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Orthodoxy And Enlightenment: George Campbell (1719-1796) And The Aberdeen Enlightenment

Jeffrey Mark Suderman

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ORTHODOXY AND ENLIGHTENMENT:
GEORGE CAMPBELL (1719–1796) AND THE ABERDEEN ENLIGHTENMENT

by

Jeffrey M. Suderman

Department of History

Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Graduate Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario
August 1995

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George Campbell (1719-1796) is now recognized as one of the leading eighteenth-century philosophers of rhetoric, but is otherwise little known. In his own time, however, he was famous for his religious and apologetic writings, and for his leadership within the Church of Scotland. Recent scholars have attempted to examine his place within the histories of both rhetorical theory and philosophy. But they have made little effort to understand his religious thought, and have consequently failed to understand either his larger intentions or the place therein of The Philosophy of Rhetoric itself.

This study seeks to redress this imbalance by exploring the whole structure, direction and context of Campbell's thought. The first part of this study provides the most comprehensive overview of his life and works to date, using hitherto unexploited primary and manuscript sources. The second and third parts analyse Campbell's structure of thought by means of a common eighteenth-century model which divided knowledge according to its two major sources, that is, nature and revelation. Part two, which examines Campbell's conception of natural knowledge, surveys his theoretical contributions to common eighteenth-century philosophical issues, including Common Sense philosophy, and his practical contributions to debates concerning the uses of historical and testimonial evidences, and textual criticism. Part three, which explores Campbell's conception of revealed knowledge, considers his contributions to contemporary religious thought, and his relation to eighteenth-century Scottish moderatism.
This study argues that Campbell was fully a man of the Enlightenment without being any less a sincere and pious Christian. In fact, it demonstrates that Campbell's Christian moderatism and apologetic strategy, like those of many of his contemporaries, were founded upon the scholarship of the Enlightenment. Nevertheless, this study also shows that Campbell directed all of his enlightened labours to thoroughly Christian ends, and that he ultimately united the natural and revealed realms of knowledge to serve those ends. If Campbell is indeed one of the Enlightenment's more typical representatives, as is here argued, then the Enlightenment itself cannot be viewed as inherently hostile to religion. Even Campbell's rhetorical theory cannot be properly understood apart from his religious teleology.
For my mother

who contributed more to this work

than she will ever believe
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For financial support of this project, I am grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and to the Department of History in the University of Western Ontario for awarding me the Ivie Cornish Memorial Fellowship. For permission to quote from manuscripts in their possession, I wish to thank Olive, Countess Fitzwilliam's Wentworth Settlement Trustees, the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, the City of Aberdeen, and the Librarians of Aberdeen University Library and the British Library. I am grateful for the personal assistance of the following librarians and archivists: Walter Zimmerman, David Murphy, Murray Simpson, Patrick Cadell, Jean Archibald, Christine Johnson, Judith Cripps, Colin McLaren, and especially Iain Beavan.

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George Campbell, A Dissertation on Miracles... To Which Are Added Sermons and Tracts, 2 vols., 3d ed. (Edinburgh: Bell and Bradfute, and W. Creech; London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1797).

Sher

SRO
Scottish Record Office

Treatise

Wood

WTR
INTRODUCTION

In him, the polite scholar was eminently joined with the deep and liberal divine.

William Laurence Brown

George Campbell's modern reputation could hardly be more different than the one he enjoyed in his own time. Brown's funeral sermon, from which the epigraph is taken, gives only a partial sense of the esteem in which he was held by his contemporaries at the time of his death. Principal Campbell of Marischal College, Aberdeen, was recognized by his contemporaries as a leading religious thinker, a pre-eminent divinity teacher, an influential pulpit orator, an erudite scholar, a church leader who promoted toleration and Christian unity, and a Christian apologist who decisively silenced the infidel David Hume on the question of miracles. The Dissertation on Miracles was probably his best-known work in the contemporary republic of letters, though the "Preliminary Dissertations" to his critical translation of The Four Gospels was recognized as his scholarly masterpiece. As the lead article in the Scots Magazine said at the time of his death: "His reputation as a writer, is as extensive as the present intercourse of letters; not confined to his own country, but spread through every civilized

'The Dissertation on Miracles was reprinted at least twenty times in English after its initial publication in 1762. Appendix I shows that Campbell's religious writings were popular up until the 1840s, after which they were virtually ignored. This trend did not affect the popularity of his Philosophy of Rhetoric.
nation." But his reputation was more than just literary. John Ramsay of Ochtertyre, one of the best-known chroniclers of eighteenth-century Scotland, remarked that, "Dr Campbell was long reputed the most eloquent, if not the most learned, professor of divinity in his time."3

Today Campbell is known only to a specialized few. Modern rhetoricians consider his *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776) to be the eighteenth-century work which most clearly pointed the way to the "new country" in which the study of human nature would become the foundation for the oratorical arts.4 A few twentieth-century scholars remember him as one of the abler respondents to Hume's attack on the believability of miracles, or as a peripheral adherent of the Moderate party in the Church of Scotland. Otherwise, he is but one among the myriad of Scots to come tumbling into the light during the recent renaissance of eighteenth-century Scottish studies.

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3*Scots Magazine* 58 (July 1796): 439. This line, and much of the article, is lifted directly from Brown's funeral sermon without acknowledgement. Even into the next generation, Campbell was considered to be "the greatest [minister] of whom [the Church of Scotland] can boast, and the man who, of all her ministers, has done most by his writings for the cause of the Christian religion" (James Bruce, *Lives of Eminent Men of Aberdeen* [Aberdeen: L. Smith, 1841], 323).

3*Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Alexander Allardyce, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1888), 1:485. Ramsay (1736-1814) was trained as an advocate, but soon retired to the life of a gentleman farmer near the estate of the improver Henry Home, Lord Kames. Kames' extensive connections, as well as his own, help account for the scope of Ramsay's knowledge and opinions of his contemporaries, which will be repeated frequently in this essay.

4The term "new country", often cited by scholars, was Campbell's own (*FR*, lxxv). Wilbur Samuel Howell, a leading modern authority, considers Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* to be the most important work on the subject in eighteenth-century Europe (*Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971], 602).
Modern scholars have done little to redress or even understand the significant disparity between Campbell's contemporary and modern reputations. They have indeed made considerable efforts to understand the place of his Philosophy of Rhetoric in the transition from classical to modern conceptions of rhetoric. They have analysed and traced the influence of his rules of persuasive discourse. Some scholars have examined the sources of Campbell's underlying philosophy, and have disputed whether he was most significantly indebted to Francis Bacon, John Locke, David Hume or Thomas Reid. But The Philosophy of Rhetoric was one of the lesser known of Campbell's works in the eighteenth century; it was not even reprinted in English until the nineteenth century. Consequently, interpretive problems must necessarily arise when modern scholars focus on this work alone. Moreover, the place of

"Douglas Ehninger, in a ground-breaking article, was one of the first scholars to cite the revolutionary implications of Campbell's rhetorical theory; see "George Campbell and the Revolution in Inventional Theory," *Southern Speech Journal* 15 (May 1950): 270–6.

"Clarence W. Edney early advanced the priority of Locke ("George Campbell's Theory of Logical Truth," *Speech Monographs* 15 [1948]: 19–32. Lloyd F. Bitzer responded by convincingly establishing the pre-eminence of Hume ("The Lively Idea: A Study of Hume's Influence on George Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric," [Ph.D. diss., State University of Iowa, 1962]). In an important article, Vincent M. Bevilacqua focused on the Baconian influence ("Philosophical Origins of George Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric," *Speech Monographs* 32 [March 1965]: 1–12). The modern literature on Campbell has been systematically reviewed in Howard Lewis Ulman III, "Thought and Language in George Campbell's The Philosophy of Rhetoric" (Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1985), chapter I. As my purposes are considerably removed from the main body of scholarship on Campbell, I will not offer a review of this sizeable body of rhetorical literature. I will comment on specific problems in this literature only at appropriate points in the text, particularly in chapter four.

"See appendix I. Although The Philosophy of Rhetoric has been reprinted more than forty-five times, all but the first edition and a German translation appeared after Campbell's death."
Campbell's rhetoric within the whole body of his work cannot be correctly understood without a broader-based appreciation of his thought.

A few twentieth-century scholars have made tentative steps towards a more comprehensive understanding of Campbell's life and thought. Arthur Raymond McKay has written the only sizeable work devoted to Campbell's religious thought. Unfortunately, McKay's dissertation does little more than summarize Campbell's major arguments and compare them to twentieth-century evangelical notions of orthodoxy. It offers little analysis, uses few manuscript sources (which, to be fair, were generally not known at the time), and completely fails to understand Campbell in terms of the issues and values of the eighteenth century. More recently, Douglas A. Sonheim has examined Campbell's pulpit rhetoric, that is, his theory of religious communication, but has failed to move beyond a strictly rhetorical interpretation of Campbell's overall intentions. Professor Lloyd F. Bitzer has done more than anyone else to advertise the need for an appreciation of Campbell's religious mind. The introduction to his second edition (1988) of Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric marks the first notable attempt to employ both Campbell's printed religious works and his manuscripts in Aberdeen University Library to explore his religious thought. But Bitzer's valuable

---

"George Campbell (1719-1796), His Life and Thought" (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 1951).

"George Campbell's Theory of Pulpit Discourse" (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri, Columbia, 1993). It is neither convincing nor satisfying to view everything that Campbell did as part of a "communicative paradigm"; such an approach pays little attention to his broader eighteenth-century context. Nevertheless, Sonheim discusses some aspects of Campbell's practical rhetoric for which I do not have room in the present essay.
introduction is only the first step towards a balanced understanding of Campbell's religious mind and of his thought as a whole. Bitzer concludes his introduction with the following remark: "It is surprising that Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric failed to treat God's revelations and designs and failed also to describe the whole territory of what can be known through natural and supernatural means."10 Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric failed to do so only because it was not meant to stand in isolation from his religious writings. Modern scholars cannot afford to view this "secular" work apart from the broader context in which Campbell himself viewed his rhetorical philosophy.

The major purpose of the present essay is to address the need for a broader understanding of Campbell's thought within the context of the philosophical and religious concerns of his day. This essay is must directly concerned with the structure and flow of his thought. Campbell was pre-eminently a Christian apologist who employed both natural knowledge and revealed knowledge to defend the reasonableness and necessity of the Christian religion. Moreover, the various components of his apologetic strategy were interdependent and arranged in a particular although implicit order. The analytical structure of the present essay represents both the structure and the direction of his apology. Campbell's thought was neither profoundly original nor entirely consistent, yet it was a remarkably coherent and comprehensive representation of a manner of thinking common among eighteenth-century enlightened British divines. In other words, Campbell's system of thought makes sense in light of the presuppositions which he shared with

10Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Editor's Introduction" (PR, 11).
many of his peers. But these presuppositions, as we shall see, differ significantly from those that have become typical of Western thought since the eighteenth century. The disparity between Campbell's presuppositions and those of a later age helps explain the disparity between his contemporary and modern reputations.

This essay is divided into three major parts, the first biographical and contextual, and the other two analytical. Part I reviews Campbell's life and works, with particular attention to the context and controversies surrounding his activities and writings. Wherever possible, it reconstructs Campbell's life from primary sources, many of which are presented here for the first time. As no modern critical biography of Campbell exists, this constitutes the most comprehensive and reliable biography to date. George Skene Keith's standard life, which appeared in the first of Campbell's posthumous publications only four years after his death, remains an invaluable source, but does not provide as much detail and context as the modern scholar would wish.

Part II, the first of two analytical sections, examines Campbell's philosophical system. It explores that realm of knowledge which, he thought, human beings could discover by means of their natural abilities alone. Campbell was a practical philosopher who would have scorned the notion of being remembered as a theoretician or system-builder. "Valuable knowledge," he said, "... always leads to some practical skill, and is perfected in it."1 Consequently, his writings were primarily concerned with very specific issues in the realm of natural

1 'Pr. 1xix.'
knowledge, such as the principles of persuasive discourse, the value of testimonial evidence concerning miracles, the historical nature of the Christian church, and the criticism of ancient texts (particularly the Gospels of Jesus). Campbell's treatment of these practical issues was, nevertheless, based upon more fundamental premises which, though not always systematically stated, are essential to understanding the structure of his thought. Chapter four examines the often-implicit foundations and premises of Campbell's philosophy. Chapter five examines the application of these premises to the practical issues above mentioned, with the exception of Campbell's practical rhetoric which has been treated extensively by modern scholars. Chapter six considers the relation of Campbell's thought to the Enlightenment, and subsequently to the very different kinds of thought that have characterized the intellectual world since his death.

Part III concentrates on that realm of knowledge which Campbell believed could only be approached by means of a divine revelation. The internal structure of this section parallels that of part II. Chapter seven reconstructs Campbell's theology and conception of Christianity from references scattered throughout his writings. Campbell had reasons for not making his religious doctrines explicit, but it is of value to us to make them so. Campbell's theology sheds light on a particular kind of Christianity which was common in the eighteenth century, but which is generally misunderstood today. Chapter eight re-examines the practical issues raised in chapter five, but this time with attention to their religious implications. The last chapter considers both Campbell's Christian "moderatism" and his relation to the Moderate party in the Church of Scotland. A critical appreciation of Campbell's
thought throws as much light onto these phenomena as they do onto the structure and purpose of his own thought.

It is very difficult to find a term adequate to describe Campbell's kind of Christianity. Campbell himself sometimes used the term "rational Christian" to distance himself from those who, he thought, adhered to an unreasoning and bigoted form of Christianity. For the purpose of historical analysis, however, this essay will use the terms "moderate Christianity" and "Christian moderatism" to describe his kind of Christianity. These terms properly suggest the values of moderation, reasonableness, tolerance, doctrinal caution, scholarly precision and moral earnestness which Campbell shared with many of his age, both in and out of Scotland. These terms should be kept distinct from the capitalized terms "Moderatism" and "Moderate party" which describe a faction within the Scottish church in the second half of the eighteenth century. Although Campbell did indeed have ties with this ecclesiastical party, it should not be thought that this small group of ministers, centred in Edinburgh, held a monopoly on eighteenth-century Christian "moderatism". The term "Popular party" will be used to describe the Scottish ecclesiastical faction that generally opposed the

\[1^2\text{AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page.}\]

\[2\text{Richard B. Sher uses the term "moderatism" only in reference to William Robertson's ecclesiastical Moderates. I prefer Ian D.L. Clark's broader use of the term which defines "moderatism" as an intellectual mood or attitude which was widespread in the eighteenth century, while recognizing that the Moderate party in the Church of Scotland did not exist before the 1750s; see "Moderatism and the Moderate Party in the Church of Scotland 1752-1805," (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 1963), especially pp. 194 and 205. We must remember, however, that while the term "Moderate party" was current in the eighteenth century, the term "moderatism" was a nineteenth-century invention (Sher, 17). These terms will be discussed further in chapter nine, below.}\]
Moderate party, while the term "High-flyer" will be applied to those who placed greater emphasis on creeds and doctrine than did Campbell and his cohorts.14

As the subtitle of this essay suggests, an analysis of Campbell's thought helps delineate the nature of the Aberdeen Enlightenment.15 The "Aberdeen Enlightenment" here refers to the thought and activities of a small group of professors and professional men (hereafter referred to as "Aberdonians") who comprised the Aberdeen Philosophical Society, of which Campbell was a leading member. Certain members of this group, including Campbell, made up nearly the whole of the first generation of Common Sense philosophers.16 Alexander Gerard was professor of divinity at King's College in Old Aberdeen at the same time that Campbell held the corresponding chair at Marischal College in the New Town. Although he was Campbell's chief personal rival, he was at the same time most like Campbell in overall thought, and therefore provides a useful means of comparison. Thomas Reid, traditionally the "father" of Common Sense philosophy, is also useful for judging the degree of Campbell's

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14I do not think that the term "High-flyer" (which describes those who continually focused on the "high" themes of Christian doctrine) was as pejorative in the eighteenth-century as Sher (17) claims. It is certainly less misleading than the term "orthodox", and does not bring up as many problems of anachronism as the term "evangelical", which I will discuss more fully in chapter eight, below.

15The distinctiveness of the North-East of Scotland, of which Aberdeen was the capital, and of the Aberdeen Enlightenment, has received recent attention from Paul B. Wood, Roger L. Emerson, H. Lewis Ulman and Stephen A. Conrad. The distinctiveness of its clergy was noted long before by John Ramsay of Ochteryre and James McCoash.

16To avoid confusion, I will use "Common Sense" (capitalized) to differentiate the formal philosophy from the ordinary meaning of "common sense" as well as from the faculty in human nature which the Common Sense philosophers believed was responsible for common sense judgments.
philosophical adherence to the Aberdeen standard. James Beattie, professor of moral philosophy at Marischal, famed author, and Campbell's closest friend in Aberdeen, is as problematic as he is useful. Although he claimed to agree with Campbell on all important matters, his thought presents the most significant obstacle to constructing a unified and coherent Aberdonian mindset.

Modern scholars have constructed a Scottish Enlightenment that often appears to be no larger than the city of Edinburgh. At the same time they have given the Scottish Enlightenment very little religious colouring.

Even Richard B. Sher's fine study, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment* (1985), says little about the religious thought of his small group of divines. A careful study of George Campbell and the Aberdonians suggests that the Scottish Enlightenment extended considerably beyond the pale of Edinburgh. Furthermore, such a

"Beattie's significant intellectual departures from his Aberdeen colleagues (a fact least recognized by Beattie himself) suggest what I will refer to as the "Beattie problem". The problem centres on David Hume. All the Aberdonians, with the notable exception of Beattie, borrowed heavily from Hume, even while they criticized his extreme scepticism. Beattie maintained a hostile attitude towards Hume in his writings, an attitude which Campbell appears to have allowed to pass unchallenged, even though he proof-read all of Beattie's manuscripts. The problem will be explained more fully later in this essay.

Hugh Trevor-Roper and Nicholas Phillipson are among the most obvious exemplars of this scholarly trend. John Dwyer's Edinburgh moderates are, if we believe his account, little removed from deists. He argues that the proper context for these divines is polite, not religious ("The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Moderate Divines," in *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland*, ed. John Dwyer, Roger A. Mason and Alexander Murdoch [Edinburgh: John Donald, 1981], 310). His account of their moral preoccupations provides virtually no indication that they were Christians; see his *Virtuous Discourse: Sensibility and Community in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1987).
study restores religious thought to its rightful place at the centre of eighteenth-century Scottish concern.
PART I

GEORGE CAMPBELL: LIFE AND WORKS
CHAPTER ONE

CAMPBELL'S WORLD (TO 1771)

On 22 January 1765, the Aberdeen Philosophical Society debated a question posed by George Campbell, "Whether the manner of living of parents affects the genius or intellectual abilities of the children." Perhaps Campbell had good reason to wonder. His father, Colin Campbell, from the little we know of him, seems to have been utterly unlike his son in temperament and outlook. This is perhaps not surprising when one considers the relatively turbulent world in which the elder Campbell was raised.

Colin Campbell was born in 1678, at the height of the government oppression of the adherents of the Presbyterian form of church government. His father was George Campbell, Esq., of Westhall in Aberdeenshire, who, according to Campbell's first biographer, "had originally come from Moray, and was a descendant of Campbell of Moy, and a Cadet of the family of Argyle." We know nothing of the family's

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1*Minutes*, 194.


3Keith, vi. Westhall is located in the parish of Oyne, approximately 20 miles north and west of the city of Aberdeen. Westhall was owned by a John Campbell of Moye between 1654 and 1674; *The Jacobite Cess Roll for the County of Aberdeen in 1715*, ed. Alistair and Henrietta Tayler (Aberdeen: Third Spalding Club, 1932), 83. This was probably Colin Campbell's grandfather. I have not been able to trace Campbell's lineage back to the west of Scotland.
religious sympathies before Scotland's rejection of Episcopal government in 1690, nor in the decade or so following. Colin Campbell received his M.A. from Marischal College, Aberdeen, in 1699, and, like many of his generation, travelled to Leiden for theological training. Leiden was the leading university in the Protestant Netherlands, known for its religious toleration and liberalism, and was to become a model for Scottish university reform in the eighteenth century. Colin Campbell would certainly have been exposed to a great many new ideas, but we do not know the degree to which he embraced them. From the time of his return to the city of Aberdeen, we can discover a little more about his religious beliefs because he kept a brief spiritual record, begun at the time of his establishment in the First Charge (St. Nicholas' West Church).

"On Thursday [the] 29 of April 1703," the journal begins, "poor, insignificant I was ordained by [the] laying on of hands of the

---

*Peter John Anderson, ed., *Fasti Academiae Mariscallanae Aberdonensis*, 3 vols. (Aberdeen: New Spalding Club, 1889–98), 2:272. The Marischal course content was undergoing great change at this time, and was very sensitive to the ideological winds from the continent (Wood, 5).

*Fasti*, 6:38.


*The single sheet of manuscript, attributed to Colin Campbell, minister of St. Nicholas' Church in Aberdeen, is entitled "Some Memorandum's", and is found in the National Library of Scotland, MS 1704, fol. 5. St. Nicholas' was an important parish, and the appointment was all the more so from the shortage of qualified Presbyterian ministers in the North-East.*
presbtry, to preach the gospel in this city (Aberdeen)." The journal reveals a man desperately aware of his own sinful nature and inadequacies, and continually cognizant of a direct and ever-intervening providence. Colin Campbell's God was both terrible and merciful, abandoning his servant in the midst of his sermons, but always reminding him of the superior wisdom of divine guidance in every detail of his life.\(^8\) The journal also reveals the considerable opposition which Colin Campbell encountered from his own parishioners, though it is unclear whether his enemies objected to him personally or to the re-established Presbyterian church that he represented in a largely Episcopalian part of the country. Colin Campbell came to be known for his peculiar preaching style, but also for his orthodoxy.\(^9\) He was also loyal to the established government, supporting it during the abortive Jacobite rising in 1715 when Aberdeen itself, including most of its ministers and professors, favoured the Pretender.\(^10\)

\(^8\)A sample from the journal: "I acordingly went out [the] 23 of May. and lectured [with] difficulty on [the] 73d psalm from [the] 15 v. to [the] 21. But a little after I had begun to preach, not a full quarter of an hour, the Lord was pleased to leave me wholly, that I could not recover my self again. So I desisted before half twelve in [the] fore noon: what this dispensation means, I cannot tell, the Lord knows; but I was never witness to [the] like of it. O [that] for [the] blood of Christ, I may be kept humble, and may not be suffered to repine against [the] providence. Domino da lucom."


Such was the spiritual climate into which George Campbell was born on 25 December 1719. But the elder Campbell did not have long to train his youngest son, for he died suddenly on 27 August 1728, leaving his family in difficult circumstances. Colin Campbell was survived by his wife Margaret Walker, daughter of Alexander Walker, Esq., who had been a merchant and provost of Aberdeen, and, according to the estate inventory, five children besides George.

The elder Campbell departed his world while it was in the midst of momentous changes. The political union of Scotland with England, though accomplished two decades before, was only now bearing economic fruits. The city of Aberdeen was slowly recovering from a population low of about 6,000 at the beginning of the century. Its relative smallness

"This was not a particularly special day; Scottish Calvinists did not celebrate Popish holidays such as Christmas.

Tayler, Jacobite Cess Roll, 231; and Fasti, 6:38. Hew Scott also lists Alexander Walker's wife as Helen Irvine, daughter of Alexander Irvine of Murthill. The International Genealogical Index (hereafter IGI) gives a birthdate of 19 February 1684 for Margaret Walker, daughter of Alexander Walker, in the parish of Old Machar. She died 8 April, 1747, aged 69, according to Fasti, 6:38, a date inconsistent with the IGI.

SRO CC1/6/9, dated 26 September, 1728. The children listed are Jean (perhaps the one christened 29 January 1706, IGI, though listed under Colin and "Marjorie" Campbell; there is no record of her attaining adulthood), Colin (christened 28 January 1711, IGI; died September 1763, SRO CC1/6/40), Margaret (christened 30 Sept, 1716, IGI), Anna (christened 19 January 1718, IGI), George (christened 27 December 1719, IGI), and Marjorie (probably christened 7 May, 1721, IGI, though listed under Colin Campbell and "Marjorie" Campbell). Colin Campbell the younger's will of 1765 lists sisters Ann, Marjory and Margaret (Milen, with a daughter, also Margaret), but no other siblings (SRO CC1/6/40). Keith (vi) mentions that Colin Campbell Sr. had a house in the city and a small estate near Aberdeen, though there is no other evidence of this.

William Robbie, Aberdeen: Its Traditions and History (Aberdeen: D. Wylie, 1893), 259. This figure undoubtedly excludes the Old Town of Aberdeen, which lay outside of the city proper. The combined population reached about 15,000 by mid-century and 25,000 by the end of the
was partly offset by its importance as the capital of the North-East, a region with unique cultural and intellectual traditions and a character that set it apart from the rest of the Scottish lowlands. The North-East had long been the preserve of a liberal Episcopalianism that opposed the covenanting tradition of the South-West. The distinctness of the North-East, however, came to be tempered in the years after the 1715 rebellion by the influx into Marischal College of a group of young professors and regents with new and modern ideas of education. This group included the mathematician Colin Maclaurin, the moral philosopher George Turnbull, and others eager to teach Shaftesbury and Newton. They reflected the trends in education that were simultaneously transforming the universities in the south of Scotland. This rising generation was concerned more with polite and virtuous learning than with polemical dispute, more with the general providential economy than with the acts of particular providence. They were well-acquainted with the Newtonian and Lockean philosophies, the likes of which Calvinistic scholasticism had once scorned. George Campbell's education fully reflected the liberalizing trends in Scottish education that were entrenched by the 1730s.

George Campbell attended the Aberdeen Grammar School from 1729 to 1734, though it is likely that he had already become proficient in reading and writing English at one of the other burgh schools.¹⁵ He

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¹⁵ Proficiency in English, as well as in mathematics and music was recommended for all entrants to the Grammar school; H.F. Morland Simpson, ed., Bon Record: Records and Reminiscences of Aberdeen Grammar School from the Earliest Times by Many Writers (Aberdeen: D. Wyllie, 1906), 92.
studied under Alexander Malcolm, who was well-known as the author of a philosophical work on mathematics, and presumably under John Milne, the school's rector. The Grammar School held a high reputation for the teaching of Latin, which included a review of classical logic and rhetoric as well as the standard eighteenth-century canon of ancient authors. It also ensured that the boys were well versed in the Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647), which contained the basic creed of Scottish Calvinism and its scriptural proof-texts. Campbell would have learned by memory that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever," and that God "hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass." He would also have learned that the proper interpretation of the fifth commandment, " Honour thy father and mother," was to do the duties of one's particular rank and station. Likewise, the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," required "the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others."*

In his fifteenth year (1734), Campbell turned his steps towards Marischal College, the University at the heart of the New Town and within sight of his childhood home. Marischal College, like her sister college in the Old Town, still operated on a regenting system, whereby

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**See Simpson, Bon Record, 164-8.

one teacher guided a class of boys for several years through all of the required subjects, with the exception of mathematics and of a first year devoted to the classical languages. The regents were expected to lead their students through a standard curriculum which included (in order) logic, metaphysics, pneumatology, ethics and natural philosophy. The teaching of these subjects may well have been affected by the fact that English replaced Latin as the language of instruction during the 1730s. Campbell learned mathematics from Professor John Stewart, later one of his associates in the Aberdeen Philosophical Society. Stewart taught Newtonianism and the practical applications of mathematics, but also stressed the moral and mental utility of the discipline. Thomas Blackwell the younger, professor of Greek and later principal, lectured on the history and culture of ancient Greece in his first-year Greek course. His polite and reputable published works, like his lectures, presented highly-contextualized examinations of classical literary works and languages, as well as naturalistic explanations of ancient mythologies. His course undoubtedly provided a foundation for Campbell's later scholarly career. Unfortunately, Campbell's regent, William Duff (later a historian of minor note), was

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Wood, 35.

Wood, 49.

Wood, 22; see also appendix II of Wood's book which provides a checklist of mathematical texts recommended in Stewart's class.

See Wood, 56 and 59. Blackwell's publications included An Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer (1735), Letters Concerning Mythology (1748) and Memoirs of the Court of Augustus (3 vols., 1751-64).

Duff published A New and Full, Critical, Biographical, and Geographical History of Scotland (London, 1749). Wood (25-6) notes that
an unpleasant man little interested in teaching his charges. He spent most of his time away from the college, for which negligence he was eventually deposed (January 1738). Campbell was one of the senior boys who gave testimony against Duff.\footnote{See the record of testimony given at the Rectorial Court, AUL MS M 387/9/2/2/6.} Alexander Innes, an able but unremarkable man, was made regent in Duff's place, having already substituted during Duff's absences. During these years Campbell may have come to know Thomas Reid, who was then the college's librarian. Campbell graduated M.A. in 1738.\footnote{Anderson, \textit{Fasti}, 2:29.}

As with most young men of his social background, Campbell knew that his best hopes for advancement were by means of one of the professions. His elder brother Colin being already destined for the ministry, Campbell moved to Edinburgh to become apprenticed to George Turnbull, a writer to the signet.\footnote{\textit{Fasti}, 7:359.} Writers to the signet were not as socially prestigious as some advocates, but they earned a better living than most advocates by providing various commercial services in the area of Scots law.\footnote{John Stuart Shaw, \textit{The Management of Scottish Society 1707-1764: Power, Nobles, Lawyers, Edinburgh Agents and English Influences} (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1983), 32-5.} Although we know nothing of Campbell's time as an apprentice, we do know that he abandoned a secure albeit dull profession (and an expensive education) in about 1741 when his interests gravitated towards theology.\footnote{It was perhaps at this time that Campbell became friends}
with Hugh Blair, then a tutor in Edinburgh, whose preaching Campbell
supposedly admired.\textsuperscript{29} Campbell may also have associated with other
future Moderates, and almost certainly visited or joined some convivial
societies. In any case, Campbell began attending the divinity lectures
of John Gowdie at Edinburgh University.\textsuperscript{30} He was sufficiently
fascinated to move back to Aberdeen (probably late in 1741) to enroll as
a full-time divinity student.

Aberdeen divinity students, whether at King's or Marischal,
customarily attended the lectures of both divinity professors. The
Marischal professor of divinity was James Chalmers, who died in 1744 and
was succeeded by Robert Pollock in 1745 (who was later Campbell's
immediate predecessor as principal). The King's professor was John
Lumsden, a respected and learned teacher. He specialized in
controversial divinity and church history, while Pollock concentrated on
practical theology (that is, preaching and pastoral duties). John

\textsuperscript{29}It is unclear whether he completed his apprenticeship before
abandoning law. The Signet Office records appear only to acknowledge
his apprenticeship.

\textsuperscript{30}Chambers, 293, and Bruce, 322. Blair's life is covered in Robert
Morell Schmitz, 
Hugh Blair
(Morningside Heights, N.Y.: King's Crown
Press, 1948). Blair was only licensed to preach in October 1741, and
was certainly not yet a minister of the Canongate church as has been
claimed. Perhaps Campbell heard Blair preach in one of the student
societies. H. Lewis Ulman states that Campbell was only later
introduced to Blair by John Farquhar (Minutes, 35).

\textsuperscript{30}The teaching at the University of Edinburgh is described in an
article entitled "A Short Account of the University of Edinburgh, the
present Professors in it, and the several parts of Learning taught by
was the principal of the university and the first professor of divinity.
Alexander Carlyle, who also attended Edinburgh divinity classes at about
this time, recalled how dull and tedious the classes were, and how the
students became theologically liberal in reaction to the professor;
Anecdotes and Characters of the Times, ed. James Kingsley (London:
Oxford University Press, 1973), 29. Carlyle does not say which of the
divinity professors this was, though it was probably Gowdie.
Ramsay of Ochtertyre remarked that Pollock's expertise lay in Hebrew literature, which Pollock advised should be read in the original rather than in translation, a suggestion which Campbell certainly followed. Lumsden's recommended reading list is particularly interesting. Despite his supposedly conservative reputation in matters of doctrine, Lumsden recommended such English divines as Stillingfleet, Chillingworth, Tillotson, Whiston, Clarke, Sherlock and Butler, as well as Hugo Grotius and a list of controversialists who wrote against Atheists, Socinians, Papists and Jews.

Campbell's theological education was not confined to the classroom. Student societies had become important parts of a young Scot's education, providing venues for public speaking, not to mention conversation and debate. Campbell must have retained a strong impression of the burgeoning club scene in Edinburgh. There, societies such as the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh were only the most visible examples of an improving tradition that stretched back to the seventeenth century. It was only natural then, that in January 1742, not long after the beginning of the college session in Aberdeen, Campbell formed the Theological Club with John Glennie and James McKail.

31Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:469.

32The information in this paragraph comes largely from G.D. Henderson, Aberdeen Divines: being a History of the Chair of Divinity in King's College, Aberdeen (AUL Special Collections typescript). See especially p. 292A for Lumsden's 1751 reading list.

33Davis D. McElroy, Scotland's Age of Improvement: A Survey of Eighteenth-Century Literary Clubs and Societies ([Pullman]: Washington State University Press, 1969), 104. Alexander Carlyle claimed that the theological clubs in Glasgow contributed significantly to his personal improvement, and allowed him to read theological discourses in public (Anecdotes, 40).
The club was designed to combine "the pleasures of conversation with the pursuit of sacred literature." In other words, it was to be both polite and Christian. The members of the club created fourteen regulations to promote individual improvement in all things related to the study of divinity, particularly the practical aspects of the pastoral office. Campbell later recalled his time in the society with great fondness, recommending the formation of such societies to his own divinity students as an effectual means of improvement. Certainly the concept of improvement would become a central feature of Campbell's thought, both enlightened and religious. Moreover, the modern scholar can cite the Theological Club as the context in which Campbell first discussed and formulated his rules of literary composition.

The early 1740s was an eventful time in Scottish history, and made a deep and lasting impression on the young divinity students who would later form the Moderate party within the Church of Scotland. Everyone with ambitions was aware of the battles between the Argathelians and

\[^{34}\text{Keith, viii. Keith's biography of Campbell seems to be the only notable source of information concerning this society. Keith received his information from John Glennie. Later members included Alexander Gerard, James Trail (later Bishop of Down and Connor and an honourary member of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society), and possibly John Skinner of Linshart (Episcopalian minister, poet and father of the Episcopal bishop of the same name). Thomas Reid was not a member, as is sometimes suggested.}\]

\[^{35}\text{Keith, ix. Keith does not describe these regulations specifically.}\]

\[^{36}\text{LSTPE, 48.}\]

\[^{37}\text{LSTPE, 349.}\]

\[^{38}\text{See Richard Sher's Church and University for the collective experiences of these young Moderates, Campbell's Edinburgh contemporaries. Sher's study focuses on William Robertson, Hugh Blair, Alexander Carlyle, Adam Ferguson and John Home.}\]
Squadrone for control of Scottish politics. The Argathelian supremacy was as yet far from certain. The young Edinburgh Moderates noted the Scottish church's excessive dependence on secular political factions and would eventually seek to make the church independent of such outside interests. At the same time, the future Moderates observed the dangers of popular religious enthusiasm to church order and discipline. The Cambuslang Revival, known as the "Great Wark", began in 1742, drawing crowds of up to thirty thousand to hear popular preachers such as George Whitefield. The young Moderates generally scorned such events, regarding as mere enthusiasm what others claimed was the outpouring of divine grace. We do not know Campbell's opinion of Cambuslang, though his later strictures on enthusiasm generally and on Whitefield specifically suggest that it may have affected him deeply. Even more memorable, however, was the year 1745, when the Young Pretender, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, attempted to reclaim the throne for his family, an affair which ended unhappily for him, but tragically for so many Scots. Again, we do not know about Campbell's activities during the '45, when the Edinburgh Moderates vigorously defended the Hanoverian government. He may well have been active too, for the

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Ian Clark was the first to argue that, so far from being Erastians, the Edinburgh Moderates actually sought to free the church from external political control; see his dissertation, passim.


See the last section of chapter eight, below.
completion of his divinity degree appears to have been delayed.\textsuperscript{43} 
Undoubtedly, his feelings towards a Jacobite revival were even colder than those of the now rather unsympathetic Aberdonian citizenry. Nor did the Aberdonians have reason to regret their lack of enthusiasm for the Stuarts, for by all accounts, Aberdeen and the whole of Scotland prospered considerably in the years after the last major Jacobite threat.\textsuperscript{44}

Campbell received his licence to preach from the Presbytery of Aberdeen on 11 June 1746, having successfully completed a series of trials before that body.\textsuperscript{45} The trials included the preparation of a popular sermon on a specified text and an historical discourse on a

\textsuperscript{43}If the Theological Club was formed in January 1742, then Campbell must have begun his studies at the end of 1741. He was licensed to preach in 1746, indicating five years of study as opposed to the ordinary four. Another explanation might be that Campbell was tutoring or teaching during these years.

\textsuperscript{44}Robbie, Aberdeen, 280. See Sinclair's Statistical Account, vol. 14, for Aberdeen's economic growth after the '45, especially in agriculture and the linen trade. Rosalind Mitchison mentions an upturn in population growth during the 1740s, and notes that it was after the '45 that Britain's colonial markets really began to expand, a major source of opportunity for eighteenth-century Scots; Lordship to Patronage: Scotland 1603-1745 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1983), 167 and 173. Bruce Lenman states that though Scotland's economy was perhaps more poised for expansion than actually expanding, the political stability achieved after the '45 was a crucial factor in its later successes; Integration, Enlightenment, and Industrialization: Scotland 1746-1832 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 7 and 25. Lenman also notes that Scotland's universities were expanding during the 1740s, a time when Europe's other universities were declining (95).

\textsuperscript{45}Register of the Presbytery of Aberdeen, SRO CH2/1/8, pp. 67-70. Campbell was licensed, "having given satisfying Answers to the Questions ordinarily propos'd to such as are to be licens'd, & having come under the usual engagements, & subscribed the Confession of Faith in formula" (70). George's elder brother Colin must have been undergoing trials at roughly the same time, for both appear in the records, which leads to some confusion of identity. I cannot find Colin Campbell in Hew Scott's Fasti.
matter of early church history, the explanation of a text in Greek and
Hebrew, and the handling of questions on doctrine and history. Campbell
was a probationary preacher for less than a year before being called to
be minister at Fordoun, a call which turned into a contest between the
parish's heritors and heads of families. The issue was resolved by the
1747 General Assembly in favour of the other candidate, William
Forbes, a friend of Campbell's from the Theological Club. Campbell
was more successful on his next call, however, which came in October
1747 from Robert Burnett of Leys on behalf of his father, Sir Alexander
Burnett, fourth baronet of Leys, the patron of the parish of Banchory
Ternan in Kincardineshire. The call engendered some confusion between
George, of whose reputation the heritors had heard, and his elder
brother Colin, who mistakenly recei...ed the initial invitation. The
congregation ultimately approved the younger brother, who was ordained
on 2 June 1748.

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"[Nathaniel Morren], Annals of the General Assembly of the Church
of Scotland. From the Final Succession in 1739, to The Origin of the
Relief in 1752. (Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1838), 99. There was a
great increase in the number of such disputes in the Church of Scotland
during the 1740s (Sherr, 50). The life of Campbell in the Supplement to
the Third Edition of the Cyclopædia Britannica, ed. George Gleig, 2
vols. (Edinburgh: Thomas Boner, 1801) gives an unaccountably large space
to criticizing Campbell's rival Forbes (1:147). Keith berates this in
his life of Campbell.

"The story can be found in Keith, as well as in Chambers, 293. On
the Deeside Burnetts, see George Burnett, The Family of Burnett of Leys,

"Register of the Presbytery of Kincairden O'neal [Kincardine
O'Neill], SRO CH2/602/3, pp. 25, 29 and 34. John R. McIntosh and H.R.
Sefton claim that Campbell was a leader of the 1749 movement for
augmentation of the ministerial stipend until the government threatened
to take away his royal chaplaincy; see the article on Campbell in the
Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology, ed. N. Cameron
(Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity, 1993), 128. This claim appears
The genesis of Campbell's scholarly career can be traced back to his nine years in this country parish. It began with his conscientious desire to improve his ability to understand and communicate what he took to be the plain and simple truths of Scripture. This pastoral concern with systematic self-improvement would eventually culminate in his two greatest works, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* and *The Four Gospels*. In addition, he established a reputation as a preacher of the first order. But these years were also a period of trial and learning. Campbell later recalled to his divinity students that he had been too concerned at this time with memorizing his sermons, in accordance with the regulations of the Scottish Kirk, and not enough with composition, which, he thought in retrospect, was the real key to effective preaching. He also learned the practical aspects of Scottish church government, being voted moderator of the October 1751 meeting of the Synod of Aberdeen. As was customary, Campbell delivered the opening sermon of the following synod meeting in April 1752. This sermon, entitled "The Character of a Minister of the Gospel as a Teacher and Pattern," became his first publication in the same year. It clearly reflects the pastoral concerns that occupied his mind in these years, being at once a synopsis for his later *Lectures on the Pastoral Character* and a summary of his Christian creed. It also established highly doubtful, for I have found no supporting evidence, nor does it seem likely that a first-year country minister had a royal chaplaincy.

49Keith (x) briefly describes Campbell's early preaching style, though he does not mention where he gets his information; perhaps it came from Campbell's close friend of that time, John Glennie.

50*LPC*, 247.

51This one-page creed, which will be discussed in detail in chapter seven, below, is reproduced in appendix IV, also below.
him as a critic of certain irreligious tendencies of the Enlightenment, most notably libertinism, while at the same time placing him firmly in the ranks of the defenders of enlightenment. Campbell vigorously maintained the value of progress in knowledge, considering this to be the foundation of true philosophy and religion. Yet he believed it was the duty of a minister to show that true progress in knowledge cannot ignore piety and practical virtue. Perhaps because of this judicious balance, Campbell's first publication was well received in the *Monthly Review*.

Campbell returned to Aberdeen in 1757, where he remained for the rest of his life. He did so not only with a considerable stock of learning, which would become the foundation for a lifetime of work, but with a life companion as well. He married Grace Farquharson on 26 June, 1755 in Glenmuick parish in Aberdeenshire. The Farquharsons were an old established family of the North-East, long known as Episcopalians and Jacobites. Grace's father, Harry (or Hary) Farquharson of Whitehouse Mill, in the parish of Logie-Coldstone, died in April 1746 at Culloden, leading the Mar men for the Young Pretender. It appears that the aftermath of the '45 left his widow Barbara Gordon and seven children in some difficulty, for Harry Farquharson's estate was not settled until 1766, and then only with George Campbell's signature.

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52Vol. 8 (April 1753): 32.

53IGI.

54The settlement of the Farquharson estate can be found in the SRO CC1/6/40 (30 January 1766). It appears that, because he died in battle, his family estate was not in danger of forfeiture; see Alistair and Henrietta Tayler, *Jacobites of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire in the Forty-Five* (Aberdeen: Milne and Hutchison, 1928), 168–9. The Farquharsons were probably one of the many families in the North-East
By all accounts Grace was a spirited woman and a fine companion."

There is no record of any children from this union.

On 19 January 1757, the Aberdeen Town Council elected George Campbell to be a minister of the city, ""whereunto he was translated on 23 June 1757."" The translation was a return home, for he took the Second Charge (St. Nicholas' East Church) which shared the ancient cathedral with his father's former charge, where George had worshipped most of his life. The transition was not entirely smooth, however, because Campbell had inherited the parish of the late John Bisset (1692-1756), a popular preacher and outspoken foe of church patronage."

This same John Bisset had been responsible for the popular outcry at Thomas Reid's call to New Machar in 1737. Bisset was a "puritan of the old school,"" and,

that gave up Jacobitism and converted to Presbyterianism in the years after the '45. The current "Whitehouse" owned by the Farquharsons in Tough near Alford is a different estate purchased by Campbell's nephew Peter Farquharson.

"James McCosh's account of Grace's character in The Scottish Philosophy, Biographical, Expository, Critical, From Hutcheson to Hamilton (London: Macmillan, 1875), 244, which was based on a letter from Campbell to his niece Ann Farquharson (AUL MS 3214/6), is really about Campbell's mother-in-law. There is an anecdote about Grace in Alexander Keith, A Thousand Years of Aberdeen (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1972), 351-2, which is un referenced and perhaps unreliable.

"ACA Council Register 62, fol. 156.

"Fasti, 6:80. Keith (xiii) gives the same date.

"See John Bisset, Discourses on Several Important Subjects (Edinburgh: John Bruce, 1763), 60.

"Scots Magazine 58 (July 1796): 437. See James Bruce, Lives (324-8) for an attack on Bisset's character. Bisset was long remembered in Aberdeen for his public rebukes of the vices of his contemporaries.
according to Hew Scott, the instigator of the secession church in
Aberdeen, the first congregation of which was formed from his own parish
after his death, that is, upon Campbell's arrival. Bisset had
apparently advised his parishioners in advance that they were unlikely
to receive a replacement who could minister to their expectations. It
seems likely, therefore, that the parish was prejudiced against any new
candidate having the town's patronage, rather than against Campbell
personally. Nevertheless, Campbell was henceforth unfriendly to would-
be separatists, if he was not already.

Campbell's translation to the city's Second Charge undoubtedly
reflected his growing reputation as a preacher, and put him back into
the centre of the North-East's intellectual life. Within two years he
was again immersed in university life, but this time as principal of
Marischal College and University. How he got the principalship is not
entirely clear. The office was in the gift of the crown (the estates
and patronage of the earls of Marischal having been forfeited after the
'15), and was thus administered by Scotland's manager Archibald

\[\text{Ramsay of Ochtertyre considered him very atypical of the clergy of the North-East (Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:303).}\]

-'Fasti, 6:2-3.

'James Stark, The Lights of the North (Aberdeen: D. Wyllie, 1896),
211. Part of Bisset's congregation seceded after not being able to call
a successor; they applied to the Burgher-Associate Synod for a pastor
and received Alexander Dick in 1758. See Robert Wilson, An Historical
Account and Delineation of Aberdeen (Aberdeen: James Johnston, 1822),
140.

\[\text{See, for example, LPC, 197. Campbell's annual salary at this}
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\[\text{time was 100 pounds sterling, plus a chalder of coals. In 1785 this was}
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\[\text{augmented to 126 pounds sterling (William Kennedy, Annals of Aberdeen, 2}
\]
\[\text{vols. [Aberdeen: A. Brown, 1818], 2:50). A chalder contained anywhere}
\]
\[\text{form 20-64 imperial bushels. Aberdeen ministers were not provided with}
\]
\[\text{manses (Statistical Account, 14:300).}\]
Campbell, Lord Ilay and now the third duke of Argyll. Keith states that when Principal Robert Pollock died, Campbell was initially disinclined to apply for the post, but was eventually persuaded to write Ilay directly, claiming family connection.63 It does not appear that he had much local support for the position, whereas the other two candidates, professor of natural philosophy William Duncan and professor of natural and civil history Francis Skene, had the support of the magistrates and the local landed interest respectively.64 Nevertheless, Campbell was presented to the office in August 1759.65 His reputation as an outstanding pulpit lecturer (appropriate to a principal's duties), his legal training, his political reliability, his generally moderate character, and perhaps his scientific and improving interests may all have contributed to gaining Ilay's attention.66 Principal Campbell was

63Keith, xv. Unfortunately, I can find no trace of this letter. According to some biographers, Campbell supposedly claimed in his letter that one of his ancestors had held the basket into which one of the duke's ancestors' heads had fallen at his execution (though it is unclear which ancestor it was) for which the principalship was a belated reward; these biographers probably all follow Chambers, 293. If there was a family connection claimed, I suspect it was probably Campbell's father's friendship with and support of Ilay's brother John, second duke of Argyll, when the latter entered Aberdeen during the '15, and in the years after.

64Keith, xv. Duncan was the well-known author of the Elements of Logick, and was succeeded by Francis Skene's son George in 1760, after Duncan drowned in a bathing accident (Wood, 101). George Skene then succeeded to his father's chair in 1775.

65Anderson, Fasti, vol. 2. The Aberdeen Philosophical Society minutes begin calling Campbell "Principal" by the end of August, 1759.

66Ilay was known for promoting people like himself; like Campbell, he was a trained lawyer, an improver and a botanist; Emerson, "The Scottish Scientific and Medical Patronage of Archibald Campbell, 3d Duke of Argyll." Unfortunately, there is just not enough information to reconstruct the politics of Campbell's appointment as Jeremy J. Cater has done for Robertson; see "The Making of Principal Robertson in 1762," Scottish Historical Review 49 (1970): 60-84.
soon after awarded a doctor of divinity degree, an honour all the more respectable for having come from King's College and University rather than Marischal.⁶⁷

The principal's duties were important but not onerous. He administered the college, recruited students, chaired the faculty meetings, conferred degrees, and disciplined the boys. He addressed the assembled students every Friday, and may also have led daily chapels. The college's original constitution also required the principal to do a considerable amount of teaching (including languages and astronomy), though it is likely that most of these requirements had become obsolete by the eighteenth century.⁶⁸ Campbell still had sufficient time to attend to his pastoral duties, as well as to his private studies.

Campbell took the helm of the university soon after it had gone through some radical changes. Marischal, unlike its neighbour King's, abandoned the regenting system in 1753, and entirely re-ordered its curriculum to match new and enlightened conceptions of science,

⁶⁷The degree, according to Anderson, Officers and Graduates of the University and King's College Aberdeen (Aberdeen: New Spalding Club, 1893), 101, was given 1 October 1761 (along with one to Alexander Gerard), while the same author in Fasti, 2:29, gives 1764 (as do most other biographers). The date is important for establishing the reasons for which Campbell was awarded the degree. The earlier date is probably correct, for Campbell was being called "Dr." by November 1761 in the minutes of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society, in which case the recognition preceded the publication of the Dissertation on Miracles, but followed its presentation as a synod sermon. University principals were generally expected to possess or be awarded doctorates.

⁶⁸See the Statistical Account, 1:303, for the principal's duties as specified in Marischal's founding charter. According to this report from the 1790s, the principal's salary was more than 100 pounds sterling per year, though it was not fixed due to the fact that it came out of the former bishop's rents of Aberdeen, which had been transferred to the college (325). EUL La. MS II, 152 is an example of a receipt written by Campbell for part of this annual income.
education and human psychology. Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews had already made similar changes earlier in the century. The *Scots Magazine* of December 1752 described Marischal's new order of teaching. First year students attended the professor of Greek, as they always had. Second year students now took civil and natural history, as well as elementary mathematics. Third year students concentrated on natural philosophy and more advanced mathematics. Moral philosophy and logic were only taught in the fourth and final year. 

Alexander Gerard (1728-95), the new professor of moral philosophy and logic, was chosen by his colleagues to defend the new arrangements publically, which he did in his *Plan of Education in the Marischal College and University of Aberdeen, with the Reasons of it* (1755). The *Plan of Education* was a thoroughly enlightened document, reflecting the Baconian view that:

> the only basis of Philosophy is now acknowledged to be an accurate and extensive history of nature, exhibiting an exact view of the various phænomena for which Philosophy is to account, and on which it is to found its reasonings.

The new teaching order, argued Gerard, better accomodated the "gradual openings of the human mind," and thus more easily convinced the understanding of the truth of its evidences. Besides the clear Baconian influence, there was also a strong hint of Hume's empirical

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approach to human nature: "The constitution of man, and his several active powers must be explained, before his business, his duty, and his happiness can be discovered." The new curriculum provided considerably more room for the natural sciences, and emphasized mathematical proficiency. This emphasis on natural philosophy was highlighted by the appointments made to the faculty during Campbell's tenure. These appointments included Patrick Copland to the professorship of natural philosophy in 1775 (though he nominally held the mathematics chair), the noted civic improver Robert Hamilton to the professorship of mathematics in 1779 (though he held the natural philosophy chair), George French to the newly created chair of chemistry in 1793, and William Livingston to the post of mediciner in 1793, the latter being the first in a long time to treat the job as something more than a sinecure. Copland, a popular lecturer, was involved in numerous public works projects, and, with the help of the Town Council, erected a fine astronomical observatory for teaching purposes. Campbell, it may be assumed, was a significant player in making Scotland's youngest university into the growing and thriving institution of the North-East. So too was the third earl of Bute, Marischal's chancellor after the death of his uncle Lord Ilay.

The changes within the university reflected an evolving notion of the nature and purpose of education. King's College's decisions both to

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72Gerard, Plan, 23.

73Wood, 81.

74Bute donated approximately 1400 (mostly medical) volumes to the college library (Statistical Account, 1:327), in addition to scientific equipment for the teaching of natural philosophy.
remain with a regenting system and to require its students to live in the college," indicate that its philosophy of education focused on the religious and moral improvement of young boys. Regenting implicitly assumed that the sum of essential human knowledge remained constant and within the grasp of an individual mind, and that it was better communicated by a single teacher than by a host of specialists. The reforms at Marischal, on the other hand, may suggest that its faculty had adopted a philosophy of education that reflected more enlightened pedagogical notions, according to which human knowledge was dynamic, contingent, and quickly expanding beyond the grasp of a single mind. That this was Campbell's view of education is evidenced by his continual emphasis on the proper method rather than the precise content of learning. He wished to teach his students how to teach themselves. This view was appropriate to the flourishing, bustling New Town and its college, where specialization and cosmopolitanism had become the prevailing ideological realities. Despite this educational philosophy, the moral welfare of the boys remained one of the chief concerns of Marischal College's principal, as is evidenced by a letter written by Campbell to the magistrates of the city, recommending that


See for example LEH, 1:9-11.

Paul Wood originally suggested some of these ideas to me in a private conversation.
they prevent acting companies from staging plays within the city during college term and tempting students away from their classes.\textsuperscript{7}

Marischal's and King's differing philosophies of education may help explain the misfortunes of the various proposals put forward in the eighteenth century for uniting the two colleges. Most of the Marischal men and a few isolated individuals at King's sought to join the two independent institutions in order to promote more efficient teaching, establish functional professional schools and thus raise Aberdeen's academic reputation. As Alexander Carlyle noted during his visit to Aberdeen in August 1769: "It is very absurd to have two Colleges so near one another, so ill endow'd, so ruinous, and attended by so small a number of Students, when their Union would rectify all these Evils, and make one very flourishing University."\textsuperscript{7\textsuperscript{*}} Unfortunately, proprietary and legal obstacles were not so easily overcome. Campbell's opposite number at King's College, John Chalmers, along with most of the professors there, consistently blocked the union attempts.\textsuperscript{8\textsuperscript{o}} The King's faculty's introverted and nepotistic interests would certainly have been endangered by a union, though it is worth remembering that the educational arguments used to promote union may not have been accepted by the King’s men. There were two union attempts during Campbell's tenure, the first in 1770, and the second and more involved attempt from

\textsuperscript{7\textsuperscript{*}}Principal and Professors to the Magistrates of Aberdeen (17 February, 1787), ACA Letterbook 13, 217. This kind of recommendation was common in eighteenth-century Scotland.

\textsuperscript{7\textsuperscript{o}}Journal of a Tour to the North of Scotland, ed. Richard B. Sher (Aberdeen: Centre for Scottish Studies, 1981), 16. Carlyle recognized that it would take a special act of Parliament to bring about a union, though he did not see the difficulty of arranging it.

\textsuperscript{8\textsuperscript{o}}See Emerson, Professors, Patronage and Politics, 138.
1785-7. The latter was especially unpleasant, generating a significant pamphlet war. A large part of the ill-feeling was focused on William Ogilvie, the King's humanist who had repeatedly alienated his colleagues by calling public attention to their peculations and their refusal to reform King's educational short-comings or remedy its administrative abuses.\footnote{See Walter Robson Humphries, William Ogilvie and the Projected Union of the Colleges 1786-1787 (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1940). Unfortunately, Humphries accounts for only a small portion of the political manoeuvring behind the union attempt.} But the union was probably doomed regardless, for the sides could not agree on the location of a united university, nor on its new faculty arrangements. To this union attempt, Campbell contributed a pamphlet entitled Defence of the Conduct of Marischal College, In Relation to the Present Scheme of Union, Against the Attack Made on It by the Principal and Six Professors of King's College, In a Letter to a Friend, By a Member of Marischal College (October 1786).\footnote{The pamphlet attributed to Campbell was written to deny accusations against Marischal contained in the King's College pamphlet, Memorial from the University and King's College of Aberdeen (August 1786). Probably written by Alexander Gerard and Thomas Gordon, the Memorial was itself a rebuff of William Ogilvie's Outline's of a Plan For Uniting the King's and Marischal Universities of Aberdeen, with a View to Render the System of Education More Complete (July 1786). The Outline made the case for the educational gains to be made by union, while the Memorial accused Marischal of negotiating behind King's back and further claimed that the union was neither necessary nor so productive of good effects as claimed.} The apologetic title indicates that relations between the two sides had already broken down, and that the purpose of the work was to save face rather than to argue the benefits of union. Campbell's defensive pamphlet was directed chiefly against Alexander Gerard, who had long since been translated to the divinity chair at King's. Its tone may
have contributed further to the apparently cool relations between Gerard and Campbell.\textsuperscript{33}

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The most historically significant part of Campbell's intellectual life during this time was the Aberdeen Philosophical Society, popularly known as the "Wise Club". The society was established in January of 1758, and survived at least until 1773.\textsuperscript{44} Campbell was one of six original members, and was the only member who belonged to the society for its entire recorded existence.\textsuperscript{44} The society's membership was virtually indistinguishable from the Aberdeen literati. Thomas Reid (1710–96) is generally considered the moving force behind the society's inception, having once belonged to a "philosophical club" in Aberdeen from 1736–7, though Campbell's experiences in Edinburgh and with the Theological Club may have been just as important. The other original

\textsuperscript{33}There are a number of rather cryptic references to strained relations between the two in Chambers (294), and particularly in Ramsay of Ochtertyre's Scotland and Scotsmen. This strained relationship, if it existed before this time, may also help explain the decline of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society (see next section, below) and the lack of cooperation between the two Aberdeen divinity chairs (see chapters two and three, below), though neither of the above authors provides a timeframe. Gerard's hostility to the 1786 union attempt is almost unaccountable, considering that he had actively backed earlier union proposals while at Marischal (see, for example, AUL MS M 387/16/2, 1–8).

\textsuperscript{44}We do not know how or why the society disbanded, but there are no records after 1773. Campbell states in The Philosophy of Rhetoric that he had read a draft of that work to a "private literary society" in 1757 (lxv). Campbell was probably misremembering, though it is likely that the group met informally in 1757.

\textsuperscript{44}See The Minutes of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society 1758–1773, ed. H. Lewis Ulman, for details concerning membership and participation in the society. Campbell was the only surviving original member still in Aberdeen in 1773.
members were the mediciner John Gregory (1724-73), the gifted naturalist and physician David Skene (1731-70), the mathematician John Stewart (ca. 1708-66), and the minister Robert Traill (1720-75). Subsequently elected members included (among others) Alexander Gerard, James Beattie (1735-1803), William Ogilvie (1736-1819), James Dunbar (1742-98) and John Farquhar (1732-68). This group of literati, like the Moderates in Edinburgh, were or would become firmly established in both church and university. Many of them were to achieve considerable fame in the coming decades. Campbell and Gerard were the most faithful participants in the society, and may have been responsible for the fact that such a small society survived as long as it did.

The Aberdeen Philosophical Society was formed in the same year as the correctly-predicted return of Halley's comet, an event that dramatically vindicated the powers of Newtonian science and human reason. These same themes underscore the purpose of the Wise Club, well-encapsulated in its seventeenth and final rule:

The Subject of the Discourses and Questions shall be Philosophical, all Grammatical Historical and [Philological] Discussions being conceived to be foreign to the Design of this Society. And Philosophical Matters are understood to comprehend, Every Principle of Science which may be deduced by Just and Lawfull Induction from the Phænomena either of the human Mind or of the material World; All [Observations] & Experiments that may furnish Materials for such Induction; The Examination of False Schemes of Philosophy & false Methods of Philosophizing; The Subserviency of Philosophy to

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**"After Farquhar's death, Campbell and Gerard collected and edited his Sermons on Various Subjects, published in two volumes in 1772. These were fairly popular, and Campbell recommended them to his divinity students (LSTPE, 274).**

**"I. Bernard Cohen, The Birth of a New Physics, rev. ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1985), 183. Unfortunately, there does not appear to be a report from Aberdeen on either the comet or the 1769 transit of Venus in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London.**
Arts, the Principles they borrow from it and the Means of carrying them to their Perfection.**

The society gave considerable attention to experimental science and methodology, though it was not as purely scientific as the Edinburgh Philosophical Society. Nor was it as focused on practical economic, social and political issues as the Select Society in Edinburgh.** The Wise Club explored a wide range of subjects, from scientific experiments and philosophical issues to problems of education and social reform. The society's structure allowed its members to work both individually (by reading discourses) and corporately (by discussing questions previously announced).

The questions which Campbell posed for the society's consideration form a window into his interests as well as those of his age.** His first recorded question, "What is the Cause of that Pleasure we have from ...presentations or Objects which excite Pity or other painfull Feelings?", was the subject not only of a discussion,** but ultimately of an important chapter in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. The question

**"Minutes," 78. McElroy notes that despite their disclaimer, the Aberdonians were as concerned as any other Scottish improving society with correcting one another's form and style (*Scotland's Age of Improvement*, 46).


"See appendix II, below, for a list of Campbell's questions. See Ulman's *Minutes*, Table A-4, for a list of the discourses that Campbell read before the society.

"Abstracted by Campbell and copied by Thomas Gordon, AUL MS 3107/2/1: fols. 7r-12v. This question had been of interest to Hume, among others.
conjoined aesthetics with the philosophy of the human mind, both leading concerns among the members of the Wise Club. Another question posed by Campbell, "Can the Generation of Worms in the Bodies of Animals be accounted for on the common Principles of Generation?", highlighted an important contemporary scientific issue which became a matter of particular interest to the naturalist David Skene. The third question, "Whether Matter has a Separate and permanent Existence," was crossed out in the society's records in favour of a question concerning "The Nature of Contrariety." It would be of considerable philosophical interest to know why the society chose not to debate the original question, which had been central to Berkeley's philosophy. Campbell was in turn influenced by the questions posed by other members. The group's discussion of David Skene's question concerning the nature of enthusiasm and superstition was reflected in one of Campbell's later sermons, and also touched on the problem of belief in miracles.

The Wise Club provided a venue in which Campbell could explore his scientific interests. Not only did he contribute discussion questions concerning the colour of the heavens and the nature of diseases in animals, but he also devoted considerable attention to the collection and classification of botanical specimens. A rare letter from this period details Campbell's expeditions in Aberdeenshire, where he examined geological phenomena and identified plant species with more

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*See Skene's abstract of the question (which includes a compelling example of his bibliographic knowledge of the topic), AUL MS 37, fol. 188r-v, and a discourse by him on the same topic, AUL MS 475, fols. 284-9. Concerning the question's philosophical and religious significance, see Paul B. Wood, "Buffon's Reception in Scotland: The Aberdeen Connection," *Annals of Science* 44 (1987): 180-1.

*AUL MS 37, fols. 186r-7v.
than mere amateurish skill. The recipient of the letter, David Skene, routinely corresponded with Linnaeus, which linked Campbell into the most important network of eighteenth-century naturalists. James Beattie later wrote that, "The Principal, who was once a great botanist, though he has now given over the study, has made him [his son, James Hay Beattie] a present of a very great collection of dried plants." Samples from this same collection now constitute the oldest specimens in the Aberdeen University Herbarium. Campbell's interest in natural history, particularly in the systematic classification of nature, suggests that he shared with Reid and with many thinkers of the Enlightenment a rather taxonomic view of the whole of creation, which included the human mind. Their notion that human classificatory schemes represented real and purposeful divisions in the natural world had definite religious and apologetic significance.

The Aberdeen Philosophical Society is most often remembered because of its philosophical productions, notably Reid's *Inquiry into the Human

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*Campbell to Skene, 1 August 1770: NCL MS THO 2, fols. 53-4. This letter is one of a collection of Skene letters recently discovered in New College Library, Edinburgh, by Kurtis Kitagawa.

*See AUL MS 482, p. 45, for an example of Campbell's contributions to Skene's work in natural history (1765).

*Beattie to Miss Valentine (his niece), 22 May 1787: AUL MS 301/266. Campbell also used botanical analogies several times in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (lxi and 51). He alluded to the contemporary controversy concerning the circulation of sap in vegetable bodies (*FR*, 53), and mentioned new fossil discoveries (*DM*, 270).


Mind on the Principles of Common Sense, Beattie's Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, and Gerard's Essay on Genius. All of Campbell's own discourses appeared later in The Philosophy of Rhetoric, a work which bears the unmistakable stamp of the Wise Club. In fact, Campbell's attempt to employ the universal rules of rhetoric to uncover the principles of human nature may have been directly inspired by the very specific subject-rules of the society.\(^9\) Likewise, the Dissertation on Miracles's arguments and doctrine of evidence depended upon a philosophy of Common Sense that was, to a large degree, worked out in the society's meetings.\(^10\) The Wise Club members' shared interest in the philosophy of Common Sense properly suggests that they were deeply concerned with the sceptical challenges of David Hume. In fact, the society was created specifically for "the Examination of False Schemes of Philosophy & false Methods of Philosophizing."\(^11\) Although the fact of the society's interest in Hume is well known, the nature and complexity of its intellectual relationship with Hume is not as well understood. This relationship, as we shall see in a later chapter, ought to be characterized as a dialogue rather than as a simple refutation. The Wise Club members were certainly concerned to vindicate

\(^9\)Campbell's rhetoric might have looked much more conventional if not for the influence of the Wise Club. The grafting of an eighteenth-century science of human nature onto classical rules of composition may account for the significant problems of structure and focus evident in The Philosophy of Rhetoric.

\(^10\)Manuscript evidence suggests that even the non-publishing members made significant contributions to Common Sense philosophy; see, for example, Conrad, Citizenship and Common Sense, 219, which quotes (from AUL MS 475, item no. 38) David Skene's definition of Common Sense, one entirely consistent with published Common Sense views.

\(^11\)Minutes, 78.
science and religion from the implications of Hume's scepticism, but they also consistently used Hume's philosophy of human nature as a foundation for their own moral philosophy. Virtually all the members of the society responded directly to some part of Hume's thought, often in print, as in the works of Campbell, Reid, Beattie and Gerard, but also within the confines of the society, as in a discourse by John Farquhar entitled "On the nature [and] operations of the imagination, in which Mr Humes theory of this faculty is particularly considered."¹⁰²

Campbell's contribution to the society's philosophical dialogue with Hume was his only publication of this period. The Dissertation on Miracles, published in 1762,¹⁰³ was based on a synod sermon preached in October 1760, and was directed against Hume's famous attack on miracles, found in the Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding. The Dissertation took issue with Hume's philosophical strictures on the possibility of belief in miracles, as well as with his historical considerations of various miracle-claims, and ultimately vindicated the Protestant view of miracles.¹⁰⁴ Between the preaching of the initial sermon, and the publication of the first edition, Campbell entered into a correspondence with Hume himself, mediated by their mutual friend Hugh Blair. In a

¹⁰²AUL MS 3107/1/3, pp. 35-7. In this discourse, Farquhar seems more often to agree than disagree with Hume's Treatise. Similar references to Hume's philosophy appear in David Skene's papers as well. For more examples, see Conrad, Citizenship and Common Sense, 214, and Minutes, 52.

¹⁰³Some biographers give dates of 1761 or 1763; 1762 appears on the title-page of the first edition. See Conrad, Citizenship and Common Sense, 239, for evidence that the Wise Club helped transform the sermon into a dissertation.

¹⁰⁴As both Hume's and Campbell's arguments concerning miracles are based on their respective epistemologies, I will not review these arguments in detail until chapter five.
letter to Blair, probably written in the autumn of 1761, Hume spoke highly of the manuscript, though he objected to its controversial and accusatory tone, claiming Campbell was "a little too zealous for a philosopher." Campbell obligingly toned down the personal nature of the attack, enough that Hume wrote him a very friendly letter soon after the publication of the Dissertation. In this well-known epistle, Hume praised Campbell's abilities, and even more the affable tone in which Campbell had ultimately conducted the controversy. "I own to you," he claimed, "that I never felt so violent an Inclination to defend myself as at present when I am thus fairly challeng'd by you," but cited his famous maxim never to answer an adversary in print. Campbell's reply was equally obliging, praising Hume's abilities as a writer, and the generosity which Hume had shown in taking notice of his work. He admitted that Hume's friendly letter had even forced him to love a man so different in religious and moral principles. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that the two ever corresponded again, though it is quite possible that they later met in Edinburgh.

Campbell's Dissertation was even better-received by the critics. An anonymous reviewer in the Critical Review thought Campbell's reasoning so acute that, "we may venture to pronounce Mr. Hume, with all his subtlety, will not be able to elude the force of the critic's argument." William Rose, writing in the Monthly Review, praised


106 AUL MS 3214/7.

107 NLS MS 23154, n. 11.
Campbell's work as the most regular and methodical treatment of the topic to date. The Dissertation went through many English editions, and became Campbell's best-known work on the continent. For a considerable time after its first publication, it was considered to be the definitive refutation of Hume's impious attack on the miracles of the Christian religion. Campbell's reputation as a writer and Christian apologist was firmly established.

108 Critical Review 14 (August 1762): 84. Oddly enough, this reviewer also thought that Hume had long been misunderstood, and that he represented no real threat to the intellectual foundations of religion or society.


110 See appendix I for a complete list of editions and reprints of the Dissertation. It was definitely translated into French by both Jean de Castillon and Marc Eidous. Some biographers claim that there were Dutch and German translations, but I have not been able to confirm this.

CHAPTER TWO

THE YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT (1771-1790)

In an often-repeated story, Marischal College's professor of divinity, Alexander Gerard, is supposed to have remarked that his successor George Campbell was indolent, a remark that, when repeated to Campbell, roused him to a hitherto unknown diligence. We can confirm neither the truth of the anecdote itself nor the justness of the accusation, but we can confidently assert that the charge of indolence could in no way be true of the years after Campbell added the duties of professor of divinity to his other activities.

John Lumsden, Campbell's former divinity professor at King's, died in July 1770. Alexander Gerard, who had already been the divinity professor at Marischal for a decade, was translated to the corresponding chair in the Old Town's college. Campbell's candidacy for the Marischal chair seems to have had the support of most of his colleagues, though G.D. Henderson says that he only narrowly won over his old friend John Glennie. Dr. David Skene, Campbell's friend in science, had also written to Lord Kames, asking his help in securing the place for


2ACA Council Register 63, fol. 174 records an official recommendation of Campbell to the chair by six of the Marischal professors.

Campbell. The chair, one of two Marischal chairs in the gift of the Town Council, was eventually voted to Campbell on 26 June 1771, after the council had satisfied itself as to Campbell's "Ability piety Literature, Christian life and Conversation." The new position was not of great material benefit to Campbell, adding only 20 pounds per year to his principal's and minister's salaries. He was, however, translated from St. Nicholas' to Greyfriars, a ministerial position traditionally attached to the divinity chair, but which carried no parochial duties other than a weekly sermon in one of the city's churches. This reduction in parochial obligations allowed Campbell to focus entirely on lecturing and publishing.

We are fortunate in that many of Campbell's divinity lectures have been published. They provide important insights into the structure of Campbell's thought and the range of his scholarly activities. They also betray the fact that he and his opposite number at King's College had broken the long-standing tradition of dividing Aberdeen's divinity

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"26 September 1770: AUL MS 38, no. 175.

"ACA Council Register 63, fol. 183.

"The 20 pounds sterling salary (from the crown) is cited in the letter from Skene to Kames. Divinity students in Scotland did not pay class fees. At the time of his retirement in 1795, the divinity chair and Greyfriars were together worth 160 pounds sterling per year (Keith, liii), making his total income more than 260 pounds sterling per year. Again, the divinity professor's salary would have come out of the land rents and feu duties once belonging to the bishop or abbot of Greyfriars, such as the rents of Torie (AUL MS M 94, p. 53).

"Greyfriars was the property of the town, not the college. Duties connected with this church were undertaken by an assistant (Wilson, Historical Account, 81-2).

"See chapter three, section 3, for an overview of the structure of Campbell's lecturing scheme.
teaching between the two chairs. Individual students continued to
attend both lecturers, but they now witnessed a great deal more overlap
and less specialization than before. They probably could not have
helped noticing some coldness between the two professors," despite the
remarkable similarities of their thought patterns.

The college term in Aberdeen ran from the beginning of November to
early April. The divinity course, however, did not begin until mid or
late December. Campbell increased his own workload by doubling the
number of lectures normally delivered in a term. He lectured on
Tuesdays and Thursdays, while Gerard lectured on Mondays and Fridays.
Because divinity students did not take degrees, often lived out of town,
and frequently supported themselves by teaching or tutoring, regular
attendance at divinity lectures was an on-going concern. Campbell did

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10 Robert Eden Scott, for example, attended and preserved notes on
the lectures of both professors during the 1786-7 term. These notes can
be found in Aberdeen University Library, MS M 190 (Campbell's) and MS K
174 (Gerard's). See appendix III, below, for a list of the lecture
topics from that term. Both professors lectured on aspects of biblical
criticism during that school year, confirming the lack of lecture
coordination. Another major source of manuscript evidence is Campbell's
own lecture notes, a portion of which can be found in AUL MSS M 191-201.

11 Ramsay of Ochtertyre claims that Gerard and Campbell did not live
on friendly terms, and tended to petty squabbling (Scotland and
Scotsmen, 485). The source of this claim is unclear since Ramsay did
not know them personally.

12 LSPFE, 48. Divinity professors had formerly lectured only once
per week (Keith, xxii), whereas both Campbell and Gerard lectured twice
per week, further evidence that they did not coordinate their courses.
Each professor, then, had to do the work of a whole divinity faculty,
except for teaching the Hebrew language. Other universities had two or
three divinity chairs.

13 According to the Statistical Account, the two Aberdeen divinity
professors had approximately 60-80 students between them at any one
time, though only about one third of these attended regularly (1:319).
his best to regularize his course. He kept attendance records for each class, so that he could give a fair and accurate report of each student's diligence to the presbytery at the time of a prospective minister's licensing examinations. ¹⁴ Since prospective ministers were expected to take at least four years of divinity studies, Campbell lectured according to a four-year schedule. At whatever part of the cycle a student began his studies, he could expect to hear the entire course of lectures by the end of four years. Campbell further claimed that he would intersperse lectures on theoretical divinity with lectures on practical pastoral duties each year. ¹⁵ Both Campbell and Gerard lectured extensively on biblical criticism, but little on systematic theology. Both emphasized the practical duties of the pastoral office. ¹⁶ As Marischal College did not have a chair of ecclesiastical history, Campbell devoted a considerable portion of his theology course to this subject. He lectured in English, but expected his students to be sufficiently proficient in the learned language that they could follow extensive quotations in Latin without translation. ¹⁷ In addition

Besides the divinity courses themselves, students were strongly urged to attend the Hebrew class, given by the professor of oriental languages twice a day, five days per week (1:321; LSTPE, 74).

¹⁴AUL MS M 191, p. 44. The trials which Campbell used with his students were probably also preparatory for the licensing exams (see AUL MS M 192, p. 5).

¹⁵According to a portion of his introductory lectures not included with the printed Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence, Campbell devoted Tuesday lectures to the science of theology and Thursday lectures to the pastoral function (AUL MS M 191, p. 40). But according to Scott's lecture notes for 1786-7, Campbell lectured only on biblical criticism, while Gerard did in fact intersperse lectures on criticism with ones on the pastoral duties. See appendix III, below.

¹⁶See Henderson, Aberdeen Divines, 324-5.

¹⁷LSTPE, 69.
to the two weekly lectures, Campbell spent Saturdays listening to student discourses." And since both Campbell and Gerard held very high reputations as preachers, the populations of both Old and New Aberdeen, along with the matriculated and enrolled members of their communities, would have been familiar with their preaching, and thus the practical bent of their theologies.

As principal and professor of divinity in one of Scotland's five universities, Campbell was automatically an important and influential person within the Church of Scotland. Although we do not know much about his ecclesiastical politicking, we do know that he was heavily involved in the various layers of Scottish church government. He would have regularly attended local kirk-sessions and the meetings of the presbytery of Aberdeen, as well as the biannual meetings of the provincial Synod of Aberdeen, of which he was moderator on several occasions. Despite his frequent attendance, Campbell was never moderator of the General Assembly, an odd fact considering the respect in which he was held by all parties within the church.19 Keith states that Campbell consistently refused to be considered for the moderator's position, claiming that he did not have the character of a politician.

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18On Campbell's teaching style, see Keith, lxxvii. AUL MS M 192, p. 5 provides details on the various discourses, homilies and sermons that Campbell expected to hear from his students. AUL MS K 174, pp. 140, 201 and 333 suggest that Gerard's student exercises were very practical in nature, appropriate to the pastoral duty lectures he was at that time giving.

19Sher (128) lists Campbell at the General Assembly eight times between 1751 and 1785. Gerard was there fourteen times in the same period, and was moderator in 1764. Various sources indicate that Campbell attended the General Assembly in 1764, 1767, 1768, 1771, 1777, 1778, and 1779.
and wished only to convince his fellow assembly members by argument and persuasion. According to Thomas Somerville,

There was not any member of the General Assembly who was listened to with more attention, or who, as a speaker, was more successful in producing conviction than Principal Campbell of Aberdeen. The closeness, the force, the condensed precision of his reasoning, exceed the power of description. Not a single superfluous word was used—no weak or doubtful argument introduced. Like a mathematical demonstration, every topic produced accumulation of proof, and prepared his audience for the more complete assent to the conclusion drawn from it. His person and manner indicated such simplicity of character, such indifference either to personal consequence or the interests of party, that it was impossible to deny him as much credit for the purity of his heart as for the transcendent excellence of his understanding. Although he coincided with Dr. Robertson in every case relative to presentations and the settlement of vacant parishes, yet I remember that in some questions of considerable moment, he divided with the minority, which, from the power of his arguments, was, on such occasions, more considerable than in most other cases decided by calling the votes of the members.

We should not conclude from this that Campbell was entirely free of the entanglements of church politics. He may have played a small part in the Moderate party’s victory when the "Drysdale bustle" came before

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20 Keith, xli.

21 Thomas Somerville, My Own Life and Times 1741–1814 (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1861), 95–6. Ramsay of Ochteryre suggests that Campbell spoke seldom in the General Assembly, and did not enter much into party debates (Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:493).

22 See Richard B. Sher, "Moderates, Managers and Popular Politics in Mid-Eighteenth Century Edinburgh: The Drysdale 'Bustle' of the 1760s," in New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland, ed. John Dwyer, Roger A. Mason and Alexander Murdoch (Edinburgh: John Donald, [1981]), 198. In 1764, the Edinburgh Moderate John Jardine represented Marischal College at the General Assembly, which probably could not have happened without Campbell’s and Gerard’s approval. Gerard, the moderator that year, gave a closing speech which defended patronage and the rule of law; see Gerard’s speech in Nathaniel Morren, ed., Annals of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland 1752–66 (Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1840), 405–9. Campbell’s relation to the Moderate party will be considered more fully in chapter nine, below.
the 1764 General Assembly. But it is as yet too soon in this study to consider the extent of Campbell's relations with the Moderate party.

Campbell, by virtue of his offices, was also an important figure in Aberdeen city life. He was, for example, elected tenth patron of the Incorporated Trades of Aberdeen in 1783, an honourary lifetime position that Campbell seems to have held until he resigned his divinity chair in 1795. The Patron, usually one of the ministers of St. Nicholas', was responsible for providing continuity at the society's elections, and presiding at other official functions.\textsuperscript{23}

Campbell's literary career would prove to be highly controversial, though seldom in the ways that he himself expected. His already well-known \textit{Dissertation on Miracles} had established him as a major European figure in Christian apologetics. Campbell believed that all assaults on Christianity took one of two forms, attacking either the character of Christianity or its positive evidences.\textsuperscript{24} The \textit{Dissertation on Miracles} had defended the external evidences of Christianity from the strictures of an infidel. In his next publication, Campbell attempted to defend the character of Christianity (that is, its worthiness of God) not only from attacks from without the church, but from the dangers of misguided Christians within.

\textsuperscript{23}I wish to thank Mr. George A. Robertson for his hospitality at Trinity Hall, the home of the still thriving Incorporated Trades. The best known portrait of Campbell hangs in Trinity Hall.

\textsuperscript{24}\textit{LSTPE}, 90; \textit{Sermons} 1:307.
In April 1771, Campbell preached a sermon before the Synod of Aberdeen that he then published the same year under the title *The Spirit of the Gospel. A Spirit Neither of Superstition Nor of Enthusiasm*. Campbell argued, against the critics of religion, that true Christianity is characterized neither by fearful superstition nor by the opposite extreme of intemperate enthusiasm. The spirit of true Christianity, he said, was one of charity, reforming power, and soundness of mind, rather than one of mystery, ritual, intolerance and sectarian zeal. Campbell thought it necessary to demonstrate that Christianity was intrinsically beautiful and worthy of the God revealed in nature. Few in the enlightened eighteenth century could have objected to this standard theme, for it embraced moderatism while rejecting irreligion. The *Critical Review* noted that the sermon "contains the genuine dictates of a sound mind, and breathes throughout the evangelical spirit which it so accurately and elegantly describes." But others were less pleased, particularly adherents of Scottish churches outside of the Presbyterian fold, who thought Campbell's sermon challenged their legitimacy. Indeed, Campbell's latitudinarian and anti-sectarian stance placed more emphasis on the heart of the individual than on the ceremonies and legalities which High Church dissenters claimed were necessary to salvation. William Abernethy Drummond, a minister of the nonjuring Scottish Episcopal Church, responded with a pamphlet entitled *Remarks Upon Dr. Campbell's Sermon* (1771). Drummond objected to Campbell's

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26 William Abernethy (1719?–1809) later bishop of Brechin and then of Edinburgh (1787), took the surname Drummond upon marriage into the Drummond of Hawthornden family in 1760.
attempt to minimize the importance of the external observances of religious worship and of a necessary structure of church government, both of which he felt were essential to the question of salvation. But Drummond's tone was not hostile; that of Campbell's other major critic was. The second attack, entitled A Detection of the Dangerous Tendency. Both for Christianity and Protestancy. of a Sermon, said to be preached before an Assembly of Divines (1771), appeared under the moniker of "Staurophilus, A Member of the Aletheian Club." It was in fact the first publication of George Hay, a Scottish Roman Catholic priest who later became the head of the Catholic church in Scotland. The author's identity was apparently unknown to Campbell, though he quickly guessed the sectarian adherence of the controversialist. Hay brutally characterized Campbell's sermon as "fraught with the grossest calumnies and most unjust misrepresentations." He dismissed Campbell's implied charges that the Catholic church had promoted ignorance in its adherents, corrupted Christian morals, and sacrificed virtue for the advancement of the papal hierarchy. Campbell was taken aback by the vicious nature of Hay's attack, no doubt because he had never directly implicated the contemporary Roman Catholic church.

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27 Other Scottish Episcopalians felt more threatened by Campbell. John Allan wrote to John Alexander: "I'm informed the Sermon is doing some hurt in the North; & no wonder: for the Author's Principles will be readily adopted by this fashionable Age" (2 October 1771: SRO CH12/23/1422). See other letters of Scottish Episcopalians, SRO CH12/23/1416-1430, and CH12/24/138 and 140.

Though Campbell did eventually prepare a rebuttal, it did not appear in print. The issues raised in this controversy would, however, become important in his later writings, particularly in the divinity lectures. For the present, Campbell had unwittingly made himself an enemy of Scots outside the established church.

3

In late spring of 1775, Campbell undertook the long journey to London to find a publisher for his *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, which he had first begun twenty-five years earlier. Clearly Campbell had high hopes for his work, for he sought help in the best literary circles. The well-placed critic William Rose wrote to James Beattie in June that he was in the process of helping Campbell sell the manuscript to the famous Scottish-born publisher and King's Printer William Strahan.31 Beattie,

20Campbell mainly attacked the early corruptions of the church, such as celibacy, monasticism and superstition. It was Hay himself who applied these attacks to his own church. That he did so is not surprising since the corruption of the early church was incompatible with the Catholic emphasis on continuous church tradition. Campbell later denied that he had here charged the Catholic church with promoting ignorance (AUL MS 651, p. 32), though he elsewhere upheld this charge with considerable historical detail (MS 649).

30John Allan in another letter to John Alexander (20 November 1771) stated that "Campbel has been insinuating his Intention of making a Reply soon. He is very angry at the Author of the Detection to whom, I imagine, his Answer will be principally addressed" (SRO CH12/23/1429). On Campbell's lengthy answer to these pamphlets, see chapter three, section 1, below. In an unpublished manuscript, Campbell mentioned that there were two other minor attacks on his sermon in addition to these two (AUL MS 651, p. 25), but I have not been able to find them. In a later letter to Bishop John Douglas (30 December 1790), Campbell mentioned three attacks altogether, the third being by "a Scotch methodist" (BL Egerton MS 2186, fol. 16).

3126 June 1775: AUL MS 30/2/232a.
who had himself been in London only the week before, recorded the
following entry in his journal:

[Principal Campbell's] manuscript is now given to Strachan who has
put it in the hands of Adam Smith. I advise the Principal not to
meddle himself in the disposal of it, but to leave that matter to
Mr. Rose and others of his friends, who will probably get more
money for it than he would be inclined to ask. . . . I have again
and again recommended it to Strachan in the strongest terms, yet
no more than it deserves.\footnote{Entry for 19 June 1775, quoted in Margaret Forbes, \textit{Beattie and His Friends} (Westminster: Archibald Constable, 1904), 123.}

Strahan did indeed publish it the following year, though we do not know
the price or conditions of the manuscript sale. Adam Smith, whose own
\textbf{Wealth of Nations} was just published, gave Strahan a mixed opinion:
"There is good sense, and learning, and philosophy in Campbells Book:
But it is so unfashioned that I am afraid you will not be a great gainer
by it."\footnote{Smith to Strahan, 6 July 1776: \textit{The Correspondence of Adam Smith},
ed. E.C. Mossner and I.S. Ross (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977,
1987), 202-3. Smith was not entirely disinterested, for his own
"Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres" were in potential competition
with Campbell's book; see Howell, \textit{Eighteenth-Century British Logic and
Rhetoric}, 578.} The critics were kinder, if not always less confused about
the structure of the work. The anonymous reviewer for the \textbf{Critical
Review} had nothing but praise, noting in particular Campbell's
philosophical abilities.\footnote{\textit{Critical Review} 42 (July, August and September 1776): 1-11, 111-
18, and 182-7.} William Enfield, reviewing the work for the
\textbf{Monthly Review}, was almost equally lavish in praise, though he seemed to
think that additional volumes would appear in order to complete
Campbell's explicit plan.\footnote{\textit{Monthly Review} 55 (October and November 1776): 286-95 and 374-83.
For a full account of the critical reaction to this work see H. Lewis} Indeed, Campbell had named perspicuity,
vivacity, elegance, animation and music as the "five simple and original qualities of style," but had addressed only the first two.36 Eighteenth-century sales did nothing to contradict Smith’s original assessment.

Two major purposes are evident in The Philosophy of Rhetoric, both characteristic of the Enlightenment. One purpose was to set out rules for pure English usage, a matter of common concern to eighteenth-century English and particularly Scottish authors. Campbell displayed a genuine talent for systematically exposing the characteristic stylistic flaws of English authors, using the best writers as examples. He did not wish to promote novel standards of usage, believing that customary usage is the only proper standard of correct style. This belief may have reflected the Common Sense school’s notion that the fundamental truths of common sense are embodied in the universal structure of human languages.37 Thus Campbell believed that the rules of rhetoric had been definitively outlined in the works of the ancients, particularly those of Aristotle,

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36PR, 216. Campbell himself offered no explanation for this apparent incompleteness. There are no manuscript remains of any additional parts. Perhaps the slow sales of the first edition prevented Campbell from publishing more. The existing portion includes all of the discourses delivered to the Aberdeen Philosophical Society; see Minuteg, 26. For Lloyd Bitzer’s comments on the Rhetoric’s structural oddities, see PR, xxi and xlvi. For the Philosophy of Rhetoric’s subsequent publishing history, see Bitzer’s table (PR, liii-1v), or appendix I, below.

37This principle is seen throughout Reid’s Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man, and can also be found in the teaching of Campbell’s colleague Alexander Gerard (Wood, 118). Unlike Jonathan Swift, and other defenders of the ancients, Campbell did not hold that language is static or believe that the English language could be definitively fixed once and for all; see Joseph M. Levine, The Battle of the Books: History and Literature in the Augustan Age (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 377.
Quintilian and Cicero. The philosophical foundations and explanations
of these universal principles of rhetoric, however, were only beginning
to be explored in his own time. Campbell's second major purpose was to
use the study of rhetoric to discover the inner workings and secret
springs of human nature, and thus contribute to the developing science
of man that had become the particular concern of the Scottish
Enlightenment. He did this by relating the ends of persuasive discourse
to the natural, empirically-discovered faculties of the human mind.
Campbell then associated the four ends of speaking, which were "to
enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the
passions, or to influence the will," with the qualities of style (he
discussed only perspicuity and vivacity) that most effectively brought
about persuasion. He even employed the principle of "sympathy", again
very characteristic of the Scottish Enlightenment, as a natural
explanation of the effectiveness of the communicative arts. He
described sympathy as "the common tie of human souls," and used it to
help explain the natural human tendency to believe the testimony of
others. Campbell's philosophy was most fully (though not
systematically) expressed in The Philosophy of Rhetoric, and bore the
unmistakable stamp of Hume's influence. We can imagine, therefore, that

38PR, 1.

39PR, 15 and 96. As we shall see in chapters four and five,
testimony was a subject of vital concern to Campbell. Unfortunately, I
do not have the room to discuss Campbell's concept of sympathy nor his
moral theory in depth, though these topics need attention. One might
begin by looking at Paul G. Bator, "The 'Principle of Sympathy' in
Campbell's The Philosophy of Rhetoric," Quarterly Journal of Speech 68
Campbell's book made particularly pleasurable reading for Hume as he lay on his deathbed.  

4

The year 1776 was, of course, also a turning-point in the life of the British people. It marked the formal outbreak of hostilities between Britain and most of her American colonies. The British people seemed for the most part utterly surprised and baffled by the event, which prompted a drawn-out crisis of national confidence. The king proclaimed several national fast-days which in turn generated a large number of fast-day sermons, many of which were published. Campbell's fast-day sermon, entitled The Nature, Extent, and Importance, of the Duty of Allegiance, was preached on 12 December 1776, and published early in the following year. It argued that rebellion in general is unreasonable and without scriptural warrant. True liberty can only be found within the rule of law. Because of their proud and haughty attitude, the Americans were making themselves ungovernable, and were therefore only endangering their existing liberty. They were also spreading dangerous and misleading republican notions back to the British isles. Nevertheless, Campbell concluded that the Americans

James Boswell reports that Hume was reading The Philosophy of Rhetoric at the time of their last meeting; Boswell in Extremes 1776-1778, ed. Charles McE Weis and Frederick A. Pottle (New York: McGraw Hill, 1970), 11. Hume's influence upon Campbell's philosophy will be discussed more extensively in chapter four, below.

Bruce Lenman states that while the Scots were intensely interested in the American provinces, "few parts of the English-speaking world were less likely to offer constructive sympathy to the troubled American colonies than Scotland" (Integration, Enlightenment, and Industrialization, 60).
ought to be allowed their independence if they were determined to delude themselves. He seems to have consistently maintained this opinion as the war progressed. In a letter to Edmund Burke, written 12 June 1779, he declared:

I should have had no objection to their total independence, if any minister could have adopted that measure with safety. But such a real independence as they wanted, along with a nominal subordination, appeared to serve only as a foundation for eternal quarreling. . . . I am strongly inclined to think (and it was my opinion from the beginning) that Great Britain might be much more benefited by an equitable alliance and treaty of commerce with that people, than even by the connection that heretofore subsisted between us.**

Campbell's apparent moderation, pragmatism, and willingness to give up the name of empire set him apart from the two extremes of popular Scottish opinion. Though he rejected the republicanism and pro-Americanism favoured by the members of the Popular party in the Church of Scotland, his combination of confidence in British moral right with a conciliatory attitude towards the mistaken colonists seems to have been unusual for a Moderate party adherent.*** Alexander Gerard's fast-day

**Most of Campbell's political opinions are found in this sermon. Like Hume, he was politically conservative in that he argued that government is based on opinion (LHE, 2:234), and that most notions of inalienable rights are vague and meaningless. He was hostile to republicanism, political innovators and visionaries, and disbelieved in the original compact. He upheld the rights of ideological and religious toleration, and opposed slavery.

***SCA WWM Bk. 1/1172.

****The American war became an extremely divisive issue in Scotland, especially within the established church. See Dalphy I. Fogerstrom, "Scottish Opinion and the American Revolution," William and Mary Quarterly 3rd series, 11 (1954): 252-75; and Andrew Hook, Scotland and America: A Study of Cultural Relations 1750-1835 (Glasgow: Blackie, 1975), 67-8. For the Moderates' position, see Sher, 263-76. Alexander Carlyle's published sermon The Justice and Necessity of the War with our American Colonies Examined (1777), and another by Blair, both preached on the same day as Campbell's, as well as Adam Ferguson's Remark's on a Pamphlet Lately Published by Dr. Price (1776), all maintained the necessity of suppressing the rebels, even by force. For a very
sermon of 1778 was, unlike Campbell's, a jeremiad entitled *Liberty the Cloke of Maliciousness. Both in The American Rebellion, and in The Manners of the Times*. Gerard saw dire consequences for both Americans and Britons if they did not begin a moral reformation and repudiate the licentiousness of the day. But in another fast-day sermon of the same year, William Robertson remained belligerent in his sense of British moral superiority, condemning the doom-sayers like Gerard, while remaining mindful of the need for renewed piety and patriotism.

Campbell's sermon seems to have been accorded greater respect in the reviews than most of the myriad of fast-day sermons that appeared at the same time. Josiah Tucker, the dean of Gloucester, who had himself contributed to the written controversy, made efforts to have large

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Different attitude see the pamphlet by the Popular party leader, John Erskine, revealingly-entitled *Shall I go to War with my American Brethren?* (1769), which was published long before the beginning of hostilities.

"To his fellow British people, Gerard recommended that "[we] humble ourselves in sincere repentance for those sins by which we have provoked God to visit us with this calamity, and which, persisted in, may justly provoke him to prolong it, or to blast our success and our national prosperity" (*Liberty the Cloke* [Aberdeen: J. Chalmers, 1778], 3). Of the Americans, he said, "They have stirred up war: and war is one of the fiercest fiends which the Almighty turneth loose for the punishment of nations by whom he hath been long provoked" (13). Campbell's sermon was virtually free of these providential warnings; the most he said along these lines was that, "our religion teaches us to consider all afflictions as chastisements for sin, and as mercifully intended by our heavenly father to bring the afflicted to reflection and repentance" (*Sermons*, 2:125).

"See the manuscript notes on Robertson's sermon, NLS 5003, fols. 92-Jv.

"See Monthly Review 56 (April 1777): 315-17, in which Campbell's sermon is counted as number 29 of the fast-day sermons reviewed.

"Tucker's *Four Tracts* (1774), which Campbell cited, put forward a proposal for voluntary separation from the "ungrateful, ungovernable, and rebellious" Americans (quoted in Lenman, *Integration, Enlightenment, and Industrialization*, 87).
numbers of Campbell's sermon sent to America for distribution. It is not known whether Campbell's sermon made the crossing at this time, although an announcement written shortly after the peace of 1783 declared that one thousand copies of the sermon were to be given away, both to domestic employers and to sea-captains venturing to the remaining British colonies in America, as antidotes to unconstitutional republicanism.**

5

Campbell published two more sermons in the turbulent years following the outbreak of war with the colonies. The first of these returned Campbell to familiar territory, that is, the external evidences of the Christian religion. The sermon was called The Success of the First Publishers of the Gospel a Proof of Its Truth (1777), and was preached before the annual meeting of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, a society particularly concerned with ministering to Roman Catholics in the highlands and islands. The sermon argued that the situation of the world during the first era of the Christian church was sufficiently inhospitable that the gospel could not possibly have prospered by natural means alone. The doctrines of Christ would have appeared foolish to that age, especially when preached by lowly and illiterate Jewish fishermen. The historical fact of the gospel's rapid and unparalleled success, therefore, can only be explained by supernatural means. In other words, the early Christian church had the particular favour of heaven. Campbell thought it

**See the handwritten version of this announcement, BL Add. MS 33498, fol. 40.
historically obvious that the Roman Catholic church had had no comparable success. This kind of historical-providential Protestant argument was common among eighteenth-century moderate Christians. William Robertson's only published sermon, *The Situation of the World at the Time of Christ's Appearance, and Its Connexion with the Success of His Religion, Considered* (1755), likewise claimed that historical evidences demonstrate that the early church had the unique support of providence.\(^5\)

Whereas *The Success of the First Publishers of the Gospel* is typical of Campbell's usually calm and measured apologetic tone, the second sermon published during these years, entitled *The Happy Influence of Religion on Civil Society* (1779), seems strangely out of character for him. The argument itself was common enough, that Christianity is by its very nature and spirit beneficial to the interests of civil society. This argument was meant to contradict the claim of "libertines" that religion is the invention of politicians for the purpose of social control. Campbell argued that religion is necessary for civic order and happiness because it provides moral sanctions that political laws cannot. The libertines' attempt to undermine religion would only lead to the collapse of civil society. Campbell's sermon seems to imply, however, that arguments favourable to the Christian establishment can be made entirely apart from the historical truth of Christian claims, an unusual argument from an apologist known for his evidential defence of Christian belief. Campbell generally argued that Christianity ought to

\(^5\) Though Campbell's and Robertson's views of providence are similar, it is difficult to reconcile the particular arguments of these two sermons. This difficulty will be addressed in chapter seven, section 4, below.
be believed because of its morally certain evidences and not because of its accidental benefits. The argument implied in the *Happy Influence* sermon, that civil society ought to endorse Christianity whether or not it is historically true, contradicted his usual assertion that the factual truth of a claim ought to stand independently of the supposed consequences of belief in that claim.\(^3\) The argument of the *Happy Influence* sermon, however well-founded, ought to have been superfluous, for the best way to ensure the beneficial civil consequences of Christian belief was to defend the evidential justness of that belief. Although such philosophical ambiguity was unusual for Campbell, the argument itself was not uncommon among moderate Christian (and even non-Christian) apologists in the eighteenth century. In *The Influence of Piety on the Public Good* (1761), Gerard argued that irreligion is destructive to civil society because it unleashes the viciousness of human nature ordinarily kept in check by the prescripts of religion, true or otherwise. He claimed that, "the mischiefs of irreligion are incomparably greater, and more destructive to society, than all the bad effects which can be charged on false religion."\(^2\) Gerard's claim, together with Campbell's fear of the consequences of freeing the vulgar masses from the constraints of religion,\(^3\) does not sit well with the Common Sense belief in human nature's inherent goodness and love of truth.

\(^1\) See, for example, *Sermons*, 2:71, where Campbell (like Hume) claimed that "a good end will never justify bad means," which for Campbell ought to have included encouraging known falsehoods.

\(^2\) Gerard, *The Influence of Piety on the Public Good* (Edinburgh: A. Kincaid and J. Bell, 1761), 13 (Gerard's emphasis).

\(^3\) *Sermons*, 2:99–100.
The defensive and fearful tone apparent in Campbell's *Happy Influence* sermon was highly unusual in his writings. If only the truth of the Christian religion mattered, why was Campbell here preaching consequences? Although the sermon cannot be reconciled with his usual preaching style, it can perhaps be explained by the turmoil of events that surrounded its composition. The British national mood only worsened with the advance of the American war, a situation complicated by events of 1778–9 that have come to be known as the "No-Popery" affair.

Roman Catholics had continued to exist in Scotland despite the best efforts of the Reformed church. Unlike their English counterparts, however, Scottish Catholics were not only few in number but tended to be poor and politically insignificant. Their civil status was precarious, and they continued to suffer popular resentment even though the laws against them were not strictly enforced. But the generally enlightened and tolerant mood among eighteenth-century elites caused some in high places to think that the time had come to begin lifting the civil disabilities that had been placed on Catholics, particularly in the years after the Glorious Revolution. The need to raise more troops for use in the American war provided additional political motivations for immediate relief measures. On 14 May 1778, Henry Dundas, Scotland's

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"The details of the whole No-Popery affair, including political motivations, are nicely laid out in Robert Kent Donovan, *No Popery and Radialism: Opposition to Roman Catholic Relief in Scotland, 1778–1782*
Lord Advocate and the rising star of Scottish management, announced that a bill for the relief of Catholics in Scotland would probably be introduced into the House of Commons following the successful passage of a similar piece of legislation for England and Ireland. The announcement caused immediate panic among some delegates to the Scottish General Assembly which met later that same month, and provoked intense debate concerning the threat of Catholic relief to Protestant interests in Scotland. Campbell, who attended the 1778 General Assembly, spoke in favour of the relief act, downplaying the dangers of Catholic emancipation.¹⁶ No amount of assuagement, however, was capable of calming the general hysteria that infected the Scottish population during the following year.¹⁷ In January and February of 1779, Edinburgh and Glasgow fell victim to No-Popery riots, which destroyed considerable Catholic property. William Robertson, a leading voice for relief, had his house attacked by the Edinburgh mob and received a number of anonymous death-threats. The abashed political management of Scotland decided to drop the relief effort in February 1779, a gesture which barely eased the public tension.

A considerable pamphlet war developed around the emancipation issue. The first major volley was fired by Campbell’s Episcopalian

¹⁶See the advertisement to Campbell’s Address to the People of Scotland. Unfortunately, I have found no information on the content of Campbell’s speech in the General Assembly. Donovan says that most Scottish newspapers published in favour of relief (No Popery, 100).

¹⁷If Gerard’s 1778 fast-day sermon on the American war is any indication, many Scots believed that the war was a divine visitation because of national sin, in which case they may also have thought that Catholic relief would be an additional affront to God and a hindrance to national purification.
rival, William Abernethy Drummond, in a piece called The Lawfulness of Breaking Faith with Heretics Proved to be An Established Doctrine of the Church of Rome, in a letter to Mr. G.H. (September 1778).  

The pamphlet was only a belated attack on George Hay's polemical piece, A Detection of the Dangerous Tendency, which had itself attacked Campbell's sermon on The Spirit of the Gospel. As an Episcopalian High Churchman, Drummond perhaps felt more threatened by the Romanist Hay than by Campbell, and thus defended Campbell's implied charges concerning the intolerant nature of the Roman Catholic church. As the title of his pamphlet suggests, Drummond claimed that the Catholic church still upheld the doctrine of the lawfulness of breaking faith with heretics. 

Campbell, however, was less concerned with the likes of Drummond and Hay than with controversialists within his own church. He was particularly worried about a publication by the advocate John Dickson (on behalf of the "Friends of the Protestant Interest") entitled A Short View of the Statutes at Present in Force in Scotland against Popery (1778). This inflammatory piece claimed that the proposed relief act was really "an act for promoting the growth of Popery." It considered Catholic relief unconstitutional and a threat to the security of the state. Furthermore, Catholics were anti-Christian, blasphemous, untrustworthy and intolerant, and therefore could not themselves be

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58It was Thomas Somerville's opinion, among others, that Drummond's pamphlet touched off the popular frenzy (My Own Life and Times, 193).

59George Hay responded to Drummond's attack with An Answer to Mr. W.A.D.'s letter to G.H. (1778). Drummond answered with A Second Letter to Mr. G.H. (1778).

60A Short View, 2d ed., in Scotland's Opposition to the Popish Bill (Edinburgh: David Paterson, 1780), 321.
tolerated. They would, if unchecked, take over the property of the whole kingdom.⁶¹ These opinions, as Campbell well knew, were all too common in Scotland.

Campbell's own contribution to the polemical war came in April 1779 under the title An Address to the People of Scotland. Upon the Alarms that Have Been Raised in Regard to Popery. From an enlightened perspective, the work is a masterful piece of rational Christian argument, demonstrating from both Scripture and reason that persecution in all its forms is both morally wrong and practically ineffective. It denied Dickson's claims that Catholics threatened national security or sought to over-run the kingdom. But the Address was probably too enlightened to win the battles in which Campbell was engaged. Campbell waged a two-front campaign against both popular opinion and his fellow Protestant ministers, and he could not win over either.⁶² In fact, Campbell's was probably the only pro-relief pamphlet to appear in Scotland.⁶³ As he later reflected in a letter to the Anglican bishop John Douglas, the Address aroused "all the zealous and intolerant

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⁶¹ In this second edition, Dickson attacked Campbell personally, calling him "the apologist of Popery" (335n.), whose "most gross jesuitical misrepresentations" (of the first edition of Dickson's pamphlet) had disgraced his once respected name (328n.).

⁶² Donovan argues that, "Principal Campbell's appeal to Jesus' charitable sayings was not likely to win over men of a more orthodox and traditional stripe suspicious of a view of Christ which to them came close to perceiving him merely as a teacher and moralist." Campbell's arguments merely betrayed his party attachment, for they were more concerned with philanthropy than states of grace. (No Popery and Radicalism, 102).

⁶³ Mark Goldie says that about fifty Scottish tracts appeared against Catholic relief, while only one (which I assume was Campbell's) favoured toleration; see "The Scottish Catholic Enlightenment," Journal of British Studies 30 (January 1991): 39.
protestants of every denomination, episcopalian and presbyterian, juror and nonjuror, seceders, indeper. its &c." The answers to Campbell's Address came quickly. One pamphlet, purportedly "By a Lady", entitled Observations on [principal] Campbell's Conduct, with Regard to the R. Catholic Bill (1781), accused Campbell himself of inciting the contemporary hatred against Catholics in his 1771 sermon The Spirit of the Gospel. Though the anonymous author claimed to be Protestant, the pamphlet's summary and defence of Catholic doctrines made the sectarian authorship plain, and thus allowed it to be easily ignored by Protestants. A more typically Protestant piece entitled A Vindication of the Opposition to the Late Intended Bill for the Relief of Roman Catholics in Scotland (1780) assumed that the Church of Rome was the Antichrist, and therefore defended the reasonableness of liberal Protestant opposition to a relief measure which would only set free Popish pedagogical and political agendas. These sentiments were probably shared by John Erskine, the leader of the Popular party in the Scottish Church, and a declared admirer of Campbell. He nevertheless gently rebuked Campbell for insinuating that the Scottish clergy were responsible for whipping up popular hostility against the repeal. Like the author of the Vindication, he thought that the present disabilities were reasonable because of the danger Catholics posed to civil society.

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"Campbell to Douglas, 30 December 1790: BL Egerton MS 2186, fol. 16v.

"I have not been able to determine the authorship of this work. The combined facts that the pamphlet is largely an attack on Campbell's Spirit of the Gospel sermon, that it summarizes Catholic doctrine in a catechetical manner, and that it denies papal infallibility, suggest that its author might be Bishop George Hay or someone in his circle."
rather than because of their religion.\textsuperscript{66} Campbell's pleadings were perhaps impotent against these Protestant arguments, for the latter were too much like ones that could be found elsewhere in his own writings.\textsuperscript{67} In recognition of his efforts on behalf of Roman Catholics, he supposedly was dubbed "Pope Campbell" and had his windows smashed.\textsuperscript{68}

Much of this debate occurred after the relief measure had already been discarded in Westminster (February) and condemned in the May 1779 meeting of the General Assembly. The reaction to the proposed bill came from the bottom up. Popular agitation, for example, inspired the Aberd.\textsuperscript{69} Town Council to resolve "by every legal and Constitutional Method to Endeavour to prevent the said Bill from being brought into Parliament," and for that purpose to hire legal counsel in London.\textsuperscript{69} Likewise, the Presbytery of Aberdeen voted on 1 February 1779, by a margin of 33 to 2 (Campbell being one of the dissenters), that the proposed relief bill would "be highly prejudicial to the interests of religion, and perhaps to the civil interests of Society too."\textsuperscript{70} But the

\textsuperscript{66} John Erskine, ed., \textit{A Narrative of the Debate in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, May 25, 1779, Occasioned by Apprehensions of an Intended Repeal of the Penal Statutes against Papists} (Edinburgh: W. Gray, 1780), v.

\textsuperscript{67} In later manuscripts written primarily against Hay's earlier \textit{Detection}, Campbell upheld virtually the same scathing charges against the Catholic church advanced by his fellow Protestants. At the same time he advocated toleration. The pamphlet "By a Lady" entitled \textit{Observations} may have been correct in claiming that this kind of double argument only confused the Scottish people.

\textsuperscript{68} Bruce, \textit{Lives}, 342-3; and James Valentine, "An Aberdeen Principal of Last Century," \textit{The Aberdeen Journal} (3 April 1896): 5. Donovan says there was a minor disturbance in Aberdeen in late 1778 (\textit{No Popery, 27n.}).

\textsuperscript{69} ACA Council Register 64, fol. 154 (29 January 1779).
opponents of relief were even more active in other synods, particularly the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr. By the time of the May General Assembly, the formerly confident Moderates were on the defensive,\(^7\) and were ultimately forced to concede that present measures for Catholic relief were inexpedient.\(^7\) Campbell, who does not appear to have taken part in the 1779 debates in the General Assembly,\(^7\) was nevertheless considered

\(^7\)SRO CH2/1/10, p. 226. Nevertheless, the declaration of the Presbytery of Aberdeen against Catholic relief, reprinted in Scotland's Opposition to the Popish Bill, sounds considerably more moderate than declarations printed by groups in the South-West of Scotland.

\(^7\)For the arguments of the General Assembly, which were almost entirely against the relief act, though not always for the expected reasons, see Erskine's Narrative or volume 41 of the Scots Magazine (May through September issues). Many assembly delegates thought that the disabling laws should be retained though not rigidly enforced; most expressed sentiments in favour of toleration but believed (as John Locke had) that Catholics could not be trusted in civil matters.

\(^7\)The text of the General Assembly's resolution (25 May 1779), based on a proposal by John McFarlan, minister in the Canongate, and modified by one by William Robertson, ran as follows: "While [the members of the General Assembly] Express their gratitude to Providence for the Invaluable Privileages enjoyed by this National Church, and the security afforded to the Protestant Religion by established Laws; They declare their firm attachment to the Principles of Civil and Religious Liberty, and their earnest desire that Universal toleration and Liberty of Conscience may be Extended to Protestants of every Denomination. But they think it their duty also to Declare their firm persuasion that a Repeal of the Laws now in force against Papists would be highly inexpedient, dangerous and prejudicial to the best interests of Religion and Civil Society in this Part of the United Kingdoms." The resolution went on to denounce the activities of "lawless Mcbs", and instructed the assembly's commission to be vigilant for any weakening of the legal securities against Popery. The General Assembly also rejected the various overtures for a standing committee to guard "Protestant interests" (SRO CH1/1/67, pp. 46-8).

\(^7\)There is some mystery as to Campbell's whereabouts at this time. The records of the 1779 General Assembly suggest that he was a delegate, and that he was serving on committees. Yet his Happy Influence of Religion on Civil Society sermon was supposedly preached in Aberdeen on the Sunday that fell in the midst of the General Assembly meetings. In his admiring review of Campbell's Address, William Rose suggested that the Address was published because Campbell could not attend the General Assembly; Monthly Review 62 (February 1780): 149. Perhaps because of
the leader of the relief forces, evidenced by the fact that Erskine addressed his account of the debates of that session directly to Campbell. Campbell maintained a low view of his clerical opponents, as is clear in the following summary of their character, addressed to Edmund Burke:

You will be surprized to be informed, but it is a certain fact, that they are the most unfriendly to true and rational liberty of any in the country, the most bigoted, the most intolerant, the most fanatical, and in one word, the most like the Bostonians of the last century. They are the very men who have had a principal hand in raising the present flame against papists.74

The loss of this battle was a major defeat for the Moderates, and may have been partially responsible for Robertson's retirement from active church politics. It may also account for Campbell's relative quiet in the years following.75 Despite moderate hopes, the General Assembly's resolution had somewhat more finality than James Beattie knew:

I am quite out of temper with our General Assembly, and almost the whole of the Scotch ministers. Dr Campbell is the only man among them, who has had the courage to speak and publish the words of Christianity, which are always the words of truth and soberness. You must have seen his excellent pamphlet. As matters now stand, there is a grievous stigma upon the name of Presbyterian; but I hope a new assembly may wipe it off, as nothing is more unsteady than the resolution of a popular meeting.76

his close involvement in the affair, Campbell decided at the last moment to stay away from the General Assembly.

74Campbell to Burke, 12 June 1779: SCA WWM Bk. 1/1172.

75In a letter to Alexander Carlyle (19 November 1785), Campbell stated that he had not been in Edinburgh since July 1781. The same letter indicates that he thought the General Assembly was losing its respectability because of its flagrant party-spirit (EUL MS Dc.4.41/116). Campbell continued to speak out on the issue in his divinity lectures, condemning anti-Catholic activities as a form of spiritual tyranny (LEH, 2:329).

76Beattie to Forbes, 12 June 1779: AUL MS 30/1/171.
Campbell's quiet in the years following the defeat of the Catholic relief proposal was not a sign of inactivity. These were the years in which he completed his scholarly masterpiece, *The Four Gospels. Translated from the Greek, with Preliminary Dissertations, and Notes Critical and Explanatory.*" This work, like *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* was begun in his earliest pastoral days." The Greek word-studies which form the basis of the translation are evident in all his writings. The genesis of the work may perhaps be discovered in the daily devotions of his childhood, when he took note of the King James Version's particular method of rendering certain idiomatic expressions. "I remember," Campbell wrote, "that when I first observed this distinction of character in the English Bible, being then a schoolboy, I asked my elder brother, who had been at college, the reason of the difference." Obviously unsatisfied with the explanation, Campbell sought to rework the standard translation using the new critical methods of the Enlightenment. Campbell was not alone in this attempt, for as he himself observed, "there has been of late, both abroad and at home, a profusion of criticisms on the sacred text; and many new versions have been attempted, especially in France and England." The work was the

"Most of his contemporaries considered *The Four Gospels* to be his greatest work. See, for example, "Memoirs of the Late Dr. Campbell," in the *Aberdeen Magazine* 1 (1796): 49. Campbell's Trinity Hall portrait (painted by Archibald Robertson and reproduced in the stained glass in Marischal College's chapel) has him holding a copy of this work. The publication required immense labours; Keith (xliv) remarks that Campbell rose at five each morning to begin studying and quit only at midnight.

"FG. 1:1.

"FG. 1:474."
most scholarly of his career, and particularly required the honing of his language skills. In addition to Latin and the various Hebrew and Greek dialects with which he was already familiar, Campbell improved his reading knowledge of French and Italian, and learned German in order to read Luther's Bible. He also believed that the work demanded a detailed understanding of the history and culture of the peoples who produced the Gospels. Campbell's own learning was augmented by the careful criticisms of David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes. The Four Gospels was clearly intended to be not just a translation, but a model of translation, for the greater part of its approximately 1500 pages was taken up by critical dissertations on problems concerning the interpretation and translation of ancient texts, as well as by critical notes on the translations themselves.

This immense quantity of work, however, was no guarantee of an easy publication. William Creech warned Beattie that a work even of such high literary merit would have difficulty making money for a publisher, and reminded him that The Philosophy of Rhetoric had yet to see a second edition. Nevertheless, Campbell, with manuscript in hand, travelled to London in the summer of 1787 to find a publisher. He had the help not only of his travelling companion James Beattie, by now an important

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*FOG, 1:486. The particular body of literature to which Campbell refers will be examined more fully in chapter five, sections 5 and 6.

"Hailes (1726-92) was a judge of Scotland's highest civil and criminal courts and an expert on Christian as well as Scottish antiquities. Campbell and Hailes had corresponded on questions of antiquity and translation since at least 1778. Campbell's portion of this correspondence is found in the New Hailes papers in the National Library of Scotland; I have not found Hailes' letters to Campbell, though his notes on Campbell's manuscript are preserved in NLS MS 25429, fols. 85-94."

*Creech to Beattie, 17 May 1787: AUL MS 30/2/545."
figure in the English publishing world, but also of the expatriate Scot John Douglas, bishop of Carlisle. Douglas, however, was not optimistic concerning the price that could be got for the sale of the manuscript, remembering that even the most valuable sacred works were not the most popular literature. Thomas Cadell agreed to publish a first edition of 750 copies, but declined to purchase the property of the manuscript outright. Though Campbell would have made little or nothing by this agreement, he was relieved to have the work in press.

Campbell's trip was eventful in other ways. Through Douglas he met and conversed with the king and queen on several occasions at Windsor. He had less to do in London, however, not being able to keep up with Beattie's relentless social schedule. It is also possible that this ageing Aberdonian had difficulty managing the heat and oppression of the metropolis. Consequently, he left Beattie prematurely, though he may have regretted his hasty decision, for the subsequent sea-voyage to

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Douglas (1721-1807) became bishop of Carlisle in 1787 and of Salisbury in 1791. He was the author of the Criterion (1752), an early attack on Hume's miracles argument. Campbell may have met Douglas during his student days in Edinburgh, or he may have come to know him because of their common interest in miracles or through Beattie who knew virtually every London figure of importance. The Campbell-Douglas correspondence can be found in the Egerton manuscripts in the British Library (along with the letters of many Edinburgh Moderates) and in the Farquharson papers in Aberdeen. Campbell dedicated The Four Gospels to Douglas.

Douglas to Campbell, 8 July 1787: AUL MS 3214/17.

Campbell to Ann Farquharson, 25 July 1787: AUL MS 3214/14. An anecdote recorded in a letter to Douglas some years later (22 September 1790) indicates that Campbell had doubts about the reliability of Cadell's character (BL Egerton MS 2186, fols. 12-15).

See Campbell's description of this event in a letter to his niece, 25 July 1787: AUL MS 3214/14.
Berwick was so unpleasant that he would not consider another trip south thereafter."7

The Four Gospels did not appear in print until early 1789. As Campbell feared, the two quarto volumes with a price of two guineas proved prohibitive to popular sales. The critics were suitably impressed, though more with the critical dissertations in the first volume than with the actual translation in the second."8 Ramsay of Ochteryre's opinion was perhaps representative: "All the learning and ingenuity of principal Campbell did not enable him to make a better translation of the gospels; for one hole he mended, like the bakers, he made two or three."9 Campbell was especially bothered by the criticisms of his translation, and defended its accuracy and justness if not its attractiveness to an English-speaking audience accustomed to the language of the King James Version.90 It was the inaccuracies in the common version that had initially prompted Campbell to use the critical tools of his age to produce a new translation. Douglas assured him that

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7Beattie recalls the story to Williamson, Campbell's London host, some years later (22 November 1789); AUL MS 301/1302.


9Letters of John Ramsay of Ochteryre 1799-1812, ed. Barbara L.H. Horn (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1966), 5. Ramsay also criticized the translations of Alexander Geddes and Bishop Robert Lowth, the most advanced British biblical critics. Ramsay elsewhere suggested that Campbell's Greek scholarship was considered superficial by many English scholars (Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:495).

the translation was, despite the reviews, well-received by his own peers. Josiah Tucker intimated that the bishop of Gloucester expected that the English Prayer Book would soon be revised with Campbell's criticisms in mind. Dr. William Heberden, a physician and respected classical scholar, was especially impressed with Campbell's translation and encouraged him to consider undertaking the translation of the rest of the New Testament. Campbell pleaded age and declined. Nevertheless, his Gospel translation was used, along with various translations of the other parts of the New Testament, in several popular nineteenth-century editions of the New Testament.

Campbell's new publication invited fresh attacks from his old nemesis William Abernethy Drummond, now a Scottish Episcopal bishop. Drummond renewed his strictures on Campbell's Low Church views in two pamphlets, whose short titles are A Friendly Address (1789) and Reasons for the Scotch Episcopal Clergy Submitting to the Royal Family of Hanover (1792). He particularly objected to Campbell's claim, made in the "Preliminary Dissertations", that the early church used the term "heresy" in a manner considerably removed from the modern sectarian

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9 Douglas to Campbell, 19 June 1789: AUL MS 3214/9.
92 Tucker to Campbell, 24 October 1790: AUL MS 3214/3.
93 Heberden to Campbell, 23 December 1789: AUL MS 3214/1.
94 Campbell's translation was compiled with other translations by Philip Doddridge and James Macknight under the title The New Testament (1826), and frequently reprinted. See appendix I, below. A work by Angus, The Life of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (1814) was apparently based on Campbell's Gospels. Archibald Alexander, at Princeton Theological Seminary, used Campbell's Four Gospels in his divinity teaching; Lefferts A. Loetscher, Facing the Enlightenment and Pietism: Archibald Alexander and the Founding of Princeton Theological Seminary (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983), 155.
signification. But his criticisms were only convenient means of upholding his own views on the necessary order and discipline of church government in opposition to Campbell's latitudinarianism. Drummond's declaration of his views on church government was an attempt to heal the breach that had developed among Episcopalians in Scotland during the eighteenth century. With this proposed reconciliation Campbell was once again to become deeply involved.

A century after the establishment of the Presbyterian form of government in the Church of Scotland, remnants of the old Episcopal order remained, particularly in the North-East. The 1712 Act of Toleration had given legal recognition to any Episcopalians who abjured the Stuarts and took an oath of allegiance to Queen Anne and her Hanoverian successors. Those who accepted these terms were provided with English-ordained Episcopal clergy and followed the English model of worship. Those who refused (including most of the existing Episcopal clergy and all of the bishops) remained Jacobites and faced persecution throughout most of the eighteenth century, particularly after the '45. Each of these two Episcopalian bodies, one legal and one not, continued to be suspicious of the other.

The decisive change for the nonjuring Episcopalians came in 1788 when the last of the exiled Stuart pretenders died. John Skinner (1744-1816), bishop of Aberdeen and primus of the Scottish Episcopal church, and the son of Campbell's class-mate, took this opportunity to

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*See chapter eight, section 3, below.*
lead his church back into favour with the Hanoverian government. He and Bishop William Abernethy Drummond began making overtures to Westminster for repeal of the disabilities against them. For this end they gained the help of Campbell, who was personally acquainted with Skinner. Campbell wrote of the situation to Bishop John Douglas, who passed along Campbell's favourable sentiments, and those of other leading Moderates, to the English bishops. The only obstacle to the removal of disabilities against the Scottish Episcopalians was the presence in Scotland of the English-ordained Episcopalians who feared that relief measures would force their clergy and property under the jurisdiction of the Scottish bishops. Campbell was familiar with Episcopalians on both sides of this issue. His wife's family had been dissenting Episcopalians who had fought for the Pretender. His friend James Beattie was intimate with the English-ordained Episcopalian clergy in the North-East. Campbell knew that the two Episcopal bodies had evolved apart because of their very different circumstances. These differences, not the least of which was the extreme High Church stance

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97 One such acquaintance had been James Riddoch, an English-ordained minister in Aberdeen. In 1779 Riddoch's widow (and James Boswell's cousin) approached Beattie and Campbell to edit her late husband's sermons, pleading financial difficulty. The two agreed, not knowing that the huge mass of sermons was not only unprepared for publication but almost unreadable in their manuscript form. We know from Beattie's letters that he went on to trl. _ribe and edit some of the sermons, but we do not know whether Campbell was able to continue with the project. Riddoch's *Sermons* appeared in two volumes in 1782, but gave no editing credit either to Campbell or to Beattie. The story may be found in Beattie's letters to Sir William Forbes, AUL MS 30/1/166 (10 April 1779), NLS Acc 4796, box 94 (28 April 1779), and AUL MS 30/1/180 (11 April 1780). The last makes no mention of Campbell's continued involvement.
maintained by the harried dissenting bishops, engendered fear and mistrust on both sides. Abernethy Drummond's pamphlets against Campbell were at bottom attempts to assert the right of jurisdiction of Scottish Episcopal bishops over their anglicized brethren and to assuage their fears concerning the consequences. Until the 1790s, the government in Westminster had wished to protect the existing interests of the English-ordained Episcopalians, and so had blocked repeated parliamentary attempts to provide relief for the dissenters. Campbell's correspondence with Bishop Douglas was an attempt to break this resistance. Ultimately, the reputations of Principals Campbell and Robertson were enough to convince the Anglican bench of bishops that the Presbyterian Church of Scotland had no particular objections to relief for dissenting Episcopalians. A relief bill was finally passed in June 1792, requiring the Scottish Episcopal clergy to assent to the Thirty-Nine Articles, but placing the English Episcopal clergy in Scotland under their jurisdiction. This and the eventual relief of Scottish Catholics in 1793 were significant victories for Campbell's enlightened principles of toleration. His efforts drew the following response from his old adversary, William Abernethy Drummond:

Dr Campbell has behaved like himself: for he is one of the sweetest blooded, & best hearted men in the world, & the friend of mankind. 'Tis a great pity that he is so loose in Church principles, for were He: sincere Episcopalian, he would be of great use to us as he is now, on account of his learning, a great ornament to the Presbyterians.**

**Such appears to be the opinion of John Skinner the younger in Annals, 175-84.

**Drummond to John Douglas, 27 April 1790: BL Egerton MS 2186, fol. 7r.
CHAPTER THREE

THE HEIGHT OF REPUTATION (FROM 1790)

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In the midst of his efforts for the relief of Scottish Episcopalians, Campbell was brought nearly to his own end. The illness struck quickly in January 1791. A cold became a violent asthma and fever, and soon those around him were resigned to Campbell's imminent death. Grace Campbell was so distraught at his suffering that she thought him better at rest.¹ Even Campbell spoke what he thought would be the dying words of a Christian man.² Within days, those around him began the flurry of letters concerning the distribution of his offices after his death. Campbell intimated to Beattie that he hoped Beattie would succeed him as principal.³ But this was not to be. By 31 January Campbell had passed through the worst of his ailment, and the doctors became confident of his recovery.⁴ By early March he was again attending to his duties at the college.⁵

¹Beattie to Laing, 21 January 1791: NLS Acc 4796, box 92.

²See the Rev. Dr. David Cruden's account of what he thought would be Campbell's last conversation, which took place 23 January, 1791 (Keith, 1-1i).

³Beattie to Arbuthnot, 24 January 1791: AUL MS 30/1/317; see also Beattie to Montagu, 24 January 1791: AUL MS 30/1/318.

⁴Beattie to Forbes, 31 January 1791: NLS, Acc 4796, box 92. In this letter appears the story of Campbell's remarkable recovery, during which time he had a deeply spiritual experience.
Campbell eventually returned to nearly all of his former activities, though perhaps not at his former pace. Keith claims that Campbell dropped out of public life, particularly the activities of the church courts. But this loss of robustness was slight compared to the loss of his wife two years later, in February 1793. Campbell was thereafter attended by his niece Ann Farquharson, who had lived with the Campbells for many years and had become as a daughter to them.

Campbell devoted most of his remaining energies to the preparation of his final publications. Foremost in his mind were questions concerning the nature of the true church, questions which arose from his historical researches into the character and structure of the early church. In addition to preparing his ecclesiastical history lectures for publication (see below), he also began to compose a belated response to some of his earlier critics. Campbell had not answered the attacks made against his sermon The Spirit of the Gospel, which were by this time twenty years old. But with the planned republication of his

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"Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon, 7 March 1791: NLS Acc 4796, box 92.

"Keith, lii.

"Though Grace Campbell's death is usually given as 16 February 1792 (e.g., Keith, xiii), I prefer 1793 as it is found in a letter from Beattie to Forbes (23 February 1793: NLS Acc 4796, box 94). Campbell's will dates Grace's will (which I have not found) as 5 February 1793 (SRO CC1/6/60). The Aberdeen Magazine states that Grace died about three years before Campbell ("Memoirs of the late Dr. Campbell," [June 1796]: 47). All other accounts which give February 1792 probably depend on Keith. The dating also makes doubtful the traditional story that Grace's death was hastened by her assiduous attention to Campbell's own health in 1791.

"Besides the attacks by Hay and Drummond described in chapter two, section 2, above, Campbell suggests that there had been two other attacks made against The Spirit of the Gospel, "one probably by a presbyterian, the other by a Roman Catholic" (AUL MS 651, p. 25). Of these two latter works I can find no trace.
Dissertation on Miracles, which was to include his previously-published sermons, he decided to add new apologetic tracts. These he described to his printer William Creech in a letter of September 1793.⁹ Campbell mentioned four tracts, one on implicit faith, another on Christian temperance and self-denial, a third on the unfavourable effects of superstition on morality, and a final tract on the difference between the form and power of religion. All of these had something to do with the abuses which Campbell believed had infected the true church and which had become most apparent in Roman Catholicism. All but the last of the four tracts survive in some form. The first tract "Of implicit faith" was never published, but can be found in a manuscript version ready for the press.¹⁰ It was directed primarily at Bishop George Hay's Detection of the Dangerous Tendency and upheld Campbell's earlier implicit charge that the Roman church has historically promoted a form of faith based on ignorance rather than knowledge. The second and third mentioned tracts became essays within a lengthy manuscript entitled, "Defence of the doctrine contained in the foregoing sermon against the attacks made upon it, by one under the signature of Staurophilus and an anonymous remarker,"¹¹ which, as the title suggests, was the tract intended to defend the republished Spirit of the Gospel sermon.¹² The


¹⁰AUL MS 649.

¹¹AUL MSS 651-655.

¹²It is not clear how the "Defence" manuscript and the "Implicit faith" manuscript were related to one another. Both are responses to the published attacks on the Spirit of the Gospel sermon. Both contain prefaces that suggest that they were to be the answers to Hay's attack. In addition, it is clear that the "Implicit Faith" tract was originally
manuscript contains three essays, entitled "The doctrine of some priests has encouraged ignorance," "Of christian temperance and self-denial," and "Superstition unfavourable to morality." A portion of the second of these essays was published at the end of the Lectures on Ecclesiastical History (see below). The "Defence" manuscript as a whole was a substantial piece of controversial writing and would have run to approximately 750 printed pages if published, more than five times the length of the sermon it was intended to vindicate. The great length reflects Campbell's intention to fully answer Hay's challenge to produce evidence that the Roman Catholic church had in fact followed a policy of breaking faith with heretics.\textsuperscript{3} Campbell's evidence included many of the same historical examples that had been used by Protestants for two centuries (such as the case of Jan Huss), but also included eighteenth-century examples to demonstrate the continuing relevance of Protestant mistrust.

In addition to these strictures on Roman Catholic abuses, Campbell addressed what he believed was a potentially dangerous abuse within Protestant Christianity. The unfinished "Strictures on Dodwell's Paranaesis [in five sections],"\textsuperscript{4} attacked the common Christian practice of placing too much authority in merely human hands. The antagonist in question was Henry Dodwell the elder (1641-1711), a learned defender of

\textsuperscript{3}Campbell cites Staurophilus' challenge, AUL MS 652, p. 102.

\textsuperscript{4}AUL MS 650. The unpublished manuscript breaks off mysteriously in the early part of section IV, suggesting that Campbell may have been working on it at the time of his death.
English nonjurors, whose *De nupero schismate Anglicano paraenesis* (1704) advocated an extreme High Church view of ecclesiastical authority. Campbell denounced Dodwell's Episcopal view of ecclesiastical history in no uncertain terms, claiming that it "corrupts the mind from the simplicity that is in Christ." His concern for ecclesiastical authoritarianism is also evident in another lengthy attack on Dodwell, found in the published *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, a section added to the manuscript lectures only in the final years of Campbell's life. Campbell's scorn for Dodwell may reflect an increasing concern for the authoritarianism apparent in Protestant churches (and states) in the years following the outbreak of the French Revolution. Campbell said little about the situation in France itself, making only a negative allusion to the unthinking mob of Paris.

Campbell's 1793 letter to his publisher William Creech also included an insinuation that a recently-published *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (1791) contained arguments suspiciously akin to those in his own *Four Gospels*. Creech relayed the charge to the book's author, Alexander Fraser Tytler (later Lord Woodhouselee), who, with the help of their mutual friend James Beattie, explained to Campbell the genesis of his own principles. Campbell was quickly satisfied that the episode was nothing but a coincidence of ideas, and the two established a friendly communication. Nevertheless, others

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15 AUL MS 650, section IV.

16 See AUL MS M 193.

must have noticed the same coincidence, for some years later the editor of the third edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* felt obliged to defend the originality of Tytler's views on translation.\(^9\)

All the while Campbell continued his administrative duties in the university, which included the management of several student bursaries. A small scandal erupted in 1794 over a bursary established by the will of a John Paterson.\(^20\) Campbell was charged by an Aberdeen shoemaker, Alexander Paterson, with failing to observe the terms of the will, which, he thought, ought to have favoured his own son. Campbell responded to the charge with a pamphlet entitled *Remarks on Dr. Paterson's Will* (n.d., probably 1794), which, while admitting that the wording of the bequest led to confusion, argued that he had settled that year's bursary correctly. Though Campbell claimed strict compliance with the terms of the will, it is clear that the rewarding of academic excellence was uppermost in his mind. The details of the dispute are unimportant,\(^21\) but the dispute itself, which involved a significant branch of the Incorporated Trades of which Campbell was patron, occasioned bitter feelings in the town and may have convinced Campbell that it was time to consider retiring from his active duties.

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\(^1\) The episode can be partly reconstructed from the following letters: Campbell to Creech, 14 September 1793: SRO microfilm RH4/26/1; Tytler to Beattie, 12 November 1793: AUL MS 30/2/698; Beattie to Tytler, 27 November 1793: NLS Acc 4796, box 91; and Tytler to Beattie, 25 December 1793: AUL MS 30/2/703. I have found no more of the four-party correspondence than this.


\(^20\) See P.J. Anderson *Fasti*, 1:433-4, for details of this 1762 endowment.

\(^21\) McKay gives details (diss., 51-3), but probably more than the incident deserves.
Campbell's wish to retire was tempered by his desire to be succeeded by a worthy candidate. He made his first overture to the Town Council, which held the gift of the divinity chair, in October 1794, only weeks before the beginning of the college term.\textsuperscript{22} Campbell offered to give up the divinity chair immediately on the condition that it go to one of three possible candidates, his close friend David Cruden, minister of Nigg, James Shirrefs, minister of St. Nicholas' West in Aberdeen, or his future editor James Fraser of Drumoak. The Council, for reasons unknown, declined Campbell's offer, and he was forced to teach for another winter. It may well have been a difficult term, for Campbell wrote unconditional letters of resignation to both the Presbytery of Aberdeen and the Town Council on 11 June 1795.\textsuperscript{23} Campbell cited failing health for his resignation rather than a decline in will to serve Christ. But the choice of successor was no longer at issue, for by that time one had already been selected. The position went to William Laurence Brown, who, before fleeing from the French army, had ministered to an English-speaking congregation in the Netherlands, and had been professor of moral philosophy and of ecclesiastical history in the University of Utrecht.\textsuperscript{24} Though the Town Council held the gift of the divinity chair, it appears that the appointment was controlled by Henry Dundas in London, and may have reflected political rather than

\textsuperscript{22}A transcription of the letter appears in ACA Council Register 67, fol. 41v. The original letter does not appear in the council's letterbook.

\textsuperscript{23}The letter to the Presbytery appears in the Presbytery of Aberdeen court records, SRO CH2/1/11, and is reprinted, though somewhat incorrectly, by Keith (liii-liv); the letter to the Town Council can be found transcribed in ACA Council Register 67, fols. 69v-70r.

\textsuperscript{24}Keith, liii.
academic concerns. Nevertheless, Campbell seemed quite pleased with his successor.

Campbell soon resigned the principalship to Brown as well (July 1795). He must have negotiated a retirement from this post some time earlier, for it seems that he had already been promised a pension from the government no later than spring of 1795. The pension was worth 300 pounds sterling per year, more or less covering the income from Campbell's various offices. Campbell was pleased with the arrangement, though, as he confessed to Lord Mansfield, "It is to me a real self-denial . . . to be no longer a member of Marischal College."

Campbell did not have long to enjoy either his pension or his leisure. He fell ill at the end of March 1796, "seized with a stroke of palsy," and was dead a week later (6 April). Campbell's last illness

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26 See Emerson, Professors, Patronage and Politics, 92-3. See Lenman, Integration, Enlightenment, and Industrialization, 77-8, on how Dundas gained control of appointments in the North-East.

27A letter to Mansfield (22 July 1795) suggests that he had agreed to Brown's appointment before he resigned the chair (AUL MS M 96).

28McKay says he resigned the principalship on 18 January 1796 (diss., 57), but gives no source. The letter to Mansfield rules out the 1796 date.

29A letter to Campbell from John Moore, the archbishop of Canterbury, via W.L. Brown, dated 12 May 1795, was already apologizing for the lateness of the government pension for the intended resignation of his offices (AUL MS 3214/4). A letter from Campbell to John Spottiswoode (14 January 1796) suggests that he had finally received his pension (NLS MS 2618, fol. 57-8).

30Keith, lvi.

30Campbell to Lord Mansfield, 22 July 1795: AUL MS M 96. David Murray, second earl of Mansfield, had been Marischal's chancellor since April 1793.
was not as memorably pious as the one of five years earlier, for he quickly lost all power of speech and writing, and was soon reduced to insensibility. His friends preferred to remember Campbell's last days as the ones of his earlier illness. Campbell was buried on 17 April, in St Nicholas' churchyard.\footnote{Keith, lvii. See Keith for details of his last illness. Beattie provides a few additional details in a letter to Laing, 10 April 1796: NLS Acc 4796, box 92.} William Laurence Brown preached the funeral sermon.\footnote{The tombstone that is supposedly Campbell's (according to Valentine, "An Aberdeen Principal," 5) is situated south and west of the church, towards the Union Street entrance, beside the tomb of the printer James Chalmers. The lettering of the tombstone has become entirely obscured, see Valentine for the Latin inscription.} Campbell's will\footnote{The funeral sermon was published as The Death of the Righteous Precious in the Sight of God: A Sermon Preached in the West Church, Aberdeen, April 17th, 1796. On Occasion of the Death of the Very Reverend Dr. George Campbell, Late Principal and Professor of Divinity in Marischal College (Aberdeen: A. Brown, 1796). Campbell himself did not have a high opinion of funeral sermons in general (LSTPE, 498).} named his nephew-by-marriage Peter Farquharson, an Aberdeen advocate, as his executor. Peter's sister Ann Farquharson, the niece who had been living in the Campbell's for many years, was the main beneficiary of the estate. The estate itself was not negligible, for Campbell was able to disperse monies to the amount of 1550 pounds sterling, mostly to female relatives. Ann received his English books, which were probably that portion of Campbell's library listed in A Catalogue of a Valuable Collection of Books (Aberdeen, 1799).\footnote{SRO CC1/6/60.} The only identifiable portions of Campbell's estate remaining

\footnote{As this auction catalogue contains the libraries of several others as well, it is impossible to accurately identify Campbell's own books.}
today are to be found at Whitehouse, near Alford, the residence of Peter Farquharson's descendants.

The question of Campbell's personal character depends mainly on the panegyrist, particularly Keith and Brown.\textsuperscript{36} Beattie spoke most highly of Campbell's character, and may have viewed Campbell's death as the perfect Christian foil to the famous and controversial death-scene of the arch-infidel Hume.\textsuperscript{37} But the limited evidence clearly suggests that Campbell was held in the highest regard as a preacher, orator and teacher, and that friends and foes alike spoke of his sweetness, patience and generosity of character.

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Campbell's publications did not cease with his death. A two-volume edition of the \textit{Dissertation on Miracles} was published in 1797, which included all of Campbell's previously published sermons (except \textit{The Character of a Minister}) but not the additional tracts that he had intended to include.\textsuperscript{38} More importantly, both to Campbell's reputation

\textsuperscript{36}Certainly Keith's (xlvii) emphasis on Campbell's strict regard to truth in his own moral life is in keeping with the tenor of his intellectual career.

\textsuperscript{37}See, for example, Beattie to Laing, 10 April 1796: NLS Acc 4796, box 92; and Beattie to Forbes, 31 January 1791: NLS Acc 4796, box 92 (which contains an implied comparison with Hume). Beattie may have been battling Hume's posthumous reputation, particularly the account of Hume's character given by Adam Smith shortly after the philosopher's death. In a letter to Elizabeth Montagu, written 7 December 1776, Beattie indicated that he was offended by Hume's levity during his last illness, a levity unbecoming in one devoid of hope (AUL MS 30/1/118).

\textsuperscript{38}Campbell had earlier told Douglas that the publication of this augmented edition of the \textit{Dissertation on Miracles} was meant to buoy up sales of the slow-moving \textit{Four Gospels}; Campbell to Douglas, 30 December 1790: BL Egerton MS 2186, fol. 16.
and to our understanding of the structure of his thought, was the posthumous publication of his divinity lectures. The lectures, first written in the early 1770s but continually revised until the 1790s, allow us to complete the map of Campbell's intellectual system.

The first part of Campbell's divinity course published, the *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History* (1800), was also the most controversial. Campbell intended these particular lectures for the press, undoubtedly because they concerned matters that dominated his thought in the last years of his life, that is the nature and form of the Christian church. They were published by his literary executors, who asked George Skene Keith, a long-time friend of Campbell, to contribute the life that has since been the main source of biographical information about Campbell. The lectures appear to have gone to press virtually unedited.39

Campbell's ecclesiastical history lectures are less a narrative history of the church than a series of topical arguments designed to illustrate certain historical tendencies in the development of the church, particularly the growth and domination of the hierarchical form of ecclesiastical government.40 Campbell examined the means by which a number of small, independent, and egalitarian congregations were transformed into a multi-layered, hierarchical and elitist government, ultimately subjugated to the bishop of Rome. There was nothing particularly new in Campbell's analysis, except perhaps his

39 Keith claimed that he was not the editor in a letter to the *Anti-Jacobin* 9 (July 1801): 249n. (see below).

40 See, for example, *LEH*, lecture 18, for a topical and thematic, rather than chronological or narrative, treatment of the rise of the papacy.
latitudinarian conclusion. Presbyterian historians had long argued that Episcopal government was a human corruption. Much of the theological controversy in seventeenth-century Scotland had covered this same historical territory.⁴¹ A considerable number of Campbell's lectures were devoted to the question of whether the primitive bishops had been equal in rank or superior to the presbyters. His conclusion that early bishops had been nothing more than congregational ministers implicitly questioned the necessity of the Scottish Episcopal church. Even more typical of Campbell's general thesis, however, was his characterization of the Roman Catholic church, an organization which he believed was entirely devoted to self-aggrandizement.⁴² This latter theme was augmented by the anti-monastic "Essay on Christian Temperance and Self-Denial," which the publishers extracted from Campbell's manuscripts and added to the lectures. Predictably, this essay argued that certain characteristically Catholic spiritual practices were superficial and devoid of real moral value.

The reaction of Campbell's contemporaries to these lectures provides an interesting insight into the tensions that existed in British society at the turn of the century. Both the Critical Review and the Monthly Review received Campbell's arguments favourably, indicating that much of the English establishment felt unthreatened by Campbell's strictures on the necessity of the Episcopal form of church

⁴²LEH, 2:129.
government. The anonymous reviewer in the Tory Critical Review called them,

the most important lectures on church history that have ever fallen under our inspection; in which such is the assemblage of good qualities, that we know not which most to admire:--the erudition, the labour, the impartiality, the ease, the skill, the arrangement of the lecturer, are every-where conspicuous, and every-where correct.43

Stephen Jones, in the Monthly Review (which by this time had become a vehicle for radical ideas), also considered Campbell's account impartial, but warned that some in England would think Campbell too much a latitudinarian, and too condemning of the controversies within the early church.44 He suggested that the times were not favourable for an impartial and critical account of such a politically-charged topic.45

Indeed, Campbell would gain new enemies for treating so lightly the necessary form of early church government. The lectures were attacked through six issues of the Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine from an extreme High Church position.46 George Gleig, who apparently wrote this review with help from William Abernethy Drummond,47 charged Campbell not only with maligning the original church through false assumptions and

43Critical Review 33 (October 1801): 205.
47Drummond refers to Gleig's authorship in a letter to Bishop Alexander Jolly (22 December 1801: SRO CH12/30/78/2). Gleig (1753-1840) was a Scottish Episcopal church minister and the final editor of the third edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica (and the probable author of Campbell's biography in the supplement to that edition) as well as the future Bishop of Brechin. He was a frequent contributor to the Anti-Jacobin (DNB, 7:1302-3).
shoddy scholarship, and with subverting the Christ-authorized form of
the Anglican church, but with supplying the rabble with arms to use
as 'inst the contemporary church." Clearly, Campbell's tolerant and
latitudinarian views of primitive and contemporary Christianity were not
everywhere welcome in an age of revolution."  

Book-length attacks soon followed. As we have already noted,
Campbell had long been an irritant to the Scottish Episcopal church.
But having recently received legal recognition with Campbell's help, the
Scottish Episcopalians now felt dismayed and even betrayed by the
publication of Campbell's Lectures on Ecclesiastical History." Some
Episcopalians were simply hostile: Andrew Macfarlane, the bishop of
Ross, who claimed that he had always held Campbell in contempt, called
the lectures "such a farrago of impertinent, petulant rancorous stuff--
as must turn a person of taste's stomach," and little wondered that,
"the disciples of Campbell should all be loose--and many of them
Infidels."  

Charles Daubeney (1745-1827), later archdeacon of
Salisbury, agreed with his Scottish brethren, and, in a letter to Bishop
John Skinner, called Campbell's publication, "the most hostile, the most
illiberal, and the most unsupported attack that has perhaps ever been
made on the Episcopacy of the church of Christ!"  

Daubeney's public

"Anti-Jacobin 8 (April 1801): 359; 9 (June 1801): 106; and 9 (July
1801): 250.

"Even John Ramsay of Ochtertyre thought that Campbell was too hard
on Episcopalians in an age when all of Christianity was threatened by
the forces of irreligion (Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:497-501).

John Skinner (the younger), Annals of Scottish Episcopacy, 314.

Macfarlane to Bishop Jolly, 2 July 1800: SRO CH12/30/71.
refutation of Campbell's lectures appeared in a lengthy preface attached
to his *Eight Discourses on the Connection between the Old and New*
*Testament Considered as Two Parts of the Same Divine Revelation* (1802).
As the title suggests, Daubeny argued that the Old and New Testaments
together constitute a single unified and eternal revelation, and that
the church likewise has only one legitimate and eternal form,
specifically that of the apostolically-sanctioned Episcopal church.

Daubeny appealed to Skinner to publish his own Scottish answer to
Campbell. Skinner obliged with a substantial tome entitled *Primitive*
*Truth and Order Vindicated from Modern Misrepresentation* (1803).\(^3\) The
central argument was virtually identical to Daubeny's, stressing the
primary importance of continuity and legitimacy to proper church order
and ultimately to the salvation of the individual. Skinner added
arguments defending the exclusive legitimacy of the Scottish Episcopal
church in his native country. Many of Skinner's arguments were derived
from the review in the *Anti-Jacobin*,\(^4\) though they do not exhibit the
extreme hostility that characterized other responses to Campbell.
Skinner treated his adversary with respect, but implicitly regretted
that Campbell's mistaken views would prevent them from meeting in glory.

The final two publications of Campbell's literary career did not
generate any significant controversy, but neither had they been intended

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\(^3\) Daubeny to Skinner, 19 August 1801: quoted from John Skinner,

\(^4\) The book was dedicated to Sir William Forbes, baronet of
Pitsligo, Beattie's closest friend and biographer, and a one-time rector
of Marischal College.

\(^4\) For example, the *Anti-Jacobin* 9 (July 1801): 236, made certain
claims about the sources of Campbell's argument which were repeated in
Skinner, *Primitive Truth*, 107n. Extracts from the *Anti-Jacobin* review
were included as an appendix to Skinner's work.
for the press as had the Lectures on Ecclesiastical History. The first of these, the Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence (1807), was transcribed from Campbell's manuscripts and corrected by his old friend James Fraser of Drumoak. This volume contained four "Preliminary Discourses" (described below), six lectures on systematic theology, and twelve on pulpit eloquence. The "Systematic Theology" lectures were perhaps misleadingly titled, for Campbell explicitly repudiated doctrinal systems. They were not a systematic overview of Campbell's religious tenets, but were instead intended to outline a method for systematically studying Scripture and the evidences of religion, and for forming a system of Christian morality. Their purpose, in fact, was to prevent divinity students from too quickly accepting a fixed view of Christian teaching. The lectures on pulpit eloquence complemented The Philosophy of Rhetoric by seeking "only to apply to the pulpit, as far as they are applicable, the general rules laid down by the ancients." They examined the various types of pulpit oratory, giving particular attention to the manner in which these types can be most effectively used to highlight and recommend Christian knowledge and practice.

"Fraser's name does not appear in the volume, but his editorship is clearly implied in a letter to Campbell's niece about the task of preparing the work for publication; Fraser to Ann Farquharson, 23 April 1805: AUL MS 3214/12. Unfortunately, we do not have the manuscript for this or the final volume of Campbell's lectures, against which to check the scope and nature of Fraser's editing. Fraser may have kept these manuscripts, but I have not been able to find them.

"STPE, 505.

"The only English review of the work gave the volume high marks, and praised Campbell's skill as a divinity professor, while giving no hint of past controversy; Christopher Lake Moody (1753-1815) in the Monthly Review 56 (August 1808): 370-82."
Campbell's final posthumous publication, *Lectures on the Pastoral Character*, appeared in 1811. Fraser was again the editor, but was now given credit. These lectures were practical in nature, giving advice to prospective ministers, especially those in the Church of Scotland, on particular virtues to cultivate and vices to avoid. This theme returned Campbell to the concerns with which he had begun his pastoral and publishing careers, as exemplified in the 1752 sermon *The Character of a Minister of the Gospel as a Teacher and Pattern*. The lectures also gave renewed attention to the opinions of Campbell's old adversary David Hume, specifically his disparaging comments on the pastoral character.\(^5^a\) Campbell's defensiveness suggests that Hume had once again pierced to the very heart of his world-view, as Hume had done long ago with his epistemology and evaluation of Christian evidences. To the end of his career, then, Campbell was concerned with the same issues that had occupied his mind in the early days of his Christian ministry, foremost of which was the defence and practical realization of the Christian religion.

Having reviewed all of Campbell's known publications, we can now make a preliminary attempt to establish the relationship of his individual publications to his thought as a whole. Such an attempt has never before been made, but is nevertheless essential to understanding

\(^5^a\) LPC, 146-9. Campbell was primarily concerned with Hume's essay "Of National Characters," which suggested that the ministerial office itself corrupted the character of the individual minister. Other Presbyterian moderates were also displeased with Hume's implication that all priests share a common character; see especially Alexander Gerard's sermon, *The Influence of the Pastoral Office on the Character*. 
the greater purpose of Campbell's body of work. Campbell's divinity lectures provide the key to mapping out the whole of his intellectual system. His lecturing scheme not only demonstrates the scope of his science of divinity, but provides teleological perspective on all of his writings, including such seemingly secular works as The Philosophy of Rhetoric.

We have several sources from which to reconstruct the original form of Campbell's lecturing scheme. The main sources are Campbell's printed lectures together with their manuscript originals and the student notes of Robert Eden Scott.39 Campbell's explicit lecturing plan appears in the "Introductory Discourses." Additional evidence is provided by Keith's "General View of Dr. Campbell's Prelections in Theology."60 Campbell's three posthumous publications contain fifty-nine lectures, listed under five headings: four "Introductory Discourses," six lectures on "Systematic Theology," twelve lectures on "Pulpit Eloquence," twenty-eight lectures on "Ecclesiastical History," and nine lectures on the "Pastoral Character." Do these represent Campbell's entire divinity course? Campbell supposedly lectured according to a four-year cycle. The college term ran approximately sixteen weeks each year, from late December to early April. Campbell and Gerard both lectured twice a

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39These are AUL MS M 191-201 and AUL AS M 190 respectively.

60Found in LEB, 1:lx-lxxviii. Ramsay of Ochtertyre claimed that the "Theology" article in the "Edinburgh Encyclopedia" provides a good overview of Campbell's manner of teaching divinity (Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:486). Ramsay's meaning remains a mystery. The "Theology" article in David Brewster's Edinburgh Encyclopedia (which appeared in 1830, considerably after Ramsay's death) does not sound like Campbell at all. If he meant one of the editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica (and it could only be the first or the second), I can find no evidence that Campbell wrote or was cited in either of these.
week. Thus they each delivered approximately 32 lectures per year,\textsuperscript{61} giving a total of 128 lectures over a four-year course. It appears, then, that less than half of Campbell's lectures were published. There are a number of ways to account for the difference.\textsuperscript{62} James Fraser, the editor of the \textit{Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence}, indicates that at least one of the pulpit eloquence lectures had been excluded because it was identical to a chapter in \textit{The Philosophy of Rhetoric}.\textsuperscript{63} Campbell himself intimated that he would repeat his four "Introductory Discourses" each year for the benefit of incoming students.\textsuperscript{64} With this in mind, we have enough material (including Scott's notes) to account for three full years of Campbell's divinity course. What then of the remaining year? The answer may lie in Campbell's own account of his lecturing scheme, found in the "Introductory Discourses." Here we discover that much of Campbell's divinity teaching can be found in his other publications.

\textsuperscript{61} This is supported by Robert Eden Scott's student notes, AUL MS M 190 (Campbell) and AUL MS K 174 (Gerard). Scott attended both professors during the 1786-7 college term, and apparently did not miss any lectures. He records 31 lectures for each professor. The topics of Scott's lecture notes are summarized in appendix III, below.

\textsuperscript{62} Each printed lecture apparently corresponds to a spoken lecture, even though the printed ones do not account for spontaneous asides. Keith notes that the lectures were full of wit and humour (lxxvi), which is not readily apparent in the printed versions.

\textsuperscript{63} PR, book I, chapter 10 corresponds with the second eloquence lecture (\textit{LSTPE}, 274n.). The same editor intimated in the \textit{Lectures on the Pastoral Character} (67n.) that a particular illustration already found in \textit{The Four Gospels} was removed from the printed lecture. Though Fraser claims to have published all the extant lectures, it is possible that he did not have the written remains of all of Campbell's lectures.

\textsuperscript{64} AUL MS M 191, pp. 42-3. That he did in fact do this is supported by Scott's student notes.
Campbell divided his divinity course into two major parts, the theoretical and the practical. "The first regards purely the science of theology, the second the application of that science to the purposes of the christian pastor."\(^{65}\) The theoretical side encompassed three fields: ecclesiastical history, biblical criticism, and systematic or polemical divinity. Systematic divinity was subdivided into two parts, the "Christian System" and "Theological Controversy." The practical side of the course was divided into two major areas, "Instructing" and "Governing".\(^{66}\) Figure I correlates this course structure with Campbell's known publications.

Campbell subdivided the first major section of his theoretical science of divinity, ecclesiastical (or sacred) history, into "Ancient History" and "Church History." The latter corresponds to the published Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, which surveys the church from its primitive beginnings to modern times, and fills up exactly one year of instruction. Campbell also treated aspects of ecclesiastical history in his unpublished manuscripts, notably his "Strictures on Dodwell" and his "Defence" of The Spirit of the Gospel sermon. "Ancient" or "Jewish History" was taught by the professor of oriental languages as part of his daily Hebrew class, which the divinity students were expected to

\(^{65}\)STEE. 4.

\(^{66}\)The Statistical Account indicates that the Marischal College divinity course covered the following subjects: natural religion, Christian evidences, scriptural criticism, systematic and controversial divinity, church history, and pastoral care (1:319-20). The description of King's divinity course is virtually identical (1:284). Compare this to Loetscher's table of the divinity courses in four American colleges in the early nineteenth century, which look very similar (Facing the Enlightenment and Pietism, 156-7).
I. THE SCIENCE OF THEOLOGY (Theory)

1. Sacred History
   i. Ancient (Jewish)
   ii. Ecclesiastical

2. Biblical Criticism

3. Systematic/Polemical Divinity
   i. The Christian System
   ii. Theological Controversy
      a. against infidels
      b. against misinformed Christians

II. THE PASTORAL OFFICE (Practice)

1. Instructing
   i. By Example (Propriety Of Character)
   ii. By Teaching (Christian Eloquence)

2. Governing
   i. Church Discipline
   ii. Ordination

Lectures on Ecclesiastical History
"Strictures on Dodwell" MS

"Preliminary Dissertations"
   to The Four Gospels

Lectures on Systematic Theology

A Dissertation on Miracles
The Success of the First Publishers
   of the Gospel
The Happy Influence of Religion
   on Civil Society

The Spirit of the Gospel
"Defence" MS
"Of Implicit Faith" MS
An Address to the People of Scotland

The Character of a Minister
Lectures on the Pastoral Character

Lectures on Pulpit Eloquence
The Philosophy of Rhetoric
Campbell himself only provided brief instructions on how to study Jewish antiquities.

Campbell's lecture notes on the second major area of theoretical divinity, biblical criticism, do not appear to have survived, yet they clearly formed the basis for the "Preliminary Dissertations" which appeared with his translation of The Four Gospels. Scott's lecture notes, recorded during the 1786-7 term (as Campbell was putting the finishing touches on his Four Gospels manuscript) correspond very closely to the "Preliminary Dissertations," suggesting that Campbell was reading from that very manuscript. Campbell's lectures on biblical criticism occupied another full year of his divinity course.

It was well known that Campbell did not care for abstract theological questions or disputes, which is perhaps why there are only six published lectures on systematic theology. All of these provided practical instruction on a method of study rather than on the "Christian System" itself, which Campbell thought divinity students should reconstruct from their own Bible studies (hence the importance of criticism). No lectures survive on the second aspect of polemical divinity, that concerned with theological controversy. This does not mean that Campbell had nothing to say on the matter. He subdivided the subject of theological controversy into two parts, each representing a

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67 See the Statistical Account, 1:321.

68 Keith (xxiii) states that the "Preliminary Dissertations" were the only part of the divinity course that Campbell published himself (xxii: xxiv). Ramsay of Ochtertyre also notes that the "Preliminary Dissertations" form the substance of his lectures on criticism (Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:486). The correlation of topics between Scott's student notes and the "Preliminary Dissertations" shows this to be accurate; see appendix III, below.
major danger from which Christianity had to defend itself. The first part treated the attacks on Christianity made by infidels, while the second considered the dangers posed by misinformed Christians.

Eighteenth-century writers, particularly British moderates, routinely defended the necessity of revelation against infidels and deists. As Campbell said to his class, "The first controversy that claims our attention is the deistical, as this strikes directly at the foundation of all." Campbell advised his students to become familiar with infidels' attacks upon both Christianity's external and internal evidences. Campbell's own published writings reflect this apologetic concern. The *Dissertation on Miracles* is a particularly good example of the defence of Christianity's testimonial evidences. Likewise, *The Success of the First Publishers of the Gospel* highlights Christianity's historical evidences. The *Happy Influence of Religion on Civil Society* justifies Christianity's moral character against the taunts of libertines. Aberdeen's divinity students were certainly familiar with Campbell's apologetic works, as well as the works of other eighteenth-century apologists, such as Alexander Gerard's *The Influence of the Pastoral Office on the Character* (1760), which was directed against Hume.

Campbell's Christian apologia was at least as much concerned with the dangers posed by misinformed Christians as by infidels. His *Spirit of the Gospel* was written against the twin evils of superstition and enthusiasm, and ultimately involved him in considerable inter-denominational controversy. Misguided Christians (in this case Roman

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69LSTPE, 221.
Catholics) loomed large in two unpublished manuscripts, "Of implicit faith" and the "Defence" of the Spirit of the Gospel sermon. Protestant High Churchmanship was the target of the manuscript "Strictures on Dodwell." In addition, Campbell's Address to the People of Scotland was written against the enthusiastic and intolerant members of his own church. We do not know if Campbell treated all of these subjects in his lecture course, but it is likely that he provided his students with directed readings, and that they were aware of the place of theological controversy within his scheme of education.

Campbell divided the second half of his divinity course, the practical application of the science of theology to the pastoral office, into "Instructing" and "Governing". Because ministers communicated instruction to their parishioners both by direct teaching and by example, Campbell further divided the instructing category into "Christian or Pulpit Eloquence" and "Propriety of Character." The latter corresponds to the Lectures on the Pastoral Character, itself a reworking of Campbell's first publication, The Character of a Minister of the Gospel as a Teacher and Pattern. The published Lectures on Pulpit Eloquence clearly addresses the topic of Christian eloquence. That this topic was of particular interest to Campbell is evidenced by its central place in the Theological Club of his student days. Christian eloquence was also extensively treated in The Philosophy of Rhetoric, which, like all classical-Christian schemes of rhetoric,

70 Gerard also gave considerable attention to the topic of pastoral care; see Scott's lecture-note topics, summarized in appendix III, below, and Gerard's own posthumously-published The Pastoral Care, ed. Gilbert Gerard (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, and Aberdeen: A. Brown, 1799).
considered pulpit eloquence to be a major type of discourse. Campbell maintained that a minister must use every rhetorical art to effectively communicate religious truth. These rhetorical arts demand a familiarity not only with the classical rules of discourse, but also with the powers of the human mind and the types of evidence that make the classical rules effective. Even *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* was ultimately subordinated to Campbell's pedagogically-oriented structure of thought.

Virtually all of Campbell's writings were subsumed under his general scheme of education. The only area of his divinity course not reflected in either his known lectures or his other published works is the last part of the practical side of the pastoral office, that concerned with "Governing". This Campbell divided into "Church Discipline" and "Ordination". Campbell himself stated that he would not discourse copiously on the topics of discipline, ordination, and civil rights. Keith, however, notes that Campbell delivered several useful lectures on Christian duty and Christian practice, and on the duties which we owe to God, our neighbour, and ourselves. It does not appear, that he ever wrote any thing on the conduct of ministers, when attending the Church courts of the Scotch establishment.

Campbell certainly did not lack experience in this area, but probably believed that experience itself was the only practical teacher in this

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77*AUL MS M 190*, p. 288, shows that Campbell chastised his students for failing to suit their discourses to the audiences for which they were intended.

78See chapter four, below.

79*LSTPE*, 63.

80Keith, lxxv. Gerard did deal with this topic briefly.
realm of the pastoral duties. In any case we have no evidence that this formed a significant part of his lecturing scheme.

Campbell's literary career was clearly dominated by pedagogical and pastoral concerns. Thus a comprehensive view of Campbell's lecturing scheme provides insight into the structure of his thought, and clarifies the direction of his Christian apology. It is now evident that all of Campbell's intellectual activities, including his theories of rhetoric and evidence, were directed to religious ends. But it is equally clear that Campbell's religious mind was deeply imbued with the values of the Enlightenment. This can be seen in his emphasis on methodology before doctrine, on critical inquiry before judgment, and on the practical realization of the Christian values of tolerance, moderation and improvement. A considerable number of the clergy of the Scottish North-East and highlands were thus inculcated with the values of the enlightened, moderate Christian.

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Campbell's life embodied the enlightened values of his age. He participated faithfully in that most enlightened of institutions, the convivial club. The Aberdeen Philosophical Society discussed a wide range of contemporary topics, including natural philosophy and history, language, evidence, education, and political and social reform. Campbell was also a dedicated amateur botanist, and used his understanding of the natural world to reinforce his religious beliefs. He was an advocate of educational reform, helping to make Marischal College one of the fastest-growing and most modern universities in Europe. He was a noted apologist for religious toleration and legal
equality in his own country, and for political toleration in regard to America. Furthermore, Campbell published scholarly works on important enlightened concerns, such as miracles, evidence, language and communication, freedom of belief and expression, and textual criticism. But the values of Campbell's enlightened age did not long outlive him.

Campbell's posthumous reputation changed as the world changed. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Campbell was considered to be one of Scotland's foremost religious minds, though this reputation did not survive the Evangelical revival and mid nineteenth-century disruption within the Scottish church. Neither his biblical criticism nor his historical scholarship could withstand the nineteenth-century methodological upheavals in those fields. But The Philosophy of Rhetoric, which was little read in Campbell's own time, found new life in the nineteenth century, when it was reprinted at least forty-five times. It became a standard textbook in its field, particularly in the American college curriculum, where only Hugh Blair's and Lord Kames' rhetorical texts were more frequently read. The work continues to be reprinted today and is considered one of the most important contributions to eighteenth-century rhetorical theory. The only other Campbell publication to survive (marginally) into the twentieth-century is the Dissertation on Miracles, due primarily to the twentieth-century renaissance in Hume studies. But here again, a work that was thought by

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75 See chapter six, section 2, below.

76 See appendix I, below, or Lloyd F. Bitzer's introduction to The Philosophy of Rhetoric.

77 See Hook, Scotland and America, 79. Campbell's text was more difficult to use than Blair's and Kames' comparatively traditional and clearly-structured treatments.
eighteenth-century minds to have completely refuted Hume's unreasonable scepticism has now been eclipsed by the modern fascination with the opinion of the sceptic himself.

The fact that Campbell's modern reputation bears little resemblance to his eighteenth-century reputation is an interesting but not unusual historical phenomenon. To understand this disparity is to understand some of the differences between the characteristic thought-patterns of the eighteenth-century world and those of our own. The remainder of this dissertation will attempt to rebuild the structure of George Campbell's thought in order to appreciate the significance of his ideas in the context of his enlightened age. Such an attempt may also shed light on the ways in which Western thought has changed in the last two centuries.
PART II

NATURAL KNOWLEDGE: THE ENLIGHTENED CAMPBELL
CHAPTER FOUR
PHILOSOPHY IN THEORY

1

Campbell's entire body of work, as we have now seen, was directed towards Christian ends. But what were these Christian ends, and how were they to be realized? What kind of Christian was Campbell? John Ramsay of Ochtertyre characterized Campbell's theology as perfectly orthodox in the manner of late seventeenth-century Anglican divines.¹ This correctly suggests that Campbell's defence of Christianity bore a striking resemblance to the apologetic works of those English divines known as Latitudinarians.² Campbell, like his Anglican predecessors, avoided doctrinal subtleties, preached Christian morals, and advocated religious toleration. But more importantly, Campbell's intellectual journey, like those of the great English divines of the late seventeenth century, began with the foundations of religious knowledge.

Seventeenth-century English divines such as William Chillingworth, Edward Stillingfleet and John Tillotson³ were primarily motivated by

¹Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:486.

problems of religious knowledge. They wished to avoid surrendering to either the authoritarianism and dogmatism of the Roman Catholic church or to the extreme scepticism of those who denied that reliable religious knowledge was attainable. Consequently, they developed a theory of probabilistic knowledge wherein belief was to be proportioned to the available evidence. Absolute knowledge, according to this theory, was beyond human ability, and was therefore inappropriate to religious apology. The human mind was capable, however, of achieving varying degrees of certainty, ranging from merely probable knowledge to morally certain knowledge. Moral certainty could be attained in important religious matters, claimed the probabilists, which meant that the empirical evidence in favour of the Christian religion was sufficient to convince an impartial enquirer. Nevertheless, the human inability to attain absolute certainty made religious moderation and toleration a logical consequence of the probabilist view of religious evidence. Furthermore, this circumscription of man's rational abilities left room

The Aberdonians had a high regard for these three figures. Campbell recommended the "excellent Chillingworth" to his students, claiming that his work was an "admirable specimen of just and acute reasoning" (LSTFC, 206). In a footnote in the third edition of the Dissertation on Miracles, he denied Hume's claim that Tillotson's argument against transubstantiation was akin to Hume's argument against miracles (Sermons, 1:60-3n.). Gerard's Pastoral Care acknowledged Stillingfleet more often than any other source.

for, and indeed made necessary, religious faith. The probabilistic approach to Christian apology, which may be termed "Christian empiricism", dominated the British Enlightenment and found its greatest champion in Bishop Joseph Butler.

Butler (1692-1752) was one of the few thinkers of the eighteenth century to gain almost universal approbation in Britain. His mixture of empirical moral philosophy and probabilistic Christian apology won the admiration of a broad range of eighteenth-century thinkers, including the Scottish moderates. Thomas Reid, while a young man, took extensive and detailed notes on Butler's most famous work, The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature (1736). Campbell acknowledged the Analogy of Religion as having "shown us how useful [the analogical] mode of reasoning may be rendered, by the application he hath so successfully made of it for refuting the cavils of infidelity." Butler was credited by his contemporaries with having decisively refuted the early eighteenth-century deistical challenge to empirical Christianity. It is difficult to find another eighteenth-century figure so often cited, copied, and approved, especially by those who came of age in the 1730s.

Butler's Analogy of Religion encapsulated the methodological and structural approach of Christian empiricism. The first part of the work

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"See, for example, Wood, 54, 111 and 132, on the important influence of Butler on Gerard and other Aberdonians.

These 20 cramped pages of summary notes may be seen in AUL MS 3061/10. See also WTR, 1:237.

PR, 54n. For Campbell's favourable view of Butler, see LSTPE, 91-2 and 427, and DM, 30 and 276. See FG, 1:6, for Campbell's borrowing of the concept of the "analogy of nature".
described the extent of religious knowledge that could be known solely by means of natural human ability. Using analogical reasoning, Butler argued from the moral certainty of God's government in the natural realm to the corresponding probability of his government in the moral realm. He demonstrated the overwhelming probability of such doctrines as the survival of our minds and identities after death and the existence of rewards and punishments in the next life. The human capacity for improvement was an additional indication that this life was but a probationary state for the next life. Butler thought it unlikely that God would act as a moral governor if he had not given us free wills. Our natural reason, therefore, indicates that our earthly life is merely part of a larger providential plan. Natural religion cannot itself discover this plan, but it does teach us to anticipate the revelation which will complete God's communication to men.⁸

Having established the overwhelming probability of the essential doctrines of natural religion, Butler then argued that the Christian religion most successfully addresses the religious concerns raised by our natural enquiries. The second part of the Analogy argued that the Christian revelation constitutes a necessary supplement to the moral certainties of natural religion. Christianity contains all that nature leads us to expect from a true revelation. Its moral character is unimpeachable and its positive evidences (prophecies and miracles) prove its divine origin. Christianity, in other words, is a reasonable

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⁸Natural reason also tells us to watch for the miracles that will identify the true revelation; Butler, Analogy of Religion (London: George Bell, 1898), 216.
religion; it appeals both to our natural moral sense and to our critical understanding.

Christianity, according to Butler, is proved by a series of overwhelming evidences and probabilities. This empirical approach was imitated throughout the eighteenth century and seems to have been perfectly convincing to the eighteenth-century British mind. Order of procedure was essential to the empirical Christian apologist: natural evidences have to precede revealed evidences because only natural evidences can indicate whether a purported revelation is worth regarding. Butler's division of Christian evidences into natural and revealed components had clear seventeenth-century antecedents, and remained the standard model of Christian apology until the middle of the nineteenth century. William Paley (1743–1805), the most influential of the late eighteenth-century Christian apologists, argued that the evidences of natural theology ought to be studied before the positive evidences of the Christian religion.¹⁰

The Aberdonians were particularly drawn to Butler's style of argument. First, they supported the concept and necessity of probabilistic reasoning. As Campbell said, "provided the facts upon which it is founded be sufficiently numerous, the conclusion is said to be morally certain."¹¹ Alexander Gerard, in his aptly-titled

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¹²PR, 50; "The credibility of the fact is the sum of the evidence of all the arguments, often independent of one another, brought to support it" (PR, 75).
Dissertations on Subjects Relating to The Genius and the Evidences of Christianity (1766), claimed that

the evidence of Christianity is of the probable kind; and in every probable argument, the strength of the evidence depends not only on the strength of each separate probability, but also on the number of probabilities.\(^2\)

Thomas Reid likewise argued that the strength of probable reasoning depends upon the united force of several arguments which, by themselves, might be unconvincing.\(^3\) Secondly, the Aberdonians supported the structure and direction of Butler's reasoning. Concerning "the order in which our theological enquiries ought to be conducted," said Campbell to his divinity students, "religion hath been often and not unaptly divided into natural and revealed." Natural religion subdivides into two parts, "namely what concerns the nature and providence of God [natural theology], and what concerns the duties and prospects of man [ethics]." He told his young charges that, "to a certain degree the knowledge of divine attributes and of human obligations are discoverable by the light of nature," and that this truth "scripture itself always presuposeth." These subjects, he continued, do not "fall within my province as a teacher of christian theology. They are in fact preliminary studies, and constitute a part of the philosophic course."\(^4\) Campbell assumed

\(^2\)Gerard, *Dissertations* (Edinburgh: A. Kincaid and J. Bell, 1766), 405; "for the more numerous the proofs, especially when they are deduced from circumstances untoward and unfavourable, the more irresistibly they compel our assent" (Gerard, *The Corruptions of Christianity Considered as Affecting Its Truth* [Edinburgh: Mundell and Son, 1792], 52).

\(^3\)WTR, 1:482.

\(^4\)LSTPE, 84-6. Campbell elsewhere made the natural/revealed division clear when he considered Catholic notions of papal infallibility as "incompatible with the first principles of rational theism, as well as of revelation" (AUL MS 652, p. 107).
that his divinity students had, in the fourth year of their arts degree, received philosophical instruction concerning the nature and attributes of God, and the consequent moral duties of man. The theologian, in other words, must begin as a philosopher.

Late seventeenth and eighteenth-century epistemological theories were generally inspired by problems of religious knowledge. This was the case for the Latitudinarians, as well as for Locke, Berkeley and Butler. It was also the case for Campbell and his Aberdeen associates. But the Aberdonians faced a difficulty not encountered by their predecessors, a difficulty that arose directly from the earlier attempts to establish an empirical epistemology. The problem was David Hume. Hume, more than anyone else, highlighted the potential scepticism that arose from the new empirical theory of knowledge. Butler's accumulation of evidences was, in Hume's philosophy, an accumulation of uncertainties. The Aberdonians, more than anyone else, recognized the legitimacy of Hume's challenge, and attempted to save empirical philosophy and religion from the ravages of his scepticism. Hume's influence on Campbell's philosophy was pervasive and multifaceted. It began with a theory of human nature.

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"This instruction is described in section 6 of this chapter.

"Reid specifically noted Hume's argument that the fallibility of our mental powers adds uncertainty to every mental step we take (WTR, 1:486).

"Hume's influence on Campbell has been convincingly demonstrated by Lloyd F. Bitzer in his dissertation "The Lively Idea." My argument necessitates going over some of Bitzer's territory, though I will try not to repeat his work. I hope to reinforce his arguments in some places, and correct them in others.
The Philosophy of Rhetoric, though it contains the bulk of Campbell's philosophy of human nature and theory of knowledge, is not a formal treatise on epistemology. Its purpose, according to Campbell, is to investigate those principles in human nature which account for the efficacy of the established rules of rhetoric.\textsuperscript{18} In other words, it is "in the human mind that we must investigate the source of some of the useful arts."\textsuperscript{19} The purpose of the work is to present not a correct map, but a tolerable sketch of the human mind; and, aided by the lights which the Poet and the Orator so amply furnish, to disclose its secret movements, tracing its principal channels of perception and action, as near as possible, to their source: and, on the other hand, from the science of human nature, to ascertain with greater precision, the radical principles of that art, whose object it is, by the use of language, to operate on the soul of the hearer, in the way of informing, convincing, pleasing, moving, or persuading.\textsuperscript{20}

Clearly the practical and the theoretical aspects of rhetoric must be made to shed light on one another.

Besides, this study, properly conducted, leads directly to an acquaintance with ourselves; it not only traces the operations of the intellect and imagination, but discloses the lurking springs of action in the heart. In this view it is perhaps the surest and the shortest, as well as the pleasantest way of arriving at the science of the human mind.\textsuperscript{21}

Campbell later added:

The art of the rhetorician, like that of the philosopher, is analytical; the art of the orator is synthetical. The former acts the part of the skilful anatomist, who, by removing the teguments, and nicely separating the parts, presents us with views at once naked, distinct, and hideous, now of the structure of the bones,

\textsuperscript{18} PR. lxxiv-lxxv.

\textsuperscript{19} PR. lxxiii.

\textsuperscript{20} PR. lxvii.

\textsuperscript{21} PR. lxxiv.
now of the muscles and tendons, now of the arteries and veins, now of the bowels, now of the brain and nervous system. The latter imitates Nature in the constructing of her work, who, with wonderful symmetry, unites the various organs, adapts them to their respective uses, and covers all with a decent veil, the skin. This, though she hide entirely the more minute and the interior parts, and show not to equal advantage even the articulations of the limbs, and the adjustment of the larger members, adds inexpressible beauty, and strength, and energy to the whole.²²

This anatomical analogy is remarkably like the one found in Hume's famous letter to Francis Hutcheson, where Hume argued that a moral philosopher can study human nature either as a painter and highlight moral excellence, or as an anatomist and systematically expose the real workings of the human mind. He added that the moral philosopher perhaps cannot do both at the same time.²³ Campbell clearly placed his rhetorical work on the anatomist side of this analogy. Even to his divinity students Campbell said, "It is the business of the orator to accomodate himself to men, such as he sees they are, and not such as he imagines they should be."²⁴ Likewise, Cambell's opposite number at

²²PR, 92n.

²³Hume to Hutcheson, 17 September, 1739: in The Letters of David Hume, 1:32-4. Hume concluded his Treatise of Human Nature with this remarkable passage: "The anatomist ought never to emulate the painter: nor in his accurate dissections and portraiture of the smaller parts of the human body, pretend to give his figures any graceful and engaging attitude of expression. There is even something hideous, or at least minute in the views of things, which he presents; and 'tis necessary the objects shou'd be set more at a distance, and be more cover'd up from sight, to make them engaging to the eye and imagination. An anatomist, however, is admirably fitted to give advice to a painter; and 'tis even impracticable to excel in the latter art, without the assistance of the former. We must have an exact knowledge of the parts, their situation and connexion, before we can design with any elegance or correctness. And thus the most abstract speculations concerning human nature, however cold and unentertaining, become subservient to practical morality: and may render this latter science more correct in its precepts, and more persuasive in its exhortations" (Treatise, 620-1). Note the rhetorical implications in the last line. It is probable that Campbell was thinking of this passage when writing his own.
King's College, Alexander Gerard, employed the phenomena of taste and genius to investigate human nature.\(^{2a}\) The Aberdonians in general, Campbell, Reid and Gerard (but not Beattie), emulated Hume's "anatomical" approach to human nature, meaning that they claimed to investigate human nature by empirical means. But unlike Hume, they thought that this approach would only strengthen virtue and religion by demonstrating that these things are founded in our natural constitution.\(^{2b}\)

In terms of method and purpose, then, Campbell was clearly a man of the Enlightenment.\(^{27}\) He, like his age, believed in a universal human nature. In fact, he thought that a philosophy of rhetoric was possible precisely because the "general principles [of taste] are the same in every people."\(^{28}\) Even figures of speech, "are so far from being the inventions of art, that, on the contrary, they result from the original and essential principles of the human mind."\(^{29}\) The task of the empirical philosopher of human nature is to explicate these "original and essential principles."

What does this empirical science tell us about the nature of the human mind? In order to understand how rhetoric actually functions in universal human nature, a rhetorician must consider the basic contents

\(^{2a}\) LSTPE, 299.

\(^{2b}\) See Gerard's *Essay on Taste* (1759) and *Essay on Genius* (1774).

\(^{26}\) See, for example, *WTR*, 1:493, where Reid argued that an understanding of anatomy helped one better appreciate beauty.

\(^{27}\) See Bitzer diss., chap. 3, for a fuller comparison of the methods and purposes of Hume's *Treatise* and Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*.

\(^{28}\) *PR*, 411.

\(^{29}\) *PR*, 316.
of the human mind. This is no easy task, for, "Whatever regards the
analysis of the operations of the mind, which is quicker than lightning
in all her energies, must in a great measure be abstruse and dark."30
Campbell's cautionary suggestion is as true of his own underlying
epistemology as it is of any other's. His tendency to borrow various
epistemological concepts eclectically from his contemporaries helps us
understand his epistemological notions in the context of his age, but at
the same time obscures his own particular understanding of those
concepts.

Eighteenth-century philosophers usually assumed that the contents
of the human mind are all in plain view and that human motivations are
always readily apparent. Campbell too believed that, "the properties of
our clear and adequate ideas can be no other than what the mind clearly
perceives them to be."31 Like the ideal philosophers (but in surprisin-
contrast to Reid), Campbell held that "the mind is passive. It does not
act, but is acted upon."32 The mind cannot generate any new simple
ideas, though it can combine simple ideas into novel combinations.
Campbell argued that all our ideas are particular,33 thus following the
atomistic conception of mental contents current in the eighteenth
century. But he also argued that all truths are general. It is by
means of signs that the human mind proceeds from particular perceptions

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30PR, 265.

31PR, 36. Cf. Hume: "The essence and composition of external
bodies are . . . obscure . . . [but] the perceptions of the mind are
perfectly known" (Treatise, 366). In a similar vein, Locke argued that
there is no thought without consciousness (Essay, 109).

32AUL MS 655, un-numbered page. See also PR, 49.

33PR, 260.
to general truths. Thus we come not only to communicate by signs but to think by them as well. \(^{34}\)

Campbell said very little about mental contents themselves. Early in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* he stated his position thus:

*Perception* is employed alike to denote every immediate object of thought, or whatever is apprehended by the mind, our sensations themselves, and those qualities in body suggested by our sensations, the ideas of these upon reflection, whether remembered or imagined, together with those called general notions, or abstract ideas. It is only the last of these kinds which are considered as peculiarly the object of the understanding, and which, therefore, require to be distinguished by a peculiar name. \(^{35}\)

Campbell applied the term "intellection" to this latter ability of the mind to handle general or abstract notions. In doing so, he was implicitly criticizing Locke, whom he later chastised for promiscuous use of the term "idea" to mean such different things as perceptions of the senses, traces of memory, creations of the imagination, and conceptions of the intellect. \(^{36}\) Campbell clearly intended to keep the operations of the senses and those of the understanding strictly apart. Sense perceptions ought never to be confused with ideas proper.

Some ambiguity is already apparent in Campbell's epistemology. As we shall see below, Campbell did not consistently hold that the mind is simply a passive receiver of sense perceptions. Although he often suggested that the mind passively receives whatever objects ("ideas") happen to come before it, he also followed Reid in criticizing the ideal

\(^{34}\) *PR*, 260. It is interesting that Campbell believed that the medieval debate between the realists and the nominalists was of no real significance, that it was merely a difference over words (AUL MS 655, un-numbered page).

\(^{35}\) *PR*, 35-6n.

\(^{36}\) *PR*, 261-3.
philosophers (notably Locke and Hume) for confusing distinct actions or powers of the mind. Campbell's theory of mental contents probably cannot be worked out with any precision, but it is possible to note certain significant trends.

One such trend is Campbell's intense interest in the manner in which the contents of the mind combine, interact, or associate with one another. Campbell made extensive use of Hume's principles of association. Hume suggested that ideas and impressions do not assemble randomly but follow certain universal principles of association, analogous to the universal principles that Newton discovered in the natural world. Resemblance, contiguity in time or place, and cause and effect were the most important of Hume's associating principles. Like Hume, Campbell gave considerable attention to "experience, or the tendency of the mind to associate ideas under the notion of causes, effects, or adjuncts." In fact,

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37 For a fuller account of Campbell's and Hume's use of the concept of the association of ideas, see Bitzer's diss., 78-97. Alexander Gerard made even more extensive use of Hume's theory; see his Essay on Genius, ed. Bernhard Fabian (Munchen: Wilhelm Fink, 1966), part II, especially 108-25. There is no indication that the Aberdonians' use of the association of ideas owed anything to David Hartley. Their use was in no way materialistic.

The association of ideas was a new concept in the eighteenth century. It was not crucial to Locke, whose one chapter on the topic, added in the fourth edition of the Essay (book II, chap. 33), was a negative view of the phenomenon and argued that habitual associations of ideas are responsible for many philosophical and religious misunderstandings. See Martin Kallich, The Association of Ideas and Critical Theory in Eighteenth-Century England (The Hague: Mouton, 1970). See also Daston, Classical Probability, 196-7, for the connection between the theories of the association of ideas and of classical probability.

38 Treatise, 11.

39 FR, 50.
experience is made possible by the habitual association of like ideas retained in memory and generalized.⁴⁰ Campbell said:

There is a variety of relations to be found in things, by which they are connected. Such are, among several others, resemblance, identity, equality, contrariety, cause and effect, concomitancy, vicinity in time or place. These we become acquainted with by experience; and they prove, by means of association, the source of various combinations of ideas.⁴¹

Campbell clearly suggested that these relations exist objectively in the external world, and are learned and imitated by the mind. This differentiated his associational psychology from Hume's, which could make no claims concerning the reality represented by habitual mental constructs. Campbell argued that the connections between things and the signs that represent them are artificial and arbitrary, but that the associations among things themselves are real and natural. Although this may seem a minor difference (in that it still allows them both to be "associationists"), it is, as we shall see later, a difference of considerable philosophic import.

Campbell borrowed important epistemological concepts from Hume, but not without significant qualification. He acknowledged that the mind customarily confuses the artificial relations that subsist between things and their signs and between signs and other signs with the natural relations that subsist among real things.⁴² Such an acknowledgement implicitly recognized the value of Hume's work in sorting out these confusions. Campbell even reminded his divinity students of "the laws of association in our ideas" when discussing the

⁴⁰PR, 48.
⁴¹PR, 258.
⁴²PR, 258.
problems of sermon composition, thereby recognizing the value of philosophical enquiry in the religious as well as the secular domain.

Nevertheless, Campbell believed that the principles of association cannot, by themselves, sufficiently account for the operations of the human mind. They certainly help explain the principles of rhetoric, but they cannot support Campbell's system of philosophic and religious apology, primarily because they cannot justify his theory of evidence. In his enthusiasm to prove Campbell's likeness to Hume, Lloyd Bitzer has failed to note the significant non-Humean concepts in Campbell's theory of the mind, one of the most important of which concerned the faculties or innate powers of the human mind.

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Although Hume occasionally referred to the faculties of the human mind, the concept of faculties was foreign to his epistemology. His insistence that the only demonstrable difference between sensations, memories and imaginings is their relative degree of vivacity, made the concept of faculties redundant. Reid, in contrast, constructed his entire epistemology on the premise that there are distinct, original, though inexplicable faculties or powers in the human mind.\footnote{LSTPE, 399-400.}

\textit{See, for example, PR, lxxiii.}

\textit{This is most apparent in Reid's Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man.} Nearly every essay accounted for a different inherent power or faculty in the human mind. Reid defined the faculties as "those powers of the mind which are original and natural, and which make a part of the constitution of the mind" (\textit{WTR}, 1:221). Though Reid's "train of thought" (\textit{WTR}, 1:379-88) bore some resemblance to the theory of the association of ideas, he insisted on seeing even this as the product of
faculties are appropriate to his conception of an active and self-willing mind, while Hume's associations of ideas correspond to his notion of a passive mind whose basic operating principles are beyond the influence of the will.\textsuperscript{46} Campbell's own position lay somewhere between Hume's and Reid's. Sometimes, like Hume, he seems to have differentiated the mental powers only by their degree of vivacity:

A passion is most strongly excited by sensation. . . . Next to the influence of sense is that of memory, the effect of which upon passion, if the fact be recent, and remembered distinctly and circumstantially, is almost equal. Next to the influence of memory is that of imagination; by which is here solely meant the faculty of apprehending what is neither perceived by the senses, nor remembered.\textsuperscript{47}

Campbell agreed with Hume that, "sense invariably makes a stronger impression than memory, and memory a stronger than imagination," though his rhetorical concerns forced him to make much of the exceptions, particularly the suasive efficacy of the imaginative faculty.\textsuperscript{48} But Campbell did not distinguish between the mental powers merely by their degree of vivacity.\textsuperscript{49} Moreover, he repudiated Hume's notion that belief is nothing more than the liveliness of ideas.\textsuperscript{50} Like Reid, he viewed an active, rather than a passive, mind (see \textit{WTR}, 1:388). Kallich, \textit{The Association of Ideas}, 235, sees Reid as a firm anti-associationist.

\textsuperscript{46}See John Herman Randall, \textit{The Career of Philosophy from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment} (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 923.

\textsuperscript{47}\textit{PR}, 81.

\textsuperscript{48}\textit{PR}, 137.

\textsuperscript{49}Bitzer denies that Campbell was a faculty psychologist, implying that this would be incompatible with being an associationist (diss., 11). He makes too much of Campbell's use of Hume's notion of vivacity (see especially p. 65). Unfortunately, Bitzer's thesis centres on the claim that Campbell borrowed the concept of "vivacity" from Hume. While this is partly true, it does not mean that Campbell's whole epistemology depended on vivacity to the degree that Humes's did.
the faculties as original and unaccountable powers of the mind, and as important original sources of evidence and belief. We have already noted, as an example, that Campbell's rhetorical philosophy appealed to the individual faculties of the mind in order to explain how the various types of classical discourse influence the will.\textsuperscript{51} But Campbell's relationship to Hume was, as usual, complex.

The senses [said Campbell], both external and internal, are the original inlets of perception. They inform the mind of the facts, which in the present instant are situated within the sphere of their activity, and no sooner discharge their office in any particular instance than the articles of information exhibited by them are devolved on the memory. Remembrance instantly succeeds sensation, insomuch that the memory becomes the sole repository of the knowledge received from sense; knowledge which, without this repository, would be as instantaneously lost as it is gotten, and could be of no service to the mind. Our sensations would be no better than the fleeting pictures of a moving object on a camera obscura, which leave not the least vestige behind them. Memory, therefore, is the only original voucher extant of those past realities for which we had once the evidence of sense.\textsuperscript{52}

Echoes of Hume are apparent throughout this passage. The external sense corresponds roughly to Hume's "sensation" and the internal to Hume's

\textsuperscript{50}PR, 73. Campbell here cited Reid's Inquiry. All the Aberdonians denied Hume's equation of belief with vivacity; see, for example, WTR, 1:183. Within the Aberdeen Philosophical Society, John Farquhar chastised Hume for not seeing the fundamental differences between such mental activities as sense perception, memory, and imagination (AUL MS 3107/1/3, pp. 35-7).

\textsuperscript{51}PR, 1, and lxxiii. See also PR, book 1, chapter VII, and LSTPE, 374. Gerard also argued that the purpose of oratory is to convince the understanding, please the imagination, move the passions, and persuade the will (AUL MS K 174, p. 181). H. Lewis Ulman notes that Campbell's appeal to all the faculties set him apart from Locke who thought that discourse ought to address only the understanding (diss., 77). Bitzer's recent introduction to The Philosophy of Rhetoric implies that Campbell was using the faculties as a convenient fiction (PR, xxii). But in the same place Bitzer correctly suggests that Campbell's use of the faculties was not always consistent, which may imply that they were sometimes more than mere fictions.

\textsuperscript{52}PR, 47.
"reflection". Nevertheless, the distinctness and importance of each individual faculty remains clear.

The faculties were important to Campbell and the Aberdonians for a number of reasons. First of all, they constituted those "principles in our nature, which, when properly addressed and managed, give no inconsiderable aid to reason in promoting belief." This had obvious significance for the orator, but, on a more fundamental level, it indicates that Campbell's notion of belief was intricately linked to his discussion of the various mental powers. Thus the faculties were more than convenient fictions; they constituted a crucial line of defence against Hume's attack on human knowledge and belief. Belief, insisted the Aberdonians, must be more than mere vivacity of feeling. And considering that Campbell addressed his rhetorical theory primarily to Christian ministers, the faculties must necessarily have played a large role in his conception of religious apology.

How many distinct and irreducible powers of the mind did Campbell identify? The Philosophy of Rhetoric clearly specifies the understanding, memory, imagination and the passions. The will also appears to be an original power of the mind, though, in the context of Campbell's rhetoric, it is that which is influenced by the other faculties. Campbell probably also considered the senses (external and internal) to be original faculties, though these were not particularly

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53PR, 71.

54Campbell provided a rather complex analogy of all these powers and their literary implications: the first is sense, whose "first-born and heir" is memory, who in turn is the parent of experience, and who again is the father of sisters probability and plausibility, the first by the mother reason, and the second by the mother fancy (PR, 85).
important to his rhetorical theory.\textsuperscript{55} The imagination, which has virtually unlimited powers of combining and shaping ideas, probably received the most attention in \textit{The Philosophy of Rhetoric}. This faculty, also known as the "fancy" or the "creative faculty", is most effectively influenced by the principle of vivacity, that is, "by exhibiting to it a lively and beautiful representation of a suitable object."\textsuperscript{56} Campbell and his contemporaries knew that strong and lively ideas are essential to Christian persuasion, but they were also convinced that ideas alone are ineffective if they are not directed to the appropriate passions. "If it is the fancy," said Campbell, "which bestows brilliancy on our ideas, if it is memory which gives them stability, passion doth more, it animates them."\textsuperscript{57} Pride, self-love, patriotism and pity are among those passions which most effectively move an audience to action. Campbell clearly believed that the passions are positive aspects of human nature, and indispensable tools of pastoral influence. But he also knew that the passions are capable of great mischief if not properly guided. Campbell was therefore profoundly interested in working out the proper relationship between the passions and the understanding, or what was commonly called reason.

\textsuperscript{55}In a later manuscript, Campbell named only three faculties, memory, judgment, and imagination; AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page.

\textsuperscript{56}\textit{PR}, 3. Campbell's imaginative faculty is primarily of interest in relation to his rhetorical theory, and has already been extensively treated by modern rhetoricians. Therefore, I will say very little about it.

\textsuperscript{57}\textit{PR}, 77. See also Gerard, \textit{Pastoral Care}, 294. All of the Scottish moderates agreed with Hume that the passions are the mainspring of human motivation (Dwyer, \textit{Virtuous Discourse}, 58).
Campbell, like his contemporaries, did not always clearly differentiate the understanding from reason and judgment. Reid distinguished judgment from reasoning by defining it as a simple power of affirming or denying the truth of fundamental propositions and of recognizing self-evident premises, and thereby made it equivalent to common sense perception. Reasoning, he said, is the ability to "draw conclusions that are not self-evident from those that are." \(^{29}\) Campbell likewise thought that reason works only from established premises or foundations, \(^{39}\) and that its primary task is to compare ideas in the Lockean sense and to consider the weight and validity of evidence. The Aberdonians applied the term "understanding" to all of these powers combined, that is, to the whole power of thinking, and indeed to all of the mental powers besides sense, memory, imagination, passion and will. For Campbell then, the understanding was the same as the power of intellect, which handles all abstract ideas and general notions. \(^{60}\) The eighteenth-century contest between the understanding and the passions was made all the more confusing by the ambiguous use of terms. "Reason" was sometimes used in Reid's narrowly-defined sense, but was often employed in a more comprehensive sense that ought to have been reserved for the term "understanding".

\(^{29}\)WTR, 1:425; see also 423. Reid's Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man cites the following faculties: perception (which includes sensation), consciousness, memory, conception (which includes imagination), abstraction, judgment, reasoning and taste. Reid also appears to have included belief, the will, and moral perception as original faculties.

\(^{39}\)PR, 71n.

\(^{60}\)PR, 35-6n. See also Gerard's Pastoral Care, 241 and 272.
Reason (in the broad sense) had traditionally been king of the mental realm, though eighteenth-century empiricists tended to reduce the relative importance of reason in most human activities, and to circumscribe its meaning. The most obvious proponent of this trend was Hume, who placed severe limits on the ability of reason (in any sense) to discover knowledge and moral values. Campbell, as an anatomist of the human mind, was also aware of the real limitations of the role of reason in human affairs. Reason, in either the broad or the narrow sense, is not itself a source of knowledge. Campbell declared that the far greater part of the natural knowledge with which a man of science is acquainted, he neither did derive, nor by any exertion whatever could derive, from his mental powers; but that he has gotten it by information from without; and that the only legitimate application of the intellectual faculty was, to enable him to apprehend the facts, and canvass the evidence.  

He contrasted his empirical stance to those who have come to be called rationalists:

With them, reason is held the standard of truth; whereas it is, primarily, no more than the test or the touchstone of evidence, and in a secondary sense only the standard of truth. Now the difference between these two, however little it may appear on a superficial view, is very great.  

Here Campbell was beginning to use reason in its narrower signification. He still categorically denied that reason, even in its broadest sense, is an all-sufficient source of knowledge. He also denied that reason can or even ought to determine ends of action. And, like Hume, he

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61 Sermon, 1:343.

62 FG, 1:2–3. Campbell immediately went on to say that reason is necessary to apprehend the evidence given by God to prove his revelation. Alexander Gerard also thought that even Locke had overrated the abilities of reason, and therefore limited reason in the same manner that Hume had (Essay on Genius, 33–4 and 282).

63 DM, 249.
argued that a strong passion can only be overcome by another strong passion, or by the destruction of the belief which originally excited the passion. Hume might have summed up his views on reason and the passions as follows: "passion is the mover to action, reason is the guide." The words, in fact, are Campbell's. As he explained to his divinity students:

To make me believe, it is enough to shew me that things are so; to make me act, it is necessary to shew that the action will answer some end. That can never be an end to me, which gratifies no passion or affection in my nature. In order to persuade, it is always necessary to move the passions. Passion is the mover to action, reason is the guide. Good is the object of the will, truth is the object of the understanding. It is only through the passions, affections and sentiments of the heart, that the will is to be reached.

Furthermore, Campbell thought that "mens [sic] conduct is influenced more by passion than by cool reflection," and that "the bulk of mankind are more influenced by their passions, in forming their opinions, than by reason." But Campbell, unlike Hume, did not have to depend exclusively on a narrowly-defined reason to stand against the desires of the passions. His broader conception of the understanding (which Hume did not seem to share) included a power of judging the validity of fundamental moral and metaphysical propositions. This power of common sense judgment will be described more fully below.

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64PR, 93.
65PR, 78.
66LSTPR, 530-1. The first sentence of this quotation tends to over-simplify Campbell's notion of belief. This will be discussed below.
67Sermons, 2:292 and 314.
Despite the limitations which he placed on the more narrowly-defined power of reason, Campbell believed that the understanding (which includes reason as one of its components) is the chief safeguard against the dangerous influences of the passions. He warned his readers that "the understanding is too generally the dupe of the passions."  

Virtue, he thought, is too important to be considered a mere passion.  

In Campbell's system the understanding remains the chief decision-maker.  

This prerogative the intellect has above all the other faculties, that whether it be or be not immediately addressed by the speaker, it must be regarded by him either ultimately or subordinately; ultimately, when the direct purpose of the discourse is information or conviction; subordinately, when the end is pleasure, emotion, or persuasion.  

Belief, upon which passions themselves are often founded, is primarily swayed by information and argument, which belong in the realm of the understanding. Understanding, to bring about conviction, must be supplemented by imagination, memory and the passions, but, "these are not the supplanters of reason [in the broader sense], or even rivals in her sway; they are her handmaids, by whose ministry she is enabled to usher truth into the heart, and procure it there a favourable reception."  

This passage may have been meant to stand in opposition to Hume's famous dictum that "reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them."  

Campbell agreed with Hume that the passions are  

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"Sermons, 1:392.

"PR, 80.

"PR, 216.

"PR, 72.

"Treatise, 415."
absolutely necessary to motivate the will, and that the intellect is virtually powerless to direct activity towards desirable ends without their aid. Nevertheless, he put considerably more emphasis on the ability of the intellect to discover and reveal to the passions valuable and desirable ends. The passions were not to be conquered, but were to be directed to higher purposes by the God-given intellectual faculty.\(^{73}\)

Campbell's most important philosophical contribution to the delineation of the mental faculties was his treatment of memory. All knowledge, claimed Campbell, depends upon the veracity of memory. Memory is fundamental to all evidence and belief, and is the very source of experience.\(^{74}\) Even mathematical reasoning, which appears to be incontrovertible, often depends upon a long series of proofs and therefore relies on the faculty of memory to bring about conviction in the mind.\(^{75}\)

In spite of the pride of mathesis [said Campbell], no demonstration whatever can produce, or reasonably ought to produce, a higher degree of certainty than that which results from the vivid representations of memory, on which the other is obliged to lean.\(^{76}\)

\(^{73}\) PR, 4 and 77. Campbell equated the rise of civilization with the gradual triumph of reason over the human passions (such as the desire for revenge); AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page. Likewise, it is the continued influence of the passions (such as friendship, enmity, ambition and greed) that leads to most modern philosophical and religious conflicts; "The great source of the unfairness of our reasonings and of the unsuccessfulness of our enquiries is the free admission of the passions into all the disquisitions in which we enter." The passions cloud the understanding and render it "incapable of perceiving distinctly its object" (AUL MS 655, un-numbered page). In comparing Hume to Campbell, Bitzer overemphasizes the non-rationality of Campbell's ends (diss., 110-11).

\(^{74}\) PR, 48.

\(^{75}\) PR, 58.

\(^{76}\) PR, 59.
Ultimately, "all the particular truths about which we are conversant, are properly historical, and compose the furniture of memory." 77 As an empirical philosopher, Campbell was well aware that only memory can survey all of the evidence upon which any factual claim is based. He knew that his whole apologetic system depended upon the accumulation of natural and historical evidences for which only memory can vouch.

Memory was therefore essential to Campbell's conception of belief. But on the matter of belief he again encountered his long-time friendly adversary. Hume thought that memory is different from sense perception and imagination in nothing but degree, that is, in the liveliness of the experience. Belief, likewise, is nothing more than the degree of vivacity with which we perceive an object. Hume declared that "we must not be contented with saying, that the vividness of the idea produces the belief: We must maintain that they are individually the same." 78 Ultimately, belief cannot be philosophically differentiated from a mere feeling. With these claims Campbell the empirical philosopher took issue, not because he thought that the veracity of memory or of belief can be empirically demonstrated, but because moral reasoning and its conclusions depend entirely on these mental powers. In Campbell's view (assuming that he did not ascribe to Hume evil intentions), Hume had not done enough to safeguard the pre-eminence of memory as a foundation for empirical knowledge, and ultimately for belief. Experience without memory is a meaningless concept. The value of belief was similarly underrated by Hume. "I will not say with a late subtle metaphysician,"

77PR, 260.

"Treatise, 116.
remarked Campbell, "that 'Belief consisteth in the liveliness of our ideas.' That this doctrine is erroneous, it would be quite foreign to my purpose to attempt here to evince." Campbell salvaged part of Hume's theory by declaring:

Thus much however is undubitable, that belief commonly enlivens our ideas; and that lively ideas have a stronger influence than faint ideas to induce belief. But so far are these two from being coincident, that even this connexion between them, though common, is not necessary. Vivacity of ideas is not always accompanied with faith, nor is faith always able to produce vivacity.\(^7\)

Repetition, it is true, "enlivens the remembrance, and so strengthens the conviction," but it does not create conviction.\(^8\) Thus belief is influenced by vivacity, but it is by no means the same as vivacity.\(^9\)

The Aberdonians all agreed that belief is more than a feeling, and that its importance transcends the ability of moral philosophers to define its nature precisely. It has an unaccountable though indispensable influence on the human soul. The nature of this unaccountable influence, and its relation to memory will be discussed later in this chapter. Its relation to the problem of religious faith will be

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\(^7\)PR, 73. See similar statements in James Beattie, Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, in Opposition to Sophistry and Scepticism (Edinburgh: William Creech, 1776), 58, and WTR, 1:107 and 358.

\(^8\)PR, 73.

\(^9\)PR, 60.

\(^2\)Lloyd Bitzer has attempted to minimize this difference between Hume and Campbell (diss., 76-7) partly because his thesis depends on Campbell borrowing the "lively idea" from Hume. But he is mistaken to minimize what will turn out to be a very crucial difference. This does not seriously undermine Bitzer's argument, for Campbell agreed with Hume that the "lively idea" is a necessary tool for influencing an audience; the "lively idea" does not need to be the same as belief to accomplish this.
discussed in another chapter. First we must deal with the remainder of the accountable aspects of belief.

We can already see that Campbell thought Hume had misunderstood the psychology of belief. Hume had underestimated the crucial role played by all the irreducible powers or faculties of the human mind in establishing belief and influencing the will. Although the passions are indeed the primary movers of the will, they are directionless and therefore impotent without the cautious investigations of the understanding, the enlivening powers of the imagination, and the organizing and verifying abilities of the memory. All of these are distinct and original powers, and are considerably more than mere degrees of liveliness or complexity. Unlike Hume, Campbell was a faculty psychologist. Campbell's notion of belief, and ultimately his Christian apologia, were clearly influenced by contemporary developments in the science of human psychology. He argued (not unlike Hume) that we cannot rationally control our belief or lack of belief in abstract propositions such as religious doctrines. We cannot, in other words, will our belief. In this sense, belief is indeed a feeling and beyond the control of reason. As such, our beliefs demand toleration from other minds. But Campbell also argued that we have considerable freedom to decide, by means of our reasoning powers, what information to gather and present to the judgment of belief. Reason, though it cannot act as a judge, has all the powers of an advocate. It can properly be said, therefore, that

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3Campbell addressed this problem most fully in the last part of his "Defence" manuscript, AUL MS 655.
probability results from evidence, and begets belief. Belief invigorates our ideas. Belief raised to the highest becomes certainty. Certainty flows . . . from the force of the evidence, real or apparent, that is produced.**

As much as belief is a rational problem, and within the realm of our will, so also is it a problem of evidence. It is time, then, to consider Campbell's theory of evidence.

4

Campbell's discussion of evidence is, appropriately, the heart of his contribution to eighteenth-century philosophy.*** His fellow Aberdonians were also deeply interested in problems of evidence.**** Campbell devoted a considerable portion of the first book of The Philosophy of Rhetoric to systematically detailing the nature, types, and sources of evidence. He believed that a rhetorician, in order to effectively understand how and why an audience comes to be persuaded, has to appreciate the relationship between evidence and human nature. His philosophy of human nature allowed him to bridge the distance between the discovery and the communication of truth, and thus heal the classical breach between logic and rhetoric.***** Campbell also treated

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**PR. 81.

***His contemporaries thought so too. The author of the biography of Campbell, in George Gleig's Supplement to the Third Edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica considered Campbell's discussion of evidence to be the most important part of The Philosophy of Rhetoric, and suggested that it was the best such discussion in existence (1:149).

****John Stewart, the Marischal professor of mathematics, devoted almost all of his Aberdeen Philosophical Society discourses to the problems of evidence; see Minutes, table A-4. Reid said: "To believe without evidence is a weakness which every man is concerned to avoid . . . Nor is it in a man's power to believe anything longer than he thinks he has evidence" (WTR, 1:328).
the problem of evidence in his apologetic works, most notably in the *Dissertation on Miracles*. Although his delineation of evidence was not particularly original (except, as we shall see, in the matter of testimony), it nicely encapsulated the eighteenth-century understanding of the subject. This encapsulation is schematically represented in figure II.

Campbell divided evidence into two major types, intuitive and deductive.** He distinguished the two by the following criteria:

> Logical truth consisteth in the conformity of our conceptions to their archetypes in the nature of things. This conformity is perceived by the mind, either immediately on a bare attention to the ideas under review, or mediately by a comparison of these with other related ideas. Evidence of the former kind is called intuitive; of the latter, deductive."**

Intuitive evidence, argued Campbell, is convincing by its mere appearance. Its effect on the mind's power of judgment is "natural, original, and unaccountable,"*** and, as such, infallible. Campbell subdivided intuitive evidence according to its three sources, that is, evidence from intellection, consciousness and common sense. Pure

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**"The ancient world had assumed a sharp discontinuity between logic and rhetoric, considering one the realm of certainty and the other the realm of opinion. Even until Locke's time, rhetoric was seen as a hindrance to the discovery of truth (Shapiro, *Probability and Certainty*, 6 and chap. VII). Campbell's view of human nature and of evidence made such a division meaningless, and thus gave his rhetoric its radical flavour.

***Locke divided knowledge into intuitive and demonstrative, but insisted on describing both as comparisons of ideas (*Essay*, 530–1). Campbell, in contrast, thought that evidence was intuitive precisely because it did not require a comparison of ideas. Campbell's division is more akin to Reid's distinction between "intuitive judgments" (i.e., common sense judgments) and "discursive judgments", the latter of which he divided into demonstrative and probable reasoning (*MTR*, 1:475–6).

**PR, 35.

***PR, 42.
Figure II: Campbell's Theory of Evidence

I. INTUITIVE EVIDENCE

- natural, original, and unaccountable
- not subject to reason
- self-evident and infallible
- immediately perceived

1. Pure Intellection
   - metaphysical truths
   - mathematical axioms

2. Consciousness
   - physical truths (sensations)
   - knowledge of self-existence

3. Common Sense
   - moral truths (instinctive)
   - basis of all moral (probable) knowledge

II. DEDUCTIVE EVIDENCE

- subject to reason
- mediately perceived by a comparison of ideas

1. Demonstrative
   (Scientific)
   - invariable (necessary)
   - relations of general ideas
   - based upon pure intellection
   - mathematical demonstrations
   - logical

2. Moral
   - contingent (not necessary)
   - relations of particular facts
   - probable (degrees of certainty)
   - rhetorical

   i. Experience
   - customary or habitual associations of ideas

   ii. Analogy
   - indirect experience
   - weakens in proportion to remoteness of resemblance

   iii. Testimony
   - often antecedent to personal experience
   - primary source of particular facts

   iv. Calculation of Chances
   - mixture of demonstrative and moral evidence
intellection allows us to immediately recognize the necessary and
universal relations among abstract ideas, by which Campbell meant simple
mathematical axioms and definitions. Evidence from consciousness, that
is, our present feelings, sensations and passions, gives us infallible
information concerning the operations of our own minds. It accounts for
the "perfect assurance that [every person] hath of his own existence."91
Finally, evidence from common sense provides us with original and
fundamental principles for moral reasoning.

All reasoning [argued Campbell] necessarily supposes that there are
certain principles in which we must acquiesce, and beyond which we
cannot go—principles clearly discernible by their own light, which
can derive no additional evidence from any thing besides.92

Campbell's philosophy of Common Sense, which is a subject of both
historical and historiographical interest, will be discussed in greater
detail later in this chapter. For the moment, we may note

that axioms of this last kind are as essential to moral reasoning,
to all deductions concerning life and existence, as those of the
first kind are to the sciences of arithmetic and geometry. Perhaps
it will appear afterwards that, without the aid of some of them,
these sciences themselves would be utterly inaccessible to us.93

Deductive evidence, unlike intuitive evidence, cannot be
immediately perceived, and must therefore be proven either logically or
factually. It falls within the realm of reason because it does not
concern itself with fundamental premises, and because it convinces only
by a comparison of ideas.

All rational or deductive evidence [said Campbell] is derived from
one or other of these two sources: from the invariable properties

91PR, 37. Reid defined "consciousness" in exactly the same way
(WTR, 1:222).
92PR, 42.
93PR, 42.
or relations of general ideas; or from the actual, though perhaps
variable connexions subsisting among things."**

The first of these types of evidence Campbell called demonstrative and
the second moral. Demonstrative evidence concerns the abstract and
invariable relations of ideas. It "is built on pure intellection, and
consisteth in an uninterrupted series of axioms," and is capable of
absolute proof in that the opposite of such a proof is not conceivable.
It "is solely conversant about number and extension, and about those
other qualities which are measurable by these."** Although its
conclusions are absolute, its authority is limited to mathematical and
geometrical demonstrations.

Moral evidence (which Reid called probable evidence), is concerned
only with matters of fact, that is, with the actual but contingent
relations among things. It is

founded on the principles we have from consciousness and common
sense, improved by experience; and as it proceeds on this general
presumption or moral axiom, that the course of nature in time to
come will be similar to what it hath been hitherto, it decides, in
regard to particulars, concerning the future from the past, and
concerning things unknown from things familiar to us."**

Moral evidence concerns things that are probably but not necessarily
ture, that is, things whose contraries are conceivable and not
necessarily absurd. Mathematical demonstration is, therefore,
inappropriate in this realm."** Moral evidence is important because

all the truths which constitute science, which give exercise to
reason, and are discovered by philosophy, are general; all our

**PR, 43.

**PR, 43.

**PR, 43.

"AUL MS 650, section II."
ideas, in the strictest sense of the word, are particular. All the
particular truths about which we are conversant, are properly
historical, and compose the furniture of memory."**

Campbell provided such examples as "'Caesar overcame Pompey'" and "'The
sun will rise to-morrow'."** These sound remarkably like the examples
in Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Hume divided human
knowledge into two kinds, "relations of ideas" and "matters of fact",
the first being demonstratively certain mathematical relations and the
second being exemplified by the following:

_that the sun will not rise to-morrow_ is no less intelligible a
proposition, and implies no more contradiction, than the
affirmation, _that it will rise_. We should in vain, therefore,
attempt to demonstrate its falsehood. Were it demonstratively
false, it would imply a contradiction, and could never be
distinctly conceived by the mind."***

The similarity of examples and argument is too close to be coincidental.
Clearly Campbell's "moral evidence" corresponds closely to Hume's
"matters of fact". Campbell and Hume were considerably less interested
in demonstrative evidence than in moral evidence, for, as Campbell said,
"On a survey of the whole, it seems indubitable, that if the former is
infinitely superior in point of authority, the latter no less excels in
point of importance."**** Hume would have agreed with Campbell that "the
proper province of rhetoric is the second, or moral evidence; for to the
second belong all decisions concerning fact, and things without us."*****
Thus Campbell and Hume generally agreed on the structure and purpose of

***PR, 260.

**PR, 44.

**Enquiries, 25-6.

***PR, 46.

****PR, 43.
deductive evidence. They agreed that moral evidence is the broadest field of human inquiry, but that its evidences are only highly probable at best. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Hume's scepticism implicitly rejected Campbell's category of intuitive evidence, upon the premises of which Campbell thought all deductive evidence is based. This difference will prove crucial, as we shall see.

Moral evidence is the centrepiece of Campbell's examination of evidence. It is also the branch of evidence most laden with difficulties. Whereas demonstrative evidence allows no contrary proofs and no degrees of probability, the case is far otherwise with moral evidence, which is of a complex nature, which admits degrees, which is almost always combated by opposite proofs, and these, though perhaps lower in degree, as truly of the nature of proof and evidence as those whereby they are opposed. The probability, on the whole ... lies in the proportion which the contrary proofs, upon comparison, bear to one another; a proportion which, in complicated cases, it is often difficult, and sometimes even impossible, to ascertain. The speakers, there are, on the opposite sides have each real evidence to insist on.\textsuperscript{103}

Campbell held no illusions as to the difficulties endemic to moral evidence, upon which his world-view and religion rested. That is why, in his practical philosophy, he devoted considerable energy to, on the one hand, agreeing with Hume as to the considerable obstacles encountered by the empirical apologist, but, on the other hand, denying that these obstacles are rationally insurmountable.\textsuperscript{104}

Campbell divided moral evidence into three (or possibly four) types, according to the various sources from which it is derived, which are experience, analogy, testimony, and the calculation of chances.

\textsuperscript{103}PR, 276.

\textsuperscript{104}See chapter five, below.
This last type, said Campbell, is really an application of demonstrative or mathematical evidence to problems of moral evidence. Campbell's remarks on experience, the first type of moral evidence, demonstrate that he stood firmly within the eighteenth century's empirical camp. He used the language of moral probabilities and certainties based on the accumulation of empirical evidences that had been developed by late seventeenth-century Latitudinarians. But Campbell was more up-to-date in his psychology. Like Hume, he equated experience with the observed uniformity of cause and effect in nature. And, like Hume, he described experience as no different than the habitual association of ideas in the mind. In psychological terms, moral certainty is the same as uniform experience. Unlike Hume, however, Campbell emphasized the importance of the faculty of memory in organizing and vouching for the reliability of sense experiences. Campbell considered experience to be, "if not the foundation, at least the criterion of all moral reasoning whatever," including natural history, natural theology and psychology. Even in the matter of interpreting Scripture, he claimed, we must keep it as a rule, that "in every question relating to fact, where experience may be had, our safest recourse is to experience." Campbell argued that analogy, the second

105 See Van Leeuwen's description of Tillotson's view of evidence, which was remarkably like Campbell's (The Problem of Certainty, 39).

106 PR, 51.

107 PR, 50. Campbell also noted that in this operation, the mind is entirely passive (PR, 49).

108 PR, 52.

109 FG, 1:22. See also Sermons, 1:343.
source of moral evidence, is merely a weaker form of experience, and constitutes the human habit of reasoning from that which is known to that which is unknown. It is reliable only in proportion to the likeness between the thing observed and the thing of which we have prior experience." Its value in Christian apology had been amply demonstrated by Bishop Butler.

Campbell gave particular attention to testimony, the third source of moral evidence. His theory of testimony was his most original contribution to the eighteenth-century conception of evidence. It was foundational to the Dissertation on Miracles, and appeared again in more philosophical garb in The Philosophy of Rhetoric. It also appeared in The Four Gospels, for "the light by which the mental eye is informed comes also from without, and consists chiefly in testimony, human or divine."

Campbell defined testimony as "a serious intimation from another, of any fact or observation, as being what he remembers to have seen or heard or experienced."

Testimony, he argued, is a necessary supplement to the general truths derived from our personal experience, for it gives us information concerning any number of particular facts which we have not ourselves experienced. "Testimony, therefore, is the

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"PR, 53. Compare this to Reid's similar description of analogy (WTR, 1:236-8).

"FG, 1:4. Reid had similar things to say about testimony (e.g. WTR, 1:482), though the brevity of his remarks suggests that he deferred to Campbell on this matter. C.A.J. Coady has credited Reid with a theory of testimony that I think properly belongs to Campbell; see Coady's essay "Reid on Testimony," in The Philosophy of Thomas Reid, ed. Melvin Dalgarno and Eric Matthews (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 225-46, which entirely ignores Campbell and his priority in time.

"PR, 55."
foundation of history, which is occupied about individuals. "113 In fact, it often carries greater authority concerning particular facts than the whole weight of experience."114 Campbell was once again thinking of Hume, who had given testimony rough treatment not only in the essay "Of Miracles," but also in the Treatise of Human Nature.115 Hume had argued that testimonial claims cannot be believed if they contradict the laws of nature which are based on uniform and invariable experience. This argument made Christian miracles necessarily unbelievable, and threatened to undermine empirical Christian apology. Campbell defied Hume, first on purely philosophical grounds, by giving testimony a special status compared to experience. He argued that a single reliable piece of testimony (such as a miracle claim) can overturn even uniform experience to the contrary.116 There is some value to Hume's sceptical argument, thought Campbell, but

the utmost in regard to [it] . . . that can be affirmed with truth, is that the evidence of testimony is to be considered as strictly logical, no further than human veracity in general, or the veracity of witnessess of such a character, and in such circumstances in particular, is supported, or perhaps more properly, hath not been refuted, by experience. But that testimony, antecedently to experience, hath a natural influence on belief, is undeniable.117

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113PR, 54-5. See also Sermons, 1:344.
114PR, 54.
115"No weakness of human nature is more universal and conspicuous than what we commonly call CREDULITY, or a too easy faith in the testimony of others" (Treatise, 112).
116PR, 55. Their debate over miracles is more fully treated in chapter five, sections 1 and 2.
117PR, 54. A little further down, Campbell added: "we are taught to consider many attendant circumstances, which serve either to corroborate or to invalidate its evidence. The reputation of the attester, his manner of address, the nature of the fact attested, the occasion of giving the testimony, the possible or probable design in
Campbell was here arguing from human nature, in which he saw both a
natural inclination to tell the truth and a natural principle of
sympathy which supported the inherent reliability of testimony."18
Perhaps Campbell thought that, in this particular instance, Hume had
overlooked the empirically-observed function of sympathy in human
relations, which had nevertheless found a place in his moral theory.
Furthermore, Hume had failed to realize the sheer inadequacy of personal
experience not informed by the enlarged views of testimony."19 We can
no more reject the testimony of reliable witnesses concerning particular
facts than we can the myriad of individual testimonies that have
combined to establish the general laws of nature in the first place.
Campbell may have thought that he had defeated the sceptic at his own
game by suggesting that a single positive testimonial claim is
inherently more believable than the uniformity of nature, which, after
all, is only a fiction of the human mind."20

Campbell's epistemological stance against Hume, and ultimately his
whole Christian apology, rested on an important set of assumptions. He
assumed that the general reliability of testimony, like memory, is
giving it, the disposition of the hearers to whom it was given, and
several other circumstances, have all considerable influence in fixing
the degree of credibility" (PR, 55); cf. Locke, Essay, 656. In The Four
Gospels, Campbell noted that a man's known prejudices will either
detract from or add to the reliability of his testimony depending on
whether they are favourable or unfavourable to the claim under
consideration (FG, 1:507). None of these considerations, however,
invalidate the essential believability of human testimony.

18Bevilacqua, "Philosophical Origins," 10. See also Bator, "The

19DM, 37-46.

20Bitzer has seriously underestimated the difference between Hume
and Campbell on the matter of testimony, which Bitzer calls a "mild
controversy" (diss., 160).
fundamental to human knowledge, but is beyond the realm of empirical demonstration. Testimony, said Campbell,

resembles memory; for though the defects and misrepresentations of memory are corrected by experience, yet that this faculty hath an innate evidence of its own we know from this, that if we had not previously given an implicit faith to memory, we had never been able to acquire experience.'21

Testimony and memory share a fundamental problem. We can neither give logical reasons for our faith in them nor function without them. One of Campbell's main arguments in the Dissertation on Miracles is that human nature is designed to implicitly believe testimony, and learns scepticism only with time and experience. Campbell charged Hume with undermining the grounds of all testimony, and consequently of all moral reasoning, by reversing this natural order. To accept Hume's scepticism concerning the believability of testimony concerning miracles,'22 is to put all historical testimony into jeopardy. The natural human belief in testimony is the foundation of all moral evidence and therefore of all knowledge concerning particular facts. In order to avoid the unacceptable consequences of Hume's scepticism, Campbell was forced to posit a mechanism in human nature capable of equating our natural propensity to believe testimony with our need for metaphysical and moral truth. Humanity, he implicitly argued, needs to believe that the Creator does not deceive his creatures with regard to their fundamental sources of knowledge.'23

'21PB, 54.

'22See chapter five, below.

'23Alexander Gerard clearly struggled with the same problem; see his Sermons, 2 vols. (London: Charles Dilly, 1780-82), 1:360, and Dissertations, 42 and 44.
As we have already noted, Campbell argued that all knowledge depends on the veracity of memory, demonstrative evidence no less than moral, and that moral evidence is therefore not inferior to demonstrative evidence. While both Hume and Campbell considered themselves to be firm empiricists, Campbell's empiricism paid special attention to the mechanisms in human psychology that caused people to trust their experience, their memories and the testimony of others. The reliability of these mechanisms cannot be guaranteed by experience simply because they are the very sources of experience. How then did Campbell guarantee the veracity of memory and testimony, which are fundamental to all knowledge? His solution, which brought him closer to his Aberdeen colleagues and set him most clearly apart from Hume, was the philosophy of Common Sense.

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The question of Campbell's relation to Common Sense philosophy has not been carefully examined. It has received only limited treatment by modern rhetoricians,\(^1\) and almost no consideration by historians of philosophy. S.A. Grave specifically excluded Campbell from his analysis.

\(^1\)Bitzer, in his well-supported dissertation, has minimized Campbell's link to Reid and Common Sense. Dennis R. Bormann has vigorously attacked Bitzer's Hume-Campbell connection and reasserted the Reid-Campbell connection, but with very little textual evidence; "Some 'Common Sense' about Campbell, Hume, and Reid: The Extrinsic Evidence," Quarterly Journal of Speech 71 (1985): 395-421. I will argue that the Campbell-Reid connection holds despite Bitzer's evidence, but not for the reasons Bormann offers. Karen Rasmussen, who accepts the Hume-Campbell connection, argues that Campbell tried to maintain an ultimately untenable position between Hume's rigid empiricism and Reid's intuitionism; "Inconsistency in Campbell's Rhetoric: Explanation and Implications," Quarterly Journal of Speech 60 (1974): 190-200. Rasmussen has undervalued Campbell's own awareness of and solution to this problem.
of Common Sense philosophy, noting that "George Campbell would count as a member of Reid's school, if his concern with the philosophy of Common Sense had been less marginal." Yet the Aberdonian Common Sense philosophers themselves valued Campbell's contribution to their stand against the abuses of empirical philosophy. Beattie prefaced the 1776 edition of his *Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, in Opposition to Sophistry and Scepticism* with this acknowledgement:

> It is with great pleasure I take this opportunity to declare, that the best Theory of Evidence I have ever seen, is delivered by my excellent Friend Dr Campbell, in that most ingenious and learned performance, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. His principles and mine, though they differ somewhat in the arrangement, (in which I am inclined to think that his have the advantage), will not be found to differ in any thing material.\(^{126}\)

Campbell's theory of evidence was inseparably linked to the claims of the Common Sense school, which casts doubt on Grave's assertion that Campbell's concern with and contribution to Common Sense was only marginal.

Campbell in turn claimed to support the Common Sense philosophy of his associates. In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* 's short section on "Common Sense", Campbell attacked Joseph Priestley's attempt to refute of Reid, Beattie and Oswald,\(^{127}\) which surely indicates that

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\(^{126}\) Beattie, *Essay*, x. See also p. 86, where Beattie claims that Campbell decisively disproved Hume on the matter of evidence. Gerard thought Campbell was the last word on the subject of testimony (*Essay on Genius*, 297-8). Reid himself acknowledged the similarity of Campbell's thought to his own, but declined to specify any intellectual debts (*WTR*, 1:468).

\(^{127}\) Joseph Priestley's *An Examination of Dr. Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense. Dr. Beattie's Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, and Dr. Oswald's Appeal to Common Sense in Behalf of Religion* (London: J. Johnson, 1774), was not a
Campbell thought his own position sufficiently akin to that of the others to be implicitly threatened by Priestley's criticisms. In addition to occasional deferential references to his "learned and ingenious friend Dr. Reid," \(^{128}\) Campbell declared that the philosophy of "common sense"

hath lately, in our own country, been set in the clearest light, and supported by invincible force of argument, by two very able writers in the science of man, Dr. Reid . . . and Dr. Beattie . . . I beg leave to remark in this place, that, though for distinction's sake, I use the term common sense in a more limited signification than either of the authors last mentioned, there appears to be no real difference in our sentiments of the thing itself." \(^{129}\)

This declaration is sufficient to justify a brief review of the works of Aberdeen's leading Common Sense philosophers, Reid and Beattie, in order to identify those tenets which Campbell claimed to support.

Thomas Reid's *Inquiry into the Human Mind, on the Principles of Common Sense* (1764), was published just before his departure from King's College for Adam Smith's vacated moral philosophy chair at Glasgow. \(^{130}\)

defence of Hume, but rather a defence of the Lockean experimental philosophy tradition that he thought was most successfully carried forward by David Hartley. Priestley accused the Common Sense philosophers of advocating ignorance by multiplying tautological "original principles", of being dissatisfied with reasonable degrees of evidence, and of reducing philosophical inquiry to subjective feeling. See Vincent M. Bevilacqua, "Campbell, Priestley, and the Controversy Concerning Common Sense," *Southern Speech Journal* 30 (1964): 79-98; and Jack Fruchtman, who notes that Priestley's epistemology was directly linked to his radical political and religious views ("Common Sense and the Association of Ideas: The Reid-Priestley Controversy," in Dalgarno and Matthews, *The Philosophy of Thomas Reid*, 421-31).

\(^{128}\)PR, 81n.

\(^{129}\)PR, 38n. Campbell also acknowledged an intellectual debt to the French philosopher Buffier (PR, 38n. and 42), whose own "Common Sense" predated that of the Abergonians.

\(^{130}\)Thomas Reid's "Common Sense" has been a subject of scholarly inquiry for a considerable while, but has recently expanded into a major and vigorous scholarly field of its own. A new scholarly edition of his works is now in progress. A notable product of this new scholarship is
It immediately set itself against the "ideal system" or "theory of ideas" which Reid claimed had become prominent with Descartes and Locke, but had only displayed its full sceptical tendencies in the works of Berkeley and Hume. Reid realized that philosophy had strayed onto an inevitably sceptical path when it assumed that "ideas" stand between external objects and the human understanding. In the first stage of his defence of epistemological realism, Reid argued that we perceive things in themselves, and not by means of mediatory ideas. His Common Sense theory of perception denied Locke's and Hume's assumption that the mind is merely a passive receiver of sense impressions. He argued that an "idea" is properly an act rather than an object, which means that the perception of an external body is substantially more than a mere sensation or feeling in the mind. In the second stage of his philosophical apology, Reid answered Hume's extreme metaphysical scepticism by giving a special status to those fundamental beliefs which we necessarily hold despite a lack of rational warrant.

If there are certain principles [said Reid], as I think there are, which the constitution of our nature leads us to believe, and which we are under a necessity to take for granted in the common concerns of life, without being able to give a reason for them—these are what we call the principles of common sense; and what is manifestly contrary to them, is what we call absurd. 13

Reid argued that the principles of common sense are fundamental aspects of universal human nature that give us the ability to intuitively and actively recognize metaphysical truths, in the same way that Moral Sense


13' WTR, 1:108.
philosophers claimed we recognize moral and aesthetic absolutes.\textsuperscript{132}

Reid agreed with Hume that reason is powerless to justify even the most fundamental and necessary metaphysical beliefs, such as the objective reality of the self, other minds, the material and spiritual worlds, and causation.\textsuperscript{133} He argued, therefore, that philosophers must give up the attempt to ground everything on reason, and admit that even reason itself is founded on self-evident yet unprovable principles.\textsuperscript{134}

The evidence of sense, the evidence of memory, and the evidence of the necessary relations of things, are all distinct and original kinds of evidence, equally grounded on our constitution: none of them depends upon, or can be resolved into another. To reason against any of these kinds of evidence, is absurd; nay, to reason for them is absurd. They are first principles; and such fall not within the province of reason, but of common sense.\textsuperscript{135}

Belief, said Reid, "which accompanies sensation and memory, is a simple act of the mind, which cannot be defined."\textsuperscript{136} Our nature compels us to pass judgments, including the inexplicable judgment of belief, on the things we perceive.

\textsuperscript{132}David Fate Norton has demonstrated that Reid's common sense principles and the moral sense principles of his predecessors were part of a larger movement that he calls "Scottish realism"; "From Moral Sense to Common Sense: An Essay on the Development of Scottish Common Sense Philosophy, 1700-1765" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, San Diego, 1966), 281. Reid himself claimed that his philosophy was not novel (\textit{WTR}, 1:422 and 467), though he was not generous with his acknowledgements.

\textsuperscript{133}See Reid's \textit{Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man} (1785), essay VI, chaps. V and VI, for a list of his first principles of common sense. Though reason cannot defend these common sense truths, it can recognize them empirically because they are universally embedded in the structure of human language. The language argument is developed throughout the \textit{Intellectual Powers}.

\textsuperscript{134}\textit{WTR}, 1:100-1.

\textsuperscript{135}\textit{WTR}, 1:108.

\textsuperscript{136}\textit{WTR}, 1:108.
Such original and natural judgments are . . . a part of that furniture which Nature hath given to the human understanding. They are the inspiration of the Almighty, no less than our notions or simple apprehensions. They serve to direct us in the common affairs of life, where our reasoning faculty would leave us in the dark. They are a part of our constitution; and all the discoveries of our reason are grounded upon them. They make up what is called the common sense of mankind; and, what is manifestly contrary to any of these first principles, is what we call absurd. The strength of them is good sense, which is often found in those who are not acute in reasoning.\textsuperscript{137}

Reid's assertions ultimately rested on an assumption of providential design that Hume refused to accept.

Common Sense and Reason have both one author; that Almighty Author in all whose other works we observe a consistency, uniformity, and beauty which charm and delight the understanding: there must, therefore, be some order and consistency in the human faculties, as well as in other parts of his workmanship.\textsuperscript{138}

Despite such providential assumptions, Reid's philosophy of Common Sense was grounded on a theory of perception that has gained the critical attention of post-Enlightenment scholars. The absence of a similar careful and philosophic foundation has prevented James Beattie's version of Common Sense from finding a modern audience.

Beattie intended his philosophy of Common Sense to have greater popular appeal than Reid's academic treatment. Whereas Reid criticized a philosophical tradition and largely spared the personal reputation of Hume,\textsuperscript{139} Beattie's Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth (1770) attacked Hume's personal character itself.\textsuperscript{140} Beattie's Common Sense

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{137}\textit{WTR}, 1:209.
  \item \textsuperscript{138}\textit{WTR}, 1:127.
  \item \textsuperscript{139}Reid considered Hume to be an acute thinker whose scepticism had unmasked the tendencies of the ideal system (\textit{WTR}, 1:108).
  \item \textsuperscript{140}This helps explain the decline of Beattie's own reputation. The twentieth century's philosophical romance with Hume makes Beattie's unrelenting diatribe against Hume's character unpalatable. While the
philosophy was more concerned to defend moral and metaphysical absolutes than a theory of perceptual realism, and was therefore more polemical than Reid's. "I account That to be truth," said Beattie, "which the constitution of our nature determines us to believe, and That to be falsehood which the constitution of our nature determines us to disbelieve."¹⁴¹ Common sense is,

that power of the mind which perceives truth, or commands belief, not by progressive argumentation, but by an instantaneous and instinctive impulse; derived neither from education nor from habit, but from nature; acting independently on our will, whenever its object is presented, according to an established law, and therefore not improperly called Sense; and acting in a similar manner upon all mankind, and therefore properly called Common Sense.¹⁴²

Our common sense assures us of the existence of the soul, the self, God and human free-will.¹⁴³ These truths are not subject to the test of reason, because

all just reasoning does ultimately terminate in the principles of common sense; that is, in principles which must be admitted as certain, or as probable, upon their own authority, without evidence, or at least without proof.¹⁴⁴

Finally, Beattie assumed "that truth is something fixed and determinate, depending not upon man, but upon the Author of nature."¹⁴⁵ Beattie's eighteenth century viewed Beattie as the champion of common sense and religion against sceptics and infidels, the twentieth century has demoted Beattie to a third-rate philosopher, whose philosophy was based on a rather overwrought misunderstanding of Hume. This transformation in reputation is of great historical interest, and in many ways epitomizes the change in philosophical givens from the eighteenth century to our own time.

¹⁴¹Beattie, Essay, 19.
¹⁴³Beattie, Essay, 55, 71, and 238.
¹⁴⁴Beattie, Essay, 239.
¹⁴⁵Beattie, Essay, 89.
audience was delighted, both with his undisguised hatred of Hume's sceptical dilemmas and with the bold and unapologetic manner in which he stated the utterly simple truths in which they had always implicitly believed.

George Campbell wrote no systematic work on Common Sense philosophy. Even his use of the term "common sense" was usually less formal than that of his associates. But, as we have already seen, "common sense" was an important subsection of Campbell's category of intuitive evidence, itself an implicit rejection of the extreme nature of Hume's empiricism. In his treatment of evidence, Campbell defined "common sense" as "an original source of knowledge common to all mankind." By it we are assured of the truth of such fundamental propositions as these:

'Whatever has a beginning has a cause'--'When there is in the effect a manifest adjustment of the several parts to a certain end, there is intelligence in the cause.' 'The course of nature will be the same to-morrow that it is to-day; or, the future will resemble the past'--'There is such a thing as body; or, there are material substances independent of the mind's conceptions'--'There are other intelligent beings in the universe besides me'--'The clear representations of my memory, in regard to past events, are indubitably true.'

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146 Campbell frequently used "common sense" in its ordinary meaning (that is, as "common wisdom" or even "reasonableness"); see, for example, PR, 112, 236 and 415, and LSTPE, 99 and 140. Sometimes he meant it to stand for reason itself, as when he considered Dodwell's claim concerning the rights of bishops to be, "in the age of common sense," a reductio ad absurdum (AUL MS 650, section II, un-numbered page; see also FG, 1:450). At other times, it is difficult to tell whether Campbell was using the term in this sense or in the particular manner of the Common Sense school; see Sermons, 2:146, and FG, 1:89.

147 PR, 38-9.

148 PR, 40. This list does not include an assurance of our own existence, which Campbell included under the evidence of consciousness (PR, 37), and which he considered to precede even the evidence of common sense. Reid's list of the first principles of common sense (note 133,
These truths, and "a great many more of the same kind," cannot be proven by reason, and yet, "it is equally impossible, without a full conviction of them, to advance a single step in the acquisition of knowledge." Experience, he implied, is meaningless without antecedent guiding principles. Common sense differs from other forms of intuitive knowledge because it gives us sure knowledge of the existence of persons and substances beyond our own minds. Campbell recognized, however, that common sense truths are not of the kind whose denial would imply a contradiction, and thus suggested that they be called instinctive rather than intuitive. But the importance of these truths is not thereby diminished. "Such instincts are no other than the oracles of eternal wisdom."

In the brief section of The Philosophy of Rhetoric devoted to common sense, Campbell again gave special attention to the problem of memory. He argued that our faith in memory is considerably different than our belief in our present feelings (subsumed under evidence from consciousness), for "there is a reference in the ideas of memory to former sensible impressions, to which there is nothing analogous in

above) includes the six mentioned by Campbell, but is much more extensive. Campbell's claim that this was but a partial list suggests that he may have agreed with Reid's other first principles. It is difficult to say whether and how far Campbell followed Reid on the first principles of free will, taste, and morals. He did refer to the "reflex senses" which included a taste for beauty and for moral sentiments (PR, 3).

PR, 40. Bitzer mistakenly thinks Campbell's list includes only the six mentioned above (see his introduction to the PR, xxxvii–xxxviii).

PR, 40.

PR, 41–2.
sensation." Our faith in memory is not derived from consciousness, and therefore cannot depend upon the mere vivacity of our feelings.

Some may imagine [said Campbell] that it is from experience we come to know what faith in every case is due to memory. But it will appear more fully afterwards, that unless we had implicitly relied on the distinct and vivid informations of that faculty, we could not have moved a step towards the acquisition of experience.  

If Campbell was here addressing Hume, as he probably was, he was suggesting that even Hume had not been sufficiently sceptical in his account of memory as a source of knowledge. Neither reason nor experience can verify the claims of memory. If memory is not in fact a fainter copy of a sense impression (as Hume claimed it was), then it must be a mental phenomenon sufficiently different to constitute a distinct faculty. As such it requires an independent mechanism for bringing about belief. This mechanism tells us not only that we remember such a thing happening but that what we remember really did happen. We neither perceive nor understand this mechanism, yet we cannot deny its operation. It therefore falls within the realm of common sense. The problem of memory also highlights the limits of our personal experience. As early as 1762, in the *Dissertation on Miracles*, Campbell had said:

Certain it is that the defects and misrepresentations of memory are often corrected by experience. Yet should any person hence infer, that memory derives all its evidence from experience, he would fall into a manifest absurdity. On the contrary, experience derives its origin solely from memory, and is nothing else but the general maxims or conclusions, we have form'd, from the comparison of

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152 PR, 41.
153 PR, 41.
154 Treatise, 8–9 and 627–8.
155 PR, 41.
particular facts remember'd. If we had not previously given an implicit faith to memory, we had never been able to acquire experience.\textsuperscript{156}

Again Campbell criticized Hume for under-rating the special problem of memory and thus overlooking a major support for the necessity of common sense.

Campbell's brief account of common sense in his discussion of evidence helps clarify other portions of The Philosophy of Rhetoric. Our common sense explains why, for example, the notion of agency or causation "is from the very frame of our nature, suggested, necessarily suggested, and often instantaneously suggested; but still it is suggested and not perceived."\textsuperscript{157} In other words, common sense largely explains the nature of human belief, which Hume had mistaken. Campbell agreed with Hume that belief in causation cannot be rationally justified. Yet we are not without a reason for believing that the future will resemble the past:

By \textit{reason} we often mean, not an argument, or medium of proving, but a ground in human nature on which a particular judgment is founded. Nay further, as no progress in reasoning can be made where there is no foundation, (and first principles are here the sole foundation,) I should readily admit, that the man who does not believe such propositions, if it were possible to find such a man, is perfectly irrational, and consequently not to be argued with.\textsuperscript{158}

Campbell objected to the scholastic form of syllogistic disputation, for example, because it allowed its adherents to "defend any position

\textsuperscript{156}DM, 17-18.

\textsuperscript{157}PR, 366.

\textsuperscript{158}PR, 71n. The power of causation "is conceived by the understanding, and not perceived by the senses, as the causes and the effects themselves often are" (PR, 367). Elsewhere, Campbell argued that reason cannot take an infinite number of steps to prove something, and must therefore terminate in self-evident axioms (AUL MS 654, un-numbered page). This, of course, helps justify Christian empiricism.
whosoever, how contradictory soever to common sense, and to the clearest discoveries of reason and experience." 139

Campbell's use of Common Sense philosophy was not limited to The Philosophy of Rhetoric. The Dissertation on Miracles, for example, employed Campbell's Common Sense understanding of the nature of testimony. Campbell thought that Hume had seriously overestimated the scope of our personal experience of the world. Our understanding of the ordinary course of nature is no more reliable than the general testimony upon which it is actually based. But neither experience nor reason can guarantee the general reliability of testimony. Our faith in it, and thus our faith in all knowledge beyond the range of our personal experience, must be grounded elsewhere. We can neither explain our tendency to believe testimony nor choose to disbelieve such an indispensable source of knowledge. Without it there is neither history nor science. Thus we believe in testimony without reason or proofs—we believe by virtue of our common sense. "To this," said Campbell, "when we have no positive reasons of mistrust or doubt, we are, by an original principle of our nature (analogous to that which compels our faith in memory), led to give an unlimited assent." 160 The inexplicable but undeniable human reliance on testimony constituted a major pillar in Campbell's stand against Hume's scepticism. It is not difficult to

139Pr, 271. For an account of Campbell's attack on syllogistic reasoning, see Howell, Eighteenth-Century Logic and Rhetoric, 401-7.

160Pr, 55. Reid used almost exactly the same argument at about the same time in his lectures at King's College; see "A System of Logic Taught at Aberdeen 1763," EUL MS Dk.3.2, pp. 47-8. Campbell's argument may have implicitly depended upon Reid's assertion that human beings have a natural propensity to speak the truth (which Reid paired with the human tendency to believe in the testimony of others; WTR, 1:196), an assertion crucial for making testimony worth regarding.
understand why his discussion of this topic was taken as definitive by the other Aberdonian Common Sense philosophers. But, as we shall see below, Campbell's commitment to the natural honesty of human testimony raises the question of whether he believed the Calvinist doctrine of the corruption of human nature.

Common Sense philosophy was crucial to Campbell's view of the evidences of religion. Campbell assumed, as did the other Aberdonians, that God cannot mislead us.\(^{161}\) This assumption allowed Campbell to give divine sanction to the pleadings of conscience:

The laws which prohibit murder, adultery, theft, false testimony have the manifest stamp of divine authority; there is no difference of opinion about their meaning; the light of nature, or, if you please to call it common sense is sufficient to satisfy all who are neither fools nor mad that they are binding on all human beings.\(^{162}\)

Campbell assured his divinity students that, in matters of conduct, God does not leave our most important duties to be discovered by reason, but has in our consciences given such clear intimations of what is right and amiable in conduct, that where there have been no prejudices to occupy the mind, and pervert the natural sense of things, it commands an immediate and instinctive approbation.\(^{163}\)

And even when conscience must make a difficult choice, it is "a principle of common sense, that a less evil should be born to prevent a greater."\(^{164}\) Campbell confidently assumed that religion cannot contradict common sense. The latter may in fact be used to judge when

\(^{161}\)Sermons, 1:371-2. "The voice of conscience, therefore, is the voice of God; and God cannot contradict himself" (Sermons, 1:372).

\(^{162}\)AUL MS 650, section III. Common Sense philosophy also provides exceptions to the above laws, such as the right to kill in self-defence (AUL MS 652, part II).

\(^{163}\)LSTPE, 182.

\(^{164}\)Sermons, 2:146.
religion has strayed from its true path. For example, liturgies that are written in a language other than that of the common people are obviously repugnant to common sense.\textsuperscript{165} Campbell thought it a self-evident axiom, as clear as the axioms of geometry, that belief cannot be compelled, and that common sense demands religious toleration.\textsuperscript{166} Our common sense may even oblige us to defy laws that compel belief and promote intolerance. In the case of blatantly indefensible laws:

by the common sense of mankind, undebauched by superstition, fanaticism, or party-spirit, virtue is acknowledged to be on the side of disobedience, and the meritorious character is he who in defiance of all its terrors dares to transgress an iniquitous statute.\textsuperscript{167}

Campbell's strictures on certain religious practices, particularly those of the Catholic church, suggest that common sense and custom do not always coincide. Bad customs often develop slowly and insensibly in the context of ignorance and superstition, and undermine the dictates of common sense.\textsuperscript{166} Nevertheless, nature has given us the means to correct these abuses.

The philosophy of Common Sense clearly had a pervasive influence on the foundation and structure of Campbell's thought. Campbell in turn made significant and original contributions to the Aberdeen version of

\textsuperscript{165}\textsuperscript{LEH}, 2:242.

\textsuperscript{166}\textsuperscript{AUL MS 654, un-numbered page.}

\textsuperscript{167}\textsuperscript{AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page. In the same manuscript, Campbell identified the situation in Ireland as one in which the civil penalties against Catholics were without moral validity. He argued that certain moral and social obligations (such as the obligation to honour promises) antedate all civil contracts, powers and obligations; civil laws, therefore, cannot suspend these natural obligations.}

\textsuperscript{168}\textsuperscript{AUL M: 652, p. 87. For Campbell, fear and ignorance are the enemies of common sense and conscience (Sermons, 1:338).}
Common Sense philosophy. His discussions of the intuitive forms of evidence, and of the nature and uses of memory and testimony, were perfectly consistent with the Common Sense philosophies of his fellow Aberdonians. His claims that our constitutional beliefs are fundamental to all knowledge, including scientific and religious knowledge, echoed Reid's Common Sense declarations. His suggestion that universal constants in the structure of human languages signify fundamental principles in human nature, "was akin to Reid's pervasive arguments concerning language. Campbell certainly shared a large part of the Common Sense philosophers' epistemological realism, that is, their belief in the objective existence of bodies, minds and metaphysical and moral truths. In fact, his discussion of testimony in the Dissertation on Miracles (1762) may have been the first printed expression of Aberdonian Common Sense."

There are, nevertheless, some important differences between Campbell's Common Sense philosophy and the philosophies of Reid and Beattie. First of all, Campbell's common sense was more narrowly defined and carefully circumscribed than theirs. We do not know how extensive Campbell's list of common sense axioms would have been had he treated the topic in a more systematic manner. That he did not do so suggests either that he trusted Reid's enumeration, or that, in Newtonian fashion, he wished to claim no more common sense axioms than were necessary for his immediate epistemological and religious needs.

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169PR, 259.

170See DM, 16-18.

171PR, 38n. See Bitzer, diss., 173-5.
It may even indicate that he gave more weight to Hume's sceptical caution than did Reid.

Secondly, Campbell seems to have held a notion of perception that was somewhat at odds with the perceptual theory that Reid made fundamental to his own notion of Common Sense. Campbell tended to agree with Hume (and Locke) that the human mind is a passive receiver of sensory data. In his discussion of religious faith and persecution, he said:

belief ... is the necessary, not the voluntary consequence of the evidence; and strictly speaking, there is no more merit in the faith consequent upon the clear manifestation of the truth to the understanding ... than there would be in the sight of a visible object set in broad daylight before a man who has the perfect use of his eyes. The reason is the same in both. The mind is passive. It does not act, but is acted upon.172

Reid, of course, vehemently objected to the ideal system's tendency to view the mind as passive. He argued that "the mind is, from its very nature, a living and active being."173 It is difficult to determine, without more textual evidence, how different Campbell and Reid were on this matter. If Campbell did view the mind as passive (which his associational psychology seems to support but which his faculty psychology seems to contradict), this would constitute a significant departure from a more orthodox view of Common Sense.

Finally, and most perplexing, is Campbell's relation to Common Sense philosophy's most vocal champion, James Beattie. Beattie claimed that he and Campbell thought alike on all important matters.174 Yet

172'AUL MS 655, un-numbered page.
173WTR, 1:22'.
174See Beattie to William Creech, 28 October 1789: AUL MS 30/1/299. Campbell's support of Beattie's work can also be seen in FG, 1:429n. and
Beattie's belligerent misunderstanding of Hume's philosophy (a philosophy for which Campbell had a deep sympathy) makes this claim problematic. Furthermore, Campbell read and corrected the manuscripts of all of Beattie's philosophical publications, and yet allowed Beattie's misreadings and personal abuse of Hume to go to press.  

While Campbell may have thought that Beattie's "masterly pen" was appropriate for a popular audience, it is difficult to gauge his own relative position between Hume's philosophy and Beattie's virulent anti-scepticism.

Perhaps Campbell may best be described as of the Common Sense school though not one of its typical exponents. Campbell's purpose was clearly very different from that of either Reid or Beattie. Unlike Reid, he did not attempt to explicate the philosophy of Common Sense in a comprehensive manner; unlike Beattie, he did not try to influence a popular audience. Campbell did not indulge in the polemical liberties of Beattie because he recognized the philosophical importance of Hume's scepticism. Campbell's philosophy, in fact, constitutes an important bridge between Common Sense philosophy and the philosophy of David Hume. It suggests that Common Sense could be more flexible and tolerant of Hume than traditional readings would allow.

Oddly enough, a case could be made that Hume himself drew Common Sense conclusions long before the Aberdonians did. In a sentiment

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452; and in a note copied by Beattie into a letter to William Forbes, 3 June 1785: NLS Acc 4796, box 94.

175 For example, Beattie, Essay, 158ff. Beattie seems to have been generally hostile to epistemological enquiry (Essay, preface and 320), which is not the case with Campbell or Reid.

176 FC, 1:453n.
almost perfectly reproduced later in Reid, Hume argued that "nature, by an absolute and uncontroulable necessity has determin'd us to judge as well as to breathe and feel."¹⁷⁸ Furthermore, "'Tis happy . . . that nature breaks the force of all sceptical arguments in time, and keeps them from having any considerable influence on the understanding," for, "the sceptic still continues to reason and believe, even tho' he asserts, that he cannot defend his reason by reason."¹⁷⁹ And, as if to confute his future opponents, Hume added:

Whoever has taken the pains to refute the cavils of this total scepticism, has really disputed without an antagonist, and endeavour'd by arguments to establish a faculty, which nature has antecedently implanted in the mind, and render'd unavoidable.¹⁸⁰

Nevertheless, it is precisely in the matter of Common Sense that the differences between Hume and the Aberdonians are most apparent. Although Hume recognized that nature has imposed certain beliefs upon us, he continued to uphold his claim that we know no more of cause and effect than custom teaches. Custom leads us to infer necessary connections in the world, but, "upon the whole, necessity is something, that exists in the mind, not in objects."¹⁸¹ In direct contrast to the Aberdonians, Hume argued "that there is no absolute nor metaphysical

¹⁷⁷David Fate Norton first made such a case in his doctoral dissertation, "From Moral Sense to Common Sense." Norton argued that Hume made a positive contribution to the development of Common Sense philosophy. If Norton is right in his general thesis, as I think he is, then Campbell could belong to the larger school of Scottish "teleological realism" (281-2) without necessarily being dependent on Reid.

¹⁷⁸Treatise, 183.

¹⁷⁹Treatise, 187.

¹⁸⁰Treatise, 183.

¹⁸¹Treatise, 165.
necessity, that every beginning of existence shou'd be attended with [a cause]."182 Hume ultimately refused to aquiesce in the vulgar view of the world, though he knew that our nature prevents us from being able to disown it. "'Tis impossible upon any system to defend either our understanding or senses . . . Carelessness and in-attention alone can afford us any remedy."183 Hume recognized the practical necessity of giving in to the demands of common sense in matters of moral philosophy, but would not do so in his speculative philosophy. The Aberdonians, in contrast, demanded a complete surrender to common sense in both moral and epistemological matters.184

The Aberdonians held that the propositions which nature obliges us to believe must be necessarily true. Hume would acknowledge only that we must believe certain propositions. The major difference, then, between Hume and the Aberdonians was their respective attitudes towards the notion of metaphysical truth.185 Campbell claimed that "the sole and ultimate end of logic is the eviction of truth," and that "logical

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182Treatise, 172.

183Treatise, 218.

184David Fate Norton, David Hume: Common-Sense Moralist, Sceptical Metaphysician (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 201. Norton says, "Hume does not conflate psychological certainty with certain knowledge or unavoidable doxa with episteme." Thus while Hume and his critics agreed in practical matters, they significantly differed in speculative matters. S.A. Grave seems to make a similar point (The Scottish Philosophy, 255).

185Karen Rasmussen, we recall, argues that Campbell was inconsistent in claiming to be an empiricist and yet to know absolute truths. She thinks that Campbell could have avoided this by using intuitive principles without calling them absolute principles ("Inconsistency in Campbell's Rhetoric," 193). Rasmussen's argument is really with the whole philosophy of Common Sense and perhaps with the greater part of eighteenth-century philosophy, and cannot be applied to Campbell in isolation.
truth consisteth in the conformity of our conceptions to their archetypes in the nature of things.\textsuperscript{186} Campbell clearly believed that there is such a thing as "universal truth," and that we can discover it.\textsuperscript{187} Furthermore, this truth cannot be relative, for "the way of truth is one, the ways of error are infinite."\textsuperscript{188} The Aberdonians, unlike Hume, were willing to make truth-claims about ultimate causes, that is, about God.\textsuperscript{189} Not any kind of God would do, however. The Aberdonians required a God with certain qualities, for it was not the mere existence of God that guaranteed the reliability of common sense dictates, but the particular moral qualities which the Aberdonians believed God must necessarily possess. A benevolent Creator was as fundamental to their philosophy as it was to their religion. The Common Sense position depended upon the assumptions that God does not deceive us in our natural beliefs, and that we can have morally certain knowledge of this and like aspects of God's moral nature through natural knowledge.\textsuperscript{190} Hume, of course, would have viewed these assumptions as

\textsuperscript{186}PR, 33 and 35.

\textsuperscript{187}PR, 260. Gerard also wished to maintain some kind of objective truth, even in the realm of taste (Essay on Taste, 207).

\textsuperscript{188}PR, 271; see also LSTPE, 229.


\textsuperscript{190}The Aberdonians probably thought they were not being circular because they did not have to appeal to revelation for their reliance on the truths of common sense. Reid, for example, argued that our natural sense of beauty indicates that there must be an intelligent designer, for beauty by his definition cannot be undesigned (WTR, 1:496 and 503).
hopelessly circular. Clearly then, the Common Sense position, in contrast to Hume's, was founded on the premises of natural religion.

"Reason is natural Revelation," said Locke.¹⁹¹ This view held sway throughout the eighteenth century. Campbell's assumptions about the being and attributes of God and about man's ability to know him were shared by most eighteenth-century British moderates.¹⁹² Natural religion did not belong to the deists alone, but was considered fundamental to Christianity itself. As Gerard said to his divinity students, "Natural religion is the foundation of revealed; its principles & the doctrines of morality are all advanced illustrated & improved in the Christian system."¹⁹³ Campbell said to his own divinity students:

As it is the same God (for there is no other) who is the author of nature and the author of revelation, who speaks to us in the one by his works, and in the other by his spirit, it becomes his creatures reverently to hearken to his voice, in whatever manner he is pleased to address them. Now the philosopher is by profession the interpreter of nature, that is of the language of God's works, as the christian divine is the interpreter of scripture, that is of the language of God's spirit. Nor do I mean to signify, that there is not in many things a coincidence in the discoveries made in these two different ways. The conclusions may be the same, though deduced, and justly deduced, from different premises. The result


¹⁹²Redwood says that eighteenth-century British thinkers agreed concerning the minimal standards of religious belief (i.e., natural religion), but disagreed concerning its sufficiency (Reason, Ridicule and Religion, 114).

¹⁹³AUL MS K 174, p. 317.
may be one, when the methods of investigation are widely different. There is even a considerable utility in pursuing both methods, as what is clear in one may serve to enlighten what is obscure in the other." 194

What methods of investigation are appropriate to the philosopher of natural religion? "He argues from the effect to the cause, the only way in which we can argue intelligibly concerning the divine attributes." 195 Campbell was concerned, as ever, with the proper method of studying the being and works of God. This method had been learned from the natural philosopher, for,

Spirit, which here comprises only the Supreme Being and the human soul, is surely as much included under the notion of natural object as body is, and is knowable to the philosopher purely in the same way, by observation and experience. 196

Such a method is appropriate because "the natural evidences of true theism are among the simplest, and at the same time the clearest deductions from the effect to the cause." 197 Eighteenth-century scientists and religious apologists, like their Latitudinarian predecessors, believed that natural philosophy and religion are bound together by a common providential teleology. In other words, natural knowledge and revealed knowledge were viewed as two parts of the same divine communication. 198 Campbell likewise viewed natural religion and natural philosophy as aspects of the same providential economy. 199

194 LSTPE, 86-7.
195 PR, 378.
196 PR, 53.
197 LSTPE, 88-9.
Campbell and his contemporaries agreed that God, by his very nature, provides human beings with sufficient knowledge about himself for their well-being. But eighteenth-century polemicists could not agree whether natural knowledge of God is alone sufficient for human needs. Deists claimed that it is, whereas Christians (including moderate ones) maintained that a more specific revelation is required to supplement the general declarations of nature. The Aberdonians, like other moderates, claimed that the natural world itself proclaims the need for a saving revelation and that it provides hints as to what that revelation must contain in order to be authentic.

Despite these qualifications, Campbell maintained that nature tells us much about the character of God. It tells us, for example, that we ought to fear and reverence God. Campbell argued that no revelation can give us more information about our natural rights than nature itself does, nor can it oppose those natural rights. God neither contradicts himself nor repeats himself unnecessarily. Christ's teachings corroborate and strengthen the obligations of natural religion, though they do much more as well. Natural knowledge assures us of the wisdom of divine providence, for "the cause of God can be no other than the cause of piety and virtue." Moreover, natural religion serves as the foundation for knowing our natural moral duties.

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199^PR, 52.

200^STEP, 110.

201^Sermons, 1:324.

202^AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page.

203^AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page.

204^AUL MS 652, part I, un-numbered page.
to God, ourselves and others. The moral obligations described by Cicero precede all human conventions and governments, and are ultimately the same as those espoused by Scripture. 205 Unlike Hume, Campbell assumed that true virtue requires natural piety, but like Hume, he made much of the concept of sympathy in his moral theory.

Unfortunately, Campbell did not say much more on the topic of natural religion. We should not conclude from his lack of systematic treatment that natural religion was unimportant to him; it simply did not fall directly within the scope of his publications or lectures. Campbell explained to his divinity students that natural religion is properly the subject of their moral philosophy classes, which they had taken in the final year of their arts degree. He assumed that they were already sufficiently grounded in this topic that his own teaching could presuppose the premises of natural religion without having to make them continually explicit. How then can we reconstruct this important part of Campbell's thought without direct textual evidence? We can turn to the texts of his professional associates who taught natural religion to Scottish undergraduates.

James Beattie, perhaps Campbell's closest friend in Aberdeen, lectured on natural religion at Marischal College as part of his moral philosophy course. His lectures were published in the early 1790s as the Elements of Moral Science. Beattie taught his students that the Christian revelation rests on the proofs of natural religion, for "we do not prove from Scripture, that God exists." 206 Only after we have

205 AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page.
determined, by means of rational proofs, the being and attributes of God, can we judge the truth or falsehood of any purported revelation.\textsuperscript{207} The proofs for the existence of God, claimed Beattie, are not difficult to discover. He recommended a combination of \textit{a priori} and \textit{a posteriori} arguments that, upon examination, would immediately recommend themselves to common sense.\textsuperscript{208} The proofs for God's existence also suggest some of his necessary attributes, including his spiritual nature, self-existence, oneness, omnipotence, unchangingness, infinite wisdom, goodness, and justice.\textsuperscript{209} Beattie warned his students about the dangers of forgetting these truths, because "atheism is utterly subversive of morality, and consequently of happiness."\textsuperscript{210}

Thomas Reid's \textit{Lectures on Natural Theology},\textsuperscript{211} also delivered to undergraduates, painted a similar picture. Like Beattie and Campbell, he argued that much of our knowledge of God is derived analogically from our understanding of the human mind.\textsuperscript{212} He stressed the importance of this kind of knowledge, because

\textsuperscript{207} Beattie, \textit{Elements}, 1:279.

\textsuperscript{208} Beattie, \textit{Elements}, 1:280-2.

\textsuperscript{209} Beattie, \textit{Elements}, 1:292-8. Beattie also maintained that Scripture is necessary to correct and improve our views about God's nature (\textit{Elements}, 1:293).

\textsuperscript{210} Beattie, \textit{Elements}, 1:278.

\textsuperscript{211} These are probably student notes, recorded in 1780, and edited by Elmer H. Duncan (Washington: University Press of America, 1981). Though the editing is unreliable, I think that the text itself reflects Reid's teaching with reasonable accuracy.

\textsuperscript{212} Reid, \textit{Natural Theology}, 2. Clearly, Reid accepted Butler's premise that reasoning from analogy is entirely convincing in this matter.
there can be no rational piety without just notions of the
perfections and providence of God. It is no doubt true that
Revelation exhibits all the truths of natural Religion, but it is
no less true that reason must be employed to judge of that
revelation; whether it comes from God. 213

"That Man is surely best prepared for the study of revealed Religion," he
maintained, "who has just and Rational Sentiments of natural
Religion." 214 Reid argued that the existence of God is proclaimed by
heaven and earth, as well as by the structure of our minds, and
therefore requires no additional proofs. 215 He provided rational proofs
anyway, using both a priori and a posteriori arguments as Beattie
had. 216 He divided God's naturally-known attributes into two
categories, natural and moral. By natural means alone, we can have
certain knowledge of God's necessary existence, eternity, immensity,
unlimited powers and perfections, perfect knowledge and wisdom,
spirituality, unity and immutable happiness. 217 In addition, we can be
sure of his moral veracity, love of virtue, and justice. 218 Reid argued
that without natural and rational religion, Revelation would degenerate
into either of the eighteenth century's leading evils, that is,
superstition or wild enthusiasm. 219 Natural religion is also essential

213 Reid, Natural Theology, 1.

214 Reid, Practical Ethics, 109.

215 Reid, Natural Theology, 2. Reid argued that we can know about
God through his effects (Natural Theology, 51), which might explain the
importance of defeating Hume's sceptical strictures on the notion of
causation.

216 Reid, Natural Theology, 10-16.

217 Reid, Natural Theology, 63-82.

218 Reid, Natural Theology, 83-89. Reid assumed it to be impossible
that God could have a different moral standard than man (97).
for meeting basic human needs, for without religion mankind would be plunged into anarchy and despair.²²⁰

The natural religion of Reid and Beattie was entirely compatible with the prevailing eighteenth-century views on the subject. Campbell's would have looked the same. Natural religion provided a necessary foundation for the Aberdonians' Common Sense philosophy. Although the axioms of common sense are known by instinct rather than by reason, they are not arbitrary, for they have been implanted by the benevolent Creator. The universal principles of common sense can be empirically verified, which means that they provide us with an eternal moral standard without obstructing our free will. Moderate Christians purportedly used natural religion to test the veracity of supposed revelations, and, like Butler, thought Christianity true because it is precisely what natural religion leads us to expect in an authentic revelation. They also believed that God reveals himself through nature in order to prevent us from misunderstanding and abusing the necessary additional directives found in Revelation.²²¹

Campbell's thought clearly belonged to his age. He struggled with the same problems of knowledge, particularly religious knowledge, which had motivated seventeenth-century English divines to develop an empirical approach to natural and religious evidences. Campbell's

²¹⁰Reid, Natural Theology, 2.

²²⁰Reid, Natural Theology, 8.

²²¹George Turnbull, A Philosophical Enquiry concerning the Connexion between the Doctrines and Miracles of Jesus Christ. In a Letter to a Friend, 2d ed. (London: R. Willock, 1732), 63.
solutions were much like theirs. His philosophy of human nature, of
evidence, of Common Sense, and finally of natural religion was all part
of his contribution to the central debates of the Enlightenment. At
the same time, Campbell's philosophy was essential to his Christianity.
As we will see in the next chapter, it provided the theoretical
foundation and justification for his practical defence of Christian
claims.

The eclectic nature of Campbell's philosophical debts also marks
him as a man of the Enlightenment. Campbell, like Reid and Hume and
most eighteenth-century Scots, was profoundly indebted to Bacon. He
described Bacon as "perhaps the most comprehensive genius in philosophy
that has appeared in modern times."²²² The epigraph that appears on the
title-page of The Philosophy of Rhetoric, taken from Bacon's De
Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum (1623), may be translated as "Let men
be assured that the solid and true arts of invention grow and increase
as inventions themselves increase."²²³ It rightly suggests Campbell's
debt to the method and structure of Bacon's philosophy. The taxonomic
approach to knowledge that is evident in the thought of Campbell, Reid
and the Aberdeen Philosophical Society,²²⁴ also owes much to Bacon's
conception of natural history. There can be no question that Campbell
was also indebted to Reid. The similarity of their Common Sense
philosophies indicates common origins. But this merely begs the

²²²PR, lxxiii.

²²³Quoted in Howell, Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric,
596, which itself is taken from Spedding's edition of The Works of
Bacon, 9:87. See Howell, 582-601, for a full account of Campbell's debt
to Bacon; see also Bevilacqua, "Philosophical Origins."

²²⁴See chapter one. section 3, above.
question of who influenced whom. It seems likely that the currents of influence travelled in both directions, and involved all members of the Wise Club.²²⁵

The most interesting question of influence concerns the degree to which Campbell's thought was indebted to or like Hume's.²²⁶ Hume's philosophy constituted a serious challenge to eighteenth-century empirical Christianity, to which Campbell was intellectually committed. As we can now see, Campbell's relationship to Hume was most complex. Campbell was completely familiar with Hume's writings, and frequently cited them as authoritative sources, even on religious questions.²²⁷ When disagreeing with Hume, he still acknowledged Hume's "usual

²²⁵Reid, for example, took notes on "An Argument to prove that the Identity of a person does not consist in Consciousess against Mr Locke by Mr[r] G Campbel [sic]," an argument which later appeared in his own writings as the story of the brave officer who, as a boy, had robbed an orchard (cited in Charles Stewart-Robertson, "Thomas Reid and Pneumatology: The Text of the Old, The Tradition of the New," in The Philosophy of Thomas Reid, ed. Dalgarno and Matthews, 397); the manuscript notes are found in AUL 6/3/5, fol. 3. In the same essay collection, see Kathleen Holcomb, "Reid in the Philosophical Society," 415-16.

²²⁶This question has received a considerable amount of scholarly attention and debate. Lloyd Bitzer, in his dissertation, has demonstrated with ample textual evidence Campbell's profound philosophical debt to Hume. That he has often overstated this debt, and sometimes overlooked some profound differences, does not affect his main argument. Dennis Borrmann's attack on Bitzer ("Some 'Common Sense'" is, I think, profoundly misguided and misleading. He has ignored the sheer bulk of Bitzer's textual evidence (it seems he has not even read Bitzer's dissertation), without providing much countering evidence, and has failed to consider that Campbell could have been influenced by Hume and yet opposed him on some fundamental matters at the same time. Borrmann has explicitly disbelieved Campbell's acknowledgements of Hume's influence, which is really an attack on Campbell's candour.

²²⁷See, for example, Sermons, 1:325, where Campbell used Hume's Natural History of Religion approvingly. Campbell cited virtually all of Hume's works in the course of his writings.
precision." He tended to correct rather than reject his friendly adversary. Hume set much of the agenda for Campbell's intellectual activities, and also provided a methodological and philosophical framework which Campbell used to answer the sceptic. Campbell certainly believed it as important to oppose the implications of Hume's scepticism, but this does not mean that he was fundamentally hostile to Hume. In fact, it does not even mean that he was hostile to Hume's scepticism, just the degree of it. Hume's failing, in Campbell's eyes, was his refusal to see the natural limits of scepticism in light of the dictates of common sense and the probabilistic evidence available in the moral realm. Hume's scepticism was otherwise a very useful instrument, and Hume a very skilful wielder of it. Campbell paid tribute to his philosophical master by sometimes turning that scepticism against the sceptic himself, as in the matters of memory and testimony.  

Ultimately, we must recognize that Campbell simultaneously learned from Hume and opposed him on fundamental questions. Campbell regarded Hume's philosophy as dangerous precisely because it was akin to

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228PR, 134.

229See Bitzer, diss., 161-82, on the similarities of Hume's and Campbell's uses of scepticism as a grounding for a viable empiricism.

230Some of this tension is also evident in the mind of the man who most resembled Campbell, Alexander Gerard. In one of his sermons, Gerard used Humean language to battle some of Hume's conclusions. He employed Hume's premise, that "all arguments concerning matter of fact are ultimately founded on experience," to reject Hume's historical characterization of the ministerial office (Gerard, Sermons, 2:344). He added that Hume's "infidelity will probably rob him of some part of the attention and regard, which his philosophical genius and taste would have otherwise commanded from the curious and intelligent" (Gerard, Sermons, 2:438). See also Lewis Ulman's remarks on the ambivalence of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society's attitude towards Hume (Minutes, 51-7).
his own in so many ways. Hume's genius and the essential correctness of his methodology made his departures from the true path all the more seductive. Campbell and the Aberdeen Philosophical Society's intense interest in Hume suggests the following: that, on the one hand, Hume offered a profound and important challenge to many of their fundamental assumptions concerning the nature of the knowable; and that, on the other hand, he provided a philosophical methodology and analysis of human nature which, because of its comprehensiveness, insight, and cleverness, they (apart from Beattie) could not do without. Hume was simply too important to ignore. As we shall see next, this became painfully apparent when Hume applied his metaphysical scepticism to the practical evidences of the Christian religion.
CHAPTER FIVE
PHILOSOPHY IN PRACTICE

George Campbell intended to be a practical rather than a theoretical philosopher. His writings treated such practical issues as the nature of effective communication, the possibility of belief in miracles, the standards of historical proofs and explanations, and the uses of biblical criticism. But, as we have seen, all of these practical problems were grounded on a well-reasoned, though perhaps not always consistent, theory of human nature and of evidence. Testimony was a particularly important philosophical concern for Campbell because to this species of evidence . . . we are first immediately indebted for all the branches of philology, such as, history, civil, ecclesiastic, and literary; grammar, languages, jurisprudence, and criticism; to which I may add revealed religion, as far as it is to be considered as a subject of historical and critical inquiry, and so discoverable by natural means."

Critical philosophy, thought Campbell, is the beginning of Christian wisdom. He and his moderate Christian associates believed that, in an age of enlightenment and of growing infidelity, religious belief had to answer its critics by moving formally from evidences to faith, from the discovery of empirical probabilities to their application. In other words, natural knowledge had to precede revealed knowledge, in order of time if not of importance. "Testimony," said James Beattie in summary, "is the grand external evidence of Christianity."*

*PR, 56.

**Beattie, Essay on Truth, 84-5.
The Aberdonians' particular concern for the empirical basis of religious belief explains why they could not let Hume's attacks on the evidences of Christianity pass unchallenged. Hume's scepticism struck at the very heart of their conception of Christian apology. Alexander Gerard argued that

there is a credulous, and there is a sceptical temper; they are founded in opposite turns of understanding: but these opposite turns generally imply the same intellectual weakness, an incapacity of perceiving the force of evidence quickly and precisely.³

The natural proofs of Christianity, continued Gerard, are as clear as a Euclidian demonstration.⁴ He therefore placed the burden of disproving Christianity's obvious evidences upon unbelievers: "all men are obliged, before they can reasonably disbelieve the gospel, to go through an inquiry which will put it in their power to decide with understanding, concerning the fact upon which our present argument depends."⁵ Failure to be impressed by Christianity's evidences implies a weakness of philosophical understanding, or perhaps of ordinary common sense. The Aberdonian philosophers, with the exception of Beattie, recognized Hume's uncommon philosophical abilities. Hume's attacks on the Christian evidences were, therefore, all the more unaccountable. His failure to believe was an important problem for the Aberdonians because it made apparent the weak link in their evidential chain of reasoning: what makes any given piece of evidence convincing? The Aberdonians

³Gerard, Sermons, 1:226.

⁴Gerard, Dissertations on Subjects Relating to the Genius and Evidences of Christianity, 474-5.

⁵Gerard, Dissertations, 467. Gerard's Dissertations (1766) was, not surprisingly, written against Henry Dodwell the younger's Christianity Not Founded on Argument (1741).
claimed that our inborn common sense provides a universal standard for communicating and judging evidence. Yet Hume did not recognize the validity of such a standard for metaphysical claims. How then did the Aberdonians deal with Hume? Generally, they attempted to demonstrate that the evidences in favour of Christianity are of the same kind as any historical evidences. This was the method used by Campbell on the question of miracles;

Now as the miracles which were wrought in support of our religion, with us stand on the evidence of testimony conveyed in history, and as the fulfilment of most of the prophecies urged in support of the same cause, are vouched to us in the same manner, the argument with regard to miracles is entirely, and with regard to prophecy is in a great measure of the historical kind. . . . Whereas therefore with regard to the performance of such a miracle, there can be only one question, and a mere question of fact.\(^6\)

Campbell accounted for Hume's unaccountable unbelief by claiming that he was mistaken, first and foremost, in matters of fact. This was a sufficiently compelling strategy as far as Campbell and most eighteenth-century minds were concerned, but it did not entirely penetrate to the heart of their differences, as we shall see.

Miracles were the cornerstone of the empirical structure of eighteenth-century Christian apology. They constituted perhaps the most important battleground in the Enlightenment's war over religion. Enlightened Christians responded to the taunts of their deistical contemporaries by arguing that the miracles upon which the Christian religion was originally founded are not merely objects of faith, but unimpeachable historical facts as well.

\(^6\) STEE. 93-4
The triumph of Newtonian science at the end of the seventeenth century helped make respectable a general conviction that most events in the world happen according to fixed and uniform natural laws. Acts of particular providence were to play a much smaller role in causal explanations. Rather than explaining the particular intentions of God, natural philosophers concentrated on explaining the general expressions of God's will embodied in his natural laws. But this created new problems for these natural philosophers who, for the most part, remained convinced Christians. Miracles and other acts of particular providence had always been an important part of Christian belief as well as of everyday life. Now that miracles had been largely removed from ordinary life, what was to be their status in the realm of Christian belief? Christian natural philosophers, such as John Locke, took upon themselves the apologetic task of reintegrating miracles into their new mechanistic world-view, an effort which only intensified the eighteenth-century deistical war over miracles. The question of miracles was important to philosophers of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because it brought together the major philosophical problems of the day, problems concerning the nature of knowledge, evidence and belief, the religious implications of the scientific world-view, and the proper realms of general and particular providence. The probabilistic approach to natural and religious evidences, developed by seventeenth-century

7The Aberdeen Philosophical Society debated this very issue in a discussion of the nature of superstition and enthusiasm (AUL MS 37, fol. 186). They wondered if a belief in the interruption of the fixed laws of nature, even for a good cause, might be interpreted as "enthusiasm". Enthusiasts supposedly believed in personal revelations, which were a type of miracle.
English divines, was severely tested in the eighteenth-century war over miracles."

The miracles debate had already passed its zenith by the middle of the eighteenth century, though controversial pamphlets continued to be published in great numbers. "Virtually every major enlightened figure, and a host of minor ones, had something to say on the matter. When David Hume belatedly entered the lists against belief in miracles, it was not because he had formulated novel arguments against miracles themselves, but because he had discovered that new epistemological theories concerning the nature of evidence and belief could be used to undermine the foundation of the moderate Christians' belief in miracles.

Hume's "Of Miracles" appeared as a single essay in the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, originally titled *Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding* (1748). Hume explained the origin of the essay's central argument in his only known letter to Campbell:

> I was walking in the Cloysters of the Jesuits College of La Flērhe (a Town in which I pass'd two Years of my Youth) and was engag'd in conversation with a Jesuit of some Parts & Learning, who was relating to me & urging some nonsensical Miracle perform'd lately in their Convent; when I was tempted to dispute against him, and as my Head was full of the Topics of my Treatise of Human Nature, which I was at that time composing, this Argument immediately occur'd to me, and I thought it very much gravell'd my Companion. But at last he observ'd to me, that it was impossible for that Argument to have any Solidity because it operated equally against the Gospel as the catholic Miracles: Which Observation I thought proper to admit as a sufficient Answer."^6

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^6 Laston, *Classical Probability*, 323. See the beginning of chapter four, above.

^7 James Allen Herrick claims that Campbell's *Dissertation on Miracles* (1762) was the last eighteenth-century work with anything new to say on the matter ("Miracles and Reasonableness in the Eighteenth Century," [Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1986], 28).
This excerpt reveals the combination of levity and seriousness with which Hume treated the subject of miracles. The advertisement to Campbell's *Dissertation on Miracles* likewise reveals some of the ambiguity of Campbell's feelings towards Hume. Campbell called Hume's treatment of miracles "one of the most dangerous attacks that have been made on our religion," and yet

The piece itself, like every other work of Mr Hume, is ingenious; but its merit is more of the oratorical kind than of the philosophical. The merit of the author, I acknowledge, is great. The many useful volumes he hath published of history, and on criticism, politics, and trade, have justly procur'd him, with all persons of taste and discernment, the highest reputation as a writer. What pity it is, that this reputation should have been sullied by attempts to undermine the foundations both of natural religion, and of reveal'd!

Campbell went on to describe his debt to Hume:

For my own part, I think it a piece of justice in me, to acknowledge the obligations I owe the author, before I enter on the propos'd examination. I have not only been much entertain'd and instructed by his works; but, if I am possess'd of any talent in abstract reasoning, I am not a little indebted to what he hath written on human nature, for the improvement of that talent. If therefore, in this tract, I have refuted Mr Hume's Essay, the greater share of the merit is perhaps to be ascrib'd to Mr Hume himself. ¹

From what we have already seen of his philosophical borrowings, Campbell's assessment of his debt to Hume is perhaps not far from the mark.

"This Argument," to which Hume referred in his letter to Campbell, constituted the first part of his essay on miracles, and developed out


¹'DM, v-vi.

²'DM, vi-vii.
of the larger argument of the *Enquiry*, itself a popular reworking of the more detailed *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739-40). Hume's main contention in these works was that our understanding of the world, that is, our understanding of the relationships between such ideas as cause and effect, is the product of customary inferences from uniform experience, and not the product of intuition or reason. This extreme version of empirical philosophy placed the burden of knowledge upon our personal experience of the world. Our knowledge of any phenomenon, even phenomena beyond the range of our personal experience, is ultimately dependent on our customary expectations of the course of nature.

Though our conclusions from experience carry us beyond our memory and senses, and assure us of matters of fact which happened in the most distant places and most remote ages, yet some fact must always be present to the senses or memory, from which we may first proceed in drawing these conclusions.\(^3\)

Thus we judge the testimony of others according to our own experience of the world. An event which contradicts our experience of the ordinary course of nature is properly held suspect, which is to say that it does not become an object of belief, since "a wise man . . . proportions his belief to the evidence."\(^4\)

Hume considered miracles to be no more and no less than a problem concerning the relationships between experience, testimony and belief. In fact, Hume broke eighteenth-century empirical tradition by implicitly denying that historical claims in favour of miracles are relevant to the epistemological question of their believability.\(^5\) The reality of

\(^3\) *Enquiries*, 45.

\(^4\) *Enquiries*, 110.
miracles, he argued, is not at issue because we do not have the ability to perceive ultimate causes. He questioned only the believability of events that contradict our experiential understanding of the uniform course of nature. In doing so, he used probabilistic arguments developed by empirical Christians to show that miracles are so improbable as to warrant disbelief.\textsuperscript{16} As we shall see in the next section, Hume chose to define a miracle as an event that necessarily contradicts our uniform experience of the course of nature. A miracle is, by definition, as unbelievable an event as can be imagined. The problem with miracles, according to the main argument of his essay, is that the general body of experience which has established the uniform laws of nature is also the only measure by which we can determine the believability of particular testimonial claims which seek to overturn that same body of uniform experience.\textsuperscript{17} In each case, we must choose between our general knowledge of the world and the particular claim made against that body of knowledge. Hume maintained, as a maxim of good philosophy, that we must always reject the less probable of two conflicting possibilities. In the case of miracles, we must believe either that the testimony is true or that the particular testifier is lying. Consequently, a contest develops between our experience of nature and our experience of the usual reliability of witnesses.\textsuperscript{18} But the contest is not of long duration, for "no testimony is sufficient to

\textsuperscript{16}Campbell recognized the abstract nature of Hume's argument, and suggested that it was a unique type of argument on that account (LSTPE, 106-7).

\textsuperscript{17}Van Leeuwen, The Problem of Certainty, 146.

\textsuperscript{18}Enquiries, 127.

\textsuperscript{18}Enquiries, 121.
establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous, than the fact, which it endeavours to establish." 19 The ontological possibility of miracles aside then, Hume asserted that there never has been sufficient evidence for believing any miracle. 20 The remainder of Hume's essay attempted to demonstrate that this last claim is historically justified. 21

Campbell's objections to Hume's miracles argument mirrored his objections to Hume's epistemology. He claimed, as did the other Common Sense realists, that we can have sure knowledge of the real existence of external objects, and that the relations between ideas in our understanding reflect the real relations that subsist between external objects. In other words, cause and effect relationships are objectively knowable. Campbell, who considered himself an empiricist, rejected Hume's kind of empiricism. In his haste to dethrone reason, Hume had forgotten that even personal experience depends upon the testimony of memory, for whose reliability we have no guarantor but our common sense. Thus even Hume's argument from experience was meaningless without common sense. Hume had also misjudged the source from which we derive our understanding of the uniform course of nature. He had supposed that our

19*Enquiries*, 115-16.

20*Enquiries*, 116.

21*The second and longer part of the essay employed more traditional arguments against miracle claims, that is, arguments familiar to most eighteenth-century deists, such as the argument that one cannot believe the testimony of interested parties. Hume appealed to superstition and the love of wonder as psychological explanations of belief in miracles. R.M. Burns has plausibly suggested that the two halves of Hume's essay are not philosophically compatible (*The Great Debate*, 158), which is to say that the argument of the first part, if correct, makes the arguments of the second part redundant.
understanding of the laws of nature derives from our personal experience, when in fact our personal acquaintance with the course of the world is extremely limited. We depend on the testimony of others for our understanding of the laws of nature long before we have experienced even the smallest part of the operations of the world for ourselves.²² Again, Hume had overlooked the fact that experience itself depends upon a source whose veracity cannot be rationally demonstrated.

Just as Campbell objected to Hume's general notion of the nature of experience, so also did he object to Hume's treatment of the possible evidence for miracles themselves. As we have seen, Campbell thought Hume had misunderstood the psychology of belief. He objected to Hume's assumption that testimony must be disbelieved until the weight of probability tips in its favour. In sceptical (or perhaps legal) fashion, Hume implied that the burden of proof always rests with those who give testimony in favour of an unlikely event such as a miracle. In direct opposition to this premise, Campbell argued that one ought always to presume the truth of testimony, including testimony for miracles, unless one can find sufficient cause to doubt it.²³ He claimed that this presumption is supported by human nature itself. The Aberdonians considered faith in testimony to be a fundamental and necessary premise of all human knowledge. Hume had supposed that human beings begin their quest for knowledge by being sceptical of the testimony of others, and

²²PM, 39. This sounds very much like an argument made by Joseph Glanvill; see Burns, The Great Debate, 48-9). Gerard stated that Campbell's argument penetrated to the very source of Christian proofs itself, that is, to human nature (Dissertations, 356-7).

²³PM, 15-16. We may recall that both Hume and Campbell had received some legal education.
only gradually come to believe testimonial claims as they gain experience. Campbell claimed Hume had got things the wrong way round. Human beings are in fact naturally credulous. Children believe whatever they are told, and only learn to doubt certain testimonial claims as they gain experience.\textsuperscript{24} Hume's assumptions about human nature contradicted the observed facts about human nature, as well as the benevolent nature of God's design.

Campbell argued that Hume's mistaken notions concerning the nature of experience led him to be unfairly hard on testimony regarding miracles. Hume made demands of such testimony that he would not make of testimony regarding events within the scope of ordinary human experience. He supposed, for example, that there have been an insufficient number of credible witnesses for the historical substantiation of any miracle.\textsuperscript{25} Against this, and against Hume's notion of the universal experience of the laws of nature, Campbell placed the sheer number of accounts testifying to the occurrence of miraculous events.\textsuperscript{26} In addition, he argued that the universal testimony in favour of the absolute uniformity of nature's laws (that is, against the possibility of miraculous events) is simply a fiction.\textsuperscript{27} "A general conclusion from experience," he said, "is in comparison but

\textsuperscript{24}Hume, at one point, acknowledged the natural credulity of children (\textit{Treatise}, 316), though he did not think that this bespoke the natural reliability of testimony.

\textsuperscript{25}\textit{Enquiries}, 116.

\textsuperscript{26}\textit{DM}, 44. Joseph Butler had also argued that the positive evidences in favour of Christian miracles are sufficiently numerous that it is up to unbelievers to show why they should be discredited (\textit{Analogy}, 281).

\textsuperscript{27}\textit{DM}, 43 and 45.
presumptive and indirect; sufficient testimony for a particular fact is
direct and positive evidence." A single piece of reliable testimony
might well be sufficient to overturn a great body of countering
experience.

Hume and Campbell agreed, to a certain extent, that the problem of
miracles is really a problem of evidence, an attitude that tied them
both to the major concerns of the Enlightenment. They further agreed
that the issue must take into account certain epistemological, or
perhaps psychological, considerations, such as the observed nature of
human belief. Why then did they disagree as to the reasonable
possibility of belief in miracles? Obviously, the question of miracles
was for them considerably more than an abstract problem. Miracles
symbolized their deep-seated religious differences. But without looking
this far ahead, we can also note that they were not arguing about
precisely the same thing. Although each disputant put forward
compelling arguments, neither adequately defined the object in dispute.
Hume claimed (and Campbell agreed) that, "the chief obstacle . . . to
our improvement in the moral or metaphysical sciences is the obscurity
of the ideas, and ambiguity of the terms." Yet neither contestant

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\(^{28}\) DM, 46.

\(^{29}\) DM, 35-6. Hume seems to have anticipated this. He argued that
incredible testimony actually destroys itself. Our usual belief in
testimony causes us to reject the incredible testimony that would
imperil the ordinary testimony upon which our knowledge depends
(Enquiries, 121). Much of the deistical debate over miracles revolved
around the question of whether the Gospel writers were wary and
therefore reliable witnesses or credulous dupes (R.R. Palmer, Catholics
and Unbelievers in Eighteenth Century France [New York: Cooper Square,
1939], 86-7).

\(^{30}\) Enquiries, 61.
really addressed the basic problem of semantics, even though their central arguments depended on definition. We must, therefore, define miracles in order to understand why they ultimately failed to agree.

2

The meaning of the term "miracle" was as ambiguous in the eighteenth century as it is today. In twentieth-century popular usage, it often signifies no more than a wonderful or remarkable event. The eighteenth-century understanding of the term had considerably wider signification, but also had to bear the weight of new scientific and probabilistic conceptions of natural providence. To provide a context for the eighteenth-century miracles debate, we must consider the normative eighteenth-century meaning of the term before examining Hume's and Campbell's particular meanings.

Nathan Bailey's early eighteenth-century *Dictionarium Britannicum* (1730) defined miracles as

works effected in a manner unusual or different from the common and regular method of the Almighty Providence, by the interposition either of himself, or of some intelligent Agent, superior to Man, for the Evidence and proving of some particular Doctrine, or in Attestation to the Authority of some particular Person or Persons.\(^{31}\)

Samuel Johnson considered a miracle to be "a wonder; something above human power;" or "An effect above human or natural power, performed in attestation of some truth."\(^{32}\) Eighteenth-century definitions of


"miracle" included three common but distinct elements: (1) reference to a particular event external to the observed laws of nature (general providence), and (2) ascription of agency to some supernatural power, (3) for the purpose of proving a divine truth or favour. Most eighteenth-century men of letters, including, as we shall see, Hume and Campbell, would have agreed to a definition of "miracle" containing these elements.

Eighteenth-century treatments of miracles differed from one another according to the weight that the disputants chose to put on the various components of the definition. The Newtonian emphasis on the uniformity of general providence made the first part of the definition much more compelling but at the same time more limiting. In other words, even moderate Christian apologists agreed that acts of particular providence are the rarest of events and done only for the greatest of purposes. The second part of the definition was probably the oldest, and certainly remained current in the eighteenth century. But even eighteenth-century Christian apologists tended not to accept a supernatural claim unless it was accompanied with objective evidence that the ordinary course of nature had in fact been interrupted. The significant exception to this tendency were Evangelicals (or "enthusiasts" according to the moderates) who claimed inner or private miracles and revelations that were not subject to verification, and were thus held in suspicion by most moderate Christians. The third part of the definition, that miracles must attest some significant point of religion, was given particular

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33 John Wesley's journals, for example, reveal that he did not clearly differentiate between particular and general acts of providence. He interpreted every storm and trial as a personal divine communication.
attention by moderate Christians who believed that it would minimize the violations of general providence, and preserve the evidential character of miracles from the violence done to objective truth by enthusiasts.

Hume gave the greatest weight to the first part of the definition, that a purported miracle, to be worthy of regard, must clearly violate the universally-observed laws of nature. This, according to his philosophical premises, is the only aspect of the definition of miracles that can possibly fall within the realm of human observation. Hume therefore defined a miracle as:

"a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined."  

Hume in effect argued that the very definition of a miracle (assuming the definition hinges on the first part) is the best proof against a miracle claim. If an event falls within the scope of ordinary human experience, it cannot be a miracle, for, "nothing is esteemed a miracle, if it ever happen in the common course of nature."  

Again, "there must ... be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation."  

Hume's objection to belief in miracles was based on his philosophical premises. As we cannot know ultimate causes, he said, but only their supposed effects, we must be morally certain of the nature of

34*Enquiries*, 114.

35*Enquiries*, 115.

the effect before we can legitimately speculate concerning the cause. The second and third parts of the definition of miracles are therefore irrelevant unless the first is clearly established. As we have seen, Hume set up the problem in such a way that miracles, by definition, cannot be rationally believed. Miracle claims are by their very nature hostile to the cherished enlightened goal of empirically-founded knowledge.

This was enough to satisfy Hume that miracle claims are inherently unbelievable, and thus conclude the question of their epistemological significance, but it was not enough to satisfy a philosopher of human nature as to their psychological or sociological significance. Hume was not oblivious to the religious importance of the other components of the definition. "A miracle," he said, "may be accurately defined, a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent,"\textsuperscript{37} which nicely encapsulates the first two parts of the definition. He rounded out the definition as follows:

Every miracle . . . pretended to have been wrought in any of these religions (and all of them abound in miracles), as its direct scope is to establish the particular system to which it is attributed; so has it the same force, though more indirectly, to overthrow every other system.\textsuperscript{38}

The last part of this statement highlights another common eighteenth-century assumption, that evidence for one religion simultaneously constitutes evidence against all other religions. Said Hume, "If a miracle proves a doctrine to be revealed from God, and consequently

\textsuperscript{37}Enquiries, 115n.

\textsuperscript{38}Enquiries, 121.
true, a miracle can never be wrought for a contrary doctrine. The facts are therefore as incompatible as the doctrines. 39 Hume was as aware as his Christian opponents of the significance of miracles to exclusive religious claims. But more than the moderate Christians, he saw the significance of miracles to the philosophy of human nature. Miracles highlight certain aspects of human psychology, such as the compelling human need to assign causes to events that have not occurred with sufficient frequency for the associative principles of the mind to create their own causal connections.

It is usual for men, in such difficulties, to have recourse to some invisible intelligent principle as the immediate cause of that event which surprises them, and which, they think, cannot be accounted for from the common powers of nature.

Only philosophers realize that the ultimate causes of these prodigies are as unknowable as the events of everyday life. 40

However serious Hume's intentions may have been, he used a great deal of his characteristically subtle humour to achieve his purpose. He often used the term "miracle" in an intentionally loose manner; thus "no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous, than the fact, which it endeavours to establish." 41 Undoubtedly, Hume's loose employment of the term was meant to parody the very notion of miracles. 42 Campbell was fully aware of Hume's devices, and took him

39 Hume, Letters, 1:350-1. In the same letter, Hume stated, "I never read of a miracle in my life, that was not meant to establish some new point of religion" (350).

40 Enquiries, 69-70.

41 Enquiries, 115-16.
gently to task for them: "The style, we find, is figurative, and the
author is all the while amusing both his readers and himself with an
unusual application of a familiar term."\textsuperscript{a3} Campbell criticized Hume for
sometimes employing the term "miraculous" as a synonym for "improbable",
thus allowing him always to reject the more improbable event.\textsuperscript{a4} If
miracles are really just improbabilities, Campbell suggested, then
miracles must happen all the time, for history is full of statistically
improbable events.\textsuperscript{a5}

Campbell's conception of miracles was very different from Hume's,
particularly in point of emphasis. Whereas Hume focused his attention
primarily on the first part of the definition, Campbell (like other
moderate Christians) gave considerable attention to the second and
particularly the third parts of the definition. As we have already
seen, Campbell did not consider the first part of the definition to be
an insurmountable barrier to belief. He objected to the absoluteness of
Hume's conception of the laws of nature, and differentiated between what
is contrary to experience and what is merely not conformable to it, that
is, what has not been observed or recorded before.\textsuperscript{a6} He asserted that

\textsuperscript{a2}In the \textit{Treatise} (474), Hume provided different definitions of the
term "nature", some of which affect his definition of miracles by
setting them in contrast to events merely improbable.

\textsuperscript{a3}DM, 101.

\textsuperscript{a4}DM, 99.

\textsuperscript{a5}DM, 100-1.

\textsuperscript{a6}DM, 47. In another place, Campbell suggested that miracles do
not necessarily indicate the violation of the laws of nature; in fact,
they are more likely cases of over-riding the ordinary laws of nature by
hitherto unknown natural laws (AUL MS 651, pp. 10-11). In a note to the
third edition of the \textit{Dissertation on Miracles}, Campbell suggested that
the spiritual world is governed by laws with which we are not familiar,
there is no inherently greater presumption against believing miracles than believing that which is merely extraordinary. The difference between Hume and Campbell on this point was again a matter of basic epistemology. Hume believed that we cannot observe laws directly, but only constant conjunctions. We habitually come to expect the same constant conjunctions in the future, and thus we construct the laws of nature in our minds. Any break in the constant conjunction destroys the mental construct. Campbell believed that we can have sure knowledge of external causal relationships by means of our common sense, that they exist independently of our minds, and, therefore, that they are in no danger of collapse if occasionally suspended. Though we discover universal laws by experience, we also intuitively recognize that the laws of nature stand whether or not they are universally observed. Campbell did not believe that purposeful departures from the otherwise uniform laws of nature detract from the dignity or reliability of those laws.

Campbell and other moderates did what Hume found philosophically unacceptable; they fell back on a conception of God which assumed his mastery over both general and particular providences. In other words, laws which might account for occasional suspensions of the inferior laws of the material universe (Sermons, 1:86n.).

Yet Campbell argued elsewhere that plausibility may never be considered positive evidence for an event, whereas implausibility may be negative evidence against it (PR, 82).

"The Westminster Confession had asserted God's absolute government over all things, saying, "God, in his ordinary providence, maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them, at his pleasure" (The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines...., in The Creeds of Christendom, ed. Philip Schaff, vol. 3, chap. V). William Paley also assumed that if God (and his natural attributes) can be proved from natural evidences, then miracles (which are the probable
they thought that the believability of miracles is tied to the great purposes for which they are supposedly wrought. In fact, Campbell objected to Hume's argument, that the greater of two miracles ought always to be rejected, on the grounds that a greater miracle is a clearer indication of a great and noble purpose, and therefore of an event worthy of God.49 Hume, who could have no reliable knowledge of the nature or even of the existence of God, could never prefer a supernatural explanation to a natural one.50 The merely improbable still falls within the realm of experience, whereas rational belief in the miraculous would require knowledge from without the realm of experience. Hume was therefore rigorously unwilling to allow anything less than a palpable violation of observed nature warrants the label of miracle. Campbell, in contrast, believed that we can know much about the nature and intentions of God by means of natural knowledge in conjunction with our common sense. Like the seventeenth-century Latitudinarians, Campbell and the moderates expected to find limited examples of particular providence in support of a necessary revelation.51 Campbell's definition of a miracle was necessarily pointed at a supernatural element. A miracle, he said, "implies the interposul of an invisible agent, which is not implied in (a merely

49PM, 95. On the moderates' "great purposes" argument, see Herrick, diss., chap. five.

50This is clear from the Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, which was not yet published.

51See, for example, Butler's Analogy, 216-17, and Paley, Works, 299. Locke argued that the third part of the above definition actually makes the existence of miracles more believable, because it leads us to anticipate them (Essay, 667).
extraordinary event]."\(^{54}\) We may already observe a significant lapse in parity between Hume's and Campbell's definitions, for Hume would not even allow such an implication. Hume's theory of knowledge did not permit speculation concerning the cause of a unique event. A contradiction of the ordinary course of nature can imply no more than the forfeiture of a natural law. Campbell was more predisposed to consider the divine meaning of an event, "for if the interposal of the Deity be the proper solution of the phenomenon, why recur to natural causes?"\(^{55}\) Unlike Hume, he could not think of a miracle without considering all three parts of the definition. Campbell's natural religion demonstrated that natural knowledge about God is insufficient for human purposes. He therefore expected that God must reveal his divine purpose for humanity in a great and unmistakable historical event. This assumption made the second and third parts of the miracle definition indispensable, and the first part a considerably less formidable obstacle to belief.

According to moderate Christians, then, the first part of the definition can be vindicated by natural (that is, historical) evidences, while the second part is self-evident. Therefore, the third part of the definition, that a miracle is meant to testify a divine communication, requires the most attention. This is apparent from the epigraph that Campbell placed on the title-page of his Dissertation, which quotes John 10:25; "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." In Campbell's mind, belief in a miracle, once gained, must

\(^{54}\text{PM}, 51.\)

\(^{55}\text{PM}, 60n.\)
necessarily carry with it belief in a corresponding supernatural communication." Campbell was enough of a natural philosopher to assume that God never interrupts the course of nature in vain, that is, without attesting to some divine truth which cannot be communicated in any other manner. He also agreed with Hume that a new religion would be difficult, if not impossible, to accept without such a divine mark.

Campbell assumed that since God must reveal his will to mankind with the support of appropriate miracles, a philosopher's only crucial task is to decide which among the historical miracle claims is most believable. Once the authenticity of a miracle, or set of miracles, has been verified, one can and must accept the revelation that accompanies the miracle. Christianity, argued Campbell, is most probable in its evidences and most conformable in character to the expectations of nature as determined by experience and common sense. It is the only religion in human history whose claims have been founded on well-attested miracles. It stands in stark contrast to the obviously false claims of Mahomet and the Roman Catholic church. Christianity,

"DM, 163. Gerard said that "miracles are proofs of a doctrine, only when they are performed with a professed intention to answer this purpose" (Dissertations, 13; see also 147). George Turnbull argued that Jesus' miracles were "samples" of the supernatural power and authority which he claimed (Philosophical Enquiry, 4). This made it easy for moderates to dismiss the myriad of Roman Catholic miracle claims, which, they thought, were usually made without reference to a corresponding great purpose.

"It becomes obvious why eighteenth-century moderate Christians generally held a notion of miracles very different from that of Evangelicals such as John Wesley. Wesley would not have thought such a coldly evidential view of the truth of Christianity sufficient or appropriate. Wesley's experiential but not empirically verifiable conception of belief was far removed from Campbell's. In this matter, Campbell's conception of evidence was much more akin to Hume's.

"DM, 124 and 159."
therefore, ought to be followed in its simplest and purest form without unreasonable expectation of further divine signs or proofs, for once a revelation has been well-founded, ordinary providence is sufficient for daily life.

Hume and Campbell’s debate over miracles was about much more than just miracles. They were contesting the nature of religious belief itself. Hume was implicitly willing to abandon revealed religion if satisfactory evidences could not be found. Campbell assumed that a satisfactory answer is necessarily within the grasp of the rational mind. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Hume placed the burden of proving a miracle on the believer, while Campbell placed the burden of disproving Christian miracles on the unbeliever. Campbell went so far as to declare that his greatest advantage over Hume was being on the side of truth, while Hume’s only advantage was his native ingenuity.  

His fundamental premise was that

God has neither in natural nor reveal’d religion, left himself without a witness; but has in both given moral and external evidence, sufficient to convince the impartial, to silence the gainsayer, and to render the atheist and the unbeliever without excuse. This evidence it is our duty to attend to, and candidly to examine.  

Campbell assumed that the Christian evidences demand investigation, while Hume, working from the premise that miracles are inherently unbelievable, felt no compulsion to examine every (or any) miracle claim. In defiance of Hume, Campbell confidently declared that the

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57DM, 6. It is unclear what motives Campbell was here implicitly attributing to Hume.

58DM, 3-4.

59Hume to Blair, 1761: Letters of David Hume, 1:350.
testing of Christianity's claims in the stark light of reason only demonstrates their strength and consistency. He was certainly right in assuming that the vast majority of his readers would be sympathetic to his own presuppositions and to his manner of defining miracles. Hume, on the other hand, had to do all the work of convincing Christian readers to disregard their native prejudices concerning the possibility of miracles.

Campbell and the moderates believed that everything they assumed thus far about God and his universe is apparent by the light of natural reason. Hume not only rejected their assumptions but wondered what a proven contradiction of the observed laws of nature could possibly signify. The moderates, by using epistemological and empirical criteria less rigid than Hume's, believed that the fact of a miracle can be known with moral certainty, and solely by means of natural knowledge. The significance of such an event, however, can only be interpreted by knowledge from outside of nature. We must, therefore, leave consideration of the religious significance of miracles to the next part of this essay.

3

The historical evidences in favour of early Christian miracles constituted a major component of the empirical Christians' conception of religious belief. Authenticated miracles also said much about the true nature of the Christian church. Campbell's interest in miracles was a component of his interest in the historical evidences concerning the

\[^{68}\text{PM, 284.}^\]
early church. "A considerable portion of the Christian faith," said Campbell, "consists in points of an historic nature." Historical evidences were useful in discriminating between the various and sometimes conflicting claims within Christianity. Eighteenth-century Christians of various denominations agreed that the form, structure, and beliefs of the early church were critical for determining the legitimacy of contemporary forms of Christian belief and church order. Campbell believed that historical investigations were equally useful in determining which doctrinal and ecclesiological claims were merely the illegitimate products of human invention. He therefore taught his divinity students the critical uses of history.

As an historian, Campbell was very much a man of his age. His views concerning the nature and purpose of history were those of the Enlightenment. He was, in other words, a philosophical historian. The leading British historians of the eighteenth century, most notably David Hume and Edward Gibbon, re-invented their discipline by bringing the concerns of the critical philosopher to a field of study which had traditionally been dominated by dull annalists or politically and religiously-motivated polemicists. The philosophical historians rejected traditional party debates, maintained a Newtonian concern for method, applied critical and probabilistic reasoning to both historical sources and human motives, employed an enlightened and empirical theory of human nature, and, most importantly, concerned themselves with causal connections and explanations.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{61} LEH, 1:3.

\textsuperscript{62}I have examined the eighteenth-century notion of "polite history" in an M.A. thesis entitled, "Politeness and History: The Scottish
Campbell was an historian of this kind, despite the fact that he was concerned mainly with the history of the Christian church. His historical interests are, of course, most evident in his ecclesiastical history lectures, but are also embedded in other works, notably the *Dissertation on Miracles*, *The Four Gospels*, some of the sermons, and the unpublished manuscripts of his later years. The pervasiveness of Campbell's historical concerns indicates that they were an important part of the structure of his overall thought. We have already noted the degree to which Campbell was interested in the philosophical nature and uses of evidence.\(^3^\) Eighteenth-century thinkers were on the whole as much concerned with the uses of the past as were nineteenth and twentieth-century thinkers, though their theory of human nature prevented them from using history in ways to which we have become accustomed.\(^4^\) It is important, therefore, to reconstruct Campbell's

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\(^3^\)David Wooton argues that our modern critical notion of history (which includes a sophisticated method of source citation, the application of probabilist theory, and a focus on causal explanations through narrative) did not exist before the eighteenth century, and that it was first practiced by David Hume, followed closely by Edward Gibbon; "Narrative, Irony, and Faith in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*," *History and Theory* 33 (1994): 77-105.

\(^4^\)Campbell's concern for historical evidence and testimony is evident throughout his writings; see, for example, *LEH*, 1:234 and 2:69. Campbell argued that conviction in a sceptical age requires full disclosure of sources (AUL MS 654, un-numbered page). His correspondence with Lord Hailes, one of the better-known eighteenth-century Scottish historians, included discussion of critical historical methodology. Campbell told Hailes, for example, that the burden of proof always lies upon the historian who seeks to prove a change in custom or practice rather than upon one who argues historical continuity (Campbell to Hailes, 17 June 1786: NLS MS 25304, fols. 54-5).

\(^6^\)See chapter six, section 2, below. We must be wary of the common nineteenth and twentieth-century opinion that the eighteenth century was predominantly ahistorical. Many eighteenth-century writers were
general view of history before examining his treatment of specific historical problems.

The enlightened historians' concern for impartiality and critical attitude towards sources allowed them, on the one hand, to reject partisan historical claims, and, on the other hand, to be more tolerant of the differentness of past cultures. They were, by turns, systematically judgmental and surprisingly sympathetic in their historical pronouncements. "Wonderful are the differences in manners and opinions," said Campbell, "which prevail in different countries, and even in the same country, at different periods." 65 He recognized the difficulties of entering into the sentiments of the early Christian age. 66 He argued that one cannot understand a past language without understanding the character of the people who used it. 67 And, even more remarkable in light of common eighteenth-century prejudices, he often restrained himself from lumping all Roman Catholics into categorical judgments. 68 Campbell's attempts at historical sensitivity, however, are not always convincing, especially when followed by harsh and judgmental comments on the views of literary opponents. 69 He considered it a matter of historical fact that the Roman Catholic church had always

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65AUL MS 654, un-numbered page.
66Sermons, 2:21.
67FG, 1:54.
68Sermons, 2:308-10.
69For example, Campbell identified his critical methodology with the dawning of the Reformation over the dark ignorant night of the middle ages (AUL MS 649, pp. 43-4).
been more concerned with power than doctrine. His account of the successes of the early church betrays his enlightened inclination to assign universally-applicable motives to the actions of past peoples:

"Now the nature of things, my brethren, was the same then that it is at present, and means which we perceive now to be perfectly inadequate must have been always so." Campbell's seemingly inflexible judgments become more comprehensible when viewed in light of the purpose for which enlightened historians studied the past.

Philosophical historians, like their humanist predecessors, viewed the study of the past as a moral enterprise. History was meant to be didactic, but in what sense? It was to communicate not just moral lessons but an understanding of human nature itself. Campbell meant his divinity lectures to convey some notion of the nature and origin and essential parts of this species of history, to trace as briefly as possible the latent springs of the principle changes, with which the ecclesiastical history in particular presents us; and ... to offer suitable advices to the student, first as to the order in which he ought to proceed in the acquisition of this necessary branch of knowledge; secondly as to the books and assistances which he ought to use.

Two things are here evident. The first is that Campbell intended to teach a proper method of historical study so that his students could embark on a lifetime of competent self-instruction. He continually made this philosophy of education plain to his students:

So far from allowing yourselves to lose any thing of what ye have already acquired, ye ought to be daily improving your stock of

70LEH, 1:418-19.

71Sermons, 2:31.

72LSPE, 54-5. All Scottish moralists and historians sought the secret or "latent springs" of human nature through the study of history.
knowledge. Of some branches of study, young men, after finishing their philosophical course, often have the acquisition to begin. Of this sort is civil history, which, especially the ancient oriental, as well as Greek and Roman histories, are of considerable importance here, inasmuch as they have a pretty close connection and are in some particulars closely interwoven with the scriptural and ecclesiastic histories; and these ye know make a principal branch of your subject. Sacred history and profane serve reciprocally to throw light on each other. I may add that historical knowledge is of immense use in criticism, from the acquaintance to which it introduces us, with ancient manners, laws, rites and idioms.\textsuperscript{73}

The second point that Campbell wished to convey is that the study of history ought to be concerned primarily with moral causes, that is, with the hidden springs or motives of universal human nature. As Campbell taught in The Philosophy of Rhetoric, a minister must know human nature in order to communicate effectively with his parishioners. True didactic history, which is a branch of moral philosophy, considers the motivations and consequences of human moral action. The philosophical historian's determination to uncover the real causes of historical events was made possible by the Enlightenment's belief in a universal human nature.

Campbell's enlightened interest in uncovering human nature, manifested in the history of the Christian church allowed him to consider religious conflicts and controversies as failings of human character rather than as shortcomings of theological knowledge.\textsuperscript{74} His historical explanations often cited the universal weaknesses of human nature, such as its tendency to be irrationally swayed by wealth and

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{73}LATPE, 78. This passage is remarkably akin to the didactic emphasis of Charles Rollin's \textit{Ancient History} (1729).
\item \textsuperscript{74}See, for example PC, 1:229. Hugh Blair, who said "in all ages, human nature has been the same," considered history to be the mirror of human nature (Sermons, 4 vols. [London: A. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1794], 1:178-9).
\end{itemize}
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splendour, names and titles, and veneration for antiquity. Campbell took it for historical truth that, "exorbitant wealth annexed to offices may be said universally to produce two effects. . . . arrogance and laziness." He explained the continued popular veneration of Latin in the church thus:

though it arise in them all from a silly prejudice, which manifestly shows, that the form of religion has supplanted the power; yet I can easily, without recurring to authority or foreign influence, especially in the decline of all literature and science, account for it from the weakness incident to human nature.  

Like Hume, Campbell believed that any customary observance, however unofficial, always comes to be considered a positive right in time. "Custom rules the world," said Campbell, "and is the principle foundation of obedience in all the governments that are, and ever were, upon the earth." He meant the term "custom" to signify somewhat more than its ordinary meaning. Like contemporary conjectural historians, he used such terms as part of a larger philosophical or psychological explanation of the course of history.

Conjectural history was one of the most visible products of the Scottish historians' concern to understand the past in a philosophical manner. Conjectural historians tended to explain history in its broadest terms, by drawing upon a probabilistic theory of human nature and motivation. They tended to write the history of institutions and

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75LEH, 2:110, 2:149, and 1:405.
76LEH, 2:218.
77LEH, 2:254.
78See, for example, LEH, 1:284-5.
79LEH, 2:53. Like Hume, Campbell argued that custom can eventually reconcile men to any historical development (PR, 402).
movements rather than of individuals; thus Lord Kames explained the
general principles that underlie the histories of both law and
science; and Hume examined the cycles of religious belief.\footnote{See Kames' \textit{Historical Law-Tracts}, Smith's \textit{History of Astronomy} and its companion pieces, and Hume's \textit{Natural History of Religion}.}\footnote{See, for example, \textit{LEH}, 1:253-6 and 276.} Campbell did the same for the Christian church. The \textit{Lectures on Ecclesiastical History} may be read as a psychological reconstruction of church history, combining historical evidences with an enlightened understanding of the universal principles of human nature.\footnote{\textit{LEH}, 2:108.} Campbell's declared goal "in these discourses, is not to give a narrative of facts, but from known facts, with their attendant circumstances, by comparing one with another, to deduce principles and causes."\footnote{\textit{LEH}, 2:143.} He sought the "springs of action" not immediately apparent to the historical reader. "As some of the largest and loftiest trees spring from very small seeds, so the most extensive and wonderful effects sometimes arise from very inconsiderable causes."\footnote{\textit{LEH}, 2:143.} Campbell paid little attention to individual historical actors, except insofar as they illustrated general trends. His historical analyses, like those of other conjectural historians, often focused on the unintended or spontaneous consequences of a great number of uncoordinated individual actions.\footnote{\textit{LEH}, 1:167; see also \textit{LEH}, 1:317.} The development of an

"The whole of life shows us, that from the most
trivial causes the greatest effects sometimes proceed. History in
depth evinces this truth, and no sort of history more remarkably
than the ecclesiastical" (\textit{LEH}, 1:167; see also \textit{LEH}, 1:317). Similar statements concerning causation may be found throughout the historical writings of William Robertson and Hume, and in French philosophers like Montesquieu.
ecclesiastical hierarchy, for example, was as much the unplanned product of certain characteristic human tendencies as it was the intended consequence of explicit policy decisions. Christian persecution developed without deliberate planning over a long period of time.\textsuperscript{\textdegree} The conspiracy of the priesthood, apparent in Campbell's writings and in the writings of most Enlightenment figures,\textsuperscript{\textdegree\textdegree} was likewise an undesigned conspiracy. Campbell's explanations may not have paid much regard to the intentions of individual historical actors, but they did appeal to a few causal principles and they did have philosophical coherence, and were therefore perfectly in line with the expectations of his enlightened audience. The novelty of Campbell's approach to church history (which was an intensely-cultivated historical field), was his concern for broad and philosophical explanations, rather than for minute and controversial details.

Enlightened historians sought the most broadly-applicable explanations of historical events and trends, and consequently tended to view the past in its broadest terms. This helps account for the readiness with which they judged the past. Campbell, like his contemporaries, held a very low opinion of the "middle ages"\textsuperscript{\textdegree\textdegree\textdegree} between

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{\textdegree\textdegree}The theory of unintended consequences or of spontaneous order was popular among eighteenth-century Scots. Such theories necessarily focused on broad social and institutional histories rather than on histories of individuals, and were thus closely tied to conjectural histories. Adam Smith's invisible hand was a version of this type of history. See Ronald Hamowy, "The Scottish Enlightenment and the Theory of Spontaneous Order," \textit{Journal of the History of Philosophy}, Monograph Series (1987).

\textsuperscript{\textdegree\textdegree\textdegree}AUL MS 654, part IV.

\textsuperscript{\textdegree\textdegree\textdegree}See chapter six, section 1, below.

\textsuperscript{\textdegree\textdegree\textdegree}Campbell's use of this term (\textit{LEH}, 1:363) indicates that he viewed this era only in negative relation to the ancient and modern eras.
\end{flushleft}
antiquity and his own reformed and enlightened age. The end of these "dark ages" was signified by "a second dawn of reason, and the return of thought, after a long night of barbarity and ignorance." Like Hume and Robertson, Campbell chronicled the medieval decline of literature, arts, and learning that accompanied the rise of superstition and priesthood, which was itself a secondary cause in Satan's historical plan. The decline of the Roman Empire and the rise of ecclesiastical dominion was a matter of wonder to the modern reader;

when the sun of science was now set, and the night of ignorance, superstition and barbarism, was fast advancing; that out of the ruins of every thing great and venerable, there should spring a new species of despotism, never heard of, or imagined before, whose means of conquest and defence were neither swords nor spears, fortifications nor warlike engines, but definitions and canons, sophisms and imprecations; and that by such weapons, as by a kind of magic, there should actually be reared a second universal monarchy, the most formidable the world ever knew."

Despite his argument with Hume over the possibility and fact of miracles, Campbell, like Hume, had no difficulty attributing the age's myriad of false miracles to a gross and ignorant people. He accused the medieval Pope Gregory I of using his office purely for political gain, of being more interested in converts than good Christians, and of pursuing a form of zeal hostile to true Christian tolerance.

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88LEH, 2:50.

89LEH, 2:265.


91LEH, 2:19.

92LEH, 2:51.
That Gregory had, through the misfortune and error of the times, thoroughly imbibed . . . these principles, will never be doubted by any person, who, with judgment and impartiality, reads his history.\textsuperscript{93}

Even while defending Roman Catholics against popular Protestant hostility in his \textit{Address to the People of Scotland}, Campbell equated modern Catholic irrationality with the church's rise to power in dark and ignorant ages.\textsuperscript{94} His characterization of the middle ages as an extended moral lapse in the history of human nature was little different from the opinions of Hume or Voltaire. His description of "priestcraft"\textsuperscript{95} could easily be attributed to one of these authors. Campbell even cited Voltaire approvingly in his divinity lectures.\textsuperscript{96} The historical source for his discussion of the Council of Trent was Paolo Sarpi, whose antipathy to Rome was famous.\textsuperscript{97} Campbell clearly believed that one did not have to be a Protestant historian to see that historical scholarship was demonstrably unfavourable to the claims of Rome.\textsuperscript{98}

Campbell's view of the rise of the modern era and of the Protestant Reformation also corresponded to the views of his compatriots, with the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{93} \textit{LEH}, 2:75.
  \item \textsuperscript{94} \textit{Sermons}, 2:348.
  \item \textsuperscript{95} This is Campbell's term (e.g., \textit{LEH}, 2:41).
  \item \textsuperscript{96} \textit{LEH}, 2:135 and 313-14. Campbell quoted from what is probably the \textit{Essai sur les Moeurs}, and, very interestingly, from the \textit{Philosophical Dictionary}.
  \item \textsuperscript{97} \textit{LEH}, 2:155.
  \item \textsuperscript{98} \textit{LEH}, 2:94. "The gradual introduction of their many gross corruptions, both in doctrine and practice, is so extremely apparent to the historic student, that even a person of moderate penetration will need no other proof, either of their novelty, or of the baseness of their extraction" (\textit{LSTPE}, 206).
\end{itemize}
exception of Hume. Although Campbell, Robertson and Hume all agreed that the modern age broke as morning light over the dark ruins of corrupted civilization, Hume implicitly denied a connection between the reformed religion and the new learning. Campbell agreed with Hume that the invention of printing played a significant role in the triumph of modern learning, but he also highlighted, as did Robertson, the important role played by the learned Martin Luther. It is not difficult to see how these historical judgments concerning the nature of the medieval church and the character of the Reformation became inextricably intertwined with the eighteenth-century British view of the contemporary Roman Catholic church.

Such a sweeping view of human history was easily translated into a theory of progress. Campbell argued that the evident changes in mankind over the last three thousand years was no less than the transformation of a child into an adult. The most dramatic change had been in the arts and sciences; as Thomas Reid said, "Nature intended man to improve in Knowledge and the usefull arts." Campbell saw progress in knowledge reflected in the development of language; "Things

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100 Compare LEH, lecture 28. with Robertson, Charles V, 1:422. Robertson emphasized the classical learning of the reformers.


102 DM, 251.

103 Reid, Natural Theology, 46.
sensible first had names in every language: The names were afterward extended to things conceivable and intellectual. This is according to the natural progress of knowledge." 104 Campbell seems to have believed that recent advances in general learning had made it virtually impossible for darkness and ignorance to again triumph as they had in the middle ages. 105 His theory of toleration was partly based on the historical supposition that "the progressive state of all human knowledge and art, will ever be unfriendly to the adoption of any measure which seems to fix a barrier against improvement." 106 The most interesting expression of Campbell's view of progress is found in a letter to Bishop John Douglas. Here Campbell claimed that humanity is progressively advancing towards a state of perfection predicted in Isaiah's prophecy, "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks."

I am strongly of opinion [said Campbell] that this prophecy will be one day literally accomplished: tho' we are many centuries too early here to see it. The advancement of knowledge is the sure foundation of improvement of every kind, both in morals and in civil policy. 107

This enlightened and optimistic view of progress is made all the more fascinating by its complete lack of secular intent, as if the triumph of the Enlightenment itself is the fulfillment of God's plan for man on

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104 PG, 1:206.

105 AUL MS 652, pp. 87-8. Campbell seems to have implied that contemporary events on the continent (that is, the early stages of the French Revolution) signified what Europeans really thought of the age-old customs associated with the medieval church. But he also seems to have been somewhat pessimistic about the inevitability of progress.

106 PG, 1:29.

107 Campbell to Douglas, 22 July 1790: BL Egerton MS 2186, fols. 10v-11r. The scriptural reference is to Isaiah 2:4.
earth. It further suggests that Campbell's view of the structure of history was firmly providential, and his view of the future eschatological. 108

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Campbell's historiography was unquestionably enlightened, though it partook of older traditions as well, as evidenced by his appeal to Genesis to account for the necessarily miraculous origin of the world. 109 But Campbell focused his historiographical energies primarily on the early Christian church. Like most of his contemporaries, he believed that the model of the early church was the proper standard by which to measure all subsequent manifestations of the church. The prescriptive authority of the early church was a religious concern, and as such will be considered later. The historical nature of the early church, however, remained a problem of natural knowledge, for the post-apostolic church was left "to force its way in the world by its own intrinsic and external evidence." 110

The controversial details of ecclesiastical history came to dominate Campbell's attention only in his last years, as evidenced by his unpublished manuscripts. The "Strictures on Dodwell" employed a wide range of historical sources to demonstrate that the apostolic

108 Cf. Spadafora, *Idea of Progress*, 104-32, and especially 126, which demonstrates that this way of thinking was very common in the eighteenth century. Robertson's *History of the Discovery and Settlement of America*, which made extensive use of the term "progress", also linked the progress evident in human history with divine providence ([New York: Harper and Brothers, 1855], 33).

109 See *DM*, part II, section VI.

succession was neither a fact nor a doctrine of the early church. Like Presbyterian historians since the Reformation, Campbell argued that historical evidences contradicted the doctrine of the primitive rule of bishops. Dodwell's shoddy scholarship, he implied, was responsible for a false and dangerous ecclesiology.'Campbell was even harder on his anonymous antagonist "Staurophilus" (the Roman Catholic bishop George Hay), whose confessional adherence he easily identified. In the lengthy "Defence" of the charges only implied in his Spirit of the Gospel, he surveyed the frightening historical legacy of Catholic church policies, from the early days of institutionalized Christian intolerance,' to the betrayal of Jan Huss, and finally to the claims of papal infallibility still being made in the eighteenth century. Campbell cited historical examples of such unnatural moral p. ices as monasticism and the breaking of faith with heretics in order to demonstrate that the corruption of the church is a matter of historical fact. His sources were again eclectic, including such pre-Christian authorities as Cicero, Horace, and Caesar, as well as such contemporaries as Voltaire, Helvetius, Montesquieu, and Gibbon. He appealed to Protestant churchmen and historians (such as Mosheim), but mostly to the church fathers and to modern Roman Catholic historians so as to make his case all the more convincing to his antagonists.'


"Campbell used early Christian authors such as Tertullian and Hilary to show that tolerance was the policy even of the post-apostolic primitive church (AUL MS 654).
Campbell's most comprehensive and philosophical treatment of church history, however, is found in his divinity lectures. The Lectures on Ecclesiastical History might be described as a history of the corruption of the Christian church. Campbell assumed that the New Testament did not prescribe an ecclesiastical polity, but only provided examples of Christian love and community. This primitive equality of Christians was transformed, with the progress of time and the addition of vast numbers of adherents, into an increasingly hierarchical and sacerdotal institution. The Roman papacy was merely the last logical stage of a spiritual despotism built from layer upon layer of authoritarian claims entrenched by the slow but irresistible force of custom. The first and most significant step in this process, argued Campbell, was the transformation of bishops from congregational ministers into spiritual and administrative authorities. The bishops, who had originally been equal in rank and office to the presbyters, began to arbitrate the disputes of other pastors and lay Christians, a practice which soon

"Campbell made extensive use of the Abbe Claude Fleury (1640-1723), author of the 20 volume Histoire ecclésiastique (1691-1720), a work perhaps recommended by its place on the Index. He also used Bossuet, L'enfant, and Bellarmine.

1^14LEH, 1:99.

1^15This was one of Campbell's central premises, which he defended at length. It was an old Protestant argument. Calvin had argued that bishops and presbyters originally performed the same office (John T. McNeill, The History and Character of Calvinism [New York: Oxford University Press, 1954], 217). William Jameson, an early eighteenth-century professor at Glasgow, also argued that time had transformed congregational ministers into hierarchical bishops. Unlike his Scottish predecessors, Campbell did not appeal to ancien"t Scottish history as a source of modern Presbyterianism; see Colin Kidd, Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity, 1689-c.1830 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 63 and 66. Campbell was accused by several contemporaries of imitating Lord Peter King's Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity and Worship of the Primitive Church (1691)."
became a customary right. This process was entrenched by the christianization of the Roman Empire, when the authority of bishops was confirmed by law and extended to great numbers of new adherents. Here, the novelty of Campbell's philosophical approach to the history of the church is most apparent. He explained these historical processes with reference to the universal propensities of human nature, arguing that time and custom always transform duties into privileges, and spiritual claims into material ambitions. But though this process was natural and inevitable, it was still a corruption of the pastoral office. Human nature merely accounts for the ease with which spiritual mandates are forgotten when mixed with magisterial powers.

Campbell was well aware that the primitive rights of bishops had been a fundamental matter of debate in the Scottish church since the Reformation. He therefore devoted a substantial number of his ecclesiastical history lectures to describing and accounting for this first significant corruption. Subsequent lectures detailed the inevitable further development of metropolitans, patriarchs and church courts. The rise of the Roman See was the last stage of the transformation of the Christian church into a worldly hierarchy. Campbell devoted the bulk of his remaining lectures to this great symbol of human corruption, whose sole objective was the perfection of its worldly power. He argued that Rome acquired its right of doctrinal arbitration by consistently deciding claims in favour of appellants, thereby encouraging more appeals.116 Rome confirmed its power by its acquisition of dazzling wealth and by its skillful and opportunistic

116 EMH, 2:41.
manipulation of events to suit its authoritarian policies. But Rome's fortune could not last. Campbell implicitly believed that the recovery of learning was inevitable and necessarily fatal to Roman claims. The Reformation was the direct result of Rome's inability to keep its charges in perpetual ignorance. 117

Campbell believed that his historical claims were reflections of objective fact, and not merely the required declarations of a Presbyterian churchman and teacher. He even found extensive support for these claims in Edward Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Campbell read the first volume (that is the first sixteen chapters) of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* soon after its publication in 1776. He immediately wrote a letter to their mutual publisher William Strahan, of which the following extract, dated 26 June 1776, survives:

> I have lately read over one of your last winter's publications, with very great pleasure and I hope some instruction. My expectations were indeed high when I began it, but I assure you the entertainment I received greatly exceeded them. What made me fall to it with the greater avidity, was, that it had in part a pretty close connection with a subject I had occasion to treat sometimes in my Theological lectures; to wit the rise and progress of the Hierarchy. And you will believe I was not the less pleased to discover in an Historian of so much learning and penetration so great a coincidence with my own sentiments in relation to some obscure points in the Christian Antiquities. I suppose I need not inform you that the book I mean is Gibbon's History of the fall of the Roman Empire; which in respect of the style and manner as well as the matter is a most masterly performance. 118

This extract suggests that the main argument of Campbell's ecclesiastical history lectures was well established by 1776. It further suggests that Campbell did not at that time notice any

117See LEH, lecture 24.

118BL Add. MS 34886, fol. 78. These are Gibbon papers, which suggests that this extract was copied by Strahan for Gibbon.
irreligious tendencies in Gibbon's work, but saw only the similarities with his own lectures.\textsuperscript{119} His subsequent citations of Gibbon continued to be favourable. The printed Lectures on Ecclesiastical History contain a lengthy quotation from chapter forty-six of Gibbon's Decline and Fall, indicating that Campbell kept up with the various volumes of Gibbon's work as they were published.\textsuperscript{120}

Like Campbell, Gibbon argued that the early Christian church did not establish a definitive form of ecclesiastical government:

> the apostles declined the office of legislation, and rather chose to endure some partial scandals and divisions than to exclude the Christians of a future age from the liberty of varying their forms of ecclesiastical government according to the changes of times and circumstances.\textsuperscript{121}

Gibbon also claimed that the offices of bishop and presbyter were originally the same, and that the term "bishop" only later came to be applied to the presidents of the presbyterian assemblies. A primitive bishop, in other words, was originally no more than a first among equals. Only gradually did the growth of the church lead to the formation of a hierarchy, as bishops began to assume ascendancy over their fellow presbyters, and metropolitan prelates subsequently claimed

\textsuperscript{119}The Episcopalian bishop John Skinner even accused Campbell of imitating Gibbon (Prismatic Truth, 1st American ed. [New York: T. and J. Swords, 1808], 231n.). Campbell eventually became aware of the charges of infidelity made against Gibbon, probably through his friend and correspondent Lord Hailes (one of Gibbon's leading contemporary critics). Campbell eventually agreed with Hailes' judgments, calling Gibbon "that able but prejudiced author" (Campbell to Hailes, 1 March 1783: NLS MS 25303, fols. 177-8).

\textsuperscript{120}This chapter on Gregory I appeared in the fourth volume of the work, first published in 1788. See also RG, 1:506n., where Campbell, in a long footnote, considered an historical question posed by Gibbon.

rights over bishops.\textsuperscript{122} Gibbon thus reproduced the leading arguments of Campbell's lectures, against which Campbell's Episcopalian opponents took such exception.\textsuperscript{123} At the end of his infamous chapter fifteen, Gibbon remarked that the humble status of the early Christians ought to increase our regard for the successes of the primitive church. This sentiment, though without the possibility of ironic intent, was at the heart of Campbell's 1777 sermon, \textit{The Success of the First Publishers of the Gospel a Proof of Its Truth}.\textsuperscript{124} Gibbon appealed to the universal principles of human nature to account for the rise of monasticism, claiming that the particular value-system of the early church allowed its adherents to easily confuse resistance to ordinary pleasures with spiritual merit, which in turn allowed pride of spirit to triumph over physical comfort. This kind of explanation would undoubtedly have appealed to Campbell.\textsuperscript{125}

Campbell's philosophical treatment of the early church was, at least superficially, very much like Gibbon's. Gibbon argued that impartial historians must appeal exclusively to natural and human explanations,\textsuperscript{126} and yet the sceptical direction of his own narrative

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[122]{Gibbon, 2:43-8.}
\footnotetext[123]{See chapter eight, section 3, below. This argument can also be found in the sermons of Campbell's colleague Alexander Gerard, who said, "A presbyter is, by his office, a bishop, that is, an overseer" (Gerard, \textit{Sermons}, 2:353).}
\footnotetext[124]{Gibbon, 2:72. It is possible that Campbell conceived this sermon with a hint from Gibbon, whose first volume appeared not long before the sermon.}
\footnotetext[126]{Gibbon, 2:1-3 and 31-2.}
\end{footnotes}
suggests that he was neither as pious nor as impartial as he claimed. Modern historians have uncovered the irony built into the very structure of his history, which Campbell himself may not have noticed. Gibbon declared that ancient peoples would have embraced any pagan superstition "if, in the decisive moment, the wisdom of Providence had not interposed a genuine revelation." This passage can suggest entirely contradictory interpretations, depending upon one's views of Gibbon's literary intentions. But all this must be read into Gibbon's style, for his infidelity is not apparent at the literal level. It is nevertheless remarkable that Gibbon's explicit historical arguments were largely compatible with the enlightened Reformed tradition. It is also noteworthy that Gibbon and Campbell, working independently, but with many of the same philosophical intentions, came to virtually the same conclusions about controversial matters of church history. We must, however, defer consideration of the religious implications of these historical conclusions to another chapter and perspective.

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127 We might note, for example, that chapter fifteen ends with an unresolved issue potentially damaging to Christianity. Gibbon wondered aloud why ancient writers failed to notice the three hours of darkness that supposedly covered the earth at the time of Christ's crucifixion (2:75). See Wootton, "Narrative, Irony, and Faith," 88 and 94-5, for additional examples of how Gibbon undermined Protestant claims in particular.

128 See Wootton, "Narrative, Irony, and Faith," 91-9, and David Womersley, The Transformation of The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 114. Both argue that Gibbon's intentions are best seen in the sustained ironical direction of his narrative.

129 Gibbon, 2:59.
Campbell's philosophical history was closely tied to another field of practical scholarship that occupied much of his attention, biblical criticism. His greatest scholarly achievement was the 1789 publication of *The Four Gospels, Translated from the Greek, with Preliminary Dissertations, and Notes Critical and Explanatory*. The translation of the four canonical Gospels was in part a practical working out of the philosophical and rhetorical principles found in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, although the addition of twelve substantial dissertations, as well as extensive notes on the translations, made it an original work of critical philosophy in itself. Campbell's methodological care and his concern to promote knowledge while systematically avoiding dogma provided a firm philosophical basis for his conception of Christianity. The "Preliminary Dissertations" examined, among other things, the language, style and idiom of the New Testament writers, the historical origins of their particular style, the proper signification of certain terms and titles, and the critical rules for examining and translating Scripture. Campbell's contemporaries were particularly impressed by his remarks on the original meaning and subsequent corruption of terms such as "mystery", "blasphemy", "schism" and "heresy". The misuse of these terms had had profoundly negative effects on the development and perceived mandate of the Christian church. Campbell believed that practical criticism was vitally important for modern Christians. As he

[130] See FG, dissertation IX.
explained to his students in an introductory lecture\textsuperscript{31} to his divinity course:

To lay down . . . proper canons of sacred criticism, to arrange them according to their comparative merit, so that we may readily apprehend the way in which they are to be applied, must be a very useful labour to all in general, but of particular consequence to the young student. It is the more so, because could we once arrive at being adepts in the critical science, the help of the commentator would be much more rarely needed; we should serve as commentators to ourselves.

Two major purposes are evident in The Four Gospels. First and foremost, Campbell meant his scholarship to be useful to ordinary Christians. He wished to produce an accurate and unambiguous translation for the purpose of practical devotion. To Lord Hailes he wrote:

It is not the business of the teacher of religion to make men linguists, or critics, or antiquaries, but to make them good Christians. . . . In short, as I write to the people of the eighteenth century, I choose to speak the language of the eighteenth century, and not that of the fifteenth or sixteenth.\textsuperscript{32}

To this end, a translation must be free of darkness, obscurity, and unfamiliar or obsolete words, and it must faithfully reproduce any colloquial usage in the original. The sense of the original passage, argued Campbell, is everything in translation. For this reason, current usage ought to determine the translator's word-choice. As in The Philosophy of Rhetoric, Campbell argued that literature must reflect the fact that a living language is subject to change over time, and that meanings must be accurately conveyed by contemporary usage.\textsuperscript{33} In the

\textsuperscript{31}LSTPE, 57.

\textsuperscript{32}Campbell to Hailes, 24 June 1789: NLS MS 25305, fols. 13-14.

\textsuperscript{33}PG, 1:409-10.
employment of a word, utility must take precedence over pedigree. As is evident in the second book of *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Campbell had no difficulty criticizing the King James Version of the Bible, despite the veneration in which it was commonly held. Any particular translation, howsoever revered, is only as good as its ability to capture the sense of the original.

The second major purpose of *The Four Gospels* was critical. Campbell attempted to establish comprehensive rules for translation, and to demonstrate in notes how these rules were to be applied to actual problems of Gospel translation. Consequently, Campbell's claims to accuracy of translation were made on rational rather than inspirational grounds. His scholarship was based on a critical tradition that stretched back to Erasmus' Greek edition of the New Testament (1516). Campbell's own translation of the Gospels was based on the textual criticism of John Mills (1645-1707) and J.J. Wettstein (1693-1754), whose Greek texts of the New Testament, which contained critical apparatus and variant readings, established a new scholarly standard in the eighteenth century. In fact, they allowed Campbell to concentrate on the practical task of rendering the Gospels into contemporary English, without having to worry about the accuracy of the Greek originals. Campbell was also familiar with the leading edge of contemporary biblical scholarship, including the works of J.D. Michaelis

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134 Campbell to Hailes, 23 November 1789: NLS MS 25305, fols. 16-22.

135 Campbell to Hailes (Autumn 1789?): NLS MS 25305, fols. 27-30. The majority of the criticisms of *The Four Gospels* concerned the colloquial nature of the translation.

136 *FG*, 1:442.
and Alexander Geddes, who were generating novel mythical interpretations of the literary intentions of the biblical authors. Of particular interest is the fact that he used and applauded, with certain reservations, the critical work of the Roman Catholic priest Richard Simon, who had shocked Catholics and Protestants alike with his aspersions cast on the reliability of Scripture.\(^{37}\) Campbell shared with most of these critics (but not Simon) a belief that critical methodology is capable of solving all important questions concerning the intentions and reliability of the scriptural authors. He was confident that just as the Reformation had sprung inevitably from the revival of learning, so too would the continued refinement of biblical criticism complete the work of the Reformation. He assumed, in other words, that rigorous scriptural criticism can produce only beneficent effects.

Campbell believed that his two major objectives, popular utility and critical rigour, were compatible and even complementary. His desire to unite these two enlightened ends into a single work was exceptionally optimistic, and may indicate that The Four Gospels, more than any other work, reflected his lifetime ambition to marry the ideals of the Enlightenment to the purposes of Christianity. But this joining of translation and criticism in two massive volumes may also have been the direct cause of The Four Gospels' failure to become a popular success. Campbell's popular audience was in reality far removed from the scholarly audience that appreciated his critical apparatus more than his translation. The translation would eventually find a popular audience,

\(^{37}\)Campbell's extensive comments on Simon can be found in PG, 1:73-5 and 372-403. He thought that Simon was extremely sensible when not blinded by confessional attachment. He recommended Simon to his students.
but only when divorced from the massive scholarship that created and
surrounded it.\textsuperscript{138} Campbell's pedagogical desire to make a work of
enlightened scholarship available to the average Christian was hardly
realized.

Campbell's faith in the beneficent effects of critical scholarship,
as well as his failure to communicate his scholarly optimism to a
popular audience, were both common in eighteenth-century Scotland. More
than once, Scottish moderates had to deal with problems that arose when
critical scholarship did not vindicate cherished beliefs. Scotland's
long debate over the authenticity of the "Ossianic" poems highlights the
inability of moderate Christian scholars like Hugh Blair to satisfy at
the same time literary critics and a popular audience which considered
the poems to be (like the Bible) a national treasure.\textsuperscript{139} In the case of
Ossian, there was too much national pride at stake to even consider the
possibility that the epic poems were not exactly what they were claimed
to be.\textsuperscript{140} Ossian turned out to be precisely what the Scottish
conjectural historians expected to find in an ancient bard;\textsuperscript{141} later

\textsuperscript{138}See appendix I for examples of popular editions of Campbell's
translations alone.

\textsuperscript{139}James Macpherson's "Ossianic" \textit{Fingal} (1762) and \textit{Temora} (1767)
were hailed at the time as authentic ancient Scottish epics on a level
with the Homeric epics, and were vigorously defended by Hugh Blair.
They were subsequently discovered to be largely forged. This suggests
that eighteenth-century criticism and perhaps psychology (see chapter
six, below) was not quite equipped to deal with the problem of literary
forgeries, and may have put constraints on their biblical criticism
also.

\textsuperscript{140}Richard B. Sher, "'Those Scotch Imposters and Their Cabal':
Ossian and the Scottish Enlightenment," \textit{Proceedings of the Canadian

\textsuperscript{141}Kidd, \textit{Subverting Scotland's Past}, 220.
critics wondered why they failed to become suspicious of this too-convenient likeness. Perhaps in Campbell's case too, the received gospel Jesus was too integral to his Christianity to permit questions concerning the received method of interpreting ancient literary motives. The integrity of Blair's Ossian and Campbell's Jesus were each dependent on the literal veracity of supposedly ancient texts, and on the assumption that literary criticism cannot challenge the moderates' common sense interpretations of the motives of ancient authors. The same theory of universal human nature which allowed Scottish philosophical historians to confidently organize and judge the past also allowed moderates like Blair and Campbell to believe that they could accurately perceive the literary intentions and reliability of ancient authors and texts. Earlier in the century, in the "Battle of the Books," ancients and moderns had debated the value and uses of textual criticism and other tools of modern scholarship which sometimes challenged the canon of classical authors. Like the Scots, William Temple had been certain that he could judge the authenticity of a classical work by his general experience of human affairs. But the classical texts were clearly becoming the objects of philological analysis and even literary dissection, though it is not clear whether most eighteenth-century minds could conceive of the same process overwhelming biblical studies. Campbell did believe that the critical and historical problems that affected ancient secular literature also affected ancient Christian documents. His confidence, however, that critical analysis could only augment the authority of Scripture,

"42Levine, Humanism and History, 163."
highlights the degree to which his conception of biblical criticism
differs from modern conceptions. But literary criticism was as yet a
young discipline. Eighteenth-century scholars did not have the sheer
number of comparative texts that would allow later generations of
critics to more effectively determine literary intentions and
authenticity, and challenge popular conceptions of the meaning and uses
of ancient texts. The invention of higher criticism in the early
nineteenth century was at least partly responsible for the decline of
Campbell's eighteenth-century reputation.

Campbell belonged to a critical tradition firmly embedded in the
seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But his own textual work, coming
at the very end of the Enlightenment, has been eclipsed by the
revolution in critical studies that has come to be known as higher
criticism. Although higher criticism had its roots in the
Enlightenment, it clearly belonged to a post-Enlightenment world.
Although it would be unfair to judge Campbell's work by scholarly
developments since his time, a comparison of his biblical criticism with
that of the following age highlights the magnitude of post-Enlightenment
changes in scholarly assumptions and values. Enlightenment scholars
were not less learned or able than later scholars, but they did lack
many of the texts used by later critics. More importantly, however,
they worked from a set of premises concerning human psychology and
motivation that prevented them from drawing conclusions which later
minds have come to see as natural and obvious.
Textual or lower criticism is concerned with the recovery, verification, and establishment of reliable texts. It attempts to resolve differences between various manuscripts, in order to determine the best possible version of a text. Literary or higher criticism is concerned with the authorship, style, origins, structure, and literary history of a particular document. In other words, it employs an historical or empirical methodology to uncover the human origins and meaning of a text, without concern for its exegetical application.¹⁴³ The difference between the two forms of criticism is the difference between discovering, on the one hand, what the Gospels texts actually said about Jesus, and, on the other hand, what the Gospel writers meant by these claims, and, possibly, what these claims tell us about the historical Jesus. The techniques of literary criticism had been applied to classical literature since the late seventeenth century. By the eighteenth century, classicists had begun to employ "mythical" interpretations to explain the literary intentions of their ancient secular authors. These critics considered ancient myths to be not deliberate fictions but rather supernatural and philosophical explanations of semi-historical events.¹⁴⁴ Campbell's teacher Thomas Blackwell, for example, claimed that ancient mythologies were neither literal relations of fact nor devoid of religious meaning, but were rather the natural first expressions of philosophy and religion.¹⁴⁵ It


¹⁴⁴For a good account of the various meanings of "myth" employed by these early higher critics, see J.W. Rogerson, Myth in Old Testament Interpretation (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1974), 4-7 and 175-7.
was perhaps inevitable that scholars would come to apply such explanations to first ancient Hebrew and then early Christian documents. Campbell's Roman Catholic friend Alexander Geddes compared the Hebrew historians of the Old Testament to Homer and Herodotus, suggesting a mythical interpretation of the stories of the Garden of Eden and Noah's deluge. The creation stories were not to be taken as literally true, but as philosophical poems designed to promote faith. \textsuperscript{146} The German philosopher J.G. Hamann went much further, describing the Bible as God's poetry wherein religious truth is found in the language itself, rather than in some universal truth merely represented by language. \textsuperscript{147} In the twentieth century, higher criticism has typically led to the literary deconstruction and redaction of biblical texts, and to form criticism.

Campbell was aware of some of the early forms of these developments. We know that he admired the work of Richard Simon, who, a century earlier, had suggested that the Pentateuch was an abridgement of more ancient records, rather than the singular work of an inspired Moses. \textsuperscript{148} He knew the arguments of Geddes and of Bishop Robert Lowth, who interpreted the Old Testament poetically as had Geddes. But was Campbell inclined to interpret the literary texts of Scripture in the

\textsuperscript{145}Blackwell, \textit{Letters concerning Mythology} (London: n.p., 1748), 10. Blackwell seems to have implied that some of these mythical interpretations could be applied to Scripture too (286).

\textsuperscript{146}See Reginald Fuller's excellent study, \textit{Alexander Geddes}, 6, 46, and 92. For Geddes' relation to Campbell, see 24.


same mythical way that Geddes and Lowth interpreted ancient Hebrew texts? Would he consider a mythical interpretation of the Gospels as D.F. Strauss did less than half a century later?149 Campbell was indeed up-to-date in his critical scholarship, or as up-to-date as an eighteenth-century British critic was likely to be, and yet it is clear that he was not moving in the direction of nineteenth-century higher criticism.

There is some evidence that Campbell was thinking about Scripture as a collection of ancient literature. He knew that an understanding of ancient texts was improved by a familiarity with the historical customs and contexts in which they were written.150 He argued that, "it is of real consequence to scriptural criticism, not to confound the language of the sacred penmen with that of the writers of the fourth, or any subsequent century."151 Campbell's word-studies often demonstrate the kind of critical thinking that would become common in the nineteenth century, such as his disassociation of the word "devil" from "Satan", or his history of the development of the term "Christ".152 It is also clear from the sheer scale of The Four Gospels that his conception of translation involved much more than basic language skills. Accurate translation requires an historical appreciation of subtle changes in language and thought over time. Furthermore, Campbell did consider some comparative problems between the Gospel texts. He noted that

149 On Strauss, see chapter six, section 2, below.
150 Campbell to Hailes (Autumn 1789?): NLS MS 25305, fols. 27-30.
151 FG, 1:364.
152 FG, 1:152-68 and 143-51.
the evangelists have been thought, by many, so much to coincide in their narratives, as to give scope for suspecting that some of those who wrote more lately copied those who wrote before them. Though it must be owned that there is often a coincidence, both in matter and in expression, it will not be found so great in the original, nor so frequent, as perhaps in all translations ancient and modern. ¹³³

Higher critics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with better access to manuscripts and more refined techniques, pursued such questions at much greater length and arrived at very different conclusions concerning the non-literary origins of the received Gospel texts. ¹³⁴ This suggests that the differences between eighteenth-century critical scholarship and later higher criticism can be partially explained by the sheer bulk of scholarship and comparative data that has become available since the eighteenth century. ¹³⁵ Campbell was, at the very least, beginning to ask the questions that would characterize the work of the higher critics. In his divinity lectures, he noted the great variety of writings within the Bible, posed historical questions concerning the origins of its books and wondered about the many other

¹³³PG, 1:422. It is evident that Campbell was able to look at the individual Gospels as discrete texts: "It would be absurd to suppose, that the pronouns and relatives in one Gospel refer to antecedents in another. Every one of the Gospels does, indeed, give additional information; and, in various ways, serves to throw light upon the rest. But every Gospel must be a consistent history by itself; otherwise an attempt at explanation would be in vain" (PG, 2:215). Nevertheless, he does not seem to have considered that each Gospel might itself be a collection of distinct fragments.

¹³⁴See, for example, Thomas Sheehan, The First Coming: How the Kingdom of God Became Christianity (New York: Vintage, 1986), and the recent publications of the Jesus Seminar, notably R.W. Funk et al., The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus.

¹³⁵Joseph Levine uses this argument to account for the increased competence with which nineteenth-century classical scholars were able to solve problems that had plagued their eighteenth-century predecessors (Dr. Woodward's Shield, 291-2).
biographical accounts of Christ that must have existed. In one of the "Preliminary Dissertations", entitled "Observations on the right method of proceeding in the critical Examination of the Books of the New Testament," Campbell recommended careful consideration of the individual styles and backgrounds of the various New Testament authors, the purpose and design of each of the works, and the changing uses of literary devices such as metaphors. John Ramsay of Ochtertyre, who was generally critical of the liberality with which Campbell taught raw divinity students, stated that,

He directed them to read the Bible in the order in which the books were written—only as a history of ancient facts and opinions—in order to discover what it treated of, without giving themselves the trouble to ascertain its truth or falsehood, or even its precise meaning.

Despite his critical open-mindedness, it is evident that Campbell was not moving towards modern higher criticism at all. Though he occasionally treated Scripture texts as if they were like other ancient texts, his continual use of terms such as "holy writ" and "divine oracles" suggests that there were clear limits to his willingness to do so. His biblical criticism was applied less to the original writings of the "sacred penmen" than to the ways in which men have subsequently treated or interpreted the fixed body of Scripture. So far from viewing the Old Testament as a product of Jewish history and culture,

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156 LEH, 1:23-8.
157 FG, 1:99-121.
158 Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:486-7.
159 For example, FG, 1:81.
160 FG, 1:469.
Campbell asserted that the very incongruity between the "barbarous" ancient Hebrews and their wondrous Scriptures is the best evidence that the latter could not have been of mere human origin.\footnote{DM, 263-6. He argued that in all other learning, the Hebrews were as children, but in their religious notions they were entirely mature. In all non-religious matters, Campbell thought that the Pentateuch suited the style of an ancient barbarous people.} Despite this low view of the ancient Hebrew people, Campbell assumed that their writings constituted the only reliable history of ancient events, and that pagan histories can be summarily dismissed.\footnote{LEH, 1:2 and 18.} At no time did he consider applying to the Gospel narratives a mythical interpretation, but always assumed that they were literal relations of fact.\footnote{See FG, 1:222-3.} He deduced, from the apparent simplicity of the Gospel narratives, that the Gospel writers merely recorded what they witnessed and heard and never intruded with personal commentary,\footnote{FG, 1:90 and 477. Despite a suggestion that the Gospel of John reflected the currents of opinion of the time at which it was written (AUL MS M 190, p. 352), Campbell claimed that the "artless simplicity" evident in this Gospel is the best evidence of its trustworthiness (FG, 2:409-10). Modern scholars, in contrast, tend to see John's Gospel as the one most influenced by doctrinal innovations in the early church. For nineteenth-century interpretations of John, see Jaroslav Pelikan, Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 194; and John Edward Toews, Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1841 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 312.} a claim entirely at odds with the trends of modern biblical scholarship. He assumed that ancient Christians were pure in their beliefs and unencumbered by dogmatism,\footnote{FG, 1:103.} an assumption which today's higher critics cannot afford to make.

Campbell declared that
the grand question, to adopt the scripture idiom, is no other than this: Is the doctrine which Jesus Christ preached, from heaven, or of men? That it is from heaven, is the avowed belief of all his disciples; that it is of men, is on the contrary the declared opinion of Jews and pagans.166

Campbell assumed that the statements attributed to Jesus are faithful records of his actual words, an assumption in keeping with his Common Sense views concerning the inherent believability of testimonial evidence. He believed, moreover, that he could draw from the whole of Scripture a single, unified and historically accurate character sketch of Jesus.167 The only remaining question for critics, then, was whether to accept or reject the entirety of the Gospels' claims about the Messiahship of Christ. Campbell, unlike modern critics, did not consider that the Gospels might be collections of pericopes, some of which were more likely than others to be the actual teachings of the historical Jesus. He assumed, in other words, that the Gospels' account of Jesus must be all of one kind, literally and absolutely true or an utter fabrication.168

Campbell was either unwilling or unable to do what modern higher critics believe is essential to their task, that is, give up or at least suspend the assumption that Scripture is necessarily of one piece, single, and inviolable. Higher critics have implicitly abandoned the notion that the various texts which make up the Bible were the products

166LSTPE, 89.

167Many of Campbell's moral arguments about Jesus depend on this assumption; see, for example, LEH, 2:378.

168Campbell was extremely critical of the non-canonical accounts of Jesus and the early church, considering them easily-identifiable forgeries and calling them the "basest frauds" (AUL MS 652, pp. 98 and 100-1).
of one mind working for a single explicit end, and therefore necessarily free of the possibility of internal contradiction. They have given up, in other words, the idea that the devotional and religious value of Scripture is directly dependent upon its critical-historical accuracy. Eighteenth-century empirical Christians could do no such thing. They believed that Scripture is a uniformly-inspired body of writings, and that the only matter of controversy concerns the nature of the universal truths it represents. Campbell implicitly assumed that failure to understand Scripture is the fault of modern readers, and not the result of ambiguities in the literary sources themselves. He was aware that the Gospel stories may not have followed precise chronological order, but he argued that this was no more than the effect of memorial-style writing, and has no impact on the literal veracity of Gospel claims. Higher critics, in contrast, tend to view ancient documents as like the peoples and cultures that created them,

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169 See FG, 2:408-9, for Campbell's explanation of how the singularity of John's account of the raising of Lazarus actually makes the story more authentic than if other Gospel writers had recorded it too. His explanation highlights the difference between his and modern assumptions concerning the motives of ancient writers. Modern critics argue that the last twelve verses of the Gospel of Mark were added by later Christians to bring that Gospel into line with later stories of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances (Sheehan, The First Coming, 131). Campbell was aware that some manuscript versions of Mark did not contain the last twelve verses, but argued that these verses were authentic because he could think of no plausible reason why they would be added later if they were not there originally (FG, 2:237). Clearly, Campbell did not consider that the doctrines of the early church could have evolved over time.

170 Alexander Geddes, like Campbell, was never able to separate his religious beliefs from historical evidences (Fuller, Geddes, 70 and 112).

171 Nigel Cameron, Biblical Higher Criticism, 20-1.

172 FG, 1:511.
that is, subject to change over time.\footnote{73} The Gospels represent not a coherent and single-minded declaration of doctrine but the literary expression of the evolving needs, hopes and beliefs of the Christian community.\footnote{74} Consequently, higher critics recognize that there may not even be a single "correct" version of a scriptural text. Eighteenth-century critics, on the other hand, assumed that sufficient scholarly attention can determine the single correct interpretation of any textual problem.\footnote{75} As has been suggested, they did not yet have the critical mass of comparative data with which to develop theories characteristic of higher criticism. But what most effectively prevented eighteenth-century scholars from doing higher criticism was the want of a psychology able to account for the non-rational human needs that, even in the case of seemingly sophisticated early Christians, produce "mythical" texts. The limits of Campbell's biblical criticism were the limits of the Enlightenment, as we shall see in the next chapter.

\footnote{73} Although Campbell did have a relatively dynamic view of linguistic change, he does not seem to have held a dynamic view of the mental constructs that languages represent. Truths remain eternal, even as languages change.

\footnote{74} This sounds much like the concept of "unintended consequences" or "spontaneous order" developed by eighteenth-century Scots, and applied to a number of social and economic situations, but not, it seems, to the mental constructs or world-view of a community.

\footnote{75} Fuller argues that Geddes did not seem to realize that there could be more than one "correct" version of a Hebrew text, each representing a distinct Hebrew community (\textit{Alexander Geddes}, 37).
CHAPTER SIX

THE LIMITS OF ENLIGHTENMENT

1

Campbell was clearly a man of the Enlightenment. His participation in that most enlightened of institutions, the Aberdeen Philosophical Society, was the foundation of a career of enlightened scholarship. Far more than Hume, Campbell represented the thought of his age in basic matters of evidence and belief. Campbell's probabilist theory of knowledge was inspired by the same problems of religious belief that had led seventeenth-century English divines to develop a new empirical approach to both religious epistemology and science. Even the Common Sense elements of his epistemology, based upon assumptions concerning the God of nature, reflected the typical beliefs of his age. Campbell's treatment of miracles, far from discrediting his enlightened claims, actually puts him in the mainstream of enlightened debate, because the status of miracles and of historical evidences were among the most universally treated problems of the day. The Philosophy of Rhetoric was concerned not just with the communication of knowledge, but with the observable aspects of human nature that make communication and persuasion possible. Even in such an apparently religious work of scholarship as The Four Gospels, Campbell's attempt to marry critical accuracy with practical appeal betrays his enlightened agenda.

These enlightened characteristics were not the only ones that Campbell and his moderate Christian associates shared with their non-
Christian counterparts. Hume and Voltaire, for example, tended to portray the clergy as duplicitous and self-interested power-seekers, whose ministrations are best described as a conspiracy for control of the ignorant masses. In the essay "Of National Characters," Hume attacked what he took to be the universal priestly character by contrasting it to the "candid, honest, and undesigning" character of the soldier. In an extended footnote, he suggested that clergymen typically feign more piety than they actually possess, advance themselves by promoting ignorance and superstition in their charges, and protect their priestly society with persecution and revenge. It is no surprise that Scottish ministers took offence at this character portrait, though only as it applied to the clergy of their own church. With regard to Roman Catholic priests, however, the Scottish moderates implicitly upheld Hume's strictures. Campbell consistently thought of the Roman Catholic hierarchy as the product of a deliberate quest for power. He gave the following account of the rise of the Roman See to his divinity students:

Tha': the great enemy which superstition has to overcome is knowledge, was early perceived by those, who found their account in

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²Hume, Essays, 199-201n.

³Hume was taken to task for this footnote by many Scottish moderates, including Campbell in the Lectures on the Pastoral Character, and Gerard in "The Influence of the Pastoral Office on the Character."

⁴Campbell's Protestant opponents in the No-Popery affair of 1778-9 all assumed the existence of a dangerous conspiracy on the part of the Roman Catholic church. See, for example, the anonymous Vindication of the Opposition to the Late Intended Bill for the Relief of Roman Catholics in Scotland (cited in chapter two, section 6, above).
supporting her throne. Nor were they slack in taking measures for stifling this dangerous foe."

Spiritual tyrannies, said Campbell, always depend on superstition, ignorance and credulity. In fact,

Superstition, especially when formed into a politic system, like the Romish, is never deficient in expedients for conjuring down that terror, and rendering it subservient to the invariable aim, priestly dominion."

Campbell's "Of implicit faith" manuscript accused the Roman Catholic church of deliberately promoting ignorance in its adherents. His "Defence" manuscript catalogued the criminal history of the Roman hierarchy. That the degeneration of the true Christian religion happened over many ages and partly as a process of unintended consequences does not seem to have lessened Rome's culpability in Campbell's eyes. "Does any one claim or exercise a dominion over the faith of others?" he asked. "That man is a priest in the most odious sense the word bears." "Priestcraft" is repugnant to "common sense, morality, and all rational religion, natural and revealed." William Robertson's History of the Reign of Charles V likewise attributed uniformly base motives to the clerics of the Roman faith. The only real difference on this matter between Christian moderates and infidels was that the latter applied these strictures to all clerics, whether pagan,

"LEH, 2:239.
"LEH, 2:237. Campbell argued that all religious corruptions lead to the placing of faith in priests (AUL MS 651, p. 47).
"LEH, 2:238.
*See AUL MS 654.
*Sermons, 1:429.
*"AUL MS 654, un-numbered page.
Roman or Reformed. Like Voltaire and Hume, Protestant writers had difficulty believing that Roman Catholic prelates could at the same time advance the policies of Rome and yet be genuinely concerned for the spiritual welfare of their charges. The enlightened belief in a conspiracy of the priesthood may have been psychologically comforting to eighteenth-century minds. It helped account for the inevitable corruption that even enlightened Christians discovered in the history of that ideal institution, the Christian church. It also helped explain why so many people in an age of enlightenment still failed to be convinced by the clear and rational evidences of true religion.

Despite the evils of false religion, Christian moderates (as well as some enlightened infidels) assumed that religion is necessary for civil order. Campbell's sermon The Happy Influence of Religion on Civil Society even implied that false religion might be preferable to no religion for the sake of social stability. Campbell took it as a given that religion is essential to the security and well-being of society, even though the sermon's main purpose was to deny libertines' claims that religion is nothing more than a political invention for the purpose of social control. Although this denial sits uneasily with Campbell's implicit belief in a conspiracy of the priesthood, it says much about his assumptions concerning the nature of human motivation.

1Campbell did not think badly of the motives of all Roman Catholic priests, such as those of his friend Alexander Geddes. But Geddes' fall from favour with the Scottish Catholic hierarchy merely confirmed the general rule.

2George Turnbull, the former Marischal regent, explicitly declared that he would support Christianity for the sake of public virtue even if he were an unbeliever (Philosophical Enquiry, 3-4).

3Sermons, 2:77-80.
The Happy Influence sermon assumes that religious adherence and civil obedience are the products of prudent calculations concerning reward and punishment. On the one hand, this corresponds with Campbell's enlightened belief that the mental processes which motivate human action are necessarily conscious and open to inspection. On the other hand, this suggests that human nature is naturally inclined to evil unless checked by clear penalties. This latter implication appears to contradict the Common Sense view of human nature, which maintained that people are obliged by their constitutions to recognize metaphysical truths and to conduct themselves honestly. Yet Campbell seemed genuinely concerned that society would fall but for the support of convincing Christian evidences. This apparent inconsistency in Campbell's view of human nature will be addressed again in the next chapter inasmuch as it is a religious problem. The question of human motivation, however, is a matter of Enlightenment psychology, and concerns enlightened infidels and Christians alike. The eighteenth century's common belief in transparent psychological motives helps account for the widespread notion of a conspiracy of the priesthood. It suggests that only a clear and powerful motive, such as personal aggrandizement, can account for the deliberate actions of Roman Catholic prelates which run counter to the obvious evidences and obligations of natural religion.¹⁴ As we shall see, this same psychology accounts for

¹⁴See, for example, DM, 118. Eighteenth-century explanations of religious belief were occasionally more complex than this, as described by Frank E. Manuel in his classic The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), esp. 70-81. Manuel also notes that eighteenth-century philosophers routinely held a double standard of religious belief, a true notion of religion for the philosophical minority and another version for the masses which emphasized moral sanctions to ensure social order (68).
Campbell's belief in the veracity of biblical and early Christian claims. The Enlightenment's extremely rationalistic view of religious truth and human belief helps explain its pervasive concern with the empirical aspects of belief.

The Enlightenment was a positive force in Campbell's eyes. He opened The Four Gospels with an enlightened declaration of intellectual independence: "I have always laid it down as a rule in my researches, to divest myself as much as possible of an excessive deference to the judgment of men." ³⁵ He believed that the extreme claims of the papacy were being checked not because his age was unusually honest, but because his age possessed more knowledge. "This is one great victory which knowledge has already gained over the triple alliance of ignorance, superstition and priestcraft." ³⁶ Campbell's hostility to superstition was no less than that of any Enlightenment figure. ³⁷ Although he criticized the irreligious tendencies of his day, he also suggested that more enlightenment would only highlight the duties of religion and virtue. ³⁸ Campbell genuinely believed that the Enlightenment belonged to Christian moderates like himself.

The Enlightenment was perhaps the last age in which so many men like Campbell could competently participate in a wide range of

³⁵PG, 1:2.

³⁶AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page. Campbell thought that the intellectual light that had been diffused throughout Europe in recent times had prevented Spain from being entirely overwhelmed by ecclesiastical power (LEH, 2:319).

³⁷See LPC, 161-2.

³⁸Character, 61. Campbell also criticized his age for being sometimes over-polished, and the French especially for being over-refined (PR, 22 and 398).
intellectual activities and survey the whole expanse of human knowledge. But the Enlightenment's ability to collect, organize and classify information ultimately led to its own demise. By the nineteenth century, scholarly fields such as history, philology, criticism, botany, and even philosophy had become so rich in comparative information and so specialized that few could hope to become masters of even one branch of knowledge.¹⁰ Campbell's passing marked the end of an age in which a polite scholar could still maintain wide competence in the republic of letters and a polymathic view of the whole range of human knowledge.²⁰ The loss of this ability also heralded the breakdown of the psychological premises upon which Campbell's intellectual world-view was constructed.

2

Campbell's view of evidence and belief, and therefore his view of all natural knowledge, was based on a cluster of assumptions concerning the nature of human psychology. He assumed that the operations of the mind are readily open to inspection. He assumed that human beings act according to clear and obvious motives. He assumed that reliable testifiers are always fully aware of the operations of their own minds. Finally, he assumed that these aspects of human nature remain constant throughout history. In other words, he assumed that standards of evidence and of belief are universal and unchanging. These assumptions dominated the British Enlightenment's empirical notions of defensible

¹⁰See Levine, Dr. Woodward's Shield, especially 279-80 and 291-3.

²⁰See chapter one, section 2, above.
religion. The philosophy of Common Sense was merely the most
determined statement of this prevailing presumption of a universal human
nature. Common Sense philosophy claimed that all human minds are so
constituted as to perceive and judge evidence (such as testimony) in a
uniform manner. Furthermore, it assumed that God is of such a nature
that he always makes necessary truths accessible to human minds.

The enlightened notion of human psychology and of the application
of this psychology to religious evidences is nowhere more clearly
expressed than in William Paley's View of the Evidences of Christianity
(1794). Paley, the best known and most detailed of the eighteenth-
century empirical apologists, was, like the Common Sense philosophers,
motivated by Hume's challenges to rational Christian belief. Paley
assumed that the claims of the first Christians had to have been either
deliberate forgeries or literal relations of historical fact. He
appears to have considered no alternative to these two possibilities.
Since the early Christians suffered for their claims, and for no
apparent reason but their belief in the truth of those claims, they must
have been telling the truth. Paley had no psychological explanation for
why sane men and women would suffer and die for the sake of claims which
they did not believe in an absolutely literal and historical manner. In
other words, he assumed that the early Christians observed the miracles
and weighed the claims of Jesus as an eighteenth-century empirical

2' See LeMahieu's Mind of William Paley, which corroborates my
general argument. LeMahieu correctly claims that Paley's Evidences was
meant to respectfully answer the challenge of Hume's miracles argument
on the skeptic's own terms (71 and 95).
philosopher would, and that they consequently arrived at morally certain
conclusions. 22

Campbell likewise assumed that Christianity must be either "a
divine communication to mankind, or a mere human figment." 23
Furthermore, he thought it impossible that the first Christians could
have believed the gospel story unless it was a literal relation of
fact. 24 Campbell argued that the Gospel-writers were clearly too calm
to be fanatics or imposters. 25 He thought that their literary style
makes their testimony *prima facie* believable. 26 It is historically
plain that the Apostles were virtuous and trustworthy men. 27 Moreover,
there are insurmountable difficulties to explaining Christian claims as
a conspiracy:

The Christian's hypothesis, that they spoke the truth, and were
under the influence of the divine Spirit, removes at once all

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22 As LeMahieu explains, Paley assumed that the first Christians
demanded and got reasonable evidences, that is, unmistakable signs of
divine favour. In other words, Paley assumed that the first Christians
suffered because they had seen miracles, not simply because they
believed Jesus' message in itself (100-1). Cf. Leslie Stephen, *History
of English Thought*, 1:354. R.R. Palmer shows that French Jesuits were
making the same arguments, that the early Christians were
intellectually-cautious witnesses of the early miracles, and that a true
martyr would die only for empirical facts (*Catholics and Unbelievers*,
86-7).

23 *LSTPE*, 105.


25 *FG*, 1:96.

26 *DM*, 110. Interestingly, this is the same argument that William
Temple had used a century earlier to defend the authenticity of certain
disputed classical texts (Levine, *Battle of the Books*, 49). Temple was
ultimately proved wrong.

27 Campbell's arguments often depended on such assumptions
concerning the moral character of the Gospel-writers; for example, *FG*,
2:150.
difficulties, and in my judgment, (for I have long and often revolved the subject), is the only hypothesis which ever will, or ever can remove them.28

Early Christians had no earthly motive for clinging to belief in the face of persecution,

indeed no motive whatever but faith and a good conscience. If they had these, their conduct was perfectly rational; their counterpoise to all worldly considerations was more than sufficient. Whereas, if they were liars in the profession which they made, and had not the internal supports of faith and the testimony of conscience, I will take the liberty to say that their conduct was, on all principles of persuasion, utterly inexplicable.29

Furthermore, we can trust the historical veracity of the Gospel-writers because they were in the best position to know the truth of what they related, and because they had "no conceivable temptation to misrepresent."30 Campbell here followed his own Common Sense maxim that we must believe testimony unless we have a compelling reason not to. The Aberdonians generally ignored the possibility of inexplicable motives. Alexander Gerard assumed that a deliberately devious mind and an honest one are equally transparent. He could thereby detect the purposeful lies of Mahomet.31 Campbell likewise thought it plain that

28FG, 1:96-7.

29AUL MS 654, un-numbered page. Campbell's psychology was not without its subtleties. He argued that we have no power of believing what we will, but are at the mercy of whatever information or evidence our senses provide. Thus he was able to account for sincere martyrs in any religious faith (unlike many of his Protestant opponents), and therefore to argue the necessity of religious toleration. (All of this may be found in AUL MS 655.) Despite the fact that belief has no immediate dependence on the will, Campbell argued that we retain the capacity to weigh evidence; "by this conduct, which has an immediate dependence on the will, we have a probability of arriving at true opinions" (AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page). Thus Campbell remained, despite his reservations, a firm empiricist.

30FG, 2:241.
the Koran is the work of men whereas the Bible contains sentiments superior to those of men. 32 Beattie defended the New Testament writers with the presumption that they either believed or disbelieved what they wrote, and, therefore, that their accounts have to be taken as literally true or as gross forgeries. He then demonstrated that, because they were clearly men of virtue, and because they could not possibly have disbelieved what they claimed, their claims must be accepted as true. 33 Campbell's Roman Catholic opponent George Hay also assumed that we must believe the testimony of others if they believe it themselves and relate it honestly. 34 Furthermore, Hay explicitly argued what Campbell implicitly believed, that to doubt honestly related testimony would undermine all history and all religion, and bring about universal scepticism. 35 Even Hume, whom Hay probably had in mind, generally presupposed a human psychology whose motivations are open to conscious inspection. Eighteenth-century deists, like their Christian opponents, assumed that the Christian Scriptures are either truthful relations of

31Alexander Gerard, Sermons, 1:365. So too could he determine that Jesus' methods were not the methods of an imposter, for Jesus was obviously concerned with providing clear evidences of his claims (Dissertations, 77). Gerard's views on Mahomet may have been influenced by Humphrey Prideaux's The True Nature of Imposture Fully Displayed in the Life of Mahomet (1697) or Henri de Boulainvilliers' Life of Mahomet (1730).

32This argument appears in a long footnote to the third edition of the Dissertation on Miracles (Sermons, 1:152-7n.).


35Hay, Miracles, 2:90. As I suggested in the last chapter, this common eighteenth-century fear of the consequences of discovering a forgery may also have played a part in the Ossian controversy.
fact or deliberate forgeries. The eighteenth-century war between orthodoxy and deism was waged from opposite poles of the same assumption.\textsuperscript{36}

The eighteenth-century's tendency to explain human motivations in a bipolar (that is, either/or) manner helps account for the ease with which Enlightenment historians judged the past. Campbell assumed that different religious points-of-view are fundamentally opposed to one another,\textsuperscript{37} that is, that they stand in a simple and objective true/false relationship. Thus, it was obvious to Campbell that the Old Testament related history while ancient pagan texts retailed myths.\textsuperscript{38} Nineteenth and twentieth-century proponents of historicism have frequently charged their enlightened predecessors with having little sympathy for the differentness of other times and cultures, and with judging the past by the standards of their present. Though these charges have been greatly exaggerated, they correctly suggest that enlightened historians believed they could understand any foreign culture if they could only uncover the universal principles of human nature that underlie its cultural expressions. Enlightened minds tended to assume that the diversity apparent in the moral universe masks a hidden but real uniformity, just as the natural world appeared chaotic until its universal laws were uncovered by the great Newton. The Enlightenment's notion of "truth"

\textsuperscript{36}Leslie Stephen long ago concluded that deists agreed with Christians that there can be no middle ground between truth and forgery (History of English Thought, 1:167; see also pp. 204 and 211). "Both sides seemed to agree that nothing but a prospect of gain in this world, or a clear offer of rewards in the next, from undeniable authority, could have induced men to preach a new religion" (213).

\textsuperscript{37}DM, 84.

\textsuperscript{38}LEH, 1:2.
was universal, and so, therefore, were its standards of judgment. Truth
was absolutely bound to the literal veracity of historical claims.

The Enlightenment's notions of evidence and historical truth were
undercut by nineteenth-century philosophical developments in the German-
speaking parts of Europe. Whereas the eighteenth century tended to see
both natural and moral evidences as subject to similar laws of
probability, the nineteenth century abandoned the attempt to apply a
quantitative or mathematical notion of evidence to moral subjects. 39
The empirical approach made famous by Butler and Paley, which focused on
the weight rather than the quality of evidence, was a casualty of the
decline of enlightened moral probabilism. The Enlightenment viewed
human nature as constant, impervious to the changes of history, and thus
subject to general laws. The nineteenth century tended to see human
nature as part of history, that is, as inseparable from the specific
cultures in which it manifests itself. 40 Herder rejected the
Enlightenment's belief that we can necessarily understand another
culture by discovering the common ties of human nature. Thus the
enlightened values of cosmopolitanism and universalism were overcome by
the values of either relativism or nationalism. The Hegelians replaced
the Enlightenment's bipolar, either/or conception of competing cultural

39See Lorraine Daston, Classical Probability in the Enlightenment,
especially 369. Daston argues that the whole notion of "reasonableness"
in matters of moral evidence had changed by the mid nineteenth century.
Decision-making and belief in testimony were no longer to be regarded as
quantifiable (376). It is perhaps no coincidence that Campbell's
religious works virtually ceased to be reprinted after the 1840s, the
end of Daston's age of classical probability; see appendix I, below.

40See Christopher J. Berry, Hume, Hegel and Human Nature (The
Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), 2, 12, and 25. Berry argues that this
changing view of human nature allowed Hegel to reject the
Enlightenment's faculty view of human psychology (122).
claims with a more flexible, both and conception of differing cultural values. Notions of psychological explanation evolved to match these new relativistic values. Whereas Locke's psychology tended to consider only conscious and readily-observable mental processes, the nineteenth century discovered the unconscious and applied it to problems of human motivation. This trend culminated in Freud's psychoanalytic view of basic human activities, which regarded formal religious beliefs as akin to neuroses in individuals.\footnote{Just as Freud's neurotic patients were among the most civilized people in the world, so too were seemingly rational cultures capable of inventing sincere religious belief for reasons not apparent to the empirical philosopher. All of these trends were hostile to Common Sense conceptions of human nature, and conspired to make Campbell's theory of testimony unworkable, especially as applied to foreign cultures.}

Nineteenth-century innovations in human psychology and historiography were felt in many areas of scholarship, particularly in the new field of higher criticism. David Friedrich Strauss, in his highly influential The Life Of Jesus Critically Examined (1835), was one of the first biblical critics to apply a Hegelian conception of history and the developing notion of "myth" to New Testament documents. Herder had argued that myths are the ultimate expression of the spirit of a people.\footnote{Strauss likewise explained the writings and doctrines of the early Christian church as manifestations of a myth-making process, that is, as the unconscious products of the Christian community's hopes and}
beliefs. In other words, the gospel of Jesus was historically conditioned, developed by degrees over a period of time. Strauss did not employ the concept of "myth" in a negative manner (as eighteenth-century empirical Christians would have), but rather considered myths to be indispensable components of all story-telling, whether historical or fictitious. Too often, he said, myths "are confounded with fables, premeditated fictions, and wilful falsehoods, instead of being recognised as the necessary vehicle of expression for the first efforts of the human mind." Strauss conceded that it was difficult for modern minds to conceive of a time when the imagination was so powerful that its creations were as literally believed as any historical fact, but such was the differentness of primitive thought. His Jesus was ultimately an ambiguous figure, neither the literal Son of God nor an imposter. The significance of Jesus, however, corresponds to the "universal idea" that his life represents. Strauss firmly separated philosophical or religious truth from historical fact. The dogmatic (or rather dialectical) significance of Jesus' life remains unaffected by the mythical nature of the Gospel accounts. In fact, Strauss believed that the eternal truths of the Gospels can only be discovered and

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43 Strausss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, ed. Peter Hodgson, trans. George Eliot, 4th ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 52. Thomas Blackwell had made a similar point about the ancient Greeks (see chapter five, section 6, above), but had perhaps not thought to apply it to the ancient Christians.

44 Strauss, 83.

45 Strauss, lii. Strauss was not the first of the German critics to do this; see Fuller, *Goddes*, 65 and 69.
preserved if rigidly excised from the mass of absurd and contradictory historical claims that surround them.⁴⁶

Campbell would have found Strauss' account of the Gospels incomprehensible. He could not have imagined a Christianity which did not treat its evidences in a literal and historical manner, and which did not appeal to objective proofs such as historically verifiable miracles. Nor could Campbell think of the Gospel texts as having any religious value apart from their literal and factual claims. But Strauss' kind of thinking has become a pervasive part of modern thought. William Robertson Smith, a late nineteenth-century Aberdonian biblical critic, shocked the Scottish religious community by introducing the findings of German higher criticism to English-speaking audiences. Like Strauss, Smith separated his personal faith from the historiographical consequences of biblical criticism.⁴⁷ By the end of the nineteenth century, most British scholars had done the same. One recent historian has rightly suggested that this surrender of the notion of scriptural infallibility and of the objective historical verifiability of Christian

⁴⁶See Toews, Hegelianism, 165-75, and 255-87. Toews emphasizes that for Strauss historical fact could never be sufficient to support a saving religion (262). Only through the "Hegelian rehabilitation" of Christianity by means of a "negative moment" of uninhibited criticism could its eternal philosophical truths be recovered (258).

⁴⁷Nigel Cameron, Biblical Higher Criticism, 226. For twentieth-century examples of this phenomenon, see Albert Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, and Sheehan, The First Coming. Cameron argues that Smith's opponents, the supporters of the infallibility of Scripture, weighed each negative critical claim against the whole of their notion of Christianity, with the result that no piece of critical evidence was ever enough to overturn their larger commitment to the absolute and literal truth of Scripture (282-8).
evidences was nothing short of a major paradigm shift in Christian thought.48

Nineteenth-century developments in historiography paralleled the changes in psychology and biblical criticism. Campbell had a very good sense of historical change by eighteenth-century standards.

It happens in a tract of ages [he said], through the gradual alterations which take place in laws, manners, rites and customs, that words come, as it were, along with these, by imperceptible degrees, to vary considerably from their primitive signification.49

Nevertheless, the Dissertation on Miracles assumed that early Christian and non-Christian people thought about miracles and other abstract religious concepts in the same critical and coldly rational way that eighteenth-century philosophers did.50 Nineteenth-century historicism demanded a more flexible conception of historical evidences than the enlightened static view of history allowed. Furthermore, it contributed to the decline of the notion of objectively verifiable religious truths by demonstrating that even the most fundamental Christian doctrines have been historically conditioned.51 Thus, just as eighteenth-century critical historiography had exposed the historical myths that supported

48N. Cameron, Biblical Higher Criticism, 4. See the appendix to Cameron’s book for his comparison of Thomas Kuhn’s paradigm model to the situation of nineteenth-century criticism. Cameron argues that the consequences of this paradigm shift are comparable to those resulting from the cosmological transformations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

49WJG, 1:216.

50DH, 106. Leslie Stephen, from a nineteenth-century perspective, argued that the eighteenth-century held two contradictory views of history: (1) that ancient history related events utterly unlike modern ones, but that (2) ancient figures still thought about evidence as eighteenth-century men of education would (History of English Thought, 1:162). See also Pelikan, Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture, 239.

whiggish views of Scottish and English national identity," so also did subsequent scholars seriously question the historical claims that supported cherished notions of an ideal Christian past. This undermined the belief, which had been held by moderate Christians, including the historian George Campbell, that the essential truths of Christianity, like the essential features of human nature, exist outside of history.

The collapse of the Enlightenment corresponded to the fall of this static conception of history and of human nature in favour of a more flexible and dynamic world-view, but one in which no single mind can grasp the whole range of human thought.\(^\text{3}\) Twentieth-century scholars must appreciate the premises which shaped and limited all aspects of Campbell's thought, and recognize that if Campbell did not do higher criticism, it was only because it was not for him a conceptual possibility. Like the seventeenth-century English divines, he had come to defend his religious beliefs with a probabilist theory of evidence. Eighteenth-century minds, whether orthodox or deist, believed that the disproving of Christian historical claims must necessarily lead to disbelief in the Christian religion. Nineteenth and twentieth-century critics have silently given up this logical imperative. Campbell's

\(^2\)See Colin Kidd's important *Subverting Scotland's Past*.

\(^3\)This, I think, is essentially Ernst Cassirer's argument in his *Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (trans. Fritz C.A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951, 1979]). "This age," he concludes, "forged the weapons with which it was finally defeated; with its own clarity and consistency it established the premises on which Herder based his inference. The conquest of the Enlightenment by Herder is therefore a genuine self-conquest" (233). Cassirer is speaking primarily of Germany, the land of the new history and of the new literary criticism. But I think this could just as well be applied to the biblical criticism of Campbell, whose careful, honest workmanship helped bring about the fall of his own premises.
either/or assumptions concerning the nature of religious proofs reveal not so much the limits of his religious mind as the limits of his enlightened mind. It was the Enlightenment that seemed unable to deal with the complexities, irrationalities and inexplicable motives of human beings. We cannot hope to understand eighteenth-century thought, or the thought of one of its more typical figures, without appreciating the psychological distance that separates us. This distance helps explain the considerable disparity between Campbell's eighteenth-century reputation and his modern one. His scholarship appears simply unimpressive to a modern mind used to literary criticism. His work has been superseded by scholarship not necessarily better than his but based on a wider range of comparative sources as well as on very different conceptions of evidence and human motivation.

George Campbell's conception of religious knowledge was ultimately dependent upon the natural evidences embodied in human nature and in history. Nineteenth-century innovations in the fields of psychology, history and criticism have made unworkable Campbell's two-part conception of knowledge, as defined in the structure of Butler's *Analogy of Religion*. The nineteenth-century abandonment of the doctrine of scriptural infallibility broke the connections between the two realms of knowledge, that is, between critical scholarship and religious faith. Faith was henceforth to be a more subjective and internal matter, as it was for William Robertson Smith and Albert Schweitzer. But in Campbell's world, the bridge between knowledge and faith held. We have now reached the limits of what Campbell believed could be known solely by means of natural knowledge. We have seen that this amounts to a great deal of knowledge, though not by itself sufficient to enable human
beings to properly conduct themselves in this life and the next. The very findings of natural inquiry point towards the realm of grace.
PART III

REVEALED KNOWLEDGE: THE RELIGIOUS CAMPBELL
CHAPTER SEVEN

CAMPBELL'S THEOLOGY

Christianity, declared Campbell, cannot convince by rational arguments alone. "No arguments unaccompanied by the influences of the Holy Spirit, can convert the soul from sin to God." In other words, the human mind is unable to discover the principles of true religion by its natural abilities alone. Natural religion, though it is the basis of the Christian religion, is not the sum of the Christian religion. It carries within itself the evidence of its own insufficiency to meet human needs. It also indicates that the God of nature will provide for his creatures' needs with a particular revelation. This revelation, by its very nature, must contain information that cannot be entirely grasped by the rational mind. In other words, a necessary revelation must be, to some degree, mysterious.

Natural knowledge gives way to revealed knowledge at the point where natural evidences indicate that the claims of Christianity are morally certain. Natural evidences are only highly probable at best, and natural belief must correspond to the strength of those evidences. Religious faith, on the other hand, is not based upon degrees of probability. It must be whole and complete, without reservation. Faith, said Locke, "which . . . absolutely determines our Minds, and

'DM, 1.
... perfectly excludes all wavering ... leaves no manner of room for Doubt or Hesitation." In other words, the certainty of Christian faith must transcend the limits of the natural evidences upon which belief in Christianity is rationally established. In contrast to Hume, the Scottish moderates believed that even if the natural evidences in favour of Christianity are not absolutely certain, one must make an absolute commitment of faith, a faith which they believed is recognized and strengthened by God. Campbell would undoubtedly have acknowledged that the efficacy of Christian faith is a mystery, and that it is a sign in itself of the inner workings of the Spirit of God.

Campbell gave little public attention to the mysteries of the Christian faith. He found scant virtue in dwelling on those things that are by their nature incomprehensible. Those who advertise their unusual acquaintance with the mysteries of religion only demonstrate their ignorance. Campbell believed, as did his deistical contemporaries, that too much attention to a mystery promotes superstition and spiritual tyranny. The absurdities found in some translations of Scripture, he said, have proved "a fund of materials to the visionary, out of which his imagination frames a thousand mysteries." He thought it absurd to keep obscure and ambiguous phrases in a translation, even though they had become sanctified by tradition. He cautioned his divinity students

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2Locke, Essay, 667.
3Sermons, 1:364.
4Pelikan, Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture, 66.
5FG, 1:336.
6FG, 1:350.
not to treat the Christian mysteries as sacred rituals. The original meaning ... "mystery" signified no more than something "not yet discovered." The relation between God's omniscience and human free will has never been understood by the rational mind, argued Campbell, and yet it is a mystery central even to natural religion.⁷ Campbell implicitly suggested that such a necessary mystery must be accepted, but not ruminated upon with an attention unbecoming to the present condition of human knowledge. Our present state of knowledge, argued Hugh Blair in a sermon entitled "On our Imperfect Knowledge of a Future State," fits us for concentrating on this life, rather than speculating on the next.⁸ In other words, Campbell and the moderates believed, as Calvinists always had, that it is not the business of Christians to know the mind of God. It is their business only to believe and obey the clear dictates of Christian revelation.

Eighteenth-century Christian moderates accepted the necessity of mystery without allowing it to dominate their public ministry. They agreed that belief in Christianity entails belief in certain doctrines beyond the reach of natural knowledge. Yet they would also have agreed with the later eighteenth-century moderate divine George Hill that faith is primarily, though not exclusively, an exercise of the

⁷AUL MS M 190, pp. 243-9. Gerard warned the same divinity students not to use mystical and unintelligible expressions in sacramental sermons (AUL MS K 174, p. 302).

⁸AUL MS M 190, p. 246. Seventeenth-century English divines likewise argued that the Trinity is a mystery above but not contrary to reason and must be accepted (Reedy, The Bible and Reason, 127-8).

⁹Blair, Sermons, 1:85-114. Contrast this to Thomas Boston's Human Nature in its Fourfold State, which includes, in its last part on the eternal state, every biblical scrap pertaining to the afterlife.
understanding.\(^{10}\) Revelation posed no conceptual problem to these enlightened minds. Its authenticity and importance can be confirmed by natural means. As Campbell said, "the christian scheme ... will be found, it is hoped, exactly conformable to the purest dictates of the unprejudiced mind."\(^{11}\) Or, as Campbell's colleague Alexander Gerard said:

Christianity includes all the principles of natural religion, and superadds the revelation of a stupendous dispensation of Providence, for the redemption and reformation of an apostate world, by Jesus Christ.\(^{12}\)

James Beattie (who would have previously taught many of Campbell's divinity students) summed up the implications of this notion:

When we have, from the purity of its doctrine, and the external evidence of miracles, prophecy, and human testimony, satisfied ourselves of the truth of the Christian revelation, it becomes us to believe even such parts of it as could never have been found out by human reason.\(^{13}\)

How then is Christianity (including its mysteries) to be believed, how are its essential doctrines to be discovered, and how are these doctrines to be put into practice? These questions were the very purpose of Campbell's intellectual journey. We have seen, in the structure of his lecturing scheme, that all the parts of his scholarly work were connected, and bound together for a common end. This end was the practical realization of the Christian religion. Campbell taught Scotland's future ministers that practical religion ought to inform


\(^{11}\)LSPPE, 182.

\(^{12}\)Gerard, Sermons, 2:388.

\(^{13}\)Beattie, Elements of Moral Science, 1:279.
every aspect of the Christian's earthly journey. "On the most sublime of all sciences, theology and ethics," said Campbell, "is built the most important of all arts, the art of living." A polite regard to others is the essence of the true pastoral character. Campbell cautioned his students that religion is a powerful tool. It has the capacity to bring out the worst as well as the best side of human nature. "Remember," he said, "that the whole of our business and duty in life may be said to consist in the right application of our talents, by the proper use of our opportunities." Utility and piety ought ideally to meet in the life of the enlightened Christian.

Campbell's practical religion, like his practical philosophy, required a theoretical base. But his formal religious doctrine, like his theoretical philosophy, is difficult to uncover. He chose not to systematize this part of his thought. For one thing, the idea of systematizing brought up the spectre of "orthodoxy".

Now to know the truths of religion [said Campbell], which you call orthodox, is the very end of my enquiries, and am I to begin these

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14PR, lxix.

15LPC, 25.

16LPC, 50. "I would have, in the minister of religion, the politeness of the gentleman grafted on the virtue of the Christian" (LPC, 118-19).

17LPC, 18.

18LPC, 257.
enquiries on the presumption, that without any enquiry I know it already?\(^9\)

Campbell thought that the term "orthodoxy" is often used by priests as a weapon to intimidate the unthinking.\(^20\) He argued that orthodoxy should not be considered a starting principle, for then it would already hold universal approbation and require no proof.\(^21\) Orthodoxy, if it meant anything to Campbell (and, indeed, it meant much less to him than to his non-moderate contemporaries), was not a standard but a goal, that is, the end of much striving, questioning and uncertainty. It was this Calvinistic spirit of inquiry that Campbell wished to implant in the minds of his students.

The nature of Campbell's writings also makes it difficult to uncover his doctrinal beliefs. His divinity lectures were purposely kept free of doctrine, so as not to prevent his students from discovering scriptural doctrine for themselves.\(^22\) Campbell's surviving sermons, on the other hand, are occasional pieces. They were meant to address very specific issues or themes, and cannot be taken as typical of Campbell's sermons in either style or content. Only the first of Campbell's published sermons, The Character of a Minister, contains an explicit creed.\(^23\) The more typical sermons that Campbell delivered each week

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\(^9\)\textit{LSTPE}, 113.

\(^{20}\)\textit{LSTPE}, 114.

\(^{21}\)\textit{LSTPE}, 113.

\(^{22}\)Robert Eden Scott's class notes (AUL MS M 190) indicate that Campbell's students were delivering homilies on such standard topics as the nature of faith, which supports Campbell's claim that they were to teach themselves doctrine from Scripture.

\(^{23}\)This creed, which will be quoted throughout this chapter, is printed in full in appendix IV, below.
from Aberdeen's pulpits have not survived, and may never have been written out in full.\textsuperscript{24} He was famous in his time as an expositor of Scripture, and was recognized particularly for his ability to explicate difficult passages in the Pauline epistles and the major prophetic books of the Old Testament and for his concern to draw practical lessons from his textual commentary.\textsuperscript{25} We must keep in mind that we have only a partial record of Campbell's religious doctrine when we compare his sermons to the more typical ones left behind by such contemporaries as Alexander Gerard and Hugh Blair.

In re-creating Campbell's religious doctrine, we are limited to the topics that can be found in his writings. This means that some topics of interest to eighteenth-century Scots, such as the nature of Christ's atonement, cannot be included simply because they do not fall within the scope of Campbell's surviving works. Other more practical questions, such as the nature of Christ's moral example, can be examined at length. Although the following discussion will allow us to better understand Campbell's religious mind, it will not allow us to judge the completeness or incompleteness of his doctrine. There is simply not enough evidence to make a systematic theologian out of Campbell. But we must begin somewhere. We may start with the creed that Campbell endorsed at the time of his ordination.

\textsuperscript{24}In an undated letter to Campbell, Beattie conveys the sentiments of one (probably the Duchess of Gordon) who thought Campbell's sermons much more calculated to convey divine truth and inspire real devotion than those of Hugh Blair (AUL MS 3214/15).

\textsuperscript{25}See Keith, xii and xxxv, and \textit{The Aberdeen Magazine} (June 1796): 49-50. See the \textit{LSTPE}, 378-94, for Campbell's comments on the expository sermon.
The official standard of Christian doctrine for eighteenth-century ministers in the Church of Scotland was the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647). While this confession was the required test of orthodoxy, it could not, by its own standards, be taken as the very word of God. Indeed, its major premise was the primacy of scriptural authority for the true Christian, a claim supported by its continual citation of Scripture. The Westminster Confession acknowledged the importance of human reason, and betrayed a distinct distaste for mystery. It nevertheless recognized the necessity of mystery as a consequence of the unsearchableness of God's nature and the limits of human reason. It allowed a limited place for natural theology, arguing that the light of nature demonstrates the benevolence and omnipotence of God, but quickly added that the light of nature also exposes our sinful state. Only Revelation can exhibit the means of our salvation and the proper manner of worshipping God. Theologically, the Westminster Confession focused on the majesty and sovereignty of God. It argued the absolute determination of all things by God and the absolute dependence of man on divine mercy. That man is also free and responsible for his condition was an acknowledged mystery of the Christian faith. The confession held that man, in contrast to God, is utterly depraved and powerless, and cannot be saved even by his own faith, for the justifying faith of

26The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines (hereafter, Westminster Confession) chap. I.

27Westminster Confession, chap. XXI.

28Westminster Confession, chap. IX.
righteousness is itself given by God. The works of a degenerate man, no matter how admirable or useful, are of no value apart from divine grace and count only as additional sin. The confession argued that the body of chosen saints, known as the universal church, is invisible and distinct from the visible church. It nevertheless maintained the necessity of adhering to the discipline and sacraments of the correctly-established visible church. Finally, the confession continually stressed the endless striving of the Christian elect.

The Westminster Confession and its attendant catechisms were adopted as the official creed of the Church of Scotland upon the re-establishment of the Presbyterian form of church government in 1690. As we have seen, Campbell was early trained in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and was of course completely familiar with the Westminster Confession itself. He was required to subscribe to the latter in order to be ordained in the established church, though we know neither his opinion of this creed nor if he held any mental reservations upon subscribing. We also do not know if Campbell noticed that the Westminster Confession gave relatively little space to the doctrine of Christ or to the mysteries of the Trinity. The moderates themselves

29 Westminster Confession, chap. XI. "The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word" (chap. XIV).

30 Westminster Confession, chap. XVI.

31 Westminster Confession, chap. XXV.

32 Chapter VIII of the confession focuses on the nature of Christ. It states that Christ appeared on earth as fully man and fully God and continues to communicate saving grace to the elect. Although the confession maintains a sufficiently orthodox Christology, it does not devote much space to this issue which has since become central to
would later be criticized for their lack of attention to these same matters. Campbell did refer to the Westminster Confession in his divinity course, though not often. We do not know if he reviewed it systematically with his students. Considering his dislike for systems, and his emphasis on individual discovery of Christian theology through self-directed Bible-study, it is probable that he did not.

Campbell was well aware that the recent history of his own church was shaped by controversies concerning the degree of strictness with which the official creed was to be imposed upon its ministers. The term "heresy" was used more frequently in the first half of the eighteenth century partly because the church now had a clear standard of orthodoxy.\(^{33}\) Several professors of divinity were brought before the General Assembly charged with spreading heretical opinions to Scotland's future ministers. John Simson (1667-1740), professor of divinity at Glasgow, came before the church's highest court on two separate occasions, charged first with promoting Arminianism and later with teaching Arianism. Whether or not Simson held these doctrines, he certainly taught his students natural theology and the art of critical thinking.\(^{34}\) His implicit suggestion that Christian knowledge is capable of improvement by the employment of human reason was anathema to the creedalists of his time. The orthodoxy of Archibald Campbell (1691-

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1756), a St Andrews professor of divinity, was also seriously questioned in the General Assembly. His *The Apostles No Enthusiasts* made the Apostles into rational believers of Christ,\(^35\) which, according to his opponents, gave too much credit to corrupted human faculties. Archibald Campbell's failure to be convicted suggests either that secular politicians were conspiring to mitigate the enthusiasms of strict creedalists or that the forces of creedalism were declining within the established church.\(^36\) Although we do not know George Campbell's opinion of these highly-publicized trials of Scotland's divinity teachers, we may conjecture that they encouraged him either to guard his own expressions in the divinity-hall or to question the justness of representing the spirit of Christianity in terms of strict adherence to abstract propositions.

Scottish Presbyterians who were not satisfied with the established church's commitment to creedal orthodoxy began to choose secession, the first instance of which was the formation of the Associate Presbytery by Ebenezer Erskine in 1733. The seceding congregations grew rapidly thereafter, numbering forty-five in 1750 and more than three hundred by the end of the century,\(^37\) though many of these congregations had little interest in strict intellectual creedalism. The Evangelical revivalism


\(^{36}\)James Cameron, "Theological Controversy," 128.

that began on both sides of the Atlantic in the 1730s encouraged many Scots to seek a religion of the heart rather than of the head. Evangelicals were friendly neither to the exclusivity of the seceding creedalists nor to the conservatism and rational empiricism of the rising moderates, but rather supported popular revivals such as those at Cambuslang in the 1740s. Some Evangelicals such as John Erskine became leaders of the Popular party, which opposed the Moderate party in the Scottish church courts. William Robertson's Moderates, who first gained influence in the 1750s and had Campbell's general support, throve because of their high degree of organization and because of the support they received from social elites. They clashed with the Popular party over such issues as lay patronage and the morality of stage-plays, though these issues perhaps only masked more fundamental differences in Christian values. Campbell was highly sensitive to all of these developments within the eighteenth-century Scottish church, but was most

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38 The quest of a heart-felt religion was behind Thomas Boston's support of The Marrow of Modern Divinity. Boston's creedalist opponents in the "Marrow controversy" mistook his religion of the heart for support of universal atonement or for antinomianism (Donaldson, The Faith of the Scots, 105; James Walker, The Theology and Theologians of Scotland, 2d ed. [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888], 87).

39 Fratt has plausibly suggested that the eighteenth-century Scottish church was divided into three (rather than two) broad groups: creedalists, empirical apologists (moderates), and Pietists (Evangelicals); diss., 39-41. The last of these was friendly to Cambuslang, while the other two, but especially the first (notably Erskine's seceders), were not (142-3).

40 Moderatism and the Moderate party are discussed in chapter nine, below.

41 The issue of stage-plays may be seen as an enlightened problem as well as a church problem, as is evident in the controversy between d'Alembert and Rousseau over the civil character of Geneva. Campbell characteristically avoided partisan extremes by arguing that stage-plays are not necessarily immoral, just usually so (LSTE, 367).
concerned with the rise of party-spirit itself. Party-attachment, besides being the bane of enlightened historians, was for Campbell a symptom of the disunity and decline that almost inevitably infects and corrupts Christ's church in all its manifestations.

The controversies which shaped the eighteenth-century Scottish church, and which troubled the mind of George Campbell, concerned a few characteristic issues. Scottish ministers disputed the value of strict adherence to established creeds. They disputed the merits of doctrinal purity as opposed to ecclesiastical unity. They disputed the relative weight to be given to a religion of the head as opposed to one of the heart. Finally, they disputed the sources of Christian knowledge itself, that is, the degree to which the human understanding is useful in discovering Christian truth. This last issue was the starting-point of Campbell's own religious doctrine.

"Knowledge," said Campbell early in his career, "is truly the ground-work of every moral and spiritual attainment." It is also a powerful tool, susceptible to abuse by the wicked, though more likely to promote the good. Campbell's theory of Christian knowledge is not far removed from his secular epistemology. Like his seventeenth-century Anglican predecessors, he developed a theory of knowledge equally suited to religious and secular applications. Furthermore, he saw little discontinuity between the two realms, for the law of nature, which is the law of God, is written on our hearts. It should therefore not be

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"Character," 7.
surprising that Campbell's theory of religious knowledge is an extension of the epistemology outlined in a previous chapter.

Campbell's theory of religious knowledge, like his secular epistemology, devoted considerable attention to methodology. The bulk of Campbell's few lectures on systematic theology stressed method over doctrine. The methodology of the "heavenly science" concerns the proper interpretation and application of God's revelation. But revealed knowledge, thought Campbell, is no more the product of reason than is natural knowledge. Natural knowledge is gained experientially, as all philosophers of the Lockean tradition knew. The light which informs our reason in spiritual matters "comes also from without, and consists chiefly in testimony, human or divine." Thus Campbell's theory of evidence, particularly his discussion of testimony, applies also to "revealed religion, as far as it is to be considered as a subject of historical and critical inquiry, and so discoverable by natural means." Campbell further believed that the most important tool of the experimental philosopher is a critical attitude, for "when we have no principles of critical knowledge, we have no rule by which to chuse." His chief advice to his students, that they think and judge for

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43AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page.

44"Character, 5. "Science" in this context means "body of knowledge."


46PR, 56.

47LSTPE, 121. Campbell's philosophy of education is summed up as follows: "Let it be a standing maxim, that the student's business is more an habitual exercise of reflection, than barely of reading and remembrance" (LSTPE, 240).
themselves, is characteristically enlightened. Imbuing the minds of his divinity students with a critical sense was one of the foremost objectives of his pedagogical theory.\textsuperscript{49}

Campbell was very optimistic concerning the ability of critical and empirical knowledge to solve religious problems. Knowledge, he held, is the bane of spiritual despotism. It allows true virtue and piety to throw off the fetters of harmful superstition.\textsuperscript{50} In his manuscript attack on the Roman Catholic bishop George Hay, Campbell restated Calvin's argument that salvation comes through knowledge rather than ignorance.\textsuperscript{51} He criticized Hay for not revealing the sources of his religious claims. A sceptical age, he said, demands proof even of religious arguments.\textsuperscript{52} Campbell further asserted that God expects Christians to prosper by natural means, the foremost of which is learning.\textsuperscript{53} Learning is essential in a minister because his task is to understand and communicate Christian evidences, and to defend them against the enemies of Christianity.\textsuperscript{54}

Empirical knowledge, which includes the testimony of Scripture, and which is distinguished by the critical eye of reason, is thus the

\textsuperscript{46}LSTPE, 117.

\textsuperscript{49}In fact, Ramsay of Ochterytyre criticized Campbell for allowing his students too much latitude of inquiry in their scriptural studies (Scotland and Scotsmen, 486-7).

\textsuperscript{50}LEH, 2:236-7.

\textsuperscript{51}AUL MS 649, p. 25. This is one of the very few times that Campbell cited Calvin, though he did so approvingly.

\textsuperscript{52}AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page.

\textsuperscript{53}Sermons, 2:67-8.

\textsuperscript{54}LEH, 1:6.
foundation of true Christian learning. We cannot depend on the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for the age of miracles and divine inspiration has passed.\footnote{55} Campbell claimed, from the beginning of his career, that true philosophy cannot contradict revealed knowledge, because both come from the same divine source.\footnote{56} The sixteenth-century revival of learning, he argued, had prepared men's minds to receive a true reform of religion.\footnote{57} Our intellectual powers continue to help us decide that a purported revelation is actually the word of God.\footnote{58} They tell us that true revelation must be morally unassailable and must contain everything necessary to salvation.\footnote{59} The neglect of these natural powers, on the other hand, can only bring on "the terrors of superstition, or the arrogance of fanaticism."\footnote{60}

\footnote{55}{LSTPE, 263-6. This does not prevent the Holy Spirit from guiding us in the use of our God-given faculties.}

\footnote{56}{Character, 11. Campbell argued that however much Revelation can add to natural knowledge, or provide additional moral sanctions or dissuasions, it can never supersede the dictates of natural law (AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page). This claim is certainly an implicit condemnation of the antinomian tendencies that had sometimes been exhibited within the Scottish church.}

\footnote{57}{LEH, 2:265-6. We may recall that Robertson had characterized Martin Luther as a classical scholar in The History of the Reign of the Emperor Charles V.}

\footnote{58}{FG, 1:7. As Gerard said, "The excellence of doctrine is founded upon truth. No evidence can prove a doctrine to be from God, which plainly contradicts what we know to be true" (Disertations, 102). This kind of thinking was very prevalent in the eighteenth century; see Pelikan, Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture, 61.}

\footnote{59}{LEH, 1:101. That the Christian doctrines are reasonable does not mean that they can all be rationally demonstrated but rather that they can be reasonably shown to have come from God, even if mysterious (Reedy, The Bible and Reason, 141).}

\footnote{60}{Sermons, 1:341-2. Campbell set clear limits to the powers of reason, arguing that an honest heart is superior to a clear head in the advancement of religious knowledge (AUL MS 651, p. 27).}
Furthermore, our experience of natural religion helps us to distinguish the more vital parts of Scripture from the less important.\textsuperscript{61} The accumulation of empirical knowledge is the best means of solving difficulties of scriptural interpretation, for "in every question relating to fact, where experience may be had, our safest recourse is to experience."\textsuperscript{62} Campbell's emphasis on the uses of experience perfectly coincides with his assertion that religious knowledge, like every other branch of human learning, is progressive.\textsuperscript{63} Indeed, one of the major underlying arguments of \textit{The Philosophy of Rhetoric} is that a minister of the gospel must use every rhetorical art to communicate progressive religious truth. Clearly, Campbell gave considerably more credit to man's natural ability to know God than did the Westminster Confession. In fact, he thought that Scripture is valuable only to the degree that Christians can correctly verify, understand, and apply its directives.

Campbell's enlightened rationalism and empiricism did not make him any less Protestant. In fact, his emphatic support of the authority of Scripture was based at least in part on his rational appreciation of its divine character. His claim that a true revelation can never contradict the God-given light of reason or of common sense,\textsuperscript{64} was one of the major pillars of his Christian apology.

Now (said Campbell), for supporting and enforcing the suggestions of reason and conscience, I know no auxiliary so powerful as the

\textsuperscript{61}\textit{LSTPE}, 88. Campbell argued that not everything in Scripture is equally entitled to be called a prescriptive revelation or to be followed in a literal fashion (\textit{LSTPE}, 418).

\textsuperscript{62}\textit{PG}, 1:22.

\textsuperscript{63}\textit{PG}, 1:29.

\textsuperscript{64}\textit{Sermons}, 1:351.
precepts of the gospel, which are the result of the most enlarged views of human nature, and which breathe the most liberal benevolence to the whole creation of God.\textsuperscript{65}

Scripture agrees with good sense concerning the duties of a Christian. Both, for example, abhor monkish excesses.\textsuperscript{66} But Campbell made it very clear that man can know little about the particular mind of God without his revealed word. It is vanity, he asserted, to try to comprehend divine knowledge by the light of reason \textsuperscript{67}. Nature has assisted rational man in answering the "grand question, to adopt the scripture idiom . . . Is the doctrine which Jesus Christ preached, from heaven, or of men?"\textsuperscript{68} Having answered with moral certainty that it is from heaven, we submit ourselves to its teaching. Campbell instructed his divinity students that while they may include in their sermons arguments from nature and from history, they ought to argue primarily from Scripture.\textsuperscript{69}

Although Campbell believed that Scripture is the primary source of Christian knowledge, he did not assume that the meaning of Scripture is always unambiguous or impervious to misunderstandings. Christians must approach Scripture in the proper spirit. First, they must seek the simple meaning of a text rather than obscure or difficult ones. Revealed truths are meant to be accessible to all.\textsuperscript{70} Campbell's

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{65} AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page. Campbell argued that Jesus' teaching was authoritative because he was able to convince his hearers that his teachings conformed to nature, conscience and common sense (FG, 1:89).
\item \textsuperscript{66} LEH, 2:379.
\item \textsuperscript{67} Character, 18. See also Sermons, 1:349.
\item \textsuperscript{68} LSTPE, 89.
\item \textsuperscript{69} LSTPE, 481.
\item \textsuperscript{70} LEH, 1:101.
\end{itemize}
conceptual inability to do higher criticism was in part due to his assumption that Scripture is characterized by simplicity. The simplicity of Christ's character, he thought, demands a corresponding belief in the simplicity of his message.\footnote{Campbell berated Dodwell for failing to see this aspect of Christ's nature, and thus corrupting his teaching (AUL MS 650, sect. IV).} This allowed Campbell to think of the Christian Scriptures as a unified body of doctrine with a simple, central message. For this reason, "Scripture will ever be found its own best interpreter."\footnote{FG, 1:358. See also LSTPE, 57.} Campbell recommended to his Christian readers a sermon by his colleague Alexander Gerard entitled "The Nature of Sound Doctrine," which claimed that true scriptural doctrine, unlike the divisive complexity of human systems, is known by its clarity and simplicity. Gerard further argued that sound doctrine always has a moral tendency, because true Christianity is concerned with practical conduct rather than with the subtleties of correct thinking. "Let us attend to the great end of all Christian doctrine," concluded Gerard, "namely, holiness of heart and life, our purification from vice, and our improvement in virtue."\footnote{Gerard, Sermons, 2:163. It should be little surprise that Campbell recommended this sermon so warmly (FG, 1:371n.).} Gerard and Campbell agreed that the term "heretic" properly denotes one who prefers divisiveness to the simple truth of gospel morality.\footnote{Cf. Gerard, Sermons, 2:149, with Campbell's Four Gospels, diss. IX, part iv.} Campbell claimed that, even among Protestants, the all-sufficiency of Scripture has been frequently subverted by the monopolistic interpretive claims of parties and
Thus his regard for Scripture helps account for his antipathy to ecclesiastical party spirit and conflict.

Campbell's Protestant adherence to the authority of Scripture makes apparent his intentions for The Four Gospels. As the record of Christ's exemplary life and simple moral teachings, the Gospels constitute the very heart of Christian teaching. A Christian scholar can perform no more useful service than to produce an accurate and accessible Gospel translation. Despite the bulk of its scholarly apparatus, The Four Gospels was meant for a popular audience. Campbell attempted to realize the Protestant goal of providing every Christian with the means of making his own impartial inquiry into Scripture. The critical apparatus was added to clarify his scholarly decisions rather than to interpret the text. Campbell's biblical criticism, therefore, only corroborated his belief in the absolute authority and sufficiency of the uncorrupted message of the Gospels.

Campbell's theory of religious knowledge demonstrates that he was fully committed to the central tenets of Protestantism. Scripture, he argued, provides the Christian with all knowledge necessary to salvation. Campbell thought it self-evident that Scripture is meant to be read, interpreted and judged by all. He spoke of the liberty

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73 LSTPE, 242.

76 LSTPE, 115. Campbell also recommended the study of ecclesiastical history to the Christian everyman, for "he will thus in the most effectual manner be convinced of the falseness of all other foundations, tradition, popes and councils, and that the Bible is that alone on which the religion of christians can rest immoveably" (LSTPE, 206).

77 This coincides with the Westminster Confession, chap. I.

given by Christ to all believers, a liberty which has too often been usurped by priests. He warned his students against putting too much faith in the word of a teacher, including, presumably, himself. That these ideas are akin to the central tenets of the Enlightenment is not surprising, nor is the fact that Campbell's secular and religious epistemologies shared much common ground. For Campbell and his moderate associates, as for English radicals like Price and Priestley, the Reformation and the Enlightenment appeared to be aspects of a single historical development. Like Robertson, Campbell implicitly suggested that the modern age of enlightenment began

when the light of the reformation broke forth, and people awoke out of that lethargy into which ignorance and sacerdotal tyranny had lulled them, when they began to be sensible that God had not more certainly given men eyes to see with, and ears to hear with, and feet to walk with, than he had given them reason to assist in the discovery of truth, and conscience to indicate the path of duty."

Campbell's Protestancy also prevented him from giving much attention to creeds. Like Gerard, he believed that the establishment of formal standards of faith is too often a corruption of the Protestant notion that Scripture alone is the proper measure of Christian belief."

7*LEH, 1:333.
8*LSTPG, 111.
9*AUL MS 649, p. 43.
10Gerard, The Corruptions of Christianity, 57. Scottish Evangelicals may have agreed with the moderates in rejecting the constraints of formal creeds, though they rejected arid rationalism along with creedalism as unfriendly to a religion of the heart (Fratt diss., 3). Campbell undoubtedly objected to creeds on some of the same grounds that William Dunlop attempted to refute in his Preface to the Westminster Confession (London: T. Cox, 1720).
Campbell's doctrine of religious knowledge was a substantial and indispensable part of his overall theology. It was the foundation for discovering the rest of necessary Christian doctrine. For this reason he taught his students a method of religious inquiry rather than religious doctrines themselves. While this pedagogical strategy may have been profitable to Campbell's students, it makes difficult the modern historian's task of uncovering his own formal doctrine. Nevertheless, it is time to reconstruct what Campbell called, in his own brief creed, "the genuine uncorrupted truths of Christianity."\(^3\)

Campbell's secular epistemology, as we have seen, was closely related to his theory of human nature. In the same manner, Campbell's theory of religious knowledge was tied to his doctrine of human nature. Traditional Calvinism had viewed human beings as utterly depraved and worthless, incapable of contributing anything to their own redemption,\(^4\) and presumably unable to discover saving truth for themselves. Campbell acknowledged the "universal depravation" into which man has fallen because of his apostasy, with the result that he has "become obnoxious

\(^3\)Character, 16. The short creed that follows this statement is reprinted in appendix IV, below. It is similar to the "Apostles' Creed" and to the "Nicene Creed" (especially in length), but very unlike the dogmatic "Athanasian Creed." It is neither very Calvinistic nor hostile to Calvinism. If Campbell is borrowing from another source, I have not been able to discover it.

\(^4\)See Calvin, Institutes, which describes man as utterly perverted and unable to will the good (1:251, 253 and 286). For a more contemporary representation, see Thomas Boston's Human Nature in its Fourfold State. The issue of man's ability to contribute to his own salvation had long been a matter of conflict within the various Calvinist churches. See John T. McNeill for an account of the debate over this issue at the time of the Synod of Dort (The History and Character of Calvinism, 264-5).
to perdition." He seems to have upheld a traditional Calvinist conception of the four stages of human nature when he claimed that the science of religion teaches "the origin of man, his primitive dignity, the source of his degeneracy, the means of his recovery, the eternal happiness that awaits the good, and the future misery of the impenitent." He accounted for the inevitable corruption of the church with the argument that "what God makes upright, man always corrupts by his inventions." Divisions within the church "are universally admitted to be evils, though unavoidable in the present lapsed condition of human nature." Unfortunately, Campbell had little else to say on the matter. But it is clear that he, along with his colleagues, subscribed to the belief that human nature has been in some way corrupted.

Nevertheless, Campbell does not appear to have believed that human nature is as utterly depraved and helpless as represented in traditional Calvinist theology. His belief in progressive religious knowledge would have been untenable if man’s natural faculties had been utterly corrupted by the fall. He held that "none of the appetites or

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"Character, 26 and 16.

PR, 105.

LEH, 1:46.

LEH, 1:48.

The corruption of human nature is somewhat more apparent in the sermons of Alexander Gerard; see his Sermons, 1:168 and 301, as well as 2:366. In a series of sermons on man’s natural temper (1:211-84), Gerard asked whether man can modify his basic fallen nature. His answer employed an interesting combination of mechanistic psychology and theology. Though he ultimately asserted that man cannot change his nature, he did believe that man has a considerable capacity to manage it.
affections belonging to human nature are evil in themselves." If these were to be considered intrinsically evil, what faith could the Aberdonians have placed in the natural instincts or common sense of humankind? Thomas Boston, whose *Human Nature in its Fourfold State* (1720) represents a more traditional Scottish Calvinist theology, asserted that the fall has corrupted our natural faculties to the degree that we have become hostile to goodness itself. Furthermore, he claimed, our nature now has "a natural proneness to lies and falsehood." Such a view directly contradicted the Common Sense account of human nature. Reid, for example, explicitly claimed that human beings are naturally prone to tell the truth. The Aberdonians were rather ambiguous on the effects of original sin. Campbell suggested that man is sufficiently corrupted to make it impracticable for him to discover true religion by natural means. "The weakness and the corruption of our nature," said Gerard, "render the assistance of God absolutely necessary for our practicing holiness." Nevertheless, the moderates' focus on moral preaching and reformation (as opposed to

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**Sermons**, 1:321. Campbell is clearly speaking of man in his natural state. Campbell's view corresponds with that of eighteenth-century French Jesuits, who, like the moderates, wished to mitigate the corruption of fallen human nature. Like the Scottish moderates, the Jesuits battled rather puritanical opponents, in their case, the Jansenists (Palmer, *Catholics and Unbelievers*, 29).


**Boston, Works**, 34.

**WTR**, 1:196. See chapter four, section 5, above.

**Character**, 10.

**Gerard, Sermons**, 1:301.
states of grace) suggests that human beings have some capacity to understand the good and to act for their own betterment. Campbell and the moderates seem to have believed that human nature is somewhere between natural goodness and sinful corruption. Human beings are not sufficiently fallen to lose all hope of desiring and seeking the will of God, and of improving themselves. Yet they are not sufficiently pure to avoid the necessity of seeking God's revealed plan of salvation. This dichotomy in the thought of Campbell and the moderates is important, for it helps make sense of the remainder of their theological stance. As Campbell said, concerning the purpose of man's existence, "The light of nature, as well as revelation, points to this great end, the perfecting of his nature by effecting a conformity to the will of God, the highest felicity of which a man is susceptible."

The traditional Calvinistic emphasis on the absolute depravity of human nature was clearly meant to contradistinguish and highlight the absolute power, goodness and otherness of God. By the same measure, the eighteenth-century moderates' more positive reading of human nature allowed them to mitigate the effects of the extreme Calvinist emphasis on the absoluteness of God's will. The Christian moderates wished to attribute to man an effective freedom of will compatible with a

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"This milder version of the position of the Westminster Confession certainly fits the picture of man found in Hugh Blair's Sermons; see, for example, 1:192 and 195.

"LEH, 2:372. Compare the tone of this against the Westminster Shorter Catechism's statement concerning the purpose of human existence: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever" (676).

"McNeill, Calvinism, 208. McNeill argues that in emphasizing the gulf between the majesty of God and the sinfulness of man, Reformed theologians had broken significantly with Christian humanists (76).
benevolent divine providence. Campbell argued that the proper means of discovering God's nature is to reason from the effects evident in creation to the cause, which implicitly credited man with a considerable power of discovering God's nature for himself.

Campbell sought a God who reveals himself. "God has not, in respect of revealed, any more than in respect of natural religion, left himself without a witness. Sufficient evidence has been and will be always given." Campbell's creed described God in terms recognizable to a natural philosopher: "there is one only God, a spirit, eternal and omnipresent, infinitely powerful, wise and good, the maker and the ruler of the world." This description is conspicuously devoid of reference to a vengeful God absolutely intolerant of sin. Campbell assumed that authentic religion resembles its creator; "Whatever therefore tends to exhibit our religion as amiable, is, in fact, an intrinsic evidence of its truth." Campbell's God is indeed not so much a God of judgment as a God of love and mercy. His God is understanding of human failures, and desires man's improvement by both natural and spiritual means.

It is only in a superstitious religion that "the divine being appears to the worshipers as a capricious and tyrannical master to his wretched slaves." The whole of nature, particularly man's common sense,

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99 PR, 378.

100 Sermons, 2:63.

101 Character, 16.

102 Sermons, 1:308.

103 AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page. Reid argued that God will not hold us accountable for failing to do what is beyond our natural power and knowledge (WTR, 1:480).
declares that God has not abandoned his creatures to misery, but has provided them with the means and the evidences to desire and know God's benevolent plan for humanity. By removing some of the distance between God's absolute holiness and man's absolute corruption, Campbell managed to avoid the unanswerable question that had plagued Scottish Calvinists for generations, that is, the question of how an omnipotent, infallible and just God can permit sin without being responsible for it.

The gulf between the holiness of God and the fallenness of man had traditionally been filled by the person of Jesus Christ, the saving mediator who partook fully of both the human and the divine natures.\textsuperscript{104} If the moderates indeed held a mitigated view of the corruption of human nature, it seems to follow that their doctrine of Christ would have focused less on the atoning nature of Christ's sacrifice than on the moral example of Jesus' life. This is certainly the sense of their typical sermons. But this does not necessarily mean that they dismissed the traditional doctrine of Christ. Christology may justly be considered the touchstone of orthodoxy. The doctrine of the Trinity, for example, is so closely tied to the doctrine of Christ, that to clarify the one will largely clarify the other. But in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the orthodox doctrines of Christ and the Trinity, which had formerly been agreed upon by Catholics and

\textsuperscript{104}Sermons, 1:331.

\textsuperscript{105}See James Walker, Theology and Theologians of Scotland, 75-6. I do not agree with Walker, however, that the notion of a personal Jesus was always central to seventeenth-century covenanting theology (177). A theology that puts so much emphasis on the covenant of grace, that is on the ontological status of Christ, cannot be as concerned with the moral nature of the human Jesus. Drummond and Bulloch argue that the seceders of the 1720s (the heirs of extreme Calvinism) focused little on the person of Jesus (Scottish Church, 107).
Protestants alike, came under intense critical scrutiny by biblical scholars and church historians. These doctrines were increasingly found to be dependent not upon Scripture but upon historical developments in the early church. Some modern scholars have assumed that eighteenth-century Scottish moderatism was part of this critical trend and have therefore equated it with Socinianism, that is, with the belief that Christ was not truly divine. This has contributed to the popular notion that the moderates were heterodox. The only modern scholar who has examined the religious side of Campbell's thought in any detail has highlighted Campbell's lack of an adequate Christology. A. R. McKay notes that "all of his sermons fail to strike clearly the central note of evangelical Christianity, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself." McKay's own evangelical position is clear, as is

106 Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture*, 88-101 and 193-4. Arminians supposedly questioned the work of Christ, that is, the necessity of the sacrificial atonement, while Socinians questioned the ontological status (i.e., divinity) of Christ. Unfortunately, Campbell did not comment upon I John 5:7, the traditional support for Trinitarianism.

107 See, for example, Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Scottish Enlightenment," *Blackwood's Magazine* 322 (1977): 380. Trevor-Roper's claim is based on the few sensational orthodoxy trials in the Scottish church early in the century, and perhaps on the infrequency of references to the nature of Christ in the moderates' writings. Trevor-Roper is not clear, however, on what he means by "Socinianism." The term can refer either to the doctrine of Christ or to a methodology that emphasizes human reason (Reedy, *The Bible and Reason*, 119-20). The two meanings are connected, but the one does not necessarily imply the other.

108 McKay, diss., 88. McKay further criticizes Campbell for failing to declare Jesus to be the Son of God, that is, the Word made Flesh. This general theme is repeated several times in the dissertation, for example, 106-7 and 214. Keith claimed that Campbell disapproved of "modern socinians, or rationalists . . . who attempt to explain away the peculiar doctrines of the gospel" (xliii). McKay does deny that Campbell was a Socinian (56).
the fact that he has not seen all of the extant Campbell manuscripts, nor considered that Campbell's sermons were occasional pieces. Nevertheless, his basic point is at least partly correct. Campbell failed, by the standard either of strict creedalism or of modern Evangelicalism, to give sufficient attention to the nature of Christ and of his atonement. Before we judge Campbell on what he did not say, however, we should be clear on what he did say.

Campbell's view of Christ was constructed with care from textual and historical evidences. Dissertation VII of The Four Gospels, for example, considers the historical signification of the term "Messiah". Campbell argued that the ancient meaning of the term was quite different from the modern meaning. In Jesus' own time, not even the few who thought of him as the Messiah believed that he was more than human. The term "lord" was meant only as a mark of respect to a superior. Nevertheless, Campbell did not draw a heterodox conclusion from this claim:

It was plainly our Saviour's intention to insinuate, that there was in this character, as delineated by the Prophets and suggested by the royal Psalmist, something superior to human, which they were not aware of. And though he does not, in express words, give the solution, he leaves no person who reflects at a loss to infer it. 109

Campbell claimed that the confusion over these terms was a good example of the tendency of modern readers to impose their own meanings on ancient words. 110 He accused modern paraphrasers of making the gospel Jesus into their own party-man. 111 This helps explain Campbell's

109 FG, 1:237.
110 FG, 1:236-42.
111 FR, 351.
reluctance to discuss the nature of Christ in his own writings. He thought that the true Christ is to be found in the Gospels rather than in the writings of modern commentators. The spirit of Christ portrayed in the Gospels was, as we shall see, the very opposite of the spirit of party-men.\textsuperscript{112}

Despite these limitations, there are enough clues in Campbell's writings to suggest that his view of Christ was largely orthodox. In his "Defence" manuscript, Campbell advocated the simple creed that he claimed had been enough for the early Christians: "I believe Jesus is the messiah the son of God."\textsuperscript{113} Like Locke, he added that "we must possess the love as well as the belief of the truth, if we would be saved by it."\textsuperscript{114} He claimed that Christ is the Son of God, was born of a virgin, lived a perfect life, rose from the dead, and purchased eternal happiness for those who repented and obeyed the gospel. These claims, in fact, take up the bulk of his formal creed.\textsuperscript{115} He taught his divinity students that their study of scriptural doctrine must include consideration of the Messiah's

\textsuperscript{112}"If we are susceptible of the impartiality requisite to constitute us proper judges in these matters, we shall find in him nothing that can be thought to favour the subtle disquisitions of a sect. His language is not, like that of all dogmatists, the language of a bastard philosophy, which, under the pretence of methodizing religion, hath corrupted it, and, in less or more, tinged all the parties into which Christendom is divided. His language is not so much the language of the head as of the heart. His object is not science, but wisdom; accordingly, his discourses abound more in sentiments than in opinions" (FR, 351).

\textsuperscript{113}AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page. Interestingly, even John Locke and Thomas Hobbes had claimed to advocate the same minimal creed, which is not much of a support to orthodoxy.

\textsuperscript{114}Sermons, 1:309.

\textsuperscript{115}Character, 17. See appendix IV.
pre-existence and divinity, his state of suffering including his incarnation, his character, his ministry on earth, his death and burial, and . . . his succeeding state of glory, including his resurrection, ascension, exaltation, and second coming, together with the purposes which the several particulars were intended to answer. 116

This again suggests that Campbell guarded his doctrinal expressions merely to prevent his students from neglecting their own researches. Furthermore, he explicitly rejected Unitarianism (perhaps the natural consequence of Socinianism) in his friendly letter to the Unitarian sympathizer Alexander Christie. 117 A more complete Christology appears near the end of the "Defence" manuscript:

no created excellency is worthy to be compared with that of the only begotten son of God, the brightness of the father's glory and the express image of his person; we are certain that no human virtue, however splendid, will bear to be compared with his in whom dwelt all the fulness of the godhead bodily, who did no sin, and in whose mouth no guile was ever found; whose whole life and death and doctrine are incontestible evidences of the insuperable zeal whereby he was actuata for the advancement of the honour of God and the felicity of men. 118

Though this passage would probably not satisfy an extreme creedalist, there is enough material here to suggest that Campbell advocated a more or less traditional Christology. He argued that Christ was the Son of

116LSTPR, 158.

117"Campbell to Christie, 20 May 1790: NLS MS 3703, fols. 65v-70. Christie had been disciplined by the kirk-session of Montrose in April 1789 for attending a Unitarian place of worship. He wrote letters to various leading Presbyterian churchmen asking for support. Apparently Campbell was one of the only ones to respond; other moderates considered Christie an embarrassment. For more information on Christie, see Ian Clark's dissertation, 307-9.

118AUL MS 655, un-numbered page. The passage goes on to discuss "the creator" and "the redeemer" as if they are two separate persons. The language is too vague, however, to make any firm conclusions.
God, in whom resided the completeness of God, that he was fully human and perfect, and that he died for the benefit of men.

A similar Christology can be found in the writings of other moderates, though the references are infrequent. Alexander Gerard's series of sermons "The First Promise of the Redeemer," describes the miraculous conception of Christ and the role of Christ as the primary instrument of mankind's salvation. Hugh Blair's sermons clearly proclaim the death and resurrection of Christ for the sake of man's salvation, and the present role of Christ as the Great High Priest. Moreover, his equation of Christ with God is so strongly implied as to be unmistakable, though the equality of Christ with the Father is not as clear. George Hill, the most systematic of the eighteenth-century Scottish moderates, held a doctrine of Christ that was unimpeachable by any orthodox standard.

The foregoing evidence suggests that Campbell and the moderates' view of Christ was largely orthodox. Why then did they not preach it

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120 Blair, *Sermons*, 1:48-9 and 121. "It was the hour in which the Son of God was to terminate the labours of his important life, by a death still more important and illustrious; the hour of atoning, by his sufferings, for the guilt of mankind; the hour of accomplishing prophecies, types, and symbols, which had been carried on through a series of ages; the hour of concluding the old, and of introducing to the world the new dispensation of religion" (1:116-17). Of particular interest here is the elevation of Christ's death above his life.


122 See McCallum thesis, 40-44. Hill emphasized that Christ really did something efficacious to atone for sin.

123 Ian Clark thinks it nonsense to accuse the moderates of ignoring the person and work of Christ (diss., 259). He argues that the moderates chose to focus on the human side of Christ (262). This in
more frequently or distinctly in their surviving sermons? It is probable that they viewed the atoning nature of Christ's mission as a mystery, that is, as a doctrine to be believed but not completely understood. An overzealous desire to dwell on such mysteries leads only to enthusiasm and to strife within the church, which are, in Campbell's eyes, counter to the spirit of the gospel. Such controversies had, within Campbell's lifetime, rent the unity of the Church of Scotland. Campbell, like other moderates, firmly believed that Christians ought to concentrate on matters within their grasp, such as following the moral example of Jesus' life. Thus he chose to concentrate on the person and actions of Jesus rather than on the ontological status of Christ. He thought it contrary to the spirit of Christ to divide the church over abstract questions that are not in themselves necessary to Christian life.¹²⁴ As George Skene Keith said:

> though satisfied, in his own mind, of the truth of the essential doctrines of Christianity, he also disapproved of certain abstruse questions concerning the trinity, the nature of Christ's satisfaction, and such like controversies.¹²⁵

Campbell did occasionally advertise his orthodoxy, as in his reference to the "Holy Ghost, the third of the sacred Three in whose name we are by baptism initiated into the Christian communion."¹²⁶ But his

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¹²⁴Creedalists, of course, believed that correct thinking is necessary for salvation. Campbell, like George Turnbull, believed that natural religion has demonstrated that we need only know that Jesus is the Christ, our saviour and the example for our moral life (Turnbull, Philosophical Enquiry, 78).

¹²⁵Keith, xliii-xliv.

¹²⁶Sermons, 1:314. This may be his only substantial reference to the place of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity.
orthodoxy usually manifested itself in a subtler form, particularly in his tendency to read into the nature of the divine what he found characteristic in the life of Jesus. This may have been his way of identifying the person of Christ with the being of God.\textsuperscript{127}

Campbell's doctrine of salvation corresponded to his Christology, which is to say that he made no firm commitment to either side of the long-standing Scottish debate over the relative value of faith and works in the economy of salvation.\textsuperscript{128} Sometimes Campbell seemed to uphold the traditional Calvinist belief that man has been corrupted to such a degree that he cannot even will to believe in saving grace.\textsuperscript{129} The doctrine of unmerited grace he called an "important evangelical truth."\textsuperscript{130} In illustrating a particular preaching style, he made use of the doctrine of redemption by unmerited grace through the mediation of Christ and the operation of the Spirit.\textsuperscript{131} But Campbell's views sometimes took him far afield from traditional Calvinism. The text for his sermon \textit{The Happy Influence of Religion on Civil Society}, Proverbs 14:34, reads as follows: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a

\textsuperscript{127}Campbell said almost nothing concerning the Trinity, though, from the foregoing evidence, it is likely that he was orthodox on this matter too. Ramsay of Ochtertyre strongly implied that he was (\textit{Scotland and Scotsman}, 1:486). Campbell could not have helped noticing that the doctrine of the Trinity was a major source of conflict in the late seventeenth-century Anglican church (Redwood, \textit{Reason, Ridicule and Religion}, 156), and for that reason probably avoided the issue as too controversial for the purposes of Christian unity.

\textsuperscript{128}Donaldson, \textit{Faith of the Scots}, 105. This was an extremely divisive issue in the Scottish church, pitting supposed antinomians on one side against supposed polite preachers on the other.

\textsuperscript{129}Boston, \textit{Works}, 80.

\textsuperscript{130}\textit{LSTPE}, 453.

\textsuperscript{131}\textit{LSTPE}, 447-8.
reproach to any people." Campbell interpreted the "righteousness" of this passage to mean "true and practical religion,"¹³² an interpretation which placed considerably more emphasis on the moral practice of Christians than on the unmerited grace of God.

Campbell's doctrine of salvation can be better understood in relation to one that it opposed. Campbell attacked the High Churchmanship of the elder Dodwell for taking the keys of salvation from Christ and giving them exclusively to the alleged apostolically-descended bishops.¹³³ This, suggested Campbell, is a rather arbitrary method of salvation. He preferred what he considered a traditional notion of salvation: "as we are repeatedly assured in the New Testament, the purpose, rule or law of the Almighty, when he should come at last to judgment, was to render to every man according to his deeds."¹³⁴ Campbell clearly subscribed to some kind of doctrine of works, in defiance of Calvinist tradition. He credited human beings with having a considerable capacity for achieving their own salvation.¹³⁵ Moreover, he thought that people who reform themselves provide powerful moral

¹³²*Sermons*, 2:82.

¹³³*AUL MS 650*, section II.

¹³⁴*AUL MS 650*, section II. Campbell cited Revelation 22:12, "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." William Abernethy Drummond argued, against Campbell, that salvation will not come to those who willfully repudiate the external observances of religion (*Remarks upon Dr. Campbell's Sermon* [Edinburgh: John Wilson, 1771], 12).

¹³⁵But he still acknowledged that only God can say if a man be saved or damned (*Sermons*, 1:434).
examples which inspire others to seek their own salvation. Gerard, like Campbell, argued that

genuine religion is wholly practical: grace is but the principle of virtue and good works. Your religion can be of no value, I should rather say, you have no real religion, if it do not enter into life with you, if it do not pervade and animate all your actions.

Gerard went so far as to tell his students that, "every person must work out his own salvation & depend only upon his own labours for it." In other words, he emphasized the process of regeneration rather than states of grace.

Although Campbell and the moderates preached the value of works, even in regard to salvation, they did not believe that man has the capacity to seek his own salvation apart from divine grace. But should the moderates be labelled Arminians? Did they believe, in other words, that man has an effective free will and that Jesus died for all who will receive him, and thereby deny Calvinist predestinarianism? On the one hand, the Common Sense philosophers required that our will be free in some effective sense, and that we be able to determine our own will.

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136 AUL MS 652, part I, un-numbered page.

137 Gerard, *Sermons*, 1:11. Gerard further suggested that the diligent practice of one's calling promotes one's salvation (*Sermons*, 1:342). The connection of faith and works in Gerard's mind might be explained by his Humean-like definition of faith as a "lively impression" which forms our temper to good actions (*Sermons*, 1:36). This connection also has a more traditionally Christian flavour, as in the following: "in the spiritual world, the seeds of virtue can be ripened into a solid temper only by a continuous course of virtuous practice, animated by the power of divine grace" (*Sermons*, 1:430).

138 AUL MS K 174, p. 7. He further warned his charges not to allow their future parishioners to worry too much about their state of grace (123). He also denied the absoluteness of salvation and damnation (124), clearly a rejection of double predestination.

139 Gerard, *Pastoral Care*, 159.
Though this was primarily directed against Hume's sociological type of determinism, it may also have been implicitly directed against the determinism inherent in extreme Calvinism. On the other hand, the moderates seem to have upheld a more traditional Scottish notion of providential determinism. Reid informed his students that "the firm persuasian that nothing befalls us but by the appointment or permission of our Father in Heaven, is the truest Source of Consolation to a pious Mind."141 Campbell's own position conforms neither to predestinarianism nor to Arminianism. He said that "God does not force the wills of his creatures; but he makes both their errors and their vices conduce to effect his wise and gracious purposes."142 Although the words could be Calvinistic, the sentiment probably is not. Divine foreknowledge does not here appear to be deterministic in the Calvinist sense. Yet Campbell based his toleration argument on the premise that human beings cannot will their own belief. Belief in doctrinal propositions is the irresistible consequence of viewing the available evidence.143 It seems, therefore, that Campbell believed there are natural limits to human free will, quite apart from any theological arguments. He appears to have been less committed to free will than his Common Sense associates. Campbell had reason to be circumspect on the religious

140Reid argued against Hume that we must be able to determine our will in order to have free will (Grave, Scottish Philosophy, 206). See also Reid, Natural Theology, 118-19; and Beattie, Essay, 277 and 301, and Elements, 1:153-8.

141Reid, Practical Ethics, 120. Sher argues that the Stoicism evident in his Moderates included the notion of complete resignation to the will of God (179).

142FG, 1:440.

143See AUL MS 655.
problem of free will, for he was clearly hostile to the antinomian
tendencies evident in his own church. He argued that no spiritual
attainment can free us from our natural duties and obligations, since
God is the author of nature as well as of Revelation. Although it is
tempting to label Campbell an Arminian, such a label is neither very
helpful nor accurate. It does not convey either the complexity or the
ambiguity of Campbell's position. Campbell certainly believed that
Christ's atonement is indispensable to human salvation, and that the
grace of God is necessary to discover it. But he also claimed that "the
grace of the HOLY SPIRIT of God is tender'd to every one, who sincerely
and assiduously seeks it." This ambiguity is further evident in his
assertion that neither reason nor faith is by itself sufficient for the
Christian. Ultimately, Campbell would have argued that salvation is
the business of God, whereas the fulfilling of God's natural and
revealed commands is the business of men, and their only legitimate
concern. He was equally unwilling to speculate on the nature of the
next life. He supported the minimal view that "the wicked shall go into

\[\text{AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page.}\]

\[\text{Jeffrey Smitten argues that Robertson was an Arminian ("The}
\text{Shaping of Moderateism: William Robertson and Arminianism,"}
\text{Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture 22 [1992]), while Griffin}
\text{assumes the same about Reid ("Possible Theological Perspectives"). George Hill was}
\text{certainly not an Arminian (McCallum thesis, 53).}\]

\[\text{Character, 17.}\]

\[\text{FG, 1:3-4.}\]

\[\text{Ian Clark rightly points out that the moderates saw salvation as}
\text{a process rather than as a state (diss., 261). This has led to some}
\text{obscurity in the moderates' doctrine of salvation; see, for example,}
\text{Blair, Sermons, 1:22 and 166.}\]
everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal." \(^{149}\)

Nevertheless his treatment of the term "hell" seems to have questioned much of the popular understanding of its implications. \(^{150}\)

Campbell and the moderates clearly did not consider the church necessary for the salvation of the individual. Campbell's page-long creed includes no mention of the church in any form. \(^{151}\) He declared that Christ has no temporal kingdom. \(^{152}\) Campbell would have agreed with Calvin's belief that the Church Triumphant is invisible, though he would not have agreed with extreme Calvinists' rather sectarian conception of the visible church. \(^{153}\) Nevertheless, he upheld the traditional belief that the true church is "the spouse of Jesus Christ, for the love of whom he died." \(^{154}\) Campbell emphasized Christ's role as sole mediator between man and God in the Christian economy. A minister, therefore, can only claim the role of mediator or priest in a loose sense. \(^{155}\)

Campbell's hostility to the human usurpation of Christ's priesthood runs

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\(^{149}\)Character, 17. Cf. Boston, Human Nature in its Fourfold State, which includes a great deal of material on the nature of the future state.

\(^{150}\)See AUL MS M 190, lecture 15; FG, diss. VI, part ii. As an interesting aside, James Boswell recorded the following (7 June 1777): "Supped . . . with Principal Campbell; not pleased. He thought not horribly of annihilation" (Boswell in Extreme, 129). I suspect that Boswell had been describing to Campbell his last interview with Hume (at which time Hume had been reading Campbell's Rheto'g), and that Campbell thought Hume's notion of annihilation after death not inherently repugnant.

\(^{151}\)See appendix IV, below.

\(^{152}\)Sermons, 1:397.

\(^{153}\)McNeill, Calvinism, 214.

\(^{154}\)AUL MS 652, part I, un-numbered page.

\(^{155}\)LEH, 1:310-11.
as a theme throughout the Lectures on Ecclesiastical History. His unmistakable antipathy to the Roman Catholic hierarchy was derived at least in part from his hostility to clerical superiority within the church. He further believed that any emphasis on rites and ceremonies is positively harmful to the Christian life if it distracts from simple gospel truths. Campbell even considered the rite of baptism useless in itself, suggesting the relative unimportance of the sacraments to salvation.

Campbell was largely indifferent to the form of ecclesiastical order. The probabilist theory of knowledge which he inherited from the seventeenth-century Latitudinarians allowed him, like them, to favour a broad view of the visible church. Campbell's explicit ecclesiological claims were largely negative ones. He worried primarily about the dangers posed to personal religion by particular ecclesiological forms, and consequently highlighted the alarming historical manifestations of sectarian claims. It is not surprising that he tended to view the visible church as a voluntary society, united by common principles of belief. In his 'Defence' manuscript, whose main target was the Roman Catholic church's notion of hierarchical order, Campbell described the ideal church as a "society" whose "members" had come together by means of an "original compact". These terms were all borrowed from

[156] Character, 11.

[157] Sermons, 1:385. Gerard agreed that the sacraments are useful only insofar as they encourage holiness and piety (Pastoral Care, 375-80).

[158] AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page. Robertson's political Moderates used the notion of the voluntary nature of a church society to support their call for greater discipline within their own church. See Robertson's "Reasons of dissent" (often called the "Manifesto of the
seventeenth-century political theory. Campbell's concern for ecclesiological abuses led him to insist on the necessity of an absolute separation of church and state powers.\textsuperscript{159}

Campbell applied the same concerns to his own established church. He advocated neither its disestablishment nor a return to the covenanting tradition of the past. Campbell was rather ambivalent concerning whether the Scottish people as a whole would be held accountable for their degree of faithfulness to God. His sermon \textit{The Nature, Extent, and Importance, of the Duty of Allegiance} strongly implied that the American war was a divine punishment for national sin. In every war, said Campbell, there is "some immorality or guilt which is the direct cause. The superintendency of Providence is doubtless to be acknowledged in this, as in every other event."\textsuperscript{160} Campbell's use of the passive voice throughout this passage suggests that he could not be entirely sure of God's intentions. He was more sure, however, of the proper human response to acts of providence: "affliction of every kind ought to excite us to self-examination, prayer, and repentance."\textsuperscript{161}

Campbell's hesitancy concerning the possibility of a Scottish or British jeremiad may be contrasted with the certainty evident in Gerard's own fait\-day sermon:

\begin{quote}
[we must] humble ourselves in sincere repentance for those sins by which we have provoked God to visit us with this calamity, and
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{159} AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page.

\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Sermons}, 2:127.

\textsuperscript{161} \textit{Sermons}, 2:128.
which, persisted in, may justly provoke him to prolong it, or to blast our success and our national prosperity."  

The Americans, continued Gerard, "have stirred up war: and war is one of the fiercest fiends which the Almighty turneth loose for the punishment of nations by whom he hath been long provoked." But neither Campbell nor Gerard adhered to a view of divine visitation comparable to that held by John Bisset, Campbell's High-flying predecessor in Aberdeen's Second Charge. Bisset's sermon on the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 argued that "national sins, without national repentance, will certainly bring on national judgments." The Lisbon earthquake was a divine call for the repentance of the Scottish people, lest they receive a similar visitation. Clearly, Bisset held a very immediate sense of providence which was fundamentally incompatible with Campbell's probabilist theory of knowledge and Christian evidences. Campbell believed in divine rewards and punishments for virtues and crimes, but seems to have been unwilling to make claims about how these manifested themselves.  

Although the moderates' conception of providence appears to have included an element of divine visitation, they generally agreed that God accomplishes his designs primarily through natural means, that is,  

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Gerard, Liberty the Cloke of Maliciousness, 3.

Gerard, Liberty, 13. Gerard seems to have recommended to his students that they use providential explanations when discussing matters such as illness with their parishioners (AUL MS K 174, p. 145).

Bisset, Discourses, 55.

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Campbell's ambiguity is apparent in the Duty of Allegiance sermon, where he discussed "those public calamities, famine, pestilence, and earthquake, which are considered as proceeding immediately from the hand of God. They are all to be regarded as the punishments, but not as the natural effects of sin" (Sermons, 2:127).
secondary causes." But in keeping with their more traditional Christian heritage, they tended to interpret human history according to a Christian model. Campbell argued, in the *Dissertation on Miracles*, that the origins of the world would be inexplicable without reference to particular acts of providence (miracles), and that the beginning of history would be unknowable without Revelation. Sometimes, however, the moderates' views of historical providence were not entirely complementary. For example, Robertson's sermon, *The Situation of the World at the Time of Christ's Appearance, and Its Connexion with the Success of His Religion*, argued that the success of the early church can be explained entirely in terms of God's general providence. In other words, the church could not have prospered outside of the particular historical context which God prepared for it by natural means.

Campbell, in contrast, asserted in *The Success of the First Publishers of the Gospel a Proof of Its Truth* that the early church could not possibly have prospered by natural means alone in the hostile situation of the time, and therefore must have had the miraculous assistance of particular providence. Although these arguments appear to contradict one another, their incompatibility probably went unnoticed at the time. Such arguments undoubtedly appeared to eighteenth-century minds as

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167 Richard Sher argues that the moderates' notion of virtue was closely tied to their view of a primarily benevolent providence (*Church and University*, 175-86). See also Dwyer, *Virtuous Discourse*, 49.

168 See *DM*, part II, section VI.

169 In *The History of the Reign of the Emperor Charles V*, Robertson likewise accounted for Protestant successes in terms of natural providence (that is, secondary causes) alone.
additional proofs that the early church was, one way or another, under the patronage of heaven.

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The foregoing review of Campbell's theology demonstrates that he was not notably heterodox. His departures from traditional Scottish Calvinism are best explained by the tempering effects of eighteenth-century natural religion. Campbell, in other words, was a mitigated Calvinist. But to judge Campbell's theology merely by the standards of the Calvinist past is to miss the originality of his Christianity. Furthermore, this approach tends to perpetuate the mistaken view that the moderates' commitment to Christianity was minimalistic, limp and superficial. We ought, therefore, to consider Campbell's Christianity according to its own standards.

Campbell's Christianity was centred on the concept of personal, practical reformation. His notion of reformation encompassed improvement in both knowledge and morals.

As in religion [said Campbell], the ultimate end both of knowledge and faith is practice, or, in other words, the real improvement of the heart and life, so every doctrine whatever is of use, either as a direction in the performance of duty, or as a motive to it. And the knowledge and belief of hearers are no farther salutary to them, than this great end is reached. On the contrary, where it is not reached, where the heart is not bettered and the life reformed, they prove only the means of aggravating their guilt and heightening their condemnation.\textsuperscript{170}

Campbell's hesitancy to proclaim a comprehensive and dogmatic theology does not indicate indifference to Christian truth, but rather highlights his sincere pedagogical belief that every Christian ought to discover

\textsuperscript{170}STPE, 466-7.
God's revelation for himself.'\textsuperscript{171} Although Campbell believed that "religion is a thing purely personal,"\textsuperscript{172} he was no fideist. He assumed that the strongest Christian faith is built on the bedrock of empirical investigation.'\textsuperscript{173} Faith based on ignorance received only his scorn.'\textsuperscript{174} But Campbell also believed that mere acknowledgement of the moral certainty of Christianity's claims is not sufficient. Belief must give way to the transforming certainty of faith. Upon conviction by the Spirit of God, Christians must not merely repent but ceaselessly reform their lives and characters.'\textsuperscript{175} Campbell believed that Christian moral reform is that "to which every other [part] in this [Christian] economy points, as to its ultimate end."\textsuperscript{176} "The reformation of mankind," he taught his students, "is the great and ultimate end of the whole ministerial function."\textsuperscript{177} Gerard likewise declared that the end of the pastoral office is "the improvement and salvation of mankind."\textsuperscript{178} The Aberdonians' notion of the Christian life and system, therefore, is best summarized as a work of reformation.'\textsuperscript{179}

\textsuperscript{171}FG, 1:30.

\textsuperscript{172}AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page.

\textsuperscript{173}Sermons, 2:42.

\textsuperscript{174}See AUL MS 649, "Of implicit faith."

\textsuperscript{175}FG, 1:198.

\textsuperscript{176}STFE, 169.

\textsuperscript{177}STFE, 355. Likewise, "The primary intention of preaching is the reformation of mankind" (FR, 107).

\textsuperscript{178}Gerard, Pastoral Care, 403.

\textsuperscript{179}For more on the reformation theme, see Scott's student notes, especially lecture 17 (AUL MS M 190). Similar notions are evident in Gerard's teaching; see AUL MS K 174, pp. 92-4 and 178.
Christian reformation, thought Campbell, ought to be patterned on "the spirit of the gospel." He used this phrase to capture the character and style of Christ's ministry, which was thoroughly benevolent, moral and practical.\footnote{180} Christ was not just a saviour, but "the very pattern in the conduct of providence presented for our imitation."\footnote{181} In other words, one's profession of Christianity is worthless if one does not strive to become like Christ. The spirit of the gospel, said Campbell, is the "internal signature of genuine Christianity."\footnote{182} He contrasted "the spirit of the gospel" (also known as "the spirit of Christ" or "the spirit of charity") to the "spirit of dogmatism". Blind zeal is the very antithesis of the "benevolent and amiable spirit of Christ."\footnote{183} Campbell avoided dogmatic disputes, he told his students, because they lead away from the charity and virtue which constitute the heart of pure religion.\footnote{184} The authentic fruit of Christianity is moral reformation rather than vain disputation.\footnote{185} Protestantism's most significant pitfall is its tendency to become

\footnote{180}{To me nothing is more evident, than that the essence of Christianity, abstractly considered, consists in the system of doctrines and duties revealed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and that the essence of the Christian character consists in the belief of the one, and the obedience of the other" (LEH. 1:86).}

\footnote{181}{AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page. "To attain a conformity to the maxims of our Lord and his apostles, as interpreted by common sense, will satisfy my utmost wish of moral excellence" (AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page).}

\footnote{182}{Sermon, 1:317.}

\footnote{183}{AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page.}

\footnote{184}{LOC. 200-1.}

\footnote{185}{Character, 15-16. Gerard made the same point in his lectures, AUL MS K 174, p. 195.}
overly concerned with metaphysical reasoning, which leads only to
dogmatism and consequently disharmony. Campbell explicitly approved
Gerard's argument that controversy and division within the church is the
very opposite of "sound doctrine", which, in its proper scriptural
signification, means healthfulness and healing. Sound doctrine
necessarily excludes any teaching that does not have a practical, moral
tendency. Campbell ultimately thought it better to accept a degree
of doctrinal uncertainty than to live apart from the spirit of the
gospel, whose only absolute requirement is benevolent unity. William
Laurence Brown's posthumous summary of Campbell's teaching was
remarkably appropriate:

He placed the essence of religion, where our Saviour himself placed
it, in the unfeigned love of God, and of mankind, and actions were,
in his opinion, virtuous only as far as they flowed from one or
other of these sources, or tended to establish or enlarge these
principles in the hearts of men. To him it appeared highly
detrimental to pure and vital christianity to make it consist
wholly in certain external modes of worship, in the maintenance of
certain systems of speculation, or in any of those little
peculiarities by which sects and parties are commonly
distinguished. . . . Bigotry he regarded as having a fatal tendency
to sour the temper, and to harden the heart. Laxity of principle
he considered as cutting the sinews of christianity. Lukewarmness
was, in his opinion, incompatible with conviction of the truth of
religion; fanaticism was subversive of all its blessed effects.

Practical piety was, for Campbell, the very end and purpose of the
Christian life. Piety, he thought, is the respectful recognition of

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\*\*LEH, 2:361. Campbell believed that this was Martin Luther's
greatest failing.

\*\*Gerard, Sermons, 2:142.


\*\*\*\*Hugh Blair likewise believed that the truly Christian character
united piety with charity (Sermons, 1:17).
God's benevolent order in the universe. Practical religion is the self-conscious pursuit of virtue in the present life. Campbell's practical and improving religion was never far removed from the spirit of the Enlightenment, just as his piety owed much to the Enlightenment's conception of natural religion. As we shall see, the moderationism of Campbell and his associates is best understood in this light. But before turning to a final examination of Campbell's moderation, we must examine some of the practical and controversial implications of his Christianity.

See LPC, 24.
CHAPTER EIGHT

RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS AND CONTROVERSIES

George Campbell's religion, like his philosophy, was meant to be practical. The religious problems that occupied his attention were hotly-debated issues in his day, and their solution required the use of both natural and revealed sources of knowledge. Campbell believed that there are certain things we can know about the nature of miracles, Scripture, and the Christian church by means of our natural understanding alone. Thus he could argue with Hume concerning the philosophical possibility and merit of miraculous claims without invoking revelation or divine inspiration. So too could he invoke the authority of the Roman Catholic critic Richard Simon on the context and reliability of scriptural texts. Finally, he could engage in historical debate concerning the nature of the early church with such diverse figures as the High Church apologist Henry Dodwell or the infidel Edward Gibbon. In all of these cases Campbell believed that he could arrive at empirically-established, that is, highly probable, conclusions. A philosopher, in other words, can believe in the veracity of Christian claims with moral certainty.

Probabilist conclusions, however compelling, were not in themselves teleologically satisfying to the moderate Christian mind. True and practical Christianity demanded a faith ultimately oblivious to degrees of moral evidence. Campbell held that a Christian must consider the consequences of Christian belief, that is, the religious significance of
the Christian evidences, and realize these consequences with practical commitment. Natural evidences themselves proclaim the need to move beyond natural knowledge. Campbell thought it clear, for example, that the successes of the early church cannot be explained by natural means alone, as is evident in his sermon The Success of the First Publishers of the Gospel a Proof of Its Truth. Our natural enquiries, therefore, compel us to consider the significance of the religious claims of a small band of believers who clearly enjoyed the favour of God's particular providence. In other words, the empirical reality of miracles in the early church constitutes the first unmistakable sign of the revelation of God's particular will to mankind.

Campbell employed an enlightened theory of knowledge to defend the historical veracity of miracles against the Enlightenment's greatest sceptic. His reason for defending miracles, however, cannot be explained by a secular teleology.

My primary intention in undertaking an answer to [Hume's "Miracles"]... hath invariably been, to contribute all in my power, to the defence of a religion, which I esteem the greatest blessing conferred by Heaven on the sons of men.²

When we left the subject of miracles, Campbell had established, by natural arguments, that miracles are not only possible, but the expected consequence of God's moral nature. Furthermore, he had demonstrated that the historical claims in favour of the miracles of the early church are highly probable and, indeed, morally certain. This means, according

¹See also LEH, 1:5.

²DM, 5.
to the third part of our earlier miracle definition, that the doctrine which accompanies these miracles must be a special revelation from God. The most obvious religious implication of a miracle is that anyone who can successfully prove a miracle can also claim a corresponding point of doctrine. Nevertheless, Campbell asserted that the only believable miracles are those recorded in Scripture for the purpose of authenticating the doctrine of Scripture. Miraculous powers are not to be found after the first generation of the Christian church, which means that, in modern times, "we have no ground to look for miraculous assistance." After the age of divine inspiration and miracles, "it pleased heaven to withdraw those supernatural aids, and leave this cause to force its way in the world by its own intrinsic and external evidence." Miracles form the bridge between God's natural providence and his revealed will. Having crossed that bridge, Campbell's argument concerning miracles shifted its focus away from Hume and onto Christian rivals such as the Roman Catholic apologist George Hay who had an interest in finding miracles in every age since the early church. The remaining discussion of miracles, therefore, must consider the significance rather than the possibility of miracles.

Campbell was not, however, entirely done with Hume. Even Hume had recognized that the question of miracles was interesting primarily for

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3Campbell argued that the primary purpose of Christ's miracles was to provide evidence for his mission (LEH, 2:377). This basic premise was supported by Gerard (Sermons, 1:369), and Paley (Works, 315).

4Sermons, 2:349. See also FG, 1:318; Sermons, 2:60-1; LSTPE, 140; and AUL MS 654, part IV. Even Campbell's opponent, William Abernethy Drummond, agreed that we have no right to expect miracles in the present age (Reasons [Edinburgh: Sangster, Gray, and Wilson, 1792], 25).

5LEH, 1:4.
its religious implications. "If the spirit of religion join itself to the love of wonder," said Hume, "there is an end of common sense; and human testimony, in these circumstances, loses all pretensions to authority." Hume knew that most people neither believed nor disbelieved miracle claims for philosophical reasons, but that their belief in miracles generally followed from their religious commitments. According to his _Natural History of Religion_, religious belief can be adequately explained by a philosophy of human nature, without reference to metaphysical arguments. The superstitious tendency evident in human nature, along with the love of wonder, sufficiently accounts for the common belief in miracles. Thus a particularly superstitious religion, such as Roman Catholicism, naturally has a corresponding legion of miracle claims. In the second half of his "Miracles" essay, Hume derived devious pleasure from pointing out the multitude of witnesses attesting to modern Catholic miracles. He implicitly suggested that their testimony was as good as, if not better than, the testimony of the witnesses for early Christian miracles.

Hume may have simply intended to perplex conscientious Protestant readers who necessarily believed the gospel miracles without accepting Roman Catholic ones. He concluded his "Miracles" essay with an ironic shot aimed directly at the empirical Christian apologists of his age. His strategy, he claimed, was to confound those dangerous friends or disguised enemies to the Christian Religion, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on Faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is, by no means, fitted to endure. . . .

upon the whole, we may conclude, that the Christian Religion not

"Enquiries, 117."
only was at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity: And whoever is moved by faith to assent to it, is conscious of a continued miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience.  

If Hume's purpose was to bait moderate Scottish divines, then he accomplished his end with particular success. Perhaps nothing better identifies Campbell as an eighteenth-century empirical Christian than his compulsion to answer Hume's ironic charge. Campbell also took great pains to discount the miracle claims that Hume playfully proposed in favour of contemporary Roman Catholic miracles. In fact, it is his attempt to directly answer the details of Hume's ironic argument that betrays his moderate and empirical mindset.

The details of Campbell's strategy for defending gospel miracles while at the same time discounting Roman Catholic miracles are very revealing. Campbell argued that Christianity was first established in an environment inherently hostile to its message. Its early defenders, therefore, could not have been predisposed to believe its miracle claims. The testimony in favour of the gospel miracles could have survived only if the miracles were true and so unassailable by Christianity's many enemies. The rapid growth of the early church, therefore, conclusively demonstrates that the gospel miracles were believed by all parties in those difficult early years.  

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7Enquiries, 129-31. In his introduction to Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, Norman Kemp Smith argues that this argument was actually consistent with the Reformed tradition, which had maintained that Christian faith is impossible without the miraculous gift of divine grace ((Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1947), 47). In other words, Hume's miracle argument was more consistent with the Calvinist tradition than Campbell's empirical argument.
miracle claims, in contrast, are advanced by those predisposed to believe them, and in an environment which encourages such claims. All eighteenth-century philosophers and historians knew that the testimony of interested parties is inherently suspect. Catholic miracles, some thought, can be dismissed on purely natural grounds. Despite his Common Sense theory of testimony, Campbell had no difficulty disbelieving testimony concerning Catholic prodigies. He promoted the typical eighteenth-century Protestant belief that Popery is a "fruitful source of lying wonders," and predictably concluded that the reliability of Catholic witnesses is in no way equal to that of the gospel testifiers. Catholic miracles, unlike gospel ones, cannot be rationally believed.

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8This argument is developed by Campbell in both the Dissertation on Miracles, and in the sermon The Success of the First Publishers of the Gospel. The same is argument is made by James Beattie (Evidences, 35).

9DM, 221.

10See, for example, LEH, 2:404, 411 and 412.

11DM, 211. Elsewhere Campbell argued that the ignorance and barbarism of the dark ages allowed the Roman Catholic church to deliberately use forgeries and false miracles to promote their tyrannical interests (LEH, 2:50). Campbell's "Defence" manuscript demonstrates that his miracles argument was inextricably bound with his general view of history: "It is chiefly, on monkish testimony, that some Romish champions have maintained that the power of working miracles is still among them. A plea so wretchedly supported, by pretended facts which, if true, would be more properly denominated monsters than miracles, miracles wrought for purposes the most puerile imaginable, not to say ridiculous, and vouched by witnesses, ignorant, credulous, interested, and inveterately bigotted from childhood on the side for which they give their testimony; in short who, in everything material, are a perfect contrast to those who attest the miracles of the gospel. . . That such silly stories had so long and so extensive a currency in Christendom, is a demonstration of the extreme degeneracy, and credulity of those ages" (AUL MS 652, p. 99).

12DM, 244.
Campbell's rejection of Roman Catholic miracles required the employment of detailed arguments even apart from Hume's taunts. A Catholic apologist such as Bishop George Hay would have agreed that Hume's impieties can be easily dismissed,¹³ but he would allow no such treatment of his own claims. Roman Catholic claims were perhaps even more dangerous in Campbell's world than were the claims of Hume. Though the number of Catholics in Scotland was small, Catholicism still held considerably more sway than did scepticism. Hay, like Campbell, considered miracles to be the "highly-prized prerogative of revelation."¹⁴ They are to be regarded as absolute proofs of a divine communication.¹⁵ In fact, argued Hay, the Protestant Reformation can be rejected on the grounds that it wrought no miracles to prove the legitimacy of its innovations. God would never sanction such changes without incontrovertible evidences.¹⁶ Though Hay's Scripture Doctrine of Miracles Displayed (1775) was published after Campbell's Dissertation on Miracles, it may be used to represent another kind of opponent against whom Campbell fought.

Hay's argument concerning miracles proceeded in an entirely different direction than Campbell's. Although Hay discussed the evidences for miracles, he did so only in the second volume of his work.

¹²In fact, Hay agreed with most of Campbell's arguments against Hume. Campbell does not appear to have noticed Hay's Miracles in the third (that is, the last corrected) edition of his Dissertation on Miracles (1797).


¹⁵Hay, Miracles, 1:226.

¹⁶Hay, Miracles, 1:286.
In other words, he assumed the truth of miracles from the outset. Hay did not even attempt to debate Hume, for the philosophical aspects of belief in miracles were of no interest to him. He claimed that "since revelation assures us of the fact, it is most unphilosophical to pretend from reason to argue against it." Hay made no attempt to persuade infidels or deists that miracles are possible or historically demonstrable. His arguments were directed at Protestant moderates such as Campbell who already believed in the possibility as well as the fact of miracles. Against these opponents, he argued that if any Christian miracles are worthy of belief, then Roman Catholic miracles must also be accepted. Hay wondered why the establishment of the original gospel should be the only legitimate function of miracles. He claimed, against Campbell, that the Common Sense presumption of the veracity of testifiers must apply as well to Catholic witnesses as to any other. He thought that Catholic testimony is no more self-interested than Protestant claims. After all, would not a predisposition to Protestantism encourage one to seek means of limiting miracles to the first Christian age? Hay had only to demonstrate that there is no good reason to believe that the age of miracles has ended to accomplish

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7He also assumed the truth of Scripture from the outset (Hay, Miracles, 1:20).

8Hay, Miracles, 1:31. Such statements make me wary of Mark Goldie's claim that Hay's thought was close to that of the Common Sense philosophers; "Common Sense Philosophy and Catholic Theology in the Scottish Enlightenment," Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century 302 (1992): 281-320.

9Hay, Miracles, 1:65.

10Hay, Miracles, 2:85.

his main purpose. This purpose, he said, is to decide the whole issue between Catholicism and Protestantism.\textsuperscript{22} If it could be demonstrated that the age of miracles has in fact not ended, then Campbell would have to acknowledge the claims of the Roman Catholic church.

Campbell, of course, would admit none of this. He implicitly disagreed with Hay concerning the very premises of their debate. Campbell started from the rather Newtonian assumption that God accomplishes his purposes in the most efficient manner possible, that is, with the fewest number of miracles. Critical philosophers must seek out not only the most believable miracles but also the most economical set of miracle claims. Biblical miracles are the best-attested miracles in human history, and therefore Christianity (which has superseded Judaism) is the only well-founded religion.\textsuperscript{23} Furthermore, Christian revelation has been convincingly and completely established, and requires no further examples of particular providence to support it.\textsuperscript{24} Roman Catholic miracles, therefore, are simply superfluous. Campbell consistently assumed that Christianity ought to be followed in its simplest and purest form without unreasonable expectation of further signs and proofs. In fact, he implied that miracle claims are illegitimate and not to be believed if unaccompanied by a corresponding

\textsuperscript{22}Hay, Miracles, 2:87.

\textsuperscript{23}DM, 159.

\textsuperscript{24}Campbell was undoubtedly being a bit circular here. He argued, \textit{a priori}, that, since gospel revelation is sufficient for human needs, miracles must have ended in the early church, and that subsequent claims can be automatically discounted. But he also argued, \textit{a posteriori}, that since the age of miracles has in fact ended, God must have deemed primitive Christianity sufficiently evidenced to convince Christians of all subsequent ages (LEH, 1:4).
doctrinal claim. After God had communicated the fullness of his saving plan to humanity, he intended ordinary providence to be sufficient for daily life. In other words, God expects Christians to prosper by natural means. The Protestant Reformation required no miracles because it merely re-established the spirit and doctrine of the early church. Furthermore, Campbell rejected Roman Catholicism because it advances itself by force rather than by testimony and persuasion, which gives it the character of Mahomet rather than that of Christ.

Campbell's position was not without its difficulties. Concerning the historical transmission of Scripture, which was naturally of vital concern to Protestantism, he claimed that, "the intrusion of mistakes into the manuscripts, and thence into printed editions, was, without a chain of miracles, absolutely unavoidable." Since he wished to avoid any such miracle claim, he was forced to rely solely upon textual criticism, one of the natural means by which God intends modern Christians to prosper. But he knew that similar conclusions, mixed with a little more scepticism, had allowed Richard Simon to reject the Protestant principle of sola scriptura as inherently unreliable. Ultimately, Campbell treated Roman Catholic miracles as Hume treated all miracles. He assumed that they are a priori unreliable without feeling

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25 LFC, 135.
26 Sermons, 2:68.
27 Sermons, 2:42-3.
28 LFC, 1:447.
29 Immediate inspiration is a miraculous gift, and as the age of miracles has ended, Christian orators cannot now look for such aid (LSTPE, 264).
an obligation to consider the individual pieces of testimony.\textsuperscript{30}
Campbell finalized his anti-Catholic position by claiming, in \textit{The Spirit of the Gospel}, that not even a miracle can justify false or immoral methods of advancement. "There are doctrines," he said, "which, though an apostle of Christ, or an angel from heaven, should preach to us, we ought not to receive."\textsuperscript{31} Campbell assumed, in other words, that authentic doctrine must be not only supported by miracles, but inherently consistent with reason. Campbell's opponents might have objected that this placed human reason above the explicit commands of God. They might also have claimed that Campbell could use this criterion against virtually any doctrine he pleased, and that he had the Roman Catholic church in mind when he established it. Hay, who had a special dislike for this sermon, would not have failed to note this.

Apart from his disagreement with Hume, Campbell applied most of his effort to minimizing the place of miracles in the Christian economy. Campbell argued that one ought not to call a miracle that which can be explained by ordinary providence or by natural or human causes. Scriptural prophecies, for example, can be fulfilled by ordinary providence (secondary causes) without the assistance of miracles.\textsuperscript{32} Campbell's position on particular providence, which was situated somewhere between Hume's rigid scepticism on the one side and Hay's Catholic fideism on the other, highlights the inherent difficulties of Campbell's Christian moderatism. He was forced to make certain

\textsuperscript{30}See \textit{Sermons}, 2:47.

\textsuperscript{31}\textit{Sermons}, 1:375.

\textsuperscript{32}Campbell to Hailes, 24 June 1789: NLS MS 25305, fols. 10-16.
assumptions about what constitutes a reliable witness, though he could neither convince Hume that there are any reliable witnesses for miracles, nor convince Hay that the gospel testifiers are more reliable than the Roman Catholic testifiers of a later age. He also needed to convince his various opponents that the successes of the early church constitute proof of God's particular favour while the successes of the Roman Catholic church do not.\footnote{See his rather naturalistic explanations of Roman Catholic successes, \textit{LEH}, 2:134.} Campbell's natural theory of evidence was in each of these cases pushed to its limits, and perhaps beyond.

Campbell's argument concerning miracles may ultimately have been more effective against Hume than against Hay. If Hay's argument on miracles was part of a larger argument concerning the nature of providence, then he may have been closer to high-flyers such as Bisset or Evangelicals such as Wesley, who also believed in the direct hand of God in the modern world, than these latter groups were to Campbell. Campbell's attempt to navigate between Hume's scepticism on the one side, much of which he considered appropriate to such empirical questions, and on the other Hay's or Wesley's practical negation of the distinction between general and particular providence, put him in an extremely difficult and vulnerable position. One must view evidence exactly as Campbell and other eighteenth-century moderates did in order to agree with them concerning which kinds of evidence are to be considered acceptable. Both Hume and Hay, from very different perspectives, rejected Campbell's criteria. Yet Campbell's position remained more typical of the Enlightenment than either of theirs.
Scriptural revelation was, as Campbell well knew, one of the greatest of all miracles. But the miracle of revelation presented its own unique problems. We have already seen that Campbell rejected the notion that the integrity of Scripture has been maintained through the ages by miraculous supports. Yet he also rejected the Roman Catholic position that the church itself can guarantee the continuity of true doctrine. Campbell upheld the Protestant belief in sola scriptura, but he did so on the basis of the competency of the critical arts which he himself practised. He was committed to the authority of Scripture but not to any indiscriminate use of Scripture. He knew that many sectarians misuse Scripture in order to find their favourite doctrines. For this reason God has given humanity its critical powers. We can know, by means of our natural faculties, much about the nature and attributes of God, even more about the nature of man, and a great deal about the historical and critical uses of scriptural texts. We therefore have a reliable rational and empirical basis for interpreting Scripture and understanding the divine truths that are not themselves found in nature. Campbell's Protestant faith was not set in opposition to reason, but was built upon the accomplishments of rational enquiry, itself a gift of the Creator. "Every thing . . . here," said Campbell, "is subjected to the test of Scripture and sound criticism."

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⁵ FG, 1:31.
Campbell believed that one of the best uses of common sense is to mitigate the potentially dangerous effects of popular and sectarian interpretations of Scripture. He told his divinity students never to believe a tenet "in opposition to reason and to common sense." Scripture ought not to be followed in a slavishly literal manner. It tells us, as a general precept, to obey our rulers, and yet there are times when resistance to government or parents is lawful, and when killing is necessary. Ultimately, "It is by common use, and not by scholastic quibbles, that the language of the sacred writers ought to be interpreted." The enemy of understanding is party-spirit. Campbell encapsulated the sectarian philosophy of interpretation thus: "You are to try our doctrine by the Scripture only: But then you are to be very careful that you explain the Scripture solely by our doctrine." He believed that the legitimate purpose of scriptural study is to formulate doctrine rather than reinforce pre-formed doctrines. As Alexander Gerard said, "New means of elucidating scripture are every day discovered and employed: there is a very general disposition among

\[36\text{STPE, 148.}\]

\[37\text{Sermons, 2:135-7. Common sense also tells us when virtue lies on the side of civil disobedience, as in the case of blatantly indefensible laws promoting religious persecution (AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page).}\]

\[38\text{FG, 1:340. Yet Campbell disliked paraphrases, which, he thought, arrogantly presume to know the intentions of the inspired authors (STPE, 230).}\]

\[39\text{FG, 1:106. Campbell even chastised Calvin's successor Beza for misrepresenting Scripture's meaning to suit his own doctrine (AUL MS M 190, p. 324).}\]

\[40\text{FG, 1:104.}\]
protestants to examine with impartiality what it really teaches.""41
Campbell's own intentions for his textual criticism should be understood
in light of this Christian teleology.

Campbell considered his translation of the Gospels to be not an
exercise in scholastic pedantry, but rather a means of promoting the
practical improvement of Christian knowledge.

The worst consequences [he said] which the blunders of transcribers
have occasioned, are their hurting sometimes the perspecuity,
sometimes the credibility of holy writ, affording a handle to the
objections of infidels, and thereby weakening the evidences of
religion."42

Campbell nevertheless argued that a multiplicity of critical
translations actually affirms rather than obscures the most important
truths of Scripture and secures the reputation of Christ against the
infidels."43 This is, he thought, the best argument for freedom of
inquiry and publication in religious matters. Unlike Richard Simon,
Campbell believed that the critical method of scriptural inquiry is
sufficient for Christian understanding, and considerably more reliable
than Simon's conception of church tradition."44 In fact, he seemed to

was very optimistic concerning the results of this critical work: "by the
unrestrained progression of such inquiry, we trust that all the
really important truths of our religion will in time be irrefragably
ascertained and unanimously acknowledged; that Christians will
harmoniously acquiesce in these; and that, disregarding other things,
they will concur in considering or using Christianity, as a system of
simple principles revealed for the sanctification, the consolation, and
the salvation of mankind" (42).

42PG, 1:455.

43PG, 1:18-20. An anonymous reviewer of *The Four Gospels* agreed
that critical enquiry would only help secure the fundamentals of

44PG, 1:73-4.
argue that solving the linguistic problems of Scripture by means of historical scholarship and textual criticism has the potential to eliminate most controversy and confusion from the church. "In these matters we ought all to be determined by the impartial principles of sound criticism, and not by our own prepossessions."\(^4^5\) The health and unity of the church, Campbell suggested, is directly dependent on the practical progress of natural knowledge.

What then were the practical consequences of Campbell's biblical criticism? How did he actually apply his principles to the problems of translation and interpretation? Campbell took seriously his own injunction in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* that usage and custom is of primary importance in communication. In his translation of the Gospels, therefore, he generally adopted the King James Version (the standard English translation) as his base text, recognizing that the language of this particular translation had become the medium of ordinary religious expression in the English-speaking world. His own translation was, for the most part, a correction of the common text rather than an original production. As he himself frequently admitted in the notes to his translation, he often chose to retain the common reading rather than make a linguistic innovation. "It is a good rule in translating," he said, "always to prefer the usual signification, unless it would imply something absurd, or at least unsuitable to the scope of the place."\(^4^6\) This further supports the notion, advanced in a previous chapter, that Campbell's biblical criticism was inherently conservative.

\(^4^3\) FG, 1:278.

\(^4^6\) FG, 2:80.
Campbell did not, however, always retain the familiar flavour of a passage. His translation of a particularly famous text, Matthew 16:18-19, may have shocked many of his Protestant readers. The King James Version reads as follows:

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Campbell's version is considerably more abrupt:

I tell thee likewise, Thou art named Rock; and on this rock I will build my church, over which the gates of hades shall not prevail. Moreover, I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever thou shalt bind upon the earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatever thou shalt loose upon the earth, shall be loosed in heaven. 47

Campbell's choice of "Rock" in place of "Peter", apart from its inelegancy, may have bothered many Protestants who preferred to keep the Apostle Peter distinct from the foundation upon which the church was built. 48 But his word-choice was meant to address this very issue. He emphasized in his notes that Jesus intended to associate the name of Peter with the rock of the church's establishment, and furthermore, that the keys of the kingdom were in this instance given to Peter specifically. 49 As if to be emphatic on the matter, Campbell elsewhere confirmed that the powers of binding and loosing were at this time given to Peter alone, and only later given to the rest of the disciples.

47 PG, 1:536.

48 Zwingli, for example, had believed that "the rock" upon which the Church was built was Peter's confession of faith in Christ (McNeill, Calvinism, 80). This interpretation has predominated in Protestant churches since.

49 PG, 2:95 and 100.
Peter was therefore to be considered as the first among equals in the apostolic circle. But Campbell quickly added, so as not to give particular satisfaction to Roman Catholic claims of primacy, that Peter's position was special but not hereditary, that, in other words, this status belonged to him alone and did not descend.\textsuperscript{30} He emphasized that, although his critical reading of the passage contradicts the traditional Protestant interpretation, the same critical insight demonstrates that Peter himself never claimed the powers that the Roman church eventually attributed to him. Campbell supplemented his interpretation with a psycho-historical or conjectural reconstruction of how the Roman church came, step by step, to mistake Peter's unique position for a supremacy and ultimately a despotism over the church.\textsuperscript{31} Campbell used his critical talents, therefore, to disabuse the Roman church of its illusions concerning the status of Peter, but also to correct the mistaken Protestant reading of the same passage.

Campbell claimed that the right use of reason can prevent dangerous interpretative errors, as in the case of the "parable of the supper" (Luke 14:23). His translation, very similar to the King James Version, read: "The master answered, 'Go out into the highways, and along the hedges, and compel people to come, that my house may be filled.'"\textsuperscript{32} This passage had often been interpreted as a divine command to force unbelievers into the church, that is, as a warrant for persecution. Campbell, however, argued that "usages such as this, of expressing great

\textsuperscript{30} LEH, 1:161-6 and 369-70.

\textsuperscript{31} LEH, 2:95-101. Campbell argued that Rome did not advance its Petrine supremacy before the fifth century (2:81).

\textsuperscript{32} FG, 2:276.
urgency of solicitation by terms which, in strictness, imply force and compulsion, are common in every tongue." The term "compel", in other words, is a figure of speech, and "doth not authorize persecution or force in matters of religion." The passage does, however, provide a useful example to future ministers that there is sometimes to be found an apparent inconsistency between the literal meaning of a text and "the principles of right reason." The inconsistency can be resolved only by means of critical and historical study which places the usage in its appropriate context.

The same rule applies to other frequently misunderstood scriptural terms. What is often translated as "devil" or even "Satan" in the King James Version, and hence assumed to be a proper name, carried no such signification in the original Greek. Matthew 16:23, for example, reads as follows in the King James Version:

But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of man.

The same passage was rendered thus by Campbell:

But he turning, said to Peter, Get thee hence, adversary, thou art an obstacle in my way; for thou relishest not the things of God, but the things of men.

The significance of Campbell's changes is obvious. He based his interpretation partly on the linguistic conventions of the time, but also on his understanding of the character of Jesus, who he assumed had

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"FG", 2:401.
"LSTPE", 388.
"LSTPE", 386.
"FG", 1:536.
originally spoken the words. Jesus, he argued, would not have used such a harsh appellation as "Satan" when he meant no more than "adversary" or "obstacle", for "this would be but ill adapted to the patience, the meekness, and the humility of his character." The same applies to John 6:70 which, in the King James Version, reads:

Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

Campbell translated the same passage, which speaks of Judas Iscariot, as follows:

*Jesus answered them*, Have not I chosen you twelve? yet one of you is a spy.

Campbell claimed that distinguishing character descriptions from proper names in the Gospels requires an appreciation of such minute matters as the use or omission of an article in the original Hebrew-inflected Greek.

Campbell admitted that some Scripture passages cannot be definitively clarified. Matthew 26:29, for example, reads as follows in the King James Version: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." This passage, said Campbell, has caused some speculation as to the nature of heaven, specifically whether the

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57FG, 1:155. Campbell clearly believed that he could interpret Scripture according to his assumptions about what Jesus must have been like. These assumptions, in turn, were based on further assumptions concerning the unity of intent and historical literalness of the various Gospel texts. In other words, the character of Jesus was based on an interpretation of Scripture while at the same time the interpretation of Scripture was based on the character of Jesus.

58FG, 2:421.

59FG, 1:154.
immortal will require sustenance. He made no attempt to answer the question, but merely used the passage to show that such a possibility does exist. The common assumption that the immortal saints will need no sustenance is without scriptural support. The lesson to be learned is that "difficulties in Scripture arise often from a contradiction neither to reason nor to experience; but to the presumptions we have rashly taken up, in matters whereof we have no knowledge." Campbell believed that the critical arts are useful in uprooting notions that have no necessary place in Christian belief, and in demonstrating that Christians need not have dogmatic assurance about every speculative point of doctrine.

The best interpreter of Scripture, said Campbell, is Scripture itself. This old Protestant maxim had some important implications, as demonstrated in one of the most interesting passages in Campbell's "Preliminary Dissertations" to The Four Gospels. Referring to Ephesians 5:32, which compares the union of Christ with his church to the institution of marriage, Campbell remarked:

the apostle alluded not to any fiction, but to an historical fact, the formation of Eve out of the body of Adam her husband. For, though there is no necessity that the story which supplies us with the body of the parable or allegory (if I may so express myself) be literally true, there is, on the other hand, no necessity that it be false. Passages of true history are sometimes allegorized by the sacred penmen. Witness the story of Abraham and his two sons, Isaac by his wife Sarah and Ishmael by his bond-woman Hag'r, of which the apostle has made an allegory for representing the comparative natures of the Mosaic dispensation and the Christian.62

60 FG, 2:133.
61 FG, 1:283.
62 FG, 1:287. This sounds like Campbell's old teacher, Thomas Blackwell.
Campbell's point was that a general familiarity with Scripture often makes clear the literary intentions of particular scriptural authors. But he also seems to have implied that the divine truth of Scripture might conceivably stand apart from the literal truth of the biblical stories. Though he certainly did not mean by this what D.F. Strauss would mean a half-century later, it is interesting to note that long exposure to ancient literary genres had perhaps planted the seed of higher criticism in Campbell's mind.

For the most part, however, Campbell adhered to the assumption that Scripture is a single entity rather than a collection of literary texts. He assumed that Scripture was the product of one mind rather than many. As the last point of his scriptural inquiry, he asked what modern critics tend to ask at the beginning, namely, "first what is scripture, secondly, what is its authority." He claimed in The Four Gospels that critics cannot take the same liberties with a scriptural text that they can with a secular one, thus assuming from the outset a qualitative difference between the two. He argued that a critic ought not to court novelty in translation, even though he elsewhere warned against looking into Scripture merely to uphold pre-formed

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63 FG, 1:42. At one point, Campbell addressed this problem by asking, "How is this diversity in the diction of the sacred penmen reconcileable with the idea of inspiration?" (FG, 1:50). The terms he used suggest his answer. They imply that it is the words rather than the content of Scripture that are open to criticism (FG, 1:52). The truth of Scripture is found in its ideas rather than in its expressions.

64 LSPE, 159.

65 FG, 1:455.

66 FG, 1:11.
interpretations.  Despite his critical innovations, and despite his use of the tools of the Enlightenment, Campbell never strayed far from his orthodox Protestant roots.

Campbell believed that there are no ideal solutions to the problems inherent in textual work. Nevertheless, he maintained that critical scholarship can discover adequate solutions. His rational optimism suggests that he was able to reconcile, to his own satisfaction, the Protestant tradition of *sola scriptura* with the enlightened ideal of progress in knowledge. Campbell's critical scholarship assured him that, apart from a few localized problems, God's message to man is clearly evident in the grand unity of Revelation;

> And whatever in any degree corroborates our faith, contributes in the same degree to strengthen our hope, to enhance our love, and to give additional weight to all the motives with which our religion supplies us, to a pious and virtuous life.

"A considerable portion of the Christian faith," said Campbell, "consists in points of an historic nature." As we have seen, Campbell's historical scholarship helped him decide difficult questions concerning the interpretation of scriptural texts and the validity of miracle claims. Likewise, his researches into ecclesiastical history influenced his views on the nature of church structure, order and authority. Campbell and his ecclesiological opponents all agreed that

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67 FG, 1:71.
68 FG, diss. VIII, for example.
69 FG, 1:86.
70 LPH, 1:3.
contemporary controversies over church order depend directly on the historical nature of the early church."" The practice of the apostolic age," said Campbell, "which has the best title to the denomination of primitive, is the surest commentary on this precept of our Lord.""2

Campbell therefore stressed to his students the utility of the study of church history, when entered on (as is too rarely the case) by a mind free from prejudices, and superior to the injustice which is almost invariably consequent on all party-attractions whatsoever.""3

Campbell and his antagonists, however, derived very different lessons from their historical studies. First of all, they disagreed over the importance of the issue, that is, over the necessity of a particular church order to the salvation of the individual Christian. Campbell's historical investigations demonstrated to him that the form of ecclesiastical order had not been of particular importance in the early church. He further undercut his Episcopal opponents by declaring that "the early belief of a particular tenet is not a sufficient proof of its truth, and that the early adoption of a particular custom is not a full vindication of its rectitude.""4 Campbell believed that the primitive church had been a free, voluntary, and humble body which

"Jaroslav Pelikan points out that, after the Reformation, all denominations, whether Roman Catholic or Reformed, claimed that their doctrine was continuous with apostolic revelation, and that it was their opponents who innovated (Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300-1700) [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984], 334-5). David Allan demonstrates that Scotland in particular had a long tradition of intense and unresolved debate over ecclesiological issues (Virtue, Learning and the Scottish Enlightenment, 31, 47 and 166).

"LEH, 1:55.

"AUL MS 650, section III, un-numbered page.

"AUL MS 650, section III, un-numbered page.
respected the laws and independence of the civil magistrate. The apostolic church had even tolerated diverse views and sentiments in order to avoid disputes. The term "church", said Campbell, had originally denoted either a single congregation or the whole body of believing Christians, but never a denomination or political entity. Campbell warned his students to keep in mind the corruptive powers of "time, the greatest of all innovators, though, when it operates by slow degrees, the least observable." The true apostolic church was of very short duration, and the corruptions of the following ages cannot be taken as authoritative models.

Campbell believed that a proper historical understanding of the post-apostolic church demonstrates how quickly it lost sight of its original mandate. If Christ's kingdom was a spiritual kingdom, as it surely was, then the church's worldly successes after its official establishment by Constantine were really hindrances to its true mission, rather than signs of divine favour. Critical inquiry further proves that the bulk of church history has been little more than strife over words. Campbell believed that examples of ecclesiastical tyranny are

75LEH, 1:41-5.

76AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page.

77AUL MS 652, part I, un-numbered page. This assertion did not make Campbell a congregationalist. He agreed with George Hill that Scripture did not prescribe a particular form of church order, though Presbyterianism was agreeable to Scripture and suitable to modern needs (McCallum thesis, 66).

78LEH, 1:59. Gerard also argued that all religions, authentic or not, become corrupted with the passage of time; see his The Corruptions of Christianity Considered, 32.

not confined to the past, and that spiritual despotism remains a
canstant threat to vital Christianity. Like many of his contemporaries,
he assumed that Roman Catholic countries such as Spain were merely
puppets of a foreign ecclesiastical power.\footnote{Sermons, 1:365.}

Campbell's historical belief in the corruption of the church was
supported by his critical work with early Christian texts. His
discussion of the terms "schism" and "heresy" in the "Preliminary
Dissertations" to The Four Gospels efficiently summarizes his conception
of the original and ideal character of the church, as opposed to its
subsequent manifestations. "Schism", he argued, originally meant "an
alienation of the heart,"\footnote{LEH, 2:319.} while "heretic" properly signified one of
sectarian or factious temperament.\footnote{FG, 1:306. Locke had likewise argued that "schism" properly
signified a division in the church over a matter not explicitly
prescribed in Scripture (Reventlow, The Authority of the Bible, 282-3).}
The real evil implied by these
concepts is alienation of affection, not from God but from one's
Christian brethren, "for it is in the union of affection among
Christians, that the spirit, the life, and the power of religion, are
principally placed."\footnote{FG, 1:306 and 317. Gerard likewise argued that a heretic was
properly one who disputed with his brethren (Sermons, 2:149). See also
Redwood, Reason, Ridicule, and Religion, 23.}

\footnote{FG, 1:306.}
accuracy of expression."\(^{85}\) These researches demonstrated to Campbell that true Christianity ought to be primarily concerned with realizing a disposition of heart appropriate to the spirit that Christ brought into the world. The visible church, therefore, is not a saving institution, but rather the context in which the spirit of Christ is to be exercised and used to transform lives and hearts. Outward church forms have a legitimate purpose but are no more valuable than the degree to which they facilitate the reformation of Christian lives by the spirit of the gospel. "Heresy" and "schism" signify not heterodox thought but the disunity of spirit which inevitably divides and corrupts the body of Christ's people. Clearly, an orthodox church is as liable to these evils as any sect. Campbell's hostility to certain ecclesiastical doctrines was derived from his conviction that visible forms of church order have too often interrupted the true work of the gospel.

Campbell's reading of church history, together with his understanding of the spirit of the gospel, rendered it impossible for him to support the exclusive claims of any contemporary church institution. In fact, the great error in Christianity, he claimed, "has been an attempt to render it in effect a temporal kingdom, and to support and extend it by earthly means."\(^{86}\) In The Spirit of the Gospel, Campbell plainly declared that Christ has no temporal kingdom.\(^{87}\) He went so far as to say that the Apostles themselves were "Latitudinarian", since they did not separate from the synagogue.\(^{88}\)

\(^{85}\) FG, 1:307.

\(^{86}\) FG, 1:30.

\(^{87}\) Sermons, 1:397.
Established religious forms were, for Campbell, largely irrelevant to Christianity's legitimate concerns. Despite these claims, or rather because of them, Campbell's ecclesiology became the subject of heated controversy, though he did not live to see the final stage of this controversy. His only purposefully controversial contributions to this debate, besides *The Spirit of the Gospel*, were his unpublished manuscripts, particularly the "strictures on Dodwell" and the "Defence."

Campbell's latitudinarian tendencies, evident particularly in his sermon *The Spirit of the Gospel*, outraged his opponents in Scotland's nonjuring churches. The differences between Campbell and either William Abernethy Drummond or George Hay, both of whom answered *The Spirit of the Gospel*, highlight the novelty of Campbell's view of the place of the church in the Christian scheme. The Roman Catholic bishop George Hay, writing under the pseudonym "Staurophilus", claimed that "the sacramental rites are the infallible means, on the part of God, for bringing the grace of justification, as well as the actual grace by which we are enabled to persevere, to the soul of the worthy receiver."** This was no more than the traditional Catholic position that saving grace is communicated through the correctly-administered sacraments by a properly-ordained priest. Campbell's objections to Hay's position were based on his historical understanding of the Roman Catholic church, whose atrocities filled up hundreds of pages of his unpublished "Defence." Their ultimate lack of agreement may indicate a more fundamental disagreement concerning the proper perspective from which to view ecclesiastical history, that is, whether the past is to be

**Sermons, 1:412. "Latitudinarian" is Campbell's term.

**Hay, *Detection*, 92.
interpreted by the dictates of Catholic church tradition or by the spirit of critical historical inquiry.  

Campbell's more significant ecclesiological adversary, at least in the context of the previous two centuries of Scottish church history, was William Abernethy Drummond, bishop in the Scottish Episcopal church. Although he maintained a great respect for Campbell's abilities, Drummond plagued Campbell for most of his career. In 1771 he chided Campbell for suggesting that external observances are of no value, and argued that one who wilfully spurns Christ's external ordinances cannot look forward to salvation.  

He later objected to Campbell's definition of "schism" in The Four Gospels. He agreed that the term indicated an alienation of heart, but contended that it more significantly suggested a contempt for lawful authority. "Heresy", likewise, often did refer to erroneous doctrine, since unity of belief is essential in the true church.  

George Gleig, the anonymous reviewer of Campbell's Lectures on Ecclesiastical History in the Anti-Jacobin, argued that Campbell had, from the outset, prejudiced the question of proper church order by assuming the inevitable corruption of the post-apostolic church. He further charged Campbell with supporting a notion of popular church

See Palmer, Catholics and Unbelievers, chapter III, on this important problem.

Drummond, Remarks, 12.


Drummond, Friendly Address, 16.

Anti-Jacobin 8 (March 1801): 279.
government which, by its contempt for legitimately-established hierarchies, can only lead to anarchy.\textsuperscript{95}

Gleig's polemical tone can perhaps be explained by the emotional extremes of a revolutionary age, but that of Campbell's other adversaries cannot. Bishop John Skinner, the primus of the Scottish Episcopal church, which itself was the most immediate rival of Campbell's Presbyterian church, produced a lengthy and carefully-structured response to Campbell's latitudinarianism. From the premise of God's unchanging nature, Skinner argued that there can be but one legitimate ecclesiastical order for all time. The Old Testament Hebrew synagogue and the subsequent Christian church are expressions of a single divinely-sanctioned model of ecclesiastical government. Legitimacy, argued Skinner, is indispensable to salvation, and is presently found only in those ordained in the tradition of the apostolic succession. The principle of legitimacy demonstrates that Campbell's ecclesiastical history must necessarily be wrong, even apart from historical arguments. Skinner's obvious conclusion was that there can be but one saving church, which in Scotland was his own Episcopal church. On matters as important as salvation, he said, the true church cannot be too intolerant of schism.\textsuperscript{96} Campbell disagreed most vehemently with this kind of sentiment. Despite his dislike of schism, he thought that intolerance is worse, and that it is in fact the cause

\textsuperscript{95} Anti-Jacobin 9 (June 1801): 127; and (July 1801): 241-2 and 250.

\textsuperscript{96} Skinner, Primitive Truth and Order, 330. The preceding summary is a reconstruction of the general trend of Skinner's argument. Skinner must have realized that, despite his gratitude to Campbell for his help in legalizing the Scottish Episcopal church, he could not have done the same for Campbell if their positions were reversed.
rather than the effect of schism. Campbell had no particular desire to unseat Skinner. He had only challenged the necessity, not the legitimacy, of the Episcopal order. To Skinner it was all the same. Campbell's challenge of the necessity of bishops was taken as a challenge of his belief in a single legitimate and necessary church order. The Anglican Charles Daubeney, like his Scottish High Church brethren, thought that the greatest threats to Christianity were church leaders like Campbell who held a liberal and generous view of distinctions among sects.97 His extremism is evident in his tendency to apply the term "heretic" to anyone who disagreed with him.

All of Campbell's ecclesiological opponents maintained a very rigid and legalistic conception of salvation, believing that it is unattainable without adherence to certain technical requirements. Drummond assumed that there can be no true church without spiritual jurisdiction based on lawful apostolic ordination.98 Where there is no true visible church, salvation is ordinarily unattainable. Legitimacy, he said, simply does not reside in the heart.99 The Episcopalians also believed that their arguments have historical justification, which is to say that they thought the apostolic succession is empirically verifiable. Campbell contrarily claimed that it is impossible to verify a perfect lineal descent of ordination from the Apostles.100 In other words, Campbell thought that the Episcopalians' arguments are disproved

98See, for example, Drummond, Friendly Address, 3 and 8.
99Drummond, Remarks, 46.
100LBH, 1:104.
by plain natural evidences. History demonstrated to him that all Christian sects and denominations had eventually become tainted to one degree or another. 101 Drummond in turn claimed that Campbell's historical arguments implicitly gave up the divine right of the Presbyterian form of church government. 102 Campbell's agreement on this point meant that they had nothing left to argue, for they had come to an impasse concerning fundamental assumptions. Drummond had to believe that "since there is in Scotland a regular Episcopacy, you must either be members of the Church of Scotland, or of no church." 103 Campbell's moderatism rejected such coercive ultimatums as much as his scholarship rejected the Episcopalian's historical claims.

Campbell believed that the Episcopalian's historical claims endanger the true spirit of the gospel. In the "Strictures on Dodwell" manuscript, he argued that the office of Apostle was limited to the first generation of the church. The Apostles' powers of binding and loosing did not descend to later generations. Campbell claimed that Henry Dodwell the elder gave more power to priests than the Roman Catholic church ever had, by attributing to the early bishops God's own power of judging the souls of men. He accused Dodwell of misreading church history so completely that he was led to propose the most miserable form of slavery imaginable. "I have never heard of a scheme," he concluded, "which combines so closely all the evils of atheism and despotism with those of superstition and idolatry." 104 Campbell's

101 AUL MS 655, part IV, un-numbered page.
102 Drummond, Remarks, 31.
103 Drummond, Friendly Address, 20.
critical study of church history proved to him that no single form of church structure is exclusively legitimate. But even more significantly, it conclusively demonstrated the fallacy of spiritual despotisms such as Dodwell's.

What were the implications of Campbell's historical and biblical studies for his contemporary situation? On the one hand, Campbell firmly adhered to the necessity of a clear separation of church and state powers. As the spiritual realm is entirely removed from the civil, so also must the church be kept free of the powers of physical or legal coercion. The weapons of the magistrate are inappropriate to the work of the minister, whose only legitimate weapon is persuasion. On the other hand, Campbell did not oppose an official state church. In keeping with the developing sociological sensitivity of his age, he suggested that the unique needs of various places and ages demand different ecclesiastical orders, and that even the model of the early church is not entirely appropriate for modern times. Campbell thought that the Church of Scotland was well-constituted in that the civil magistrate could not interfere with ecclesiastical courts, nor could the church use excommunication as a political weapon. The church's inability to impose civil penalties made its rulings cautious and respectable. The appropriate function of the church, thought

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104 AUL MS 650, section II, un-numbered page.
105 AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page.
106 Campbell, in fact, seems to have assumed the desirability of an established church; see LEH, 1:70.
107 LEH, 1:74-5.
Campbell, is the discipline of its own members, particularly its ministers, which he believed was too relaxed in the Scotland of his day.\textsuperscript{108} Campbell ultimately had no overriding prejudice against the Episcopal model of church government.\textsuperscript{110} His ecclesiology focused on the practical needs of Christians rather than on the uncertain issue of legitimacy. Church order mattered most to fringe groups, such as the Scottish Episcopalians, whose very existence (they thought) depended upon the exclusivity of their ecclesiological claims.

4

Campbell's concerns for church order were less governed by regard for the next life than by regard for the present life. The business of the visible church is not to save souls but to provide leadership and stability in matters of religious doctrine, worship and discipline. Campbell's rather intense commitment to freedom of thought and expression did not allow him to interfere with the worship of other Christian bodies. His concern for the good order of society, however, caused him to worry about two typically eighteenth-century religious problems. Superstition and enthusiasm, embodied in Roman Catholicism

\textsuperscript{108}LPH, 1:75. This sentiment was quite meaningful in a country where it was relatively easy to leave the established church for another one of similar beliefs.

\textsuperscript{109}LPC, 235. In this matter, he was very much in agreement with the political Moderates of his day. He thought that the Church of England, whose ecclesiastical laws were more lax, was particularly prone to ministerial sloth (LPC, 230).

\textsuperscript{110}The tone of Campbell's remarks on past Episcopal versions of the historical Scottish church (e.g., Sermons, 2:316-17) suggests that he was not absolutely hostile to this form of church government. His friend Beattie preferred the Episcopal model.
and Evangelicalism respectively, were for Campbell and other Christian
moderates of his age, the chief obstacles to religious enlightenment.

Campbell was deeply mistrustful of the Roman Catholic church, despite his pleas for Catholic emancipation. Like many of his age, he assumed that the Roman priesthood conspired to keep its charges ignorant and dependent. "Certain it is," said Campbell, that [the Romish religion] . . . succeeds [sic] best where ignorance and barbarity with their inseparable attendant superstition most abound.""" Priestcraft, he argued, is the inevitable result of joining the offices of the cleric and the magistrate.""" All religious sects are guilty to some degree of superstition, but the Roman Catholic church is the veritable embodiment of this unfortunate aspect of human nature."""

Campbell's hostility to the Roman Catholic church was at least in part derived from his Presbyterian heritage. Nothing had united Scottish Protestants of the previous two centuries more than their common hatred of papists. The Westminster Confession itself was packed with anti-papal sentiments, and explicitly identified the pope with antichrist.""" Robert Wodrow's History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland implicitly bound Presbyterianism, Hanoverian loyalty, and civil liberty together with antipathy towards Romish tyranny and persecution. William Dunlop, an ecclesiastical history professor at Edinburgh University, argued the essential unity of Protestant belief by

"""AUL MS 649, p. 41.

"""AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page.

"""AUL MS 652, pp. 93-4.

"""Westminster Confession, chap. XXV.
contrasting it with Catholic superstition.'13 Even seventeenth-century Anglican divines developed their probabilist theory of knowledge, which became so pervasive in the eighteenth century, to battle the absolutist claims of their Roman Catholic opponents.'16 Thomas Reid similarly argued that the papal claim of infallibility is the greatest obstacle to the advancement of religious knowledge.'17 Alexander Gerard, who took great offence at Hume's ungenerous characterization of the ministerial character, was quite willing to uphold Hume's charges against the Roman clergy.'18 Campbell's own hostility to the Catholic church had much in common with his Scottish heritage, yet it was not entirely based on Protestant prejudice. In fact, his attitude was somewhat more complex and carefully reasoned than that of most Scots. He objected, first of all, to the actual claims made by Roman Catholic apologists.

Bishop George Hay, the vicar apostolic of the Scottish Catholic community, maintained an ecclesiology very similar to that of his Episcopalian rivals. Like them, he held that salvation is unattainable outside of the one true visible church. The true church, said Hay, "is always Holy, always Catholic, always a visible body . . . always one,

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"13Dunlop, Preface, 42.

"16See Shapiro, Probability and Certainty, 101; Van Leeuwen, The Problem of Certainty, 16 and 32.

"17WTR, 1:268.

"18Gerard, Sermons, 2:407. The Aberdonians' complex attitude towards Hume, even on the subject of religion, can be seen in an abstract of the Wise Club's discussion of enthusiasm and superstition (AUL MS 37, fols. 186-7v). Hume, they thought, had made some just observations on the rise and progress of various religions. In particular, they seem to have upheld his rather psychological or sociological account of the circumstances in which various kinds of religious characters tend to develop.
always apostolical, always infallible in what she teaches."\textsuperscript{119} It follows, then, that "the Church of Christ is the only road to salvation."\textsuperscript{120} Though his views sound similar to those of the Episcopal Bishop Skinner, Hay naturally denied true church status to the Church of England or to any other non-Roman Episcopal church.\textsuperscript{121} Against Campbell and other latitudinarians, Hay directed "An Inquiry, Whether Salvation Can Be Had Without True Faith, and Out of the Communion of the Church of Christ." Here he explicitly rejected the liberal view, which he thought very prevalent in his contemporary world, that a man can be saved in any religion provided that he live a moral life according to his own conscience.\textsuperscript{122} Whether Campbell actually believed the things with which he was here implicitly charged is questionable, but it is significant that Hay thought of his moderate opponents in the same way that the Presbyterian High-flyers did.

Campbell's objections to the Roman Catholic church were derived partly from his notion of the true nature of Christianity, which he thought opposed the apologetic claims of those like Hay, and partly from his enlightened scholarship. His work on the Gospels demonstrated to him that the Roman church's

secret reason, both for preserving the consecrated terms and for translating only from the Vulgate, is no other than to avoid, as


\textsuperscript{120}Hay, Works, 1:195.

\textsuperscript{121}Hay, Works, 1:211-14.

\textsuperscript{122}Hay, Works, 2:262. Hay was explicitly anti-latitudinarian, anti-moderate, and anti-deistical, all of which he implicitly assumed were bound together.
much as possible, whatever might suggest to the people that the
Spirit says one thing and the church another.¹²³

Familiarity with church history also proved that the spirit of the
modern Catholic church was completely antithetical to the spirit of the
primitive church. Campbell's "Defence" manuscript supported this claim
with a catalogue of Catholic crimes and abuses through the ages. The
actions of prelates and popes in the "advancement of sacerdotal
despotism"¹²⁴ had demonstrated their disregard for both God's natural
law and his revealed commands. Though the breaking of faith with
heretics was never an established doctrine, it was sufficiently
practised to warrant Protestant mistrust of Catholic promises.¹²⁵ Most
of all, Campbell objected to "priestly dominion, the sumnum bonum in
Rome's theology."¹²⁶ The majority of Roman Catholic adherents were not
corrupt, he thought. In fact, the greater part of modern Catholics
detested the inquisition. Yet,

How they should have the inconsistency, notwithstanding this, to
acknowledge a power as from God, which has found it necessary to
recur to expedients so manifestly from hell, so subversive of every
principle of sound morality and religion, can be regarded only as
one of those contradictions, for which human characters, both in
individuals and in nations, are often so remarkable. That the
policy of Rome bears the marks, not of the wisdom which is from
above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be
entreated, full of mercy and of good fruits, without partiality,
and without hypocrisy; but of that which flows from a very
different source, and is earthly, sensual, devilish, is so
manifest, that the person who needs to be convinced of it, seems
to be beyond the power of argument and reason.¹²⁷

¹²³EG, 1:401.
¹²⁴AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page.
¹²⁵AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page.
¹²⁶AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page.
Campbell had himself clearly passed the bounds of rational discourse, but his passion on the matter is telling. As much as he objected to the Roman Catholic church's legacy of intolerance and tyranny, he objected even more to the ecclesiology that inspired these most un-Christian of actions. For him, the Roman church, or at least his conception of the Roman church, represented everything that contradicted or subverted the true spirit of the gospel. The Roman church's claims of spiritual superiority and infallibility were the most visible obstacles to Campbell's belief that the true spirit of the gospel will only flourish and bring about charitable Christian unity when such exclusive and sectarian claims have been abandoned. Christian unity ought not to be the product of ignorance in its adherents, but the spontaneous result of the gathering of like-minded individuals who have discovered Christian truth by means of personal Scripture-reading. Campbell's attitude towards the Roman Catholic church was subtle in that his notion of Christian charity allowed him to both condemn the spirit of Popery and tolerate the practice of the Catholic religion at the same time. Campbell thought that he was being consistent, though it is not difficult to understand why he confused many of his fellow Presbyterians, particularly those who clung to an older covenanted and militant view of their own confession.

127LEH, 2:320-1. Although the violence of Campbell's assertions here is probably indefensible, it is important to recognize that he thought they were objective historical claims; see LEH, 2:42.

128STPE, 127.

129The theory of spontaneous order or unintended consequences that is apparent in the works of many Scots (most notably, in Adam Smith's invisible hand), is also, I believe, apparent in Campbell's religious writings. See chapter five, section 3, above.
Campbell's presuppositions concerning the true spirit of the gospel were fundamentally incompatible with the claims of Roman Catholics like George Hay. Both Catholic and Episcopalian High Churchmen assumed that there can be only one divinely-sanctioned church order, though they disagreed over the identity of the true apostolic church. Campbell, believing that church order is largely irrelevant to the question of salvation, was concerned only to discover which form of church government best supported the practice of the Christian life. His historical studies had convinced him that no contemporary church order corresponded exactly to the apostolic model.\(^\text{130}\) In fact, he conceded that different forms of church government might be suitable to different climates and conditions, as was the case with civil government.\(^\text{131}\) The enlightened pedigree of this idea is unmistakable.\(^\text{132}\)

Campbell vehemently opposed any form of church government which placed its own good above that of the individual Christian. Coercion had no place in matters of the heart. The authoritarian nature of the Roman hierarchy, therefore, was entirely incompatible with the true gospel. Did this mean then that there was no place for church discipline? Was the heart the only authority for the individual Christian? Campbell and other moderates were forced to address this issue by those in the eighteenth century who elevated individual Christian experience above all temporal authority, that is, those to

\(^\text{130}\) LEH, 1:248.

\(^\text{131}\) LEH, 1:92.

\(^\text{132}\) Eighteenth-century Scots were remarkably taken with the protosociological and political theories of Montesquieu. Adam Ferguson and John Millar based whole works on the method of enquiry developed in The Spirit of the Laws (1748).
whom we give the historical label of "Evangelicals". Eighteenth-century Evangelicals, whether Calvinist or Arminian, gave priority to the internal evidences of the Christian religion, that is, to the vivid and personal experience of saving grace. ¹³³ Eighteenth-century empirical Christians like Campbell tended to call these people "enthusiasts".¹³⁴ Nevertheless, the Aberdonians seem to have been friendlier to the travelling Methodists than were many Scots in the southern lowlands. John Wesley and George Whitefield each visited the capital of the North-East more than a dozen times, and were even cordially received into its established churches.¹³⁵

¹³³Evangelicalism, which was growing throughout Europe during the eighteenth century, put more emphasis on the activity than on the ontological status of the Holy Spirit (Pelikan, Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture, 164-5). See D.W. Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989). Like Bebbington (3), I will limit my use of the term "Evangelicalism" to the movements beginning in the 1730s that emphasized conversion experience, missionary activism, biblicism, and attention to Christ crucified. Bebbington argues that Evangelicalism was closely tied to the Enlightenment (50-74), though I think that the Evangelical emphasis on experiential religion should not be confused with the moderates' concern for demonstrable Christian evidences.

¹³⁴Samuel Johnson, in his Dictionary, defined an enthusiast as, "One who vainly imagines a private revelation; one who has a vain confidence of his intercourse with God." Locke condemned enthusiasts for making revelation redundant, and for confusing their personal feelings with empirically-verifiable divine communications (Essay, 701).

¹³⁵James Stark says Wesley visited Aberdeen seventeen times (The Lights of the North, 250), while J.H.S. Burleigh claims that he was there at least twenty-two times, and that Whitefield appeared fourteen times (A Church History of Scotland [Edinburgh: Hope Trust, 1988], 293-4). Upon arriving in Aberdeen for the first time, in May 1763, Wesley himself said: "Surely, never was there a more open door. The four Ministers of Aberdeen, the Minister of the adjoining town, and the three Ministers of Old-Aberdeen, hitherto seem to have no dislike, but rather to wish us 'good luck in the name of the Lord.'" That day and the next, Wesley preached in Marischal College; The Works of John Wesley, 14 vols., 3d ed. (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872), 3:133-4. It was likely to Whitefield that Campbell referred when he described to his students "the most popular preacher, I cannot add the most judicious,
Evangelicalism horrified those who gave priority to church order. William Abernethy Drummond, in answering Campbell's sermon *The Spirit of the Gospel* in 1771, categorically denied the legitimacy of the inward call. Bishop Skinner argued that "enthusiasm" (by which he clearly meant Evangelicalism) was the logical result of rejecting the apostolic succession. Moderates like Campbell tended to have somewhat different reasons for objecting to the Evangelical spirit. They agreed with the High Churchmen that popular religious activities promoted disorder within the church. Gerard advised his divinity students that lay fellowship meetings at the parish level were not necessarily bad but that they were usually so ill-managed that they promoted more enthusiasm, superstition, and hypocrisy than genuine piety. For that reason, they had to be carefully monitored and controlled. But eighteenth-century Christian moderates like Campbell objected to Evangelicalism primarily because it implicitly rejected the notion of objective and demonstrable truth in religious matters. Campbell believed that religious truth, to be of any value, has to be discoverable by the individual, but also subject to verification, that is, communicated to and scrutinized by other minds. The empirical conception of defensible religious belief underlay the whole structure of Campbell's apologetic system, from his secular notion of evidence and his philosophy of suasive discourse, to his detailed examination of the

that has appeared in this island in the present century" (LSTPE, 489). The Scottish Evangelical John Erskine, in contrast, defended Whitefield and condemned Wesley.

136Drummond, *Remarks*, 34.


138AUL MS K 174, pp. 193-5.
particular natural evidences of the Christian religion. Campbell believed that Christianity can answer infidelity and deism only on its own grounds, that is, on the historical verifiability of Christian claims. Evangelicalism merely abandoned the field to Christianity's foremost eighteenth-century opponents.\textsuperscript{139} In fact, Campbell objected to the Evangelical emphasis on Christian feeling and passion for much the same reason that he objected to Hume's under-appreciation of natural and Christian evidences. Hume and the Evangelicals failed to adequately respect the Creator's gift to man of natural critical faculties capable of uncovering sufficient natural evidence of divine truth.

Campbell's objection to enthusiasm (which did not always mean Evangelicalism) was rooted in his notion of the true spirit of gospel charity. "The fanatic," he said, "considers himself as Heaven's favourite; and believes this to be either his peculiar prerogative, or, at least, a privilege he enjoys in common with a few."\textsuperscript{140} Campbell emphasized the dangers of religious passions that go unchecked by reason:

\begin{quote}
Hence it is, if without offence I may be indulged the observation, that in some popular systems of religion, the zeal of the people is principally exerted in support of certain favourite phrases, and a kind of technical and idiomatical dialect to which their ears have been long inured, and which they consequently imagine they understand, but in which often there is nothing to be understood.\textsuperscript{141}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{139} Pelikan notes that the problem of subjectivity in Evangelical Christianity was widely recognized in eighteenth-century Europe, even by Evangelicals themselves (\textit{Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture}, 167-8).

\textsuperscript{140} Sermons, 1:337.

\textsuperscript{141} PR, 270.
Such errors, characteristic of some parties within the Church of Scotland, are difficult to detect when the subject is abstract. Campbell cautioned his students to avoid "superstitious or enthusiastic notions in regard to religion."\textsuperscript{142} The spirit of false religion takes different forms in different individuals; "in the apprehensive and timorous, the effect is \textit{Superstition}; in the arrogant and daring, it is \textit{Enthusiasm}. \textit{Ignorance} is the mother of both by different fathers."\textsuperscript{143} Campbell thought that his own church was subject more to the latter abuse. Violence is the natural consequence when a man convinces himself that he has found special favour in God's sight.\textsuperscript{144} \textit{The Philosophy of Rhetoric} gave special attention to the evils of fanaticism which resulted from the misuse of rhetoric. Popular hatred, Campbell warned, is easily inflamed, but only the sensitive rhetorician can move an audience to love.\textsuperscript{145} Thus it is again clear why the study of rhetoric was such an important component of Campbell's practical divinity.

Campbell's concern for the abuses to which the Presbyterian church was especially liable caused him to give particular attention to the problem of enthusiasm in his divinity lectures. He openly wondered why some enthusiastic Scottish preachers criticized their brethren for

\textsuperscript{142}\textit{LPC}, 162. Superstition he defined as that "which instigates only to a blind tenaciousness of absurdities in theory, and the most contemptible mummeries in practice, as a full compensation for every defect in virtue, and an atonement for every vice" (\textit{LPC}, 162). This he associated with the spirit of Popery.

\textsuperscript{143}\textit{Sermons}, 1:334.

\textsuperscript{144}\textit{Sermons}, 1:337.

\textsuperscript{145}\textit{PR}, 108-9.
preaching a "dry and heathen morality" when they themselves courted popularity by attacking the sins of the wealthy.\footnote{LPC, 192-3.} He inveighed most of all against those popular preachers who, while noisily attacking the faults of their fellow ministers, succeeded only in promoting the schisms and "methodisms" which had rent the Scottish church.\footnote{LPC, 211. Campbell here meant not Methodists but seceders and sectarians.} He objected not to pious zeal, but to sectarian zeal.\footnote{SAUL MS 651, p. 30.} Ultimately, said Campbell to his divinity students, there must be order and discipline within even a voluntary body such as the church because it contains as many opinions as it does adherents.\footnote{LPC, 207.} Opinions are not worth dividing the body of Christ's believers because division itself is the great enemy of the gospel. Campbell's rejection of salvation by external observances or visible institutions meant that the true cost of salvation is borne inwardly, by means of self-discipline and internal reformation. Enthusiasm is the outward sign that an individual has not grasped this central Christian truth.\footnote{See PR, 109.}

Campbell had no particular quarrel with contemporary Evangelicals (who he knew were not sectarian), and certainly not with warmth in the cause of religion. He feared only the dangers to which the enthusiastic mindset exposed the practical realization of the authentic spirit of the gospel. True religion is of the heart, though only the head can decide if the heart has not deceived itself. "That we may reflect light on
others," Campbell told his Christian audience, "we must ourselves be previously enlightened." To this end we must have experienced the spirit of the gospel in our own hearts.\(^{31}\) Those who impose their private experiences and imagined revelations upon others have not experienced the gospel. Those who indulge in the excesses of enthusiasm have forgotten their God-given reason.\(^{32}\)

It has long been assumed that the Evangelical spirit was the particular enemy of the Moderate party within the eighteenth-century Church of Scotland. Campbell, like his Moderate brethren, did indeed advocate order and discipline within the Scottish church. The point of this discipline, as we can now see, was not to crush Christian zeal or self-determination, nor to promote authoritarian power in the church (which Campbell feared more than enthusiasm), but to prevent the needless divisions which are the real enemies of Christian charity. It is time to undertake a final examination of Campbell's relation to moderatism and to the Scottish Moderate party in order to clarify Campbell's own intentions as well as those of the much-maligned Moderates.

\(^{31}\) *Sermons*, 1:312.

\(^{32}\) This is Thomas Reid's view in *Lectures on Natural Theology*, 2.
CHAPTER NINE

THE LIMITS OF MODERATISM

"In all great questions," said George Skene Keith of Campbell, "he belonged to what is called the moderate party in the church; and generally supported the laws of the state with respect to patronage."' Campbell, in other words, was a Moderate in the narrow, political sense of the term. From what we have already seen, he was certainly a moderate in the broader sense of the term. He was a latitudinarian, though he promoted discipline within his own voluntary church. He was rational and empirical in his treatment of Christian evidences, though he allowed for the usual Christian mysteries. He trained his divinity students to value politeness and critical thinking, but not at the expense of piety. He valued natural religion, but emphasized that it was merely the first step towards discovering the necessary truths of revealed religion.

These values were shared by those who comprised the Moderate party within the eighteenth-century Church of Scotland. This well-organized group of ministers and laymen should, nevertheless, be kept distinct from the broader climate of values and beliefs that constituted moderatism. The Moderate party first rose to prominence under William

'Keith, xl-xlI. Keith adds that in minor matters, he did not always follow the leader of the Moderate party. Ramsay of Ochtertyre believed that the clergy of the North-East were characteristic supporters of the Moderate party (Scotland and Scotsmen, 1:302).
Robertson's leadership in the early 1750s. It advocated order and discipline according to the Presbyterian model of church government, and employed skillful ecclesiastical management to bring enlightened values into the Scottish church. Campbell generally supported the goals and strategies of the Moderate party, though his ideological aversion to party-spirit as well as his distance from Edinburgh prevented him from being one of its political leaders. His only surviving letter to Alexander Carlyle demonstrates that he was intimate with the Moderate party leadership but at the same time hostile to the personal attachments that were evidently taking priority over the merit of particular policies and cases in the General Assembly. Campbell's co-leadership with Robertson at the time of the No-Fopery affair (1778-9) marked the height of his political involvement with the Moderate party.

The reputations of Scottish moderatism and the Moderate party have suffered greatly since the rise of the latter in the 1750s. Moderates

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2Ian D. L. Clark, in his ground-breaking dissertation, was the first to firmly distinguish moderatism as a climate of thought from the Moderate party. Clark defines "Moderatism" as a mood rather than as a firm set of beliefs, though "the guiding principle of Moderatism was balance" (ix). He considers Campbell to be a firm moderate in both senses of the term.

3Richard Sher, in his indispensable Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment, upholds Clark's political definition of the Moderate party, but confines his own definition of "Moderatism" to the specific beliefs of Robertson's circle (16-17). He describes the Moderate party members as "Whig-Presbyterian conservatives" (54). Their "Moderatism" was committed "to such polite, enlightened values as genteel manners, religious moderation and tolerance, and high esteem for scientific and literary accomplishments." The Moderates hoped thereby to lead Scotland towards "virtue, order, and enlightenment" (57). Sher summarizes the values of Moderatism under six heads: "Presbyterianism, Scottish nationalism, Stoicism, civic humanism, conservatism, and enlightenment" (324). It is perhaps telling that five out of six of Sher's heads are secular.

4Campbell to Carlyle, 19 November 1785: EUL Dc.4.41/116.
were first made the subject of popular abuse in John Witherspoon's satirical Ecclesiastical Characteristics (1753). He subtly accused "the moderate man" of neglecting Scripture, courting heresy, despising religious learning, and favouring social accomplishments and politeness above pastoral duty. Witherspoon's characterization has remained popular among churchmen and historians for two centuries. Many twentieth-century scholars have continued to assume that Scottish moderates valued polite morality above scriptural doctrine, placed worldly values before religious ones, and bowed to the dictates of secular politics and fashionable society.  

5Ecclesiastical Characteristics or, The Arcana of Church Policy [:] Being an Humble Attempt to Open the Mystery of Moderation. Wherein Is Shewn, a Plain and Easy Way of Attaining to the Character of a Moderate Man, as at Present in Repute in the Church of Scotland, in The Selected Writings of John Witherspoon, ed. Thomas Miller (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990). Richard Sher has rightly noted the irony of Witherspoon's use of clever satire, a significant branch of polite literature, to mock the polite values of the moderates ("Literature and the Church of Scotland," in The History of Scottish Literature, Volume 2: 1660-1800, ed. Andrew Hook [Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987], 264). It is further ironic, that upon moving to America to become president of the College of New Jersey (Princeton), Witherspoon taught a course of moral philosophy little different from that taught by the Scottish moderates.

6For a nineteenth-century opinion of moderatism along the same lines as Witherspoon, see James Marten, Eminent Divines in Aberdeen and the North (Aberdeen: "Free Press" Office, 1888), 171 and 189-90. John Macleod, writing in 1943, believed Witherspoon entirely. He savagely characterized the Moderates as Pelagians and Socinians, hostile to the gospel, and friendly to the deistical and worldly fashions of the day (Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History Since the Reformation, 2d ed. [Edinburgh: KLox Press, 1943, 1946], 199-212).

7McNeill calls them Erastian (Calvinism, 358), while Gordon Donaldson assumes they rejected traditional orthodoxy (Faith of the Scots, 108-11). Drummond and Bulloch claim they were "little removed from Deism" (The Scottish Church, 112). John Dwyer argues that they belong more in a secular than in a religious context ("The Heavenly City," 310). The same author, in his Virtuous Discourse, seems to describe the moderates as anything but religious.
Recent scholars have begun to revive the reputation of the Scottish moderates by demonstrating that they were genuinely concerned for the welfare of the Scottish church and for the spiritual lives of its people, and that they were not as different from their "orthodox" opponents as has been assumed. Nevertheless, contemporary scholarship continues to focus mainly on the Edinburgh moderates, and continues to pay meagre respect to the religious and pious aspects of moderate Christianity in general. We have already observed that, though he downplayed the necessity of dogmatic certainty on speculative matters of doctrine, Campbell was not notably heterodox. We have seen that labels such as "Arminianism" and "rationalism" cannot account for the subtlety of his religious thought. Furthermore, he placed the highest value on Christian reformation and practical piety. It is absurd, therefore, to think that Campbell's Christianity was shallow, unsophisticated or insincere. His religious thought is, in fact, a valuable means of re-examining the ideological tenets, real or imagined, of eighteenth-century Scottish moderatism. It gives substance to the Christian temperament of moderates in both Aberdeen and Edinburgh.

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*Ian Clark and Richard B. Sher have demonstrated that the policies of the Moderate party actually secured the independency of the Scottish church from overt political interference (though only for a few decades) by advocating self-discipline.

*Clark argues that moderatism was confessionally orthodox, though it avoided difficult speculative questions (diss., 7). Donald McCallum, in his thesis, has demonstrated that the Moderate party leader George Hill was unimpeachably orthodox, and doctrinally indistinguishable from his opponents in the Popular party. Steven Pratt has also shown that the doctrines and values of such Popular party ministers as John Erskine were very similar to those of moderate preachers (diss., 246).
"Let your moderation be known unto all men," said the Apostle. Moderation, or balance, was the pre-eminent value of eighteenth-century moderatism, and combined the foregoing scriptural imperative with contemporary notions of politeness. Gerard maintained that "every excellence is a middle between two extremes." Campbell likewise told his divinity students that "truth is most commonly to be found in the middle between . . . two extremes." In his first published sermon, he advised his fellow ministers to be examples of moderation and temperateness in all things. Moderation sought the happy median between too much regard to doctrine and too little, between extreme legalism and too little respect for lawful authority, and between solemnity and levity in worship. Moderation meant avoiding the extremes of superstition and enthusiasm, both of which corrupted the spirit of the gospel. Campbell's central argument in his sermon The Spirit of the Gospel was that authentic Christianity is by its very nature moderate, avoiding both ignorant faith and overzealous action. Moderation also meant avoiding the extremes of self-indulgence and self-denial. Campbell argued that there is no Christian virtue in suffering for the sake of suffering. Self-denial in the name of Christianity, he implied, is a corruption of legitimate self-discipline. Finally, moderation

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10Philippians 4:5.


12LPC, 137-9.

13Character, 59.

14LEH, 2:379.
meant tempering religious passion with reason. A religious faith informed only by passion is the true enemy of moderation, as demonstrated by the lawless mob.\textsuperscript{15} Religious truth, said Campbell, can never be discovered while passions hold sway in the mind, a notion supported as much by his secular theory of human nature as by his Christian ideals.\textsuperscript{16}

Campbell’s notion of moderation rejected traditional concepts of religious controversy. In the \textit{Spirit of the Gospel}, he concluded that the outward forms of religion are necessary but not to be overstressed.\textsuperscript{17} In his "Defence" of the same sermon, he conceded that, "by this moderation, I gain nobody."\textsuperscript{18} But Campbell also believed that seeking adherents is itself contrary to the spirit of the gospel. "In the search of truth," he said, ". . . I disclaim all party or sect."\textsuperscript{19} A central tenet of his moderatism, therefore, was the rejection of the sectarian or partisan spirit, as well as those things that engender this spirit, notably controversy over abstract doctrines.\textsuperscript{20}

Campbell argued that "nothing blinds the understanding more effectually than the spirit of party, and no kind of party-spirit more than bigotry, under the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{15}Sermons, 2:341-4.
  \item \textsuperscript{16}AUL MS 655, un-numbered page. See chapter four, section 3, above.
  \item \textsuperscript{17}Sermons, 1:378.
  \item \textsuperscript{18}AUL MS 652, part II, un-numbered page.
  \item \textsuperscript{19}AUL MS 652, part II, un-numbered page.
  \item \textsuperscript{20}Likewise, William Robertson’s "general strategy, which [he] followed throughout his career both as an historian and as a church administrator, was to diminish controversy by deferring final judgment and to maintain an image of impartial, independent judgment" (Smitten, "The Shaping of Moderatism," 291).
\end{itemize}
assumed character of religious zeal."²¹ Perhaps with his own church in mind, he stressed that
the more insignificant, the more inconceivable, nay the more nonsensical the question is, the greater will be the heat, the more unrelenting the zeal, and the less flexible the dogmatism with which it is agitated.²²

Campbell's reasons for opposing sectarian controversy were very Christian, for he considered any controversy that distracts the Christian from his charitable duty to be evil.²³

Have our polemic divines, by their abstruse researches and metaphysical refinements, contributed to the advancement of charity, love to God, and love to man? Yet this is, in religion, the great end of all; for charity is the end of the commandment, and the bond of perfectness.²⁴

Campbell ultimately maintained that proper Christian zeal, as opposed to sectarian zeal, is concerned only with purity of heart, and is guided by knowledge and charity.²⁵

Scottish moderates generally gave high priority to ecclesiastical order, which for them necessarily included respect for social subordination. Campbell may have rejected party-spirit in matters of doctrine, but he nevertheless supported the Moderate party in matters of church order and discipline. In the eighteenth-century, this meant the enforcement of lay patronage. The Moderate party has been frequently

²¹_EG, 1:101. It is interesting that, once again, Campbell sounds just like Hume.

²²_AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page. Gerard likewise considered doctrinal controversy to be the very antithesis of the true spirit of the gospel (Sermons, 2:135).

²³_EG, 1:404.

²⁴_EG, 1:482.

²⁵_Sermons, 1:401-2.
disparaged for its conservative views of social order, although recent scholarship has demonstrated that the eighteenth-century opponents of the Moderate party seldom advocated democratic notions of church government.26 The Moderates may have believed that patronage was the necessary price to be paid to keep landowners friendly to the Presbyterian form of church government.27 Robertson's Moderate party was created explicitly to promote order and discipline within the Church of Scotland. It published a policy paper in 1752, since dubbed the "Manifesto of the Moderate Party," which argued that discipline and subordination are necessary for the survival of any society, but particularly for a voluntary society such as the Church of Scotland.28 This meant that the particular issue of lay patronage was of only secondary importance compared to the more central problem of law and order. Campbell's views were fully in line with those of the Moderate party. "All government," he said, "all subordination, all order, is

26Richard B. Sher and Alexander Murdoch argue that the Popular party was not "popular" at all. Most opponents of lay patronage wanted to place control of ministerial appointments into the hands of lesser heritors or into the hands of ministers themselves, rather than into the hands of the people; see "Patronage and Party," 197-220.

27Colin Kidd suggests that Scottish landowners were naturally inclined to favour Episcopalianism (Subverting Scotland's Past, 59).

28"Reasons of dissent from the judgment and resolution of the commission," reprinted in The Scots Magazine 14 (April 1752): 191-97. This apology makes brilliant use of the Westminster Confession to bolster its case for the necessity of strict subordination of church courts in the Presbyterian model of government. Drummond and Bulloch make a significant error in supposing that the Robertson Moderates advocated order because they thought that their church was not a voluntary society (The Scottish Church, 65). The Moderates knew perfectly well that Scottish Presbyterians could and did leave the established church for another Presbyterian church more to their liking. In fact, the Moderates may have wished to force these extreme elements out of the established church.
overturned at once, if every man shall think himself entitled to rail and clamour, whenever he disapproves, or is dissatisfied."\(^{29}\) Although Campbell did in fact argue that Christians are obligated to the dictates of their consciences, that is, to the laws of God before those of men,\(^{30}\) it is likely that he referred only to private matters of belief, and not to the right of a congregation to choose its own minister. He was not an unbending conservative, for "neither length of time, nor extent of territory, nor number of suffrages can invest error with the prerogatives of truth, or make evil good, and good evil."\(^{31}\) We have seen that Campbell associated the history of the church with the inevitable and insensible rise of abuses over time, which suggests that he supported the Moderate party because it promoted the practical interests of Christianity in Scotland rather than because it was simply conservative. The unusual respect which he commanded in the General Assembly suggests that he was often successful in his attempt to convince his fellow ministers to consider each ecclesiastical issue according to its individual merits, rather than according to a predetermined party line. His commitment to social order in no way implies disdain or insensitivity towards his common parishioners. In any case, the social conservatism generally evident in the Moderate party was more typical of the age than was any democratic notion of popular rights.

\(^{29}\) LPC, 206.

\(^{30}\) AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page.

\(^{31}\) AUL MS 652, p. 85.
Moderates have most often been accused of a thinly-disguised secularism and of a disdain for religious truth and piety. This is a much more serious charge than that of social conservatism. The fact that the Moderates' religion sometimes appears secular indicates that they wished to bring religion into the realm of daily life. As Gerard said:

The shop, the exchange, the occupations of active life, form the only theatre on which the virtues of justice, fidelity, and honesty can be practised; and without constantly practising these, you can have no religion.  

This attitude was rooted in the traditional Christian notion that the present life is "a state of discipline for eternity." Campbell characterized the religious fanatic as one who valued "what tended only to make men resigned to Heaven, and useless to mankind; what tended but to promote rational piety, temperance, justice, and beneficence, was in no estimation at all." "That doctrine is the soundest," he argued in contrast, "which has the happiest influence on the temper and lives of those who receive it; which operates most powerfully by love to God, and love to man." Although moderate preachers such as Hugh Blair implicitly identified the interests of Christianity with those of politeness, they also maintained that the triumph of genuine Christian values was responsible for the contemporary revolution in the manners of men. Robertson claimed that the mildness and humanity of modern

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32 Gerard, Sermons, 1:18.
33 Gerard, Sermons, 1:46.
34 Sermons, 1:365–6.
35 Sermons, 1:442.
36 Blair, Sermons, vol. 1, sermon VI, "Of Gentleness."
European manners, as well as Europe's superiority in the arts and sciences, were largely the result of the Protestant Reformation. In other words, the moderates assumed that polite culture was the consequence of Christian reform, rather than the catalyst for a secularized religion as their critics have suggested. They saw politeness as part of God's plan for the Christian enlightenment of humanity.

The Scottish moderates naturally translated their notions of Christian politeness into their sermons. Their critics have misinterpreted this as the preaching of mere secular morality. There can be little question that the moderates did in fact preach morals in preference to doctrine. It is also clear, however, that their sermons contained orthodox doctrine. This was not sufficient to satisfy their High-flying opponents, who believed that every sermon ought to proclaim the high points of Christian doctrine, including the depravity of human nature, the omnipotence of God, the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, and the irresistible gift of grace given to the elect. The fact that formal theology formed but a small portion of the Scottish moderates' known discourse does not necessarily indicate that they were ignorant of theology or that they disliked it. Campbell was perfectly familiar with the creeds of his church, and expected his students and many of his parishioners to know them too. Why did he not continually reinforce these doctrines as previous generations had? The answer lies partly in the methodological emphasis of his philosophy of education. Campbell

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38 See chapter seven, section 4, above.
wished to teach his students and parishioners to be their own teachers. His style cannot be understood without appreciating the pedagogical purpose that pervades his work. As Jesus himself said, a teacher is to be judged by his practical fruits, that is, by his moral example. Other leading Scottish moderates, many of whom were university professors, were probably motivated by similar pedagogical concerns.

To understand the Scottish moderates' moral preaching style, we must consider their own explicit claims. Gerard thought that moral preaching best captures the heart of the gospel message: "A very great part of that conduct by which your eternal happiness may be promoted, consists in transacting your ordinary business in a proper and virtuous manner." Christian belief that does not give priority to moral duties, he said, is nothing more than superstitious veneration of forms and observances. The moderates tended to equate virtue itself with true religion. There was no difference in Gerard's mind between wickedness and contempt for religion. The denial of one's moral duty must lead

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39 This corresponds with Campbell's emphasis on education as the answer to, among other things, the Roman Catholic problem in Scotland (Sermons, 2:358-9). I suspect that Campbell's usual expository sermons, of which we have no surviving samples, were also meant to be examples for private Bible study. Campbell was well-known for his ability to draw practical consequences from passages of Scripture.

40 AUL MS 655, un-numbered page.

41 Gerard, Sermons, 1:11.

42 Gerard, Sermons, 1:310. Gerard equated the moral gospel with true Christianity; everything else, including new doctrines and creeds, was a corruption of true Christianity (The Corruptions of Christianity, 27-32).

43 Gerard, Sermons, 2:3.
inevitably to denial of the religious truth that commands virtue. Thus Gerard confidently excluded from sound doctrine anything that does not have a practical, moral tendency. Campbell likewise taught his divinity students that to preach the whole Christian system in every sermon is to accomplish nothing at all, for such a strategy allows no time to inculcate the practical and useful Christian duties. The teachings of Jesus, Campbell claimed, were meant to strengthen the obligations of natural religion and morality. The moderates did not ignore doctrine in their moral preaching, but applied it in the only way they thought proper. They believed that any doctrine devoid of practical application can only lead to superstition and Popery. The gospel message is concerned with conduct rather than abstract doctrine. A heretic is properly one who disrupts the unity of the church by overturning this clear gospel priority.

The moderates intended their preaching to be practical and moral, but no less Christian for all that. Hugh Blair argued that our concern for the next life ought to inspire us to focus our efforts on moral improvement in this life, for, "in this conflict, the souls of good men are tried, improved, and strengthened." The pursuit of virtue in the present life is the best that we can do for the benefit of our eternal

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44Gerard, Sermons, 2:82.
45Gerard, Sermons, 2:142.
46LSTPE, 444.
47AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page.
49Blair, Sermons, 1:98.
souls. Campbell argued that there can be no other means of gaining
divine favour than by pursuing a moral life. Moral improvement, he
insisted, is the only absolutely indispensable part of the Christian
life. No special dispensation of grace can alter this divine
imperative. The preaching of moral improvement was the practical
consequence of Campbell's emphasis on Christian reformation and the
spirit of the gospel. For some moderates, personal reformation was also
linked with the more traditional covenanting notion of national
reformation. As Gerard said, "It is only the reformation of each
particular person, that can reform the nation."

The Scottish moderates' emphasis on moral reformation helps explain
the nature of their theology. Their doctrine of Christ, for example,
focused on the character and actions of Jesus, rather than on the
ontological status of Christ. The moderates thought that undue
attention to the mysteries of the Christian faith can only pervert the
simple and unmistakable moral imperatives of the gospel. The true
spirit of the gospel is found in the life and teachings of Christ and
the Apostles, rather than in the doctrinal systems of later
interpreters. Campbell's decision to translate only the Gospels

AUL MS 655, un-numbered page.

Gerard, National Blessings an Argument for Reformation (Aberdeen:
J. Chalmers, 1759), 25. Sher supports the idea that moral preaching had
firm roots in the Presbyterian concept of jeremiad and national renewal
(44). Ian Clark claims that, "the notorious moralism of the Moderates
must . . . be recognized for what it was—an attempt to suffuse with
Christian principles a society whose standards were altering with
alarming and unprecedented rapidity" (diss., 202).

Sermons, 1:330. Gerard summarized this notion by imagining a
future time when Christianity would again become "as it truly is in the
New Testament, not a system of nice speculations and contentious
subleties [sic], but a series of plain principles, evidently founded in
highlights his belief that knowledge of Christ's actions and teachings is more relevant to the life of the Christian than knowledge of his divine status. The moderates undoubtedly questioned the value of proclaiming human sinfulness if it did not lead to practical moral betterment. Their moral preaching further suggests that their doctrine of God was strongly influenced by contemporary developments in natural philosophy and natural religion. They put far more weight on God's love and benevolence than did earlier generations of Calvinist preachers. Their emphasis on the virtue of benevolence indicates that they had discovered in nature a benevolent deity.\(^3^3\) Moral preaching was, in fact, perfectly appropriate in an age when many believed that God's concern for the welfare of his creatures is reflected in the natural and moral order of the universe.

Campbell and his fellow moderates shared a common notion of the nature and purpose of Christianity. Their Christianity was often quite different from that of earlier generations of Scots, and yet it was not so secular, superficial or heterodox as has been commonly supposed. Although they preached morals, the morals that they preached were those of the gospel of Jesus. These Christian morals were the natural outcome of a Scripture-based theology which emphasized the benevolence of God, the example of Christ, and the freedom of the human will to reform and improve itself.

\(^3^3\) See Sher, 175–86.
The practical bent of Scottish moderate theology had several important consequences. The moderates meant to reform not only the lives of individual Christians, but also the world in which they lived. To this end they promoted religious toleration and improved pastoral care. These goals are particularly evident in the life and writings of George Campbell.

It is already evident that Campbell devoted a considerable portion of his writings to the cause of religious toleration. His concern for toleration was firmly grounded in his epistemological theory. He argued that

A man's right to his opinions may be truly said to be both natural and unalienable. As they depend not on his will, it is not in his power to alter them. And no law is obligatory which commands a man to lie. Religious toleration therefore may justly be considered as a natural right.\(^5^4\)

Campbell's views on this matter were little removed from Hume's. Both held that the natural limits of human knowledge make toleration a necessary component of civil society. All men believe that their own opinions conform to nature and reason, said Campbell. All men think that their conviction of truth is strongest.\(^5^5\) But natural reason demonstrates that we are not capable of uncovering the secret springs of another person's heart. We can judge the actions but not the opinions of another.\(^5^6\) Wrong-thinking is at worst a misfortune, but never a

\(^5^4\) Sermonz, 2:144.

\(^5^5\) LEH, 2:288-9.

\(^5^6\) AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page. From this same premise, Robertson drew the conclusion that an orderly society must impose limits on the right of individuals to avoid discipline by appealing to private conscience ("Reasons of dissent," 196).
crime. Reas... also demonstrates that persecution is destructive of morality, for the object of all persecuting laws, "without exception, is to produce and to reward the guilt of lying, cowardice, and hypocrisy, to destroy and to punish the virtues of veracity, fortitude and integrity." In keeping with this, Campbell argued that contemporary disabilities against Irish Catholics were inhuman and without moral validity.

Most of Campbell's arguments for toleration, however, were grounded on his conception of Christianity. He declared simply that "religion and coercion of any kind are utterly incompatible." "True religion," he believed, "is of too delicate a nature to be compelled . . . by the coarse implements of human authority and worldly sanctions." Religious coercion, he further argued, is not only ineffectual, but contrary to the ideal spirit of the ministerial office. Toleration, in contrast, is supported by both the Gospels and the practice of the apostolic church. Campbell claimed that to destroy freedom of conscience by coercion of any kind is to destroy religion itself, for Christianity is more concerned with trueness of heart than correctness.

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57 AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page.
58 AUL MS 653, part II, un-numbered page. Campbell was likewise hostile to the English Test Act, not so much because it attacked the civil liberties of dissenters, but because it compromised religious purity with political office-seeking (LEH, 1:72).
59 FG, 1:27.
60 LEH, 1:73.
61 LPC, 86, and LSTPE, 43.
62 See AUL MS 653, parts II and III.
of opinion. At best, he said, compulsion turns a man of mistaken judgment into a hypocrite. In every case, it is more honourable to be the victim than the instigator of persecution. Campbell argued that no claims of truth can justify religious persecution, for "the true definition of persecution is to distress men, or harass them with penalties of any kind, on account of an avowed difference in opinion or religious profession." This definition further suggests that a man cannot be persecuted for spreading his views either. In fact, Campbell claimed to defend freedom of opinion in its utmost extent. This, in my judgment, gives a much fairer chance for the discovery of truth, as well as for promoting the interests of humanity and equity in mens [sic] treatment of one another, than all the artifices which have been devised by a crooked policy, for either bribing or frightening the mind into a decision which is not founded in cool reflection. I am so little a partisan in regard to any of the sects concerned in this question, that, tho' I am myself a firm protestant, I would make no distinction here between protestant and catholic.

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63 Campbell to Hailes, 24 June 1789: NLS MS 25305, fols. 10-16; AUL MS 653, part III, un-numbered page. Gerard made virtually the same argument at the close of his Dissertations on Subjects Relating to the Genius and Evidences of Christianity, where he argued that persecution cannot achieve its supposed end, and that Christianity is better off for being severely tested. Campbell's and Gerard's position appears quite removed from that of the Westminster Confession (chap. XX), which upheld the right of the civil magistrate to enforce proper Christian doctrine and expression, as well as from that of the Scottish church at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

64 AUL MSS 654 and 655, un-numbered pages.

65 Sermons, 2:249. Campbell went so far as to say that to think badly of another person for their opinions is to be a persecutor at heart (AUL MS 655, un-numbered page).

66 AUL MS 654, part IV, un-numbered page.

67 Campbell to Douglas, 11 March 1790: BL Egerton MS 2186, fol. 5v.
Campbell went considerably beyond Locke by suggesting that freedom of religion ought even to be extended to the adversaries of religion. He contradicted the views of most of his contemporaries, including some in the Moderate party, by insisting that persecution is not even justified for the protection of the community. Campbell's strong opinions were derived from his belief that religious truth is most often subverted by the imposition of arbitrary bounds of inquiry. Scripture, he claimed, is not meant to make men omniscient in matters of religion.

Nevertheless, biblical criticism and a multitude of translations have actually brought Christians closer to scriptural truth. "The due consideration of the progressive state of all human knowledge and art," he asserted, "will ever be unfriendly to the adoption of any measure which seems to fix a barrier against improvement." And as additional incentive, Campbell reminded his audience that toleration is the glory of the British nation.

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68 PM, 284. Locke's *Letter Concerning Toleration* had stopped short of tolerating Roman Catholics and atheists.

69 AUL MS 655, un-numbered page. The debates in the 1779 General Assembly suggest that few Moderates were willing to take a firm stand in favour of Catholic emancipation. George Hill, the late eighteenth-century Moderate party leader, opposed full civil liberties for Catholics (McCallum thesis, 74).

70 Sermons, 1:361.

71 FG, 1:19.

72 FG, 1:29. Campbell would probably have been less confident than William Dunlop (Preface, 156) that the Westminster Confession posed no threat to freedom of inquiry among Scottish ministers.

73 AUL MS 649, p. 8. Campbell took pride "in this island, the asylum of liberty, where the spirit of Christianity is better understood (however defective its inhabitants are in the observance of the precepts) than in any other part of the Christian world" (PM, 284).
Toleration is not only right, argued Campbell, but practical as well. He thought that the tempers of the Scottish Episcopalians had been soured because of their exclusion from national life. Consequently, legal toleration must inevitably moderate their temperaments, and "their sentiments will breath [sic] more of humanity, and more of common sense." Their extreme High Church stance was merely a natural reaction to the perceived threat against their very existence. Campbell suggested that to treat the Scottish dissenters like friends instead of enemies would eventually make them so. His attitude may have reflected the situation in the North-East of Scotland, where Episcopalians and Presbyterians, as well as Jacobites and Hanoverians, co-existed more readily than did similar groups in the south of Scotland. Campbell's marriage into a prominent Aberdeenshire Episcopalian and Jacobite family certainly demonstrated the practical benefits of friendly understanding. His firm stance during the Non-Popery affair likewise reflected his belief that even his own church was often less than an ideal model of the true spirit of Christianity. He chastised his countrymen for their intolerance towards Catholics, arguing that their illiberal spirit was no different than that which made the spirit of Popery itself so reprehensible. Intolerance,

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74 Campbell to Douglas, 4 July 1789: BL Egerton MS 2185, fol. 192r.

75 Campbell to Douglas, 22 July 1790: BL Egerton MS 2186, fols. 10-11. Campbell argued in a direction opposite to most of his countrymen. They claimed that Catholics and Episcopalians could not be tolerated because they were dangerous to civil society. Campbell argued that they were dangerous to civil society because they were not tolerated.

76 In a letter to his niece (27 June 1776: AUL MS 3214/6), Campbell praised the character of his mother-in-law though she had been (and perhaps remained) a staunch Episcopalian.
suggested Campbell, indicates a lack of faith in the effectiveness of providential protection.\textsuperscript{78}

Campbell's theory of toleration was at least as advanced as that of any non-Christian philosopher of his time.\textsuperscript{79} Campbell advocated full freedom of inquiry and expression, but also argued the necessity of removing powers of civil coercion from ecclesiastical offices. To combine the offices of magistrate and minister, he said, "is to attempt to form a hideous monster at the best."

The weapons of [the minister's] warfare are not carnal: he forbears threatening, and does not employ the arm of flesh: his weapons are the soft powers of persuasion, animated by tenderness and love. In vain it is pretended, that the [coercive] ecclesiastical jurisdiction . . . is not of the nature of dominion, like the secular. Where is the difference that can be called material?\textsuperscript{80}

Campbell taught his young charges that a minister must be careful not to form a poor opinion of those who think differently than they do.\textsuperscript{81} He was well aware that a large share of contemporary intolerance could be traced to the example of ministers.\textsuperscript{82} One of his major pedagogical aims, therefore, was to instill a spirit of toleration into the future

\textsuperscript{77}Sermons, 2:240 and 261.

\textsuperscript{78}Character, 58.

\textsuperscript{79}R.R. Palmer demonstrates that though the French philosophes advocated toleration in theory, they often surreptitiously advocated the suppression of their opponents' ideas. Orthodox French Jesuits, on the other hand, though they were theoretically obliged to suppress anything that contradicted the authority of the church, were often much more tolerant in practice (Catholics and Unbelievers, 6 and 21).

\textsuperscript{80}LEH, 1:67.

\textsuperscript{81}STPE, 18.

\textsuperscript{82}See Campbell to Burke (12 June 1779: SCA WWM Bk. 1/1172) described in chapter two, section 6, above; see Sermons, 2:328-32, for his thoughts on the proper attitude of ministers towards the No-Popery affair.
moral and spiritual leaders of the Scottish community." In fact, he
devoted an entire discourse near the end of his ecclesiastical history
lectures to defending the benefits of toleration, an appropriate end to
a course whose theme had often been the historic manifestations of false
religion.

Campbell's concern for instilling in his divinity students a sense
of the true spirit of Christian charity helps dispel the common notion
that the Scottish moderates were unconcerned with the duties of the
pastoral office. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that moderates
such as Alexander Carlyle and William Robertson were deeply concerned
with pastoral duties." Gerard's divinity lectures devoted considerable
space to the daily obligations of the parochial minister." He
described to his students the aims and requirements of the pastoral
office: "The spirit of your profession is a warm ambition to accomplish
the salvation & improvement of men; an active & ardent love of God & of
Christ; benevolence towards men; a love of truth & of religion." He
told them that the ministerial office requires a full-time commitment,

"Anglican divines of the 1690s once again anticipated Campbell by
linking toleration with improved pastoral training and care. They
argued that gentle pastorship was the surest way to win back dissenters;
Mark Goldie, "John Locke, Jonas Proast and Religious Toleration 1688-
1692," in The Church of England c.1689-c.1833: From Toleration to
Tractarianism, ed. John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 166.

"Drummond and Bulloch show that Carlyle had a much a greater
concern for his office than either his autobiography or his enemies let
on (The Scottish Church, 70). George Hill was also a dedicated and
popular parish minister (McCallum thesis, 8).

"See R.E. Scott's student notes of his course, AUL MS K 174, and
his Pastoral Care. See appendix III, below.

"AUL MS K 174, p. 65."
and is incompatible with absenteeism and secular occupations.  
Although we know little about Campbell's actual performance as a minister, it is clear from his writings that he was deeply concerned with the office itself. From the beginning of his career, Campbell equated the ministerial office with enlightenment, that is, with improvement in both understanding and virtue. His first published sermon, *The Character of a Minister*, criticized "these enlightened days" for their growing unconcern with the duties of religion.  
Campbell was not critical of the Enlightenment itself, but of its abuse. He thought it self-contradictory to pursue virtue and yet neglect religion. More enlightenment, not less, was the antidote for the ills of his age. Rhetoric was just one of the enlightened arts that could be effectively employed to battle popular errors.  
*The Philosophy of Rhetoric* itself was conceived at the time of Campbell's first pastoral placement at Banchory Ternan. Along with *The Four Gospels*, it was meant to answer his early concern to discover the best means of interpreting and communicating gospel truths to God's people. The purposes of both works, in other words, were subordinate to Campbell's larger pastoral and pedagogical concerns.  
Campbell's *Lectures on the Pastoral Character* outline his views on the ideal nature of the ministerial office. He contrasted the particular virtues of the pastoral character, meekness, fortitude, and temperance, with the particular vices to which a minister is most

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^7^{AUL MS K 174, pp. 197-9.  

^8^{Character, 61.  

^9^{Character, 49.
susceptible, namely hypocrisy, love of popularity, schism, and sloth. In his earlier Character of a Minister, he cautioned his fellow ministers against intemperance and impiety. Campbell argued that worship ought to be solemn, and that gravity is most becoming in the ministerial character. His first biographer suggests that he was quite sincere in his recommendations, for he practised a style of public prayer which was simple and humble, and which avoided pompous and controversial expressions. Campbell believed that the administration of the sacraments and other external observances is only a small part of the minister's office:

To inculcate the truths and duties of religion, to give seasonable advice and consolation, make also a part of that important charge: if I should even say, the principal part, I should not speak without warrant.

Only the perversions of priestcraft, he thought, substitute rites and observances in place of true moral piety.

The moderatism of Campbell and his associates was a more carefully-constructed and complex system of thought than has been commonly realized. It was also much more earnestly and sincerely Christian than has been generally assumed. Too many critics have confused moderatism's methodological care and aversion to dogmatism with coolness towards Christian truth. Furthermore, Campbell's system of thought, of which

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"Character", 39-45.

"PR", 26, and "Character", 45.

"Keith", xxxix-xl.

"AUL MS 655, un-numbered page."
moderatism was a major component, was far from superficial. It was truly a system in the sense that its components could not be successfully isolated from one another. All the various parts of that system depended on the viability of the other parts. Campbell's position on miracles, for example, was inseparable from the rest of his religious thought, as well as from his theory of evidence. Likewise, his rhetorical philosophy was inseparable from his religious teleology. The structural unity to be found in Campbell's thought depended upon acceptance of certain notions of human psychology, as well as upon agreement concerning the nature and uses of evidence. Thus the enlightened part of his thought was ultimately inseparable from the religious part of his thought.

There were certain strengths to such a unified system of thought. Campbell's expertise in ecclesiastical history, for example, lent authority to his treatment of miracles, as well as to his defence of religious toleration. Eighteenth-century minds craved the kind of detailed historical examples that Campbell used to buttress his arguments concerning the nature and duration of the apostolic church. Campbell's familiarity with epistemological theory contributed to his contemporary triumph over Hume. His theory of evidence made his Christian apologia all the more convincing to an empirical age. His biblical criticism allowed his Protestant emphasis on the authority of the Bible to appear more secure.

But there was also a critical weakness to Campbell's moderate system of thought. Campbell's arguments were convincing as long as his audience accepted the premises from which he argued. Eighteenth-century audiences found his method of argument particularly convincing. If one
successfully disputes his premises, however, or, if one rejects a major argument in his system, the remaining structure of his thought verges towards collapse. The *Dissertation on Miracles*, for example, was about the nature of testimony and belief rather than about miracles themselves. If one rethinks the nature of historical and testimonial evidence, as nineteenth-century historians did, then Campbell's position on miracles becomes considerably less tenable. If one begins to handle Christian texts in an entirely new manner, as the higher critics did, then the use of the Gospels as simple historical narratives becomes problematic.** If the evidences of Christian miracles and revelation are re-evaluated, then so also must the conclusions of empirical Christian belief. Moderate Christianity, more than most other manifestations of Christianity, depended on the critical historiography and textual scholarship developed during the age of Enlightenment. Just as the Enlightenment sowed the seeds of its own demise, by creating the critical tools and wealth of information with which to question its own views of human nature and universal truth, so also did it entail the demise of a Christianity dependent on enlightened proofs.***

Campbell, like his age, believed in the existence and knowability of universal truth. Yet Campbell also believed in the relativity of human belief in truth. His theory of toleration was based on the

**See chapter six, section 2, above.

***Ian Clark argues that the Moderate party declined in the early nineteenth century partly because the Moderates' Evangelical opponents had begun to wield Hume's sceptical arguments against them. The moderates were ultimately unable to imagine doing without their favourite *a posteriori* arguments about God (diss., 342). I think that this is another way of saying that the Moderates could not do without their natural religion, the importance of which declined dramatically during the nineteenth century.
premise that every sect and party believes it has a monopoly on truth, and that the most bigoted and ignorant are generally the most sure of themselves. Campbell saw no contradiction in believing in the knowability of truth and in supporting a policy of toleration based on the relativity of human belief in truth. This may represent a religious version of Newtonian science, which held that the truth of all universal laws of nature is contingent upon future experience of phenomena perfectly conformable to those laws. Seventeenth-century English divines had similarly believed that truth is absolute even though our knowledge of it is not. Upon this premise they constructed their probabilist theory of knowledge which Campbell remade into his own. Campbell believed that religious and moral knowledge is based on arguments from experience, the cumulative effect of which amounts to moral certainties. Moral certainties, according to Campbell's philosophy of evidence, can be as reliable as mathematical certainties, even though their "truth" depends upon the continued support of verifiably similar experiences. Eighteenth-century moderatism was friendly neither to Hume's unreasonable scepticism nor to the Evangelical fondness for private religious experiences and revelations. It was also unfriendly to dogmatic and exclusive religious claims made by extreme Episcopalians and Roman Catholics, as well as by some

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**The more traditional-minded of the age had difficulty with this apparent contradiction. The anonymous (but probably Roman Catholic) author of a pamphlet against Campbell's Address to the People of Scotland thought that Campbell himself was responsible for contemporary hatred of Catholics because of his disparaging remarks in the Spirit of the Gospel (Observations, 7-9). Many of Campbell's co-religionists might have thought the same.**

**Van Leeuwen, The Problem of Certainty, 67. See the beginning of chapter four, above.**
Presbyterian sects. The moderates could live comfortably with a degree of uncertainty about religion and Scripture, as well as with the limitations built into the very notion of probabilist knowledge. They could do so with the confidence that their method of inquiry was the one most likely to lead them closest to the truth.** This confidence was necessary to allow them to believe that their Christian faith, which ideally demanded a commitment oblivious to degrees of probability, was well-founded. But the moderates' enlightened view of human nature and of contingent truth was enough to make philosophical and religious toleration a moral necessity.

The moderates' philosophical caution may have been reasonable, but it was much too subtle to be popular, and it helps account for the demise of moderatism in the early nineteenth century.*** The central tenet of moderatism, as we have seen, was moderation or balance between extremes. In the eighteenth century, this meant balance between implicit belief on the one hand and unreasonable scepticism on the other, between religious certainty and methodological caution, between evidence and faith, and between orthodoxy and freedom of enquiry.

Campbell and other moderates had to continuously maintain a middling position between the opposing pulls of fideism and scepticism, ecclesiastical authoritarianism and spiritual enthusiasm, religious

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**Campbell strongly implied that enlightened Christian scholarship was fairer and freer of bias than the scholarship of any other Christian group or non-Christian people (FG, 1:452). This assumption depended on a belief in universal truth and bipolar human psychology; see chapter six, section 2, above.

***I am only thinking about moderatism as an intellectual system. I am not going to consider here the social and economic factors that undoubtedly contributed to the decline of moderatism; see, for example, Drummond and Bulloch, The Scottish Church, 68.
conservatism and radicalism. They were challenged on the one side by rival sects, such as Scottish Episcopalians and Scottish Roman Catholics, who made exclusive and legalistic claims about salvation based on their understanding of history or tradition. On the opposite side, they were challenged by Evangelicals who based their religious claims on private experiences rather than on historical evidences. Moderate Christians had to balance their desire to oppose these religious claims with detailed, sceptical arguments against their desire to maintain a vital and charitable Christianity. They also had to prevent their own scepticism from becoming as unreasonable as that of Hume and Gibbon. Moderate Christian scholars who adopted the critical tools of their age bore the novel burden of defending not just their own sectarian claims but the validity of religious belief itself. The Scottish Moderates had to do all this while sustaining their own political viability. Maintaining a reasonable yet sincere middling position is difficult enough in times of relative political, social and ideological stability. It is impossible when external pressures become unbearable, as they did in Britain and Europe after the 1780s. By the early nineteenth century, the moderates' position was being pulled apart from every side. During the wars with France, the political and intellectual atmosphere in Britain became particularly unfriendly to those considered liberal in their thinking or those who

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101. Richard B. Sher also argues that the Lalance of "Polite Presbyterianism" (between secular learning and traditional piety) was intrinsically difficult to maintain ("Literature and the Church of Scotland," 269).
tolerated latitude of belief. The British establishment demanded firmer allegiance to orthodox and conservative values in order to ward off a conflagration like that in France. During this time the ultra-conservative Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine was founded, a journal decidedly unfriendly to Campbell's latitudinarianism. The Moderate party in the Church of Scotland became much more politically conservative and reactionary, and implicitly abandoned some of its moderatismo. These various pressures made it virtually impossible to maintain the kind of ideological balance and cautious intellectual optimism that eighteenth-century moderates desired. By attempting to maintain an intellectual position reasonable to all, the moderates' position ultimately became acceptable to none.

The climate of the nineteenth century was as unsuited to the social and intellectual values of moderatismo as it was to the values of the Enlightenment. Just as the nineteenth century swept away many of the enlightened premises upon which Campbell's thought was constructed, so also did it sweep away many of the premises of Christian moderatismo. Eighteenth-century moderates constructed their formal beliefs on what they took to be objective historical facts. Higher critics of the

102See Paul B. Wood, "Thomas Reid, Natural Philosopher: A Study of Science and Philosophy in the Scottish Enlightenment" (Ph.D. diss., University of Leeds, 1984), for an account of how Reid's reputation was manipulated during this time because of political considerations.

103Some historians, notably Elie Halevy and Bernard Semmel, have speculated that Evangelical groups such as the Methodists helped siphon off some of the revolutionary fervour of the lower classes.

104McCallum thesis, 91-5. I think it distinctly possible that Campbell would have abandoned George Hill's Moderate party had he lived into the nineteenth century and witnessed some of its pro-establishment stances.
nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, tended to divorce their religious faith from both traditional orthodoxy and historical evidences. In other words, they continued to maintain a Christian faith despite the evidence (which they themselves had gathered) that cast doubt on the literal veracity of traditional claims about Jesus. The moderates were traditional enough to think it absurd to believe in one who did not historically do all that was claimed of him, that is, who did not assert that he was the Son of God and who did not perform miracles to prove that he was. The moderates also adhered to enlightened views of human nature. They assumed (along with some notable infidels of their time) that society would crumble without the support of religious moral sanctions. Nineteenth and twentieth-century developments in psychology and sociology have silently discarded such assumptions and eroded their emotional impact. The limits of the moderate mind were intimately related to the limits of the Enlightenment mind. The fall of the Enlightenment entailed the fall of Christian moderatism.

Campbell, of course, saw no such limits to his own system of thought. He also saw no incompatibility between the religious mind and the enlightened mind. He thought that his world was progressively advancing towards a state of perfection. In the coming age, he argued, swords will be beaten into plowshares, as foretold in Scripture: "I am

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'05 See chapter five, part 6, and chapter six, part two, above. William Robertson Smith, the famous late nineteenth-century Scottish high critic, combined Evangelical Christianity with a severely critical attitude towards traditional notions of scriptural infallibility (N. Cameron, Biblical Higher Criticism, 204).

'06 This is the premise of Campbell's sermon The Happy Influence of Religion on Civil Society. See chapter two, section 5, above.
strongly of opinion that this prophecy will be one day literally accomplished: tho' we are many centuries too early here to see it."  

In his imagination, Campbell saw the ideals of an enlightened utopia meet those of historic Christianity. But he did not think that his own age had yet come close to such ideals. "To me it is not improbable," he said, "that we shall be deemed little better than savages, by our Successors, two centuries hence."

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107 Campbell to Douglas, 22 July 1790: BL Egerton MS 2186, fols. 10v-11r. It is interesting that, although his politics were conservative, Campbell held millenarian hopes not unlike those of the radical ministers and pamphleteers Richard Price and Joseph Priestley. The English radicals, however, tended to hold rather unqualified and unlimited views of future progress, in comparison to the more cautious Scots; see Spadafora, The Idea of Progress, 231-2, 245-9, and 363-70.

108 Campbell to Douglas, 22 July 1790: BL Egerton MS 2186, fol. 10v. Campbell was here speaking of the folly of the slave-trade, which the Aberdonians hoped to abolish.
CONCLUSION

For what concerns natural religion, to the light of nature, and the light of conscience which Solomon justly calls the candle of the Lord; and for what concerns revealed religion, to the light of God's word, interpreted by the best application I can make of the understanding which God has given me to be employed in his service, I will assiduously and attentively look for direction. In this exercise I have ground to think that I shall not prove unsuccessful. I am persuaded that to them who use aright what they have, more shall be given: whatever is necessary, God will not withhold. If we seek the truth, in the love of truth, we shall find it.

George Campbell'

George Campbell's system of thought belonged to the eighteenth century. It divided into natural and religious realms, according to the common contemporary model. In fact, Campbell's work nicely encapsulates what was perhaps the most typical enlightened British method of conducting philosophical enquiry and religious apology. It sought first the natural evidences of God's intentions, evidences impervious to sectarian dispute, and then applied the Christian findings of these researches to practical life, avoiding claims that were exclusive, dogmatic or offensive to natural religion. This apologetic system was grounded on empirical proofs and contemporary epistemological theory, but allowed room for religious faith and mystery.

Campbell's system of thought was also internally unified, both in structure and over time. The intellectual themes evident in his first

'AUL MS 652, part II, un-numbered page.
publication, *The Character of a Minister*, are also found in his last unpublished works. More importantly, however, the natural and religious realms of knowledge were, for him, ultimately inseparable. No part of this study has been unrelated to Campbell's religious thought. His theory of evidence was as important to his religion as it was to his secular philosophy. His Common Sense philosophy was grounded on natural religion, but in turn supported Christian revelation. His characteristically enlightened approach to history was used to support a Presbyterian model of church government. His rhetorical arguments were created primarily with the pulpit in mind. Campbell was as much a man of the Enlightenment as was Hume or Voltaire, but this in no way detracted from his religious teleology. The end of Campbell's labours was the practical realization of the Christian religion in everyday life. The tools of the Enlightenment were the means to this end.

There are important limitations to the foregoing structural representation of Campbell's thought. It would be inaccurate to claim that Campbell's personal religious faith was built, workmanlike, from a series of natural evidences and probabilist conclusions, or that he taught his divinity students to follow this model. While he did believe that Christianity is perfectly conformable to natural evidences and natural religion, he also argued, as Calvinists always had, that Christianity cannot convince by reason alone. Campbell did not recommend to his divinity students that they suspend Christian faith until they had worked through its natural evidences carefully and impartially. In fact, he recommended that his students become

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2 *DM*, 1.
thoroughly familiar with "sacred writ and sacred history" before examining the works of the deistical controversy, so as to avoid being "misled and imposed on." Campbell meant his students to learn their theology from Scripture rather than from nature. He told them that inquiring into the authority of Scripture ought to be the last point of their study of "the revealed word." Clearly, he assumed the truth and goodness of the Christian religion from the beginning of his course, and only later provided natural evidences to support it. He undoubtedly believed that Christianity had been sufficiently vindicated in the past that it could be taught with absolute confidence. Campbell's Christian moderatism was neither unidirectional nor coldly rational.

Nevertheless, Campbell's formal system of apology was largely based upon the natural/revealed model of knowledge. Miracles, for example, had to be treated as problems of natural evidence before their religious significance could be assessed. Scripture, the cornerstone of Campbell's Protestant Christianity, had to undergo the scrutiny of textual criticism before its message could be clearly understood. Even Campbell's ecclesiastical history was little different from Gibbon's in terms of its methodology and conclusions. Moderate Christians like Campbell did not flee the critical assaults of Enlightenment sceptics, but attempted to answer the sceptics on their own terms. Their appeal to natural evidence was a part of the culture of thought that all

3*STPF, 221-2.

4*STPF, 159.

5LeMahieu rightly argues that, "Neither Newton, Berkeley, Joseph Butler, nor Paley had faith in God because he believed the argument from design; they accepted the argument from design because they had faith in God" (William Paley, 54).
enlightened minds shared, whether Christian or infidel. Campbell did not believe that the Enlightenment was a threat to his Christian heritage. It was instead the ally of a moderate, rational and practical Christianity. In fact, Campbell consistently used the term "enlightenment" in reference to the spirit of the gospel. "That we may reflect light on others," he said to his fellow ministers, "we must ourselves be previously enlightened."  

The careers of George Campbell and Alexander Gerard together form an interesting example of the eighteenth-century use of Enlightenment for Christian ends. Both Campbell and Gerard began their literary careers with indisputably secular works which dealt with common enlightened topics such as rhetoric, taste and genius. These works were clearly connected to the larger Scottish project of delineating human nature by exploring its various manifestations. They were direct products of that most characteristically enlightened institution, the philosophical society. Both Campbell and Gerard, however, increasingly devoted the energies of their later years to more obviously Christian concerns. They taught Scotland's future ministers, delivered popular sermons, and influenced the direction of the Scottish church through their participation in the General Assembly and the Synod and Presbytery of Aberdeen. But despite this trend from secular to religious concerns, their careers demonstrate a remarkable continuity of thought and purpose. They were as concerned with the practical realization of the Christian religion at the beginning as at the end of their careers.

"Sermons, 1:312. Campbell may also be reflecting the more traditional Calvinist notion that, "In regeneration the mind is savingly enlightened" (Boston, Works, 88).
Though their methodology was enlightened, their teleology was unmistakably Christian. Everything that they did pointed to the practical and the pious. Nevertheless, modern scholarship has concentrated on their secular writings to the exclusion of their religious works. Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* and Gerard's *Essay on Taste* and *Essay on Genius* are reprinted and read today while the sermons and religious dissertations are systematically ignored. The disparity between Campbell's eighteenth-century reputation and his modern reputation is the direct result of this arbitrary division. If we wish to gain a more historically accurate understanding of Campbell's thought, and the thought of the age which his work so often represents, we must repair this violent breach.

Campbell's mind was not ahead of its time. His apologetic system belonged squarely in the eighteenth century. While he did contribute to the modern philosophy of rhetoric, he did not push the frontiers of Western thought towards their twentieth-century forms. For that very reason, Campbell may better represent the thought of his age than those whose philosophies appeal to our own age. Although we see in retrospect that David Hume offered important challenges to eighteenth-century thought, challenges which Campbell took seriously, it is important to recognize that most eighteenth-century minds found Hume's premises, arguments and conclusions unconvincing. If we choose to dismiss eighteenth-century moderates for not fully appreciating one who has found such favour in the twentieth century, we deliberately misunderstand the more characteristic thought patterns of Hume's world. For most eighteenth-century empirical apologists, including Campbell and Paley, quantity of argument mattered. Natural philosophers and
theologians alike deduced the existence and qualities of God from the apparent design of his universe. The more examples of design that they found, that is, the greater their scientific understanding of the natural order, the more they knew of God and his intentions. 7 Paley's Natural Theology, which summarized the natural religious thought of the eighteenth century, overwhelmed the reader with quantity of detail. 6 Campbell's arguments concerning the historical nature of the early church, or the superior validity of the apostolic to the Roman Catholic miracles, ultimately employed the same strategy. Hume contradicted the empirical trends of his age by placing more emphasis on quality than quantity of argument. This approach has come to be favoured by later generations. Campbell was so typical of his age that his reputation could not easily survive the decline of the values of his age.

Modern eighteenth-century scholarship has focused on unrepresentative figures such as Hume to the exclusion of more typical figures such as Campbell. As a consequence, we have come to interpret the Enlightenment as we have usually interpreted Hume, that is, as fundamentally hostile to religion. 9 Modern scholarship has, in effect,

7The God that they derived from an ordered universe was a benevolent, orderly God, rather than the Calvinist God who was often vengeful and whose motives were always incomprehensible. Campbell's Calvinism was therefore mitigated by the discoveries of natural religion.

8Paley's argument from design was cumulative, such that individual errors of argument did not effect the outcome (LeMahieu, William Paley, 64). LeMahieu argues, correctly I think, that eighteenth-century science is not quite comprehensible without appreciation of its teleological function (33-5). The Aberdonians all saw science as part of their war on infidelity (Wood, 163). They wanted to save science as much as religion from Hume's scepticism.

9Peter Gay, whose interpretation of the Enlightenment has had a profound effect on the present generation of scholars, sees the
merely imposed its own irreligion upon the past. But eighteenth-century Scots, with the possible exception of Hume, will not bear to be called philosophe." The Aberdeen Enlightenment, of which Campbell was a leading figure, cannot be interpreted as pagan. The Aberdonians were learned scholars, thoughtful philosophers, and skillful scientists, but they used their learning to uphold a more or less orthodox Christianity. In fact, the Aberdeen moderates (and probably the Edinburgh moderates too) were more earnestly Christian than some recent studies of the Scottish moderates would suggest. The structure and the details of Campbell's apologetic system of thought show how one eighteenth-century Scot managed to reconcile and ultimately fuse the interests of religion and the Enlightenment.

If we wish to maintain some kind of unified European Enlightenment, then we must think of the Enlightenment as a culture of thought neither religious nor secular, but employed by both Christians and infidels for their own purposes. Within the Scottish Enlightenment, Hume was exceptional in his attempt to use the critical tools of the Enlightenment as both pagan and unified in purpose; see The Enlightenment: An Interpretation, 2 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966 and 1969). Recent scholarly trends are beginning to show that it was neither. National enlightenments, as well as provincial ones, had their own unique characters, while none of them, not even the Parisian, was fundamentally and uniformly anti-Christian. Sher (10-11) and Wood ("Buffon's Reception," 190) both question the applicability of Gay's model to Scotland.

"Gay succeeded in making his Enlightenment pagan partly by applying the term "philosophe" indiscriminately to men of the Enlightenment. Campbell considered "philosophe" to be a term of ill-repute, and applied it to the likes of Helvetius (AUL MS 655, un-numbered page).

While Richard Sher's Church and University is a fine study of Robertson's group of Edinburgh moderates, and puts them in their rightful place at the centre of the Scottish Enlightenment, I think it undervalues the religious aspects of their thought.
Enlightenment against Christianity itself. But even Hume's critical
tools were as much a Reformed or Calvinist legacy as those employed by
George Campbell, John Witherspoon, or Jonathan Edwards. The fact that
skepticism could ultimately be used to undermine Christianity itself
(and not just other versions of it), does not lessen the Christian
intentions of its typical users.¹² Just as critical classical
scholarship, by its attention to detail, ultimately helped to undermine
the European veneration for classical authors (much against the
intentions of the classicists),¹³ so also did the critical tools of
Christian apology contain the potential to overturn traditional,
historically-based ideas of Christian truth. Only in hindsight can we
perceive the natural progression from textual criticism (used for the
establishment of reliable texts) to higher criticism (used to uncover
the human origins and literary purposes of texts). Campbell's career
was a microcosm of the Christian Enlightenment's attempt to use all
available critical tools to defend Christian belief, and to navigate
between the extremes of Catholic mystery and Calvinistic skepticism.
Christian moderates asserted the value and necessity of natural
knowledge, though they carefully contained the uses of this knowledge
within the framework of revealed religion. More importantly, they
denied any inherent hostility between reason and revelation. Perhaps
the Enlightenment was the last age to keep the warfare between reason

¹²For a discussion of some aspects of "secularization" in
eighteenth-century Scotland, see Roger L. Emerson, "The Religious, the
Secular and the Worldly: Scotland 1680-1800," in Religion,
Secularization and Political Thought, ed. James E. Crimmins (London:
Routledge, 1990), 68-89.

¹³See Levine, The Battle of the Books, 2 and 46.
and revelation within manageable bounds. But the concept of a war between science and religion is the creation of historians. It is the kind of mental construct or fiction that Campbell and Hume wished to expose. Reconciling the enlightened Campbell with the religious Campbell is our problem, not his.
Appendix I: Editions and Reprints of Campbell's Works'

The Character of a Minister

1752, Aberdeen: J. Chalmers. 8°

A Dissertation on Miracles

1762, Edinburgh: A. Kincaid and J. Bell. 8°
*1767, Amsterdam: Merlin. Trans. Marc Eidous (French). 2° 12°
1790, Philadelphia: T. Dobson. ("3d ed")
1796, Edinburgh: J. Mundell; Glasgow: J. Mundell; Cambridge: W. Lunn. 3d ed. 12°
1797, Edinburgh: Bell and Bradfute, and W. Creech; London: T. Cadell, Jr. and W. Davies. 3d ed. with sermons. 2 vols. 8°
1807, Edinburgh: Mundell and Doig
1812, Edinburgh: W. Creech, P. Hill, and J. Ogle; London: T. Cadell and W. Davies. 8°
1812, Edinburgh: A. Shortrede
1815[?]
1816, London. Reprinted in vol. 3 of The Evidences of the Christian Religion
1817, In David Hume, Philosophical Essays on Morals, Literature, and Politics, vol. 2
1824, Edinburgh
1824, London: T. Tegg. (With sermons). 8°
1825, Edinburg
1834, London: T. Tegg. New ed. (with sermons)
1835–6, In The Christian Library, vol. 2
1839, London
1840, London T. Tegg. (Vol. 1 of Works)
1983, New York: Garland. (Reprint of 1st ed.)

'This list has been compiled from a variety of sources. I have included as much publication information as my sources allow; nevertheless, the list remains far from definitive. I have listed the information in order of importance, beginning with date and place of publication. An asterisk indicates a translation.

'There are, apparently, Dutch and German translations as well, but I have not been able to find bibliographical references to these.
The Spirit of the Gospel

1771, Edinburgh: A. Kincaid and W. Creech. 8° (123pp.)
1797, Edinburgh and London. (In DM with sermons)³
1840, London: T. Tegg. (In vol. 1 of Works)

The Philosophy of Rhetoric⁴

1776, London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell; Edinburgh: W. Creech. 2 vols. 8°
*1791, Berlin: C. Matzdorff. Trans. D. Jenisch (German)
1801, London: A. Strahan, T. Cadell, Jr., and W. Davies; Edinburgh:
   (corrected). 2 vols. 8°
   and W. Davies. 2 vols. New ed. 8°
1818, Boston: Wells and Lilly
1818, Philadelphia: Mitchell, Ames and White
   Wait
n.d., Boston: T.B. Wait
n.d., Boston: T.B. Wait; Newburyport: Thomas and Whipple
1823, Boston: Charles Ewer
1823, London: G. and W.B. Whittaker. (Abridged for schools by A.
   Jamieson)
1833, London: [Whittaker?] (Abridged by A. Jamieson)
1834, New York: [numerous printers]
1835, Boston: [numerous printers]
1838, London: T. Tegg [and several others]
1840, London: T. Tegg. (Vol. 2 of Works)
1841, New York: Harper and Brothers
1844, New York: Harper and Brothers
n.d., New York: Harper and Brothers
1845, New York: Harper and Brothers
1846, New York: Harper and Brothers
1849, New York: Harper and Brithers
1850, London: William Tegg
1850, New York: Harper and Brothers

³The Dissertation on Miracles was often reprinted, following the
1797 edition, with the collected sermons. Therefore, this and the
following sermons were reprinted more often than is here indicated.

⁴Much of the information concerning reprints of The Philosophy of
Rhetoric is based on Lloyd F. Bitzer's introduction to his own edition,
pp. liii-lv. Bitzer's list includes derivations which are not included
here.
1851, New York: Harper and Brothers
1854, New York: Harper and Brothers
1855, New York: Harper and Brothers
1856, New York: Harper and Brothers
1857, New York: Harper and Brothers
1858, New York: Harper and Brothers
1859, New York: Harper and Brothers
1860, New York: Harper and Brothers
1868, New York: Harper and Brothers
1871, New York: Harper and Brothers
1873, New York: Harper and Brothers
1877, New York: Harper and Brothers
1881, New York: Harper and Brothers
1885, New York: Harper and Brothers
1887, New York: Harper and Brothers
1968. Abridged in Goldon and Corbett, The Rhetoric of Blair, Campbell, and Whately
1992, Delmar, New York: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints. (Reprint ed.). Introduction by Charlotte Downey

The Nature, Extent, and Importance of the Duty of Allegiance

1777, Aberdeen: J. Chalmers. 4°[?](41pp.)
1778, Aberdeen. J. Chalmers. 2d ed. [8°/12°?] (74pp.)
1797, Edinburgh and London. (In DM with sermons)
1840, London: T. Tegg. (In vol. 1 of Works)
1857[?]

The Success of the First Publishers of the Gospel

1779, In The Scotch Preacher, vol. 3. 12°
1797, Edinburgh and London. (In DM with sermons)
1840, London: T. Tegg. (In vol. 1 of Works)

An Address to the People of Scotland

1779, Aberdeen: J. Chalmers. 12°
1797, Edinburgh and London. (In DM with sermons)
1840, London: T. Tegg. (In vol. 1 of Works)
[12°?]

The Happy Influence of Religion

1779, Edinburgh: W. Creech. 8° (31pp.)
1797, Edinburgh and London. (In DM with sermons)
1840, London: T. Tegg. (In vol. 1 of Works)

The Four Gospels

1789, London: A. Strahan and T. Cadell. 2 vols. 4°
1796, Philadelphia: T. Dobson. (1 vol.) 4°
1799, Philadelphia: A. Bartram. (1 vol.) 4°
1803, 8°
1807, Edinburgh: J. Ritchie. 3d ed. 2 vols. 8°
1814, Aberdeen. 8°
1814. Translation used by Angus in The Life of our Lord and Saviour
Jesus Christ. 12°
1821, Edinburgh. 8°
1822, 8°
1826, Aberdeen[?]
1826, [Buffalo, Va.]: A. Campbell. Translation used with others
by James Macknight and Philip Doddridge in The Sacred
Writings
1827, Aberdeen: G. King. Trans. used with Doddridge and Macknight
1827, London. Trans. used with Doddridge and Macknight in The New
Testament
1835. In The New Testament. 8°
1835, Bethany, Va: M'Vay and Ewing. Trans. used with Doddridge and
Macknight
1838, Lo: G. Wightman. Trans. used with Doddridge and Macknight
1840, London: T. Tegg. 2 vols. (Vols. 3 and 4 of Works)
1845, Aberdeen
1845, Hartford: I. Stowe [and J. Wells?]. Trans. used with
Macknight in The New Testament

Lectures on Ecclesiastical History

1800, London: J. Johnson; Aberdeen: A. Brown. 2 vols. 8°
1804, Chicago. [Includes DM?]
1807, Philadelphia: B. Hopkins. [Includes DM?]
1815, Aberdeen: A. Brown; London: T. Hamilton; Edinburgh: Oliphant,
Waugh, and Innes. 2d ed. 2 vols. 8°
1824, London: T. Tegg ("3d ed")
1834, [London?]. New ed.
1840, London: T. Tegg [and Glasgow: R. Griffin?]. (Vol. 5 of Works)
Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence

1807, London: T. Cadell and W. Davies. [Ed. by James Fraser]. 8°
1810, Boston: W. Wells and T. Wait
1824, London: W. Baynes. 8°
1827[?]
1832, Boston: Lincoln and Edmands. Ed. by Henry J. Ripley, with Fenelon's Dialogues on Eloquence
1840, London: T. Tegg. (Vol. 6 of Works, which includes LPC below) 8°

Lectures on the Pastoral Character

1840, London: T. Tegg. (Vol. 6 of Works, along with LSTPE above)
Appendix II: Campbell's Questions Proposed in the
Aberdeen Philosophical Society

[1] 4. What is the Cause of that Pleasure we have from
Representations or Objects which excite Pity or other
painfull Feelings? [Proposed 12 January 1758; handled 8
February 1758.]

accounted for on the common Principles of Generation?
[Proposed 12 January 1758; handled 28 June 1758.]

[3] 23. Whether Matter has a Separate and permanent Existence?² The
Nature of Contrariety? [Handled 30 May 1759.]

[4] 33. Whether Education in public Schools or by private Tutors be
preferable. [Handled 11 December 1759 and 26 February
1760.]

[5] 41. What is the cause of the apparent colour of the heavens? Or
what is properly the object to which that colour can be
attributed? [Handled 10 March 1761.]

[6] 52. How far human laws can justly make alterations in what seems
to be founded on the principles of the law of nature?
[Handled 9 and 23 March 1762.]

[7] 61. Whether any animals beside man & domestic animals are liable
to diseases, the decay of nature & Accidental hurts
excepted: And if they are not, whether there is any thing in
the domestic life which can account for such diseases as men
and domestic animals are obnoxious to? [Handled 5 April and
10 May 1763.]

[8] 72. Whether the manner of living of parents affects the genius or
intellectual abilitites of the children. [Handled 22 January
1765.]

[9] 83. Whether it is possible, that the Language of any People,
should continue invariably the same? And if not, from what
Causes the Variations arise? [Handled 13 October 1766.]

¹The source for this is H. Lewis Ulman's The Minutes of the
Aberdeen Philosophical Society, 189-98. I have supplemented Ulman's
transcription with information from the minutes of the actual meetings.
See Minutes, 249-52, for manuscript sources of the abstracts associated
with these questions. The first [bracketed] number preceding each
question is my own, while the second is from the original.

²This was crossed out in the manuscript and replaced by the
question on contrariety.
[10] 92. Whether the Greek language remained invariably the same so long as is commonly thought; & to what causes the duration which it had ought to be ascribed. [Handled 12 October and 10 November 1767.]

[11] 102. What is the proper notion of civil Liberty. [Handled 24 October 1769.]

[12] 112. What is the best method of teaching a foreign or dead language? [Handled 11 December 1770.]

3Question 111, "What are the advantages and disadvantages arising from the different arrangements of words which obtain in the antient and modern languages?", is originally attributed to Dr. David Skene, but is re-recorded between questions 119 and 120, while retaining the number 111, and attributed to Campbell.
Appendix III: Campbell's and Gerard's Divinity Lectures for 1786-1787

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAMPBELL</th>
<th>GERARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Dec 19. 1st intro. lecture²</td>
<td>(1) Dec 25. Nature of the Pastoral Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(PC, intro.)³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Dec 21. 2nd intro. lecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Dec 26. 3rd intro. lecture</td>
<td>(2) Dec 29. Scriptural criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Dec 29. 4th intro. lecture</td>
<td>(3) Jan 1. Proper idea of pastoral office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(PC, I,i,1-3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Jan 2. Language and idiom of Scripture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(PC, I,i)³</td>
<td>(4) Jan 5. Scriptural criticism: the Hebrew idiom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Jan 4. Varieties of style in Scripture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(PC, I,ii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Descriptions of both George Campbell's and Alexander Gerard's lecture courses for the 1786-7 term come from the student notebooks of R.E.S. [Robert Eden Scott]. The manuscripts, both located in the Aberdeen University Library's special collections, are numbered M 190 and K 174 respectively. Campbell lectured on Tuesdays and Thursdays, while Gerard lectured on Mondays and Fridays, so that Aberdeen divinity students could in fact attend both professors. It appears that Scott missed no classes for the year. Campbell's lecture for March 29 was cancelled due to the graduation ceremonies at King's College.

²The first four introductory lectures correspond to the first four introductory discourses found in Campbell's Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence or in his manuscript AUL MS M 191 and 192.

³PC signifies corresponding sections of Gerard's Pastoral Care, which will ordinarily be followed by numerals designating part, chapter, section, and (where applicable) article.

⁴This and the following references refer to the corresponding sections of Campbell's Four Gospels, which match the lectures quite closely. The first roman numeral refers to the dissertation number, while the second lower-case numeral, where applicable, refers to the part number.
Jan 9. Difficulties of translation (FG, II, ii and iii)

Jan 11. Perspicuity of Scripture (FG, III)

Jan 16. Simplicity of design in Scripture (FG, III)

Jan 18. Method of examining Scripture (FG, IV)

Jan 23. Difficulties of etymology (FG, IV)

Jan 25. Word meanings in N.T. (FG, V, i and ii)

Jan 30. Word meanings in N.T. (FG, V, iii and iv)

Feb 1. Commonly mistranslated terms: "devil" (FG, VI, i)

Feb 6. Mistranslated terms: "hell" (FG, VI, ii)

Feb 8. Mistranslated terms: "hell" and "heaven" (FG, VI, ii)

Jan 8. Dignity of the pastoral office (PC, I, i, 4)

Jan 12. Scriptural criticism: phrases and clauses

Jan 15. Difficulty of the pastoral office (PC, i, ii, 1-2)

Jan 19. Scriptural criticism: punctuation

Jan 22. Spirit of the pastoral office (PC, I, ii, 3)

Jan 26. Scriptural criticism: grammatical figures

Jan 29. Pastoral duties: private duties (PC, II, i)

Feb 2. Scriptural criticism: grammatical figures

Feb 5. Pastoral duties: private instruction (PC, II, i, 2)
(14) Feb 9. Scriptural criticism: grammatical figures

(15) Feb 12. Pastoral duties: exhortation
    (PG, II,i,3)

(17) Feb 13. Mistranslated terms: "to repent"
    (PG, VI,iii)

(18) Feb 15. Mistranslated terms: "holy"/"saint"
    (PG, VI,iv)

(16) Feb 16. Scriptural criticism: rhetorical figures

(17) Feb 19. Pastoral duties: visiting the sick
    (PG, II,i,5)

(19) Feb 20. Translating titles of honour (PG, VII)

(20) Feb 22. Translating titles of honour (PG, VII)

(18) Feb 23. Scriptural criticism: rhetorical figures

(19) Feb 26. Pastoral duties: reproving and rebuking reconciling care of the poor
    (PG, II,i,6–9)

(21) Feb 27. Terms not directly translatable
    (PG, VIII)

(22) Mar 1. Terms not directly translatable
    (PG, VIII)

(20) Mar 2. Pastoral duties: preaching
    (PG, II,iii,1)

(21) Mar 5. Pastoral duties: visitation of families catechizing marriage
    (PG, II,ii)

(23) Mar 6. Problem terms: "mystery" (PG, IX,1)
(24) Mar 8. Problem terms: "blasphemy"  
(FG, IX,ii)

(22) Mar 9. Preaching: explanatory discourse  
(PC, II,iii,1,[1])

(23) Mar 12. Preaching: explanatory discourse (PC, ibid.)

(25) Mar 13. Problem terms: "schism" and "heresy"  
(FG, IX,iii and iv)

(26) Mar 15. Problem terms: "sect" and "heresy"  
(FG, IX,iv)

(PC, II,iii,1,[2])

(PC, II,iii,1,[4])

(27) Mar 20. Methods of the various translators (FG, X,i)

(28) Mar 22. The Vulgate; Castalio  
(FG, X,iii and iv)

(26) Mar 23. Preaching: invention  
(PC, II,iii,1,[5])

etocution  
memory  
pronunciation  
occasional sermons  
(PC, II,iii,1,[6-9])

(29) Mar 27. Beza (FG, X,v)

(28) Mar 30. Pastoral duties: other public duties  
(PC, II,iii,2)

(29) Apr 2. Pastoral duties: public discipline  
(PC, II,iv)

(30) Apr 3. The Gospel authors: Matthew


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Each of the translated Gospels is individually prefaced in The Four Gospels.
(30) Apr 6. Qualifications for the pastoral office (PC, III,i)

(31) Apr 9. Preparations for the pastoral office (PC, III,ii)
"Such, to wit plain and practical, the genuine uncorrupted truths of christianity . . . are in reality neither many nor complicated . . . Thence we learn, 'That there is one only GOD, a spirit, eternal and omnipresent, infinitely powerful, wise and good, the maker and the ruler of the world:-----That man having apostatiz'd from him, and so become obnoxious to perdition, it pleas'd the universal Lord, for our recovery, to send into the world his ONLY SON:--- That this glorious personage assum'd our nature, was born of a virgin, and so usher'd into these terrestrial abodes in a way suitable to the dignity of his source:----- That he reveal'd the will of heaven to man, was by profession a preacher of righteousness, of which in his life he exhibited a perfect pattern:-- ---- That under the form of civil justice, he suffered a most unjust, cruel and ignominious death:------ That he rose again the third day, an irrefragable evidence of his mission: ------ That he afterwards ascended into heaven: ------ That by the merit of his obedience and suffering, he purchased for his people eternal felicity: ------- That this purchase is ascertained to all who repent and obey the gospel, and offer'd on these terms: ------- That to assist in performing this condition, the grace of the HOLY SPIRIT of God is tender'd to every one, who sincerely and assiduously seeks it:------ That there is an appointed time of general resurrection, when all the dead wheresoever scatter'd, shall arise: ---- - That thereafter comes the final judgment, when every individual shall be judged by Jesus the Son of God, according to the actions done in the body, whether good or bad: ------ That finally in consequence of the irrevocable sentence, which will be then pronounced, the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal, the two last states of retribution.'" (Character, 16-17)
Appendix V: Checklist of Campbell's Correspondence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Correspondent</th>
<th>MS Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 Feb 1761</td>
<td>TO Lord Provost of Aberdeen</td>
<td>ACA Letterbook 12, 119.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Jan 1762</td>
<td>TO Aberdeen Town Council</td>
<td>ACA Letterbook 12, 209.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June 1762</td>
<td>FROM David Hume</td>
<td>AUL 3214/7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 June 1762</td>
<td>TO David Hume</td>
<td>NLS 23154, n. 11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Sept 1762</td>
<td>TO [John Stuart], third earl of Bute</td>
<td>AUL M 370.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Feb 1770</td>
<td>TO [David Steuart Erskine], eleventh earl of Buchan</td>
<td>EUL La. II, 588.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Aug 1770</td>
<td>TO David Skene</td>
<td>NCL THO 2, fols. 53-4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 May 1771</td>
<td>TO Alexander Kincaid</td>
<td>SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 May 1771</td>
<td>TO Alexander Kincaid</td>
<td>SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 May 1771</td>
<td>TO Alexander Kincaid</td>
<td>SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[4 Sept 1771]</td>
<td>TO James Beattie</td>
<td>AUL 30/2/62.³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Aug 1773</td>
<td>FROM James Beattie</td>
<td>MS?⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Apr 1776</td>
<td>TO William Strahan</td>
<td>NLS 2618, fol. 55.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 May 1776</td>
<td>TO Ann Farquharson</td>
<td>AUL 3214/5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹The following list includes 82 letters, 68 written by Campbell, and 14 addressed to Campbell. Only extant letters are listed. Known but lost letters are excluded. Correspondence about Campbell is also excluded.

²The William Creech letterbooks are part of the Dalguise Muniments, held on microfilm at West Register House, RH4/26/1.

³This note from Campbell to Beattie is copied into a letter from James Dun to Beattie. The date is from the Dun letter, not from the original Campbell note.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>To/From</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26 June 1776</td>
<td>TO William Strahan</td>
<td>BL Add. 34886, fol. 78.\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 June 1776</td>
<td>TO Ann Farquharson</td>
<td>AUL 3214/6 [and 3214/8?].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Dec 1776</td>
<td>TO Ann Farquharson</td>
<td>AUL 3214/16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 May 1779</td>
<td>TO William Creech</td>
<td>SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 May 1779</td>
<td>TO Edmund Burke</td>
<td>SCA WWM Bk. 1/240.\textsuperscript{b}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 June 1779</td>
<td>TO Edmund Burke</td>
<td>SCA WWM Bk. 1/1172.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[25 June 1779</td>
<td>TO James Beattie</td>
<td>AUL 30/1/173.\textsuperscript{c}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 July 1779</td>
<td>TO William Creech</td>
<td>SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 May 1780</td>
<td>FROM John Erskine</td>
<td>[No MS.].\textsuperscript{d}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Aug 1781</td>
<td>TO James Beattie</td>
<td>AUL 30/2/361.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Mar 1782</td>
<td>TO William Creech</td>
<td>SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Oct 1782</td>
<td>TO James Beattie</td>
<td>AUL 30/2/386.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Nov 1782</td>
<td>TO Lord Hailes</td>
<td>NLS 25303, fol. 161.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Dec 1782</td>
<td>TO James Beattie</td>
<td>AUL 30/2/393.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1 Mar 1783?]</td>
<td>TO Lord Hailes</td>
<td>NLS 25303, fols. 177-8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Mar 1783</td>
<td>TO Lord Hailes</td>
<td>NLS 25303. fol. 179.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 July 1783</td>
<td>TO James Beattie</td>
<td>AUL 30/2/417.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Mar 1784</td>
<td>TO Lord Hailes</td>
<td>NLS 25304, fols. 1-2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 May 1784</td>
<td>TO James Beattie</td>
<td>AUL 30/2/454.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a}This is an extract of a letter to Strahan, found among the Gibbon papers.

\textsuperscript{b}This letter was misdated by Campbell as 1769, an error repeated in the Sheffield archives.

\textsuperscript{c}This is an extract from a letter to Beattie, and copied by Beattie into a letter to Elizabeth Montagu. I cannot find the original. The date given is of the Beattie letter, not of the original Campbell letter.

\textsuperscript{d}This open letter appears as a preface to Erskine’s *Narrative of the Debate in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh: W. Gray, 1780).
4 June [1784?] TO James Beattie
25 Sept 1784 TO Lord Hailes
[Summer 1785?] TO Lord Bute
19 Nov 1785 TO Alexander Carlyle
29 Dec 1785 TO James Beattie
6 May 1786 TO William Creech
17 June 1786 TO Lord Hailes
17 July 1786 TO [Anthony Fletcher], fifth earl of Kintore
12 July 1786 TO Lord Buchan
17 July 1786 TO Henry Dundas
6 Sept 1786 TO the Aberdeen Magistrates
17 Feb 1787 TO William Creech
8 July 1787 FROM Bishop John Jlas
25 July 1787 TO Ann Farquharson
9 Aug 1787 TO James Beattie
16 Apr 1788 TO Lord Hailes
5 May [1788?] TO James Beattie
10 June 1788 TO James Beattie
30 Aug 1788 TO James Beattie
1 Oct 1788 FROM Bishop John Douglas
7 May 1789 TO Thomas Brydson
19 June 1789 FROM Bishop John Douglas
24 June 1789 TO Lord Hailes
4 July 1789 TO Bishop John Douglas

AUL 30/2/478.
NLS 25304, fol. 3.
AUL M 387/16/4/7.
EUL Dc.4.41/116.
AUL 30/2/494.
SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.
NLS 25304, fols. 54-5.
[Source of MS?]
AUL 2954.
AUL U 557.
ACA Letterbook 13, 217.
AUL 3214/17.
AUL 3214/14.
AUL 30/2/548.
SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.
NLS 25305, fols. 22-3.
AUL 30/2/568.
AUL 30/2/574.
AUL 3214/11.
EUL La.II.110.
AUL 3214/9.
NLS 25305, fols. 10-16.
BL Egerton 2185,
fols. 191-2.

*This letter also includes notes from James Beattie and Patrick Copland to Brydson.
26 Sept 1789  TO Bishop John Douglas  BL Egerton 2185, fols. 194-5.
[Autumn 1789?] TO Lord Hailes  NLS 25305, fols. 27-30.
23 Nov 1789  TO Lord Hailes  NLS 25305, fols. 16-22.
23 Dec 1789  FROM William Heberden  AUL 3214/1.
11 Mar 1790  TO Bishop John Douglas  BL Egerton 2186, fols. 5-6.
20 May 1790  TO Alexander Christie  NLS 3703, fols. 66-7.
[24?] May 1790 FROM Alexander Christie  NLS 3703, fols. 68-70.
22 July 1790  TO G.J. Thorkelin  EUL La.III.379/146.
22 July 1790  TO Bishop John Douglas  BL Egerton 2186, fols. 10-11.
18 Oct 1790  FROM Bishop John Douglas  AUL 3214/2.
24 Oct [1790?] FROM Josiah Tucker  AUL 3214/3.
9 Nov 1790  TO William Creech  SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.
30 Dec 1790  TO Bishop John Douglas  BL Egerton 2186, fol. 16.
1 Apr 1791  TO Bishop John Douglas  BL Egerton 2186, fol. 27.
14 Sept 1793  TO William Creech  SRO Wm. Creech letterbks.
4 July 1794  TO James Beattie  AUL 30/2/719.
10 Oct 1794  TO John Abercrombie (Lord Provost of Aberdeen)  ACA Council Register 67 fols. 41v.10
12 May 1795 FROM [John Moore], archbishop of Canterbury  AUL 3214/4.11

10 This is a transcription; the original does not appear in the Council's letterbook.
11 The message from the archbishop is in William Laurence Brown's hand.
11 June 1795  TO the moderator of the Presbytery of Aberdeen  SRO CH2/1/11, pp. 53–4.

11 June 1795  TO the Lord Provost of Aberdeen  ACA Council Register 67 fols. 69v–70r.

2 July 1795  TO [David Murray], second earl of Mansfield  AUL M 96.

14 Jan 1796  TO John Spottiswoode  NLS 2618, fols. 57–8.

12 March [yr?]  FROM James Beattie  AUL 3214/15.

n.d.  FROM [William Heberden?]  AUL 3214/13.12

12This contains unsigned but friendly comments on Campbell's Four Gospels; thus the date is no earlier than 1789. The attribution of authorship to Heberden is my own best guess.
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