At the opening of the 1840s Scottish evangelicals, hitherto less prominently a part of earlier transatlantic exchanges, became more deeply involved with the American churches than at any other time in their history. While in the preceding decade English Dissenters had pioneered a closer understanding with American denominational leaders, primarily northerners from New York and New England, the Scottish churches had been preoccupied at home with the fierce Voluntary Controversy between the Establishment and Scottish Dissenters—chiefly Congregationalists, Baptists, the Relief church, and the Secession church. The American example of church-state separation had always been a part of that dispute, but in the early 1840s Scottish interest in American religion became more intense, and extensive new transatlantic contacts were effected. Indeed, between 1843 and 1846 the more significant British encounter with American religion had shifted from England to Scotland, while in the United States the principal churchmen joining in that encounter were denominational statesmen who had been less prominent in transatlantic enterprise in the 1830s—chiefly Presbyterians from the middle Atlantic and Southern states.

The source of this alteration lay in the ten-year struggle of the Evangelical party within the Scottish Church against parliamentary Erastianism—a struggle which ended in the famous Disruption of 1843 and a new and reluctant addition to British Nonconformity, the Scottish Free Church. At once the new church, despite its continuing theoretical adherence to the ideal of a state Establishment, had to organize practically on a voluntary and self-sustaining basis for which "American Protestantism" supplied the outstanding model. Moreover, across the Atlantic American support for the Free Church was overwhelming, and the belief that American voluntaryism had now won a signal victory abroad was general. Not surprisingly, then, in 1844 an official Scottish
delegation journeyed to the United States to study American church practice and collect funds for the needy Free Church at home. Traveling throughout the nation and conferring everywhere with prominent churchmen, it heightened the sense of new solidarity and gave promise of closer cooperation between the Scots and American Protestants.

Ultimately the promise was to be unfulfilled; the hoped-for "accord" was to be limited, partial, and finally illusory. Although transatlantic harmony was temporarily magnified and some misunderstandings removed, Free Church leaders still distrusted New World voluntaryism and its revivalist tradition and found much to criticize in American culture. For their part, many Americans were annoyed with Free Church fidelity to the Establishment ideal and pained at Scottish inability to appreciate American religious variety and vitality. Nonetheless, for several years in the mid-1840's the effort, particularly by Old School Presbyterians, to build a Scottish-American religious entente made its contribution to the ideal of an interdependent transatlantic Protestantism.

Moreover—as we shall see in the following chapter—there was a subtext to this effort which quickly assumed an importance far overshadowing the original design. For in the course of the Scottish visit another aspect of American religion—its toleration of slavery—rose to dominate Scottish and American debate. For Scotland's traditional Dissenters the Free Kirk's new link with the slaveholding South provided opportunity for renewing the Voluntary Controversy with powerful new ammunition. For the Free Church the new connection was almost disastrous. It drew the struggling new-born church into the international debate over slavery, an exchange so passionate that it appeared even to eclipse the Scottish issues which had brought the church into existence. And in America by 1847 leading Old School statesmen were rapidly becoming persuaded that, despite Free Church leaders' "moderation," their appreciation of America's slavery problem was not sufficiently firm or sympathetic. Thus, just as slavery
had undermined the promised unity of English Dissenters and American churchmen in the 1830s, so now transatlantic Presbyterianism tended to succumb to the same encumbrance.

In the 1830s it had been difficult to suppose that Scottish Church evangelicals could make any sympathetic approach to American religion. In that decade their adversaries, the Scottish Dissenters, had transformed their earlier emphasis on the right to dissent into a militant and universal voluntaryism, identified in theory with primitive Christianity and oriented politically toward disestablishing the national church. Strongly entrenched among the middle classes in the lowland towns, Seceders and Congregationalists especially constituted an aggressive and formidable enemy of all state supported religion.

With the Seceder Andrew Marshall's sermon "On Ecclesiastical Establishments" in 1829 they began their attack, and for polemical purposes America provided the evidence. Throughout the 1830s their orators and their Voluntary Church Magazine pointed to America as proof of the efficacy of the voluntary system. Visiting American clergy like Samuel Hanson Cox in 1833 and Heman Humphrey in 1835 publicly supported the argument, and George Cheever in 1838 even provoked a tumultuous outcry from a hostile Edinburgh audience when he openly joined the Dissenter offensive.

Not surprisingly, the Establishment's defenders surveyed the American evidence and came to very different conclusions. Churchmen, Evangelicals as well as Moderates, found the "spiritual destitution" of America appalling. Lorimer's Past and Present Condition of Religion and Morality in the United States was a principal source, used frequently by apologists for the Church, but recourse to a multitude of American tracts, sermons, reform society reports, and travel diaries was also common. Throughout the decade the Church of Scotland Magazine repeatedly warned that American religion was flawed by a paucity of churches, ignorant ministers, luxuriant heterodoxies as diverse as Unitarianism
and Catholicism, and such flourishing social sins as prostitution, gambling, alcoholism, Sabbath-breaking, and slavery. The indictment of the Belfast Presbyterian, Henry Cook, was absolute: "With all America en masse solemnly, though silently, proclaiming the utter inadequacy of the Dissenting system to evangelise the Heathen, or to build them up when evangelised," he stormed, Dissenters seek "to reduce Britain to the same appalling destitution which the Voluntary system has inflicted on America. Are these men infidels, or are they insane?"

Writing from Edinburgh in 1840 Samuel Hanson Cox accurately described the central American place in this polemic: "AMERICA becomes a mighty argument between the combatants and is perpetually cited, advocated and traduced, loved and feared, panegyrized and misrepresented, alternately by the opposing sides."

Though more temperate in expression, the judgment of Thomas Chalmers was basically the same as other conservatives. This undisputed chief of the Evangelical party enjoyed a towering reputation—among Americans as well as Scots—and his defense of the Establishment principle was carefully reasoned. Scripturally, the practice was lawful, violating no divine command. Practically, it was economic and efficient, "bringing Christianity to every door" and fulfilling the great command to preach the gospel to every creature. Consequently, for Chalmers the American experiment was to be ultimately tragic. New England's superiority in moral and religious habits he ascribed to their historic Standing Orders and noted that their abolition was now followed by vacant churches, moral decay, expanding infidelity, and the declension of Harvard. Beyond New England, even in populous, prosperous, and long established states, there was "an extremely feeble demand for the lessons of Christianity," and the people were "almost utter strangers to the habits or the decencies of a Christian land, . . . scarcely above a state of practical heathenism."

For Chalmers as for other evangelicals, the long and emotional voluntary debate
could only lead to commitment to a disparaging assessment of American Christianity.\footnote{5}

Voluntaryism was the fundamental American defect, but the judgment was reinforced by two other concerns. The Voluntary Controversy was accompanied by accounts of American revivals and by attempts to introduce American methods and theology into Scotland. Scottish Dissenters were deeply drawn to American tales of successful revivals which seemed to represent the unaided power of primitive Christianity when freed from state control. They begged their American correspondents for more detailed reports and in 1832 welcomed British editions of Calvin Colton's *History and Character of American Revivals* and William Buell Sprague's *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*.\footnote{6} In 1839 an authentic Scottish revival broke out in Congregational and Secession chapels in which such American methods as the protracted meeting were used, while the preaching showed the influence of American New School men, notably Charles Grandison Finney. To this appearance of American revivalism in Scotland Church evangelicals responded variously, with occasional enthusiasm, but usually with caution, and sometimes with alarm. Some were caught up in the excitement, but many remained sceptical of claims of conversions, deplored emotionalism and "fanaticism," and feared injury to theology, liturgy, and church order. The openness of revivalists to American "self-conversionist" theological tendencies was especially repugnant. As early as 1833 Chalmers had warned Samuel Hanson Cox that revivalist appeals would lead American practitioners to Arminianism.

Finally, this close observation of American religion also evoked its most sinister feature, and here Dissenters and Churchmen stood in closer agreement. Scottish opinion generally deplored the failure of American churches to provide an unqualified condemnation of slavery. The doctrine of "immediate emancipation" was first preached by the Establishment evangelical, Andrew Thomson, but it also had far more sweeping success among Dissenters. The response of
the Evangelical party to American slavery was complex. Some became committed to "immediatism," while others, like their leader, Chalmers, were more cautious, denouncing slavery but perceiving disengagement from the evil as an intricate and complicated problem. Hence they were unwilling to condemn individuals, institutions, or nations without making careful distinctions and refinements. Yet such concerns did not prevent evangelical Churchmen from charging the American churches with monstrous sin. Slavery, said William Cunningham, a leading evangelical and later a Free Church delegate to America, discovered "the real nature and character of that boasted [American] civil and religious liberty" and revealed "the brutal deeds of American republicanism and Voluntaryism." 8

Thus on all prominent aspects of "American Protestantism" Scottish Churchmen tended to be wary and unenthusiastic. While maintaining amicable formal ties with overseas Presbyterians, especially at Princeton, they remained more aloof from America and American religion than did Scottish Dissenters, and sometimes, especially in controversy, they expressed openly sceptical or censorious judgments on the value of America's alleged advances.

By the late 1830s, however, this coolness between Scottish and American evangelicals began to thaw, and the possibility of a more cordial relation emerged. In part this was due to the mounting reverence paid to Chalmers on both sides of the Atlantic. In America the religious press faithfully reported his accomplishments and opinions in countless news accounts, anecdotes, sermon summaries, and reviews of his writings. His American correspondence was large, and every visiting American cleric sought not only to hear him preach but to secure an interview with him in Edinburgh or at his Burntisland home. For his part, Chalmers was eager to learn more about American religious conditions. He received American visitors courteously and interrogated them closely, often requesting factual evidence for American claims. Later, after Disruption, although he remained unshaken in his scepticism concerning the success of American
voluntaryism, he inevitably became more curious about a New World Presbyterianism developing without public support. Still, his familiarity with the American scene remained rather vague. In 1846 he was astonished to discover that Yale was not in Kentucky and thought that the Old School-New School break was somehow similar to the Scottish Disruption.  

More important in making way for a more amiable understanding between American and Scottish evangelicals was the major shift in Scottish ecclesiastical politics which occurred in the later 1830s. The Voluntary Controversy was now eclipsed by the burning dispute over Erastianism within the Church of Scotland. Establishment evangelicals, led by Chalmers, began the "Ten Years' Conflict" which eventuated in their reluctant withdrawal from the state church and organization of the Free Church. American Presbyterians and Congregationalists watched this struggle with huge interest and open sympathy. In 1839 Princeton's Biblical Repertory reviewed the celebrated Auchterarder case at length and strongly endorsed the stand of such protest leaders as Chalmers, Robert Smith Candlish, and Robert Burns of Paisley. Two years later Nicholas Murray wrote to Candlish (on whom a Princeton D.D. had just been conferred), "You have the sympathies and the prayers of our whole American Zion," and added that Americans would also "aid you in building churches, should you be dis-established." Nor was this only an Old School attitude. The New School Evangelist urged American Christians to pray for Scottish evangelicals, though it also gave space to criticism of the "inconsistency" of the attempt to maintain both the church's freedom and the state connection. To many Americans of all denominations it seemed that the revered Scottish church was moving rapidly in the direction of American voluntary religion.  

In Scotland too Church evangelicals adopted a more charitable approach to American religion, seeking whatever instruction the American experience might provide for a "free church" deprived of public funding. As the Dundee
minister, George Lewis, later remarked, from the new perspective the former polemical rejection of American religion now had to give way to accurate and informed appraisal. Probably the most ambitious effort to fill this need was John Dunmore Lang's *Religion and Education in America* (1840). Lang was himself a Church evangelical who had favored state support for religion; not only had he approved its practice in Scotland but he had also promoted its adoption in Australia. Yet his review of the American church was favorable. He issued his study as an answer to Frederick Marryat's popular *Diary in America with Remarks on its Institutions*, (1839), a work which found that the lack of a state church not only left Americans without spiritual direction but also fostered the dangerous social instability of the republic. Anticipating the coming crisis and dedicating his volume to the "Christian laity of Scotland," Lang argued that the Scottish church stood in immediate need of a strictly honest assessment of the American Presbyterian example. Impressed with the vitality and activism of American denominations, he concluded that voluntaryism could be "a course of safety" for Scotland if the crisis should be insoluble by other means. What the Americans had achieved in separation from the state, the Scots could do also.

Consequently, a more congenial atmosphere was already in the ascendant when the great Disruption actually took place in Edinburgh in May, 1843. Led by Chalmers, approximately one-third of the Church of Scotland clergy, having failed to persuade the state to abandon patronage, withdrew from the Establishment.
to organize the new Free Church. At once the secession itself increased the momentum for transatlantic mutual understanding and collaboration. The New York Observer published the complete narrative of the dramatic session in the Edinburgh Assembly when the protesting divines solemnly filed out. Numerous American denominations wrote to Scotland to express their sympathy and offer help. Prodded by Robert Baird and by a plea from David Welsh, the last Moderator of the undivided Church of Scotland, an American committee was formed to collect books for a library at New College, the planned Free Church seminary in Edinburgh. And at the next Old School General Assembly some delegates would even raise the question of whether communion with the "residual" Church of Scotland should be continued. Soon the means of advancing this enthusiastic accord would appear. The Scottish Free church, deeply in need of financial assistance, was to send an official deputation to the United States in 1844.

Although most American denominations were interested and sympathetic, the Old School Presbyterians were most deeply affected by these events. More than the New School, the Old School venerated Scottish background and tradition and viewed the Knoxian Reformation as the historic norm of Presbyterianism. Whereas in the past this veneration had sometimes been troubled by distaste for Scottish Erastianism and Moderatism, Old School leaders could now regard the emergent Free Church as a distillation of the historic Scottish faith, pure and free. (English and Scottish Dissenters, in contrast, were gravely suspect for their welcome to abolitionism and their marked bias toward the New School.) On the personal level, the Old School already had the closest ties with the Scottish evangelical party. Chalmers' American contacts were strongest with Princeton, and he corresponded regularly with Samuel Miller, the Alexanders, and Charles Hodge, among others. Of comparable importance was his firm link with the influential New York Old School layman, James Lenox. Lenox, whose father had been born in Kirkcudbright and become one of America's
richest men, advised Chalmers on all American affairs and promised to do all in his power to aid the new Free Church. Finally, the Old School, in competition with the New School since the schism of 1837, was eager for recognition and approval from the prestigious Scottish evangelicals. Moreover, such recognition was becoming especially critical for another reason: the Old School was already sensing increasing disapproval, threatening even ostracism, from international Protestantism because of its compromises on the issue of American slavery.

Scottish Free Church leaders reciprocated this trust. Alarmed by the "excesses" of American Protestantism, they viewed the Old School as the most orthodox and responsible of American denominations. In contrast, they were troubled by what they saw as exaggerated reformism and revivalism in the New School and were repelled by incautious soteriological recommendations concerning "human exertions." Finally in April, 1841 the Scottish General Assembly, after a four-year delay to study documents from Old and New Schools, had recognized the Old School church and congratulated its leaders for "acting for truth." 

Thus it was natural that the Old School should have led the American resolve to assist the new Free Church. Immediately after the Disruption in 1843 the Old School Assembly expressed "deep and cordial sympathy with the Brethren in Scotland" and opened discussion on a plan for a general collection in their behalf. Literary support for the idea came from prominent Old School statesmen. From Britain Robert Baird dispatched urgent appeals to the New York Observer. More elaborately, Charles Hodge soon placed a thirty-page historical narration and appeal in the Biblical Repertory. With characteristic thoroughness he discussed the evolution of patronage since the seventeenth century and dismissed American objections to Scottish preference for state support. If Americans favored religion in the public school, he argued, they were of the same outlook as the Free Church. No church on earth, was his enthusiastic conclusion, "is now exhibiting such an amount of Christian energy
and excellence." But the most important—and fateful—American apologetic for the campaign came from one of the most prominent and conservative Presbyterian scholars of the South, Thomas Smyth of Charleston.

Smyth was an Ulsterman, educated in Belfast, London, and Princeton, who in 1834 had become minister of the Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston. Although he soon identified with South Carolina and became an apologist for slavery and Southern interests, his international outlook and connections remained strong. He corresponded regularly with Scottish and Irish Presbyterian leaders, published some of his writings in England, and made periodic visits to Britain. Not unnaturally then in October, 1843 he preached and published an ardent exhortation for aid to the Scots under the title of The Exodus of the Church of Scotland and the Claims of the Free Church of Scotland to the Sympathy and Assistance of American Christians. The sermon admirably narrated the courageous stand of the Disruption leaders and stressed the larger indebtedness of American Protestantism to Scottish tradition. The tract won notice far beyond Charleston. It was widely reviewed, and five hundred copies were quickly printed to forward the money-raising campaign. More ominously, its republication in Scotland was to have unexpected results: it was to be seized upon by Scottish antislavery and Dissenter controversialists as evidence of the Free Church's unholy connection with American slavery.²

Thus the Old School took the lead in laying the basis for a Scottish mission to America. Faced with the unprecedented task of building churches and schools, providing for theological education, and supporting a ministry without state funding, the Free Church launched its huge endowment campaign. One month after the schism, in June, 1843, Baird wrote from London that the Free Kirk leadership was committed to sending a delegation to America to seek financial help. Indeed, American funding had already begun, for in July Chalmers was writing to New York to thank Lenox for a gift of £1,100.
At first Chalmers himself was considered for the American mission, but he could hardly be spared. Eventually the Free Church selected a small party of delegates who could both gather information about American church organization and receive donations for the Scottish church. The first to leave, in December, 1843, was William Cunningham, already nominated to be professor in the Free Church theological college, but commissioned first to explain Scottish events to Americans and study the organization of their theological institutions. A keen controversialist in the "Ten Years' Conflict" and universally regarded as a chieftain of the Disruption together with Chalmers and Candlish, Cunningham was already well known to American Presbyterians and had received a Princeton D.D. in 1842. His stay in America was to be the briefest, however, since he was committed to report back to the Free Church General Assembly in May, 1844.

If Cunningham was the most eminent of the delegates, his companion was altogether unknown in America. Henry Ferguson was a Dundee merchant with an impressive gift for popular, entertaining, and even comic exposition. He may have been the most effective advocate of the Free Church to lay audiences; James W. Alexander at first thought his appearance plain and unimpressive, but after hearing him speak at Princeton, he found his performance "amazing."

Two months later three more ministers prominent in Disruption politics joined the American campaign. George Lewis of Ormiston, near Dundee, though not of first prominence in Scotland, was important as the campaign's recorder. He was an intelligent observer and his was the published report, Impressions of America and American Churches (1845). His two companions were important in another and less favorable direction: they were fated to play roles in the entanglement of the campaign in the abolitionist crusade. William Chalmers of Dailly was the delegate approached by William Lloyd Garrison in May with an invitation to speak at the impending Antislavery convention; his inevitable refusal fatefuly imprisoned the Free Church mission in the labyrinth of
transatlantic antislavery agitation. The third cleric, Robert Burns of Paisely, was to raise the slavery issue in another way—by his very presence. In Scotland he had been an effective non-intrusion orator and temperance crusader. But he was also an antislavery activist and a prominent member of the powerful Glasgow Emancipation Society. Known for his candor and directness, his quick judgments and "vivacious idiosyncrasies," as Cunningham euphemistically called them, caused friction, despite American appreciation of his brilliance as a preacher. His manner elicited "puzzled letters of inquiry" from "kirk-sessions" and at least one embittered altercation on the issue of American responsibility to aid the Free Church. "He was always ready, in public and private," fumed Cunningham, "to tell his auditors all he thought of their ways and of their institutions, great and small." Throughout the visit Cunningham's efforts to control him proved fruitless, and whether by original design or improvised "damage control" he was eventually sent to conduct the appeal in Canada.

The delegates' itineraries were significant. Letters to Chalmers noted regretfully that the mission had neither time nor numbers to effect a thorough canvass of the republic. In consequence, their travels adhered primarily to areas of Presbyterian, especially Old School, strength. Despite its fame and religious reputation in Britain, New England was not given high priority. Instead, cities of the middle Atlantic seaboard were favored, while the South was the most carefully cultivated area of all. Cunningham, whose time was limited, addressed meetings in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Richmond, but ventured no further south and never left the Atlantic region. In his own account he emphasized his three satisfying stays at Princeton where he was a guest of Charles Hodge and engaged in faculty discussions concerning the correct organization of a Presbyterian church and its relation to the state. His companion, Ferguson, travelled farther south to Charleston before returning back north. Their tour had to be hurried to a conclusion in April, and in
May Cunningham was back in Edinburgh making his report to the General Assembly.

The other delegates, led by Lewis, gave more serious attention to the South and West. Traveling uncomfortably in winter by train, coach, and river boat, they followed a grueling schedule which took them over much of settled North America. Lewis' itinerary is known in greatest detail. After disembarking in Boston, he spent his first week in New York and Princeton, consulting with James Fenno, Charles Hodge, Samuel Miller, and the Alexanders. Then, omitting Philadelphia, he proceeded directly to Baltimore and Washington. Here he paid a reverent visit to Washington's tomb at Mount Vernon, visited the Supreme Court, called on President Tyler, and preached before Congress. Then for the next ten weeks he travelled in the South—to Charleston, Savannah, Augusta, Montgomery, Mobile, New Orleans, Natchez, Vicksburg, Memphis, St. Louis, and Louisville.

His usual practice was to stay for several days at the home of the local Presbyterian minister, to preach and present the case for the Free Kirk, and to seek out substantial citizens, often of Scottish birth or descent, who might be induced to give generous aid to the cause. In some places his appeal was strongly supported by local celebrities, such as Smyth and Adger in Charleston and Thornwell in Columbia. Generally, he appears to have been well received. Money was pledged, and women even sent him ear rings, gold coins, and gold watches. A dying Charleston lady placed a bequest in the hands of her sister with the words, "Before they come I hope to be with John Knox in heaven."

Only occasionally did Lewis meet with unexpected hostility. A Seceder challenged his arguments, an old Scottish soldier scorned all religion, a Glasgow baker uttered defiance as a socialist. Most surprisingly, a rich elderly planter in Augusta spurned him with the unexpected announcement that his family had been Catholic Jacobites who had been driven from Glasgow seventy years earlier, and furthermore, he now believed "religion to be either for rogues or fools,
and for the most part a scramble for power or money."

Finally in May Lewis arrived in Louisville where he was apparently taken
in hand by Gardiner Spring before his presentation to the Old School General
Assembly. Lewis was not impressed with the sessions: reports were interminable,
debates were unfocused and lifeless, and discussions of trivial issues were
prolonged while the Assembly resolutely gagged all mention of slavery. After
William Chalmers arrived from Pittsburgh, the two Scots made their three-hour
presentation, Chalmers narrating the history of the Scottish separation, while
Lewis followed with discussion of the principles which justified it. At the
climax of the session the delegates formally presented the Free Church Protest
and Deed of Separation to the Moderator. The scene was an emotional one, and
the Americans showed abundant sympathy and support. (An exception was Robert
J. Breckinridge, still embittered by his Glasgow experience in 1836. Lewis
found him to be "a shrewd, vigorous, sarcastic man, not very amiable or
interesting, but acute, logical, and pertinaciously fond of an argument."
Deeply moved, the Assembly recommended that parishes initiate collections for
the Scottish brethren overseas, though no definite plan of solicitation was
legislated.

The delegates’ concluding month, June, was experienced almost as anticlimax.
Lewis, for example, became almost a tourist, covering huge distances with driving
speed. He resumed his travels, crossing the Mason-Dixon Line again to pay
flying visits to Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Erie, Niagara, Toronto, Kingston,
Montreal, and Quebec before returning to New York and Boston in preparation
for his departure. Finally, on July 1 he and the other delegates boarded ship
in Boston for the return voyage to Britain.

On both sides of the Atlantic religious journals heralded the Free Church
mission as an unrivalled success and the beginning of a new era of closer trans-
atlantic understanding and co-operation. The principals in this apparent entente
themselves strove to advance an impression of genuine concord. Nonetheless, if the Scottish visit had its triumphs, it also knew some frictions and ironies, and the true state and consequences of the Scottish encounter with American religion require closer inspection. Obscured behind the surface congratulations, three significant sequels to the encounter may be discerned. First and most simply, the Free Church obtained some American money. The fund campaign was declared a success, though the proceeds were more slender than expected. If the Scots were rather disappointed with their monetary gains, a second outcome was disappointing to many Americans. Hopes that the Free Church, deprived of state support, would be led to applaud the republic's religious experiment were to remain largely unfulfilled. In general, America's voluntaryism and revivalism evoked scepticism, not imitation. And lastly, the Scots and the Old School Presbyterians did indeed labor to achieve some transatlantic co-ordination for the future. Though at first this effort appeared to promise real gains, the connection was soon to be assailed and ultimately debilitated by the passionate antislavery controversy in Scottish-American religious relations. Each of these results requires some exposition.
First, with respect to the financial collections, the total was apparently disappointing. While some American individuals and churches gave generously to the Scots, the aggregate results were hardly satisfying if the purpose of the tour was—as announced—to furnish the Free Church with a substantial contribution towards a permanent endowment. Unfortunately, it is not now possible to assess the total raised in the United States with any accuracy. The _Edinburgh Witness_, organ of the Free Kirk and in a position to know, suggested receipts of about £3,000 (approximately $15,000). James Macbeth, an outspoken Free Churchman but also an antislavery opponent of the American campaign, halved the sum, suggesting a total of only £1,500. Both Lewis Tappan in America and Cunningham in Scotland estimated a far larger sum of about £9,000. On the evidence of several specific American gifts, it is very difficult to suppose a figure as limited as $15,000. Chalmers wrote letters of gratitude in 1844 thanking New York alone for almost £1,500, and Lewis stated that a quarter of the total receipts arose from the princely gifts of great New York merchants, Farnum, Johnstone, and Bethune. In contrast, New England, where the cause was in the hands of Baptists and Congregationalists, appears to have lacked enthusiasm. "I don't know what may be the result . . .," Cunningham wrote from Boston, "but as I have not heard of any very large subscriptions from individuals, I fear the sum total will not come to a great deal."

Of the grand total, the South appears to have raised the lion's share, at least $9,000. Charleston alone provided $2,000, despite the opposition of the minister of the Scotch Church, an elderly Moderate. The figure astonished Smyth, despite his enthusiasm for the cause. Lewis also praised Columbia, Augusta, Mobile and other places on his Southern tour for their generosity. In New Orleans even slaves made a contribution. But in comparison with gifts from other Presbyterian peoples, the alleged American £3,000 contribution may have been considered disappointing. Scotland was reported to have raised
£250,000, and even troubled Ireland produced £10,000. There may have been some American reluctance. Free Church adherence to the Establishment principle continued to rankle, anticlerical suspicions of Presbyterianism occasionally appeared, and some Southerners were certainly annoyed by delegates' antislavery opinions and news of Scottish antislavery agitation. As Smyth informed Chalmers, "the portion of our population which sympathizes with presbyterianism is small; and ... the sympathy of some parts of this body was studiously alienated by the opposition of your own clergymen here and other Scotchmen." Breckinridge, sensitive on this issue, responded to a plea from Burns with a surly reminder that after the American Revolution Witherspoon's begging mission in Scotland had met with small success.

Consequently, sensing the probable outcome, the deputation had to warn Chalmers by letter to lower his expectations. American sympathizers also were pained at the size of the gift. Hodge criticized the Louisville Assembly in the Biblical Repertory for not taking more concrete action, and William Buell Sprague told Cunningham that the sum was "not by any means what I think it should have been and ... I feel rather mortified than gratified by the result." Accordingly, when Cunningham made his preliminary report to the Edinburgh Assembly in 1844, he sounded defensive, claiming that the American contribution was a "liberal" one, considering the prevailing economic conditions in the United States.

Secondly, to the perplexity of many Americans, the delegates' personal observations in the United States did not lead to Free Church conversion to the American "religious economy" or to uncritical admiration for America's voluntary religious culture. Evangelicals of the Disruption continued to value the ordered concurrence of church and state and taught that a national church, if free of state manipulation, was a blessing to a Christian land. Magistrates, they had explained in a candid 1841 letter to American Presbyterians published
in the *Biblical Repertory*, were to support the church, providing the means of religious worship and instruction, but never to control or govern the church. Many Americans expressed disappointment and resentment at this rejection of church-state separation, regarded as the fundamental contribution of American Protestantism. A typical reaction was a forceful letter to the *New York Observer* which objected that financial aid to a church which would not abjure the principle of church-state union could not be given in good conscience. The *New York Evangelist* emphatically repeated the supposed moral difficulty. The *Methodist Quarterly Review* thought that the Free Church concept of a free Establishment was a logical absurdity. Probably the most embarrassing assault came from the Old School Synod of New York. Early in 1844 the Synod formally recommended generosity to the Free Church but also expressed dismay that Scots continued to adhere to the Establishment model of church-state relations. Eventually Gardiner Spring was able to have the awkward addendum suppressed, but the incident was characteristic of scenes repeated frequently throughout the deputation's American tour.

The Scots responded to this pressure with care and discretion. In America they tactfully muted criticisms, and later in Edinburgh Cunningham painted a highly flattering portrait of American religion for the General Assembly, citing well trained ministers, flourishing colleges, public sobriety, Sabbath observance almost as strict as Britain's, and revivals attended with salutary results. But while the Free Church gained confidence that independent financing could be practical, it never surrendered its conviction that the state owed duties to a national church. Especially in *Fleish*’s semi-official *Impressions* a more discriminating assessment of American religion persisted. *Fleish* was candid, mixing sincere praise in some things with strong disapproval in others, and conceding in his preface that Americans might find his opinions unwelcome. In this respect he was correct. Princeton's James W. Alexander summarized
the **Impressions** for his friend, John Hall:

He censures right and left. Our preaching . . . he describes as characterized by want of animation and earnestness. He is very severe on slavery and democracy. In fine, very little pleases him.

There is, throughout, a very offensive air of self-sufficiency and patronage.

It may be significant that the book was not republished in the United States and that American periodicals did not review it.

While his criticism ranged widely, including such defects as the "democratic excesses" of American politics and the inadequate Biblical foundations of public school education, emphasis fell on the traditional objections of voluntaryism and revivalism.

Like Chalmers, the Scots held to the scripturalness, efficacy, and superiority of a territorial church ministering competently to an entire nation through a comprehensive system of subsidized parishes. Against this ideological background the drawbacks of the American experiment with the voluntary scheme were amply demonstrated. The admired competition of churches was an evil rather than a blessing. Churches were planted where they were neither needed nor adequately maintained, simply to thwart another denomination. Everywhere the "religious economy" tended toward congregational polity, even among Presbyterians, resulting in scandalous inequities in ministerial support. Towns absorbed the best men and country parishes were left with the worst. Many ministers had to teach school or farm in order to live. Inevitably, the system created jealousy and division, the result of which was "to lower the tone of ministerial feeling, to vulgarize and secularize the churches of Christ, and to diminish the moral weight and influence of the ministers of the Gospel."

Furthermore, behind the ubiquitous American boasts of church-state separation there existed a comfortable Protestant consensus but also a subtle
crypto-Erastianism. Lewis even engaged in an amiable White House debate with John Tyler on the subject when the president raised the usual criticism of Free Church insistence on a committed Christian state. America itself was not genuinely voluntaryist, Lewis declared, pointing to state maintenance of chaplains in military forces and legislatures. When Tyler answered that such clergy were drawn from all sects, Lewis countered that they were drawn only from Christian sects. But a more fundamental difference obtruded when Tyler insisted that a healthy sectarian diversity encouraged competition and vitality in American religion. Lewis demurred. Divisions, he said, were an evil, tolerable only for the sake of liberty. 53

Probably the criticism that most puzzled Americans was the accusation that America's statutory separation masked a genuine Erastian threat to spiritual independence. Free of state support, they were told, congregations were nevertheless bound to private wealth. Pewholders were given voice in choosing ministers, and since sitters outnumbered members, sitters determined ministerial appointments. "Our American friends," Lewis complained, "are loath to believe us when we tell them that the church may get quit of the State connexion without attaining nearer to spiritual independence, or securing her self-regulating power. The monied man of a nominally Presbyterian Church may as completely trample on all discipline, and set at nought her spiritual interests, as any politicians in the management of a State church." American Erastianism was especially transparent where public issues were concerned, for Protestant leaders used the disjunction of church and state to excuse their failure to allow religion to challenge immoral political decisions. Here the churches' unwillingness to confront slavery, arguing that it was a problem of the political sphere, was the prime example. On the other hand, churches naively accepted political intrusions on their freedom with little or no protest in a way which recalled the worst abuses of Scottish patronage. "Do not the State Governments," Lewis
demanded, "in forbidding you, under severe penalties to teach the negro to read, as much interfere with your liberties as a Church of Christ, as the British Government did with ours in its recent attempt to coerce the Church of Scotland? . . . . The Government has plainly invaded your province as a Church, and that too without the plea of your being a State paid Church."  

Finally, American revivalism was the necessary concomitant of the competitive voluntary system, and fewis was convinced that, despite some genuine conversions, its practice was often corrupt. After viewing Western meetings, he added up their repellent defects--their excitement, fanaticism, absence of Biblical or theological foundation, and debilitating cyclical pattern. American preaching, he thought, was cold and ineffective until the revival machinery was activated. Then "the warmth of religious feeling is expended in paroxysms, which leave minister and members of the church weaker and more apathetic for months after, until the religious paroxysm is again renewed." Its vulgarity with its contrived publicity and newspaper sensationalism was especially abhorrent. "I hope," he concluded, "I shall never see the Free Church, in its impatience for fruit, resorting to the American method of 'getting up a revival' which, by a sure law of our nature, leaves ultimate weakness and imbecility."  

This Scottish distaste for a crude revivalism was certainly magnified by the belief that the phenomenon rested on the American pulpit's stress on human initiative in salvation, leading to fateful "compromises with Socinianism." Wariness on this issue was also intensified by circulation of American "self-conversionist" ideas in some quarters of Scottish Dissent in the 1840s. Contemporary revivals in the Secession and Congregational chapels emphasized universality of the atonement, conditional election, and the responsibility of all to repent and believe, and in both connexions schisms resulted for which America was held partly responsible. In the very year of the Disruption Wardlaw
had found it necessary to expel nine students, tainted with "American heresy," from his Glasgow Congregational academy. Visiting Scotland two years earlier, James T. Thornwell had noted the expulsion of James Morison, leader of the Secession revival, for "sentiments somewhat similar to those of Albert Barnes." He regretted that "the leaven of New Schoolism . . . is beginning to work its way, even here." It was not Barnes but Finney that Morison had been reading, but distrust of American revival compromises with Reformed orthodoxy served to strengthen some Free Kirk uneasiness with American influences throughout the 1840s.

The most dramatic illustration of this continuing distrust occurred but two years after the Free Church visit to America in a little known encounter between the two great personalities of Scottish and American religion. Following his custom, Chalmers in May, 1846 preached to an assembly of poor people in Burk's Close, Edinburgh. At the close of his sermon a visiting American minister, dissatisfied with what he perceived to be a lack of emphasis on immediate action, ventured uninvited to add extemporaneous exhortations to urgent and strenuous human effort. The interruption, regarded as offensive if not scandalous, created a minor sensation. The incident was the work of the venerable Lyman Beecher, then on his only visit to Scotland. Chalmers later dismissed the matter, received Beecher at his Burntisland home, and paid him compliments. Yet he expressed private misgivings that Beecher had urged human exertions on his people "without one word about the Spirit helping them." And later it was noticed that, contrary to his usual custom at Burntisland, Chalmers neglected to invite his American guest to lead his household in prayer.

It may be that all these concerns help to explain the cautious reception given to Robert Baird's classic survey and apologetic, Religion in America, published in Glasgow in 1844 only months after the delegates' return home. The book's treatment of theology and revivals was conservative but its transparent
endorsement of America’s voluntary religious system could not have entirely pleased Free Kirk champions. Accordingly, the book carried a routine but carefully crafted and meaningless "Recommendatory Notice" from Candlish, Welsh, and Robert Buchanan, leaders in the Disruption. It may be significant also that, despite long reviews in many British Dissenter journals, Baird’s work received no notice in the North British Review, the organ of the Free Church. Lewis indeed mentioned it in his Impressions, but only to accuse Baird of making false claims for America, contradicted by Baird’s own statistics in the appendix of his book.61

But there was a third and apparently more positive sequel to the Free Church visit of 1844. For as Thornwell’s comment suggests, these same Scottish reservations made possible a stronger sense of transatlantic fraternity with American Old School Presbyterians. Consequently, if the Scots were not attracted to "American Protestantism" in general, they did indeed develop a genuine respect for the Old School leadership, particularly at Princeton. At summer’s end a transatlantic entente between the two churches seemed to be settling into place. This was probably perceived as the most hopeful consequence of the movements of 1844, but its problems were to dominate Scottish-American religious relations for the remainder of the 1840s.

Throughout their travels, the Scottish deputation had been welcomed, entertained, and promoted by leading preachers and statesmen of the Old School. Although delegates appealed for aid to the general public and often spoke to representatives of other denominations, their personal associations were formed chiefly with Old School notables. Cunningham’s itinerary, the tour of shortest duration, centered prominently on Old School populations from New York to Richmond. Despite his limited time, his longest stays were at Princeton where serious discussion of free Presbyterian polity took place. The other delegates’ longer journeys were somewhat similar in pattern. It is clear from Lewis’
journal that he judged his most productive stays to be at Princeton, Charleston, Augusta, and Louisville. Thus the delegates developed their principal American ties with the established statesmen of the Old School—men like Hodge and the Alexanders at Princeton, and Smyth, Adger, and Thornwell in South Carolina.

Furthermore, the delegates soon made the pleasing discovery that common ground between the Free Church and many Presbyterians, even on the sensitive American church-state issue, was substantial. On his first Sabbath in New York Lewis reported that "the Presbyterian clergy of America had small sympathy with the extreme views of Scottish dissenters and like ourselves, hated the faults, not the existence, of an Established Church." Cunningham also was able to tell the Edinburgh General Assembly that on this issue there was not "the shadow of a shade of difference between us and our fathers and brethren at Princeton." In recognizing the Sabbath and appointing government chaplains, he went on, "the American nation has, in common with our own, expressed her adherence to the principle of a national religion and national duties to Christ."

The only remaining question was "simply how far it is expedient—that is, how far it is for the advancement of pure religion that the State should go in a country placed in the circumstances of America." Minimizing differences was also Cunningham's message to the Presbyterian public in the New York Observer. While the Free Church could not rule out any future connection with the Scottish state, his letter declared, government assistance could be accepted only under conditions of perfect freedom. And since such terms would never be offered, the church was in practice shut up to a voluntary system. The issue therefore was purely theoretical, and the task of the Free Church was now to grapple with future problems rather than dwell on lost aspirations of the past.

However, the work of demonstrating the essential unity of Free Kirk and American Presbyterianism was not left to the Scottish delegates. When an article in the New York Observer criticized Chalmers' church principles, Thomas Smyth
was quick to publish a rebuttal. But the Scots' chief American champion was Charles Hodge. Even before Disruption Hodge, in reviewing Chalmers' works, had warned Americans that "in regard to the existing establishments of the old world, there is more to be said, than is apparent at first view." Then when Disruption occurred, he reproved those who objected to Chalmers' continued adherence to the Establishment ideal, reminding his readers that Americans had only lately abandoned their New England Standing Orders and come to a general support of voluntaryism. His most extended comment appeared in the Biblical Repertory in 1844. Here he argued that there was virtually no difference between American and Free Scottish Presbyterians. Like the Scots, Americans insisted that government be leavened by Christianity, that state functionaries labor under its influence, and that the Christian religion be respected as part of the law of the land. The sole significant difference, thought Hodge, was that while Americans expected public support for religious instruction in the schools, the Scots "went one step further" in demanding state provision for preachers. He conceded that Americans would oppose such subsidies to the ministry, but insisted that the difference was small. Finally, Hodge wanted American Presbyterians to abjure "Independency" and adopt Free Church principles; he admired Chalmers' insistence on organizing on a national rather than congregational basis for financial support. After his conversations with Cunningham he wrote his plan for a Presbyterian Sustentation Fund which he tried--unsuccessfully--to have adopted at the Louisville General Assembly in 1844.

Consequently, the Scottish mission of 1844 ended on a note of mutual congratulations between Old and New World Presbyterians. Yet one immensely difficult issue remained. Scottish public opinion regarded American slavery with revulsion, while by the mid-1840s the Old School had become increasingly committed to non-interference with or even to an apologetic for the institution. Even while the Scots deputation was in America, Robert Candlish, Chalmers'
chief aid, had been denouncing the horrors of slavery before cheering Edinburgh audiences, and among the delegates themselves Robert Burns of Paisley occasionally had been outspoken on the question. Yet the delegates had generally tried to be discreet, not disguising their hostility to slavery, but wishing also to avoid compromising their mission. Overtures and remonstrances from American abolitionists had been firmly rejected, Questions about the morality of accepting contributions from the slaveholding South had been dismissed.

Nonetheless, Lewis typified the general Scottish detestation of slavery. On his travels he often privately rebuked Southerners for their defense of the institution, and his Impressions added to Scottish antislavery literature by its frequent examples of masters' inhumanity and cruelty as well as admiring portrayals of slaves' inoffensiveness and patience. Indeed, passages on slavery from his book were abstracted and republished in Edinburgh in 1845 under the title, Slavery and Slaveholding in the United States. Accordingly, the slave question was inevitably destined to come to the fore in Scottish-American relations, overshadowing all other triumphs of consensus. In April, 1844 as the delegates were moving into the South, Lewis Tappan of the American and Foreign Antislavery Society was writing to John Scoble of the British and Foreign, urging the British to raise the issue of "tainted money" in Scotland. Two weeks later, Robert Breckinridge of Baltimore, worried about news reports of increasing agitation in the Free Church about "the unhappy position of the African race in America," sent an express note to Cunningham as he was boarding ship to return home, warning him of the danger of "an explosion between us and you."

In Scotland an explosion was already taking place.
1. Voluntary controversy bibliography
   Burleigh, 325
   Heman Humphrey in 1835 thought that "the great Church and State question,
as far as endowments are concerned, was never more thoroughly and ably
discussed, than it has been within the last two or three years in Scotland."
   Heman Humphrey, Great Britain, France and Belgium: A Short Tour in 1835 (2

   Comparative size of Scottish Dissent in John D. Gay, The Geography of Religion
in England (London, 1971)

   preached on the Evening of Thursday, 9th April, 1828, in Greyfriars Church,
   Glasgow, before the Glasgow Association for Propagating the Gospel in
   connexion with the United Secession Church (Glasgow, 1829). Samuel Hanson Cox
   in NYE, July 25, 1840. Humphrey, Britain, France and Belgium, II, 154 ff.
   Robert M. York, George E. Cheever Religious and Social Reformer 1807-1830
   (Orono, Maine, 1855), p. 93. NYE, Jan. 6, 1838.
   Humphrey confessed that he, like Lyman Beecher, had once trembled over
disestablishment, but was mistaken. Religious institutions, he thought, were
better maintained after than before the change in the United States. However,
Humphrey was also shocked at the extremes of Scottish voluntarism; "But while
I fully agree with the Scottish Voluntaries in their general views and
reasonings, they have broached certain ultra opinions, to which I cannot
subscribe. They will not allow the government to legislate at all in
religious matters—not even to recognize the Christian Sabbath as a divine
institution."

3. John Gordon Lorimer, Church Establishments Defended (Glasgow, 1832); ibid.,
   The Past and Present Condition of Religion and Morality in the United States
   of America (Glasgow, 1833). See also supra Chap. III. For Henry Cooke's
   outburst, see The Voluntaries in Belfast: Report of the Discussion on Civil
   Establishments of Religion: Held in Belfast, on the Evenings of 16th and 17th
   March, 1836 (Belfast, 1836),

4. NYE, July 25, 1840.

5. Thomas Chalmers

6. Calvin Colton, History and Character of American Revivals of Religion
   (London, 1832). William Buell Sprague, Lectures on Revivals of Religion
   (Glasgow, 1832).

7. For the Scottish revival, see Narratives of Revivals ..., in Scotland
   Ireland and Wales (Philadelphia, 1847). Harry Escott, A History of Scottish
   Ralph Wardlaw, The Revival of Religion (Manchester, 1841). For American
   notice see NYE, Jan 25, Aug. 22, Oct. 17, 1840; Aug. 21, 1841. NYE, Nov. 9,
   1839, Oct 31, 1840.

   See Robert John Carwardine, Transatlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelism in
   Britain and America, 1790-1855 (Westport, Conn., 1878).

   Cox to Chalmers, in Interviews; Memorable and Useful (London, 1853)

8. Cunningham wrote the (anonymous) preface to Bourne

9. Cox, Interviews, pp. 52-64, 90-91.

10. Bibliography of "Ten Years Conflict"

"Our whole Church is awake to the importance of your conflict, nor do I know of a minister, elder, or layman in the length and breadth of this land who does not entirely sympathize with you and the beloved brethren who are so ready to hazard all that the Lord Jesus Christ may rule as King in His own Church . . . ."


13. Lewis, Impressions, preface


15. Free Church to Associate Synod of North America in Evangelical Repository 1846, p. 45. Baird to Editor, June 23 or 24, 1843 in NYG, July 29, 1843. (98) Welsh to Nicholas Murray, July 11, 1843 in NYG Sept. 9, 1843.


17. Old School and New School

18. Chalmers correspondence to Old School

Princeton

Lenox

19. General Assembly to Church of Scotland April 14, 1841 in Princeton R. 1841, pp. 565-566. Note also letters from Secession church, Congregational Union, and the Synod of Ulster, in ibid., 1840, 411-413. The Irish letter, July 4, 1839, expressed sympathy with the Old School, observing that the Irish church had been concerned about American Presbyterian errors.


Baird in NYG


22. Baird to NYG


Cunningham was in the United States from Dec. 18 1843 to May 1, 1844.

Princeton D.D.
24. Ferguson bio

25. Lewis left Liverpool Feb. 4, 1844. His sojourn in the United States was between Feb. 21 and July 1, 1844. His book was published in Edinburgh in 1845.

William Chalmers
Robert Burns of Paisley

26. For the problem with Burns, see Rainy and Mackenzie, Cunningham, pp. 202-203, 210-211. Hodge reported to Cunningham, March 21, 1844: Burns preached a delightful sermon. All were ready "to let him abuse us and our domestic institutions as much as he pleases if he will only preach the gospel as purely and spiritually as he did last night." Other Presbyterians were less tolerant. Hodge, 354.

27. The delegation was at full strength only in late February, March, and April. Cunningham and Ferguson were in the United States between Dec. 13 and May 1, 1844. Lewis and his colleagues toured the country between Feb. 21 and July 1, 1844.

28. Cunningham itinerary
Ferguson itinerary

Departure


30. Ibid., pp. 107, 138-139, 120-121, 141.


32. Itinerary

Departure July 1


34. Ibid. James Macbeth, The Church and the Slaveholder: or Light and Darkness ... Earnestly and Respectfully Addressed to the Members of the Approaching Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, and to the Churches Generally (Edinburgh, n.d.), p.


Cunningham 208


Lewis
37. Cunningham to Hodge, April 9, 1844 in Hodge, 356. Yet New England appears to have given about $3500; Shepparson, *Journal of Southern History*

38. Southern contribution

Charleston

Scotch church -- Lewis, *Impressions*, p. 108 ff. See the notice of the Rev. Mr. Forrest, the Scottish Moderate at the Old Scots Church, Charleston in *Lang, Religion and Education*, pp. 9, 184-186.

Smyth surprise


Augusta

Mobile

New Orleans


*Annals* 545.

41. Smyth


43. Hodge

*Annals* 543.

44. *Annals* 548.

See letters from Moses Stuart and Leonard Woods to Cunningham, in *Cunningham*, pp. 214-215.


46. NYO, Oct. 7, 1843.

*NYE Methodist Quarterly Review*, 1844, 514-515.


48.

49.


52. Ibid., 54-56, 266, 383-406.

53. Ibid., pp. 78-79.

54. Ibid., pp. 125-126.
55. Ibid., pp. 125-126, 297.


57. Christian Witness, 1844, 356. The Expulsion of Nine Students

58.


60. See the review in Cong. Mag., 1844, 209-214. Lewis, Impressions, pp. 54-56. Baird, Religion in the United States (Glasgow, 1843), preface. The Scottish recommendation, dated September, 1843, stated that "We do not agree in all the opinions which the esteemed Author has expressed," but "there can be no reasonable doubt that the information it contains is well fitted to encourage the efforts of all churches which are similarly situated." "Whatever diversities of opinion may prevail in this country on . . . the condition and prospects of religion in America, no candid man will deny, that religion has there been placed in circumstances, and has appeared in aspects, which are well worthy of serious consideration. . . ."


62. Ibid., pp. 46-47.

63. Ibid., pp. 39-40, 46-47. Lewis was told that American Presbyterians believed Scottish Dissenters to be wrong in attacking the principle of a national Christianity.

64. NYQ, Jan. 6, 1844. Lewis made the same point two months later; NYQ, March 23, 1844.

65.


67. Ibid., New Series, XVI (1844), 86-118, 249-260. For Free Church inspiration of Hodge's Sustentation Fund, see Ibid., 1847, 360-370.

68.

69.