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## The Tractarians' Political Rhetoric

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## “The Tractarians’ Political Rhetoric”<sup>1</sup>

Robert H. Ellison

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On Sunday 14 July 1833, John Keble, Professor of Poetry at the University of Oxford,<sup>2</sup> preached a sermon entitled “National Apostasy” in the Church of St Mary the Virgin, the primary venue for academic sermons, religious lectures, and other expressions of the university’s spiritual life. The sermon is remembered now largely because John Henry Newman, who was vicar of St Mary’s at the time,<sup>3</sup> regarded it as the beginning of the Oxford Movement.

Generally regarded as stretching from 1833 to Newman’s conversion to Rome in 1845, the movement was an effort to return the Church of England to her historic roots, as expressed in

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<sup>2</sup> John Keble (1792-1866) is best known today as the author of *The Christian Year*, an enormously popular book of devotional poems written to correspond to the important dates and seasons of the Church of England’s calendar. He was also a devoted parish priest, serving first with his father in Gloucestershire and later, from 1836 until his death, in Hursley, a parish in Hampshire not far from the cathedral city of Winchester. Keble College, Oxford, which opened in 1870, was constructed in his memory. Helpful articles on Keble and the other figures mentioned in this essay can be found in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

<sup>3</sup> John Henry Newman (1801-1890), began his affiliation with Oxford in 1817. He became tutor of Oriel in 1826 and vicar of St. Mary’s in 1828. His shift in sympathies from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism led him to resign both positions in the mid-1840s. He became a Catholic in 1845, was made a cardinal in 1879, and was declared “Venerable” in 1991. Efforts to have him declared a saint are currently underway.

the writings of the church fathers<sup>4</sup> and the seventeenth-century theologians known as the “Caroline Divines.”<sup>5</sup> The doctrinal elements of the movement—those concerned with proper belief<sup>6</sup>—were expressed in the *Tracts for the Times*, a series of ninety-one pamphlets and treatises that inspired some to label the movement “tractarianism” and its adherents “tractarians.” Its practical emphases—the dimension concerned with proper conduct—appeared in the ten volumes of *Plain Sermons, by Contributors to the “Tracts for the Times”* (London, 1839-48). Politics was not a dominant concern, but both publications did give some attention to the social order in general and the relationship between the church and the civil powers in particular.<sup>7</sup>

Not everyone would agree with Newman’s assertion that 14 July marked “the start of the religious movement of 1833.”<sup>8</sup> Among Keble’s contemporaries, for example, J. B. Mozley<sup>9</sup> saw

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<sup>4</sup> The fathers most often cited in the writings of the Oxford Movement include Ambrose (c. 339-397), Augustine (354-430), Chrysostom (c. 347-407), Irenaeus (c. 130-c. 200), Jerome (c. 342-420), Origen (c. 185-c. 254), and Tertullian (c. 160-c. 225). See the article entitled “Fathers of the Church” and the individual biographical entries in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. revised, ed. E. A. Livingstone (Oxford and New York, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> These theologians are called “Caroline” because they lived during the reigns of Charles I and II. The ones who most influenced the leaders of the Oxford Movement include Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626), William Beveridge (died 1708), George Bull (1634-1710), Thomas Ken (1637-1711), and William Laud (1573-1645). Selections from their writings are included in one of the tractarians’ major projects, the eighty-three-volume *Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology* (Oxford, 1841-63).

<sup>6</sup> In 1840, Pusey identified the Oxford Movement’s chief concerns as “High thoughts of the two Sacraments” (baptism and holy communion); a “High estimate” of the “visible Church” and the Episcopal system of government; “Regard for ordinances” and “the visible part of devotion”; and “Reverence for and deference to the Ancient Church”; see Henry Parry Liddon, *Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey*, 4 Vols. (London and New York, 1893-1897), 2:140.

<sup>7</sup> For discussions of the extent to which tractarianism was a political movement, see John R. Griffin, *The Oxford Movement: A Revision* (Edinburgh, 1984); Peter Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760-1857* (Cambridge and New York, 1994); John Henry Lewis Rowlands, *Church, State and Society: The Attitudes of John Keble, Richard Hurrell Froude and John Henry Newman, 1827-1845* (Worthing, 1989); David Nicholls, “Two Tendencies in Anglo-Catholic Political Theology,” in *Tradition Renewed: The Oxford Movement Conference Papers*, ed. Geoffrey Rowell (London, 1986), 140-52.

<sup>8</sup> John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1890; repr. New York, 1968), 41.

<sup>9</sup> James Bowling Mozley (1813-1878) and his older brother Thomas (1806-1893) were closely associated with the leading members of the Oxford Movement. James studied with

“National Apostasy” as the “exordium of a great revolution,”<sup>10</sup> while Thomas Keble, the younger brother who read the sermon before it was delivered, is reported to have said only that John “should read in a quick and lively manner and he should be sure to wear his spectacles.”<sup>11</sup> Since then, one of Newman’s few defenders has been John R. Griffin, who published several pieces in the 1970s and 1980s about the “radical” nature of the sermon;<sup>12</sup> several others have challenged Newman’s claim, sometimes going so far as to dismiss it as a “myth.”<sup>13</sup> Other studies suggest that the issue has yet to be decided: one scholar has noted that some Victorians saw the sermon as a “counter-attack” against Parliament’s interference in the Church’s affairs;<sup>14</sup> another has called it “something of a non-event”;<sup>15</sup> and a third appears to take a kind of middle ground, granting it only a “highly symbolic” place “in the beginnings of the Oxford Movement.”<sup>16</sup>

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Pusey, was Newman’s curate at St Mary’s, and worked with Newman and Keble on an edition of the works of fellow tractarian Richard Hurrell Froude. He was also involved with three organs of the high church party: the *British Critic*; its successor the *Christian Remembrancer*; and a weekly newspaper called *The Guardian*.

<sup>10</sup> J. B. Mozley, *Essays Historical and Theological*, 2 vols. (New York, 1878), 1:xxii.

<sup>11</sup> Marvin R. O’Connell, *The Oxford Conspirators: A History of the Oxford Movement 1833-45* (London, 1969), 126.

<sup>12</sup> Griffin presents his most extensive arguments in “The Meaning of *National Apostasy*: A Note on Newman’s *Apologia*,” *Faith & Reason* 2 (1976): 19-33. They also appear briefly in *Revision*, 5-15 and *John Keble: Saint of Anglicanism* (Macon, GA, 1987), 77-86. It is somewhat ironic that his most reserved comments about “National Apostasy” appear in “John Keble: Radical,” *Anglican Theological Review* 53 (1971): 167-73.

<sup>13</sup> The word “myth” was the choice of F. L. Cross, who has chronicled the lack of attention given to the sermon for the rest of the nineteenth century. See F. L. Cross, *John Henry Newman* (London, 1933), 162. For other skeptical assessments, see Josef L. Altholz, “The Tractarian Moment: The Incidental Origins of the Oxford Movement,” *Albion* 26 (1994): 276; Peter Nockles, “Church and King: Tractarian Politics Reappraised,” in *From Oxford to the People: Reconsidering Newman & the Oxford Movement*, ed. Paul Vaiss (Leominster, 1996), 96-97; and Griffin’s survey of views contrary to his own in “Meaning of *National Apostasy*,” 31.

<sup>14</sup> George Herring, *What Was the Oxford Movement?* (London and New York, 2002), 15.

<sup>15</sup> Mark D. Chapman, “John Keble, ‘National Apostasy’ and the Myths of 14 July,” in *John Keble in Context*, ed. Kirstie Blair (London, 2004), 47.

<sup>16</sup> C. Brad Faught, *The Oxford Movement: A Thematic History of the Tractarians and Their Times* (University Park, PA, 2003), 5. A counterproposal appears in a recent edition of Newman’s *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford* (Oxford and New York, 2006): James David Earnest and Gerard Tracey have written that the Victorian critic Joseph

Choosing “National Apostasy” as a starting point may be historically convenient; it does provide a specific point of reference, much as the publication of *Lyrical Ballads* did for English Romanticism<sup>17</sup> and the “shot heard round the world” did for the American Revolution.<sup>18</sup> It is not rhetorically accurate, however, for the sermon did not call for the audience to embrace any theological or political agenda. In fact, Keble warned his audience that “Public concerns, ecclesiastical or civil, will prove ruinous indeed to those, who permit them to occupy all their care and thoughts.”<sup>19</sup> The sermon was essentially conservative in all regards, not radical or revolutionary as other critics have maintained.

A more accurate assessment has been offered by Perry Butler, who wrote the article on Keble for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Butler contends that it was actually the preface to “National Apostasy,” written on 22 July and somewhat “more pointed” than the sermon itself, that “played a part in stirring concerned churchmen into action.”<sup>20</sup> In other words,

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Jacobs and noted Newman scholar Stephen Dessain believe “Personal Influence, the Means of Propagating the Truth,” which Newman preached on 22 January 1832, as the actual beginning of the movement (“Editors’ Introduction,” xvi, lviii).

<sup>17</sup> William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge published the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798. The preface to the 1800 edition, which famously defined “good poetry” as “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings,” is often regarded as one of the leading manifestoes of Romantic aesthetic theory. See *Lyrical Ballads, with Other Poems*, 2 vols. 2nd ed. (London, 1800), 1:xiv.

<sup>18</sup> Mark Chapman has offered similar analogies; he has suggested that “National Apostasy” was “as notable in its way as the display of Luther’s theses,” the act that is generally regarded as launching the Protestant Reformation, or “the assassination at Sarajevo,” which was the catalyst for the first world war; Mark Chapman, *Faith and Revolt: Studies in the Literary Influence of the Oxford Movement* (London, 1970), 30. Chapman is more sympathetic to Newman’s claim than I: the introduction to *Faith and Revolt* states that the Oxford Movement spanned the “twelve years between Keble’s Assize Sermon and Newman’s secession” to Rome (6), and he cites Newman’s own words uncritically soon after the references to Luther and Sarajevo (31).

<sup>19</sup> John Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional* (Oxford and London, 1847), 147.

<sup>20</sup> Perry Butler, “Keble, John (1792-1866),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15231> (accessed 20 January 2008). I will return to the preface at the end of the essay; for the full text of both preface and sermon, see Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 127-48.

it was what Keble prepared for the press, not what he wrote for the pulpit, that was truly revolutionary. The sermon, then, may not mark the genesis of the Oxford Movement, but it does make a useful starting point in a study of the tractarians' political beliefs and rhetorical strategies. Newman, Keble, and E.B. Pusey<sup>21</sup> published a number of works on the relationship between church and state, and they did so while working in the midst of different circumstances and while playing different roles. In most cases, they were speaking from the pulpit, and thus acting as official representatives of the Church of England; at times, however, they wrote for a broader readership and acted essentially as private citizens. Their ideas were not always the same; whatever differences may be found show not that they were confused, inconsistent, or even intellectually dishonest, but that they knew how to craft their messages for specific audiences and occasions. The works to be considered here are some of the leading examples of their rhetorical versatility and keen sense of what we today would call "audience awareness."<sup>22</sup>

"National Apostasy" was what is known as an "assize sermon," a message preached when judges came from London to hear cases in the outlying counties.<sup>23</sup> Little has been written

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<sup>21</sup> Along with Keble and Newman, Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882) was one of the most prominent figures in the Oxford Movement. He was often a favorite target of its enemies; those sympathetic to the movement's doctrines and agendas were sometimes pejoratively described as "Puseyites." Pusey was a scholar and a priest, serving for many years as professor of Hebrew and canon of Christ Church, which was, and is, both a college chapel and the cathedral of the Diocese of Oxford. His monument in Oxford is Pusey House, an academic and spiritual community that opened in 1884.

<sup>22</sup> The concept of audience awareness goes back to Aristotle, who asserted that "of the three elements in speech-making—speaker, subject, and person addressed—it is the last one, the hearer, that determines the speech's end and object"; *Rhetoric*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts, Great Books of the Western World 9, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins (Chicago and London, 1952), I.3. Newman applied this principle to homiletics in *The Idea of a University*, noting that the audience "is included in the very idea of preaching; and we cannot determine how in detail we ought to preach, till we know whom we are to address"; John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (1852; repr. Oxford, 1976), 336. For additional discussion, see Sharon E. Jarvis, "Audience," in *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*, ed. Thomas O. Sloane (Oxford and New York, 2001), 59-68.

<sup>23</sup> According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word "assize" derives from the Old French words "asise" or "assise," meaning the "act of sitting down." It has come to denote a

about the genre in Victorian times, but Randall McGowen has identified two primary features of assize sermons preached in the eighteenth century. The preachers often spoke directly to the judges assembled before them, outlining the scriptural foundation on which the legal system had been built and exhorting them to uphold the ideals of law and justice in the deliberations they were about to undertake.<sup>24</sup> The sermon, he says, was also a theologically and politically conservative speech; the preacher was to maintain the religio-political *status quo*, not to offer radical ideas or suggest revolutionary actions.<sup>25</sup>

Direct address was a minor element in Keble's sermon: near the end, he mentioned, almost in passing, the importance of "veracity in witness, fairness in pleaders, strict impartiality, self-command, and patience, in those on whom decisions depend."<sup>26</sup> His tone, however, was precisely what the occasion demanded. Keble was privately questioning whether measures such as the Irish Church Temporalities Act<sup>27</sup> were making it difficult for the church to maintain her alliance with the state,<sup>28</sup> but he did not use the sermon as a platform for criticizing the government. References to Parliament and "public measures" appeared only as brief allusions; language such as "the case is, I say, conceivable"; "if such a thing should be"; and "should it

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"Legislative sitting" or "A trial in which sworn assessors or jurymen decide questions of fact; a judicial inquest."

<sup>24</sup> Randall McGowen, "'He Beareth not the Sword in Vain': Religion and the Criminal Law in Eighteenth-Century England," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 21 (Winter 1987-1988): 193.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 194.

<sup>26</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 146.

<sup>27</sup> The Irish Church Temporalities Act, which was introduced into Parliament in February 1833 and enacted that August, called for a number of reforms, including the elimination or consolidation of ten dioceses spread throughout the country; see John Keble, "Church Reform. No. IV," *British Magazine* 3 (March 1833): 361. It had been proposed without first securing the advice or consent of church officials, and thus proved deeply unpopular among many laity and clergy. See Olive J. Brose, *Church and Parliament: The Reshaping of the Church of England 1828-1860* (Stanford and London, 1959), 101-19.

<sup>28</sup> Griffin, "Meaning of *National Apostasy*," 27.

ever happen” showed that, at least for that occasion, Keble was presenting the state’s interference with the church as a hypothetical development rather than a *fait accompli*.<sup>29</sup>

Keble offered no such qualifiers, however, when he discussed the conduct of the people. He identified several “omens and tokens” that suggested the nation had begun to fall away: a “restless, godless spirit,” the forging of unholy personal and commercial ties “under the guise of charity and toleration,” and the rejection of Christian principles as a guide to “public conduct.”<sup>30</sup> Apostasy, then, was the fault of the subjects rather than their rulers; it took place not when the government passed bills undermining the country’s Christian identity, but rather when such measures were “forced on the Legislature” by irreligious “public opinion.”<sup>31</sup>

Because apostasy had been caused by spiritual apathy and neglect, it could only be remedied by spiritual activity and zeal. Keble thus asked, “what are the particular duties of sincere Christians . . . in a time of such dire calamity?”<sup>32</sup> He found his answer in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Samuel, where Samuel rebuked Saul “for his impious liberality in sparing the Amalekites,” but did so in a manner that would not “dishonour him in the presence of the people.”<sup>33</sup> The concern, moreover, lasted longer than the conflict, for Samuel “mourned for” Saul long after he cut off all association with him.<sup>34</sup>

Keble’s congregation had an obligation to act likewise. Their first responsibility was the cultivation of their spiritual lives: they were to commit themselves “more thoroughly to [their] God and Saviour in those duties . . . which are not immediately affected by the emergencies of

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<sup>29</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 134, 137, 140, 142.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 135, 136, 138.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

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



the moment: the daily and hourly duties . . . of piety, purity, charity, [and] justice.”<sup>35</sup> They could also confront “misguided” authorities who were acting against the best interests of the church, but only in a “grave, respectful, [and] affectionate” way, and only after they had first engaged in “earnest INTERCESSION with God.”<sup>36</sup> Rebuke must not, moreover, lead to rebellion; Keble reminded his congregation that “Submission and order are still duties” because “‘The powers that be are ordained of God,’ whether they foster the true Church or no.”<sup>37</sup>

The object, then, of “National Apostasy” was not to assess whether the government was properly fulfilling its roles, but rather to explore the will of God as it related to “the civil and national conduct” of the people.<sup>38</sup> Keble’s insistence upon both obedience to the civil powers and complete devotion to “the cause of the Apostolical Church” reminded his audience that they had obligations both to Caesar and to God; one of the lessons taught in the story of Saul, he said, was that there could be grave danger in divorcing “religious resignation altogether from men’s notions of civil duty.”<sup>39</sup> This echoed the “familiar themes of hierarchy, authority, and responsibility”<sup>40</sup> that characterized the assize sermons of earlier times, so “National Apostasy” was very much in harmony with the spirit of the day.

“National Apostasy” exemplified both the timing and the tone of the tractarians’ political preaching. They viewed the regular Sunday service as unsuited to discussions of civic affairs<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 145.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 141, 147.

<sup>40</sup> McGowen, “He Beareth not the Sword,” 194.

<sup>41</sup> Newman had a self-imposed rule against “introduc[ing] the exciting topics of the day into the Pulpit” (*Apologia*, 125); in 1851 Keble himself opted to discuss a recent judicial decision in a pastoral letter rather than a sermon because such matters were “not in all respects fit for the House of God”; see *Occasional Papers and Reviews* (Oxford and London, 1877), 238. Pusey’s published works do not contain such statements, but he indicated a similar reluctance when he was asked to preach the sermon for Guy Fawkes’ day in 1837. In a letter to Newman dated 9

and generally preached church-state sermons only on the occasions specified in the Oxford University statutes and the Book of Common Prayer. The convening of an assize was one such occasion; others included the anniversary of the current monarch's accession to the throne; 30 January, the date of King Charles I's martyrdom in 1649; 29 May, the date of Charles II's restoration in 1660; and 5 November, which was both the day in 1605 on which Guy Fawkes attempted to destroy Parliament and the day in 1688 when William of Orange arrived in England, marking the beginning of the end of James II's reign.<sup>42</sup> In virtually every case, the content of the sermons was consistent with the mood that the prayer book intended to create.

One sermon that might appear to be an exception to this rule is "Church and State," which Keble preached in Oxford on 26 June 1835, the fifth anniversary of the accession of William IV. Much of the sermon was a challenge to the crown rather than a celebration of William's rule. Keble's text was Isaiah 49:23: "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers."<sup>43</sup> Most interpreters of this verse regarded the church as the weaker partner, unable to exist without the support of the civil power any more than infants could survive without their caretakers. Keble argued that Isaiah intended precisely the opposite reading: it was the church that operated from the position of strength and power, coming to the

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October of that year, Pusey wrote, "I am not at all at home on Church + State questions . . . I feel like a person with a great gun [thrust?] into his hands, but he does not know exactly with what materials to load it, or how to use it" (quoted in Griffin, *Revision*, 64).

<sup>42</sup> *Oxford University Statutes. Volume II. Containing the University Statutes from 1767 to 1850*, trans. G. R. M. Ward (London, 1851), 47, 72; *The Book of Common Prayer* (London, 1815). Not every sermon preached on these dates, moreover, dealt with church-state themes. Examples of such non-political preaching include an untitled sermon by Keble delivered on 30 January 1825 (*Sermons, Occasional and Parochial* [Oxford and London, 1868], 203-13); an assize sermon delivered by Pusey in the latter part of the nineteenth century (*Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford Between A.D. 1859 and 1872* [Oxford and London, 1872], 289-312; and a sermon on the Trinity which Newman preached 29 May 1825 (location number A.50.1, Birmingham Oratory Archives).

<sup>43</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 149.

state not to be nursed, but to call the government to serve as “nurses under her.”<sup>44</sup> Keble’s own term for this role was “foster-parent,”<sup>45</sup> which effectively conveyed the idea that the state was not acting in its own right, but rather as a kind of surrogate, responsible for training and governing God’s children in accordance with the precepts of the established church. Nations, Keble maintained, neglected this duty at their peril; in the penultimate paragraph, he reminded his audience of the dire warning of Isaiah 60:12: “The nation and kingdom which will not serve thee shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.”<sup>46</sup>

These statements may seem out of place in an accession sermon, but elsewhere in the address Keble proposed a “moral drift and meaning” that was “strictly in unison with the services of this important day.”<sup>47</sup> He suggested that in addition to directly outlining the obligations of the crown, Isaiah’s metaphors implicitly addressed the duties of the people: if kings had a divine mandate to care for the people of God, it followed that they were owed the same “affectionate reverence” that was due to God himself.<sup>48</sup> If people truly understood the spiritual dimensions of being royal subjects, they would be quick to obey and less apt to speak disrespectfully of their rulers, even when those rulers appeared to be acting in irreligious ways. As Keble intended, these ideas readily conformed to the prayer book: the selected epistle was 1 Peter 2:13—“Submit yourself to every ordinance of man”—and the service included a “Collect of Thanksgiving” in which the people prayed for “grace to obey [the king] cheerfully and willingly for conscience sake.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 154.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 170.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>49</sup> Book of Common Prayer, Service for “The King’s Accession.”

Two accession sermons Keble preached in the 1820s and 1830s had a great deal in common with “Church and State.” Both discourses were explicitly linked to the occasion. The first, preached in Keble’s parish church in Hursley on 29 January 1826, simply noted that the church had “appointed” the day “for the especial consideration of our duties to the king.”<sup>50</sup> The connection in the latter, delivered in an unspecified location in 1836, was a bit more roundabout: he suggested that “There is a remarkable correspondence” between his text—Jeremiah’s command that the displaced Israelites “seek the peace of the city” to which they had been exiled—and Paul’s command that “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made . . . for kings, and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.”<sup>51</sup> He did not point this out, but the scripture quoted there is 1 Timothy 2:1-2, the same verses that were to be read as part of morning prayer on each Accession Day.<sup>52</sup>

The lesson of these sermons resembled that of “Church and State” as well. Both condemned disrespectful speech—Paul’s injunction against it in Acts 23:5 was the text for the 1826 address<sup>53</sup>—and noted that avoiding such language was the beginning, not the end, of the Christian’s obligations. It would be wrong, Keble said, to even listen to improper conversations, to treat one’s superiors unkindly, or to do anything else that might bring dishonor to the king.<sup>54</sup> “Church and State” ended with Isaiah’s warning to the state—“The nation and kingdom which will not serve [the church] shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted”<sup>55</sup>—but these

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<sup>50</sup> John Keble, *Sermons, Occasional and Parochial*, 216.

<sup>51</sup> [John Keble], “Kings to Be Honoured for Their Office Sake,” in *Plain Sermons by Contributors to the “Tracts for the Times,”* 10 vols. (London, 1839-1848), 1:236-37.

<sup>52</sup> Book of Common Prayer, service for “The King’s Accession.”

<sup>53</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Occasional and Parochial*, 215.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 216-21; Keble, “Kings to Be Honoured for Their Office Sake,” 1:243-45.

<sup>55</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 172.

two sermons concluded with Solomon's admonitions to the people: "My son, fear thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change."<sup>56</sup>

The sermons Keble preached in Oxford on 30 January 1831 and in Hursley on 30 January 1840—the 182<sup>nd</sup> and 191<sup>st</sup> anniversaries of King Charles I's execution—were as suited for a somber commemoration of a martyr as his accession sermons were for a joyous celebration of a sitting king. The service for the day described Charles as a "sacred person" who had fallen victim to "cruel and bloody men";<sup>57</sup> Keble's discourses elegized him as "pure and devout,"<sup>58</sup> a man who, like Christ himself, did not resist his oppressors, but went to his death "pitying them and praying for them."<sup>59</sup> Rebelling against any monarch would have been an offense against the established order, but overthrowing such a saintly man, Keble said, was especially egregious, the "worst act of treasonable injustice and violence" that England had ever seen.<sup>60</sup>

Keble's purpose in these sermons was not just to provide historical commentary, but also to show how events that took place in the seventeenth century carried implications for Christians living in the nineteenth. In one sermon, the lesson was that Christians should be like Charles; in the other that they should not be like the people who put him to death. Keble ended his untitled discourse of 1840 with the admonition that the best preparation for persecution and trial was living as the king did, with "devotion" and in "purity of heart and life."<sup>61</sup> Conversely, the message of "The Danger of Sympathizing with Rebellion" was summarized in Keble's text: "Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death,

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<sup>56</sup> Keble, "Kings to Be Honoured for Their Office Sake," 1:247; Keble, *Sermons, Occasional and Parochial*, 224.

<sup>57</sup> Book of Common Prayer, Service for "King Charles the Martyr."

<sup>58</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 117.

<sup>59</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Occasional and Parochial*, 416.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 412.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 419.

not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”<sup>62</sup> The thought, in other words, was as offensive as the act; both those who actively rebelled against their rulers and those who looked on approvingly, perhaps wishing they could do the same, violated “the Gospel rule of non-resistance”<sup>63</sup> and would not escape the judgment of God.

Keble’s last published sermon on church-state matters was delivered in Hursley on 29 May 1843, 183 years after the Restoration of Charles II. It was an exposition of Numbers 16, one of the “Proper Lessons” to be read as part of the restoration service. He focused on verses 33-35, in which all those who had joined Korah in rebelling against Moses and Aaron were either swallowed by the earth or consumed by fire. Keble saw this as an apt text for the day, for it presented an example of the punishment that awaited both those who sinned against “their Church and country”<sup>64</sup> in the Great Rebellion and any Victorians who might choose to emulate their wicked ways. God had no tolerance, Keble declared, for people who broke faith “under a pretence of light and liberty,”<sup>65</sup> so his audience would do well to remember the story of Korah when they were tempted to be less than loyal subjects. If they acted as he did, they would be judged just as he was, but if they remembered, and followed, their “duty to be obedient and teachable,”<sup>66</sup> they could avoid God’s wrath. The sermon, in short, was more condemnation than celebration, but it was nonetheless suited to the service, for both it and the prayer book thanked God for placing Charles II on the throne and reminded the people of the importance of obeying and praying for those whom God had placed in positions of political and spiritual authority.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 105.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 124-25.

<sup>64</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Occasional and Parochial*, 453.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 455.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 458.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 453-58; Book of Common Prayer, Service for the “Restoration of the Royal Family.”

The only political date in the church calendar for which there are no published sermons by Keble is 5 November, the anniversary of Guy Fawkes's Gunpowder Plot and William of Orange's arrival on English soil. Newman was occasionally hesitant to commemorate this date,<sup>68</sup> but he did speak about it in a sermon preached in 1837. Earlier that year, on 30 January, he had preached "King Charles the Martyr," a sermon very much like Keble's discourses of 1831 and 1840. He held Charles up as a model of "holiness and innocence"; condemned his execution as a great "national sin"; and warned the people not only against committing regicide, but also against "disloyalty and rebellion," the sins of the heart that led to that heinous deed.<sup>69</sup> The historical dimension was largely absent in the sermon of 5 November; his discussion of Fawkes and William themselves was largely confined to the statements from the Book of Common Prayer thanking God for rescuing the nation from their "Popish treachery," "tyranny," and "arbitrary power."<sup>70</sup> Most of the discourse was devoted to practical application, to instructing the congregation about how they should *not* respond to these words.

Newman began the sermon by lamenting that too many of his contemporaries regarded 5 November as a kind of festival day, an occasion for condemning Roman Catholicism and boasting about the spiritual superiority of the English Church.<sup>71</sup> He did not deny Catholicism's historical "cruelty" and present-day unorthodoxy—he uncategorically declared, for example, that

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<sup>68</sup> In a letter to William Wilberforce dated 29 October 1840, Newman wrote, "As to the 5<sup>th</sup> of November I acknowledge myself to be *quite* perplexed. I have no kind of view. In sheer despair I only read the common morning service. . . . I *cannot* read the special service as it stands—and fear to alter it to the *old* appointed Service, lest I perplex people"; *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. Ian Ker et al., 31 vols. (Oxford, 1961-2006), 7:424-25. His diary entries for 5 November 1834 and 1835 offer no commentary, but simply note that he "did not read" the service for the day (4:351, 5:161).

<sup>69</sup> John Henry Newman, "King Charles the Martyr", location number A.50.2, Birmingham Oratory Archives, 6, 10. The sermon was first delivered in St Mary's on 30 January 1835.

<sup>70</sup> John Henry Newman, untitled sermon, location number A.50.2, Birmingham Oratory Archives, 15.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

“Romanists are wrong”—but he insisted that Anglicans must not “retaliate eye for eye and tooth for tooth.”<sup>72</sup> They could—and should—reject Rome’s errors but love her people until God should see fit to bring the two faiths together in one united church. The people could do nothing to hasten the coming of that day, but they could eagerly anticipate it and rejoice if it were to happen while they were still alive.<sup>73</sup>

The note on which Newman closed his sermon was also the focus of “Patience and Confidence the Strength of the Church,” a sermon Pusey preached in Oxford on the very same day.<sup>74</sup> He stressed the importance of what he called “NON-RESISTANCE” and “passive obedience,”<sup>75</sup> concepts he found illustrated throughout the Bible. His text came from Exodus 14, the story of the Israelites’ flight from Egypt. When the people found themselves trapped between Pharaoh’s army and the Red Sea, they appealed to Moses to save them. His reply was simply “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.”<sup>76</sup> They complied and God delivered them, dividing the waters, granting them safe passage on dry land, and drowning the Egyptian soldiers when the waters closed again.

Pusey went on to view much of Judeo-Christian history through the lenses of submission and passivity. Isaac, Paul, St. Ambrose, and St. Basil, he said, demonstrated endurance and obedience, and enjoyed God’s rewards; when Abraham and Sarah, Saul, David, and Jeroboam

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 2, 5 17.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 7, 18.

<sup>74</sup> The dedication of “Patience and Confidence” credited Keble with “unconsciously implant[ing] a truth which was afterwards to take root” in Pusey’s mind. In a letter to Keble dated a few days after the sermon was preached, Pusey suggested that the ideas in the sermon were not only inspired by Keble, but they actually belonged to him. He wrote, for example, that it was Keble’s doctrine that he preached on 5 November; the postscript to the letter reads “I have sent you some extra copies, because it is your sermon”; (E. B. Pusey to John Keble, 15 November 1837, AD 1. B5, vol. I, # 3, Keble College Archives).

<sup>75</sup> Edward Bouverie Pusey, *Patience and Confidence the Strength of the Church*, 2nd ed. (Oxford and London, 1838), v.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 1.



grew impatient and carried out their own plans, they incurred his judgment instead.<sup>77</sup> Carrying this principle forward to the year 1605, he suggested that the Gunpowder Plot had failed because its intended victims had not tried to save themselves. It was God, he said, who did all the work: he prompted the conspirators to leak their secrets, he “enlightened the mind of the monarch” about the plot, and he enabled the king to “persevere, undeterred, until He had brought the whole to light.”<sup>78</sup>

Pusey’s interpretation of events may not be historically verifiable, but it did accord with the purpose of the service: reminding the congregation that the grace and providence of God were far more important and effective than any human merit or endeavor. When he took up the subject of William of Orange, however, he presented an argument that many in the audience were probably quite surprised to hear.<sup>79</sup> He followed the prayers in giving thanks for William’s safe arrival, calling it a “blessing” because “it prevented further tyranny on the part of James” and “probably saved the nation from the miseries of anarchy and civil war.”<sup>80</sup> He did not, however, endorse the events that followed, which he saw as a violation of the doctrine of non-

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 12-22.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>79</sup> Reactions to *Patience and Confidence* were mixed, with some reviews falling along party lines. The tractarian *British Critic* commended Pusey for having the courage to carry out his “principles,” particularly the principle of non-resistance, “to their full and legitimate extent”; Nathanael Goldsmid, Review of *Patience*, *British Critic* 23 (January 1838): 140. On the other hand, the secular and politically more liberal *Edinburgh Review* published an essay in which Herman Merivale, a similarly liberal economist and essayist, expressed surprise that “a sermon should have been preached before the University of Oxford . . . in which the preacher reversed the precedent of Balaam, and mounted the pulpit to curse, where he was appointed to bless”; Review of *Patience*, *Edinburgh Review* 66 (January 1838): 396. An even harsher assessment came from an anonymous pamphleteer who accused Pusey of going beyond novelty to outright heresy. He viewed the events that placed William in power as entirely legal and thus rejected Pusey’s interpretation of the doctrine of passivity as “unsound,” “unscriptural,” and “utterly subversive of all peace and social order in the world”; *The Doctrine of Passive Obedience to Kings Contrary to Holy Scripture. Remarks on Professor Pusey's Sermon, Preached Before the University of Oxford on the 5th of November, 1837; with an Examination of the Principle Therein Advocated* (Oxford, 1837), 4, 8.

<sup>80</sup> Pusey, *Patience and Confidence*, 43-44.

resistance. James was indeed a tyrant, but his tyranny was not sufficient justification for driving him out of the land. God would have eventually deposed him just as he had exposed the Gunpowder Plot; the people, Pusey said, should have “remained passive under the shadow of God’s wings,” and the evil would have eventually “passed over.”<sup>81</sup> When they took an active role in making William their king, they violated their obligations to the one who was already on the throne, obligations of which Paul spoke in Romans 13:1, the epistle for the day.<sup>82</sup> What had come to be known as the “Glorious Revolution” was therefore actually a godless insurrection, one whose effects could still be seen in the debased state of the English church.<sup>83</sup>

Keble, Newman, and Pusey employed a variety of approaches in their political sermons, but the messages they meant to convey were essentially the same: the people had a duty to maintain the civic *status quo* and to focus on eternal rather than temporal concerns.<sup>84</sup> This sentiment accorded not only with the martyrdom, restoration, and accession services in the prayer book, but also with two of the primary tenets of the Oxford Movement: the illegitimacy of private judgment and the practice of reserve. Private judgment, the belief that “every man has a right to interpret [scripture] for himself, and no one may impose his own interpretation on

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>82</sup> Book of Common Prayer, Service for “Gunpowder Treason.”

<sup>83</sup> Pusey, *Patience and Confidence*, 46.

<sup>84</sup> Keble practiced the conduct he expected of his flocks. He was not entirely apolitical; several of his letters in the Keble College Archives allude to his roles in circulating petitions about various legislative actions or proposals (John Keble to Thomas Keble, 1832, AD 1. C14 [8]; to Thomas Keble, 1834, AD 1. C14 [41]; Petition on the Deceased Wife’s Sister Bill, 23 April 1855, AD 1. L191; John Keble to Mr. Buston, 7 July 1857, AD 1. D46). Of much greater significance, however, are meetings such as the one he attended in Oxford on 13 August 1833, shortly after the passage of the Irish Church Bill. The goal of the meeting was theological rather than political reform; its fruits included the formation of “An Association of Friends of the Church” and the inauguration of the *Tracts for the Times*. The Association’s agenda was published in Newman, *Letters and Diaries*, 4:129; for a discussion of the activities that took place in the summer and fall of 1833, see Altholz, “Tractarian Moment,” 276-82.

another,”<sup>85</sup> was clearly rejected in a number of tractarian sermons. In 1851, for example, Pusey preached a sermon intended to help Oxford students understand why it was the Church of England, not the dissenters, Roman Catholics, or the government, that was the repository and guardian of religious truth. Entitled “The Rule of Faith,” the sermon asserted that doctrines were determined by the Bible and church tradition, not by private judgment; as he put it, every “matter of faith must be capable of being proved out of Holy Scripture; yet that, not according to the private sense of individuals, but according to the uniform teaching of the Church.”<sup>86</sup>

Keble made much the same argument in two sermons published in 1846 and 1847. In one, which he preached in Oxford, he acknowledged that Christians were expected both to possess “implicit faith,” a childlike trust in the church and her ministers, and to practice “free enquiry,” the process of determining for themselves how they should act in the light of what they had been taught.<sup>87</sup> He cautioned his congregation, however, that what they may perceive as freedom or license was in fact a perilous task. Because the “interests at stake” were so great, and “so many the chances of going wrong,” they would do well to suspend their private judgment and “rather choose to be guided” by the clergy “than have to select opinions and rules of conduct for themselves.”<sup>88</sup>

Keble moved from suggestions to commands in “Catholic Faith Without Respect of Persons,” published in the eighth volume of *Plain Sermons, by Contributors to the “Tracts for the Times.”* His text was 1 Corinthians 15:11—“Therefore whether it were I or they, so we

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<sup>85</sup> [John Henry Newman], Review of *The Brothers' Controversy, being a genuine Correspondence between a Clergyman of the Church of England and a Layman of Unitarian Opinions*, *British Critic* 20 (July 1836): 174.

<sup>86</sup> Edward Bouverie Pusey, *The Rule of Faith as Maintained by the Fathers, and the Church of England* (Oxford and London, 1878), 36.

<sup>87</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 52-55.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

preach, and so ye believed”<sup>89</sup>—which carried two warnings against the use of private judgment. The first phrase, “whether it were I or they,” might appear to suggest that people could choose to listen to any preachers they liked, whether they were Anglican or not. Keble asserted, however, that Paul “did not mean to undervalue all kinds of authority, but only that which men choose out for themselves to be guided by.”<sup>90</sup> The other preachers to whom Paul referred were the original Apostles; Keble maintained that the people should place themselves only under the clergy of the established church, which alone had remained faithful to the teachings and traditions the Apostles had handed down. They were then obligated to believe what the clergy taught; in Keble’s words, they must do “away with that arrogant respect of persons which sets up private judgment, the authority of man, in place of CHRIST’S authority; and let the judgment of the Holy Catholic Church . . . be the one rule for our practice in holy things, and interpretation of holy words.”<sup>91</sup>

Reserve, as discussed in Isaac Williams’ *On Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge*,<sup>92</sup> carried a twofold meaning. First, it followed the ancient practice of *disciplina arcani*, or “the Discipline of the Secret”: the Church Fathers “kept back in reserve the higher doctrines of our Faith until persons were rendered fit to receive them.”<sup>93</sup> Next, it stipulated that believers should be likewise reserved in their religious conduct, approaching God’s word with “a

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<sup>89</sup> [John Keble], “Catholic Faith Without Respect of Persons,” in *Plain Sermons by Contributors to the “Tracts for the Times,”* 8:166.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 8:171.

<sup>92</sup> Like Keble, Isaac Williams (1802-1865) was pastor, poet, and tractarian. He served in a parish near Keble’s, published a popular collection of poems called *The Cathedral, or the Catholic and Apostolic Church in England*, and wrote three of the *Tracts for the Times*. Two of them, numbers 80 and 87, addressed the doctrine of reserve; the third, number 86, is entitled *Indications of a Superintending Providence in the Preservation of the Prayer-book and in the Changes which it has Undergone*.

<sup>93</sup> [Isaac Williams], “On Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge,” *Tracts for the Times by Members of the University of Oxford*, 5 vols. (London and Oxford, 1834-1841), 5:6.

certain reverential sobriety,” and performing their almsgiving and fasting in secret, where God alone would see and grant rewards.<sup>94</sup>

The tractarians’ insistence upon reserve was as strong as their condemnation of private judgment. They believed that all forms of oratorical display were improper in the pulpit,<sup>95</sup> Newman claimed that Keble once went so far as to change his preaching style so as to make it less appealing to the congregation.<sup>96</sup> The titles of some of their sermons—“Restraint the Christian’s Blessing,” “Reverence in Worship,” “The Incarnation, A Lesson of Humility”<sup>97</sup>—and the content of virtually all of them expressed their desire that their parishioners be calm and sober in all areas of their lives.

These spiritual principles could readily be applied to civic matters; as Keble noted in “Danger of Sympathizing with Rebellion,” no Christian should believe that it was “no part of our Saviour’s mission, to interfere at all in our political conduct.”<sup>98</sup> Reserve would be a critical aspect of this behavior, for if religious enthusiasm was undesirable, zeal in worldly affairs would be even more problematic. Keble and Pusey did not use the word itself, but the principle was

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<sup>94</sup> Williams, “On Reserve,” 5:26, 96-97.

<sup>95</sup> Keble, *Occasional Papers*, 370.

<sup>96</sup> In a letter written in 1875 and printed in the Preface to Keble’s *Occasional Papers and Reviews*, Newman wrote: “On one occasion he [Keble] preached a sermon in the University pulpit which made a great impression. Hurrell Froude and I left St. Mary’s so touched by it, that we did not speak a word to each other all the way down to Oriel. He found out what we thought of it, and doubtless heard it praised in other quarters. His next sermon was a great disappointment to his hearers; it was without unity, point, or effectiveness.” The change, Newman suggested, “arose from his vigilance over himself, and his scrupulousness lest in his former sermon he had so handled a sacred subject as to lead his audience to think rather of him than of it” (xiii-xiv).

<sup>97</sup> “Restraint” and “Reverence” were preached by Keble and Newman and published in volumes 2 and 5 of the *Plain Sermons*. “The Incarnation,” one of Pusey’s Christmas sermons, appeared in *Parochial Sermons. Vol. I. For the season from Advent to Whitsuntide* (Oxford and London, 1868).

<sup>98</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 113.

expressed in their frequent reminders that it would be the meek, not those who indulged in “party-spirit”<sup>99</sup> or employed secular political tactics, who would one day “inherit the earth.”<sup>100</sup>

The error of private judgment was also a prominent theme of the political sermons, particularly Pusey’s “Patience and Confidence” and Keble’s “Church and State.” Pusey implied it in his repeated insistence upon submission and passivity, and explicitly stated it in an appendix to the sermon: “It were indeed very dangerous to leave it to the subject to determine, when or under what circumstances the Sovereign broke his coronation oath, and thereby according to this theory [of the ‘social compact’] absolved them from their allegiance.”<sup>101</sup> Keble similarly expressed his distaste for such presumption, cautioning that “the duty of governors” was not “a very proper subject for discussion on the part of mere subjects.”<sup>102</sup> He did make some provision for protesting against the government’s misdeeds, but he made it clear that such protest was outside the province of the laity. He declared that “while the Church ceases not . . . to reprove, rebuke, exhort even highest earthly potentates . . . yet Churchmen individually will not dare to meet the abuses of legitimate power by any thing but firm remonstrance and patient suffering.”<sup>103</sup> The clergy, then, were not only the ones who would teach the people what the Church’s doctrines were, but they also had sole responsibility for taking action when those doctrines were threatened by parliamentary legislation or judicial decree.

Sermons were not the only texts the tractarians used to express their political views. Between 1833 and 1881, Keble, Pusey, and Newman published over a dozen tracts, letters, pamphlets, and treatises on the ever-changing relationship between church and state. When they prepared these works, they were not occupying the same offices or addressing the same

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>100</sup> Pusey, *Patience and Confidence*, 15.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 103.

<sup>102</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 163.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

audiences as they were when writing for the pulpit. The distinction is similar to the one J. B. Mozley drew in his discussion of “National Apostasy”:

I am the more sorry I did not hear it, as I cannot help thinking it a kind of exordium of a great revolution. . . . It is the first regular remonstrance against the measures of the infidel party here, the first decided and pointed protest from a minister of the Church in his proper and peculiar station. All the articles and letters and reviews of the *British Magazine* are very well in their way, but they don't come as from authority; and though the authors of them are clergymen, yet, when writing for the public at large, they are no more than laymen and private persons.<sup>104</sup>

Mozley saw the “private” identity behind non-homiletic texts as a hindrance because the *logos* of the written word could not be reinforced by the *ethos* the priestly collar could convey. It could, however, also work to a clergyman's advantage, allowing him to write without the constraints of pulpit propriety that Keble mentioned in his pastoral letter of 1851. In many cases, he could opt to publish these works anonymously, distancing himself even further from his clerical identity.<sup>105</sup>

The tractarians took full advantage of this freedom. Newman chose not to put his sermons on church and state in print, but he addressed political matters in a number of other works published during the twelve years of the Oxford Movement. In some cases, his attitudes toward the situation in England could be inferred from his assessment of the state of Christianity in other countries. In an 1837 article in the *British Critic*, for example, he wrote of the

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<sup>104</sup> Mozley, *Essays*, xxii-xxiii.

<sup>105</sup> In keeping with the practice of the respective periodicals, all of the articles discussed in this section of the essay were unsigned or marked only with a sign such as the contributor's initials. Other works, such as Pusey's treatises and Keble's papers, were published or republished under the authors' full names.

“captivity” suffered by the French in the ninth and nineteenth centuries: bishops were being appointed by the government, education was becoming the province of the laity rather than the clergy, and the church was being in many other ways “enslaved and insulted” by a nonreligious state.<sup>106</sup> Two years later, he published another article suggesting that he disapproved of the American system of governance, in which matters such as the process of ordination and the form of the liturgy were decided not by the church officials only, but by a General Convention “constituted so largely of laymen.”<sup>107</sup> It is reasonable to surmise that Newman would have objected to religion in his own country being placed in such compromising conditions; as he wrote in his 1841 review of John William Bowden’s *Life and Pontificate of Gregory the Seventh*,<sup>108</sup> “Had we lived in such deplorable times as have been above described . . . we might have asked whether it was conceivable that the Church should ever recover itself from the abyss into which it was sunk.”<sup>109</sup>

In other works, Newman expressed concern that Victorian Britain was, or was in danger of soon becoming, just such an age. At times, he phrased his views in hypothetical terms, much as Keble had done in “National Apostasy.” The pieces he published in the mid-1830s included a *British Magazine* article about St. Ambrose and a pamphlet recommending the appointment of “Suffragans,” or “District Bishops,” to help with pastoral care “in the larger or more populous

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<sup>106</sup> [John Henry Newman], “Affairs of Rome,” *British Critic* 22 (October 1837): 262-65.

<sup>107</sup> [John Henry Newman], “The American Church,” *British Critic* 26 (October 1839): 331-32.

<sup>108</sup> Bowden (1798-1844) and Newman were friends for nearly thirty years. They met as students at Trinity College, where they collaborated on a number of literary projects; Bowden went on to contribute five of the *Tracts for the Times* and publish essays and poems in the *British Critic* and *British Magazine*.

<sup>109</sup> [John Henry Newman], Review of *The Life and Pontificate of Gregory the Seventh*, by John William Bowden, *British Critic* 29 (April 1841): 289.



dioceses.”<sup>110</sup> The topics were quite different, but both noted, at least in passing, that the political climate was about to change and that the clergy would need to decide how to respond if the church were to find herself governed by an indifferent or even a hostile parliament or monarch.<sup>111</sup> In the early *Tracts for the Times*, however, he declared that the alliance had already been severed by the Irish Church Act, which he regarded as “a most dangerous infringement” on the rights of the church.<sup>112</sup> The clergy, he maintained, had a duty to respond to this attack, to “protest against it in public and in private”<sup>113</sup> and to assert the church’s apostolic identity and authority, which far predated its establishment as England’s official faith.<sup>114</sup>

Keble and Pusey also used the rhetorical distance afforded by articles and treatises to present political ideas they would never have expressed in a pulpit. In Keble’s case, the differences began with the preface, or “Advertisement,” to “National Apostasy.” In the sermon, he suggested that the root of apostasy was irreligious “public opinion”; in the advertisement, he shifted his focus and accused Parliament of doing wrong by giving itself the right to pass laws governing the Church of England.<sup>115</sup> His call to action changed as well. The people who were in St. Mary’s on 14 July 1833 would have heard Keble say that they could “remonstrate” with “misguided” people, provided that they earnestly prayed for them as well.<sup>116</sup> Those who

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<sup>110</sup> John Henry Newman, *The Restoration of Suffragan Bishops Recommended, as a Means of Effecting a More Equal Distribution of Episcopal Duties, as Contemplated by His Majesty's Recent Ecclesiastical Commission* (London and Oxford, 1835), 5.

<sup>111</sup> John Henry Newman, “Primitive Christianity,” in *Essays and Sketches*, ed. Charles Frederick Harrold, 3 vols. (New York and London, 1948), 1:85; Newman, *Restoration of Suffragan Bishops*, 45.

<sup>112</sup> [John Henry Newman], “The Catholic Church,” in *Tracts for the Times by Members of the University of Oxford*, 5 vols. (London and Oxford, 1834-1841), 1:2.

<sup>113</sup> Newman, “The Catholic Church,” 1:3.

<sup>114</sup> [John Henry Newman], “Thoughts on the Ministerial Commission. Respectfully Addressed to the Clergy,” *Tracts for the Times by Members of the University of Oxford*, 5 Vols. (London and Oxford, 1834-1841), 1:1-4.

<sup>115</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, 127.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

purchased the sermon a week later would not find any insistence upon intercession in the “Advertisement,” and they would read an exhortation cast in much stronger language. The authorities were now described as not merely mistaken, but tyrannical; if the people were to “submit to any profane intrusion” upon church affairs, “it must at least be their sacred duty, to declare . . . their full conviction, that it *is* intrusion; that they yield to it as they might to any other tyranny, but do from their hearts deprecate and abjure it.”<sup>117</sup> This is indeed “more pointed,” as Perry Butler suggested; indeed, it is not surprising to see why another scholar has described the “Advertisement” as “Tract No. 0,” the document that got the Oxford Movement underway.<sup>118</sup>

The “Advertisement” was not Keble’s only objection to the Irish Church Act. Similar language appeared in an article in the *British Magazine* in March 1833, several months before “National Apostasy” called for submission and obedience in troubled political times. He contended that ecclesiastical structure was not merely an administrative or organizational matter, but something that directly affected the church’s “spiritual welfare,” her ability to secure “the salvation of the souls committed to her charge.”<sup>119</sup> The arrangement of dioceses in Ireland should therefore be determined by the church, not by a Parliament that had been open to dissenters since the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828 and could thus include not only “strangers” to the Anglican Communion, but people who were “conscientiously” its “enemies” as well.<sup>120</sup> He discussed Erastianism—the belief that the church should be subordinate to the state<sup>121</sup>—in hypothetical terms in “National Apostasy,” but this article, like the

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<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>118</sup> Altholz, “Tractarian Moment,” 277.

<sup>119</sup> Keble, “Church Reform,” 365, 370.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 372.

<sup>121</sup> Thomas Erastus (1524-1583) was a Swiss theologian who believed that the proper punishment for wayward Christians was not excommunication, but prosecution in the secular courts. “Erastianism” grew to denote the absolute authority of the civil powers and was thus regarded by the tractarians as a highly pejorative term.

“Advertisement” that would be published in July, contended that “*persecution of the church*” had already begun and no one could be sure “Where it is to end.”<sup>122</sup>

Early the next year, Keble issued yet another protest against the Act, this time in a letter to the editor of the *British Magazine*.<sup>123</sup> On 31 December 1833, the magazine had printed a defense of the legislation by Thomas Elrington, who was directly affected by it: he was the bishop of Leighlin and Ferns, and the law stipulated that the see of Ossary was one of the ten to be abolished, with its “duties to be transferred” to Ferns.<sup>124</sup> He defended the measure, arguing that while Parliament did not have the power to consecrate a bishop, it did have the authority to “regulate his jurisdiction.”<sup>125</sup> If, therefore, he were to die, and his see “annexed to another,” the clergy would have both the civil and ecclesiastical obligation to “to submit themselves . . . to the bishop of that diocese to which they have been so joined.”<sup>126</sup>

Keble’s letter showed a great deal of respect for the episcopal office. He said it would be presumptuous “either to question or maintain the validity and sufficiency” of Elrington’s opinions<sup>127</sup> and recognized the importance of submitting to his own spiritual overseers. He wrote that if he had been a priest in either of the “suppressed dioceses” and had been unsure whether to

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<sup>122</sup> Keble, “Church Reform,” 366.

<sup>123</sup> The letter was never published in the magazine, but Henry Parry Liddon printed it as an appendix to “The State in Its Relations with the Church” (Oxford and London, 1869), a reprint of an article which Keble published in the *British Critic* in October 1839.

<sup>124</sup> Keble, “Church Reform,” 361.

<sup>125</sup> Thomas Elrington, “A Letter from the Bishop of Leighlin and Ferns to the Clergy of the United Dioceses, on the Church Temporalities Act,” *British Magazine* 4 (31 December 1833): 743.

<sup>126</sup> Elrington, “Letter from the Bishop of Leighlin,” 742.

<sup>127</sup> John Keble, “Letter to the Editor of the *British Magazine*,” in *The State in Its Relations with the Church: A Paper Reprinted from the "British Critic," October 1839*, ed. H. P. Liddon (Oxford and London, 1869), 59.

accept the provisions of the law, he would have “consulted the Archbishop of the province, or the Primate, and have yielded obedience to his decision.”<sup>128</sup>

Such obedience, however, did not imply agreement with the law itself. In Keble’s view, the Church Act did not infringe upon the “judicial” aspects of the bishops’ “ruling power,” but it did usurp both their “executive” prerogative of overseeing everyday parochial affairs and their right to participate in any “legislative” decisions that affected the operation of the church.<sup>129</sup>

Elrington’s letter, then, may have solved a local issue, but a larger question remained: how long would the Church tolerate “a system which permits aliens and heretics to bear the chief sway in legislating for her”?<sup>130</sup> Keble was not willing to allow her to remain silent indefinitely; the day would come, he predicted, when pervasive Erastianism would render the union of church and state untenable, and it would be “the sacred duty of us all to exert ourselves, in every allowable way, for the breaking of such an unhallowed bond.”<sup>131</sup>

Keble’s next opportunity to express his political views to a general readership came in 1839, when he reviewed William Ewart Gladstone’s *The State in its Relations with the Church* for the *British Critic*.<sup>132</sup> Like many of his contemporaries, Keble made his article both a critique of the book under review and an essay expressing his own views on the topics the book

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 57-59.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>132</sup> Gladstone (1809-1898) is perhaps better known as a politician than an ecclesiastical writer (he became a member of Parliament in 1832 and served as prime minister four times between 1868 and 1894). *The State in its Relations with the Church* argued essentially what Keble maintained in “Church and State,” that government officials were to serve as “foster parents” to the children of God. Later books also explored the limits of state power in religious matters: *Remarks on the Royal Supremacy* (London, 1850) objected to doctrinal issues being debated in secular courts, while *A Chapter of Autobiography* (London, 1868) defended his efforts to eliminate “church rates” (taxes levied to support the parish churches) and to disestablish the Irish Church.

addressed.<sup>133</sup> In his sermon on “Church and State,” Keble had argued that Isaiah saw the monarch as a servant or attendant to the church; in this article, he indicted the government for failing to perform that role. When the civil powers reorganized the Irish diocese, proposed to admit dissenters to Oxford, and took other actions that Keble regarded as “incroachments” against the church, they placed themselves in opposition to God and became susceptible to the judgment Isaiah pronounced later in his prophecy: “The nation and kingdom which will not serve thee shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.”<sup>134</sup>

Keble’s last major publications on church and state were written in response to an 1850 court case that became known as the “Gorham Judgment.” The case began as a doctrinal dispute: Henry Philpotts, the high church bishop of Exeter,<sup>135</sup> objected to George Gorham’s evangelical views on baptism and refused to allow him to take a position in his diocese. It became a kind of Erastian “litmus test” when the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, a

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<sup>133</sup> Walter Bagehot’s well known phrase “the review-like essay and the essay-like review” was first used to describe articles published in the *Edinburgh Review* (Joanne Shattock, *Politics and Reviewers: The Edinburgh and the Quarterly* [London and New York, 1989], 109), but it aptly describes what we find in many other periodicals as well. Keble himself implied that he would take such an approach, telling Newman that Gladstone’s book offered him “a good field for saying something useful in the B.C.”; Simon Skinner, “‘The Duty of the State’: Keble, the Tractarians and Establishment,” in *John Keble in Context*, ed. Kirstie Blair (London, 2004), 36. My concern here is with Keble’s article as an essay; for a discussion of it as a review, see Skinner, “‘The Duty of the State,’” 36-43.

<sup>134</sup> [John Keble], Review of *The State in Its Relations with the Church*, by W. E. Gladstone, *British Critic* 26 (October 1839): 355, 367, 388.

<sup>135</sup> First used in the late 1600s, the term “high church” refers to Anglicans whose views on church history and liturgy most resemble Roman Catholic teaching. Its opposite, “low church,” denotes a perspective closer to modern evangelicalism, placing less emphasis on liturgy and tending to regard baptism and Lord’s Supper more as symbols than as sacraments. The nineteenth century saw the emergence of a “broad church” movement that called for a less strict, often metaphorical, reading of the Bible, a position analogous to what we would call “liberal Protestantism” today (see the respective entries in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*).

secular tribunal, ruled that Gorham held an acceptably Anglican position and could not be excluded from the job that Philpotts had refused him.<sup>136</sup>

While the case was still under consideration, Keble argued that the Judicial Committee had no jurisdiction because the doctrines *of* the Church of England should be established *by* the Church of England. Christ, he said, “intrusted to . . . His Apostles and their successors, the exclusive right to determine questions of this kind,” and the Thirty-Nine Articles granted the church, not the state, “authority in Controversies of Faith.”<sup>137</sup> Because the committee was a heterodox body—it was made up of “six laymen, not one of whom need be a Churchman; and one of whom . . . actually professes himself a Presbyterian”—its “intrusion” into the Gorham case was, in Keble’s view, “not only unjust, but profane.”<sup>138</sup>

The offense was compounded when the committee found in Gorham’s favor. Keble had been enduring what he saw as Erastian affronts for nearly twenty years, and this sanctioning of views he believed to be heretical was the “*comble de malheur*, the drop which was to make the waters of bitterness overflow.”<sup>139</sup> If the established church were to become the only religious body in England whose doctrines could be determined by the courts, the price of the alliance would be too high, and Keble was prepared to ask that steps “be speedily taken for relieving us of such painful support.”<sup>140</sup> Such relief was vital to the church’s spiritual integrity: it would be better, Keble said, to “be a Church in Earnest separate from the State, than a Counterfeit Church in professed union with the State.”<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Nockles, *Oxford Movement in Context*, 94.

<sup>137</sup> Keble, *Occasional Papers*, 203-4, 212.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 203-4.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 225-26.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 226. Many of the Keble pieces I discuss here are also addressed in Marc L. Schwarz, “The Paradox of Commitment: John Keble and the Establishment, 1833-1850,” *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 37 (1968): 299-310. Most of his

Pusey, who preached the tractarians' strongest sermon on the doctrine of non-resistance, also went to the greatest lengths in challenging the government outside the pulpit. These challenges were not always immediately evident, as some of his works appeared to be more similar to "Patience and Confidence" than to Keble's tracts. In 1883, for example, he published *Remarks on the Prospective and Past Benefits of Cathedral Institutions* in response to Robert Henley, an evangelical baron who had written a plan to eliminate most of the property and clerical offices associated with the cathedrals and redistribute their funds to other areas of the church. The treatise was more a meditation on the state of theological education in England than an attack of Henley's plan, and several passages carried a distinctly conciliatory tone. He began by suggesting that people who desired to maintain "their own peace" in "times of excitement" would do well to "abstain from intermeddling in these questions"; he ended with a request for people to calmly persevere until the issue of cathedral governance could "really and permanently be settled."<sup>142</sup>

Similar statements appeared in *The Royal Supremacy*, written, like Keble's pastoral tracts, in response to the Gorham Judgment.<sup>143</sup> Pusey in no way supported the Privy Council's

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assessments are fairly similar to mine, but I do part ways with him in the interpretation of Keble's final tract. In Schwarz's view, Keble decided that people "would not be heretic if they continued to associate with Gorham" (307). While Keble saw such association as carrying no formal or legal implications, he was very concerned that those who did not distance themselves from the Judgment would incur some "moral guilt and scandal," which would essentially be just as bad (*Occasional Papers*, 221-22). Schwarz becomes more problematic when we he writes, "That Keble really considered the possibility of a Church no longer connected with the State should not be taken seriously since so much of Keble's other writings talk of it as a perpetual relationship" (308). I contend that since Keble had kept silent for so long, raising the idea of separation only after two decades of political provocation, the possibility should be taken very seriously indeed.

<sup>142</sup> Edward Bouverie Pusey, *Remarks on the Prospective and Past Benefits of Cathedral Institutions, in the Promotion of Sound Religious Knowledge, Occasioned by Lord Henley's Plan for Their Abolition* (London and Oxford, 1833), 1, 124.

<sup>143</sup> Pusey's title is a reference to the 1534 Act of Supremacy, which proclaimed that "the king's majesty justly and rightfully is and ought to be supreme head of the Church of England";

support of Gorham, asserting that allowing a secular court to rule on matters of faith posed a grave threat to the church's autonomy and spiritual integrity.<sup>144</sup> He argued, however, that no judicial verdict could alter the church's doctrines, and whatever damage had been done to her "discipline" was the result of ignorance and incompetence rather than Erastian malice.<sup>145</sup> Calls for disestablishment or other drastic action were therefore premature; those disturbed by the verdict should exercise "patience, until the Church have time to recover from the blow inflicted upon her by persons who 'knew not what they did.'"<sup>146</sup>

These works also contained, however, some degree of challenge to the civil powers. In *Royal Supremacy*, he stated that bishops should take action against irreligious verdicts and called for vigilance on the part of all Christians:

Our eyes are now opened: we dare not close them, nor act as if they had not been opened. We see now on the brink of what peril the Church is placed; and even if, by God's mercy, we escape at this time, we dare not leave the flood-gates open which might again admit it. . . . It would be tempting the goodness of God, it would be recklessness as to the Faith in Christ, for the Church of England to admit the continuance of a Court involving such risk as this.<sup>147</sup>

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(Act of Supremacy, 1534, [http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/citizenship/rise\\_parliament/transcripts/henry\\_supremacy.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/citizenship/rise_parliament/transcripts/henry_supremacy.htm) (accessed 14 December 2007). Similar language also appeared in a second Act passed in 1559; in the canons of 1603; and in the Thirty-nine Articles, which declare that the monarch has "the chief power" and "the chief Government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil"; Keble, *Occasional Papers*, 211-12; Book of Common Prayer, "Articles of Religion."

<sup>144</sup> Edward Bouverie Pusey, *The Royal Supremacy not an Arbitrary Authority but Limited by the Laws of the Church of Which Kings Are Members* (Oxford and London, 1850), 14.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5, 157.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-11.



Similarly, in his *Remarks on the Prospective and Past Benefits of Cathedral Institutions* he asserted that cathedral institutions, with their libraries and communities of priests, provided a number of opportunities that could not be found anywhere else: the “literary Clergy” could pursue their calling in the libraries; aspiring priests could be mentored by the bishops who would one day supervise their work; and “eminent men might prepare for the higher and more responsible duties of the Church.”<sup>148</sup> It would therefore be “impious” to attempt to reduce their scope and influence. The governmental officials who had made such efforts in the latter part of the eighteenth century had “lowered” both “the Church itself” and the “moral and religious” character of the English people, and Pusey’s readers had an obligation not to continue in their ways. “Let us not,” he urged, “by continuing their sin, entitle ourselves to the inheritance of their punishment, or because they have mutilated and maimed one of the fairest edifices ever raised to the service of God, ourselves waywardly destroy it, instead of restoring it in its original beauty and strength.”<sup>149</sup>

Pusey offered similar remonstrations in four other works he published over a period of nearly fifty years. His first target was the Ecclesiastical Commissions that had been operating since the early 1830s. The initial Commission had been appointed “to inquire into the Ecclesiastical Revenues of England and Wales.”<sup>150</sup> It had no power to propose legislation but was, in Pusey’s view, “clearly illegal” nonetheless because merely investigating church affairs lay outside the authority of the Crown.<sup>151</sup> The second, created in February 1835, was even more problematic: it included several laymen, whom Pusey believed were neither qualified nor

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<sup>148</sup> Pusey, *Cathedral Institutions*, 61, 76.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>150</sup> [Edward Bouverie Pusey], “The Royal and Parliamentary Ecclesiastical Commissions,” *British Critic* 23 (April 1838): 456.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 456.

authorized to discuss the proper “distribution of episcopal duties.”<sup>152</sup> One of its reports called for merging the diocese of Sodor and Man with the see of Carlisle, an “Erastian act” that Pusey condemned as violating “every principle of honesty, generosity, and ecclesiastical polity.”<sup>153</sup>

Pusey went on to contend that church autonomy had been further eroded by the establishment of a permanent commission that eventually claimed for itself the right to manage the entire system of church property and revenue. His response was not to counsel the church to quietly endure such affronts, but to insist that the state restore what it had taken away. He asserted that the government should relinquish all of its “impropriations”—ecclesiastical funds and property under its control—as an act of “restitution” for the “spoliation” of the church committed during the reign of Henry VIII.<sup>154</sup> If it did, it could “avert the wrath of God, whose Church has been suffering these 300 years”;<sup>155</sup> if it did not, it would invite the judgment Pusey pronounced in his closing paragraph: “Whoso violates the inheritance of the Church, his inheritance shall be violated. Whatever nation shall give other heirs to the institutions dedicated to ALMIGHTY GOD, shall He, in the energetic language of Israel . . . ‘cast them out and place others in their room.’”<sup>156</sup>

Pusey’s defiant words became defiant actions in his response to the Privy Council’s 1871 ruling that Brighton clergyman John Purchas had employed illegal practices in his celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Three years after the verdict, Pusey noted that one could not follow both the Council’s judgment and the prayer book, and he left no doubt as to which one he was willing to transgress. He noted, apparently with approval, that two clergyman had asked to be prosecuted for disregarding the Council’s decision, for such trials were the only way to determine whether

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 459.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 471.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 532, 542.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 542.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 562.

the judgment would continue to carry the force of law.<sup>157</sup> His campaign against the ruling continued in 1881, with the publication of *Unlaw in Judgements of the Judicial Committee*. He declared that it was the bishops' duty to reject the judges' encroachments upon the church, and to protect their clergy "against vexatious prosecutions, and suits which would rend from a congregation a Pastor, whom they love."<sup>158</sup> Several such prosecutions had taken place in the decade following Purchas's conviction, and Pusey lamented that more than one clergyman had been "cast like a felon into a Gaol, because he has obeyed the law of the Church rather than the 'unlaw' of a secular Court."<sup>159</sup> He recalled that he had even been guilty of a criminal act himself. The offenses for which Purchas had been tried included wearing illegal vestments, standing at the altar with his back to the congregation, and adding water to the wine in the Eucharistic chalice.<sup>160</sup> When the verdict was first announced, Pusey felt that he could not change his stance or his attire without consulting the others who officiated in the service, but he did resolve to use a mixed chalice in accordance with the prayer book of 1559. He thus incurred the risk of being prosecuted and jailed "for celebrating the Holy Communion as our Blessed Lord instituted it."<sup>161</sup>

These shifts in attitudes toward church and state can be attributed, at least in part, to simple matters of chronology. When Keble and Pusey preached "National Apostasy" and "Patience and Confidence," the Irish Church Act had been introduced and ecclesiastical commissions formed, but the government had not yet taken measures that they saw as affecting the essential nature of the church. Over the next few decades, the Erastian attacks grew more

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<sup>157</sup> Edward Bouverie Pusey, *The Proposed Ecclesiastical Legislation. Three Letters to "The Times,"* (Reprinted by Request): With a Preface (Oxford and London, 1874), 6, 15.

<sup>158</sup> Edward Bouverie Pusey, *Unlaw in Judgements of the Judicial Committee and Its Remedies. A Letter to the Rev. H. P. Liddon, D. D. Canon of S. Paul's* (Oxford and London, 1881), 68.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

severe, and the Gorham verdict and Purchas judgment finally made it impossible for a conscientious churchman to simply “stand still” and quietly await “the salvation of the Lord.”<sup>162</sup>

But this cannot be the only explanation. Both Pusey and Keble, after all, published protests—*Remarks on Cathedral Institutions*, the article in the *British Magazine*—before any major measures had been passed; conversely, they issued calls for submission and obedience—“Patience and Confidence,” “Kings to be Honoured for their Office Sake”—well after they feared that the breach between church and state was growing beyond repair.

A complete assessment of the tractarians’ political communication must be derived from a variety of factors: the number of works they published, the circumstances behind the publication, and the rhetorical categories to which the works belong. Their involvement in civic affairs was indeed “episodic,” as Peter Nockles suggested in 1996.<sup>163</sup> They had strong political opinions, but they did not allow themselves to become defined by them; they were not “single-issue” preachers like the Rev. John Cumming, the Scottish end-times devotee and strident anti-Catholic who never missed an opportunity, no matter how farfetched, to work a condemnation of Rome into his sermons.<sup>164</sup> Instead, they wrote only in response to specific legislative or judicial events, and they preached on church and state only when the Anglican calendar called for it.

The ideas they expressed were also genre-specific. The term “genre” was in its infancy in the nineteenth century; the first usage recorded in the *Oxford English Dictionary* dates only to 1770, and the word does not appear at all in any of the tractarians’ publications. The concept of

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<sup>162</sup> Pusey, *Patience and Confidence*, 1.

<sup>163</sup> Nockles, “Church and King,” 112.

<sup>164</sup> For more on Cumming’s preaching, see Robert H. Ellison and Carol Marie Engelhardt, “Prophecy and Anti-Popery in Victorian London: John Cumming Reconsidered,” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 31 (2003): 373-89. In regard to Cumming’s penchant for anti-Catholic preaching, they write that he “worked a condemnation of the confessional into his remarks on the prayer in Daniel 9, used a discussion of the holiness of heaven to reject ‘the unscriptural dogma of Baptismal Regeneration,’ and even found a way to attack the doctrine of transubstantiation in his analysis of the seven stars and candlesticks in Revelation 1” (381).

literary and rhetorical categories, like the notion of audience awareness, was, however, very much in vogue. A vast number of books and periodical articles addressed such matters as the definition of a “sermon,” the traits that set sermons apart from other kinds of religious lectures, and the differences among the various subgenres of preaching, especially “plain” and “university” sermons.<sup>165</sup>

Pusey published little on the nature of preaching, but Newman and Keble made several contributions to this large body of theoretical literature. In both brief statements and fully developed essays, they discussed the essential elements of all sermons, the special nature of parochial and university addresses, and whether certain collections of texts were more accurately described as “sermons” or as “essays.”<sup>166</sup>

Their public speaking, moreover, covered all the major points on the rhetorical spectrum. All three published university sermons<sup>167</sup> and provided material for the *Plain Sermons*, by

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<sup>165</sup> As the name suggests, “university” sermons were delivered before academic audiences. In Oxford, such sermons were delivered, usually in St Mary’s, “on Sunday mornings and afternoons, major saints’ days, and days of national or university importance” (Earnest and Tracey, Introduction to *Fifteen Sermons*, xxiv). They were often technical discussions of complex topics. Plain sermons, in contrast, were intended for what were often called “village congregations” and were thus expected to be accessible to people of all stations in life. For an extended discussion of the Victorian plain sermon, see Harvey Goodwin, “What Constitutes a Plain Sermon?” in *Homiletical and Pastoral Lectures*, ed. C. J. Ellicott (New York, 1880), 105-31.

<sup>166</sup> Keble, *Occasional Papers*, 368-71; Keble, “Alison’s Sermons,” *Quarterly Review* 14 (1816): 429-43; Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*, i; Newman, *Apologia*, 235, 242; Newman, *Idea of a University*, 328-45.

<sup>167</sup> Keble, *Sermons, Academical and Occasional*; John Henry Newman, *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford* (Oxford and New York, 2006); Edward Bouverie Pusey, *Nine Sermons, Preached Before the University of Oxford, and Printed Chiefly Between A.D. 1843-1855* (Oxford and London, 1879); Pusey, *Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford Between A.D. 1859 and 1872*; Pusey, *Ten Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford Between 1864-1879 Now Collected Into One Volume and a Sermon Preached at the Opening of the Chapel of Keble College on S. Mark’s Day, 1876* (Oxford and London, 1880).

*Contributors to the “Tracts for the Times”*;<sup>168</sup> Newman and Pusey also published lectures on justification, on the Anglican Church as a “middle ground” between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, and on the historical accuracy of the book of Daniel.<sup>169</sup> In almost every case, these works illustrate the principles that they and their contemporaries defined.<sup>170</sup>

The political expression discussed here is a clear case of distinctions between genres. When the tractarians preached, they used scripture and historical analogies to draw broad—and conservative—practical applications; when they wanted to respond to specific incidents or to express more radical ideas, they did so at other times and through other means. There is thus little warrant for John R. Griffin’s claim that “it is impossible to make any coherent sense” of Keble’s politics between 1835 and 1845.<sup>171</sup> Keble, along with Newman and Pusey, were clear and consistent not only in their opinions, but also in their strategies for setting them before the public. When it came to the intersection of the civic and the spiritual, they had clear understandings of their roles, the nature of their audiences, and the protocols of their occasions.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Pusey and Newman wrote all of volumes three and five; Newman’s works were later republished as volumes seven and eight of his *Parochial and Plain Sermons* (London and Oxford, 1868). Keble contributed nearly 140 sermons—all of volumes six and eight, as well as significant portions of volumes one, two, four, and seven.

<sup>169</sup> John Henry Newman, *Lectures on Justification* (London and Oxford, 1838); John Henry Newman, *Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church, Viewed Relatively to Romanism and Popular Protestantism* (London and Oxford, 1837); Edward Bouverie Pusey, *Daniel the Prophet: Nine Lectures Delivered in the Divinity School of the University of Oxford* (1885; repr. Minneapolis, 1978).

<sup>170</sup> I provided an overview of Victorian homiletic theory in *The Victorian Pulpit: Spoken and Written Sermons in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Selinsgrove, PA, and London, 1998), 18–42. I will examine all the genres of Oxford Movement oratory in “The Tractarians’ Sermons and Other Speeches,” to be published in *A New History of the Sermon: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Robert H. Ellison (Leiden and Boston, forthcoming 2009).

<sup>171</sup> Griffin, *Revision*, 15.

<sup>172</sup> This statement is similar to the concept of the “rhetorical situation,” a seminal term in speech communication that Lloyd F. Bitzer introduced in 1968. He posited that it consisted of an “exigence,” the circumstances that inspired or provoked a given address; the audience; and

This essay is part of a broader effort to bring a more multidisciplinary approach to Oxford Movement studies. For many years, most of the leading scholarship in the field has been published by theologians, historians, and literary scholars; the time has now come for those in other disciplines, especially rhetoric and speech communication, to join the conversation. These colleagues can call attention to important but neglected texts, and help bring new perspectives to the study of familiar ones. Genre, audience, occasion, and other related matters were central to the theory and practice of Victorian religion; “redrawing the boundaries” of our inquiries will give us the vocabulary and methodology we need to explore these issues for ourselves.<sup>173</sup>

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“constraints,” or the collection of elements such as the orator’s “personal character” or the audience’s “beliefs” and “motives,” that may affect how the message is communicated and received; “The Rhetorical Situation,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 6-8.. Bitzer’s ideas have proven to be both influential and controversial; see James Jasinski’s article in his *Sourcebook on Rhetoric* (Thousand Oaks, CA, 2001).

<sup>173</sup> *Redrawing the Boundaries*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn (New York, 1992) is a collection of essays examining recent trends in English studies and suggesting some directions twenty-first-century scholarship might take. All periods of literary history are addressed, as well as rhetoric and composition and the major schools of critical theory. Its title perfectly expresses the kind of work I am undertaking in this essay and other projects.