NUI MAYNOOTH

Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

REFORM AND OPPOSITION IN THE 1830s AS VIEWED THROUGH THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS OF IRELAND AND BRITAIN

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

AOE	Author's own edition
BL	British Library
BM	British Museum
Bodl	Bodleian Library, University of Oxford
CPM	*Catholic Penny Magazine*
DCLA	Dublin City Library & Archive
DDA	Dublin Diocesan Archives
DHJ	*Dublin Halfpenny Journal*
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
DPJ	*Dublin Penny Journal*
DUM	*Dublin University Magazine*
ESTC	English Short Title Catalogue
HM	*Halfpenny Magazine*
IHS	*Irish Historical Studies*
JJC	John Johnson Collection, Bodleian Library
LOC	Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
ML	Marsh's Library, Dublin
NA	National Archives of Ireland
NGI	National Gallery of Ireland
NLI	National Library of Ireland
NLS	National Library of Scotland
NYPL	New York Public Library
PM	*Penny Magazine*
PPM	*Protestant Penny Magazine*
RH	Richard Hawes, Lancashire Gallery
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
RUS	Russell Library, NUI Maynooth
SDUK	Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
UCD	University College Dublin
WEL	Wellcome Library, London

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INTRODUCTION

On 1 September 1831 the Zoological Gardens in Dublin's Phoenix Park opened to the public[1] and those relatively few members of the Irish population who could afford the price of sixpence entrance fee were offered a look at live exotic animals from foreign places. With the exception of the rare few who had experienced African wildlife safaris, most Irishmen and women of the early nineteenth century had only ever seen depictions of wild animals in prints or paintings, or carved in the stone sculptures that decorated the great buildings in their cities. Pictures in print in the newspapers were rare before the 1830s and most Irish and British people, anyway, could not afford the 6*d*. to purchase one. However, it was not necessary to purchase these publications and prints in order to see them; anyone passing by the window of their local print shop and bookseller could gaze to their heart's delight at the latest array of prints and illustrated publications boldly displayed in every windowpane for all to see.

This thesis examines and compares a variety of the Irish and British illustrated periodicals that were published during the 1830s, an emotionally charged period of political and religious polarization. The contemporary events and issues surrounding the parliamentary reforms, industrial and technical innovations, evangelical activities and the church reform and anti-tithes movement all contribute to the contextualization of this study. The pictorial images appearing in periodicals during this time have received surprisingly little scholarly attention; this study is the first research project specifically targeting the role of the illustrated periodicals in the pre-famine period.

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[1] *Dublin Penny Journal,* 30 June 1832.

It has been well established from previous historical, anthropological and cultural

studies that visual images play an important role and are powerful tools that help in the

formation of Irish and British cultural identity.[2] The prime objective of this study is

concerned with questioning the motives and influences that compelled publishers to

embrace the format of the illustrated press and to examine some of the ways they chose

to portray people and contemporary events in Ireland and Britain. It is too simplistic an

argument to state that their motives were purely due to individual political affiliations

or moral and religious partialities. While this is true for many, there were some

publishers who were driven by more practical economic imperatives. The effects the

illustrations had on public opinion, political attitudes, religious beliefs, current events

and human behaviour during this turbulent decade cannot be positively quantified;

however, they are the prime topic of consideration in this thesis.

All over Britain and Ireland booksellers and newspaper stands were festooned with

copies of the most current prints of well-known artists such as Gillray, Brocas, Clayton,

Cruikshank, Doyle, Heath, O'Keefe, Lisle, Newton, Rowlandson, Seymour and many

others. Humorous views of society and caricatures of well-known public figures

provided great entertainment for passers-by. This phenomenon of the public taking an

interest in the current popular print culture was such a commonplace occurrence and

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[2] These are some of the works that have made a considerable contribution to Irish visual history: Anne Crookshank and The Knight of Glin, *Ireland's painters 1600-1940* (Yale, 2002); Patricia Butler, *The Brocas collection* (Dublin, 1997); Fintan Cullen, *Visual politics* (Cork, 1997); Adele Dalsimer (ed.), *Visualizing Ireland* (Boston, 1993); Roy Douglas, Liam Harte, Jim O'Hara, *Drawing conclusions* (Belfast, 1998); Brian Fallon, *Irish art 1830-1990* (Belfast, 1994); Raymond Gillespie and Brian Kennedy (eds.), *Ireland art into history* (Dublin, 1994); Belinda Loftus, *Mirrors: orange & green* (Dundrum, Co. Down, 1994) also *Mirrors: William III & mother Ireland* (Dundrum, Co. Down, 1990); Jeanne Sheehy, *Rediscovery of Ireland's past, the Celtic Revival 1830-1930* (Dublin, 1980), Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and popular culture in Ireland, 1750-1850* (Galway, 1997), Barbara Hayley, *Three hundred years of Irish periodicals* (Mullingar, 1987).

everyday event, that it, in itself, became the subject of many fine engravings by some of the most well known artists of the period (Figs.1, 2, 3).

Fig.1

Fig. 1 - George Cruikshank, *Street scene in front of a London booksellers and print shop,* **London, 1831,** BM.

Images in print fed the curiosity and imagination of early nineteenth century viewers. Practically everything a nineteenth century viewer could imagine, was depicted; there were nature studies, portraits, political caricatures, social comedy and satires, landscapes, architectural drawings, devotional illustrations and more. There were realistic depictions of royalty, politicians, churchmen, farmers, the architecture, scenery and antiquities of Ireland, and a stream of hilarious satires that made fun of most of the above. Each one was understood in different ways by different segments of society of the 1830s. Visual images on the printed page offered ways for people to comprehend and conceptualize the world and their place in it.

Fig.2   Fig.3

Fig. 2 – J. Lisle, *The Spectator very fond of prints & drawing master*, **London, 1828,** *British Classics*, BL.
Fig. 3 – James Gillray, *Very Slippery Weather at H. Humphrey's print shop on St. James Street*, **London, 1808,** BM.

All the public events, personalities, festivities and catastrophes were displayed for all to see in the illustrated press of the time. They provided not only functionalist pictures to inform and present narratives of events but frequently contained important critiques of contemporary behaviour and customs. The images became elaborate mechanisms that were used to shape attitudes and to define power relationships within Irish culture.[3] It seems certain that printed images were effective in raising consciousness on a variety of levels that included class, gender, religion and politics.

In this study many questions arise concerning the purposes of the images, whether they were meant to be informative, politically propitious, decorative, humorous, or didactic. What kinds of messages were being conveyed, and by whom? What were the target audiences and how effectively were they targeted? Did the appearance of certain

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[3] Clifford Geertz, *Local knowledge* (New York, 1983), p. 99.

illustrations contribute to the turn of events by influencing public opinion? Did the images and the text reflect the sentiments of the day, or were there combinations of both? In most cases no single conclusion can be drawn but a host of contributing factors lead to several plausible possibilities.

In order to 'read' a printed image, the historian needs to mediate between a range of competing interpretations.[4] It is important to remember that, in some cases, the illustration was designed to be understood by a contemporary audience, many of whom lacked a formal education. Many of the images contained simplistic pictorial codes that were deliberately embedded in the image to facilitate comprehension by a less sophisticated audience. Others included elaborately constructed etchings, containing complex, enigmatic language targeted directly at an educated readership. We are fortunate that the graphic language employed in these early nineteenth century prints is accessible and readily understandable by twenty-first century historians. This is not the case with other graphic languages, such as Heraldry, whose symbolic codes have lost their meaning for modern society.

Visual images in the form of satires, cartoons and caricatures can reveal a wealth of representations of popular beliefs and customs. They can afford, in many instances, a more privileged insight into the mentalities of their contemporaries than written sources alone. They typically feature ghosts, angels, demonic characters, mysterious winds and hidden hands all of which hint at the theological, social and political controversies of the age.

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[4] Brian Maidment, *Reading popular prints 1790 - 1870* (Manchester, 1996), p. 3.

The image-makers had at their disposal a variety of potential representational possibilities as a resource for the depiction of any particular event or subject. Some chose images that were artistically sophisticated and filled with clever irony, *double-entendres*, subtleties and contradictions. These could be termed 'quite elitist', intelligible only to those familiar with the foibles of the great and steeped in learning of both the bible and the classics.[5] Many other images were crude in their graphic formations and simplistic in their social analyses. Maidment argued that the 'simple' images offer a better understanding of widely-held cultural assumptions, social stereotypes and values than the more complex work.[6]

The more provocative the image, the more likely it was to sway public opinion and encourage certain behavioural patterns. Provocative images in illustrated periodicals could be an extremely effective motivating force condoning active aggression in the face of abuse or, conversely, encouraging 'civilized' behaviour conducive to social cohesion and stability. Images may have engendered shared responses within the clearly-distinguished divisions of society and reinforced certain characteristics of that division. This does not suggest that it is an easy task to re-construct readerships and audiences.[7] One must avoid making an assumption that there would have been a common inference within a particular class of viewers; to do so would be to ignore the tremendous diversity of responses which existed within the targeted audiences.

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[5] Roy Porter, 'Priney , Boney, Boot', in *London Review of Books*, xviii, no. 5, March 1986, p. 19.
[6] Brian Maidment, *Reading popular prints, 1790-1870* (Manchester, 2001), pp 7-8.
[7] Ibid., pp 7-8.

Individual satiric and caricature prints on all kinds of subjects, events, opinions and

public figures were devices commonly used to support or undermine political parties

and so shape public opinion. These prints presaged the politically-motivated

caricatures that became regular features of the illustrated press. Despite the fact that

they were unaffordable to the majority of the public, their prices ranging from the 6*d.* to

1*s.* depending upon the artist and the quality of the print, they were nonetheless a

ubiquitous part of the public landscape in the larger towns and cities. Professional

caricature artists such as James Gillray, Thomas Rowlandson, James Sayers, George

Cruikshank, William Heath and John Doyle were often hired by publishers to use their

talents in support of specific political agendas, but even more than for their political

efficacy, publishers were interested in prints for their commercial value. Artists such as

George Cruikshank were prepared to produce political prints for both radical and

conservative publishers. As the century progressed the prices for prints fell; publishers

utilized more inexpensive techniques such as wood-cuts and lithography for their

reproductions. In major cities they were pasted up at street corners, on walls, in ale

houses and gin-shops.[8]   The most esteemed historian of the English satirical prints, M.

Dorothy George, called the print-shop windows 'the picture galleries of the public.'[9]

The proclivity on the part of the public to view with enthusiastic interest the latest and

most controversial, individual prints contributed to the popularity of the illustrated

press as a vehicle for political propaganda.

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[8] M. D. George, *Hogarth to Cruikshank: social change in graphic satire* (London, 1967), p. 17.
[9] Ibid., p.17.

Politicians and royals seem to have had a love/ hate relationship with the creators of the individual caricature prints. Some aspirant politicians, such as George Canning, who led the Tory government in 1827, sought the high public profile and publicity that the caricatures in print afforded them. Canning retained the assistance of an intermediary in order to urge James Gillray to portray him in one of his creations.[10] On the other hand, George IV was notorious for his paranoia and fear of being personally ridiculed or lampooned; he not only purchased original plates and copyrights from some artists but also made payments to artists George and Robert Cruikshank for their 'pledge not to caricature His Majesty in any immoral situation.'[11] While some public figures were clearly worried about their personal appearance in the pictures, many politicians were cognizant of the print's ability to shape public opinion and of their potential political impact.

In monetary terms, professional caricaturists earned good steady incomes; they hired out their skills and adapted their images and commentary to appeal to different audiences. Artists could not afford to wait for events to unfold; instead they behaved proactively reading newspapers and listening to parliamentary debates to seek out topics that could be relevant and interesting to the public. High calibre artists such as George Cruikshank and James Gillray often fashioned their creations with their own brand of radical reform that focused on highlighting corruption in government and exposing misuses of power.[12] Similar to our modern day paparazzi, nineteenth-century caricature artists sought out personal and political gossip, twisting the facts and drawing

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[10] H. T. Dickinson, *Caricatures and the constitution 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 16.
[11] Ibid., p. 16.
[12] Ibid., p. 19.

on the Achilles' heel of political and public figures. British caricature artists captured

the changing moods of the times; sometimes they directed, informed and excited public

interest in ways that were easily adapted to the format of the illustrated press.

Some late eighteenth century periodicals had included illustrations but in a more

limited way. Woodcut prints appeared on frontispieces or mastheads that visually

embodied the new canons of enlightened thoughts based on science and rationality

from Hume, Locke, Kant and Bentham. This intellectual, reasoned approach became

popular in the press but at the same time growing opposition to these canons by those

who found them to be 'too cold and formal for their tastes'[13] triggered a rebellion in the

arts and literature. Contemporaneous with the social, political and industrial

revolutions taking place in Britain and Ireland, Romanticism, the importance of

imagination and emotions or 'sensibilities' and the connection between humans and

nature began to flourish in the early part of the nineteenth century.

During the Napoleonic wars, caricatures played an important propaganda tool in France

for the support of Napoleon and, more frequently, in the resistance to Napoleon.[14]

London und Paris,[15] a remarkable illustrated periodical published in Weimar, included

pictures of life in both of these capitals through the medium of caricature prints. Some

of the Irish and continental periodicals copied or adapted illustrations from the political

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[13] R. K. Webb, *Modern England from the eighteenth century to the present* (London, 1969), pp 119-124.
[14] See these works for in-depth discussions of the use of images during this period: H. B.Wheeler and A. M. Broadley, *Napoleon in caricature 1795-1821* (London, 1911); David Alexander, *Richard Newton and English caricature in the 1790s* (Manchester, 1998); M. D. George, 'Pictorial propaganda, 1793-1815: Gillray and Canning' in *History*, xxxi, March 1946, pp 9-25; David Bindman, *The shadow of the guillotine: Britain and French revolution exhibition catalogue* (London , 1989); Draper Hill, *Mr. Gillray the caricaturist* (London, 1965); Michael Duffy, *The Englishman and the foreigner* (Cambridge, 1986).
[15] *London und Paris* (Weimar, 1798-1815).

caricatures or social comedy of popular British artists, Richard Newton, James Gillray, George and Isaac Cruikshank and Thomas Rowlandson.

The Industrial Revolution introduced rapid progress in new printing technology to England and Ireland. Some of the most significant technological advancements were the introduction of mechanized papermaking in 1803, the steam-powered press in 1814, and multiple-cylinder stereotype printing in 1827.[16] Together, these elements facilitated economical speedy dissemination of the printed word and allowed for the inclusion of mass-produced reproduction of printed images. In the area of print communication, new technology enabled the mass circulation of wood-cut engravings printed and intertwined with corresponding text on the same page. Beginning in England, these innovations were introduced, on a lesser scale to Ireland, but Ireland, unlike the rest of the Britain at this period, gained little benefit as a result of the Industrial Revolution. There was no mass exodus of the Irish working class from the rural areas to the cities to fill factory jobs. Few factories sprang up in Ireland and, with the exception of Ulster, Ireland remained an overwhelmingly agrarian society. Many of the cottage crafts and artisan based manufacturing industry suffered as a result of the mass-produced goods imported into Ireland from England.[17]

For the first time in modern Irish history, the early decades of the nineteenth century saw the Irish Catholic populace transformed into an effective mobilized force that had demanded and received representation in Parliament. Irish Catholics and Protestants in

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[16] Patricia Anderson, *The printed image and the transformation of popular culture 1790-1860* (Oxford, 1991), p. 2.
[17] R. V. Comerford, *Ireland* (London, 2003), pp 37-39.

the farming community displayed unprecedented resistance in seeking a reprieve from tithes payments to the established church. Irish church and municipal reforms were being hotly debated in parliament in the post-emancipation decade and Irish Catholics gained a new sense of importance and self-esteem through their religion.[18] An emerging Catholic political force helped to forge a powerful alliance between Catholicism and nationalism, one that proved to be of enduring importance in Ireland's subsequent historical development. All these stirring developments in Ireland and Britain coupled with the eventual lowering of stamp duty on newspapers and periodicals led to a widening demand for reading material.

Emerging in this period in Ireland was an array of literary, religious, scientific, antiquarian, and special interest periodicals directed at specific segments of Irish society. They carried articles discussing the Irish character, Irish music, Irish language, the Irish literary and fine arts, Irish antiquities and current political activity relating to Ireland. With a confident new voice, many engaged not only with topics of Irish interest but also displayed a growing intellectual interest in events on the continent and overseas. Some of the more frequently issued periodicals reported their versions of current events as opposed to merely reflecting on society as a whole. The titles of some of the Irish illustrated periodicals were self-explanatory: there was the *Dublin Penny Journal* (1832-36), *Dublin University Magazine* (1833-77), *Irish Penny Magazine* (1833-42), *Catholic Penny Magazine* (1834-35), *Protestant Penny Magazine* (1834-36), *Farmer's Friend* (1834-37), *Weekly Dublin Satirist* (1834-36), *Dublin Half-Penny Magazine* (1832), *Irish Farmer's and Gardener's Magazine* (1833-41), *Irish Rushlight*

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[18] Jacqueline Hill, *From patriots to unionists* (Oxford, 1997), p. 347.

(1831), *Irish Temperance and Literary Gazette* (1836-38), *The Firebrand* (1835-36)

and many more. The titles and contents of many of these periodicals revealed a self-

consciousness by focusing attention on wholly Irish interests; each, in their own ways,

alleging to profess their portrait of Irish national identity. A few of these periodicals

signaled a noticeable beginning of a trend towards a recognizable Irish nationality that

embraced all religions and social classes, but the majority of the periodicals during this

decade were highly sectarian and nurtured religious and political polarization in

Ireland.

Irish literacy and education

In regards to the abundance and variety of Irish periodicals published, and the quantities

purchased, Hayley describes Ireland as 'a reading and thinking nation'[19] during the

nineteenth century. In the 1830s, however, was the nation of Ireland truly a 'reading

nation' or was the majority of the population listening to others read and looking at the

pictures? Illustrations sold books; annotated and illustrated Bibles and histories that

came in instalments or numbers proved to be the best selling and most popular. In

announcing the embellishments of these publications, the publishers used the terms

such as 'beautiful', 'elegant', 'superb' and even 'magnificent' to express their

tremendous value. This would also guarantee the wonders to come in any subsequent

instalments.[20] Some very early publications continued to be reprinted for years and

were likely to have been bought quite as much for their pictures as for their text. Many

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[19] Barbara Hayley and Enda McKay (eds.), *Three hundred years of Irish periodicals* (Mullingar, 1987), p. 29.
[20] Richard Altick, *The English common reader* (Chicago, 1998), p. 56.

impressionable children in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries must

have had quite a few nightmares from some of the horrifying illustrations in Foxe's

Book of Martyrs.[21] The inclusion of illustration, even if it was simply on the

frontispiece (Figs. 4 & 5), acted as a motivational pull to generate curiosity. It is for

this reason that when a certain work showed signs of falling sales, it was refreshed, new

illustrations were added, and the work was printed again and again as new editions.

Due to a variety of reasons, including monetary and proselytizing, reprinting occurred,

not only over decades, but for centuries.

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 4 - *The Irish Rogue,* London, 1690. ESTC.   **Fig. 5 - John Foxe,** *Actes and Monuments, or, Foxe's Book of Martyrs,* **London, 1563,** ESTC.

These are very early examples of publications whose wood-cut illustrations depicted subject matter that would have shocked contemporaries by their graphic depictions. Pictures of torture, murder and nudity assured monetary success for their publishers. These publications were reissued frequently over the centuries for a variety of reasons.

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[21] Ibid., pp 56-57.

J. R. R. Adams credits the Kildare Place Society for having had a profound influence in determining the positive direction for Ireland's progressive popular reading habit.[22] This society's formation, in Dublin 1811, was managed by a committee of people from different religious persuasions. Its overriding principle was to establish a series of schools that would be uninfluenced by religious considerations. The society received £6,980 as the first of many parliamentary grants. Its success led the committee to take over the running of the 'Cheap Book Society' that had been established in Dublin 1814 whose purpose was to provide literature of a 'healthy kind'[23] cheaply. They used this vehicle to broaden the supply of, what they deemed to be, good literature, as compared with the 'pernicious' chapbooks that had gained such a wide appeal.[24]

Whatever their motives, the publishing industry's embrace of illustration introduced reading matter into many homes that previously would never have had it. In homes of people who could already read, it stimulated the reading habit. For those people who could not read, it provided an interest and, possibly, an incentive to learn.[25] The most popular texts were the annotated and illustrated works. Richard Altick credits the purveyors of this type of literature in the 1830s as beginning a 'true age of popular literature.'[26] Altick quoting a passage from C.H. Timperley, a nineteenth century authority on the printing and publishing trade and author of the *Encyclopedia of Literary and Typographical Anecdote,* confirms the significant role played by the illustrated literature of the early nineteenth century towards increased literacy.

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[22] J. R. R. Adams, *The printed word and the common man* (Belfast, 1987), pp 98-101.
[23] Ibid., pp 98-101.
[24] Ibid., Appendices I-V for lists of Chapmans books and Kildare Place Society publications.
[25] Richard Altick, *The English common reader* (2nd edn., Chicago, 1998), p. 57.
[26] Ibid., p. 57.

> However it may be customary to kick the ladder down when we find we no longer want it, these
> sort of publications must be confessed to have greatly contributed to lay the foundation of that
> literary taste and thirst for knowledge, which now pervades all classes.[27]

Irish literacy levels grew steadily, if not remarkably, during the early nineteenth

century. Ireland and its education system in the early nineteenth century became the

'social laboratory where various policy initiatives were tried out which might be less

acceptable in England.'[28] The relaxation of the penal laws during the late eighteenth

century was the beginning of a new era of formal education for Irish people far

different from the humble, yet vast, network of hedge schools[29] that operated in

previous centuries. John Coolahan, in his vanguard work, *Irish education: its history

and structure*, argues convincingly, that many of the education acts and policies

enacted by Parliament were attempts, in the contentious post-Act of Union years, at

state sponsored 'cultural assimilation.'[30] There can be no ignoring the importance of

the 1831 Stanley Letter in the House of Commons, which led to the establishment of a

state-sponsored Irish national primary school system. Ironically, British financial

support for various Irish education agencies allowed Ireland to develop a state-

supported primary school system much earlier than England; four decades would pass

before England adopted a similar state-sponsored primary education system. This

interesting development, Coolahan believes, appears to be due to England's strict

'political philosophy of laissez-faire.'[31] New government policies and changing

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[27] Ibid., p. 57.

[28] John Coolahan, *Irish education: its history and structure* (Dublin, 1981), p. 3.

[29] For a comprehensive account of hedge schools see: P. J. Dowling, *The hedge schools of Ireland*, (2nd edn., Cork, 1968) and J. R. R. Adams, 'Swine-tax and eat-him-all-Magee: the hedge schools and popular education in Ireland' in J. S. Donnelly and Kerby Miller (eds.), *Irish popular culture 1650-1850* (Dublin, 1999), pp 97-117.

[30] John Coolahan, *Irish education: its history and structure* (Dublin, 1981), p. 3.

[31] Ibid., p. 3.

attitudes regarding education continued to have the welcome result that brought about a vast rise in the Irish rate of literacy.

The Irish population's level of literacy in the nineteenth century may be estimated by census data from 1841[32] onwards. Prior to this period, it becomes more problematic to accurately gauge Ireland's literacy levels, as it was only when data begun to be gathered in 1841 onwards, including English and Irish literacy statistics, that these statistics were then included in the census returns. O'Ciosáin points to the recent historiography of literacy that makes a clear distinction between literacy and education. The former is the acquisition of the ability to read and write, and the later refers to receiving schooling from an institution of education.[33]

However, literacy statistics have been a constant factor in the way societies measure their progress, although, in an historical study, using the literacy figures as 'a narrative of progress' has fallen into disrepute as growing doubt surrounds this form of quantitative evidence.[34] In the nineteenth century, western societies began to be fixated on collecting and analysing the census figures that concentrated on basic skills of written communication. These figures of population rates of literacy were thought to be accurate indicators, and inextricably linked to a measurement of a society's progress.[35]

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[32] Margaret Crawford, *Counting the people* (Dublin, 2003), p. 67.
[33] Niall O'Ciosáin, Print and popular culture in Ireland, 1750-1850 (London, 1997), pp 25-26.
[34] David Vincent, 'The progress of literacy' in *Victorian Studies*, xl, 3, 2003, p. 405. Also see: Margaret Crawford, *Counting the people* (Dublin, 2003) and J. J. Lee, 'On the accuracy of the pre-Famine Irish censuses' in Peter Laslett (ed.), *Household and family in the past times* (Cambridge, 1972).
[35] David Vincent, 'The progress of literacy' in *Victorian Studies*, xl, 3, 2003, pp 405-431.

There was a broadening of education levels for the Irish population as a result of the government's appointment of a Board of Commissioners for National Education in Ireland in 1831. This new government sponsored national schools system played a major part in promoting literacy in Ireland and is likely to have provided a key component to a burgeoning Irish publishing industry. Irish literacy levels grew steadily, if not remarkably, during the early nineteenth century. However, Barbara Hayley's description of Ireland during the nineteenth century as 'a reading and thinking nation'[36] appears to be an overly confident label considering the 1841 census returns for Ireland reported that only forty-seven percent of persons over five years of age were able to read. It was not until 1911 that this proportion grew to reach eighty-eight per cent.[37]

The focus on gathering statistics on the levels of Irish literacy did not commence in earnest until the *General Report of the Census for Ireland for the year 1841*.[38] There were many obstacles to be overcome by Irish census officials in collecting accurate data to be used for the surveys during the early decades of the nineteenth century. Chief amongst the problems was the lack of precise maps showing clear boundaries. This was rectified by the creation of the Irish Ordnance Survey department in 1824. Its townland survey of the entire country in six-inch maps was remarkable but it was not completed until 1846.[39] The subject of education for the 1831 census was completely

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[36] Barbara Hayley and Enda McKay (eds.), *Three hundred years of Irish periodicals* (Mullingar, 1987), p. 29.
[37] S. J. Connolly (ed.), *The Oxford companion to Irish history* (2nd. edn., Oxford, 2002), p. 333.
[38] Margaret Crawford, *Counting the people* (Dublin, 2003), p. 67.
[39] Ibid., p. 14.

omitted.[40] In regards to education and literacy, the census for 1821 included some

imprecise figures on numbers of male and female school pupils at parish, barony and

county levels. This survey, although an improvement on its predecessor, is viewed by

J. J. Lee and other historians with a degree of uncertainty in regards to its accuracy.[41]

It is evident that many of the enlightened ideas on primary education embraced by

politicians in early nineteenth century originated from the influential works of Adam

Smith and John Locke. Economic and moral theorist Adam Smith in his seminal work

of 1776, *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations*[42] was a keen

proponent of state-funded public education for the lower classes including education for

women.

> Ought the public, therefore, to give no attention, it may be asked, to the education of the people? Or if it ought to give any, what are the different parts of education which it ought to attend to in the different orders of the people? and in what manner ought it to attend to them?...'
>
> In some cases the state of the society necessarily places the greater part of individuals in such situations as naturally form in them, without any attention of government, almost all the abilities and virtues which that state requires, or perhaps can admit of. In other cases the state of the society does not place the part of individuals in such situations, and some attention of government is necessary in order to prevent the almost entire corruption and degeneracy of the great body of the people.
>
> The education of the common people requires, perhaps, in a civilised and commercial society the attention of the public more than that of people of some rank and fortune. [43]

Although Smith is, indeed, an advocate of literacy and numeracy for the working

classes, he makes a severe class distinction in what should, or could, be taught to the

'common people'. His view is that they cannot be taught as well as those of 'rank and

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[40] Ibid., p. 62.
[41] J. J. Lee, 'On the accuracy of the pre-Famine Irish censuses' in Peter Laslett (ed.), *Household and family in the past times* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 39.
[42] Adam Smith, *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations* (Edinburgh, 1776), available at: The Adam Smith Institute (http://www.adamsmith.org) (11 Nov. 2005).
[43] Ibid., (11 Nov. 2005).

fortune'; they should receive instruction in 'the most essential parts of education',[44] limited to reading, writing and basic arithmetic. This would then prepare them to become essential components for continued industrial progress.

> But though the common people cannot, in any civilised society, be so well instructed as people of some rank and fortune, the most essential parts of education, however, to read, write, and account, can be acquired at so early a period of life that the greater part even of those who are to be bred to the lowest occupations have time to acquire them before they can be employed in those occupations. For a very small expense the public can facilitate, can encourage, and can even impose upon almost the whole body of the people the necessity of acquiring those most essential parts of education.[45]

Economic drive is unlikely to have been the motivation behind the government to push for national education in Ireland. The industrial manufacturing activity in Ireland was predominantly in the northern region of the country, most of the rest of the country was agrarian. Improved agricultural techniques and practice would not have been factor enough to induce parliament to fund even a minimally educated Irish working class. Coolahan has suggested the motivation for Parliament's funding of a national school system in Ireland was to serve politicizing and socializing goals. The schools could become catalysts for political loyalty and cultural assimilation that would prevent denominational school systems from gaining a foothold.[46] The reality was far from this ideal. This manner of state-funded secular non-denominational schooling in Ireland was to become an extremely contentious issue. Each of the religious denominations disputed the secular education system. The churches strongly felt that religious education could not be separated from, but was an integral part of, the whole schooling process. This conflict between church and state, over education, was to have a

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[44] Ibid., (11 Nov. 2005).
[45] Ibid., (11 Nov. 2005).
[46] John Coolahan, *Irish education: its history and structure* (Dublin, 1981), p. 5.

protracted and circuitous path that eventually led to education in Ireland becoming more denominational, not less.

The census reports for Ireland 1841-1871 show that while the population numbers in Ireland decreased drastically in the mid-nineteenth century, literacy levels increased. Not surprisingly, in the decade following the implementation of the national system of education in 1831, there was a dramatic increase, proportionately, in school attendance, literacy levels and the numbers of Irish people whose occupations were ministering to education. Although this dramatic increase in literacy numbers came during the period when Ireland's population suffered unprecedented decline in numbers due to famine and emigration.

By the end of the century, illiteracy was virtually eliminated in Ireland, going from a high 53% in 1841 to 14% by 1901.[47] It is important to remember that these figures are approximated and refer to the English language only. The 1851 census report was the first to seek information on spoken languages. The Irish language was for the most part ignored; although spoken, it had been a tradition from the early days of hedge schooling to teach English. It was implicit that in order to emigrate or become involved in commerce it was essential to learn to read and write English.

As a result of a combination of changing religious attitudes and government education policies enacted by parliament, all classes of Ireland's population began to become

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[47] Thomas Jordon, *The census of Ireland, 1821-1911: general reports and extracts*, vii (New York, 1998).

literate. Irish writers and Irish publishers now had a growing audience for their

newspapers, periodicals and books. Writers such as William Carleton became popular,

his 1830 publication, *Traits and stories of the Irish peasantry* 'was a watershed in the

revival of native Irish publishing.'[48] This in turn spawned a burgeoning printing and

publishing industry for books, periodicals, and pamphlets; all of which helped to shape

Irish popular culture in the nineteenth century.

Extant Research

Up to the present, there has been relatively little research on Irish illustrated periodicals

and newspapers for this period. Most of the current and past research on visual images

focused on the representation of Ireland and the Irish in high art: paintings, sculptures

and architecture. Fintan Cullen in his work *Visual politics* observes that 'The

historiography of Irish imagery of the eighteenth through to the twentieth centuries has

been dominated by connoisseurship and biography with an emphasis on revealing a

forgotten canon of Irish artists.'[49] One noteworthy addition to this genre is Anne

Crookshank and the Knight of Glin's *Ireland's painters 1600-1940.*[50] This is a classic

substantial volume possessing superb reproductions of the 'great' Irish paintings and

biographical details on their creators. *Drawing conclusions* [51] by Roy Douglas et al

presents a very broad range analysis, spanning two centuries, of the cartoon history of

Anglo-Irish relations from 1798 to 1998. In this work the 1830s receives hardly a

mention; only one printed image from this period is included. The subject of this image

is the decisive defeat of Daniel O'Connell's pro-Repeal parliamentary motion and the

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[48] S. J. Connolly (ed.), *The Oxford companion to Irish history* (Oxford, 1998), p. 462.
[49] Fintan Cullen, *Visual politics* (Cork, 1997), p. 2.
[50] Anne Crookshank and Knight of Glin, *Ireland's painters 1600-1940* (Yale, 2002).
[51] Roy Douglas, Liam Harte, Jim O'Hara, *Drawing conclusions* (Belfast, 1998).

machinations by the Whigs in Parliament to gain tithe and municipal reforms. While this book presents an interesting grouping of Irish drawings and prints, any work spanning a two hundred year period does not allow for a comprehensive study. There have been other expansive studies of Ireland's visual artistic history including Jeanne Sheehy's *Rediscovery of Ireland's past, the Celtic Revival 1830-1930.*[52] Sheehy draws connections between what she identified as the growing sense of Irish nationalism and the rich heritage of visual images from the Celtic past. Belinda Loftus' work *Mirrors orange & green*[53] highlights the visual symbols and signs employed by the divergent segments of society of Northern Ireland. In *Ireland art into history*,[54] Raymond Gillespie and Brian Kennedy have assembled an outstanding array of essays that place a variety of Irish visual images in their historical and cultural context. In this work, too, most of the visual sources discussed are from the genre considered to be 'high art'

Historians have traditionally given primacy to the written sources over the visual. In Niall Ó'Ciosáin's book, *Print and popular culture in Ireland, 1750-1850,* he devotes a mere few paragraphs to his discussion of the relative absence of visual illustration in chapbooks and the high-priced costs of the woodcuts.[55] While Ó'Ciosáin admits that there was a 'visual element' in the popular print culture in Ireland, he devotes little attention to the visual and, instead, concentrates his full attention on the textual content of Irish print popular culture. He alludes to the illustrations only once by offering an anecdote about the avarice of one agent who seems to be the beneficiary of the lucrative

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[52] Jeanne Sheehy, *Rediscovery of Ireland's past, the Celtic Revival 1830-1930* (London, 1980).
[53] Belinda Loftus, *Mirrors orange and green* (Dundrum, 1994).
[54] Raymond Gillespie and Brian Kennedy (eds.), *Ireland art into history* (Dublin, 1994).
[55] Niall Ó'Ciosáin, *Print and popular culture in Ireland, 1750-1850* (London, 1997), p. 21.

market for religious prints.[56] This is not a fair reflection of the trend towards popular

illustrated penny periodicals in Ireland and England. By overlooking the printed visual

images, Ó'Ciosáin is not presenting the full picture of popular print culture. Barbara

Hayley, author of the wide ranging *Three hundred years of Irish periodicals*[57] also

chooses to ignore the cultural significance of the illustrations in the popular press.

Hayley consigns them to a similar fate of ignominy by branding them as 'clumsy

woodcuts' or 'dreadful woodcuts'.[58] They were, in fact, of varying artistic quality;

while some were indeed crude simple images, others were more sophisticated in design

and technique.

In the early to mid-nineteenth century a significant change occurs in the dissemination

of information and entertainment. In her study of four popular English illustrated

periodicals, Patricia Anderson[59] suggests that the printed image, more than the word,

represented a cultural break with the past, for it demanded neither formal education nor

even basic literacy. Her contention is that, in England, the dissemination of illustrated

magazines was fundamental to the transformation of popular culture, as they provided a

new and varied source for information and amusement. This does not suggest that a

print-centred mass culture would not have emerged without the added impetus of

illustration, but that it would have happened in a less rapid and dramatic way. Brian

Maidment argues convincingly that printed images in popular publications had the

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[56] Ibid., p. 21.
[57] Barbara Hayley, *Three hundred years of Irish periodicals* (Mullingar, 1987).
[58] Ibid., p. 29.
[59] Patricia Anderson, *The printed image and the transformation of popular culture 1790-1860* (Oxford, 1991), p. 2.

effect of bringing about what he has called, 'a democratising social understanding'.[60] All of the authors mentioned have made a significant contribution to uncovering Ireland's or Britain's visual history. They all, however, concur, in their works, that there is a need for further research and analysis in this area.

Thesis structure

Chapter one focuses attention on the technological developments in the printing industry that led to an enormous growth of illustrated press. As national education was slowly introduced in Ireland and then later in Britain, the illiterate and semi-literate masses were targeted as a new audience for the illustrated publications that were inexpensive and easily understood. Illustrations became an increasingly indispensable adjunct to journals and an urgent economic imperative for those publishers who were interested in exploiting the working-class market.[61]

Printing machinery innovations in the printing trade facilitated the sharing and selling of illustrations to printers all over the world. By employing the new method of stereo-type cast printing, the images on plates produced in Britain and Ireland were used in publications in many parts of the globe. By reaching this world-wide audience, these influential publishers traversed significant new ground in their representations and stereotyping of people, ideas, events and places. The 1830s was an important

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[60] Brian Maidment, *Reading popular prints, 1790-1870* (Manchester, 2001), pp 7-8.
[61] Richard Altick, *The English common reader* (2nd edn., Chicago, 1998), p. 344.

watershed in the progression and development of clichéd characteristics or distinctive

generalizations that were encouraged and circulated in the illustrated press.

The first chapter highlights the restrictive government libel laws and tax legislation on

the printing industry that raised the newspaper stamp tax duties to unprecedented levels

and incited a popular groundswell of dissatisfaction that labelled the government's

actions colloquially as 'taxes on knowledge'. These unpopular moves had the effect of

hampering the progress of the conventional printing industry but, also, provoked a very

visible reaction by radical publishers. They protested the stamp duties by going

underground with their publications and declared a 'war of the unstamped' by flooding

the streets with their cheaply produced unstamped newspapers.

Chapter two: 'The Irish illustrated press in the era of the tithes war' confirms the

powerful influence wielded by some illustrated publications during these troubles. The

chapter discusses the progression and the publications of The Political Tract Society,

later to be known as The Comet Club. A noteworthy publication of the Comet Club for

the anti-tithes movement was a book entitled the *Parson's Horn-book*. This book in

two parts was heavily illustrated by an important member of their group, Samuel Lover,

a Dublin-born artist and member of the Royal Hibernian Academy.[62] Lover's shocking

illustrations graced the pages of their books, pamphlets and later, also, their newspaper

The Comet. His satirical prints were received with mixed emotions by different

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[62] W.G. Strickland, *A dictionary of Irish artists*, ii (Dublin, 1913), pp 25-29
and *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, 'Lover, Samuel (1797-1868)' available at
(http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17066) (14 Feb. 2005).

members of society; for some his illustrations cultivated fear and outrage, while for others they encouraged bravery and determination.

The magnitude of the authority exerted by one of Lover's powerful images (Fig. 2.3) is clearly demonstrated in this chapter. This image was originally included in the *Parson's Horn-book* and then appeared later in Dublin's *The Comet* newspaper on 22 May 1831. The illustration became a symbol with which many Irish farmers could easily identify. Subsequently hand painted onto flags and banners and carried by farmers during anti-tithes demonstrations, it became an icon of the anti-tithes movement. Although problems arise in trying to accurately gauge the impact of the illustrated press on their audiences, in this case it can be demonstrably proven that this publication resonated with the feelings of many Irish people.

Chapter three: 'Perspectives on the Irish question in the British illustrated press' presents the images in the periodicals in relation to the events as they happened. This decade described by G. K. Clark as an 'era of hope, pain, suffering and fear'[63] came between two of the most important events in Irish history: the granting of Catholic Emancipation through the passage of the Catholic relief act of 1829 and the Great Famine of 1845-9. The political turmoil that led into the Victorian era was unprecedented in British history. The 'Irish question' was a convenient way of grouping a whole range of religious, political and economic concerns pertaining to Ireland that dogged British politicians. Irish issues were only some of the many topics illustrated in the press during this period of extreme elation and utter desolation. The

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[5] G. Kitson Clark, *The making of Victorian England* (London, 1962), p. 31.

bulk were comprised by satirical images and caricatures surrounding the many sides of these issues: disintegration of the Tory leadership after thirty years, Whig reform pledges, radical reform activity, public unrest and rioting, political resignations and appointments, threats and political manoeuvrings, Church reforms and a host of other church and state related woes. The British illustrated press represented the opinions of contemporary Tories, Whigs, left wing radicals, extremist conservatives and, also, the opinions of publishers who, seemingly, did not care who they insulted or targeted with their controversial images, as long as they sold.

The final chapter four: 'Irish Catholic religious identity in the periodicals of the 1830s' follows the progress of an illustrated religious periodical that never achieved large circulation numbers but despite this made a significant contribution to the Irish Catholic renewed sense of self confidence. The *Catholic Penny Magazine* was created by Catholic Church ecclesiastics during an important period of rejuvenation of Catholicism in Ireland. This publication endured a battering by the evangelical press and in particular from the *Protestant Penny Magazine*'s editor, Rev. Edward Nangle. Religious sectarian divisions deepened during this intense period of evangelical mission activity; along with daily reports of the violent clashes of the tithes war, the pages of the *Protestant Penny Magazine* were filled with images that widened the divisions between Catholics and Protestants. In parishes all over Ireland there was a heightened state of insecurity and suspicion evident within their respective congregations. This anxiety is revealed in the illustrations of these two periodicals that portrayed the ambiguous status of these two churches in Ireland at that period.[64]

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[64] Jacqueline Hill, *From patriots to unionists* (Oxford, 1997), p. 333.

The visual images that adorned the pages of many of the religious periodicals served a multiplicity of purposes. They served as an adjunct to the clergymen in their role as religious instructors. Along with accompanying text the illustrations reflected Christian liturgical and scriptural knowledge. Stories from the New and Old Testaments with accompanying graphic images helped carry along the narratives and assisted in revealing the underlying messages. They were instrumental in the inculcation of particular sets of morals and beliefs and were highly influential in setting a tone for normalcy or deviancy on a variety of subjects. Some images were chosen for their ability to convey accepted Christian behaviour and values by depicting role models or by showing negative examples. In many cases the ideas for the printed images appearing in the press were influenced by political crises in which religion played a part and so were intended to serve an immediate polemical purpose.[65]

There were many religious periodicals of all denominations in Ireland and Britain during this decade, although the vast majority of them were not illustrated. Most publications did include a visual display on their masthead or frontispieces that symbolized or was a pronouncement of their faith or affiliation. These were publications purposefully created, published and circulated to members of their particular religious group and parishes. For example a Catholic publication, *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*[66] began publishing in Paris in 1838 and then in Dublin in1839. This periodical was not an illustrated periodical; however, its frontispiece

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[65] John Miller, *Religion in the popular prints 1600-1832* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 14.
[66] *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, Jan. 1838.

image reflected the progression and continued advancement of Catholicism in Ireland

and around the world (Fig. 6).

Fig. 6

Fig. 6 – *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, **Dublin, 1838.** This insignia on the frontispiece changed over the course of three months in 1838. The illustration shows a marked progression in the size of the crucifix from Jan. to July. The image began as a small crucifix in the clouds in front of the sun. It became a much larger one that appears to be radiating over the whole earth. This is clearly a reference to the extensive growth of international Catholic missionary activity during this period. RUS.

Method

Modern developments in digital technology have made it effortless for researchers

to incorporate images in print into their theses. However, many libraries and

repositories that house the hard copies of periodicals do not allow individuals to use

their own photographic equipment but charge a fee for good

camera-ready copies. This is an obstacle but it is not insurmountable and forces the

researcher to be more discerning in their choice of images. Speciality

databases that include nineteenth century periodicals have been helpful for some of this

research. However, online availability did not obviate the need to physically inspect

the hard copies for important details. This is particularly true for images with captions; for some of these, a magnifying glass was an essential piece of equipment.

In order to gain insights into the meanings of some of the more satirical images it was essential to understand the contemporary political controversies, and current events. The illustrations were for the most part rendered in caricature; this made it somewhat difficult to recognize the identities of all the faces depicted in the prints. This was an easy task for the illustrious characters of the period such as Daniel O'Connell, Wellington, Peel, Grey and William IV but for the lesser-known players in the intrigues of the day such as Brougham, Russell, Stanley, Rice, Melbourne, Althorp, Cumberland and many others in government it was more difficult. However, the National Portrait Gallery in London has a wonderful website: www.npg.org.uk that has a search engine for their database of images. This allows the viewer to access realistic portrait images of important personalities of the period and look for important signifying features that will assist in the identification of the person portrayed in caricature. For example, see the two depictions of the Duke of Cumberland below, by comparing the two images you discover that Cumberland had very distinctive sideburns and a moustache (Figs.7 & 8); this makes for an easier identification of him in the images in print. The online version of the Dictionary of National Biography that is available through most Irish and British universities has links to the National Portrait Gallery that gives you access to the portraits of the person you are researching.

Fig. 7 - George Dawe, Oil portrait of Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, London, 1828, NPG.
Fig. 8 - Seymour and Horngold, *The House of Reform That Jack Built,* **May 1832,** in this extract, the Duke of Cumberland appears in caricature, BL.

The reference work by M.D. George, *The British Museum catalogue of political and personal satires*[67] is an invaluable source of information for the British individual prints of this period; however, many of the illustrations that appeared in illustrated periodicals were not included in this catalogue. The periodicals and newspapers of the 1830s are available to viewers in many formats including: hardcopy viewing at libraries, microfiche and microfilms, printing museums and through the databases of online periodical websites.

The interpretative model used in this study recognized that printed images do not simply describe or interpret a particular individual social narrative or historical event. There was a deliberate effort to avoid presenting a single unified meaning for each image discussed; instead, what was stressed was the colloquial and commonplace competing possibilities and differing accounts of similar events or experiences. The

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[67] M. D. George, *The British Museum catalogue of political and personal satires*, xi (London, 1954).

images embodied the values and beliefs of their creators whether they were instructive, satirical, didactic, explanatory, or clinical.

Comparative research from several British studies on popular print culture allowed me to discern the similarities between the two cultures and draw some analogies, but more importantly they highlighted some of the exceptional differences. Two modern studies of English print culture between 1790 and 1870 posit the contention that the printed images appearing in popular publications signalled a widespread cultural communication transformation.[68] These studies of the English print culture and other research into print media and popular culture in America were invaluable as sources for inspiration and reflection.[69] They provided a substantial body of scholarship that could be used to compare and draw upon for greater insight into the British and Irish images. For each English image considered by these fine authors, similar and/or different questions were asked of the Irish images. It was possible to judge whether their analyses were helpful in understanding their Irish counterpart.

The popular illustrated press gained considerable momentum during the 1830s; its power to influence, create, or alter public opinion reached a fever pitch during the tithes war and through the excitement of the parliamentary and church reform movements. Editors and publishers skilfully used newspapers and magazines as ideal vehicles to serve their idiosyncratic religious, social and/or political purposes. The creation of new

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[68] Patricia Anderson, *The printed image and the transformation of popular culture 1790-1860* (Oxford, 1991) and Brian Maidment, *Reading popular prints,1790-1870* (Manchester, 2001).

[69] For some more examples see: M. Dorothy George, *Hogarth to Cruikshank: social change in graphic satire* (London, 1967), Paul Starr, *Creation of the media* (New York, 2004) and John Miller, *Religion in the popular prints 1600-1832* (Cambridge, 1986).

fiscally practical reproductive imagery printing techniques allowed this process to be greatly accelerated during this decade.

Foremost for many editors was the anticipation that their illustrated publication would provide information and the means for intellectual or moral improvement of their audiences. Some editors were candid and straightforward in regards to their political motives and aspirations; by including specific images in their texts they wished to enhance the politicisation of certain issues. Many modern texts offer clear evidence to support the view that readers attained accelerated levels of intellectual understanding and moral elevation by the inclusion of illustration into the main body of the text.[70]

Most importantly it must be remembered that the illustrated periodicals presented in this study are an important part of the history of material culture[71] in Ireland and Britain. They were the valued possessions of the men and women of the 1830s who purchased them. Often the images were removed from the pages to decorate the walls in the homes of their owners. Visual images have survived where in some cases the texts have faded into obscurity. They are embedded with 'potent symbols'[72] of a language of communication in the early nineteenth century historical context. Did Irish purchasers of illustrated publications make a distinction of cultural loyalty with the

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[70] See: P. Anderson, *The printed image and the transformation of popular culture 1790-1860* (Oxford, 1991), Michael Duffy (ed.), *The English satirical print 1600-1832* (Cambridge, 1986), David Freedberg, *Power of the images: studies in the history and theory of response* (Chicago, 1989), Clifford Gertz, *Local knowledge: further essays in interpretive anthropology* (New York, 1983), John Miller, *Religion in the popular prints 1600-1832* (Cambridge, 1986).

[71] See: Toby Barnard, *A guide to the sources for the history of material culture in Ireland, 1500-2000* (Dublin, 2005).

[72] Ibid., p. 11.

purchase of an Irish journal over an English one? Dr. Barnard makes an important

point that would certainly be applicable to periodicals and journals.

> ...some possessions are associated (rightly or wrongly) with an indigenous Irish and Catholic culture, and so are felt to connote confessional, ethnic and cultural loyalties at variance with those of Britain. Purchasers sensitive to these connotations, shunned certain goods because of their origins and associations, and, keen to act patriotically, bought the Irish-made.[73]

How did the population of Ireland in the early nineteenth century interpret, reshape,

and, in some instances, reject the culture that was created for their consumption? This

study acknowledges that there can be no conclusive answers to how people responded

to, or understood the visual images in the 1830s. They remain as eternal mirrors

reflecting the social history of their time.

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[73] Ibid., p. 11.

CHAPTER ONE

Illustrations: 'the most influential novelty'[1] of the nineteenth-century Irish and British press

Open political discourse in the press and uncensored communication has become

a hallmark of a democratic society. The development of this kind of liberal

press, that today we take so much for granted, did not come about easily. In the

United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland, the publishing industry endured decades

of defiance in the face of severe censorship and libel laws. The exorbitant

government stamp duties, known colloquially in Britain as 'taxes on knowledge',

ensured that the prices of newspapers were prohibitively high for the poorer

classes of society. Despite these hardships hindering the growth of the popular

press, things began to change in the 1830s. New technological innovations in the

printing industry, such as the steam powered stereo-type[2] cast printing process,

led the way to remarkable changes in the dissemination of information and

entertainment. This, coupled with huge strides in mass education, the easing of

libel laws, and reductions in government stamp duties, widened the demand for

more reading materials, thus allowing the printing industry to thrive.

Publishers adopted new methods of integrating images with text in their

publications; illustrations became 'the most influential novelty' of nineteenth-

century press. New, inexpensive, illustrated newspapers and periodicals poured

off the presses and found new audiences amongst people previously

unaccustomed to reading. This chapter will survey some of the reforms of the

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[1] Richard Altick, *The English common reader* (2nd edn., Chicago, 1998), p. 344.
[2] The hyphenated word 'stereo-type' became fixed over time as one word, it passed through the hyphenation stage and finally came out as one word as described in: R. M. Ritter, *The Oxford guide to style* (Oxford, 2000) pp 133-134. For the purpose of clarification, the hyphenated version will be used only in reference to the printing process.
[4] Paul Starr, *The creation of the media* (New York, 2004), pp 2-5.

period that invigorated the printing industry, and turned conventional press to popular illustrated press. Presented are the triumphs and failures of some British and Irish publishers, their illustrated works, their supporters and the oppositional forces that encumbered progress in the printing industry of the 1830s.

Since the American Revolution, the United States government had enacted press policies differing drastically from Britain and Europe. Britain's tendency in the early nineteenth century, to hinder and direct the printing industry by the imposition of stamp duty and a vast network of regulatory systems, was opposite to America's policy that actively chose to use laws and policies that worked to promote communications.[4] The Bill of Rights denied the federal government any authority to regulate the press, and the Constitution nationalized the Post Office. These two policies worked together in a complementary way that helped to advance communications. The Post Office was used in a way that subsidized the press by making the postage of newspapers and magazines relatively cheap, charging a special newspaper rate of one cent for any distance within one hundred miles, no matter what the size of the paper. After 1845, all newspapers sent within a thirty-mile radius were posted free of charge.[5] This served, not only the public, by making the dissemination of knowledge easier and more abundant, but provided a key step to the broadening of America's social and economic development. In an article in an American magazine in 1834 about the 'Penny Dailies', it was reported that the introduction of penny magazines had helped to increase circulation statistics and 'The cheap press has excited much interest'.[6] While these policies are said to have been 'born of

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[5] Frank Luther Mott, *A history of American magazines 1741-1850* (New York, 1930), p. 517.
[6] *Family Magazine Weekly Abstract of General Knowledge,* no. 40 (New York, 1834), p. 1.

supremely political objectives',[7] they were extremely instrumental in expanding America's public knowledge and public opinion.

In Britain and Ireland, by contrast, the government's taxes, known colloquially as 'taxes on knowledge', on every aspect of the printing industry covered a range of journalistic grievances. Initially, a newspaper stamp duty of ½ *d* was imposed in 1712 but the tax was increased gradually to 3½ *d* by the end of the eighteenth century and further increased to 4*d* in 1815.[8] In addition to the newspaper stamp duty, there were additional levies on advertisements, excise duty on paper and other smaller taxes on pamphlets and almanacs. This had the effect of significantly driving up the prices of newspapers; as a result, the circulation of mainstream newspapers was restricted to those in the upper income levels. Middle class and working-class reformers irrespective of their political persuasions voiced their opposition to the 'taxes on knowledge' in the form of unstamped newspapers.

During the period between 1830 until 1836, when the newspaper tax was finally reduced to 1*d*, a flood of these radical papers emerged in what has been called the 'war of the unstamped'.[9] This was waged from multiple perspectives, not only, for press restrictions but also for a variety of other concerns, relating to parliamentary reform, trade union activity, church reform, and poor law and industrial reform.[11] As political and economic tensions increased, these radical journalists were summarily susceptible to immediate legal prosecution but it

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[7] Paul Starr, *The creation of the media* (New York, 2004), p. 3.
[8] Arthur Aspinall, *Politics and the press 1780-1850* (London, 1949), pp 16-24.
[9] For a full and comprehensive account of this issue, see: Joel Weiner, *The war of the unstamped, the movement to repeal the British newspaper tax, 1830-1836* (New York, 1969). Unfortunately, the 'unstamped' press activity in Ireland and Wales was not covered in this study.
[11] Ibid., xiii.

would always be subject to the discretionary powers that controlled enforcement.

This served as a useful political party tool, wielded by both Whigs and Tories;

those in control could choose, primarily, to enforce the stamp duty laws on the

editors of 'unstamped' papers that represented an oppositional voice. Many

editors chose to include instantly recognizable illustrations on their mastheads

that would be emblematic of their oppositional political points of view or

opinions (see Figs.1.0, 1.1, 1.2).

Fig.1.0

Fig.1.1

Figs. 1.0 & 1.1 - *The Cab*, London, 8 Mar. 1832, *The Devil in London*, London, 19 Feb. 1832. These are two examples of mastheads from 'unstamped' newspapers. The horse depicted in *The Cab*, an anti-Tory paper, has a Duke of Wellington facemask, so it was essential that the driver must 'hold a tight rein'.[12] *The Devil in London* has a depiction of the devilish character sitting atop St. Paul's Cathedral and accompanies their motto 'the nearer the church, the nearer the devil'.[13] © *The Bodleian Library*

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[12] *The Cab*, 3 Mar. 1832.
[13] *The Devil in London,* 29 Feb. 1832.

Fig. 1.2

Fig. 1.2 – Samuel Lover, *The Dublin Satirist,* Dublin, 29 June 1833. This pro-church reform illustrated radical weekly newspaper was edited by one of the former editors of *The Comet,* Thomas Browne. Browne had been jailed and fined for obstructing the course of justice.[14] He was forced to close down his operations of *The Comet* but re-opened with the new name. The illustrations in the masthead (left) shows a bishop complete with crozier and mitre at a window looking in at the editor working at his desk with an open copy of *The Parson's Horn-book,* an illustrated satirical publication that was highly critical of tithes system of taxation and The Established Church of Ireland. The editor wields a stick in a threatening manner at the intrusion of the bishop. On the other side we see Britannia holing the shield of 'truth' as she deflects the light of the sun across the water towards a churchman of the Established Church. This was a 'stamped' paper but was found guilty of libel and closed down on 23 January 1836,[15] NLI.

While the vast majority of the 'unstamped' papers were political or religious in content, many in England, Scotland and Ireland were purposely published to be pure entertainment. They were cheaply priced at one penny or less, in order to be affordable and fun. Even their titles were meant to be amusing; there was *The Magician, The Laughing Philosopher, The Half-Penny, The Man, The Cheap Repository of Amusement and Instruction, The Parrot* and many more.[16] There has not yet been a full study of the 'unstamped' papers of Ireland, although there are some such as *The True Salmagundi,* printed in Dublin from 1834-1836 that deserve further study. It was interested in spreading light-hearted entertainment to lower income audiences. Although, it was an illustrated publication, it had very few pictures but it was chock full of fictional stories, anecdotes, poems, advertisements, jokes and letters to the editor. The editor cleverly contrived everything in the paper

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[14] 'Carrickshock Trials and the pending prosecutions' in *The Pilot,* 8 Aug. 1832

[15] *The Dublin Satirist* and *The Comet* are covered in more detail in chapter two.

[16] For a full listing of the British unstamped papers see: Joel Weiner, *The war of the unstamped, the movement to repeal the British newspaper tax, 1830-1836* (New York, 1969).

to appear as if it was fictional but many of the articles were, actually, smartly disguised contemporary commentary on celebrated local people, dignitaries and affairs of the state. This anonymous periodical was entertaining but had a subtle national agenda that it made clear in its opening address to its readers: 'The same spirit, the same determined opposition to vice, injustice, and foreign monopoly; the same amusements and entertainment; the same taste and industry in catering for the pleasure of the public; and the same honest and independent patriotism, as far as an Unstamped Penny Publication can go in interfering for, or advocating our country's good.' Its title word 'salmagundi' refers to a kind of stew and the motto of the paper was:

> In hocest hoax, cum quiz et jokesez,
> Et smokem, toastem, roastem folksez,
> Fee, faw, fum.   PSALMAMZAR.
> With Baked and broil'd, and stewed and toasted,
> And fried, and boil'd and smoked, and roasted,
> We treat the town.[17]

This Irish illustrated weekly lasted for nearly two years as an 'unstamped' paper until its demise on 19 Dec. 1835. It is probable that it was allowed to continue publishing in its 'unstamped' state due to the nature of its contents, which was so sensibly masked as fiction, not appearing to pose any threat or cause libel to any person. Its illustrations, too, were inoffensive and too few to mention, though their addition was certainly an attempt to appeal to those persons who could not read the text.

The process of including illustrations with text in periodicals was sporadic before the 1830s as the high costs involved in drawing, engraving and then reproducing was deemed prohibitive, an extravagance few publishers felt to be fiscally worthwhile. Printing text in the early nineteenth century was an extremely labour intensive and costly enough business without factoring in pictures.

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[17] *The True Salamagundi,* 26 July 1834.

Publishers' costs for the army of typography tradesmen included the master-printer, the letter-cutter, the letter-caster, the letter dresser, the compositor, the reader /corrector, the pressman, ink-man, and the assistance from several other tradesmen, the smith, the joiner, etc. Large-scale printing offices gave constant employment to scores of artisans. Fifty to sixty of these, called compositors, sat at tables with frames in front of them picking up and arranging, letter by letter, as fast as they could, the movable metal type letters correctly according to their copy to produce a clean proof.[18] Each proof, depending on the size of each sheet, *quarto, octavo, duodecimo*, required between 40,000 to 100,000 moveable pieces assembled in the correct order.[19] Moreover, that was only the beginning of the labour-intensive journey from type to printed page. Most of the publishers of daily newspapers in the early nineteenth century eschewed illustration and confined their publications to include text exclusively. The periodicals that did utilize illustration did so in a very limited fashion, some using pictures on their masthead or frontispiece. This graphic would be the same on each number issued, so it required an initial outlay only.

It was during this decade, when large percentages of Irish and British people were still unable to read, that journalist, publisher and utilitarian liberal, Charles Knight and his London printers, William Clowes, Duke Street introduced, on 31 March 1832 a new illustrated weekly periodical. Charles Knight was more than an entrepreneur in the publishing industry; he was one of a new breed of publisher, one greatly influenced by the benevolent utilitarian ideals of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) whose Utilitarian principles were founded on the belief that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the measure of right or

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[18] Charles Knight, 'The commercial history of a penny magazine', iii, p. 2. in the monthly supplement of the *Penny Magazine*, 31 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1833.
[19] Ibid., p. 3.

wrong. Knight describes himself as 'a temperate advocate of everything that
thinking men will tolerate – toleration, education of the poor, diffusion of
religious knowledge and public economy'.[20] His publishing venture was
grounded on the fundamental principle that most social ills were humanly
created, not God inflicted, and they could be remedied by human efforts. With
this in mind, he joined Henry Brougham, who had founded the Society for the
Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK). Knight introduced and became
publisher of the *Penny Magazine* under SDUK auspices. He wished to bring
printed matter to the attention of a public unaccustomed to reading. His
publications were targeted at the working class; he hoped that they would
provide a 'wholesome diet' of information on topics such as art, literature,
history, natural history and the sciences.[21] His publications avoided politics and
religion but their clear intention was to encourage a particular set of values that
included thriftiness, self-discipline, self-education and other moral and social
coaching.

By using an innovative printing technique called 'stereo-type', this new London
illustrated weekly introduced the world to a new age of mass popular press, all for
the price of one penny. Knight believed that 'instructive woodcuts' were not only
attractive but 'indeed essentially applicable to the general diffusion of knowledge'[22].
Knight was anxious to bring information into the home of the peasant and the artisan,
and to 'excite the curiosity of those who have been unaccustomed to think upon any
subject connected with art and literature'.[23] This was the first lavishly illustrated

[20] *PM*, 31 Mar. 1832.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Charles Knight, 'The commercial history of a penny magazine', iii, p. 4, in the monthly supplement of the *Penny Magazine*, 31 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1833.

publication that, due to the new stereo-type technology that made it affordable, was enjoyed by working-class people.

The word 'stereotype' has its primitive origin in the printing industry as early as the fifteenth century when the first experimentations in the art of stereo-typing were recorded.[24] The word 'stereo' originates from Greek στερεό meaning 'solid'.[25] There appears to be some uncertainty in the evidence regarding who first invented the 'stereo-type' cast method of printing; very simply, this refers to a page of type fused into a solid plate. Generally, credit has been given to both a Frenchman and a Scotsman of the early eighteenth century: the former, a Parisian printer named Valleyre, who printed calendars; the other, William Ged, an Edinburgh goldsmith, who used the method, with minimal success, in the mass production of bibles. Knight gives an account of the difficulty faced by William Ged after he had been engaged by the University of Cambridge to print bibles and prayer books using the new stereotype method. [29]   His success was impeded by an organized effort on the part of the workers of the University of Cambridge to sabotage his work. The compositors thought that the invention would threaten their trade; both they and the pressmen secretly made errors in the moveable types after they were corrected by the readers to lessen the credit to Ged's new books. The books were so defective that the university suspended their contract with Ged and gave up on the scheme. [30] In addition to these two gentlemen, there

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[24] George Kubler, *A new history of stereotyping* (New York, 1941), p. 28.

[25] *Oxford English Dictionary* available at (http://www.dictionary.oed.com) (12 May 2005).

[29] Charles Knight, 'The commercial history of a penny magazine', iii, p. 4, in the monthly supplement of the *Penny Magazine*, 31 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1833.

[30] A. G. Camus, 'History and processes of polytyping and stereotyping' in George Kubler, *Historical treatises abstracts and papers on stereotyping* (New York, 1936), pp 10-21.

is a reference to Messrs. Tilloch and Didot of Paris, as well as Lord Stanhope, who is credited as having brought it (stereotyping), in 1833, 'to pretty nearly its present perfection'.[31]

The stereo-type method of printing had many advantages, both commercial and munificent. The method allowed the printer to cast several metal plates from one original *form,* thus reducing the costs to the printer who, presumably, would pass on the savings to the consumer. Charles Knight realized that publications were more attractive to the public with illustrations; by utilizing this new technology he was able to make his publications more affordable, causing the circulations to multiply. Large printing runs of publications were accomplished with less time and effort than previously. All the stages required more initial labour and expense, but it was so valuable, that it was deemed as essential to the reproduction of cheap publications in large numbers.

In the *Penny Magazine* in the year 1833, several supplements provided, in exhaustive detail with illustrations (Figs. 1.3, 1.4), all the intricacies of the commercial history of the magazine, including the stereo-type method of printing. The process of stereo-typing went through a complexity of steps that began after the print house compositors, working from a manuscript copy, had arranged the pieces of moveable type, the readers had corrected it, and the pictorial engraving had been added within a frame, called in the trade, a *form.* The *form* at this stage was ready to be printed from without any further preparation. Prior to 1832, this was the standard procedure for printing. It was effective but slow and allowed only limited quantities to be printed. At this stage of production, the printer could

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[31] *PM*, 31 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1833, monthly supplement, 'The commercial history of a penny magazine.' No. iii, p. 8.

decide to employ the stereotyping method. An oily substance was rubbed over the surface before the gypsum plaster of Paris was evenly poured onto the assembled *form* to prevent it sticking. After a short time, the solid plaster mould was removed from the moulding frame (Fig.1.3), checked for imperfections and then baked in special ovens until sufficiently hard and dry. In the next step, it was placed in a special cast iron box (Fig.1.4) fitted with a special lid that allowed molten lead to seep into a small crevice that became the new metal stereo-type sheet.[32]

In order to double, triple or quadruple the printing output, several stereo-type cast metal sheets could be made in this manner, arranged next to each other on the press and printed from.[33] By employing this method, Knight using two printing presses with two sets of plates on each was able to produce 160,000 copies of his paper in five days instead of taking upwards of twenty days.[34] At its peak, the lavishly illustrated *Penny Magazine* circulation numbers required weekly print runs numbering 200,000 and, according to its editor, the magazine was available throughout the United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland .

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[32] Charles Knight, 'The commercial history of a penny magazine', iii, p. 8, in the monthly supplement of the *Penny Magazine*, 31 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1833.
[33] Ibid., p. 8.
[34] Ibid., p. 7.

Fig.1.3

Fig.1.4

[Moulding-Frame.]

[Casting-Box.]

Figs. 1.3 & 1.4 - 'The commercial history of a penny magazine' No.III, in the *Penny Magazine*, 31 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1833, monthly supplement. Depicted are woodcut prints of a moulding frame and a casting box; these were two important steps in the stereo-type cast printing technique used by the printers of *The Penny Magazine*.

The progress and steady growth of this periodical and the whole of the printing industry, generally, was a by-product of the industrial revolution. The contemporaneous developments in steam railway networks in Britain and abroad, although in their early stages, enhanced communication service and mechanized land transport for all industries. The printing industry's distribution networks expanded as new rail tracks were laid in formerly remote locations. In the following twenty years, Knight was credited with having expanded the provincial press in the whole of the United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland, with the assistance of the new railway networks; 'No one who wishes for a copy of this magazine, whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland, can have difficulty in getting it, if he can find a bookseller.'[35] Articles and illustrations of the wonderful new inventions and technological advancements that revolutionized papermaking, printing and other industries regularly featured in the *PM*.

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[35] *PM*, 31 Aug. to 30 Sept. 1833, preface.

Knight could see other advantages to multiplying plates using the stereotyping developments; it was an opportunity to assist foreign nations in the production of 'penny magazines'. He sold stereo-type plates of woodcuts at a tenth of what it would have cost them to have them re-engraved.[36] His rationale for selling stereo-type plates is summed up by his own words: 'we can thus not only obtain the high moral advantage of giving a tone to the popular literature of other nations, which shall be favourable to peace, and a right understanding of our common interests, but we can improve our own '*Penny Magazine*' out of the profit that accrues from the sale of these casts'.[37] He wished to cultivate and spread a particular set of English social morals and virtues that he believed to be superior.[38] He hoped that this type of international literary interaction would 'direct the popular reading ... into the same channels'.[39] The stereo-type method of printing was not kept as a monopoly; it was shared with other printers. Printers from all over the world were purchasing and sharing 'stereo-type' plate images for their magazines. Some printers began to represent themselves as 'stereo-typers', not just printers. There was now the potential for all kinds of images to be viewed on an international scale.

In 1832, the *Penny Magazine* became the model and prototype for contemporary rivals and emulators as a series of similar illustrated publications emerged at this time. Many publications copied the format and design, and even the title was translated into other languages. Some of these new periodicals not only resembled in format their English parent publication but also were propounding similar ideology, opinions and attitudes. Some English and Irish periodicals professed neutrality regarding political or religious affiliation; despite this, they were quite resolute in

[36] *PM*, 31 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1833, p. 7.
[37] Ibid., p. 7.
[38] Charles Knight, *Passages*, ii (London, 1864), pp 243-4.
[39] *PM*, 31 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1833, p. 7.

presenting, within their pages, the accepted and correct *mores* of polite society. In this context 'polite' refers to the Anglican Protestant middle class, who were primarily controlling the publications. In Ireland, we will see in chapter five how this situation changed as the Irish Catholic middle class gained momentum and Catholic men like W.J. Battersby began to be active in the printing industry. On the cover of the first number of Ireland's *Catholic Penny Magazine* it states that 'This publication was stereo-typed, printed and published by Thomas and John Coldwell, 50 Capel Street and distributed by the Catholic Book Society...'[40] What may be inferred is that not only was this magazine viewed in Ireland and Britain but because it was stereo-typed, it was sent around the globe through the Catholic ecclesiastical networks to reach their target audiences. Appearing in the same year were many other 'penny' magazines including: *The Saturday Magazine of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, The Dublin Penny Journal, The Irish Penny Weekly, Irish Penny Journal, Pfenig-Magazin,* and *Magasin Pittoresque.*

Irish poorer classes, as well as their British counterparts, were seemingly highly unlikely to have purchased even the cheapest 'halfpenny magazine' but that doesn't mean that they didn't see it or hear it. Dublin publisher B. West had followed the lead of London publisher R. Seton in producing a periodical with a price and title name that includes the word 'halfpenny'.[42] Both publications had similarly limited circulations, short lifespan and were created with similar aims. Their publishers wished to avoid presenting any material that would be 'taken up with their own narrow partialities, as to loose (sic) sight of the wants and needs of others.'[43] Both

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[40] *Catholic Penny Magazine,* 15 Feb. 1834.
[42] *Halfpenny Magazine,* 5 May 1832, published in London and also *The Dublin Halfpenny Journal,* 3 Nov. 1832 published in Dublin.
[43] *DHJ,* 3 Nov. 1832.

publications would include matter 'judiciously selected and diversified'[44], and of such a character to appeal to most. The London publication, although its publishers, unlike in Dublin, eschew illustrations of any kind, stating they would '…anticipate patronage from classes very different in rank'; citing as an analogy how a fruiterer in Covent Garden will sell apples and pears to the Duke of Bedford as well as to little boys at the crossing because they both have a sweet tooth. They seem oblivious to the fact of a high percentage of illiteracy in Britain and Ireland which might preclude many from this purchase, stating, instead, that their modest charge might be an obstacle to some.[45] The *Dublin Halfpenny Journal* (1832), published weekly included an illustration in each number (Fig. 1.5). Its aim was to please, interest, instruct and delight all classes and 'no exertions nor expense shall be wanting to effect that purpose'.[46]

The publishers of *DHJ* believed that their publication would be 'open to every grade of society' as there has never been presented to the public 'such an easily acquired means of advancing in useful knowledge'.[47] While both publications were seemingly created with altruistic ideals at heart, they were both up against similar legal obstacles as unstamped newspapers. Largely due to the 'taxes on knowledge', the numbers issued could be extremely low. Most of the Irish provincial papers in 1831 had circulation numbers fewer than 400.[48] Yet small circulation numbers alone were not an accurate measure of the readership or audience for any periodical or newspaper.

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[44] *DHJ, 3* Nov. 1832.
[45] *HM*, 5 May 1832.
[46] *DHJ*, 3 Nov. 1832.
[47] *DHJ*, 3 Nov. 1832.
[48] J. R. R. Adams, *The printed word and the common man* (Belfast, 1987), p. 131.

During this period, there were booksellers who wished to import *PM* for the American market but the American government had placed a prohibitively high 33% tariff, or duty on all foreign publications shipped into the United States. This tariff would mean that the *PM* would have sold for a more costly price, thus defeating the purpose of the SDUK. To get around this problem, Knight sent his stereo-type casts of the pages to a publisher in New York; he in turn used American paper and American labour to print the magazine at the price of two cents (the equivalent of a penny).[49] Cheap periodicals similar to Knight's 'penny magazines' received both praise and condemnation as they gained popularity around the world.

Fig.1.5

Fig.1.6

Fig. 1.5 – *The Dublin Halfpenny Journal*, Dublin, Nov. 1832, Frontispiece woodcut 'View of a Franciscan Abbey, Sligo'. *© The Bodleian Library*

Fig. 1.6 - *The Penny Magazine*, London, Nov. 1834, Frontispiece woodcut illustration depicts a tourist venue in Iceland 'Cataract at Fossvollum.' Landscapes were popular subjects for woodcuts that were stereo-typed and used in many penny magazines, BL..

[49]*PM*, 31 Oct. to 30 Nov. 1833, monthly supplement, 'The commercial history of a penny magazine.' No. iii, p. 7.

Knight was criticized and frequently lampooned in competitor publications probably due to jealousy over his success and, undoubtedly, due to his close association with noted Scottish Whig, Henry Brougham, who under Grey's government, became lord chancellor. [50] The publishing industry was not at all pleased with Brougham's Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK) or Charles Knight's publishing success, influence and soaring circulation numbers achieved by their 'Penny' press. As a contributor, for thirty years, to the *Edinburgh Review,* Brougham's writing and speeches reflected his controversial and passionate stance as an ardent advocate for law reform, parliamentary reform and the defence of free speech in the publishing industry. The *Edinburgh Review,* with Brougham's lively contributions, rapidly became a party political conduit against the *Quarterly Review* and other rival Tory journals. As Lord Chancellor, he helped to secure the passage of the Reform Bill, supposedly coining the slogan 'The Bill, the whole Bill and nothing but the Bill'[51]. SDUK's Library of Entertaining Knowledge was a source of many volumes on a variety of topics that was primarily aimed at the working-class readership.

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[50] 'Brougham, Henry Peter', *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, available at (http://www.oxforddnb.com) (22 Jan. 2004).
[51] Ibid., (22 Jan. 2004).

Fig. 1.7 - Anon., 'Patent Penny Knowledge Mill', *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricature,* **October 1832, London,** No. 34. RH. This satire alludes to the unfair influence exerted by Knight and Brougham with their illustrated 'penny' press. The 'Be Knighted' generation put themselves in the role of sole provider of public information (*Twaddle*), by brainwashing and controlling the press and the public opinion with their *'Knowledge Mill'* brand of *'Whig Theology* and *'Whig Liberalism'*. The notice reads *'No one else need attempt to print or publish any* (sic) *thing; as we intend to do all and any* (sic) *thing cheaper and better than it ever was or will (by other means) be done'.* In addition, the image shows a man (Knight) forcing something down another's mouth (John Bull), the caption reads: *'Never mind your pockets Mr. Bull but take these. I am the Publisher and know it to be good for a Be-Knight-ed generation'.*

Several rival illustrated publications such as *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures,* *John Bull's Picture Gallery* and *Figaro in London* responded by issuing a variety of satirical unflattering illustrations. Knight and Brougham were depicted in one as the purveyor of select information for a 'Be- Knight-ed' generation (Fig. 1.7). They were cast as attempting to usurp a role of being the sole provider of public information for

the working class masses, also as a master at brainwashing and controlling the press and the public opinion with their 'Knowledge Mill' brand of 'Whig liberalism' and 'Whig Theology'.[52]

In Ireland, publisher, or 'conductor', as he preferred to call himself, Mr. Philip Dixon-Hardy, took over the running of the *Dublin Penny Journal* (*DPJ*) in Aug. 1833 until its demise in 1837. Hardy assumed the proprietorship from its previous editors, Rev. Caesar Otway and George Petrie, artist and antiquarian, who founded the publication in 1832. The contributors to the *DPJ* included some well-known authors: James Clarence Mangan, John O'Donovan, Caesar Otway, Aubrey deVere and Rev. James Wills.[53] The appearance and character of the *DPJ* at that time was conspicuously similar to Knight's magazine but with distinct differences. *DPJ* was entirely focused on Irish native history and antiquities; it presented George Petrie's striking illustrations of antiquities, scenery and ancient topography of Ireland. The contents of the essays focused on the progress of the Irish arts from the earliest times, the Irish kings, extracts of early manuscripts, Brehon Laws, proverbs, Irish poetry, genealogies of native families, burial sites, residences and distinguished persons.[54] The *DPJ*, unlike *PM,* did not show any particular interest in the edification or in the improvement of the social condition of the working class. Instead, it was clearly intended for an educated, learned portion of Irish society, primarily, at that time, a Protestant audience.

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[52] Reference to captions on Fig. 1.6, *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures*, Oct. 1832, No. 34.
[53] 'The Dublin Penny Journal' in *Dublin University Magazine*, xv, Jan.-June 1840, pp 112-144.
[54] Ibid., pp 112-144.

Fig.1.8

THE
DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL
PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

No. 71 Vol. II.   P. D. HARDY, 3 CECILIA STREET.   November, 9, 1833.

ABBEY AND ROUND TOWER OF MONASTERBOICE.

Fig. 1.8 - B. Wright, 'Abbey and round tower of Monasterboice', *Dublin Penny Journal,* **Nov. 1833,** NLI. The frontispiece illustration shows the ruins of the abbey, round tower and cemetery with St. Muiredach's high cross at Monasterboice, County Louth.

Phillip Dixon-Hardy, the new publisher, editor and printer stated that the reason an Irish version of Knight's publication was needed was that the original 'though well calculated to excite a spirit of pride and national glory in the minds of Englishmen, had but little such talismanic power of association in the minds of 'the men of the Emerald Isle.'[55] Hardy paid tribute to the aims of Knight's *PM* but felt that it was not suitable for an Irish audience. He wished to emulate the success of *PM* but felt some changes needed to occur to its character, which he believed was 'too foreign or too British for Irish sympathies – and too generally serious for the mercurial and laughter –loving temperament of the people of Ireland.'[56] In the preface to the publication of the first year's collected volume of *DPJ,* the editor writes:

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[55] *Dublin Penny Journal*, 25 June 1833, preface.
[56] Ibid., preface.

> ...it became obvious that, however excellent in matter as in intention those works confessedly were, they were but little suited to the tastes of a people whose only literary food had been for a long period the highly seasoned and inflammatory stimulants furnished by religious and political animosities.[57]

Ironically, with the selection of illustrations and stories included by Hardy in the *DPJ*, he succeeded in alienating and offending conservative Protestant audiences and factions of the Catholic majority. In a review of the *DPJ* appearing in the *Dublin University Magazine (DUM)*, a journal described as 'Irish in purpose and theme...conservative and Protestant in policy',[58] the criticism comes from two dissimilar directions, religious bias and national pride. It accuses the *DPJ* of being excessively compassionate towards the Irish Catholic population. Stating that throughout the 'entire miscellany, the Roman party had been treated with a tenderness - a sensitive shrinking from every irritating topic – an anxious toleration of their prejudices, such as few Protestant writers could have brought themselves to exhibit.'[59] The review turns into a vitriolic anti-Catholic rant condemning the journal as culpable in having '...ministered to the pride and self-exaltation of the Roman party, by eulogies on the zeal and intrepidity of those bishops and others of their church, who have, from time to time, obtained martyrdoms in our civil wars – fanatics and traitors as they were...'.[60] The *DPJ*'s attempt at reconciliation between the religious factions of society, certainly, did not go as planned. The publication received a reprimand by the Irish Catholic hierarchy for their statement implying that *DPJ*'s contributors were 'the best possible instructors of the day'[61]. Believing that only Catholics could be 'the best possible instructors' for Catholics, this statement could have been part of the catalyst that led to the appearance

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[57] Ibid., preface.
[58] Michael Sadlier, 'Dublin University Magazine, its history, contents and bibliography' in *Bibliographical Society of Ireland Publications*, v, no. 4 (Dublin, 1938), p. 64.
[59] 'The Dublin Penny Journal' in *DUM*, Jan. - June 1840, p. 121.
[60] Ibid., p. 121.
[61] *DPJ*, 25 June 1833, p. 1.

of the *Catholic Penny Magazine*[62] the following year. Hardy, however, did duplicate some of the success in regards to circulation numbers; the *DUM* records the number of issues per week for the *DPJ*, in its second year, reaching as high as 30,000, 'a success wholly unprecedented in the history of any publication in Ireland.'[63]

It is possible that much of this success stemmed from *DPJ*'s presentation of a new variety of illustrations and content material that moved away from its previous focus on Irish antiquities and concentrated more on provincial places and people (Fig.1.9). Its new style and manner excited the fury of people from all religious persuasions and across all political divides. Although its editor stated his intention, with *DPJ*, was to avoid 'religious and political animosities,'[64] the *DPJ* appeared to have courted it and thus became a very popular periodical.

Fig.1.9

Fig. 1.9 – 'Outside Jaunting Car in a Storm', *Dublin Penny Journal,* **May 1836**
Frontispiece illustration and extract taken from John Barrow's book, *Tour around Ireland*.[65]

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[62] *CPM*, 15 Feb. 1834, p. 2.
[63] 'The Dublin Penny Journal' in *DUM*, Jan.-June 1840, p. 116.
[64] *DPJ*, 25 June 1833, preface.
[65] John Barrow, *A tour round Ireland, through the sea-coast counties, in the Autumn of 1835* (London, 1835).

Fig.1.10

Fig. 1.10 - Benjamin Clayton, 'Donnybrook Fair', *Dublin Penny Journal,* **Nov. 1833,** NLI.
The frontispiece illustration depicts the popular annual fair that was notorious for being rowdy
and violent. In the middle of the nineteenth century it became much tamer, and was eventually
banned, when civil and religious leaders mounted a campaign to abolish it.[66]

Fig.1.11

Fig. 1.11 – William Heath, 'Glasgow Fair', *Glasgow Looking Glass,* **July 1825, No.4,** NLS.
This was the first periodical whose entire content was caricatures. In stark contrast with the image above, this
illustration depicts the people attending the Glasgow Fair in neat dress and behaving in a genteel manner.

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[66] Fergus D'Arcy, 'The decline and fall of Donnybrook Fair' in *Saothar*, 1988, 13, pp 7-21.

The most intense criticism *DUM*'s editors aimed at the *DPJ* was that it contained

illustrations and stories that degraded the Irish national character; although, they felt it

was acceptable to display the 'provincial peculiarities in a grotesque and amusingly

whimsical manner.'[67] *DUM*, in its review, urged all publications to refrain from

presenting images and literary works of disparaging caricature; although they,

themselves, must have felt their periodical to be exempt from this kind of censure.

> We have no objection whatever to legends and stories told in that pleasant and amiable spirit which,without distorting the entire features, playfully exhibits national habits and provincial peculiarities in a grotesque and amusingly whimsical manner; but we do enter our protest against those libels on Irishmen and Irish character, which are such favourites with a great mass of the people ...which delights in broad grins and caricatured exhibitions of national character and manners. [68]

The editors of *DUM* called upon Irish writers to take a lesson from Sir Walter Scott,

and 'imitate his example'. They admired the way Scott did not hold his compatriots up

'to scorn and contempt, as blundering good-humoured idiots, or barefaced audacious

witty knaves.' When he 'paints a detestable character, he isolates him, so that contempt

falls on the individual, not on the nation.[69] The *DUM* called upon Irishmen to avoid

any association of 'falsehood and absurdity with wit, and would identify *stupid* cunning

as a prominent feature in the character of the nation.'[70] The conservative editors of

DUM compared Scott's ludicrous characters with the ones found in Samuel Lover's

'Irish Legends' in the *DPJ*, calling Scott's, 'good-natured exaggerations' and Lover's,

'offensive caricatures'.[71] This is quite a statement to make considering that Samuel

Lover became a frequent contributor to the *Dublin University Magazine*. This review

by *DUM* of *DPJ* is extremely hypocritical. It was written in 1840 only seven years

after its own first number presented the story about the dense, yet cunning, Irish west

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[67] 'The Dublin Penny Journal' in *DUM*, Jan.-June 1840, pp 121-122.
[68] Ibid., pp 121-122.
[69] Ibid., p. 121.
[70] Ibid., p. 121.
[71] Ibid., p. 121.

coast fisherman, 'Barny O'Reirdon, the navigator'. This story by Samuel Lover included an illustration (Fig. 1.12), by the author and was serialized in subsequent numbers.

Fig.1.12
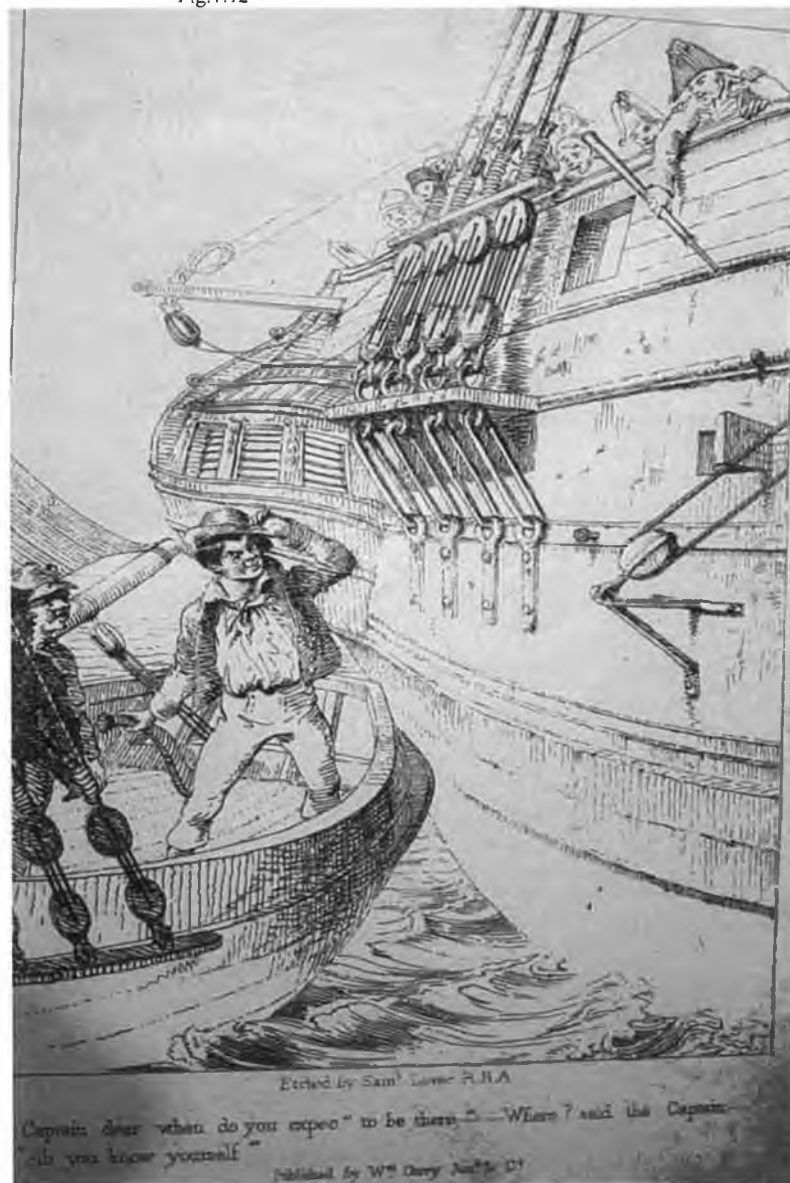
Fig. 1.12 – Samuel Lover, 'Barny O'Reirdon, The Navigator' , *Dublin University Magazine*, Jan. 1833, NLI. The illustration accompanies the story with the same title written by Samuel Lover. This story tells of the misadventures of a local Irish fisherman's mistaken understanding that led him to follow, in his hooker, a British military ship on its way to Bengal, not Fingal. The caption reads:
Captain dear when do you expec' to be there – Where? Said the Captain
"Ah you know yourself".

This began *DUM*'s long history, numbering forty-five years, of presenting equally nonsensical Irish characters such as, 'Barney Bradley', 'Paddy the Piper', 'Darby McFudge' and a host of other irreverent characters from the imaginations of many contemporary Irish writers. It appears that the editors of the *DUM* were not concerned

about their own contributors' derisive treatment of Irish Catholic characters. The

editors of the *DUM,* beginning with Stanford, Butt, Wills, Lever and Le Fanu,

encouraged a particular brand of Irish nationality, one that aligned itself strictly within a

conservative Protestant establishment framework. [72] The story of 'Barny O'Rierdon –

The Navigator' epitomizes a grand amusing metaphor that serves as a rationale

favouring the continuance of Unionism and British imperialism on the grounds of

superiority.

The innovative stereo-type technology in the printing trade of the early 1830s allowed

for easier reproduction of images on a worldwide scale; although these shared

illustrations were often biased images of people, places and society, they entered public

consciousness and became generally understood to be truths. Through print, native

populations have long been identified by distinctive character traits that have become

standardized or 'stereotypical' images. These 'differences' reflected real tensions in

society and have been used as tools by those who sought to subjugate and wield control

over native populations. For over two hundred years, since the commencement of the

illustrated 'penny press', the Irish Catholic populace has been the target of a sustained

barrage of derisive stereotyping that originated from the illustrated press.[73] Some of

the Anglo-Irish events of the 1830s contributed to aggravating religious, social and

economic tensions. Many publishers chose to capitalize on Protestant feelings of fear

and anxiety towards Irish Catholics following their political emancipation. Also

contributing to the anti- Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment was the rise of agrarian

violence associated with the 'tithes war', this will be discussed more fully in the next

chapter. Irish Catholics were frequently depicted in highly pejorative images that were

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[72] This description of some of the *Dublin University Magazine*'s fictional characters and editorial themes is based on a sampling of issues from 1833-1840.

[73] There have been several excellent studies that have focused attention on Irish characterization. See: R.F. Foster, *Paddy and Mr. Punch: connections in Irish and English history* (London, 1993) and also Perry Curtis, *Apes and angels: the Irishman in Victorian caricature* (London, 1997).

mainly based on distortions and falsehoods that became associated with

discrimination.[74] The seemingly innocent and good business acumen by the originators

of these publications propagated a widespread culture of uncomplimentary language

and behaviour that led to intolerance, discrimination and prejudice. Some examples of

the printing industry's early creation and dissemination of derogatory images of the

Irish character follow (Fig. 1.13-1.17). National stereotypes offer generalizations that

can be extremely influential in how we determine our responses and can become

substitutes for observation.[75] As the nineteenth century progressed, so too did the print

technology, the negative stereotypes of the Irish Catholic community became more

frequent and more ferocious.[76]

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[74] Charles Guichard and Margaret Connolly (eds.), 'Ethnic group stereotypes: a new look at the problem' in *Journal of Negro Education,* 1977, xlvi, 3, p. 346.

[75] A. L. Edwards, 'Studies of stereotypes: the directionality and uniformity of responses of stereotypes' in *Journal of Social Psychology*, 1940, xii, pp 356-366.

[76] Perry Curtiss, 'Simianizing the Irish Celt' and 'Irish –American apes' in *Apes and angels: the Irishman in Victorian caricature* (London, 1997), pp 29-67.

Fig.1.13

Fig. 1.13 – F. E. Busby, 'A Pat – excuse', *Busby's Humorous Etchings*, **London, 1827, No.66**. An Irish shop clerk is reprimanded for breaking a piece of pottery. Caption reads: *Oh Y'er honour don't be after making a fuss. Tis only a pace drop't out. You are always, you rascal Pat breaking and making balls.* This type of illustration was widespread, it depicted the Irish working class as subordinate and inept in their occupations.

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Fig.1.14

A DEMOCRATIC VOTER

Fig. 1.14 - 'A Democratic Voter', New York City, 1836, LOC. This is a satiric depiction of the split in party loyalties of the American Democratic party during the congressional elections of 1836. It is meant as an insult to the Irish immigrants who were recruited to the party at that time. The illustration shows the 'stereotypically' dressed Irishman as he steps up to the two booths and proceeds to incriminate himself as a man looking for a bribe. Caption reads: *As I'm a hindepent Helector, I means to give my Wote according to conscience and him as Tips most!* [77]

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[77] 'Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division', available at (http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a22307) (29 Jan. 2003).

Fig.1.15

Fig. 1.15 - W. Heath, 'TRANQUIL STATE OF IRE –LAND –OR REAL PAT – RIOTS', *The Looking Glass,* **London, 1830,** No. 3, BM. This is a disparaging play on words and an unflattering depiction of Irish peasants in a violent display. Intermittent agrarian unrest in Ireland fuelled the production of this kind of image that portrayed the Irish farmer as savage and hostile to civilized behaviour.

Fig.1.16

Fig. 1.16 – 'Paddy Kelly's Public House' advertisement in *Weekly Dublin Satirist,* **19 Dec. 1835,** NLI. This illustration accompanied an advertisement for Paddy Kelly's Public House and restaurant on D'Olier Street, '…Where the very best of Whiskey Punch in Dublin 's to be got – Pray, do 'drop in' and try it, boys, and have a little chat O'er a glass of 'summat' *nicish,* with your humble servant, Patt'.[78] This image was part of the material culture that helped to establish a 'stereotypical' idiom of 'Paddy Irishman'.

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[78] *Weekly Dublin Satirist*, 19 Dec. 1835.

Fig.1.17

Fig. 1.17 - W. Heath, 'Irish March of Intellect: or, The happy Result of Emancipation', London, 1829, LOC. This illustration is part of the popular series entitled 'March of Intellect' satire prints. The 'March' in Britain referred to aspects of democratization and industrialization, offering views of progress that allowed for a social class reshuffling, whether feared, resented or welcomed.[79] The image depicts a stern looking Daniel O'Connell wearing legal wig and robe sitting in his chamber. Two ragged, barefoot working class Irishmen, Mr. O'Doherty and his son, interrupt him, he enquires: *Well, O'Doherty what can I do for you?* O'Doherty replies: *Och, good luck to your honour! I've brought you my little Paddy, as bright a lad as any in Killarney – and now we've got mancipation I would bind the jewel 'prentice to your honor to make a judge of him just for all the world like your Honor's Lordship.*

This study has not been able to access the information necessary to confirm whether these particular images were converted into stereo-type plates for reproducing and then sold abroad but Figs. 13-17 are representative examples of the variety of stereotyping to which the Irish population have been subjected. Through the illustrated press, native populations have been imagined and identified by distinctive character traits that have became standardized or 'stereotypical', yet, decidedly antithetical to the reality. These traits, or

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[79] M. Dorothy George, *Hogarth to Cruikshank: social change in graphic satire* (London, 1967), p. 177.

differences, nurtured attitudes towards the Irish that reflected real tensions in society and have been used as tools by those who sought to subjugate and wield control over native populations. The Anglo-Irish events of the 1830s seriously aggravated religious, social and economic tensions; these conflicts were clearly visible in the texts.

The 'stereo-type' cast method of print reproduction, discussed in this chapter, represented just the beginning of a lengthy obsession with illustration. 'Stereo-type' printing was swiftly superseded by lithography and photography in the latter half of the nineteenth century and relegated to become a profoundly influential, yet, anachronistic memory. People in cultures all over the world use the word 'stereotype' but hardly ever in connection with printing. Social psychologists are kept very busy sorting out the various biases and prejudices that have occurred because of, and due to stereotypical language, imaging and behaviour. The images were created and disseminated for a variety of reasons by people with all kinds of agendas.

> We consider it the duty of every man to make himself acquainted with the events that are passing in the world,—with the progress of legislation, and the administration of the laws; for every man is deeply interested in all the great questions of government. Every man, however, may not be qualified to understand them; but the more he knows, the less hasty and the less violent will be his opinions. The false judgments which are sometimes formed by the people upon public events, can only be corrected by the diffusion of sound knowledge. Whatever tends to enlarge the range of observation, to add to the store of facts, to awaken the reason, and to lead the imagination into agreeable and innocent trains of thought, may assist in the establishment of a sincere and ardent desire for information. [80]

Illustrations published in the 1830s were an important part of popular culture. Illustrations were considered by some people to be informative and close to reality, and, indeed, some were; while others viewed images of caricature and satire as innocent exaggerations that could provide amusement and light entertainment, and, indeed, some did. In subsequent chapters it will be demonstrated how, in the 1830s, printed images served all sides of the

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[80] *Penny Magazine*, 31 Mar. 1832, p. 1.

political and religious reform movements, on both sides of the Irish Sea and across the

Atlantic Ocean. There was a vast array of all kinds of images appearing in the new

illustrated periodicals, some of them were 'stereo- typed'; they entered the consciousness of

cultures, passing from one generation to the next as stereotypes.

CHAPTER TWO

Irish illustrated press in the era of the 'tithes war'

In the early 1830s the Irish agrarian agitation against the payment of tithes to the established church in Ireland became an intense and highly visible topic in many illustrated periodicals and newspapers. Publishers represented the topic from every angle and affiliation: Irish Catholic, Irish Protestant, Orange, Whig, Tory and other more radical perspectives. It is impossible to accurately gauge the effects illustrations had on their contemporary audiences, however, there are some exceptionally noteworthy images that, certainly, made deep impressions on the lives of people and the events during the tithes war. The illustrated press exploited the highly charged atmosphere on both sides of this issue by disseminating images that, on one side fostered feelings of hostility towards the established church in Catholics, and on the other fed into the fears of Protestants encouraging bigotry and intolerance. The end result of the tithes war resulted in a progressively heightened state of religious and political polarization in Ireland, and parliament's enacting moderate reforms of the established church and their tithes system. This chapter will examine some of the most striking images from the Irish illustrated press and consider, as far as possible, their impact upon contemporary public opinion and events. Did they create public opinion, reflect it, or was there a combination of both?

In an early pamphlet dated 1811 John Reade, a Protestant gentleman, offers his specific version of how to define 'tithes'.

> ...Tythes then, (according to legal acceptation) are defined to be – the tenth part of the increase arising from the profit of lands – the stock upon lands – and the personal industry of the occupant – so that the circumstance of yielding a *yearly* increase designates what shall be legally subject to the payment of Tythe.[1]

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[1] John Reade, Esq., *Observations upon tythes, rents, and other subjects, with a peculiar reference to Ireland; an appendix, and postscript upon Catholic Emancipation* (Dublin, 1811).

Reade's assessment of yearly tithe payments is unequivocal and unwavering; it negates any possibility of leniency or compassion with regards to arrears arising due to failed harvests, decreases in market prices, or other unforeseen eventualities. His opinion offers a clinical definition, devoid of empathy for the people who carried this tax burden.

The suggestion of the church and its clergy as a burden had been visualized in numerous illustrations that served as the antecedent of the later 'tithes war' images. In early English illustrations such as the one below (Fig. 2.0), Gillray condemns both the church and the state. The government allows its military to be used in support of a church taxation system that takes large portions of farmers' income in order to increase its own wealth. The theme of the clergy as a 'burden' in illustrations became a popular motif of subsequent images during periods of revolution and radical struggles in many countries.

Fig.2.0

Fig. 2.0 - James Gillray, *Balaam – or the Majesty of the People*, London, 1783, BM.
This English satiric image is an early attack on the clergy. A thin military officer is seen carrying the enormous weight of a smug, bloated parson who carries a basket labelled 'Tithes'. Behind him walks a sad, dejected farmer, who is powerless and must pay taxes of ten percent of his produce to the Church. The parson, in this image, is far from a charitable Christian, he is more akin to Balaam, who the bible mentions as a teacher of false doctrine.[2]

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[2] John McKenzie, *Dictionary of the bible* (London, 1965), p. 77.

Fig. 2.1

le Peuple sous l'ancien Regime

Fig. 2.1 – *Le Peuple sous L'ancien Regime* **Paris, 1789**. This image from the French Revolution shows 'the people' as chained, blindfolded and crushed under the burden of the King Louis XVI, clergy and the nobility. This perspective purposely exaggerates social divisions and was used by revolutionaries to inflame tensions during the social clash of the French Revolution.[3]

Fig.2.2

Fig. 2.2 - Samuel Lover, 'The Patlander, and his Burden of Sanctity' *Parson's Horn-book part II*, **Dublin, 1831.** This Irish image by the Comet Literary and Patriotic Club illustrates a common complaint of the rural populace. A bishop of the Established Church sits as an intolerable burden on the back of the hard working farmer. This is an attack on the Church of Ireland tithes system of taxation that extracts its tithes payments to fund the livelihood of its Anglican clergymen.

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[3]'Liberty, equality, fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution' available at (http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/browse/images/) (18 Feb. 2006).

The collection of tithes, ostensibly an agricultural tax levied for the support of the church and its clergy, was a European phenomenon that reached Ireland as part of the reforms brought in by the Anglo-Normans after 1169. The structure of the tithes system of taxation went through many modifications over time. Originally implemented as a ten percent tax on all agricultural tillage produce, although this varied from parish to parish it was later extended to include all profits from pasturelands. In 1736 the Irish House of Commons passed a resolution that was highly favourable to the landlord class. It effectively eliminated the tithes payments on the extensive tracts of pasturelands and placed a disproportionately large bulk of this economic burden on the Irish tillage farming population. While tillage farming families comprised the bulk of the population of Ireland, they were far from a homogenous group.

Based on the statistics from the 1841 census, Cormac O Grada has identified the agrarian population, based on acreage owned or farmed, as comprised of six classes of males engaged in farming. They ranged from the powerful resident and absentee landlords who owned tens of thousands of acres of farmlands and pastures, right down to the miserable subsistence cottiers and the poorest peasants living on tiny potato plots. Others in the farming communities were the snug middlemen whose parasitic livelihoods derived from collecting rents from the comfortable farmers with thirty to fifty acres and the less well off farmers.[4] In the towns and cities there were small but growing numbers of Irish middle class merchants and professionals and the ubiquitous members of the clergy. It is likely that most of these farming families survived in a state of permanent subsistence that left them totally reliant on tillage and labour intensive cultivation to provide sustenance and

[4] Cormac O'Grada, 'Poverty, population, and agriculture, 1801-45' in W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A new history of Ireland*, v (Oxford, 1989), pp 108-136.

pay their debts. The vast majority of Ireland's population were occupied in keeping an outmoded agrarian economy moving forward; although for most, their chief concerns were the daily struggle for their own self-preservation and the welfare of their families.

Despite the fact that some of these subsistence farmers could barely feed themselves and their families from their small plots of land, they were still required to pay one tenth part of their produce for the benefit of Anglican clergyman of the established church, from whose ministrations the majority population derived no benefit. This situation was further compounded by the aggressive methods employed by the tithe proctors, whose job and livelihood was dependant upon their success in collecting the tariffs.[5] During the later half of the eighteenth century and continuing into the nineteenth century, the Whiteboy[6] movement actively engaged in intermittent violent protest against a variety of agrarian issues, including the payment of tithes. Resentment against the paying of tithes was a part of rural life in Ireland, although the intensity of the resistance fluctuated with the levels of agricultural prosperity.

The Tithe Composition Act 1823[7] was first introduced as voluntary and later made compulsory in 1832.[8] It signalled a surprising unification of landowners and tenants in a joint grievance against the paying of tithes. These acts required authorized clergymen and parishioners to negotiate fixed tithes payments to be paid twice annually on an agreed valuation of land in each parish, which included the produce from tillage farmland and the profits on livestock from all pastureland. The implementation of these acts now required

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[5] John D'Alton, *The history of tithes, church lands, and other ecclesiastical benefices; with a plan for the abolition of the former, and the better distribution of the latter, in accordance with the trusts for which they were originally given* (Dublin, 1832). Also see: Donald Akenson, *The Church of Ireland, ecclesiastical reform and revolution, 1800 -1885* (New Haven, 1971), pp 87-111.
[6] See: Maureen Wall, 'The Whiteboys' in T. D. Williams, *Secret societies in Ireland* (Dublin, 1973), pp 13-25 and also J. S. Donnelly, 'The Whiteboy movement' in *Irish Historical Studies*, lxxxi (March 1978), pp. 20-54.
[7] 4 Geo. IV, c. 99.
[8] 2 & 3 Will. IV, c. 41.

that pastureland be included in the total composition tithes payment. Tithes composition charges reached by mutual agreement were to last for twenty-one years. In the case of disagreements, the tithes charge would revert to an average price from the past seven years; this price would then be fixed and would become subject to revision only after a seven year interval, without taking into account market price fluctuations.[9]

The terms of tithes composition in parishes led to a new class of farmer, the wealthy grazier, to be added to the ranks of the tithes opponents. It was claimed by John Walsh, a magistrate and tithes commissioner of Fanningstown, Piltown, County Kilkenny, that some of the resistance to the payment of tithes was 'secretly encouraged' by graziers.[10] Other reports indicate that some substantial farmers of the county acted in a more supervisory role as advisors to the perpetrators of the tithes agitation.[11] The wealthy graziers' resistance to composition was not confined to the amounts of their tithes payments; they found the terms odious as they stipulated that precedence of payment must be given to tithes before the payment of rents or other local and parliamentary taxes. Landlords saw this as an infringement, by the state, on their property rights.[12] However, small farmers and cottiers and other tithes opponents found some powerful allies and leaders, some from the established church itself, joining them in opposition to the tithes taxation system.[13] Significantly, this collaboration of the propertied and the tenants in joint opposition to the tithes system was not confined to the island of Ireland.

[9] Patrick O'Donoghue, 'Causes of the opposition to tithes, 1830-38' in *Studia Hibernica*, no. 5 , 1965, pp 13-14.
[10] *First report from the select committee of the House of Lords on tithes in Ireland*, H. L. 1831 xxii, I pp 154-5.
[11] Michael O'Hanrahan, 'The tithe war in county Kilkenny 1830-1834' in W. Nolan and K. Whelan (eds.), *Kilkenny: history and society* (Dublin, 1990), p. 482.
[12] Ibid., p. 484.
[13] Patrick O'Donoghue, 'Causes of the opposition to tithes, 1830-38' in *Studia Hibernica*, no. 5 , 1965, p. 17.

Before the 1830s anti-tithes movement, the press in England reported sporadic cases in which the landlords and clergymen were compassionate towards the plight of farmers not able to meet their payment obligations due to the downward turn of the market. The greater portion of these cases involved English farmers and their landowners or clergymen who allowed reductions in rents and tithes '…until times were better for the agricultural interest…in the present depressed state of the markets…'[14] However, *The Times* in London reported very few cases of similar kindness or compassion shown towards farmers in Ireland. On the rare occasion when they did so, the press mentioned that they were not absentee landlords, but resident in Ireland.

> The tenants of John Rowe, Esq., of Ballyharty, in the county of Wexford, having waited upon their landlord with the half-year's rent, were sent home again with the entire sum in their pockets, in consideration of the losses they had sustained by the depreciation of the late ruinous season. Mr. Rowe resides constantly on his estate.[15]

There was growing unease towards the tithes issue in urban and rural parishes in England before the beginning of the 1830s anti-tithes agitation in Ireland. Excess tithes payments was a subject of concern for people of many religious denominations, including Anglicans. Anti-tithes sentiments were reportedly evident at a Church of England parish meeting in St. Olave's in Hart Street, London, on 26 Jan. 1828 where a parishioner Mr. Nodin expressed his concern at the excessive demands for tithes.

> The question of tithes, whatever might become of it here, was, I am happy to say, gaining ground over the whole country, and would at no great length of time come to a decision that would relieve and satisfy nine-tenths of the community.[16]

In Ireland, tithe payers, who were mostly Catholic, expressed their resentment in much more demonstrative terms. Resentment directed at the Church of Ireland tithes system reached its breaking point in the early 1830s as agricultural prices for grain and livestock plummeted. Commencing in Dec. 1830, the collection of tithes became a major grievance that prompted organized anti-tithes resistance movements that spread throughout the

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[14] *The Times*, 9 Dec. 1829, p. 4.

[15] Ibid., p. 4.

[16] *The Times*, 26 Jan. 1828, p. 3.

southern counties and into most rural counties in Ireland.[17] At first, these protests were non-violent, beginning in the diocese of Kildare and Leighlin at the parish of Graiguenamanagh, County Kilkenny, at the behest of the parish priest Martin Doyle and with the support of his bishop, James Doyle.[18] Bishop Doyle was an outstanding opponent of the tithes and encouraged popular resistance amongst his flock, although he urged the protestors to stay within the law. It seems to be the case that this became increasingly problematical. As the level and intensity of tithes opposition activity increased, so too did the severity of the responses from the magistrates, who were forced to send in the constabulary and the yeomanry at the insistence of the tithes owners. Violent confrontations began the 'final and most aggressive phase, known as the 'tithe war'[19] following a bloody episode at Newtownbarry, County Wexford on 18 June 1831, where anti-tithes protesters were fired on by the yeomanry and killing twelve.

Disputes and discussions over the levels at which tithes were set became a popular topic of debate in parliament.[20] Public attention focused upon the incidence, amounts and destination of the tithes payments. In the press of the United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland, there were urgent pleas for church reform as a tide of anticlericalism swept over the land.

Contemporaneous with the tithes agitation in Ireland, an unprecedented outpouring of hostility was directed at the Duke of Wellington's Tory led government. The Whig party, with the assistance of the press, accused the Duke of leading a corrupt social system with the Church at its very core. Opposition parties blamed the Church institution as embodying

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[17] Michael O'Hanrahan, 'The tithe war in county Kilkenny 1830-1834', p. 482 in W. Nolan and K. Whelan (eds.), *Kilkenny: history and society* (Dublin, 1990).
[18] For a comprehensive account see: Thomas McGrath, *Politics, interdenominational relations and education in the public ministry of Bishop James Doyle of Kildare and Leighlin, 1786-1834* (Dublin, 1999), pp 146-151.
[19] Ibid., p. 151.
[20] *First report of the select committee of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into the collection and payments of tithes in Ireland*, H.C., 1831-2, xxi, p. 685.

all the societal wrongs of the country. Clearly severe reform was needed but not all in parliament were in agreement. Prompted, perhaps, by indignation and self-preservation, intense discussions and political machinations occurred in the House of Lords.[21] The continuing news of the anti-tithes activity and violence in Ireland fuelled the heated parliamentary debates and provided hardening evidence of corruption within the Established Church. The Church, even more than the State, became public enemy number one. The British illustrated press covered every aspect of the reform movement, including often surprising interpretations of the tithes war and the worsening economic situation in Ireland but this will be examined in the next chapter.

In a small notice on the back of the *Kilkenny Journal*, 1 May, 1830 the following notice appeared:

> A number of persons were dispossessed of their holdings on the lands of Sir Robert Hudson, in the County of Cavan on the 24th ult., and their cabins levelled to the ground. The scene of misery exhibited on the occasion, surpassed, we understand, all description.[22]

Before the anti-tithes protests, newspapers in many provincial areas of Ireland, regardless of their political or religious affiliation showed evidence of frank and open non-sectarian compassion towards the members of the agricultural community who suffered due to agrarian related troubles; this sympathy drastically changed to enmity during the tithes war.

From 1830 through 1838, the years of the 'tithes war', newspapers were filled with various articles and illustrations representing and voicing the concerns of all the divergent social groups of the period. Increasingly, as the violence of the 'tithes war' intensified, with reports of outrages from both sides, the press reported the events from their clear predilections.

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[21] *First report from the select committee of the House of Lords on tithes in Ireland,* H. L., 1831, xxii, i, pp 154-158.
[22] *Kilkenny Journal,* 1 May 1830.

The Late Savage Outrage –
Another of the miscreants, named Sullivan, charged with being concerned
in the tearing the tongues out of the care-takers of Mr. Westropp, of Dromelihy,
has been apprehended in Kilrush.[23]

Graphic reports such as this in both the Dublin and provincial papers, many of which had

extensive circulation in Ireland, England and Scotland, were complicit in fomenting and

spreading an atmosphere of fear and distrust of the rural Irish peasantry.

There was a preponderance of anti-Catholic sentiment evident in the journalistic reporting

of anti-tithes 'outrages' by the Protestant, unionist and establishment publications. After a

sale of distrained 'tithes cattle' was cancelled due to an organized non-violent anti-tithes

protest, a vehemently anti-Catholic newspaper in Kilkenny ran an article with the headline

'Grand Cavalcade of 82 Papists on Horseback!!!', reporting the peaceful anti-tithes event

as follows:

> At about four o'clock in the afternoon a procession of the "tithe resisters", mounted, passed
> slowly through our streets, three a-breast, on their return from Freshford, with green
> branches at the heads of the horses. We could have smiled at this attempt of Popery to set
> her 'beggars on horseback'.[24]

While the article didn't complete the well-known adage, 'put a beggar on horseback and he

will ride to hell', its message of sectarian animosity was clear.

The word 'outrage' became the calling card that described all manner of violent activity

that occurred at the hands of either anti-tithes protestors or tithes proctors. The manner and

sectarian content of the ordinary press coverage of the 'outrages' assisted the spread of

confessionalism and advanced feelings of anti-clericalism. These sentiments were about to

be carried to a much wider audience as the printing trade began to include illustrations,

along with text, as a regular feature. These illustrated newspapers and periodicals were

intended to grab the attention of Ireland's illiterate population.

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[23] *Dublin Evening Packet and Correspondent*, 2 Jan. 1830 reported from the *Clare Journal*.
[24] *Kilkenny Moderator*, 'Grand Cavalcade of 82 Papists on Horseback', 13 June 1832.

For the farming community in Ireland tithes represented a visible, tangible hardship and burden. The predominantly Catholic peasant population of Ireland were forced to pay for the upkeep of what was perceived as an alien, yet established, minority. The viewpoint that regardless of religious affiliation, Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians and other 'dissenters' equally viewed the payment of tithes as an intolerable burden[25] does not appear to be substantiated in the Irish press of the 1830s. The tithes issue, did in fact, affect all the members of the agricultural community but, by its very nature, it exacerbated religious tensions and separated the communities along confessional divides. The religious affiliation of some of the publications was quite apparent in the Irish illustrated press; they identified and visually depicted the Catholic farming community as either victim or villain in the 'tithes war', and likewise the clergymen of the Church of Ireland were depicted.

In the spring of 1831 about a dozen young Irishmen of different backgrounds founded an association in Dublin entitled 'The Political Tract Society', later to be known as 'The Comet Club'.[26] This religiously diverse group felt it could provide a path to effect change. Their members included Maurice O'Connell, the son of Daniel O'Connell, John Sheehan, a writer, publisher and son of a Catholic hotelier in Celbridge, Co. Kildare. Other members of the society included the Reverend Thomas Browne, Joseph Stirling Coyne and Robert Knox, who eventually became editor of the *Morning Post*. [27] Most of them had met while attending Trinity College Dublin. These self-confident intellectual radicals were clearly influenced by Benthamite, utilitarian principles and O'Connellite principles of passive resistance and political expediency. In their prospectus, they wrote that it was their desire to prepare the people of Ireland by instructing them in the elements of political knowledge. They believed that it was their mandate to provide simple rudiments of instruction on

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[25] Patrick O'Donoghue, 'Causes of the opposition to tithes, 1830-38' in *Studia Hibernica*, no. 5 (1965), p. 7.
[26] For a history of *The Comet* see: 'Memorandum of a prospectus for the Political Tract Society' (NLI, John Sheehan papers, MS 3517).
[27] Ibid.

political topics, conveyed in familiar language that would provide entertaining and suitable discourse. They chose to use the printing press to generate a 'powerful and irresistible impulse of moral force, the force of mind'.[28] Their publications would be distributed widely to the peasantry of Ireland through the agency of their society. They believed they would accomplish this by generating illustrated books and pamphlets, penny tracts and eventually their own illustrated newspaper, called *The Comet*. They opened up an office in the heart of the printing and publishing quarter of Dublin in the spring of 1831.[29]

The primary objective of the Comet Club was to advocate for radical reforms of the Irish municipalities, a repeal of the union and the abolition of tithes. However, its prospectus made clear that the members did not set out to be subversive, but to help create a moral 'force', against those who, they felt, had an interest in keeping down the peasantry of Ireland. The Comet Club's first publication was a book called the *Parson's Horn-book*. It was condemned by one of Dublin's establishment newspapers, *Saunders News-letter* as having 'emanated from persons leagued in a foul conspiracy'.[30] The *Parson's Horn-book* is a heavily illustrated satirical criticism on the 'temporalities and anomalies' of the Church of Ireland. It is included in this study because many of the illustrations that first appeared in this controversial work went on to appear in newspapers, and at least one of the illustrations became an icon of the anti-tithes movement (see Fig. 2.3).

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[28] 'Memorandum of a prospectus for the Political Tract Society' (NLI, John Sheehan papers, MS 3517).
[29] Ibid.
[30] 'The Comet Literary Club' in *Saunders News-Letter*, Dublin, 1831, p. 3.

Fig.2.3 – Samuel Lover, *I – FOR INCUMBENT – Incumbrance were better, Parson's Horn-book part I*, **Dublin 1831**, Browne & Sheehan publishers, AOE. The image made its first appearance in *The Parson's Horn-book*, an illustrated pro-reform satirical publication that was highly critical of Church of Ireland tithes system. It appeared in the chapter called 'The Church-Man's Alphabet', it is the illustration that accompanies the letter 'I', ' I – FOR INCUMBENT – *Incumbrance* were better'. The same image was integrated into the pages of text of the radical anti-tithe newspaper by the same publishers called *The Comet*. The titles read from left to right: *Have Mercy!! – Quiet you Rebel!! – Mammy I'm Starving – God help us – Flying Artillery*. The illustration symbolically represents the suffering of the Irish peasantry under the burden of the tithes.

'The Church-Man's Alphabet' as it appeared in *The Parson's Horn-book*, Dublin 1831.

A Was an Archbishop, rich as a Jew   *B* a great Bishop, an Israelite too
C a *cognomen*—disgrace to the earth!   *D* he of Derry, "wha has a bra birth"
E as Evangelist, teacher of ten   *F* was a fisher of *unions*, not MEN
G for old Glendaloch's churches will stand   *H* for the History of the Poor's third and land
I for INCUMBENT – *Incumbrance* were better --   *K* for four Bishopricks is the first letter
L a fat LIVING, two thousand a –year   *M* a MAD PREACHER, an orthodox Seer
N a Non-entity, silly and old   *O* is an OMNIBUS OWL, a sad scold
P a keen Parson, who gathers tithe doles   *Q* uite careful to *cure* more of *tenths* than of SOULS
R is a Rector with Prebend and Stall   *S* a snug Glebe-House called "Simony Hall"
T a tough teacher of tabernacle lore   *U* is an ULTRA whose GOD-HEAD is four
W was a wrangler, a "worshipful" wight   *X* an x-ample of Xenophon's might!
Y a YOUTH, tradesman-like, 'prentice to *Grace*--   *Z* zeal—for *tithes!* Not "THE CALL," in his face![31]

The idea of a 'Church- Man's Alphabet' was copied from this earlier work by Richard

Newton (Fig.2.4), published by William Holland in London, 1795. Both works portray a

very negative image of the church professionals.

Fig. 2.4

Fig. 2.4 – Richard Newton, *A CLERICAL ALPHABET*, London, 1795, published by William Holland, AOE.

A Was Archbishop with a red face   B Was a Bishop who long'd for his place.
C Was a Curate, a poor Sans *Culotte*.   D Was a Dean who refus'd him a Coat.
E ven grudg'd him small beer to moisten his throat!   F Was a Fellow of Brazen-Nose college
G Was a Graduate guileless of knowledge   H Was a high-flying Priest had a call!
I Was an incumbent did nothing at all.   K Was King's Chaplain, as pompous as Didd.
L Was a Lecturer dull as a clod   M Was a Methodist Parson, stark mad!
N Was a Non Con and nearly as bad.   O Was an Orator, Stupid and sad.
P Was a Pluralist ever a craving.   Q A queer Parson at Pluralists raving!
R Was a Rector at Pray'rs went to sleep.   S Was his Shepherd who fleec'd all his sheep.
T Was a Tutor, a dull Pedagogue   U Was an Usher delighted to flog
V Was a Vicar who smok'd and drank grog.   W Was a wretched Welsh Parson in rags
X Stands for Tenths or for Tythes in the bags   Y Was a young Priest the butt of Lay Wags
Z Is a letter most people call Izzard/and I think what I've said will stick in their gizzard. [32]

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[31] *Parson's Horn-book part I* (Dublin, 1831), pp 2-9.

The title words 'horn-book' refers to a type of primitive style lesson book or primer; the intention of the creators was to teach a lesson or two to the Anglican clergy and the general public. With bitter debates raging in the parliament over the school system and whether Irish schools should be secularised or remain under the auspices of the various church credos, 'horn-book' is meant as a deliberate taunt or jibe to the clergymen of the established church.

The author of the *Parson's Horn-book* remained anonymous; the only names to appear on the work were publishers, Browne and Sheehan. The artist who was responsible for the creation of all the illustrations, that were an integral part of this volume, did not reveal his identity. Anonymity was not uncommon for satirical works and other controversial works during this period. In many of the periodicals, anonymity was customary; it allowed the writers and artists more freedom of expression. Without a signature, authors could be more honest about controversial topics, or conversely, they could be irresponsible. Writers and artists were free from personal retribution and immune from accusations of flagrant bias or any hint of self-aggrandisement motivations. Writers and artists directed their fury at the tithes system by an avalanche of satiric, and often offensive, depictions of the clergymen of the Church of Ireland; many of whom used pseudonyms or hid behind veils of anonymity. It is now acknowledged that Samuel Lover, a renowned Irish writer and artist,[33] who in 1828 had been elected to the Royal Hibernian Academy, richly illustrated the *Parson's Horn-book* with his own original highly controversial engravings.[34] The *Parson's Horn-book* was published anonymously, although it is likely that Samuel Lover's unique drawing and etching style would have been widely recognized at the time of its publication.

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[32] David Alexander, *Richard Newton and English caricature in the 1790s* (Manchester 1998), p. 129.
[33] W. G. Strickland, *A dictionary of Irish artists*, ii (Dublin, 1913), pp 25-29.
[34] Ibid., pp 25-29.

Samuel Lover was born in Dublin in 1797, the son of a lottery-office keeper and a money - changer.[35] Strickland described him as having 'versatile talents as a musician, a composer, a writer and book-illustrator';[36] he had some moderate success as a miniature portrait painter, alongside his friend and well-known miniaturist John Comerford. Lover had success in 1831 with the publication of his book *Legends and Stories of Ireland* that he wrote and illustrated; he also was a contributor and illustrator to the *Dublin University Magazine* and the *Irish Penny Magazine*. Lover's career as a portrait artist in Dublin, however, seems to have suffered due to his connection with the controversial publication the *Parson's Horn-Book* that included twelve of his highly irreverent illustrations of the established church. His loss of clientele occurred coincidentally after the publication of this book and may have prompted his move from Dublin to London in 1834.[37]

While Lover's illustrations are original, many of the themes appearing in the *Parson's Horn-Book* are copied from earlier artist's works. As noted already, Browne and Sheehan imitated the idea of presenting a 'Church-man's Alphabet' from London artist, Richard Newton. Newton, in 1795 had already collaborated with radical publisher, William Holland, who published his amusing version of a clerical alphabet that included most of the clerical 'types' in narrative strip format that would have been familiar to a late eighteenth century audience (Fig. 2.4). It is probable that this previous work would have been the prototype for the 1831 version appearing in the *Parson's Horn-book*.

The influence wielded by the *Parson's Horn-book* can be gauged by the numerous references to it in most contemporary periodicals. Even the most vociferous critics of the text of the *Parson's Horn-book* reserved much praise for the illustrations. The review of

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[35] W. G. Strickland, *A dictionary of Irish artists* ii (Dublin, 1913), p. 25.
[36] Ibid., p. 26.
[37] Ibid., p. 27.

the work that appeared in *Saunders Newsletter*, a popular Dublin conservative Protestant

newspaper, is surprisingly effusive in its praise for the talent displayed by the writers and

artist. At the same time, it accuses the creators of the work of being co-conspirators in

some elaborate plot against the established church. The criticism of this work represents

an extremely important pronouncement of a certain mindset of the period that was quite

content with 'the present order of things.'[38]

There is evidently a conspiracy formed against the Established Church. We will state our conviction on this point. ...*The Parson's Hornbook* just published, and of which we have attained a copy, must be got up on the strength of some joint stock purse; for a work upon which so much pains and expense has been bestowed, could not possibly be sold by an individual under double the price at which it is published. The exquisite style of the Etchings, twelve in number; the talent displayed in the writings, and the splendid style in which the whole book is finished off for sale, compared with the price (five shillings) prove that it has emanated from persons leagued in a foul conspiracy to up-root the Established Church. A series of such works, if persisted in, must have that purpose and tendency in view. Upon these grounds we denounce the work altogether. We should be utterly inconsistent with our known principles if we did otherwise; we are faithfully attached to the present order of things,...From the outcry which at present is becoming general against the Church, we are sorry to say, we fear the dissemination of this dangerous publication will be too general. [39]

Whole pamphlets, articles and reviews were written in response to its publication.[40] So

controversial was this book, and its sequel the *Parson's Horn-book part II*, that most

periodicals, regardless of their alliances, political motivation or religious affiliation,

regardless of whether they agreed with or despised the sentiments in *The Parson's Horn-

book*, acknowledged that it influenced public opinion. *The Morning Post*, a major Belfast

newspaper of Catholic affiliation, chose to walk a more cautious line in its praise for the

book. Its review strongly acknowledges, and asserts its belief in the importance of this

work as a medium that could impact religious and political public opinion. It does not go

any further in offering its recommendation or condemnation of the publication.

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[38] *The Comet*, 1 May 1831, p. 1 from *Saunders Newsletter*.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Rev. Thomas Smith, *Parson's Horn-book examined* (Dublin, 1831).

The Parson's Horn-book, 'deserves all praise which a lover of elegant typography can give, and the etchings are executed in a manner which redounds to the credit of the artist; but when we open the leaves of this beautiful little volume, and see what is "therein written," we must call a halt to our panegyric, and walk more cautiously over ground where the subject may influence the mind upon matters the most serious, both in a political and religious point of view.[41]

Browne and Sheehan and the other members of the Comet Club achieved success and controversy with their first publication. It was reported that the Rev. Mr. Mathias, along with his whole congregation believed that the editors of the *Parson's Horn-book* were badly in need of spiritual guidance. The Reverend led his flock every Sunday in praying aloud for their conversion. The *Parson's Horn-book* was described, by its editor John Sheehan, in later years as having '…had a greater circulation and caused more sensation than any book issued in Ireland since the days of Swift.'[42]

The conjoined entity of the institutions of Church and State was a theme commonly utilized in Ireland and England in both the conservative and radical press. The image below (Fig. 2.5) depicts an Irish peasant farming family terrorized by a two- headed monster, Church and State. It encapsulates some of the many real fears harboured by the Irish Catholic farming community against the established church which was supported by government military forces during the tithes war. In England and Ireland the press dubbed this phenomenon the 'twin headed monster', or the 'Siamese twins'; it provided good fodder for the imagination of both artists and journalists.

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[41] *The Comet*, 1 May 1831, p. 1 from the *Morning Post.*

[42] This was stated in the entry for John Sheehan in the *DNB*, xviii, p. 7. The entry refers to a supposed quote from *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1874. However, I feel this is somewhat apocryphal; having completed a thorough check of all the volumes from that year, I was unsuccessful in locating the quote.

Fig.2..5

Fig. 2.5 - Samuel Lover, *Parson's Horn-book part II*, Dublin, 1831, AOE. This image appears adjacent to the title page. It depicts an Irish peasant family and their animals outside their thatched cottage. The woman holds her child and has a rosary hanging from her arm. They appear to be distraught and fearful while they run away from the approach of a two-headed figure with one devil's hoof wearing the hats of militia and bishop and carrying sabre, moneybag and bible. In the background are soldiers on horseback chasing and threatening peasants with sabres. On top of a gothic style church, the devil dances and exclaims 'well done' while some soldiers stand ready with canons in front of the church.

An English illustrated periodical chose for its title, *The Church and State* (see Fig. 2.6). Its illustrated masthead served as a constant reminder of the dangers in allowing the government and Church to exist in mutually beneficial arrangement that supersedes their mandate of caring for the welfare of the population. The satirical illustrations that appear in the masthead depict incidents whereby the military's use of excess violence resulted in horrific loss of civilian life. On the left background, the illustration clearly depicts the churchmen-led massacre of peasants on 18 December 1835 at Rathcormac, County Cork[43] during the tithes war and the picture on the right background shows the lethal use of artillery and martial force against civilians that is most likely a reference to the Peterloo massacre that occurred during a reform rally held on 16 August 1819 at St. Peter's Field, Manchester.

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[43] Edward Garner, *Massacre at Rathcormac: last battle in the tithes war* (Fermoy, 1984).

Fig. 2.6- *Church and State,* **London, 1836** , Bodl. Masthead illustration depicts William IV in a celebratory toast with a high bishop of the Church of England. In the background are seen two lethal incidents where artillery and martial force was used against civilians, one is named *Rathcormac*. The notorious massacre at Rathcormac, County Cork was the last violent episode of the tithes war. The words *Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin* written on the banner is from the Bible and refers to the handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar's kingdom;[44] in this instance it may be inferred as a threat or warning to the established church and the government as it symbolizes that God has numbered the kingdom, weighed it and found it to be in need of division.

Fig. 2.7 - Samuel Lover, 'Paddy and the Bishop: an Ecclesiastical Pastoral', *The Parson's Horn-book part II.* **Dublin, 1831,** AOE. This image depicts a conversation between an Irish farmer and an Anglican Bishop. The scene depicts a rotund Anglican bishop and his beautiful spouse seated at a table in a splendid apartment. The table, its base and legs formed from a mitre and crosiers, is profusely furnished with various meats, liqueurs, wines and fruits; on the table is placed a large money bag, containing a renewal fine of ten thousand pounds. The large window has an extensive unimpeded prospect of sea and land. Near the table stands Paddy, a thin raggedly-dressed Irish peasant farmer who appears to be visibly distressed by the scene he points to outside the window. At a distance a number of yeomanry are observed seizing for tithes the cattle of the poor. There are some militia shooting, bayoneting, sabreing, and riding over crowds of men, women and children. In the distance, several families are seen in small boats heading to a sailing ship to escape the area by emigrating from their native land.[45]

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[44] John McKenzie, *Dictionary of the bible* (London, 1996), p. 564.

[45] Comet Literary and Patriotic Club editor's notes, *Parson's Horn-book part II* (Dublin, 1831), p. 18.

Images in the illustrated press made clear distinctions between the various echelons of authority within the established church. The *PHB* primarily portrayed the burden of the tithes as being borne by the Irish peasantry, however, in this image the lower clergymen of the established church feel the 'burden', as they are depicted pulling the weight of the Church of Ireland as the 'bishop' comfortably enjoys a free ride. The non-payment of tithes by Irish farmers began to erupt in violent confrontations as the parsons, curates and rectors, who in some cases had no other sources of livelihood, forcibly attempted to collect their dues with the help of the militia and yeomanry.

Higher levels of clergymen, mostly the bishops, were pictured as prosperous, well fed, avaricious and wholly unaware of the desperate plight of the poor farming class of people who funded their profligate way of life. They are also visualised as appearing to be oblivious to the desperate plight of their lower brethren within their church who were without their 'tithes' wages. Higher clergymen were pictured as belligerent or as regarding the non-payment of tithes as a nuisance, or an effrontery to their authority, requiring them to tighten their belts another notch or two over their already protruding stomachs. Other illustrations are more sympathetic to the parsons, curates and reverends who appear in some images as exceedingly slim and downtrodden figures fighting for their very survival (Fig. 2.8).
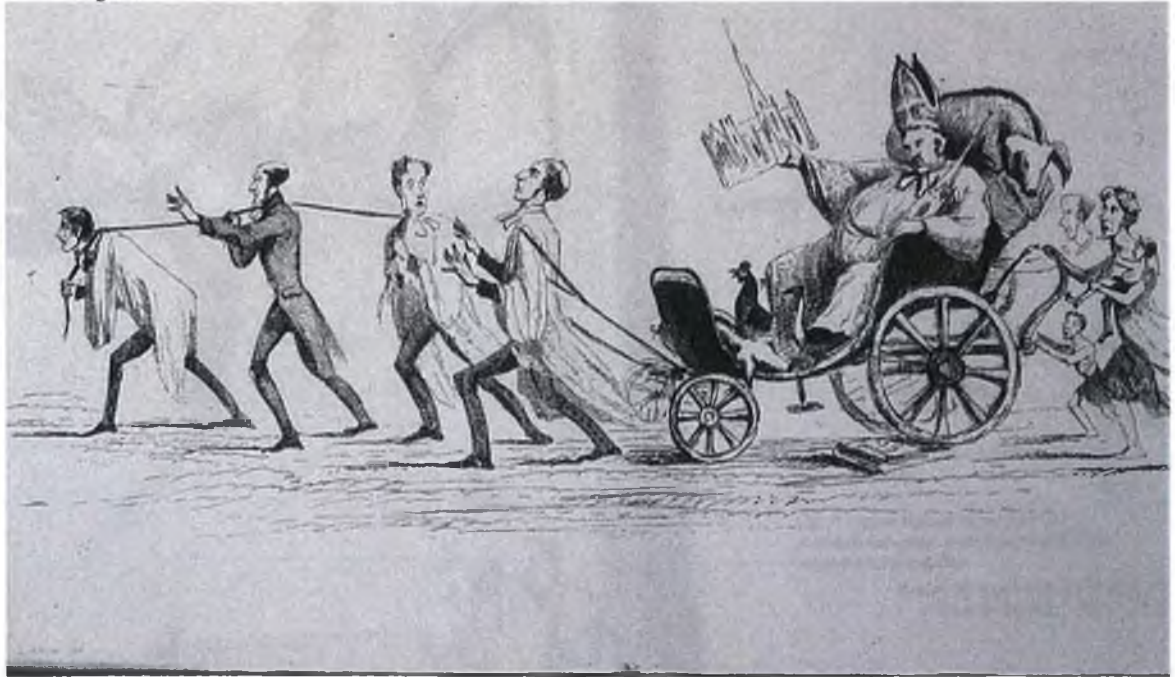
Fig. 2.8 - Samuel Lover, *Parson's Horn-book part II*, Dublin, 1831, AOE. The carriage holds a bloated clergyman of the Established Church wearing a bishop's mitre and holding in one hand a miniature model of a broken church building and in the other hand the broken off steeple portion. Riding in the carriage are assorted farm animals: a pig, chicken, duck and a calf; these animals represent those that were regularly seized in lieu of tithes payments. Four slim men are pulling the entire weight of carriage, three are wearing ragged clergymen robes, while the other is dressed in gentlemen's attire; they all appear to be straining under the weight of their heavy burden. In the rear of the carriage a barefoot family tries to cling to the carriage as it rolls over the book on the ground entitled *39 Articles* (this book is the doctrinal foundations of the Church of England).

Fig.2.9

Fig. 2.9. Excerpt from *The Comet*, 15 May 1831.
This is an excerpt of an anonymous letter and accompanying illustration, from a reader, to the editors of *The Comet*.

'I address you in the language of contempt, to show you how abhorred you are to the members of my cloth. What a pretty time we have arrived at when Laymen will be *permitted* to make such gross attacks upon the *chosen* FEW to whom GOD has consigned his people? Let me dissuade you from your wicked courses. Sirs, ere you have stripped the land of its spiritual guides, the Church Established of its only hold-fast—its temporalities--, and the "labourers in the vineyard" of their hire. Sirs, Sirs, have ye no bowels of compassion? What pleasures can you derive from such cruelties as you have inflicted upon me and my fraternity in that bitter and vindictive work which you have, with so much impudence, baptized the "Parson's Horn-Hook?"...But you shall behold a picture of yourselves—with your swaggering impudence as you walk the streets; and you shall look at the portrait of a pious meek, and humble shepherd, ... I have taken some pains to sketch you,...I put you to your courage to publish it, ...Sirs, Sirs, again I ask, have ye no bowels of compassion? ...'.

Yours, Sirs, for your souls'cure.
CLERICUS

The income of ordinary clergymen of the established church consisted primarily of tithes payments and without which, for some, it was impossible to remain in their parishes. The withholding of tithes payments in some parishes did necessitate their finding alternative arrangements as their livelihood was in jeopardy. Rev. Dr. Sadleir, S.F. T.C. D. sought supplemental income with this advertisement in the *Dublin Evening Mail*:

> A married clergyman, who resides about forty miles from Dublin, would receive into his family, two pupils, who should in every respect be treated as members of the family, and whom he would undertake to instruct in the entrance course of Trinity College, or if candidate for Holy Orders he would read with them for Ordination, or for the divinity examination; the advertiser has been in orders for some years; previous to his ordination he resided as tutor in most respectable families where he was in the habit of giving instruction both in the entrance, and under-graduate courses. In college the advertiser attained the highest honours in Divinity and Hebrew. Persons who are intended for the university would have peculiar advantages in being with the advertiser, as they might have the opportunity of accompanying him in his parochial visits, etc.etc…Terms 80 guineas, per annum, for persons reading for entrance; and 100 for those reading for Ordination. Reference of the highest character to Fellows of College and others, can be given. For particulars, apply to the Rev. Dr. Sadleir, S.F. T.C.D.[46]

It is too simple an explanation to attribute the anti-tithes agitation to merely economic causes. Many historians who have studied this period concur that a variety of other religious and political issues acted in unison to prompt this violent period. Evangelical missionary activity towards religious conversion of the masses was heavy in many areas of the country. The more fanatical and passionate preachers in these missions often used anti-Catholic verbiage that had the effect of heightening antagonism in the communities.[47] During the most contentious period of the anti-tithes movement several illustrated publications, Protestant evangelical and Roman Catholic, vied with each other for the attention of the Irish populace. Some of these publications are discussed in detail in chapter four.

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[46] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 6 Jan. 1832.
[47]See below chapter four for a discussion of the evangelical illustrated press in Ireland. For a comprehensive account of evangelical activity in Ireland during the early nineteenth century see: David Hempton and Myrtle Hill, *Evangelical Protestantism in Ulster society 1740-1890* (London, 1992) and Irene Whelan, *The bible war in Ireland* (Dublin, 2005).

In the wake of Catholic Emancipation some ultra-Protestant tithes owners became stricter in their tithes collection policies. In previous decades, small plots of land held by Catholic parish priests would sometimes be exempted from tithes collection. This compassionate practice was abandoned in many cases in favour of overly zealous manners of collecting dues.[48] There are a variety of reasons that might have prompted certain segments of the Protestant clerical population to adopt a strict adherence to the collection of tithes. As more and more farmers from parishes all over the country withheld paying tithes, some of the poorer Anglican clergymen may have felt economic desperation seeing their main source of revenue drying up. The Church of Ireland clergymen may have had a palpable feeling of abandonment by their church and government. Parliament did not offer any assistance to clergymen of the Church of Ireland until the Clergy Relief Fund 1831, when Parliament finally passed legislation to cover the tithes arrears for the previous year, it was too little and too late. Having been left to fend for themselves, many clergymen were prompted to seek assistance in the procurement of their dues from the magistrate and local constabulary. As the situation became more desperate, on both sides of the issue, the level of violence increased. Parliamentary debates were increasingly focused on one issue, that of Church reform and its ailing system of tithes taxation.

Driven by a royal commission, the Whig ministry and the relentless press, a complete overhaul of the entire diocesan structure of the Irish Church was instituted with the enactment of the Church Temporalities Act 1833.[49] This controversial legislation reduced the number of bishoprics from twenty-two to twelve and the four archbishoprics were reduced to two. It also provided for a land purchase provision

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[48] D. H. Akenson, *The church of Ireland ecclesiastical reform and revolution, 1800-1885* (New Haven, 1971), pp 149-51.
[49] 3 & 4 Will. IV, c. 37 and amended by 4 & 5 Will. IV, c. 90.

for tenants holding bishops' leases. The Board of First Fruits was abolished and replaced by a new organization, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of Ireland. This might have streamlined the efficiency of the structure of the Church of Ireland but it did not yet rectify the controversial issue of tithes. Five more years ensued before this too was dealt with by the government in 1838. The illustrated press on both sides of the Irish Sea kept the pressure on parliamentary leaders and influenced public opinion with their graphic images.

Buoyed up by the notoriety and success of the *Parson's Horn-book*, the publishing group followed their triumph by creating, on 1 May 1831, an illustrated Sunday newspaper called *The Comet*. The prospectus for this newspaper asserts its commitment to presenting anti-tithes commentary and illustrations. Its motto or credo states that the newspaper was founded upon principles of radical reform (see Figs. 2.10 and 2.11).

Fig.2.10

Fig. 2.10 - *The Comet*, Dublin 1831, This is the masthead for an anti-tithes movement illustrated newspaper,. It was published by *Browne* and Sheehan for a three year duration.

Fig.2.11

THINGS AS THEY ARE.   THINGS AS THEY WILL BE.
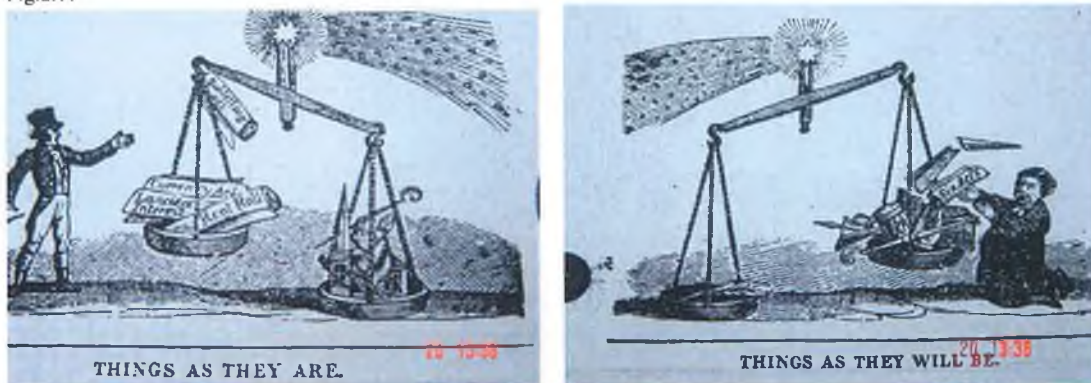
Figs. 2.10 and 2.11 - Masthead detail from *The Comet*, Dublin 1831, NLI. This anti-tithes newspaper published from 1831-1833 carried these illustrations adorning its masthead. 'THINGS AS THEY ARE', depicts the scales of justice favouring the established church and its property over all other interests, including *Subletting Act, Currency Act, Landed interest and Rent Roll*. '*THINGS AS THEY WILL BE'* has the scales weighed very much against the church with a quill as the weighty opponent representing the weight of the written (or printed) word; it will not be shifted by the weight of the entire established church property.

It was to be a completely independent publication whose editors 'identified with the people as a third branch of the Constitution from which the other two have absorbed rights and privileges'.[50] The avowed aim of the newspaper was to offer suggestions for the practical improvement in the conditions of the Irish peasantry by encouraging self-reliance in an effort to eradicate subservience. They serialised some of the *PHB* chapters and reproduced many of its striking illustrations to embellish the pages of the newspaper. These illustrations made the publication more appealing to a wider audience that included the illiterate. They became vital ingredients of the anti-tithes discourse by conveying, visually, the sentiments of the movement. The publication became a voice of the anti-tithes movement; it publicized anti-tithes actions that were taken by tenants and clergy and gave practical advice for the preparation of anti-tithes petitions and other strategic information. With its prolific use of simplistic visual imagery, satire and caricatures, *The Comet* was able to convey its messages clearly and effectively. The inevitable result was that some of its illustrations went on to achieve iconic status as symbols or emblems of the movement.[51]

Fig.2.12

Fig. 2.12 – *The Comet*, 22 May 1831, Dublin, p. 28. The printed image in the upper right corner is reprinted from the *Parson's Horn-book*, Browne & Sheehan publishers (see Fig. 2.3). This image, according to several journalists' reports, was hand painted on banners and carried in a massive anti-tithes demonstration in Co. Kilkenny on Sunday, 8 July 1832.

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[50] 'Prospectus of a Sunday Newspaper to be called *The Comet*', in the *Parson's Horn-book* (Dublin, 1831).
[51] This determination was made by Irish and English newspaper journalists' references to images from *PHB* (see: footnotes 45 and 46).

In their coverage of anti-tithes demonstrations journalists from English and Irish newspapers reported seeing demonstrators carrying flags and banners with hand-drawn reproductions of illustrations from the *Parson's Horn-Book*. When this image (Fig. 2.3) first appeared in *PHB* priced at five shillings, its prohibitive price would have been out of reach for most of the population of Ireland. However, it subsequently appeared in the newly popular illustrated weekly *The Comet* (Fig. 2.12). Priced at 6*d*, this newspaper was similarly priced to other weeklies and had the largest per issue circulation in Ireland of 3,392,[52] rivalling the *Weekly Freeman* in popularity; the illustration soon became an icon of the anti-tithes movement.

Journalists reported on the 'most splendid', 'truly magnificent' and 'grand' exhibition ever held in Ireland to demonstrate the publics 'detestation of tithes'. This demonstration was held on Sunday, 8 July 1832 between Knocktopher and Ballyhale, Co. Kilkenny. According to the newspaper reports, it attracted crowds of men and women numbering 200,000 from counties Kilkenny, Wexford, Tipperary and Waterford within a twenty-mile radius. Included below is most of the text from two articles that covered this event, one from an Irish regional newspaper and another from London. Both make specific reference to the hand drawn illustrations on the banners carried by the anti-tithes demonstrators.[53] This incident offers demonstrable proof that visual images played a key role and went to the very heart of the anti-tithes issue for the farming community. Although problems arise in trying to accurately gauge how many people actually saw this newspaper; the circulation numbers for *The Comet* show that in the three years of its existence there were only 6,814 stamps issued.[54] This does not give the full picture of the extent of the 'readership', since many Irish people in the farming community identified themselves with the heavily

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[52] *Account of the number of stamps issued to newspapers in Ireland, 1830-32*, H. C. 1831-1832 (242) XXXIV.

[53] *Kilkenny Journal*, 11 July 1832, p. 2 and *The Times*, 14 July 1832, p. 6.

[54] *Account of number of stamps issued to newspapers in Ireland, 1830-1832*, H.C. 1833 (412), *Account of number of stamps issued to newspapers in Ireland 1833-1834*, H. C. 1834 (510), XLIX.

burdened poor people depicted in this image. On the basis of this evidence, it is quite clear that *The Comet* exerted a considerable influence on Irish public opinion for the first three years of the tithes war until its demise in 1833.

GRAND TITHE MEETING OF 200,000 MEN FROM THE COUNTIES OF KILKENNY, WEXFORD, TIPPERARY AND WATERFORD –REPEAL OF THE UNION - A DEPUTY LORD LIEUTENANT IN THE CHAIR.

The most splendid exhibition yet made in Ireland of the public detestation of tithes, took place between Knocktopher and Ballyhale, Sunday last. The general impression was that less than 200,000 persons could not be present; nor will that seem surprising, when the fact is known that every part within twenty miles round, of the four named counties, sent forth their inhabitants, men and women, in dense masses. While the committee were preparing resolutions, &c. we watched the continued procession of people passing from the Waterford side, through the village of Ballyhale, proceeding to the field appointed for the meeting to be held in and, for upwards of two hours, did the line continue unbroken, while an equally imposing mass of human beings, on foot, and in chaises and cars, and on horseback,... Few spectacles, indeed, could be grander than the large bodies of fine fellows, and neatly dressed handsome women, filing along the cross roads and lanes, as far as the eye could reach, now lost in the vallies, ... Between the pauses in the cheering, were heard on every side the sounds of fifes and drums, and full bands of music; and the inhabitants of each district were arranged under their respective banners, hundreds of which could be seen, orange, green or tricolour, floating as thickly, and far more widely extending, than the mast-head colours in a spacious and crowded port, while many attracted attention by the aptness of their inscriptions, or excited a smile at the originality of their quaint and humorous devices. Numbers of Protestant gentlemen attended, who took a deep interest in the proceedings; and, it may be truly said of the meeting, that it contained not only the constituency, but the representatives of the wealth, talent, and respectability, &c. of four of the most important Irish counties. **Some of the Catholic Clergy, among whom we noticed the Rev. M. Doyle, of Graig, and the Rev. Mr. Hewetson, were in attendance; but needed not to use their influence to maintain order among so vast a multitude,...**

Among the banners was one bearing a well executed painting from the "Parson's Horn Book," representing a starving Irish man and woman, carrying one of the bloated dignitaries of the church, and behind was added a spavined horse, carrying a figure said to have a likeness to one of the witnesses examined by the tithe committee, and who, in the picture, acted in the laudable capacity of slave driver. This banner was borne at the head of 8000 or 10,000 men from Piltown, Bessborough, and its neighbourhood, and bore as an inscription 'Power of ejectment –Landlord and driver." – Another represented the devil as auctioneer, standing on the back of a cow destrained (sic) for tithes, and vainly offering her for sale, while on the one side a Reverend pot-bellied man, with rueful looks, ejaculated "No bidders; no bidders!" and on the other, a tithe proctor "with the fur of his hat brushed back," as Banim says "to show it was a *beaver*," moaned forth "God bless us poor proctors." It would be almost endless to enumerate those bearing likenesses of O'Connell, &c., and inscriptions of "no tithes" "a total abolition" "a just reform or repeal, " and other loyal, constitutional or popular sentences. In the front of a fine body of gentry, farmers, and peasantry from the country around Carrick, was borne a *coffin*, emblematic of the funeral of tithes, and bearing suitable inscriptions; and a truly Irish funeral it was for thousands had walked that day twenty miles to attend it, and returned home the same night, without having had perhaps a sixpence in their pockets, to procure refreshment. The Chair was filled by the Hon. Col. PIERCE BUTLER, of Ballyconra, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of the County, who went 28 miles that morning to record his detestation of the tithes system, and to demand a full and just Reform, or REPEAL OF THE UNION.[55]

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[55]*Kilkenny Journal*, 11 July 1832, p. 2.

IRELAND – ANTI-TITHE MEETINGS
The meeting held last Sunday at Ballyhale, County Kilkenny (Colonel Pierce Butler, Deputy-Lieutenant, in the chair), was truly magnificent, and now that the details have reached us, appears worthy of something more than the brief comment I sent you yesterday. Four counties (Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny, and Tipperary) contributed their thousands from all quarters to swell the assembly; and it was estimated by an eminent surveyor, Mr. Patrick Mackey…and declares his belief that the men and women assembled amounted to 200,000…**Several of the banners bore well executed caricatures; that from Piltown and Besborough represented (a sketch from the Parson's Horn-Book) some emaciated peasants bearing a bloated dignitary of the church in a chair of state; they are groaning in anguish, while he endeavours to silence them by prods of a bayonet, but lest they should faint or rebel beneath the weight, yokes a piece of flying artillery to his triumphal chair, and so drives tandem…**[56]

The demise of *The Comet* came in 1833. Despite being defended by Daniel O'Connell, the editors of *The Comet*, Thomas Browne and John Sheehan, were found guilty of perverting the course of justice by publishing prejudicial commentary regarding a pending court case. Both editors were jailed and incurred heavy punitive fines. *The Comet* newspaper folded but was rapidly replaced by other publications claiming to be splinters of the parent publication. *The Irish Monthly Magazine of Politics and Literature* followed *The Comet*'s staunchly anti-tithes footsteps; *its* masthead motto proclaimed its stance: 'Let no man be obliged to pay for a priest or religion in which he does not believe.'[57]

Even before the tithes war, the Irish Protestant community viewed the rise of the O'Connellite wave of political perspicacity as an alarming indicator of reform that was threatening to topple the already precarious Protestant ascendancy. Newly created political structures that had galvanized the passage of the Catholic Relief Act of 1829 were now poised, ready and mobilized, to direct their energies at resolving the Established Church's contentious tithes system of taxation. During the previous decade Daniel O'Connell and his supporters managed to metamorphose the campaign for Catholic emancipation into an inclusive symbol of all Catholic aspirations for relief from poverty and oppression.[58] The

[56] *The Times*, 14 July 1832, p. 6.
[57] From the masthead of *Irish Monthly Magazine of Politics and Literature*, 1832-1834.
[19] *The Comet*, 15 May 1831.
[58] S. J. Connolly, 'Mass politics and sectarian conflict, 1823-1830' in W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A new history of Ireland*, v (Oxford, 1989), pp 92-94.

tithes agitation movement in1830s used some of the same organizational tools and

followed similar paths in rallying political support that had been successful in the campaign

for Catholic emancipation.

Irish political representatives gave the impression that the campaign to reform the tithes

system was lesser in importance than the campaign for a repeal of the Union. Daniel

O'Connell made it clear at every opportunity that he believed that everyone in Ireland felt

as he did, that the two issues were firmly attached. *The Times* of London reported on his

speech in Parliament that made this, and other things, quite obvious.

> His own countrymen appeared to be troubled with a fogginess of intellect, which made them unable to see their own interests, without the aid of British spectacles; but; however stupid they might be, they all, both Protestant and Catholic, united for the abolition of tithes and the repeal of the legislative union.[59]

This statement by O'Connell, who was, at that time, an MP for Dublin, certainly did not

represent the sentiments of his entire constituency. Not all Protestants in Ireland wished for

a repeal of the Union; some Irish Unionist publications, made it very clear that,

unreservedly, they wished to uphold the Union and that they were entirely displeased with

Mr. O'Connell. Daniel O'Connell was an adept tactician of the press; his political activity

made him the constant subject of both praise and satire in the illustrated press in Ireland

and England. His letters addressed to the people of Ireland often appeared in the nationalist

press and occasionally in the establishment press. *The Dublin Evening Packet and

Correspondent*, a conservative Protestant daily, voiced the views of some, calling Daniel

O'Connell 'the eternal agitator' and 'a complete failure': in their opinion he was:

> stuck in the mire, and in endeavouring to extricate himself he but plunges deeper in; out of mind he can never get; even those who formerly identified themselves with him have turned aside in disgust, and are not likely to resume his fellowship.[60]

The Irish Unionist establishment publications were primarily textual in content; their

publishers, evidently, may not have felt a pressing need to appeal to the, predominantly

Catholic, masses by including pictures. They were aware that their Protestant audiences,

[59] *The Times*, 18 Feb. 1834, p. 1.
[60] *Dublin Evening Packet and Correspondent*, 2 Jan. 1830, p. 3.

for the most part, were literate. This was certainly not the case in Britain where

illustrations, in publications, were heavily utilised equally across all political and religious

divides.
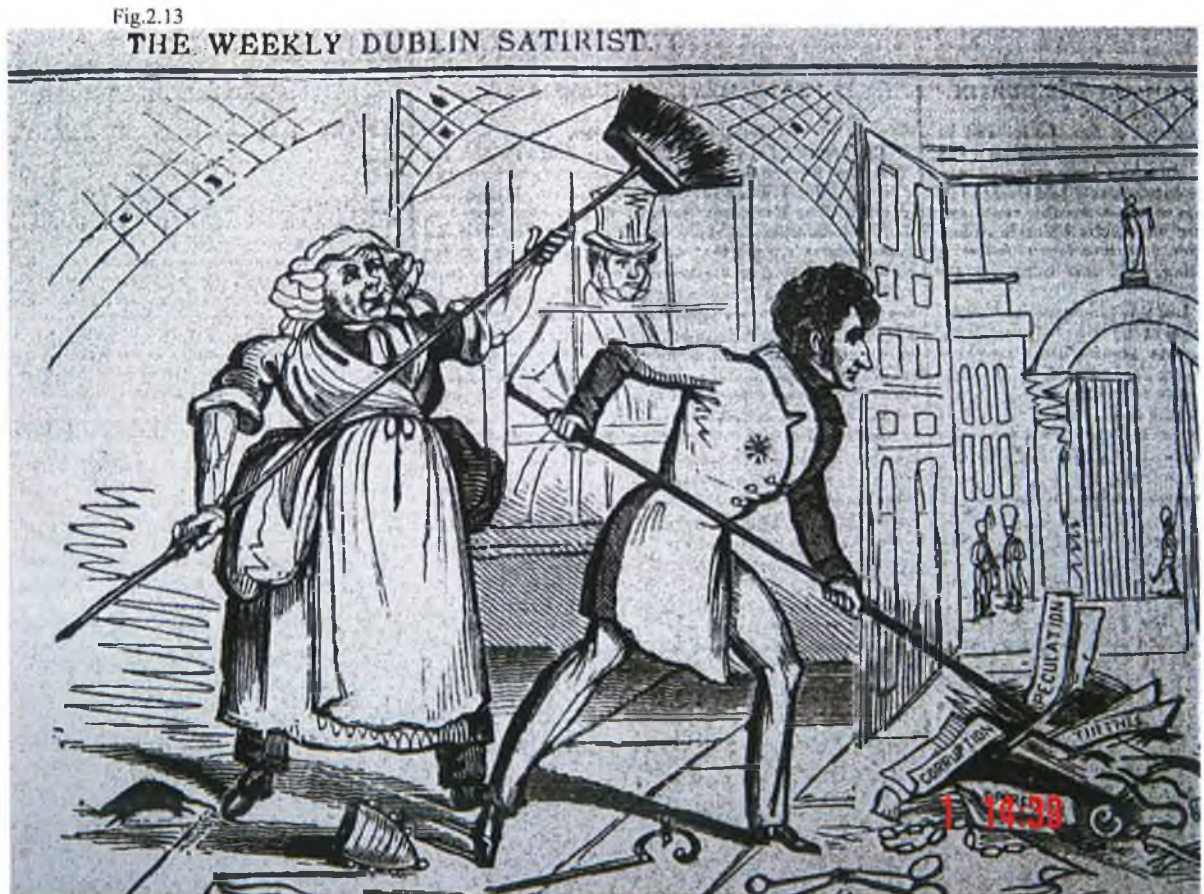
Fig.2.13

Fig. 2.13 - The *Weekly Dublin Satirist*, 11 July 1835, Dublin, TCD. In this image we see Daniel O'Connell, dressed as a housemaid with broom cleaning the cobwebs and Lord Lieutenant. of Ireland, Earl of Mulgrave sweeping the floor littered with the remnants of 'oppression, corruption, speculation and tithes'. Looking in, approvingly, through the window is Lord John Russell. 'The Cleaning out of the Castle Stable, or Mulgrave and Dan sweeping, scraping, and throwing out the Tory filth'.[61].

Irish illustrated nationalist press offered favourable caricatures of Daniel O'Connell and

other topical figures who were sympathetic to Irish nationalist grievances. This image

appeared in the *Dublin Satirist,* 11 July 1835 (Fig. 2.13) to mark the return to Parliament of

Melbourne's Whig ministry, three years after the passage of the Reform Act 1832. It

portrays Daniel O'Connell with Henry Phipps, Earl of Mulgrave, wearing the insignia of

lord lieutenant of Ireland on his lapel, and Lord John Russell in a positive manner

continuing in the work as reformers of a corrupt system.

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[61] *Weekly Dublin Satirist,* 11 July 1835, p. 29.

Irish illustrated weekly newspapers such as *The Comet, The Dublin Weekly Satirist, The*

Pilot and the *Irish Monthly Magazine of Politics and Literature* played significant roles as

political propaganda tools and as a means of communication for politicians with their

supporters in the anti-tithes movement. These nationalist newspapers became important

conduits for progress towards mass political consciousness. Along with the pictures, they

reported on the current events, parliamentary debates and also supplied instructions for the

correct preparation of anti-tithes petitions and commentary that favoured church reform and

greatly influenced public opinion.

Fig.2.14

Fig. 2.14 – Samuel Lover, 'Babylon the Great Is Fallen', *Parson's Horn-book part II,* **Dublin, 1831,**
AOE. This image depicts London in a parody of the fall of Babylon. Satan observes the chaos below as mobs
of citizens storm the battlements that protect the officials of Church and State. Some run for their lives carrying
bags of money, two bishops run away and try to uphold and protect their '*SINECURES*' but trip and fall. Others
stand in defiance with a banner held '*DAMN REFORM*', a military figure stands aghast appearing to be shocked at
the affront to his authority. A winged personification of Liberty delivers the writing on the wall with the word
'*REFORM*' to the people.

Fig.2.15

Fig. 2.15 – Samuel Lover, detail from 'Babylon the great is fallen', in *Parson's Horn-book II,*
Dublin, 1831, AOE.

Fig.2.16

Fig. 2.16 – 'The Triumph of the Satirist', *Weekly Dublin Satirist,* **27 June 1835, Dublin,** TCD. This godlike image of the editor was accompanied by the self–explanatory quote:

Yes, I am proud – I must be proud to see
Men, not afraid of God, afraid of me. – Alexander Pope

Fig.2.17

Fig. 2.17 - Henry Brocas, *The Triple Alliance* **, Dublin, 1810,** NLI. This early image entitled, *a holy league and covenant* depicts Daniel O'Connell standing in the middle between Pope Leo XII, holding a copy of *Den's Theology,* and the Satan, dressed in priest's vestments. This type of derogatory depiction of Daniel O'Connell was common in some British publications during the struggle for Catholic emancipation. The theme of pairing party politicians or ecclesiastical figures with Satan continued in the 1830s by oppositional political and religious factions during the reform movement and tithes war.

Simple illustrations like those featured in this chapter could be understood by all audiences, whether literate or not. We know that periodicals and newspapers were shared around and that there were group readings in pubs, houses and places of worship. The publications were also included in lending libraries and for a small fee of 1d per hour, patrons would be able to view and read several publications.[62] On display for all to see at booksellers in the cities towns and villages were the latest crop of individual prints and illustrated publications.

Pictures in the press were a highly valued commodity by their audiences. This is evidenced by the inordinately high number of the newspapers of the period, in the archives today, with the actual illustrations removed or cut out; presumably, they were coveted for safe keeping or to display on walls as decorative artwork.[63]

Pictures of printing presses were habitually portrayed in the publications of the period as the purveyors of the light of truth. Many illustrations depicted the printing press as having been imbued with divine status of truth against perceived avarice and doctrinal exploitation. The symbol of the printing press became the ultimate adversary against evil or corruption in government or church institutions. Satan or the devil also featured prominently in many illustrated publications. He could be paired with any of the so-called vices of society but primarily he appeared paired with political opponents or ecclesiastical figures to render an ironic twist or blasphemous ring to the image.

The illustrations appearing in the Irish illustrated press during the tithes war communicated to those who could not read the text. The affiliation of the publication

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[62] J. R. R. Adams, *The printed word and the common man* (Belfast, 1987), p. 132.

[63] This information was told to me by Penny Woods, head librarian of Russell Library, NUI Maynooth.

determined whose side of the story was portrayed. The symbols and visual images used in the publications were continually reinterpreted by all who saw them in ways that often differed from their intended meanings but suited the agendas of their publishers. The illustrated press, whether conservative or radical, utilised provocative pictures profusely and effectively to get their ideas, opinions and political candidates, whether favoured or abhorred, in the press and across to the masses. They not only helped to shape public opinion and influence events in Ireland but, as will be discussed in the next chapter, also across the Irish Sea.

CHAPTER THREE

Perspectives on the 'Irish question' in the British illustrated press.
To write or print, to publish or debate,
On every subject that concerns Man's state.[1]

The 'Irish question' is an expedient used to signify a whole range of economic, political

and religious concerns pertaining to Ireland that, along with other domestic and

international concerns, became a formidable challenge to British politicians during the

nineteenth century. Britain's economy staggered during the post –war period as

manufacturers felt pressurised to cut wages in order to reduce their costs to compete with

foreign competition. The incomes of many lower class families were threatened by steady

technological advances which rendered obsolete commonly-used manufacturing equipment

and methods, as well as bad harvests in rural areas and an economic geographic landscape

that was moving inexorably towards the urban areas. Unemployment rose dramatically as

hundreds of thousands of soldiers and sailors were demobilized after the war.[2] The

economic downturn manifested itself in the form of increased working-class radicalism and

discord that seemed to fluctuate in concordance with the harvests and the instability of the

prices of food and commodities. Radicalism and agitation were met by a rollercoaster

combination of repressive government legislation and, also, by some liberal reforms.

Steady movement towards streamlining government institutions grew slowly during the

1820s with advancements in free trade, progress in banking and sweeping law reforms.

The decade ended with the emergence of a nascent religious liberalism best exemplified by

the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828 and the passage of Catholic Relief Act

1829[3] that relieved, somewhat, the Dissenters and Catholics. Ireland's hardships during

the next critical decade, while urgent and pressing, were just one of the many issues facing

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[1] *The Man*, 7 July 1833, p. 1.
[2] R. Webb, *Modern England from the eighteenth century to the present* (London, 1969), p. 158.
[3] Geo. IV, c.7.

a Parliament whose leadership alternated no less than eight times and whose crown passed from King George IV to William IV to Queen Victoria in seven frenzied years. With each event or changing ideology, the newspapers and periodicals served as the main instruments that disseminated knowledge to the growing British and Irish readership. Regardless of the numerous and frequent attempts by government to impose press restrictions, British cartoon artists of the late eighteenth century and early decades of the nineteenth such as Newton, Heath, Gillray, Seymour, Doyle, Cruikshank and Rowlandson would not be contained by censure. They found their niche in caricature and political satire and excelled in challenging all aspects of the British constitution.

Some publishers capitalized on the viscerally emotive appeal of many of the issues that surrounded the 'Irish question' in order to increase circulation numbers. All matters concerning Ireland became highly politicized in parliament with many debates centered on Irish church reform, anti-tithes activity, landlord absenteeism, poor laws and the widening cholera epidemic. This chapter analyses some of the graphic visualizations that appeared in the British illustrated press during the 1830s and discusses the various conservative, liberal and radical reactions. With particular attention given to the images of Ireland and the Irish, this study examines their impact upon political developments.

The ways in which Ireland was viewed in the periodicals were as diverse and wide ranging as the publications themselves. Long before it became popular to include illustrations with text, periodicals made an extra effort to compensate for their lack of pictures by offering their readers vivid textual descriptions of people and places. In their pages, descriptions abound from travellers to the country that present very different versions of Ireland and the Irish people. Quite as expected, the travellers tended to be from the leisured class and they, invariably, seemed anxious to make their pronouncement on the state of the lower orders of

society. Some of the travellers' diaries of their excursions to Ireland were printed as

books, then subsequently, sometimes after a decade or more, excerpts were included in

periodicals. A notable work of this genre published in London 1820 and lavishly illustrated

with six hundred engravings in its three volumes is *Excursions through Ireland* by Thomas

Kitson Cromwell.[4] Thirteen years after this book was first published, *The Advocate,* a

London working class periodical, included a small excerpt from Cromwell's book under

the title 'An Irish Cabin'. It described in dreadful details the 'miserable cabins of the Irish

peasantry'[5] By including this text, it clearly hoped to elicit feelings of outrage, contempt

and condemnation at any system that would produce such a pitiful situation. Another

traveller to Ireland in 1823 sent letters to a friend describing his 'Walks in Wicklow' that

were published in 1834 in the *Belfast Magazine.* He began his general reflections with this

assessment:

> Certainly no country in the world furnishes more materials for reflection – a single cabin might
> supply subject for a treatise on political economy – a single glen for an essay on the picturesque –
> and an unsophisticated Irishman, with all his bulls and blunders, ingenuity, and kindness of heart, for
> a system of moral philosophy, or a treatise on phrenology. [6]

His praise for the Wicklow countryside describes 'romantic glens and mountains' that are

'blended with fertile cultivated valleys, to a degree where I have nowhere else seen'. They

do not compare, however, with the 'extensive glens, nor the majestic rivers, nor the vast

and interminable mountains of the Scottish Highlands.'[7] In many British illustrated

periodicals of the 1830s, the *Penny Magazine* being a notable example, vivid descriptions

of the Irish landscapes, like this one, were accompanied by beautifully detailed landscape

prints. However, oftentimes there were elaborate and descriptive textual commentaries on

the people encountered along the way. Dramatic literary descriptions offered clear portraits

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[4] Thomas Kitson Cromwell, *Excursions through Ireland* (London, 1820).
[5] *The Advocate; or Artizan's and Labourers' Friend,* 16 Feb. 1833.
[6] *Belfast Magazine, conducted by the students of the Royal Academical Institution* (Belfast, 1834), p. 524.
[7] Ibid., p. 525.

of the Irish people, as well as clear evidence of the mentalities and attitudes of the

narrators.

> We had not proceeded far, when we were struck with a boy of extraordinary beauty, standing erect by a wall. I went up to him and asked him, why he stood there; he bowed gracefully, and held out his hand, into which I put a penny. He smiled intelligently and gratefully, but still said nothing. At first, I thought him dumb; but learned from some people who stood near, that he knew no English, and that the only language he spoke or understood, was Irish. This was the first specimen we had seen of a genuine Irishman: he was almost naked; and though there were about him obvious marks of meagre living, yet his limbs were finely formed, and he had a face of the most perfect symmetry, lighted up with an animation, which neither hunger, nakedness, nor beggary, had been able to extinguish.[8]

Many early nineteenth-century British periodicals refrained from entering the political fray

and were devoid of any content other than literature, arts and entertainment. They restricted

their focus on Ireland to its beautiful landscapes and antiquities. As visitors to Ireland

increased, the beauty of its scenery was overshadowed by reports of the poverty and

destitution of the Irish poor and of the violent clashes in the agricultural regions affected by

anti-tithes agitation. The politics surrounding the 'Irish question' was also brought into the

mainstream of public debate by the printing industry.

The freedoms of the press were greatly restricted by the legislative response to a

particularly violent incident, later nicknamed the bloodbath at 'Peterloo', a sardonic

reference to a more noble victory.[9] A particularly bad harvest the previous year incited a

crowd of over 80,000 or 90,000[10] persons to gather on 16 Aug. 1819 at St. Peter's Fields in

Manchester to hear the popular activist Henry Hunt speak on political reform and oppose

the jailing of Sir Charles Wolseley. Upon a magistrate's order to arrest Hunt, a violent

confrontation occurred between the crowds of protestors and government troops and local

yeomanry leaving eleven dead and hundreds injured. Webb judged that the agitation was

given a distinctive shape at this time by the 'growing belief in parliamentary reform and

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[8] Ibid., p. 525.
[9] Webb, *Modern England*, p. 161.
[10] *The Times*, 7 Sept. 1819.

universal suffrage as the remedies for all ills.'[11] Indeed, the demand for reform was

growing from compassionate men whether conservative, liberal or reformist yet despite the

government being 'morally damaged'[12] by the 'Peterloo' episode and despite the public's

discontent, the Tory-led government continued to be politically victorious. Parliament's

response to the growing disturbances and cries for reform was to impose the Six Acts[13] to

swiftly curb disorder. They included a ban on unlawful military training, strict regulations

for all public meetings, additional penalties for seditious libel, new newspaper stamp duties

and a further strengthening of the press laws.[14] While these acts succeeded in curtailing

some of the mass meetings and extremist activities, the legitimate press was seething from

the restrictions placed on their freedoms and the increase in tax to 4*d*. The radical

publications and cheap press were able to flourish finding ways to circumvent the

restrictions or by going underground.[15] Reactions to the attempted press gag order and the

burning 'Irish question' were merely two of the significant factors that contributed to the

resignation of Wellington and the toppling of Tory leadership's thirty year domination of

government in 1830 by elements from within its ranks and from without.

The political events that occurred in the 1820s and 1830s were greatly influenced by the

intellectual currents and opinions that were popular during this period. The humanitarian

philosophical ideas of Edmund Burke, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill were

commonly understood by politicians and the recommendations from political economists

David Ricardo, James Mill, Thomas Malthus were read and applied.[16] Politicians were not

impervious to the sensibilities and emotional reactions from the literary and visual arts and

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[11] Webb, *Modern England*, p. 158.

[12] Ibid., p. 161.

[13] The Six Acts comprised: Training Prevention Act (60 Geo III cap. 1), Seizure of Arms Act (60 III cap. 2), Blasphemous and Seditious Libel Act (60 Geo III cap. 4), Seditious Meetings Act (60 Geo III cap. 6), Misdemeanours Act (60 Geo III cap. 8), Newspaper Stamp Duties Act (60 Geo III cap. 9).

[14] Alan and Veronica Palmer, *The chronology of British history* (London, 1992), p. 250.

[15] See chapter one references to the 'war of the unstamped' pp 46-48.

[16] Webb, *Modern England*, pp 178-181.

they certainly enjoyed the romantic poets and authors that were *au courant,* although

they were unlikely to have been amused by the political caricatures that were ubiquitous,

especially if they were featured.

Fig.3.0

Fig. 3.0 – Anonymous, *The Man Wots Got The Whip Hand of 'Em All*, London, 1829,
T. McLean, Publisher, ©*The Bodleian Library.*

Current events and literary trends during this period had a particularly influential impact on

how topical events, politicians and opinions were visualized in the illustrations. The

illustrated press with its burning texts and images 'hot off the press' can topple all of its

opposition; here it sends the Duke of Wellington flying. While this satirical print assigns to

the 'free press' the ultimate acknowledgement of having supreme power over all, it also

characterizes this powerful medium as an unthinking mechanical body that is controlled by

a devilish figure holding the key. A degree of contempt is conveyed towards

mechanical machines out of control; in particular, this image implies that the printing

industry has become an unruly monster akin to the creature in Mary Shelley's recently

published gothic novel *Frankenstein* (1818). While it was generally felt that a 'free press'

was essential for a liberated society, this illustration made its appearance in the midst of the

industrial revolution not too long after the 'Luddite Riots' 1811-1813 when there were

episodes of machine breaking by some workers who thought the old traditional ways were

being destroyed by mechanical progress and that they were being outperformed and

replaced by machines and technology. [17] This sentiment was echoed by workers in other

industries but it was particularly widespread in the printing industry where skilled workers

felt threatened by the technological advancements not necessarily the content of what was

printed. The ultimate message being conveyed in this print was the power and influence of

a 'free press', but depending on whether you were a politician, a well-read merchant or a

tradesman, it communicated different meanings.

One London periodical, *The Advocate; or Artizans' and Labourers' Friend,* a publication

under the superintendence of a 'Committee of the Printers' Protection Society', asserts in

its first number that 'its chief business is with machinery, or rather with the inevitable

effects of machinery upon the condition of the working class.'[18] The editor, John Ambrose

Williams, felt strongly that the growth of machinery was becoming pernicious; growth

must be accompanied by some 'counteracting measures for the protection of those who

have nothing but their labour to depend upon for their subsistence.'[19] The last page of this

periodical carried two codicils worth noting, the first wished to notify their readers of their

'utmost concern' that their first number was printed on machine-made paper due to them

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[17] Webb, *Modern England,* p. 146.
[18] *The Advocate; or Artizans' and Labourers' Friend,* 16 Feb. 1833.
[19] Ibid.

finding it impossible to 'procure hand-made paper of the proper size and quality'.

Their committee, however, have made arrangements 'they trust will enable them, in a short time to procure paper made by hand. The final entry in the paper stated 'Printed by MANUAL LABOUR, by P. P. Thoms'.

Politicians were not entirely driven by party partisanship as they sometimes are now, but instead their actions were based on a variety of exceedingly different priorities that included individual assumptions, beliefs and, in some cases, to benefit their own personal investments. This is why it is not reasonable to assume a single set of ideals or motives attached to any members of the Tory, Whig or independent political parties in the House of Commons, or with the Lords. While it is true that the vast majority of the ministers and MPs were powerful landlords and/or members of the aristocracy with only a very few MPs originating from the merchant class, this did not preclude some from taking a real interest in the plight of the Irish poor or their own constituent working-class populations, although, many popular prints generated an opposite public opinion.

Fig.3.0

Fig. 3.1 – W. Heath, *Blind Man's Buff – with the poor - There is none so blind as him who will not see*, **London, 1828**, © *The Bodleian Library.*

The image above (Fig. 3.1) and below (Fig. 3.2) are prime examples of individual caricature prints that were created as political and personal attacks on Tory government policies and the Duke of Wellington. Popular opposition and intense bi-partisan political pressure in Britain and Ireland was mounting. Issues that were foremost in the minds of the public and politicians when this print was released were the effects of the 1815 Corn Law, the enclosures of pastureland that had caused extreme hardship amongst farmers and rural laborers, high bread prices and low wages that had intensified urban poverty,[20] provincial opposition to revisions in the poor rates, and, after the election of O'Connell as MP for Clare, mounting legislative action to relieve Catholic parliamentary exclusion. Wellington, as an extremely popular military hero, was summoned by George IV and designated Prime Minister on 9 January 1828 to try and bring some stability to the Tory ministry in disarray having switched leadership three times in one year since the death of Liverpool.

The illustrated press was ideally suited to become a highly persuasive conduit as a reflector of public opinion and for instigating political debate. Wellington's public image and political support suffered tremendously as a result of his appearance in an avalanche of disparaging satiric caricatures. The inference from this depiction (Fig. 3.1) is Wellington's preference to 'play blind' and ignore the pressing concerns rather than taking swift action to confront and solve the urgent issues. The Duke suffered the ignominy of being portrayed, in this print, as hard-hearted and with an abject disregard for the poorest and weakest members of society. In an age of increasing liberalism and equality, images such as this one would have caused consternation with the public and may have aided a more liberal agenda amongst the political society. However, his public image in the illustrated press went through a series of gyrations and transformations in the next two years as the

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[20] Edward Pearce, *Reform! The fight for the 1832 Reform Act* (London, 2004), pp 35-37.

events unfolded or, arguably, assisting in the outcome of the sequence of events that led

to his eventual resignation on 16 Nov. 1830.

Fig. 3.2

Fig. 3.2 - John Phillips, *ANTICIPATION – Bringing them to the Scratch, - Hercules in the Church; or,*
The Tithes in Danger ('church' is crossed out and the word 'Tithes' replaces it). **London, 1829,**
© *The Bodleian Library*

This image (Fig. 3.2) pictures the Duke of Wellington as either a church reforming hero of

the oppressed poor and beleaguered lower clergymen, or as an challenger to the established

church, depending on the viewer's position and perspective. In May 1829 this image was

one of a popular series of nine prints that stressed a theme of anti-clericalism. Published

anonymously and signed with only a symbolic pseudonym 'sharpshooter' (see figure in

lower left) they were the creations of John Phillips who was the known imitator of the

style of the leading caricaturist of the period, William Heath.[21] In this striking image, a

cherub heralds the arrival of the protagonist, or target, of this print the Duke of Wellington

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[21]M. D. George, *The British Museum catalogue of political and personal satires*, xi (London, 1954), Introd.
xlv.

dressed in civilian clothing in caricature as a 'conquering hero' or 'Hercules'. He forcefully holds, by the ears, two reluctant bloated clergymen wearing mitres, emblematic of their senior rank as bishops. Papers inscribed £60,000 and £50,000 per annum fall from their pockets. They are made to cough-up large sums of gold sovereigns into a large barrel, brandishing the words 'For the poor Curates, repairs of Churches; and support of Paupers'. A second smaller barrel is filled from what spills over through a spout from the larger barrel. This smaller barrel is in the process of being emptied by a layman and tied into bags with labels that say 'support of Paupers, poor Curates,…' which are then carried away by two very slim and ragged-looking lower-ranking clergymen. In the background is a large gothic style cathedral of the established church. George IV leans into the image and seems to give his royal approval to the proceedings and comments 'Mete unto every man according to his labour'.

This image (Fig. 3.2) offered audiences a multiplicity of meanings; it is replete with innuendo, insinuations and, possibly, a hope of promises to come. It presents commentary and important messages on the activities of the government in relation to church finances, along with references to the current political debates in Parliament on tithes and the Irish church. As was the case with all the political cartoons published, there are no definitively 'correct' meanings but instead a host of differing interpretations that change with the viewer's position and circumstance.

For the curates, parsons and the lower order of Anglican clergymen, this image may have been understood to be a portent of government's long overdue intervention into the financial affairs of the Church. They may have hoped that government sponsored reforms would address the inequitable financial distribution of Church assets. They might have inferred that improvements for their churches and pecuniary help for them were looming; or that they might soon receive a welcome respite from their economic troubles due to the

redistribution of tithes payments away from affluent clergy and wealthy bishops and instead given to those who were really dependent on tithes payments for their livelihoods.

The print certainly offered hopeful messages to the poorest classes of society who suffered under the hardship of having to pay tithes to support an extremely wealthy Anglican Church. Could it be true that Wellington's Tory government had not forgotten them and that government plans and new measures were underway in the near future to improve their lot? Wellington's military career had established him amongst the common people as a heroic figure and it was his positive public persona that persuaded George IV to call for his leadership in Parliament at a time when the Tory party was rapidly disintegrating in favour of the Whigs after controlling government for thirty years. In the illustration the Duke is depicted as Hercules, a courageous Greek mythological hero who triumphs over evil against enormous odds. Does this image imply that the most onerous evil in 1829 facing Wellington was the evil of avarice that was shrouding the established church? In this context, are these parallel rationales of Wellington's personification as Hercules a good fit?

Church officials and conservative factions of parliament and society concluded that there was a serious intention on the part of the government to interfere with the property and doctrine of the church. They were quite right in this assumption given the advent of a Whig government in November 1830. They were fearful that the enactment of reforms whereby tithes were expropriated and redistributed would impact their sources of revenue. This imputation against Wellington, for some, would have fatally damaged his credibility; for others, it imbued him with divine status. Liberal-minded publishers seized on the issue of church reform and published urgent pleas in daily newspapers and weekly periodicals. The conservative and State press tried in vain to accomplish damage control. This, and other, visual fabrications proved to be politically embarrassing for Wellington and the

whole Tory cabinet. This image along with others of similar content incited British and Irish propagandist reports. The reality was that there was no such extreme church reform measure contemplated by Wellington's ministry at that time. Wellington may have been irritated by these reports and wished to repudiate them when he wrote to Lord Rolle apropos an anti-tithes agitation incident that had occurred in his constituency of Devon to clarify his position regarding tithes reform.[22]

> I am aware that it has been said by some, believed by others, and asserted positively by a third set of people, that Government had a plan in contemplation for a reform of the tithe system in England and Wales. I assure you that is not the case.[23]

The question of emancipation for Catholics was the most discussed topic in the press of the 1820s but was ardently debated in parliament ever since 1812 when Lord Liverpool's ministry allowed it to be an open question that could be supported or opposed by members.[24] Towards the end of the decade the Whig opposition and Tory moderates persevered with steady pressure on the King and Wellington for the inclusion of Catholics in the constitution. The cause was hotly debated in the press too with the predictably pro-government papers like London's *The Courier* and the ultra-Tory publications *The Standard, Fraser's, Quarterly Review* and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* frequently presenting articles that attacked the motives of the Whig party in their case for emancipation .

> Now that it is fashionable to regard Popery as only ridiculous, and that men's apprehensions are converted into contempt, the Whig party have affected popularity by bewailing the unhappy condition of their poor Romish brethren, deploring the privations to which they are subject, and clamorously contending for "Catholic Emancipation".[25]

Daily, weekly and monthly support for the cause came from many liberal, independent and radical publications, some illustrated and some not, including London's *The Times, The Globe, The Morning Chronicle* and the *Manchester Guardian, Leeds Mercury, Edinburgh Review, The Spectator, Captain Rock in London, The Dublin and London Magazine, The*

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[22] M. D. George, *The British Museum catalogue of political and personal satires*, xi (London, 1954), p. 283.
[23] Ibid., p. 283.
[24] S. J. Connolly (ed.), *The Oxford companion to Irish history* (Oxford, 1998), p. 75.
[25] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, xxvi, July 1829, p. 85.

Cabinet and many more domestic periodicals and also from Ireland and America.

Appearing under the heading 'Ought England to Emancipate the Irish Catholics' was a

lengthy piece, of which here is an excerpt addressed to John Bull:

> ...papists, as you call them, disclaim any authority in the pope, or any foreign potentate, to interfere directly or indirectly with their civil duty. They regard the Bishop of Rome only as the visible head of their church, whose power is limited to spiritualities. They are religiously bound not to recognise him in any other character; so much so, that if he had the temerity – of which there is no fear – to invade these realms, British and Irish Catholics, by the doctrine of their church, would be bound to meet him in arms, and extirpate him and his followers, ere they polluted our soil with their footsteps, even though he fulminated bulls as well as grapeshot....No matter what *has* been, this is now the doctrine known and acted upon by all Europe; yet nine-tenths of the English people actually believe that Catholics promise civil allegiance to the pope and think they are excluded from power and authority because, forsooth, they will not swear unconditional allegiance to King George....Catholicism inculcates loyalty and teaches a proper regard for an oath legally administered. Consequently Catholics, like other men, can be obedient to the laws as well as keep faith with their rulers...Thus it appears that neither church nor state are in danger. Catholics should be admitted to participate in the constitution, and that their principles are not inimical to national liberty is proved by their being , as they always have been, meritous members of the freest states in the world; for in Great Britain only are they dishonoured by national suspicion. The effect on exclusion is apparent in discontent on one hand and insult and oppression on the other – a state of things productive of a long train of evils now visible in Ireland, as injurious to this country as to the sister kingdom. I know not one benefit arising from Catholic exclusion, unless that may be called such which tends to thin the population by nightly murders, and enable the Irish peasantry to practice the art of war in time of peace... There is no alternative; we have tried coaxing and coercion long enough without any profit and have now only to reverse our policy and see what justice and reason will do...[26]

Fig.3.3   Fig.3.4

Fig. 3.3 – *Captain Rock in London*, 4 June 1825 Bodl.

Fig. 3.4 – *Glasgow Looking Glass*, 11 June 1825, NLS.

Two examples of early periodicals that successfully used satirical illustrations to ridicule the British constitution.

Captain Rock in London, printed in London and Dublin was a radical pro-Catholic

periodical, its name deriving from the Irish agrarian protest group 'Rockites'of the 1820s.

Although not part of the mainstream press, it, and others like it, helped the cause of

[26] *Captain Rock in London*, 5 Mar. 1825, pp 6-7.

Emancipation by focusing its attention on emancipation and Irish issues and targeting a primarily working and middle-class audience. It was one of the many seminal 1820s cheap illustrated octavo format journals that led the way for the mass circulation penny illustrated periodicals of the 1830s.

The Times, an independent popular daily newspaper in London, consistently supported the side of liberal religious inclusion. It ran articles from other newspapers around the country and from Ireland condemning slanderers of the Catholic faith and urging a rapid resolution and favorable outcome. This article was from the *Leeds Mercury* and was published in *The Times* under a heading that read 'NO POPERY IN THE COUNTY OF YORK'.

> There have never been such efforts made in this country to inflame and exasperate the public mind …Every topic of alarm which knavery and bigotry can suggest, and which ignorance and folly can believe has been industriously propagated. The people have been threatened with a Popish King, a Popish Parliament and a Popish church…Catholics have been calumniated and reviled…The pulpit and the press have teemed with the grossest libels on their doctrines, and the religion of the major part of the people of Europe has been represented to be a religion which communicates to its votaries the stupidity of brutes, and the malignity of demons…A very strong and pretty general feeling of hostility to the Catholic claims exist in the villages and purely agricultural districts, where political questions are least understood and superstitions linger…
> In great towns, on the contrary, these fears are pretty generally scouted, not that we mean to say that there is not a strong party even there opposed to the Catholic claims. In the towns, however, public opinion is greatly divided. ..
>
> The enemies of the Catholics are fighting to preserve exclusive privileges; their friends to place them on the same level as themselves. The educated and thinking part of the community is with them; let them persevere steadily in the course which they have commenced. In a few weeks the question will be carried, and a few months forgotten.[27]

Wellington's opposition to emancipation became politically untenable after 4 July 1828 when Daniel O'Connell was elected MP for Clare in Ireland by a large majority of 2,057 votes over 982 for Vesey Fitzgerald, a sitting member who had been appointed to Wellington's Cabinet and was therefore obliged to seek re-election in his constituency.[28] O'Connell as a Roman Catholic was unable to take the oath and sit in Parliament. Wellington's further resistance was hopeless and he persuaded the King to give his consent

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[27] *The Times*, 9 Mar. 1829, p. 4.
[28] Edward Pearce, *Reform! The fight for the 1832 Reform Act* (London, 2004), p. 46.

to granting emancipation. The Catholic Relief Act became law on 13 April 1829.[29] Catholics could now hold civil and military positions, be members of corporations, be judges, hold senior government positions excluding regent, lord lieutenant and lord chancellor; most importantly, they could now sit as members of parliament.

Liberals were heartily relieved by Wellington's long overdue appeasement gesture to religious and civil liberty and believed that he would be amenable to further concessions. The illustration below (Figs. 3.5) was released publicly in February 1829, shortly before Peel, who had been the leading challenger to emancipation, in the House of Commons moved for a bill to grant. This image portrays caricatures of Wellington holding a rosary and kneeling as a humbled sycophant to kiss the toe of the pope. Peel is portrayed holding rosary beads with crucifix in an equally submissive stance as he looks on in approval. Conservatives, on the other hand may have been alarmed at how events were proving these illustrations reflected shades of the truth.

This image (Fig. 3.6) was released in May 1830 and added to Wellington's and Peel's damaged reputation by its satirical visualization of the conservative's worst fears. If there was any question whether Wellington's political strength would fend off pressure by O'Connell and liberal factions, this image clearly portrays them trussed into making concessions under forcible intimidation. O'Connell, in this image wearing legal wig and gown, appears to terrorize them by holding a gun to Wellington's head. Wellington and Peel are tied up with banners that spell the words 'Agitation, Stonyhurst, Maynooth, Catholic Peers, Catholic Commons'. They are being offered up by the devil to the Pope who rejects them with the words 'Keep them yourself friend; they would betray me'.

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[29] 10 Geo. IV, c. 7.

Fig.3.5

Fig. 3.5 – W. Heath, *Doing Homage,* **London, 15 Feb.1829,** T. McLean 26 Haymarket where political and other caricatures are daily published. This image includes a quote from Milton, 'Thus they in lowliest plight, repentant bow', BM.

Fig.3.6

Fig. 3.6 – W. Heath, *How to have a Cabinet* <u>*United*</u> *in everlasting Bonds,* **London, May 1829,** T. McLean, Publisher, BM.

These simplistic illustrations were understood by all audiences whether literate or not. They were clearly rendered to cause embarrassment to Wellington and Peel and to generate public interest, public awareness and, most importantly to their publisher, increase his sales.

Publishers such as Thomas McLean could be called in modern terms an 'equal opportunity' publisher; in his illustrated periodicals and satirical prints he targeted Tories and Whigs equally. He appears to have taken advantage of public interest and current events and avoided personal political agenda. Depictions such as these gave the publishing industry a boost and enhanced McLean's success that enabled him to make an easy transition from publishing individual prints to mainstream illustrated periodicals. Wellington's political control and the king's favour were weakening at this point and this image clearly pictures him as defeated and untrustworthy. He had, indeed, won admiration over the Catholic emancipation issue but had also lost valuable allies. Whatever negative insinuations were inferred by these images, and many others, were quickly eclipsed by other major events that seized the country's attention.

The death of George IV on 4 June 1830 and his brother acceding to become William IV served as a distraction before the general election in August 1830. Also, continental European events were distracting Britain, in particular the July revolution in France that brought the defeat of the ultraconservative government of Prince de Polignac and the exile of Charles X who was replaced by Louis Philippe.[30] These were noted with widespread interest by the government, possibly fearful of a similar fate and worried that the 'British

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[30] Webb, *Modern England*, p. 191.

radicals might take a cue from France'.[31] The government's mood and attention was now firmly focused on reform in Britain.

The 1830 August election results firmly articulated what reform was about. Wellington and the Tories managed to gain a majority, although the Whig party succeeded in making substantial gains. Men such as Henry Brougham, a middle class lawyer and also the founder of 'The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge',[32] had conducted a frenetic campaign in Yorkshire. He brought messages of hope in his personal promise for reforms on issues such as transferring seats to the industrial towns and widening the franchise to town-dwelling householders, triennial parliaments and also the abolition of slavery.[33] He covered a wide region addressing crowds in Leeds, Huddersfield, Sheffield and other cities and towns that were reliant on trade in wool, steel and coal. Brougham echoed many of the same themes that they had heard from working class reformers and radical publisher, William Cobbett who had toured around the country lecturing on reform. For the majority of the people in Britain, Brougham's platform echoed their wants and wishes.

Wellington was unwilling to give the necessary concessions to form a coalition government working towards parliamentary reform. His solvency as a leader was questioned after he 'outraged the country by an incautious and extreme panegyric on the perfection of the representative system as it stood'.[34] The Tory government's gradual disintegration came to an end abruptly with Wellington's resignation on 16 November 1830. Earl Grey was summoned by the King to form a new government but did so only after receiving an agreement from William IV that he would consent to the passage of a reform bill.

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[31] Ibid., p. 192.
[32] See chapter one pp 7-15.
[33] Edward Pearce, *Reform! The fight for the 1832 Reform Act* (London, 2004), p. 57.
[34] Webb, *Modern England,* p. 192.

Earl Grey filled his fourteen cabinet places with a mixture of mostly aristocratic Whigs, pro-reform moderate Tories and, keeping with Whig tradition, some of his family members. Henry Brougham was too outspoken to be kept in the Commons and received a peerage and became Lord Chancellor. Grey's appointment of his son-in-law Lambton, who became Lord Durham,[35] to his cabinet left him vulnerable to being accused of blatant nepotism but it was only after his brother Edward was appointed Dean of Hereford,[36] eventually becoming bishop, that Grey endured blistering attacks in the press (Fig. 3.7). The press accusations seemed to be vindicated when his brother -in-law, Dr. Ponsonby, became bishop of Derry.

Fig.3.7

Fig. 3.7 – Robert Seymour, *A Christmas Box*, London, 1 Jan. 1831, *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures, or, The Looking Glass,* BM.
Lord Grey offers a mitre and and Episcopal wig to a surprised parson (his brother-in-law). The caption reads:
Here's something for you brother.

To the Irish majority 'reform' spelled something very different. For Ireland reform was needed in many areas including the established church, law, taxation and parliament. The Irish franchise had declined appreciably as a result of a concession made in order to gain passage of Catholic Emancipation; the property value requirement increased from forty shillings to ten pounds thus only one urban resident in twenty-six and one county resident in 116 had the vote compared to a lesser ratio in England of one in seventeen and one in

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[35] Ibid., p. 192.
[36] M. D. George, *Catalogue of political and personal satires preserved in the department of prints and drawings in the British Museum,* xi (London, 1954), p. 428.

twenty-four.[37] The interdenominational relations between Catholics and Protestants

deteriorated measurably after the passage of emancipation. Religious intolerance,

prejudice, fear and ignorance led to a rise in confessionalism. This was clearly visible in

the classified employment pages of some newspapers. Advertisements for situations vacant

in the home as servants became more adamant in the religious affiliation of prospective

employees. From a random selection of advertisements appearing in *Saunders News-letter,*

and Daily Advertiser from 5 Jan. through 31 Jan. 1831, for situations vacant as servants in

the home, many of the employers advertising in this publication included clear

requirements that they wished to hire a person who 'is of the Established Church'.[38] The

advertisements for apprentices in trades, sales clerks and other trade positions do not

appear to be as religiously constrained. In contrast, among the many ads that were from

people looking for situations, there is little mention of religious association, with the

exception of those who plainly state their affiliation as 'Protestant' or 'is of Established

Church'.[39]

> A smart active young woman, wants a situation as children's maid, she understands the care of an infant from its birth: or housemaid in a small family: is of Established Church; has no objection to town or country....[40]

Anti-tithes interdenominational confrontations worsened in rural areas of Ireland eventually

becoming so severe that the period has been designated by modern historians as the 'tithes

war'.[41] The illustrations appearing in the press reflected a wide range of attitudes regarding

the conflicts. Intermittent agrarian unrest in Ireland fuelled this (Fig.3.8) kind of image that

portrayed the Irish countrymen as savage and hostile to civilized behaviour. The public

were assailed by graphic accounts and pitiable images of Ireland (Fig.3.9) that were helpful

to reformers in pleading their cases to government for taking action that would alleviate

some of the misery.

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[37] S. J. Connolly (ed.), *The Oxford companion to Irish history* (Oxford, 1998), p. 206.
[38] *Saunder's News-letter, and Daily Advertiser,* 5 Jan. 1831.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] See chapter two pp 75-109.

Fig.3.8

Many journalists joined reformers to push for legislative action to enact new poor laws, municipal reform and later towards radical church reform. As already discussed, the primitive living conditions of the Irish peasantry have been described by numerous authors in their travel dairies and journals. First hand reports by travel writers were often published as books or in excerpt form appearing weekly in newspapers and periodicals. This kind of documented evidence provided graphic proof, brought into the houses and parlours of the middle and upper classes, that many in rural Irish endured intolerable living conditions. As information of this was seen in the papers and presented to parliament, Ireland became increasingly the topic of discussion in the debates.

In a digression from the Poor Laws debate in the House of Lords on 23 June 1831, Lord Stourton, a Roman Catholic, stood up and made an impassioned speech that reverberated in the newspapers all over Britain and Ireland.

> The extreme and appalling distress in Ireland and the imminent hazard we run, that without extensive and immediate relief, wide districts will be exposed to the alarming danger of perishing under the joint and dreadful vicissitudes of famine and pestilence. So rapid is the progress of events, that it is true to say, there is death in our deliberations![42]

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[42] *Hansard* 3, iv, 265-266.

Lord Stourton's dramatic speech prompted press articles on the plight of the Irish peasantry. Stourton's concern about the situation in Ireland appears to have been the likely catalyst to a public outcry in the press, both in text and illustration, which drew attention to the troubles of the poor in Ireland. One week after Stourton's speech in the Lords, an illustration (Fig. 3.9) appeared in London's popular illustrated periodical *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures* No.19, 1 July 1831. Its message is clear. The illustration is a caricature of the inadequate economic policies in Ireland that favoured the interests of absentee and resident landlords over the general inhabitants. The creator of this illustration incorporates words from Stourton's speech *verbatim*; it echoes his sentiment that the poor population of Ireland was extremely vulnerable to the combined evils of 'famine and pestilence'.

Fig.3.9

Fig. 3.9 - Robert Seymour, 'IRELAND', London, 1 July 1831, *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures* No.19, BM.
Depicted is a ship called *Orangeman of Galway* at anchor against a stone jetty waiting to receive its cargo. A placard on the ship reads *'for London direct with live & dead stock'*. Bags of potatoes are being carried up the gangplank. On shore a group of famished peasants pleading *It's starving we are* and threatening at the sight of the export of food. Two highland soldiers keep them away by pointing bayonets at them, more of their regiment wait behind the jetty. A man on the deck standing next to cattle and more bags waves a stick at the starving people and says *Stand off ye spalpeens can't we get 50 pr Cent more at other markets for the prates, off ye unreasonable brutes dy ye expect his Lorship in London to give up his Champagne & Burgandy to plase ye.* On the cliff is a file of soldiers firing at a group of peasants. A phantom death figure hovers over the group emblazoned with the words *Pestilence and Famine.*

British charitable organizations have not been given adequate recognition for the level of generosity displayed towards the poor in Ireland during this period of hardship. Illustrations such as the one above, although in satire, raised public awareness of the situation in Ireland and, also, many other issues that were extant during that period. On the very same day that Lord Stourton made his speech, *The Times* of London carried an article on page three with the headline 'DISTRESS and FAMINE in IRELAND' It presented a detailed account of the list of subscriptions to the Western Committee for the Relief of the Irish Poor. Hundreds of donations appear in this article; a few from servants, were as little as two shillings and many more donations were for amounts less than ten pounds, and there were also substantial donations for amounts upwards of twenty pounds. There are sums on record from whole villages that took it upon themselves to make collections for the Irish poor. In a small village of Hagley in Hertfordshire there was a very generous collection made 'for the relief of the starving Irish, by those who are anxious to assist in alleviating the sorest visitations of humanity – famine, and its inevitable accompaniment –disease.'[43] While it seems that there was a liberal outpouring of benevolence, one prospective donation came with a proviso that seems to have been meant as an affront; the treasurer of the committee, Henry Drummond, reported 'Sirs, - I have received a commission to pay £200 towards the relief of the starving Irish, provided you can find any Irish gentleman who will contribute as much.'[44] Sadly, there were no other individual donations on this list to match this one. In total the committee reported having received a total of £4,776. in funds at their disposal to assist the Irish Poor. They assigned the bulk of the responsibility to disburse the funds to:

> His Grace the Archbishop of Tuam, one moiety to purchase provisions in parts of Ireland where they can be obtained cheaply and quickly, and to forward the same to Killala and Killibegs, and the other moiety to purchase provisions in Ireland for such districts as his Grace knows to be in the most urgent distress.

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[43] *The Times*, 23 June 1831, p. 3.
[44] Ibid., p. 3.

To Sir R.O'Donnell, Bart., the Rev. Mr. Stoney, and the Rev. Mr. Wilson, of Achill, jointly, to purchase provisions for the relief of Newport and its neighbourhood.[45]

Benevolent societies in Britain were plentiful; beginning in 1832 they even had their own periodical named *The Benefit Societies' Magazine, and Mechanics' and Labourers' Adviser* to keep the various societies apprised of each others activities and offer useful advice. The motto on their masthead read:

Man, like the generous vine, supported lives;
The strength he gains is by the embrace he gives.[46]

Daily reports in the newspapers from London and Dublin were filled with horrific figures numbering the dead in both cities from a dreadful cholera epidemic. *The Cholera Gazette,*[47] issued by the Central Board of Health began publishing its own paper to keep the public informed on the developments of the epidemic. Despite this outbreak of cholera taking its toll on many people in England, the Irish poor were still on the minds of several charitable groups who continued their collections. With all the generous display of private benevolence in evidence, the perceived wealth of the established church began to come under scrutiny in the radical press. In Ireland widespread feelings of hostility towards the Established Church clergymen was evident amongst the rural population triggered by intense anti-tithes activity, in Britain too, the tithes system caused distress amongst the farming communities and was a topical issue in the pages of the more extreme dissenter and radical presses.

It was not surprising that the British mainstream press was slow to pick up the theme of the need for church reform. Hempton quoting Edmund Burke describes how the English regarded their church establishment as 'the foundation of their whole constitution'.[48] It was a nation-wide institution that was an 'integral and indispensable part of the theory and

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[45] Ibid., p. 3.
[46] *The Benefit Societies' Magazine, and Mechanics' and Labourers' Adviser*, 1 Nov. 1834.
[47] *The Cholera Gazette*, 14 Jan. 1832.
[48] David Hempton, *Religion and political culture in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), pp 3-4.

practice of governing'. Although the foundations of this interdependency were frequently challenged, the relationship between church and state operated in a mutually beneficial way that provided social cohesion, protected the legal establishment and provided benevolence and public morality.[49] Through the eighteenth century there was a long Whig tradition of political patronage through the designation of ecclesiastical appointments. This, in Hempton's estimation 'immeasurably weakened the spiritual vitality of the church by subjecting it to political control and nepotism.[50] Webb judges that there was declining spirituality in the church in favour of rationalist, more modernist views that led to a religious reaction that profoundly altered the whole tone of religious life in Britain.[51] Some of the illustrations in the press show a rift developing of differences in opinion between country clergy and their bishops, while most of the illustrations were financially themed; they appear to hint at other ideological differences that became fully articulated in 1833 during the Oxford movement (Fig. 3.10).

Fig. 3.10-Seymour,'CHURCH AFFAIRS', *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures,* **London, 1830,** BM. A bloated bishop addresses a thin parson, the caption reads: *Increase your stipend? Your Mind is as narrow as your Body – have more respect – recollect Sir there is a Wide difference between us.*

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[49] Ibid., p. 4.
[50] Ibid., p. 4.
[51] Webb, *Modern England,* p. 227.

Due to the active participation and leadership of some Catholic clergy in the anti-tithes movement, Maynooth College, at that time, the principal seminary for the training of Catholic priests in Ireland, was targeted by anti-Catholics in parliament because it received an annual government grant. What became increasingly apparent, for the Catholic majority population in Ireland and for some Protestants, was the urgent need to reform the Church of Ireland tithes system of taxation. On 23 June 1831, Lord Mandeville presented the House of Commons with several petitions from Aberdeen, Armagh, and other places calling for the termination of the annual grant to the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth. These petitions point to the grant as having been directly responsible for much of the 'evils of Ireland'.[52] The very mention of the name 'Maynooth' became the object of this concerted anti-catholic protest. Daniel O'Connell was quick to respond by proposing a bargain 'fair to both parties – let the Protestants contribute nothing to the support of the Catholic religion, and, on the other hand, let the Catholics contribute nothing to the support of the Protestant religion.'[53]

Not only were urgent reforms required in the established church taxation system, but in Ireland it was vital that reforms occur in education, the municipal corporations, and in measures to address the relief of the poor. O'Connell's disappointment with the government's failure to deliver effective reform led him to move towards repeal agitation. He founded 'The Society of Friends of all Religious Persuasions'. This society was 'intended to be an all purpose reform organization which included among its objectives the repeal of the union'.[54] O'Connell's revolutionary demands for repeal worried the new government and did not favorably impress other reformers in Ireland. McGrath submits that Bishop Doyle communicated with Lord Darnley in private correspondence, but was

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[52] *Hansard* 3, iv, 268.
[53] Ibid., 268.
[54] Thomas McGrath, *Politics, interdenominational relations and education* (Dublin, 1999) p. 78.

also read by Lords Grey and Holland, that Ireland was not on the brink of rebellion but

that immediate reforms, if implemented, would work to diminish O'Connell's agitation and

rhetoric.[55] While Bishop Doyle continued his covert course of mediation, O'Connell

applied his expert oratory skills to gain the support of popular opinion. It is for certain that

publishers of illustrated prints and journals succeeded in helping O'Connell to gain a great

degree of notoriety.

In Ireland and in Britain, Daniel O'Connell's face became recognized as the personification

of the pro-reform movement. This was due to the proliferation of prints and illustrated

publications that featured his likeness during the early 1830s. A popular series of political

prints that primarily featured O'Connell in caricature created by artist, John Doyle, known

to his contemporaries as HB were published by T. McLean in London.[56] Other prominent

reformers including Lord John Russell, Thomas Spring Rice, Lord Morpeth, Melbourne

and others featured in these prints. Whatever or how much they all may have had in

common, contrary to the impressions in the HB prints, they were all visibly linked by their

commitment to constitutionalism and reform. Pro-reform and anti-reform illustrated

periodicals borrowed many of the ideas from these political prints and used them in

countless illustrations that had O'Connell's face appearing in both flattering and

unflattering manner on both sides of the Irish Sea and across the Atlantic.

O'Connell's face in the press went through various metamorphoses transforming from hero

to Frankenstein. Widely touted in Ireland as 'liberator' (Fig. 3.11), in Britain, depending on

the particular partiality of the publisher, this positive image transmuted as either out of

control political monster (Fig. 3.12), conniving yet influential manipulator (Fig. 3.13), or

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[55] Ibid., p. 82.
[56] James McCord, 'The image in England: the cartoons of HB' in Maurice O'Connell (ed.), *Daniel O'Connell: political pioneer* (Dublin, 1991), pp 79-92.

instigator of violence (Fig. 3.14), challenger of corruption (Fig3.15), but most often as

the face of reform and repeal.

Fig.311

Fig. 3.11 –Anon., *IRELAND VICTORIOUS – or one down, another come on,* **Dublin, 1830,** *Hints & Hits* **no. 5, James McCormick, Publisher.** O'Connell in top hat and green coat fights off Wellington and Peel single handedly.

Captions read: *That hit is worse than ever I got from Boney.*
That's enough for you, My hero of Waterloo. PEEL - OFF .
He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day.
Liberator I can sincerely hold back.   © *The Bodleian Library*

Fig. 3.12

Fig. 3.12 – John Doyle, *POLITICAL FRANKENSTEINS Alarmed at the progress of a Giant of their own Creation,* **London, 18 Jan. 1831,** *HB Sketches* **No. 105, T. McLean, Publisher.** O'Connell appears as the monster who calmly walks through Anglesey's proclamation issued to prevent a demonstration of the Dublin tradesmen from taking place. O'Connell ignored Anglesey's proclamations, was arrested and pleaded guilty but the government wanted his support for their Reform Bill and dropped proceedings. O'Connell is holding a paper that reads: *Repeal the Union,*[57] BM.

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[57] M. D. George, *Catalogue of political and personal satires preserved in the department of prints and drawings in the British Museum,* xi (London, 1954), p. 433.

Fig. 3.13

Fig. 3.13 – Robert Seymour, *A Fable For the Agitators,* **London, 1 Nov. 1830,** *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures or The Looking Glass,* BM. O'Connell along with an Irish bishop, priest, monk and others pull the tail inscribed 'IRELAND' of a regal lion with the head of William IV and a collar with the words 'Great Britain'.

Fig. 3.14

Fig. 3.14 - Robert Seymour, *DOINGS IN DUBLIN!!!,* **1 Jan. 1831,** *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures or The Looking Glass,* BM. O'Connell addresses a group of scruffy looking peasants carrying pikes and a sign that reads 'No Union'. He is pictured rousing them to violence by his speech. The main caption reads: *If you want examples gentlemen look to Paris, to Brussels, to Warsaw, shall the finest Pisantry in the world & who drink wiskey want spirit.*

Fig.3.15

Fig. 3.15 – John Doyle, 'A SWINISH MULTITUDE', *HB Sketches,* **London, 1831, Publisher, T.** McLean. O'Connell herds swine with faces of: Palmerston, Stanley, Russell, Landsdowne, Melbourne, Morpeth and others. © *The Bodleian Library* .

Radical publishers in Britain and Ireland were, for the most part, able to publish their prints

and papers under the Tory government with impunity and without paying stamp duty. Tory

government officials, prior to 1830, used discretionary enforcement on journalists

regarding their payment of stamp duties; they turned a blind eye to those who presented no

major challenge to the Tory government. Extremist publishers along with mainstream

publishers hoped that under a Whig led government that there would be some positive steps

taken to reform of the reviled stamp duty, or 'taxes on knowledge'.[58] They were greatly

disappointed when a new stricter enforcement policy was put in place by the new 'liberal'

Grey cabinet. This sparked off the beginning of the 1830s 'war of the unstamped'[59] papers.

There was also growing anticipation about the prospect of reforms in some of the poorer

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[58] See chapter one pp 45-46.
[59] Joel Weiner, *The war of the unstamped* (Ithaca, 1969).

agricultural districts prompting rioting, the smashing of farm machinery and looting.[60]

The Whig government moved firmly to suppress these violent outbreaks in England as well

as anti-tithes agitation in Ireland. This action by the government against press and working-

class demonstrators destroyed any high regard radical publishers had felt for the new crop

of reforming Whigs, they became the target of many of the most scathing satirical

illustrations in the press.

Fig.3.16

Fig. 3.16 - *GREY-VY SOUP – For the Poor*, London, 12 May 1831, T. McLean Publisher, BM.

Illustrations that conveyed an anti-Whig reform theme were as commonly seen during the

1831 election campaign as were those with a pro-reform theme. This image (Fig. 3.16) is

another example of the political satire that alludes to Grey's supposed self-serving

indifferent attitude towards the poor, and it also makes a mockery out of his acts of

nepotism. Grey appears speaking to a very ragged John Bull while stirring eight of his

comfortable cronies including a military officer and a bishop in a pot of soup in the 'State

Saucepan', the captions read:

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[60] Webb, *Modern England,* p. 193.

Now John – you will enjoy yourself fine rich soup I am making – don't you smell it.
Why I can smell a rat, master Cook & I fancy the smell is all I'm likely to get- them chaps in the pan
seem to get all the thick of it…
Do you do anything in the Coal way now - nice and warm – very snug how kind of Uncle Grey.[61]

A committee of a mixture of radicals and moderates in the parliament prepared the first

Reform Bill that was delivered to the House by Lord John Russell and caused what has

been judged by McCord as 'the century's major political crisis'.[62] The drastic measures

contained in the bill transformed the old British constitution by a revolutionary altering of

the parliamentary representation system. Where the old system had had a wide electoral

diversity based upon a quagmire of patronage for influence, the new proposed reform

'substituted individuals for interests'.[63] The franchise was raised to ten pounds and

nomination, or 'rotten' boroughs, where few people were resident but the locale was

controlled by one or two influential families, would be eliminated. This was totally

unacceptable to some conservatives as well as to radical members such as Henry Hunt who

felt outraged that the reforms did not go far enough. Hunt wished to see a full radical

reform that would include 'the suffrage of every male inhabitant in the community, of full

age, and unstained by crime'.[64]

Scottish and Irish Bills were introduced shortly after the England and Wales Bill with

franchise arrangements similar to England. In Scotland the ten pound franchise represented

a tremendous boost to the voting rolls, growing from under 5,000 to a 65,000 electorate out

of a population of a little over two million.[65] Ireland's franchise already stood at ten

pounds, having been increased from forty shillings after the emancipation act, so the only

main differences this bill made was to extend the franchise to leaseholders and to add five

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[61] M. D. George, *Catalogue of political and personal satires preserved in the department of prints and drawings in the British Museum,.xi* (London, 1954), p. 432.

[62] Norman McCord, *British history 1815-1906* (Oxford, 1991), p. 131.

[63] Webb, *Modern England*. p. 194.

[64] Henry Hunt, Esq. M.P., *Lecture on the conduct of the Whigs, to the working classes, delivered at Lawrence Street Chapel. Birmingham, on Wednesday, October 31ˢᵗ, 1832* (London, 1832).

[65] Webb, *Modern England*, p. 197.

new members, one for Dublin University and four for towns.[66] These meagre pickings

for Ireland did not induce the Irish MPs and some radicals to support Grey's Whig

government. Attitudes and opinions varied considerably on the need for reform, so too did

the generalizations portrayed in these satirical illustrations (Figs. 3.17 - 3.20).

Fig. 3.17
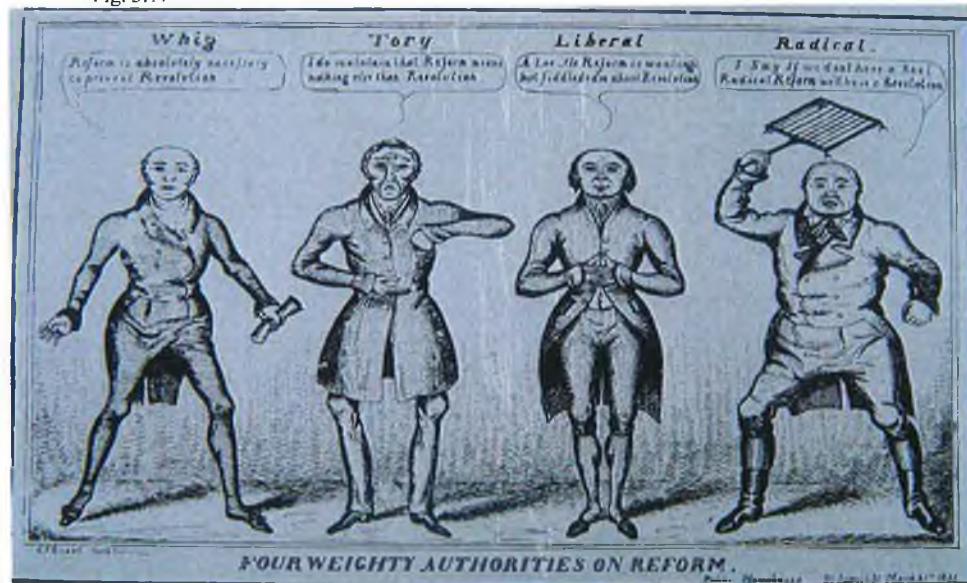
Fig. 3.17 – Charles J. Grant, *Four Weighty Authorities on Reform,* London, 31 March 1830, BM.
Captions read:

Whig – Reform is absolutely necessary to prevent Revolution.
Tory – I do maintain that Reform means nothing else than Revolution.
Liberal – A Lee_tle Reform is wanting but fiddlededee about Revolution.
Radical – I say If we don't have a Real Radical Reform we'll have a Revolution.

Fig. 3.18

Fig. 3.18 – W. Heath, *OPINIONS ON REFORM,* London, 8 March 1831, T. McLean, Publisher, BM.
Captions read: *I want a Radical Reform - I would have a moderate Reform - I am werry well
satisfied with things as they har I don't wont no Reform.*

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[66] Ibid., p. 197.

Fig.3.19

Fig. 3.19 – R. Seymour,
THOUGHTS ON REFORM, London, 1
June 1831, *McLean's Monthly Sheet of
Caricatures,* no.18, BM.
Caption reads:
*Ock by the holy proker wont this reform
make the prates grow. Wont it make
Ireland stand alone like a shelalah stuck in
a bog & every Mothers, Son, Man, Woman
& child a Gentleman.*

Fig.3.20

**Fig. 3.20 – R. Seymour, *REFORM & THE CHURCH, McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures,* No. 19,
London, 1 July 1831,** BM. An arrogant bishop holding a crosier hung with fish and carrying a basket
brimming with provisions (including a tithe pig) marches away from John Bull (a personification of the
English nation or a typical Englishman) who addresses him while pointing at the thin parsons and starving
crowd.
Caption reads: *Stop friend don't march off with all the good things, spare some for your working bretheren.*

1 March 1831 the first Reform Bill was defeated in committee after it seemed clear that

reformers couldn't agree and the opposition would make amendments stipulating that there

would be no change in the size of the House of Commons, thus negating much of the

rationale for the Bill. This sent the parliament into a frenzy of disagreement. It was

decided by the cabinet and a reluctant King that parliament would be dissolved and the

issue of reform would be put to the existing electorate.[67] Publishers grasped this

opportunity to increase their sales and make their publications indispensable as vital

communication tools for the whole population. Illustration became an essential ingredient

to attract a wide public. The illustrated press became a pivotal component in the 1831

election campaign. Publishers lost no time in publishing thousands of illustrations both

pro-reform and con, and some purely created to play devil's advocate for both Whigs and

Tories.

Fig.3.21

The Champions of Reform destroying the Monster of Corruption

Fig. 3.21 – W.Heath, *Champions of Reform destroying the Monster of Corruption,* **12 March 1831,**
G. Humphrey, Publisher, BM. Grey is pictured raising the *Reform* sword to slay the seven-headed opposition
monster.

[67] Norman McCord, *British history 1815-1906* (Oxford, 1991), p. 131.

The voting public gave the Whigs a resounding victory in the election and a clear

mandate for reform. However, there was much debate and disagreement concerning the

detailed provisions for the Reform Bill. Public opinion and a delicate political balancing

act in the House dictated whether changes that were proposed were adopted or

withdrawn.[68] O'Connell lent his support to Lord Grey's Whig reforms only after receiving

Grey's assurance of his reciprocal support for necessary Irish reforms. The position of the

established church and its relationship with the state began to be seriously examined after

the continuing agitation in Ireland against the Irish Church tithes and in England after the

Lords, many of whom held the highest ecclesiastical positions in the established church,

defeated the second Reform Bill. At times, in a perusal of the popular publications, one

must conclude that all the evils of society were laid at their doorstep.

> There is no honest man who denies the necessity of a thorough Church reform, and no man who can
> see an inch before him doubts that such reform must be speedy; but if there be one portion of the
> empire where a reform at once prompt and vast is indispensable, Ireland unquestionably is that
> spot.[69]

At this period in Britain, the Church became the symbol of all the corruption existing in the

establishment. The three major issues of contention concerning the established church

were the structure of the church as an organization, the arrangement of church finances,

and the tithe system in Ireland.[70] Many debates in parliament centred on the finances and

imbalanced structure of the Church of Ireland. The House of Lords rejection of the second

Reform Bill on 8 October 1831 further ignited an outcry of consternation around Britain

and Ireland. Riots erupted in some cities including Bristol and in Exeter targeting and

destroying Church property.[71] There was a climate of intense anti-clericalism that was

evident in the mainstream and radical press.

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[68] Webb, *Modern England*, p. 198.
[69] *The Times*, 22 Nov. 1832.
[70] D. H. Akenson, *The church of Ireland ecclesiastical reform and revolution, 1800-1885* (New Haven, 1971), p. 193.
[71] *The Times*, 3 Nov. 1831.

Fig. 3.22

Fig. 3.22 – R. Seymour, *Scene in a Vestry after a Charity Sermon,* **London, July 1832,** *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures,* **No. 31,** Bodl.
Captions read: *What a charming sermon - Beautiful! Where we spoke of enjoyment as a duty - And the obedience the poor owe to the wealthy - Will your Reverence do me the honor? - Sir with pleasure. I never flinch from my duty. – Shall I send your Reverence a Mitre.*

In December 1831, for its first number, the *Figaro in London* (Fig. 3.24), a newly-created illustrated paper ran the headline: 'The Plague of 1831' and in the related text elaborated its publisher's opinion; 'The country is at present beset by two very serious maladies – Anti-Reform, and Cholera'.[72] This is a simplistic summary of a very bizarre year beginning in May of 1831 when there were occurring the most astounding sequence of political events that preceded the passage of the Great Reform Bill.[73] Due to heavy opposition from conservatives and radicals in parliament it took the resignation of Lord Grey, the king replacing him with Wellington, who was powerless to take control of the

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[72] *Figaro in London,* 10 Dec. 1831.
[73] This expression is commonly used. My reference is in the same context as: Norman McCord, *British history 1815-1906* (Oxford, 1991), p. 138.

government, and finally, only after Grey's insistence that William IV threaten the Lords

to create enough new peers to pass the bill, was it approved. On top of all the political

strife, extreme controversy and unrest of that year, there was an outbreak of Asiatic

Cholera in London and Dublin. All of this generated the creation of a flurry of new

illustrated periodicals that pilloried the government, the politicians and the reputed wealth

of the established church. (Fig. 3.23 - 3.27).

Fig. 3.23

Fig. 3.23- Anon., *A Chip of the Old Block***, London, July, 1831,** *The Chronologist* **No.7, BL.**
A devil nurse holds up a tiny Duke of Wellington son to the devil. Caption reads: *Here's a devilish fine fellow for you I declare he is exactly like the Old un!*

Fig. 3.24

Fig. 3.24, Anon., *FIGARO IN LONDON***, No. 1, London, 10 Dec. 1831, Bodl.**
'Whigs Dressed Here'

Fig. 3.25

Fig. 3.25, Anon., *John Bull's Picture Gallery*, **No.1, London, May 1832, Bodl.**

Fig.3.26
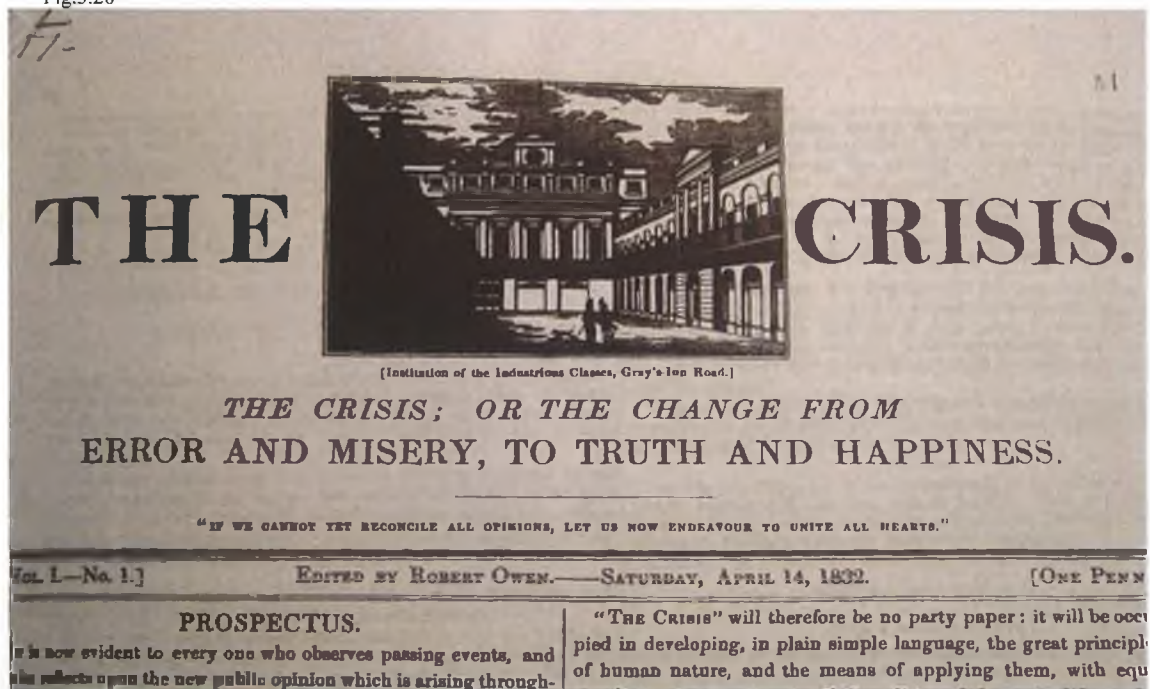
Fig. 3.26 – Anon, *THE CRISIS*, **London, 14 April 1832, Bodl.**

Fig. 3.27 – Anon., *THE NEW FIGARO*, No. 1, London, 17 March 1832, Bodl.

To appeal to a widespread audience with varying degrees of literacy, some publishers

chose to parody widely-recognized popular poems, tunes or children's rhymes with words

and illustrations that presented political affairs and current issues in simplistic terms. It

was common to have many versions adapted to suit different agendas; inexpensively

produced pamphlets were clever vehicles for getting a message out to the general public.

A pamphlet entitled 'The House that Jack Built' appeared in many variations and versions

including a 1819 London adaptation written by William Hone and illustrated by George

Cruikshank entitled *The Political House that Jack Built*.[74] An 1832 humorous Tory

version called *The House of Reform That Jack Built*[75] (Fig. 3.28) criticism is leveled at a

variety of subjects connected with the reform bill. So popular were these pamphlets that

they went through several editions and were extensively exported.

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[74] William Hone, *The political house that Jack built* (London, 1819).

[75] Anon. but with illustrations by R. Seymour and Horngold, *The house of reform that Jack built* (London, 1832).

Fig.3.28
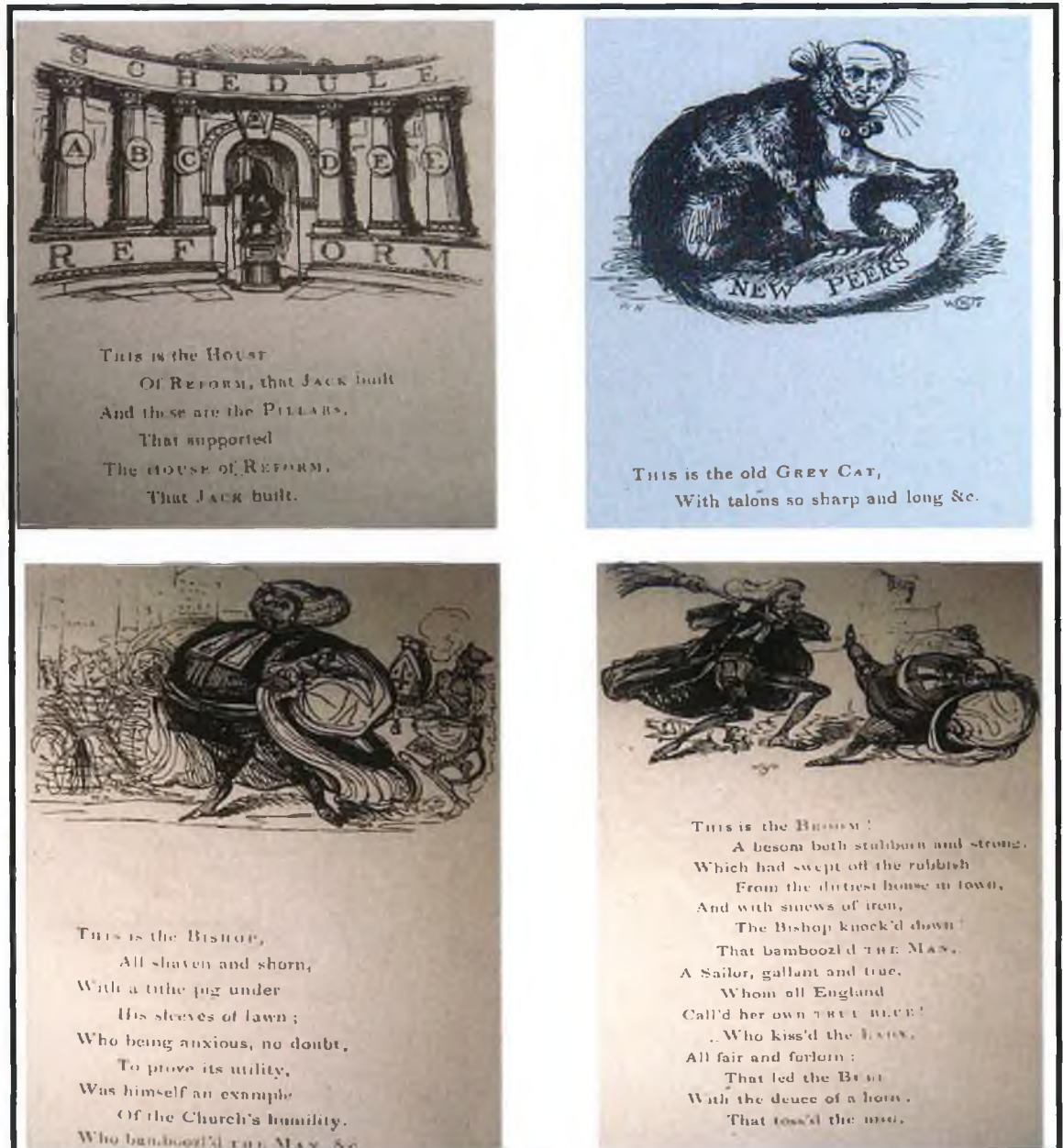
Fig. 3.28 – Seymour and Horngold, *The House of Reform That Jack Built*, May 1832, BL.

The illustrated pamphlets and papers presented above are merely a few from a vast array

that were published and released to the public during this controversial year. For the most

part they were cheaply priced and were targeted at the poorer classes.   There were other

pamphlets and publications that attacked government misconduct and mismanagement.

Following the publication and release of the *Extraordinary black book*[76] in 1831 that

reported on the abuses of finances in the church and state, the Dublin and London press

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[76] John Wade, *Extraordinary black book* (London, 1831).

were prompted to revive the theme of 'corruption unmasked' in both text and pictures. This phrase had been used in 1819 as the sub-title of a very popular and highly controversial book, the *Black Book, or corruption unmasked.*[77] It was published anonymously by the London publishers, Effingham Wilson, but has been credited to author, John Wade. In 1831 this book was called 'the reformer's bible' as it had caused a sensation in the 1820s by frequently being referred to and quoted by radicals and prominent reformers including Henry Hunt.[78] It presented a scathing exposé of the inherent corruption in both Church and State. It drew attention to the grievous abuses in the absorption of public money by the aristocracy and the urgent need for Church and state reform. The book singled out specific references to alleged harm caused by church pluralists, government sinecurists, aristocratic pensioners, and practically anyone associated with the political power structure through money or interest.[79] It achieved a staggering circulation of more than 50,000 and despite being proscribed and the subject of publishing libel convictions,[80] it had a long run of reprint editions in the years that followed.

John Wade's 'extraordinary book', even more than its predecessor, offers a bleak picture of the government that is supposed to 'work well'. Instead it presents striking examples of the wretchedness of her population, tithe system, judicial and magisterial administration, vast tracts of land, either well cultivated or totally unproductive, insurrections, factions, desolations and bloody domestic outrages.[81] In the chapter of this work devoted to presenting a picture of the 'present state of Ireland', Ireland is compared with England. It highlights that in England there were grievous abuses in the absorption of public money by

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[77] Anon. *Black book, or corruption unmasked* (London, 1819).
[78] *The Times*, 11 Aug. 1819.
[79] 'Wade, John (1788-1875)', *Oxford dictionary of national biography* available at (http://www.oxforddnb.com) (21 Jan 2005).
[80] *The Times*, 31 March 1820, 'Warwick Lent Assizes, The King v. Ragg'.
[81] John Wade, *The extraordinary black book* (London, 1831), p. 81.

the aristocracy, in the area of justice by the cost and uncertainty of legal decisions, corn

laws, partial taxation, and other oppressions; 'but these sink into insignificance when

contrasted with the sufferings of Ireland. There the national order of society has been

inverted, and the government for many years has existed, not for the benefit of the people,

but the people existed solely for the benefit of the government.'[82]

Fig.3.29

Fig. 3.29 - R. Seymour, *The Extraordinary Black Book*, John Wade, London, 1831, Frontispiece illustration, BL.
The illustration is a parody on Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. There was an adjoining caption from a seventeenth century poem, 'Hudibras' by Samuel Butler. *Twas your zealous want of sense and sanctified impertinence: Obliged the state to talk about and turn you root & branch all out.*
William IV beams down on the scene; tithe pigs are escaping as mighty John Bull is tied down, gagged, robbed and completely overrun and under the control of the corrupt forces of church and state, while at the same time being serenaded by the sweet tune of 'The Whigs March'.

The Times made no editorial comment regarding Wade's book but ran several

advertisements placed by its publishers.

> Church, State, Law, and Representation corrected throughout from the latest official returns, by the original Editor, and complete in 1 vol. 8vo, 14s. in black cloth, with a characteristic frontispiece – *The Extraordinary Black Book*; comprising a complete exposition of the Cost, Influence, Patronage, and Abuses of Government in Church, State, Law, and Representation. *The Black Book*, usually called the "Reformer's Bible", has often been reprinted, but never corrected since its first publication in 1820. It is now offered to the public as an entirely new and at two-thirds of the price of former editions. Published by Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange.[83]

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[82] Ibid., p. 81.
[83] *The Times*, 1 Mar. 1831.

The Extraordinary Black Book an exposition of abuses in church, state, courts of law, corporations, and public companies, with a précis of the House of Commons, past, present and to come.No man who desires to know how grossly the resources of the country have been misapplied ought to be without this work…the astounding facts contained in this black record of abuse and corruption; no elector can be duly qualified to vote in the choice of a member unless he be aware of the magnitude of the evils to be remedied, which he will find set forth in this work with a cogency of reasoning, and fullness of demonstration, that must bring conviction to every mind.[84]

This volume caused such a stir with its accusations of inappropriate use of public funds and vast overtures to widespread corruption. To reformers it added ammunition to the fires of debate in Parliament; to liberal and radical publishers it offered an enormous amount of material from which to work. In several satirical illustrations the Church, personified by a grotesquely fat bishop sitting supremely at the top of the heap carrying his tithe pig, cross and bales of grain, is pictured in the pinnacle position carrying the most weight above all other institutions that formed the constitutional framework (Fig. 3.30). Public opinion was sufficiently provoked by all the press coverage on Church finances and in the same year a royal commission on ecclesiastical income and patronage began.

Fig.3.30

Fig. 3.30 - Anon., *Present State of John Bull,* **London, 28 July 1832,** *John Bull's Picture Gallery,* **No. 12,** BM. The bull in the illustration is weighted down by government ministers, military men, parsons and on top of it all a bloated bishop. The bull is weighted at head and feet by large sacks inscribed with the words: *Taxes, Pensions, National Debt, Standing Army, Sinecures* and *Church Property.*

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[84] *The Times,* 7 Dec. 1832.

The problems of how to remedy the absenteeism, pluralism, and sinecures that weighed down the Irish Church were the most controversial questions to be dealt with by Lord Grey's government. Radical proposals for drastic reductions in its endowment of the Church prompted the resignation of four Tory ministers: Stanley, Graham, Lord Ripon, and the Duke of Richmond.[85] The royal commission on the Irish Church confirmed that it was severely over-endowed and excessively wealthy relative to the proportion of people to which it ministered.   In the midst of the government's delicate negotiations to act to rectify this situation, a new cycle of violence erupted in the rural agricultural areas of Ireland as the anti-tithes demonstrations became more violent on both sides of the conflict. A storm of conflict arose between Lord Grey and O'Connell following Grey's enactment of the Suppression of Disturbances Act in 1833; as part of the coercion acts it gave emergency powers to the lord lieutenant to maintain law and order in troubled districts.[86] This act, described as 'draconian'[87] by McGrath, allowed for the imposition of a curfew, restricting firearms, detention of up to three months before a trial and other harsh limitations. The illustrations that appeared following the increase in violence and the implementation of this act clearly conveyed to the public a sense of the intensity of the horror and brutality accompanying the tithes issue (Figs. 3.31, 3.32).

Many illustrations appearing in the British periodicals drew their inspiration from the literary movement of 'Gothicism'. The Gothic novels of the mid-eighteenth to early nineteenth century became one of the new modes of literary expression.   These novels, written in radical response to Enlightenment ideals that stressed order, rationality and restraint, drew, instead, on a host of impulses from the nightmare realm. Gothic novels were frequently set in gloomy, chilling and unnatural settings. The protagonist characters

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[85] Webb, *Modern England,* p. 212.
[86] S. J. Connolly (ed.), *The Oxford companion to Irish history* (Oxford, 1998), p. 101.
[87] Thomas McGrath, *Politics, interdenominational relations and education* (Dublin, 1999), p. 103.

were usually drawn from the ruling class; they frequently display irrational and aberrant sides of human nature.[88] Their victims tend to be the helpless lower class characters that were subjected to the power and will of their oppressors. Terror, obsession, violence, torture, the macabre, sexual rapacity and other perverse impulses are standard features of the Gothic mode. In these dark tales of evil and sin the frequent appearance of chilling supernatural phenomenon such as demons, ghouls, ghosts and vampires give gothic literature its distinctively dark and disturbing tone.[89] Many of the illustrators in the British press found the 'Irish question' to be ideal subject matter on which to apply the Gothic genre.

Fig.3.31

Fig. 3.31 – R. Seymour, *IRISH AFFAIRS /THE ABSENTEE*, London, 1 Oct. 1831, *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures*, No. 22, BM. *Scene Naples Enter the Ghosts of Starv'd Irish Peasentry* [sic]*!!!*

Four months prior to the appearance of this image (Fig. 3.31), MPs Mr. Sadler and Sir R. Harty voiced their abhorrence of the absentee proprietorship system in Ireland. Mr. Sadler

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[88] M. H. Adams et al., eds., *The Norton anthology of English literature* (4th edn., New York, 1979), pp 18-20.
[89] Ibid., pp 18-20.

wondered that 'distress should prevail in Ireland, when its taxes were upwards of

5,000,000*l.* per annum, - while its absentee proprietors annually abstracted 3,5000,000*l.*

from its productive capital?[90] Sir R. Harty elaborated on his colleagues remarks:

> The grievance of Ireland was not want of agricultural capital, but of a proper distribution of it, in the cultivation of her wastelands, and other sources of wealth and productiveness, and such a legal provision for the poor as would insure industry against the vicissitudes to which it would be impossible it could possess under the present system of misrule in that country. He was far from intending by this that the burden of a poor rate should fall on the resident cultivator of the soil, or the resident clergyman. By no means: his object was to compel the great absentee proprietor, who spent in foreign luxuries the hard earnings of the poor tillers of the soil, to contribute his just portion towards the support of those from whose industry he derived a lordly income.[91]

Fig.3.32

Fig. 3.32 – R. Seymour, 'Natural History of Two species of Irish Vampire', London, 1 Aug. 1831, *McLean's Monthly Sheet of Caricatures*, **No. 20,** BL. The caption reads: *The first or absentee is remarkable for a proboscis or agent with which he draws the heart's blood at an immense distance. The second or Law Priest is an importation from a neighbouring Country.*

This shocking illustration is another example of a print that derived inspiration from the

gothic literary trend of the period. The artist of this illustration (Fig. 3.32) vividly portrays

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[90] *The Times,* 23 June 1831, p. 4.
[91] Ibid., p. 4.

his interpretation of a bleak future for Ireland and its future generations. These grotesque characters are meant to depict absentee landlords and Church officials as ghoulish vampires guilty of draining the life-blood of Ireland. Ireland is personified in the shape of a half-naked young woman who appears to be dead or dying as she lies on rough ground beside a narrow channel. The emaciated infant that has fallen from her arm is symbolic of the future generations of the Irish people. The body of water represents the Irish Sea and the distance between Ireland and Britain, but more importantly, it draws attention to the problem of absentee landlords in Ireland. It reminds the viewers of the dire problems that exist over the claims of landlords residing in England and their ultimate control over the fate of their tenants in Ireland. Across this body of water is a repulsive-looking man lying on the ground. His nose extends across the width of the water and seems to pierce her chest in order to draw her heart's blood. A second man wearing a mitre and in bishop's robes of the Church of Ireland touches her breast as he sucks blood from her neck. The harp, Ireland's national symbol, has two strings only and it hangs from a bare branch of a tree above where she lies. The trunk of the tree is inscribed with the words: *Oppression Brought Famine and Famine Pestilence.* This image delivers to its viewer a powerful visceral impact. Even today, after a period of one hundred and seventy-five years, it is impossible to look at this image without becoming affected by its compelling messages.

Another image equally as compelling and disturbing and carrying a similar theme appeared in *Figaro in London* approximately one year later in 1832 during a particularly violent period of anti-tithes violence (Fig. 3.33). This periodical, edited by Gilbert a'Beckett, was a highly successful and long-running London radical weekly that begun publication in 1831 and ended in1839. It became renowned for stirring controversy due to its highly satirical commentary and notorious illustrations. This periodical's success and longevity is

attributed to its talent in combining caricature with journalism.[92] It used pictorial

commentary on the events of each month, sprinkled with puns and jokes that claimed to be

'a satirical, yet a faithful record of passing events, a 'Political Memorandum of the year'.[93]

This radical pictorial weekly, in modern times, has been called the 'supposed forerunner of

Punch'.[94] It published a striking image during the height of the tithes war that graphically

indicts the tithe system, and presents all its associates as complicit in the destruction of

Ireland.
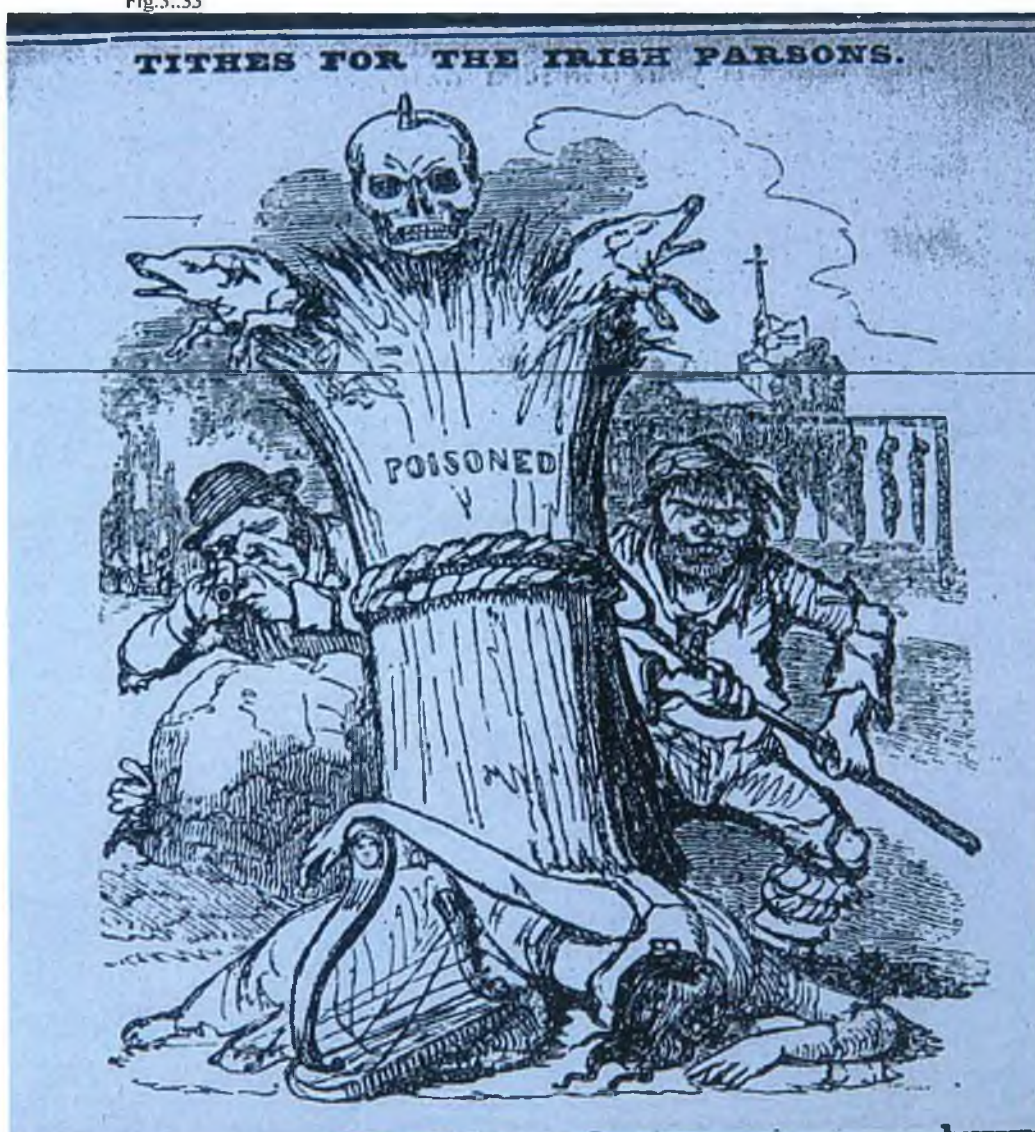
Fig. 3.33 - R. Seymour, 'TITHES FOR THE IRISH PARSONS', London, 6 Oct. 1832,
Figaro in London, **No. 44,** BL.

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[92] M. D. George, *Catalogue of political and personal satires preserved in the department of prints and drawings in the British Museum,* xi (London, 1954), xviii.
[93] *Figaro in London,* 30 Dec. 1831.
[94] M. D. George, *British Museum Catalogue,* xviii.

This image depicts Ireland allegorically as the female form who lays face down with one arm on her broken harp under a large stack of grain inscribed with the word 'Poisoned'. There are two tithe-pigs and a skull on top of the stack. From behind the stack emerge a tattered looking Irish farmer holding a pitchfork menacingly and a constable or tithe proctor who is pointing his gun. In the background appears a long gallows with a row of hanging corpses and a ruined looking church. This illustration does not require any captions. It condemns all of the participants in the tithes war as culpable for their actions that bring nothing but death, destruction and hardship to Ireland.

Grey resigned in 1833 and was replaced by Lord Melbourne but not before the passage of the Church Temporalities Act in 1833.[95] This vastly important act while providing for a major restructuring of the finances and administration of the Irish Church[96] did very little to relieve the tension of the tithes war. It did, however, signal the government's willingness, given the right combination of pressure from king, public opinion and press, to confront major issues regarding the problems in Ireland. With British and Irish farmers both protesting against the arrangement of the tithe system, the question of tithes was now very much firmly on the agenda for reform.

Melbourne's Whig majority ministry in 1834 went through cycles of highs and lows with him coming and going, replaced by Peel and then returned again in 1835 but, this time, with a reduced majority putting him in the position of having to rely upon the support of O'Connell and radical factions in the House throughout the rest of his administration until 1841. During this period major reformers continued to push for passage of their programs. O'Connell and radical factions maintained their leverage and kept the pressure on for major

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[95] 3 & 4 Will. IV, c. 37.
[96] See chapter two, p. 98.

reforms of tithes, new poor laws and also municipal reforms by offering their support when they felt it to be propitious. O'Connell's command over Irish popular politics continued throughout the decade. With the momentous alliance of the O'Connell factions and the reformer Whigs at Lord Lichfield's House in 1835, they were able to remove Peel, hold sway in the Commons, and exert pressure on the Lords to approve the Tithe Commutation Act 1838,[97] Irish Poor Law 1838[98] and the Municipal Corporation Reform Act 1840[99] (Fig. 3.34).

Fig.3..34

Fig. 3.34 - John Doyle (HB), *A Battering Train,* London, 6 June 1836 , T. McLean, Publisher, Bodl. Daniel O'Connell's face appears on the head of the battering ram that is held by Russell, Rice, Morpeth, Lawlor, Conyngham, Stanley and O'Connell. The captions read: *We don't want to invade your independence but if you presume to differ from us in opinion, we'll batter down your old House. We'll frighten them out of their wits. Look fierce or they will discover that it is all a sham.* The response from the House of Lords: *Batter Away! No Surrender.*

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[97] 1 & 2 Vict., c. 109.
[98] 1 & 2 Vict., c. 56.
[99] 3 & 4 Vict., c. 108.

Reactions to the illustrations in the popular press varied depending upon the viewer's circumstance. How influential they were on the formation of early nineteenth century attitudes, and whether they reflected public opinion or created it, is impossible to say. The 'Irish question' and all the surrounding issues of church reform, tithes, landlord absenteeism and poor laws were graphically displayed in the pages of the British illustrated press. The images reflected the feelings and opinions of the radical, moderate and liberal factions of society. Conspicuously absent in the illustrations was the voice of the conservatives. It is difficult to speculate on why this was, but it seems highly credible that they may have felt it to be beneath them to use illustrations to depict their ideologies, or, that they had no real desire or need to communicate with the masses. Conservative and ultra-conservatives certainly voiced their opinions in written comments. Whether it was to voice their approval or disapproval, they did so regularly, and often, in the daily and weekly newspapers. However, much of what they had to say was lost to the illiterate and semi-literate of the British masses.

All matters relating to 1830s Ireland were hotly debated, highly politicized and eventually were, to a degree, rectified through parliamentary legislation. The role played by the illustrated press in these events cannot be determined with certainty, but, there was a definite common thread running through the periodicals discussed in this chapter. Their repeated common objective was to bring before the public 'a magazine ...to place it on level with, or in advance of public opinion.'[100] The British illustrated press' depictions of Ireland and her people were as diverse as those in Irish publications. Although there were a great deal more of them, as they filtered into the public arena the reactions in Britain, as in Ireland, were various, ranging from benevolence and sympathy to malevolence and antipathy.

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[100] *The Constitutional Magazine*, 1 Aug. 1835, p. 1.

CHAPTER FOUR

Irish Catholic religious identity in the illustrated periodicals of 1830s

Most religions throughout time have used visual imagery to express things spiritual, sacred

or supernatural. From the earliest pictogram script of the Harrapan civilization, people have

used signs and symbols to proclaim their deities and communicate their worship rituals and

religious beliefs. As religions evolved and changed, so too have the visual images along

with their purposes and meanings. In his book *Eyewitnessing*, Peter Burke suggests that

religious images fall into four categories of purpose: images that are a means of religious

instruction and indoctrination, images that become devotional icons or objects of cults,

images that stimulate meditation, and images that are weapons of controversy and

propaganda.[1] All of these varieties of religious iconography provide historians with

evidence of religious beliefs and commonly-held views of life, death and afterlife in the

localities at the particular period of their creation. Pope Gregory the Great (540-604),

considered to be a 'people's pope', recognized the significance of the role of visual imagery

for the medieval illiterate population. His views have echoed over the centuries: 'Pictures

are placed in churches so that those who cannot read in books might 'read' by viewing the

walls' (*in parietibus videndo legant quae legere in codicibus non valent*).[2] Most Christian

sects have relied heavily upon the use of visual images or symbols to communicate their

versions of piety and religious doctrine to their adherents. This chapter examines the origin

and contents of some Irish Catholic illustrated periodicals in light of Burke's four-part

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[1] Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing* (London, 2001), p. 48.
[2] Ibid., p. 47.

categorization approach, making comparisons and connections with other contemporary illustrated religious publications.

Confessional division and religious intolerance have persistently convulsed the Catholic and Protestant communities in Ireland since the sixteenth-century Reformation. These sweeping terms do not indicate that there was homogeneity within either the Irish Protestant community or the Irish Catholics.[3] Irish Catholics included clergymen, gentry, tenant farmers, labourers, merchants, artisans and professionals who did not all share common attitudes and desires but all did share a set of grievances against the functioning of the Protestant hegemony.[4] Powerful factions within some Protestant religious groups perceived the late eighteenth-century legislative Catholic relief acts, which had contributed to hastening the departure of the penal (or popery) laws, as an intolerable diminution of the Protestant ascendancy. There were some distinguished officials in the Protestant community, including Irish Lord Chancellor, William Conyngham Plunkett and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Marquis of Anglesey, who supported the lifting of Catholic restrictions, although many more opposed the enactment of Catholic Emancipation. Evangelical fervour in the early 1820s helped to heighten a very volatile situation that prompted interdenominational feuding, or, more precisely, a war of words in print, between ecclesiastical leaders that lasted well into the 1830s.[5]

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[3] David Hempton, *Religion and political culture in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 79.
[4] Ibid., p. 79.
[4] Ibid., p. 79.
[5] For a more comprehensive study on the origins of the Evangelical 'Second Reformation' see: Irene Whelan, *The bible war in Ireland: the 'Second Reformation' and the polarization of Protestant-Catholic relations, 1800-1840* (Dublin, 2005) also see: Thomas McGrath, *Politics, interdenominational relations and education in the public ministry of Bishop James Doyle of Kildare and Leighlin, 1786-1834* (Dublin, 1999), pp 134-156.

The interdenominational controversies, or 'bible wars'[6] of the 1820s were prompted by

Archbishop William Magee's verbal charge from the pulpit of St. Patrick's Cathedral on 24

October, 1822. It came during his inaugural address that denounced both the Irish Catholic

Church and the Presbyterian Church. The Catholics were accused, by Magee, of being

'blindly enslaved to a supposed infallible ecclesiastical authority, as not to seek in the Word

of God a reason for the faith they profess.'[7] Magee described the Presbyterians as 'so

confident in the infallibility of their individual judgement as to the reasons of their faith that

they deem it their duty to resist all authority in matters of religion.'[8] Ecclesiastical leaders

reacted immediately to condemn Magee's intolerance and provocation. Bishop James

Doyle of Kildare and Leighlin was the first to rebut the 'unjust animadversions against the

Roman Catholic religion' alleged by Magee with the publication of a letter written

anonymously under the monogram J.K.L. It was widely printed and sold thousands of

copies in eight editions.[9] Doyle's letter to Magee drew responses from the president of

Maynooth College, Dr. Bartholomew Crotty and Catholic primates including Archbishop

Curtis of Armagh, Archbishop Murray of Dublin and Archbishop John McHale of Tuam.

McHale, under the pseudonym of 'Hierophilos', wrote a series of controversial letters that

sought to expose an underlying proselytizing intent by some newly-formed societies. He

also accused Magee of writing a 'calumnious libel on the Catholic church and on the great

majority of the nation.'[10] Polemical evangelical writers joined the fray with their responses

to Magee's and Doyle's letters in the form of pamphlets. One such pamphlet written by an

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[6] This term is taken from: Whelan, *The bible war in Ireland* (Dublin, 2005),.p.153.
[7] William Magee, *A charge delivered at his primary visitation, in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, on Thursday the 24th of October, 1822* (Dublin, 1822), p. 3.
[8] Ibid., p. 3.
[9] McGrath, *Politics*, pp 106-107.
[10] Ibid., p. 107.

evangelical clergyman, Sir Harcourt Lees, ran to two editions of five hundred copies and then sold out.[11] Bishop Doyle's complaint that 'Catholics were always repelling attacks rather than meting them out' verifies McGrath's judgement that the interdenominational controversies of the 1820s were not a result of Catholic polemics.[12] This type of reactive response to provocation in print continued to be the overriding policy pursued by the Catholic church into the 1830s. The print medium continued to be the weapon of choice on the part of the Catholic hierarchy to counter the proselytising threat; they took a highly pro-active move in 1827 with the establishment of the Catholic Book Society.

The creation of the Catholic Book Society for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge by the Irish Catholic hierarchy was a positive move to oppose a 'second reformation' evangelical campaign for the conversion of Irish Catholics.[13] Its objectives were to print and supply to 'all classes' of Irish people 'useful information on the truths and duties of the Christian religion' in an expedient and inexpensive manner. With their books, they wished to refute some of the 'prevailing errors of the present age' and become the supplier of elementary schoolbooks to the Irish laity.[14] Bishop Doyle instigated this measure with the approval by the rest of the Catholic Hierarchy to act as a counter to the 'Kildare Place Society' that had begun to distribute educational books since 1811.[15] The object of the Kildare Place Society, stated by its founder, John Henry North, was to unite Catholics and Protestants in one

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[11] Ibid., p. 107.
[12] Ibid., p. 105.
[13] R. V. Comerford, *Ireland* (London, 2003), p. 109.
[14] For a comprehensive history of 'The Catholic Book Society' see: Thomas McGrath, *Religious renewal and reform in the pastoral ministry of Bishop James Doyle of Kildare and Leighlin, 1786-1834* (Dublin, 1999), pp 144-147.
[15] See: McGrath, *Politics*, pp 157-245.

educational system in order to diminish religious prejudices and to promote reconciliation. The Catholic clergy, Daniel O'Connell and liberal Protestant, William Henry Curran, did not share this ecumenical vision of the Society. They believed there to be genuine provocation to conclude that this government-subsidized society, along with the supplying of chapbooks, was also involved in the distribution of tracts, prayer books, bibles and other proselytising and didactic literature. Curran, son of the former Master of the Rolls, John Philpot Curran, judged that 'the Catholic clergy and laity have taken alarm, and are deeply impressed with the conviction that proselytism, that is, persecution in disguise, is a leading object of the Society....'.[16] In its first three years, the Catholic Book Society printed 921,554 books and other items of school materials and circulated almost an equal number of books as the Kildare Place Society in their full seventeen years of existence.[17] Under the auspices and 'special patronage'[18] of its treasurer, Daniel Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, the Society received funding from a variety of donations and subscriptions and it also received grants from the Catholic Association in the first year of expansion. A prominent lay Catholic, W.J. Battersby, took over the administration and sales for the Society with great success. In its first ten years, the Society achieved a staggering figure of five million books printed. With this successful use of print, the Irish Catholic hierarchy and lay population were poised to assert an ever-increasing impact on public and political life and counter aggressive campaigns to influence Irish culture and society from 'Second Reformation' Evangelicalism.[19]

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[16] Ibid., p.157.
[17] McGrath, *Religious renewal*, p. 147.
[18] Ibid., p.145.
[19] Whelan, *The bible war in Ireland*, p.153.

Early Christian beliefs relied heavily on symbols and an esoteric figurative teaching system that permeated the framework of Irish social structure dating back more than fifteen hundred years. The distinctive artwork found within the lavishly-decorated pages of the Gospel manuscript *The Book of Kells* has become one of the most illustrious examples of Ireland's visual religiosity. Ireland's religious historical past is on display all over the island. One needs only to glance around at the Irish landscape; it reveals the omnipresent remains of early Christian and medieval churches, abbeys and monasteries with their attendant round towers, crosses, holy wells and other Christian shrines, some of which bear ornate decorations that are replete with symbolic resonances. This iconography provided an easily assimilated language for the pious laity of all religious denominations and social classes, some of whom were predominantly illiterate and relatively unsophisticated.

Religious publishers have had a long history of using simple woodcut illustrations in their bibles, prayer books, educational primers and other devotional printed matter. They were important learning tools used in conjunction with spoken instruction targeted at the illiterate audiences of children and adults from the poorer classes in Ireland and Britain. Religious tract societies liberally used this type of simple woodcut engravings in their publications to provide children with guidance along the path to virtue. The illustrated religious publications were much more than a means to disseminate key Christian beliefs. Their greatest accomplishment was that by making these publications widely available, they helped to stimulate the spread of literacy amongst the poorer classes.[20]

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[20] Richard D. Atlick, *The English common reader* (2nd edn., Chicago, 1957), p. 103.

Some of the small woodcuts utilized in these publications were copied from the original

late eighteenth-century Bewick engravings. Thomas Bewick is recognized as 'the father

of modern wood engraving'.[21] Bewick-style illustrations appeared in many well-known

texts, the great majority of which originated in England but were commonly available in

Ireland. A book of simple poems entitled, *Divine and Moral Songs For Children*, by

Isaac Watts, a leading eighteenth-century English Dissenter, was reprinted in over a

hundred editions since 1715, most of which included simple wood-cut prints that are

meant to reinforce to the viewers the moral messages of the poems (Fig. 4.0). Watts'

works were widely distributed through religious tract societies that included the London

Tract Society and the American Tract Society. This work and other similar ones

continued to shape the growing evangelicalism of the nineteenth century.[22] From 1781 to

1896 various illustrated versions of the original 1715 text were published that utilized the

changing illustration styles and techniques to aid the teaching of Christian moral values to

children.[23] Each moral lesson was illustrated by a simple wood cut print and was

accompanied by a short poem that clearly explained the lesson.

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[21] *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, 'Bewick, Thomas', available at
(http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2334), (accessed 16 June 2006).
[22] *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, 'Watts, Isaac', available at
(http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28888), (17 June 2006).
[23] Ibid.

Fig.4.0

MORAL SONGS.   83 40   DIVINE SONGS for

SONG IV.

The Thief.

SONG XV.

Against Lying.

50   DIVINE SONGS *for*

SONG XXI.

Against evil Company.

WHY fhould I join with thofe in play.
    In whom I've no Delight ;
Who curfe and fwear, but never pray ;
    Who call ill names and fight ?

11.
I hate a to hear wanton Song:
    Their Words offend mine Ears ;
I fhould not dare defile my Tongue
    With Language fuch as theirs.
    111. Away

Fig. 4.0 - Watts, Isaac, *Divine songs attempted in easy language for the use of children,* London, 1790, ESTC, *Eighteenth Century Collection,* Children's illustrated book.

Doctrinal and liturgical debates between Roman Catholics and Protestants constituted a

substantial source of content material used in publications all over the United Kingdom

and Ireland in the early nineteenth century. However, a good deal of the commentary in

some London and Glasgow Publications in 1818-1819 such as *The Protestant* and *The*

Catholic Vindicator could not be considered ideological or philosophical debate but was

more akin to heckling. In their weekly periodicals, the editors of these two publications

vehemently battled out their relative opinions using a purely textual content, they decried

against their challenger's iniquitous accusations.

> ...as holding and practising the most immoral and anti-social principles; principles so horrid and disgusting a nature; that, were they really grounded on fact, would transform the greatest part of the Christian world into sensual reprobates and idiots, unfit even to associate with the brute creation.[24]

This torrid adversarial legacy between the publishers of religious publications was

constrained by its purely textual format from reaching a wider semi-literate and illiterate

mass audience. In the 1830s, however, the religious periodicals began to embrace

illustrations as *de rigueur* in order to explain and enhance their viewpoints on religious

doctrine in a more instantly recognizable and appealing format.

Illustrations used by editors offer the historian vital clues on the contemporary religious

mindset of the confessions represented. Some editors favoured the use of instructional

images 'to advance morality and improve the mass of the people',[25] while others used

images of controversy and propaganda to deliver their messages of enlightenment and

spiritual conversion to the 'antichristian and idolatrous' or to those individuals following

'superstitions and errors of their system'.[26] Using highly graphic controversial images as

weapons of propaganda proved a successful tactic for increasing circulation and sales,

although, this was not effective as a means of religious conversion. There was no guarantee

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[24] *The Catholic Vindicator*, 5 Dec. 1818.
[25] Ibid., *CPM*, 19 July 1834.
[26] *Protestant Penny Magazine*, 1836, preface to vol. ii.

that an intended audience who were unaccustomed to the intricacies of written discourse would have understood all of the graphic visual codes used in even the simplest prints. However, in Ireland, there was a strong likelihood that the majority of the population would infer some meaning from Christian iconography, symbols and emblems.

Printing technological progress[27] in the early nineteenth century eased the way for the industry to merge graphic illustrations with the printed word more efficiently. Denominational and secular tract societies embraced this new technology to offer their audiences a wide variety of improved, and more easily assimilated, proselytising and didactic literature. Religious factions were encouraged by the new and popular economical 'penny' periodical format. They began to utilize the stereotype printing methods to return, once again, to visual expressions of spirituality.

In the judgement of Desmond Keenan, in the beginning of the nineteenth century the Irish Catholic Church was in a 'healthy state' all over Ireland.[28] Despite having had to weather the penal years of proscription, it emerged at the beginning of the century with its structures and the religious beliefs intact. Since the twelfth century, a formal diocesan organizational structure of the Catholic Church in Ireland bolstered its existence and remained a cohesive element for the laity. Within each of the twenty-eight dioceses in the four provinces in Ireland the preservation of the sanctity of the 'essential rungs in the hierarchical ladder'[29] the pope, bishop, parish priest and laymen was upheld amongst the

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[27] See chapter one, pp 51-56.

[28] Desmond Keenan, *The Catholic church in the nineteenth-century Ireland: a sociological study* (Dublin, 1983), p. 2.

[29] Ibid., p. 48.

laity. Corish advanced this argument by stating that over much of the country no organization or structures existed other than those of the Catholic Church.[30] Catholics began to enjoy the benefits of political activism, as they finally, after the Catholic Relief Act 1829, had the legal right to become participants in government. The situation of the Catholic Church in Ireland strengthened even more as newly formed municipal structures and political associations allowed Catholics to belong to corporations, hold civil or military posts and encourage a broadening of a Catholic middle class. Nevertheless, it is impossible to ignore the truth of Corish's statement about Ireland's conflicting political interests. He states that politics in Ireland 'settled into a pattern of religious sectarianism rather than of class conflict'.[31] Catholics in Ireland had to assert their place in the developing nation. Corish uses this as the explanation for Catholic movements; 'whatever their faults', they were directing their efforts to advance Catholicism 'rather than to oppose Protestantism'.[32]

Comerford judges that there was a strong desire on the part of the Catholic Church to promote a modernising ethos that would influence the increasing number of adherents and set new and improved religious standards.[33] They wished to achieve this by a variety of steps that included building new and larger churches, schools, convents and other religious institutions. Comerford suggests that the Catholic Church wished the generality of Catholics to become better educated about the doctrinal issues that differentiated themselves from Protestants. This, he points out, highlighted the 'markers of

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[30] Patrick Corish, *The Irish Catholic experience* (Dublin, 1985), p. 156.
[31] Ibid.,
[32] Ibid.,
[33] R. V. Comerford, *Ireland* (London, 2003), p. 113.

confessional difference'[34] but many of the values and *mores* attached to this new

Catholic ethos were very near, if not identical to contemporary Protestantism.[35]

Another step the Irish Catholic hierarchy took towards this goal was the decision, in early

1834 during the height of the new evangelical activity and during the brutally sectarian

tithes war, to publish a religious periodical that would avoid controversy, 'combine piety

with instruction' and 'instruct rather than recriminate.'[36] With the wholehearted support of

the Irish Catholic middle class, new churches were built and the religion flourished in a

newly found sense of confidence and respectability. The bishops assertively set out to

secure a niche for an Irish Catholic self-confident voice in the rapidly developing popular

periodical press.

The economic success or failure of a publication has traditionally been determined by its

circulation numbers. However, when discussing religious publications of the early part of

the nineteenth century, finances and circulation numbers were not necessarily as important a

determinant for success as the number of hands the paper passed through and the amount of

people who understood the didactic messages it contained. In a period of economic

deprivation with a high percentage of illiteracy, as such was the case in 1834, purchasing

newspapers and periodicals was not a high priority as money was scarce. Based upon a

variety of contemporary sources, Adams judges that in 1830 most villages in Ulster had at

least one shop or venue that stocked books and a variety of periodicals available for hire.[37]

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[34] R. V. Comerford, *Ireland* (London, 2003), p. 113.
[35] Ibid.
[36] *Catholic Penny Magazine,* 15 Feb. 1834.
[37] J. R. R. Adams, *The printed word and the common man* (Belfast, 1987), p. 130.

In addition, religious tract societies made sure that their publications were distributed to a widespread audience by supplying copies free of charge to friends, acquaintances and patrons within institutions, businesses or organizations and encouraging them to pass them around and share. Altick observes that, although the practice was illegal, many booksellers and newspapermen in London and other larger towns and cities 'hired-out' periodicals charging 1*d* per hour. [38] Informal gatherings in houses and pubs to listen to someone from the community read the current newspaper or a periodical aloud was an everyday event in Ireland. In rural areas of Ireland this had become a fairly routine event ever since the Catholic Association had perfected its technique of reaching a mass audience with the reports of its proceedings. Churchwardens were designated, among their other duties, to receive copies of the *Weekly Register* and make them available to the parishioners. Also, for those who could not read, he would read aloud certain portions of the paper outside the church after mass on Sunday mornings. [39] While circulation statistics are helpful, they do not present the full picture of the extent of coverage any publication received in the 1830s. This type of informal dissemination of information to people who could not read or afford the price of a newspaper added additional currency to the circulation of some periodicals. The Catholic hierarchy were hoping that the same procedures would apply to their publication.[40]

The appearance of the *Catholic Penny Magazine* (*CPM*) in Dublin on 15 Feb. 1834 was due to the conflation of several factors. A key central motivating issue at the heart of the

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[38] Ibid., p. 323.

[39] S. J. Connolly, 'Mass politics and sectarian conflict, 1823-30' in W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A new history of Ireland*, v (Oxford, 1989), p. 86.

[40] Battersby to Murray, 11 Feb 1835 (DDA, Murray Papers, file 1834-5/122).

creation of *CPM* was to provide an improved self-image for the Irish Catholic Church. The Irish Catholic hierarchy wished to refute the statement made three months earlier by the Protestant editors in their first number of the *Dublin Penny Journal* proclaiming themselves to be 'the best possible instructors of the day'.[41] The Catholic hierarchy wished to capitalize on the newly-developed distribution network of the Catholic Book Society set up by W. J. Battersby. Cursory accounts of *CPM* by Irene Whelan that rely on previous T. Wall and B. Hayley publications have inaccurately portrayed this periodical as one of 'Battersby projects'.[42] It is arguable that this periodical was not insignificant and 'rather mean and shabby in appearance'[43] as these authors have indicated. This type of portrayal fails to comprehend the merit of this periodical as a key to the emergence of a wholly Catholic press in Ireland. From the papers of Archbishop Daniel Murray emerges evidence to support the claim that this publication came into existence at the urging of French Catholics, who judged that there was a real need in Ireland for Catholics to develop a more prominent presence in their national press.

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[41] *Dublin Penny Journal,* 9 Nov. 1833.
[42] Whelan, *The bible war in Ireland* (Dublin, 2005), p. 224.
[43] Ibid., p. 224.

Fig.4.1

Fig. 4. 1 – Benjamin Clayton, *The Catholic Penny Magazine,* **Dublin, 15 Feb. 1834, Frontispiece.**
All illustrations of *CPM* are courtesy of the Russell Library, NUI Maynooth.

The *Catholic Penny Magazine* was under the inspection of 'Catholic Divines'. This term refers to the full title: *The Catholic Penny Magazine: published weekly under the inspection of the Catholic Divines,* which signifies a council, or synod, of bishops that held regular meetings to discuss the magazine and other religious matters. These members of the Catholic hierarchy employed engraver, Benjamin Clayton II to create a suitably striking image for the frontispiece of the first number of *CPM*. Clayton, a prominent engraver in Dublin, was the chief engraver for the popular *Dublin Penny Journal* and other works published in Dublin. His father, Benjamin Clayton the elder, was the engraver for the *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine* and his plates were used on corporation seals and many other Irish and English publications. His three sons, Samuel, Benjamin and Robert followed him into the trade. [44]

The illustration (Fig. 4.1) commissioned for the opening number of *CPM* depicted St. Peter's Basilica in Rome perched on a rock in a hellishly stormy sea with a threatening sky. The image conveys the impression of the Catholic Church as a besieged or 'persecuted church'.[45] Metaphorically, this depiction seeks to establish, in visual terms, the invulnerability of the Roman Catholic Church and axiomatically the Catholic religion as having withstood the ravages of persecution under the Penal Laws and continuing to remain stalwart against the contemporary challenge of the evangelical campaign. The caption quotes from the gospel of Matthew 16: 18 and emphatically states "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it".[46] The

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[44] W. G. Strickland, *A dictionary of Irish artists,* ii (Dublin, 1969), p. 181
[45] Keenan, Desmond, *The Catholic church in the nineteenth-century Ireland: a sociological study* (Dublin, 1983), p. 25.
[46] Frontispiece no. 1, vol. i of *Catholic Penny Magazine* 15 Feb. 1834

forceful character of this illustration appears to confirm historian Jacqueline Hill's

assessment that 'Irish Catholics were beginning to shed their customary deference and

were openly challenging the Church of Ireland on spiritual, historical and utilitarian

grounds'.[47]   Although the stance of this illustration is confrontational and seems to

conform to Burke's category of controversial or propaganda images, [48] subsequent

illustrations took a considerably more softer approach remaining true to its 'spiritual and

educational'[49]intent.

> It is our desire to show religion in its native grandeur; to prove that nothing is so pleasing as piety; so pure as virtue; so lasting as truth; or so happy as serving God in spirit and in truth....Whilst religion shall be our main object, we will introduce every thing consonant to it. Arts, Science, and Literature shall thus be made tributary to virtue; and human knowledge lead to that which is divine. Matter interesting to the husbandman and housekeeper will not be neglected. With what is useful we shall insert what is agreeable; and by combining piety with instruction—poetry with prose, and moderation with strict adherence to truth, we shall endeavor to connect all things with that never-failing link of faith and morals, which unites the throne of God. [50]

The *CPM* was conceived as an effort to fortify the Irish Catholic sense of community.

However, this periodical, as was the case with most of the devotional literature produced by

the religious institutions for mass consumption, reflected the ideals and attitudes of the

Catholic Church leadership rather than the everyday attitudes and beliefs of its adherents[51]

The Catholic hierarchy embraced the illustrated 'penny' periodical format in order to

communicate a forceful and urgent sense of spiritual renewal and affirmation of faith to

the'people of Ireland'.[52] The hierarchy of the Irish Catholic Church felt an obligation, or

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[47] Jacqueline Hill, *From patriots to unionists* (Oxford, 1997), p. 333.
[48] Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing* (London, 2001), p. 48.
[49] *CPM*, 15 Feb. 1834, p. 1.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and popular culture in Ireland 1750-1850* (1997, London), p. 118.
[52] *CPM*, 15 Feb. 1834, p. 1.

urgency, to address in print the affront they had received in 1832 in the first number of the

Dublin Penny Journal. The Protestant editors of *DPJ*, chose to describe their contributors

as 'the best possible instructors of the day'[53] for the people of Ireland. The Catholic

Archbishop of Dublin Rev. Daniel Murray decided that there was an urgent need in 1834 for

a Catholic penny periodical, as who but the Catholic Church should be the 'best possible

instructors' of its adherents? The address to the people, which appeared in the first number

of the *Catholic Penny Magazine,* makes this supremely clear:

> On presenting the people of Ireland with the first number of the *Catholic Penny Magazine*, we wish to ask: - 1st. Is such a work necessary? 2nd. Are the people able to purchase it? 3rd. What should it contain?
> As friends of the arts and lovers of science we do not wish to lessen the demand for either; but still we think, that there is much against good sense in the present flying sheets, and more sound than substance in the 'best possible instructors' of the day - . . .
> '2nd. Can the people purchase a Catholic penny magazine ?
> Whilst London has three catholic magazines, Birmingham one and Glasgow another, cannot all Ireland, with six millions of Catholics support one? Nay whilst we have in Dublin five or six weekly and monthly literary journals, with many others imported from the sister country, can we not secure the success of one more immediately deserving our attention?'
> 3rd. What should it contain?
> Every thing fit to be read by all, and nothing unfit to be read by any. ... Whilst religion shall be our main object, we will introduce every thing consonant to it. Arts, science, and literature shall thus be made tributary to virtue; and human knowledge lead to that which is divine...With what is useful we shall insert what is agreeable; and by combining piety with instruction, . . .[54]

Each week the periodical carried a frontispiece illustration purposely chosen to contribute to

and promote feelings of Catholic religious devotion, and further to provide some useful

information about the progress of the Catholic Church. The Catholic hierarchy challenged

the Established Church in this illustrated periodical by utilising images that visually

portrayed its dignified and renewed sense of self-confidence. Some of the illustrations

reinforce Comerford's suggestion that morals and customs attached to this new Catholic

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[53] *DPJ*, 30 June 1832, p. 1.
[54] *CPM,* 15 Feb. 1834, p. 1.

ethos were attempting to imitate contemporary Protestantism[55] (Fig. 4.3). The carefully

chosen illustrations took many different approaches and covered a variety of subject matter.

During the course of its short publication life of fourteen months from 15 February 1834 to

25 April 1835, the *CPM* featured forty-three engravings. Seventeen of the illustrations are

meant to be inspirational depictions of newly built, renovated or extant Catholic churches,

cathedrals, colleges, schools and convents in Ireland, England and the USA (Figs. 4.4 - 4.8).

Eight portraits of eminent Catholic ecclesiastics appear in the periodical with accompanying

biographical and Church career information, among them, Rev. Dr. Oliver Kelly,

Archbishop of Tuam (1815-1834), Rev. Dr. James Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin

(1819-1834) and Rev. Charles Gobinet (1613-1690), author and Doctor of Divinity at

Sorbonne (Fig. 4.2).

Scriptural illustrations such as The Creation, The Expulsion and The Resurrection featured

regularly along with engravings of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Patrick and Saint Bridget

along with other subjects that reinforced Irish Catholic teaching (Fig. 4.5).

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[55] R. V. Comerford, *Ireland* (London, 2003), p. 113.

Fig.4.2

Fig. 4.2 – *The Most Rev. Dr. Kelly, CPM* , **7 June 1834,** *Rev. Charles Gobinet, CPM*, **14 June 1834,** *Right Rev. Dr. Doyle, CPM*, **5 July 1834** and *Remains of the Right Rev. Dr. Doyle, as laid out after death, CPM*, **12 July 1834.**
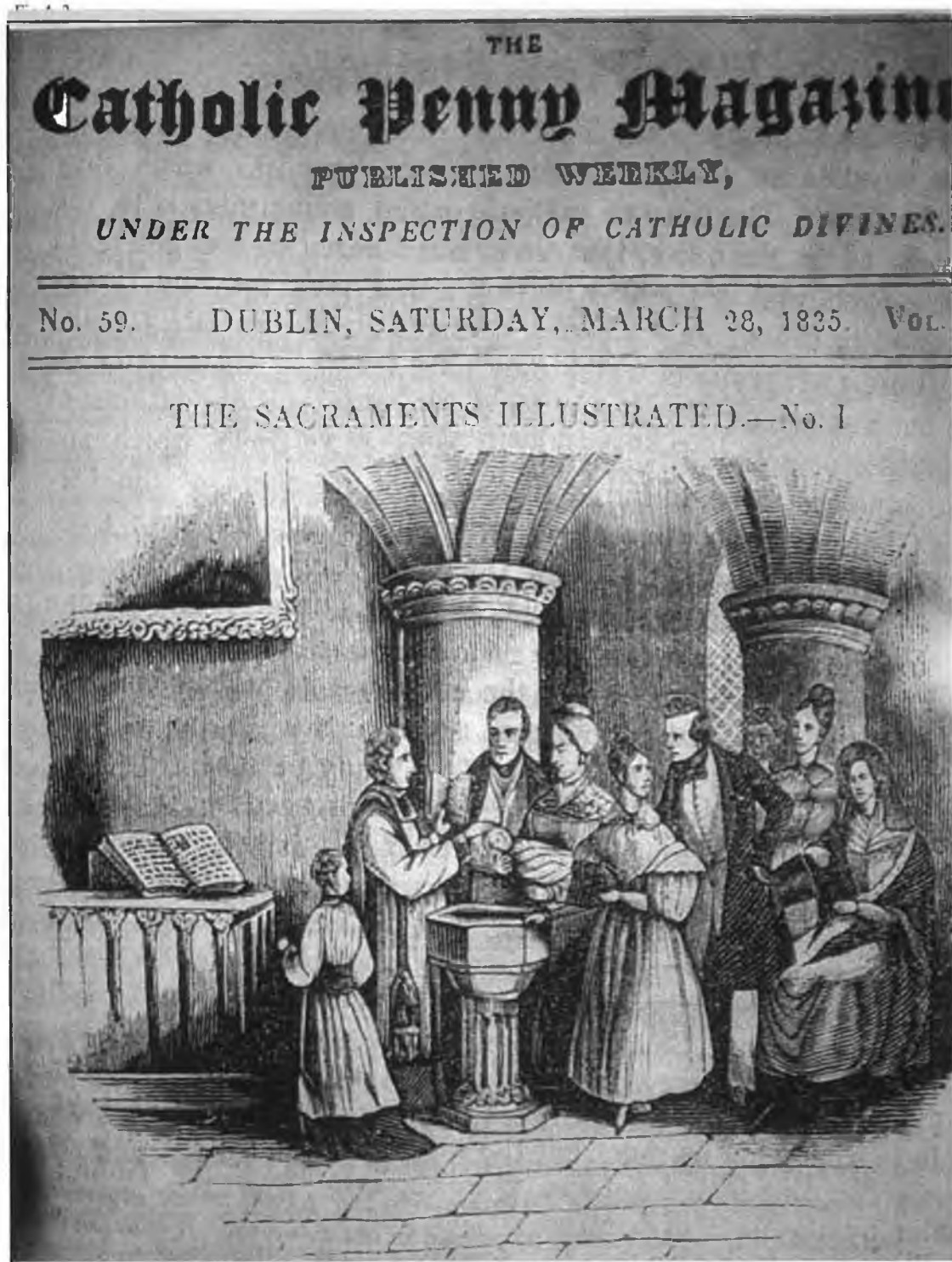
Fig. 4.3 - *Catholic Penny Magazine, The Manner of Administering the Sacrament of Baptism in the Catholic Church,* **28 March 1835.** This illustration depicts the way in which the Catholic Church statutes of 1831 recommended the Sacrament of Baptism to be administered.

The *CPM* began a pictorial series of images entitled 'The Sacraments Illustrated' but they were discontinued after the appearance of the initial one on 28 March 1835, entitled 'The Manner of Administering the Sacrament of Baptism in the Catholic Church' (Fig. 4.3). This illustration portrayed the way in which the Catholic Church statutes of 1831 recommended the sacrament of Baptism be administered. The text that accompanies this surprising image explains that 'regularly speaking, and excepting the case of necessity, the church does not allow baptism to be administered anywhere but in the churches which have fonts.'[56] Out of sheer necessity, in many of the rural parishes, clergymen regularly performed baptism, marriage and other sacraments in the homes of their parishioners. This practice continued well towards the end of the nineteenth century.[57] Although the Dublin provincial statutes of 1831 strongly recommended that the 'stations' be held in the church, it was not made obligatory until 1850.[58] Corish refers to 'stations' as inclusive of all the 'spiritual business of the station – the hearing of confessions, catechism of children by lay members of the confraternity, concluding with Mass and instruction from the priest'.[59]

The majority of Irish Catholics in 1835 may have had difficulty identifying themselves with this elegantly attired Irish Catholic family in this idealized vision of the baptismal sacrament (Fig. 4.3). It is not surprising that the series was discontinued after the appearance of this image. The Catholic hierarchy knew that in some remote parts of Ireland, the local parish priests were greatly challenged to administer the sacraments in accordance with the ideal

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[56] *CPM*, 28 March 1835, p.1
[57] As evidenced by the painting, *Mass in a Connemara Cabin* by Aloysius O'Kelly, 1883, see: Niamh O'Sullivan 'The mystery of the lost painting' in *Irish Times*, Weekend Review, 2 Nov. 2002.
[58] Patrick Corish, *The Irish Catholic experience* (Dublin, 1985), p. 179.
[59] Ibid., p. 178.

manners set down by the provincial statutes of 1831. At that period, in light of this knowledge, it is interesting to contemplate why this depiction was approved by the Catholic hierarchy to appear as the frontispiece of the *Catholic Penny Magazine.* The editors of the magazine seem particularly anxious to project an image of respectability and propriety amongst their congregation.

In the 1820s and 1830s, the construction of new churches and the renovation of old ones was a high priority for some of the Catholic bishops and for the Established Church. The Church of Ireland had compensated for its minority presence with an 'overt and disproportionate architectural presence in the Irish countryside'.[60] Funding for its large cathedral and church building activities was heavily subsidised from The Board of First Fruits until the Church Temporalities Act in 1833[61] forced its demise and replaced it in 1834 with a more parsimonious Ecclesiastical Commission.

Resources for the construction of new Catholic churches were scarce. The achievements of Bishop James Doyle of Kildare and Leighlin were particularly commendable in this regard, despite funds being in short supply due to the poverty of many of his parishioners. He felt strongly that 'one of the greatest obstacles to the instruction of the people in Ireland is the want of sufficient room in our chapels'.[62] Church building became his highest priority in all the parishes of his diocese. He became adept at sourcing alternative means of fundraising in his diocese. Bishop Doyle subscribed forty to fifty pounds a year

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[60] Cormac Allen, 'The Semple Temples' (M.A. thesis, University College Dublin, 1993), p. 4.
[61] 3 & 4 Will. IV, c. 37 amended by 4 & 5 Will. IV, c. 90.
[62] McGrath, *Religious renewal,* p. 55.

from his own income for two or three years towards the church building programme.[63]

By 1829 he had begun to build a cathedral, two new churches were planned, twenty-seven new churches were built, another twenty-two had been rebuilt and extended from their original foundations, and another forty-three enlarged.[64] To meet the devotional needs of the growing population in other dioceses their bishops followed similar paths, particularly in the province of Dublin, where there was a remarkable increase in the number and quality of churches built during this period. Unlike the traditional mud-walled thatched structures that had previously served as places of worship, these structures were built of stone and slate with a view to permanence.[65] They were built to match or rival their state-funded Protestant counterparts, most of which had been erected much earlier (Figs. 4.4 - 4.6).

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[63] Ibid., p. 56.
[64] Ibid., p. 57.
[65] McGrath, *Religious renewal,* p. 57.

Fig 4.4
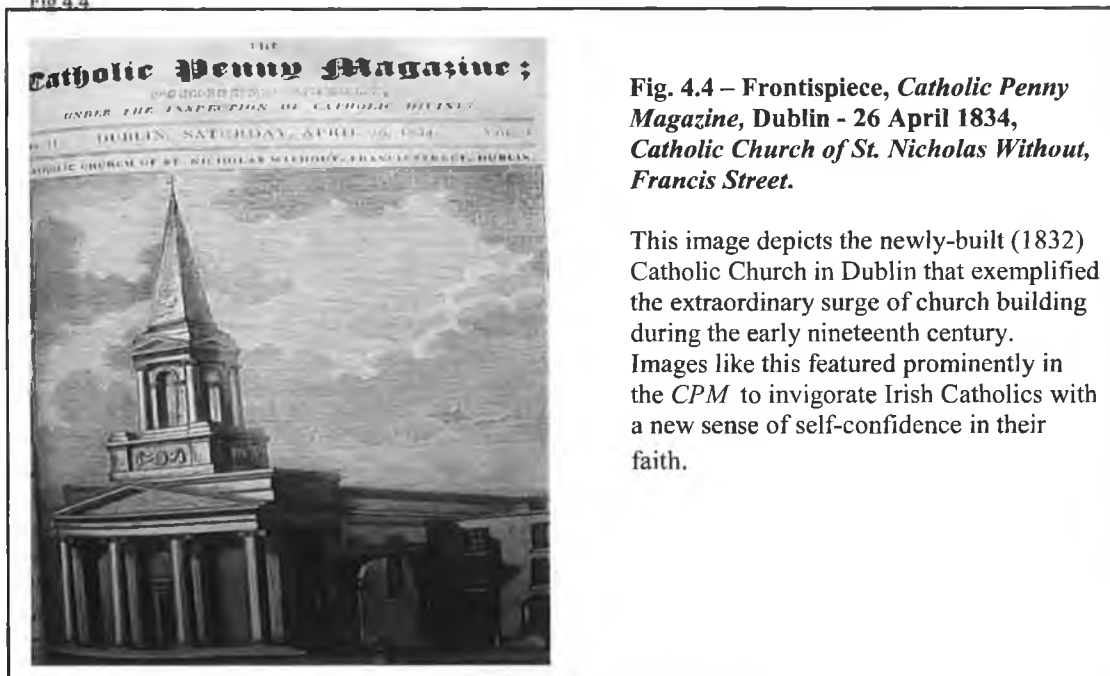
Fig. 4.4 – Frontispiece, *Catholic Penny Magazine,* Dublin - 26 April 1834, *Catholic Church of St. Nicholas Without, Francis Street.*

This image depicts the newly-built (1832) Catholic Church in Dublin that exemplified the extraordinary surge of church building during the early nineteenth century. Images like this featured prominently in the *CPM* to invigorate Irish Catholics with a new sense of self-confidence in their faith.

Fig. 4.5

Fig. 4.5 – Frontispiece, *Catholic Penny Magazine,* Dublin – 10 May 1834, 'New Roman Catholic Church, Baltimore, America'.

The Catholic Churches built around the world helped to strengthen the idea of the Universal Church.

The Basilica, known as the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was the first great metropolitan cathedral constructed in America after the adoption of the Constitution. Its cornerstone was laid in July 1806 and it became a symbol of the religious freedom that was central to the newly-formed United States.

Now designated a National Shrine and National Historic Landmark, the Basilica symbolizes the beginnings of the Catholic Church in America.

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[66]'Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary' available at (http://www.baltimorebasilica.org/) (21 June 2006).

Fig. 4.6 – *Catholic Penny Magazine,* 3 May 1834, *The Ursuline Convent, Cork,* Dublin.
Br. Michael Augustine Riordan designed the buildings of the Ursuline Convent, Blackrock, County Cork (1827).[67] Another Ursuline Convent located in Charlestown, Boston, Massachusetts of similar design was burnt to the ground during a sectarian riot on 11 Aug. 1834. The riot was incited by rumours of the nuns having forced a school girl to join the order of nuns. This incited retaliatory riots from Boston Irish Catholics who threatened to burn down the buildings of the Colleges of Cambridge (Harvard).[68]
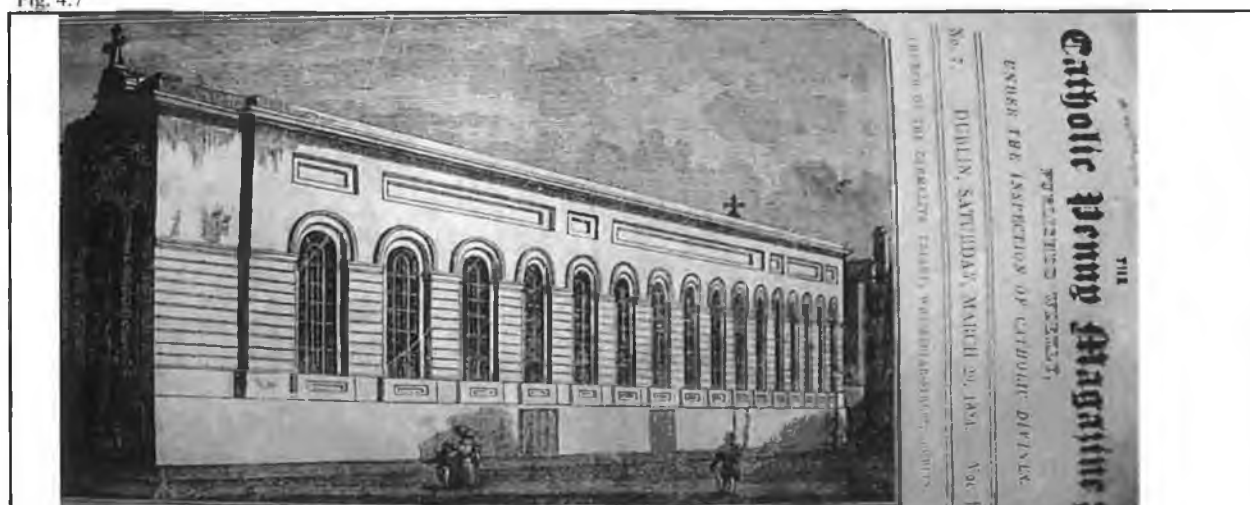
Fig. 4.7 – *Catholic Penny Magazine, Church of the Carmelite Friary, Whitefriar Street, Dublin,*
29 March 1834. The construction of this friary by the order of Carmelites was completed in 1827. The Carmelites arrived in Ireland during the thirteenth century.

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[67] *CPM*, 3 May 1834.

[68] *Portsmouth Journal of Literature and Politics*, 'Burning of the Convent in Charlestown', 12 Aug. 1834, p. 3.

Fig. 4.8

ST. PETER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, DUBLIN.

Fig. 4.8 – *Catholic Penny Magazine, St. Peter's Catholic Church, Dublin,* **17 May 1834.**

This gothic-style structure was built in 1821 in the centre of a densely populated area in Dublin called Phibsborough, at the intersection of North Circular Road and Cabra Road.

In 1834 it is noted by the editors of *CPM* that its measurements were eighty-four feet long by thirty-seven feet wide. The editors thought that the size of the church 'is scarcely sufficient to the increased and increasing congregation'.

In 1834 this prominent church was already too small to accommodate the swelling congregation. [69]

Fig. 4.9

Fig. 4.9 - 'Life of St. Patrick', March 1834 and 'Saint Bridget', Jan. 1835, *Catholic Penny Magazine,* **Dublin.** These two illustrations are representative samples of the type of devotional iconic images that appeared in the *CPM.* St. Patrick has remained a spiritual symbol for Ireland and has become the ubiquitous figure representing the nation of Irish people both at home and abroad.

[69] *CPM,* 17 May 1834.

When historian Emmet Larkin first coined the term 'devotional revolution' he was referring to the period of reform and advancement of the Catholic Church following the Great Famine in the second half of the nineteenth century.[70] The 'devotional revolution' was judged by some historians to have occurred during a lengthy period marked by a declining Gaelic culture and identity that was replaced by a uniquely Catholic ethos.[71] Larkin agrees with this assessment but postulates the argument that the central catalyst for this Gaelic decline occurred after the dreadful years of the Great Famine from 1850 onwards.[72] Critics of Larkin question Larkin's timeline for the progression and popularity of Irish Catholicism.[73] They argue that the transformation of Irish Catholicism was part of a process of modernization that was well under way in pre-Famine Ireland. Their further contention is that events of the Great Famine simply served as part of a process of acceleration.[74] The articles and illustrations that appeared in the *Catholic Penny Magazine* provides tangible evidence to support the argument that there was some manner of devotional revolution occurring during the pre- Famine era. The process of resurgence and renewal for Catholics had been occurring on the continent for some time. The Irish Catholic Church appears to have followed the lead from the French Catholics who were well positioned in terms of participation in the popular press.

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[70] This term was first coined by Emmet Larkin in 'The Devotional Revolution in Ireland', *American Historical Review,* 1973. Many historians have discussed this at length and their opinions are included in 'The Catholic Church in nineteenth century Ireland' by John Newsinger, *European History Quarterly*, xxv, (1995), pp 247-267.

[71] John Newsinger, 'The Catholic Church in nineteenth century Ireland', *European History Quarterly*, xxv, (1995), p. 249.

[72] Ibid., p. 248.

[73] Ibid., pp 247-267.

[74] Ibid., pp 250-252.

Communications between Irish Catholic church leaders and their French counterparts reveal the likely catalyst for the introduction of the *Catholic Penny Magazine* in 1834. There existed, for some time, a strong link between the two churches due to the great number of Irish clergymen who had received their theological education in France. The leading Catholic thinkers of Restoration France were actively involved in the publishing industry in the 1830s . They aggressively urged the Irish Catholics to be more assertive in the publishing arena and to exert more influence within the Irish press. They included Hughes-Felicité Robert de Lamennais, a liberal minded priest who, along with Henri-Baptiste Lacordaire and Comte de Montalembert , launched a newspaper *L'Avenir* in 1830 to promote religion and liberty. The newspaper was an advocate of an independent Catholic church and called upon Catholics to lead a movement for political democracy and economic justice.[75] Comte de Montalembert had travelled extensively in Ireland and met with Daniel O'Connell in 1830. Montalembert, a strong supporter of Irish Catholic civil liberty, was a regular contributer to the Parisian newspaper *Le Correspondant,* a semi-weekly paper founded by Carné Cazalès, and Augustin de Meaux in 1829. The motto of *Le Correspondant* was copied from George Canning's words: 'Civil and religious liberty throughout the world' and its object was to reconcile Catholicism and modern ideas.[76] Unlike the situation in Ireland, there was a tremendous use of the newspapers and periodicals to generate support for, not only, French Catholic causes but also for causes that were beneficial for all Catholics.

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[75] 'Hugues-Felicite Robert de Lamennais', available at (http://www.ohio.edu/~Chastain/ip/lamann.htm) (18 June 2006).

[76] Catholic Encyclopedia: 'Comte de Montalembert', available at (http://www.newadvent.org) (18 June 2006).

The correspondence between Archbishop Daniel Murray and Comte de Montalembert establishes a strong connection between the Irish Catholic hierarchy and leading French Catholics. Their relationship generated a very moving and successful appeal by the editors of *L'Avenir* to the Catholics of France on behalf of the famine sufferers in the western dioceses of Ireland during the period 1832-36. During this period, Austin Bourke documents an 'unmistakeable epidemic' that attacked the potato crops causing the 'first potato disease to cause serious alarm in Ireland.'[77] The monetary success of the *L'Avenir* appeal reached 46,000 fr., with the exact figures documented in the correspondence of Archbishop Daniel Murray.[78] On behalf of Murray, Archdeacon Fr. Hamilton wrote a series of letters to Comte de Montalembert, one of the editors of *L'Avenir*, thanking the editors and the people of France for their generosity. In the letter dated 27 August 1831, Hamilton informed de Montalembert that the urgent level of distress was over and the poor who had benefited from their aid would pray for them. He also judges that 'the aid from French Catholics not only met temporal needs but prevented the poor accepting the aid proffered by proselytisers; not only life, but faith was preserved.' In response de Montalembert wrote back with a request: 'They would be recompensed if the Catholic press in Ireland informed its readers of the sympathy their French co-religionists felt for them and how they expressed that sympathy.' Hamilton acknowledges this request and verifies that he will inform Murray of de Montalembert's wishes: 'but even though the Catholic press in Ireland cannot compare with the energy

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[77] Austin Bourke, *The visitation of God? The potato and the Great Irish Famine* (Dublin, 1993), pp 31-32.
[78] Mary Purcell, 'Dublin Diocesan Archives: Murray Papers, file 31/3:1831 and 1832' in *Archivium Hibernicum* xxxvii (1982), pp 31-33.

and talent Catholic needs require, he will do his utmost to pay just tribute to what

L'Avenir, its editors and the Catholics of France have done.' [79]   This statement

corroborates that the Irish Catholic leaders felt a deep sense of dissatisfaction, at that

time, with the Irish press and its ability to be an effective and influential voice for the

Catholic church.

Encouraged by the first two months circulation statistics in Navan and Tullamore, the

editors of the *CPM* hoped sales in 250 parishes would match these figures and that the

publication could reach a circulation figure of eventually 50,000.

> We know, that hundreds read our little periodical, who either never read a religious book, or have
> been reading nothing but vile publications, equally injurious to their mind and heart…its introduction
> into some towns has been the means of banishing from thence vehicles of private slander and public
> corruption…it has not only checked the abuses and diminished crimes, but inspired a greater love of
> virtue. [80]

The proprietors of *CPM* had worked out a plan for the promotion of the periodical that

would be simple and effective. The pastor or curate of every parish where there was not

a bookseller or agent was to name a person, either a 'clerk, school-master, or some other

well recommended person' to act as an agent. That person would receive the required

number of copies each week and take a commission of 'one fourth the amount of the

sales or 3*d* in each shilling.'[81] In other parishes, the members of confraternities,

sodalities, libraries, or book societies were relied upon to take copies for themselves but,

also, to promote the circulation and distribute the publication 'at the cheapest premiums

amongst the poor children or scholars of their parish.' The belief was that it would be

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[79] Ibid., p. 33
[80] *CPM*, 17 May 1834.
[81] Ibid.

possible to reach a circulation of 7,000 to 10,000 for each number and so 'defray the

expense of paper, print, stereotype, cuts.'[82] This was a good plan but it did not go exactly

as they wished. Parishes at home and abroad in England and Scotland were receiving

CPM but in low numbers. However, it was events in Ireland that ultimately worked

against the success of *CPM.*

During the early decades of the nineteenth century, the great British evangelical societies

targeted Ireland's Catholic population with their 'conversionist zeal'.[83] The *CPM*, soon

found themselves embroiled in a weekly clash of ideologies when the *Protestant Penny*

Magazine (PPM) was launched in Dublin on 28 June 1834 only four months after the

introduction of the *Catholic Penny Magazine.* Through its evangelical editor, Rev. Edward

Nangle, this publication assumed a confrontational position using text and illustration to

directly challenge many aspects of Catholicism and its new voice in Ireland the *Catholic*

Penny Magazine.

The Protestant Penny Magazine forthrightly adopted its adversarial attitude in its first

number by reproducing an illustration from the famous *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*.[84] This

controversial sixteenth-century book described in gruesome detail, with words and

printed illustrations, the persecution and deaths of many Protestant martyrs during the

reign of Queen Mary I. Hundreds of versions and new editions have been reprinted since

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[82] *CPM*, 17 May 1834.
[83] David Hempton, *Religion and political culture in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 101.
[84] John Foxe, *Actes and monuments of these latter and perillous dayes touching matters of the church, wherein ar comprehended and decribed the great persecutions…*(London, 1563).

it fist appeared in 1563. As a record of injustice and persecution, this book is a

storehouse of controversy and fodder for debate in the Christian faith.

Fig. 4.10 – Anon. *Protestant Penny Magazine*, **Dublin, 28 June 1834** *Fox's Book of Martyrs, Justice. Lively picture describing the weight and substance of God's most blessed word, against the doctrines and vanities of men's traditions.* NLI.

The editor of the *Protestant Penny Magazine* offers his readers an explanation for the

choice of illustration on its first number.

The frontispiece which we have prefixed to the first number of our little publication, illustrates its character and object. Justice, who is represented with bandaged eyes to denote her impartiality, stands in the centre; in her right hand she carries a sword, to show that, ultimately, her decisions must be carried into execution, and in her left hand she holds the balance of truth. In one scale is placed the Holy Bible, while those whose hopes for eternity are identified with the truth of that book, as the word of "GOD WHO CANNOT LIE," are represented standing on the same side – beholding, in the quiet confidence of faith, how the sacred volume preponderates against all that the Pope, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks and nuns, can heap into the opposite scale.[85]

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[85] *Protestant Penny Magazine*, 28 June 1834.

The editor of *PPM* felt that it was 'not merely a matter of expediency, but their duty'[86] to set the record straight in its opposition of Catholic religious beliefs. The reason for its creation was so it may 'act as a check upon the *Catholic Penny Magazine*'. The *PPM* assured its readers that within its pages there would be the strictest regard to truth and justice against the doctrines and vanities of papal traditions.[87] The *PPM* issued a statement remarkably similar to the one made by *CPM* regarding its circulation intentions.

> So that it may act as a check upon the *CPM*, it must, like it, be exposed to sale throughout every town and village in Ireland: this can only be accomplished by the simultaneous exertions of many individuals in their respective neighbourhoods. Persons living in, or near the larger towns, which have constant intercourse with Dublin, could readily be supplied with a parcel of copies of each number, to be distributed among surrounding depositories; and in order to assist in giving publicity to the work, and encouraging the venders of it, placards will be furnished, gratis, at our Publisher's; and to Booksellers, the usual per-centage will be allowed on the sales.[88]

The editor of the *PPM* was Rev. Edward Nangle, a passionate evangelical clergyman and a firm believer in the power of the illustrated press. Before becoming editor of *PPM* Rev. Nangle was the main person involved in the development and administration of the Achill Mission community on Achill Island, County Mayo.[89] A minor famine and exceedingly poor weather conditions in 1831 had devastated the agricultural produce in County Mayo and left the people of Achill in a severe state. Nangle came to Achill, originally, on board a ship *S.S. Nottingham* that was commissioned to deliver a shipment of grain to the needy people on the island. McDonald's estimation is that Nangle had come to assess the situation on the island and its 'suitability for a proselytising mission'.[90]

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[86] *PPM*, 28 June, 1834.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] See: Mealla Ní Ghiobúin, *Dugort, Achill Island, 1831-1861: a study of the rise and fall of a missionary communitity* (Dublin, 2001), and Whelan, *The bible war in Ireland* and Theresa McDonald, *Achill: 5000 B.C. to 1900 A.D.* (Dublin, 1992).
[90] McDonald, *Achill: 5000 B.C. to 1900 A.D.*, p. 77.

Irene Whelan judges that not only were Rev. Nangle and his Achill mission the 'most visible aspect of the westward thrust of the evangelical movement' but that this mission created more 'controversy and sectarian conflict'[91] than any other project in the campaign to evangelize the west of Ireland. With a lease secured from absentee landlord Sir Richard O'Donnell for 80,000 acres, Nangle began to build his mission at the base of Slievemore mountain in 1834. To begin with it consisted of a church, seven houses, an infant school, a small dispensary and a printing office. The mission grew substantially with the addition of three more schools and buildings in Keel, Cashel and Dugort.[92]

It is certain that the mission relieved the suffering of some poor people on Achill Island by providing food, shelter, employment and education. However, in the words of its founder, the mission was established as a 'religious and proselytising establishment' in 'direct hostility to popery'.[93] The Achill Mission's main objective was the religious conversion of the Catholic occupants of Achill Island. As this activity was occurring during a period of heightened sectarian tensions, Nangle's missionary activity did not go unnoticed by the Catholic ecclesiastics who were opposed to all evangelical proselytising activity.[94] Ní Ghiobúin judges that in response to Nangle's mission receiving the patronage and financial support from protestant archbishop of Tuam, Dr. Power le Poer Trench, a fervent evangelical, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. John

[91] Whelan, *The bible war in Ireland*, pp. 260-61.
[92] Ibid., pp 260-61.
[93] Ibid., p. 261.
[94] McDonald, *Achill: 5000 B.C. to 1900 A.D.*, p. 78.

MacHale 'sent a succession of militant priests to the island in an effort to thwart any

progress on the part of the Mission'.[95]

While editor of *PPM* he used a combination of didactic prose with satirical caricatures,

morality cartoons, and highly selective historical depictions, all of which were

specifically chosen to foster an anti-popery discourse and to summon a controversy of

ecclesiastical disputation. In subsequent issues of *PPM* appear an assortment of

frontispiece illustrations that depicted scenes of torture during the period of the

Inquisition, and other images that attempt to debase, humiliate or equate Catholicism with

the superstitions of 'Pagan Ireland'.

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[95] Ní Ghiobúin, *Dugort, Achill Island, 1831-1861*, p. 4.

Fig.4.11

Fig. 4.11 – Anon. *A NOVEL METHOD OF CATCHING FISH,* ***Protestant Penny Magazine,*** **Dublin, October 1835**, NLI. This illustration depicts a priest in a fishing boat celebrating the age-old tradition of the blessing of Galway Bay while the villagers look on from the cliffs. The accompanying text offers a disparaging view of this Catholic tradition. '...a debasing superstition has stopped the one only right channel of devotional feeling, and turned the current of their affections into many wild and devious extravagancies.'...'He proposes to bless the bay; and he professed the fullest assurance that the fish, happy of enjoying the privilege of swimming in sanctified water, would speedily return to their former resort, even at the hazard of frying on the village gridirons.'[96]

Fig.4.12

Fig. 4.12 – *THE GUNPOWDER PLOT,* ***Protestant Penny Magazine,*** **Dublin, Nov. 1835**, NLI.
'The portraits of the seven traitors, who laboured in the vaults of the parliament house of Westminster, near London, to overturn it from its foundations by gunpowder,...In fact, this whole conspiracy was formed by men ...whose consciences were under the control and guidance of Popery.'[97]

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[96] *PPM,* Oct. 1835, xvi.
[97] *PPM,* Oct. 1835, xvii.

Fig.4.13

Fig. 4.13 – *THE INQUISITION, Protestant Penny Magazine*, Dublin, 30 Aug. 1834, NLI.
'As we purpose to give an account in some subsequent numbers, of the origin, constitution, and proceedings of the Inquisition, we have here prefixed a representation of one species of torture inflicted by that merciless tribunal on its hapless victims, whose only crime consists in their refusal to believe those monstrous fables and blasphemous absurdities, which the Pope endeavours to palm on the credulity of mankind for divine truths. We have further dragged the atrocities of the Inquisition into the light of public observation, because the disgusting detail shews that the pretension of the Romish church to infallibility, has no support but that which it derives from a most unblushing impudence. It is difficult even to write on such a subject with the calmness of temper becoming a Christian.'[98]

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[98] *PPM*, 30 Aug. 1834.

Rev. Nangle delighted in 'religious warfare'[99] and by the time he settled at the Achill

Mission he was already proficient at using the printing press to the advantage of the

evangelical movement.   Upon the cessation of *PPM* in 1836, Nangle turned his attention

to printing again.   He began the publication of the *Achill Missionary Herald and Western*

Witness[100] to keep his benefactors in Ireland and England informed of the progress and

religious advances being made at the Achill mission.

There was a vast profusion of this type of religious publications; one respected historian has

quoted the number of copies to have been in the 'hundreds of millions'.[101]   This

exaggeration is most certainly a reference to the huge quantities of 'text only' publications

that included pamphlets, scriptures, tracts, prayer books, bibles, periodicals and numerous

assorted flyers.   Trying to acquire accurate numbers for the circulation statistics of the

religious literature is futile.   While the amounts were staggering, they were not likely to

have reached that lofty sum.   The proprietors of the *Protestant Penny Magazine* reported

that they achieved large circulation runs numbering in excess of 19,000 copies per issue.[102]

At the same time, the *Catholic Penny Magazine* had great difficulty achieving a circulation

of 5,000 copies.[103]

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[99] Theresa McDonald, *Achill: 5000 B.C. to 1900 A.D.* (Dublin, 1992), p. 79.
[100] *Achill Missionary Herald and Western Witness* (1837-1864).
[101] Richard D. Altick, *The English common reader* (2nd edn., Chicago, 1957), p. 100.
[102] *Protestant Penny Magazine*, Dublin 1836, preface to volume I and II.
[103] Battersby to Murray, 11 Feb 1835 (DDA, Murray Papers, file 1834-5/122).

With a population of over 7.9 million,[104] it appears that the Irish Catholic hierarchy were

not overreaching to expect that their publication would achieve circulation numbers of

50,000 each week. However, these circulation numbers were never achieved; the plan

never came to fruition. The cooperation necessary in the parishes for the successful

distribution of *CPM* did not occur. A letter from the publishers of the *CPM,* John and

Thomas Coldwell of Capel Street, Dublin to Archbishop Murray alludes to some of the

reasons for the demise of this periodical after a period of only fourteen months. For the

purpose of clarification, the whole content of this letter is given:

> Feb. 10, 1835
> To the most Rev. Chairman of the Episcopal Synod
> We beg to state to your Lordships that we undertook the risk of this publication under a strong assurance that if found deserving the sanction of the Clergy their influence would be used to extend the circulation to every parish in the Kingdom- Although we are bound to admit that it has received the sanction of many eminent Ecclesiastics yet it has not to that extent that would at all warrant us to continue a publication that we find without such cooperation would be ruinous to ourselves, its present circulation not being at all adequate to the expenses incurred.
>
> We are aware that it is unusual for your Lordships to adopt any formal resolution unless on matters of importance but we trust that circumstanced as we are with respect to this publication it will not be deemed irregular in us to state that upon your Lordships decision either as a Body or as individuals to support the work depends its continuance, for without this assurance we cannot in justice to ourselves risk any further expenditures.
>
> We beg further to state to you Lordships that The Editorial department we do not control, but we are confident that the Editors are equally anxious to avail themselves of your Lordships advice for its future management.
> Signed by J.Coldwell[105]

The publishers remind the proprietors that the *Catholic Penny Magazine* commenced

publication with a hope of counteracting the tracts and magazines being so widely

distributed among poorer Catholics. Coldwell admits that while some clergymen

encouraged sales, their efforts were not enough; the magazine was in danger of failure if

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[104] J. J. Lee, 'On the accuracy of the pre-Famine Irish censuses' in J. M. Goldstrom and L. A. Clarkson (eds.), *Irish population, economy and society: essays in honour of the late K.H. Connell* (Oxford, 1981), p. 47.
[105] Coldwell to Murray, 10 Feb 1835 (DDA, Murray Papers, file 1834-5/121).

it was not better supported.[106] The *CPM* had the enthusiastic support of two major

Dublin independent newspapers. They publicized their support and encouragement for

the *CPM*. The *Freeman's Journal* informed their readers of its good value; 'it gives more

solid and interesting matter each week, with an illustration, than perhaps was ever before

published, for only one penny!'[107] *The Register* described *CPM* as 'a work more suited to

the wants, wishes and circumstances of the great mass of Irish people'.[108] Despite these

efforts, *CPM* after one year in publication was unable to achieve a circulation figure of

2,000 copies per each number, the minimum number required to make the publication

financially viable.[109]

On 11 February 1835, W. J. Battersby, administrator of the Catholic Book Society, wrote

a long and highly emotional letter to the Catholic hierarchy, the overseeing authority for

the *CPM* to whom refers as the 'guardians of the faith'. Battersby claims to be

representing the Catholics of Ireland.[110] He specifically outlines what he believes the

Catholic population requires in a periodical and details the many reasons why the

magazine deserves their support.

> As it is from the collective knowledge of all classes, the Guardians of the faith can best know what to prescribe for the advancement of religion in general, I trust your Lordships will pardon me if I humbly submit, what I consider we want in Ireland, and how that want may be supplied.
>
> I think, we want combined general cooperation and the same measure of zeal in doing good, that the enemies of our faith show in doing what is bad.[111]

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[106] Mary Purcell, 'Dublin Diocesan Archives: Murray Papers, file 31/4:1833-34-35' in *Archivium Hibernicum*, xxxvii, 1982, p. 65.

[107] *Freeeman's Journal*, 17 Feb. 1835.

[108] *The Register*, 28 Feb. 1835.

[109] Battersby to Murray, 11 Feb. 1835 (DDA, Murray papers, file 1834-5/122).

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

Battersby makes several references to the editors of the *Protestant Penny Magazine*. His extremely emotional plea to the Catholic hierarchy for supporting the continued publication of the *CPM,* he states, is generated by his indignation at the success of the *Protestant Penny Magazine*. His lengthy letter displays both anger and frustration. He is outraged that a Protestant magazine that was distorting Catholic doctrine and attacking the church was able to sell 16,000 copies, and they, although the population of Catholics in Ireland was near seven million, could not sell 2,000 of the *Catholic Penny Magazine.*

> If vehicles of falsehoods and works of fiction are industriously circulated, why should we not present an antidote where the Bane is already before us. After Protestants in Ireland not only circulate books and tract, without number; has even distributed 16,000 copies of a magazine; whilst, to our disgrace be it said, with our hoast (sic) seven millions, we cannot already circulate 5,000 of a *Catholic Penny Magazine* - within 2,000 copies of what is necessary to prevent loss![112]

Battersby advocates the necessity of having a Catholic periodical to act as a communication vehicle that highlights and praises the accomplishments of the religion.

> Many modern religionists without the admirable organization we have at our command, adopt modes of communicating with each other; of recording their acts, and of learning what may be best done for all by collecting the sentiments, and doing so of each belonging to their communion. The best informed amongst us, are ignorant of what passes out of our own diocese; nay sometimes, out of our own parish. We are ignorant of the most common matters connected with the life and progress of religion amongst us; ignorant of the names and nature of a thousand establishments founded to promote piety or learning; ignorant of the book we should read; or of the various plans by which we could improve our mind, or mend our heart![113]

Most of Battersby's vitriol is directed towards the evangelical movement but, also, in a way that implicates the Catholic hierarchy for their lack of an adequate response and passivity in the face of evangelical zeal.

> We, the Catholics of Ireland, come to despise all ordinary efforts of this description, and appear to act, as if we got the light of faith, to put it under a bushel; or rather, to extinguish it altogether ! Whilst the enemies of truth are hourly employed in seducing poor Catholics; we are afraid to make even common efforts, in favour of Catholicity; least we might hurt the prejudices of others; as if Jesus Christ, did not come on earth, to extend the empire of truth against the prejudices and passions of mankind.

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[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid.

> Let it not be said, "we fear personality or violence, and deem it better to let much be outraged, and piety trampled underfoot, then to run the risk of hurting the feelings of others." For once, we have a Magazine free from politics – from violence and from personality – in hope object is peace – union – religion and piety – and why is it not supported?

Battersby acknowledges that some Irish clergymen have had significant success in their efforts to thwart evangelicalism and, also, have been fully cooperative by widely distributing the *CPM* but he laments that it unacceptable that the cooperation of all clergy is not common.

> Many who do not mix with the humbler classes, are ignorant of the tracts that are circulated, or at the means which are adopted to corrupt their faith, or destroy their moral habits. Some zealous priests, and ardent laymen have made notable efforts in its favour; but why is not the cooperation general?[114]

He judges that the Catholic population would consider it a blessing to have the *CPM* to read to their children every Sunday.

> The people would consider it a blessing, to read it to their children every Sunday – to keep them from vice and desperation, and from things those (pestilence?) works – which are got up to qualify fancy, the more effectually to corrupt faith. But they look to the guardians of religion for advice how to act; and nothing is required, but to name proper agents in each parish to whom the publishers will send the work, and who (at the accustomed profit) can hand it to the people.[115]

Battersby, apparently, chose to ignore the high levels of illiteracy within the Irish Catholic population. Literacy levels varied tremendously between the extremes of Irish society according the *Census of Ireland for the year 1841*. Cormac Ó Gráda and Joel Mokyr offer analysis showing that the wealthier parishes such as the Dublin parish of St. Anne's had 17.5 percent of males over the age of five who could neither read nor write, which contrasts dramatically with the rural parish in Dunquin, County Kerry where illiteracy reached to 94.8 percent.[116] Battersby's literary aspirations were not necessarily

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[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Cormac Ó Gráda and Joel Mokyr, 'Poor and getting poorer? Living standards in Ireland before the Famine' in *Economic History Review,* xl (May, 1988), pp 209-235.

in tandem with the majority of Catholics of Ireland whose average low literacy levels in

1830s would have precluded them from enjoying more than the illustrations in the *CPM*.

> If the exalted influence of the Bishops is not to be used on trifling occasions, in a <u>formal manner</u>, the Managers respectfully request, that they would sincerely urge their respective Clergy, to recommend its circulation in each parish, and to name a proper agent. If it be too much to ask each clergyman himself to subscribe for a religious periodical; this hoped that they <u>will all</u> give their kind word that the poor and uneducated, for whom it is specially intended, may have it within their reach:
> "That all who can may read"
>
> The Publishers have spared no expense; and they require no one to make a sacrifice. They are willing to expend, to improve the paper and folder, and to make it in every way, more deserving support: But they cannot be enabled to do this unless the circulation amounts to 10,000.
> If in each parish only 10 copies were regularly taken, the work would be complete, and the foundation laid for a plan, still more useful to religion, which perhaps, I may be allowed to submit to your Lordships on a future occasion.
> Who will say, whilst a single layman can secure the circulation of 1000 copies each week in one part of Dublin, that the rest cannot be affected?
> Pardon me, my Lords, for this intrusion; My object is to prevent the discontinuance of a work which I know has been useful and whose failure would be hailed as a triumph by the enemies of our religion.[117]

While the feelings and sentiments expressed by Battersby to save the *CPM* may not have

been shared by all middle class Catholics, the letter, however, offers an enlightening view of

one aspect of the Catholic mentality in the 1830s.

Unlike its rival publication, the *CPM* avoided controversial images or commentary on

political or topical events. It maintained its policy to promote peace, religion and piety.

However, in April 1835, during a particularly violent period of the tithes war, the *CPM*

altered its policy and published an illustration with an accompanying narrative about a

fictional violent incident of agrarian conflict. Although the tithes war was a highly emotive

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[117] Battersby to Murray, 11 Feb 1835 (DDA, Murray Papers, file 1834-5/122).

contemporary issue, the content narrative of this story was written to provide a message towards some form of reconciliation. Ironically, the final number of the *CPM* was published in 1835, during the bloodiest period of the conflict.[118] The *PPM* continued to be published for another year after the demise of the *CPM*.

Fig.4.9

Fig.4.9 –Frontispiece, *Catholic Penny Magazine*, 'The Mother of the Renegade' Dublin, 4 April 1835.
This illustration and accompanying fictional story begins with a Catholic priest and a Protestant Reverend summoned to the same house to offer comfort and solace to an ailing old woman and a man who was the victim of agrarian violence. The melodramatic outcome has all the wounded and the sick dying as Catholics, but the two clergymen make peace with each other.

There is ample evidence to suggest that the Catholic hierarchy had lost the will, or desire, to keep this periodical going due to its having become a weekly source of provocation for the rival publication, *Protestant Penny Magazine*. By allowing its demise to occur, it removed any possibility of it continuing to be a 'red rag to a bull', an object to provoke critique. This attitude of passivity in the face of adversity, while admirable, angered and frustrated some

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[118] This refers to the 'massacre at Rathcormac' incident on 18 December 1835 when a churchman, Rev. Archdeacon William Ryder accompanied by military and police raided the farmyard of widow Ryan at Rathcormac, County Cork to collect tithes. Thirteen men were killed in the ensuing assault.

of the *CPM*'s supporters. The letter from Battersby to the bishops demonstrates the level of dissatisfaction some middle class Catholics felt towards the Catholic hierarchy's submissive attitude. 'We fear personality or violence, and deem it better to let much be outraged, and piety trampled underfoot, then to run the risk of hurting the feelings of others.'[119] Battersby, truly became the voice of the Irish Catholics the following year when he initiated and became publisher and editor of *A Complete Catholic Registry* in 1836. This publication documented all the general matters connected with the life and progress of the Catholic religion until his death in 1873.[120] Battersby's Catholic registry is considered the forerunner of the modern *Irish Catholic Directory*.

The short history of this illustrated periodical does not substantiate the argument for the popularity of illustrated periodicals with the poorer semi-literate classes. The printed images in the *Catholic Penny Periodical* do not appear to have contributed to the development of Irish religious identity. In fact, it is very doubtful, given the low circulation numbers, whether the masses ever saw them. Were they ever on display in the churches or passed around to the parishioners by the parish priests during those fourteen months? The *CPM* under the supervision of the Catholic hierarchy proved to be an abject failure in regards to its poor circulation and its lack of support from the clergy and laity in the parishes. The illustrations in this periodical failed to excite the interest or add to its allure with the masses. Perhaps if the *CPM* had opted to print images of violence and controversy rather than devotion, it might have gained more popularity?

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[119] Battersby to Murray, 11 Feb 1835 (DDA, Murray Papers, file 1834-5/122).
[120] From 1836 until W. J. Battersby's death in 1873, this work continued to be published with various name changes: *Battersby's Complete Catholic Registry, Battersby's Catholic Directory, Almanac and Registry of the Whole Catholic World* and *Battersby's Registry for the Whole Catholic World.*

This periodical's ultimate influence on Irish Catholic identity is questionable, except that by

its introduction, it provided a first important step towards establishing a truly Catholic press

in Ireland. Mass illiteracy and severe poverty was, certainly, a major obstacle to all sales of

any printed reading matter, even illustrated ones. The *Catholic Penny Magazine* found

itself, in 1834, having to assume a demeanour more akin to performing 'damage control'

and avoiding serious confrontation against its rival *The Protestant Penny Magazine*. The

Catholic Penny Magazine may have lost the battle in the printing industry of the 1830s, but

in terms of its contribution to resurgent Catholicism in Ireland, it merits special recognition.

CONCLUSION

There was a time when historians held the widespread belief in the primacy of the written word as a form of historical evidence over the visual. This, thankfully, has become an anachronism. There is now exciting research being done in every area of material culture. Each item or possession that was coveted by members of a society gives historians new insights into that period and brings to life, again, its people. The publications that have been discussed and displayed in this study reveal to us that their creators had exemplary levels of intelligence, spirituality, humour and wickedness.

The illustrated press gained wide popularity at this time due to a confluence of events. The development of innovative stereo-type printing technology streamlined and simplified the reproduction of images thus enabling publishers to disseminate their printed works on a world wide scale. However, while this was a financially positive development for the printing trade, this study revealed that through this practice of sharing or selling their stereo-type plates, a widespread culture of intolerance and prejudice was propagated by these stereo-typed images. The use of stereotypical language, characterizations, behaviour and attitudes gained considerable momementum from the innovations of the 1830s printing industry.

At the same time the government's restrictive policies towards the printing industry, colloquially known as 'taxes on knowledge', prompted radical publishers to declare their 'war of the unstamped'. These publications poured off the presses in unprecedented numbers. Radicals were travelling around Britain and Ireland preaching to the working class that all their discontents would be remedied by

reforms. In this 'age of reform' replete with economic and social anguish, the public demanded information and entertainment; the illustrated press found its niche with the literate and semi-literate audiences.

When Irish farmers take it upon themselves to hand draw a picture onto banners and flags that they will carry in an anti-tithes demonstration, there must be something very special about that image. The image that appeared in *The Comet* in Dublin on 22 May 1831 (Fig. 2.3) achieved an iconic status during the tithes war. It spoke of the despair felt by farmers who while struggling to survive had, also, to financially support the clergymen of the established church. This was truly a surprising discovery that this one powerful image had so convincingly communicated its message to the hearts and minds of the Irish farming community. The popular illustrated press, along with the daily newspapers, were indeed partly culpable in deepening some of the hostility and confessional division during this period.

The British illustrated press' use of political satire was meant to cut to the quick, and it usually did. Whether some of the acerbic caricatures of Wellington and Peel contributed to the Tory's defeat in Parliament, is impossible to say. The illustrated press found great fodder in Grey's political machinations during the parliamentary and church reform debates. Certainly Daniel O'Connell's notoriety and admiration were raised considerably by his face appearing regularly in the pages of the illustrated press in Ireland and Britain. As political tools, they proved to be quite valuable; however, the gnawing questions remain: did the images in the illustrated press influence public opinion, or did they reflect it? Or was there evidence of both?

Some parliamentarians appeared to be watching the illustrated press and even taking their cues from them for their speeches. What part they played in the legislative debates is arguable. All the issues that surrounded the 'Irish question' including tithes, absentee landlords, education, the need for church and municipal reforms and the poor law were all graphically depicted in the illustrations continually throughout the decade. During the 1830s all these issues were debated and, to a degree, resolved by legislation.

Should the measure or worth of a periodical be tied up with its circulation statistics? It seems inexplicable that a Catholic periodical in a country of seven million Catholics should not be able to achieve a circulation of five thousand. The *Catholic Penny Magazine* had a number of facts working in opposition to it succeeding. Even at the price of one penny, it was beyond the means of many of the Irish community. The local parish priests did not cooperate with the distribution plans set out by the Catholic hierarchy just as they ignored some of the recommendations set out in the Catholic church statutes of 1831. The *CPM*'s decidedly non-aggressive stance in the face of its zealous evangelical rival was no match. However, the appearance of the *CPM* came at a key period of Irish Catholic rejuvenation and revival and although the publication did not survive, it spawned a host of progeny.

Public opinion was greatly impacted, on both sides of the Irish Sea, by the flood of printed images in the public arena. The images within their pages were ideological constructs of the period; as such they retain a level of weight of social history that gives them their power to interest and engage the contemporary historian.[1] Whether

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[1] Brian Maidment, *Reading popular prints, 1790-1870* (Manchester, 2001), p. 8.

the printed images appearing in the illustrated newspapers and periodicals were reflecting the reality, or were highly ingenious satirical imaginings, made no difference. Their power lay in their mere existence. Each image carried crucial messages for the viewer. Their subjective nature was the vital determinant governing how these printed images were interpreted. An individual's religion, gender, social class, occupation, political bend, all went into moulding some morsel of understanding out of each printed image. What you had for breakfast or, if indeed, you had any breakfast at all, could be a determining factor of comprehension. As part of the social, religious and political history of this period, these images have been neglected in the past or inadequately articulated but they represent an undervalued archival source of social history of this period. This study has merely scratched at the surface of what has proven to be a rich vein of source material that begs for further investigation.

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