

“Let There Be No Galleries”:
The Encounter of Gothic Sublime with Popular
Spirituality in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland

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Harbour Grace, 27 July 1844

We visited the church . . . The arrangement of seats is nearly the same as in St. Thomas’s Church in the capital — a block of pews in the middle with a passage on either side and between these passages and the walls and under the galleries two blocks of shorter pews. The galleries occupy 3 sides of the church as in St. John’s. At the east end of the church are two single light windows . . . leaving a blank space in the centre of the east wall, where the east window is usually found. Immediately against this space and in the centre of it towers the pulpit . . . This arrangement was introduced by the Revd. Mr. Burt, missionary at Harbour Grace . . . and was carried to all the neighbouring churches.

Bareneed, 31 July 1844

The church is small and crowded with galleries and pews of the worst description.¹

Such was the internal arrangement of Anglican churches that Bishop Edward Feild encountered upon his arrival in Newfoundland in 1844. Anglicanism, being Protestant, was an aural religion that focused on the spoken word. The pulpit was the central architectural feature in its churches to carry out its principal activity — preaching from the Bible. In order to maximize seating space most churches had galleries, and

therefore pulpits had to be high so that all eyes could be focused on the speaker delivering the message. In addition to this instrumental reason, pulpits were prominent also because of the high estimate of their purpose. Methodism, an evangelical holiness movement that began within Anglicanism, also built churches with those exact features. Bishop Feild brought with him a different iteration of Anglicanism — Tractarianism — a renewed High Church movement of Romanticism centred on the Holy Sacrament that began at Oxford a decade earlier.² To optimally attain this sacramental focus and create the correct atmosphere, it was deemed necessary for Anglican churches to have a new internal arrangement so that, architecturally, the focal point was the altar, within a Gothic setting. This paper reflects on the implications of the ecclesologically correct internal Gothic space within the Church of England featuring such elements as a centre aisle, raised chancel, raised altar, lowered pulpit to the side, and absence of galleries.³

Bishop Feild did not hesitate but immediately, even precipitately, exerted the weight of his episcopal authority to bring about an Anglicanism of solemnity upon his arrival from England in 1844. Feild's mental universe was informed by the Oxford Movement and the Cambridge Camden Society, whose singular mission was to enlighten and persuade, and aid all who agreed, that "Gothic should be loved and used as the only pure and perfect style" for churches.⁴ Internal Gothic architecture as the setting for priest and Holy Sacrament was the prime vehicle to carry out this vision of spiritual solemnity through the sublime. Thus Feild went throughout the land like a knight errant valiantly attempting to put things right architecturally. In this he faced opposition from many lay Anglicans and several clergy who deemed the changes a violation of their right to believe and worship in the Church of England as they had been accustomed.⁵

I have already broached this topic in *Beating Against the Wind*.⁶ In this article, after recalling by way of illustration a number of internal-architecture encounters noted in that work, I will examine the articulation of the Gothic movement in England in order to think through more thoroughly the implications of the change to internal Gothic

architecture for people in the pews — a symbolic change that caused Bishop Feild to encounter strong headwinds along the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. Particularly, I will focus on the contrasts of spirituality given utterance through the divergent internal architecture and also on the consequent issue of proprietary power.

One does not have to go so far as “culturalist, or symbolic-action, theorists” who “take an essentially semiotic approach to emotions” and affirm that “words, images, gestures . . . stories, rites, customs, harangues, languages, melodies, and conversations are not mere vehicles of feeling lodged elsewhere, so many reflections, symptoms . . . They are the locus and machinery of the thing itself.” One can still agree with the anthropologist Clifford Geertz that “the case for the cultural constitution of emotion seems . . . fairly well made.”⁷ It was when there was an attempt to culturally alter their symbolic spiritual universe that people reacted in such a forceful way.

The architectural pushback that erupted in St. John’s and places along the coast such as Greenspond and Barr’d Islands revealed a contrasting popular spirituality that aspired to an aural experience of the word articulated within the more democratic structures of evangelical Anglicanism and Methodism — a shared public experience of spiritual encounter and ecstasy through pulpit and galleries instead of a private feeling of solemnity within a Gothic setting of altar and chancel. These Protestant structures were a reflection of the democratic impulse in society itself, a focus on people as citizens, and of the underlying understanding that architecture should serve citizens.⁸

Feild came as an emissary of empire through the High Church and Tractarian Colonial Bishop’s Council with a determination to imprint a Gothic stamp on the Anglicanism and landscape of Newfoundland.⁹ We see this in his first “Charge to the Clergy,” 1844, *Order and Uniformity in the Public Services of the Church*. Architecturally, he ordered uniformly that pulpits, “convenient” but “by no means the most essential or first requisite in a church,” should be moved from the centre-front of the church over against “the side-pillar or side-wall.” Furthermore, “Let there be no galleries, except where absolutely necessary for

accommodation.” Every church needed that “most ancient relic . . . the Font of Stone” as “in all our Churches at home.” The prevailing sentiment was to be that of “awe and reverence . . . Nothing can be too serious, and earnest and holy.”¹⁰ Similarly, in his 1845 *Charge . . . to the Clergy of Bermuda*, printed in the *Times* of St. John’s in May, he focused on the chancel, chancel screens, and fonts of stone. He explained why he wanted these changes, namely, that the focus should be on the Holy Sacrament and that the tone of services should be one of solemnity.¹¹

The first clash of architectural styles that Bishop Feild precipitated was in St. John’s upon his arrival in this Gothic frame of mind in the summer of 1844. St. Thomas’s Church, consecrated just five years before, while outwardly somewhat Gothic, was now seen as built “in those days of ecclesiological darkness” and thus its interior had to be torn apart and rearranged. And it had to be done quickly to exhibit to the visiting clergy in September “the proper arrangements of a church.” When the clergy arrived Feild was able to show them that “the large and lofty pile” of a pulpit, which had “occupied the centre . . . obscuring the altar,” had been moved over “against a pillar” out of the way. Nothing could be done in so short a time about the galleries and the absence of a chancel, but he was able to move the Communion rails forward to have a larger area behind them. He wrote that August to his friend, the clergyman William Scott, co-editor of the High Church *Christian Remembrancer*, that if he had the money, he then and there would have torn down the galleries and would have built a chancel.¹² In addition, at St. John’s Church — the parish church — even more drastic renovations were begun in August when the crowbar and hammer were applied not just to the front of the church but also to the pews.¹³

While pews, bought or rented, were sincerely panned out of regard for the poor, they also represented proprietary, popular power. A person or family who rented a pew, or bought one, could claim that he had rights in the church, even owned part of the church as his property. Thus, pew owners could more powerfully contest the authority of the clergy and their bishop, in contrast to their paying a fee to the church

and being free to sit anywhere but with no right to claim any seat in particular. Pew-owning delivered a loss of authority to the clergy and bishop and a win for local, congregational power. This was even more so in the nineteenth century when voting was based on property. With the new Tractarian arrangement of open seats it could be claimed that all the people were equal to each other; but none were equal to the clergy. The church was now the clergyman's domain.

Over the winter of 1844, with Feild away in Bermuda (the other part of his diocese), the St. John's Church congregation — not consulted on any of these matters — were livid at the changes brought about by this latest colonial emissary, and one informed by Tractarian spirituality. They became even angrier as Feild's archdeacon, Thomas Finch Hobday Bridge, eagerly applied the liturgical changes, in the bishop's absence, to suit the new architecture. In February they rejected the changes outright "by a unanimous vote and were walking out of the church up to Good Friday, March 1845."¹⁴ The dissonance was extreme. In attacking the pulpit Feild laid an axe to their whole understanding of Christianity. As Geertz emphasizes, "sacred symbols function to synthesize a people's ethos — the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood — and their world view — the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order."¹⁵ But Feild was attempting to shatter and replace this "order," and he would if not brought to a halt.

Feild returned from Bermuda in May and rescued his besieged archdeacon. He met with the people and gave in to all the points contested but one — the wearing of the surplice instead of the black gown while preaching.¹⁶ Still, all was not well. He spent most of the summer outside of St. John's, first visiting Fogo and Twillingate in early July, and, a week after his return from there, he was off to the south coast and west coast until the end of September.¹⁷ Matters were still at such a high pitch in the fall of 1845 that he figured he should escape again. He informed Ernest Hawkins, secretary to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), "the feeling towards the Church and towards me is so bad in St. John's, that I think the most prudent thing I

can do at present is to retire for a time.”¹⁸ And off he went to Bermuda for another winter.

He had sailed north to Notre Dame Bay in July, primarily to deal with the aberrant behaviour of a clergyman in Fogo, but also to carry out his first consecration — a new church at Twillingate constructed in totally Protestant vernacular. It is actually a wonder that he consecrated it. However, he didn’t have much leeway, for the place was crawling with Methodists. Here was the very style of a church that he detested — detestable in all its prominent features. It was so detestable that 20 years after the consecration it was still fresh on his mind. Stormbound in Twillingate Harbour in 1868, he wrote back to England that it had been built, “unfortunately” before his arrival, and thus had the popular Protestant internal architecture of Newfoundland Anglican churches of the time — “galleries on three sides, no chancel, and the pulpit and prayer desk in front of the altar.”¹⁹ Four years earlier, he reflected back on the state of the Church of England in Newfoundland upon his arrival as its second bishop:

Bishop Spencer had not been able to extend his visits farther to the north than Twillingate, in Notre Dame Bay . . . or than Harbour Buffett, in Placentia Bay. . . . In these visits he consecrated nine or ten new churches, but several of them in an unfinished and unfurnished state; a circumstance which need not be regretted, as the preference for pews, and galleries, and pulpits in the center of the building, was then very strong.²⁰

And the pulpit in the Twillingate church was not just in the centre, it was high, and commanding. As the architectural historian Peter Coffman describes it, “a tremendously monumental piece of furniture raised high above the floor, reached from behind by a straight staircase and decorated with quatrefoils and a cusped Gothic arch.”²¹ But Feild would soon be off to Bermuda again in the fall of 1845, and maybe he could forget the pulpit and galleries of St. Peter’s Church at Twillingate for a while.

The Anglicans of Brigus had also built their church with galleries and, of course, with a high pulpit so that the preacher could speak to people sitting at both levels in the church. When Robert Holland Taylor, nurtured in Tractarianism at St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, was assigned there, his reaction to the material iteration of the people's faith in his letter back to his alma mater was stark: "there is . . . no chancel . . . a set of galleries runs round the building, and the pulpit stands at a dizzy height directly in front of the altar . . . I should like to pull it down . . . I hope in a short time I shall be able to tell you that we have demolished the pulpit." Taylor was able to do just that, even in the face of his admission that "the people love to have it so."²² A decade later he reported that he had a new "cruciform building" with a proper chancel in which "it is a great comfort to me personally to worship in." Bishop Feild consecrated it attended by 11 clergy. However, many felt that their faith was violated in the new interior architecture. The next census showed that 146 Brigus members, nearly one-quarter of the congregation, being "too strong Episcopalians to go to Methodism," had founded a local church of the Reformed Church of England based upon "the principles of the Protestant and Evangelical Section of the Church of England," in outright rejection of the Tractarian version of the faith on offer in the new Gothic church. No doubt the pulpit was prominent in their alternate space.²³ Of course, as they saw it, they did not have an altar but a Communion table. And if it were a matter of the table being obscured by the pulpit, the situation could be resolved quite simply by moving the table in front of the pulpit, or to the side, and to the front as needed. Such a solution would not require any great architectural insight, or effort, or cost. It was a common Protestant arrangement, as at Harbour Grace when Bishop Feild visited in 1844.²⁴ But it could no longer obtain in churches where the Communion table had been transformed into an altar in the new spirituality.

In the mid-1840s the Protestants of Port aux Basques — Anglican, Methodist, Baptists from Nova Scotia, and others — in ecumenical fashion got together and built a church. It had a prominent pulpit. When Bishop Feild returned to Port aux Basques in 1849 he was able

to secure it for the Church of England exclusively, and shortly afterwards assigned W.W. Le Gallais, an ardent Tractarian disciple of Jacob George Mountain, to the mission. With the same animus against the Protestant style, Le Gallais initiated renovations to the building and in 1861 exultantly reported that a chancel had been added. "The square headed windows have been taken out and long lancet windows substituted. The hearing gallery and high backed pews have been pulled down . . . The lofty pulpit has been tumbled down . . . and an unpretending pulpit, prayer desk, lectern . . . now grace the Church. The Chancel is furnished with a handsome carpet and the altar covered with a beautiful cloth with embroidered monogram."²⁵

Brigus and Port aux Basques could give a misleading impression of success in transforming the interior architecture of churches. Galleries remained in Twillingate and Harbour Grace, and a lofty pulpit still reigns in the former. Feild hoped to make a similar change at Barr'd Islands, on Fogo Island. When he arrived in mid-September 1849 he found that the people were busy providing for their spirituality and had combined their effort with Joe Batt's Arm to build a church halfway between the two closely situated settlements, to be named St. James. The church was actually in progress and Feild was able to visit it upon his arrival. However, he again ran into that favourite architectural feature of the people, galleries on three sides, and therefore probably a lofty pulpit to match. Five years earlier when Spaniard's Bay was planning a church he had acerbically stated his views on such: "It would be very desirable to take upon myself the fitting up of this church to prevent the abominations of galleries and pews which are threatened and in preparation."²⁶ Not an indecisive man or doubtful of his authority, he now wrote in his journal, "I hope to alter this design, and instead of galleries, to get the western end lengthened." But he came up short. Barr'd Islands, like Fogo and Twillingate, had close connections to Poole, on the south coast of England, both by immigration and by trade, and it is not a coincidence that St. James, at Poole, after which they had named their church, had both of these features.²⁷ Thus there were deep spiritual and emotional

values attached to the interior architecture they had undertaken to build, as was the case as well in other settlements. Galleries and lofty pulpits were so prominent in Newfoundland that Bishop Feild called them "the Newfoundland style."²⁸

And the style prevailed midway between Barr'd Islands and Joe Batt's Arm. When Feild returned on his quadrennial visit to consecrate the church, he was sorely disappointed to find a building "with seats on the floor, and with galleries above, which crowd the building most inconveniently." He was particularly chagrined that they had "readily assented" to his desire "that the galleries . . . be removed," but there they were, and all he could do was stand there and stare up at them. The people simply pleaded lack of funds due to a poor fishery for not affording the extensive remodelling.²⁹ In this way they let the bishop have his self-respect, but also let him know that they were not going to be deprived of the architectural values they wanted in their church by the ephemeral presence of the bishop.

Unlike Barr'd Islands, which was an outpost of Fogo, Greenspond was the centre of a parish with a clergyman. Julian Moreton, a keen Tractarian acolyte of Bishop Feild, wanted a correct instantiation of a Gothic church with proper interior arrangements in Greenspond, his first charge. He had graduated from the Theological Institution (later Theological Institute, and then Queen's College), where he meditated on such High Church texts as *Theophilus Anglicanus* and studied church architecture under William Grey, who adhered to the principles of the Oxford Architectural Society and the Cambridge Camden Society, "the principal promoters of the Gothic Revival."³⁰ Grey, both a clergyman and an architect, had a settled opinion that in Newfoundland "the Clergy *must* be architects." It was they who were responsible to build churches in their missions, and these churches under Bishop Feild must have that quality of feeling which engendered "ritual solemnity" during the service. This meant they had to be Gothic, with chancels "in every possible case," lancet windows, sharply pitched roofs, and open ceilings so that they may attain to that "great principle of Christian architecture, its verticality."³¹

With all these matters of architectural moment in mind, Moreton “constructed a model” for the new church at Greenspond. He felt quite taken aback, however, when he found that the people thought they had something to say about the architecture of a church. As he said to his bishop, yes, they are fine builders and regularly build their own houses and vessels, but when it comes to the architecture of a church, they know nothing of those qualities which relate to “its sacred purpose.”³² Yet, the people themselves thought they knew not only about the “convenience and strength of a building” but also of the aesthetic quality suiting the purpose of its design. Thus, when Moreton brought out his model for the viewing it was only “approved after a very particular examination and criticism.” Notably, unlike Le Gallais in Port aux Basques, Moreton was not able to “tumble down” the pulpit in Greenspond. Yes, the “square” pulpit was replaced with a “handsome” hexagonal pulpit, but Moreton in his 1860 report to the SPG neglected to mention its dominant feature — its height. It still towers in its lofty grandeur in St. Stephen’s Church, though off to the side instead of in the centre.³³

This is not to be wondered at, because the congregation insisted on another feature in their church — that it have galleries. Their success here against Bishop Feild and Moreton was no small feat. From his first charge to his clergy upon his arrival, *Order and Uniformity*, Bishop Feild had their destruction in his sights. He saw them as Don Quixote saw windmills, “enormous giants with whom I intend to do battle.” Nearly 10 years later William Grey testified, “our good Bishop wages war against them.” William Scott in his paper to the Ecclesiological Society noted the prime utility feature of galleries that people drew attention to, namely, to strengthen the frame by tying it together in order to withstand “the winds, the stroke of which in this country is exceedingly powerful.”³⁴ However, they likely had in mind other values that were more important than that structural provision, and these they were not prepared to surrender. Just as an interior Gothic arrangement focused on the Holy Sacrament is conducive to one type of spirituality, so a church with a lofty pulpit and galleries is conducive to another.

The people of Greenspond, along with most Church of England congregations of the day in Newfoundland and Labrador, partook of a Bible and Prayer Book spirituality.³⁵ The pulpit was the bearer and platform of that spirituality. The pulpit was to the Protestant Anglicanism of the Word what the altar was to the Tractarian Anglicanism of the Sacrament. Hence the clash of styles. It is no coincidence that representatives of each wanted their platform front and centre in their churches. The pulpit represented a religion of propositional truth, of thought, speech, and reasoning as the doorway to the experience of God. Preaching was a communal experience of this aspiration. Galleries promoted this communal experience for it facilitated interpersonal responses to the Word preached, whether of the non-verbal gravity of earnestness or the loud amens of the exuberance of joy. The Gothic Revivalist, Augustus Welby Pugin, saw it as a grave architectural defect when the congregation could "sit in . . . galleries and face each other."³⁶ They could also see many of the congregation below, who could in turn gauge the body language or words of the others. How effusive their response was depended on their degree of enthusiasm on that continuum extending from the moderate evangelical Anglicans to the exuberant Methodists before the latter reached a plateau of middle-class respectability and approached church services with a reserve deemed to be proper.

The Anglicans of St. John's and the major outports were aware of the theological and semiotic convulsions taking place in the Church of England, for they had been receiving newspaper and magazine reports of the Tractarian battles raging in England. In the transatlantic world of the nineteenth century, Newfoundland was centre stage, situated nearly halfway between Britain and Boston. Vessels arrived in Newfoundland with English pamphlets and newspapers, for instance, the anti-Tractarian London *Record*, often within three weeks of their being published in England. Furthermore, local papers republished some of the articles relating to the Tractarian controversy.³⁷ The Tractarian or Oxford Movement was one of many early nineteenth-century spiritual restoration movements — for example, Edward Irving and his

Catholic Apostolic Church, the Plymouth Brethren, the Primitive Methodists — all reaching back into the past to retrieve Christianity in its primitive purity, and all equally adamant and exact in their claims. Tractarianism, a reinvigorated High Church impulse of the 1830s elevating both the Holy Sacrament and the clergy, reached back into the Middle Ages and the Patristic era for its pure past. It elevated the clergy by its reassertion of their apostolic authority, which enabled them to precipitate the “Real Presence” at their consecration of the Eucharistic elements.³⁸ It was a movement of feeling, but in contrast to the Methodists, a disciplined feeling.³⁹ It aspired to a Romantic sensation of solemnity engendered largely by the congregation beholding and feeling the ambience of chancel, chanting, raised altar, embroidered altar cloths, lambent candlelight, within a Gothic setting of lancet windows, stained glass, and open-timbered ceiling.⁴⁰ Without this venue Tractarianism could exist only as a theology, an ideological construct. There could be no practice or devotion since Tractarian piety came through the senses, a material spirituality.⁴¹ In contrast, Protestants exclaimed that faith and spirituality can be engendered only by hearing the Word: “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” was to Protestants what the whole Gothic apparatus was to the Tractarians.⁴² It was an aural, disembodied spirituality generating discursive thought by a verbal symbolism, in contrast to a material symbolism that was primarily visual. “Now hearing, not seeing, was believing.”⁴³ The root of the Protestant contention is this preponderance of visual symbolism in the Gothic theatre, these material representational signs and their associations. One is left with a spirituality of visual associations rather than a symbolized theology through the Word, that is, through the symbolism of language.⁴⁴

Tractarianism was a reassertion not just of the architecture of the Middle Ages, but also of its political structure and society. Not just a top-down imposition of religiosity, practised preferably in stone, but a retreat into the past, into Christendom, to regain and entrench hierarchical authority against rising popular sentiment. It is not a coincidence that the spark that set off the movement, that launched it in

1833, was a reaction to a political threat, namely the authority of Parliament in reducing the number of Irish bishoprics with its Irish Church Temporalities Bill. The popular impulse for democracy was disparaged by Bishop Feild, whether that of the French, the Americans with their experiment, or the fledgling beginnings of representative and responsible government in Newfoundland in 1832 and 1855 and the rest of British North America in mid-century. All of this came against the British backdrop of the increase of popular power in the widening of the franchise with the Great Reform Act of 1832. This popular impetus is bluntly dismissed by Bishop Feild: "The farce of Responsible Government is to be enacted or represented here as in other North American Colonies."⁴⁵ So, too, the Puritan experiment. Next to the Methodists the Puritans are regularly referenced as the nadir in both church and state matters. But as the converted Roman Catholic, Welby Pugin, no lover of Puritans, fondly pointed out, the churches were "defaced, plundered, and desecrated" by Henry the Eighth's Church of England in its schismatic outbreak long before the Puritans came along, and in far greater numbers and degree.⁴⁶ As for the Irish, they were always a threat because they represented an alternate power structure centred in Rome.

Since cultural symbols are polysemous, it is not whether the changes to the interior architecture of a church and its furnishings are about religion and spirituality or about such secular matters as power and democracy; it is not one or the other but all at the same time.⁴⁷ Central pulpits and elevated galleries spiritually obscure the altar and Sacrament. The galleries have to be torn down, for nothing is to compete with the elevation of chancel and altar, with steps rising to each. But neither are people to be above the clergy physically in galleries, or symbolically; after all, it is the clergy who, by their apostolic authority and power, make the elements a sacrament, generating the "Real Presence." Thus Tractarianism is essentially a spiritual impulse; it is also essentially a hierarchical impulse restoring power to the clergy to make the church the clergyman's domain.

Galleries in their height and arrangement of facing each other, and

pulpits, represented popular power. The pulpit was central in the ever-widening popular Protestant sects with everybody going about with ideas of religion in their own heads. People thinking independently. Julian Moreton is mortified that the “Aunt Rachels” in every outpost dare to contest his thoughts by citing Scripture as their authority. To the Tractarians this is evidence of a possibly threatening societal movement. Bishop Feild, for instance, did not charge “any sect” with actually “preaching or teaching sedition, privy conspiracy, or rebellion” but he saw it as “the very essence . . . of separating, in religion, to create disaffection and disunion,” which could lead to sedition and rebellion.⁴⁸ In their world view the state was to buttress the authority of the church as the one supported the other in that ideal polity described by W.E. Gladstone in his first book, *The State in its Relations to the Church*; as David Cannadine says, “the Church hallowing the State, and the State supporting the Church.”⁴⁹ This symbiotic relationship is seen symbolically and actually with the Royal Navy man-of-war *Hydra* towing the *Hawk*, Bishop Feild’s church vessel, in Red Bay and Forteau Bay, and with Feild holding services on board the *Hydra* and administering Holy Communion in the captain’s cabin. Similarly, and even more, if possible, on HMS *Wellesley*, 74 guns, in Bay St. George with the Admiral, Lord Dundonald, whom Bishop Feild gushed over with praise and admiration — that “really great man’s kindness and condescension,” coming on board the *Hawk*. The support of church and state in their twofold authority and effort to establish order on the frontier was not lost on Feild. As he stated in his diary, “the juxtaposition” of the two vessels “might afford matter for reflection.” Feild had already proudly placed a flag from the admiral “bearing the arms of the see” in his cathedral in St. John’s on the momentous occasion of its consecration.⁵⁰

Methodists, Dissenters, Puritans, Americans, the French, and liberal democracies were all a threat to the society for which Tractarians pined. The central pulpit was the inveterate badge of dissent for it represented independent and free and divergent thought, which could possibly topple the structure of society and the church’s place in it. For Feild the only solution was a reassertion of order through uniformity.

Even a prayer before the sermon, let alone an extemporary one, he fiercely denounced in his first *Charge* as having arisen "in an evil time, and . . . adopted by perverse and self-righteous men, to introduce their own conceits and fancied improvements." Diversity, variation, variety were all a threat to that order asserted and maintained by episcopal authority and power. Thus the attack on pulpits is paramount and pivotal. To Feild they were not necessary, certainly not "the most essential or first requisite in a Church." He cut them down physically and attempted to reduce their stature to mere convenience.⁵¹

The pulpit as the site of expositing scripture, the Word, was part of an enterprise, as Frank Turner noted, in which Evangelicals "determined to furnish the laity with religious language and theological concepts that might be discussed in an open, public manner, not reserved to a secluded sacred space or closed priesthood. . . . The evangelicals thus democratized religion and in democratizing it made religion something about which Christians through the exercise of their private judgements could reason, debate, and choose."⁵² For Bishop Feild the greatest contemporary threat in Newfoundland of rising popular authority consisted of the Methodists with their enthusiasm, at a time before Methodism had reached its "respectability" phase. People alive with enthusiasm speak. Their voice cannot be squelched. Thus Methodism had turned the church into a populist domain. Its pulpits and galleries gave everyone a voice through local preaching, testimony, extemporary prayer, and the gift of exhortation. With everyone a preacher, men and women, their numbers multiplied so quickly that it appeared to Feild that they had "spawned" around him like capelin. And they continued spawning and speaking in their myriad prayer meetings and class meetings in houses, schooners, and winter tilts. The Methodists, almost all of whom were former Anglicans, increased to such an extent that by 1874 they had become nearly one-quarter of the population of Newfoundland and Labrador.⁵³ Feild called them "an unreal Church" and attacked them mercilessly. How can they call themselves "a church — the Wesleyan Church!"⁵⁴ Whatever Methodism was, it was a massive challenge to Feild, a movement in which deference was replaced by

self-assurance, so much so that in the United States Nathan Hatch called it *The Democratization of American Christianity*.⁵⁵

Even the Tractarian style of architecture was a statement against popular power. Gothic, not Classical, was the only proper architecture for churches. By mid-century George Gilbert Scott stated that Gothic for ecclesiastical purposes had become “unquestionably the one great fact of our day.”⁵⁶ Classical architecture represented Paganism, specifically, it represented the focus on man and his beginnings of democracy in Athens and in the Roman Republic.⁵⁷ Gothic architecture was the required theatre for Tractarianism to be acted out. The specific traits of internal Gothic architecture that keep appearing as paramount in the nineteenth-century Tractarian corpus, reifying its theology, are the chancel, the altar, stone font, the pulpit to the side, seats instead of pews, peaked timbered open ceilings, wings instead of galleries, and lancet windows. Only when these are in place do you have the “proper arrangements of a church.” And the foremost of these was the chancel for the altar and sacrament. Augustus Welby Pugin, respected as a Gothic Revival authority by the Camden Society and often referenced in their *Ecclesiologist*, articulated in no uncertain terms that in a church the chancel is “the place of sacrifice, the most sacred part of the edifice,” and “there are two parts, and only two parts, which are absolutely essential to a Church — chancel and nave. If it have not the latter, it is at best only a chapel; if it have not the former, it is little better than a meeting-house.”⁵⁸ Bishop Feild was in total agreement. In his 1845 Charge to the Clergy of Bermuda he invoked “ancient regulations and propriety” to declare the chancel to be “that necessary member . . . of all Christian churches.” Both also agreed that it should be partitioned off by a screen to separate it from the nave. This was not, as Pugin said, a part of “mere architectural enrichments,” but was required for theological reasons, or, as he said, for “profound mystical reasons.”⁵⁹ The chancel was the revival of the most holy place or holy of holies of the tabernacle and temple of Solomon. Indeed, Bishop Medley in New Brunswick stated this outright. Thus Victor Hugo, in an insightful comment, gave a terse but perspicacious summary of Tractarianism

that it was "turned more towards the Old Testament than the New."⁶⁰ Chancel screens, somewhat like the curtain in Solomon's temple, inhibited any indiscriminate or disinterested gazing by the people sitting in the nave. They assisted in promoting the Tractarian doctrine of reserve, which, as Isaac Williams wrote in *Tract 80*, is that in God's communication with people there is a "tendency to conceal and throw a veil over it, as if it were injurious to us unless we were of a certain disposition to receive it."⁶¹

Feild's antipathy to galleries also echoed that of the Cambridge Camden Society of which a representative exclaimed, "If everything else is forgotten, and two points only remembered, the absolute necessity of a distinct and spacious chancel, and the absolute inadmissibility of pews and galleries, in any shape whatever, I shall be more than rewarded."⁶² Pugin, that "prophet of the Gothic Revival," heartily agreed and quoted it in his book, *The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*.

But, to consider further, what was it about galleries that Feild and Pugin found so antithetical to "the proper arrangements of a church"? Galleries did not promote, and actually obstructed, the architectural fostering of solemnity. We see this interference in Feild's condemnation of "cross seats and double pews" because they "enable all persons to see and be seen by their neighbours." Rather, all should face "one way and that to the East." Of course, one has the same problem with three-sided galleries. You can see people, their faces, not just the backs of their heads, and it is impossible for everyone to face the east with such an arrangement. But what is the problem with seeing people? While Protestants thought it was an asset for the preaching experience, Tractarians saw it as a distraction from focusing on a transcendent God. We want "our thoughts and desires directed upwards" and this is obstructed by "gazing about or being gazed at."⁶³ In other words, people were a hindrance to that "awe and reverence" engendered by privately and piously beholding the chancel, altar, and sacrament, and by a peripherally conscious perception of verticality induced by the open-timbered ceilings high above. Galleries crowded out this construal of the sublime.

Similarly, Pugin was appalled at the “detestable practice” in England, possibly merely to save heat, of closing off the high-pitched vault with a flat ceiling of laths and plaster.⁶⁴ It was mainly verticality, that semblance of the vastness of nature, that could induce the sublime.⁶⁵ As John Baillie had said in the eighteenth century in his *Essay on the Sublime*, “Vast objects occasion vast Sensations.” In the interior of a Gothic church it was the vaulted ceiling and Edmund Burke’s “artificial infinite” of regular rows of pillars rising high above that largely produced this sense of limitlessness and the sublime.⁶⁶

What was the nature of that sublime? Here we are in debt largely to Burke and his *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. One could possibly call Edmund Burke the guiding light from the eighteenth century to the next. Editor and literary critic James T. Boulton, in his preface to the work, judged that because of its influence the *Enquiry* was “among the most important documents of its century.”⁶⁷ The writer, Paul Johnson, went beyond that estimation, calling Burke’s work “the most influential tract on aesthetics ever published in the Anglo-Saxon world.”⁶⁸ Burke crystallized the distinction between beauty as merely pleasurable and the sublime as generated by fear, anguish, gloom, and horror in the midst of such phenomena as vastness, immensity, power, height, wildness, and darkness, albeit while beholding them from a position of safety.

As Boulton pointed out in his introductory essay to Burke, these values were applied as the correct characteristics of Gothic architecture, for instance, by John Milner. Milner used Burke, said Boulton, “to prove the superiority of Gothic over Wren’s churches on the ground that they are more conducive to ‘prayer and contemplation.’” Milner, “having adopted Burke’s definition of the sublime[,] . . . stresses the height and length, the artificial infinite, the solemn gloom . . . which are characteristic of Gothic churches. Milner is convinced that sublimity ‘forms their proper character’ . . . and consequently the *Enquiry* is of inestimable value in proving his case.” In his essay, “Observations on the Means necessary for further illustrating the Ecclesiastical Architecture of the Middle Ages,” Milner does actually speak of solemnity as “the effect of

that solemn gloom which reigns in these venerable structures, from the studied exclusion of too glaring a light," no doubt an effect helped by narrow lancet windows. Yet he still rebuffs Sir Christopher Wren for calling Gothic churches "congestions of heavy, dark, melancholy, monkish piles."⁶⁹ Of course, Burke himself had advised specifically regarding architecture that "all edifices calculated to produce the idea of the sublime, ought rather to be dark and gloomy . . . darkness itself . . . is known to have a greater effect on the passions than light."⁷⁰

An American clergyman, who may have read Burke and Milner, rejected the whole Gothic apparatus and its spirituality. He stated in 1850:

The gloom of the dark ages, in which it arose, has passed away. Our churches are now the abodes of clear truth, not of oppressive mystery; places of lowly and glad worship, not of long processions and pompous display. The Grecian styles . . . suit our religion far better. The false poetry of "dim religious light" does not agree with our faith. . . . the inconvenient and meaningless recesses by which the church is tortured into the shape of a cross; the gloomy windows, granting little light, . . . the tub-like pulpits . . . have given place to arrangements which enable us to see and hear and worship without doing penance.⁷¹

Kenneth Clark, in reflecting on the relationship of Gothic poetry to architecture, draws attention to Milton's Gothicism of "dim religious light" and to Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*, in which nature itself reflects the melancholy state of mind of obstructed love:

Where awful arches make a noonday night
And the dim windows shed a solemn light;
But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
Long-sounding isles, and intermingled graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A death-like silence and a dread repose:

Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene . . .
And breathes a browner horror on the woods.⁷²

In speaking of solemnity, Welby Pugin observes that “nothing can be more calculated to awaken solemn and devout feelings” than a graveyard around the church, through which people pass at each attendance.⁷³ Pugin is no doubt here tapping into the melancholy mood of such Gothic graveyard poetry as Thomas Gray’s “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard” (1751), with such lines as:

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds . . .
The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow’r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e’er gave,
Awaits alike th’ inevitable hour.
The path of glory leads but to the grave. . . .
Can Honour’s voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?⁷⁴

The acclaimed Victorian art critic and admirer of Gothic, John Ruskin, was utterly shocked by the “profound and gloomy” appearance of Salisbury Cathedral. Its exterior, “those grey walls . . . like dark and barren rocks out of a green lake,” so contrasted with “that bright, smooth, sunny surface” of Giotto’s Campanile of Florence Cathedral.⁷⁵ In fact, gloom was so in vogue that the building of sham Gothic ruins to produce an atmosphere of melancholy ran its course as a fad of the day.⁷⁶

Thus, interior Gothic architecture was an attempt to mould the interior self. In the face of the clanging and banging of machine and factory and its contemptible environment, it fostered silence and quietness. In the face of its sordid structures it retreated to a perceived past of solemnity. In the face of rationalism it fostered feeling, a construed medieval mood of mystery. It was an attempt to sequester a Romantic spirituality in a dream of reverence and awe, with a tinge of gloom and melancholy.⁷⁷

The Tractarian frame of mind was one of retreat. Contemporaries saw themselves in "times of such extraordinary excitement, amid such unparalleled discoveries and strange inventions. . . . Novelties press on that language almost fails to supply fresh terms in which to represent them." Thus John Keble presented his *Christian Year* and the Church of England as "a sober standard of feeling" in contrast to the thirst of his era for "unbounded curiosity, when excitement of every kind is sought with a morbid eagerness." Keble idealizes a retreat into the past:

O who can tell how calm and sweet,
Meek Walton! Shows thy green retreat,
When wearied with the tale thy times disclose,
The eye first finds thee out in thy secure repose.⁷⁸

Bishop Medley, cloistered away in sylvan Fredericton, spoke unequivocally of his Gothic cathedral as a retreat from the world, certainly from industry-ridden Saint John, at its consecration in 1853: "How sweet and heavenly is it to turn from the jarring interests of this feverish world, maddened by excitement . . . to this haven of peace."⁷⁹

In Newfoundland, Feild's architect, William Grey, left his key teaching post at the Theological Institution and chose to remove himself to Portugal Cove, sequestered in a valley away from the hustle and bustle of St. John's. Similarly, one of Bishop Feild's prize clergymen, Jacob George Mountain, an Oxford graduate and fellow Tractarian whom he wanted to make principal of his Theological Institution, aspired instead to "some hard and secluded sphere." Feild sent him to Harbour Breton in Fortune Bay but to Mountain's disappointment, with all the crews working on the Newman premises — "tradesmen such as carpenters, coopers, blacksmiths" and "men of a lower grade, who are employed on the wharfs and in the stores" — there was simply too much tumult. He spent much of his time instead visiting the smaller outports in Fortune Bay and as far west as Cape La Hune.⁸⁰ No doubt these men were impelled in part by an asceticism that was a prominent constituent of the ethos of Tractarianism.⁸¹ The irony is

that Bishop Feild, like those of his clergymen who were Tractarian, encountered or caused tumult wherever he went. Why was this so? Prayer Book Anglicans were not at all attuned to the Tractarian values informing his interior Gothic architecture. What they valued most was the spoken word, whether in prayer, in singing, or in preaching. Their simple architecture was primarily utilitarian in its function of facilitating that spoken word, certainly nothing ontic, with an added aesthetic embellishment given to the pulpit. There was no need for a chancel that segregated the people. Architect Sir Charles Barry, of the Palace of Westminster (Houses of Parliament) fame, was not at all comfortable with the Tractarian interior Gothic arrangement precisely because of its lack of utility. “Deep chancels, high rood screens, and (in less degree) pillared aisles” belonged to the past and were not conducive “to the needs of a service which is essentially one of ‘Common Prayer.’” Gothic was fine, yes, but of forms that “secured uninterrupted space, and gave a perfect sense of the unity of the congregation, even at the cost of sacrificing . . . ‘dim religious light’ . . . and solemnity.” He saw an octagonal form in Venice that would fit such congregational requirements.⁸² John Ruskin, too, judged that “the most beautiful forms of Gothic chapels are not those which are best fitted for Protestant worship.”⁸³ Protestants other than Anglicans had no liturgical use for them, but they wanted their churches to have that exterior Gothic appeal that delineated chancels gave. To the horror of all things sacramental, they partitioned them off and filled them up with “Sunday schools, administrative offices, libraries, auditoriums, and kitchens.”⁸⁴

The prime requirement for these Protestant and evangelical Anglicans was a pulpit at the very centre in the front of the church. It was not a coincidence that Bishop Feild found it there in all the churches that he visited, for it represented a primarily verbal rather than sacramental religion — an aural version of Anglicanism rather than a visual one. Thus Feild and his cohorts kept running into pulpits and attacking them with the passion of a Don Quixote. How did Bishop Feild restrain himself in Twillingate on his so recent arrival in his diocese? He also had to restrain himself in Harbour Grace the previous year.

Just in the colony for three weeks, he determined that the Anglicans there were "a worldly and ill-instructed and encroaching people," and this showed up in their architecture. There were galleries on three sides of the church. There was no east window in the centre of the east wall; instead, "in the centre of it towers the pulpit." While returning from his tour of Conception Bay by boat he wrote up his general impression, namely that "much money is required for altering and fitting up" the churches of the area and that "the pulpits generally should be taken down and the space about the altar enlarged." As for Harbour Grace, the people "have been spoilt, and unless they can have a minister they like, will, I fear, be discontented and troublesome for a time till they are better taught."⁸⁵ Neither is it a coincidence that the altar should be increased in prominence and the pulpit diminished. After all, in Feild's spiritual universe they were antipodal, and in his quest, antithetical. The very church furnishing that was pretty well the only one that mattered to the people was the one that the Tractarians wanted to remove from its position in the church, and, furthermore, cut down in height so that it no longer held the prominence it held before. It thus became the focal point of the religious rivalry of the day.

It is clear that the major dynamic in the introduction of Tractarianism in Newfoundland was that of opposition. I realize that other academic winds are blowing and that binary concepts are now not as popular as they once were. The historian, David Cannadine, for instance, recently lamented "seeing the world in antagonistic, binary ways," dismissing "the binary simplicities of difference" in reference to the identities of "religion, nation, class, gender, race, and civilization." He does note, however, that he is taking "a long-term historical perspective."⁸⁶ This *longue durée* view is an important caution to all writers of history. It applies to Tractarianism in Newfoundland and Labrador, but not to its introduction, which has been the focus in this paper. And even here, while there was "binary" opposition from and to the Anglicanism it met on its arrival, the impetus of that opposition radiated from divergent views of spirituality and from the concomitant power of the laity and clergy appropriated by each. Of course, over time,

accommodations were made. But the opposition at its introduction is not imagined.

Thus the clashing, and often the smashing, of styles. The nineteenth-century Romantics looked at *Don Quixote* through a new lens and gained a new appreciation of the book, viewing Sancho no longer as a realist but as one walking by mere sight, living by bread alone; and Don Quixote as the man walking by faith, single-mindedly, in a cause both moral and holy.⁸⁷ Bishop Feild was able to fulfill his heroic quest for perfect Gothic architecture in a number of instances, as exemplified in his cathedral at Hamilton, Bermuda. Then in the seventieth year of his life, he admired it as “correct and complete in its form and arrangements” and thus teaching “the means and method of a Christian Life.” It was cruciform in shape, had its stone font at the entrance, chancel, and chancel screen marking its separation from the nave, “to give distinction and dignity to the higher service of Holy Communion.” In the chancel, one is brought to “the end and object, the crown and reward of all, you are brought to the Holy Table, there to partake of the Body and Blood of Christ.”⁸⁸ But unlike his achievement of the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity in the mid-Atlantic, he often had to adjust to what he regarded as less perfect forms in Newfoundland. Probably his greatest disappointment — his Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in St. John’s — remained a nave to the end of his episcopate. And beyond it.⁸⁹

But he made his most extreme adjustment during a visit to Ward’s Harbour (Beaumont) on Long Island, Notre Dame Bay. “The principal planter” there had built a small church at a personal cost of £70 — “only a wooden room, twenty-four by eighteen, with five square windows” — and he asked Feild if he would consecrate it. He told the bishop that he had to care for his neighbour through a long illness and finally bury the person who helped him plan and build it. With “deep and right feeling” he shared how his neighbour “had been wild” in his earlier life but in his last three years was of “an altered character.” Feild saw immediately that the man in front of him was not another Sancho Panza, a mere materialist, but a person of faith. He had built a church in “the Newfoundland style” that Protestant Anglicans carried over

from England. Feild granted the man's request. Instead of attempting to rearrange the front of his church he went ahead and consecrated it just as it was and it thereby became a church of the Church of England. He wrote in his journal for publication, "The little wooden building was duly consecrated . . . with all due devotion . . . if not with all the formality and circumstance of such services, in more favoured or more wealthy localities." He gave his readers the apologetic that the "devout fishermen . . . in a remote Harbour of Newfoundland" with this simple ceremony were as able as those with "the more splendid processions of our native country, to testify their zeal of God's house, and of His holy name." And then the two of them went for an English walk together, bishop and fisherman, "to some of the lovely harbours or 'Arms.'" And as they walked, Feild was so inspired by the man, and the setting, that his excursion was transformed into a pilgrimage. In the only instance in the historical record, instead of being a bishop or knight errant he became a fellow traveller and was thankful to receive "some instruction" from "the worthy planter."⁹⁰

Bishop Feild certainly did not make this adjustment because of opposition. Why did he make it? It could be that Ward's Harbour did not present a strategic, or even tactical, challenge to his Tractarian mission in Newfoundland, as did St. John's. I think, rather, that it shows his humanity and demonstrates another dimension of his spirituality in a situation in which his mission was impossible.

Bishop Feild and his priests succeeded in building a few Gothic structures along the coast of Newfoundland. Possibly the most notable instantiation of the Gothic sublime outside St. John's was at Birchy Cove (Curling) in the Bay of Islands, built by the priest, Joseph Curling, formerly a rich lieutenant of the Royal Engineers. St. Mary the Virgin, in all its solemnity in wood, had a central tower with a spire, as was planned for the cathedral at St. John's. Its most exact and ecclesiologically correct interior Gothic space had transepts, choir chamber, and a centre aisle leading up to a chancel with raised altar and an east window of "Powell's glass, oak stalls, lamps and hangings."⁹¹ However, these were not the values that many Protestant Anglicans yearned for

inside their churches. As a result, the heroic quest of Bishop Feild caused much dissonance in Newfoundland and Labrador as many worshippers reached not for the Gothic sublime, but for ecstasy through the spoken word. By 1874, after a 30-year episcopacy of singular perseverance in the relentless pursuit of solemnity, there was some success, but Methodism mushroomed to become nearly a quarter of the population, very few of them not former Anglicans. Others determined, in the common parlance, to never darken the door of the church again. It would appear that of the Church of England stalwarts who watched them leave, some just became habituated to the new observance, some transvalued their spirituality to the new symbolism, while others held steadfastly to their understanding of the Prayer Book in their hands. What is more important historically than calculating the success of Bishop Feild's mission by some quantitative measure is understanding the massive reckoning in religion, at least among Protestants, that his Gothic quest precipitated.

Notes

- 1 Ronald Rompkey, ed., *The Diary of Bishop Edward Feild in 1844* (St. John's: ISER Books, 2010), 44–45, 53.
- 2 I have used the terms “Tractarian” and “Tractarianism” in this essay for the whole movement that evolved throughout the nineteenth century. These terms are as good as any, though they have the disadvantage, as does the “Oxford Movement,” of seeming to point only to the beginnings of the movement. In addition, the latter overlooks the significant Cambridge contribution to the development of the movement. And, of course, there were the other Oxford “movements” of John Wycliffe and John Wesley. Tractarianism has had various descriptors. See Owen Chadwick, *The Spirit of the Oxford Movement: Tractarian Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 135–36. For the influence of Romanticism on Tractarianism, see Sheridan Gilley, “John Keble and the Victorian Churching of Romanticism,” in John Richard Watson, ed., *An Infinite Complexity: Essays in Romanticism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press for the University of Durham, 1983),

- 226–39; William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1989), 121–22, 139–40, 146–54.
- 3 These features and others are noted in a widely distributed pamphlet by the Cambridge Camden Society, *A Few Words to Church Builders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1841). This paper is concerned with Gothic structures insofar as they contribute to the experience of ecclesiologically correct interior Gothic space. In time, Gothic structures were more generally adopted, but with modified interiors, by Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians — practically everybody. For an Ontario example, for instance, see Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 126–58.
- 4 “Report of the Oxford Architectural Society, 2 March, 1842,” *Ecclesiologist* (Cambridge Camden Society) 6, no. 7 (Apr. 1842): 107.
- 5 A number of Tractarian bishops were sent out to the colonies in the nineteenth century with such a mission, for instance, Bishop John Medley to New Brunswick. See Gregg Finley and Lynn Wigginton, *On Earth as it is in Heaven, Gothic Revival Churches of Victorian New Brunswick* (Fredericton, NB: Goose Lane Editions, 1995); Gregg Finley, “New Brunswick’s Gothic Revival: John Medley and the Aesthetics of Anglican Worship” (PhD thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1989).
- 6 Calvin Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind: Popular Opposition to Bishop Feild and Tractarianism in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1844–1876* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2016), 36–38, 297–99.
- 7 Clifford Geertz, *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 208, 210.
- 8 There were also clergy who were upset with Bishop Feild. The clergyman John Roberts stated in 1846 that, because of this, several were looking to leave the diocese (Rooms Provincial Archives, MG 598 SPG [Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts], A196, John Roberts, Bay de Verde, 10 Nov. 1846). Instead of mounting opposition, however, they either left the diocese or remained and kept a low profile — John Roberts himself excepted. In contrast, the people often opposed Feild by opposing his clergyman, namely, by not complying with the orders from the bishop that his appointed

- clergyman attempted to carry out. For such an instance at Harbour Buffett, Placentia Bay, see Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, Chapter 6.
- 9 Through the vigorous leadership of the Colonial Bishops Council in appointing bishops to the colonies, Tractarians were able to pull far beyond their weight back home. The office of bishop was one of critical authority in the Church of England. See Alan L. Hayes, *Anglicans in Canada: Controversies and Identity in Historical Perspective* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 65; Christopher Fergus Headon, “The Influence of the Oxford Movement upon the Church of England in Eastern Canada, 1840–1900” (PhD thesis, McGill University, 1974), 279.
- 10 [Feild], *Order and Uniformity in the Public Services of the Church According to the Use of the United Church of England and Ireland: The Substance of a Charge Delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Newfoundland* (St. John’s: John W. McCoubrey, [1844]), 10–12, 14. As he found, however, he had more authority than he had power.
- 11 Feild, “A Charge, Delivered to the Clergy of Bermuda, 1845,” *Times*, 17 May 1845.
- 12 Anglican Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador Archives (ADENLA), Box 2, File 4, Feild to William Scott, 7 Aug. 1844; “Scott, William,” *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1897), 51: 112–13.
- 13 Rompkey, ed., *Diary of Bishop Edward Feild*, 69.
- 14 Thomas E. Collett, *The Church of England, No. 2* (St. John’s: Joseph Woods, 1854), 11–12; ADENLA, box 2, file 4, Feild to William Scott, 20 May 1845.
- 15 Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures, Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 89, 127.
- 16 Feild said later that this was just a tactical move. There was such “a sudden and strenuous opposition” that he “advised, or at least allowed concessions contrary to my own views . . . the spirit which had been evoked by newspapers and other publications at home, was not likely to be quieted on other terms.” [Feild], *A Charge Delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Newfoundland by the Bishop at the Second Visitation on the Feast of St. Matthew, 1847* (n.p., [1849]), 8.
- 17 [Feild], *A Journal of the Bishop’s Visitation of the Western and Southern*

- Coast, August and September, 1845, with an Account of the Anniversary Meeting of the Church Society held October 15, 1845, 5–28, Church in the Colonies*, no. 10 (London: Society for Propagation of the Gospel, 1846); H.W. Tucker, *Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of Edward Feild* (London: W. Wells Gardner, 1877), 4: 41–3.
- 18 SPG, A249, Bishop Feild, St. John’s, to Ernest Hawkins, 9 Oct. 1845.
- 19 SPG, A249, Bishop Feild, the *Hawk*, to Ernest Hawkins, 9 July 1845; Bishop Feild, Twillingate, to Canon Seymour, 14 Nov. 1868, in Tucker, *Memoir of the Life*, 235.
- 20 Quoted in Tucker, *Memoir of the Life*, 188. The only furniture the evangelical Bishop Spencer ordered for his ambitious initiative of six new churches in Placentia Bay was pulpits: SPG, A194, 12 June 1841.
- 21 Peter Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic* (Quebec: Éditions Multi-Mondes, 2008), 22, photos, 23.
- 22 St. Augustine’s College, Canterbury, *Occasional Papers* 109 (Mar. 1868): 2–3, Robert H. Taylor, Brigus, Aug. 1867; *ibid.* 161 (Apr. 1874): 6, Robert H. Taylor, Brigus, 31 Oct. 1873. On St. Augustine’s, Canterbury, see Hilary M. Carey, *God’s Empire: Religion and Colonialism in the British World, c. 1801–1908* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 271–86. Christopher Headon writes that the college was “founded upon Tractarian principles . . . Canadian dioceses received many of the Augustinians. The first student of the college, John Symes Williams, sent as a priest to Fredericton . . . The Tractarian bishops in Canada felt safe in accepting Augustinians” (Headon, “The Influence of the Oxford Movement,” 61–63).
- 23 *Occasional Papers* 205 (May 1879): 7–9, Robert H. Taylor, Brigus, 5 Feb. 1879; *Census & Return of the Population, &c., of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1884* (St. John’s: J.C. Withers, 1886); *Reformed Church Record* 1 (July 1881): 102; 4 (Apr. 1885): 29. For the Reformed Church of England in Newfoundland, see “Reformed Church of England,” *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John’s: Newfoundland Book Publishers (1967) Limited, 1981), 1: 436–37. For its larger history, see Anne Darling Price, *A History of the Formation and Growth of the Reformed Episcopal Church, 1873–1902* (Philadelphia: James M. Armstrong, 1902).
- 24 Rompkey, ed., *Diary of Bishop Edward Feild*, 27 July 1844, 45.

- 25 [Feild], *Journal of a Voyage of Visitation in the "Hawk" Church Ship, on the Coast of Labrador, and Round the Whole Island of Newfoundland, in the Year 1849*, *Church in the Colonies*, no. 25 (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1850), 34; SPG, *Mission Field* 15 (Jan. 1870): 4; *ibid.*, 15 (Mar. 1870): 85–87, "The Late W.W. Le Gallais," SPG, A227, W.W. Le Gallais, Channel, 18 Feb. 1861.
- 26 Rompkey, ed., *Diary of Bishop Edward Feild*, 30 July 1844, 51.
- 27 [Feild], *Journal of a Voyage*, 108–09; Derek Beamish, John Hillier, and H.F.V. Johnstone, *Mansions and Merchants of Poole and Dorset*, vol. 1 (Poole, UK: Poole Historical Trust, 1976), 175–80; Eric Witcher, *Historic Barr'd Islands from English Roots* (St. John's: Flanker Press, 2011), 7–8, 106–10. See the similarities between St. Peter's Church, Twillingate, and St. James Church, Poole, in Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 21–23.
- 28 In his twentieth year in Newfoundland, in 1864, Bishop Feild defined "early Newfoundland style" as "the preference for pews, and galleries, and pulpits in the centre of the building" (Tucker, *Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of Edward Feild*, 188–89, 197). Le Gallais referred to the church he renovated in Port aux Basques as having been formerly "in what the Bishop calls the early Newfoundland style" (SPG, A227, W.W. Le Gallais, Channel, 18 Feb. 1861; [Feild], "The Bishop of Newfoundland's Voyage of Visitation, 1861," 33).
- 29 [Feild], *Journal of the Bishop of Newfoundland's Voyage of Visitation on the Coast of Labrador and the North-east Coast of Newfoundland, in the Church Ship "Hawk," in the Year 1853*, 75–77, *Church in the Colonies*, no. 30 (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1854).
- 30 Shane O'Dea and Peter Coffman, "William Grey: 'Missionary' of Gothic in Newfoundland," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada* 32, no. 1 (2007): 39. As the authors state, "When the opportunity came to work with Grey, Feild must have thought it heaven-sent" (*ibid.*, 41).
- 31 Christopher Wordsworth, *Theophilus Anglicanus: or, Manual of Instruction on the Church and the Anglican Branch of It* (London: Rivingtons, 1886 [1843]); Grey, "Ecclesiology of Newfoundland," *Ecclesiologist* 96 (June 1853): 9; *ibid.*, 65 (Apr. 1848): 275, "St. John's Cathedral, Newfoundland"; *ibid.*, 70 (Feb. 1849): 215–16, "Colonial Church Architecture: Newfoundland"; William Scott, "On Wooden Churches," *ibid.*, 67 (Aug.

- 1848): 23. Pugin saw verticality, producing “internal vastness,” as “the very essence of Christian architecture” (A. Welby Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture: set forth in two lectures delivered at St. Marie’s Oscott* [London: John Weale, 1841], 7, 66).
- 32 SPG, A222, Julian Moreton, Greenspond, to Bishop Feild, 31 Dec. 1854.
- 33 SPG, A226, Julian Moreton, Greenspond, to Bishop Feild, 31 Mar. 1860. See the photos of St. Stephen’s Church in Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 143.
- 34 Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, translated by Edith Grossman (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), 58; Grey, “Ecclesiology of Newfoundland,” 157; Scott, “On Wooden Churches,” 21; Feild, “A Charge, Delivered to the Clergy of Bermuda, 1845.”
- 35 Especially since the “Evangelical Revival” of the eighteenth century, evangelical Anglicans had become used to interpreting the Prayer Book and the Thirty-Nine Articles in a way that was consistent with their theology (D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Spirit of Early Evangelicalism: True Religion in a Modern World* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2018], 74–75).
- 36 A. Welby Pugin, *The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England* (London: Charles Dolman, 1843), 47.
- 37 For instance, *Public Ledger*, 11, 18 Feb., 4 Mar. 1845. In 1845 Bishop Henry Phillpott’s aggressive Tractarian agenda caused riots in Exeter (Nigel Yates, *The Oxford Movement and Anglican Ritualism* [London: Historical Association, 1983], 26). See also James Whisenant, “Anti-Ritualism and the Moderation of Evangelical Opinion in England in the Mid-1870s,” *Anglican and Episcopal History* 70, no. 4 (Dec. 2001): 457–58.
- 38 [Arthur Philip Perceval], *Tracts for the Times, No. 35, The People’s Interest in Their Minister’s Commission* (London: J.G. & F. Rivington, 1834).
- 39 As philosopher Susanne Langer clarifies, “ritual . . . is primarily an articulation of feelings. The ultimate product of such articulation is not a simple emotion, but a complex, permanent attitude. This attitude, which is the worshipers’ response to the insight given by the sacred symbols, is an emotional pattern . . . recognized through . . . formalized gesture. . . . A rite regularly performed is the constant reiteration of sentiments

- toward ‘first and last things’; it is not a free expression of emotions, but a disciplined rehearsal of ‘right attitudes’” (Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art*, 3rd ed. [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979], 153).
- 40 For Tractarianism, see Owen Chadwick, *The Mind of the Oxford Movement* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1960); Peter Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760–1857* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); James Pereiro, *“Ethos” and the Oxford Movement: At the Heart of Tractarianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Frank M. Turner, *John Henry Newman: The Challenge to Evangelical Religion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002); Finley, “New Brunswick’s Gothic Revival.”
- 41 Charles Locke Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival: An attempt to show how the taste for Medieval architecture which lingered in England during the last two centuries has since been encouraged and developed* (London: Longmans Green, 1872), 265.
- 42 Romans 10:17, KJV.
- 43 Patrick Collinson, “The Late Medieval Church and Its Reformation 1400–1600,” in John McManners, ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 254.
- 44 On sign or signal versus symbol, see Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, x, 29–33, 73–78; Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1953), 369.
- 45 SPG, A216, Bishop Feild, St. John’s, to Ernest Hawkins, 21 Oct. 1854.
- 46 Pugin, *The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture*, 117–18. See also Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 407–82, 568–93.
- 47 Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Paperbacks, 1969), 41–42.
- 48 Edward Feild, *Charge Delivered to the Clergy of Bermuda, 1866* (Halifax: James Bowes & Sons, 1866), 11–12.
- 49 David Cannadine, *Victorious Century: The United Kingdom, 1800–1906* (New York: Random House, 2017), 197. For an analysis of Gladstone’s

- evolving views of church and state, see J.P. Parry, *Democracy & Religion, Gladstone and the Liberal Party 1867–1875* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 153–64.
- 50 *Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal* (London) 175 (Jan. 1862): 26, “The Bishop of Newfoundland’s Voyage of Visitation, 1861”; *ibid.*, 103 (Jan. 1856): 255–57, “The Bishop of Newfoundland and Lord Dundonald”; *ibid.*, 42 (Dec. 1850): 236.
- 51 [Feild], *Order and Uniformity*, 10–11, 16.
- 52 Turner, *John Henry Newman*, 55–56.
- 53 *Census & Return of the Population of Newfoundland & Labrador, 1874* (St. John’s: J.C. Withers, 1876). For the role of popular religion in the rise of Methodism in Newfoundland, see Calvin Hollett, *Shouting, Embracing, and Dancing with Ecstasy: The Growth of Methodism in Newfoundland* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010).
- 54 SPG, A249, Bishop Feild to Ernest Hawkins, 17 Nov. 1863; Edward Feild, *A Charge Delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Newfoundland, June 25, 1866* (London: Rivingtons, 1867), 19.
- 55 Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 1989).
- 56 George Gilbert Scott, *Remarks on Secular & Domestic Architecture, Present and Future* (London: John Murray, 1857), vii. Of course, Gothic also came to represent Englishness (*ibid.*, 10–11). See also Pugin, *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, 56–57; T. Warton, J. Bentham, Captain Grose, and J. Milner, *Essays on Gothic Architecture* (London: S. Gosnell, 1800), iii.
- 57 Pugin saw the paganism of Classical architecture as simply “the summit of human skill.” A. Welby Pugin, *An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England* (London: John Weale, 1843), 5.
- 58 *Ecclesiologist*, vols. 1–3 (London: Rivingtons, 1842–44); Pugin, *Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, 30, 57. See also Pugin, *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, 50.
- 59 Feild, “A Charge, Delivered to the Clergy of Bermuda, 1845”; Pugin, *Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, 69–70.
- 60 Finley, “New Brunswick’s Gothic Revival,” 92; Victor Hugo, *Toilers of the Sea*, translated by Isabel F. Hapgood, 2 vols. (New York: Thomas

- Y. Crowell & Co., 1888 [1866]), 1: 245.
- 61 [Isaac Williams], *Tracts for the Times, Tract 80, On Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge* (London: J.G. & F. Rivington, 1838), 3. James Pereiro calls *Tract 80* “the most systematic and complete formulation of the principle within the Oxford Movement” (Pereiro, *“Ethos” and the Oxford Movement*, 117).
- 62 Finley, “New Brunswick’s Gothic Revival,” 71; Pugin, *Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, 81.
- 63 Feild, “A Charge, Delivered to the Clergy of Bermuda, 1845.”
- 64 Pugin, *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, 36.
- 65 J. Taylor in his preface to Warton et al., *Essays on Gothic Architecture*, xvii; John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, 6th ed. (Sunnyside, Kent: George Allen, 1889 [1849]), 72.
- 66 Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, edited by James T. Boulton (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968 [1757]), 73–74, 139–42; Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, 79; Taylor in Warton et al., *Essays on Gothic Architecture*, xviii.
- 67 Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry*, ix.
- 68 Paul Johnson, *The Birth of the Modern World Society 1815–1830* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1991), 187.
- 69 Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry*, cvii; Warton et al., *Essays on Gothic Architecture*, xvi, xix. Charles Eastlake judged that in England, Milner and Pugin were “the most eminent apologists for the revival of the style” (Eastlake, *History of the Gothic Revival*, 118).
- 70 Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry*, 81.
- 71 George Washington Bethune, “The Prospects of Art in the United States,” *Orations and Occasional Discourses* (New York, 1850), 7: 174–5, quoted in Finley “New Brunswick’s Gothic Revival,” 50.
- 72 Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste* (London: John Murray, 1973 [1928]), 29–30.
- 73 Pugin, *Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, 15.
- 74 [Thomas Gray], *Poems by Mr. Gray* (Glasgow: Robert and Andrew Foulis, 1768), 49, 51.
- 75 Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, 146–7.
- 76 Clark, *Gothic Revival*, 46–49.

- 77 A writer to the *Ecclesiologist*, in describing the chapel at St Augustine’s, Canterbury, noted that it had sufficient light, “removing it from gloom” but not too much so that the atmosphere was still “religiously sombre.” “St. Augustine’s Canterbury,” *Ecclesiologist* 67 (Aug. 1848): 7.
- 78 *Colonial Church Chronicle* (London) 74 (Aug. 1853): 41; [John Keble], *The Christian Year: Thoughts in Verse for the Sundays and Holydays throughout the Year* (Oxford: J. Parker, 1827), v, 12.
- 79 [John Medley], *A Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese by John, Bishop of Fredericton at His Third Triennial Visitation Holden in Christ Church Cathedral, 1853* (Fredericton, NB: Royal Gazette Office, 1853), 24. Of course, Medley, in coming to New Brunswick, was also escaping the backlash against Tractarianism in England with John Henry Newman’s defection to Roman Catholicism, and with acute associations of severe personal loss (Finley, “New Brunswick’s Gothic Revival,” 96–98). It seems to have been the understanding of many Anglican clergy that “the vortex of excitement” in Methodism was a mere spiritualized inflection of the worldly excitement happening in society (SPG, A225, Oliver Rouse, Bay de Verde, Christmas, 1858; A228, Thomas Boone, Twillingate, 31 Dec. 1861; A234, Reginald M. Johnson, Fogo, 31 Dec. 1865; A237, A.E. Gabriel, Lamaline, 31 Dec. 1870).
- 80 “Jacob George Mountain,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 8: 644; SPG, A196, Carter, T.T., Mountain, W.H., Abraham, C.J., *Newfoundland Mission of the Rev. J.G. Mountain*, Private Circular, Nov. 1848, 3; *Lives of Missionaries: North America* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, n.d.), “Memoir of the Reverend Jacob George Mountain,” 207–08, 216–17, 220–21, 226, 231; Patricia J. Leader, “The Hon. Reverend William Grey, M.A.” (Master of Theological Studies thesis, Queen’s College, St. John’s, 1998), 90–91, 107–08. The name of the college was changed from Theological Institution to Theological Institute in the mid-1850s.
- 81 Peter Benedict Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760–1857* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 181–89.
- 82 Alfred Barry, *The Life and Works of Sir Charles Barry* (London: John Murray, 1867), 78–79.
- 83 John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, edited and abridged by J.G. Links

- (London: Penguin Books, 1960). First published 1851–53.
- 84 Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 153–54.
- 85 Rompkey, ed., *Diary of Bishop Edward Feild*, 27 July, 2 Aug. 1844, 45, 56–57. For photos of the renovated church, see Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 14–16, 144–46. In their introductory essay, “Sacramentality: A Principle of Ecclesiastical Design,” to a work by Guillaume Durand, a medieval French Bishop of Mende, the two Cambridge Camden Society translators, John Mason Neale and Benjamin Webb, write derisively of “the principle of symbolism” of “a Protestant place of worship On entering, the pulpit occupies the central position, and towards it every seat is directed: for preaching is the great object of the Christian ministry: galleries run all round the building, because hearing is the great object of a Christian congregation: the altar stands under the organ gallery, as being of no use, except once a month” (William Durandus, *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments*, translated by John Mason Neale and Benjamin Webb [Leeds, UK: T.W. Green, 1843], cxviii).
- 86 David Cannadine, *The Undivided Past: Humanity beyond Our Differences* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 6–9.
- 87 Anthony Close, *The Romantic Approach to “Don Quixote”: A Critical History of the Romantic Tradition in “Quixote” Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 29–67.
- 88 Edward Feild, *The Means and Method of a Christian Life, as told and taught by the Form and Arrangements of a Christian Church: A Sermon Preached in Trinity Church, Hamilton, Bermuda on S. Mark’s Day, 1870* (London: W. Clinkskel, 1870), 11–14.
- 89 C. Francis Rowe, *In Fields Afar: A Review of the Establishment of the Anglican Parish of St. John’s and Its Cathedral* (St. John’s: SeaWise Enterprise, 1989), 25–34; Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 157.
- 90 [Feild], *Journal of the Bishop of Newfoundland’s Voyage of Visitation . . . 1853*, 68–70.
- 91 Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 139–41; Richard H. Jelf, *Life of Joseph James Curling, Soldier and Priest 1844–1906* (Oxford: Fox, Jones & Co. 1910), 38–39.