

and Connelly for Connolly, pp 11 and 118) and a brief sketch of the careers of the Irish-educated surgeons Alexander Porter and John French appears without supporting footnotes (pp 201–2). Some readers might also question the relative lack of attention received by Irish women, but this is inevitable in a book which focuses on what were male professions, and Annie Besant – Irish by identification, if not by birth – does appear within the context of a discussion of emergent Indian and Irish nationalisms. On a more practical level, the volume could have been improved by the addition of a well-detailed map, and some tables presenting the statistics discussed with regard to military and civil service recruitment would have been useful. However, these minor points aside, *Irish imperial networks* remains an impressive and important book which will be read with interest by all scholars seeking to develop a nuanced understanding of Ireland's complex relationship with the British Empire.

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DANIEL O'CONNELL AND THE ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT: 'THE SADDEST PEOPLE THE SUN SEES'. By Christine Kinealy. Pp vii, 218. London: Pickering & Chatto. 2011. £60.

Involvement with anti-slavery agitation is not the first thing that comes to mind whenever most Irish people think of Daniel O'Connell. The *Liberator* is best remembered for his campaigns for Catholic Emancipation and repeal of the Act of Union, and so the reformist aspect of his career has often been eclipsed in popular memory. Christine Kinealy's objective in this volume is to draw attention to his abolitionism, which she claims is the reformist cause that the *Liberator* was most devoted to. The book seeks to enable the reader to view O'Connell outside the narrow confines of Irish political history and to acknowledge his role in promoting slave-emancipation and racial equality. Such was O'Connell's influence upon anti-slavery, in both the United Kingdom and the United States, that a monograph analysing the *Liberator's* abolitionist activities is justifiable and probably overdue. The author does, nevertheless, acknowledge the work of other scholars who have written on the subject.

Professor Kinealy begins by mapping out the history of the anti-slavery movement in Britain and Ireland and then situates O'Connell within this broader context. She points out that the *Liberator* argued for gradual emancipation in 1829, only for his position to radicalise into a demand for immediate abolition. When the British parliament did pass a bill for emancipation in 1833, O'Connell was unhappy with the apprenticeship system and the payment of twenty million pounds in compensation to the slaveholders. Consequently, he continued to agitate until the apprenticeship system was finally abolished in 1838.

While other abolitionists were content to end the anti-slavery campaign subsequent to abolition in the British Empire, O'Connell continued to attack the chattel system wherever it existed. Such was his zeal in this cause that he was even willing to work alongside those of differing religious and political convictions in pursuit of the common goal of worldwide abolition. To this end, he played a prominent role at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840. The battle against American slavery, however, brought him into conflict with Irish-American Repealers who opposed O'Connell's bellicose defence of emancipation and his support for religiously-suspect abolitionists. His position was deemed particularly radical in America, owing to his opposition to colonisation and his demand for black equality. Slavery also distinguished O'Connell from the Young Irelanders, as the latter group adopted a more conservative position. Professor Kinealy highlights the fact that, even after his death, O'Connell's writings (especially the famous 'Cincinnati Letter' of 1843) were frequently used as a propaganda tool against the pro-slavery party on the eve of the American Civil War. Hence it is not surprising that leading American abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass recognised the critical importance of O'Connell to the anti-slavery crusade. Nevertheless, the author does not

descend into hagiography, as she recognises that O'Connell had his faults. He certainly acted inconsistently when, out of fear of offending his Whig allies, O'Connell urged Irish M.P.s to vote according to their conscience on the issue of apprenticeship.

On the whole, the book reliably analyses the Liberator's involvement with the abolitionist movement and the significance of his contribution to promoting emancipation in both the British Empire and the United States. The author has also made a conscientious effort to relate this to the broader social, economic and political context in the United Kingdom and America. There are some specific points that the reviewer would question, however. Professor Kinealy suggests that O'Connell did not 'view abolition through an evangelical, redemptive prism' (p. 167), but advocated emancipation on humanitarian grounds. While O'Connell certainly had religious differences with evangelicals, it is also probable that he was influenced by them. For instance, as with many evangelical abolitionists, he advocated immediate abolition because it was what the law of God demanded (p. 1). Moreover, evangelicals would have agreed with O'Connell that chattel slavery was wrong owing to its incompatibility with man's creation in the image of God (p. 121). This is also related to the author's claim that, after 1830, 'abolitionists ... were more strident and they were less constrained by religious affiliation' (p. 28). And yet it was Andrew Thomson, the leader of the evangelical party within the Church of Scotland, who was instrumental in radicalising the debate with his call for immediate emancipation at Edinburgh in October 1830.

The reviewer would also question whether the author gives too much credence to the notion that the Irish were similarly oppressed to the slaves. It must be acknowledged that Garrison and Douglass both used this analogy, so it cannot be completely dismissed. Moreover, the author does note that O'Connell himself occasionally shunned such crude comparisons (p. 5). The argument that the Irish were influenced to support anti-slavery as a result of their experience as 'a colonized people' does not appear persuasive (p. 3). If this was correct then the Irish-Americans should have been the most zealous abolitionists. Additionally, supporters of anti-slavery in Ireland included no-popery figures such as Thomas Drew. Thus there is no logical necessary connection between the issues of Catholic Emancipation and slave abolition. The volume would also have benefitted from tighter editing in order to avoid tautologies and some confusing typographical errors.

There are some issues that might have been pursued further. For instance, O'Connell's claim that anti-slavery benefitted from the Act of Union raises the question of whether he should have embraced the union as the best vehicle for promoting social reform. His attack on Garrison's anti-sabbatarianism is striking, especially since Patrick Geoghegan has pointed out that Sunday was often a day for political agitation. It would be interesting to find out precisely what O'Connell believed concerning Sabbath observance. The Liberator's initial acceptance of money from pro-slavery American sources and his realisation in May 1843 that the only consistent policy was that of refusing such donations is relevant to the 'Send back the money controversy' which occurred shortly afterwards in the Free Church of Scotland. Unlike O'Connell, figures such as Thomas Chalmers and William Cunningham failed to see the inconsistency of opposing slavery while in receipt of pro-slavery contributions. S. J. Brown has noted the similarities between O'Connell and Chalmers in relation to mobilising the poor to support their respective campaigns for Catholic Emancipation and church extension. Perhaps a sustained comparison of their respective attitudes on relations with slave-holders would be worthwhile.

Notwithstanding some differences of opinion, the reviewer found Professor Kinealy's book a very engaging read which adds to both our understanding of O'Connell and abolitionism in America and the United Kingdom. Indeed, the willingness of the author to occasionally offer controversial opinions should provoke further debate and research. It is hoped that this volume will encourage investigation into the involvement of other Irish figures in transatlantic anti-slavery.

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