



# Oxford and the Evangelical Succession







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Sir Marcus Loane



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To my wife, true and willing helpmate  
in home and ministry, with gratitude  
and affection this book is inscribed.





## Foreword

I feel honoured that Canon Marcus Loane has asked me to write a foreword to this timely and valuable book, not only because anyone who is associated in any way with the great men it portrays is highly favoured, but because their example and specific message are desperately needed today. Indeed it is not too much to say that therein lies the solution to our present-day problems.

Canon Loane's book is a worthy successor to Bishop Ryle's *Christian Leaders of the Eighteenth Century*. To bring back to our memory their lives, to recall to our mind their teaching, and to reveal afresh the secret of their power, is a signal service to our own and to future generations.

One cannot read the story of these men, so fascinatingly told in these pages, without receiving one indelible impression, namely, that of their supreme devotion to Jesus Christ and utter loyalty to the doctrines of Grace.

Lecky says of the Evangelicals of the eighteenth century, 'They gradually changed the whole spirit of the English Church. They infused into it new fire and a passion of devotion, kindled a spirit of fervent philanthropy, raised the standard of clerical duty and completely altered the whole tone and tendency of the ministers.'





### *Foreword*

Through the ministry of such men as these whose story is told in this book, there was established in the centre of the national life a redeemed community, exhilaratingly conscious of their debt to grace and therefore of their love for the Christ who was its author. It was also a worshipping community, indifferent to surroundings and to the refinements and technique of worship, because its adoring spirit transcended all those human things and found satisfaction in a personal adoration of the Lord of Glory. Thus we, who have lost something of their ecstasy, think their worship dull. The core of their gospel was the grace of God which redeems helpless sinners. This aroused a missionary dynamic which had no need of the constant flagellations which today keep alive our missionary interest. Their love was creative and had to find some expression, some outlet, in action. They found it in the Societies which are a monument to their care for both the physical and spiritual welfare of all mankind.

Today, the world is frantically searching for security and looking more and more to material philosophy personified in human dictatorship. A Church which hopes to transform our civilization as the Evangelicals transformed the face of England will not do it by deifying its leaders or magnifying its priesthood, but by magnifying its Lord and demonstrating His power to bring peace and security.

The progressive regimentation of the individual which is a characteristic of our age does nothing to check the drift. Centralization and controls help to produce the type of person who is content to leave others to think and plan for him and to decide the mould which his religious life shall take. The increasing power of diocesan organization, reinforced by recent legislation and necessitating ever-mounting financial demands, is gradually eliminating the type of initiative which was the glory of our Church and was manifest in the great missionary societies. The preaching of the Church no longer sets forth in all its grandeur the doctrine of grace, which glorifies Christ and which is the mainspring of our worship and the motive power of our organization, but rather the ethical exhortation which is





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an appropriate accompaniment of the 'Welfare Church', and is only Christian in that it offers Christ as an example.

I can conceive of nothing better than that we should recover that single-minded devotion to the Lord and to the grace which the heroes of this book exalted and proclaimed, and thus prepare the way for the revival and renewal which accompanied their preaching.

If this book should lead us to proclaim its message afresh, how immeasurably great will be its service to our day and our generation.

The author, nurtured in the happy tradition of the diocese of Sydney, has presented his heroes in a most attractive setting. His gracious style and the ease and often beauty of his language, make reading a delight. May this book be the means of pointing the way to spiritual revival without which the future seems to offer only the atom bomb and its devastating possibilities.

*T. G. Mohan, M.A.,  
Secretary, Church Pastoral Aid Society.*









## Author's Preface

This short series of biographical studies bears the title of Oxford and the Evangelical Succession, and this may need some kind of explanation. It is not a study of Oxford as the nursing-ground of Evangelical thought and scholarship, but of men who passed through Oxford to prove themselves on the field of Evangelical life and leadership. As a matter of fact, two of the five were not Oxford men at all; John Newton and Thomas Scott had little school and no university education to fit them for their place in life. But both have a claim on our interest as we trace the succession of Oxford Evangelicals; their conversion was so decisively linked up with the story of others that the narrative cannot be thought complete apart from them.

My aim has been to tell in broad outline the main story of these five lives so as to bring out their character and their particular contribution to the Evangelical Movement. As far as possible, I have endeavoured to do this in the light of their own words or the words of their contemporaries. I have tried to show the remarkable line of descent from one generation to another as God raised up spiritual sons to carry on the work age by age. And I have tried to show how these honoured fathers of the



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Evangelical Party were used, each in turn, to help and influence many others whose praise is now in all the churches.

Some would dispute the claim for George Whitefield to stand at the head of the Church Evangelicals; but such a man as John Charles Ryle dared to place him first and foremost among all the leaders of the eighteenth century. It is not an easy task to compress the vast mass of material on the life of Whitefield, in public and private, into so brief a space, but I trust that I have made out the claim. The torch passed from his hand to that of John Newton in the second generation, and his life is full of romance and surprise. He was like a spiritual father both to Scott and Cecil in the third generation, and great was their value in the age which saw the steady development of the Evangelical cause as a vital and lasting factor in the life of the Church of England. Scott and Cecil were in turn the spiritual guides of Daniel Wilson, whose great gifts as a missionary statesman have never perhaps been fully recognized.

Thus we see how God used each generation to beget and quicken another so as to maintain the succession of these remarkable men. It is right to stress the fact that they were all strong Churchmen. They loved the Church of England, and refused to leave her in spite of scorn and contempt. They were devoted to the form of doctrine in her Articles and the form of worship in her Liturgy, and they thought that there were none to compare with the Reformation formularies which are the pride of the Church of England. They were all moderate Calvinists in an age when feeling and controversy ran high; they were all practical Christians in an age when slackness and stupidity lay like a dead hand on the Church. They were earnest students of the Bible, and were as much at home on their knees as a priest of old before the Mercy Seat. They preached in order to get souls saved, and their ministries were richly owned by God. Are not all these the marks of true worth and greatness in the Kingdom of which Jesus is Lord and King?

I have tried to trace the inner story of their spiritual development, and where material has been wanting I have tried



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to show what manner of men they were from their written works and their public ministry. If we would know what kind of trust is ours as heirs of the Evangelical Movement, let us study the lives of these noble men and seek to share the secret of their devotion. Their deeds are part of the inheritance of the saints on earth; their names are the glory of the Evangelical party. Let us reverence their memory; let us emulate their example.

I have appended a bibliography to each of the five studies. Any obscurity in the shortened footnote references will, it is hoped, be made clear by a glance at the appropriate bibliography.

The illuminating extract from *Rogue Herries* on pp. 54–9 is quoted by permission of Sir Hugh Walpole's executors and Macmillan & Co. Ltd.

