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## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

### **The life, work and thought of Michael Daniel Jones (1822-1898)**

Tudur, Dafydd

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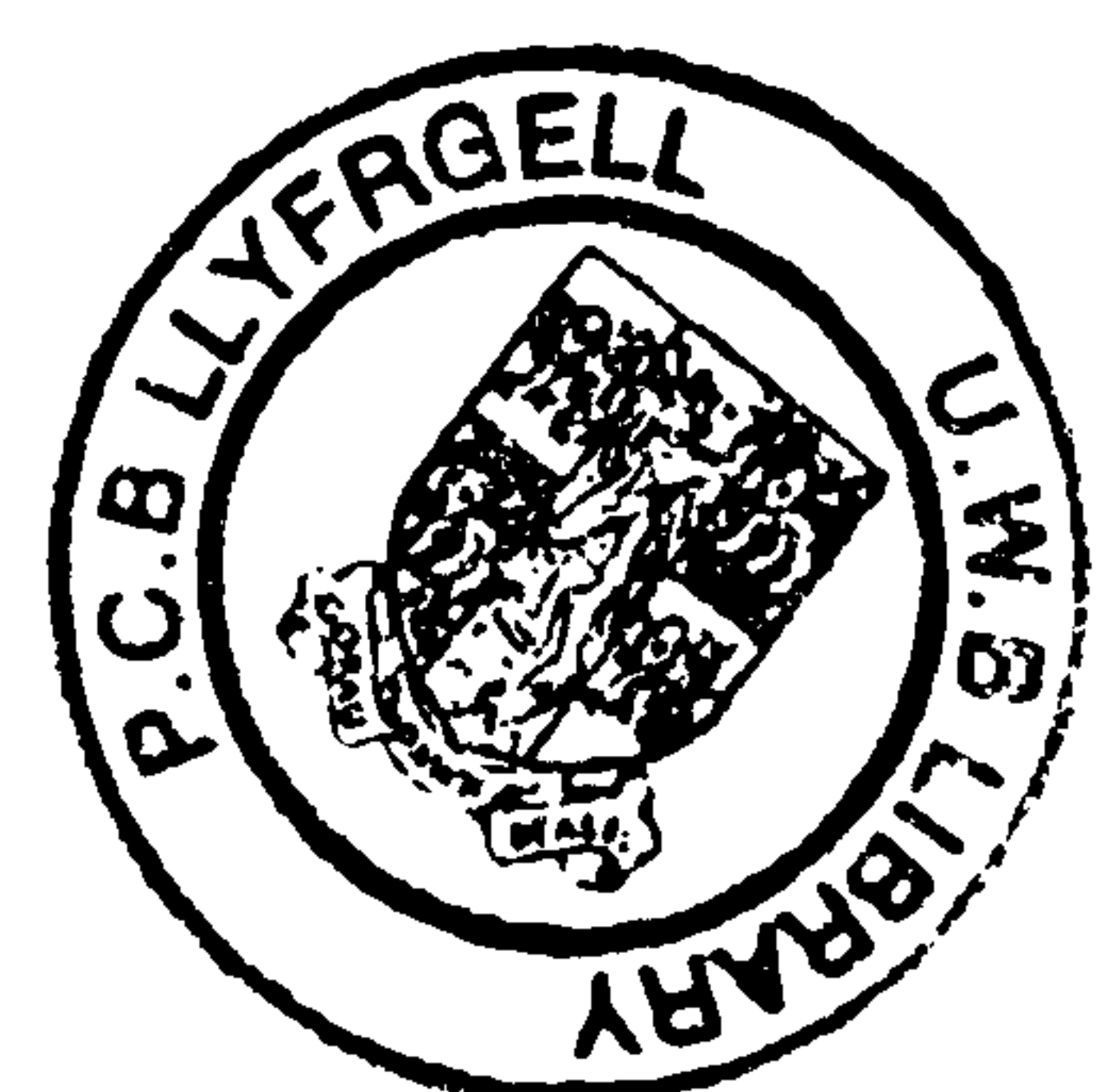
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**The Life, Work and Thought of Michael Daniel Jones  
(1822-1898)**

Dafydd Tudur

Ph.D. Thesis  
University of Wales, Bangor





# Abstract

## **The Life, Work and Thought of Michael Daniel Jones (1822-1898)**

Michael Daniel Jones (1822-1898) is regarded as a pioneering figure in nineteenth-century Wales. He has been hailed not only as the ‘father’ of the Welsh Settlement that was established in Patagonia in 1865, but also as the ‘founding father of modern Welsh nationalism’. As Congregational minister and principal of the Independent College in Bala, Jones also played a leading role in a widely publicized dispute concerning the future of Congregationalism in Wales.

Despite this acclaim, Michael D. Jones has been the subject of remarkably little study. Apart from a biography, published in 1903, only a handful of articles have been written on him. Though these studies have shed some light on Jones’s contribution to nineteenth-century Wales, they have not offered a portrayal that takes into account all aspects of his work and thought.

Based on thorough examination of all the available sources, this study is a re-evaluation of Michael D. Jones’s life, work and thought. Four primary aspects of his thought – religion, radicalism, identity and nationalism – are analysed carefully in order to clarify his views and to place them within the broader context of nineteenth-century Wales. This is followed by an examination of Jones’s participation in various spheres, in particular his role in the formation of a Welsh Settlement (1856-1865), his involvement in the dispute at Bala College (1855-1892), his relationship with the Patagonian Settlement (1865-1892), and his contribution to the ‘national awakening’ in Wales (1876-1892).

The details that emerge provide a clearer understanding of the life, work and thought of Michael D. Jones, and challenge some of the conclusions that have been drawn on the basis of less extensive studies.





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Yn olaf, yr wyf yn falch o allu cymryd y cyfle hwn i ddiolch i'm rhieni a'm brodyr am eu cefnogaeth a'u cwmni diddan yn y cartref. Yn yr un modd, hoffwn ddiolch i Elin, fy nghariad, am ei chwmni a'i chymorth ar y daith i Batagonia, ac am ei hamynedd a'i hanogaeth dros y pedair blynedd. Bu hithau a'm teulu yn gefn i mi bob amser ac am hynny diolchaf iddynt o waelod calon.



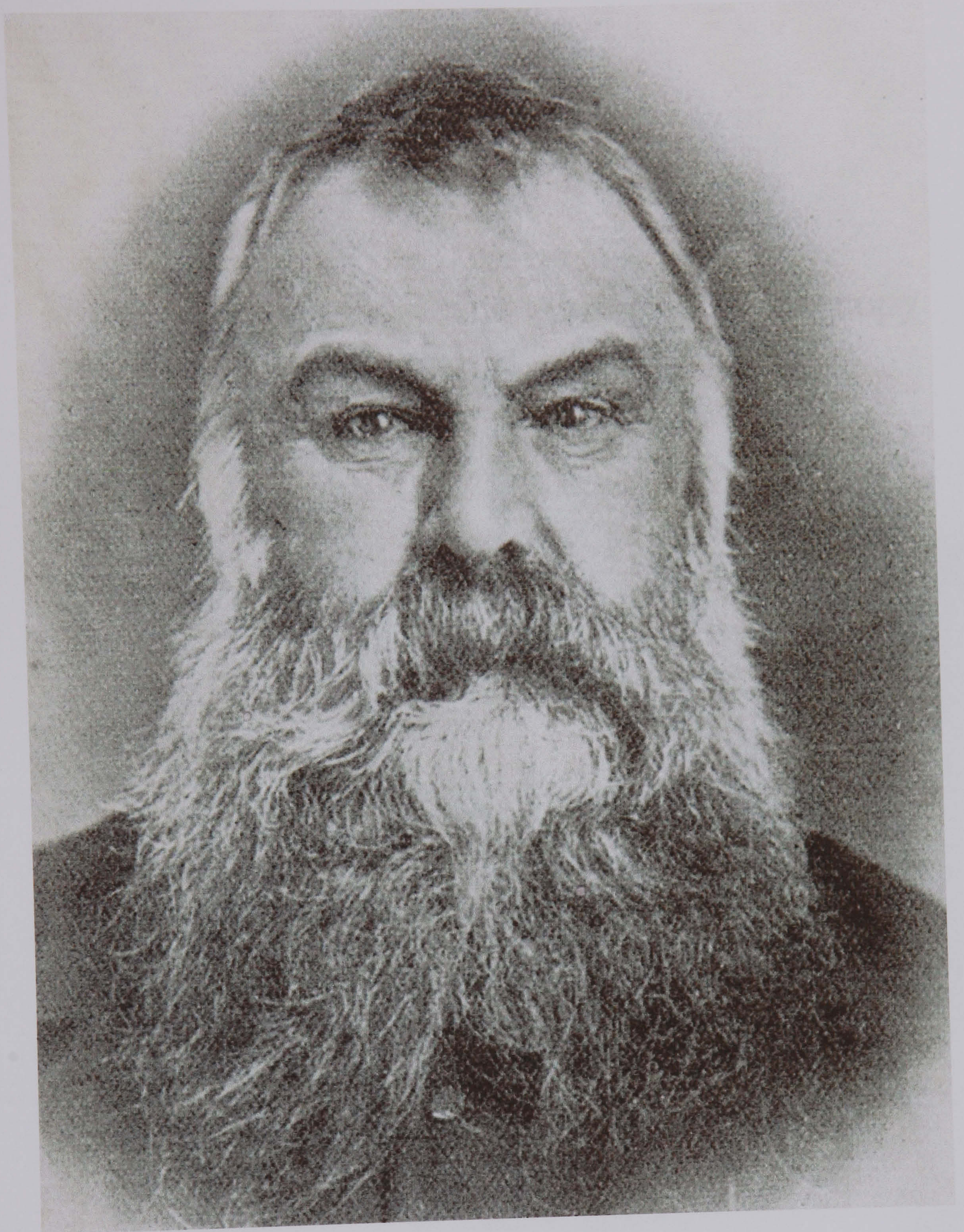
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## *Abbreviations*

- DNB* H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds.), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).
- DWB* J. E. Lloyd and R. T. Jenkins (eds.), *The Dictionary of Welsh Biography down to 1940* (London, 1959).
- DCC* E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford, 1997).
- EAH* G. B. Nash (ed.), *Encyclopedia of American History* (New York, 2003).
- EN* A. J. Motyl (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Nationalism* (London and San Diego, 2001).
- EPT* D. Miller (ed.), *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought* (Oxford, 1987).
- NCWL* M. Stephens (ed.), *The New Companion to the Literature of Wales* (Cardiff, 1998).
- NDT* S. B. Ferguson and D. F. Wright (eds.), *The New Dictionary of Theology* (Leicester, 1988).
- NLW* National Library of Wales.
- Trans. Cymm.* *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion.*





Michael Daniel Jones (1822-1898)



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## Introduction

It is not for the performance of his duties as Congregational minister and principal of a theological college that Michael Daniel Jones (1822-98) is largely remembered in contemporary Wales. Instead, his name is usually associated with the establishment of a 'Welsh' settlement in Patagonia, a sparsely populated region of South America. His involvement in the venture stemmed from his appreciation of Welsh national characteristics. By directing the flow of Welsh immigrants to this settlement, Jones hoped that their national identity would be safeguarded from the assimilative influence of other cultures and could flourish unhindered. During the late 1850s and early 1860s, he promoted the idea in Wales and in the United States, where Welsh communities were gradually losing their distinctive character, and, in July 1865, his efforts were finally rewarded when the first group of Welsh settlers landed on the shores of New Bay. Despite spending only three months in the Patagonian Settlement during a visit in 1882, Jones was hailed by its inhabitants as 'Tad y Wladfa' (the

Father of the Settlement).<sup>1</sup> For nearly thirty years, he was a vociferous supporter of the movement's aims and endeavours, and, by the time he retired from public life in 1892, the Settlement had become home to more than two thousand Welsh speakers.<sup>2</sup>

Michael D. Jones's understanding of Welsh national characteristics led him to the conclusion that, in order to maintain their identity and further their national interests, the people of Wales should campaign for their own parliament. Indeed, he was described by twentieth-century Welsh poet David James Jones (Gwenallt)<sup>3</sup> as 'the greatest Welshman of the nineteenth century; the greatest nationalist after Owain Glyndŵr'.<sup>4</sup> During the 1870s and 1880s, Jones vigorously promoted his aspirations in the press and it is claimed that his ideas influenced a younger generation of Welshmen, including Thomas Ellis and David Lloyd George, who led the *Cymru Fydd* movement in the late 1880s.<sup>5</sup> Described as 'the first in modern times to offer the Welsh a rational political solution to the question of how best to maintain their identity,'<sup>6</sup> Michael D. Jones has been hailed as 'the founding father of modern political nationalism in Wales'.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig: Tiriogaeth Chubut, yn y Weriniaeth Arianin, De Amerig* (Caernarfon, 1898), p.91; *Y Drafod* (11 August 1899), 3; *Y Drafod* (1 September 1899), 1.

<sup>2</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa* (Cardiff, 1962), p.321.

<sup>3</sup> For David James Jones ('Gwenallt'; 1899-1968), see *NCWL*.

<sup>4</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, 'National Movements in Wales in the Nineteenth Century', in *The Historical Basis of Welsh Nationalism* (Cardiff, 1950), p.115.

<sup>5</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Michael D. Jones', in G. Pierce (ed.), *Triwyr Penllyn* (Cardiff, 1956), p.25; R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl* (Llandysul, 1986), p.119; G. Williams, 'Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Wales: The Discourse of Michael D. Jones', in G. Williams (ed.), *Crisis of Economy and Ideology: Essays on Welsh Society, 1840-1980* (Bangor, 1983), p.182.

<sup>6</sup> *NCWL*, p.395.

<sup>7</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Religion, Nationality and State in Wales, 1840-1890', in D. A. Kerr (ed.), *Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1840-1940*, II (Dartmouth, 1992), p.271; *DNB*.

In addition to his nationalist aspirations, Michael D. Jones was involved in local politics. In his native county of Meirionnydd, he campaigned for the rights of tenant farmers, whom he believed to be oppressed by landowners and their staff. The most significant episode in the turbulent relationship between Jones and the local landowners was the 1859 general election. Jones expressed vocal support for David Williams, the first Liberal candidate to stand for the parliamentary seat of Meirionnydd. Although Williams was eventually defeated by a narrow margin, it seems that the local landowner, Watkin Williams Wynn, took retributive action against Jones because of his role in the campaign. Jones's mother, Mary, was evicted from her smallholding in Llanuwchllyn, the effects of which contributed to her death in 1861. This notorious incident secured for Michael D. Jones a place in the political history of Meirionnydd as one who had suffered at the hands of the landowners.<sup>8</sup>

Alongside nationalist and political interests, Michael D. Jones served as Congregational minister and principal of the Independent College in Bala for almost forty years, during which he instructed more than two hundred students.<sup>9</sup> However, his time at Bala was troubled by disagreement and ill feeling, particularly from the late 1870s, when he became involved in a dispute that has been described as 'one of the most extraordinary episodes in all the religious chronicles of our nation'.<sup>10</sup> The so-called 'Battle of the Two Constitutions' was a disagreement over the management of Bala Independent College. Some argued that the subscribers, who contributed

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<sup>8</sup> *Yr Efrogdydd* (1929-30), 34; *Y Dysgedydd* (April 1912), 152; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), p.215.

<sup>9</sup> *Y Celt* (4 August 1893), 1. See also, NLW, Typescript. D. J. Williams, 'Hanes Coleg Bala-Bangor'.

<sup>10</sup> O. Thomas and J. Machreth Rees, *Cofiant y Parchedig John Thomas, D.D.*, *Liverpool* (London, 1898), p.331; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.119.



financially towards the running of the institution, should control the College. Others believed that the County Associations, bodies which claimed to represent the views of the Congregational churches, should have a say in its management. When the College's Committee adopted the latter scheme in the form of a new constitution, Jones stated his opposition to it, claiming that it was contrary to Congregational principles. This confrontation with the College Committee resulted in Jones's formal dismissal as principal in 1879, though he established a rival Independent College in the town. The split lasted until 1890. Tension lingered among Welsh Congregationalists for many years more, and Michael D. Jones gained a reputation for his steadfast defence of Congregational principles.<sup>11</sup>

Michael D. Jones's nationalism, political involvement and Congregationalism were all discussed in *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala*, written by one of his pupils, Evan Pan Jones,<sup>12</sup> and published in 1903. This biography is an attempt to encapsulate Michael D. Jones's life and contribution in a single work. Each chapter focuses on either a period or an aspect of his life. It begins by describing his upbringing in Llanuwchllyn, his education at Carmarthen and Highbury, and his visit to the United States in 1848-9, before concentrating on the dispute at Bala, his connections with the Patagonian Settlement, and his involvement in national and local politics. Two closing chapters discuss Jones's work as a minister and his personal traits. Being the only work that discusses all aspects of Michael D. Jones's life and

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<sup>11</sup> T. R. Roberts, *Dictionary of Eminent Welshmen* (Cardiff, 1908), p.262; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru* (Swansea, 1966), p.271.

<sup>12</sup> For Evan Pan Jones (1834-1922), see E. G. Millward, 'Dieter Poeth y Dr Pan', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl IX* (Llandysul, 1994), pp.163-90; M. Evans, 'Papur Pan', *Y Traethodydd* (July 2001), 142-55; T. Davies, 'Pan Jones', *Y Llenor* (1934), 144-57; E. Pan Jones, *Oes Gofion* (Bala, 1912), pp.25-8; P. Jones-Evans, 'Evan Pan Jones – Land Reformer', *Welsh History Review* (1968), 143-59.

contribution, Pan Jones's biography is still a valuable source for any further study of his thought and work.

The weakness of *Oes a Gwaith* as a study of Michael D. Jones's life and work is that it was written in the same hagiographic style as the tributes which appeared in Welsh Congregational periodicals such as *Y Dysgedydd*, *Y Geninen* and *Y Cronicl*.<sup>13</sup> Pan Jones's evaluation of Michael D. Jones's contribution was clear from the outset. Michael D. Jones was 'a GREAT man', he declared. Indeed, Michael D. Jones was 'the most multi-talented man' that he had ever met.<sup>14</sup> Given Pan Jones's unequivocal opinion, it is hardly surprising that he did not subject Michael D. Jones's activities to any critical analysis. In fact, he made no attempt to offer a detailed and evaluative study of his subject, and despite claiming that the task of writing this biography was equal to that of four 'ordinary' biographies,<sup>15</sup> extracts from Michael D. Jones's articles and letters formed a large portion of the work. Several articles were quoted in full, yet Pan Jones rarely made any comment on their content.<sup>16</sup> He explained: 'Our reason for quoting so extensively from his articles is that they afford a better portrayal of him than we could give by describing him'.<sup>17</sup> Thus, while *Oes a Gwaith* should be the starting point for any further study of Michael D. Jones's contribution, it should

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<sup>13</sup> For tributes to Michael D. Jones, see *Y Celt* (4 August 1893), 1-2; *Cymru* (1895), 253; *Y Geninen* (July 1895), 211-3; *Y Cronicl* (January 1899), 11-15; *Cwrs y Byd* (January 1899), 1-8; *Y Cronicl* (February 1899), 39-41; *Cwrs y Byd* (March 1899), 49-51; *Y Geninen* (July 1899), 166-72; *Y Geninen* (October 1899), 281-5; *Y Geninen* (January 1900), 33; *Y Dysgedydd* (April 1912), 149-52; *Y Traethodydd* (1915), 234-49; *Y Dysgedydd* (December 1920), 358-63; *Y Dysgedydd* (May 1922), 142-5; *Y Dysgedydd* (November 1925), 328-33; *Yr Efrogdydd*, VI (1929-30), 31-7; *Y Dysgedydd* (December 1930), 367-71.

<sup>14</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.v.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.23-7, 35-9, 41-6, 59-63, 100-4, 105-10, 111-7, 122-5, 125-31, 133-4, 182-3, 189-91, 191-4, 231-6, 263-7, 267-76, 284-9, 291-314, 331-7.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p.267.



properly be regarded as a celebration rather than a critical analysis of his life and work.

Pan Jones's high regard for Michael D. Jones is hardly surprising bearing in mind the connections between the two men. Pan Jones, who hailed from Capel Iwan in Carmarthenshire, was educated by Michael D. Jones at Bala Independent College in the late 1850s. He later studied at Carmarthen, Paris and Marburg, but he retained his connection with Bala. In 1870, Pan Jones travelled with Michael D. Jones to the United States to collect donations to College funds from expatriate Welsh communities. When the dispute broke out over the management of the College, Pan Jones stood firmly in support of his former tutor. He was once described as 'the great fighter for the Old Constitution',<sup>18</sup> and, during the 1880s, he was editor of *Y Celt*, the paper that was launched by supporters of Michael D. Jones during the Bala College dispute. Pan Jones also shared the political platform with Michael D. Jones. In 1886, they organized the visit of Michael Davitt, leader of the Irish land movement, who addressed meetings at Flint, Blaenau Ffestiniog and Llandudno. Clearly, Pan Jones and Michael D. Jones were not only acquaintances, but also collaborators.

When writing the biography, Pan Jones had no reservations about his connections with Michael D. Jones. In the preface, he freely admitted that his close acquaintance with his subject made him particularly suitable for the task of writing the book.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Pan Jones's unreserved admiration for Michael D. Jones would not have drawn any criticism of the biography at the time of its publication. The *Cofiant*, which is the biographical form that Pan Jones employed, was not intended to be

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<sup>18</sup> I. Peate, 'Helynt y Cyfansoddiadau', *Y Llenor* (1933), 2.

<sup>19</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.v.

objective in its analysis. The intention was to present the subject as an embodiment of exemplary religious virtues and moral ideals.<sup>20</sup> This form of literature enjoyed immense popularity in Wales from the mid-nineteenth century. It was usually dedicated to a Nonconformist minister or lay-preacher, and the emphasis was usually on the spiritual development of its subject.<sup>21</sup> Suffice to say that contemporaries would hardly have been surprised that Pan Jones had written a portrayal of Michael D. Jones which highlighted his strengths and overlooked any possible weaknesses.

Despite popular acclaim, studies of nineteenth-century Welsh political history suggest that Michael D. Jones was a marginal figure. Reginald Coupland, in his study of Welsh and Scottish nationalism, mentioned Jones's role in the Patagonian movement, but he made no reference to his political vision for Wales.<sup>22</sup> Ryland Wallace, in his study of nineteenth-century radicalism, referred to Jones in passing, but he said nothing of his unusual political views.<sup>23</sup> More significantly, Ieuan Gwynedd Jones made only a brief reference to Michael D. Jones in his study of nineteenth-century politics in Meirionnydd, and he gave little attention to his role in the 'epoch making' general election of 1859.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, Matthew Cragoe, in his recent work on culture, politics and national identity in nineteenth-century Wales, made no reference to Michael D. Jones's national aspirations for Wales, though he referred briefly to the

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<sup>20</sup> S. Lewis, 'Y Cofiant Cymraeg', *Trans. Cymm.* (1933-5), 157-73; R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in England* (London, 1962), p.231; *NCLW*.

<sup>21</sup> T. Parry, *Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg hyd 1900* (Cardiff, 1944), p.254.

<sup>22</sup> R. Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism* (London, 1954), p.213.

<sup>23</sup> R. Wallace, *Organise! Organise! Organise!: A Study of Reform Agitations in Wales, 1840-1886* (Cardiff, 1991), p.135.

<sup>24</sup> I. G. Jones, 'Merioneth Politics in Mid-nineteenth century', in I. G. Jones, *Explorations and Explanations: Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales* (Llandysul, 1981), pp.83-163.



fact that Jones had presented evidence to the Select Committee on Municipal and Parliamentary Elections in 1869.<sup>25</sup>

Michael D. Jones's apparent isolation from mainstream Welsh politics has not passed unnoticed. Kenneth O. Morgan described him as an 'isolated figure'.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, Ieuan Gwynedd Jones referred to him as a 'lonely and enigmatic figure',<sup>27</sup> while R. Tudur Jones branded him 'a loner',<sup>28</sup> noting that 'he made no attempt to form a group or party to propagate his views'<sup>29</sup> and that he did not 'associate himself closely with any particular movement after 1870'.<sup>30</sup> Welsh *litterateur* Owen M. Edwards recalled a time 'when Michael D. Jones clearly stood alone, because he was so far ahead of everyone else with his ideas'.<sup>31</sup> Edwards suggested that it was the progressiveness of Jones's thought that separated him from other individuals and movements. Neville Masterman made a similar claim in his biography of Thomas Edward Ellis,

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<sup>25</sup> M. Cragoe, *Culture, Politics and National Identity in Wales, 1832-1886* (Oxford, 2004), pp.164-5. Michael D. Jones is also mentioned briefly in J. Black, *A New History of Wales* (Thrupp, 2000), p.158; J. Davies, *Hanes Cymru* (Cardiff, 1990), pp.398, 399, 402-3, 437; D. G. Evans, *A History of Wales, 1815-1906* (Cardiff, 1989), pp.64, 314, 315; G. H. Jenkins and J. Beverley Smith (eds.), *Politics and Society in Wales, 1840-1922* (Cardiff, 1988), pp.22, 27, 93, 98; R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cymru yn y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg* (Cardiff, 1933), pp.25, 51, 97; I. G. Jones, *Mid-Victorian Wales: The Observers and the Observed* (Cardiff, 1992), p.67; K. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980* (Oxford, 1982), pp.7, 11, 17, 33, 91, 113; P. Morgan, *Wales: The Shaping of a Nation* (Newton Abbot, 1984), p.139; D. Williams, *Modern Wales* (London, 1950), pp.274-5, 280; G. A. Williams, *When was Wales?* (Cardiff, 1985), pp.202, 214. He is not mentioned in G. E. Jones, *Modern Wales* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1994); D. Smith, *Wales! Wales?* (London, 1984).

<sup>26</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922* (Rev. edn, Cardiff, 1970), p.104.

<sup>27</sup> I. G. Jones, 'Merioneth Politics in Mid-nineteenth century', p.109.

<sup>28</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Religion, Nationality and State in Wales, 1840-1890', p.273.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl', p.111.

<sup>31</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.96. For Owen Morgan Edwards (1858-1920), see W. J. Gruffydd, *Owen Morgan Edwards, Cofiant*, I (Aberystwyth, 1937); *DWB*.



describing him as the ‘Welsh prophet’,<sup>32</sup> while R. Tudur Jones, historian of Welsh Congregationalism, saw him as ‘one of the most original and insightful minds in the second half of the nineteenth century’.<sup>33</sup> Others have suggested that there was a strong element of prejudice behind Michael D. Jones’s ideas. Reginald Coupland described Jones as ‘a somewhat eccentric Independent minister and a stout hater of England’,<sup>34</sup> and Kenneth O. Morgan presented him in a similar light by referring to his ‘bitter hostility to all things English’.<sup>35</sup>

Historians who have focused on Michael D. Jones’s thought suggest that it was his pioneering ideas about Welsh national identity, rather than his prejudices, that accounted for his isolation from mainstream Welsh politics in the nineteenth century. Indeed, it was Jones’s nationalist aspirations that attracted most interest during the twentieth century. Gwenallt, the eminent twentieth-century Welsh poet, was the first to study this aspect of his thought. Gwenallt discussed Michael D. Jones’s political ideas in two articles. The first was a study of ‘national movements’ in nineteenth-century Wales, published in 1950,<sup>36</sup> while the second was an article specifically on Michael D. Jones, published in 1956.<sup>37</sup> Based on material that Michael D. Jones published in *Y Celt* during the 1880s, these articles discussed his political and economic views and identified key aspects of his nationalism. Gwenallt also suggested various influences on Michael D. Jones’s thought, such as his father, Michael Jones, the radical Hugh Pugh and the Hungarian and Italian revolutionaries,

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<sup>32</sup> N. C. Masterman, *The Forerunner: the dilemmas of Tom Ellis, 1859-1899* (Llandybie, 1972), pp.25-6.

<sup>33</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.271.

<sup>34</sup> R. Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism*, p.213.

<sup>35</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922*, p.104.

<sup>36</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, ‘National Movements in Wales in the Nineteenth Century’, pp.114-20.

<sup>37</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, ‘Michael D. Jones’, pp.1-27.

Lajos Kossuth and Guiseppe Mazzini.<sup>38</sup> However, both articles offered little more than an outline of Jones's views. They did not dispute the significance of his ideas or the value of his contribution to nineteenth-century Welsh politics and society. Indeed, in a postscript to the second article, Gwenallt noted that while the biography had been useful to him, he felt that Pan Jones was 'too partial' to give an objective evaluation of his contribution and that 'a much larger biography' was needed 'to discuss his life and work in full detail'.<sup>39</sup>

Gwenallt's interest in Michael D. Jones may be explained by his own political convictions. He was a supporter of the nationalist movement that emerged in Wales during the 1920s, the onset of which was marked in 1925 by the formation of the Welsh Nationalist Party (Plaid Cymru). Although it did not enjoy much success at the polls, this new party had a cultural as well as a political agenda, part of which was to underline the importance of Welsh national heritage. Gwenallt was one of several members of the Welsh *literati* who supported the movement, including Saunders Lewis, D. J. Williams, Kate Roberts, Waldo Williams and R. Williams Parry.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, the work in which Gwenallt discussed Michael D. Jones's contribution was published by Plaid Cymru. Moreover, bearing in mind that Gwynfor Evans, president of the party between 1945 and 1981, described Michael D. Jones in 1968 as 'in many ways the spiritual father of Plaid Cymru',<sup>41</sup> it is hardly surprising that Gwenallt chose not to dispute his contribution.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp.3, 4, 10.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.26

<sup>40</sup> R. Merfyn Jones, *Cymru 2000: Hanes Cymru yn yr Ugeinfed Ganrif* (Cardiff, 1999), p.170.

<sup>41</sup> O. D. Edwards, et al., *Celtic Nationalism* (London, 1968), p.239.



R. Tudur Jones displayed a fleeting interest in several aspects of Michael D. Jones's thought.<sup>42</sup> Yet despite being principal of Bala-Bangor Independent College, the institution that emerged from the 'Battle of the Two Constitutions', Tudur Jones seemed more interested in Michael D. Jones's nationalist ideals than in his Congregationalism.<sup>43</sup> Tudur Jones was himself an advocate of Welsh nationalism. He stood as a candidate for Plaid Cymru in the constituency of Anglesey in the 1959 and 1964 general elections, and he edited the party's monthly journal *Y Ddraig Goch* between 1963 and 1974.<sup>44</sup> As in Gwenallt's case, Tudur Jones's political sympathies explain his apparent interest in Michael D. Jones's nationalist thought.

Nevertheless, Tudur Jones never produced a detailed study of any aspect of Michael D. Jones's life and work. Some of his articles on broader subjects contain outlines of his political thought,<sup>45</sup> but his only substantial work on Michael D. Jones was an article published in the first volume of *Cof Cenedl*, a series of articles on Welsh history. The article was entitled 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl' (Michael D. Jones and the Fate of the Nation), and it was an outline of Jones's views on issues

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<sup>42</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Barf Michael D. Jones', *Y Cofiadur* (1973), 60; R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Nimrodiaeth Lloegr', *Y Genhinen* (1974), 161-4; R. Tudur Jones, 'Haul a chwmwl ym mlynnyddoedd cyntaf Coleg Bala-Bangor', *Logos* (1977), pp.3-13; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, pp.226, 254-7, 271-2, 289; R. Tudur Jones, *Yr Undeb* (Swansea, 1975), pp.109-10.

<sup>43</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Religion, Nationality and State in Wales, 1840-1890', pp.271-4; R. Tudur Jones, *The Desire of Nations* (Llandybie, 1974), p.180; R. Tudur Jones, 'Cwmni'r Celt a Dyfodol Cymru', *Trans. Cymm.* (1987), 141-9; R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl', pp.95-123.

<sup>44</sup> R. Pope, "'Un o Gewri Protestaniaeth Cymru": R. Tudur Jones ac Annibynwyr Cymru', in R. Pope, *Codi Muriau Dinas Duw: Anghydfurfiaeth ac Anghydfurfwyr Cymru'r Ugeinfed Ganrif* (Caernarfon, 2005), pp.263-5; R. Pope, "'A Giant of Welsh Protestantism": R. Tudur Jones (1921-98) and Congregationalism in Wales', *International Congregational Journal* (February 2003), pp.31-33; *NCWL*.

<sup>45</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Religion, Nationality and State in Wales, 1840-1890', pp.271-4; R. Tudur Jones, *The Desire of Nations*, p.180; R. Tudur Jones, 'Cwmni'r Celt a Dyfodol Cymru', pp.141-9.

relating to the Welsh nation.<sup>46</sup> Tudur Jones was not the only historian to publish an article on Michael D. Jones in *Cof Cenedl*. Volume seventeen contains an article by Huw Walters, historian of the nineteenth century, which discussed Jones's views on the Welsh language.<sup>47</sup> Both articles contain new information on Michael D. Jones, but the object of the *Cof Cenedl* series has, to some extent, limited their value to further analysis of his life and work. The series was launched with the intention of 'deepening the awareness of the Welsh-speaking Welsh of their inheritance'.<sup>48</sup> It was intended particularly for non-academic circles, which may explain the omission of references to historical sources and the reluctance to engage in critical analysis of Michael D. Jones's work.

Gwenallt, R. Tudur Jones and Huw Walters approached Michael D. Jones's thought from what could be described as a 'nationalist' perspective. The basis of his nationalism was not questioned. It was a 'natural' attachment to a pre-existing 'national' community. However, in recent years, the study of nationalism in Europe, especially through the medium of English,<sup>49</sup> has been approached from a different perspective. Since the Second World War, the study of nationalism has experienced what Stuart Woolf described as an 'unusually sharp historiographical revision'.<sup>50</sup> Being aware of its power as a political ideology, many post-war historians became suspicious of nationalist ideology, and wider discussion on the subject was prompted

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<sup>46</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl', pp.95-123.

<sup>47</sup> H. Walters, 'Michael D. Jones a'r Iaith Gymraeg', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl XVII* (Llandysul, 2002), pp.103-34.

<sup>48</sup> G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl* (Llandysul, 1986), preface.

<sup>49</sup> Historiography developed differently in central-eastern Europe, where, as in Wales, the nationalist tradition continued to receive a positive evaluation. S. Woolf (ed.), *Nationalism in Europe: 1815 to the present* (London and New York, 1996), p.6.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*



in 1960 when political scientist Elie Kedourie challenged the view that nationalism was a 'natural' sentiment by declaring it to be 'a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century'.<sup>51</sup> While some historians responded to Kedourie's views by drawing attention to earlier expressions of nationalism, social scientists such as Ernest Gellner and Karl Deutsch elaborated upon them and contributed towards extending the discussion on nationalism beyond the usual boundaries of social and political history and into the fields of sociology and anthropology.<sup>52</sup> Possibly the most seminal work on Celtic nationalism to be published in the twentieth century was sociologist Michael Hechter's *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic fringe in British national development* (1975).<sup>53</sup> Hechter sought to explain why Wales, Ireland and Scotland experienced surges of national sentiment during the nineteenth century despite being at the heart of the largest empire in the world. His explanation was based on the theory of 'uneven development', which had already been used in studies of Latin American nationalism.<sup>54</sup> Hechter observed that the Celtic countries were underdeveloped as 'internal colonies', and he claimed that a 'cultural division of labour' gave the groups that were excluded from positions of authority a sense of economic and social solidarity which found expression in nationalist movements. Bearing in mind that Michael D. Jones's isolation has been attributed to his views on national identity, Hechter's thesis raises questions about his general view of the political, economic and cultural relationship between England and Wales, and how it differed from that of his contemporaries.

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<sup>51</sup> E. Kedourie, *Nationalism* (London, 1960), p.9.

<sup>52</sup> E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford, 1983); S. Woolf (ed.), *Nationalism in Europe: 1815 to the present*, pp.6-7.

<sup>53</sup> M. Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic fringe in British national development, 1536-1966* (London, 1975).

<sup>54</sup> A. G. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* (New York, 1969); A. G. Frank, *Latin America. Underdevelopment or Revolution* (New York, 1969); D. L. Adamson, *Class, Ideology and the Nation* (Cardiff, 1991), p.2.

Shortly after the appearance of Hechter's thesis, Glyn Williams published an article on 'Michael D. Jones's discourse' using a similarly sociological approach.<sup>55</sup> In discussing Jones's nationalism, which he described as 'a desire for political independence that derives in part from a sense of injustice', Williams focused on 'the nature of the economic integration which serves as the basis for the perceived injustice, the institutional structure which serves to legitimize the economic order, and the organizational structure around which the emergent nationalism can be mobilized'.<sup>56</sup> Williams created a 'schematic model' to demonstrate Jones's understanding of social and economic forces in nineteenth century Wales.<sup>57</sup> This model seemed to support Michael Hechter's claim that the cultural division of labour was a prerequisite for the development of national movements. Class-based theories of modern Welsh nationalism have since been challenged by David L. Adamson,<sup>58</sup> but Glyn Williams's article still raises questions about Michael D. Jones's interpretation of the relationship between England and Wales, the role of class divisions in his political thought and his primary motives when calling for national self-government.

Glyn Williams's attempt to interpret Michael D. Jones's political thought was ambitious, and little evidence is amassed in support of his argument. This was no doubt hampered by the fact that, at the time of writing, the only secondary sources that were directly relevant to Williams's work were Pan Jones's biography and

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<sup>55</sup> G. Williams, 'Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Wales: The Discourse of Michael D. Jones', pp.180-200.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p.182.

<sup>57</sup> Appendix I.

<sup>58</sup> D. L. Adamson, *Class, Ideology and the Nation*.



Gwenallt's articles.<sup>59</sup> In fact, Williams noted his surprise that no one had attempted to analyse 'the nature and content of his ideas',<sup>60</sup> but there is little evidence to suggest that he examined the primary sources in order to grasp a better understanding of Michael D. Jones's thought. In the article, Williams cites evidence from fewer than ten articles, even though Jones published well over two hundred during his lifetime. Moreover, more than half of the articles used by Williams were gleaned from Evan Pan Jones's biography.<sup>61</sup> Pan Jones was certainly an admirer of Michael D. Jones, but this does not mean that his own political convictions had not influenced his selection of articles to be published in the biography. Michael D. Jones and Pan Jones agreed on several subjects, but Evan Pan Jones was above all a land reformer rather than a nationalist.<sup>62</sup> It is therefore hardly surprising that Pan Jones published an article by Michael D. Jones entitled 'Cyfiawnder i'r Gweithiwr' (Justice for the Worker). This article, like many others, not only supported Pan Jones's political views, but also the argument put forward by Glyn Williams. Interesting and instructive as these articles are, they hardly offer definitive analysis of Michael D. Jones's political thought.

Superficial analysis of Michael D. Jones's life and thought has also led to different views on his role in the movement to establish a Welsh settlement. There are only two studies of Michael D. Jones's involvement in the Patagonian venture, and both were published during the 1960s. The first was part of R. Bryn Williams's celebrated

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<sup>59</sup> G. Williams, 'Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Wales: The Discourse of Michael D. Jones', p.182.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p.182.

<sup>61</sup> The articles cited in Glyn Williams's article are *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (November 1848); (December 1848); *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (22 August 1857); *Y Ddraig Goch* (August 1877); *Y Celt* (6 June 1890), 4; (4 March 1892); *Y Geninen* (November 1893); (October 1894); (July 1897).

<sup>62</sup> P. Jones-Evans, 'Evan Pan Jones – Land Reformer', *Welsh History Review* (1968), 143-59.

history of the Settlement, *Y Wladfa*, published in 1962, and the second was a lecture by Alun Davies commemorating the centenary of the Settlement's establishment in 1965 and published by the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion.<sup>63</sup> Williams and Davies took similar approaches to Michael D. Jones's involvement in the Patagonian movement by discussing his early ideas and his promotion of the venture, though it is noteworthy that neither of them gave much attention to Jones's relationship with the Welsh community in Patagonia after 1865. Nevertheless, Williams and Davies reached different conclusions when evaluating Michael D. Jones's role in the establishment of the Welsh Settlement. Williams suggested that, despite popular acclaim, Jones was a peripheral figure. While commending Jones's sincerity and perseverance, he asserted that 'he was not the first to think of such a settlement, and [that] he did not instigate the movements which sought to establish it: he merely supported them'.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, Williams claimed that Jones's 'primary contribution ... was not made as a promoter of the Welsh Settlement, but as a pioneer of the political awakening in Wales'.<sup>65</sup> Alun Davies, on the other hand, asserted the importance of Jones's contribution. 'If Michael D. Jones had achieved nothing else,' he wrote, 'that which he sacrificed for the Welsh Settlement would be enough to assure him of a prominent place in the history of late nineteenth-century Wales'.<sup>66</sup> Davies admitted that Jones had been 'unwise', 'ignorant', 'stubborn', 'impulsive', and that he had said 'silly things, and some foolish things',<sup>67</sup> yet he added that, 'without him, it is possible that this strange and glorious venture ... would never have taken place'.<sup>68</sup> It is clear that Alun Davies's intention was to reaffirm the importance of Michael D. Jones's

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<sup>63</sup> A. Davies, 'Michael D. Jones a'r Wladfa', *Trans. Cymm.* (1966), 73-87.

<sup>64</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.54.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3.

<sup>66</sup> A. Davies, 'Michael D. Jones a'r Wladfa', 87.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*



role in the venture. However, the fact that Williams and Davies had cited virtually the same sources, and yet reached different conclusions about the significance of his role in the Patagonian enterprise suggests that there is room for more detailed analysis, and that this would perhaps provide a clearer account of his involvement in the establishment of the Welsh Settlement.

The most detailed analysis of the ‘Battle of the Two Constitutions’ at Bala College is an unpublished M. A. dissertation by Richard G. Owen. Owen traced the origins of the dispute to the 1850s, but gave particular attention to events between 1877 and 1885, when the tension at Bala College was most acute. Owen’s criticism of Michael D. Jones separates his work from other studies. He mentioned Michael D. Jones’s contentious nature, his tendency to take offence from other people’s remarks and noted that his stubbornness ‘made it almost impossible for him to co-operate with others’.<sup>69</sup> Having read Evan Pan Jones’s biography and the flattering tributes that were published in the press, R. G. Owen certainly seemed to challenge the popular perception of Michael D. Jones.

However, while R. G. Owen’s criticism of Michael D. Jones was by no means unfounded, his assessment of the Bala College dispute was not impartial. In fact, what separates Owen’s work from other studies of Michael D. Jones’s thought is his sympathy for his opponents. This, it seems, was entirely accidental. Michael D. Jones’s personal papers were unavailable to Owen when he prepared his dissertation. Consequently, he relied heavily on printed and manuscript material which had been produced by Jones’s opponents, the New Constitution party. R. G. Owen’s

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<sup>69</sup> R. G. Owen, ‘Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85’ (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor, 1941), p.254.

dissertation is valuable to any study of late nineteenth century Welsh Congregationalism, but, as will be shown, this factor prevented him from fully appreciating Michael D. Jones's circumstances or the subtleties of his argument in the dispute.

As recent studies have focused on specific aspects of Michael D. Jones's life and work, the overall depiction of him has become somewhat disjointed, and the portrayal given by Evan Pan Jones has yet to be challenged. Admittedly, Jones's political ideals need to be placed within the broader context of European national movements and examined in the light of current theories on nationalism, but Glyn Williams's article has already revealed that this would be futile without an analysis of his contribution based on the widest accumulation of historical evidence. First of all, Jones's work needs to be analysed and evaluated within the spheres to which he contributed, such as the Patagonian movement and the late nineteenth-century 'national awakening', and his thought should be located within the broader context of social, cultural, political and theological developments in nineteenth-century Wales. This study is therefore an analysis of Michael D. Jones's life, work and thought. Based on careful examination of all the available evidence, it will offer a re-evaluation Jones's contribution to various spheres of activity and challenge the conclusions that have been drawn on the basis of less extensive studies.

The primary sources used for this study include both printed and manuscript material. Jones had only four publications to his name. *Cofiant Ap Vychan* was the biography



of his friend and colleague Robert Thomas (Ap Vychan),<sup>70</sup> and it was largely composed of edited material which had been written by its subject.<sup>71</sup> *Y Gwenynydd* was a handbook on beekeeping. It was co-written by local beekeeper Huw Puw Jones of Dinas Mawddwy, and, apart from revealing his love of nature, it contains little information about Jones's thought.<sup>72</sup> The other two pamphlets were published as part of the effort to establish and promote the Welsh Settlement. In *Gwladychfa Gymreig* (1860), Jones promoted the idea of a Welsh settlement before negotiations with the Argentine government had commenced. Although it was published in order to give publicity to the venture, *Gwladychfa Gymreig* contains much information about Jones's arguments in favour of a Welsh settlement.<sup>73</sup> The fourth publication, *Patagonia: Ymweliad y Parchn Michael D. Jones a David Rees a'r Wladfa Gymreig* (1882) was published following Michael D. Jones's return from his visit to Patagonia in 1882.<sup>74</sup> This pamphlet contained information on living conditions in the Chupat Valley and the opportunities that were available to prospective settlers.

Most of Michael D. Jones's published work, spanning the period between 1845 and 1892, can be found in Welsh periodicals, including *Y Cronicl*, *Y Diwygiwr*, *Y Dysgedydd*, *Yr Anybynwr*, *Yr Arweinydd*, *Baner Cymru*, *Yr Amserau*, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, *Y Gwron Gymreig*, *Y Dydd* and *Y Celt*, the Patagonian movement's *Y Ddraig Goch*, and the Welsh-American *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* and *Y Cenhadwr*

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<sup>70</sup> For Robert Thomas ('Ap Vychan'; 1809-80), see M. D. Jones and D. V. Thomas, *Cofiant a Thraethodau Diwinyddol y Parch R. Thomas, (Ap Vychan), Bala* (Dolgellau, 1882); *DWB*.

<sup>71</sup> M. D. Jones and D. V. Thomas, *Cofiant a Thraethodau Diwinyddol y Parch R. Thomas, (Ap Vychan), Bala*.

<sup>72</sup> M. D. Jones and H. P. Jones, *Y Gwenynydd* (Bala, 1888).

<sup>73</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig* (Liverpool, 1860).

<sup>74</sup> M. D. Jones and D. Rees, *Patagonia: Ymweliad y Parchn Michael D. Jones a David Rees a'r Wladfa Gymreig* (Bangor, 1882).

*Americanaid*. The largest collection of Jones's articles is found in the columns of *Y Celt*, a weekly paper launched in 1878 by supporters of Bala College's Old Constitution.<sup>75</sup> The numerous articles that he published between 1878 and 1892 covered a range of subjects, including the progress of the Welsh Settlement, the dispute at Bala College, the need for national self-government and the state of local politics in Meirionnydd.

In addition to the journals and newspapers to which Jones contributed over the years, the sources for this study also include manuscript material, most of which is utilized for the first time. Much of the relevant material is kept in the archives at the University of Wales, Bangor, and the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. The largest collection of Michael D. Jones's personal papers is kept at Bangor. It contains letters and notebooks relating to various aspects of his life and work, particularly the Patagonian Settlement and the 'Battle of the Two Constitutions'. Jones's diaries, which date from 1862 to 1884, are also kept in Bangor, although, as Pan Jones noted, they consist of little more than preaching engagements and accounts. Letters are also kept in other collections at Bangor and the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. Other documents that were useful to the study were discovered at the Gwynedd and Denbighshire County Council Archives in Dolgellau and Rhuthun, and at the University Archives in Swansea.

This study is also based on manuscripts which are unpublished. Some were found in the possession of the late R. Tudur Jones. How the collection of manuscripts came into his possession is unknown, but it consists of about 130 documents, including

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<sup>75</sup> See R. Tudur Jones, 'Cwmni'r Celt a Dyfodol Cymru'.



letters, sermons and personal notes. Research in Argentina also uncovered manuscript material that was particularly useful to the study of Michael D. Jones's relationship with the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia. Various papers were found in the Archivo General de la Nación in Buenos Aires and in the Museo Historico in Gaiman, Patagonia. Most valuable to this study was a collection of 56 letters from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, the first president of the Settlement. The correspondence spans the entire period from the establishment of the Settlement in 1865 to Michael D. Jones's retirement from public life in the 1890s. There were some documents also in the private possession of Tegai Roberts and Luned Gonzalez, both of whom are descendents of Michael D. Jones living in Gaiman.

This study of Michael D. Jones's life, work and thought begins with a brief introductory chapter discussing his early life. It will cover the period between his birth in Llanuwchllyn in 1822 and his appointment as principal of Bala Independent College in 1855. This chapter will clarify the details of a somewhat vague period in Jones's life, but it will also supply the background for the subsequent four chapters, each of which will focus on a key aspect of his thought. The second chapter examines Michael D. Jones's religious convictions, namely his theological standpoint and his moral philosophy. The third chapter will analyse Jones's political radicalism. It will also be an opportunity to evaluate his role in the mid-nineteenth century political awakening in Wales. The fourth and fifth chapters focus on Jones's Welsh identity and his nationalist aspirations. Although these aspects of his thought have received some attention in recent studies, these two chapters will reveal new information about the formation and development of Jones's ideas on Welsh nationhood and his political aspirations for Wales.

Having analysed Michael D. Jones's thought, the remaining chapters of this study will focus on his participation in the Patagonian venture, the dispute at Bala Independent College, and his contribution to the so-called 'national awakening' in the late nineteenth century. As will be seen, the various aspects of Jones's work were by no means unrelated. The sixth chapter will analyse and evaluate his participation in the Patagonian venture. It will discuss his role within the movement in Wales and the United States between 1848, when he first declared his support for the establishment of a Welsh settlement, and 1865, when he covered much of the cost of transporting the first group of settlers to Patagonia. The seventh chapter will explain the impact of this expenditure on Jones's financial situation, and how it led him to bankruptcy in 1871. This will provide the backdrop for the eighth and ninth chapters, one of which will study his involvement in the dispute at Bala College in the 1870s, and the other his relationship with the Welsh Settlement following its establishment in 1865. The tenth and final chapter is a study of Michael D. Jones's role in the 'national awakening' in the 1880s. It will discuss his efforts to gather support for his nationalist aims during a period that saw significant changes to the way in which Wales was perceived within British politics. This insight into Michael D. Jones's role in multifarious social, political and religious activities will shed new light both on the development of his thought as well as on the nature of his involvement. The details that emerge will clarify and, in some ways, challenge the current understanding of Jones's life, work and thought.

## Chapter 1

## Early Life and Background

1822-55

Michael Daniel Jones was born at the house adjoined to ‘Yr Hen Gapel’ near Llanuwchllyn, Meirionnydd, on 2 March 1822. He was the third of five children born to Michael and Mary Jones. Michael Jones was a Welsh Independent minister.<sup>1</sup> He hailed from Neuaddlwyd in Cardiganshire, where he was born in 1785 on a smallholding called ‘Yr Aipht’ and raised nearby at a larger farm called ‘Ffos-y-bontbren’.<sup>2</sup> He began his working life as a farm labourer, turning his hand also to stonemasonry. Financial assistance from his elder brother Evan enabled him to attend school at Lampeter before undertaking an apprenticeship in bookbinding.<sup>3</sup> He later spent two years at David Davies’s school in Castellhywel, paying his own way by

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<sup>1</sup> For Michael Jones (1787-1853), see *Y Dysgedydd* (May 1856), 175-80; *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (24 July 1867), 13; T. Rees and J. Thomas, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, I (Liverpool, 1871), p.420; R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn* (Bala, 1937), p.134; *DWB*.

<sup>2</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (May 1856), 175.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, (October 1953), 230.



returning home during vacations to work the land, preach and give classes. In 1810, Jones entered the Dissenting academy in Wrexham. During his four years at Wrexham, he demonstrated his academic prowess and, it was said, showed greater potential as a theological tutor than as a preacher.<sup>4</sup> On completion of his studies, he received a call to be minister of the Independent church which met at ‘Yr Hen Gapel’ near Llanuwchllyn, where his tutor, George Lewis, had formerly been minister. Two years later, he married Mari Hughes, third daughter of Edward and Elizabeth Hughes of Cwmcarnedd-Isaf near Llanbryn-mair, Montgomeryshire. The Hughes family, which included Edward’s brothers and their families, was large in number and influential in the locality of Llanbryn-mair.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to his responsibilities as minister, Michael Jones kept a school in Llanuwchllyn under the patronage of Dr Williams’s Trust. The purpose of the seven schools funded by the Trust in Wales was to teach children to read and write in English and to instruct them ‘in the principles of the Christian religion’.<sup>6</sup> Having taken advantage of the educational opportunities which had been offered to him, Michael Jones clearly wanted his children to have similar opportunities. Michael D. Jones’s sisters, Mary, Elizabeth and Martha, were taught to read and write at their father’s school. Mary, the eldest, later became a teacher in the United States.<sup>7</sup> On completing his studies, Edward, Michael D. Jones’s younger brother was apprenticed to Williams and Anwyl Surgeons and Physicians at Llanuwchllyn and was a qualified

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 231.

<sup>5</sup> For Mary Jones (1787-1861), see E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), p.13; *Y Traethodydd* (1915), 83; R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn*, p.134.

<sup>6</sup> W. D. Jeremy, *The Presbyterian Board and Dr Daniel Williams’s Trust* (London, 1885), p.87.

<sup>7</sup> *Y Cronicl* (December 1880), 362.



medic when he died on his twenty-fourth birthday in November 1850.<sup>8</sup> It has been claimed that Michael D. Jones was an able student and that he had mastered the rudiments of both Latin and Greek by the age of twelve.<sup>9</sup> He completed his studies at the age of fifteen, and spent the subsequent two years assisting his father at the school.<sup>10</sup> He then began an apprenticeship with a draper in Wrexham in 1837, but resigned almost two years later, supposedly after being beaten by a fellow worker for telling tales.<sup>11</sup>

As in other Nonconformist homes during the nineteenth century, worship and reading the Bible were important aspects of life in Michael Jones's household. Family devotions were thorough, meticulous and frequent. Each member read an extract from the Bible, before reciting the parts which they had committed to memory followed by the singing of a Psalm or hymn.<sup>12</sup> Michael D. Jones was accepted as a member of his father's church in 1834 at the age of twelve, and, by the age of sixteen, he had begun to preach.<sup>13</sup>

Michael Jones's ministry at Llanuwchllyn was troubled by a long-running dispute with members of his congregation. Being the only Independent chapel in the area,

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<sup>8</sup> NLW, W. T. Owen Papers 8. Notes on Dr Williams's Schools.

<sup>9</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.18.

<sup>10</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (November 1925), 328; NLW MS 17789 B. Notes by I. T. Davies.

<sup>11</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.18-19; *Y Drafod* (29 September 1892), 3.

<sup>12</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (May 1856), 180.

<sup>13</sup> The inside cover of Michael D. Jones's Bible, which is in the possession of Tegai Roberts of Gaiman, reads: 'Y Dydd heddyw yr wyf yn ewyllysgar ac o'm bodd yn cymmeryd arnaf Iau Iesu Grist, ac yn cyflwyno fy hun, gorph ac enaid, i'w wasanaeth; gan gyfammodi ger bron Duw a'r Eglwys hon, trwy gymmorth ei ras, i rodio mewn ufudd-dod i'w holl orchmynion holl ddyddiau fy mywyd.....Amen. Llanuwchllyn. Hydref 26 1834. Michael Jones.' For Michael D. Jones's first efforts at preaching see: E. Pan Jones, *Oriel Presbyteraidd Caerfyrddin, 1796-1899* (Merthyr Tydfil, 1909), p.60.

membership of Yr Hen Gapel in 1814 totalled approximately 250, some of whom lived locally while others travelled quite a long distance in order to attend services.<sup>14</sup>

Realizing the difficulties that some of the members faced in having to travel from the remotest parts of the area, Michael Jones began to hold regular Sunday school classes and prayer meetings in the homes of those members who lived furthest away. Considerable unease grew among the members living nearest to the chapel as those who had attended the classes and prayer meetings chose not to attend the Sunday services altogether. Indeed, the number in attendance had declined to about 150 when tensions finally erupted in 1821. Members of the congregation voiced their concern that the church was losing its strength, and Michael Jones was held responsible. Some of the deacons led the opposition, and it sparked a dispute that divided the church.

However, the dispute at Yr Hen Gapel was not confined to practical considerations. Matters of doctrine also fuelled the fires of controversy. There was a divergence of opinion on the issue of church government. Yr Hen Gapel was an Independent church, but, like many other churches of its kind, it had adopted a Presbyterian form of government. Church affairs were firmly in the hands of the deacons and during the two years' interregnum that followed George Lewis's departure their power had become further entrenched. Michael Jones, on the other hand, was a staunch Congregationalist, and was bold enough to express his disapproval of the situation.<sup>15</sup> Before long, Michael Jones, who claimed to be upholding the rights of the whole

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<sup>14</sup> R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn*, pp.135-6.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p.139.



congregation, was, somewhat ironically, accused of wielding ‘more than his share in the government of the church’.<sup>16</sup>

Ap Vychan, who had proposed to write a biography of Michael Jones but never fulfilled his intention, maintained that the primary reason behind the disagreement at Yr Hen Gapel was a conflict of theological views between Michael Jones and the congregation.<sup>17</sup> George Lewis had dedicated much of his ministry at Llanuwchllyn to ‘feeding those who were in his care with knowledge and learning’,<sup>18</sup> and so, being well versed in their Christian doctrine, some members of the Congregation found it difficult to accept some of the views expounded by Michael Jones. Jones was an advocate of the ‘New System’ of moderate Calvinism devised by the influential Congregationalist Edward Williams.<sup>19</sup> The debate between advocates of various forms of Calvinism lasted throughout the first half of the nineteenth century and was known in Welsh Nonconformist circles as the ‘Battle of the Two Systems’.<sup>20</sup> Thus, when tensions surfaced in 1821, Yr Hen Gapel became a focal point for these theological differences.

Michael Jones’s personality did not help to allay the situation. He was a formidable character to say the least. He was described as one who never made ‘an effort to gain anyone’s affections,’ and it is characteristic of his stubborn determination that he

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<sup>16</sup> T. Rees and J. Thomas, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, I, p.418; R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn*, p.142.

<sup>17</sup> T. Rees and J. Thomas, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, I, p.418.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.415.

<sup>19</sup> For Edward Williams (1750-1813), see W. T. Owen, *Edward Williams D. D.: His Life, Thought and Influence* (Cardiff, 1963); *DWB*.

<sup>20</sup> O. Thomas, *Cofiant y Parch John Jones, Talsarn* (Wrexham, 1874), pp.362-537; W. Evans, *An Outline of the History of Welsh Theology* (Newport, 1900), pp.99-168.

chose to remain in Llanuwchllyn after the schism, despite the ill feeling that lingered in the area.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Pan Jones described Mary Hughes as ‘a woman who, in more than one sense, had been made of the same stuff as her husband’,<sup>22</sup> though R. T. Jenkins accused her of failing to regulate Michael Jones’s behaviour or soften his opponents’ resentment towards him.<sup>23</sup> In later years, Michael D. Jones exhibited the same personal traits as his father. In his biography, Pan Jones failed to mention that Michael D. Jones’s determination was often seen as stubbornness, and that his vociferousness was often regarded as tactless. In every field in which he was active, these personality traits brought him into conflict with others. It seems that he inherited these characteristics from his father.

Michael D. Jones was born into this climate of theological controversy and ecclesiastical schism. He was baptized on 1 April 1822 by Cadwaladr Jones of Dolgellau,<sup>24</sup> one of Michael Jones’s supporters in the theological debate. Within a few months, the family left the chapel house because of the ill feeling, and moved to a small farm nearby called ‘Y Weirglodd Wen’.<sup>25</sup> It was there that a congregation of about fifty members who had supported Michael Jones worshipped from 1830 until the rift was healed in 1839.<sup>26</sup> The dispute had lasted eighteen years, during which

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<sup>21</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (24 Gorffennaf 1867), 13.

<sup>22</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.13.

<sup>23</sup> R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn*, p.134.

<sup>24</sup> For Cadwaladr Jones (1783-1867), see R. Thomas, *Cadwaladr Jones, Dolgellau* (Liverpool, 1870); *DWB*.

<sup>25</sup> Bangor MS 7928. The sleeve of Michael D. Jones’s diary for 1872 contains a letter, dated 13 March 1822, from Griffith Richards of Glanllyn to Michael Jones (senior). It offers Jones a farm that is visible from the turnpike road. He seems to be referring to Y Weirglodd Wen.

<sup>26</sup> R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn*, p.152.



Michael Jones was said to have experienced ‘storms that were more bitter than those experienced by any minister in Wales’.<sup>27</sup>

## Education

Michael D. Jones was eighteen years old when he applied to enter the Presbyterian College in Carmarthen. The College, which was situated on The Parade, was founded by Samuel Jones at Brynlllywarch, Carmarthenshire, in the mid-1660s,<sup>28</sup> but it was moved several times to wherever suitable tutors could be found until it settled in Carmarthen for the third and final time in 1795. Although it was sectarian in name, the College was conducted along interdenominational lines and the Presbyterian Board prided itself on its success in attracting students from various denominational backgrounds, claiming that it was proof of the superior standard of education that the institution offered.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, in the late 1830s, the Presbyterian College reached what D. Eurig Davies described as the ‘high tide of its success,’ with students excelling in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Mathematics, Theology, Church History and Biblical Knowledge. Other topics studied at the College included Logic, Natural Law, Geography, Botany, Chemistry, Physiology, French and German.<sup>30</sup>

There can be little doubt that his father’s theological views were a decisive factor in selecting that college for Michael D. Jones. The Congregational College at Newtown

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<sup>27</sup> T. Rees and J. Thomas, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, I, p.410.

<sup>28</sup> The exact date is unknown. G. D. Owen, *Ysgolion a Cholegau yr Annibynwyr* (Llandysul, 1939), p.3; D. Eurig Davies, *Hoff Ddysgedig Nyth* (Swansea, 1976), pp.11-22. For Samuel Jones (1628-97), see *DWB*.

<sup>29</sup> D. Eurig Davies, *Hoff Ddysgedig Nyth*, p.94.

<sup>30</sup> The latter five were added in 1841 in order to meet ‘matriculation’ requirements that would eventually allow the college to award Bachelor of Arts degrees in conjunction with London University. D. Eurig Davies, *Hoff Ddysgedig Nyth*, p.144.

would have been one option, but it seems that Michael Jones feared that its staff and patrons would be prejudiced against his moderate Calvinist views. Besides, the future of the College at Newtown seemed uncertain at the time as there were discussions on the possibility of moving the institution to Brecon.<sup>31</sup> The Presbyterian College, on the other hand, was renowned for the freedom that students were given to investigate different theological and philosophical schools of thought.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, David Davies of Pant-teg, one of the tutors at the Presbyterian College, was an old friend of Michael D. Jones's father.<sup>33</sup> Originally from Cilfforch, near Aberaeron, Davies was educated alongside Michael Jones at Castellhywel and they had both been members of the same Congregational church in Neuaddlwyd. David Davies was also an advocate of the 'New System', and he has been described as one of its 'chief promoters' in south Wales.<sup>34</sup>

Michael D. Jones was admitted to the Presbyterian College in July 1840.<sup>35</sup> Pan Jones gave the impression that he was a hard worker who rose early each morning and had then progressed much further than his colleagues in his studies,<sup>36</sup> but this seems far from the truth at the end of his first year at the College. A report presented by the College's examiners to the Presbyterian Board in July 1841 noted that neither Michael D. Jones nor the only other student in his year had 'given satisfaction either by their conduct or their progress'. They were both found lacking in attention and

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<sup>31</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.20.

<sup>32</sup> W. H. Lewis, *Memoir of the Life and Labours of the Rev. David Peter* (London, 1846), p.80.

<sup>33</sup> For David Davies (1791-1864), see *Y Tyst* (17 November 1955), 4; T. Rees and J. Thomas, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, III (Liverpool, 1873), p.462; *DWB*.

<sup>34</sup> *DWB*.

<sup>35</sup> Minute Books of the Presbyterian Fund. 31 July 1840. p.240; 5 April 1841, p.304; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.19; W. H. Lewis, *Memoir of the Life and Labours of the Rev. David Peter*, p.80.

<sup>36</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.21.



diligence and had been disobedient to the tutors. Furthermore, Jones had disappeared from the College for several weeks prior to the examinations and had intended, in Davison's opinion, to 'evade them altogether'.<sup>37</sup> In a special report, it was stated that Jones and two other students had come under the influence of an older, unruly student named Thomas Thomas, who had since withdrawn from the institution. It was decided that the misconduct of the two younger students was 'rather a misjudgement than an evil intention', and so they were reprimanded and pardoned.<sup>38</sup> The following autumn, the Board reviewed the College's policy on discipline and corresponded with the tutors on the matter. The Report of the Examiners in July 1842 declared that 'the remonstrances of the Board enforced by the exertions of the tutors would appear to have taken full effect – no irregularities of conduct or violations of discipline having called for reproof on this occasion'.<sup>39</sup>

There was no suggestion of any misconduct by Michael D. Jones after his first year at Carmarthen. His performance for the rest of his time there was satisfactory. He received a prize for being the best performing student in the junior class in 1842, and shared the second prize in 1843, though it should be noted that there was only one other student in his year.<sup>40</sup> At the end of his final year, Jones was awarded 'a valuable set of books'; he had 'commended himself to the approbation of the examiners by his proficiency' and had exhibited 'a very respectable power of composition in a brief discourse which he delivered in their presence'.<sup>41</sup> It is claimed that, just prior to his

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<sup>37</sup> Minute Books of the Presbyterian Fund. 19 July 1841. pp.322-3.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. 19 July 1841. pp.334-6.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. 25 July 1842. p.400.

<sup>40</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oriel Presbyteriaidd Caerfyrddin*, pp.59-60. The other student was David Lewis Jones. James James (Iago Emlyn) also entered the College in 1840, but he left in the summer of 1841.

<sup>41</sup> Minute Books of the Presbyterian Fund. 22 July 1844. p.474.

departure from the Presbyterian College, Michael D. Jones received a letter from a Mr Urwick offering him a post as an inspector for the Irish Missionary Society.<sup>42</sup> He declined the offer, choosing instead to continue his studies. Although the reason for this decision is unclear, it is noteworthy that Michael D. Jones's unusually prolonged period of education, which lasted seven years in all, was consistent with the deep respect for knowledge and learning in the home at Llanuwchllyn.

### **Highbury College**

Michael D. Jones's reasons for applying for a place at the Congregational College at Highbury, London, are not as clear as his reasons for attending the Presbyterian College at Carmarthen. There was hardly any connection between Highbury College and Wales. Of the 156 young men who had entered Highbury College between 1826 and 1847, and who were still practising in the Christian ministry in 1850, not one of them was stationed in Wales.<sup>43</sup> Henry Richard, the eminent Nonconformist minister and politician, entered Highbury College in 1830. He was a Calvinistic Methodist at the time, but chose to attend a Congregational College in the absence of theological seminaries belonging to his own denomination.<sup>44</sup> Michael D. Jones may have applied for a place at Highbury for similar reasons. The choice in Wales was limited. A new College had been opened at Bala in 1842, of which his father was principal, and the alternative would be the Congregational College at Newtown, which he had avoided in 1840. As Jones looked to England for an option, the fact that his father's brother,

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<sup>42</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.29-30.

<sup>43</sup> *Reports of the Committee of Highbury College with a List of Subscribers* (London, 1850), pp.28-31.

<sup>44</sup> C. S. Miall, *Henry Richard, M. P.: A Biography* (London, 1889), p.10; E. Roberts, *Bywyd a Gwaith y Diweddar Henry Richard, A. S.* (Wrexham, 1902), p.11; For Henry Richard (1812-88), see L. Appleton, *Memoirs of Henry Richard, The Apostle of Peace* (London, 1889); *DWB*.



Evan, lived in London may have been a decisive factor.<sup>45</sup> However, there were two other Congregational colleges in London, Homerton and Coward, which were amalgamated with Highbury in 1850 to form New College.<sup>46</sup>

It is not clear why Jones decided on Highbury rather than Homerton or Coward Colleges. One possible attraction to Highbury may have been the institution's achievements in the early nineteenth century. It was initially a private institution known as the Evangelical Academy and established by the *Societas Evangelica* in 1778 for the purpose of 'extending the Gospel in Great Britain by itinerant preaching'.<sup>47</sup> It was initially located at Mile End, London, before it was moved to Hoxton Square in 1791. Hoxton Academy established itself as the most successful of the Congregational colleges in London and its students increased from four in 1791 to forty by 1814.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, R. Tudur Jones claimed that 'no academy contributed more to the spread of Independency than Hoxton'.<sup>49</sup> It became known as Highbury College in 1826 when the academy was moved to a newly-constructed building on the South West Front, London, which provided accommodation and study rooms for the students.<sup>50</sup> By the time Michael D. Jones was admitted, the number of applicants had dwindled, and the usual number of resident students was between fifteen and twenty, but Highbury College no doubt retained its status within Congregational circles.

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<sup>45</sup> Bangor MS 10637. Letter from Michael D. Jones, Highbury College, to his parents. c. December 1844; *Y Dysgedydd* (May 1856), 175.

<sup>46</sup> *Reports of the Committee of Highbury College with a List of Subscribers* (London, 1845-7). 1845 (19 students), 1846 (16 students), 1847 (18 students).

<sup>47</sup> R. W. Dale, *History of English Congregationalism* (London, 1907), p.593.

<sup>48</sup> M. R. Watts, *The Dissenters*, II (Oxford, 1995), p.270.

<sup>49</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in England* (London, 1962), p.177.

<sup>50</sup> M. R. Watts, *The Dissenters*, II, p.330.

In October 1844, at the age of twenty-two, Michael D. Jones applied for admission to the Congregational College at Highbury, London.<sup>51</sup> The College Committee, meeting on 25 October 1844, agreed a conditional acceptance of Michael D. Jones's application because his testimonials had not yet been received.<sup>52</sup> He appeared before the Committee on 20 December 1844. The testimonials from David Davies, Pant-teg, and the Bala Congregational Church were deemed satisfactory and Michael D. Jones was admitted on probationary terms.<sup>53</sup>

Students were afforded an extensive curriculum at Highbury College. According to the 'General View' in the College's annual report, all candidates for admittance were examined with the 'Sixth Book of Virgil's *Æneid*, the first book of Xenophon's *Anabasis*, Arithmetic and the Elements of Algebra and Geometry'.<sup>54</sup> Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee and the Syriac languages were studied. Ebenezer Henderson, the theological lecturer and professor of Oriental languages, was an outstanding linguist. He had reached a scholarly standard not only in the Scandinavian languages but also in Hebrew, Syriac, Ethiopic, Russian, Manchu, Mongolian and Coptic.<sup>55</sup> Logic and Rhetoric, Intellectual and Moral Philosophy and the elements of Mathematics were also studied at Highbury, along with Church History, Political Criticism,

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<sup>51</sup> Minute Book of Highbury College, New College Collection (133), Dr Williams's Library.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*; Bangor MS 11278. Letter from E. Henderson to Michael D. Jones, October 1844.

<sup>53</sup> Minute Book of Highbury College, New College Collection (133), Dr Williams's Library.

<sup>54</sup> *Reports of the Committee of Highbury College with a List of Subscribers* (London, 1844), p.7.

<sup>55</sup> For Ebenezer Henderson (1784-1858), see *The Congregational Yearbook* (London, 1859), p.200; T. S. Henderson, *Memoir of E. Henderson, including his labours in Danmark, Iceland, Russia, etc.* (London, 1859); *DNB*.



Composition of Sermons and Theology.<sup>56</sup> These topics were all taught by Henderson and two other tutors, John Hensley Godwin and William Smith.<sup>57</sup> A list of books from Michael D. Jones's library at the end of his first year at the College also reveals the content of the course and his topics of interest. It comprised reference books, Bibles, dictionaries, lexicons and grammars of various languages, including Hebrew, Latin and Greek. Most of the other works were either religious, such as *Claude's Essay on Sermons*, or classical – Virgil, Homer, Horace, Euclid, Thucydides, Euripides, Tacitus and Demosthenes – but the list also includes literary works such as *The Works of Shakespeare* and *Milton's Poetical Works*. Interestingly, other than the Bible and an English-Welsh dictionary, there were no Welsh books on the list.<sup>58</sup>

As can be seen, the course at Highbury College was extensive. Pan Jones claimed that Michael D. Jones had 'soon mastered most, if not all, of the text-books that were studied', before becoming familiar with 'every corpus of theology within his reach'.<sup>59</sup> Yet there was no mention in the Minute Books of the College Committee that Michael D. Jones had excelled beyond the average standard in his studies.<sup>60</sup> Altogether, little is known of Michael D. Jones's time at Highbury. He was hardly mentioned in the College books. However, in a meeting held on 15 January 1847, resident tutor John Hensley Godwin reported to the College Committee that

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<sup>56</sup> *Reports of the Committee of Highbury College with a List of Subscribers*, p.7.

<sup>57</sup> For John Hensley Godwin (1809-89), see A. P. F. Sell, *Philosophy, Dissent and Nonconformity* (Cambridge, 2004), pp.112-4. For William Smith (1813-93), see *DNB*.

<sup>58</sup> Bangor MS 11276. Notebook containing a list of books in Michael D. Jones's possession while at Highbury College.

<sup>59</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.22.

<sup>60</sup> The 'gratifying progress' of Mr Griffiths, for example, had been noted on 25 June 1846.

Mr Jones ... being in an ill state of health had been recommended change of air, & had accordingly gone to his native place. He [Godwin] also suggested that as the distance is considerable and Mr Jones might not be sufficiently recovered 'till the session would be far advanced, he be allowed to remain 'till after the vacation, with the understanding that he be permitted then to return: to which the Committee assented.<sup>61</sup>

The length of time or the amount of work that Michael D. Jones lost due to his illness was not mentioned, and it was almost a year before another entry was made in the Committee Minute Book concerning his position at the College. On 23 December 1847, it was noted 'Mr Godwin reported that Mr M. D. Jones had retired from the institution & was about to embark with his friend for the United States, intending to labor [sic] at a town in the State of Ohio'.<sup>62</sup> Jones had only completed three of the course's four years, but no additional comments were recorded in the Committee Minute Book. Between his sickness and his early departure, it seems that Michael D. Jones had not spent much time at Highbury. Pan Jones made no reference to Jones's abrupt departure from the College, but claimed that two reputable churches in London were interested in him.<sup>63</sup> Clearly, Michael D. Jones had other intentions. The report of Highbury College Committee for 1847-8 stated that he had 'proceeded to North America, where he has the prospect of being useful to his spiritually destitute countrymen, settled in that part of the world'.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Minute Book of Highbury College, New College Collection (134), Dr Williams's Library.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.29.

<sup>64</sup> *Reports of the Committee of Highbury College with a List of Subscribers*, p.7.



## Visiting the United States

The first half of the nineteenth century saw an unprecedented movement of people across the globe, and Wales was only one of several parts of Europe that experienced extensive emigration, the majority of which was directed towards North America. That the flow of migrants from Wales was meagre in comparison to larger nations such as England and Ireland should not detract from the fact that this was a familiar aspect of life for the people of Wales, whether they lived in industrial or agricultural areas. An estimated 29,868 people of Welsh birth lived in the United States by 1850, and the figure would exceed 100,000 before the end of the century.<sup>65</sup>

Michael D. Jones's eldest sister, Mary Ann, left Llanuwchllyn for North America in 1837, when she was twenty years old.<sup>66</sup> Having arrived in Ohio, she stayed with an influential lawyer, William Bebb, and his family in Hamilton, Butler County.<sup>67</sup> Bebb and the Jones family (on the mother's side) were descendents of the Cwmcarnedd family from Llanbryn-mair, several members of which were domiciled in the United States by the 1840s. Of those relatives, the most eminent were Ezekiel Hughes and Edward Bebb (William Bebb's father), both of whom were second cousins of

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<sup>65</sup> J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics*, I (Cardiff, 1985), p.76. See also, A. Conway, *The Welsh in America: Letters from the Immigrants* (Cardiff, 1961), pp.3-13; R. T. Berthoff, *British Immigrants in Industrial America* (Cambridge, 1953), 1-11; W. Shepperson, *British Emigration to North America* (Oxford, 1957), pp.1-20, 257-65; E. G. Hartmann, *Americans from Wales* (Boston, 1969); G. Williams, 'A prospect of paradise? Wales and the United States of America, 1776-1914', in G. Williams, *Religion, Language and Nationality* (Cardiff, 1979), p.217.

<sup>66</sup> *Y Cronicl* (December 1880), 362.

<sup>67</sup> Herbert Bebb, *Bebb Genealogy: The Descendants of William Bebb and Martha Hughes of Llanbryn-mair, Wales* (Chicago, 1944), pp.14-16. See also, C. Taylor, 'Paddy's Run: A Welsh Community in Ohio', *Welsh History Review* (1983), 302-16; A. K. Knowles, *Calvinists Incorporated: Welsh Immigrants on Ohio's Industrial Frontier* (Chicago, 1997), pp.1-42.

Michael D. Jones.<sup>68</sup> They had led a group of about fifty Welsh immigrants to the United States aboard the vessel *Maria* in 1795 and, seven years later, Ezekiel Hughes bought 1,200 acres of land in Butler County, Ohio, which were divided into eight tenements and which developed into the nucleus of a sizeable Welsh community.<sup>69</sup>

It would appear that, amid the bitterness of the controversy surrounding Yr Hen Gapel, Michael Jones had himself contemplated the possibility of emigrating to the United States. Shortly after Mary Ann's arrival in Ohio, William Bebb wrote to Jones informing him of his daughter's good health and happiness. Having heard from Mary Ann that Michael Jones had 'at times entertained thoughts of emigrating to the United States,' Bebb noted the possible advantages and disadvantages of emigration, and assured that the former clearly outweighed the latter. Indeed, one of the advantages was that Michael Jones's son, Michael Daniel, at the time an apprentice to a draper, 'could find immediate employment and wages while learning the business. If he intends ever to come to this country, the sooner he arrives, the better'.<sup>70</sup>

The amount of correspondence between the Jones family and their relatives in America is unknown, but his family connection with Ohio explains Michael D. Jones's interest in that part of the United States.<sup>71</sup> Apart from personal correspondence, he may have read the letters from America which were often

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<sup>68</sup> Herbert Bebb, *Bebb Genealogy: The Descendants of William Bebb and Martha Hughes of Llanbryn-mair, Wales* (Chicago, 1944), pp.14-16; Papers in the possession of Owen ap Iwan, Esquel.

<sup>69</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (December 1849), 367-9; *Y Cronicl* (February 1849), 35-8; For Ezekiel Hughes (1766-1849), see *DWB*.

<sup>70</sup> Herbert Bebb, *Bebb Genealogy*, pp.53-8.

<sup>71</sup> Other letters from the United States include Bangor MS 10552. Letter from Evan H. Jones, Morgan Township, to his cousin, Michael D. Jones, 13 August 1839.



featured in the Welsh press. In the United States, the Welsh-American press was crucial in producing a sense of belonging to a wider Welsh expatriate community. Approximately 65 Welsh periodicals and papers were published in the United States during the nineteenth century. Many were published for only a few years, but it is claimed that the most popular paper, *Y Drych*, had no less than 12,000 subscribers at one time.<sup>72</sup> Copies of those publications were also sent to Wales, thus raising Welsh people's awareness of the issues that affected the day-to-day lives of their friends and family in the United States.

Michael D. Jones departed for the United States sometime in the spring of 1848. According to Evan Pan Jones, he made the journey because, in addition to observing 'Democracy at home' and 'Slavery in practice', he was eager to understand 'the advantages and disadvantages facing the Welsh in America'.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, within a few months, he seems to have established himself as an active member of the expatriate Welsh community in Ohio, and in December 1848, he accepted a call to be pastor to the Congregational Church on Lawrence Street in Cincinnati.<sup>74</sup> The ordination service was held in the Congregational chapel on 7 December 1848. 'Mr Jones,' a report stated in the Welsh periodicals, 'had promised to stay as a *supply* for the Welsh Congregational Church in this town until the beginning of next summer'.<sup>75</sup> Contrary to Pan Jones's claim, it seems that Michael D. Jones had not intended to settle permanently in the United States.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> G. Williams, 'A prospect of paradise? Wales and the United States of America, 1776-1914', p.229.

<sup>73</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.30-1.

<sup>74</sup> V. Jones, *The saga of the Welsh Congregational Church Lawrence Street Cincinnati Ohio 1840-1952* (No publisher, 1952).

<sup>75</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (March 1849), 89.

<sup>76</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.46-7.

During his time in Cincinnati, Michael D. Jones expressed a keen interest in the experiences of Welsh immigrants in the United States. Realizing that his compatriots were neglecting the language, customs and religion that defined their Welsh background, he expressed support for the idea of establishing of a 'Welsh Settlement'. There was no concerted movement to achieve this aim at the time and Jones's views on the subject were rudimentary to say the least, but it is clear that he saw the 'Welsh Settlement' as a place where immigrants from Wales could settle without there being any threat to their national identity, and he suggested Oregon as a possible location.

However, Michael D. Jones seemed to express greater concern for the plight of labourers and tenant-farmers in Wales than for his compatriots in the United States. In November 1848, he called for the establishment of a society to enable poverty-stricken families in Wales to immigrate to the United States.<sup>77</sup> His plea materialized in the form of *Cymdeithas y Brython*, a society established after two meetings were held to discuss the issue at the Baptist Chapel, Harrison Street, Cincinnati, in November 1848. Members of *Cymdeithas y Brython* were to assemble in lodges of no less than twelve subscribers of \$1 each (or women who subscribed more than \$0.50). Those who contributed \$3 were honorary members, and subscribers of \$20 or more were given membership for life. Every member had a vote in the triennial election of officials to manage the Society's activities.<sup>78</sup> The venture secured a financial basis of \$800 to \$1,000, which had been left to it in the will of a recently deceased lady from

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<sup>77</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (November 1848), 333-4. Michael D. Jones's emphasis. Two societies of this kind had already been established at Philadelphia and New York.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, (December 1848), 366-7.



Utica.<sup>79</sup> Welsh immigrants could receive support from *Cymdeithas y Brython* on the condition that they signed a note of hand. In so doing, they promised to repay the debt within eighteen months and agreed to settle in one of the Welsh communities in which a branch of the Society had been formed.<sup>80</sup>

Early reports suggest that *Cymdeithas y Brython* was a success, and Michael D. Jones was hailed as the ‘main instrument ... in awakening enthusiasm in the minds of our nation for this worthy cause’.<sup>81</sup> Edwin Cynrig Roberts, who lived in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, at the time, recalled many years later that lodges were formed in Middle Granville, Pittston, New York, Pittsburgh, Paddy’s Run, Big Rock, Vermont, Brownville, Racine, Utica, Oshkosh, and ‘wherever the Welsh settled’.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, in the spring of 1849, Michael D. Jones left Cincinnati with the intention of visiting other Welsh communities to gather further support for *Cymdeithas y Brython*, before returning to Wales in the summer.<sup>83</sup> Little is known of *Cymdeithas y Brython*’s subsequent history, but a letter published in *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* in April 1850 proves that Michael D. Jones maintained his connection with the Society following his return to Wales by selecting emigrants who were eligible for its support.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> *Yr Amserau* (29 March 1849), 6.

<sup>80</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (December 1848), 366-7.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, (July 1849), 213.

<sup>82</sup> E. C. Roberts, *Hanes Dechreuad y Wladfa Gymreig ym Mhatagonia* (Bethesda, 1893); E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.35.

<sup>83</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (April 1849), 110; (July 1849), 213.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, (April 1850), 133.

## Bwlchnewydd

On 27 June 1850, Michael D. Jones was inducted as minister of the Congregational churches at Bwlchnewydd and Gibeon, near Carmarthen.<sup>85</sup> Having returned from the United States in the summer of 1849, he embarked on a preaching tour of Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire in the company of Joseph Evans, Congregational minister at Capel Seion, Cardiganshire.<sup>86</sup> In 1850, he stayed at Bwlchnewydd for at least two months before returning to Bala in May, possibly due to his brother's poor health.<sup>87</sup> The Congregationalists at Bwlchnewydd, who were looking for a new pastor, were clearly attracted to Jones, and the position was offered to him.<sup>88</sup>

Jones took an active part in the communal life of Bwlchnewydd and the surrounding area. In addition to his pastoral duties, he organized a religious and literary 'college', similar to those conducted by his father in the Llanuwchllyn area, which met weekly at local farmhouses.<sup>89</sup> The classes gave local people an opportunity to read Welsh and English books as well as study Welsh grammar, arithmetic, composition and spelling. Children under fifteen were examined once a month to assess their progress, and a choir of about 80 members met twice a week to practice.<sup>90</sup> The classes were a success, and according to Pan Jones, the circuit was expanded to include the neighbouring communities of Ffynonbedr, Blaenycloed and Gibeon.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, such

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<sup>85</sup> *Y Diwygiwr* (August 1850), 252; T. Rees and J. Thomas, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, III, pp.394-5, 448-53.

<sup>86</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.49-50.

<sup>87</sup> Edward Jones died in November 1850.

<sup>88</sup> Private collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Letter from Cadwgan House, Carmarthen, to Michael D. Jones, 15 May 1850; Bangor MS 11294. An address book belonging to Michael D. Jones.

<sup>89</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.53; T. Rees and J. Thomas, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, III, p.452.

<sup>90</sup> *Yr Amserau* (7 May 1851), 3.

<sup>91</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.53-4.



was their success that Jones required the assistance of two other ministers who had recently been inducted to churches in the area, Daniel Cadvan Jones of Abergwili<sup>92</sup> and William Thomas of Capel Isaac.<sup>93</sup>

While Michael D. Jones seems to have been popular among the people of Bwlchnewydd, his letters to the Welsh press also gained him a reputation for outspoken behaviour.<sup>94</sup> The letters usually discussed the state of religion in nearby Carmarthen. He expressed firm opposition to the advances of the Anglican Church, but also made less welcome comments on the complacency of Nonconformists. In fact, Jones's ruthless criticism of fellow Nonconformists seems to have stirred considerable resentment towards him. Soon after his arrival in Carmarthenshire in 1850, for example, he clashed with the deacons of Lammas Street Church in Carmarthen, whom he had accused of snobbery and conceit.<sup>95</sup> While it is uncertain whether there was substance in Jones's claims, the force of his attack on the deacons led one critic to describe it retrospectively as 'a stench amid all the stench of sinful man's corrupted heart and mind'.<sup>96</sup> It was for the same reason that he was warned by the editor of *Yr Amserau*, William Rees (Gwilym Hiraethog),<sup>97</sup> that the phrasing of

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<sup>92</sup> For D. Cadvan Jones, see T. Stephens (ed.), *Album Aberhonddu o 1755-1880* (Merthyr Tydfil, 1898), pp.156-7.

<sup>93</sup> For William Thomas, see T. Stephens (ed.), *Album Aberhonddu o 1755-1880*, p.153; *Y Diwygiwr* (August 1850), 252.

<sup>94</sup> He wrote to *Y Diwygiwr*, *Yr Amserau* and *Y Gwron Cymreig* during his period at Bwlchnewydd. *Y Diwygiwr* (March 1850), 67-71; (September 1851), 265-8; (October 1851), 283-5; *Yr Amserau* (11 December 1850), 4; (8 January 1851), 2; (19 February 1851), 2; (16 April 1851), 3; (10 December 1851), 4; *Y Gwron Cymreig* (26 August 1852), 2; (9 September 1852), 2; (21 October 1852), 2.

<sup>95</sup> Private collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Mr Davies, Ffynonwen, 1 October 1850.

<sup>96</sup> *Yr Haul* (June 1853), 232.

<sup>97</sup> For William Rees ('Gwilym Hiraethog'; 1802-83), see *DWB*. Michael D. Jones wrote to *Yr Amserau* under the pseudonyms 'Dan o Benllyn' or 'Penllyn'.

one of his letters was unsuitable for publication.<sup>98</sup> A month later, a second note from Hiraethog stated that ‘because the correspondent did not omit the personal references and the scornful expressions and had not shortened his letter, we would rather not have it published’.<sup>99</sup> Gwilym Hiraethog’s refusal to print the letter was followed by a relatively short silence on Jones’s part, until his letters appeared once more, this time in the Welsh radical newspaper, *Y Gwron Cymreig*.<sup>100</sup> In later years, this outspokenness was characteristic of Michael D. Jones’s behaviour. He spared little thought before condemning those who acted contrary to his views, though he did not take kindly to criticism that was directed at him. His lack of restraint would later be a barrier to co-operation with men of similar conviction when he sought to gather support for his unusual political aspirations.

## **Bala**

Little more than two years after Michael D. Jones had settled at Bwlchnewydd, his father was taken ill and he died on 27 October 1853. Since 1842, Michael Jones had been principal of an Independent College. The College was established following the decision in 1839 to transfer the only Congregational Academy in Wales from Newtown to Brecon. Many Congregationalists in north Wales felt that the Academy at Newtown had played an important role in their recent success in attracting new members and nurturing young ministers, and, fearing that Brecon was too remote for them to continue reaping the benefits of ministerial education, they set about the

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<sup>98</sup> *Yr Amserau* (3 December 1851), 2.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, (14 January 1852), 4.

<sup>100</sup> He wrote under the pseudonym ‘Mihangel’ and ‘Mihangel o’r Bwlch’.



creation of a new College.<sup>101</sup> The new College was first situated at Llanuwchllyn and was moved to Bala after only a year.

The death of Michael Jones left Bala Independent College in need of a new principal. Gwilym Hiraethog, who had played a part in the establishment of the College in 1842, spoke at Michael Jones's funeral in November 1853, and referred to Michael D. Jones as having all the qualities of his father.<sup>102</sup> However, a year elapsed before a meeting of delegates from the eighteen County Associations throughout Wales agreed to offer the post to Michael D. Jones, which he accepted without much delay. Jones also accepted calls from the churches of Bala, Tynybont, Bethel, Llandderfel and Soar,<sup>103</sup> which had been under his father's ministry since the College was moved from Llanuwchllyn to Bala. As if this was not enough, he also agreed to take charge of the Dr Williams's school which had been in his father's care since his arrival at Llanuwchllyn. By the end of 1854, he had taken up residence in the college building at Bala, and he assumed his duties in January 1855. By 1860, his increasing workload would force him to relinquish his responsibility for the Dr Williams's school<sup>104</sup> and the churches at Bala and Tynybont, but he retained his position as principal of Bala College and minister of the churches at Llandderfel, Bethel and Soar, for the rest of his working life.

Michael D. Jones expressed views on contemporary society and politics during his time in Cincinnati and Bwlchnewydd, but it was at Bala that he made his primary

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<sup>101</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (December 1840), 381-2; (December 1841), 387-8.

<sup>102</sup> *Y Celt* (16 March 1883), 6.

<sup>103</sup> J. Thomas and T. Rees, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynol Cymru*, I, pp.400-12, 507-11; R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn*, pp.170-2.

<sup>104</sup> Private collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Letter from Samuel Cotton to Michael D. Jones, 13 May 1856.

contribution to those fields. During the late 1850s and early 1860s, he campaigned for a Welsh Settlement. He took a prominent role in the establishment of the Patagonian Settlement in 1865, and he promoted its interests in the press for the following thirty years. Soon after his arrival in Bala, Jones began to participate in local political activity, and, from the 1870s, he wrote frequently in the press on a range of political issues, the most notable being the need for national self-government. Furthermore, it was in his role as principal of Bala Independent College that Jones became involved in a widely publicized dispute, known as ‘the Battle of the Two Constitutions’, which earned him a reputation as a steadfast Congregationalist.

Michael D. Jones retired from public life in September 1892. For many months, his health had been in gradual decline. In April 1890, the doctor advised him to lighten his workload to avoid posing a threat to his health.<sup>105</sup> Jones heeded the warning and retired from his teaching and pastoral duties soon afterwards, though he continued to publish articles in *Y Celt* for almost two years. After withdrawing from public life, Jones spent the rest his life housebound. He died on 2 December 1898.

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<sup>105</sup> NLW. D. J. Williams Papers, 16/7. Letter from Roger Hughes to Michael D. Jones, 7 March 1890; Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 29 April 1890.



## Chapter 2

# Religion

Despite being a Congregational minister and, for most of his working life, the principal of a college responsible for training ministers, Michael D. Jones is not remembered for making any theological contribution. Recent studies of his thought have noted the importance of his religion,<sup>1</sup> though none of them discussed it in detail or mentioned Evan Pan Jones's claim that he had devised a 'system of Biblical criticism'.<sup>2</sup> Michael D. Jones's colleagues apparently encouraged him on several occasions to publish this system as a handbook, but he refused to do so because, in Pan Jones's words, 'our understanding of the Bible was improving, and he was afraid

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<sup>1</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl* (Llandysul, 1986), p.106; D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Michael D. Jones' in G. O. Roberts (ed.), *Triwyr Penllyn* (Cardiff, 1956), p.16; G. Williams, 'Nationalism in nineteenth century Wales: The discourse of Michael D. Jones', in G. Williams (ed.), *Crisis of Economy and Ideology: Essays on Welsh Society 1840-1980* (Bangor, 1983), p.182.

<sup>2</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), p.22.

that something he might say would be an obstruction to someone else's ideas'.<sup>3</sup> This explanation is ambiguous to say the least, yet Pan Jones felt it unfair to publish Michael D. Jones's notes if he had refused to do so himself. Three of his sermons were included in the biography, but Pan Jones made no comment on their content.<sup>4</sup>

The task of analysing Michael D. Jones's theological standpoint is complicated by a dearth of source material. His extensive writing on the Patagonian Settlement and political issues was not matched by the publication of sermons or theological essays, which are in short supply. Less than a dozen of his sermons were published during his life. However, using the limited amount of material that is available from sermons and articles, this chapter will analyse Michael D. Jones views on theology and morality. Key aspects of his religion will be studied and discussed in the broader context of theological developments in nineteenth century Wales. In so doing, it will be argued that Jones's views on religion and morality influenced other aspects of his thought.

### **The 'New System'**

In order to explain Michael D. Jones's theological standpoint, it would be helpful to outline the doctrinal discussions within Welsh Congregationalism, for it will be found that his outlook was characteristic of contemporary trends. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the dominant theological position in Wales was Calvinism, with both Congregationalists and Baptists inheriting their Calvinism from their Puritan forefathers. Even the Welsh Methodists were Calvinists, thus separating them from their English counterparts, the Wesleyan Methodists, whose theology was Arminian.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp.291-314.



In fact, it was the formation of a Wesleyan Communion in Wales in 1800 that prompted theological debate in Wales, particularly among Congregationalists.

The issue under debate was the extent of the atonement, or, rather, whether Christ's death on the cross was effective only to a limited number or sufficient for all. Calvinists maintained that Christ's death was effective only to those who had been predestined to salvation. To support his claim that 'grace rescues from God's curse and wrath and eternal death a limited number who would otherwise perish', John Calvin (1509-64)<sup>5</sup> cited verses such as Christ's assertion: 'I am not speaking of all; I know whom I have chosen' (John 13:18).<sup>6</sup> The sixteenth-century Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609)<sup>7</sup> refuted John Calvin's suggestion that some people had been predestined to salvation.<sup>8</sup> Citing verses such as John 3:16, which states that 'whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life', Arminius's followers (Arminians) claimed that assurance would not have been given to humankind unless Christ's sacrifice was sufficient for the salvation of all, and that there was a responsibility on each individual to respond wilfully to the gospel. Arminians did not deny that some had been elected to salvation while others had not. Calvinists believed that humans were elected and then saved, whereas Arminians argued that they were saved and thus elected.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For John Calvin (1509-64), see *DCC*.

<sup>6</sup> J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, edited by J. T. McNeill, III (London, 1961), xxii. 7.

<sup>7</sup> For Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609), see *DCC*.

<sup>8</sup> It has been disputed whether John Calvin preached limited atonement to the same degree as his followers. There is remarkably little discussion of election in the *Institutes*.

<sup>9</sup> A. P. F. Sell, *The Great Debate: Calvinism, Arminianism and Salvation* (Worthing, 1982), pp.1-23.

Under the influence of the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival, Welsh Congregationalists modified their Calvinist views on the atonement in order to justify their increasing missionary activity.<sup>10</sup> Since traditional Calvinist teaching seemed inconsistent with the universal call of the gospel, many of them began to claim that there were ‘universal’ as well as ‘particular’ elements to Christ’s redemptive work. Owen Thomas, the nineteenth-century Nonconformist theologian and historian, described the new position as follows:

... the infinite sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice gives the worst sinner hope of forgiveness and salvation, and calls each and every human to him, to participate in that salvation. And yet, there is a special and covenanted relationship between him and the elect, as their Surety, which ensures their salvation in him.<sup>11</sup>

According to Thomas Jones of Denbigh (1756-1820),<sup>12</sup> one of the best known advocates of this view, Christians had a duty to preach the gospel to all, because the extent of the atonement was infinite, though, crucially, he maintained that the salvific death of Christ was effective only for the elect.<sup>13</sup> Thomas Jones acknowledged that his position was somewhat paradoxical, and that he could not explain the consistency between the two principles. Nevertheless, he maintained that Scripture could be cited in support of both ‘universal’ and ‘particular’ aspects of atonement, and argued that

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<sup>10</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru* (Swansea, 1966), pp.169-90.

<sup>11</sup> O. Thomas, *Cofiant y Parchedig John Jones, Talsarn* (Wrexham, 1874), p.403.

<sup>12</sup> For Thomas Jones (1756-1820), see F. P. Jones, *Radicaliaeth a’r Werin Gymreig yn y bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg* (Denbigh, 1975), pp.17-40; *DWB*.

<sup>13</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, pp.169-76.



its inexplicability was no reason to question its authority.<sup>14</sup> However, when Wesleyan Arminianism appeared in Wales at the turn of the nineteenth century, those who had adopted these moderate views felt that their position was no longer tenable. Many Congregationalists saw Arminianism as a dangerous teaching which undermined God's omnipotence by empowering humankind with the ability to resist divine grace. They considered Arminianism as the beginning of a slippery slope into Arianism<sup>15</sup> and Socinianism,<sup>16</sup> and in order to defend their Calvinist position effectively, they felt that they had little choice but to reaffirm the doctrine of limited atonement.<sup>17</sup>

At this defining moment in the history of theology in Wales, a new form of Calvinism emerged. It was devised by Edward Williams (1750-1813), Welsh theologian and tutor,<sup>18</sup> and propagated in Wales by a group of Congregational ministers, the most prominent being John Roberts of Llanbryn-mair.<sup>19</sup> Central to Williams's 'Modern Calvinism', or the 'New System', was the belief that while God is the author of good, all sin is a direct result of human free will. Because of its corrupt nature, humankind would always be inclined to sin, which, in accordance with Divine Equity, should be punished. However, Williams maintained that God, in his sovereignty, is merciful to those who repent. Indeed, God's intention is for all humans to repent, because Jesus Christ has, through his sacrifice on the cross, suffered the punishment for their sins

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<sup>14</sup> O. Thomas, *Cofiant y Parchedig John Jones, Talsarn*, p.404.

<sup>15</sup> The teaching of Arius (c.250-336) that Jesus is the highest created being but does not share the same substance as God the Father. For Arius (c.250-336), see *NDT*.

<sup>16</sup> The teaching of Faustus Socinius (1539-1604). A rationalistic theology that reinterpreted the person and work of Jesus Christ, underlining their exemplary character. For Faustus Socinius (1539-1604), see *NDT*.

<sup>17</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.170.

<sup>18</sup> For Edward Williams (1750-1813), see W. T. Owen, *Edward Williams, D. D.: His Life, Thought and Influence* (Cardiff, 1963); *DWB*.

<sup>19</sup> For John Roberts (1767-1834), see S. Roberts, *Cofiant y Parch. John Roberts, o Lanbrynmair* (Llanelli, 1837); *DWB*.

and satisfied Divine Equity. The gospel, Williams claimed, is relevant to everyone, and each individual has a responsibility to respond to it. He reconciled these views with the 'particular' elements of Calvinism by stressing that God is omniscient. Humankind cannot achieve salvation without the sovereign grace, but since God is all-knowing, those who wilfully respond to the call of the gospel will also be those who have been predestined to receive salvation.<sup>20</sup>

Like Thomas Jones's moderate Calvinism, Edward Williams's 'New System' seemed to justify the preaching of the gospel to all without compromising the fundamental aspects of the Calvinist teaching. Its primary advantage over Thomas Jones's moderate Calvinism was that it could be defended by argument rather than asserted as a paradoxical mystery. Otherwise, there was little difference between the two standpoints. Thomas Jones's views on the general effect of the atonement on humankind differed from the 'New System' in that he claimed the blessings of everyday life to be the work of Jesus Christ's government over creation.<sup>21</sup> However, when expounding the 'New System', John Roberts of Llanbryn-mair claimed that every individual enjoyed 'temporal blessings' as a direct result of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, which he described as 'the path of the blood'.<sup>22</sup> Each person had a direct connection with Christ's sacrifice, and the 'relationship' between 'the blood of Jesus

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<sup>20</sup> Williams's theological system was outlined in two major works: *An Essay on the Equity of Divine Government and the Sovereignty of Divine Grace* (1809) and *A Defence of Modern Calvinism* (1811). See also, W. T. Owen, *Edward Williams, D. D.*, pp.94-113; R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in England* (London, 1962), pp.170-1; O. Thomas, *Cofiant y Parchedig John Jones, Talsarn*, pp.381-2.

<sup>21</sup> O. Thomas, *Cofiant y Parchedig John Jones, Talsarn*, p.421.

<sup>22</sup> J. Roberts, *Cynnygiad Gostyngedig, i Egluro yr hyn a ddysgir i ni, yn Ysgrythurau y gwirionedd, am Ddybenion Cyffredinol a Neillduol Dyoddefaint Iesu Grist, mewn Dau Lythyr at Gyfaill* (Carmarthen, 1814), p.3.



Christ and all sinners' was the same as that between 'the call of the gospel and all sinners'.<sup>23</sup>

The appeal of the 'New System' to Congregationalists in Wales was that it provided them with a defensible theological basis for their missionary work.<sup>24</sup> First, it emphasized the worth of every individual. Christ's sacrifice on the cross had an effect on everyone's life, regardless of their response to the gospel. No one was considered unworthy of the blessings of Christ's sacrifice. Secondly, the emphasis that the 'New System' placed on human 'response' to the gospel created an ethos of individual accountability. John Roberts claimed that it was 'the duty of every man who hears the gospel, to make use of the infinite sacrifice of the cross, for his eternal salvation'.<sup>25</sup> Humans were morally responsible for their actions, and God, being righteous in all things, rendered to each individual as they deserved.<sup>26</sup> Through its positive view of humankind and the onus that it placed on the individual, Edward Williams's moderate Calvinism became, in the words of R. Tudur Jones, 'the theology of the new humanitarianism'.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, such was its appeal that, by the mid-nineteenth century, the 'New System' was established as the mainstream theology of Welsh Congregationalism.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p.6.

<sup>24</sup> W. T. Owen, *Edward Williams, D. D.*, p.150.

<sup>25</sup> J. Roberts, *Galwad Ddifrifol ar Ymofynwyr am y Gwirionedd, i ystyried tystiolaeth yr ysgrythurau ynghylch Helaethrwydd yr Iawn Crist* (Dolgellau, 1820), p.6; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.174.

<sup>26</sup> D. A. Johnson, *The Changing Shape of English Nonconformists, 1825-1925* (Oxford, 1999), p.131.

<sup>27</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in England*, p.260.

<sup>28</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (December 1853), 472. See also, W. Evans, *An Outline of the History of Welsh Theology* (London, 1900), p.173; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, pp.175-6; A. P. F. Sell, *The Great Debate*, p.91; W. T. Owen, *Edward Williams, D.D.*, pp.120-9, 135-8.

Among the early advocates of the 'New System' in Wales was Michael D. Jones's father, Michael Jones. He was among the six ministers who contributed to the appendix of John Roberts's *Galwad Ddifrifol*, a work which has been described as 'the Moderate Calvinists' manifesto'.<sup>29</sup> Being the son of a Wesleyan father and a Calvinist mother,<sup>30</sup> perhaps it is hardly surprising that Michael Jones embraced Edward Williams's moderate form of Calvinism. His education also brought him into contact with differing theological standpoints. He received his early education from David Davis of Castellhywel. Davis was noted for his Arianism, the teaching which denied Christ's deity, a position that was regarded by many Congregationalists as an abomination.<sup>31</sup> During his four years at Wrexham, Michael Jones was tutored by two scholars who held differing views on the atonement. He studied for three years under the tutorship of Jenkin Lewis, former assistant to Edward Williams at an academy in Oswestry.<sup>32</sup> Evidently, it was under Jenkin Lewis that Michael Jones became familiar with the 'New System'. He spent his final year of study under George Lewis, the celebrated Congregational theologian.<sup>33</sup> George Lewis's position was more firmly Calvinist than that of his predecessor, his most influential work being *Drych Ysgrythurol neu Gorph o ddifyniaeth* (1796), a scholarly defence of the doctrine of limited atonement.<sup>34</sup>

Disagreement on theological issues was only one factor that came between Michael Jones and his congregation in the 1820s, but Llanuwchllyn became a focal point in

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<sup>29</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.174.

<sup>30</sup> NLW, Typescript. D. J. Williams, 'Hanes Coleg Bala-Bangor'.

<sup>31</sup> R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn* (Bala, 1937), p.140.

<sup>32</sup> For Jenkin Lewis (1760-1831), see *DWB*.

<sup>33</sup> For George Lewis (1863-1822), see *DWB*.

<sup>34</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru* (Swansea, 1966), pp.163-4.



Wales for the dispute between High Calvinism and the 'New System'.<sup>35</sup> The previous minister at Yr Hen Gapel had been none other than George Lewis, Michael Jones's former tutor at Wrexham. Imbued with George Lewis's Calvinist teaching, the Congregationalists of Llanuwchllyn accused Michael Jones of refuting original sin and of claiming that humans had the ability to attain salvation, though there is no evidence that he ever espoused these views.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, such was the effect of this dispute at Yr Hen Gapel on the Jones family that there can be little doubt that, from an early age, Michael D. Jones would have been familiar with the controversies and high feeling surrounding issues of theology.

Apart from the influence of his father, Michael D. Jones encountered moderate Calvinism at the Presbyterian College in Carmarthen, where he was tutored by David Davies of Pant-teg, a vociferous advocate of the 'New System'.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, it seems that Michael D. Jones's primary reason for attending the College at Carmarthen was to avoid the prejudice against moderate Calvinism at the Congregational College at Newtown. Furthermore, it is possible that attendance at the Presbyterian College encouraged in him a more liberal approach to theology. A number of staff and students had been Unitarians, who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity and the deity of Christ, though the Presbyterian Board, the College's patron, assured that the institution would never be entrusted to Unitarian tutors without there being at least one member of staff who held 'orthodox' views.<sup>38</sup> Even so, the Presbyterian College

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.137.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.141.

<sup>37</sup> For David Davies (1791-1864), see *Y Tyst* (17 November 1955), 4; T. Rees and J. Thomas, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, III (Liverpool, 1873), p.462; *DWB*.

<sup>38</sup> D. Eurig Davies, *Hoff Ddysgedig Nyth* (Swansea, 1976), p.94.

was renowned not only for the freedom of inquiry that was given to its students, but also for its 'liberal' theology, particularly Arminianism.<sup>39</sup>

Bearing in mind the accusations that were made against Michael Jones in Llanuwchllyn, and the Presbyterian College's reputation for a liberal approach to theology, R. Tudur Jones's assertion that Michael D. Jones was an Evangelical Arminian certainly seems plausible. Tudur Jones presented no evidence to support this claim,<sup>40</sup> relying instead on the testimony of William Jenkyn Thomas, lecturer in the Classical studies at the University of North Wales, who claimed in 1893 that Michael D. Jones was an Arminian.<sup>41</sup> The subtleties of Edward Williams's 'New System' make it difficult to confirm Thomas's claim. W. T. Owen, Williams's biographer, noted that only when Arminian and High Calvinist theology are compared does the extent of Edward Williams's deviation from the more established form of Calvinism become fully evident.<sup>42</sup> Both moderate Calvinists and Arminians explained the doctrine of election by claiming that God has foreseen that certain individuals will repent and be faithful, thus placing some degree of responsibility on the individual to respond to the gospel. The fundamental difference between them was that moderate Calvinists continued to claim that some had been predestined to salvation through the sovereign grace of God. Arminians claimed that God's grace was essential to salvation, but unlike the Calvinists, they saw it as a moral influence which could be resisted, rather than God's active and irresistible energy.<sup>43</sup> Still, the 'New System' and Arminianism were virtually indistinguishable from each other

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., pp.93-120.

<sup>40</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Yr Undeb* (Swansea, 1975), p.60.

<sup>41</sup> *Y Celt* (28 July 1893), 1. For William Jenkyn Thomas (1870-1959), see *NCWL*.

<sup>42</sup> W. T. Owen, *Edward Williams, D.D.*, pp.108-13.

<sup>43</sup> A. P. F. Sell, *The Great Debate*, pp.6-17; W. T. Owen, *Edward Williams, D.D.*, p.106.



unless there was a firm emphasis on the Calvinist doctrines as they related to the sovereignty and irresistibility of grace.

While it is clear that Michael D. Jones received his theological training in a period dominated by this debate, it is not entirely apparent to what extent he had adopted the New System. In fact, Jones displayed a remarkably flippant attitude towards the theological differences that were such a prominent feature of his father's generation.

During the 1880s, he asserted:

When someone is asked what his theological views are, he answers light-heartedly, "I am a Calvinist," while he has never prayed for the light of God's Spirit. Someone else is asked about his theological views, and he answers with the same light-heartedness, "I am an Arminian," while he has not been earnestly appealing for guidance from God's Spirit.<sup>44</sup>

Clearly, Jones felt that Nonconformists had been too involved in hair-splitting doctrinal debates, while their priority should have been to ensure that they were led 'along the narrow paths of truth and plenitude in this presently difficult world'.<sup>45</sup> His interest was not in explaining the technicalities of God's relationship with humankind, but in the everyday life of the Christian. Indeed, Michael D. Jones's theological inclinations are not to be found in any discussion on doctrine, but in the ethos of his work.

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<sup>44</sup> *Y Celt* (2 October 1885), 10.

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

Michael D. Jones certainly held a positive view of humankind. He claimed that Christ's incarnation had revealed not only God's love towards humankind, but also his 'glorification' in human nature.<sup>46</sup> On another occasion, he declared that 'the *Dignity of Man* as a creature in the image of God' is 'one of the foremost topics of the Bible'.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, when discussing divine revelation, he asserted that while evidence of God's work is found in all aspects of creation, the 'history of the life of Jesus Christ is different from any other divine revelation. Jesus Christ's actions are a clearer revelation of God than any other ever made'.<sup>48</sup> Being 'the greatest humanitarian who has ever walked the earth', Christ is a role model for every individual.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, Michael D. Jones also stressed the importance of human responsibility. The essential condition in life, he claimed, was to have 'control over every desire; and every instinct should be under the complete control of God's word'.<sup>50</sup> The humanitarian ethos that was associated with the spread of the 'New System' was clearly evident in Michael D. Jones's work.

Despite the dearth of doctrinal discussion, it is clear that Jones's theology was focused on humankind rather than God. The divine sovereignty was central to Calvinist theology, and, while stressing the responsibility of the individual to respond to the gospel, Edward Williams had been careful not to compromise God's supreme role in redemption. Without sufficient emphasis on God's sovereignty, the limited aspects of the atonement would no longer be apparent. By stressing the universal call of the gospel and individual responsibility, exponents of the 'New System' could,

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<sup>46</sup> *Y Diwygiwr* (December 1866), 354.

<sup>47</sup> *Y Celt* (9 November 1883), 8.

<sup>48</sup> Sermon by Michael D. Jones printed in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.301.

<sup>49</sup> *Y Celt* (2 October 1885), 10. See also, *Y Diwygiwr* (September 1851), 267; Bangor MS 8036. Sermon by Michael D. Jones.

<sup>50</sup> *Yr Annibynwr* (October 1857), 220.



without knowing it, have been preaching Arminian views. Bearing in mind the stigma which had been attached to Arminianism in the early nineteenth century and Welsh Congregationalism's long Calvinist tradition, it is unlikely that Michael D. Jones would have considered himself an Arminian. If he did, in fact, hold Arminian views, it was more likely to be the result of over-emphasis on certain aspects of his theology rather than a positive statement of Arminian teaching. However, more light will be shed on this matter by analysing Jones's moral philosophy.

### **Moral Philosophy**

As with other aspects of his religious thought, Michael D. Jones did not outline his moral philosophy in a single composite work. Nevertheless, its details are far clearer than his views on the atonement. Indeed, Pan Jones seems to have been referring to Michael D. Jones's ideas on morality when he mentioned his 'system of biblical criticism'.<sup>51</sup> Central to Jones's philosophy was his belief in a universal or 'natural' law. He believed that the universal law was the moral standard to which all humans should aspire. His views on the subject were published in the Congregational journal *Yr Anybynwr* in 1857, an article which was entitled 'Eternal Truth', the term which he often used for morality.<sup>52</sup> Throughout his life, Jones underlined the strength and consistency of 'truth'. In the early 1850s, he asserted that 'the greatest things are immutable, and among them is truth, which remains the same, like God, without change from eternity to eternity'.<sup>53</sup> Thirty years later, he continued to claim that 'truth is unchangeable like the Godhead'.<sup>54</sup> In 1857, Jones explained:

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<sup>51</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.22.

<sup>52</sup> *Yr Annibynwr* (April 1857), 78.

<sup>53</sup> *Y Diwygiwr* (September 1851), 266.

<sup>54</sup> *Y Celt* (27 March 1885), 8.

It is not when creatures come into existence that their relationships with each other, and with God, are formed. The relationship has always existed, on the supposition that such creatures would exist. The relationship between triangles, circles and squares, has always existed and is immutable, even if a house, temple or palace, a road, canal or bridge, has never been built in accordance with those principles.<sup>55</sup>

Jones believed that morality could be discussed in objective terms, in which the virtue of an action was part of its essence rather than a quality ascribed to it by human judgement. The righteousness of all human actions could therefore be measured in the light of an eternal code of conduct which held the same authority as scientific and mathematical truths. 'Sin,' he claimed, 'presupposes the existence of a law. That which causes irrational and lifeless creatures to produce a series of similar actions is not law. Law is the rule of essential and eternal truth for the mind of rational creatures'.<sup>56</sup> Michael D. Jones's belief in a universal moral law stemmed from his understanding of humankind's freedom and responsibility, and it corresponds with Edward Williams's emphasis that all sin was the result of human defection rather than divine decree.<sup>57</sup>

Some elements of Kantian ethics are also apparent in this aspect of Michael D. Jones's thought. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Protestant moral theology was

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<sup>55</sup> *Yr Annibynwr* (April 1857), 78.

<sup>56</sup> Bangor MS 11472. Sermon on Matthew 12:31-32 written by Michael D. Jones on 20 August 1855. 'Y mae'n rhagdybied bodolaeth deddf. Nid deddf yw'r hyn sy'n peri creaduriaid direswm a difywyd i gynyrchu cyfres o weithrediadau cyffelyb. Deddf yw gwirionedd reidiol a thragwyddol yn reol i feddwl creadur rhesymol.'

<sup>57</sup> E. Davies (ed.), *The Works of the Rev. Edward Williams, D. D.*, III (London, 1862), p.365.



deeply influenced by the work of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). According to Kant, belief in one's own moral agency is critical to a sense of self, but the transcendental realm to which the consciousness belongs is beyond the limits of empirical and scientific knowledge. Kant postulated that, in the transcendental realm, the mind is governed by an objective moral impulse, which he called the 'categorical imperative'.<sup>58</sup> The categorical imperative was a human compulsion to act in accordance with a universal law. It is a sense of duty, which, in order to be moral, the individual must obey, whatever the consequences. However, Kant also claimed that the interference of the 'natural' realm, perhaps in the form of material interest or passion, often causes the individual's will to be diverted from the moral course of action.<sup>59</sup> Humankind has the ability to achieve moral perfection, but this standard cannot be attained because of the constant distraction of material interests. The human will, despite being independent of any cause, is constantly led astray by external interests.<sup>60</sup> Kant's influence on Protestant Nonconformists could be seen in the way they sought guidance in everyday life from within themselves rather than the world around them. Kant's 'categorical imperative' became the human conscience, the 'voice of God' or the 'inner director'.<sup>61</sup>

Immanuel Kant's belief that obedience to God was synonymous with the categorical imperative corresponds to some degree with Michael D. Jones's belief that humankind should strive to live according to the 'eternal truth' or moral law. Jones explained that 'God in all his nature delights in truth. He has placed creation on the

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<sup>58</sup> I. Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, translated by L. W. Beck, (Chicago, 1949), pp.62-3, 70-1.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p.80; H. J. Paton, *The Categorical Imperative* (London, 1947), pp.93-5.

<sup>60</sup> *Y Celt* (9 March 1883), 5.

<sup>61</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, pp.221-6.



foundations of truth. God sings the Psalm of truth. It is the song of truth that creation sings to the furthest extremes'.<sup>62</sup> To sin was to stray from truth, and as he noted in 1888, 'adversity begins early, with the birth of man, because nature's laws are often neglected,' and 'nature has its punishments, if its laws are not respected'.<sup>63</sup> To comply with moral law was to take one's place in an orderly universe. In another sermon, for example, Jones wrote: 'Were the sun not to run its wonted course, or the moon to deny its light but for one night, that would at once produce irregularity, and the amount of damage done, no one could calculate. Therefore, when man adheres to the law of God, he is happy and useful'.<sup>64</sup>

Michael D. Jones's view of morality was, like that of Immanuel Kant, inherently 'rational'. 'Eternal truth' was a standard that humans sought for their own benefit both as individuals and as a collective. Jones held the Idealist belief that, through continuous insight and various forms of revelation, humankind was edging closer to the eternal truth. Knowledge and reason were the tools with which humans could solve the mysteries of divine revelation.<sup>65</sup> In 1851, he even asserted that 'because the soul is immortal, and is constantly progressing, there will be some point in eternity when it will be said, I know *everything* about the world'.<sup>66</sup>

Michael D. Jones's belief in the objective nature of morality had more in common with classical philosophy than traditional Christian teaching. Natural law theory was first associated with the ideas of Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. It did not

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<sup>62</sup> *Yr Annibynwr* (April 1857), 81. See also, *Y Cronicl* (August 1888), 235.

<sup>63</sup> *Y Cronicl* (August 1888), 235.

<sup>64</sup> Bangor MS 8036. Sermon by Michael D. Jones.

<sup>65</sup> *Y Diwygiwr* (September 1851), 265.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 266.



become part of the Christian teaching until the middle ages, through the work of the thirteenth-century theologian Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-74).<sup>67</sup> However, since the sixteenth century, Protestants, whose emphasis on *sola fide* was a reaction to the legalistic elements in Catholic teaching, had given precedence to *sola scriptura* and personal devotion when discussing morality.<sup>68</sup> Even so, classical subjects seem to have held a prominent place in Jones's education. It is claimed that he had mastered both Latin and Greek by the age of twelve.<sup>69</sup> Knowledge of Latin and Greek was necessary for entrance into the Presbyterian College, and classical studies were part of the curriculum at Bala Independent College.<sup>70</sup> It is also noteworthy that Pan Jones claimed that he 'often referred to the classical philosophers: he looked upon Socrates and Plato as prophets sent by God to "educate" the world'.<sup>71</sup>

Nevertheless, Michael D. Jones's views on morality seem to have been most influenced by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophy. According to his biographer, Jones spent a large portion of his leisure time in the third and fourth years at the Presbyterian College studying the works of Dugald Stewart,<sup>72</sup> William Paley,<sup>73</sup> Joseph Butler,<sup>74</sup> John Locke<sup>75</sup> and Ralph Cudworth.<sup>76</sup> All these were influenced by the spirit of the Enlightenment and its belief that the workings of the universe were

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<sup>67</sup> For Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-74), see *DCC*.

<sup>68</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, pp.59-62.

<sup>69</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.18.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Y Geninen* (1900), 33.

<sup>72</sup> For Dugald Stewart (1753-1828), see *DNB*.

<sup>73</sup> For William Paley (1743-1803), see *DNB*.

<sup>74</sup> For Joseph Butler (1692-1752), see *DNB*.

<sup>75</sup> For John Locke (1632-1704), see *DNB*.

<sup>76</sup> For Ralph Cudworth (1617-88), see R. Cudworth, *A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, edited by S. Hutton, (Cambridge, 1996); G. R. Cragg, *The Cambridge Platonists* (New York, 1968); J. A. Passmore, *Ralph Cudworth: An Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1951), pp.40-50; *DNB*.



within reach of human understanding. While many contemporary thinkers turned to deism, these men responded to the challenge by seeking to reconcile Christian teaching with human reason. Michael D. Jones displayed the kind of cool rationalism that was associated with the Enlightenment. This may have been the influence of his father, who, according to Pan Jones, ‘could not follow a dispute on any subject unless every remark was consistent in every detail with reason’.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, it was claimed that the classes that he held in Llanuwchllyn always emphasized the importance of religious education and intellect rather than emotion.<sup>78</sup> Michael D. Jones expressed a similar view when a religious revival broke out at the Independent chapel in Bala in 1859. In a letter to his fiancée, Anne Lloyd, he wrote that the ‘*Diwygiad* [Revival] ... is not in harmony altogether with my nature, tho’ I say nothing against it’.<sup>79</sup> Like his father, and in line with the education that he had received, Michael D. Jones asserted the importance of intellect rather than experience, and reason rather than emotion.

The philosophers whom Michael D. Jones had studied at the Presbyterian College held similar views on morality. They all believed that true morality could be discovered through intuition and scriptural revelation. Dugald Stewart, professor of moral philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, claimed that the role of the philosopher was to discover the laws that are essential to moral progress.<sup>80</sup> William Paley maintained that to be virtuous was to do ‘good to mankind, in obedience to the

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<sup>77</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.12.

<sup>78</sup> E. Williams, *Cofiant a phregethau'r Parch. D. M. Davies, Llanfyllin* (Machynlleth, 1871), p.65; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.194.

<sup>79</sup> Bangor MS 7815. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 30 November 1859.

<sup>80</sup> See G. Macintyre, *Dugald Stewart: The Pride and Ornament of Scotland* (Brighton, 2003); *DNB*.



will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness'.<sup>81</sup> Joseph Butler based his moral philosophy on a combination of intuition, utilitarianism (to do what is in the interest of everyone's happiness) and naturalism (to act upon instinct).<sup>82</sup> John Locke was an advocate of the natural law theory, which he believed extended to morality as well as the natural world.<sup>83</sup>

Michael D. Jones's moral theology seems to have been most influenced by the work of the seventeenth-century philosopher, Ralph Cudworth, whose ideas were expressed in *A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, published posthumously in 1731. Cudworth was perhaps the most distinguished representative of the Cambridge Platonists, a group of seventeenth-century divines who are so-called because of their association with Emmanuel College in Cambridge. The Cambridge Platonists, and Ralph Cudworth in particular, are known to have been an influence on Edward Williams,<sup>84</sup> but it seems that Michael D. Jones was directly acquainted with their work. Indeed, Pan Jones mentioned Cudworth as one of the thinkers whose work had been studied by Jones while he was a student at the Presbyterian College in Carmarthen.<sup>85</sup>

Fearing that traditional Christian thought was threatened by Thomas Hobbes's atheism and determinism, on the one hand, and by an entirely different form of determinism in the Calvinist teaching of the Puritans, on the other, the Cambridge

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<sup>81</sup> W. Paley, *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785), p.35. This definition of virtue was taken from his patron, Bishop John Law.

<sup>82</sup> See E. C. Mossner, *Bishop Butler and the Age of Reason* (Thoemmes, 1990); T. Penelhum, *Butler* (London, 1985); *DNB*.

<sup>83</sup> D. A. Lloyd Thomas, *Locke on Government* (London, 1995), pp.15-9.

<sup>84</sup> W. T. Owen, *Edward Williams, D. D.*, pp.10-11.

<sup>85</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.21.



Platonists sought common ground between theology and philosophy.<sup>86</sup> In *A Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Reality*, Ralph Cudworth compared the nature of eternal truth and morality to mathematical laws, and maintained that they are neither the result of divine will nor the whims of worldly sovereigns. Michael D. Jones's views corresponded almost exactly with Cudworth's view that God's power is limited by eternal truth. Jones asserted that God deserves praise as 'the dwelling-place of all truth' because 'we know that all knowledge, every idea, and principle is in God'. At the same time, he maintained that truth is separate from God, and because it is eternal, God is not its 'author', but its 'announcer'.<sup>87</sup> According to Jones, truth does not possess a force of its own. Truth is inert, unable to act or create in any way, and therefore it must have been God who created the world, only that he did so, by necessity, 'on foundations which are favourable to truth'.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, Cudworth described God as an 'omnipotent will or activity', which was separate from truth, but through which everything was brought into existence.<sup>89</sup>

There is also a correspondence between Cudworth's philosophy and Michael D. Jones's views on the freedom of human will. Jones refuted the increasingly popular belief that the actions of the individual were governed by the law of cause and effect, as the Cambridge Platonists had done in the seventeenth century. In fact, his argument bore a striking similarity to that put forth by Cudworth in his most famous work *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, published in 1678.<sup>90</sup> Michael D.

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<sup>86</sup> For Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), see *DNB*.

<sup>87</sup> *Yr Annibynwr* (April 1857), 78-9.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>89</sup> G. R. Cragg, *The Cambridge Platonists*, p.194.

<sup>90</sup> R. Cudworth, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, III, edited by J. Harrison, (London, 1845), pp.392-6; J. A. Passmore, *Ralph Cudworth: An Interpretation*, p.21.



Jones claimed that, rather than possessing a momentum of its own, the creation and the constant changes that it underwent could be attributed to the providential work of God. He called these forces, which were beyond human control, 'passive', and they could range from developments within the natural world to the involuntary changes to the human body, such as the process of ageing. As Cudworth noted in his work, without this divine force, all matter would be motionless. Indeed, while maintaining his belief in a universal moral law, Michael D. Jones went as far as to claim that what is usually regarded as movement propelled by the laws of physics, such as momentum or gravity, is the active work of God.<sup>91</sup> In 1883, for example, he wrote: 'From his immortal ability and wisdom, God in his sovereignty moves His fingers through the great and small cogs of the universe, working them in order to fulfil his glorious designs'.<sup>92</sup> This would explain the importance that Michael D. Jones attached to God's providential work, and to seeking divine guidance through prayer as a central aspect of every Christian's life. In 1885, Jones stated that 'when forming opinions on any matter of importance, we should do so in all gravity with prayer before the throne of grace'.<sup>93</sup> David Rees, who travelled with Jones to Patagonia in 1882, wrote that 'he believed that God listens to every prayer and governs over all of man's circumstances'.<sup>94</sup> Yet the only 'active' force in creation other than that of God was human will. Jones maintained that 'everything that man does as a rational being is deliberate, rather than passive'.<sup>95</sup> According to both Michael D. Jones and Ralph

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<sup>91</sup> *Y Celt* (9 March 1883), 5.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, (3 August 1883), 9.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, (2 October 1885), 10. See also, E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.309.

<sup>94</sup> *Y Drafod* (12 June 1925), 1; See also, *Y Dysgedydd* (April 1912), 150; *Y Cronicl* (January 1899), 4; *Y Dysgedydd* (December 1930), 370-1.

<sup>95</sup> *Y Celt* (9 March 1883), 5.



Cudworth, the human will was entirely free from any external force.<sup>96</sup> In view of these similarities, it seems that Cudworth was a major influence on Jones's thought.

While these ideas about morality do not settle completely the issue of Michael D. Jones's views on the atonement, they provide further insight into his theological standpoint. While emphasizing the freedom of the individual, and its potential to shape society in which he or she lived, Michael D. Jones gave God a co-operative rather than a sovereign role in creation. In this, he was certainly more inclined to Arminian than Calvinist teaching. Arminianism saw redemption as a collaboration between God and humankind, while Calvinists asserted firmly God's sovereignty over creation. Furthermore, the Idealism that was central to Michael D. Jones's moral philosophy shaped his outlook on the world. He believed that the purpose of humankind was to seek knowledge and understanding of the moral law and live in accordance with it, and God, who was in direct control of every other aspect of creation, assisted in the task. Jones sought to convince his fellow Congregationalists of their responsibility to abolish 'all kinds of political and religious oppression', and, in so doing, he stressed that the interests of Welsh Nonconformists should no longer be confined to specifically religious issues, but should extend to all spheres of human society:

It is time that we set aside the idea that religion is something that rewards us in the next world because we have suffered in this world every insult and injustice as patiently as Job, before joining Lazarus in

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<sup>96</sup> While maintaining the freedom of the human will, Cudworth claimed that it had a natural tendency towards good. See B. Willey, *The English Moralists* (London, 1964), p.177; G. R. Cragg, *The Cambridge Platonists*, p.25.



Abraham's bosom. The Lord's Prayer states, 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven'. We should strive for a small heaven on earth, as a foretaste of the greater heaven beyond the stars – a world so much greater than this one, and a world where life is eternal.<sup>97</sup>

In an address that he delivered prior to the 1859 general election, Jones asked whether the listeners' religion should be kept within the walls of their chapels and churches. 'No,' he declared, 'it was to be carried with them into all their avocations, ordinary, as well as extraordinary, to the fair, the market, and if need be to a contested election'.<sup>98</sup> Michael D. Jones sought to bring down the barriers between religion and other spheres of life. His emphasis on moral conduct, and its relevance to every aspect of life, made his interpretation of the Christian faith a deep influence on other aspects of his thought and justified his activity in spheres that extended far beyond his pastoral duties.

### **Shaking the Foundations**

The supremacy that moderate Calvinism had achieved in Wales by the mid-nineteenth century was short-lived. As Robert Mackintosh and W. T. Owen have highlighted,<sup>99</sup> the moderating process that was initiated by the 'New System' eventually led to the downfall of Calvinism as the dominant theology in Wales.<sup>100</sup>

The same trend was apparent in English Congregationalism. In 1876, R. W. Dale, the

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<sup>97</sup> *Y Celt* (28 October 1887), 2.

<sup>98</sup> *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (7 May 1859), 2.

<sup>99</sup> R. Mackintosh, 'The genius of Congregationalism', in A. Peel (ed.), *Essays Congregational and Catholic* (London, 1931), p.114; W. T. Owen, *Edward Williams, D. D.*, pp.149-50.

<sup>100</sup> *Royal Commission on the Church of England and other religious bodies in Wales and Monmouthshire*, II (1910), p.521; III, pp.85, 314; R. Tudur Jones, *Ffydd ac Argyfwng Cenedl*, II (Swansea, 1982), pp.48-9.



eminent English Congregationalist, noted the ‘general disappearance of Calvinism’,<sup>101</sup> and, a few years later, asserted that Congregationalists had ‘not yet been able to construct any satisfactory and permanent theological scheme to take its place’.<sup>102</sup> With his ‘New System’, Edward Williams, who had been careful to uphold the fundamental principles of Calvinism, had begun a process of liberalization which progressed further than he could ever have imagined.

The virtual collapse of Calvinism during the second half of the nineteenth century opened the door to theological liberalism, which encompassed a wide range of new ideas and interpretations of the Christian faith.<sup>103</sup> Advances in the field of science supported the spread of necessitarian philosophy, the belief that the universe was governed by nothing more than cause and effect. These ideas were slow to have any impact on Welsh theology, the reason being, according to R. Tudur Jones, that ‘thinkers were reluctant to get to grips with difficult and complex matters’.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, when the threat became apparent, Congregationalists responded by placing further emphasis on the freedom of the will, thus hastening the departure from the Calvinists’ complete dependence on the sovereignty of God.<sup>105</sup>

By the 1880s, the spread of ideas that were associated with German philosophy also threatened to undermine the foundations of traditional Christian thought. Although Immanuel Kant sought to secure the belief in God, his claim that actual knowledge of God could not be achieved by means of reason threatened the very foundations of

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<sup>101</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in England*, p.259.

<sup>102</sup> R. W. Dale, *The Evangelical Revival* (London, 1880), p.267.

<sup>103</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Ffydd ac Argyfwng Cenedl*, II, pp.7-86

<sup>104</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.246.

<sup>105</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in England*, p.259.



theological inquiry.<sup>106</sup> According to Kant, the human mind is a receptor to various experiences by way of the senses, but there is no certainty that those experiences as perceived by the mind are true to reality. As it relates to theology, he claimed that human beings were incapable of knowing or understanding God. God transcended human reason, and, therefore, theological inquiry was futile.<sup>107</sup> Georg W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) built upon Kant's ideas by asserting that humankind would eventually realize that its consciousness is also a vehicle for *Geist*, an omnipresent spirit, and that ultimate reality can only be found in the mind, and that all material is constructed by *Geist* to carry out its own self-realization. Carried to its logical conclusion, Hegel's philosophy, when applied to Christian theology, would reveal that God, Christ and humankind, were all components of *Geist*, the one and the same ubiquitous spirit.<sup>108</sup>

There is nothing to suggest that Michael D. Jones's ideas were inclined towards Hegelian notions of Absolute Idealism, or that his theology developed into pantheism, the belief that God and the universe are identical. James 'Kilsby' Jones,<sup>109</sup> who had also studied at the Presbyterian College in Carmarthen, had adopted this position by the 1880s, and drew the following response from Michael D. Jones:

From my point of view, I believe that to glorify men is against the teaching of the Bible, unless they are instruments to glorify God. It was

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<sup>106</sup> J. G. Jenkins, *Hanfod Duw a Pherson Crist* (Liverpool, 1931), pp.380-1.

<sup>107</sup> T. E. Wilkerson, *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (Oxford, 1976), pp.140-59; H. J. Paton, *The Categorical Imperative*, pp.159-60.

<sup>108</sup> C. Taylor, *Hegel and Modern Society* (Cambridge, 1979), pp.1-68; C. Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge, 1975), pp.80-94; P. Singer, *Hegel* (Oxford, 1983), pp.69-74.

<sup>109</sup> For James Rhys Jones ('Kilsby', 1813-89), see V. Morgan, *Kilsby Jones* (Wrexham, 1890); *DWB*.



Carlyle who planted this in him [Kilsby Jones], and it is known that this writer is quite a Pantheist, and men of that belief exalt men to the status of the Creator, and claim that the creation is a form of God.<sup>110</sup>

In another of his articles, Michael D. Jones refuted the pantheism of Benedict de Spinoza (1632-77), the seventeenth-century Dutch philosopher.<sup>111</sup> He expressed alarm at the conclusions that could be reached by claiming that the human mind was subject to the principle of cause and effect: ‘everything that exists, the good and the bad alike, would come originally from God, the first cause of everything, and so God is the creator of sin, as well as the father and original source of every virtue!’<sup>112</sup> David Adams, Congregational minister and theologian, responded to the challenges posed to the Christian tradition by incorporating Hegelianism into his Christianity.<sup>113</sup> For Adams, the fall of humankind, the incarnation and resurrection were all part of a dialectic of divine self-realization. As R. Tudur Jones noted, ‘Adams’s work was a sign that Modernism had reached Wales’.<sup>114</sup> While Michael D. Jones was certainly part of the liberalization of Christianity during the second half of the nineteenth century, there is nothing to suggest that these ideas had influenced his theological standpoint or that he contributed directly to these further developments in the liberalization of theology.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, another threat to traditional Christian thought emerged in the form of Higher Criticism. Higher Criticism, which

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<sup>110</sup> *Y Cronicl* (June 1889), 168.

<sup>111</sup> For Benedict de Spinoza (1632-77), see *NDT*.

<sup>112</sup> *Y Celt* (9 March 1883), 5.

<sup>113</sup> For David Adams (1845-1923), see E. K. Evans, *Cofiant y Parch David Adams, D. D.* (Liverpool, 1924); *DWB*.

<sup>114</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.250.



challenged the infallibility of Scripture, had a limited impact on Congregationalism in Wales during the late nineteenth-century.<sup>115</sup> Michael D. Jones upheld the infallibility of Scripture, which he considered as the rule of life for the Christian. Evan Pan Jones claimed that like Agur he believed that God's Word was pure,<sup>116</sup> and Michael D. Jones maintained that 'heaven and earth will pass before one iota of God's word will fail'.<sup>117</sup> Only in the 1880s did Welsh theologians begin to consider seriously the threat of Higher Criticism to the very foundations of their Christian teaching.<sup>118</sup> Given his apparent lack of interest in theological discussion, it is hardly surprising that Jones did not commit much time to refuting this criticism. Even so, in one of his articles, he revealed his views on the subject by referring somewhat disapprovingly to those who were 'sceptical of Biblical inspiration' and suggested that Isaiah 13 and 14 were written after the fall of Babylon.<sup>119</sup>

Michael D. Jones was aware of the threat of philosophical Idealism and Higher Criticism to traditional Christian doctrine, but his standpoint represented another danger to the theological foundations of Welsh Nonconformity. The 'New System' has been described as the 'doctrinal springboard'<sup>120</sup> for the radical politics and humanitarian activity of Nonconformists. This activity contributed towards undermining the authority of the theology which had justified it in the first place. R.

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p.248; R. Tudur Jones, 'Astudio'r Hen Destament yng Nghymru, 1860-90', in G. H. Jones (ed.), *Efrydiau Beiblaidd Bangor II* (Swansea, 1977), p.159.

<sup>116</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.280.

<sup>117</sup> *Y Celt* (18 November 1887), 2.

<sup>118</sup> For discussion on biblical study in Wales in the late nineteenth century, see R. Tudur Jones, 'Astudio'r Hen Destament yng Nghymru, 1860-1890', pp.150-78; R. Tudur Jones, 'Esbonio'r Testament Newydd yng Nghymru', in O. E. Evans (ed.), *Efrydiau Beiblaidd Bangor III* (Swansea, 1983), pp.161-99.

<sup>119</sup> *Y Celt* (6 July 1883), 5.

<sup>120</sup> W. T. Pennar Davies, 'Episodes in the History of Brecknockshire Dissent', *Brycheiniog* (1957), 45.



Tudur Jones pointed out that ‘moderate Calvinism had been the theology of the new humanitarianism and now that humanitarianism felt that moderate Calvinism was not moderate enough’.<sup>121</sup> The tendency to ‘secularize’ religion by making it little more than a justification for activity in other spheres was clearly apparent in Michael D. Jones’s work. In one of his sermons, for example, he maintained the distinction between religion and humanitarianism by explaining that ‘religion is love of God; humanitarianism is love of man’. Yet he added that ‘if we love the Creator, we are bound to love the creature as well as the creator because one is the image of the other’.<sup>122</sup> His point was that, if one loves God, then one should also love one’s fellow humans, because they have been created in God’s image. The doctrine of the image of God was fundamental in Reformed Theology as a justification for humanitarian concerns,<sup>123</sup> and it was another argument that supported Michael D. Jones’s social and political outlook. Indeed, in all the key aspects of Jones’s religion, the focus was firmly on humankind. He underlined the moral responsibility of the individual, the glorification of humankind, and the relevance of religion to all aspects of human society. This was a mandate for Nonconformist interest in other spheres, and, bearing this in mind, it should hardly be surprising that Michael D. Jones was most recognized for his social and political ideals and activities rather than his work as a Congregational minister and tutor.

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<sup>121</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in England*, p.260.

<sup>122</sup> *Yr Annibynwr* (April 1857), 81.

<sup>123</sup> For ‘Image of God’, see *NDT*.



## Chapter 3

# Radicalism

Nonconformity developed into a formidable political force in nineteenth-century Wales. Throwing their support behind the Liberals, Nonconformists made a valuable contribution to breaking the long lineage of Tory landowners who had represented Welsh constituencies in parliament. Evan Pan Jones credited Michael D. Jones with a central role in the campaigns that led to the political emancipation of Meirionnydd from the hands of a Tory landowning class in 1868. In a manner that was reminiscent of Williams of Pantycelyn's description of eighteenth-century Wales before the religious conversion of Howell Harris,<sup>1</sup> Pan Jones claimed that, in the mid-nineteenth century, 'Wales was like Zabulon and Naphtali, sitting in darkness, with no one offering to do anything to illuminate it', and that the people of Meirionnydd were 'hidden from sight in silence, in the same way as the Israelites hid from the

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<sup>1</sup> T. Levi, *Casgliad o Hen Farwnadau Cymreig* (Wrexham, 1872), p.26. 'Pan 'roedd Cymru gynt yn gorwedd / Mewn rhyw dywell farwol hûn ...'

Midianites'.<sup>2</sup> As if this was not enough, he added: 'Michael D. Jones had barely settled in Bala when an angel appeared, and told him, "The Lord is with you, strong, powerful man; go forth in force, and you will free Meirionnydd from the hands of the Tories".'<sup>3</sup>

In order to clarify Michael D. Jones's political radicalism, this chapter examines the nature and development of his thought and activity. It will take into account his visit to the United States in 1848-9 and his involvement in local politics in Carmarthenshire and Meirionnydd, and especially in the 'epoch-making' general election of 1859.<sup>4</sup> Jones's views on government, democracy and reform will also be discussed, as will their effect on his attitude towards the British political system.

### **Nonconformist Politics**

The claim that Michael D. Jones travelled to the United States in 1848 in order to observe 'Democracy at home' and 'Slavery in practice' would suggest that, as a young man, he took an interest in politics and society.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the letters that he published in *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* and his work with *Cymdeithas y Brython* reveal that he was familiar with the grievances of rural communities in Wales.<sup>6</sup> It is claimed that, as a boy, Jones had been confounded by the fact that the whole of Llyn Tegid was the property of the wealthy landowner Watkin Williams Wynn.<sup>7</sup> Some

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<sup>2</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), p.215.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> I. G. Jones, 'Merioneth Politics in Mid-Nineteenth Century', in I. G. Jones, *Explorations and Explanations* (Llandysul, 1981), p.83.

<sup>5</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.30-1.

<sup>6</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (November 1848), 333-4.

<sup>7</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oriel Presbyteraidd Caerfyrddin, 1796-1899* (Merthyr Tydfil, 1909), pp.301-2.



years later, he was caught breaching a prohibition on fishing in the river Lliw by Wynn's gamekeeper. Jones responded by hiring a large room in Bala where he held a public meeting to oppose the keeper's appointment.<sup>8</sup> Those who attended unanimously supported his stance, and ousted the gamekeeper from his position.<sup>9</sup> During the 1840s, Jones had also been a student in Carmarthen when Rebecca rioters ransacked the town's workhouse in 1843,<sup>10</sup> and, when he moved to Highbury College, London, fears of a Chartist rising ran high.<sup>11</sup> Michael D. Jones's interest in social and political institutions in 1848 was therefore hardly surprising, though, once he had arrived in the United States, he made little reference to democracy or slavery in the letters that he published in *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd*.

Nevertheless, while Michael D. Jones was in the United States, Welsh Nonconformity underwent one of the most significant episodes in its history. The previous twenty years had been a period of gradual politicization. Having experienced significant increases in their numbers since the turn of the nineteenth century,<sup>12</sup> Nonconformists were gradually becoming aware of their new influence on Welsh society. A series of reforms introduced by parliament in the late 1820s – the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, the abolition of slavery in 1829, and the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 – had convinced them of the value of political agitation, while the insufficiency of the Reform Act of 1832 had also been a stimulus for further

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<sup>8</sup> *Y Celt* (7 December 1888), 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Y Geninen* (July 1899), 169; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.232.

<sup>10</sup> D. Williams, *The Rebecca Riots* (Cardiff, 1955), pp.189-233.

<sup>11</sup> See I. J. Protheroe, 'Chartism in London', *Past and Present* 44 (1967).

<sup>12</sup> N. Evans, "As rich as California ...": Wales 1780-1870', in G. E. Jones and D. Smith (eds.), *The People of Wales* (Llandysul, 1999), p.118; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru* (Swansea, 1966), p.191.



activity.<sup>13</sup> During the 1830s and 1840s, Welsh Nonconformists made their first moves in the campaign for the disestablishment of the Anglican Church,<sup>14</sup> and extended the scope of their political agitation by participating in the activities of the Anti-Corn Law League and Chartists.<sup>15</sup> However, the crucial event in the emergence of Nonconformist radicalism as a powerful force in Welsh politics was the publication in 1847 of the government's reports on education in Wales, more commonly known as the 'Blue Books'. The reports' disparaging comments on the morality of Welsh people provoked a unified response from Congregationalists, Baptists, and, most significantly, the Calvinistic Methodists. Despite their secession from the Anglican Church in 1811, Calvinistic Methodists had been hesitant to participate in political campaigns. The Blue Books controversy stirred the Methodists from this slumber, thus forming a 'united Nonconformist front' in Wales.<sup>16</sup> Although Michael D. Jones had been in the United States at the time of the Blue Books controversy, his political involvement in the following years was very much in tune with this important development in Wales.

Gwenallt claimed that it was Hugh Pugh,<sup>17</sup> Congregational minister and schoolmaster from Tywyn in Meirionnydd, who turned Michael D. Jones into a political radical.<sup>18</sup>

Pugh was a pioneer of Liberalism in north Wales. He was ordained minister at

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<sup>13</sup> R. Wallace, *Organise! Organise! Organise!: A Study of Reform Agitations in Wales, 1840-1886* (Cardiff, 1991), pp.7, 10.

<sup>14</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'The Origins of the Nonconformist Disestablishment Campaign', *Journal of the Historical Society of the Church in Wales* XX (1970), pp.39-76.

<sup>15</sup> R. Wallace, 'The Anti-Corn Law League in Wales', *Welsh History Review* (1986), 6; R. I. Parry, 'Yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg a Threth yr Yd, 1828-1845', *Y Cofiadur* (1949), 20-61.

<sup>16</sup> P. Morgan, 'From long knives to Blue Books', in G. Williams (ed.), *Welsh Society and Nationhood* (Cardiff, 1984), p.208.

<sup>17</sup> For Hugh Pugh (1803-68), see *DWB*.

<sup>18</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Michael D. Jones', in G. Pierce (ed.), *Triwyr Penllyn* (Cardiff, 1950), p.4.



Llandrillo in 1827, and, in 1833, he founded a society to educate the young men of Penllyn and Edeyrnion in the principles of Liberalism and Dissent. In 1837, he moved to Mostyn, Flintshire, where he founded *Tarian Rhyddid a Dymchwelydd Gormes* (Shield of Liberty and Subverter of Oppression), a periodical which he co-edited with Gwilym Hiraethog. Gwenallt offered no evidence to support his claim that Pugh was an important influence on Michael D. Jones. Apart from the fact that Hugh Pugh ministered to churches in the Bala area between 1827 and 1837, it seems that the only direct link between the two men was the fact that Michael D. Jones addressed a meeting to present him with a testimonial in 1867.<sup>19</sup> It could have been that Pugh was an influence on Jones, but evidence for a direct association is scant.

Nevertheless, it is significant that Gwenallt associated Michael D. Jones's early political views with the radicalism of Hugh Pugh. Jones is usually noted for his unusual political views, but Gwenallt's point would suggest that some aspects of the radicalism of the previous generation were to be found in his work. Indeed, the political views that Jones expressed during his ministry at Bwlchnewydd, Carmarthenshire, (1850-5) were similar to those of other Nonconformist radicals in that they were concerned primarily with the Anglican Church. During the early 1850s, Michael D. Jones expressed anxiety at the advance of the Anglican Church in Carmarthen. Over the previous decade, the Anglican Church had made a general advance in Wales. Its resources were organized more effectively and new churches were constructed in several parts of the country.<sup>20</sup> Although Jones did not participate

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<sup>19</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (10 July 1867), 15; H. Walters, 'Michael D. Jones a'r Iaith Gymraeg', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl XVII* (Llandysul, 2002), p.113.

<sup>20</sup> J. E. de Hirsch-Davies, *A Popular History of the Church in Wales: from the beginning to the Present Day* (London, 1912), pp.318-23; O. W. Jones, 'The



in any organized campaign against the Anglican Church, he clearly believed that Nonconformist denominations should collaborate with each other against it. In a letter published in 1850, he called for unity between Carmarthen's Nonconformists in order to attack 'as one man ... snobbery, immorality and churchism, until the Church Rate is abolished, not only in the town, but throughout the county'.<sup>21</sup> From the passing of the Parliamentary Reform Act in 1832, the Church Rate had become the Nonconformists' main grievance against the Anglican Church.<sup>22</sup> The Rate was a property tax levied on all taxpayers, regardless of their religious affiliations, to finance the Anglican Church. Each year, the Rate was set by meetings in every parish between the Church authorities and ratepayers, which made it a convenient opportunity to express opposition to it. Yet, despite urging his fellow Nonconformists to oppose the Rate, Michael D. Jones's personal opposition to it was limited to the press until late 1853.

In 1853, the Nonconformists' campaign against the Rate was bolstered by the final verdict of a twelve year legal battle. The parishioners of Braintree in Essex had challenged the right of those who had organized an annual gathering of parishioners, known as a 'vestry', to set the amount payable as Church Rate when the majority of those present had voted against its imposition altogether. The case was eventually brought before the House of Lords, which concluded that a majority of the vestry's

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Welsh Church in the nineteenth century', in D. Walker (ed.) *A History of the Church in Wales* (Glamorgan, 1976), pp.155-6; J. W. James, *A Church History of Wales* (Aldershot, 1944), pp.169-85; G. A. Williams, *When was Wales?* (Cardiff, 1985), p.203.

<sup>21</sup> *Yr Amserau* (11 December 1850), 4.

<sup>22</sup> J. P. Ellens, *Religious Routes to Gladstonian Liberalism* (Pennsylvania, 1994), pp.19-114.



attendants must give their consent in order to levy the Rate.<sup>23</sup> It was a victory not only for the parishioners of Braintree, but for all opponents of the Church Rate. Even though the Church Rate had not been abolished,<sup>24</sup> this verdict meant that a majority in opposition to the Church Rate in any parish in England and Wales would be able to prevent it from being levied at all.<sup>25</sup> Before the end of the month, Welsh periodicals were announcing that the encouraging result at Braintree was the first indication that the ‘death of the Church Rate’ was imminent, and by October 1853, there were reports of extraordinary incidents at Church Rate vestries across Wales.<sup>26</sup>

Michael D. Jones was involved in clashes at two Church Rate vestries in late 1853 and early 1854, the first in Llanuwchllyn, Meirionnydd, and the second in Abernant, Carmarthenshire. At the time of the vestry in Llanuwchllyn, Jones was probably staying with his mother following his father’s death in late October. Three vestries were held in the parish between October and November 1853 to set the Church Rate for the following year, but no agreement had been reached.<sup>27</sup> It was not recorded whether Michael D. Jones was present at these meetings, but he was certainly present at the fourth vestry in December 1853. He disrupted the proceedings by rallying the parishioners in opposition to the Rate. His efforts proved unsuccessful. The matter was resolved with a majority of the parishioners voting in favour of the Church

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p.113.

<sup>24</sup> Thirteen church rate bills were introduced in Parliament in the following six years, but it would not be until July 1868 that the rate was finally abolished. Ibid., pp.2-3, 115-6.

<sup>25</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (September 1853), 360.

<sup>26</sup> *Yr Amserau* (31 August 1853), 2; *Y Cronicl* (October 1853), 311; J. P. Ellens, *Religious Routes to Gladstonian Liberalism*, p.72.

<sup>27</sup> *Yr Amserau* (2 November 1853), 4; (14 December 1853), 3.



Rate.<sup>28</sup> Jones was more successful in Abernant, Carmarthenshire, a few months later. Several members of his congregation in Bwlchnewydd were parishioners in Abernant, and it was claimed that he had organized opposition to the Rate beforehand.<sup>29</sup> There, the setting of the Rate was deferred for a year after an overwhelming majority of parishioners voted against it.<sup>30</sup>

Michael D. Jones did not pay the Church Rate in either Llanuwchllyn or Abernant. His only connection with Abernant was that a significant number of his church members in Bwlchnewydd were ratepayers in that parish. Jones was actually a resident of the parish of Merthyr, though, as a lodger in a small farm called Ffynonwen, it is doubtful that he would have paid the Rate.<sup>31</sup> The opposition to the Church Rate was not the work of a structured movement, but a collection of isolated events, and Michael D. Jones played the role of agitator in the Church Rate vestries in Llanuwchllyn and Abernant. Moreover, despite spending extended periods of time in London and in the United States, his political activity at this time was focused on the local situation rather than on national issues. He displayed little interest in wider movements, such as the Anti-State Church Association (or the 'Liberation Society' as it was later known), which called for the disestablishment of the Anglican Church.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *Y Gwron Cymreig* (19 January 1854), 2. The result of the vestry was not noted in the report.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, (27 April 1854), 2.

<sup>30</sup> 45 of the 50 parishioners who were present at the vestry voted against its imposition. *Ibid.*, (30 March 1854), 3.

<sup>31</sup> 1851 Census. Parish of Merthyr. Housholder No. 34. See also, E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.52. Jones was a lodged with David and Rachel Rees and their six children in Ffynonwen, an eighty-acre farm in the parish of Merthyr.

<sup>32</sup> I. G. Jones, 'The Liberation Society and Welsh Politics', in I. G. Jones, *Explorations and Explanations*, pp.236-68; R. Wallace, *Organise! Organise! Organise!*, p.122.



Jones's interest in local issues would also be apparent in his involvement in parliamentary campaigns in Meirionnydd.

### **Meirionnydd Politics**

For the most part, Welsh Nonconformists harboured the same grievances as their English counterparts. They opposed the Church Rate, tithe, and various restrictions imposed on them because of their religious convictions, and they were united in their campaign for the complete disestablishment of the Anglican Church.<sup>33</sup> However, in Wales, especially in rural areas, religious divisions between Nonconformists and Anglicans corresponded with social and economic divisions. On one side of the religious divide was the Anglican and anglicized gentry, while on the other were small farmers, tenants and labourers, many of whom had connections with Nonconformity.<sup>34</sup> As a result, the grievances of Nonconformity and rural Wales were often interwoven. Indeed, even though the 1850s was a period of economic stability for Welsh rural communities, the decade stands out in the history of nineteenth-century rural Wales because of the unprecedented antagonism between landowners and their tenants, a great deal of which was fuelled by the Nonconformist press.<sup>35</sup>

Michael D. Jones's earliest clash with local landowners in Meirionnydd predated these developments in Nonconformist radicalism, and so it is hardly surprising that he actively encouraged his fellow Nonconformists to take an interest in issues other than church politics. Jones developed a keen interest in the political situation of

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<sup>33</sup> G. O. Pierce, 'Nonconformity and Politics', in A. J. Roderick (ed.), *Wales through the Ages*, II (Llandybie, 1960), p.171.

<sup>34</sup> E. T. Davies, *Religion and Society in Nineteenth Century Wales* (Llandybie, 1981), pp.13-30; G. O. Pierce, 'Nonconformity and Politics', pp.169-70; R. Wallace, *Organise! Organise! Organise!*, p.4.

<sup>35</sup> D. Williams, *A History of Modern Wales* (London, 1950), p.259.



Meirionnydd, primarily because he saw an opportunity to challenge the authority of local landowners. Meirionnydd had never been represented in Parliament by anything other than Tory landed interest. Its representatives had all hailed from the wealthiest landowning families, and they usually held long uncontested incumbencies. Between 1792 and 1852, only two individuals had represented Meirionnydd in Parliament, while there had only been one contested election over the same period.<sup>36</sup> Clearly, parliamentary representation was merely another aspect of the landowners' social and political control of Meirionnydd. Of the 1,126 registered voters in Meirionnydd in 1859, 423 were leaseholders.<sup>37</sup> Landowners in rural Wales were known occasionally to have exploited their positions by issuing threats of eviction or increases in rent, commonly known as 'the screw', to coerce their tenants into voting as they wished.<sup>38</sup>

While it is clear that Michael D. Jones had questioned the authority of landowners in Meirionnydd from an early age, it is doubtful whether he should be credited for 'awakening' the county, as Evan Pan Jones claimed. There were signs of increasing sympathy for the Liberals in Meirionnydd during the early 1850s, when Jones was still a minister in Bwlchnewydd. It was rumoured in 1852 that a Liberal candidate was to challenge the wealthy landowner William Watkin Edward Wynne in the

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<sup>36</sup> An analysis of the social and political landscape of Meirionnydd prior to, and during the 1859 general election is to be found in I. G. Jones, 'Merioneth Politics in Mid-Nineteenth Century', pp.83-117. See also, W. R. Williams, *The Parliamentary History of the Principality of Wales* (Brecknock, 1895), pp.114-9; K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922* (Rev. edn, Cardiff, 1970), pp.4-5. For W. W. E. Wynne of Peniarth (1801-1880), see 'Wynne (Family)' in *DWB*.

<sup>37</sup> I. G. Jones, 'Merioneth Politics in Mid-Nineteenth Century', p.127.

<sup>38</sup> For rumours of landowner intimidation in general elections see *Yr Amserau* (11 May 1853), 3; (8 February 1854), 3.



impending general election.<sup>39</sup> In a letter to Michael D. Jones, Simon Jones, a draper from Bala who took a particular interest in liberal politics, confirmed the validity of the rumour, and stated confidently: ‘I believe that a great deal of independent thought and spirit has been flourishing among the farmers for 10 or 15 years and that they only need to be taught about the nature of their duties as her majesty’s subjects to carry the day’.<sup>40</sup> Although plans for a contested election in Meirionnydd did not come to fruition, and Wynne was elected unopposed, the results from the Registration Courts later that year suggest that Simon Jones’s optimism was not unfounded. In August 1852, the Meirionnydd Progressive Reform Association was formed at a meeting in Bala.<sup>41</sup> The primary aim of the Association was to find an individual who would represent accurately in Parliament the views and interests of the majority of people in Meirionnydd.<sup>42</sup> A report in *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* in October 1852 claimed that the recent registration of voters had shown strong support for the Liberals in Meirionnydd, and it rejoiced that there was ‘a good chance of this hitherto impregnable county being emancipated’.<sup>43</sup> Clearly, radical sentiments and political activity had been evident in Meirionnydd prior to Michael D. Jones’s return to the county in 1855 as principal of Bala Independent College.

It would appear that political activity in Meirionnydd had lost some of its momentum by the time Michael D. Jones returned to the area in 1855, and that, soon after his

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<sup>39</sup> It should be noted that the Liberal Party did not formally exist until after the 1859 general election.

<sup>40</sup> Private Collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Letter from Simon Jones to Michael D. Jones, 17 May 1852.

<sup>41</sup> *Yr Amserau* (11 August 1852), 4.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*; (15 September 1852), 1.

<sup>43</sup> *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (16 October 1852), 5.

arrival, he contributed to reviving the Reform Association.<sup>44</sup> However, the extent of the Association's activities is unclear. It was caught unprepared when Parliament dissolved in 1857 and, consequently, W. W. E. Wynne was returned unopposed for a second time.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, the events that finally led to a contested election in Meirionnydd in 1859 seem too spontaneous to be accredited to any careful planning by the Reform Association. In March 1859, a public meeting was held at Bala to discuss the Reform Bill which had been recently introduced by the Tory Government and widely criticized by the Liberal and Radical MPs because of its insufficiency.<sup>46</sup> Foreseeing the rejection of the Reform Bill and the subsequent dissolution of Parliament, David Pugh, a solicitor from Dolgellau, proposed at the meeting that if four hundred Meirionnydd voters pledged their support to a Liberal candidate, efforts should be made to find a suitable person to oppose Wynne at the following general election. Indeed, the Bill was defeated, an election was announced, and before the end of April, David Williams of Castell Deudraeth had agreed to stand as Liberal candidate for Meirionnydd.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (6 September 1871), 3.

<sup>45</sup> D. G. Lloyd Hughes, 'David Williams, Castell Deudraeth and the Merioneth Elections of 1859, 1865 & 1868', *Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes Sir Feirionnydd*, IV (1968), 336.

<sup>46</sup> *Baner Cymru* (23 March 1859), 181. For the content of the 1859 Reform Bill, see A. Wood, *Nineteenth Century Britain 1815-1915* (London, 1960), pp.234-5.

<sup>47</sup> For David Williams (1799-1869), see 'Williams (Family), Bron Eryri' in *DWB*; D. G. Lloyd Hughes, 'David Williams, Castell Deudraeth and the Merioneth Elections of 1859, 1865 & 1868', 337; *Yr Amserau* (27 April 1859), 1; *Yr Herald Cymraeg* (23 April 1859), 3. David Williams's name would have been widely recognized in Bala at the time. A few months earlier, he had supposedly stumbled across a charter at the British Museum which referred to Bala as a borough, thus providing evidence on which the town could claim privileges under the Local Government Act of 1858. If granted, the town's promotion to the status of incorporated borough would only mean a small constitutional change which allowed resident taxpayers to elect a governing body of mayor, two bailiffs, and a Local Board. However, the issue was far more than merely a matter of Bala's status and a few alterations to local government. As Ieuan Gwynedd Jones notes, it 'brought the progressive elements in the town into



Michael D. Jones seems to have played a peripheral role in the arrangements that led to Williams's agreement to stand as candidate for the county, but he gave his wholehearted support to the subsequent campaign. He was among the 31 men who met in Bala on 28 April 1859 to form a committee that would meet daily for the eleven remaining days before polling day in order to discuss the campaign's progress.<sup>48</sup> Jones was, through his regular attendance, one of the committee's keenest members, and further evidence of his commitment to the cause in the weeks leading to the election can also be found in his letters to his fiancée, Anne Lloyd of Plas-yn-rhal, near Rhuthun.<sup>49</sup>

Michael D. Jones's most notable contribution to the pre-election campaign in Meirionnydd was his address in the public meeting held at the County Hall in Bala on 3 May 1859. In the address, he called on tenant farmers to obey their consciences and vote for David Williams. *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* quoted him as saying that:

Tenant farmers ... were in some instances, too ready to succumb and to give way to a discreditable and unconstitutional coercion. Those electors so acting would do what was most sinful and immoral, that is, would

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conflict with the upholders of the ancient prerogatives of the gentry'. *Baner Cymru* (12 January 1859), 21; I. G. Jones, 'Merioneth Politics in Mid-Nineteenth Century', pp.115-7.

<sup>48</sup> Williams was undecided on 20 April 1859. See D. G. Lloyd Hughes, 'David Williams, Castell Deudraeth and the Merioneth Elections of 1859, 1865 & 1868', 337.

<sup>49</sup> Bangor MS 7782. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 26 April 1859; 7783. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 2 May 1859; 7830. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, undated.

publicly – for the sake of retaining a farm, or for other worldly considerations – record a lie. This was nothing but a wrong at the expense of right, weak policy in place of sterling principle, a lie where out-spoken truth was pre-eminently demanded (loud cheers).<sup>50</sup>

Using this highly ethical rhetoric to appeal to the consciences of voters, Michael D. Jones was again being the agitator. Indeed, in later years, he was hailed by Thomas Gee, editor of *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, as one who had ‘strenuously emphasized moral principle during election time’ and ‘helped raise political campaigns to the high platform of conscience and religion’.<sup>51</sup>

Monday, 9 May 1859, was polling day, and by the end of the afternoon, reports from different parts of Meirionnydd arrived at the office of *Yr Amserau* in Liverpool. The Liberals led by nine votes in Bala and they had a significant majority of 94 votes at Harlech, but the Tories had won comfortably at Dolgellau, Corwen and Tywyn, where the Liberals seem to have been less active. The overall result for the county gave Wynne the victory by just 38 votes.<sup>52</sup> Despite the overall defeat for the Liberals, *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* announced confidently that ‘the result of the late contest in the county of Merioneth ... can scarcely be regarded as less than a triumph, if looked upon from a proper point of view. It is in fact the thrilling augury and sure

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<sup>50</sup> *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (7 May 1859), 2. See also, *Baner Cymru* (11 May 1859), 291.

<sup>51</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (6 September 1871), 3.

<sup>52</sup> *Yr Amserau* (18 May 1859), 1. Variations in the result are noted in W. R. Williams, *The Parliamentary History of the Principality of Wales* (Brecknock, 1895), p.118. Evan Pan Jones’s claim that the Tory majority was twenty votes is inaccurate. E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.220.



precursor of a future victory'.<sup>53</sup> That victory was not secured until 1868, but, clearly, the Liberals had been encouraged by the result of the 1859 election.

Michael D. Jones's participation in local political activity continued in the weeks following the announcement of the election result. He was among the thirteen members of 'Mr Williams's Committee' who, three days after the election, met at Bala to form a new 'Reform Association' to organize Liberal support in Meirionnydd. Meeting weekly, its tasks included surveying the register of voters, promoting liberal principles in the county, and taking all necessary steps to secure the return of a Liberal MP for Meirionnydd in the following election.<sup>54</sup> Michael D. Jones was prominent in the Association's activities. He chaired meetings and gave public addresses, aided in preparing the Association's constitution, and helped to organize public meetings.<sup>55</sup> The principles endorsed by the Reform Association found a more effective platform in the Borough Local Board that was formed at Bala in September 1859.<sup>56</sup> All twelve of the Local Board's elected members, which included Michael D. Jones, had been members of 'Mr Williams's Committee' or active with the Reform Association.<sup>57</sup> The Association continued to meet thereafter, although at less frequent intervals.

In addition to his participation in this political activity, Michael D. Jones attacked the landowners and their staff in the press with a series of satirical articles entitled

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<sup>53</sup> *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (14 May 1859), 4.

<sup>54</sup> NLW MS 787 B. Minute Book of the Meirionethshire Reform Association. p.18.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 23, 29, 49, 50, 51, 55, 63.

<sup>56</sup> The Local Board was formed in accordance with the Local Government Act of 1858. Early in 1859, a public meeting was held at Bala to discuss the subject. I. G. Jones, 'Merioneth Politics in Mid-Nineteenth Century', pp.115-7.

<sup>57</sup> *Baner Cymru* (5 October 1859), 10.

‘Bwthyn Tegid’, which he wrote under the pseudonym ‘Cephas’. During August and September 1859, five episodes of ‘Bwthyn Tegid’ appeared in *Yr Amserau*.<sup>58</sup> In a letter to Anne Lloyd, Jones described it as ‘a novel founded upon fact; or rather an attack upon the Tory party here in disguise’.<sup>59</sup> In the story, ‘Bwthyn Tegid’ was a lodge which had been built near Bala Lake by a local tradesman Sir Simon ap Simon. Other landowners and their friends would visit the lodge to discuss all kinds of topics with Sir Simon, and it was the visitors rather than the host that Jones ridiculed. According to Pan Jones, its characters were easily recognizable to local people, and ‘the story was read and interpreted extensively, and many attempts were made to emulate it’.<sup>60</sup> Most notably, the last episode of ‘Bwthyn Tegid’ cited two verses from a poem, entitled ‘Y Stiwerdyn Tordyn’, in which Michael D. Jones depicted Wynn’s steward, John Williams of Gwernhefin, as bilious, stubborn and dishonest. The full version of this popular poem, which was circulated in the Bala and Llanuwchllyn area, consisted of 22 verses and, according to Bismark Davies, it was ‘sung on dark nights in front of the churchmen’s houses’.<sup>61</sup>

Michael D. Jones played a prominent part in Liberal activity in Meirionnydd that followed the 1859 general election, and there is little doubt that his involvement was more noticeable because of his status as principal of Bala Independent College. However, as Ieuan Gwynedd Jones noted in his study of mid-nineteenth century politics in Meirionnydd, the key to the Liberal campaign in 1859 had been the

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<sup>58</sup> *Yr Amserau* (3 August 1859), 1; (10 August 1859), 1; (31 August 1859), 1; (14 September 1859), 1; (28 September 1859), 1.

<sup>59</sup> Bangor MS 7807. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 12 September 1859.

<sup>60</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.224.

<sup>61</sup> *Cwrs y Byd* (March 1899), 50. See also, Bangor MS 952. ‘Y Stiwerdyn Tordyn’.



collective involvement and leadership of tradesmen and professionals in Bala. These included not only religious intellectuals such as Michael D. Jones and Lewis Edwards (principal of the Calvinistic Methodist College in Bala),<sup>62</sup> but also those shopkeepers and professionals whose livelihood depended on the agricultural hinterland but remained outside the social and political relationship between landowner and tenant.<sup>63</sup> Among these local activists were Simon Jones (draper), William Thomas (druggist) and Owen Richards (surgeon), whose participation in the campaign was equally noteworthy. Michael D. Jones was certainly committed to the Liberal campaign in 1859, but it would be misleading to credit him with a role that was any more significant than that of the other campaigners, as Evan Pan Jones did in his biography.

### **Retribution and Reputation**

Michael D. Jones won his reputation as the scourge of Meirionnydd landowners partly as a result of the events that followed the 1859 general election. The narrowness of the Tory victory in Meirionnydd, and the intense Liberal activity that occurred in the Bala area in following months, forced a reaction from the landowners. At the end of May 1859, Richard Watkin Price, one of Meirionnydd's wealthiest landowners,<sup>64</sup> gave notice to seven of his tenants to quit their farms.<sup>65</sup> The evictees were among the 21 tenants who had refused to vote for Wynne in the election.<sup>66</sup> In response, the Reform Association sent a 'Remonstrance' to Price,<sup>67</sup> but his reply was, in effect, to admit that he had taken action against his tenants because of their refusal

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<sup>62</sup> For Lewis Edwards (1809-87), see T. Lloyd Evans, *Lewis Edwards: Ei Fywyd a'i Waith* (Swansea, 1967); *DWB*.

<sup>63</sup> I. G. Jones, 'Merioneth Politics in Mid-Nineteenth Century', pp.128-33.

<sup>64</sup> T. I. Ellis, *Thomas Edward Ellis: Cofiant* (Liverpool, 1944), pp.163-4. For Richard Watkin Price (1780-1860), see 'Price (Family)' in *DWB*.

<sup>65</sup> *Yr Amserau* (8 June 1859), 2; *Yr Herald Cymraeg* (23 July 1859), 1.

<sup>66</sup> Nineteen had abstained, two had voted for David Williams.

<sup>67</sup> NLW MS 787 B. Minute Book of the Merionethshire Reform Association.

to vote for Wynne.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, on 29 September 1859, Watkin Williams Wynn followed Price's lead by issuing six of his tenants with notices to quit his lands. The five tenants who had voted for David Williams in May had received notices, and the rents of nine others who had abstained were increased. Michael D. Jones's mother also received notice to quit her smallholding, and since she was the only evictee who had not voted in the election, it seems reasonable to conclude that she was evicted because of Jones's role in the Liberal campaign. When accused in 1868 of cruel acts of retribution against his tenants, Watkin Williams Wynn did not deny that he had evicted five tenants for voting against him in 1859, but he maintained that 'the old lady ... left her farm for an entirely different reason'.<sup>69</sup> According to Wynn, Mary Jones was evicted for breaking the terms of agreement by selling crops outside the estate, when it was customary to sell only to other tenants.<sup>70</sup> However, Michael D. Jones claimed that he was the victim of a personal vendetta waged by Wynn, for, on the same day as his mother had received the notice to quit her farm, Sir Watkin had sold the land on which stood one of his chapels.<sup>71</sup>

Mary Jones died on 1 January 1861, fifteen months after her eviction from Y Weirglodd Wen.<sup>72</sup> In a letter informing his eldest sister of their mother's death, Jones again associated the deterioration in her health with the events of 1859:

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<sup>68</sup> *Yr Amserau* (27 July 1859), 1.

<sup>69</sup> T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee* (Denbigh, 1913), p.235.

<sup>70</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.234. This issue was raised again in 1886, when Owen Slaney Wynne responded to Michael D. Jones's claim that his mother had been evicted from Y Weirglodd Wen because of his involvement in the Liberal campaign. *Y Celt* (19 March 1886), 8; Private Collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Draft of a letter from Michael D. Jones to W. W. Wynn. c.1859; T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee* (Denbigh, 1913), p.250.

<sup>71</sup> Bangor MS 7811. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 29 September 1859; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.234.

<sup>72</sup> Mary Jones died at the age of 77.



I enclose the card which informs you of mother's death. There was a general election, and a liberal candidate came forward to stand for the representation of Merionethshire, for the return of whom I did my best, and that against Sir Watkin, my mother's landlord. The consequence was, she was turned out of Weirgloddwen. Several lost their farms in consequence of the stand that was made by the farmers.<sup>73</sup>

Two other tenants, John Jones of Maes-y-gadfa and Ellis Roberts of Fron-goch, were believed to have died as a result of their eviction in 1859, and the three of them became known as 'Merthyron y Gwirionedd' (The Martyrs of Truth). As a tribute, a tablet bearing their names was placed behind the pulpit at Rama Memorial Chapel,<sup>74</sup> which was officially opened in Llandderfel in 1869.<sup>75</sup>

In later years, Michael D. Jones was identified as one who had suffered terribly at the hands of the landowners because of his steadfast commitment to the Liberal cause. In 1868, for example, Thomas Gee drew attention to the incident at the hustings held in Denbigh in the weeks prior to the general election. In an effort to denigrate Wynn's character and lessen the Tory candidate's chances of re-election, Gee referred to the tenants who had been evicted or suffered increases to their rents in Meirionnydd in

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<sup>73</sup> Bangor MS 10640. Letter from Michael D. Jones to his sister, Mary Ann, c. February 1861.

<sup>74</sup> The fact that the memorial chapel was named 'Rama' is not without significance. The name comes from a verse in the book of Jeremiah: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, *and* bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they *were* not.' (Jeremiah 31:15. See also, Mt 2:17). Again, this exemplifies the powerful religious rhetoric that was often used in Nonconformist political campaigns.

<sup>75</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 April 1869), 10.

1859. He gave particular attention to the emotive issue of Mary Jones's eviction. Gee declared that Sir Watkin had evicted an old lady from her farm because her son had participated in the Liberal campaign. Moreover, he spuriously claimed that she had died from 'heartbreak' a few 'weeks' later. Gee's words were met with loud outcries of disgrace from the listeners. Michael D. Jones then rose to the platform, and he was greeted by 'thunderous applause'.<sup>76</sup> It seems that Jones was also aware of the political capital that could be gained from such incidents. He once asserted that 'it would be a great help if some powerful peer could be employed in England to write the history of our battles, our sufferings and our martyrdoms'.<sup>77</sup> In fact, over the following twenty years, the evictions in Meirionnydd in 1859 became, much like those at Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire in 1868, what Kenneth O. Morgan described as a 'powerful folk-myth' that ensured popular support for Liberal campaigns.<sup>78</sup>

The reputation that Michael D. Jones had gained for his involvement in Meirionnydd politics was given another boost when he was selected in 1869 to give evidence to the Select Committee on Municipal and Parliamentary Elections, chaired by the Marquess of Hartington. Of the 76 witnesses who appeared before the Hartington Committee, seven of them gave evidence from Wales. Two of the Welsh witnesses were solicitors from Newport and Hay, there was a barrister from the south Wales circuit, a ship owner from Cardiff, a gentleman from Cardiganshire,<sup>79</sup> the land agent

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<sup>76</sup> T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee*, pp.229-35; I. Wyn Jones, *Y Llinyn Arian: Agweddau o Fywyd a Chyfnod Thomas Gee* (Denbigh, 1998), pp.95-8.

<sup>77</sup> *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (29 September 1866), 5. See also, I. G. Jones, 'Merioneth Politics in Mid-Nineteenth Century', p.84.

<sup>78</sup> K. O. Morgan, 'Radicalism and Nationalism', in A. J. Roderick (ed.), *Wales through the Ages*, II, p.193.

<sup>79</sup> Thomas Harries of Llechryd was an active member of the Liberation Society in Cardiganshire. R. Wallace, *Organise! Organise! Organise!*, pp.128, 131, 143; *Minutes of the Select Committee on Municipal and Parliamentary Elections*



of Watkin Williams Wynn and Michael D. Jones. It is hardly surprising that, being a Congregational minister, Jones's contribution to the Committee's work received particular attention in the Nonconformist press.<sup>80</sup>

Because of the measures that were introduced as a result of the Hartington Committee's recommendations, Michael D. Jones's testimony was given added significance.<sup>81</sup> In its report, published in July 1869, the Select Committee concluded that examples of intimidation were widespread in County and Borough Elections. The report stated that intimidation was used by landlords, employers and mobs, but it also noted that 'spiritual influence exercised by ministers of religion ... prevailed to a considerable extent'.<sup>82</sup> As a remedy, the Committee strongly encouraged 'the adoption of a system of secret voting' along with 'the use of voting papers, and the multiplication of polling places'.<sup>83</sup> Nonconformist radicals welcomed the measure as offering security for tenant farmers. Of all the witnesses from Wales who contributed to the Committee's work, Jones would probably have been best-known to them. Yet the widespread publicity given to the 1859 election and the significance of the Hartington committee in securing the Ballot should not conceal the fact that, during the mid-nineteenth century, Michael D. Jones was not at all prominent in national issues and that his political activity was mainly local.

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(1868-9), pp.243-9; I. G. Jones, 'Cardiganshire Politics in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', in I. G. Jones, *Explorations and Explanations*, p.191.

<sup>80</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (23 June 1869), 56.

<sup>81</sup> NLW MS 9511 D. Letter from H. T. Roberts to Samuel Roberts, undated.

<sup>82</sup> *Report of the Select Committee on Municipal and Parliamentary Elections* (1868-9). p.xiii.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

## State and Government

The sweeping victories for the Liberals in the general election of 1868 were seen as a 'political awakening' for Wales. For the rest of the century, the Liberal Party dominated parliamentary politics in Wales. However, the Nonconformists, the majority of whom were loyal supporters of the Liberal Party, were influential in shaping the political agenda with their activity in fields such as land reform and disestablishment of the Anglican Church.<sup>84</sup> It was characteristic of Nonconformist radicals to gear their activity towards specific aims, such as the abolition of the Church Rate or disestablishment. Their discussion therefore tended to focus on the injustice of a particular legislation rather than on broader political concepts, such as democracy or government. Even the campaign for electoral reform was seen ultimately as a means of gaining a stronger voice in parliament to redress grievances and secure the disestablishment of the Church.<sup>85</sup>

In a political culture which gave little time to theoretical discussion, it is hardly surprising that Jones gave no systematic account of his views on concepts such as government and democracy. Political issues were clearly of interest to him, but, like many of his fellow Nonconformists, Jones was a polemicist rather than a philosopher. His remarks on political concepts were usually intended to support a specific argument or campaign rather than engage in a detailed discussion on political theory, and his articles usually contained more rhetoric than argument. Nevertheless, some of his views on concepts such as democracy and representation were revealed in a series of articles entitled 'Llywodraeth' (Government), which appeared in monthly issues of the Patagonian movement's paper *Y Ddraig Goch* between January 1876 and July

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<sup>84</sup> R. Wallace, *Organise! Organise! Organise!*, pp.184-5.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.74-5.



1877, and in the scores of articles that he published in *Y Celt*. By collating this evidence, it has been possible to examine his views on government, democracy and representation.

Most Western democracies find their ideological basis in the so-called 'social contract theory' which emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Social contract theorists, such as Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)<sup>86</sup> and John Locke (1632-1704),<sup>87</sup> believed that the state was an institution based on a collective agreement between individuals rather than an organic body politic. Their ideas differed from the Christian view based on assessment of biblical passages such as Romans 13 and subsequent work such as Augustine's *City of God* and John Calvin's *Institutes*, namely that the authority of the state was delegated by God.<sup>88</sup> States were required to conduct their affairs in accordance with God's will as expressed in Scripture, and only in their failure to do so could their authority be questioned. Ultimately, however, the source of their authority was God. For social contract theorists, on the other hand, it was the citizens who delegated authority to the state. The state was 'a product of human decision'.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> For Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), see *DNB*.

<sup>87</sup> For John Locke (1632-1704), see *DNB*.

<sup>88</sup> For the political philosophy of Augustine (354-430), see J. Coleman, 'St Augustine: Christian political thought and the end of the Roman Empire', in *From Plato to NATO: Studies in Political Thought* (Rev ed., London, 1995), pp.45-60; Augustine, *The City of God*, edited by H. Bettenson, (London, 1972); *EPT*. For the political philosophy of John Calvin (1509-64), see J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, edited by J. T. McNeill, II (London, 1961), XX; H. Höpfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin* (Cambridge, 1982); F. Wendel, *Calvin: The Origins and Development of his Religious Thought* (New York, 1963), pp.309-10; *EPT*.

<sup>89</sup> J. P. Wogaman, *Christian Perspectives on Politics* (London, 1988), p.149.

Views on the role and purpose of government could vary considerably between advocates of the social contract theory. According to Thomas Hobbes, individuals enter a covenant with each other to form a sovereign state that ensures a peaceful relationship between citizens, and in order to achieve this, he argued that the citizen should display unconditional obedience to the state authorities, the power of which is unlimited.<sup>90</sup> John Locke argued that the primary purpose of the state was to safeguard the natural rights of the citizen. If the state misuses its power by contravening the rights of the individual, then it forfeits its legal status.<sup>91</sup> For Locke, the guiding principle for any government was ‘liberty’, whereas for Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), it was ‘equality’ that mattered most. According to Rousseau, no one has a right to rule over another person, and the role of the state is to uphold that principle.<sup>92</sup> Rousseau’s most significant contribution was to emphasize the collective personality created by the social contract. He claimed that by contributing, and submitting, to the ‘General Will’, the citizen enhanced his or her own sense of self.<sup>93</sup> Such was the range of views on government that stemmed from the social contract theory.

Michael D. Jones was a social contract theorist. ‘Political government,’ he wrote, ‘is a social contract between two or more persons to safeguard each other’s rights’.<sup>94</sup> It would appear that the social contract theorist who most influenced Michael D. Jones was John Locke. Pan Jones claimed that ‘equality in world and church was an exceptional article in his creed,’<sup>95</sup> but it is clear that, when discussing the role of the

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<sup>90</sup> D. A. Lloyd Thomas, *Locke on Government* (Routledge, 1995), p.13.

<sup>91</sup> J. Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke* (Cambridge, 1969), pp.180-1.

<sup>92</sup> D. Boucher, ‘Rousseau’, in D. Boucher and P. Kelly (eds.), *Political Thinkers: From Socrates to the Present* (Oxford, 2003), pp.240-1.

<sup>93</sup> J. P. Wogaman, *Christian Perspectives on Politics*, pp.149-50.

<sup>94</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (January 1876), 6-7; *Y Celt* (11 November 1887), 2.

<sup>95</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.316.



state, Michael D. Jones emphasized liberty rather than equality. The purpose of government, he claimed, was to protect the 'life, liberty and property' of its citizens,<sup>96</sup> a view that corresponded with Locke's assertions in his *Second Treatise of Government* (1690).<sup>97</sup> Locke stated that 'being all *equal and independent*, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions',<sup>98</sup> and that individuals 'join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any, that are not of it'.<sup>99</sup> Michael D. Jones is known to have studied Locke while at Highbury College, and it is known that he taught Locke's philosophy to students at Bala Independent College. Yet, such was the extent of Locke's influence on contemporary political philosophers and institutions that it is also possible that he also came across this principle elsewhere.<sup>100</sup> Most notably, Locke's influence may be discerned in the American political system.<sup>101</sup> The Declaration of Independence noted life, liberty and pursuit of happiness as the 'unalienable rights' of each citizen, while the Fifth Amendment of the American Constitution (1791) stated that no criminal should be 'deprived of life, liberty or

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<sup>96</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (January 1876), 6-7; (January 1876), 6-7; (March 1876), 29; *Y Celt* (22 June 1883), 5; (27 July 1883), 8; (11 November 1887), 2; (18 November 1887), 1.

<sup>97</sup> J. Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), VIII, Sect. 95; J. Waldron, 'John Locke', in D. Boucher and P. Kelly (eds.), *Political Thinkers: From Socrates to the Present*, p.187.

<sup>98</sup> J. Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, II, Sect. 6.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, Sect. 95.

<sup>100</sup> R. Hodder Williams, 'The US Constitution', in R. Singh (ed.), *Governing America: The Politics of a Divided Democracy* (Oxford, 2003), pp.61-2.

<sup>101</sup> H. Brogan, *The Longman History of the United States of America* (London and New York, 1985), p.215; L. D. Baldwin, *The Stream of American History* (New York, 1952), pp.92-4; H. Zinn, *A People's History of the United States: From 1492 to the present* (2nd edn, Harlow, 1996), pp.73-4.

property without due process of law'.<sup>102</sup> Bearing in mind that one of Michael D. Jones's reasons for travelling to the United States in 1848 was to observe 'Democracy at home',<sup>103</sup> it seems probable that he was influenced by American 'democratic' institutions as well as the political philosophy of John Locke.

John Locke's views on liberty and property were based on an understanding of universal and natural law. Locke believed that humans were free agents but accountable to 'the law of nature'. For Locke, 'freedom of men under government' was:

... to have a standing rule to live by, common to every one of that society, and made by the legislative power erected in it; a liberty to follow my own will in all things, where the rule prescribes not; and not to be subject to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown, arbitrary will of another man: as *freedom of nature* is, to be under no other restraint but the law of nature.<sup>104</sup>

These views are also apparent in Michael D. Jones's work. Although Jones did not provide a definition of liberty, there is little doubt that he saw it as the pursuance of one's own interests within the confines of the universal moral law rather than licence to do as one pleases regardless of its effect on others. As each individual was equally accountable to the moral law, the rule of 'liberty' was in the interest of society as a

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<sup>102</sup> The American Constitution. Fifth Amendment (1791), in D. McKay, *American Politics and Society* (3rd edn, Oxford, 1993), p.319.

<sup>103</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.30-1.

<sup>104</sup> J. Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, IV. Sect. 22. See also, VI. Sect. 57.



whole: upholding the liberty of citizens should also guarantee social harmony and stability.

Michael D. Jones believed that property should always be associated with labour. The purest form of property, he claimed, was the fruit of one's labour, and he often referred to the verse, 'In the sweat of thy face thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground' (Gen. 3:19).<sup>105</sup> 'This,' he wrote in 1887, 'is the Divine order,'<sup>106</sup> though in fact his views on property also seem to have been influenced by John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government*. Locke wrote:

The *Labour* of his Body, and the *Work* of his Hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the State that Nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his *Labour* with, and joyned to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his *Property*.<sup>107</sup>

By associating property with labour, Michael D. Jones could argue that the state should safeguard property while also questioning the prerogatives of wealthy landowners. He argued that if a landowner had constructed a house, or made improvements to the holdings, then he had the same right to them as the farmer had to the crops that he had raised. Nevertheless, he added that 'the landowner does not make the *land*. No-one but the Creator himself can create an inch of land'.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> *Y Celt* (20 July 1883), 8. See also, (4 November 1887), 2; (21 October 1887); M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig* (Liverpool, 1860), p.10.

<sup>106</sup> *Y Celt* (21 October 1887), 2.

<sup>107</sup> J. Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, V. Sect.27.

<sup>108</sup> *Y Celt* (25 January 1884), 1. See also, (4 November 1887), 1.

Obtaining property through inheritance was legitimate,<sup>109</sup> though the heir did not inherit ownership of the land. Rather, the rightful inheritance was the property which forefathers had produced by their own labour.<sup>110</sup>

### **Democracy and the Franchise**

The social contract theory raised questions about the sovereignty of the state. According to Calvinist and Augustinian traditions, God had delegated authority to the state to rule over the temporal, and it was therefore accountable only to God.<sup>111</sup> For social contract theorists, however, the legitimacy of government rested on popular consent rather than divine sanction. Popular consent certainly held a prominent place in Michael D. Jones's view of the state. He claimed that 'legitimate government is founded on the will of the people, while oppressive government is forced upon them, contrary to society's wishes, with the power and authority of the sword and bayonet'.<sup>112</sup> He maintained that, in order to be legitimate, a state government should be formed according to 'the will of the people'.<sup>113</sup>

However, while stressing the importance of popular consent, Jones also emphasized the government's accountability to moral law, the supreme measure of good and righteousness according to which God governed creation. The state, like any individual, could flout the moral law, but it would remain accountable to it.<sup>114</sup> 'Some people believe,' he wrote, 'that governments are not subject to the same moral law as

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., (6 July 1883), 4.

<sup>110</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (January 1876), 7.

<sup>111</sup> *EPT*, pp.24-7, 55-7.

<sup>112</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch*, (March 1876), 29.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., (June 1877), 65; (July 1876), 77; *Y Celt* (8 April 1887), 4; (28 October 1887), 2.

<sup>114</sup> For John Locke's similar views on this issue, see J. Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke*, pp.126-7.



individuals'. 'I believe,' he declared, 'that moral law applies to everyone, for groups as well as for individuals, and governments are bound to exactly the same rule as persons'.<sup>115</sup> While Michael D. Jones's political views differed from the Calvinist and Augustinian belief that government's authority derived directly from God, his moral philosophy asserted divine sovereignty over both citizen and state.

Michael D. Jones's views on how the 'will of the people' should be interpreted and implemented are not without significance. In France, for example, an attempt to establish a 'pure democracy' (as Rousseau called it) had caused anarchy and led to the despotic reign of Napoleon Bonaparte. While his views on this subject were never articulated in full, his interpretation of the term 'people' may help to clarify his thought. As Rohan McWilliam remarked, the term 'democracy' did not acquire a positive meaning in British politics until the late nineteenth century,<sup>116</sup> but the demand for 'government by the people and for the people' was widely held by nineteenth-century British radicals.<sup>117</sup> Since the early nineteenth century, radicals had called for a state that was answerable to 'the people' through universal suffrage. In this context, 'the people' was considered a source of power that was separate from the ruling aristocracy.<sup>118</sup>

For Michael D. Jones, the will of the people would be best represented by an elected parliament. 'Legitimate government,' he wrote, 'is to govern a country in accordance

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<sup>115</sup> *Y Celt* (25 July 1890), 7.

<sup>116</sup> R. McWilliam, *Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century England* (London, 1998), p.43.

<sup>117</sup> M. Cragoe, *Culture, Politics and National Identity in Wales, 1832-1886* (Oxford, 2004), p.33.

<sup>118</sup> R. McWilliam, *Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century England*, pp.55-8; M. Cragoe, *Culture, Politics and National Identity in Wales, 1832-1886*, p.33.

with the will of the nation's representatives who have been legitimately elected', and he added that 'it is the worst kind of violence to control a country in any way other than in accordance with the will of the people as it is expressed by parliamentary members'.<sup>119</sup> However, Jones did not claim that the franchise should be based on right of the governed to have a voice in the formation of the laws by which they are to be governed. He believed that the franchise should be based on payment of taxes. Matthew Cragoe claims that, in nineteenth-century radical discourse, 'the people' was 'an amorphous category', but one that was 'often extended to include all those who engaged productively in society'.<sup>120</sup> Indeed, the notion of 'engaging productively in society' figured prominently in Michael D. Jones's thought, the purest form of wealth and property being one's own labour. His objection to the Tory Reform Bill of 1859 (which was subsequently rejected by Parliament), for example, was that it did not 'extend the franchise to the labouring class',<sup>121</sup> which clearly included workers in both agricultural and industrial sectors.

It seems that Michael D. Jones believed that the best way of extending the franchise to the 'labouring class' would be to make the payment of taxes as the requisite to vote. The fundamental principle of democracy, he claimed, was that government should be formed according to the demands of the taxpayers.<sup>122</sup> Although Jones did not explain his views on suffrage, it is possible that he saw the payment of taxes as the best means of enfranchising the 'labouring classes'. Yet, this seems somewhat inconsistent with his espousal of the social contract theory, which was traditionally

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<sup>119</sup> *Y Celt* (8 April 1887), 4.

<sup>120</sup> M. Cragoe, *Culture, Politics and National Identity in Wales, 1832-1886*, p.33.

<sup>121</sup> *Yr Amserau* (23 March 1859), 1.

<sup>122</sup> *Y Celt* (20 July 1883), 8. See also, (6 July 1883) 5.



seen as an unwritten agreement between all members of society, regardless of their contribution towards the running of the state.<sup>123</sup>

It is possible Michael D. Jones asserted his belief in taxpayer franchise in order to reinforce his position in the dispute at Bala College. One of the issues dividing the two camps at the College in the late 1870s was the question of who had a right to a voice in the management of the institution. Supporters of the New Constitution believed that the whole body of Welsh Independent churches should have some influence on its management, whereas Michael D. Jones supported the Old Constitution, which stated that only those who contributed financially to the College should have a voice in its government. Although the Old Constitution did not allow a greater voice to the most generous subscribers, the principle was the same, namely that only those who had a financial stake in the institution were entitled to have a say in its management. When discussing the management of the College in 1883, for example, Jones stated that ‘every man and woman who pays tax should have a voice in the election of a committee, and know how the committee spends their money’. ‘These,’ he added (somewhat erroneously),<sup>124</sup> ‘are the fundamental principles of a Congregational church, the Old Constitution, and every free and constitutional government’.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> J. P. Wogaman, *Christian Perspectives on Politics*, p.152.

<sup>124</sup> In Congregationalism, membership of the local church is not based on financial contribution but on the covenantal relationship between the individual and other church members, and between the church and Christ.

<sup>125</sup> *Y Celt* (6 July 1883), 5.

## Representation and Reform

Michael D. Jones's views on parliamentary representation were deeply influenced by his views on the political situation in Meirionnydd. He spoke of the county's parliamentary representation at a conference organized by the Liberation Society at Bala in September 1866. The county was still represented by a Tory landowner at the time, but the Liberals were hopeful of a victory at the next election. Meirionnydd, he claimed, had never been properly represented in parliament:

In the dignified correct sense of the term *to represent*, Merioneth is not represented. If Merioneth, or the portion of Merioneth that enjoys the franchise was to go to the House of Commons, it would not give a single vote in Parliament as Mr Wynne its member does. All the Tory members of Merioneth have always voted quite contrary to the convictions of the constituency.<sup>126</sup>

Clearly, Jones's aim was to highlight the weaknesses of the parliamentary representation of Meirionnydd. 'True' representation, he argued, is 'when an individual is selected by a community to act as its delegate, to give expression to its opinions and sentiments'.<sup>127</sup> In Jones's mind, a good representative was someone whose actions reflected the needs of the electors. He claimed that representatives should not act as they saw appropriate, even if they had the interests of the electors in mind. Rather, their foremost concern should be to vote according to the wishes of the constituents, the aim being to govern the country 'in accordance with the will of the

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<sup>126</sup> *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (29 September 1866), 5.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, (29 September 1866), 5. See also, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 November 1866), 1.



people as it is expressed by parliamentary members'.<sup>128</sup> Legitimate representation was not based on the electorate giving its consent to a representative to act according to its wishes. It was a continuous relationship between electorate and representative, and the legitimacy of government was reflected in the extent to which the actions of the state reflected the will of the people at that time. When MPs voted in accordance with the wishes of their constituents, he claimed that parliament would function 'as though the nation had congregated to make laws for itself'.<sup>129</sup>

Michael D. Jones acknowledged that, in most situations, electors would have different views on political issues. 'In such cases,' he explained, 'the constituency cannot elect a representative for everyone, only for a section of the people, but that section should always constitute the majority'.<sup>130</sup> This argument is particularly significant because, in later years, Jones justified the need for a Welsh parliament by claiming that its MPs would never constitute the majority in the British parliament, and were therefore unable to introduce legislation that was deemed necessary for Wales.<sup>131</sup> Michael D. Jones was not critical of the majority rule that was exercised in Britain, and he expressed no views on the possible flaws of that system. In 1868, shortly after the passage of the second Reform Bill, he asserted that 'although Great Britain is classed as a monarchy, it is in reality a democracy'.<sup>132</sup> Even though Michael D. Jones was, by that time, convinced that a Welsh parliament was needed, he continued to believe that the British political system was founded on commendable principles.

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<sup>128</sup> *Y Celt* (8 April 1887), 4.

<sup>129</sup> *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (29 September 1866), 5. See also, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 November 1866), 1.

<sup>130</sup> *Baner Ac Amserau Cymru* (14 November 1866), 1.

<sup>131</sup> *Y Celt* (3 April 1885), 7; (1 May 1885), 1-2.

<sup>132</sup> *Y Dydd* (5 June 1868), 8.

In Michael D. Jones's mind, the key weakness in the British political system was ineffective representation. During his visit to the United States in 1848, he had asserted confidently that 'an observant man cannot but see that the aristocracy's days are numbered, and that there will soon be a government that is as good as, if not better than, any in the world, and we will be able to love the government as much as we love the people themselves, because the people will be the government'.<sup>133</sup> It was the aristocracy, rather than the inadequacies of the British political system, that prevented the 'people' from governing the country. 'Concern for genuine representation,' he claimed, was 'the foundation of the British constitution'.<sup>134</sup> Thus, Jones could maintain that, while Congregationalists had dissented from the Established Church, they 'conform with the British constitution, and the Tories of Meirionnydd are foolish dissenters'.<sup>135</sup> This argument was characteristic of nineteenth-century radical propaganda. Radicals, whose name derived from the notion of 'going back to the roots', presented themselves as 'renovators' of the British Constitution, which, as John Belchem notes, 'confirmed the sovereignty of the people and the contingent authority of parliament'.<sup>136</sup> Similarly, Michael D. Jones argued that Tory landowners had, by intimidating voters, betrayed the fundamental principles of the British political system, and so he referred to them as 'enemies of our specific form of government' and 'traitors to their country'.<sup>137</sup> He claimed that if landowners were permitted to force their tenants to vote against their principles, then all that separated Britain from 'despotic' Russia would be lost. Britain, he asserted,

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<sup>133</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October 1848), 301.

<sup>134</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 November 1866), 1.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> J. Belchem, *Popular Radicalism in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp.1, 12; R. McWilliam, *Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century England*, pp.60-1.

<sup>137</sup> *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (29 September 1866), 5.



had a 'constitutional government' that gave its people a part in the formation of laws. But if the people were intimidated and punished for voting according to conscience, then the distinction between Britain and its enemy would vanish.<sup>138</sup> Meirionnydd's landowners would have turned 'a free country into feudal soil'.<sup>139</sup>

Michael D. Jones believed firmly in constitutional reform. He was not a pacifist,<sup>140</sup> but he opposed the use of violence either to implement the will of the state or as a method of protest. While being inspired by the progress of the Irish national movement in the 1880s, for example, he condemned the Irish Fenian movement's use of violence, and wondered: 'When will the world become sensible enough to use moral methods to bring about political change, instead of using the cruel and expensive sword?'<sup>141</sup> Again, Jones's advocacy of peaceful constitutional change placed him firmly within the British radical tradition rather than the French Revolution and the ideas of Thomas Paine and Rousseau, which were associated with the abolition of political systems to make way for new institutions.<sup>142</sup> Advocates of republicanism in Britain rarely called for the immediate abolition of the monarchy. Instead, they demanded a system of checks and balances that would ensure political stability and accountability to the people.<sup>143</sup> Jones certainly objected to the British monarchy, and argued that one should always be elected rather than born into positions of power.<sup>144</sup> Yet he also underlined the need for moderate reform and maintained that 'because we have a monarchy at present, it should be honoured as a

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<sup>138</sup> *Baner Cymru* (24 August 1859), 532.

<sup>139</sup> *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (29 September 1866), 5.

<sup>140</sup> *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 24.

<sup>141</sup> *Y Dydd* (5 June 1868), 8-9.

<sup>142</sup> S. J. Lee, *British Political History 1815-1914* (London, 1994), p.17; R. McWilliam, *Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century England*, p.59.

<sup>143</sup> R. McWilliam, *Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century England*, pp.58-9.

<sup>144</sup> *Y Celt* (1 July 1887), 2.

symbol of the law; but this should not prevent us from striving for an elected monarchy and House of Lords'.<sup>145</sup> Displaying the optimism that was characteristic of the Victorian age, Jones believed that democracy was marching forward not only in Britain, but throughout the world. In 1876, for example, he wrote: 'It must be remembered that we live in an age in which the principles of democratic government are becoming highly esteemed throughout the world. There is a form of democratic government now in Britain, which is becoming more and more democratic'.<sup>146</sup>

Michael D. Jones's participation in mid-nineteenth century politics was not particularly noteworthy, but it is clear that his early activity, which was directed towards the Anglican Church and at the landowning class in Meirionnydd, was characteristic of contemporary Nonconformist radicalism. By the late nineteenth century, these two issues – disestablishment of the Anglican Church and land reform – became central in Welsh politics. At the same time, Jones's political views were influenced by the philosophy of John Locke and he took an interest in the American political system, both of which contributed to his development as a committed democrat and a firm believer in representative government. However, while emphasizing that the actions of the state should reflect 'the will of the people', Michael D. Jones's political views were not limited to the 'popular' issues of disestablishment and land reform. In later years, his primary concern would be the preservation and political expression of Welsh national identity, an issue that gained little popular support in Wales during the nineteenth century.

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (June 1876), 67.



## Chapter 4

## Identity

Tributes to Michael D. Jones have often noted how his Welsh identity was a pervasive influence on his life. They refer to the Welsh names which he gave to his children and to his home in Bala, and that he wore a distinctly Welsh costume. They mention his preference for Welsh produce, that he used a Welsh quill when writing, and that he even ensured that he used Welsh goose fat to polish his shoes, which had been made of Welsh leather.<sup>1</sup> His national identity also shaped his social and political outlook, and led to his activity in the establishment of the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia. This chapter analyses critically the nature and development of Jones's

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<sup>1</sup> *Y Celt* (4 August 1893), 1-2; *Y Geninen* (July 1895), 211-3; *Y Dysgedydd* (December 1930), 367-71. See also, *Cymru* (1895), 253; *Y Cronicl* (January 1899), 11-15; *Cwrs y Byd* (January 1899), 1-8; *Y Cronicl* (February 1899), 39-41; *Cwrs y Byd* (March 1899), 49-51; *Y Geninen* (July 1899), 166-72; *Y Geninen* (October 1899), 281-5; *Y Geninen* (January 1900), 33; *Y Dysgedydd* (April 1912), 149-52; *Y Traethodydd* (1915), 234-49; *Y Dysgedydd* (December 1920), 358-63; *Y Dysgedydd* (May 1922), 142-5; *Y Dysgedydd* (November 1925), 328-33; *Yr Efrogdydd*, VI (1929-30), 31-7.

views on national identity, and places his ideas within the broader context of the national consciousness that was emerging in Wales during the mid-nineteenth century.

### **Language, Religion and National Identity**

Recent studies of Michael D. Jones's thought have referred to his visit to the United States in 1848-9 as a significant episode in the development of his Welsh identity. It is claimed that his awareness of the value of Welsh national characteristics was heightened and that he had demonstrated little interest in either language or nationality previously.<sup>2</sup> A short article that Jones wrote during his time at Highbury College (1844-7) reveals that his attitude towards the Welsh language developed over time.<sup>3</sup> The article appeared in the Congregational periodical *Y Dysgedydd* under the pseudonym 'Dan o Wynedd'. The subject was education, an issue frequently debated by Welsh Nonconformists in the 1840s. In his article, Jones discussed whether it was better to teach the Welsh people to read English so that they could then be educated with English books, or, alternatively, teach them with books which had been translated into Welsh. Hardly surprisingly, he supported the latter course of action. Those who had access to formal education, he claimed, were 'given wings to fly to the peak of English riches', leaving the majority of Welsh people in misery. The state of education in Wales, he explained, was symptomatic of the social and economic injustices of rural Wales: 'the landlords take whatever rent they desire

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<sup>2</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Hanes Mudiadau Cymraeg a Chenedlaethol y Bedwaredd-Ganrif-ar-Bymtheg' in *Seiliau Hanesyddol Cenedlaetholdeb Cymru* (Cardiff, 1950), p.114; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa* (Cardiff, 1962), pp.19-20; A. Davies, 'Michael D. Jones a'r Wladfa', *Trans. Cymm.* (London, 1966), pp.73-4; H. Walters, 'Michael D. Jones a'r Iaith Gymraeg', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl XVII* (Llandysul, 2002), p.118.

<sup>3</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (August 1845), 237-8.



from their tenants, so that the tenants are forced to over-work the labourers and servants, while the oppressors do not consider that it is they who give value to their land'. Clearly, Michael D. Jones saw the oppression of the Welsh people in economic rather than cultural terms, and his argument was that, in order to relieve the situation, his compatriots should realize their potential for 'self-dependence'. His views on the Welsh language were most significant. 'Despite my respect for the Welsh language,' he wrote, 'I can only admit that its extinction would be advantageous to Wales'.<sup>4</sup> Like many of his contemporaries, his argument in favour of Welsh-medium education was based on expediency rather than principle. He maintained that, because most of the people of Wales were monoglot Welsh-speakers, it would be easier to provide education through the medium of Welsh than to teach them all to understand English. At this time, there was no indication that Michael D. Jones saw any inherent value in the Welsh language.

Michael D. Jones first expressed his concern for Welsh national characteristics during his visit to the United States (1848-9). It may be noteworthy that he spent most of his visit in the bustling environment of Cincinnati. Cincinnati had experienced rapid growth since the turn of the nineteenth century as it established itself as a commercial centre for the surrounding agricultural communities. In 1802, it was described by one Welsh immigrant as 'a desert ... apart from a few cabins, and a military fort'; by 1848, its population had risen to about 100,000.<sup>5</sup> Most of the city's growth had occurred in the previous decade as a flourishing steamboat industry

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 237.

<sup>5</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (December 1849), 368; W. Stix Glazer, *Cincinnati in 1840* (Ohio, 1999), p.170.

stimulated the growth of other industries in the area,<sup>6</sup> so that by 1850, Cincinnati was the sixth largest city and second largest manufacturing centre in the United States.<sup>7</sup>

Pan Jones claimed that, when setting out for the United States in 1848, Michael D. Jones had intended to observe the advantages and disadvantages that Welsh immigrants encountered in their new environment.<sup>8</sup> Given the constant influx of immigrants from various ethnic backgrounds, and the pressure that it placed on Cincinnati's political and social structures, he could not have been in a more appropriate place to witness the effects of displacement on Welsh people.

Michael D. Jones's ministry in Cincinnati deeply influenced his response to the effects of displacement on Welsh immigrants. The Nonconformist chapel was central to the social and cultural, as well as religious, life of Welsh expatriate communities,<sup>9</sup> and Jones was in a favourable position to assess the situation of the Welsh community in the city. Welsh people did not immigrate to the United States with the specific intention of retaining their national characteristics. Their foremost concern was usually their material and economic circumstances. The first generation of American-Welsh, those who were originally from Wales, used the Welsh language. But their American-born descendants were less likely to feel any attachment to the

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<sup>6</sup> D. Stradling, *Cincinnati: From River City to Highway Metropolis* (San Francisco, 2003), p.23.

<sup>7</sup> W. Stix Glazer, *Cincinnati in 1840*, p.7; D. Stradling, *Cincinnati: From River City to Highway Metropolis*, p.31.

<sup>8</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), pp.30-1.

<sup>9</sup> J. Hunter, *Llwch Cenhedloedd: Y Cymry a Rhyfel Cartref America* (Llanrwst, 2003), pp.17-18; G. Williams, 'A prospect of paradise? Wales and the United States of America, 1776-1914', in G. Williams, *Religion, Language and Nationality* (Cardiff, 1979), pp.227-9.



Welsh language.<sup>10</sup> Thus, to Michael D. Jones, the immigrants appeared to be losing, if not discarding, the characteristics that defined their identity as Welsh people. In fact, Jones's ordination service was bilingual, suggesting either that the second or third generation immigrants was unable to understand the Welsh language, or that the congregation believed that the use of the English language facilitated their integration into American society.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, a letter written by Jones reveals how, as a minister in Cincinnati, he felt deep concern for the future of the Welsh as a distinct cultural group in the United States: 'It is truly heartbreaking to work with any institution belonging to the Welsh in this country, when all evidence shows that our nation will disappear here'.<sup>12</sup>

For Michael D. Jones, national identity was a social phenomenon. It was based on the uniqueness of the Welsh as a cultural community rather than any notion of race. By preserving their cultural characteristics, their language in particular, he believed that the Welsh could retain their national identity in other parts of the world, and, more importantly, pass it on to descendants who had been born outside Wales. Similarly, Welsh people could change their national identity simply by abandoning their cultural characteristics and adopting those of another nation. This explained the 'disappearance' of the Welsh 'nation' in the United States. For Jones, national

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<sup>10</sup> G. Williams, 'A prospect of paradise? Wales and the United States of America, 1776-1914', p.231. See also, R. T. Berthoff, *British Immigrants in Industrial America* (Cambridge, 1953), pp.125-206.

<sup>11</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (March 1849), 89; G. Williams, 'A prospect of paradise? Wales and the United States of America, 1776-1914', p.227.

<sup>12</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (April 1849), 113-4.

identity was therefore subjective in that its continuance would ultimately depend on the will of those who belonged to that specific cultural community.<sup>13</sup>

During his ministry in Cincinnati, Jones also became aware of the tendency among Welsh immigrants to lapse in moral conduct and neglect religious observances, both of which he considered to be an integral part of their national identity. In a letter published in 1849, he glorified the religious character of the Welsh:

Let other nations boast of their learning, their refinement, and their civility, and we will strive with our religion. Religion, and not learning, is the glory of the world – Christianity is the glory of religion – Protestantism is the glory of Christianity – Dissent is the glory of Protestantism – Wales is the glory of Dissent.<sup>14</sup>

The belief that the Welsh were an exceptionally religious people was commonplace among mid-nineteenth century Welsh Nonconformists. Looking at their recent history, particularly since the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival, Welsh Nonconformists claimed that God had shown particular favour to their nation, raising it 'from the depths of moral degradation, ignorance and superstition, to the highest rank amongst the enlightened Protestant nations of the world'.<sup>15</sup> The rate at which

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<sup>13</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (June 1877), 66; *Y Celt* (15 August 1884), 9; (28 October 1887), 1; *Y Celt* (1 January 1892), 1.

<sup>14</sup> *Yr Amserau* (29 March 1849), 6.

<sup>15</sup> T. Rees, *The History of Protestant Nonconformity* (London, 1861), p.2.



Welsh people continued to be drawn into the Nonconformist fold during the first half of the nineteenth century was ample evidence to support this self-image.<sup>16</sup>

Michael D. Jones had only to spend a few months in the United States to see that there were ‘hundreds who have become worldly and irreligious’ since their arrival.<sup>17</sup>

‘The loss of our language will not only mean the loss of a language,’ he wrote, ‘but also the loss of our religion and morality to a considerable degree’.<sup>18</sup> Rather than

concluding that the religiosity of the Welsh people was merely another cultural characteristic, Jones attached greater value to the Welsh language. In another letter,

he wrote that ‘the Welsh rightfully feel that morality and religion are a nation’s glory’, before adding that ‘it is the language that preserves our nation’.<sup>19</sup> Michael D.

Jones concluded that the Welsh were a uniquely religious people only so far as they remained Welsh in language and custom. His first expressions of patriotism therefore stemmed from his belief that the preservation of national characteristics was crucial for the religious well-being of the Welsh people.

Michael D. Jones believed that these observations on the connection between language and religion could be applied to Wales as well as to the United States. ‘Are not our language, our customs, our religion and our morality worth keeping?’ he asked, ‘And does not the history of our nation on this side of the Atlantic, *as well as*

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<sup>16</sup> N. Evans, “‘As rich as California ...’: Wales 1780-1870’, in G. Elwyn Jones and D. Smith (eds.), *The People of Wales* (Llandysul, 1999), p.118; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru* (Swansea, 1966), p.191; P. Morgan (ed.), *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision* (Llandysul, 1991); G. Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books* (Cardiff, 1998); P. Morgan, ‘From Long Knives to Blue Books’, in G. Williams (ed.), *Welsh Society and Nationhood* (Cardiff, 1984).

<sup>17</sup> *Yr Amserau* (29 March 1849), 6.

<sup>18</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Amercanaidd* (January 1849), 11.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, (April 1849), 109.

*the other*, prove that losing our language usually means losing the other three?<sup>20</sup> However, when discussing the situation in Wales, he tended to emphasize the irreligiousness of areas that had been Anglicized, rather than the strength of Nonconformity in other parts of the country. He warned that ‘if the Welsh do not stand up like heroes for their own country soon, and demand immediately that which they have been denied for so long, their country will decline into a Radnorshire, and a Radnorshire worse than Sodom’.<sup>21</sup> In another article, Jones attested:

Saxonism is rapidly defacing the glory of the land of our birth, so that the most Anglicized places, that is the towns, Radnorshire and Pembrokeshire, etc. are the darkest, ungodliest and most corrupt places, where violence, poverty and sin increase as Saxonism increases.<sup>22</sup>

Although the connection that Jones made between Anglicization and immorality seemed to be based on prejudice or hearsay, Ieuan Gwynedd Jones’s study of socio-religious patterns in Wales during the nineteenth century demonstrates that this argument could be supported with statistical evidence. In the Religious Census of 1851, the parts of Wales with the lowest proportion of Welsh speakers registered the poorest attendance at places of worship. The Census also revealed that while only a third of the total population of Wales attended places of worship on Sunday, chapel attendance was considerably higher in the least Anglicized parts of Wales.<sup>23</sup> Other factors, such as industrialization and urbanization, should be taken into account, but

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., (December 1848), 364. My own emphasis.

<sup>21</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (April 1849), 113.

<sup>22</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (April 1849), 109.

<sup>23</sup> I. G. Jones, ‘Religion and Society in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century’, in I. G. Jones, *Explorations and Explanations* (Llandysul, 1981), pp.217-35.



Nonconformists used the results as propaganda against the Anglican Church.<sup>24</sup> The apparent connection between the Welsh-speaking areas and religious observance persisted to the end of nineteenth century,<sup>25</sup> and, throughout his life, Michael D. Jones upheld the belief that there was an association between moral degeneracy and Anglicization. In the final years of his career, for example, he continued to claim that ‘Wales’s experience is that Anglicization means paganization’.<sup>26</sup>

When discussing the Welsh nation and its characteristics, Michael D. Jones did not seem to attach much significance to land, as did the Jewish people for example. The following quotation may initially suggest otherwise:

If there is one place on earth that is worthy of the name Holy Land in our days, where there is many a Hebron, Tabernacle, Bethel, Soar, Carmel, Libanus, Ebenezer, Peniel, Zion, Gerizim, Bethesda, Engedi, and Pisgah, that would be Wales. There is no spot on earth where the Great King is more worshipped, and Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, is more honoured, and the Scriptures are more revered.<sup>27</sup>

However, Michael D. Jones did not claim that the land had been given to the Welsh by God. Rather, he argued that ‘migration is a law of Heaven’ and that ‘humans are migratory creatures’.<sup>28</sup> In *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, a pamphlet which he published in 1859 to promote the establishment of a Welsh Settlement, he wrote: ‘The whole

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<sup>24</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics 1868-1922* (Rev. edn, Cardiff, 1970), p.28.

<sup>25</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Ffydd ac Argyfwng Cenedl*, I, (Swansea, 1981), pp.28-30.

<sup>26</sup> *Y Celt* (17 October 1890), 2.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, (4 November 1887), 1.

human family is traced back to Noah, and it was through migration that Noah's descendants inhabited the lands, and it is in accordance with the same law that the world is to be filled with men. The Welsh are to have their part in this, and it is desirable that they should do it in the wisest, most organized and effective manner'.<sup>29</sup> Evidently, to emigrate in a 'wise', 'organized' and 'effective' manner was to do so without causing detriment to national characteristics, the preservation of which was essential to the religious well-being of the Welsh people.

The comparison that Jones made between Wales and Canaan was a reference to the religious character of the Welsh people rather than their connection with the land. Also in *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, he wrote that 'the Welsh are now the most religious people on earth, and on a map of Europe, Wales is Canaan'.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, he compared the Welsh to the Israelites. He claimed that the Welsh deference towards the English was similar to that of the Israelites towards the Egyptians during their captivity, but found solace in the belief that, in the Old Testament, 'God raised a new generation who had been heartened amidst the miracles of the desert'.<sup>31</sup> The Welsh had been 'educated in hard work' and they were 'the most industrious and diligent workers in the world', which he compared with God's preparation of the Hebrews for freedom.<sup>32</sup> However, it is clear that Michael D. Jones made these comparisons between the Welsh and the Jewish people for rhetorical purposes. In fact, there was nothing extraordinary about identifying similarities between the Welsh people and

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<sup>28</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig* (Liverpool, 1860), p.5.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp.5-6.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p.12.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.9.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.12.



the history of the Jewish people as it is recorded in Scripture.<sup>33</sup> The works of two writers who are most associated with such a comparative approach to Welsh history, Charles Edwards (1628-91?)<sup>34</sup> and Theophilus Evans (1693-1767),<sup>35</sup> were on Michael D. Jones's list of favourite books which he formulated as part of a survey conducted by the Welsh periodical *Cyfaill yr Aelwyd* in 1892.<sup>36</sup>

While embracing the belief that the Welsh were a uniquely religious people, most Welsh Nonconformists did not share Michael D. Jones's belief that there was a connection between their language and religiosity.<sup>37</sup> This was evident, for example, in Nonconformist response to the Education Reports ('Blue Books') of 1847. The controversy caused by the Reports provoked a surge of national consciousness in Wales.<sup>38</sup> Nonconformists responded fiercely to the statements about their morality, claiming that it was 'the greatest insult to the Welsh people',<sup>39</sup> but few of them

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<sup>33</sup> G. Davies (ed.), *The Chosen People* (Bridgend, 2002), pp.19-20. There was also a belief that the Welsh were direct descendants of one of the tribes of Israel. See G. Williams, *Religion, Language and Nationality* (Cardiff, 1979), pp.6-8; P. B. O'Leary, 'Ieithoedd Gwladgarwch yng Nghymru 1840-1880', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Gwnewch Bopeth yn Gymraeg: Yr Iaith Gymraeg a'i pheuoedd, 1801-1911* (Cardiff, 1999), p.503.

<sup>34</sup> For Charles Edwards (1628-91?), see D. Ll. Morgan, *Charles Edwards* (Caernarfon, 1994); *NCWL*; *DWB*.

<sup>35</sup> For Theophilus Evans (1693-1767), see G. H. Jenkins, *Theophilus Evans (1693-1767): y dyn, ei deulu, a'i oes* (Aberystwyth, 1993); D. E. Evans, 'Theophilus Evans ar Hanes Cynnar Prydain', *Y Traethodydd* (1973); *NCWL*; *DWB*.

<sup>36</sup> NLW 10572 B. Those works were C. Edwards, *Y Ffydd Ddi Ffuant* (1667) and T. Evans, *Drych y Prif Oesoedd* (1716). The result of the survey were featured in *Cyfaill yr Aelwyd* (1892), 160-4, 190-4. Michael D. Jones's name was on the list of subscribers in the 1856 edition of Charles Edwards's *Y Ffydd Ddi Ffuant*, which was edited by William Edmund, Llanbedr, and published in Carmarthen.

<sup>37</sup> For studies of nineteenth-century attitudes towards the Welsh language, see G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains* (Cardiff, 2000).

<sup>38</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922*, p.16; G. A. Williams, *When was Wales?* (Cardiff, 1985), p.208.

<sup>39</sup> F. P. Jones, 'Effaith Brad y Llyfrau Gleision', in F. P. Jones, *Radicaliaeth a'r Werin Gymreig yng Nghymru'r Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg* (Cardiff, 1977), p.55.

responded to the remarks on the inferior status of the Welsh language.<sup>40</sup> Despite being Welsh speakers, many of them agreed with the Reports' assertion that the Welsh language was an impediment and that the English language provided better access to post-elementary education and employment.<sup>41</sup>

Welsh Nonconformists' somewhat nonchalant attitude towards their native language was also apparent in the 'English cause', a movement initiated during the second half of the nineteenth century by a group of influential Welsh ministers who were concerned for the spiritual welfare of the non-Welsh speaking immigrants who settled in Wales.<sup>42</sup> Rather than encourage the immigrants to learn the Welsh language in order to attend the Welsh chapel services, the intention was to increase the number of English-language Nonconformist churches in Wales to provide for the immigrants. It was an inter-denominational venture, led by the influential Lewis Edwards, who was a Calvinistic Methodist, John Thomas of Liverpool and Thomas Rees of Swansea, both of whom were Congregationalists and, it should be noted, adversaries of Michael D. Jones in the dispute at Bala College. Although this was no doubt a factor in Jones's opposition to the English Cause, his perception of Welsh identity was markedly different to that of John Thomas. For Thomas, there was no reason for language to stand in the way of religion. The increasing influx of immigrants to industrial areas and coastal towns required an urgent response, and, in his mind, it

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<sup>40</sup> E. Jones, 'A Vindication of the Educational and Moral Condition of Wales in Reply to William Williams, Esq., Late M.P. for Coventry', in B. Rees, *Ieuan Gwynedd: Detholiad o'i Ryddiaith* (Cardiff, 1957).

<sup>41</sup> G. T. Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books* (Cardiff, 1998), p.209. See also H. Williams, 'Y Traethodydd a'r Gymraeg', *Taliesin* 42 (1981); G. Williams, *Religion, Language and Nationality in Wales*, p.26; G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Gwnewch bopeth yn Gymraeg*, p.7.

<sup>42</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Ymneilltuaeth a'r Iaith Gymraeg yn y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Gwnewch bopeth yn Gymraeg*, pp.246-9.



was much more practicable to provide English-medium services than expect them to learn the Welsh language.<sup>43</sup> Thomas was not opposed to the use of the Welsh language in church services. In fact, he was the minister of a Welsh Congregational church in Liverpool. His response to the spiritual needs of English speaking immigrants was based on expediency rather than principle, and, thus, it was similar to Michael D. Jones's views on education in 1845.

Nevertheless, in later years, Michael D. Jones and John Thomas held different views on Welsh national identity. Thomas may have considered the Welsh a distinct people, but they were part of a culturally diverse British nation, governed by one parliament and administered under the same law. In addition to being the expedient response to the influx of English migrants, Thomas believed that the 'English cause' contributed to the spread the English language which advanced the unity of the British nation.<sup>44</sup> However, Michael D. Jones's experiences in the United States had revealed to him that 'it is through the old language that Wales was made religious and moral, and it is through the Welsh language that it will be exalted in future. No nation has ever been elevated by losing its language'.<sup>45</sup> For Jones, the existence of the Welsh nation depended on the survival of the Welsh language, and therefore, in typically hyperbolic fashion, he claimed that the establishment of 'English Cause' churches was the 'misuse' of Christ's name 'to complete the conquest of Wales'.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> D. D. Williams, *Llawlyfr Hanes y Cyfundeb* (Caernarfon, 1940), pp.219-20; F. P. Jones, 'Yr Achosion Saesneg', in F. P. Jones, *Radicaliaeth a'r Werin Gymreig*, pp.108-31.

<sup>44</sup> J. Edwards, *Edwards Castellnedd* (Llandysul, 1935), 25; R. Tudur Jones, *Yr Undeb* (Swansea, 1972), pp.107-8.

<sup>45</sup> *Y Celt* (24 February 1888), 7.

## The Fate of the Welsh Language

The attitudes of Welsh Nonconformists towards language were shaped by liberal political thought. 'Free trade' principles, also known as *laissez-faire*, had gained a large following in Britain since the end of the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>47</sup> After decades of protectionist policies under a war-time government, the work of economists such as Adam Smith<sup>48</sup> and David Ricardo<sup>49</sup> began to gain popularity. They argued that the state should not intervene in the economic sphere and that, through free trade and unregulated competition, the market would control itself.<sup>50</sup> By the 1840s, free market principles had become an integral aspect of liberal politics, and its advocates included leading Welsh Nonconformists such as David Rees of Llanelli,<sup>51</sup> Gwilym Hiraethog and the Roberts brothers of Llanbryn-mair.

The appeal to Nonconformists of the *laissez-faire* economic philosophy was that the principle of non-interference seemed to correspond to their demand that the state should not interfere in matters of religion. Some Nonconformists applied the *laissez-faire* principle to every aspect of life. 'Competition', wrote John Roberts (J. R.), minister at Conwy,<sup>52</sup> was 'the order of heaven',<sup>53</sup> and 'free market and competition is

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<sup>46</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (June 1877), 67; (October 1876), 114; *Y Celt* (2 May 1890), 1-2; (23 August 1878), 8; (4 October 1878), 8-9.

<sup>47</sup> G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Gwnewch Bopeth yn Gymraeg*, p.7.

<sup>48</sup> For Adam Smith (1723-90), see *DNB*.

<sup>49</sup> For David Ricardo (1772-1823), see *DNB*.

<sup>50</sup> A. J. Taylor, *Laissez-Faire and State Intervention in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London, 1972), pp.39-49; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, pp.268-71.

<sup>51</sup> For David Rees (1801-69), see I. Jones, *David Rees: Y Cynhyrfwr* (Swansea, 1971); *DWB*.

<sup>52</sup> For John Roberts ('J. R.'; 1804-84), see E. Pan Jones, *Cofiant y Tri Brawd o Lanbryn-mair a Conwy* (Bala, 1892); *DWB*.

<sup>53</sup> *Y Cronicl* (August 1874), 224-6; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.269.



that which keeps this world in its place'.<sup>54</sup> Nothing, not even language, was free from market forces.<sup>55</sup> The same position was held by his brother Richard Roberts (G. R.), who was a farmer in Llanbryn-mair.<sup>56</sup> In an article published in *Y Cronicl*, which was edited by the third brother, Samuel Roberts (S. R.),<sup>57</sup> G. R. argued that promoters of the Welsh Settlement should give up their 'nationalistic fanaticism', allowing the Welsh language to 'live or die like another respectable old lady'.<sup>58</sup> He justified his views by stating:

All I want is fair play for *each* language to work its way for preference.

Why should the Welsh *language* have more *protection* than Welsh *farmers*. The languages of the world should be given *free trade*, like other things; and if the Welsh language survives, it will survive; and if it dies out, it will die out.<sup>59</sup>

As far as trade and industry were concerned, Michael D. Jones agreed with his Congregational colleagues that free market principles should be the order of the day. He once claimed that 'supply and demand is the great law that governs worldwide trade' and that 'this law must, in the end, be allowed to run freely without obstruction'.<sup>60</sup> However, Jones saw economy and culture as two separate issues. The

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., (April 1873), 105; (July 1873), 182-4; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.269.

<sup>55</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *The Desire of Nations* (Llandybïe, 1974), pp.134-6.

<sup>56</sup> For Richard Roberts ('Gruffydd Rhisiart'; 1810-83), see E. Pan Jones, *Cofiant y Tri Brawd o Lanbrynmair a Conwy* (Bala, 1892); *DWB*.

<sup>57</sup> For Samuel Roberts ('S. R. '; 1800-85), see G. Williams, *Samuel Roberts, Llanbrynmair* (Cardiff, 1950); E. Pan Jones, *Cofiant y Tri Brawd o Lanbrynmair a Conwy*; *DWB*.

<sup>58</sup> *Y Cronicl* (February 1851), 51.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., (July 1851), 208. Roberts's emphasis.

<sup>60</sup> *Y Dydd* (19 March 1875), 3.

rise or decline of a language was determined by its speakers, not by market forces. He therefore responded to the claim that the supporters of a Welsh Settlement were 'nationalist fanatics' by accusing G. R. of being equally 'fanatical' in his desire to see the whole world speaking the same language.<sup>61</sup>

Many nineteenth-century Nonconformists held the same view as G. R., and it was often justified by claiming that to withdraw from interference in the market was to entrust social and economic forces, as well as their consequences, to Providence.<sup>62</sup> The influx of non-Welsh workers to the industrial regions of South Wales, for example, was detrimental to the Welsh language, but it was not to be opposed.<sup>63</sup> On observing the gradual Anglicization of Wales, Lewis Edwards, principal of the Calvinistic Methodist College in Bala, asserted that 'our wisdom as well as our duty is to bow before Providence'.<sup>64</sup> While encouraging Welsh people to learn the English language, Kilsby Jones assured them that there was no need to worry about the fate of the Welsh language. 'It is,' he wrote, 'like all languages, subject to the law of Providence, and languages have their day, just like men and nations, and when the hour of its demise comes, no one will be able to extend its days'.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, the apparent decline of the Welsh language in some parts of Wales seemed to confirm its exclusion from the divine scheme that was unfolding.

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<sup>61</sup> *Y Cronicl* (July 1851), 211.

<sup>62</sup> H. Teifi Edwards, 'Y Gymraeg yn y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl II* (Llandysul, 1987), p.132.

<sup>63</sup> G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Iaith Carreg fy Aelwyd: Iaith a Chymuned yn y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg* (Cardiff, 1998), p.3; H. Teifi Edwards, 'Y Gymraeg yn y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg', pp.122-3.

<sup>64</sup> *Y Drysorfa* (September 1867), 322-3.

<sup>65</sup> V. Morgan, *Kilsby Jones* (Wrexham, 1897), pp.214-5.



In arguing that the Welsh language should not be left at the mercy of the market, Michael D. Jones was not questioning the work of Providence. On one occasion, for example, he wrote that 'God's children are not placed in circumstances of need without Him having provided for them. No trial can come to them without God having given them some means of deliverance'.<sup>66</sup> According to Jones's moral philosophy, all change within creation other than that which is effected by humankind was the providential work of God.<sup>67</sup> However, he also believed that humankind was entirely responsible for its own actions and that it had an obligation to 'strive for a small heaven on earth'.<sup>68</sup> For Jones, the preservation of national characteristics was part of that obligation, and if the Welsh language were to disappear, it would be the result of human indifference rather than the work of Providence.

It was in response to determinist views on the fate of the Welsh language that Michael D. Jones first expressed his views on the millennium, the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth. Millenarianism had been a strong theme in the work of seventeenth-century Puritans, and since then, Dissenters had used it as a method of justifying their views and actions.<sup>69</sup> G. R. asserted that:

There will come a time when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, but before this happens, small nations such as the Welsh must give up their *nationality*, and stop nurturing this national hot-

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<sup>66</sup> *Y Diwygiwr* (September 1851), 267.

<sup>67</sup> *Y Celt* (9 March 1883), 5.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, (28 October 1887), 2.

<sup>69</sup> See J. F. C. Harrison, *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism, 1780-1850* (London, 1979).

headedness that is called *patriotism*. If the tribes of the world discarded this hot-headed zeal for nation and country, there would be some hope of getting the various nations of the earth to melt into each other and form *one great peaceful nation with one language*.<sup>70</sup>

In reply, Michael D. Jones argued that ‘before the Bible’s millennium arrives ... the English must change their arrogant behaviour towards the people of India, the Welsh, and the Irish, because one nation will not have swallowed all other nations’. The millennium, he added, would be ‘a time when “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall not damage or ruin the mountain of the Lord’s house”’.<sup>71</sup> Millenarianism could provide a basis for human activity or justify conformity with current trends. G.R. had used it to justify leaving the language to the mercy of market forces. For Jones, however, it was a basis for action. He argued that ‘God has his missionaries who act upon his will on earth, and to hasten the millennium, when each corner of the earth will have been subjugated, and the light of Christ’s religion will fill every glade’.<sup>72</sup> Jones’s vision of the millennium also adapted to his views on the rights of nations.<sup>73</sup> By the end of the 1850s, for example, his millennium involved not only a ‘change of behaviour’ on the part of the English. ‘Each nation will govern itself’, he declared. A ‘grand’ vision, he admitted, but ‘much less romantic than the claim that English will be the only language’.<sup>74</sup> Millenarianism was therefore a conventional rhetorical tool which Jones employed to promote his social and political views.

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<sup>70</sup> *Y Cronicl* (February, 1851), 55.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, (July 1851), 212. The quotations are from Isaiah 2:2-4. Jones writes almost the same words in an earlier response in *Yr Amserau* (19 February 1851), 2.

<sup>72</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, pp.11-2.

<sup>73</sup> *Y Cronicl* (July 1851), 212.



## Rural Wales

Michael D. Jones believed that the immorality which he had observed in American Welsh communities in the 1840s resulted from the loss of national identity, but he also attributed it to a change of lifestyle. Observing that the behaviour of Welsh immigrants who had been born and raised in rural Wales was transformed by their new urban surroundings, he pleaded with them to avoid a lifestyle of pride, idleness and materialism,<sup>75</sup> and to remain ‘as rustic as their forefathers’.<sup>76</sup> Again, the nature of his American experience seems to have played a part in this. Cincinnati was a rapidly developing urban environment. Between 1830 and 1850, its population had more than quadrupled from 26,831 to 115,438.<sup>77</sup> What was a centre for the surrounding agricultural community a generation earlier was, by the time Michael D. Jones arrived in 1848, developing into one of the most prosperous cities in the United States.<sup>78</sup> Moreover, while Jones expressed concern for the economic circumstances of Welsh immigrants who arrived in the United States, his criticism of the ‘lifestyle of pride, idleness and materialism’ would have been directed at Welsh immigrants who had established themselves in their new environment and were affluent members of Cincinnati society.

This tension between rural and urban lifestyles was also apparent in letters and articles that Jones published during his ministry at Bwlchnewydd in Carmarthenshire. Bwlchnewydd was a rural community situated about five miles

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<sup>74</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, p.19.

<sup>75</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (January 1849), 11.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, (December 1848), 364; (January 1849), 11.

<sup>77</sup> W. Stix Glazer, *Cincinnati in 1840*, p.170.

<sup>78</sup> D. Stradling, *Cincinnati: From River City to Highway Metropolis*, p.31.

north of the town of Carmarthen, a traditional market town with its main industries serving the surrounding agricultural region.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, in 1851, Carmarthen had a population of 10,524, making it the largest rural market town in Wales.<sup>80</sup> Michael D. Jones was familiar with the area, having spent four years as a student at the Presbyterian College in Carmarthen. However, within months of beginning his ministry in the area, he published a letter in *Yr Amserau* claiming that there had been a general deterioration in the conduct of Carmarthen's townsfolk in recent years. 'For the last fifteen years,' he wrote, 'the spirit of Anglicization, snobbery, and churchism, on which some Welsh towns are doting, has fallen heavily upon Carmarthen'.<sup>81</sup> Elsewhere, he protested against the 'mania for civilization ... not the Protestant civilization of Old or New England that liberates, but a Parisian civilization that enslaves by dazzling the eye'.<sup>82</sup> He referred to the moral degeneracy which had manifested itself in the people of Carmarthen people as 'crachyddiaeth' (snobbery), its clearest expression being the waste of money on fashionable clothes.<sup>83</sup>

It is doubtful that Michael D. Jones's letters provided an accurate portrayal of Carmarthen's townsfolk. His comments were certainly objectionable to some of the readers of *Yr Amserau*. 'If he [Michael D. Jones] is allowed to continue unchecked,' wrote one commentator, 'he might cause many Welsh people to consider their capital city [Carmarthen] as some kind of *Modern Babylon*'.<sup>84</sup> In fact, Jones's criticism of Carmarthen people reveals more about his own character than that of the town. In his

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<sup>79</sup> J. and V. Lodwick, *The Story of Carmarthen* (2nd edn, Carmarthen, 1972).

<sup>80</sup> J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics*, I (Cardiff, 1985), pp.62-5.

<sup>81</sup> *Yr Amserau* (11 December 1850), 4.

<sup>82</sup> Private Collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. '*Mihangel's Valentine for the "Old Mother" in Carmarthen or Carmarthen brought to tune*' (1853).

<sup>83</sup> *Yr Amserau* (10 December 1851), 4.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, (8 January 1851), 2.



biography, Pan Jones noted Jones's 'fondness for the rural life, agricultural food and clothes, and anyone who knew him is aware of his instinctive tendency towards hunting and fishing'.<sup>85</sup> Yet Michael D. Jones expressed more than a mere 'fondness' for the rural lifestyle. His articles in *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* and *Yr Amserau* suggest that it was a key influence on his thought. In early 1849, for example, he wrote:

Man was created a farmer, and all other crafts are artistic rather than natural, and men have been put in such circumstances that the majority of them must follow this vocation, and it is a necessity for which I am grateful. What vocation is most conducive to virtue and religion, and in what vocation is man most independent? In what other vocation is he so blissful? Amid nature and in the fresh air, healthy and rosy-cheeked, he receives plenty of milk, cheese, butter and wholesome unpolluted bread, whey and honey and many more mercies.<sup>86</sup>

Many years later, he pointed out in one of his articles that Adam was 'a gardener or a farmer' in Eden, and that 'the image of Paradise is on that vocation to this day, so that there is no other vocation as advantageous to virtue and health'.<sup>87</sup> Elsewhere, he wrote:

'In the sweat of thy face thou eatest bread, till thou return unto the ground,' 'in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life.' Since the

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<sup>85</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.51.

<sup>86</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (January 1849), 12.

<sup>87</sup> *Y Celt* (1 June 1883), 8.

Fall [of humankind], this is the divine order, and if people flee, or are forced from the countryside to the towns rather than labour the land, the punishment that follows is to inherit a mental and physical frailty, just as the last Romans became a nation of women.<sup>88</sup>

While Jones regarded urban habits as conducive to moral corruption, he clearly believed that the farmer's work possessed a natural integrity. In fact, it is noteworthy that urbanization or industrialization did not figure at all in Michael D. Jones's perception of Wales. This would prove most unfortunate when he came to promoting his nationalist aspirations. It seems that Welsh people in urban areas were far more receptive to ideas on the preservation of language and culture. It was in London, Liverpool and Manchester, as well as Barry in South Wales, that the most politically-minded branches of the *Cymru Fydd* movement appeared during the 1880s.<sup>89</sup> Had Michael D. Jones realized this, his arguments may have appealed to a wider audience. Instead, he concentrated on the 'Land Question', which may have been popular among the people of Meirionnydd, but held little relevance for the growing urban population of Wales.

Although Michael D. Jones first expressed his concern for the Welsh national identity during a visit to the United States, his perception of Wales was modelled on Meirionnydd, where he lived most of his life. Meirionnydd was among the Welsh counties that experienced least social and economic change during the nineteenth century. The county saw a population increase from 38,843 in 1851 to 49,212 in

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., (21 October 1887), 2. Reference to Genesis 3:17, 19.



1891, a large portion of which was attributable to the success of the slate industry in Ffestiniog.<sup>90</sup> According to the Census of 1891, 94.25 per cent of Jones's native county of Meirionnydd were Welsh speakers, and outside Ffestiniog, its economy remained predominantly rural.<sup>91</sup>

The demographic and economic character of Meirionnydd was not typical of the rest of Wales. The population of Wales had increased from 587,245 at the turn of the nineteenth century to 1,771,451 in 1891.<sup>92</sup> The overall number of Welsh speakers had also increased during that time, but their proportion had declined from about 80 per cent to 54.5 per cent.<sup>93</sup> This does not reflect the regional differences which were also becoming increasingly apparent. In 1891, about 90 per cent of the population in the counties of Anglesey, Cardiganshire, Meirionnydd, Caernarfon and Carmarthenshire were Welsh-speaking, but only 49.5 per cent in Glamorgan, 38 per cent in Breconshire and 32 per cent in Pembrokeshire. These figures continued to decline in the last decade of the century, and by 1901, less than half of the population of Wales were Welsh-speaking.<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, agricultural workers, whom Michael D. Jones held in such high esteem, represented a much smaller portion of the working population by the late nineteenth century. In the mid-century, they counted

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<sup>89</sup> D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig' (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1987), pp. 27, 56, 164, 166.

<sup>90</sup> J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics*, I, pp.20, 64, 114. The population of Ffestiniog increased from 3,460 in 1851 to 11,073 in 1891.

<sup>91</sup> H. Teifi Edwards, 'Y Gymraeg yn y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg', p.121.

<sup>92</sup> J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics*, I, p.7.

<sup>93</sup> R. Owen Jones, *Hir Oes i'r Iaith: Agweddau ar Hanes y Gymraeg a'r Gymdeithas* (Llandysul, 1997), p.240.

<sup>94</sup> G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Iaith Carreg fy Aelwyd*, p.3.

for 18.2 per cent of the workforce, but their number had declined to 6.9 per cent by 1901.<sup>95</sup>

Clearly, Michael D. Jones's perception of Welsh identity was quite different from the reality in late nineteenth-century Wales. Rather, it was shaped by Jones's reaction to the effects of Anglicization and urbanization, which contrasted with his upbringing in Meirionnydd. Indeed, bearing in mind that Jones had received an unusually extensive education, he had travelled to North and South America by the mid-1880s, and he discussed the political situation in such remote places as Afghanistan, Brazil and Burma,<sup>96</sup> this parochialism is remarkable to say the least. While consistently emphasizing that there was a much greater world beyond 'Great Britain', Michael D. Jones was unable, or perhaps unwilling, to see the rapidly changing Wales that was beyond Meirionnydd.

### **Expressions of Patriotism**

Michael D. Jones's high regard for the rural lifestyle was characteristic of the late eighteenth-century Romantic Movement. In reaction to the cold rationalism of the Enlightenment and the materialism of urban and industrial society, Romantics emphasized the purity and beauty of nature. While Jones's moral philosophy was deeply influenced by Enlightenment thought, his national consciousness was imbued with the self-expression and sensibility of the Romantic Movement. These elements were the defining characteristics of Romanticism, but the movement manifested itself differently in various parts of Europe. Gwyn A. Williams described the Romantic

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<sup>95</sup> R. Owen Jones, *Hir Oes i'r Iaith*, p.240.

<sup>96</sup> *Y Celt* (4 October 1878), 8-9; (20 December 1878), 11; (28 May 1886), 5; (11 May 1888), 6-7.



Movement in Wales as ‘an enterprise directed at saving, restoring or asserting a people and its culture against the odds’.<sup>97</sup> Through various forms of cultural activity, Welsh Romantics revived, and even invented,<sup>98</sup> a national heritage, providing the foundation for a new sense of identity.<sup>99</sup> The individual most associated with the Romantic Movement in Wales was Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg),<sup>100</sup> the stonemason from Glamorgan who is renowned for inventing the *Gorsedd* of bards which became a feature of the modern eisteddfod. Indeed, the eisteddfod, the origins of which could be traced back to the twelfth century, was possibly the most recognizable product of Romanticism in Wales.<sup>101</sup> Iolo Morganwg lived in London (1773-7, 1791-5), where, in the late eighteenth century, there was a particularly active group of expatriate Welshmen. They formed several literary societies, including *Y Cymmrodorion* (1751), *Y Gwyneddigion* (1770) and *Y Cymreigyddion* (1794), though they seem to have lost much of their zeal by the time Michael D. Jones entered Highbury College in 1844.<sup>102</sup>

Michael D. Jones’s interest in Welsh national characteristics, and his determination to make his nationality a pervasive element in his life, had the sense of purpose that characterized the Romantic movement in Wales. For example, the classes which he organized in Bwlchnewydd during the early 1850s were conducted solely through the

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<sup>97</sup> G. A. Williams, ‘Romanticism in Wales’, in R. Porter and M. Teich (eds.), *Romanticism in National Context* (Cambridge, 1988), pp.16-7.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>99</sup> R. Porter and M. Teich (eds.), *Romanticism in National Context*, pp.5-6.

<sup>100</sup> For Edward Williams (‘Iolo Morganwg’; 1747-1826), see *DWB*; *NCWL*.

<sup>101</sup> D. Williams, *A History of Modern Wales*, pp.272-3.

<sup>102</sup> E. Jones, ‘The Welsh Language in England, c.1800-1914’, in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cardiff, 1998), pp.249-50; R. T. Jenkins and H. Rammage, *The History of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion and of the Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion Societies (1751-1951)* (London, 1951).

medium of Welsh in the hope that they would contribute to a 'transformation' in the Welsh national character.<sup>103</sup> 'With a little energy and determination,' he claimed, 'ministers, schoolmasters and others suited to the work could, through the use of classes such as this, give new dimension to our nation', namely by producing new types of literature.<sup>104</sup>

During this period, Michael D. Jones also formulated his own grammar and alphabet for the Welsh language.<sup>105</sup> In reply to questions on Welsh grammar that were put to him in *Y Diwygiwr* in April 1851, Jones claimed that while trying to teach the rudiments of the Welsh language to others, presumably at the local classes in Carmarthenshire, he found it difficult to compose sentences that conformed to the rules of published Welsh grammar books.<sup>106</sup> This led him to study the language and to formulate his own rules.<sup>107</sup> Early in 1854, Jones wrote to Thomas Roberts, successor to his father at Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn, using his new alphabet for the Welsh language. He had been studying the Welsh language, and had decided to adopt the 'old Welsh form' called 'Coelbren y Beirdd', which he claimed to be the only alphabet 'that meets the requirements of our language'.<sup>108</sup> The authenticity of the

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<sup>103</sup> *Yr Amserau* (7 May 1851), 2.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.54.

<sup>106</sup> Michael D. Jones's attempt to devise his own form of Welsh grammar was not entirely unusual. A number of Welsh grammars were published during the nineteenth century, and it was not until late in the century that the language was given a standard literary form by John Morris-Jones. R. Owen Jones, *Hir Oes i'r Iaith*, p.292; R. Davies, *Gramadeg Cymraeg* (Caerlleon, 1808); J. Parry, *Gramadeg i'r Iaith Gymraeg* (Caerlleon, 1825); J. M. Jones, *Gramadeg Cymreig Ymarferol* (Llanidloes, 1847); W. Williams, *Gramadeg Cymreig* (Wrexham, 1853); R. Jones, *Gramadeg yr Iaith Gymraeg* (Bethesda, 1858); H. Hughes, *Gramadeg Cymraeg* (Caernarfon, 1859).

<sup>107</sup> *Y Diwygiwr* (June 1851), 183-4.

<sup>108</sup> Bangor MS 988 B (205). Letter from Michael D. Jones to Thomas Roberts ('Scorpion'), 9 January 1854. For Thomas Roberts ('Scorpion'; 1816-87), see R.



‘Coelbren’, an alphabet which was purported to belong to Welsh bardic circles but had been lost since the Middle Ages, was very much in question, and rightly so. Despite the publication of Taliesin Williams’s pamphlet in its defence in 1840, it was later found to be one of Iolo Morganwg’s fabrications.<sup>109</sup>

By modelling his new alphabet on the ‘Coelbren’, Michael D. Jones seemed to be reconnecting the language with its ancient past, but he did not treat it as a relic. The Welsh language was a medium that should be used every day, and so practical considerations were also to be taken into account. Certainly, there was a dynamic aspect to Jones’s sense of Welsh identity. What distinguished his alphabet from other versions was that he had rearranged and invented letter forms to avoid the use of double letters to represent a single sound in the Welsh language. For example, the letter *ch* was substituted for the Greek-inspired equivalent *x* and *ff* became *f*, whilst the sound that was usually represented by the letter *f* was replaced by *v*. The Greek delta was commonly used to represent the letter *dd* in the nineteenth century, but Michael D. Jones devised entirely new single letter forms to constitute not only the sounds of the letters *ng*, *th*, *ll*, *rh*, all of which are part of the Welsh alphabet, but also the those of *chw* and *ngh*. W. Keinion Thomas recalled Jones’s advice to him some years later: ‘Don’t use double letters when you are writing in Welsh. Save time, paper and money’.<sup>110</sup>

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T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn* (Bala, 1937), pp.179-85; *DWB*.

<sup>109</sup> T. Williams, *Traethawd ar Hynafiaeth ac Awdurdodaeth Coelbren y Beirdd* (Llandovery, 1840). For ‘Coelbren y Beirdd’, see *NCLW*.

<sup>110</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (December 1930), 367.

Michael D. Jones's attitude towards the Welsh language challenged conventional views. In addition to being the official language of Bala Independent College, the Welsh language was taught as a subject when most educational establishments in Wales proved hesitant to recognize it as part of the curriculum.<sup>111</sup> His decision in 1861 to give his newly-built house the Welsh name 'Bodiwan' (meaning 'Residence of John' or 'Jones') was a patriotic statement, because he did so at a time when it was considered fashionable to give English names to new homes.<sup>112</sup> Occasionally, he used the Welsh version of Michael, 'Mihangel', not only as a pseudonym for writing to the press, but also when writing to friends.<sup>113</sup> He not only gave his children Welsh first names, but also surnames that were in the traditional Welsh form of 'ap Iwan' and 'erch Iwan', meaning 'son' or 'daughter of John'. A letter written to his sister, Mary Ann, in early 1861 stated that the name of his first-born daughter was Myvanwy Llwyd erch Iwan: 'She is not to be called Jones but Iwan,' he explained, 'the old Welsh way of expressing Jones, a corruption of John'.<sup>114</sup> Michael D. Jones was not always consistent in his attitude towards the Welsh language. His affectionate letters to his fiancée, Anne Lloyd of Plas-yn-rhal, were written in English even though Welsh was her first language.<sup>115</sup> This, however, was one of the

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<sup>111</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Nonconformity and the Welsh Language in the Nineteenth Century', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains* (Cardiff, 2000), pp.248-9; T. Lloyd Evans, *Lewis Edwards*, pp.123-4.

<sup>112</sup> *Y Celt* (4 Awst 1893), 1-2; *Y Geninen*, (July 1895), 211-3. For Michael D. Jones's comments on the use of English names by Welsh people see *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 23; *Y Celt* (23 January 1891), 6-7; *Y Geninen* (January 1892), 13-4.

<sup>113</sup> Bangor MS 988 B (205). Letter from Michael D. Jones to Thomas Roberts ('Scorpion'), 9 January 1854; Private Collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. *Mihangel's Valentine for the "Old Mother" in Carmarthen or Carmarthen brought to tune* (1853).

<sup>114</sup> Bangor MS 10640. Letter from Michael D. Jones to his sister, Mary Ann, c. January 1861; *Y Celt* (4 Awst 1893), 1-2; *Y Geninen* (July 1895), 211-3.

<sup>115</sup> Bangor MSS 7769-7837. Letters from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 1859.



few exceptions to the rule. His later letters to Anne were written in Welsh.<sup>116</sup> Nevertheless, Michael D. Jones challenged the common belief that it should be used only in specific spheres such as literary activity and religion, and he refuted the notion that the Welsh people should hasten to learn and use the English language.

Michael D. Jones's appearance was also a combination of Romantic reaction to urban society and his dynamic patriotism. During the mid-nineteenth century, it was unusual to grow a beard, but he grew one of great length.<sup>117</sup> He questioned the ministerial etiquette that emerged during the nineteenth century, but he did not model himself on his Nonconformist predecessors. Many early nineteenth century Nonconformists would have viewed any form of hairstyling or facial hair as an expression of pride.<sup>118</sup> Michael D. Jones gave no explanation for growing such a long beard, though it seems to have been a protest against the vulgar 'civilization' which he had observed in urban society. His views on fashion were also well known. Adelphos, one of *Y Celt*'s regular correspondents, once described someone as 'not giving any more heed to the rituals of this ceremonial age than the Rev. M. D. Jones, Bala, would give to the fashions of *Myra's Journal*'.<sup>119</sup> 'The foolishness of following what is called *fashion*,' wrote Jones in 1876, 'has led people to dress in the same way as their neighbours, unreasonable as it may seem'.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., Bala Bangor 6. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 15 June 1870.

<sup>117</sup> This caused some degree of consternation to John Davies (Siôn Gymro), minister at Llanwinio, Carmarthenshire. R. Tudur Jones, 'Barf Michael D. Jones', *Y Cofiadur* (1973), 60.

<sup>118</sup> A. Tudur 'O'r Sect i'r Enwad: Datblygiad Enwadau Ymneilltuol Cymru, 1840-70', (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales, Bangor, 1992), pp.80-2.

<sup>119</sup> *Y Celt* (10 April 1885), 2. *Myra's Journal* was a popular magazine of dress and fashion for women.

<sup>120</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (November 1876), 125.

The costume usually worn by Jones attracted as much attention as his facial hair. In his biography, Evan Pan Jones referred to Michael D. Jones's preaching tour of Carmarthenshire and Cardiganshire in 1850, soon after his return from the United States.<sup>121</sup> He recalled that 'a bearded man, dressed in woollen cloth' had caused 'great astonishment' when he took to the pulpit at Seion Chapel, Capel Iwan.<sup>122</sup> The woollen cloth, knee length trousers and long beard became Michael D. Jones's distinguishing features. Rarely was he described wearing anything else during his 45 years as a minister. Decades later, John Owen Williams described an elderly Michael D. Jones in an almost identical set of clothes. He was wearing 'a suit of woollen cloth; knee length trousers; his hair short and his beard long and white; a thick stick as tall as his head, and there was a determined look on his face'.<sup>123</sup>

Jones claimed that this costume was, above all, an expression of patriotism. He wore woollen cloth because it had been manufactured in Wales, and it has been claimed that he prided himself on the fact that his costume had been made entirely in Wales, with the unfortunate exception of the buttons on his jacket.<sup>124</sup> 'We need to educate our nation to support our workshops,' he wrote, before assuring his readers: 'I myself always wear clothes made in Wales'.<sup>125</sup> Yet, by wearing a suit of Welsh woollen cloth, Michael D. Jones not only supported Welsh produce, but also an industry in decline. In the late eighteenth century, the mechanization of the woollen industry and its transition from home to factory meant that Welsh manufacturers could supply the

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<sup>121</sup> D. Tudur, 'Michael D. Jones's Costume: An Expression of Political and Religious Beliefs', *Journal of Welsh Religious History* (2003), 53-68.

<sup>122</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.50.

<sup>123</sup> *Yr Efrogdydd*, 6 (1929-30). pp.31-7. For John Owen Williams ('Pedrog'; 853-1932), see *DNB*.

<sup>124</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-1885' (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor, 1941), p.255.



textiles on a much greater scale. Welsh cloth and flannel not only clothed scores of coal and steel workers in south Wales but also slaves in North America and the duke of Wellington's army.<sup>126</sup> However, from the 1840s, the industry in Meirionnydd and Montgomeryshire encountered difficulties. In the towns of Newtown and Llanidloes, the most successful wool manufacturers hesitated before adopting new methods, whereas their competitors in the north of England, in places such as Rochdale and Leeds, were more eager to develop. By the time the Welsh wool manufacturers were taking the necessary measures to compete with their English counterparts in the 1860s, it was too late, and the industry faced a gradual decline from which it never recovered. The industry in west Wales, which remained partly cottage-based and provided for the local communities, did not show signs of decline until the early twentieth century.<sup>127</sup> While Michael D. Jones's support for the Welsh woollen industry was intended as a patriotic statement, it was also a symbol of a way of life that was gradually undermined by the industrialization and urbanization of the nineteenth century.

Another supporter of the woollen industry in Wales, and who feared the effects of Anglicization on Welsh language and customs, was Augusta Waddington Hall of Llanofor. Lady Llanofor was one of the foremost patrons of Welsh folk heritage during the nineteenth century.<sup>128</sup> She wrote an essay entitled *On the Advantages*

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<sup>125</sup> *Y Celt* (15 August 1884), 9.

<sup>126</sup> J. Geraint Jenkins, *The Flannel Makers: A Brief History of the Welsh Woollen Industry* (Llandysul, 1985), p.5.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> For Augusta Waddington Hall (Lady Llanofor, 'Gwenynen Gwent'; 1802-96), see P. Morgan, *Gwenynen Gwent* (Newport, 1988); M. Fraser, 'Lady Llanofor and her Circle', *Trans. Cymm.* (1968); S. R. Williams, 'Llwydlas, Gwenynen Gwent a Dadeni Diwylliannol y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg', in G. H. Jenkins

resulting from the preservation of the Welsh Language and National Costumes of Wales, for the Gwent and Dyfed Royal Eisteddfod,<sup>129</sup> and persuaded her maids and tenants' wives not to purchase fashionable textiles such as calico and cotton, but, instead, to wear traditional Welsh cloth and flannel.<sup>130</sup> Her other activities included the funding in 1850-1 of *Y Gymraes*, a periodical for Welsh women which was launched in response to the 1847 Education Reports. Jones is known to have stayed at Tymawr in Llanover in 1877, where he met Lady Llanofer and presented her with a fox skin from Patagonia.<sup>131</sup> He also sent his children to stay at Llanofer, where they were taught to play the Welsh triple harp.<sup>132</sup>

Lady Llanofer and Michael D. Jones held similar views on Welsh identity but they came from entirely different backgrounds. Of the two, Lady Llanofer had most in common with the direction that the Romantic tradition had taken since the turn of the nineteenth century. The heirs of the tradition in Wales were a group of Anglican clergymen who were hailed by R. T. Jenkins as 'Yr Hen Bersoniaid Llengar'.<sup>133</sup> These included individuals such as the antiquary Thomas Price (Carnhuanawc),<sup>134</sup> the poet Evan Evans (Ieuan Glan Geirionydd),<sup>135</sup> and the poet and editor Walter

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(ed.), *Cof Cenedl XV* (Llandysul, 2000), pp.97-128; G. A. Williams, 'Romanticism in Wales', p.33; *NCWL*.

<sup>129</sup> A. Hall, *The Prize Essay on the advantages resulting from the preservation of the Welsh Language, and national costumes of Wales ...* (London, 1836).

<sup>130</sup> P. Morgan, *Gwenynen Gwent*, pp.6-7.

<sup>131</sup> Bangor MS 7930. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1877.

<sup>132</sup> NLW, Aberpergwm Papers 215. Note on the back of a letter written on behalf of Lady Llanofer, 2 January 1870.

<sup>133</sup> R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cymru yn y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg* (Cardiff, 1933), p.115; B. L. Jones, *Hen Bersoniaid Llengar* (Penarth, 1963); D. G. Jones, *Detholiad o Ryddiaith Gymraeg R. J. Derfel* (Swansea, 1945), pp.30-1; R. Tudur Jones, 'Yr Eglwysi a'r Iaith Gymraeg yn y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg', pp.214-5.

<sup>134</sup> For Thomas Price ('Carnhuanawc'; 1787-1848), see *DWB*.

<sup>135</sup> For Evan Evans ('Ieuan Glan Geirionydd'; 1795-1855), see *NCWL*.



Davies (Gwallter Mechain).<sup>136</sup> For reasons which have already been mentioned, Nonconformists took little interest in Welsh language and heritage. For example, it is noteworthy that, in the response to the Blue Books of 1847, it was mostly the remarks on the morality of Welsh people that Nonconformists refuted, whereas Anglicans, such as Carnhuanawc, Jane Williams (Ysgafell)<sup>137</sup> and James H. Cotton, dean of Bangor,<sup>138</sup> challenged the statements on the status and value of the Welsh language.<sup>139</sup> Yet the denominational press focused on the statements on the morality denigrated the Anglican Church for its apparent betrayal of the Welsh people, and associated Welsh nationhood with Nonconformity and its influence on the people. Evidently, Michael D. Jones made this association between Nonconformity and the Welsh people, and it had played an important part in awakening his appreciation of national characteristics.

Michael D. Jones's views on Welsh identity were shaped by personal experience. He always held the belief that Wales was a uniquely religious nation, a belief that was widely held among Welsh Nonconformists. Yet his experiences in the United States and in Wales convinced him that the religiosity of the Welsh people depended on the survival of their cultural identity. This stimulated his appreciation of Welsh national characteristics, which later became the basis for his nationalist aspirations.

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<sup>136</sup> For Walter Davies ('Gwallter Mechain'; 1761-1849), see *NCWL*.

<sup>137</sup> For Jane Williams ('Ysgafell'; 1806-85), see *NCWL*.

<sup>138</sup> For James H. Cotton (1780-1862), see *DWB*.

<sup>139</sup> R. T. Jenkins, 'Thomas Stephen and Carnhuanawc on the "Blue-Books" of 1847', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, IX (1937-9), 273-4; J. Williams, *Artegall; or Remarks on the Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales* (2nd edn, London, 1848); J. H. Cotton, *Remarks on the Reports of the Commissioners on the State of Education in North Wales* (2nd edn, Bangor, 1848). See also, P. Morgan, 'From Long Knives to Blue Books', p.209.

Nonetheless, Michael D. Jones's perception of Welsh nationhood incorporated aspects of two traditions which have rarely been associated with each other, namely the Romantic movement of the previous century and the distinctly Nonconformist national consciousness that emerged in Wales during the mid-nineteenth century.



## Chapter 5

## Nationalism

Although Michael D. Jones's national identity incorporated elements of both the eighteenth-century Romantic Movement and the emergent national consciousness of nineteenth-century Nonconformists in Wales, his thought on the subject developed into a nationalist ideology that seemed quite extraordinary for its time. It is for this reason that Jones has been hailed as 'the founding father of modern political nationalism in Wales',<sup>1</sup> and that his aspirations for the Welsh nation attracted the interest of twentieth-century Welsh nationalists. Among them was Gwynfor Evans, president of Plaid Cymru between 1945 and 1981, who linked Jones's vision to that of his own generation. Michael D. Jones's nationalism, he claimed, was 'wholly democratic and non-violent, internationalist and anti-imperialist, the characteristics of

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<sup>1</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Religion, Nationality and State in Wales, 1840-1890', in D. A. Kerr (ed.), *Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1840-1940*, II (Dartmouth, 1992), p.271; *DNB*.

today's Welsh nationalism'.<sup>2</sup> Yet, despite this acclaim, Michael D. Jones's nationalism has not been analysed in much detail. Gwenallt and R. Tudur Jones, two other twentieth-century Welsh nationalists, outlined some of the key aspects of his thought,<sup>3</sup> but neither explained its formation and development. Sociologist Glyn Williams claimed that Jones's nationalism derived 'in part from a sense of injustice'.<sup>4</sup> Williams sought to demonstrate how Michael D. Jones's ideas were based on a particular understanding of the cultural, political and economic relationship between England and Wales, but his argument was weakened by a lack of evidence. Based on a thorough examination of Michael D. Jones's work, this chapter analyses this defining aspect of his thought. The early development of his nationalism will be examined, as will the factors that shaped his perception of the relationship between England and Wales. It will discuss the details of his vision for Wales, as well as his use of history, Scripture and moral philosophy to justify his views.

### **Nationalism in Europe**

For generations, the discussion on the meaning and origin of 'nationalism' has divided thinkers. For the purpose of this study, it would be helpful to provide a viable definition of the term. Nationalism is a concept based on the premise that the nation is a legitimate entity. It could be defined as an individual's identification with a specific national community, but as this may not involve any overt political conviction, it would be better described as 'passive nationalism' or patriotism. However, even

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<sup>2</sup> G. Evans, *Welsh Nation Builders* (Llandysul, 1988), p.263. See also, G. Evans, *Land of my Fathers: 2000 years of Welsh History* (Swansea, 1974), pp.404-8.

<sup>3</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Michael D. Jones', in G. Pierce (ed.), *Triwyr Penllyn* (Cardiff, 1953); R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl' in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl* (Llandysul, 1986).

<sup>4</sup> G. Williams, 'Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Wales: The Discourse of Michael D. Jones', in G. Williams (ed.), *Crisis of Economy and Ideology: Essays on Welsh Society, 1840-1980* (Bangor, 1983), p.182.



when its definition is restricted to political ideology, 'nationalism' may encompass a host of views ranging from liberal democracy to the most extreme fascism. Essentially, 'nationalism' is the belief that each nation should govern its own affairs, and that the state and nation should be coterminous.<sup>5</sup> Thus, nationalism may be the separatist demand of a stateless nation or the centralist aims of a nation-state seeking to eradicate regional diversity within its territory.

Differing views on the precise definition of nationalism have been complicated by debate over its origin. It is widely held that modern nationalism was the product of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, particularly the ideas associated with the social contract theory. The identification of nation with the state was apparent in the republican constitutions of both the United States and France. John Locke's views on individual rights and representative government provided the basis of the American Constitution, which was ratified in 1788 and came into effect in 1789. In France, it was the work of philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau that deeply influenced the Revolution of 1789 and *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen*, which gave legal expression to the nation as a legitimate source of power.<sup>6</sup> Rousseau elaborated on the social contract theory by asserting that, apart from being an agreement between individuals, it also created a collective personality. He claimed

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<sup>5</sup> For further discussion on the theory of nations and nationalism, see E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge, 1990), pp.14-45; E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford, 1983), pp.1-5; R. Tudur Jones, *The Desire of Nations* (Llanbydïe, 1974), pp.5-24; B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (Rev. and extended edn, London, 1991), pp.1-7; J. Hutchinson and A. D. Smith, (eds.), *Nationalism* (Oxford, 1994), pp.15-131; *EN*, I, pp.337-8.

<sup>6</sup> S. Woolf (ed.), *Nationalism in Europe: 1815 to the present* (London and New York, 1996), p.2; A. D. Smith, *National Identity* (London, 1991), p.44; T. Bayscroft, *Nationalism in Europe, 1789-1945* (Cambridge, 1998), pp.6-8; H. Kohn, *Nationalism* (New Jersey, 1955), pp.20-9.

that this collective personality, namely the national community, was the highest moral authority.<sup>7</sup>

The French Revolution contributed greatly to the spread of nationalism in Europe. Despite the deposition of the ruling aristocracy, the French Republic soon turned authoritarian, and in its attempt to spread its ideology, Europe was plunged into war. In some states, such as Britain and Spain, war with France strengthened their sense of national identity. The French Revolution raised the Habsburg Empire's awareness of the threat that nationalist ideology posed to its political stability, and it responded by tightening its control over national communities under its rule. This contributed to the spread of nationalism in another way. Some minority or stateless nations, such as Hungary and the Italian states under Habsburg rule, asserted their identities and demanded self-government. The year 1848 saw the widespread expression of national sentiment in Italy, Germany, Poland and Hungary, where peoples demanded national sovereignty.<sup>8</sup> Although these revolutions were short-lived, and that most regimes reasserted their control of those regions by the end of 1849, the revolutions of 1848 had confirmed the emergence of nationalism as a powerful ideology in European politics.

Michael D. Jones does not seem to have been inspired by the national uprisings in Europe in 1848. He was in the United States at the time, and though there is little doubt that news of the revolutions had crossed the Atlantic, he made no reference to them in his letters in *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd*. Indeed, it is clear from those letters

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<sup>7</sup> J. de Gruchy, *Christianity and Democracy* (Cambridge, 1995), p.98; G. H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory* (3rd edn, London, 1951), pp.488-91.

<sup>8</sup> H. Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History* (New Jersey, 1955), p.49; T. Bayscroft, *Nationalism in Europe, 1789-1945*, pp.16-21.



that Jones had not yet developed his nationalist thought. Despite complaining that the British government did not respect 'the rights of the Welsh' in the colonies,<sup>9</sup> and although he declared his hope that the Welsh would 'continue as a nation instead of being swallowed by the Saxon whale',<sup>10</sup> Jones chided people who displayed 'foolish prejudice' against the English. They had not realized, he claimed, that 'there is no such thing as an English government, any more than there is a Welsh or Scottish one'.<sup>11</sup> He maintained that the Welsh were never conquered by the English, but, like the Irish, united with them by agreement'.<sup>12</sup> Clearly, in 1848, Michael D. Jones saw the union between England and Wales as based on mutual consent. He saw no conflict between the interests of the British state and the need to safeguard Welsh national characteristics. He believed that if the Welsh people made a concerted call for better recognition of the Welsh language, the British government would grant it to them without much delay. Evidently, while Michael D. Jones asserted the importance of Welsh national identity, he could not yet be considered a nationalist.

Although Jones made no mention of the Hungarian and Italian uprisings in the letters published in *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* in 1848-9, it does not rule out the possibility that the events in central Europe had influenced his thought. The Hungarian and Italian uprisings had been overpowered by the end of 1849,<sup>13</sup> but, in Wales, sympathy for the Hungarians was expressed most clearly after 1850.<sup>14</sup> In *Yr Amserau*, Gwilym Hiraethog claimed somewhat extravagantly that 'our nation has never taken any foreign cause so close to heart,' and that 'there is not one nation in

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<sup>9</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October 1848), 301.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, (April 1849), 109.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, (October 1848), 301.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> I. Collins, *The Age of Progress* (London, 1964), p.358.

<sup>14</sup> D. Williams, *A History of Modern Wales* (Cardiff, 1950), p.274.

Europe that gives such general and warm support for the honourable Hungarians'.<sup>15</sup>

A series of meetings to express support for the Hungarians were held in various parts of Wales in late 1849 and early 1850,<sup>16</sup> and the interest in Hungary was rekindled when Lajos Kossuth, the exiled leader of the uprising, arrived in Britain in October 1851.<sup>17</sup> Kossuth spent his entire visit in England, but it was claimed in *Yr Amserau* that his name was 'known and revered throughout Wales'.<sup>18</sup> An anonymous pamphlet was published in Bala, entitled *Hanes Louis Kossuth, Llywydd Hungari ...*, which contained an outline of the Hungarian leader's life and excerpts from the public addresses that he delivered in various English towns and cities during his visit.<sup>19</sup>

Gwenallt declared *Hanes Louis Kossuth: Llywydd Hungari* to be 'an important pamphlet in the history of the national movement in Wales', claiming that it had converted Michael D. Jones to nationalism.<sup>20</sup> Gwenallt also maintained that both Lajos Kossuth and the Italian leader Giuseppe Mazzini had shaped Michael D. Jones's nationalist thought, though Kossuth was the 'earliest' and the 'deepest' influence.<sup>21</sup> In fact, there is little evidence to suggest that Mazzini had any direct

<sup>15</sup> *Yr Amserau* (25 October 1849), 4. See also, (2 January 1850), 4. Gwilym Hiraethog also held correspondence with the Italian leader Giuseppe Mazzini, whose letters were translated and published in *Yr Amserau*. T. G. Griffith, 'Italy and Wales', *Trans. Cymm.* (1966), 294. Again, the influence of British liberalism was apparent in that Nonconformist support for the Hungarian and Italian revolutions was not founded on sympathy for their national cause, but for the individual's struggle for freedom against the oppression of the state.

<sup>16</sup> M. Henry Jones, 'Wales and Hungary', *Trans. Cymm.* (London, 1969), 18-9.

<sup>17</sup> *Yr Amserau* (29 October 1851), 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* (18 February 1852), 2.

<sup>19</sup> *Hanes Louis Kossuth, llywydd Hungari : yn cynnwys rhagdraith ar ei nodwedd fel dyn, gwladwr, areithiwr, &c., a hanes ei fywyd o'i febyd i'w ddymchweliad gan Awstria a Rwssia; ynghyd â diangfa ryfedd ei wraig a'i blant; hefyd, ei areithiau yn Southampton, Llundain, Winchester, etc., etc.* (Bala, 1852).

<sup>20</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Michael D. Jones', pp.10-1.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.10. See also, D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Hanes Mudiadau Cymraeg a Chenedlaethol y Bedwaredd-Ganrif-ar-Bymtheg', in *Seiliau Hanesyddol*



influence on Michael D. Jones's nationalism,<sup>22</sup> and it is worth noting that though there were several references to Lajos Kossuth in Michael D. Jones's later work,<sup>23</sup> there is only one reference prior to the late 1870s.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, the following extract from an article published in 1890, strongly suggests that Jones regarded Kossuth as an influence on his nationalist ideas:

The renowned Hungarian patriot Kossuth, who was like a bright star in Europe's sky, impassioned many a soul with the teaching that 'every nation's right to govern itself,' and because of the great revolutions of 1848 and Kossuth's instruction, the oppressed nations of Europe have not been silenced to this day, but they look forward with optimism to the jubilee of oppressed nations and peoples.<sup>25</sup>

The scant reference to the 1848 revolutions in Michael D. Jones's letters in *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* suggests that his interest in Lajos Kossuth was stimulated by the delayed response in Wales to the Hungarian uprising.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, the Welsh pamphlet on Lajos Kossuth, published in 1852, probably provided Jones with an outline of the Hungarian leader's philosophy. For Kossuth, the question was 'whether Europe is to be governed by the principle of centralization or by the principle of self-

*Cenedlaetholdeb Cymru* (Cardiff, 1950), pp.113-4; R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl', p.97; H. Walters, 'Michael D. Jones a'r Iaith Gymraeg', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl XVII* (Llandysul, 2002), pp.120-1.

<sup>22</sup> Jones referred to Guiseppe Mazzini in *Y Ddraig Goch* (August 1876).

<sup>23</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (January 1877), 7; *Y Celt* (15 August 1885), 9; (11 November 1887), 2; (7 March 1890), 1.

<sup>24</sup> The only reference is found in *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 23.

<sup>25</sup> *Y Celt* (7 March 1890), 1.

<sup>26</sup> R. Tudur Jones suggested that it was during Michael D. Jones's time in the United States that he realized the relevance of Kossuth's teaching and example to the situation in Wales. R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl', p.97.

government; because self-government is freedom, and centralization is oppression'.<sup>27</sup>

As well as declaring 'every nation's right to govern its own affairs',<sup>28</sup> Kossuth emphasized that the liberty of the individual and community should take precedence over the interests of the state, a principle that was also central to Michael D. Jones's thought.<sup>29</sup>

Bearing in mind the widespread sympathy for the Hungarians, and the warm reception that Kossuth received on his arrival in Britain, it is remarkable that other Welshmen did not interpret the Hungarian leader's speeches in the same way as Michael D. Jones. This matter has already been addressed by Welsh historians,<sup>30</sup> the explanation being that most Welsh radicals were sympathetic to the Hungarians for humanitarian rather than nationalist reasons, and that they believed that Kossuth was leading an uprising against the 'tyranny' of the Habsburg Empire. Welsh radicals did not identify with the Hungarians as an 'oppressed' Welsh nation; they sympathized with them as British citizens who already enjoyed the freedom for which the Hungarians fought.<sup>31</sup>

Two other Congregationalists responded to the Hungarian uprising in a way that was similar to Michael D. Jones, by observing its national as well as its political significance. Evan Jones (Ieuan Gwynedd), a Congregational minister and

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<sup>27</sup> *Hanes Louis Kossuth, Llywydd Hungari*, p.61.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.39.

<sup>30</sup> R. Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism: A Study* (London, 1954), p.226; D. Gwenallt Jones, *Detholiad o Ryddiaith Gymraeg R. J. Derfel* (Swansea, 1945), p.20.

<sup>31</sup> *Y Traethodydd* (1849), 90-107; (1850), 269-86; M. Henry Jones, 'Wales and Hungary', 7-27.



indefatigable journalist despite his constant ill-health,<sup>32</sup> called attention to the legal status that the Hungarians wished to give to their native language, adding rather sardonically that ‘great men never belittle their mother-tongue’.<sup>33</sup> The other Congregationalist was Robert Jones Derfel, the radical from Llandderfel, Meirionnydd, who displayed nationalist inclinations in the mid-nineteenth century, and, having moved to Manchester, he was deeply influenced by early forms of socialism.<sup>34</sup> In a poem entitled *Rhosyn Meirion*, which he dedicated to Kossuth in 1852, Derfel revealed that his interpretation of the Hungarian leader’s philosophy also differed from the general response of Welsh people. For him, the underlying message of the Hungarian uprising was that ‘the majestic will of the nation is the rule’.<sup>35</sup>

Michael D. Jones, Ieuan Gwynedd and R. J. Derfel shared an appreciation of Welsh national characteristics, particularly the language. Ieuan Gwynedd was one of the few Nonconformists who condemned the remarks of the Blue Books (1847) on the language as well as the morality of the Welsh people.<sup>36</sup> R. J. Derfel was also vociferous in his response to the Blue Books, and he published a number of articles condemning the Welsh people’s view of their native language as barbaric and inferior to English.<sup>37</sup> There is no evidence of correspondence between Michael D. Jones and

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<sup>32</sup> For Evan Jones (‘Ieuan Gwynedd’; 1820-52), see R. O. Rees, *Ieuan Gwynedd, ei fywyd a’i lafur* (Dolgellau, 1876); B. Rees (ed.), *Ieuan Gwynedd: Detholiad o’i Ryddiaith* (Cardiff, 1957); G. H. Jenkins, ‘Ieuan Gwynedd: Eilun y Genedl’, in P. Morgan (ed.), *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision* (Llandysul, 1991); *DWB; NCWL*.

<sup>33</sup> *Yr Adolygydd* (December, 1851), quoted in M. Henry Jones, ‘Wales and Hungary’, 23.

<sup>34</sup> For Robert Jones Derfel (1824-1905), see *DWB; NCWL*.

<sup>35</sup> *Rhosyn Meirion* (1853), quoted in M. Henry Jones, ‘Wales and Hungary’, 24.

<sup>36</sup> E. Jones (Ieuan Gwynedd), *Facts, Figures and Statements in Illustration of the Dissent and Morality of Wales* (London, 1849), p.15.

<sup>37</sup> R. J. Derfel, *Traethodau ac Areithiau* (Bangor, 1864).

Ieuan Gwynedd or R. J. Derfel, yet clearly, their response to Kossuth and the Hungarian revolution differed from that of most Nonconformist radicals because of their different perception of Welsh identity.

The distinctiveness of the Welsh people as a cultural group formed the basis to Michael D. Jones's national identity. He emphasized the cultural distinctions between Wales and England while other Welshmen accepted acquiescently the claim that, despite their differences, they belonged to a single British nation. For most Welsh Nonconformists, Wales as a region of Britain was already enjoying the freedom of self-government. For Jones, on the other hand, Wales was, like Hungary, a nation whose rights had been abused by a foreign government. In 1851, for example, he noted that 'the subject of the revolutions of 1848 was the rights of nations and citizens'.<sup>38</sup> They were not merely the revolt of an oppressed people against a tyrannous regime. While it is clear that Jones had not developed his nationalist thought in the United States, the widespread publicity given to the Hungarian revolution when he returned to Wales seems to have sown doubt in his mind about the political relationship between England and Wales.

### **Colonial Wales**

Central to the development of Michael D. Jones's nationalist thought were his observations on the correlation between national identity and political power. There is reason to believe that his views on this subject had begun to take form during his visit to the United States in 1848-9. For example, when referring to the disadvantages that the Welsh faced when settling in the same communities as the English, Scottish

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<sup>38</sup> *Yr Amserau* (19 February 1851), 2. See also, *Y Ddraig Goch* (August 1876), 89.



and Irish immigrants, Jones noted that the reasons for their weakness as a cultural group were, first, that they were a minority, and secondly, that the legislation is written in a different language.<sup>39</sup> When calling for the establishment of a Welsh settlement, he noted that the law in the proposed settlement should be written and administered in Welsh, though he gave no further explanation for his views on the matter.<sup>40</sup>

The importance that Michael D. Jones attached to the legal status of the Welsh language in the articles which he published in the United States was an early suggestion of the theory that was outlined a decade later in his pamphlet, *Gwladychfa Gymreig* (A Welsh Settlement).<sup>41</sup> In the pamphlet, Jones explained that in all 'settlements' there are cultural groups which may be classified as either 'dominant' or 'passive'. In fact, Jones's theory applied to any society in which more than one language was spoken, for when he discussed the dominant or passive status of cultural groups, he was actually referring to the status of their languages.

For Michael D. Jones, the dominance of a cultural group was reflected by the status of its language in the spheres of law, trade, education and politics. In most countries the dominant cultural group formed the majority. The 'dominant' culture in England would have been English, Italian in Italy, and French in France. However, cultural dominance did not always reflect the number of people, or the proportion of the total population, that belonged to that group. In colonies, the situation was usually different. As an example, Jones referred to Algeria, a French colony, where the

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<sup>39</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October 1848), 301.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, (January 1849), 12.

<sup>41</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig* (Liverpool, 1860), pp.8-9.

dominant culture was French rather than Algerian. 'If Englishmen travel there,' he explained, 'they have to accept that French is the language of law and trade'.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, he noted that the English, as the dominant cultural group in all the British colonies, 'force every newcomer to adopt their language and customs, which have given them [the English] the advantage of being foremost in influence, and an opportunity to monopolize every position of comfort, profit, and honour'.<sup>43</sup> Other cultural groups in the colonies could not gain access to positions of prestige and authority. These were, according to Jones, 'passive' cultures. Some members of the passive cultural groups adopted the characteristics of the dominant cultural group in the hope of acquiring power and influence, while others simply 'yielded' by adopting the dominant language as it became an integral part of everyday life. Jones could see that, if these trends persisted, members of the passive cultural groups would 'melt into the mould' of the dominant culture to such an extent that no remnants would be left of their original cultural characteristics, in Jones's words, 'like men buried at sea, without anything to show that they had ever existed'.<sup>44</sup>

Sociolinguists who have studied the interaction between two or more languages within a specific social context have made observations similar to those of Michael D. Jones. Their research has shown that the use of several languages in a single society invariably results in language conflict, which leads to what is termed as language shift, namely a change in the number of speakers and the context in which the language is used. It has been observed that speakers of a language are in a

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p.8. It is noteworthy that Michael D. Jones used Algeria as an example. He seemed to be discussing colonies, but he referred to the cultural impact of language status on newcomers rather than indigenous people.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.



stronger position if their language has official status in the spheres of politics, education and law. Consequently, in multilingual societies, language status inevitably becomes a political issue.<sup>45</sup>

When establishing a Welsh settlement, Michael D. Jones argued that, wherever it was located, the preservation of national identity would depend on the Welsh language achieving ‘dominant’ status as the language of social, legal, educational and political institutions. Initially, he hoped that the British government, which would provide land and subsidy for the venture, would also grant a similar degree of freedom to the Welsh settlement as it had given to Canada and Australia,<sup>46</sup> the only difference being that the settlement would conduct all its official affairs through the medium of the Welsh language.<sup>47</sup> Jones did not perceive the need for a Welsh settlement as an issue of sovereignty or political loyalty, and it was for this reason that he had no objection in later years to the Patagonian Settlement’s loyalty to the Argentine government. Rather, Jones believed that, to safeguard their national identity, the Welsh needed to find a place where they had sufficient freedom to form their own society and become the ‘dominant’ culture. Thus, it was the principle of ‘self-government’ rather than ‘independence’ that was most important to Jones.

The development of Michael D. Jones’s views on the interaction between cultural groups caused a radical change in his analysis of the relationship between England

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<sup>45</sup> B. Spolsky, *Sociolinguistics* (Oxford, 1998), pp.55-8; R. Fasold, *The Sociolinguistics of Society* (Oxford, 1984), pp.1-12; S. Romaine, *Language in Society* (New York, 1994), pp.34-43; J. Edwards, *Language, Society and Identity* (Oxford, 1985), pp.47-98.

<sup>46</sup> Canada and the Australian territories that were part of the British Empire had legislative assemblies with self-governing powers.

<sup>47</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October 1848), 301.

and Wales. His hope that the British government would acknowledge the rights of the Welsh nation had been ambitious to say the least. In the mid-nineteenth century, Wales was not even recognized by its own MPs as having distinct political needs.<sup>48</sup> Yet it was within this context that Michael D. Jones formulated his ideas on 'dominant' and 'passive' culture and observed that parallels could be drawn between Wales and the colonies of the British Empire. Welsh speakers formed the majority in Wales, and proportionally, they were the strongest cultural group, but it was English culture that provided access to positions of power and privilege. Welsh culture was 'passive' in Wales, because English was the language of government, law, trade and education. Thus, Jones concluded that the relationship between Wales and England was colonial rather than contractual. He placed Wales and Ireland, two nations that were rarely considered as British colonies, alongside India, where three quarters of the British Empire's population lived and which was the most important British colony in terms of trade.<sup>49</sup> He even claimed in 1856 that 'Wales, Ireland and the nations of India are slaves of Englishmen'.<sup>50</sup>

Michael D. Jones believed that Wales's colonial status was reflected in its economic as well as its cultural situation. He noted, for example, that the wealth of natural resources in Wales, such as water and minerals, which could be utilized to serve the needs of the Welsh people. He suggested that the utilization of these resources could provide employment, thereby reducing the rate of emigration from Wales.<sup>51</sup> Rather

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<sup>48</sup> M. Cragoe, *Culture, Politics and National Identity in Wales, 1832-1886* (Oxford, 2004), p.241.

<sup>49</sup> *Yr Amserau* (19 February 1851), 2; N. McCord, *British History 1815-1906* (Oxford, 1991), pp.301, 427.

<sup>50</sup> *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 23.

<sup>51</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, p.4; *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (10 March 1869), 14.



than being utilized for the benefit of Wales, however, these resources were exploited by England. He wrote:

At present, the Welshman sends virtually all his wool to England to be spun. He pays to transport the wool, as well as fattened animals such as oxen and sheep to provide meat for the Englishmen who do the spinning. And once the Englishman has finished the cloth, the Welshman must pay for its transportation back to Wales, thus giving the Englishman a good profit so that he can live in his palace in England.<sup>52</sup>

Indeed, improvements to Wales's transport connections with England over the previous fifty years had brought new industry into Wales, thus creating, in Prys Morgan's words, 'a system of regional economic inequality, emphasizing for the Welsh that their economy was a subservient one, serving the needs of mostly English capitalism'.<sup>53</sup> For Michael D. Jones, this 'regional economic inequality' reflected the Welsh nation's colonial status in relation to England.

Michael D. Jones's analysis of Wales's political and economic situation is similar to Michael Hechter's thesis of internal colonialism. Hechter sought to explain why the Celtic nations had maintained their identities despite being at the heart of the world's most powerful empire at the time. He argued that this phenomenon could be explained by uneven economic development between the core and the peripheries, and that the unequal political relationship between cultural groups is reflected in the

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<sup>52</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, pp.4-5. See also, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (10 Mawrth 1869), 5, 14.

<sup>53</sup> P. Morgan, 'Early Victorian Wales and its crisis of identity', in L. Brockliss and D. Eastwood (eds.), *A Union of Multiple Identities* (Manchester, 1997), pp.95-6.

distribution of resources and cultural division of labour in the peripheral regions. This could elicit a reaction from the cultural group which felt that it was excluded from positions of social prestige.<sup>54</sup> Certainly, Glyn Williams was right in noting that Michael D. Jones's nationalism stemmed from a sense of injustice and that he wanted Welsh people to occupy positions of authority in Wales,<sup>55</sup> though his primary motive was not to improve the Welsh people's economic status, but to encourage an ethos of self-dependence and national pride.<sup>56</sup>

As Michael D. Jones developed his views on the rights of nations, he became increasingly critical of imperialism, which he saw as one nation's oppression of another. During the mid-nineteenth century, many Nonconformists were stern critics of British imperialism, though their outlook was based on the *laissez-faire* principle on non-intervention rather than moral considerations.<sup>57</sup> They were deeply influenced by the anti-imperialism of contemporary radicals, most notably Richard Cobden<sup>58</sup> and John Bright,<sup>59</sup> who believed that a decision by the British government not to intervene in the affairs of other nations would minimize conflict and facilitate international commerce. However, as David Bebbington noted, a significant change occurred in the attitudes of Nonconformists towards British imperialism between 1870 and 1900. It was stimulated by a series of events in the second half of the nineteenth century, such as the struggle against slavery in the American Civil War and Turkey's mistreatment of Christians, which caused Nonconformists to question

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<sup>54</sup> M. Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic fringe in British national development, 1536-1966* (London and Henley, 1975).

<sup>55</sup> *Y Celt* (23 February 1883), 8.

<sup>56</sup> G. Williams, 'Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Wales: The Discourse of Michael D. Jones', in G. Williams (ed.), *Crisis of Economy and Ideology* (Bangor, 1983).

<sup>57</sup> D. W. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience* (London, 1982), pp.106-7.

<sup>58</sup> For Richard Cobden (1804-1865), see *DNB*.

<sup>59</sup> For John Bright (1811-1889), see *DNB*.



the policy of non-intervention. Their attitudes were influenced by their allegiance to William Gladstone, who, as Michael D. Jones was eager to point out, took no less an interest in imperial policies than the previous Tory governments.<sup>60</sup> This led to a revival in British imperialism during the 1870s and 1880s. From about 1875, the British Empire entered a period of unprecedented expansion that would, by the turn of the century, extend its boundaries by around 40 million square miles of land and about 90 million subjects.<sup>61</sup>

Michael D. Jones was not swayed by the change in Nonconformist attitudes towards British imperialism. He responded with cynicism to the English condemnation of atrocities committed by the Ottoman Turks in the Balkans between 1875 and 1878, when the British Empire, he claimed, was behaving in the same way in other parts of the world.<sup>62</sup> Again, when the Irish were condemned for resorting to violence to assert their republican demands, Jones pointed out that England would retaliate in much the same way if its own government was under threat. 'The English value their own self-determination,' he wrote, 'and if France, Russia or any other country attempted to take it away from them, there would be a thousand times more killing than there has ever been in Ireland'.<sup>63</sup> In fact, Jones considered imperialism as a fundamentally hypocritical position, because, he claimed, it 'places a burden on other nations that it would not be willing to bear itself'.<sup>64</sup> His views on this subject were particularly significant because of his perspective on the political and economic relationship

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp.108-9.

<sup>61</sup> M. E. Chamberlain, *'Pax Britannica'? British Foreign Policy 1789-1914* (London, 1988), pp.123-7.

<sup>62</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (August 1876), 89-90; H. Hearder, *Europe in the Nineteenth Century 1830-1880* (2nd edn, London, 1988), pp.181-3.

<sup>63</sup> *Y Celt* (10 Rhagfyr 1886), 1.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., (26 April 1878), 8.

between Wales and England. While many Welsh people embraced both Welsh and British identities, Michael D. Jones saw no consistency between imperialism and the recognition of national rights.

Michael D. Jones's proclamation of national rights and his condemnation of imperialism set him apart from other nineteenth-century Welsh Nonconformists. Robert Ambrose Jones (Emrys ap Iwan), Calvinistic Methodist minister from Abergele,<sup>65</sup> is the only other individual who is noted for espousing such views. Born in 1848, Emrys ap Iwan began his working life as a gardener and an assistant in a clothes shop in Liverpool. He studied for three years at the Calvinistic Methodist College at Bala before spending two years in Lausanne, Switzerland. After returning in 1876, his letters began to appear in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, and they continued to do so for the following twenty years.<sup>66</sup>

Emrys ap Iwan claimed in 1892 that he had been the first to campaign for self-government for Wales,<sup>67</sup> but he soon received a letter from Michael D. Jones. Referring to Emrys ap Iwan's nationalism, Jones stated: 'I have influenced you a little in this respect whether you know it or not'.<sup>68</sup> In fact, Emrys ap Iwan's ideas were remarkably similar to those of Michael D. Jones. In his articles, he drew attention to the servility of the Welsh and criticized their attitudes towards their

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<sup>65</sup> For Robert Ambrose Jones ('Emrys ap Iwan'; 1848-1906), see T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Emrys ap Iwan* (Caernarfon, 1912); D. M. Lloyd, *Emrys ap Iwan* (Cardiff, 1979); *Emrys ap Iwan: Tair Darlith Goffa* (Mold, 1991); *DWB*; *NCWL*.

<sup>66</sup> T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Emrys ap Iwan*, pp.239-44.

<sup>67</sup> *Y Geninen* (April 1892), 52.

<sup>68</sup> T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Emrys ap Iwan*, p.192.



native language and customs.<sup>69</sup> Like Michael D. Jones, he believed the Welsh language to be the foundation of Welsh identity. He was fiercely opposed to the Welsh Nonconformists' establishment of English-medium churches in Wales ('The English Cause'),<sup>70</sup> he condemned British imperial activities and supported the Irish national movement long before the first Irish Home Rule Bill was introduced in 1886,<sup>71</sup> and he sought to draw the attention of the public to the unequal political relationship between England and Wales.<sup>72</sup> He was not interested in the Welsh Settlement, but he and Michael D. Jones did not disagree on the matter.<sup>73</sup> Emrys ap Iwan's views on national self-government also derived from his appreciation of Welsh national characteristics and his desire 'to keep the Welsh a nation in terms of emotion and qualities of the mind'.<sup>74</sup> Nothing other than a national parliament would meet the needs of Welsh people.<sup>75</sup> Like Jones, he claimed that all nations were equal, and that Wales, Scotland and Ireland should have the same national rights as England.<sup>76</sup>

Despite the similarities in their ideas, there is no evidence of correspondence between Jones and Emrys ap Iwan prior to the letter that he sent to him in 1892. Jones made no reference to Emrys ap Iwan's political views until 1889, when a reader of *Y Celt* ventured to ask what were his views on the matter.<sup>77</sup> He acknowledged the valuable

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<sup>69</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (11 April 1877), 4-5; (26 December 1877), 5; (27 March 1878), 5; (27 December 1876), 5.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, (20 March 1878), 13; (16 October 1878), 13-14.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, (22 December 1880), 13; (9 March 1881), 13; (6 April 1881), 13; (8 March 1882), 6-7; (15 March 1882), 7; (26 April 1882), 6-7.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, (30 October 1878), 14; (13 November 1878), 14.

<sup>73</sup> *Detholiad o Erthyglau a Llythyrau Emrys ap Iwan*, I (Denbigh, 1937), pp.90-1.

<sup>74</sup> *Y Geninen* (April 1892), 52.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, (July 1886), 156.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>77</sup> *Y Celt* (26 April 1889), 3.

work of Emrys ap Iwan, whom he claimed was 'like a cockerel crowing before dawn'.<sup>78</sup> The lack of correspondence between the two men does not reflect any animosity or difference of opinion between them. In 1882, Emrys ap Iwan had declared Michael D. Jones to be '*the best of the Welsh*', who deserved 'more honour than any other living Welshman' because of his role in the establishment of the Patagonian Settlement.<sup>79</sup> The explanation, it seems, is that Emrys ap Iwan was not as productive as Michael D. Jones. Between 1876 and 1892, when both he and Jones wrote to the press, no more than a dozen of his articles discussed the issue of national self-government. More importantly, most of his letters were published under various *noms de plume*. It is reasonable to believe, therefore, that Michael D. Jones was simply unaware of Emrys ap Iwan's views on the Welsh national question. However, there is no doubt that Jones's nationalist views had been formed many years before Emrys ap Iwan began to publish his work in the Welsh press.

### **The Hallmarks of Conquest**

In the late 1840s and 1850s, Michael D. Jones observed the effects of American and English culture on the Welsh people. In several of his early articles, he was fiercely critical of 'Dic Sion Dafyddion', fellow countrymen who seemed intent on abandoning their Welsh roots for English national characteristics.<sup>80</sup> An 'unpatriotic Welshman', he once wrote, was a 'traitor, and a brother of Iscariot', and he could claim that he had never met an 'English-worshipper' (meaning a Welshman who

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., (25 October 1889), 1.

<sup>79</sup> *Detholiad o Erthyglau a Llythyrau Emrys ap Iwan*, I, pp.90-1.

<sup>80</sup> The earliest reference to 'Dic Sion Dafydd' in Michael D. Jones's work is found in *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October, 1848), 300. The name 'Dic Shon Dafydd' was first used by John Jones ('Jac Glan y Gors', 1766-1821). See R. T. Jenkins. *Hanes Cymru yn y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg* (Cardiff, 1933), p.20.



aspired to be English) who was worthy of his trust.<sup>81</sup> Despite adopting a more cynical view of the British government, Michael D. Jones continued to apportion some of the blame to the Welsh people's obsequiousness,<sup>82</sup> though he claimed their lack of self-esteem was the result of centuries of political subjugation.<sup>83</sup> The unequal relationship between England and Wales, he asserted, had made deference to the English a 'second nature' to the Welsh people.<sup>84</sup>

Michael D. Jones harboured a deep mistrust of the British government, maintaining that its intention was nothing short of eradicating the Welsh nation altogether. He claimed that the aim of every imperial nation was 'to transform the conquered nation into its own shape and form'.<sup>85</sup> It was for this reason, he argued, that parliament gave little attention to Welsh issues, the aim being for the English 'to swallow it up'.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, he wrote:

Ever since the massacre at Morfa Rhuddlan,<sup>87</sup> the Welsh have felt trampled on in their own country. Our religion is oppressed because we, a poor dissenting nation, are forced to support the Anglican Church in Wales, so that it may serve our oppressors and the rich. The old Welsh land system was discarded, and it is the scheme that was adopted in its place which has caused such discontent in Wales, and a revolution in

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<sup>81</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, p.22.

<sup>82</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (June 1877), 66; *Y Celt* (15 August 1884), 9; (28 October 1887), 2.

<sup>83</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (May 1876), 54-5; *Y Celt* (17 April 1885), 1-2; (24 April 1885), 1; (16 July 1886), 4; (28 October 1887), 2.

<sup>84</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (April 1877), 41.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, (July 1876), 77.

<sup>86</sup> *Y Celt* (3 April 1885), 7.

<sup>87</sup> This is a reference to the battle of Morfa Rhuddlan in 796 CE, when the Welsh were crushed by the forces of Offa, King of Mercia.

Ireland. No Welshman is allowed to hold a position of authority in this country. We are forced to pay for English education from our own pockets, and not a penny goes towards Welsh education, while all of the Principality's endowments are directed towards the same aim. In the courts of law, all of our cases are discussed in a foreign language by strangers. The purpose of all this ... is to erase our national characteristics by using the tax money collected from us to turn us into Englishmen.<sup>88</sup>

For Jones, the inferior status of the Welsh language in Wales was a political issue, and its deterioration a hallmark of 'conquest'.<sup>89</sup> The English had failed to eliminate the Welsh language, but he asserted that 'they have succeeded in making the Welsh servile to such an extent that few Welshman will place even a Welsh sign above his door, but it has to be in English, even though every customer would understand it better in Welsh'.<sup>90</sup> Jones maintained that it was only by eradicating the Welsh language that the English would complete the conquest of Wales, and he maintained that 'the Welsh language will not die unless the Welsh people wilfully abandon it, which would be inexcusable cowardice and deference'.<sup>91</sup> In some respects, Jones was a conspiracist. He blamed individuals and institutions, rather than social and economic forces, for the threat that he saw to the Welsh nation. In his mind, both the British government and his compatriots were responsible for the uncertain future of the Welsh nation. Its fate would hinge on 'willpower' – the fate of the Welsh nation

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<sup>88</sup> *Y Celt* (25 December 1885), 9.

<sup>89</sup> *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 23; *Y Celt* (15 August 1884), 9; (28 October 1887), 1; (27 June 1890), 3.

<sup>90</sup> *Y Celt* (27 July 1883), 8.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, (15 August 1884), 9. See also, *Y Ddraig Goch* (June 1877), 66.



would be determined by a battle between the will of the British parliament to eradicate the Welsh language and the will of the Welsh to withstand the threat to its existence.<sup>92</sup>

### **A Self-governing Wales**

It was the new light which had been shed on the relationship between Wales and England that produced Michael D. Jones's first expression of nationalist aspirations. His hope that the British government would acknowledge the rights of the Welsh people by granting official status to their language soon faded.<sup>93</sup> Instead, this was to be achieved by acquiring national self-government. In addition to safeguarding their national identity, self-government would enable the Welsh people to address, and find practical solutions to, issues that were distinct to Wales. When a Welsh agenda was emerging in the British parliamentary circles during the 1880s, and attention was being called to issues such as land reform and disestablishment, Jones contended that, instead of struggling to win over English MPs, Welsh MPs should demand their own national parliament. A Welsh parliament, he argued, could act according to the 'will of the people',<sup>94</sup> and he claimed that, 'having expressed its will at the polling booth, the nation shall have all that it desires'.<sup>95</sup>

Michael D. Jones believed that self-government would also have its economic advantages for the Welsh people. He argued that, if utilized properly, the wealth of natural resources in Wales could provide work for some of those who were otherwise

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<sup>92</sup> *Y Celt* (1 January 1892), 1.

<sup>93</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, p.13.

<sup>94</sup> *Y Celt* (28 October 1887), 2.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, (21 March 1890), 1.

forced to migrate.<sup>96</sup> Even so, when discussing the oppression of the Welsh nation by the English and the advantages that could be gained from self-government, the tension between social classes and the ‘cultural division of labour’ suggested by Glyn Williams were not prominent in Jones’s work.<sup>97</sup> He emphasized that it was the English aristocracy who ‘formed legislation for all the nations’, not the ‘English nation as a whole’.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, arguing that English workers should have a voice in government, Jones suggested that the Celtic nations allied with them to form a political movement calling for the ‘British constitution to be reformed so that it is more in keeping with the character and needs of the people who are governed’.<sup>99</sup> Yet, despite his active interest in Meirionnydd politics, and the influence of his native county in shaping his perception of Wales, Jones did not associate the tensions between landowners and tenants with the need for national self-government. As will be seen later, Jones attempted to emulate the Irish land movement to promote his nationalist cause. However, he did not present Welsh landowners as the instrument of English oppression, as the Irish had done. Rather than fuelling tension between social classes, it seems that Jones merely wanted to convince Welsh farmers that their grievances would be addressed most effectively by securing a parliament for Wales.

Furthermore, Michael D. Jones did not draw attention to the economic advantages for Welshmen who, in a self-governing Wales, would fill the positions of authority and prestige in Wales. Jones’s argument was that Welsh people would be more suited for positions of authority in Wales because they better understood the needs of the Welsh people. Under the circumstances, he claimed that the Welsh were too deferential and

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<sup>96</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, pp.4-5.

<sup>97</sup> Appendix I.

<sup>98</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (April 1876), 43; (June 1876), 66.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, (July 1876), 77.



indifferent to fill the posts that were ‘ravaged by incompetent Englishmen’,<sup>100</sup> but he argued that a Welsh parliament would create an ethos of self-dependence, the effects of which would be apparent on all aspects of life in Wales. Like slaves who had been emancipated, the Welsh would have to learn how to exercise their new freedom.<sup>101</sup> He also emphasized that political education could raise the awareness of Welsh people to the injustices that they suffered at the hands of the English,<sup>102</sup> and nurture this ‘spirit of independence’ in them.<sup>103</sup>

Michael D. Jones’s vision for Wales was not expressed in terms of specific institutional structures, and while maintaining that self-government would lead to the revitalization of the Welsh nation, he did not argue that the state had a direct responsibility for the preservation of national characteristics. R. J. Derfel, who held similar views on the value of the Welsh language, argued in favour of an academy of arts and science, village libraries, a national museum and an observatory.<sup>104</sup> Jones, on the other hand, made no mention of cultural institutions, such as libraries and museums, as means of preserving and adding to the richness of Welsh national identity. In Jones’s mind, the reinvigoration of the Welsh nation would not be achieved through state-sponsored cultural activity, but by creating an ethos of self-dependence. By making the Welsh language the official medium of government, law, trade, and education in Wales, he believed that a parliament would restore the people’s pride in their national identity.

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<sup>100</sup> *Y Celt* (23 February 1883), 8.

<sup>101</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (April 1876), 41; (January 1877), 7.

<sup>102</sup> *Y Celt* (15 August 1884), 9.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, (21 October 1887), 1.

<sup>104</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, *Detholiad o Ryddiaith Gymraeg* R. J. Derfel, p.28.

For Michael D. Jones, there seemed to be no question that Welsh would be the official language if the Welsh people were self-governing. In the mid-nineteenth century, when he first expressed his nationalist aspirations, Welsh-speakers still formed the majority in Wales. There had been little change between 1841 and 1871, the proportion of Welsh-speakers falling by only 0.8 per cent from 67 to 66.2.<sup>105</sup> By 1891, however, this figure had fallen to 54.4 per cent, and the downward trend continued into the twentieth century.<sup>106</sup> Even this noticeable change in the overall proportion of Welsh-speakers concealed the extent of the regional differences that emerged in Wales during the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>107</sup> Despite the overall decline in the proportion of Welsh-speakers in Wales, Jones's native county of Meirionnydd retained its Welsh character – 94.25 per cent of the population were Welsh-speakers in 1891. However, in Glamorganshire, which contained well over a third of the population of Wales, less than half of the people were Welsh-speakers.<sup>108</sup> The cultural divide between south Wales, on the one hand, and the north and west, on the other, continued to widen over the following years. Even so, when discussing his nationalist aspirations during the 1880s, Jones hardly mentioned these regional differences, his rural perception of Wales, for example, resulting in him virtually ignoring the industrial regions that were becoming Anglicized. This is remarkable bearing in mind that Jones called attention to the separate needs of the Welsh and Irish nations. He even foresaw that regions of England would eventually demand self-

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<sup>105</sup> R. O. Jones, *Hir Oes i'r Iaith: Agweddau ar Hanes y Gymraeg a'r Gymdeithas* (Llandysul, 1997), p.241.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. For more statistics relating to the Welsh language, see D. Jones, *Statistical Evidence relating to the Welsh Language 1801-1911* (Cardiff, 1998); J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics*, I (Cardiff, 1985), pp.78-81.

<sup>107</sup> For studies of language change in Wales during the nineteenth century, see G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cardiff, 1998).

<sup>108</sup> J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics*, I, p.80.



government from London, presumably because of the separate needs that resulted from the remarkably different economies of those regions.<sup>109</sup> Evidently, Jones's political views were a response to the process of Anglicization, but, still, as these regional differences became increasingly apparent, questions could be raised about the practicability of his nationalist aspirations as a means of safeguarding the Welsh national identity, as he perceived it.

While Michael D. Jones was fiercely critical of the British Empire, he did not believe that Wales needed to sever completely its connections with other nations in order to achieve effective self-government. 'I am willing for nations to be in alliance with each other as long as it is voluntary,' he wrote, 'but I do not believe that Englishmen ... have a right to suppress other people and take them for slaves'.<sup>110</sup> As early as 1863, he wrote:

There have been demands for a parliament in Scotland, and another in Ireland, and we should demand one in Wales, so that the government is more consistent with the character of the people. A union with England would then be beneficial – a union of alliance, because the present union is nothing more than the burden of conquest.<sup>111</sup>

If nations were equal as self-governing states, Jones believed that their governments would all see the advantage of being in alliance with each other.<sup>112</sup> In fact, he argued that a federal union between nations would prove stronger than imperial ties. When

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<sup>109</sup> *Y Celt* (4 September 1891), 2.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, (21 May 1886), 1.

<sup>111</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (17 October 1863), 1.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, (June 1876), 67; *Y Celt* (28 October 1887), 2.

the first Irish Home Rule Bill was presented to Parliament in August 1886, and there was much talk of preserving the unity of the British Empire against the threat from Russia, some believed that this required Britain to tighten its control over the colonies. Michael D. Jones, on the other hand, contended that the bonds between the nations and their loyalty to the cause would be stronger if colonies governed their own affairs.<sup>113</sup>

Michael D. Jones's thought on this subject was influenced by the American political system. While the United States had revealed to him the threat posed to national culture even in democratic societies, it also seems to have convinced him that the principles of self-determination and union could both be exercised within the same political structure. For example, he wrote:

I believe in the independence of nations, that each nation has a right to govern itself, while, at the same time, it would be an unquestionable advantage for the four nations of the United Kingdom to *combine* for common objectives, as the separate states in America combine for national objectives.<sup>114</sup>

As Gwenallt noted, this could be interpreted as a claim that the parliament in London should deal with 'common affairs' while the governments in Wales, Scotland, Ireland and parts of England should each deal with issues that were specifically relevant to them.<sup>115</sup> The lack of clarity with which Jones expressed his views gives rise to

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<sup>113</sup> *Y Celt* (6 August 1886), 1; (30 September 1886), 7.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, (1 April 1887), 4.

<sup>115</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Michael D. Jones', p.23.



ambiguity. However, elsewhere, he noted that the American states governed all their own affairs, with the exception of foreign policy, adding that ‘the Irish, Welsh and Scottish were certain to achieve this goal’.<sup>116</sup> His ideas on this subject were by no means clear, but, judging by Jones’s general emphasis on the rights of nations, it seems likely that his view of the relationship between Wales and the central government of the United Kingdom would be less centralized than Gwennallt suggested, and that the balance of power would be firmly in favour of the individual nations.

Michael D. Jones’s vision of an international confederation was not restricted to the British nations. When discussing the union between the British nations, he wrote:

For my part, I am eager to continue the union, and I am zealously in favour of making other nations part of it, as long as they make a request and a vow of loyalty to each other against every invader, and that every nations within the union has equal rights.<sup>117</sup>

As an example, he claimed that he would have no objection if Poland or Bulgaria requested entry into the union.<sup>118</sup> In fact, Michael D. Jones declared that the world’s nations should have ‘one general government to protect the rights of nations, just as nations have governments to protect the rights of individuals’.<sup>119</sup> While demanding self-government for Wales, Michael D. Jones did not seek to isolate the nation from the rest of the world, but he hoped to see a federal alliance that included every nation

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<sup>116</sup> *Y Celt* (4 September 1891), 2. See also, (11 November 1887), 2.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, (28 October 1887), 1.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (August 1876), 90.

on earth. Although Jones's perception of Wales was remarkably parochial, he envisaged a peaceful international community in which each nation governed its affairs according to its needs and requirements, but co-operated with other nations as far as possible to safeguard and advance their common interests.<sup>120</sup>

While stating clearly the need for national self-government and holding firm views on Wales's relationship with other nations, Michael D. Jones never set out in detail his scheme for a self-governing Wales. His views on how self-government should be achieved were ambiguous and he made no comment on the form of government that should be installed in Wales. It is clear that Jones wanted some form of representative government for Wales, though it is uncertain whether he believed it should be based on the pattern of the British or American political system. Like Emrys ap Iwan, Michael D. Jones only promoted the principle of national self-government. The discussion on the details of how it should be achieved and implemented was left to others. As will be seen later, this lack of direction and detail would prove problematic for Jones in the 1870s and 1880s, when he committed an increasing amount of time to the promotion of these ideas.

### **History and Scripture**

Michael D. Jones supported his promotion of national rights and his opposition to imperialism with references to history and Scripture. As Gwenallt noted, Welsh history had a prominent place in Jones's work.<sup>121</sup> He believed that there was a need for 'a full and accurate account of our lineage, in so far as truth and authority will

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<sup>120</sup> *Y Celt* (18 November 1887), 2.

<sup>121</sup> D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Hanes Mudiadau Cymraeg a Chenedlaethol y Bedwaredd-ganrif-ar-bymtheg', p.114.



permit', a task which he hoped the promising scholar from Llanuwchllyn, Owen M. Edwards, would undertake.<sup>122</sup> As this work had not yet been done, Jones's discussion of Welsh history was largely based on Theophilus Evans's eighteenth-century work, *Drych y Prif Oesoedd* (1716),<sup>123</sup> which was an immensely popular text in nineteenth-century Wales.<sup>124</sup> Beginning with the Welsh nation's ancient origins, it chronicled the clashes between the Britons and the Romans, the Picts and the Saxons, and the history of the Welsh up to the Protestant Reformation.

*Drych y Prif Oesoedd* is noted for its deep prejudice towards the English, describing them as 'an oppressive force of armed barbarians' and 'children of perdition'.<sup>125</sup> The book explained how Gwrtheyrn, king of the Britons in the fifth century, invited the Saxons (Evans called them 'English') to the British Isles to protect him against conspirators. But, led by two brothers Hengist and Horsa, the Saxons turned against the Britons, deposed Gwrtheyrn and installed a Saxon king in his place.<sup>126</sup> This, it was claimed, marked the beginning of the Saxon conquest of Britain. The names of Hengist and Horsa were mentioned in several of Michael D. Jones's articles. For Jones, the story of the Saxon conquests, the historical accuracy of which is questionable to say the least, was a means of highlighting the iniquitous relationship between Wales and England.<sup>127</sup> On several occasions, he asserted that Hengist and Horsa were the forefathers of the English, and that the connection was evident in

<sup>122</sup> *Y Celt* (21 October 1887), 1.

<sup>123</sup> NLW MS 10572 B. 'Dewisol Lyvrau'r Oes hon'.

<sup>124</sup> D. Glyn Jones, *Agoriad yr Oes* (Talybont, 2001), p.13.

<sup>125</sup> T. Evans, *Drych y Prif Oesoedd*, edited by S. J. Evans, (Rev. 2nd edn, Bangor, 1902), pp.95, 99, 102; D. Ellis Evans, 'Theophilus Evans ar Hanes Cynnar Prydain', *Y Traethodydd* (1973), 106.

<sup>126</sup> T. Evans, *Drych y Prif Oesoedd*, pp.93-104.

<sup>127</sup> *Y Celt* (4 October 1878), 8; (27 July 1883), 8; (27 March 1885), 8; (21 May 1886), 1; (11 March 1887), 1; (13 May 1887), 2; (4 May 1888), 1; (7 March 1890), 1; (17 October 1890), 2.

their current treatment of other nations, including Wales. The Welsh, he claimed, were ‘paying taxes to the English, to assist them in doing to other nations today that which has been the scourge of our nation since the fourth century, when the English began their attack on us’.<sup>128</sup> In the late 1840s, Jones had defended the union between England and Wales by referring to the fact that the Welsh had given consent to the 1536 Act of Union.<sup>129</sup> By late 1870s, his views had changed considerably, and so had his interpretation of Welsh history. By tracing the nation’s history to the time of Hengist and Horsa, Michael D. Jones could argue that the Welsh were victims of imperial expansion.

When condemning imperialism, Michael D. Jones made frequent reference to the biblical figure of Nimrod and the ancient city of Babylon.<sup>130</sup> Nimrod was the ‘mighty hunter’ in the Book of Genesis (10:8-10), the son of Cush and grandson of Noah, who built a kingdom at Babel, Erech, Accad and Calneh in the land of Shinar. As Jones explained, ‘this Babel was the beginning of Babylon the Great, which conquered the whole world, and which the Scriptures call the mother of earth’s harlots’.<sup>131</sup> Descriptions of Babylon seem to have varied according to the political or religious convictions of its interpreter.<sup>132</sup> For Jones, it represented oppressive and imperial government. He asserted that ‘to use the state to conquer other nations, as Babylon did, and restrict the rights of its own citizens, is to fornicate with

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<sup>128</sup> *Y Celt* (4 October 1878), 8.

<sup>129</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd*, (October 1848), 301.

<sup>130</sup> R. Tudur Jones, ‘Michael D. Jones a Nimrodiaeth Lloegr’, *Y Genhinen* (1974), 161-4.

<sup>131</sup> *Y Celt* (18 November 1887), 1-2. Reference to Revelation 17:5.

<sup>132</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (19 September 1863), 1; (3 October 1863), 1; (17 October 1863), 1; (31 October 1863), 1-2; (14 November 1863), 1.



Babylon'.<sup>133</sup> Jones explained that, by creating Babylon, 'Nimrod established the first oppressive government and [that] he was the father of the kings and conquerors of the world'.<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, Nimrod was the personification of oppression. According to Jones, all those who acted contrary to the principles of freedom and democracy were branded as Nimrod's descendents, and his legacy lived on in all forms of 'oppression'.

'If history teaches us anything,' Jones wrote, 'its lessons are, that conquest is the greatest evil that can ever be inflicted on a nation, and that it is an injustice; and history proves that an independent spirit is essential to the success of a nation'.<sup>135</sup> The annals of history, or so he claimed, revealed not only the effects of conquest on its victims, but also evidence of the Welsh nation's former glory, its potential for achievement, and the fragile and limited reign of empires.<sup>136</sup> In fact, the use of history to reveal the inequity or corruption of the present political situation was often a feature of nineteenth-century English radical literature.<sup>137</sup> Radicals sought not only to expose the injustice of the current political arrangement, but also to reveal that it was a corruption of an older and better order.<sup>138</sup> In his work *Seren tan Gwmmwl* (1795), John Jones (Jac Glan-y-gors, 1766-1821),<sup>139</sup> one of the most prominent of eighteenth-century Welsh radicals, referred both to the onslaughts of Hengist and Horsa, 'the first time that the English got the upper hand on the Welsh', and to the

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., (17 October 1863), 1.

<sup>134</sup> *Y Celt* (18 November 1887), 1-2. See also, *Y Ddraig Goch* (March 1876), 29.

<sup>135</sup> *Y Celt* (21 October 1887), 1.

<sup>136</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (17 October 1863), 1.

<sup>137</sup> J. Belchem, *Popular Radicalism in the Nineteenth-Century* (London, 1996), p.12.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., p.1.

<sup>139</sup> For John Jones ('Jac Glan-y-gors'; 1766-1821), see *DWB*; *NCWL*.

legacy of Nimrod.<sup>140</sup> The intention of Jac Glan-y-gors, who was a keen supporter of ideas circulated by the French Revolution, was to highlight the ‘horror that humanity has suffered’ through the ages at the hands of tyrannous monarchs.<sup>141</sup> While Michael D. Jones called for a ‘true’ and ‘accurate’ account of Welsh history, he employed the same kind of rhetoric as previous generations of Welsh radicals. The difference was that the eighteenth-century radicals’ endorsed republican ideas while Michael D. Jones promoted national self-government.

### **Nations and Morality**

In addition to supporting his nationalist aspirations with references to history and Scripture, Michael D. Jones also claimed that all nations, like individuals, had a moral right to govern their own affairs. He wrote: ‘I believe that truth is immutable, like the Godhead, in every time and place, *and that justice requires that each nation governs itself*’.<sup>142</sup> In his letter to Emrys ap Iwan, Jones claimed that ‘justice for conquered and oppressed nations is as much a part of true religion as justification through faith’.<sup>143</sup> Indeed, Emrys ap Iwan made a similar claim that no one could be a true Christian without also being a nationalist.<sup>144</sup> On another occasion, Michael D. Jones even claimed that the Hungarian revolutionary Lajos Kossuth’s principle that each nation has a right to govern itself could be compared to Martin Luther’s teaching that each individual was free to interpret and respond to the Bible, a doctrine

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<sup>140</sup> J. Jones (Jac Glan-y-gors), *Seren tan Gwmmwl a Toriad y Dydd* (Originally published in 1795; Liverpool, 1923), p.14.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.3-4; D. Gwenallt Jones, ‘Hanes Mudiadau Cymraeg a Chenedlaethol y Bedwaredd-ganrif-ar-bymtheg’, p.114.

<sup>142</sup> *Y Celt* (27 March 1885), 8. Jones’s emphasis. See also, *Y Celt* (9 August 1878), 8.

<sup>143</sup> T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Emrys ap Iwan*, pp.192-3.

<sup>144</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (22 December 1880), 13.



that was central to Protestant theology.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, he claimed that ‘the rule of the Bible is that each nation should govern itself’.<sup>146</sup> This seems to have been more than a rhetorical tool to convey to fellow Nonconformists the importance of national rights. Such was the significance of national rights to Michael D. Jones that he considered them to be part of his creed. In fact, his contemporaries claimed that his religion and his nationalism seemed inseparable.<sup>147</sup>

Michael D. Jones’s views on morality, namely that humans should aspire to live according to a universal moral law, shaped his opinions on the relationship between nations. He claimed that ‘there is no consistency between being in favour of the freedom of the individual, while battling against the independence and freedom of nations’.<sup>148</sup> Jones warned that nations, like individuals, could be held as slaves in the service of others,<sup>149</sup> for he believed that nations held the same rights as individuals, namely the right to life, liberty and property.<sup>150</sup> Individuals and collective entities were both accountable to the same moral law, a standard of conduct which, according to Jones, belonged to the same realm as the laws of nature. ‘Groups of people,’ he argued, ‘have the same moral obligations as individuals towards their fellow men, and a government does not have a moral freedom to do anything to their fellow creatures that an individual would be prohibited from doing to its neighbour’.<sup>151</sup> Although some crimes, such as those committed on the battlefield, were not punished by state law, he maintained that those who had ordered and committed them were

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<sup>145</sup> *Y Celt* (3 May 1878), 8.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, (21 May 1886), 1.

<sup>147</sup> *Cymru* (January 1893), 16; *Y Celt* (4 August 1893), 1.

<sup>148</sup> *Y Celt* (6 August 1886), 1. See also, (28 October 1887), 2.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, (9 August 1878), 8.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, (28 October 1887), 1.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, (17 October 1890), 2-3.

still accountable to moral law.<sup>152</sup> On another occasion, for example, he declared that ‘murder is murder, and theft is theft, regardless of whether it is planned by one, two or a thousand people, in the name of a parliament, secret society or a smaller group’.<sup>153</sup> Jones’s views on morality were certainly inconsistent with the Augustinian and Calvinist traditions, which claimed that the state was not subject to the same code of morality as individuals, but exercised its power, which had been delegated by God, in order to implement divine justice in the temporal sphere.<sup>154</sup>

It is here that similarities have been drawn between Michael D. Jones’s philosophy and that of the Dutch Calvinist theologian Abraham Kuyper, who became Prime Minister of the Netherlands in 1901.<sup>155</sup> R. Tudur Jones noted the similarity between Michael D. Jones’s ‘radical and co-operative nationalism’ and Kuyper’s principle of ‘soevereiniteit in eigen kring’ (sphere sovereignty).<sup>156</sup> Kuyper asserted that God holds ultimate sovereignty over everything, and that all sovereignties, spiritual or temporal, are subordinate to God in the same way as Michael D. Jones claimed that they were all subject to the divine moral law. Moreover, Kuyper argued that authority, which is always derived from God, could not be transferred from one entity to another. Each entity, be it an individual or a collective, is inextricably responsible and accountable to God. Kuyper extended this principle to include the sovereignty of nations, thus providing a theological argument for national movements striving for

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., (28 May 1886), 5. See also, (28 May 1886), 5.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., (11 May 1888), 7.

<sup>154</sup> *EPT*, pp.24-7, 55-7.

<sup>155</sup> For Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), see A. Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Michigan, 1961); A. Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (Michigan, 1966); F. Vanden Berg, *Abraham Kuyper* (Ontario, 1978); R. Tudur Jones, ‘Abraham Kuyper’, in N. A. Gibbard (ed.), *Ysgrifau Diwinyddol* (Swansea, 1988), pp.105-22.

<sup>156</sup> R. Tudur Jones, ‘Abraham Kuyper’, pp.120-22.



political self-government. However, as R. Tudur Jones observed, there is nothing, other than this similarity in ideas, to suggest a direct link between the work of Abraham Kuyper and Michael D. Jones.<sup>157</sup>

Michael D. Jones's emphasis on the sovereignty of the divine moral law and its relevance to individual and collective entities was central to his nationalist thought. In France, Rousseau's belief that the collective personality of the nation was the highest moral authority had resulted in undermining the rights and liberties of the individual. The eighteenth-century German philosophers Georg W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) and Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) had a similar influence on nineteenth-century thought. For them, the nation was the entity that dictated the direction of history. Hegel and Herder believed that each nation had a mission to fulfil, though their interpretations of that mission differed. Hegel believed that there would always be conflict between nations, as each wished to dominate world history, whereas Herder believed that the nation's mission should be the peaceful development of cultural characteristics. In Germany, the influence of this philosophy created a sense of national identity in which a spiritual bond existed between the individual and the community.<sup>158</sup> Indeed, in Wales, the *Cymru Fydd* movement of the 1880s was influenced by Neo-Hegelian philosophy of thinkers such as Edward Caird<sup>159</sup> and T. H. Green.<sup>160</sup> Reacting against the individualism of mid-nineteenth century liberalism, the New Liberals viewed society as an organic entity and believed that the individual should always be discussed within its social context. Again, there

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<sup>157</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Religion, Nationality and State in Wales, 1840-1890', p.273.

<sup>158</sup> R. R. Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism* (New York, 1966), p.89; R. Tudur Jones, *The Desire of Nations*, p.122; G. Williams, *Religion, Language and Nationality in Wales* (Cardiff, 1979), p.30.

<sup>159</sup> For Edward Caird (1835-1908), see *DNB*.

<sup>160</sup> For Thomas Hill Green (1836-1882), see *DNB*.

was a danger that the social whole would take precedence over the individual. In Michael D. Jones's thought, however, there was no conflict between the rights of the individual and those of the nation. Both entities were on equal moral ground in the light of the universal moral law. As long as humans lived according to the moral law, the individual and the nation, and indeed, any social entity, could enjoy freedom and prosperity.

Michael D. Jones was a pioneer of Welsh nationalism. Few other Welshmen were as vocal in their support of Welsh national self-government during the late nineteenth century, and he had stated his position long before Emrys ap Iwan and the *Cymru Fydd* movement. However, despite expressing his nationalist aspirations during the 1850s, Michael D. Jones made no real effort to promote his views until the 1870s. The reason for this procrastination lay in his typically Radical view of the British political system. 'Why are the Welsh not represented in Parliament?' he asked in 1856. It was, he claimed, the fault of aristocrats and the Anglican clergy, rather than Nonconformists, or any other Welshmen, 'who are incomparable in their decency and obedience to the law'.<sup>161</sup> Jones was committed to constitutional reform, whatever the inequity of the relationship between England and Wales. Again, in 1863, he wrote: 'We are a liberal nation, and yet we are oppressed and enslaved. We do not yet see any peaceful means of perfecting our national character other than through national immigration'.<sup>162</sup> The value that Jones attached to Welsh national culture, and his subsequent realization that nations should have the right to govern themselves, were only the formative stages in his thought. He also needed to convince the Welsh people that his arguments were valid, and in order to do so, he needed a clear

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<sup>161</sup> *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 23.

<sup>162</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (31 October 1863), 2.



programme, based on policy as well as principle, as well as means of reaching as wide an audience as possible. Clearly, he saw that there was little hope of achieving this aim in the foreseeable future. Until this situation changed, Michael D. Jones's patriotic sentiments would be expressed in another way, namely through his involvement in the movement to establish a Welsh settlement.

## Chapter 6

## Establishing a Welsh Settlement

1848-65

Although Michael D. Jones was involved in multifarious religious and political activities, his name is most commonly associated with the movement to establish the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia.<sup>1</sup> For nearly forty years, he was involved in the movement to establish a Welsh Settlement. Such was the value of his contribution to the movement that two of its prominent figures, Lewis Jones and David S. Davies,

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<sup>1</sup> 'Y Wladfa' has also been described as 'the Welsh Colony'. Indeed, 'Welsh Colony' was the term used by the promoters of the Patagonian movement when discussing the subject in English. However, in its current use, the word 'colony' is often associated with imperialism and capitalism, neither of which reflects the aims or intentions of those who organized the Patagonian venture. They aimed to settle the land and to develop its resources, and although they attempted to establish a Christian mission in Patagonia, they had no intention of exploiting, or imposing their government on, the indigenous people. 'Settlement' would therefore be a more apposite term than 'colony' to describe the objective of the movement. See J. McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* (Manchester, 2000), pp.7-8; E. Boehemer, *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (Oxford, 1995), p.2.



referred to him as the Settlement's 'father',<sup>2</sup> while Abraham Matthews, a Congregational minister who settled in Patagonia, claimed that it was Jones who gave the movement its conceptual basis.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, when news of his death reached the Welsh community in Patagonia in January 1899, its publication *Y Drafod* hailed him as 'the founder and architect of the Settlement'. 'Even though others worked faithfully and valiantly to begin the movement,' it read, 'it is M. D. Jones of Bala who will, in years to come, be remembered as the foundation and cornerstone of the movement to establish a Welsh Settlement in the Chupat Valley'.<sup>4</sup>

Despite this acclaim, the precise nature of Michael D. Jones's role in the movement to establish the Patagonian Settlement has never been particularly clear. In his celebrated history of the Settlement, R. Bryn Williams raised doubts over the popular perception of Jones's role in the movement by claiming that he 'was not the first to think of such a settlement, and [that] he did not instigate the movements which sought to establish it: he merely supported them'.<sup>5</sup> Williams argued that it was the 'fanatical' Hugh Hughes who played the key role,<sup>6</sup> while Michael D. Jones had merely been drawn into the movement.<sup>7</sup> Again, contrary to the often romanticized perception of the Patagonian movement, Alun Davies claimed that 'haste, inefficiency, ignorance, and innocence, not to say foolhardiness, characterized the venture from the outset'.<sup>8</sup> He was equally critical of Michael D. Jones's personal contribution: 'He [Michael D.

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<sup>2</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig: Tiriogaeth Chubut, yn y Weriniaeth Arianin, De Amerig* (Caernarfon, 1898), p.91; *Y Drafod* (11 August 1899), 3; (1 September 1899), 1.

<sup>3</sup> A. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig* (Aberdare, 1894), pp.4-6.

<sup>4</sup> *Y Drafod* (27 January 1899), 1.

<sup>5</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.6, 54.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.26, 54.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.7, 54.

<sup>8</sup> *Morgannwg* (1963), 137-8.

Jones] did some unwise things; he said some silly things and some foolish things. He was ignorant of many important things; he was rash, and he was stubborn'. Yet Davies seemed more willing than Williams to underline the importance of Jones's contribution to the movement. 'Without him,' Davies claimed, 'this strange and glorious venture ... may not have occurred at all'.<sup>9</sup>

To dispel the ambiguity that shrouds Michael D. Jones's role in the Patagonian venture, this chapter will focus on his role in the movement to establish the Welsh Settlement in order to clarify its precise nature and evaluate its significance. Account will be given of the development of Jones's ideas and activities during the period between October 1848, when he first expressed his support for the notion of a Welsh Settlement, and May 1865, when the first group of Welsh settlers departed for Patagonia.

### **The Welsh Settlement and the United States**

The idea of establishing a specifically 'Welsh' community in another part of the world did not emerge in the mid-nineteenth century, nor was it vaguely the brainchild of Michael D. Jones.<sup>10</sup> Distinctly Welsh communities, pioneered by Puritans such as William Vaughan<sup>11</sup> and John Miles,<sup>12</sup> were established in Newfoundland and Massachusetts as early as the seventeenth century, and during the 1790s, Morgan

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<sup>9</sup> A. Davies, 'Michael D. Jones a'r Wladfa', *Trans. Cymm.* (1966), 87. See also, A. Davies, 'Michael D. Jones a'r Wladfa', *Barn* (December 1865), 6-7.

<sup>10</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, pp.9-10; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa* (Cardiff, 1962), pp.4-5.

<sup>11</sup> For William Vaughan (1577-1641), see *DWB*.

<sup>12</sup> For John Miles (1621-83), see *DWB*.



John Rhys<sup>13</sup> and Ezekiel Hughes<sup>14</sup> formed similar communities of Welsh emigrants in Philadelphia and Ohio.<sup>15</sup> The reasons behind the formation of these communities varied from economic hardship to political and religious persecution, and though they were not established specifically to retain Welsh national characteristics on foreign soil, the leaders were united in their belief that Welsh immigrants would fare better if they settled together.

Furthermore, the notion of establishing a Welsh Settlement so that immigrants could retain their national characteristics was not unprecedented when Michael D. Jones first expressed his views on the subject in the columns of *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* in 1848-9. Emigration from Wales reached new heights in the 1840s, raising questions about integration and assimilation with other cultures, and the possibility was mooted of establishing a Welsh Settlement as a remedy to the detrimental impact of American culture on expatriate Welsh communities. Writing in *Yr Amserau* in 1849, Gwilym Hiraethog, the influential Nonconformist who is not usually associated with the Welsh Settlement movement, expressed concerns that were similar to those of Michael D. Jones. He regretted that there was 'no centre point for the Welsh who emigrated,' and consequently, 'they lose each other, their language, and many of them lose their religion'.<sup>16</sup> The American Welsh were also vocal in their support for establishing a Welsh Settlement to secure the future of their national characteristics

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<sup>13</sup> For Morgan John Rhys (1760-1804), see H. M. Davies, "Cymro gelynol i bob gorthrech": Morgan John Rhys (1760-1804)', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl IX* (Llandysul, 1994); *DWB*.

<sup>14</sup> For Ezekiel Hughes (1766-1849), see *DWB*.

<sup>15</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.4-5.

<sup>16</sup> *Yr Amserau* (26 April 1849), 4. Other letters on the need for a Welsh Settlement are found in *Yr Amserau* (1849), Letters from 'Ymwelydd' and 'Eubulus' (18 January 1849), 6; 'Iorwerth' and John Price (25 January 1849), 6; 'Dafydd o'r De' (1 February 1849), 6; 'Iorwerth' (22 February 1849), 6; 'Veritas' (8 March 1849), 6.

outside Wales.<sup>17</sup> In fact, in his first letter to refer to the possibility of a Welsh Settlement, Michael D. Jones pledged his support to the views of Morris Roberts of Remsen, New York State. Writing in August 1848, Roberts had expressed alarm at the manner in which the younger generation of Welsh immigrants were being consumed by ‘Saxon waves’, and declared the need for

... somewhere that the Welsh may settle together, where their language would be safeguarded, and where they could enjoy political and religious advantages through the medium of their own language, without being in poverty or under the kind of oppression that they face in Wales, or lost among the English, as they are on the Welsh borders, in English towns, and in small settlements in the United States.<sup>18</sup>

Michael D. Jones’s personal experiences in the United States may have been a crucial factor in shaping his view of national characteristics, but when his letters were first published in October 1848, he merely contributed to a broader discussion on the need for a settlement to safeguard the Welsh identity.

Morris Roberts referred to Michael D. Jones as one who had expressed ‘a degree of zeal’ for the establishment of a Welsh Settlement,<sup>19</sup> but the letters that Jones published during his time in the United States reveal that his views on the subject were not well developed. Although four of his published letters were entitled ‘Gwladychfa Gymreig’ (A Welsh Settlement), they focused far more on the

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<sup>17</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.6.

<sup>18</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (August 1848), 244.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*



difficulties faced by expatriate communities than on discussing the solution to their problems. For example, while claiming that the Welsh would, as Morris Roberts had noted, enjoy political and religious advantages if they governed their own settlement, he made no mention of the political and social institutions that should exist in this proposed Welsh Settlement. Indeed, in later years, Michael D. Jones outlined his views on the need for a Welsh Settlement in a pamphlet entitled *Gwladychfa Gymreig* (1860), but, again, he did not state his views on the kind of society that he believed should exist in the Settlement. Moreover, there is nothing to suggest that he had a special role in the preparation of a constitution for the Patagonian Settlement in 1865.

It is clear that, in Jones's mind, the primary purpose of the Settlement was to preserve the national characteristics of Welsh immigrants. 'We face extinction in America unless we do something,' he warned, 'and it is our responsibility'.<sup>20</sup> Yet, while stressing the responsibility of the Welsh for their national survival, Jones suggested that the Settlement could be established under the patronage of the British government.<sup>21</sup> At the time (the late 1840s), he was far less critical of the British government than he would be in later years. Viewing the 1536 union between England and Wales in contractual rather than imperial terms, he believed that the Welsh had as much right as the English to govern in the colonies of the British Empire, and that such a right could be conceded to them without the British government having to abandon its sovereignty over them.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., (December 1848), 365.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., (October 1848), 301; (April 1850), 124.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., (October 1848), 301.

However, Michael D. Jones emphasized that, in the Welsh Settlement, ‘we must have a government of our own like Canada and Australia, and it is only right that it be a Welsh one, because all of the other governments in the colonies are English, even though Wales is [also] part of Britain’.<sup>23</sup> From the outset, cultural status and self-government were part of Jones’s vision of a Welsh Settlement, though it was only in later years that he explained his theory that, in any ‘settlement’, there is a crucial connection between the language of political and legal institutions and the sustainability of national characteristics.<sup>24</sup> Clearly, Jones believed that ‘self-government’ was far more important than ‘independence’. This is why he saw no difficulty with the Welsh Settlement being a colony of the British Empire or a province of a larger state, the condition being that its institutions were self-governing and functioned through the medium of the Welsh language.

While Michael D. Jones’s views on the organization of the Welsh Settlement were somewhat opaque, he was much clearer about its possible location. Jones’s colleague and companion on his visit to America, Cadwaladr R. Jones, claimed that Wisconsin was the place best suited for a Welsh Settlement. Many Welsh people had already settled there and they had secured a Welsh translation of the American Constitution.<sup>25</sup> Michael D. Jones agreed that Wisconsin seemed an ideal location for a Welsh Settlement, but he opted for a more ambitious plan. He proposed that, having gathered at Wisconsin, the Welsh should travel to the west coast of North America to form the new Welsh Settlement. Oregon, he declared, had all that was needed for a Settlement. The climate was suitable for agriculture, contacts with the east were

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 302.

<sup>24</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig* (Liverpool, 1860), pp.8-9.

<sup>25</sup> *Yr Amserau* (8 February 1849), 7.



improving due to the expansion of the rail network, and several parts of the coast were suitable for the construction of commercial ports. He noted that it was well situated for international commerce, and that it had the potential to develop into a focal point for trade between China and Europe.<sup>26</sup>

When discussing Oregon as a possible location for the Welsh Settlement, Michael D. Jones was actually referring to 'Oregon Country', the region of north-west America which lay between 42°N latitude and 54°40'N latitude, and which extended from the Pacific coast to the Rocky Mountains. In 1846, Oregon Country had been divided along 49°N latitude. The southern part (Oregon Territory) was occupied by the United States and the northern part (British Columbia) by Britain.<sup>27</sup> Michael D. Jones hoped to establish the Settlement under the patronage of the British government in the region that came to be known as British Columbia.<sup>28</sup>

Some of Michael D. Jones's early views on this subject were also revealed in his response to the establishment of a Welsh Settlement at Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil during the early 1850s. Jones was not associated with this movement, which again demonstrates that interest in the establishment of a Welsh Settlement was by no means exclusive to a single group of enthusiasts. The initiator was a 22-year-old Welshman from Manchester named Thomas Benbow Phillips,<sup>29</sup> who, in February 1850, launched a movement to establish a Settlement where the Welsh 'national

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<sup>26</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October 1848), 301-2.

<sup>27</sup> For 'Oregon Treaty of 1846', see *EAH*, IV, pp.269-71.

<sup>28</sup> *Yr Amserau* (29 March 1849), 6.

<sup>29</sup> For Thomas Benbow Phillips (1829-1915), see *Y Drafod* (26 February 1915), 3.

spirit' could flourish unhindered.<sup>30</sup> Phillips had reached an agreement with the Brazilian government whereby settlers could pay for land, priced at four shillings per acre, over a period of thirteen years and at an interest rate of 6 per cent, which would enable immigrants from all social backgrounds to participate in the venture. The designated location for the Welsh Settlement was registered under the name 'Nova Cambria'. Arrangements were made for immigrants to be supplied with food, clothes and agricultural equipment, and a 'Cambro-Brazilian Amalgamated Trades' Emigration Society' was registered on a co-operative basis to assist trade and transportation.<sup>31</sup> Phillips's activities were given considerable publicity by the Nonconformist paper *Yr Amserau* in 1851-2, though the flow of settlers to the Brazilian Settlement was modest to say the least, reaching only 81 people in its first fourteen months.<sup>32</sup>

Michael D. Jones's impressions of Phillips's scheme were published in *Yr Amserau* in March 1851, three months prior to the departure of the first group of settlers for Nova Cambria. He supported the movement's aims, but he was far from convinced about the detail of the scheme. While admitting that he knew very little about Rio Grande do Sul, he feared that the climate would be too hot, and consequently unsuitable for Welsh immigrants. He was also sceptical of the degree of religious and political freedom that would be granted to the Settlement by the Catholic government of Brazil. Most significantly, he questioned the basis on which Benbow Phillips claimed that the Welsh in Brazil would be able to retain their national characteristics without being granted legislation through the medium of the Welsh language, or even be

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<sup>30</sup> *Yr Amserau* (20 February 1850), 6; (6 March 1850), 2; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.7-14.

<sup>31</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.9-10.

<sup>32</sup> *Yr Amserau* (22 October 1851), 3.



given status as a province of Brazil. Clearly, Michael D. Jones had firm views on the political and economic requirements for the successful establishment of a Welsh Settlement.<sup>33</sup>

Within four years, it was clear that the Brazilian scheme was doomed to failure. A significant portion of the land that was intended for the Settlement was purchased by a merchant from Rio de Janeiro. Those who had made the journey also faced the stigma attached to agricultural labour, which was the domain of the Negro slave. Also, a number of the adult male immigrants chose to abandon the Settlement and enter the Brazilian coal industry in nearby Pelotas.<sup>34</sup> Thomas Benbow Phillips spent a few more years in Brazil, but eventually settled in the Patagonian Settlement in 1872.<sup>35</sup>

Michael D. Jones took no part in the promotion of the Brazilian Settlement. In fact, despite expressing support for the establishment of a Welsh Settlement during his time in the United States, he made little effort to promote the idea following his return to Wales in late 1849. R. Bryn Williams has suggested, somewhat vaguely, that Jones had become 'bored or disheartened' by the notion of establishing a Welsh Settlement.<sup>36</sup> Yet, in early 1851, just over a year after his return from the United States, Michael D. Jones seemed no less convinced of the need for a Settlement. In March 1851, when commenting on Thomas Benbow Phillips's Brazilian enterprise, he averred that the matter of a Welsh Settlement was 'close to his heart'.<sup>37</sup> The

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., (12 March 1851), 2.

<sup>34</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, pp.15-18.

<sup>35</sup> *Y Drafod* (26 February 1915), 3.

<sup>36</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.22.

<sup>37</sup> *Yr Amserau* (12 March 1851), 2.

following month, he wrote to Robert Everett, editor of *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd*,<sup>38</sup> stating that nothing had caused him 'to doubt the *wisdom, possibility, and need* for a scheme to establish a Welsh Settlement in Oregon'.<sup>39</sup> Again, in July 1851, he wrote in defence of the idea after G. R. had claimed in *Y Cronicl* that the Welsh were too quarrelsome to accomplish such a task.<sup>40</sup>

Despite being convinced of the need for a Welsh Settlement, Michael D. Jones saw little point in promoting the cause at home. Although he defended the idea when it came under criticism in the press and supported Thomas Benbow Phillips's efforts in Brazil, Jones believed that the Settlement should be pioneered by the American Welsh. He foresaw a time when the Welsh would travel directly from Wales to the Settlement, but he claimed that it was the Welsh who had already settled in the United States who were 'most suitable to settle first in a new country'.<sup>41</sup> He argued that the American Welsh, unlike those who had remained at home, were experienced in travelling long distances, they were aware of the difficulties of farming uncultivated land, and they were 'full of the spirit of adventure'.<sup>42</sup> Without leadership from the expatriate Welsh in the United States, Michael D. Jones believed there would be no success for the movement. Indeed, it was at the request of a Welsh society in the United States that he finally decided, in 1856, to organize support in Wales for the establishment of a Welsh Settlement.

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<sup>38</sup> Robert Everett entered the Academy in Wrexham in 1811, the same year as Michael Jones (Senior). For Robert Everett (1791-1875), see *DWB*.

<sup>39</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (April 1851), 124. Robert Everett's initial letter to Michael D. Jones was published in *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (January 1851), 23-4. Samuel Thurston's letter, which is mentioned in Everett's letter appeared in *Yr Amserau* (12 February 1851), 2.

<sup>40</sup> *Y Cronicl* (February 1851), 51-3; (July 1851), 210-2.

<sup>41</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October 1848), 302.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, (April 1849), 125.



## Gathering Support in Wales

The catalyst for Michael D. Jones's renewed interest in the need for a Welsh Settlement was the formation in January 1856 of 'Cymdeithas Drefedigaethol Gymreig' (The Welsh Settlement Society) at Camptonville, California. Its intention was to 'seek land that was beyond the jurisdiction of any other government in order to establish a Welsh Settlement so that the nation is elevated to its previous status among the nations of the world'.<sup>43</sup> The scheme was to promote the establishment of branches of the Society in Welsh communities throughout the United States, each member of which would donate no less than a quarter of a dollar per month to the Society's treasury. The branches would also appoint an 'executive committee' which would be responsible for managing the accounts and finding suitable land for the establishment of the Settlement. Once the Settlement had been established and its constitution completed, the powers of the executive committee would then be transferred to officials who were elected by the settlers.<sup>44</sup> There were others in the United States who shared the Camptonville Society's views on the need for a distinctly Welsh Settlement. Over the following two years, it found support a number of Welsh communities in the United States, resulting in the foundation of several branch societies.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (8 March 1856), 76. See also, *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (April 1856), 154.

<sup>44</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (8 March 1856), 76.

<sup>45</sup> Branch-societies were founded at Big Rock, Illinois; Bethel, Wisconsin; Pittson Ferry; Vermont; Webster Hill; Bromville, Maine; and Cwmburla, Silver Creek; Racine, Wisconsin; Penuel, Oshkosh; Middle Granville, New York State; and New York City. L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, p.21; E. C. Roberts, *Hanes Dechreuad y Wladfa Gymreig yn Mhatagonia* (Bethesda, 1893), p.13.

The Camptonville Society did not limit its appeal to Welsh communities in the United States. William ap Rees, secretary of the Society, composed a circular letter in 1856 encouraging 'Welshmen in every part of the world' to form branch-societies.<sup>46</sup> When it was published in Wales, it caught the attention of Michael D. Jones, who had, by that time, moved from Bwlchnewydd to Bala. Jones must have written to William ap Rees, for he received a reply which stated that the Camptonville Society hoped to enlist ten thousand members. Rees also assured Jones that a considerable number of potential settlers could be found in California, and he asked Jones to form a branch at Bala in aid of the Society, because, he claimed, such an expression of support from Wales would have 'a remarkable influence in America'.<sup>47</sup> For Michael D. Jones, the formation of the Camptonville Society was the realization of his hope that the Welsh in the United States would pioneer the movement to establish a Welsh Settlement.<sup>48</sup> His first attempts to gather support in Wales for the establishment of a Welsh Settlement were made in the belief that it would provide moral support for the movement in the United States.

In response to William ap Rees's request that a branch society be formed at Bala, Michael D. Jones organized a public meeting on 15 August 1856 at the Calvinistic Methodist College at Bala, which could accommodate a far greater audience than the Independent College.<sup>49</sup> Having read the correspondence from William ap Rees, he was asked several questions on the possible establishment of a Settlement, in response to which he assured those in attendance that other nations had managed to do so, although he apparently mentioned no examples. Satisfied by his answers, the

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<sup>46</sup> *Yr Amserau* (27 August 1856), 3.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (28 February 1857), 66; (16 May 1857), 159.

<sup>49</sup> *Yr Amserau* (27 August 1856), 3.



meeting drew to a close with a unanimous vote in favour of the following motion:

‘That this meeting has listened with great interest to the expressions of the patriotic feeling that is so strong among the Welsh of America, and that it hopes that the [Camptonville] Society continues to strive for its objective’.<sup>50</sup> A fortnight later, a local society called ‘Cymdeithas Wladychfaol Penllyn’ (Penllyn Settlement Society) was formed in order ‘to support the Welsh in America in their attempts to establish a Welsh Settlement’,<sup>51</sup> and before the end of the year, similar meetings were held at Bethel, Llandderfel and Llanuwchllyn, near Bala, and Brithdir, near Dolgellau.<sup>52</sup>

In December 1856, another Welsh Settlement society was formed at Caernarfon. It is claimed that Hugh Hughes, a carpenter from Rhosgadfan,<sup>53</sup> called the attention of ‘Cymdeithas y Bwcis’, a small literary society which met at Engedi chapel in Caernarfon, to the movement in the United States, and persuaded its other members to invite Michael D. Jones to address a public meeting at the Guild Hall on 23 December 1856.<sup>54</sup> The response was keen, and the meeting resulted in the formation of ‘Cymdeithas Wladychol Gymreig Caernarfon’ (Caernarfon Welsh Settlement Society, which met monthly in the schoolhouse at Glan y Môr and, by the end of January 1857, it had sixty members.<sup>55</sup> Michael D. Jones’s apparent claim that support

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid. See also, *Y Drych a’r Gwyliedydd* (27 September 1856), 306.

<sup>51</sup> *Yr Amserau* (3 September 1856), 3. Although it was not stated in the report, it is assumed that the society at Bala was a branch-society of those founded in the United States.

<sup>52</sup> *Y Drych a’r Gwyliedydd* (28 February 1857), 66. Reports of those meetings are found in *Y Gwron Cymreig* (27 December 1856), 4; *Yr Amserau* (24 December 1856), 4; *Y Drych a’r Gwyliedydd* (31 January 1857), 39; *Yr Herald Cymraeg* (27 December 1856), 2-3.

<sup>53</sup> For Hugh Hughes (1824-98), see *DWB*.

<sup>54</sup> *Yr Amserau* (7 January 1857), 2.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.; *Y Drych a’r Gwyliedydd* (28 February 1857), 66; *Yr Herald Cymraeg*, (17 January 1857), 2; *Yr Amserau* (18 November 1857), 7; *Y Drafod* (9 December 1910), 1-2.

for a Welsh Settlement was, by July 1857, spreading like wildfire throughout Wales was almost certainly an exaggeration as, by that time, societies had only been formed in Meirionnydd and Caernarfon.<sup>56</sup>

The Caernarfon Society seems to have been more willing than the Bala Society to take the initiative in organizing the establishment of a Welsh Settlement. When Hugh Hughes outlined the Society's 'rules' in late 1857, for example, he made no mention of the movement in the United States, though their aims were virtually identical.<sup>57</sup> Not only does it seem to have acted independently of the movement in the United States, but there is little evidence of collaboration with the Bala Society either. It was not until November 1857, nearly a year after the formation of the Caernarfon Society, that there is any mention in the press of a meeting to bring the members of the two societies together to discuss their common aims.<sup>58</sup> It is not without significance either that two of the founding members of the Caernarfon Society, Hugh Hughes and Lewis Jones, would become leading figures in the establishment of the Patagonian Settlement in 1865, though they had not yet risen to prominence.

Michael D. Jones held no formal office in the societies at Bala or Caernarfon.<sup>59</sup> He made little effort at this time to promote the idea in the press or to organize a concerted movement in Wales. Yet, in the absence of any other high-profile individuals supporting the establishment of a Welsh Settlement, he came to be seen as the leader of the campaign in Wales. There was some truth in the claim that he was

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<sup>56</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (26 July 1856), 236; E. C. Roberts, *Hanes Dechreuad y Wladfa Gymreig yn Mhatagonia*, p.15.

<sup>57</sup> *Yr Amserau* (18 November 1857), 7.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, (3 September 1856), 3; *Y Drafod* (9 December 1910), 1-2.



‘the chief activator of this movement’, as he was described in *Baner Cymru*,<sup>60</sup> or ‘the father of the enterprise’, as he was dubbed in *Y Drych a’r Gwyliedydd*,<sup>61</sup> but whether he was worthy of the title ‘hero of the Welsh Settlement’, as he was greeted by the American Welsh on his arrival in the United States in August 1858, is dubious to say the least.<sup>62</sup> Nevertheless, bearing in mind that Michael D. Jones had already formed his opinions on the subject, and that he was now regarded as the leader of the movement in Wales, it is hardly surprising that he then attempted to impose his influence on it. It would soon become evident, however, that the Welsh Settlement movement in Wales was gathering a momentum of its own, and that Michael D. Jones had little control over its direction.

### Location

The weakness of Michael D. Jones’s influence within the movement that was emerging in Wales first became apparent in the discussion on the location of the proposed settlement, the subject of some debate between 1856 and 1858. It seems that Michael D. Jones still entertained the possibility of directing Welsh immigrants to Oregon (British Columbia), and to Vancouver Island in particular. But the scheme was rejected by William ap Rees, who argued that the region was being rapidly populated, and that South America would be a better choice.<sup>63</sup> This reflected the official view of the Camptonville Society, which, in its very first meeting, had voted in favour of promoting ‘that vast land in south America, known as Patagonia, as a

<sup>60</sup> *Baner Cymru* (26 May 1857), 324.

<sup>61</sup> *Y Drych a’r Gwyliedydd* (28 February 1857), 68.

<sup>62</sup> *Yr Arweinydd* (23 September 1858), 6; *Y Drych a’r Gwyliedydd* (4 September 1858), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), p.197.

<sup>63</sup> *Yr Amserau* (27 August 1856), 3.

convenient and advantageous place for the Welsh to settle'.<sup>64</sup> At the Society's first meeting, the land in Patagonia was described as 'healthy and fruitful',<sup>65</sup> though it seems that the primary incentive was the claim that no government had a legitimate right to that part of the world, even though the government of Buenos Aires was encouraging immigration to Patagonia in order to strengthen its hold on the territory.<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless, within two months of William ap Rees's views being communicated to him, Michael D. Jones was also promoting Patagonia as the best location for the Settlement. He had, *prima facie*, accepted Rees's opinion on the matter.<sup>67</sup>

However, Jones was still not completely persuaded that Patagonia should be the location. In 1856, he had written to Sir George Grey,<sup>68</sup> formerly a colonial governor in New Zealand, to ask whether the British government would object to a scheme to establish a Settlement on Vancouver Island. He had received an encouraging reply stating that there would be no opposition from the British government to his proposal.<sup>69</sup> William ap Rees's correspondence was read to the audience at the meeting in Bala in August 1856, but it was Vancouver Island that was named by Michael D. Jones as a suitable location for the Welsh Settlement. Despite emphasizing that the Welsh in the United States should lead the movement, Michael D. Jones, in typically single-minded fashion, was willing to make decisions that were contrary to the views of the American Welsh when they conflicted with his own ideas.

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<sup>64</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (8 March 1856), 76.

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

<sup>66</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.23.

<sup>67</sup> *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 24.

<sup>68</sup> For Sir George Grey (1812-98), see *DNB*.

<sup>69</sup> *Y Gwladgarwr* (10 July 1858), 4.



Despite the nominal support of the British government, Jones's scheme met with little success. In fact, popular support for Vancouver Island as a location for the proposed Settlement was negligible. A letter published in *Yr Amserau* in October 1856 informed readers that the Hudson's Bay Company had claimed Vancouver Island,<sup>70</sup> while another correspondent informed the readers that the societies in California had voted in favour of Patagonia as the Settlement's location.<sup>71</sup> Michael D. Jones's hopes were frustrated, and it seemed that the tide was against him. Early in 1857, John W. Jones, editor of the Welsh-American paper *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd*, declared that 'Patagonia is the only place in which the aim in mind could be achieved', and in August that year, he assured the people of Wales that 'the adventurous Welshmen here have their eyes on Patagonia'.<sup>72</sup> In Wales also, the members of the Caernarfon Society had been inspired by the notion of settling in Patagonia,<sup>73</sup> while Michael D. Jones himself had to admit that the movement's supporters in Meirionnydd and Caernarfon favoured Patagonia.<sup>74</sup>

Even when the consensus was moving towards Patagonia as the preferred location, Michael D. Jones seems to have been keen to explore other possibilities for the Settlement. He took particular interest in a scheme to establish a Settlement in Syria or Palestine (which were at that time under Turkish rule). Indeed, he later wrote that it would be an 'unrivalled mission to carry civilization, religion and order to the

<sup>70</sup> *Yr Amserau* (22 October 1856), 2.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, (10 September 1856), 2.

<sup>72</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (3 January 1857), 4. See also, (8 August 1857), 249-50.

<sup>73</sup> *Y Drafod* (9 December 1910), 1-2.

<sup>74</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (28 February 1857), 66.

place'.<sup>75</sup> Yet again, this was not Jones's idea. The scheme was instigated by John Mills, a native of Llanidloes who, over many years, had been proselytizing among the Jewish people in London, and whose visits to Palestine had convinced him that it would be a suitable location for a Welsh Settlement.<sup>76</sup> In November 1856, Mills announced that at the request of, and in collaboration with, Michael D. Jones, he had entered negotiations with the Turkish ambassador, and that the prospects looked promising.<sup>77</sup> As part of the scheme, it seems that the Welsh settlers would be offered work on a railway line in Palestine.<sup>78</sup> Yet despite his covert support for Mills's scheme, Jones appeared reluctant to commit himself publicly to any particular location following the rejection of his choice of Vancouver Island for the Settlement. In a meeting at Brithdir, near Dolgellau, in December 1856, he referred to both Patagonia and Syria as possible locations, but no record was made of him revealing a preference for either place.<sup>79</sup> In the same month, however, David Rowlands (Dewi Môn),<sup>80</sup> compared these two parts of the world and concluded that the evidence favoured Patagonia for reasons similar to those of the Camptonville Society. While admitting that Syria was well situated for trade with other countries, Dewi Môn argued that Patagonia was expansive, suitable for land cultivation, and unlike Syria, it was beyond the authority of any state government.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, p.15.

<sup>76</sup> For John Mills ('Ieuan Glan Alarch'; 1812-73), see *DWB*.

<sup>77</sup> *Yr Amserau* (3 December 1856), 2.

<sup>78</sup> Private collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Letter from John H. Mills to Michael D. Jones, 26 February 1857.

<sup>79</sup> *Yr Amserau* (24 December 1856), 4.

<sup>80</sup> For David Rowlands (Dewi Môn; 1836-1907), see *DWB*.

<sup>81</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (25 April 1857), 129; (2 May 1857), 137-8. For David Rowlands ('Dewi Môn', 1836-1907), see *DWB*.



By this time, Michael D. Jones was advocating a cautious approach. It seems that he was attempting to curb the enthusiasm of some of the movement's supporters for fear that they would raise premature expectations, which would eventually lead to disaster.<sup>82</sup> The movement in Wales certainly had its enthusiasts, and among them was Hugh Hughes, perhaps the most prominent member of the Caernarfon Society, who was later described as being 'completely drunk on the *Wladfa*'.<sup>83</sup> Yet, while apparently advocating caution at home, Michael D. Jones adopted a more nuanced approach among the American Welsh. He stressed that they 'should not be too hurried on the one hand and not too apathetic on the other',<sup>84</sup> but, while he feared that the movement in Wales was becoming too impulsive, it was the inactivity of the movement's supporters in the United States that caused him most concern, because it was they whom he expected to lead the way. In January 1857, he declared: 'The Welsh here are now prepared to support the matter ... but we expect the American Welsh to lead the way'.<sup>85</sup> Yet little had been achieved by the end of the year, and Michael D. Jones called for those who were most committed to the cause in the United States to co-operate with each other to ensure its success.<sup>86</sup> John W. Jones claimed that, in America, the issue was polarizing opinions. Those who had an interest in the Welsh Settlement were either zealous supporters or fierce opponents, whereas Michael D. Jones was, somewhat uncharacteristically, depicted as a paragon of reason and caution: 'if the movement is ever to succeed the middle road must be taken,' wrote the editor, 'and we are inclined to think that ... the Rev. Michael D.

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<sup>82</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.196.

<sup>83</sup> *Y Genedl Gymreig* (16 July 1912), 8; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.54.

<sup>84</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwylidydd* (16 May 1857), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.183.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, (28 February 1857), 66.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, (January 1858), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.193-4.

Jones is on that road'.<sup>87</sup> Again, Jones was attempting to impose his views on the movement by encouraging the Welsh in the United States to take action while warning the Welsh in Wales to be cautious, his intention being to ensure that the American Welsh led the movement to establish a Welsh Settlement.

Even so, Michael D. Jones investigated several possibilities for establishing a Welsh Settlement.<sup>88</sup> He emphasized that the movement in Wales should act cautiously and allow the American Welsh to pioneer the Settlement, and yet he took matters into his own hands when it suited him. But what is most significant is that, while he had previously been reluctant to promote Patagonia as a location for the Settlement, the governments that he approached were all South American. Early in 1857, he corresponded with the Paraguayan consul and wrote to the government of Buenos Aires, though he claimed that he received a better response from the former.<sup>89</sup> In the summer of 1857, he was deputed by the Bala Society to travel to London to meet the consuls of those two countries and discuss the possibilities of acquiring land for a Welsh Settlement.<sup>90</sup> He had also corresponded with the consul for Banda Oriental, who informed him that there was no land available for a Welsh Settlement.<sup>91</sup>

Jones had not abandoned the possibility of founding a Settlement in Palestine, but its prospects were looking increasingly poor.<sup>92</sup> His views on this subject were also distancing him from the activity of the Caernarfon Society. Lewis Jones, who at that

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., (28 February 1857), 68.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., (8 August 1857), 249-50; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.189-91.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., (16 May 1857), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.183.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., (8 August 1857), 249-50.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., (19 December 1857), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.189.

<sup>92</sup> Bangor MS 7778. Jones mentioned the possibility of establishing the Welsh Settlement in Palestine in a letter to Anne Lloyd, dated 19 March 1859.



time was an active member of that Society, noted that while Michael D. Jones approved of the idea of settling in Syria, Hugh Hughes was adamantly opposed to it,<sup>93</sup> and Hughes claimed that it was a disagreement on this issue that, in 1857, caused the Caernarfon Society to sever its links with Michael D. Jones.<sup>94</sup> It is possible that Michael D. Jones's realization of the danger posed by internal divisions within the movement in Wales led him to conclude that South America was 'one of the most agreeable regions in the whole world', though he claimed to have done so as a result of his own research rather than the opinion of others.<sup>95</sup> Over the following months, then, he limited his discussion on the location of the Settlement to South American regions, including Bahia Blanca, Gran Chaco, the southern part of Chile or the banks of the Chupat river, on the west coast of Patagonia.<sup>96</sup> It was not in Michael D. Jones's nature to admit defeat, but, clearly, he had been swayed by the tide of opinion in favour of Patagonia as a location for the Welsh Settlement.

### **The Acquisition of Land**

Michael D. Jones believed that co-operation with state governments was crucial in order to ensure safety for the settlers and freedom for them to conduct their affairs entirely through the medium of Welsh.<sup>97</sup> In this, his views appear to have differed from those of the American Welsh, some of whom disapproved of his efforts to acquire land through negotiation with South American governments. It seems that

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<sup>93</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.31.

<sup>94</sup> *Y Drafod* (9 December 1910), 1-2.

<sup>95</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwylidydd* (8 August 1857), 249-50.

<sup>96</sup> *Baner Cymru* (26 May 1858), 324; *Y Drych a'r Gwylidydd* (8 August 1857), 249-50; (January 1858), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.194; *Baner Cymru* (15 September 1858), 578.

<sup>97</sup> *Correspondence respecting the Establishment of a Welsh Colony on the River Chupat, in Patagonia. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty* (1867), p.3; *Y Drych a'r Gwylidydd* (16 May 1857), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.182-3.

they feared that negotiation with other governments would only limit the ‘independence and freedom’ of the Welsh Settlement, and that self-government would be a more realistic prospect if the venture were undertaken independently.<sup>98</sup>

Jones, on the other hand, believed that the sanction of another government was essential for the movement to achieve its aims. Part of his reluctance to populate the land without negotiation with other state governments was based on practical reasons.

He wrote:

... it is difficult to say whether it would be possible to settle in Patagonia without the permission of the Argentine Confederation on the eastern side, or the Chilean government on the western side. Although these governments have no right to this region, it would possibly be unwise to rush in without inquiring further into the situation.<sup>99</sup>

Elsewhere, he explained that it would be ‘futile to settle in Patagonia or Gran Chaco without a charter,’ adding that ‘occupying territory without permission is “filibustering”, and if we settled as “squatters”, the land would have to be paid for sometime, and that without the privileges that we could otherwise acquire by securing a charter before establishing the Settlement’.<sup>100</sup> This was no naïve scheme, for he was not oblivious to the ulterior motives of state governments. He was certainly aware that the political grasp of some governments on the most sparsely populated parts of South America was weak, and he realized that this was why the Argentine

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<sup>98</sup> *Yr Arweinydd* (10 September 1857), 5; *Y Drych a'r Gwylidydd* (8 August 1857), 249-50.

<sup>99</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, p.14.

<sup>100</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwylidydd* (16 May 1857), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.182-3.



government offered land to immigrants free of charge. Having negotiated with representatives of several South American governments in 1857, for example, he explained that ‘the governments ... have only a nominal authority over many places, and the future of Patagonia and Gran Chaco depends on the people who settle there’.<sup>101</sup> He was also aware of the Argentine Government’s hope that the land occupied by the settlers would serve as a buffer zone against indigenous tribes: ‘The aim of the [Argentine] government,’ he noted, ‘is to create a “frontier settlement” to keep the Indians away’.<sup>102</sup>

Alongside practical considerations, Michael D. Jones recognized the moral requirement to co-operate with state governments, though his views on this subject require explanation. As early as 1848, he had averred that the Settlement should be established on land which had been ‘bought honestly’, though he saw no inconsistency between this and his belief that the movement should be conducted under the patronage of the British government, which had built its empire mostly through conquest.<sup>103</sup> Even in 1856, by which time he had come to see the relationship between England and Wales in imperial rather than contractual terms, he continued to believe that the Welsh could establish a Settlement in Vancouver Island under the patronage of the British government.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, Jones had clearly considered his moral standpoint on imperialism and the possession of land. When discussing the possible establishment of a Welsh ‘Community’ in Tennessee in 1856, he advised that it would be better to settle outside the United States, and ‘if some other nation were to go to another part [of North America] and formed its own government, it

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., (8 August 1857), 249-50.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (December 1848), 365.

<sup>104</sup> *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 23.

would not contravene any rule of justice relating to God or man'.<sup>105</sup> This may give the appearance of imperialism, but, in the same article, he wrote:

I do not believe that, if attacked, a man cannot righteously protect his own life. However, I am completely opposed to taking land, unless the principles of fair trade allow it. If a country can be bought, or obtained by charter, and land could be acquired by similar means, then I am not opposed to it.<sup>106</sup>

It may be argued that despite the fact that land in Patagonia was 'bought honestly' from the Argentine government, the settlement of that land remained an imperialistic act, for the Welsh had taken the land from the indigenous people. In fact, Jones maintained that the indigenous people should be recognized as 'the land's owners', even though the tribes were mostly nomadic. Although there is nothing to suggest that he encouraged negotiations with the indigenous tribes prior to the establishment of the Settlement, he claimed that they should receive full compensation for the area to be populated by the Welsh, which he knew was largely unpopulated, the sum being based on its 'full value as hunting land'.<sup>107</sup>

Furthermore, to demonstrate the manner in which he wanted the movement to conduct its business, he referred to the conduct of William Penn in Pennsylvania, who, he claimed, had been exemplary in his treatment of indigenous people. In 1683, Penn had made a treaty with North American tribes in which they vowed not to use

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.; *Y Drych a'r Gwyllyddydd* (19 December 1857), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.190; *Y Ddraig Goch* (15 November 1862), 1.



force against each other.<sup>108</sup> Jones was not, on the other hand, naïve enough to believe that the indigenous people would welcome the Welsh to Patagonia. Accepting the possibility that the Welsh could come under attack, Jones warned that

If they killed some of the first settlers, they should be forgiven, for they have been treated badly by Europeans, and it is hardly surprising that they seek revenge until they are assured that the settlers' aim is peace and not war.<sup>109</sup>

As he stated on other occasions, the essential requirement when establishing the Settlement was that a region be populated 'without depriving others of their rights', whether they were state governments or indigenous tribes, and that all was carried out 'fairly and justly'.<sup>110</sup> Jones's attitudes towards indigenous people were, clearly, characteristic of his age. He saw their apparently primitive habits and pagan religion as inferior, and considered their behaviour to be child-like. Yet, he emphasized human compassion above all else. He maintained that indigenous tribes possessed the same rights as anyone else, and should be treated accordingly. In later years, the Welsh settlers in the Chupat Valley would be recognized for, and would take great pride in, their humane treatment of the indigenous people during the nineteenth century, a time when the Patagonian tribes suffered horrific treatment at the hands of the Argentine government.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> For William Penn (1644-1718) and Pennsylvania, see *EAH*, II, pp.273-8.

<sup>109</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (15 November 1862), 1.

<sup>110</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwylledydd* (16 May 1857), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.182-3. See also, Private collection in the hands of Gwenllian Tudur Jones. Manuscript of an article written by Michael D. Jones.

<sup>111</sup> F. Green, *Pethau Patagonia* (Caernarfon, 1984), p.121.

## Financing the movement

The promoters of the Welsh Settlement faced the difficult task of raising capital to finance their activities, and this occupied much of Michael D. Jones's time. In March 1858, he warned that it would be unwise to act without first ensuring that the movement had 'sufficient funds to achieve its aims effectively'.<sup>112</sup> It seems that little attention was given to this warning, and, in the 1860s, the shortage of funds led to difficulties as the promoters of the movement made progress in their negotiations with the Argentine government. In fact, it was the failure of the movement to fund its activities through public collections that led to Michael D. Jones's most important contribution to the venture.

When societies were formed at Bala and Caernarfon in 1856, some arrangements were made to meet the costs of the movement's activities. At Bala, the Society's members agreed to pay an annual fee of one shilling for five years, while the members at Caernarfon had agreed to donate a penny a week to the fund.<sup>113</sup> Although there is little doubt that Michael D. Jones wanted the Settlement to be accessible to immigrants from all social backgrounds, he was also aware that the movement needed to mobilize support on a much larger scale if it was going to collect sufficient funds to achieve its objectives. In February 1857, Jones noted that a few men of wealth were about to emigrate from Wales and were waiting to see what happened to the movement. He believed that 'if such a company took the thing in hand ... they could bring it about, and that it could be profitable, as long as they conducted things wisely

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<sup>112</sup> *Yr Amserau* (3 March 1858), 7. See also, *Yr Arweinydd* (10 March 1859), 3.

<sup>113</sup> *Yr Amserau* (7 January 1857), 2.



and effectively'.<sup>114</sup> A year elapsed, however, and the movement remained dependent on small donations.

A letter written by William Bebb, former Governor of Ohio and a distant relation of Jones, suggests that Michael D. Jones had considered organizing an official scheme to finance the Welsh Settlement movement in April 1856, a few months before the first meeting to discuss the idea was held at Bala. William Bebb was involved in the attempt to establish a 'Welsh Community' in Tennessee, which explains why Michael D. Jones had sought his advice on the possibility of purchasing land on a co-operative basis.<sup>115</sup> As in the discussion on the location of the Settlement, Michael D. Jones's inquiries seem to undermine his conviction that the movement should be led by the Welsh in the United States. Evidently, Jones found it difficult not to act independently, even when he claimed to be following the leadership of others. Moreover, even though William Bebb was uncertain regarding the viability of his plans, Michael D. Jones initiated a scheme in 1858 to form a co-operative company to finance the movement's activities.<sup>116</sup> Having corresponded with a solicitor in London,<sup>117</sup> and researched the financial basis of other settlements, Jones found that the 'Joint Stock' scheme, in which shareholders took full legal responsibility for a company, had already been successful in Australia and New Zealand, and he decided to launch a similar scheme to finance the Welsh Settlement. He proposed that, once an agreement had been reached with a state government over the transfer of land, a Joint Stock company should be formed to divide and sell the land at a price that

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<sup>114</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (28 February 1857), 66.

<sup>115</sup> Bangor MS 10568. Letter from William Bebb to Michael D. Jones, 24 April 1856.

<sup>116</sup> *Baner Cymru* (15 September 1858), 578.

<sup>117</sup> Denbighshire Record Office. DD/DM/927/37. Letter from Robert Edwards (Derfel Meirion) to John Williams (Ab Ithel), 12 May 1858.

would cover additional costs and provide cheap transport for immigrants to the Settlement.<sup>118</sup>

When Michael D. Jones was invited by the American branches of the Welsh Settlement Society to discuss the progress of the movement in the United States, he saw an opportunity to sell the Company's shares, which he priced at \$25 each.<sup>119</sup> A thousand shares needed to be sold for the Company to be incorporated. However, when he arrived in New York in August 1858, he was soon made aware of the difficulties facing him in promoting the movement in the United States. In October that year, he wrote that it was a 'truly bad time' for such a movement in the United States. Adventurous men with wild schemes had disappointed thousands of Welsh people in the past, he claimed, and this had made them dubious of new schemes. He claimed that his visit had removed 'a great deal of prejudice against the movement, and shown the possibility of bringing it about', and he later stated that 'there is all likelihood that my journey will not have been in vain'.<sup>120</sup> Despite Jones's upbeat reports, the movement in the United States was clearly not as strong as he had expected. This was reflected in the poor response to the Joint Stock Company. He returned to Wales in November 1858 having sold only three hundred shares.<sup>121</sup> Yet, it is noteworthy that Michael D. Jones still believed that there was a better chance of selling the shares in the United States than in Wales. Responsibility for the Company's dealings was therefore devolved to a committee in Utica, New York State, until the shareholders could assume control. Day to day responsibility for the scheme was thus transferred to the committee's secretary, John Edred Jones, Baptist

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<sup>118</sup> *Baner Cymru* (15 September 1858), 578.

<sup>119</sup> *Yr Arweinydd* (10 March 1859), 3.

<sup>120</sup> *Yr Amserau* (13 October 1858), 3.

<sup>121</sup> *Yr Arweinydd* (25 November 1858), 4.



minister in Utica.<sup>122</sup> By March 1859, John Edred Jones reported that less than five hundred shares had been sold.<sup>123</sup> He claimed that promising negotiations were being undertaken between the Committee and the Chilean consul, but no commitment could be made 'until a company has been formed, and officers elected legitimately'.<sup>124</sup> Still, Michael D. Jones was confident that the Company would eventually be formed, and he intended to return to the United States to continue its promotion, this time in California, where he was doubtless hoping for a better response.<sup>125</sup> However, this journey did not prove necessary as it seems that Jones eventually succeeded in selling the number of shares that was required to incorporate the Company. In fact, the venture ran into difficulties, not because of a lack of support, but because the lawyers were taking such a long time to complete the legal process. By 1861, feelings of unease had emerged among the Company's supporters and shareholders, and they soon abandoned the enterprise completely.<sup>126</sup>

### **Distractions**

It has been suggested that Michael D. Jones's zeal for the Welsh Settlement was dampened in the months following his return from the United States at the end of 1858.<sup>127</sup> R. Bryn Williams claimed that, having been disappointed by the lack of support in the United States, Michael D. Jones hardly mentioned the subject for about

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> NLW MS 3294 E. Letter from Michael D. Jones to William Thomas of Bwlchnewydd, 22 December 1858; *Yr Arweinydd* (10 March 1859), 3.

<sup>124</sup> *Yr Arweinydd* (10 March 1859), 3.

<sup>125</sup> Private collection in the hands of Gwenllian Tudur Jones. Manuscript of an article written by Michael D. Jones; Bangor MS 7783. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 2 May 1859.

<sup>126</sup> H. Hughes, *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa Gymreig* (Liverpool, 1862), p.50.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.; L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.33.

three years.<sup>128</sup> However, Williams omitted to record that Jones was still hoping to establish the Joint Stock Company,<sup>129</sup> and that, soon after returning to Wales, he published a series of articles entitled 'Gwladychfa Gymreig',<sup>130</sup> which were later published as a pamphlet.<sup>131</sup> Williams also failed to note that the movement, at that time, experienced a lull in its activities, and seemed to be losing momentum. Edwin Roberts noted that, in 1860, 'there seemed to be little of the Welsh Settlement spirit in Wales'.<sup>132</sup> It is claimed that the Caernarfon Society virtually collapsed overnight after Robert Parry (Robin Ddu Eryri),<sup>133</sup> a guest speaker at its meeting in July 1857, unexpectedly disparaged the whole notion of a Welsh Settlement.<sup>134</sup> Two of the Society's most active members had also left the area. Hugh Hughes had moved to Liverpool, while Lewis Jones had left Caernarfon to run a printing firm in Holyhead. The Bala Society, which had always seemed less active, was not mentioned in the Welsh press after 1858.<sup>135</sup> By early 1859, enthusiasm for the Welsh Settlement seems to have dwindled in Wales.

Personal reasons, rather than a decline in the movement's support, were preventing Michael D. Jones from dedicating more time to the promotion of the Welsh Settlement. His work as principal of Bala Independent College in 1855, and his ministry of five churches in the Bala area, meant that the time that he could dedicate to the movement was already limited, but his marriage to Anne Lloyd in December

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<sup>128</sup> R. Bryn Williams *Y Wladfa*, p.26.

<sup>129</sup> E. C. Roberts, *Hanes Dechreuad y Wladfa Gymreig yn Mhatagonia*, p.26.

<sup>130</sup> *Yr Amserau* (16 February 1859), 3; (23 February 1859), 1; (2 March 1859), 1; (16 March 1859), 1; (30 March 1859), 1; (13 April 1859), 1.

<sup>131</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*.

<sup>132</sup> E. C. Roberts, *Hanes Dechreuad y Wladfa Gymreig yn Mhatagonia*, p.23.

<sup>133</sup> For Robert Parry ('Robin Ddu Eryri'; 1804-92), see *DWB*.

<sup>134</sup> *Y Drafod* (9 December 1910), 1-2.

<sup>135</sup> *Yr Amserau* (18 November 1857), 7; (3 March 1858), 7.



1859 also ensured that his mind was elsewhere.<sup>136</sup> When Hugh Hughes wrote to Michael D. Jones in January 1859 appealing for his assistance should a 'Settlement Society' be formed in Liverpool,<sup>137</sup> the reply came from John Peter (Ioan Pedr),<sup>138</sup> assistant tutor at Bala Independent College, explaining that Michael D. Jones was making preparations for his marriage and was therefore unable to contribute to the scheme.<sup>139</sup> At the same time, Jones was also hoping to build a new home. In 1859, he purchased a plot of land on the outskirts of Bala, and 'Bodiwan' was soon under construction.<sup>140</sup> Within a year of their marriage, Michael D. Jones and Anne were expecting their first child, and Myfanwy erch Iwan was born on 3 December 1860.<sup>141</sup> In addition to this, Michael D. Jones was deeply involved in events that followed the 1859 general election in Meirionnydd. His support for the Liberal candidate had resulted in the eviction of his mother, Mary Jones, from Y Weirglodd Wen in September 1859. Her health quickly deteriorated, and she died on 1 January 1861.<sup>142</sup>

Michael D. Jones's inactivity lasted only half the time that R. Bryn Williams claimed.<sup>143</sup> In late 1860, he came into contact with Edwin Roberts, a vociferous supporter of the movement in the United States, who had travelled to Wales. Roberts had hoped to travel to Patagonia with a group of American Welsh settlers in

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<sup>136</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, p.33.

<sup>137</sup> Hugh Hughes had moved from Caernarfon to Liverpool in July 1858. *Y Drafod* (9 December 1910), 1-2.

<sup>138</sup> For John Peter ('Ioan Pedr'; 1833-77), see R. Morgan, *Ioan Pedr* (Caernarfon, 1999); *DWB*.

<sup>139</sup> N. Hughes Cadfan, 'Hanes a Llenyddiaeth Cychwyniad Mudiad y Wladfa Gymreig ym Mhatagonia' (unpublished M. A. dissertation, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1943), p.108. N. H. Cadfan was referring to a manuscript that was in his possession.

<sup>140</sup> Bangor MS 10640. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Mary Ann Jones, c.1861.

<sup>141</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (5 December 1860), 978.

<sup>142</sup> *Y Cronicl* (March 1861), 81.

<sup>143</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.26.

September 1860, but upon realizing that the arrangements would not come to fruition, he had intended to make the voyage on his own. However, having arrived in New York, he was persuaded by friends at the office of *Y Drych* to travel to Wales in search of others who shared his views.<sup>144</sup> On his arrival at Liverpool in December 1860, Edwin Roberts was summoned to Bala.<sup>145</sup> Within a month, he was, ‘under Mr M. D. Jones’s instruction’, lecturing throughout Wales on the need for a Welsh Settlement,<sup>146</sup> and in January 1861, it was announced that he and Jones would be travelling throughout Caernarfonshire and Anglesey to promote the cause.<sup>147</sup> By all accounts, Roberts was an able public speaker, and there is little doubt that he received an encouraging response.<sup>148</sup>

However, as Michael D. Jones resumed his promotion of the Welsh Settlement, he was forced to rethink his position on the best plan of action. In the United States, the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 caused difficulties for the movement. Communication between the various branches of the Society became increasingly difficult, and the movement’s funds, which had reached about \$2,000, were lost when the bank in which they were kept was declared bankrupt.<sup>149</sup> Another factor was the loss of support from *Y Drych* in the early 1860s, when two Welshmen who had purchased land in Missouri for the establishment of a Welsh community gained the support of its editor and proprietor, John W. Jones, who had previously been

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<sup>144</sup> E. C. Roberts, *Hanes Dechreuad y Wladfa Gymreig yn Mhatagonia*, pp.21-6.

<sup>145</sup> For Edwin Roberts (1838-93), see E. Macdonald, *Yr Hirdaith* (Llandysul, 1999). It is most interesting that, in his letters, Roberts referred to Jones as ‘uncle’, suggesting perhaps a family connection between them. *Yr Hirdaith*, p.7.

<sup>146</sup> E. C. Roberts, *Hanes Dechreuad y Wladfa Gymreig yn Mhatagonia*, pp.26-7.

<sup>147</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (23 January 1861), 62.

<sup>148</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, pp.32-3; A. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig yn Patagonia*, pp.5, 9; E. Macdonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, p.20.

<sup>149</sup> E. C. Roberts, *Hanes Dechreuad y Wladfa Gymreig yn Mhatagonia*, p.20.



supportive of the Patagonian movement and had, over the years, published several of Michael D. Jones's letters in the paper's columns.<sup>150</sup> Michael D. Jones did not abandon the hope that the American Welsh, as seasoned immigrants, would pioneer the proposed settlement,<sup>151</sup> but from that time, the focus of the movement that led to the Patagonian venture would be neither in Wales nor in the United States, but in Liverpool.

### **Michael D. Jones and the Liverpool Society**

Activities led by Hugh Hughes in Liverpool, in which Michael D. Jones had been unable to participate in early 1859, were to develop into the focal point of the movement to establish a Welsh Settlement in Patagonia. In July 1861, the group of about a dozen supporters who had been gathering frequently at 22 Williamson Square, Liverpool, organized themselves as a 'Welsh Settlement Society' and entered into negotiations with the consul of the Argentine Confederation, Samuel R. Phibbs.<sup>152</sup> Hugh Hughes's initial request was that 'the Welsh be given everlasting possession of the country, so that they could form a government that was independent of all others'.<sup>153</sup> Hardly surprisingly, Phibbs told Hughes that the government was unlikely to relinquish its possession of Patagonia. Phibbs suggested, however, that the government would possibly approve the formation of a new province of the Argentine Republic, and that, under this arrangement, the Welsh would be virtually

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<sup>150</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.26; A. Jones and B. Jones, *Welsh Reflections: Y Drych and America, 1851-2001* (Llandysul, 2001), pp.22-3.

<sup>151</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (11 March 1863), 154.

<sup>152</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.31.

<sup>153</sup> H. Hughes, *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa*, p.41.

autonomous.<sup>154</sup> All this occurred before Michael D. Jones came into contact with the Liverpool Society.

R. Bryn Williams and Elvey MacDonald had different views on Michael D. Jones's relationship with the Liverpool Society. Williams claimed that Jones had been drawn into the movement because it was believed that his status as a college principal would give it some degree of dignity.<sup>155</sup> Williams also suggested that Jones would not have initiated a movement to establish a Welsh Settlement by himself, and that the Patagonian Settlement would never have been established without the input of Hugh Hughes. It is true that, when the Liverpool Society was formed, Michael D. Jones still hoped that Welsh in the United States would lead the movement to establish the Settlement, and that negotiations with the Argentine government would not have begun without the efforts of Hugh Hughes. However, it seems too cynical to suggest that the Liverpool Society sought to 'take advantage' of Jones's patriotic zeal. For years, his name had been associated with the campaign to establish a Welsh Settlement, and there is no doubt that its other members would have valued his involvement in the work of the Society.

Elvey Macdonald, on the other hand, suggested that Michael D. Jones's intention in 1861 was to prevent the Liverpool Society from making any rash decisions.<sup>156</sup> It is clear that Jones held unequivocal views on the best way forward for the movement, and he soon played a prominent part in the Society's negotiations with Samuel R. Phibbs. MacDonald claimed that, in order to achieve his aims, Jones supported efforts

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.54.

<sup>156</sup> E. Macdonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, pp.18-19.



to turn the Liverpool Society into a 'National Committee' by enlisting members from other parts of Wales.<sup>157</sup> It is claimed that this was first suggested by Phibbs to improve the Society's chances of attracting the attention of the Argentine government, though Abraham Matthews claimed that it was Michael D. Jones who was primarily responsible for its implementation.<sup>158</sup> However, whether his intention was to slow the progress of the Liverpool Society's work is doubtful. There is little doubt that Michael D. Jones would have been supportive of the idea of giving a national dimension to the movement, especially since its focal point was now in Liverpool.

There is some degree of truth in both Williams and MacDonald's views. As Williams suggests, Hughes must have seen some advantage in Michael D. Jones's involvement, or he would not have tried to contact him in 1859.<sup>159</sup> Indeed, in early 1865, one correspondent writing in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* doubted whether the movement's activities would have received any attention at all had it not been for Michael D. Jones's involvement, his name being 'of high standing among the Congregationalists' because of his association with Bala Independent College.<sup>160</sup> Yet, as MacDonald noted, Jones was by no means a peripheral figure of the Liverpool Society. He took a prominent role in its activities. In addition to forming the 'National Committee', he was a member of the party that visited Samuel R. Phibbs to discuss the possibilities for the venture and the requests that were sent to the Argentine government. He also contributed to the formation of a board of trustees to act as a link between the

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<sup>157</sup> A. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig yn Patagonia*, p.5; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.55; E. MacDonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, p.18.

<sup>158</sup> E. Macdonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, p.18.

<sup>159</sup> N. Hughes Cadfan, 'Hanes a Llenyddiaeth Cychwyniad Mudiad y Wladfa Gymreig ym Mhatagonia', p.108.

<sup>160</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (4 January 1865), 12.

Liverpool Committee and the Argentine government. By enlisting figures of high social standing, it was believed that the Society would have better hope of success in their negotiations with the Argentine government.<sup>161</sup> Using his political connections,<sup>162</sup> Michael D. Jones secured the support of David Williams, High-Sheriff of Meirionnydd and a Parliamentary candidate in the general election of 1859, and George Hammond Whalley, MP for Peterborough.<sup>163</sup> The support of these men was nominal, but Edwin Roberts claimed that their association with the movement was crucial to its success, and he acknowledged that the settlers were indebted to Michael D. Jones for ensuring their support.<sup>164</sup> The other three trustees were Michael D. Jones; Captain Thomas L. D. Jones-Parry, a landowner from Penllŷn; and Robert James, a coal merchant from Wigan.<sup>165</sup> These three men had already shown an interest in the work of the Liverpool Society, and they made a more active contribution to its work.

Michael D. Jones also contributed to the work of the Liverpool Committee by editing *Y Ddraig Goch*, a fortnightly journal that was launched in July 1862.<sup>166</sup> Each issue contained news of recent activities, letters from the Welsh in the United States, articles on various aspects of life in Wales, and discussion on the objectives of the movement. For a while, *Y Ddraig Goch* gave supporters of the Welsh Settlement an opportunity to voice their opinions on various aspects of the movement, but the costs

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<sup>161</sup> The date is uncertain. According to extracts from the society's minutes which were quoted by Lewis Jones, the board of trustees was fully formed on 18 December 1861. L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, pp.31-2.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p.37.

<sup>163</sup> A. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig yn Patagonia*, p.5. For George Hammond Whalley (1813-1878), see *DNB*.

<sup>164</sup> E. C. Roberts, *Hanes Dechreuad y Wladfa Gymreig yn Mhatagonia*, p.38.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p.31.

<sup>166</sup> Bangor MS 11296. Letter from Lewis Jones to Michael D. Jones, 29 May 1862; L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, p.34.



of publication and the slow progress of negotiations with the Argentine government soon became a burden. Ten issues were published in 1862, and another six issues in late 1863.<sup>167</sup>

Michael D. Jones's conceptual influence on the Patagonian movement was by no means obvious at this time. In *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa*, a pamphlet by Hugh Hughes which outlined the movement's aims, it was claimed that, when Jones came into contact with the Liverpool Society, he had been 'satisfied with the proceedings of the present Committees' and that he was 'co-operating with them wholeheartedly'.<sup>168</sup> It is noteworthy that, between 1861 and 1865, there is no suggestion that Jones took matters into his own hands because of any difference of opinion between him and other supporters of the movement, as he had done in the late 1850s. He would certainly not have been displeased by the Committee's decision to take the advice of Samuel Phibbs by applying for provincial status within the Argentine Republic. Jones had argued on previous occasions that land for the Welsh Settlement should be acquired through negotiation with state governments,<sup>169</sup> and the scheme adopted by the Liverpool Society was not much different from his initial idea of establishing a Settlement under the patronage of the British government.<sup>170</sup> Although Michael D. Jones had become mistrustful of the British government by the 1860s, he was not as wary of the Argentines, whom he stereotyped as 'dim, indolent, contentious,

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<sup>167</sup> The first series was published between 5 July 1862 and 15 November 1862, and the second was published between 5 September 1863 and 14 November 1863.

<sup>168</sup> H. Hughes, *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa Gymreig*, p.50.

<sup>169</sup> *Correspondence respecting the Establishment of a Welsh Colony on the River Chupat, in Patagonia. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty* (1867), p.3; *Y Drych a'r Gwyllyddydd* (16 May 1857), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.182-3; M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, p.14.

<sup>170</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October 1848), 301; (April 1850), 124.

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<sup>170</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October 1848), 301; (April 1850), 124.



disorganized and unruly'.<sup>171</sup> While he had shown some degree of political acumen when discussing the acquisition of land, this kind of complacency reveals Jones's failure to realize that the Argentines would have the same interest as other state governments, namely the promotion of national unity. The Welsh Settlement would still have to struggle to maintain its cultural identity.

In addition to co-operating with the aims of the Liverpool Committee, it would appear that the direction which the Patagonian movement had taken in the early 1860s influenced the rhetoric used by Michael D. Jones when promoting the Settlement. Previously, Jones had emphasized that the primary purpose of the Settlement was to preserve the national characteristics of Welsh immigrants. For example, when justifying the need for a Welsh Settlement in *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, a pamphlet published in 1860, Jones asserted that, since migration was an inevitable aspect of life, it was only reasonable that the Welsh took measures to ensure that it was carried out in the 'wisest, most organized and effective manner'.<sup>172</sup> A Welsh Settlement, he claimed, would be beneficial to the material and spiritual well-being of Welsh immigrants. In promoting this idea, Jones certainly had patriotic aspirations for the Welsh people. 'The Welshman has served for long enough,' he wrote. 'It is now time for him to think a little about governing'.<sup>173</sup> But, above all, he emphasized that the aim of the Welsh Settlement movement was 'not to encourage migration, but to control it.'<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, p.10.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5.

In Hugh Hughes's *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa*, the justification for the establishment of a Welsh Settlement was noticeably different. Hughes's focus was clearly on the situation in Wales. He claimed that whole structure of Welsh society had been shaped by its relationship with England.<sup>175</sup> English people were given priority in all aspects of life in Wales, leaving the Welsh 'to fill positions that were too low for the Englishman's ambition, or to torture themselves into the English mould, and to beg for jobs'.<sup>176</sup> Hughes disapproved of any suggestion of rebellion, and argued that the best means of restoring the 'honour' and 'independence' of the Welsh people was by establishing a Welsh Settlement.<sup>177</sup> No mention was made of migration and its effect on Welsh people, which had been central to Michael D. Jones's *Gwladychfa Gymreig*.

However, by 1862, it would appear that Michael D. Jones's rhetoric was far more similar to the arguments put forth by Hugh Hughes in *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa* than those given in *Gwladychfa Gymreig* a few years earlier. 'Why must the Welsh be slaves in their native Principality, when they have the rights of citizens in every other country?' he asked in *Y Ddraig Goch*.<sup>178</sup> By this time, it was the situation in Wales, rather than the United States, that called for the establishment of a Welsh Settlement:

Our children are taught in English schools; the English language is on all railway stations; English managers curse the Welsh in almost all of our factories – and, soon enough, foreigners will have eaten all the Welsh meat, and once the Welshman has completed his work, they use

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<sup>175</sup> H. Hughes, *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa*, pp.5-6.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>178</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (15 November 1862), 3.



the bones to beat him. Should it be like this? Can it be like this? I hear the answer, “No – a free Welshman in a free country”.<sup>179</sup>

Jones no longer presented the Welsh Settlement as a haven for Welsh immigrants against the assimilative forces of American society, but as a means of ‘perfecting our national character’.<sup>180</sup> It seems that the arguments put forth in *Gwladychfa Gymreig* were not considered relevant, and therefore not as persuasive, to the Welsh in Wales. While Michael D. Jones’s vision of a Welsh Settlement was initially a response to the effects of displacement on the national identity of Welsh immigrants, it was influenced in the early 1860s by the change in the direction of the movement, which came as a result of its collapse in the United States and the emergence of Liverpool as its focal point.

### ‘The Practical Phase’

Following its discussions with the Argentine consul, the Liverpool Committee petitioned the Argentine government requesting cheap land, a degree of self-government, freedom of worship, provisions of livestock and arms for the first settlers.<sup>181</sup> In August 1862, the response to the petition came from Guillermo Rawson, Minister of Home Affairs for the Argentine government. In his reply, Rawson assured the Committee that land would be granted, that none of their demands were unacceptable, and that agents should be sent to South America to proceed with the negotiations. The movement seemed to be moving forward and the news was greeted

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., (31 October 1863), 2.

<sup>181</sup> H. Hughes, *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa Gymreig*, pp.41-9; E. Macdonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, p.19; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.53-7, 301-2.

by Michael D. Jones in *Y Ddraig Goch* as a sign of ‘the movement entering a new PHASE – *the practical phase*’.<sup>182</sup>

Despite the apparent breakthrough in its negotiations with the Argentine government, the Liverpool Committee found itself with hardly any funds to finance its activities. Until then, the movement had been able to carry out its work at little cost, but no funds had been raised for any future activity. When the Caernarfon Society was dissolved in 1857, it had little more than three pounds in its treasury,<sup>183</sup> and no mention was made of any funds raised by the Bala Society. Membership of the Liverpool Society was 2s.6d. and each member was required to make a weekly contribution of sixpence. The 2s.6d. would be returned with interest to the member on arrival at the Welsh Settlement. If the member had no desire to emigrate, he or she could sell the membership token to one of the settlers.<sup>184</sup> This scheme was hardly likely to be profitable. In the autumn of 1861, some money was received from branches formed at Neath, Aberdare, Mountain Ash and Briton Ferry, but the Liverpool Society’s takings at the end of the year were still only £5.8s.8d., while its expenses were £5.3s.7d.<sup>185</sup>

Three fund-raising schemes were mentioned in Hugh Hughes’s *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa*. The first was to form a company on the same pattern as the ‘East India Company’, but Hughes noted that it had been judged impractical.<sup>186</sup> The second scheme was that the costs of the venture would be covered by increasing the price of

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<sup>182</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (4 October 1862), 2.

<sup>183</sup> *Y Drafod* (9 December 1910), 2.

<sup>184</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.31.

<sup>185</sup> NLW MS 7524 D. Accounts of the Welsh Settlement, 1861-81.

<sup>186</sup> H. Hughes, *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa Gymreig*, p.50.



passage for immigrants to the Settlement.<sup>187</sup> The other suggestion was to form a company, and to sell its 2,500 shares at a price of £5 each. The money would be used to purchase a ship for general trading purposes, but the Company would give priority to the Patagonian Settlement.<sup>188</sup> However, none of these schemes were implemented, and in order to meet the costs of sending two agents to Buenos Aires, the Committee had no choice but to make a public appeal. Michael D. Jones was one of the four men who travelled to various parts of Wales in late 1862 to collect the contributions. Hugh Hughes went to north Wales, Edwin Roberts to the south, and Michael D. Jones and Lewis Jones to Cardiganshire.<sup>189</sup> Nonetheless, they were disappointed by the lack of public support. The donations did not even cover the costs of the collectors, let alone cover the £150 that had been promised to each of the two agents, Lewis Jones and Love Jones-Parry.<sup>190</sup>

This failure to raise money at such a crucial stage for the movement would suggest that the public was not fully supportive of the Patagonian venture. At first glance, the situation seemed promising. Before the end of 1862, branches of the movement had been formed at Llandeilo, Llanelli, Aberystwyth, Dowlais and Castell Newydd Emlyn.<sup>191</sup> Yet, despite the apparent progress, support for the venture does not seem to have been particularly strong in those communities. Rather, the activity was led by individuals, such as Morgan Page Price and Thomas Davies, who were supportive of the Liverpool Committee's work.<sup>192</sup> The results of Edwin Roberts's promotional work seemed equally promising. It was claimed that his tour of Cardiganshire in early

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p.51.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p.52.

<sup>189</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.36.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.; NLW MS 7254 D. Accounts of the Welsh Settlement, 1861-81.

<sup>191</sup> NLW MS 7254 D. Accounts of the Welsh Settlement, 1861-81.

<sup>192</sup> *Y Drafod* (13 January 1911), 2.

1862 had resulted in the formation of no less than 32 societies and the registration of about 1,500 members.<sup>193</sup> A festival was arranged at Aberystwyth in May 1862 in order to bring them together for a discussion on the establishment of the Settlement. However, according to newspaper reports, only about 25 people attended the meetings.<sup>194</sup> It seems that, on the whole, the public was supportive of the venture, but that few people were willing to commit their time and money to it. This may explain why the movement's organizers proceeded with the arrangements despite the lukewarm public support and their failure to raise sufficient funds from public collections. They may have believed that the public would become more committed to the cause as they progressed in their negotiations with the Argentine government.

The tension that arose between the success of negotiations with the Argentine government, on the one hand, and the failure to raise adequate funds, on the other, marked a watershed for Michael D. Jones's participation in the movement. The responsibility for paying the deficit fell on members of the Liverpool Committee, and Lewis Jones later recalled that 'the burden was placed on Michael D. Jones's shoulders'.<sup>195</sup> Abraham Matthews, who was a student at Bala Independent College at the time, claimed that Love Jones-Parry contributed as much as £750, which was probably used to cover costs once he and Lewis Jones had arrived in South America.<sup>196</sup> But Hugh Hughes gave yet another version of events. According to Hughes, the various branches of the Society had agreed to pay the costs of one agent, while Michael D. Jones and Robert James would cover those of the other. But, in the

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<sup>193</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.56-7.

<sup>194</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 May 1862), 311.

<sup>195</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, p.37.

<sup>196</sup> *Y Drafod* (7 May 1955), 3; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.57-8.



end, Jones himself paid £150 to fund one agent, while the Liverpool Committee covered the cost of the other.<sup>197</sup>

Michael D. Jones was forced to look for alternative financial sources to pay his portion of the costs. At the time, he received an annual salary of £90 at the Independent College,<sup>198</sup> and a further £20 from the three churches under his ministry.<sup>199</sup> However, it would appear that Jones turned to his mother-in-law, Mary Davies, for support. Following the death of her first husband, John Lloyd, Mary sold the farm at Pistyll and married a widower named Hugh Davies of Plas-yn-rhal, near Rhuthun.<sup>200</sup> By the 1860s, Mary Davies was a widow once more, and having inherited the estate of her uncle as well as her second husband, she found herself in a comfortable financial situation. She had the added advantage of inheriting several small properties in Denbighshire and Flintshire, all of which provided her with a steady income. It seems reasonable that Mary Davies, at short notice, provided the funds that were necessary to send the two delegates to Argentina in the winter of 1862, and it is noteworthy that, on 1 January 1863, Jones paid £204.10s.0d., a sum similar to that which he had lent to the Liverpool Committee, into the bank at Bala on behalf of his mother-in-law.<sup>201</sup> Yet whatever the arrangement between him and Mary Davies, it would appear that Jones's contribution towards the visit had plunged him into financial difficulty. In September 1863, he requested a loan of £27 from Robert James, while he also petitioned the Liverpool Committee in the hope that some

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<sup>197</sup> *Y Drafod* (13 January 1911), 2.

<sup>198</sup> NLW, D. J. Williams Papers, 16/7. Notes on Michael D. Jones's salary.

<sup>199</sup> Bangor MS 7540. Manuscript by Michael D. Jones, 'Athrova Anybynol y Bala'.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 8052. 'Cofnodion o hanes bywyd Mary Davies, Bodiwan, Bala'.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, 7941. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1863.

money would be repaid to him.<sup>202</sup> James could not supply the loan, and Lewis Jones replied to Michael D. Jones on behalf of the Liverpool Committee informing him that there was not one member who could afford to give him the money that he had requested.<sup>203</sup>

There is little doubt that Michael D. Jones's financial involvement strengthened his commitment to the venture. The Committee's finances did not improve in the following months, and it became clear that only the success of the Patagonian movement would ensure that the money would be returned to him. Previously, Jones had advocated a cautious approach, and had been eager to ensure that the arrangements were as thorough as possible. However, once he had a financial stake in the movement, he seems to have accepted circumstances and arrangements that would not have met his satisfaction in previous years. This was apparent in his response to the news that the agreement made between Lewis Jones and Love Jones-Parry, the two agents who had been sent to inspect the land in Patagonia, and Guillermo Rawson, the Argentine minister for home affairs,<sup>204</sup> had been rejected by the Argentine Congress in August 1863.<sup>205</sup> By the time the news reached the Committee, Michael D. Jones had already been looking for a suitable ship to carry emigrants to the Settlement and had made enquiries with Thomas Duguid, a Buenos Aires merchant who had been supportive of the movement, about the possible concessions that he would give per head for any travellers.<sup>206</sup> Determined to press on with the

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 11297. Letter from Robert James to Michael D. Jones, 2 September 1863.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., 11298. Letter from Lewis Jones to Michael D. Jones, 8 September 1863.

<sup>204</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.70.

<sup>205</sup> H. Hughes, *Y Wladychfa Gymreig: Attodiad i'r Llawlyfr* (Liverpool, 1863). This is also suggested in R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.71.

<sup>206</sup> Bangor MS 11297. Letter from Robert James to Michael D. Jones, 2 September 1863.



arrangements, Jones declared at a meeting of the Liverpool Committee that they should not 'give up the idea of a Welsh Settlement'. He is claimed to have stated:

... since the Welsh Settlement Society has gone to great expense to carry the movement thus far, and that it has all been in vain due to the Senate's rejection of the agreement, that an application is to be made to the [Argentine] government to enquire as to what support the Welsh would receive if they settled as ordinary immigrants on the Chupat river.<sup>207</sup>

Clearly, his investment, both in time and money, would be in vain if the movement then came to a halt without achieving its objective. Indeed, such was Michael D. Jones's persistence that, in April 1864, he contributed another £100 towards the costs of sending Samuel Phibbs to Buenos Aires to discuss the application for land with the Argentine government on behalf of the Liverpool Committee.<sup>208</sup>

In October 1864, the Committee received a letter from Rawson informing it that land in the Chupat Valley in Patagonia would be granted to the Welsh settlers under the terms of legislation of 11 October 1862. According to this legislation, 25 cuadras (about 100 acres) would be given to each family and they would receive their deeds within two years. It did not grant self-government to the settlers; they were the terms that were offered to all immigrants.<sup>209</sup> Having waited so long for a positive reply, the

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<sup>207</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, pp.41-2. See also, *Y Drafod* (3 February 1911), 2.

<sup>208</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.42; Bangor MS 8052. Copies of letters sent by Michael D. Jones, 1863-92.

<sup>209</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.71.

members of the Liverpool Committee voted unanimously in favour of accepting the Argentine government's terms.<sup>210</sup>

For the Liverpool Committee, accepting these terms meant a considerable concession from its original demands. In previous years, Michael D. Jones had argued that some degree of self-government would be crucial if the Settlement were to preserve the national characteristics of Welsh immigrants.<sup>211</sup> In 1851, for example, he had criticized Thomas Benbow Phillips for his failure to achieve such an agreement with the Brazilian government.<sup>212</sup> However, under this agreement with the Argentine government, there was no guarantee that any measure of self-government would be granted to the Welsh Settlement. From this time, Michael D. Jones's aim would be to transport as many people as possible to the Settlement so that its leaders could demand provincial status from the Argentine government. He had suggested previously that 'ten thousand Welsh people in Bahia Blanca or Patagonia would be a great force in South America',<sup>213</sup> and the same figure was mentioned in an address at Bala in 1863, when he stated that: 'Ten thousand settlers in Patagonia will be able to govern themselves as they wish'.<sup>214</sup> In actual fact, the Welsh-speaking population of the Patagonian Settlement did not exceed five thousand people until the turn of the twentieth century,<sup>215</sup> and provincial status was not achieved until 1955. By seeking to ensure that his expenditure on the movement had not been in vain, Michael D. Jones

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<sup>210</sup> *Y Drafod* (3 February 1911), 2; N. Hughes Cadfan, 'Hanes a Llenyddiaeth Cychwyniad Mudiad y Wladfa Gymreig ym Mhatagonia', p.118.

<sup>211</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (28 February 1857), 66; M. D. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, pp.7-9, 13.

<sup>212</sup> *Yr Amserau* (12 March 1851), 2.

<sup>213</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyliedydd* (January 1858), in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.193.

<sup>214</sup> From an address delivered at Bala. *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (28 January 1863), 58.

<sup>215</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, Appendix XI.



had made a compromise that would have a significant influence on the future of the Welsh Settlement.

### **Preparation for departure**

As soon as the Liverpool Committee had decided to accept the Argentine government's offer, arrangements were made for the registration and transport of settlers to Patagonia. Michael D. Jones and Lewis Jones were responsible for chartering a ship for the voyage. They chartered a 700 tonne ship called *Halton Castle*.<sup>216</sup> It was set to depart from Liverpool on 25 April 1865 so that the settlers would arrive at the Chupat Valley in time for the sowing season in July and August.<sup>217</sup> The Settlement was to be pioneered by a group of about 250 settlers. Registering passengers for the voyage was not expected to be a difficult task. According to Hugh Hughes, sixty people had already come forward and paid the cost of passage in full,<sup>218</sup> though it seems that most of them were members of the Liverpool Committee and the branch-societies in Wales.

Michael D. Jones began to register passengers for the voyage to Patagonia by lecturing in his native county of Meirionnydd, addressing meetings at Llanuwchllyn and Bethel in January, Llandderfel and Llandrillo in February.<sup>219</sup> He spoke at meetings in more distant parts of Meirionnydd and Denbighshire in March 1865,<sup>220</sup> and by the end of the month he was travelling through Cardiganshire and holding

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<sup>216</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (29 March 1865), 219.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, (14 December 1864), 809; L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.43.

<sup>218</sup> *Y Drafod* (3 February 1911), 2.

<sup>219</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (25 January 1865), 58; (1 February 1865), 70; (1 March 1865), 140; (15 March 1865), 165; *Yr Herald Cymraeg* (28 January 1865), 1.

<sup>220</sup> Bangor MS 7943. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1865; *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (15 March 1865), 165; *Yr Herald Cymraeg* (25 March 1865), 3.

meetings daily at places such as Capel Seion, Pontrhydfendigaid and Tregaron.<sup>221</sup> Jones's diary suggests that he had intended to continue lecturing in Cardiganshire in early April, but instead he travelled further south to Carmarthenshire, and spoke at Bwlchnewydd, Llanelli and Swansea.<sup>222</sup> He spent a few days in the south Wales valleys, lecturing at Ystradgynlais, Ystalyfera and Aberdare, before returning north in the second week of April.<sup>223</sup>

Contrary to their expectations, the organizers of the venture had difficulties in finding settlers to make the voyage to Patagonia. This was partly explained by the appearance of a damning letter, written by a correspondent calling himself 'Garibaldi', in the columns of *Yr Herald Cymraeg*. In the letter, Garibaldi doubted whether the Settlement would be able attract immigrants bearing in mind that its agreement with the Argentine government was insufficient, the unsuitability of the agents for the task of inspecting the land, the barrenness of the land and the ferocity of the indigenous people.<sup>224</sup> Many of the points made by Garibaldi were well-founded, and the letter appeared at a time when the organizers of the movement were visiting various parts of Wales in the hope of finding immigrants to pioneer the Settlement, and therefore had little time to respond to the criticism.

The shortage of passengers was a particular cause for concern because Michael D. Jones had agreed to make the full payment to the owners of *Halton Castle* prior to its departure from Liverpool. According to the original arrangements, passage for each

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<sup>221</sup> Bangor MS 7943. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1865.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.; *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (12 April 1865), 228, 229.

<sup>223</sup> Bangor MS 7943. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1865; *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (19 April 1865), 247.

<sup>224</sup> *Yr Herald Cymraeg* (18 February 1865), 2.



adult would cost £12, children under twelve would cost £6, and infants under twelve months of age travelled free of charge.<sup>225</sup> However, in the hope of attracting the interest of more immigrants, it was decided that passengers who were unable to pay the £12 could pay half the money before their departure from Liverpool, and the rest once they had established themselves in Patagonia. Their debt would be owed to Michael D. Jones. Again, however, the organizers failed to register the required number of passengers. Jones therefore agreed to pay for the passage in full. Each passenger would sign a note of hand in which they agreed to repay £12 with an interest rate of 12 per cent per annum to the Settlement's authorities.<sup>226</sup>

Although the required number of passengers were eventually found, those who registered did not conform to the expectations of the Committee. Michael D. Jones believed that the suitability of the immigrants would be key to the success of the Welsh Settlement,<sup>227</sup> and it was for this reason that he had argued that the American Welsh should lead the way.<sup>228</sup> In the months prior to departure, he had argued that diligence was the most important factor when settling in a new country,<sup>229</sup> but, clearly, some experience of farming was needed if they were to establish themselves in an uncultivated region such as the Chupat Valley. Of the 162 passengers who eventually departed for Patagonia, over half of them came from industrial communities in south Wales, namely Mountain Ash and Aberdare, and the English cities of Liverpool and Manchester.<sup>230</sup> Although some of these people would no doubt

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<sup>225</sup> *Y Drafod* (3 February 1911), 2.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>227</sup> *Y Drych a'r Gwyllydydd* (28 February 1857), 66.

<sup>228</sup> *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (October 1848), 302; (April 1849), 125.

<sup>229</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (15 March 1865), 173.

<sup>230</sup> The number of passengers on board the *Mimosa* is a subject of some debate. Abraham Matthews counted 153 on board the *Mimosa*, and the same figure is

have had some experience of farming, this was still a concern for Michael D. Jones. Fearing that the settlers might not be up to the task of cultivating the land in the Chupat Valley, he suggested to the Liverpool Committee that they should be sent to the Rio Negro province, about three hundred miles north of the Chupat Valley.<sup>231</sup> Other immigrants had already settled there and connections with Buenos Aires were more reliable. However, this suggestion was overruled after opposition from some members of the Liverpool Committee, who preferred to send them directly to the Chupat Valley.<sup>232</sup> Although Michael D. Jones was not fully aware of the difficult circumstances that the settlers would have to endure on their arrival in the Chupat Valley, the recent turn of events had clearly made him anxious.

Finding settlers to make the voyage would only be half the task facing the organizers of the Patagonian venture in 1865. As the departure date approached, it became clear that the *Halton Castle* would not be ready in time. It had not returned from its previous voyage, which left the venture on the verge of collapse.<sup>233</sup> The Committee was determined to press on, but it had left little room for such a calamity. Michael D. Jones finally found another ship to carry the settlers in the shape of a tea-clipper

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given in *Correspondence respecting the Establishment of a Welsh Colony on the River Chupat, in Patagonia* (1867), p.29. According to Matthew Henry Jones, grandson of Abraham Matthews, there were 164 passengers on *Mimosa*. More recently, Elvey MacDonald suggested that 162 passengers departed from Liverpool for Patagonia. E. Macdonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, pp.213-20.

<sup>231</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 12 July 1866.

<sup>232</sup> Bangor MS 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company'; Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 12 July 1866.

<sup>233</sup> *Correspondence respecting the Establishment of a Welsh Colony on the River Chupat, in Patagonia* (1867), p.25.



named *Mimosa*. It was chartered for £1,200, but Committee also needed to pay for modifications if it was to carry passengers.<sup>234</sup>

It was at this stage that Michael D. Jones made his most important contribution to the Patagonian venture. The Committee had no funds at all, and in order to meet the additional costs, Jones obtained a mortgage of £1,000 on a farm called Tynygors, which his wife had inherited from her mother, and the land on which stood Bodiwan, his home on the outskirts of Bala.<sup>235</sup> It was understood that *Mimosa* would be ready for departure within a week, but it took a month to make the necessary preparations and to collect the provisions for the voyage.<sup>236</sup> This delay gave rise to further difficulties. It was claimed that some of the people who had registered for the journey dispersed on hearing that *Halton Castle* had been delayed, leaving about 150 people waiting for passage to Patagonia.<sup>237</sup> Many of those who chose to wait for *Mimosa* stayed in two houses on Union Street, Liverpool,<sup>238</sup> at Michael D. Jones's expense.<sup>239</sup> While the passengers stayed in Liverpool, Jones tried to keep their spirits high with the assistance of three former students at Bala College, Lewis Humphreys, David Rees and David Lloyd Jones.<sup>240</sup> There was no mention in the Welsh press of the delays until the passengers boarded *Mimosa* on 24 May 1865. Hugh Hughes wrote a

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<sup>234</sup> Bangor MS 11456. Various papers relating to *Mimosa*.

<sup>235</sup> Bangor MS 10509. Mortgage by Michael D. Jones to Henry Ford of Chester, 5 May 1865.

<sup>236</sup> A. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig yn Patagonia*, p.10; *Y Drafod* (3 February 1911), 2.

<sup>237</sup> *Y Drafod* (3 February 1911), 2; (24 February 1911), 3.

<sup>238</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (28 June 1865), 413. Some of the passengers stayed with George Lamb, 41 Union Street, and others at 35 Union Street, a hotel owned by David Richards, the brother-in-law of Hugh Hughes.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, (31 May 1865), 350; *Y Drafod* (24 February 1911), 3.

<sup>240</sup> *Y Drafod* (24 February 1911), 3; (25 March 1910), 1; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.81; A. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig yn Patagonia*, p.12; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.200.

letter from the ship's deck in which he stressed that 'it is the owners of *Halton Castle* who are to blame for this [inconvenience], and not the [Liverpool] Committee or Revd M. D. Jones. On the contrary, the first settlers are indebted to Mr Jones for their departure even at this late stage'.<sup>241</sup> *Mimosa* left Liverpool Docks on 28 May 1865.<sup>242</sup>

The unforeseen difficulties that were encountered in April and May 1865 cost Michael D. Jones a significant amount of money. According to Hugh Hughes, he contributed more than £1,000,<sup>243</sup> but Abraham Matthews's estimate of £2,500 was much nearer the mark.<sup>244</sup> Michael D. Jones claimed that he spent £2,000 on the preparation of *Mimosa*, and a further £400 on the visits of Lewis Jones, Love Jones-Parry and Samuel Phibbs to Argentina. This is supported by the accounts of the Welsh Settlement, which noted that the sum owed to Michael D. Jones was £2,545.16s.1d,<sup>245</sup> a considerable amount bearing in mind that his annual salary was about £170.<sup>246</sup>

The movement to establish a Welsh settlement did not turn out as Michael D. Jones had hoped. Initially, he had believed that the Welsh in the United States should pioneer the Settlement, and it was in response to the formation of a society in Camptonville, California, that he began to promote the idea in Wales. However, following the collapse of the movement in the United States in the early 1860s, he was left with little choice but to support the activities that were led by Hugh Hughes in Liverpool, and to accept that the Settlement would be pioneered by people from

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<sup>241</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (31 May 1865), 350.

<sup>242</sup> Bangor MS 7943. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1865.

<sup>243</sup> *Y Drafod* (3 February 1911), 2.

<sup>244</sup> A. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig yn Patagonia*, p.11.

<sup>245</sup> NLW MS 7254 D. Accounts of the Welsh Settlement, 1861-81.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, D. J. Williams (Bethesda) Papers, 16/7. Notes on Michael D. Jones's salary.



Wales. Michael D. Jones had also hoped that the Settlement would be established on Vancouver Island, under the patronage of the British government. He had seemed hesitant to consider Patagonia as a possible location, but he was eventually swayed by the tide of public opinion. Having realized that the Welsh Settlement would not be established with the support of the British government, Jones had warned that sufficient funds should be raised before any action was taken, but his Joint Stock venture ended in failure and the Patagonian movement had little success with its public collections. Indeed, it was as a result of the Liverpool Committee's difficulties in raising sufficient funds to take full advantage of its negotiations with the Argentine government that Michael D. Jones, with the support of his wife and mother-in-law, made his first significant financial contribution to the venture. While this backing ensured that the negotiations were not hampered by a shortage of funds, Jones's fear that his expenditure had been in vain led him to compromise the initial demands of the Committee in order to secure an agreement with the Argentine government – a decision which, in later years, inhibited the development of the Settlement as an autonomous political entity. Jones had hoped that the Settlement would have some degree of autonomy from the outset, but, under the agreement made with the Argentine government, the Welsh would settle in the Chupat Valley on the same terms as any other immigrants. As though this was not enough, the organizers were troubled in the final months of preparation by an insufficient number of passengers to make the voyage to Patagonia and by the failure of *Halton Castle* to return to Liverpool in time for departure in late April 1865. At this crucial stage in the movement, Michael D. Jones obtained a mortgage to secure a replacement vessel for *Halton Castle* and to make the necessary preparations for the voyage. The movement had not developed as he had hoped, and he did not seem comfortable with the last-

minute changes, but Michael D. Jones's contribution to the venture had been vital, for it was ultimately his determination and absolute commitment to the cause that ensured that the first group of settlers departed from Liverpool in May 1865 to establish the long-awaited Welsh Settlement in Patagonia.



## Chapter 7

## Financial Troubles

1865-72

Michael D. Jones's unanticipated expenditure on the Patagonian movement in May 1865 initiated a sequence of events that would have a significant impact on his later work. Indeed, over the following years, his financial situation deteriorated to the point of crisis, eventually forcing him to file for bankruptcy. In his biography, Pan Jones gave little attention to this aspect of Jones's life, presumably because financial difficulties of any kind tended to be frowned upon during the nineteenth century, but he alluded to the bankruptcy as 'the greatest misfortune to arise in relation to the Settlement'.<sup>1</sup> Recent studies of Michael D. Jones's involvement in the Patagonian venture have been more critical of his expenditure on the Settlement. Both R. Bryn Williams and Alun Davies presented Jones as an 'incompetent businessman' who had

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<sup>1</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), p.203.

squandered his wife's inheritance on the Patagonian settlement.<sup>2</sup> However, the details of Jones's situation are still somewhat ambiguous, and in order to shed more light on Jones's financial crisis, this chapter will focus on the period between the departure of *Mimosa* in May 1865 and his bankruptcy in July 1871. This will provide a basis for an evaluation of Jones's financial difficulties and the extent to which they resulted from misjudgement or from factors that were beyond his control.

### **The Loan Society and the Colonizing Company**

Soon after the departure of *Mimosa*, the Liverpool Committee formed a 'loan society' in order to repay its debt to Michael D. Jones and finance its activities. The idea was that the movement's supporters could lend money to the Committee in sums of £5, £10 or £20, and receive 7.5 per cent interest on it over a period of three years. The money would ensure that the Committee could repay Michael D. Jones, and, at the end of three years, trade from the Settlement would provide money to repay the investors.<sup>3</sup> In a letter to *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, Jones noted the great cost of establishing the Welsh Settlement. He welcomed any donations and he stated that the Committee intended to form a loan society. If three thousand people contributed a pound each towards the venture, the money would be exchanged for bonds.<sup>4</sup>

Michael D. Jones had high expectations for the Welsh Settlement, and despite the last-minute delays and his unforeseen expenditure, he was confident of success. His optimism was fuelled by favourable news from Lewis Jones, who had travelled with

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<sup>2</sup> *Morgannwg* (1963), 137; L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig: Tiriogaeth Chubut, yn y Weriniaeth Arianin, De Amerig* (Caernarfon, 1898), p.24.

<sup>3</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 June 1865), 381; (9 August 1865), 13; Bangor MS 8052. Letter from Michael D. Jones to W. M. Claypole, 27 October 1865.

<sup>4</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 June 1865), 381.



Edwyn Roberts to Patagonia ahead of the first settlers to prepare for their arrival.<sup>5</sup> In August 1865, Michael D. Jones announced in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*:

There are twenty-five million acres of excellent meadow-land cheaply available, and much of it free of charge. There are fifty thousand sheep ready to be sold, and three thousand cattle on the way, and it is accessible enough for people to get a supply of wheat and plants. We now need people to look after them, and to create factories. Millers should go there with machines and factory workers to turn the wool into cloth and flannel, smiths, carpenters, servants, maids, farmers, shepherds, &c. Let people flock there, and soon we will have a Welsh country.<sup>6</sup>

The reference to livestock was based on information that he had received in a letter from Lewis Jones earlier than month.<sup>7</sup> Lewis Jones seemed confident of success, and, in the same letter, he wrote:

I never imagined that we would succeed like this *so soon*, but because the opportunity came my way, I thought it would be madness to let it go. And now I congratulate myself for laying such a firm and glorious

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<sup>5</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa* (Cardiff, 1962), pp.83-4; L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, p.44.

<sup>6</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (23 August 1865), 13.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, (16 August 1865), 13; E. MacDonald, *Dyddiadur Mimosa* (Llanrwst, 2002), pp.40, 57.

foundation for the Settlement, and it will not be long before I see my dreams being realized before my eyes.<sup>8</sup>

Now, he claimed, there was a responsibility on the Liverpool Committee would soon send more settlers directly to Patagonia to look after the livestock that he had purchased.<sup>9</sup> In fact, Lewis Jones's optimism was somewhat misleading. Neither the three thousand cattle nor the fifty thousand sheep arrived in the Chupat Valley, and by the end of the year, Lewis Jones had left the Settlement for Buenos Aires after the settlers had accused him of deception.<sup>10</sup> Michael D. Jones had assumed that the new settlers would be virtually self-reliant from the outset, but, for nearly two years, their failure to cultivate the arid and desolate land made them dependent on imported food and provisions.

David Lloyd Jones, former-student at Bala College and supporter of the Patagonian movement,<sup>11</sup> was wary of Lewis Jones's optimism. In October 1865, he suggested to Michael D. Jones that, before sending one of Lewis Jones's letters to the papers, he should take the precaution of omitting the parts which discussed the Settlement's future progress.<sup>12</sup> However, Michael D. Jones put all his trust in Lewis Jones's reports. They supported his belief that the money raised by the Loan Society should be used to purchase a ship, and that a second group of settlers should be sent to

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<sup>8</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (16 August 1865), 13.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, (19 Awst 1865), 7.

<sup>10</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa* (Cardiff, 1962), pp.98-103.

<sup>11</sup> For David Lloyd Jones (1832-1920), see NLW, Typescript. D. J. Williams, 'Hanes Coleg Bala-Bangor'.

<sup>12</sup> Bangor MS 11301. Letter from D. Lloyd Jones to Michael D. Jones, 20 October 1865.



Patagonia as soon as possible.<sup>13</sup> Despite his cynicism, David Lloyd Jones supported this idea, and he prepared a programme for the Loan Society, part of which was to use the money to purchase a ship.<sup>14</sup>

It was in the autumn of 1865 that Michael D. Jones and David Lloyd Jones began to collaborate with Thomas Cadivor Wood, a 25-year-old son of an estate agent from Chester.<sup>15</sup> Cadivor Wood had followed the progress of the Patagonian movement with interest, and being an experienced seaman, he had travelled to Patagonia shortly after the departure of *Mimosa*.<sup>16</sup> Cadivor Wood had been inspired by the possibility of forming a private company in accordance with the 1862 Companies' Act which would trade with South American states and provide cheap passage for immigrants to the Welsh Settlement.<sup>17</sup> 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company Limited' would have a financial basis of five thousand shares, each worth ten pounds, which suggests that they hoped to attract support from relatively affluent people.

Tension arose between the promoters of the Patagonian venture when Michael D. Jones's plan to purchase a ship was disapproved by the Liverpool Committee. In a letter to Jones, George Lamb, secretary of the Committee, expressed his concern that

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<sup>13</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 June 1865), 381; *Correspondence respecting the Establishment of a Welsh Colony on the River Chupat, in Patagonia* (1867), p.2; Bangor MS 11300. Memorandum by Loram & Co Ship Brokers; This intention was also stated in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (23 August 1865), 13.

<sup>14</sup> Bangor MS 11301. Letter from D. Lloyd Jones to Michael D. Jones, 20 October 1865.

<sup>15</sup> Historical accounts of these events have been unclear. Contrary to Lewis Jones's claim, the establishment of the Company preceded the formation of a society at Ffestiniog to provide support for those wishing to immigrate to the Settlement. L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.81. Also, R. Bryn Williams had not realized that the 'Loan Society' and the 'Colonizing Company' were two separate ventures.

<sup>16</sup> E. MacDonald, *Yr Hirdaith* (Llandysul, 1999), p.83.

<sup>17</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (20 December 1865), 7.

if a ship were purchased, there would be nothing left to pay its debts. Lamb argued that there would not be enough time to implement Jones's scheme, and that it would be better to wait for further news from the settlers. 'We have no right to make trade from the Settlement's property', he argued, at least not until the settlers had approved the scheme.<sup>18</sup> It is clear that Michael D. Jones's ideas were far too ambitious at such an early stage in the movement, although it is clear that he had been misled by Lewis Jones's overoptimistic reports. Bearing in mind the adverse circumstances that the first group of settlers endured in the months following their arrival, the consequences could easily have been disastrous had a second ship followed *Mimosa* to Patagonia. Michael D. Jones intended for the second group to depart for Patagonia in November 1865, but he failed to find two hundred people who were able to pay £10 for their passage to Patagonia. It was the weakness of public support for the venture, rather than a change of tack on the organizers' part, that avoided this potential catastrophe.

In December 1865, Thomas Cadivor Wood met with the Liverpool Committee to explain his scheme, and in a letter written to Michael D. Jones the previous day, he emphasized that 'the acquisition of a ship or ships is not put down as the sole object. They are to be acquired for *general trading purposes*'.<sup>19</sup> However, the Liverpool Committee remained opposed to Cadivor Wood's scheme. Following the meeting, the Committee sent a letter to Michael D. Jones in which it condemned Cadivor Wood's

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<sup>18</sup> Bangor MS 11303. Letter from George Lamb, Liverpool, to Michael D. Jones, 3 November 1865. 'Oni ac nid oes genym un hawl i wneyd masnach o feddiant y Wladychfa.'

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 11304. Letter from Thomas Cadivor Wood, Chester, to Michael D. Jones, 4 December 1865.



scheme as 'disloyal and damaging' to the Settlement, and warned him not to let his 'naïvety in dealing with tradesmen be a cause for concern'.<sup>20</sup>

It seems that the Committee was referring in the letter to a previous incident involving Jones, but it is also possible that it had been made aware of Cadivor Wood's reputation at the Settlement. Cadivor Wood had been surrounded by controversy shortly after his arrival in New Bay in the summer of 1865. He had been appointed captain of the schooner *Mary Helen* and requested to transport women and children from New Bay, where *Mimosa* had left the settlers, and the estuary of Rio Chupat.<sup>21</sup> The journey usually took a day, but *Mary Helen* did not reach its final destination for fifteen days. Wood claimed that strong winds had forced him to seek shelter on islands of guano,<sup>22</sup> but according to the other passengers, he had forced them to spend eight days below deck with little food and no water.<sup>23</sup> Following that incident, Wood's movements at the Settlement had been watched with suspicion. Cadivor Wood was an ambitious businessman who had set his sights on exploiting the Settlement's resources. Within a few weeks of *Mary Helen*'s controversial voyage, he made Lewis Jones an offer to join him in the formation of a company trading in guano.<sup>24</sup> Lewis Jones accepted, but was criticized by other settlers because the company would be run privately rather than in the name of the Settlement.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 7565. Letter from the Liverpool Society to Michael D. Jones, 7 December 1865.

<sup>21</sup> *Mary Helen* was hired by Lewis Jones at Patagones in August 1865. R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.79.

<sup>22</sup> Guano is the excrement of seabirds which can be used as manure.

<sup>23</sup> E. MacDonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, pp.86-7; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.95-6.

<sup>24</sup> This may have been the shipment that Michael D. Jones was expecting when he wrote to Vining, Killey and Co in November 1865. Bangor MS 8052. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Vining, Killey and Co., 7 November 1865.

<sup>25</sup> E. MacDonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, pp.100-101.

Indeed, the Settlement's Council went as far as to prohibit Lewis Jones and Thomas Cadivor Wood from pursuing their intention of trading in guano.<sup>26</sup>

Whether or not it was the Colonizing Company that was supposed to ship the guano is unclear, but the fact that it was a private venture did not deter Michael D. Jones, who also seems to have been unaware of Wood's bad reputation among the settlers. George Lamb had good reason to be concerned for the unpaid debts relating to *Mimosa*. The Settlement was in a far more precarious situation than Michael D. Jones had anticipated, and there was little indication that he would be reimbursed. Late in 1865, bills relating to *Mimosa* began to arrive at Bodiwan.<sup>27</sup> Among them was £400 that was owed to Vining, Killey and Co. for the charter of *Mimosa*. It seems that Michael D. Jones had believed that he would be able to manage these debts, or that the Liverpool Committee would have raised the money by the time payment was due.

Michael D. Jones had not expected to receive additional bills for the supplies and livestock that Lewis Jones and Edwin Roberts had purchased from companies in Buenos Aires.<sup>28</sup> In one of his published letters, he claimed that Lewis Jones and Edwin Roberts had been authorized by the Liverpool Committee to 'make every preparation, as though nothing would be sent with the settlers'.<sup>29</sup> They had little money to make these preparations. The Committee's accounts note that Lewis Jones

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p.110.

<sup>27</sup> Bangor MS 11456. Various papers relating to *Mimosa*.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 11310. Letter from R. J. Evans & D. Robinson, Liverpool, to Michael D. Jones requesting payment for the work on *Mimosa*, 12 May 1866; 11357. Letter from Moore, Punch & Tudor, Buenos Aires, to Michael D. Jones, 25 February 1866.

<sup>29</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 June 1865), 381.



was given £250 and Edwin Roberts only £25.<sup>30</sup> Their correspondence with Guillermo Rawson, the Argentine Minister of the Interior, had given them the impression that the government would supply them with the necessary provisions. But Lewis Jones and Edwin Roberts arrived in Buenos Aires to find that Rawson was away in Paraná, and that the Argentine government could not give any supplies to the settlers.<sup>31</sup> Michael D. Jones was certainly aware that the provisions had been acquired on credit rather than supplied by the Argentine government free of charge, but Lewis Jones assured him that there were no grounds for concern. In one letter, Lewis Jones admitted that he had been disappointed by the Argentine government, but he also noted that J. H. Denby, a merchant from Buenos Aires,<sup>32</sup> had promised to lend him £100 and that he could get hundreds more from other merchants.<sup>33</sup>

Lewis Jones acquired some of the provisions by incurring debts in the name of the Liverpool Committee, but he assured Michael D. Jones that the Settlement would cover the costs by selling the wool of the fifty thousand sheep that were on the way to the Chupat Valley.<sup>34</sup> He also claimed that a shipment of guano would be sent to Liverpool by September 1865, and that the Committee could use the profit to send the second group of settlers to Patagonia.<sup>35</sup> When the fifty thousand sheep failed to arrive at the Chupat Valley, the unpaid bills for the supplies were forwarded to the Liverpool Committee. But the shipment of guano had not arrived in Liverpool either, and the Committee did not have sufficient funds to make the payment. Michael D.

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<sup>30</sup> NLW MS 7254 D. Accounts of the Welsh Settlement, 1861-88.

<sup>31</sup> Bangor MS 11355. Lewis Jones to Michael D. Jones, 27 April 1865.

<sup>32</sup> Denby was the business partner of Thomas Duguid, who had participated in the negotiations with the Argentine government prior to the establishment of the Settlement.

<sup>33</sup> Bangor MS 11355. Letter from Lewis Jones to Michael D. Jones, 27 April 1865.

<sup>34</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (16 August 1865), 13.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*; (19 August 1865), 7.

Jones received a letter from J. W. M. Claypole of London in October 1865 requesting payment for timber that Lewis Jones had acquired in Buenos Aires.<sup>36</sup> In his reply, he stated that neither Lewis Jones nor Edwin Roberts had been authorized ‘*to incur any debt whatever* on the committee account’.<sup>37</sup> In February 1866, a bill for £340 arrived at Bodiwan from Moore, Punch and Tudor of Buenos Aires, the company which had supplied foodstuff to the settlers.<sup>38</sup> Other members of the Liverpool Committee, such as David Lloyd Jones and the brothers John and Owen Edwards of Williamson Square, shouldered part of the debt,<sup>39</sup> but it was Michael D. Jones who bore the brunt of it. In his letter to Claypole, for example, he explained that his own resources had been ‘exhausted by the movement’ and that he did not intend to give further financial assistance to the Settlement.<sup>40</sup>

These unforeseen expenses placed Michael D. Jones in financial difficulties. By late 1866, he complained in a letter to Lewis Jones that his debts were weighing heavily upon him: ‘The whole burden of the Settlement’s debts is on my shoulders,’ he wrote, ‘I long for deliverance’.<sup>41</sup> In September 1865, Michael D. Jones’s salary was increased from £90 to £150 per annum, which, added to the £20 that he received from

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<sup>36</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.111. W. M. Claypole was the uncle of T. Cadivor Wood.

<sup>37</sup> Bangor MS 8052. Letter from Michael D. Jones to W. M. Claypole, 27 October 1865; 11302. Letter from W. M. Claypole to Michael D. Jones, 24 October 1865.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 11357. Letter from Moore, Punch and Tudor, Buenos Aires, to Michael D. Jones. 25 February 1866.

<sup>39</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letters from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 19 October 1869; 7 July 1871.

<sup>40</sup> Bangor MS 8052. Letter from Michael D. Jones to W. M. Claypole, 27 October 1865.

<sup>41</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 13 December 1866. ‘Y mae holl faix dyled y wladva hon yn gyvan ar fy ysgwydau i. Yr wyv yn hiraethu am amser ymwarded.’



the churches under his ministry, totalled £170.<sup>42</sup> This was hardly sufficient to cover the remaining debts for *Mimosa* and the additional £1,000 for four months' supplies for the settlers.<sup>43</sup> He found some degree of relief by obtaining a second mortgage, this time a sum of £1,500, on Bodiwan and Votty Arddwyfaen, another farm which his wife had inherited.<sup>44</sup> This was used to pay the first mortgage of £1,000 and the interest on it.<sup>45</sup> It also bought Jones some time to find an alternative source of income.

Michael D. Jones's decision to support the Company had a ruinous influence on his relationship with other members of the Liverpool Committee. Although his financial situation had been affected by factors that were, after all, beyond his control, it seems that the Committee had little sympathy for him. Jones ignored the advice that he should keep away from Cadivor Wood, and his association with the Liverpool Committee came to an end.<sup>46</sup> His commitment to the Colonizing Company, on the other hand, was beyond question. He was the only one of the Company's five directors who attended all five meetings in 1866, three of which he chaired.<sup>47</sup> His reimbursement would depend on the success of the Welsh Settlement, and he seems

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<sup>42</sup> NLW, D. J. Williams (Bethesda) Papers, 16/7. Notes on Michael D. Jones's salary.

<sup>43</sup> *Correspondence respecting the Establishment of a Welsh Colony on the River Chupat, in Patagonia* (1867), p.11; Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 7 July 1871.

<sup>44</sup> 10511. Mortgage by Michael D. Jones to Thomas Jenkins, 28 February 1867.

<sup>45</sup> Bangor MS 10509. Mortgage by Michael D. Jones to Henry Ford of Chester, 5 May 1865. Repaid on 2 March 1867.

<sup>46</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.112. The only member of the Committee who participated in the formation of the original committee was Owen Edwards, Williamson Square. Edwards is also the only one who seems to have supported the Colonizing Company. He was named as one of its directors. Bangor MS 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company Limited'; 7570. Letter from Owen Edwards to Michael D. Jones, 22 May 1871; NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends at the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>47</sup> Bangor MS 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company Limited'.

to have believed that he could assist its development by ensuring the success of the Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company.

Despite Michael D. Jones's loyalty, the Company failed to provide the relief for which he hoped. The shares were sold at £10 each, but they could be purchased by annual payments of £1.10s.0d. By mid-1866, £243.5s.3d. had been received, but the costs of the Company amounted to nearly £300.<sup>48</sup> By November, six hundred shares had been sold and over £1,000 had been received.<sup>49</sup> In a letter written to Lewis Jones in late 1866, Michael D. Jones could claim that the Company was 'coming along brilliantly these days', and that it was showing 'signs of great success'.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, funds were still insufficient to purchase a ship, which was crucial if the Company was to achieve its objective of trading with South American countries and providing cheap passage to the Patagonian Settlement.<sup>51</sup> Late in 1865, the Company was negotiating the purchase of a vessel belonging to one Captain D. L. Lloyd, but they failed to reach an agreement.<sup>52</sup> Michael D. Jones gave his initial blessing to the idea, but as subscriptions to the Company were not forthcoming, the tone of his letters to the Patagonian leader Lewis Jones changed. By October 1868, he feared that a ship would not prove profitable, and in any case, he claimed that the Company did not possess the necessary funds to undertake such a venture.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.113-4.

<sup>49</sup> Bangor MS 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company Limited'.

<sup>50</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 13 December 1866. 'Mae ein cwmni yn dyvod yn mlaen yn wyx y dydiau hyn. Mae pob argoelion llwydiant mawr arno.'

<sup>51</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (20 December 1865), 7; (10 January 1866), 13.

<sup>52</sup> Bangor MS 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company Limited'.

<sup>53</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 31 October 1868.



Michael D. Jones blamed the Company's difficulty in attracting investors on its failure to secure a charter for land in the Chupat Valley. The intention had been to get a concession of land in the region which would provide the basis for an 'extreme scheme of colonization' without the settlers having to pay for their passage before departing for South America.<sup>54</sup> In October 1866, Jones claimed that, with five hundred people at the Settlement, an application could be made to the Argentine government for 'a large grant of land' and permission to construct a railway between the Settlement and the coast.<sup>55</sup> Again, he relied on information that he had received from others. On this occasion, it was J. H. Denby who had vowed to demand a charter for land from the Argentine government as soon as the population of the Welsh Settlement had reached five hundred.<sup>56</sup> However, in October 1868, Jones was still complaining that without security of tenure in the Settlement, there was little hope of attracting investors. 'I cannot see how the Company can progress without obtaining a charter to populate a large tract of land,' he wrote. 'By refusing this the government prevents us from acting effectively, for we will not accumulate *capital* without *security*.'<sup>57</sup>

Despite Michael D. Jones's frustration, the Argentine government cannot be blamed for its reluctance to allow a concession of land. The Welsh who had settled in the Chupat Valley could barely sustain themselves, and they were in no position to

<sup>54</sup> Bangor MS 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company Limited'.

<sup>55</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (10 October 1866), 13.

<sup>56</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, c.1867.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 31 October 1868. 'Nid wyv yn gweled y gall Cwmni wneud dim heb gael breinlen ar ddarn mawr o wlad i'w boblogi. Trwy wrthod hyn y mae'r llywodraeth yn ein rhwystro ni i wneud dim yn effeithiol, am na chawen *capital* heb *security*.'

provide for additional immigrants. The Colonizing Company had virtually no bargaining power. It had hardly any capital and little support, and, despite Jones's claims to the contrary, it is doubtful whether a concession of land would have led to a significant improvement in the movement's prospects. Yet Michael D. Jones continued to exhibit the optimism that characterized his attitude towards the movement, and the Company persevered, despite suffering a blow when Thomas Cadivor Wood was lost at sea in 1868.<sup>58</sup> Management of the Company was left in the hands of Michael D. Jones and the travelling secretary, David Lloyd Jones, and its office was moved from Chester to Bala, and then to Rhuthun, where Lloyd Jones was minister.<sup>59</sup>

### **Bodiwan**

The deliverance that Michael D. Jones longed for came not from the Colonizing Company, but from Bala Independent College. Since his appointment as principal in 1854, the institution had been expanding steadily, and the number of students funded by the College had increased from fourteen in 1858 to twenty in 1861.<sup>60</sup> To lighten Michael D. Jones's mounting workload, the College Committee increased his annual salary from £30 to £100 in August 1858 so that he could employ a full-time assistant.<sup>61</sup> Jones chose Ioan Pedr, possibly the most talented of his former-students, and he was appointed tutor in 1861. The need for larger premises was also recognized during the 1850s, but the discussion on the subject made little headway until 1867,<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.117-8.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p.127.

<sup>60</sup> G. D. Owen, *Ysgolion a Cholegau yr Annibynwyr* (Llandysul, 1939), pp.148-9.

<sup>61</sup> Since 1857, he had received an extra £10 per annum to pay students whom he believed could be of assistance to him. NLW, D. J. Williams (Bethesda) Papers, 16/7. Notes on Michael D. Jones's salary.

<sup>62</sup> NLW, Typescript. D. J. Williams, 'Hanes Coleg Bala-Bangor'.



when the task of finding a suitable location in the Bala area for a new building was given to Michael D. Jones and Ioan Pedr.

Pan Jones records that, having failed to find a site for the construction of a new College, Ioan Pedr informed the Committee that Michael D. Jones was ready to sell his home, Bodiwan, to the College than be without a building at all.<sup>63</sup> Edward Williams, secretary of the College Committee, claimed that he had first heard mention of the possibility of using Bodiwan as premises for the College from David Lloyd Jones.<sup>64</sup> Lloyd Jones was one of the few individuals who were aware of Michael D. Jones's problems at the time,<sup>65</sup> and it is therefore plausible that he promoted the idea of selling Bodiwan to the College in order to provide relief for him. Edward Williams also claimed that, once the College Committee had approved of the purchase of Bodiwan,<sup>66</sup> Michael D. Jones became 'the soul of the movement [to purchase Bodiwan]'.<sup>67</sup> Again, this evidence seems to support the claim that Michael D. Jones manipulated the College Committee in an attempt to stabilize his financial situation.

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<sup>63</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.143; Bangor MS 7484. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 15 August 1871.

<sup>64</sup> Bangor MS 7484. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 15 August 1871; 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company Limited'.

<sup>65</sup> Bangor MS 11311. Letter from David Lloyd Jones to Michael D. Jones, 23 January 1867; 11313. Letter from David Lloyd Jones to Michael D. Jones, 29 June 1871; NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends in the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>66</sup> 'Llyfr Cofnodion Perthynol i'r Cyfansoddiad Newydd', p.150. quoted in R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-1885' (unpublished M. A. dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor, 1941), pp.52-3.

<sup>67</sup> Bangor MS 7484. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 15 August 1871. 'Enaid y symudiad'.

Before a decision was taken, some Congregationalists wished to hear the churches' views on the need for a new college building at Bala. The College Committee responded to this request by arranging a conference at Aberystwyth in October 1869.<sup>68</sup> Remarkably, the reports published in the press made no mention of Bodiwan, and the intention of converting it into a college building was not mooted at the conference. Rather, the outcome of the conference was the recommendation that £8,000 should be raised over the following five years in order to construct a new college at Bala.<sup>69</sup> Although an anonymous correspondent in *Y Dydd* hinted at Michael D. Jones's conspiracy by commenting on his apparent discomfort at the conference,<sup>70</sup> it seems that his financial situation remained confidential, and that even the College Committee did not know of his difficulties.<sup>71</sup> In a letter written to Lewis Jones less than a month later, he wrote:

I must be thrifty in all things, or I could not go on. The College threatens to buy my house. I must agree to sell my home in order to make homes for people in Patagonia, and its sale provides some degree of deliverance. Remember that this is a secret. Yet this is the truth.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>68</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-1885', p.55.

<sup>69</sup> *Y Dydd* (8 October 1869), 9.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, (15 October 1869), 3.

<sup>71</sup> Bangor MS 7484. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 15 August 1871.

<sup>72</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 27 October 1869. 'Y mae'n rhaid i mi fod yn gynil mewn pob peth, onide ni allav vyned ymlaen. Y mae'r Coleg yn bygwth prynu vy nhŷ. Yr wyv yn gorfod bodloni gwerthu fy nghartref, er mwyn gwneud cartrevi i bobl Patagonia, ac y mae cael ei werthu yn rhyw vath o ymwarded. Cofier mai cyfrinax yw hyn. Eto dyma'r gwir.'



Clearly, Michael D. Jones was not being entirely honest, and it seems that he was trying to pressure Lewis Jones and the other settlers into repaying their debt to him. Yet he also knew very well that he would have less chance of securing the churches' support for the movement if his financial difficulties became public knowledge. Because of contemporary attitudes towards personal debt and bankruptcy, the argument that Michael D. Jones had committed his money to a worthy cause would have meant little. Many churches incurred debts when building their chapels, but personal difficulties were simply not acceptable, and were considered as proof of prodigality.<sup>73</sup>

As the letter to Lewis Jones implied, the conference's recommendation that Bala College should raise money to construct a new building had not changed the Committee's intention of purchasing Bodiwan. In the weeks following the conference, letters in the press cast doubts over whether the conference was representative of 'the denomination' because some claimed that not all County Associations had been represented.<sup>74</sup> Michael D. Jones's response was to state that, whatever the decision reached by the County Associations at the Aberystwyth conference, it was the subscribers of the College who had the last word.<sup>75</sup> These issues would be the subject of a fierce debate at Bala College in later years. On this occasion, however, it seems that Jones was merely paving the way for the decision of a select committee, which had been appointed by the College and of which he was a member, to overrule the recommendation made at the Aberystwyth conference. Michael D. Jones was a member of the select committee appointed by the College to

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<sup>73</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru* (Swansea, 1966), p.189.

<sup>74</sup> 'Llyfr Cofnodion Perthynol i'r Cyfansoddiad Newydd', p.168, quoted in R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-1885', p.53.

<sup>75</sup> *Y Dydd* (12 November 1869), 1.

deal with matters relating to new premises, and bearing in mind that he was once described as ‘the soul of the [College] committee’,<sup>76</sup> it is hardly surprising that it was decided in December 1869 to proceed with the purchase of Bodiwan. This motion was subsequently approved by College’s subscribers, though the decision of the Aberystwyth conference was not altogether rejected. The construction of a new college building remained on the agenda, and a field adjacent to Bodiwan was purchased as a site for it.<sup>77</sup>

By early 1870, rumours were circulating that Michael D. Jones had more than the College’s requirements in mind when he offered to sell Bodiwan to the Committee. Jones’s support at Bala College virtually evaporated as soon as the truth about his financial situation was revealed to the Committee. Indeed, such was the lack of sympathy for his situation that he had to be personally responsible for finding trustees to take possession of Bodiwan. In March 1870, Bodiwan was transferred to three trustees – Robert Owen of Tyncoed, Thomas Davies of Llandrillo and John Edwards of Glanypwll – of whom relatively little is known.<sup>78</sup>

This was by no means the end of Michael D. Jones’s troubles. In April 1870, he was incensed by the Committee’s decision to organize public collections rather than take a bank loan in order to pay for Bodiwan.<sup>79</sup> Jones knew too well from personal experience that public collections were not always successful. It could take months, if

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<sup>76</sup> Bangor MS 7484. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 15 August 1871. ‘... Chwi o’ch dyfodiad i’r Bala fel athraw hyd yn awr yw enaid y pwyllgor yn gystal a’ch bod yn ben yn yr addysg.’

<sup>77</sup> *Y Dydd* (11 March 1870), 2; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.143-5.

<sup>78</sup> Bangor MS 11287. Copy of the agreement between Michael D. Jones, on the one hand, and Robert Owen of Tyncoed, Thomas Davies of Llandrillo, and John Edwards of Glanypwll, on the other. 2 March 1870.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 7484. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 15 August 1871.



not years, to raise £2,000.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, the Committee refused to change its plans and the task of collecting the £2,000 to pay for Bodiwan commenced. Twelve Congregational ministers were delegated to six regions throughout north Wales, and Michael D. Jones, who was pressing for urgency, was released from his duties at the College so that he and Evan Pan Jones, by that time minister at Mostyn in Flintshire, could travel to the United States. They spent the following eight months collecting donations from expatriate Welsh communities in the eastern states of New York, Virginia, New Jersey and Ohio.<sup>81</sup>

### *Myfanwy*

The need to raise money for the purchase of Bodiwan was not the only reason for Michael D. Jones's journey to the United States in June 1870. When he and David Lloyd Jones took control of the Colonizing Company in 1868-9, it seems that part of their intention was to purchase a ship. Their decision may well have been influenced by one Captain William A. Griffiths of Liverpool, who participated briefly in the Company's activities and contributed nearly £300 towards the purchase of the ship,<sup>82</sup> but of whom little else is known. Griffiths played a crucial part in negotiating the purchase of a three-hundred tonne vessel that was under construction in Newport in August 1869. Acting on behalf of the Colonizing Company, he agreed to buy the ship, subsequently named *Myfanwy*, from the Newport Dry Dock Company for the

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 7651. A book relating to the movement to purchase Bodiwan; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.61-2.

<sup>81</sup> *Y Dydd* (11 March 1870), 2; Bangor MS 7535. Notes written by Michael D. Jones in 1876; 7949. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1870; 7950. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1871.

<sup>82</sup> Bangor MS 7613. Document relating to the purchase of *Myfanwy*.

sum of £2,700.<sup>83</sup> According to the agreement, £1,800 was to be paid on delivery of the ship, and the other £900 paid a year later.<sup>84</sup>

The price seemed reasonable, but the Company's purchase of *Myfanwy* was a bold, if not foolish, move. There is no record of the Company's finances, but, it is clear that Michael D. Jones and David Lloyd Jones had calculated the funds that were available to them by estimating the total value of the shares sold, each of which were worth £10. However, this did not correspond to the amount in their possession, as shareholders could pay for their shares in annual instalments of £1.10s.0d. Their intention, it seems, was to complete the payment for *Myfanwy* by collecting the rest of the money owed by the shareholders. There was little more than a month between the completion of the agreement and the date on which the ship was to be delivered. Collecting the money in such a short space of time proved to be an impossible task, and when it emerged that the money was not forthcoming, the Company's directors were left in something of a predicament. In a letter to Lewis Jones, Michael D. Jones explained that the directors were faced with the choice of either threatening the shareholders with legal procedures or shouldering the Company's debts themselves. He noted that by the end of October 1869 the Newport Dry Dock Company was requesting surety for the money which had not been paid.<sup>85</sup> Delays in the ship's construction prevented it from being seaworthy until March 1870. This gave Michael

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 7608. Letter from Capt. W. A. Griffiths to D. Lloyd Jones, 28 August 1869. In his report to the Bala College Committee in September 1871, Jones claimed that the total cost of the ship was £2,800; 7534. Michael D. Jones's report to Bala Independent College on the circumstances of his bankruptcy, 7 September 1871.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 7607. Letter from W. Cattle, secretary of the Newport Dry Dock Company, to D. Lloyd Jones, 25 August 1869; 7608. Letter from Capt. W. A. Griffiths to D. Lloyd Jones, 28 August 1869.

<sup>85</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 19 October 1869.



D. Jones and David Lloyd Jones a few more months to collect the money, but the preparations added another £300 to the overall costs.<sup>86</sup>

Realizing that no additional money was likely to come from the shareholders, David Lloyd Jones introduced changes to The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company's organization, probably in the hope that it would attract new investors. The most notable change was that the price of shares was reduced from £10 to £1 each,<sup>87</sup> a strategy that seems to have been successful. Five hundred shares were sold at Ffestiniog,<sup>88</sup> no doubt a valuable contribution to the Company's payment of £844.1s.5½d. for the ship.<sup>89</sup> Nevertheless, it was still not half the sum that was required to pay the first instalment, and there were additional costs of about £100 for fittings<sup>90</sup> and £300 for minor preparations and provisions.<sup>91</sup> Refusing to change the terms of agreement, the Newport Dry Dock Company threatened Michael D. Jones, William Griffiths and David Lloyd Jones with a court order unless they signed *policies of assurance* for the £2,000 that remained unpaid.<sup>92</sup> In order to meet the demands, Michael D. Jones paid £500, William Griffiths about £300, and David Lloyd Jones £220, and the rest of the money came from advance payments for

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<sup>86</sup> Bangor MS 7534. Michael D. Jones's report to Bala Independent College on the circumstances of his bankruptcy, 7 September 1871.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company Limited'.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 7838. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd Jones, 3 May 1870.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 7613. Document relating to the purchase of *Myfanwy*.

<sup>90</sup> A letter that Michael D. Jones wrote to the solicitors of the Newport Dry Dock Company notes that the value of *Myfanwy* 'without fittings' was £2,700. Since his report to Bala Independent College on the circumstances surrounding his bankruptcy states that the value of *Myfanwy* was £2,800, it is assumed that the £100 covers the cost of the fittings. Bangor MS 7534. Michael D. Jones's report to Bala Independent College on the circumstances of his bankruptcy, 7 September 1871. See also, 8052. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Messrs Protheroe and Fox, 16 June 1871.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 7613. Document relating to the purchase of *Myfanwy*.

<sup>92</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.129.

freightage.<sup>93</sup> Michael D. Jones and David Lloyd Jones obtained a bank loan of £400 to cover part of their payment,<sup>94</sup> and £100 was borrowed from Owen Edwards, another of the Company's directors.<sup>95</sup> It was during these negotiations that the inexperience of Michael D. Jones and David Lloyd Jones in matters relating to business and finance became apparent. They had made the payments for *Myfanwy* in their own names rather than that of the Company, which made them legally responsible for the remaining debt.

The arrangements of the Colonizing Company were further disrupted by a six month delay in the preparation of *Myfanwy*. The Company had found passengers to travel to Patagonia in October 1869, but they dispersed upon hearing that the ship was not ready to depart. R. Bryn Williams has questioned why Michael D. Jones and David Lloyd Jones did not demand compensation for the delays in the ship's construction,<sup>96</sup> but it seems that their own failure to make the initial payments for *Myfanwy* gave the Newport Dry Dock Company the upper hand. Michael D. Jones blamed the shareholders for not paying the money they had pledged to the Company,<sup>97</sup> but it was the directors who were most to blame for taking such substantial risks. In fact, their planning was also far from adequate. Even though Lewis Jones had requested a hundred-tonne ship to serve the Settlement, the Company had purchased a three-hundred tonne ship, presumably in order to carry as many passengers and cargo as possible. But soon after taking possession of *Myfanwy*, it was discovered that shipping regulations would only allow eleven passengers to travel at a time.

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<sup>93</sup> Bangor MS 7613. Document relating to the purchase of *Myfanwy*.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 8052. Note of bank loan of £400 from National Provincial Bank of England.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 7570. Letter from Owen Edwards to Michael D. Jones, 22 May 1871.

<sup>96</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.130.

<sup>97</sup> Bangor MS, 7534. Michael D. Jones's report to Bala Independent College on the circumstances of his bankruptcy, 7 September 1871.



Moreover, the Company had less than five tonnes of cargo for the Settlement, and to compensate, it agreed to carry coal to Montevideo in Uruguay, which would involve a detour of two thousand miles on its return voyage.<sup>98</sup>

### **Bankruptcy**

When Michael D. Jones departed for the United States to collect money on behalf of the College,<sup>99</sup> he went there with the additional intention of extending the activities of the Colonizing Company. He had already been in correspondence with David Stephen Davies, originally from Plas-marl near Swansea, who had emigrated to the United States in 1857 and entered the Congregational ministry in Youngstown, Ohio.<sup>100</sup> Jones was, rather naïvely, inspired by Davies's claim that he could get fifty thousand people to support the Patagonian movement in five years.<sup>101</sup> When Michael D. Jones visited the United States in 1871, he and David S. Davies formed an American branch of the Colonizing Company, which had its offices in New York.<sup>102</sup>

Despite the expansion of the Colonizing Company's activities to the United States, its funds were still insufficient to complete the payment for *Myfanwy*. Indeed, on his return to Wales in April 1871, Michael D. Jones discovered that the Newport Dry Dock Company had taken legal possession of *Myfanwy*. To make matters worse, *Myfanwy* had been sold to the Dry Dock Company's chairman for £1,400, nearly half

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<sup>98</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.129-30.

<sup>99</sup> Bangor MS, Bala Bangor Papers, 6. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd Jones, 15 June 1870; Bangor MS 7840. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd Jones, June 1870. R. Bryn Williams's claim that Michael D. Jones and Evan Pan Jones travelled to the United States in early 1871 is inaccurate.

<sup>100</sup> For David Stephen Davies (1841-98), see *DWB*.

<sup>101</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 7 October 1868.

<sup>102</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.135.

the price that the Colonizing Company had agreed to pay for it,<sup>103</sup> and Michael D. Jones had received a writ for the remaining £920.<sup>104</sup> Already in an unstable financial situation, this turn of events led Jones into crisis.

The advice of Jones's solicitor, Walter D. Jeremy, was that he should seek protection from his creditors under the 1869 Bankruptcy Act. Jones could declare himself bankrupt by gaining the favour of the majority of his creditors to whom he owed no less than three quarters of his debt.<sup>105</sup> Because a large portion of the debt was owed to his mother-in-law, Mary Davies,<sup>106</sup> Jones felt that he had a good chance of being protected from the demands of the Newport Dry Dock Company.<sup>107</sup> It has been suggested that Michael D. Jones did not file for bankruptcy because he had no other choice, but because he felt that the demands of the Newport Dry Dock Company were unjust.<sup>108</sup> In a letter to the Dry Dock Company's solicitors, he stated that he had no option but to file for bankruptcy,<sup>109</sup> but it is known that his family received rent money from smallholdings in Denbighshire and Flintshire that were the property of his wife, Anne Lloyd.<sup>110</sup> It seems that Jones had the option of selling those lands to pay the £920 owed to the Dry Dock Company, but he chose to hold on to them.<sup>111</sup> It

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<sup>103</sup> Bangor MS 7614. Letter from R. D. Jones to Michael D. Jones, 13 April 1871.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 7534. Michael D. Jones's report to Bala Independent College on the circumstances of his bankruptcy, 7 September 1871.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 7713. Letter from W. D. Jeremy to Michael D. Jones, 1871.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 7534. Michael D. Jones's report to Bala Independent College on the circumstances of his bankruptcy, 7 September 1871.

<sup>108</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.132.

<sup>109</sup> Bangor MS 8052. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Messrs Protheroe and Fox, 16 June 1871.

<sup>110</sup> *Returns of Owners of Land 1873 for Wales* (1875). See Flintshire, p.5, and Denbighshire, p.8.

<sup>111</sup> The lands in Michael D. Jones's possession in 1871 were Havotty Llechweddgaer, Denbighshire; Votty Arddwyfaen, Denbighshire; Tynygors,



would appear that his reason for not selling the land was that he considered the debt to the Dry Dock Company to be 'unrighteous'.<sup>112</sup> The Dry Dock Company had received £1,780 of the £2,700 for *Myfanwy* in 1870. Since then, it had taken legal possession of the ship, but it was still demanding the £920 which had not yet been paid. In a letter to the Dry Dock Company's solicitors, Michael D. Jones claimed that a debt was actually owed to him, David Lloyd Jones and Captain Griffiths. They had paid half the price for *Myfanwy* but had received nothing in return since its repossession.<sup>113</sup> Nevertheless, Jones could not afford to pay the debt with liquid assets, and in June 1871, the situation deteriorated when bailiffs were sent to Bodiwan and his possessions were sold for £33.<sup>114</sup> At a meeting of the creditors at the White Lion Hotel in Bala on 13 July 1871, Michael D. Jones was therefore declared bankrupt, which gave him a level of protection.<sup>115</sup> What remained of his estate was sold to his mother-in-law Mary Davies for £50, and, on 2 October 1871, he was discharged from bankruptcy at the County Court of Denbighshire in Wrexham.<sup>116</sup>

Studies of the Patagonian venture have rightly pointed out that the money that Michael D. Jones committed to the movement during this period belonged to his wife, Anne. However, it is clear that Jones's mother-in-law, Mary Davies, who lived with the family at Bodiwan throughout this period, had a more prominent role in these

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Denbighshire; Cae Gwydd, Flintshire; Rhosesmor Cottages, Flintshire; and Tynyffordd, Flintshire.

<sup>112</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends at the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>113</sup> Bangor MS 8052. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Messrs Protheroe and Fox, 16 June 1871.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 7534. Michael D. Jones's report to Bala Independent College on the circumstances of his bankruptcy, 7 September 1871; 7950. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1871.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 7534. Michael D. Jones's report to Bala Independent College on the circumstances of his bankruptcy, 7 September 1871

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 11289. Discharge from Bankruptcy, 2 October 1871.

developments than previously thought. This is particularly noteworthy in light of the fact that, in 1859, Mary Davies had reservations about her daughter courting Michael D. Jones because she feared that he wanted her money.<sup>117</sup> Indeed, she lived long enough to see Jones spend a large portion of her daughter's inheritance on the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia. Mary Davies died at the age of 86 in 1877.<sup>118</sup> Michael D. Jones still had not received repayment for the money that he had spent on the Settlement in 1865, and in a letter sent to the Settlement a few months later, he stated that he had 'wished to see the Settlement repay its debt to me before my mother-in-law left this world. She died before seeing this happen'.<sup>119</sup>

The Colonizing Company continued its activities despite Michael D. Jones's difficulties and the loss of *Myfanwy*. It is possible that Jones's misfortune had affected whatever prospects that the Company may have had in Wales. In 1872, it still had only four hundred shareholders and its annual receipts decreased steadily from £51.0s.9d. in 1872 to £11.19s.0d. by 1882.<sup>120</sup> The Company fared better in the United States. Though it only had three hundred shareholders in 1872,<sup>121</sup> its supporters seemed to be wealthier than those in Wales.<sup>122</sup> Under the supervision of David S. Davies, the Company raised sufficient funds to purchase a two-hundred tonne ship

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 7800. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 15 July 1859.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 7933. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1877.

<sup>119</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends at the Settlement', 1 October 1877. 'Mawr dymunais gael gweled y wladva wedi talu ei dyled i mi cyn i'm mam yng nghyvraith vyned o'r byd. Bu hi varw heb gael gweled hyn.'

<sup>120</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 13 December 1866; *Y Dydd* (26 July 1872), 10; Bangor MS 7670. Accounts of the Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company. The Company continued to exist until October 1893, when it was abolished for lack of capital. See also, 7939. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1892.

<sup>121</sup> *Y Dydd* (26 July 1872), 10.

<sup>122</sup> NLW MS 4616 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to D. S. Davies, 21 December 1871; L. Jones, *Y Wladva Gymreig yn Ne Amerig*, pp.27-8; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.144.



called *Rush*,<sup>123</sup> but, having travelled as far as Montevideo, vicious rumours about living conditions at the Settlement dissuaded the 29 settlers from making the rest of the journey.<sup>124</sup> Even if the passengers had reached the Settlement, and found the rumours of famine to be false, the venture could have provoked criticism of the organizers. Michael D. Jones was doing his utmost at the time to secure a charter on a tract of land,<sup>125</sup> and it seems that David S. Davies had been promoting the movement without any doubt that Jones would soon succeed in his aims.<sup>126</sup> Davies was aware that securing a charter was crucial to the success of the Company, and he failed to conceal his disappointment when he realized the nature of the situation:

If it were not for your recent letter informing us that you do not have a charter for Patagonia, the directors and I would now be rejoicing because of the success and the prospects! ... Having talked so much about the charter, and the charter, and again the charter, without ever obtaining it, don't you think that it is cruel of you to end your letter without explaining to us the true circumstances of the Settlement and the Company.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> A. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig yn Patagonia* (Aberdare, 1894), pp.59-60.

<sup>124</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 21 October 1872; L. Jones, *Y Wladva Gymreig yn Ne Amerig*, pp.25-6.

<sup>125</sup> NLW MS 4616 B. Letter from D. Lloyd Jones to D. S. Davies, 6 December 1871; Museo Historico Gaiman. Letters from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 5 April 1872; 20 March 1872; 11 April 1872; 21 October 1872; 22 November 1872.

<sup>126</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 20 March 1872.

<sup>127</sup> L. Jones, *Y Wladva Gymreig yn Ne Amerig*, p.24.

The failure to obtain a charter forced the Company to reconsider its objectives.<sup>128</sup> *Rush* was sold after its first voyage to the Patagonian Settlement, but by 1874, the Company purchased a smaller ship named *Electric Spark*. On this occasion, a number of wealthy passengers were to travel to the Patagonian Settlement, where they would hopefully invest their money. Unfortunately for the Company, however, *Electric Spark* was shipwrecked off the coast of Brazil during its first voyage to Patagonia. Despite rumours circulating in the Welsh press, none of the 33 passengers to the Settlement lost their lives, but it was a further blow to the credibility of the Colonizing Company both in Wales and in the United States.<sup>129</sup>

Michael D. Jones's situation at Bala College deteriorated during the 1870s. He and Evan Pan Jones collected nearly £500 in the United States in 1870-1,<sup>130</sup> but those who had been appointed to collect funds towards the purchase of Bodiwan had made little headway. Their zeal for the cause may have been dampened by the manner in which events had unfolded since 1869, and perhaps the churches that they visited were reluctant to donate for the same reason. Publicly, the Bala College Committee gave every support to Michael D. Jones during this difficult period. Having been presented with a report by Jones on the reasons for his bankruptcy, it declared its 'complete satisfaction that he had behaved honourably without bringing his moral character into disrepute'.<sup>131</sup> However, these events clearly provoked ill feeling towards Michael D.

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<sup>128</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 11 April 1872.

<sup>129</sup> *Y Dydd* (3 July 1874), 10.

<sup>130</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (3 November 1876), quoted in R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.108. According to Edward Williams, Michael D. Jones paid £20 himself in order to bring the collection to £500.

<sup>131</sup> Bangor MS 7534. Notes from a meeting held at Bala on 7 September 1871. 'Fod y Pwyllgor hwn ar ôl gwranddo adroddiad Mr Jones o'r amgylchiadau gofidus y bu



Jones, and he did himself no favour by demanding payment from the College Committee. Edward Williams, the College Secretary, had to warn him in a private letter not to be too harsh on members of the Committee and that he had no right to coerce them into submitting to his will.<sup>132</sup> Yet Williams's admonition did not prevent Michael D. Jones from writing a letter to Ioan Pedr to complain about the College Committee's lack of action.<sup>133</sup> Moreover, John H. Jones, one of the College's treasurers, wrote in a letter to Edward Williams that Robert Owen, one of the trustees for Bodiwan, was 'very much annoyed with Mr M. D. Jones and say [sic] that he does not act straightforward at all with them'.<sup>134</sup> Robert Owen had borrowed £200 from the bank to support the Bodiwan family while Michael D. Jones was collecting donations in the United States, but received nothing from him on his return.<sup>135</sup> Simon Jones, a diligent member of the College Committee, had lost his patience with his old friend Michael D. Jones. In a letter published in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* in December 1871, he remonstrated:

He has for many years been given the freedom to go wherever he wishes, to do whatever he desires, and say whatever he chooses, without

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ynddynt yn ddiweddar wedi cael hollol foddlonrwydd ei fod wedi ymddwyn yn foddhaol heb dynu dim anfri ar ei gymeriad moesol.'

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 7484. Letter from Edward Williams, Dinas Mawddwy, to Michael D. Jones, 15 August 1871; NLW, J. Dyfnallt Owen Papers. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Edward Williams, 26 July 1871.

<sup>133</sup> Bangor MS, Ioan Pedr Papers 718. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Ioan Pedr, 2 September 1871; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.90.

<sup>134</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.91.

<sup>135</sup> Bangor MS 7485. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 9 October 1871; 7486. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 3 November 1871; 7487. Letter from Llew Adams to Michael D. Jones, 8 November 1871; 7488. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 8 November 1871.

anyone daring to say 'Shut up!' ... but perhaps it will not be long before he is told, '*Come to book*'.<sup>136</sup>

The College Committee did not have sufficient funds to pay in full for Bodiwan. Nevertheless, Michael D. Jones put pressure on the Committee to complete the transaction by December 1871, leaving the College with a debt of more than £1,000.<sup>137</sup> The College moved to Bodiwan on 30 May 1872, but, on the same day, the Committee granted permission to Michael D. Jones and his family to continue to reside there until construction began on the new college building.<sup>138</sup> However, the task of raising funds to repay the debt, and to construct a new building, proved difficult. In August 1872, S. R., minister at Conwy and a distant relation of Michael D. Jones, was appointed 'General Collector' for the College. S. R. was struck by illness soon afterwards, and fearing that little progress was being made, the Committee released Michael D. Jones from his duties as principal to give him assistance.<sup>139</sup> Jones was not released from his duties because of any talent for collecting public donations. It seems that members of the Committee continued to feel that it was he who had put the College in such a difficult situation in the first place, and that he should therefore take responsibility for collecting the rest of the money.

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<sup>136</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (6 December 1871), 13.

<sup>137</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (1872), 128.

<sup>138</sup> Bangor MS 7561. A book relating to the movement to acquire new accommodation for the service of Bala Independent College; *Y Dysgedydd* (1872), 128; Bangor MS 7492. Letter from Edward Williams to Michael D. Jones, 31 May 1872; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-1885', pp.66-7, 90-1.

<sup>139</sup> Bangor MS 7535. Notes written by Michael D. Jones in 1876; 7561. A book relating to the movement to acquire new accommodation for the service of Bala Independent College.



Michael D. Jones's financial situation stabilized following his bankruptcy. He continued to receive his salary of £150 per annum for his work as College principal, and another £20 from the three churches under his ministry.<sup>140</sup> He received rent from the properties that he owned in Denbighshire and Flintshire, though in 1872 he sold one of the largest farms, Havotty Llechweddgaer in the parish of Llanfihangel Glynmyfyr in Denbighshire, and two cottages in Flintshire, presumably in order to settle his personal debts.<sup>141</sup> Later that year, he also sold a smallholding in Denbighshire called Cae ap Edward which he had received from his mother-in-law as 'rent' for living at Bodiwan.<sup>142</sup> He had no intention of paying his debt to the Newport Dry Dock Company, because he believed it to be 'unrighteous'. What is more significant, however, is that Michael D. Jones refused to sell his land to repay the £1,000 of debt he owed on behalf of the Patagonian Settlement. Out of optimism rather than stubbornness, Jones chose to pay interest on the Settlement's debts rather than sell his property. 'Despite the misfortunes which have come my way,' he wrote in July 1871, 'I believe that this will turn out well'.<sup>143</sup> However, he complained to Richard Jones Berwyn, one of the pioneers at the Patagonian Settlement, that he was paying annual interest of about £100 on the Settlement's debts.<sup>144</sup> This amounted to nearly half of his annual income, but he certainly did not live in conditions of extreme poverty. The College's decision to allow Jones to live at Bodiwan free of rent, and the

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<sup>140</sup> NLW, D. J. Williams (Bethesda) Papers. 16/7. Notes on Michael D. Jones's salary; NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends at the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>141</sup> Bangor MS 7465. Copies of letters relating to Michael D. Jones's property, 1866-74.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.; 7480. Letter from O. David Hughes to William Owen, 21 June 1871.

<sup>143</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 7 July 1871. 'Er yr [anffod]ion syδ wedi vy nghyfarfod i, yr wyv yn credu y daw pethau yn mlaen yn δa eto.'

<sup>144</sup> Bangor MS 7589. Draft of a letter from Michael D. Jones to Richard Jones Berwyn, 16 September 1875; Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 26 July 1876.

additional money that his wife received from the rents on her properties, gave him sufficient income to maintain himself and his family.

From the early stages of the movement to establish a Welsh Settlement, Michael D. Jones had argued that a good financial basis was essential to the success of the venture. However, he had not expected to have to mortgage his house to ensure that the first group of settlers reached Patagonia in 1865. It became clear in the following months that Jones's financial commitment to the venture was based on an error of judgement. Jones's belief that the Settlement would develop at a rapid pace was partly the result of Lewis Jones's misleading reports from the Settlement, but his previous experiences with the Joint Stock Company and the registration of passengers should have warned him that support for the scheme would not be as widespread as he hoped, and that there would be no guarantee that the Liverpool Committee's loan society would prove successful. Michael D. Jones's efforts to stabilize his financial situation led to his involvement with the Colonizing Company, despite the disapproval of the Liverpool Committee, and eventually to his decision to sell Bodiwan to Bala Independent College. When these possible sources of income failed to provide immediate relief, Jones was faced with little choice but to risk the purchase of a ship in the hope that it would hasten the development of the Settlement and increase the profits of the Colonizing Company. This scheme backfired when Jones was held accountable for bills which the Company had failed to pay.

Michael D. Jones was, as R. Bryn Williams and Alun Davies claimed, an 'incompetent businessman'. He had neither the knowledge nor the experience to manage the financial aspects of either the Patagonian venture or the Colonizing



Company. However, the true source of Jones's financial troubles was a combination of fierce determination, over-optimism and an absolute commitment to the venture. This influenced Jones's decision to commit a large amount of money to ensure the establishment of the Settlement, to sell Bodiwan to the College and to purchase *Myfanwy* without sufficient credit, all of which had significant repercussions for his position at Bala College and his relationship with the Welsh community in Patagonia.

## Chapter 8

## Bala Independent College

1855-92

The Nonconformists' achievements in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century led them not only to broaden their interests, but also to organize themselves in a manner that would take full advantage of their numerical strength. Although the Calvinistic Methodists did not separate from the Anglican Church until 1811, they already had a denominational structure that facilitated co-operation between congregations in various parts of Wales. The Baptists, despite their Congregational views on church polity, demonstrated a desire for inter-ecclesiastical co-operation in the 1790s, and, in 1836, a Welsh Baptist Union was formed.<sup>1</sup> English-speaking Congregationalists took similar steps much earlier than their Welsh counterparts.<sup>2</sup> In England, County and District Associations were formed in order to assist collaboration between Congregational churches during the late eighteenth century, and in 1832, the

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<sup>1</sup> T. M. Bassett, *Bedyddwyr Cymru* (Swansea, 1977), pp.325-6.

<sup>2</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in England* (London, 1962), p.242.



Congregational Union of England and Wales was formed to integrate the Associations into a single structure.<sup>3</sup> In Wales, however, Congregational churches seemed more hesitant to move in this direction. There were several societies and organizations which encouraged fellowship between the churches, but there was a reluctance to form any structure that might pose a threat to the independence of the local church.<sup>4</sup> County Associations were not formed until the 1830s and 1840s,<sup>5</sup> and it was not until 1871 that a Union of Welsh Independents was established on the same pattern as the Congregational Union of England and Wales.<sup>6</sup>

As some had feared, it was not long after the County Associations appeared in Wales in the 1830s that some Congregationalists called on them to take a more prominent role in the life of the churches by regulating the training and appointment of ministers.<sup>7</sup> Those who held this view were termed by R. Tudur Jones, historian of Welsh Congregationalism, as 'cyfundrefnwyr' (systematists).<sup>8</sup> Facilitated by improvements in transport and communication, the systematists' schemes began to gain popularity among Welsh Congregationalists. It was believed that inter-ecclesiastical bodies, such as the County Associations, would foster a sense of unity and uniformity among Welsh Congregational churches by ensuring a consensus between churches. However, other Congregationalists continued to feel ill at ease

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp.242-4. Wales was included in the title only at the late request of William Griffith, minister in Holyhead.

<sup>4</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Yr Undeb*, pp.23-4.

<sup>5</sup> They stemmed from the 'Cymanfa', which was an annual gathering of ministers which gained popularity in Wales in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru* (Swansea, 1966), pp.184-6.

<sup>6</sup> See R. Tudur Jones, *Yr Undeb* (Swansea, 1975), pp.17-22.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp.27-8; R. Tudur Jones, 'Trefniadaeth Ryngeglwysig yr Annibynwyr', *Y Cofiadur*, XXI (1953), pp.46-63.

<sup>8</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Yr Undeb*, p.27.

with these developments, and believed that the actual aim of the systematists was to centralize the control of churches and institutions.

In 1883, Evan Pan Jones discussed the threat of centralization to Welsh Congregationalism in a pamphlet entitled *Gargantua: neu Ddadblygiad Clymbleidiaeth*.<sup>9</sup> ‘Gargantua’, he claimed, was ‘a new and foreign spirit’ which had entered Welsh Congregationalism some forty years earlier.<sup>10</sup> According to Pan Jones, a handful of ministers, many of whom had been raised as Methodists but who had converted to Congregationalism, were conspiring to control the denomination by gathering authority into their own hands. Their most recent onslaught was an attempt to bring Bala Independent College under the control of the County Associations. Michael D. Jones’s vocal opposition to this ‘plot’ resulted in a fierce dispute that came to be known as the ‘Battle of the Two Constitutions’. Pan Jones claimed that the conspirators had tried to ‘impress on the public mind that it was the “stubbornness” and “profanity” of M. D. Jones and his supporters’ which had caused the dispute.<sup>11</sup> He must have succeeded in countering these rumours, for Michael D. Jones was praised by later generations of Congregationalists as having remained loyal to his principles when others had lost their way.<sup>12</sup> However, to determine the accuracy of Pan Jones’s account, this chapter analyses Michael D. Jones’s role in the events that led to, and were part of, the dispute at Bala College. His argument in opposition to the

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<sup>9</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Gargantua: neu Ddadblygiad Clymbleidiaeth* (Ystalyfera, 1883). The title of the pamphlet came from sixteenth-century French author François Rabelais’s work *Gargantua and Pantagruel*.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2.

<sup>12</sup> T. R. Roberts, *Dictionary of Eminent Welshmen* (Cardiff, 1908), p.262; R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.271.



'New Constitution' of Bala College will also be studied, thus providing a basis for an evaluation of his reputation as a steadfast Congregationalist.

### **Michael D. Jones and the College**

Although the dispute about the constitution of Bala College did not begin until late in the 1870s, some of the tensions could be traced back to the time of Michael D. Jones's appointment as principal in 1854. Jones had a propensity for controversy, and his career as principal of Bala Independent College began with a storm. His appointment could have been criticized simply because he was the son of the former principal, but the whole affair was complicated by speculation about the future of Bala Independent College and by Jones's impulsive behaviour.

Gwilym Hiraethog, minister in Liverpool and editor of *Yr Amserau*, played a key role in the events of 1853-4. His involvement began in November 1853, when he suggested in an address at Michael Jones's funeral that Michael D. Jones would be a worthy successor to his father.<sup>13</sup> Gwilym Hiraethog's opinion on the subject was particularly respected because he had been a member of the Committee that established the College in 1841, and, supposedly, it was he who had first suggested that a new institution should be opened in north Wales.<sup>14</sup> However, by early 1854, Hiraethog's views on the future of Bala College seemed more ambiguous. In an article published in *Y Dysgedydd*, he again gave his support to Michael D. Jones, though, on this occasion, he mentioned the possibility of 'uniting the Congregational

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<sup>13</sup> *Y Celt* (16 March 1883), 6.

<sup>14</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85' (unpublished M. A. dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor, 1941), p.21.

colleges and forming ONE honourable institution'.<sup>15</sup> Gwilym Hiraethog may have considered the 'one college' a long term objective, but, by the following February, he appeared to be supporting another scheme that would result in the removal of the College from Bala. Henry Griffiths, a former tutor at the Congregational College in Brecon, had offered his services to the College on the condition that the institution be moved to Liverpool, where, by that time, he served as a minister.<sup>16</sup> Unable to attend the meeting in person, Griffiths had asked Gwilym Hiraethog to deliver the proposition to the College Committee. The offer met with fierce disapproval, and Hiraethog, whose suggestion of uniting the Colleges had already caused a commotion, was branded a traitor to Bala College.<sup>17</sup> The task of appointing a new principal had raised important questions about the future of the institution, and, clearly, some members of the Committee held strong feelings about the College's connections with Bala.

Michael D. Jones's appointment as principal of Bala College gave rise to heightened feelings of resentment and suspicion. Some of the College's subscribers believed that the institution could be located in a more suitable place than Bala. It was noted, for example, that the College had been initially located at Llanuwchllyn, and later moved to Bala, only to please Michael Jones.<sup>18</sup> It seems that Michael D. Jones had made it clear that he would accept the post only if the College remained at Bala.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the post of principal of Bala Independent College was linked to the five churches in the Bala area – Bala, Tynybont, Bethel, Soar and Llandderfel – which had been under

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<sup>15</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (1854), 7.

<sup>16</sup> For Henry Griffiths (1812-1891), see *DWB*.

<sup>17</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (26 October 1877), 6-7; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.19-20.

<sup>18</sup> *Yr Amserau* (25 October 1854), 2-3.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, (29 November 1854), 4.



Michael Jones's ministry. These churches sent letters to Michael D. Jones calling him to be their minister before any decision on the appointment of a principal had been made by the College Committee. Some of the churches' deacons were involved in the management of the College, and it seems that they had been pressing others to appoint Jones as the new principal. In a letter to Michael D. Jones, Gwilym Hiraethog stated that some of the letters he had received in response to Henry Griffiths's proposal had led him to suspect that the 'purpose of the College is to aid the churches of Bala and Bethel to support a minister, and, from other letters, that it has a family purpose'.<sup>20</sup>

Incensed by the College Committee's procrastination over the appointment of the new principal, not to mention the rumours of nepotism and misconduct, Michael D. Jones delayed his reply to the Bala churches and advised the Committee not to consider him for the post.<sup>21</sup> However, he was eventually persuaded to move more cautiously before making any rash decisions about his possible move to Bala, and, on 26 September 1854, representatives of Congregational Associations throughout Wales gathered at Rhuthun and voted to 'keep the College at Bala, and to extend an invitation to the Rev. M. D. Jones, Bwlchnewydd, to be Tutor'.<sup>22</sup> Michael D. Jones

<sup>20</sup> Private Collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Letter from William Rees to Michael D. Jones, 27 February 1854. 'Ond oddiwrth rai llythyrau a dderbyniais gallwn feddwl mai dyben yr ysgol ydyw cynorthwyo eglwysi Bala a Bethel i gynnal gweinidog, ac oddiwrth ereill mai ei dyben teuluaidd sydd iddi.'

<sup>21</sup> Bangor MS 10558. Letter from Simon Jones to Michael D. Jones, 7 February 1854; 10635. Letter from Simon Jones to Michael D. Jones, 1854; Private Collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Letter from William Davies, Bethel, to Michael D. Jones, 6 March 1854; Letter from William Davies, Bethel, to Michael D. Jones, 6 May 1854; Letter from Moses Roberts, Bala, to Michael D. Jones, 31 March 1854; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), pp.68-71.

<sup>22</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Haul a chwmwl ym mlynynyddoedd cyntaf Coleg Bala-Bangor', *Logos* (1977), p.11.

accepted the invitation, and the call from the churches of Bala, and assumed the position in January 1855.

Rather than silencing the critics, Michael D. Jones's appointment in September 1854 led to fresh allegations of nepotism at Bala.<sup>23</sup> In a letter to Michael D. Jones, John Davies of Aberaman claimed that John Thomas, a minister from Liverpool who would play a leading part in 'the Battle of the Two Constitutions', had written anonymously on the subject in *Y Gwron* and *Yr Amserau*.<sup>24</sup> Once more, Jones revealed his tendency to act on impulse. He responded to the criticism with a scathing letter to Gwilym Hiraethog. In the letter, Jones accused Hiraethog, who had claimed that the 'country' was not content with his appointment as principal, of an 'interfering attack' on himself and the College. He also complained of similar articles which had appeared in *Y Cronicl*, *Y Dysgedydd* and *Y Gwron*, which he believed had brought the north Wales ministry into disrepute for questioning the standard of education at Bala College and its choice of principal.<sup>25</sup> Jones's reckless condemnation of other periodicals gave Gwilym Hiraethog an opportunity to cast further doubt on his suitability for the post at Bala College. A fortnight later, 'Tanysgrifiwr Arall' (Another Subscriber) responded to Jones's outburst: 'Your letter is mean,' he wrote, 'its language is irritable, its spirit is bitter, the references are aggressive, and it is completely unworthy of one who is about to assume responsibility for an institution that prepares young men for the holy vocation'.<sup>26</sup> Another letter published in *Yr Amserau* claimed that Michael D. Jones's reputation had been damaged. Only a few

<sup>23</sup> *Yr Amserau* (25 October 1854), 2-3; (29 November 1854), 4.

<sup>24</sup> Private Collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Letter from J. Davies to Michael D. Jones, 10 February 1855.

<sup>25</sup> *Yr Amserau* (13 December 1854), 4.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, (27 December 1854), 4.



months earlier, ‘... everyone seemed to consider him worthy as a man, Christian, and scholar, but many who were present [at Rhuthun], and more of those who were absent, have changed their opinions of him after reading his epistle to the editor of *Yr Amserau*’.<sup>27</sup> The same week, Jones responded with equal ferocity to insinuations of nepotism made by William Williams (Caledfryn), editor of *Y Gwron Cymreig*.<sup>28</sup> Jones declared that ‘the man who could be such a *hound* beside my late father’s grave, whatever profession of respect he pays him, I wish to spit upon it with angry contempt’.<sup>29</sup> Failing once more to restrain himself, Jones was exposed to further criticism. Williams responded by pointing out, with cutting sarcasm, that ‘if a tutor requires godliness, no-one will doubt Michael D. Jones’s godliness after reading his evangelical letters’.<sup>30</sup>

These tensions eventually subsided, but the events of 1854-5 had revealed two things to those who were interested in the Bala College. First, it was clear that Bala College had its critics, some of whom felt that it should be moved to another location or amalgamated with the other Congregational college at Brecon. Moreover, the ministers in Liverpool, who were viewed in the 1870s as the leaders of the New Constitution party, were already perceived as a threat to Bala College. Secondly, it is clear that there were some people who believed that Michael D. Jones should not have been appointed as the new principal, and who felt that his unwarranted response to criticism in 1854-5 had confirmed their suspicions.

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<sup>27</sup> *Yr Amserau* (3 January 1855), 4.

<sup>28</sup> For William Williams (‘Caledfryn’; 1801-69), see T. Roberts, *Cofiant Caledfryn* (Bala, 1877); *DWB*.

<sup>29</sup> *Y Gwron Cymreig* (4 January 1855), 2.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, (18 January 1855), 3.

### Early encounters with Systematism

During his first ten years as principal of Bala College, Michael D. Jones was involved in two episodes that were later noted by Evan Pan Jones as evidence of the scheme to centralize Welsh Congregationalism. The first of those episodes concerned the editorship of the Congregationalist monthly *Y Dysgedydd*. It was claimed that, because *Y Dysgedydd* had featured articles that were critical of the systematists' ideas, a group of ministers had compelled Cadwaladr Jones, one of the periodical's founders, to resign as editor in 1852. The ministers, who included Gwilym Hiraethog and Caledfryn, formed a committee to discuss the appointment of a new editor for *Y Dysgedydd*, but decided instead to take full responsibility for its management and publication.<sup>31</sup>

This decision was unacceptable to some Congregationalists. They felt that, unlike in previous years, this committee did not have 'denominational' sanction. *Y Dysgedydd* was founded in 1821 by a committee of 21 Congregational ministers, and, since then, it had been under the management of 'whosoever took an interest in its welfare'.<sup>32</sup>

This, however, was no longer the case. In September 1855, Michael D. Jones and David Morgan, minister at Llanfyllin,<sup>33</sup> were deputed by the Maldwyn Association of Congregational churches to deliver a proposition to the editorial board of *Y Dysgedydd* which would hopefully result in the periodical being placed back in the hands of the 'denomination'. Thomas Davies, a deacon at Dolgellau Independent church, offered *Y Dysgedydd* a generous donation for including a section on the Sunday School. It was offered on the condition that the management of *Y Dysgedydd*

<sup>31</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Gargantua*, pp.24-5.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24.

<sup>33</sup> For David Morgan (1779-1858), see *DWB*.



reverted to the previous arrangement.<sup>34</sup> However, Davies's offer was rejected by the editorial board,<sup>35</sup> and his money funded the publication of a new periodical, *Yr Anybynwr*, which was edited by Michael D. Jones, David Morgan and Cadwaladr Jones.<sup>36</sup>

According to Evan Pan Jones, this was Michael D. Jones's first encounter with the systematist scheme to centralize Congregationalism in Wales. Yet, while Jones attempted to persuade the editorial board of *Y Dysgedydd* to relinquish its control, there is no evidence of his opinions on the matter. Indeed, David Rees, editor of *Y Diwygiwr* and another highly influential Congregational minister, accused Jones of ignoring the views of the churches by publishing *Yr Anybynwr* prior to the summer conferences. In Rees's opinion, the prospects looked dim for a periodical that showed little heed for the opinions of the churches.<sup>37</sup> This was a similar criticism as that used against *Y Dysgedydd*, and, in later years, the relationship between church conferences (in the form of County Associations) and non-ecclesiastical activities, such as the running of periodicals and educational institutions, became the subject of fierce debate. At this time, however, Michael D. Jones did not seem to express any opinions on the role of summer conferences or on their representation of the churches' opinions.

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<sup>34</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Yr Undeb*, p.31.

<sup>35</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (December 1855), quoted in *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 3. In the reply, the board stated that it would 'gladly release it back into the hands of the denomination' once the circulation was sufficient to employ an editor.

<sup>36</sup> *Yr Anybynwr* (May 1856), 3.

<sup>37</sup> Private Collection in the hands of Gwenllïan Tudur Jones. Letter from David Rees, Llanelli, to Michael D. Jones, 29 March 1856.

The whole affair with *Yr Anybynwr* seems only to have brought Michael D. Jones into further conflict with fellow Congregationalists. By backing the publication of *Yr Anybynwr*, he no doubt ruffled the feathers of *Y Dysgedydd*'s editors. David Rees's letter also suggests that Jones had responded to his advice with characteristic brashness:

I do not know what now to say because you seem to have a perfect set of rules, that there is no room for improvement and that you are beyond anyone's advice. You are second only to the Pope in infallibility and you consider everything that is said about you or to you an 'attack' ...<sup>38</sup>

Michael D. Jones also clashed with Congregationalists who were associated with *Yr Anybynwr*. Before the end of 1856, he had resigned as editor because of the trustees' decision to use Thomas Davies's donation to buy a printing press, giving Cadwaladr Jones's son, Cadwaladr R. Jones, control of *Yr Anybynwr*.<sup>39</sup> Publication was postponed temporarily following Jones's resignation, but the periodical was revived in 1858 under the modified title of *Yr Annibynwr*, with John Thomas of Liverpool as editor and C. R. Jones as printer and publisher.<sup>40</sup> Adding to the tension was Michael D. Jones and C. R. Jones's mutual interest in Anne Lloyd of Plas-yn-rhal, near

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., '... nis gwn beth i ddywedyd yn awr canys yr ydych chwi yn ymddangos fel pe byddech yn meddu ar set o reolau perffaith heb achos i neb gynnyg gwelliant arnynt na chynghori dim yn ei gylch. Yr ydych yn y radd nesaf i'r Pab o anffaeledigrwydd a chyfrifwch bob beth a ddywedir amdanoch neu wrthy ch yn "ymosod" arnoch ...'

<sup>39</sup> Bangor MS 3620. Papers relating to the charge of libel brought against E. Pan Jones, 1881.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 3621. Papers relating to the charge of libel brought against E. Pan Jones, 1881.



Rhuthun, who married the former in December 1859.<sup>41</sup> Jones retained his position as a trustee of *Yr Annibynwr* until 1865, when it was united with *Y Dysgedydd*, but the ill feeling between him and C. R. Jones never receded.

Evan Pan Jones claimed that it was Michael D. Jones's 'firm support' for David Morgan and Cadwaladr Jones in suggesting that the 'mighty ones of Gargantua' relinquish their control of *Y Dysgedydd*, and also his involvement in the appearance of *Yr Anybynwr*, which offended influential Congregational ministers and turned their attention to Bala College.<sup>42</sup> There may have been a grain of truth in this claim. In 1862, three articles were published in *Y Dysgedydd* which raised questions about both the standard of education at Bala Independent College and the suitability of its location. They also suggested that Michael D. Jones was unsuited for the post of principal and called for a review of the ministerial training of Welsh Congregationalists.<sup>43</sup> The author of the articles was William Ambrose (Emrys), minister at Porthmadog and one of the most eminent Welsh poets of his time.<sup>44</sup> The reason for Emrys's attack on Jones and the College is unclear. Emrys was one of the ministers who had taken control of *Y Dysgedydd* in 1852, and, according to Pan Jones, he was the first to shout 'tallyho' in the vengeful 'hunt' for Michael D. Jones.<sup>45</sup> Even so, it would appear that resentment between Emrys and Jones went back further. It seems that Emrys had been involved in an unsuccessful attempt to reduce Michael

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 7799. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 22 June 1859; 7800. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Anne Lloyd, 15 July 1859; *Y Celt* (18 October 1878), 8.

<sup>42</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Gargantua*, p.43.

<sup>43</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (1862), 94, 170, 410; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.30-2; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.133-4.

<sup>44</sup> For William Ambrose ('Emrys'; 1832-78), see *DWB*.

<sup>45</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Gargantua*, p.44.

Jones's salary either as principal of Bala College or as tutor of Dr Williams's school in Llanuwchllyn.<sup>46</sup>

Nevertheless, it is clear that resentment towards Michael D. Jones and Bala College, and uncertainty about the training of Congregational ministers in Wales, dated back to his appointment as principal in 1854. Furthermore, by the time Emrys's letters were published, a movement was in progress to raise money for the establishment of 'One College', such as that proposed by Gwilym Hiraethog in 1854. According to Emrys, the movement was the result of discontent among Congregationalists over the standard of ministerial training.<sup>47</sup> The 'One College' was to be opened as a bicentennial commemoration of the eviction of two thousand Puritan clergymen from the Established Church in 1662.<sup>48</sup> This was the second episode which Pan Jones cited as a clash between Michael D. Jones and the systematists' scheme to centralize Welsh Congregationalism, for it was clear that the establishment of 'One College' would mean the closure of Bala Independent College and similar institutions at Brecon and Carmarthen.

Michael D. Jones was present at the second of two conferences that were held to discuss the commemorative scheme, and he seemed willing, initially, to co-operate with the movement's aims.<sup>49</sup> However, many years later, Jones described how he had listened with scepticism to rumours that the movement's real aim was to re-establish the College at Brecon, and close the competing colleges at Bala and Carmarthen. He

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<sup>46</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.34-5.

<sup>47</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (1862), 95.

<sup>48</sup> Funds were also raised to construct chapels in places where there were none already. *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (8 January 1862), 26; (15 January 1862), 42; (22 January 1862), 58; (23 April 1862), 262-3; (30 April 1862), 282.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, (30 April 1862), 282.



became convinced that there was substance in those rumours during a conference at Carmarthen. He noticed that the promoters were reluctant to decide upon a location for the new college, and that they intended to postpone the decision until sufficient funds had been raised.<sup>50</sup> Realizing this, he brought the matter before the Bala College Committee, which decided to oppose the 'One College' movement and called for the funds to be divided between the Bala and Brecon Colleges.<sup>51</sup>

When the Bala College Committee convened in March 1863 to confirm its official position on the matter, John Thomas, accompanied by Thomas Rees and Thomas Williams, was there to state the case in favour of the 'One College'. Thomas, who was originally from Holyhead, Anglesey, was minister of the Welsh Congregational Church on Great Crosshall Street in Liverpool. Although not the first to suggest the establishment of 'One College', he was considered the most active of the movement's four secretaries.<sup>52</sup> In fact, as editor of *Yr Annibynwr* between 1857 and 1861 and *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* from 1867, Thomas became one of the most influential Welsh Congregational ministers of the nineteenth century. He was a shrewd and intelligent tactician, but as iron-willed and unswerving as Michael D. Jones. Indeed, realizing that the Bala College Committee was not yielding to his demands by co-operating with the One College movement, Thomas pointed out that he 'could bring a majority

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<sup>50</sup> The only motion relating to this issue and presented to the conference at Denbigh was that the new college should be located to the north of Brecon. *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (23 April 1862), 262-3; *Y Diwygiwr* (September 1862), 281-2; *Y Celt* (28 February 1879), 6.

<sup>51</sup> There were also complications with regards to Carmarthen Presbyterian College's part in the scheme, namely because it was under the patronage of the Presbyterian Board. O. Thomas and J. Machreth Rees, *Cofiant y Parch John Thomas* (London, 1898), p.225.

<sup>52</sup> O. Thomas and J. Machreth Rees, *Cofiant y Parch John Thomas*, p.226; E. Pan Jones, *Gargantua*, p.30.

to the Committee meeting that could extinguish the college'.<sup>53</sup> The threat was not carried out, but the movement continued for another five years, and the funds raised were spent on the construction of the Memorial College at Brecon. Despite being eligible to vote at the Bala College's Committee meetings, only once did John Thomas visit the institution in the following fifteen years.<sup>54</sup>

Bala College's refusal to co-operate with the 'One College' movement intensified the feelings of Congregationalists who were already critical of Bala College. It also gave rise to the first clash between Michael D. Jones and John Thomas, the two protagonists in the dispute over the constitution of Bala College. Yet despite the significance that Pan Jones gave to this episode, Michael D. Jones did not change his opinion on the One College movement because of any opposition to the centralization of Congregational institutions. In a letter to Edward Williams, the College secretary, shortly after his clash with John Thomas, Jones stated that he 'did not care how things turned out, but I do not want trickery to gain the upper hand'.<sup>55</sup> It seems that, by the mid-1860s, there were several Congregationalists who had taken a dislike to Michael D. Jones, and that he was wary of their interest in Bala Independent College. At this time, however, there was nothing to suggest that he felt any concern for Congregational principle or for the broader developments within Congregationalism in Wales.

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<sup>53</sup> *Y Diwygiwr* (April 1863), 121; *Y Celt* (21 February 1879), 1; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.132-3. Pan Jones claims that Michael D. Jones had replied: 'Declare war, and we will meet you on your request' ('Cyhoeddwch ryfel, a ni a'ch cyfarfyddwn pan fynoch').

<sup>54</sup> J. Thomas, *Coleg y Bala: Llythyrâu Dr Thomas Liverpool* (Merthyr Tydfil, 1880), p.3. That single occasion was in March 1867, when Thomas, on the invitation of Michael D. Jones, visited the College to deliver an address to the students.

<sup>55</sup> NLW, J. Dyfnallt Owen Papers A2002/27. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Edward Williams, Dinas Mawddwy, 23 May 1863. 'Nid wyv yn govalu sut y try pethau, ond ni hoffwn i gastiaeth gael goruxaviaeth.'



### Divisions at Bala College

Despite the *prima facie* arguments over the nature of Congregationalism and the apparent desire of some to centralize, it was Michael D. Jones's financial troubles that contributed most to the escalation of tension at Bala. His initial scheme of settling his debts by selling Bodiwan to the College had been scuppered because of the Committee's failure to raise the money in time. In fact, Jones's excessive and unplanned investment in the Patagonian venture had borne heavily on the institution. In 1870, he incurred additional debts for *Myfanwy*, the ship that the Colonizing Company had bought in 1869. Rather than be forced to make the payment, Jones filed for bankruptcy in July 1871. However, later that year, he succeeded in pressing the College Committee into completing the payment for Bodiwan. This left the College with a debt of £1,000, and raising the money would prove particularly difficult now that Michael D. Jones's financial difficulties had been made public. S. R., who was sympathetic towards Michael D. Jones, was appointed 'General Collector' for the College in August 1872. However, S. R. became ill, and so Michael D. Jones was released from his duties to assist him in the task of raising money for the College.<sup>56</sup>

Clearly, Michael D. Jones's financial difficulties and their effect on the College led to ill feeling at Bala. Jones's release from his duties as principal in 1872 in order to raise money towards the College's debt led to further conflict between him and members of the College Committee, particularly his colleague Ioan Pedr.<sup>57</sup> As a replacement

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<sup>56</sup> Bangor MS 7535. Notes written by Michael D. Jones in 1876; 7561. A book relating to the movement to acquire new accommodation for the service of Bala Independent College.

<sup>57</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-1885', pp.97-8.; Bangor MS 7535. Notes written by Michael D. Jones in 1876.

for Jones, Ap Vychan, minister at Bangor who hailed from Meirionnydd, was appointed part-time 'theological tutor'. However, some members of the College Committee felt that a full-time substitute was needed, though Michael D. Jones suspected that their true intention was to find a permanent replacement. For example, his colleague Ioan Pedr wanted to offer a position to John Bowen Jones, minister at Brecon and one of the first Welshmen to graduate from New College, London.<sup>58</sup> Jones feared that Ioan Pedr's preference for the highly qualified John Bowen Jones was a conspiracy to oust him from his position as principal,<sup>59</sup> though whether there was any substance to his suspicions is unknown. In order to safeguard his position, Jones offered the post to Thomas Lewis, a grammar school tutor from Cardiff.<sup>60</sup> His plan was to invite Lewis to Bala and to propose the creation of a grammar school to work in conjunction with the College.<sup>61</sup> This would ensure that Lewis's appointment as substitute was temporary, for he could supervise the grammar school once Jones had returned to his duties. Almost a year elapsed before the College Committee finally gave its approval to the establishment of a grammar school at Bala,<sup>62</sup> thus making Thomas Lewis the candidate that was best suited for the position.<sup>63</sup> Thomas Lewis accepted the offer, and was appointed tutor at Bala College in the summer of 1874.

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<sup>58</sup> Bangor MS 7535. Notes written by Michael D. Jones in 1876; 7499. Letter from William Davies, Parcglas, to Michael D. Jones, 5 May 1873. For John Bowen Jones (1829-1905), see *DWB*.

<sup>59</sup> Bangor MS 7535. 'Pwyllgor Coleg y Bala'. Notes by Michael D. Jones. '... y diweddar brivathraw'.

<sup>60</sup> Bangor MS 7496. Letter from Thomas Lewis to Michael D. Jones, 7 April 1873. For Thomas Lewis (1837-1892), see *DWB*.

<sup>61</sup> Bangor MS 7498. Letter from Thomas Lewis to Michael D. Jones, 29 April 1873.

<sup>62</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (1874), 143-5.

<sup>63</sup> Bangor MS 7500. Letter from Thomas Lewis to Michael D. Jones, 5 May 1873; 7496. Letter from Thomas Lewis to Michael D. Jones, 7 April 1874; 7498. Letter from Thomas Lewis to Michael D. Jones, 29 April 1874.



Another disagreement broke out at Bala College soon after the long-awaited appointment of Thomas Lewis. Michael D. Jones was accused of offering Lewis a salary of £150 per annum in order to undermine the status of his colleague Ioan Pedr, who received an annual salary of £120. The dispute was settled by increasing Ioan Pedr's annual salary to £150.<sup>64</sup> The salaries of Michael D. Jones and Ap Vychan were also to be increased, but they both rejected the offer, claiming that the College's funds would not be able to support any additional expenditure. This, no doubt, incensed Ioan Pedr.<sup>65</sup> Only a few weeks after he had requested an increase in his salary, both his colleagues had rejected a similar offer. To add to the hostilities, Michael D. Jones was convinced by this time that Ioan Pedr was attempting to take his place as principal of Bala College.<sup>66</sup> According to Jones, Ioan Pedr signed his name as principal and turned students against him during his absence from the College. Moreover, John Evans-Owen of Llanberis, Ioan Pedr's brother-in-law, referred to Michael D. Jones in the press as 'the late principal' of Bala College.<sup>67</sup> Jones's suspicions may have been more than a bout of paranoia. In 1872, Ap Vychan had accepted the position at the College partly out of sympathy for Michael D. Jones, whom he claimed had been the subject of 'a good deal of jealousy'.<sup>68</sup> Also, David Lloyd, a student at Bala College during the 1870s, recalled that, soon after arriving at

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<sup>64</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-1885', pp.96-8.

<sup>65</sup> There had been discord between them prior to this. Jones's version of the circumstances at Bala Congregational Church can be found in Bangor MS 7535. Notes written by Michael D. Jones in 1876.

<sup>66</sup> *Y Celt* (6 Rhagfyr 1878), 12; Bangor MS 8052. Copies of letters sent by Michael D. Jones, 1863-92.

<sup>67</sup> *Y Celt* (6 Rhagfyr 1878), 12.

<sup>68</sup> NLW, J. Dyfnallt Owen Papers. The recipient of the letter, which is dated 27 March 1872, is unknown. 'Y peth a baroð i mi gynyg dyfod yn bythefnosol oed, fod yn amhosibl i mi adael yma – a gweled llawer iawn o wenwyn i Mr Jones, mewn rhai cyrion, a meddwl y gallai fy nyfodiad i'r Bala i ddarlithio, *hyd yn oed bob pythefnos* fod yn gyfnerthiad i Mr Jones a'r sefydliad sy dan ei ofal ef a Mr Peters.'

Bala, he realized that Ioan Pedr 'led a faction of the College Committee which had set its sights on deposing the Principal'.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, a request from Michael D. Jones's churches that he be released from collecting duties in 1875 was rejected by the College Committee.<sup>70</sup> He was told to continue collecting for another two years, the reasons presumably being that sufficient funds had not yet been raised, that there were too many tutors at Bala College and that there was, as yet, no indication that a grammar school was to be established.<sup>71</sup> The problem was unexpectedly resolved in January 1877 with the sudden death of Ioan Pedr at the age of 43, a few months prior to Michael D. Jones's return to the College.<sup>72</sup>

How much was known of these tensions beyond Bala College Committee is unclear, but Michael D. Jones's financial difficulties, and their impact on Bala College, seem to have been a topic of conversation among Congregational ministers who had no direct connection with the College. In 1875, for example, he received a letter from Robin Ddu Eryri, a poet from Caernarfon, stating that kind things were being said about him in Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire, but that J. R. Kilsby Jones, minister at Llandrindod, had said that 'glancing at such a man [as Michael D. Jones] is a waste of time'. He warned him also that Edward Williams, the College secretary, who supported Jones in the early 1870s, was now 'an enemy'.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Bangor MS 3622. David Lloyd's recollections of his time at Bala, p.106. 'Gwedi dyfod ohonof i'r Bala, deuthum i ddeall, bob yn dipyn, mai o gylch ei ben ef [sef Ioan Pedr] yr oedd y cwmwl yn hongian . . . Blaenor yr adran o'r Pwyllgor oedd wedi rhoi eu bryd ar ddiorseddu'r Prifathro, oedd Ioan Pedr.'

<sup>70</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.99.

<sup>71</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (17 September 1875), 4.

<sup>72</sup> NLW, D. R. Daniel Papers 556. A recollection of Michael D. Jones's response upon hearing of Ioan Pedr's untimely death.

<sup>73</sup> Bangor MS 7501. Letter from R. Parry to Michael D. Jones, 4 October 1875. 'Byddai edrych ar y fath ddyn am un wingeiad llygad, yn wastraff ar amser.' '... gelyn i chwi yw Edward Williams.'



In later years, Michael D. Jones would claim that there were individuals who had seized an opportunity to exploit the divisions at Bala College to achieve their sinister aims. It was claimed, for example, that Benjamin Williams, minister at Canaan Church, Pentrechwyth, near Swansea, had thanked God when he heard of 'the split in the Bala camp'.<sup>74</sup> The prime suspect, however, was John Thomas, who was reported to have told S. R. many years earlier that he hoped to see 'a committee controlling the denomination and one college, but that *Michael must be moved out of the way*'.<sup>75</sup> There is no certainty that this was anything more than a rumour nor is there any evidence to suggest that Thomas attempted to carry out this intention prior to 1876. Nevertheless, Michael D. Jones's prominent role in the troubles at the College between 1870 and 1875 had caught the interest of individuals, such as John Thomas and Gwilym Hiraethog, who stayed away from Bala because of their previous clashes with the Principal. One correspondent writing in *Y Dydd* in 1876 claimed that 'there is no point hiding the fact that there is considerable disquiet within the denomination over a number of things relating to the [Bala] College and its management, and that the institution is rapidly losing its respect and influence among the Congregational Colleges' dearest friends'.<sup>76</sup>

### **The Two Constitutions**

By 1876, the Bala College Committee, once again, faced the pressing issue of finding new accommodation for the institution. The original intention, as stated by the

<sup>74</sup> *Y Celt* (6 December 1878), 12. See also, (7 March 1879), 6.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, (28 February 1879), 6. See also, (7 March 1879), 6. In *Gargantua*, Evan Pan Jones claimed that it was Cadwaladr R. Jones who had said these words to S. R. E. Pan Jones, *Gargantua*, p.46.

<sup>76</sup> *Y Dydd* (25 August 1876), 10.

conference at Aberystwyth in 1869, was to raise £8,000 for the construction of a new College building. Over the previous six years, Michael D. Jones, S. R. and the other collectors had raised a total of £4,754.1s.10d., but having paid £2,000 for Bodiwan, £254 for the adjacent field and a considerable sum to the collectors, only £1,171.11s.4d. remained.<sup>77</sup> It was far from the £8,000 which the Aberystwyth conference had hoped to raise for the construction of a new college building and, therefore, it seemed that Bodiwan would have to suffice for the near future. This led to further questions about Michael D. Jones's tenancy. It was agreed some years earlier that Jones would be permitted to stay at Bodiwan until work on the new building commenced, but circumstances were changing, to the chagrin of certain members of the College Committee.

The Committee discussed the future of the College at its meeting in early September 1876. It was proposed initially that Bodiwan be sold and that the proceeds from the sale be used to supplement the funds raised for the construction of a new building. This would no doubt have gained the support of Michael D. Jones, had he been in a position to purchase Bodiwan from the College. Jones's financial situation was stable but by no means comfortable, and the best option for him was to continue to live at Bodiwan. Prior to the meeting, he and his solicitor, Walter D. Jeremy, had prepared an amendment to the proposal to sell Bodiwan.<sup>78</sup> It suggested the possibility of constructing an extension to Bodiwan, an idea which had been investigated in the late 1860s (prior to the Aberystwyth conference) but had not been discussed since then.

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<sup>77</sup> NLW, Typescript. D. J. Williams, 'Hanes Coleg Bala-Bangor'.

<sup>78</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (7 December 1879), 10; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.111.



Quite unexpectedly, the College subscribers approved the amendment, though the decision proved extremely controversial. Realizing that the scheme was a ploy to ensure that Bodiwan could continue to be used as a college building while, at the same time, accommodating Jones and his family, some Committee members pointed out that it was contrary to the decision of the Aberystwyth conference. It was claimed that, having covered the costs for Bodiwan, the churches had contributed to the cause on the understanding that the money would be spent on a new college building rather than an extension to the present one.<sup>79</sup> More importantly, the subscribers' unexpected approval of the scheme led to questions being asked about the legitimacy of the voting procedure at Bala College.

Under the existing voting procedure, which had been in practice since 1855, anyone who contributed five shillings or more per annum towards the running of the College, or who represented a church contributing £1 or more per annum, was permitted to vote at the College Committee meeting. Those who met these requirements, 'the subscribers', managed all of the College's affairs. Even if a select committee were appointed to carry out a specific task, it would always be accountable to the College Committee of subscribers.<sup>80</sup> There was, however, a weakness in the Constitution. There was a danger that an individual who was eager to see a motion approved or rejected could manipulate the subscribers' meeting by registering new subscribers in order to gain approval for a specific motion. To complicate matters, it was not necessary for the new subscribers to appear on the list in the College's annual report in order to vote at the meeting. Voters could be registered on the day that the

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<sup>79</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.113.

<sup>80</sup> *Coleg Y Bala: Yr Hen Gyfansoddiad [a'r] Cyfansoddiad Newydd* (Pwllheli, 1879), p.1.

Committee met. This made the voting system difficult to regulate, and open to manipulation. The Committee was certainly aware of this danger, for it was this weakness in the constitution that John Thomas had intended to exploit in 1863 when he threatened to ‘extinguish’ Bala Independent College for not co-operating with the ‘One College’ movement.<sup>81</sup>

However, it was the suspicion that Michael D. Jones was manipulating College meetings that turned the attention to the College’s constitution in 1876. He certainly had a motive for ensuring that the decisions of the Committee meetings went in his favour. Both his future at Bala College and his family’s circumstances relied on the support of the Committee. In fact, a letter written to Pan Jones confirms that Michael D. Jones had conspired to limit the publicity of meetings in order to manipulate the decision-making process. Unfortunately, he did not note the date of the letter or the meeting:

If this meeting is to be rather select, write only to those who have X (cross) beside their names. If many are likely to turn up, send word to all those who are on the list. I almost feel that it would be better to invite a large number, in order to get extensive co-operation. I don’t think there will be much of an argument.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> *Y Diwygiwr* (April 1863), 121; *Y Celt* (21 February 1879), 1; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.132-3.

<sup>82</sup> Bangor MS 3619 (80). Letter from Michael D. Jones to Pan Jones, undated. ‘Os yw y cwrδ i vod yn bur δetholedig, nac anvonwx ond at y rai y mae X (croes) o’u blaenau. Os oes niver mawr i δyvod, anvonwx at y rai a welwx yn y restr. Yr wyv bron a meδwl mai gwahodd niver mawr syδ oreu, er mwyn cael cydweithrediad ehelaeth. Ni vydd lawer o ddadl yr wyv yn meδwl.’



Clearly, there is reason to suspect that he had rigged the vote at the College Committee meeting in September 1876, and that the amendment to construct an extension to Bodiwan would not have been approved without the presence of illegitimate voters, as his critics claimed.<sup>83</sup>

Matters did not improve in 1877. Michael D. Jones, whose financial situation was still precarious, was desperate to hang on to his position at the College and, as the motion to construct the extension had revealed, was willing to do his utmost to keep his family at Bodiwan. Jones's opponents, on the other hand, were also willing to go to great lengths to prevent him from using the College to his own ends. Indeed, Jones claimed that, in the meeting in March 1877, his opponents had mustered support to secure approval for a single motion. Ironically, that motion called for the formation of a committee to address the flaws in the College constitution which allowed the misuse of the voting system.<sup>84</sup> The special committee was to be elected by delegates from the County Associations at a meeting in Shrewsbury in August 1877. The special committee was to present its report to a General Meeting of subscribers the following month. Sensing a threat to his position, Michael D. Jones was intent on rejecting the committee's proposals by forming 'committees in every part of the country to canvass every corner' and getting 'as many as possible to the September meeting, to put an end to the actions of the *Clique* within our committee'.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.116-8.

<sup>84</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (6 April 1877), 5.

<sup>85</sup> NLW MS 18882 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to H. Tobit Evans, 3 May 1877. 'Mae pobl L-Pool wedi bod yn ymgorphori i gael pobl i'r Pwyllgor diwedav. Yr oed gandynt eu *organisation* at yr amcan'. It is also clear that Michael D. Jones intends to form his own 'organisation' to prevent the Liverpool people from carrying out their intentions: 'Mae eisiau pwyllgor yn mob sir, i bleidgeisio (canvass) pob congl, er mwyn cael pawb a ellir i bwyllgor Medi, i rodi tervyn ar weithrediadau y *clique* yn ein Pwyllgor.'

Behind the request for a revision of the Bala College constitution was a desire to challenge Michael D. Jones's influence on the Committee. During 1876-7, several articles in the denominational press called attention to the situation at Bala College with particular reference to Jones's control of the Committee.<sup>86</sup> He was accused not only of packing the College Committee meetings with his own supporters, but also of concealing the accounts of his collections, behaving like an autocrat, taking possession of Bodiwan and refusing to hand over the property to its rightful owner.<sup>87</sup> This was a blatant attempt to convince the churches that Michael D. Jones's influence needed to be curbed.

The problem facing Michael D. Jones's opponents was that many of the College's subscribers were from Meirionnydd, and since most meetings were held at Bala, they were in a better situation to attend and, consequently, were usually in the majority. A former-student, David Lloyd, described Meirionnydd as the 'backbone' of the Committee, and noted that substantial contributions came from the churches in Ffestiniog.<sup>88</sup> Jones was minister to three churches in the Bala area, and by the 1870s, he was much admired for the prominent role that he had played in the county's electoral battles, especially that of 1859.<sup>89</sup> Ffestiniog, having been under the ministry of David Lloyd Jones, had long been a stronghold of support for the Patagonian

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<sup>86</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (8 December 1876), 10-11; (5 January 1877), 10; *Y Dydd* (14 April 1876), 8-9.

<sup>87</sup> *Y Dydd* (14 April 1876), 8-9; *Y Tyst a'r Dydd*, (3 November 1876), 10; (17 November 1876), 6; (6 April 1877), 1; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.70-2, 108-10.

<sup>88</sup> Bangor MS 3622. David Lloyd's recollections of his time as a student at Bala College.

<sup>89</sup> See I. G. Jones, 'Meirioneth Politics in Mid-Nineteenth Century', in I. G. Jones, *Explorations and Explanations: Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales* (Llandysul, 1981), pp.83-163.



movement. Whatever Michael D. Jones's personal motives were, he was sure to get firm support from the people of Meirionnydd, and if his influence was to be curbed, it could only be achieved by shifting the Committee's centre of balance away from Bala and the surrounding area. The Committee's decision to hold a special meeting at Shrewsbury in August 1877 was crucial in achieving that objective, for the matter was to be discussed by delegates from each of the eighteen County Associations throughout Wales rather than the College's subscribers.

It was at this stage that John Thomas became involved in the proceedings. According to a letter that Thomas published in 1879, he had been asked to attend previous Committee meetings, but, being aware of Michael D. Jones's suspicion of him, he had declined. However, Thomas claimed that, 'in a moment of weakness, and under strong persuasion', he agreed to attend the special committee at Shrewsbury as one of the Liverpool Association's two representatives.<sup>90</sup> Yet, although his involvement was intended to appear unplanned, John Thomas arrived at the meeting with a scheme already prepared that would sort out both the College's voting procedure and the Bodiwan affair. In a letter written a few weeks before the meeting at Shrewsbury, Thomas presented William J. Parry, a prominent member of the quarrying community in Bethesda, with 'a completely confidential outline' of how he would proceed if everything were in his hands. He believed that a 'sub-committee' should be appointed to prepare 'a draft of a constitution' for the College, which could be presented to the conference the following morning. In fact, Thomas noted in his letter that he had already prepared a draft of a new constitution. He already knew who would present the motions to the meeting, and who would second them. Furthermore, when

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<sup>90</sup> John Thomas, *Coleg Y Bala: Llythyr Dr John Thomas*, pp.6-8.

discussing the College building, Thomas hoped that those who were present at the meeting would be told 'everything possible about the Aberystwyth decision, the purchase of Bodiwan, and all the other dodges' so that 'everyone will see that the Principal is not as honest and selfless as he wants the world to believe'.<sup>91</sup> Thomas wanted to hold Michael D. Jones accountable for his actions by placing him in a situation where he had no choice but to leave Bodiwan, or face the possibility that the College would be moved from Bala. 'If M.D.J. refuses to leave Bodiwan,' he wrote, 'then sell it back to him for the same price as it was purchased, transfer the College to Wrexham, and M.D.J. will be responsible for the move ... All of Bodiwan at the service of the College, or away we shall go from Bala, and that would be deliverance'.<sup>92</sup> Whatever may be said of Michael D. Jones's conduct, it is clear that the 'New Constitution' for Bala College was intended, first and foremost, to undermine his influence as principal. It is also clear that the whole process was orchestrated by John Thomas, though it was intended to appear as the work of delegates from the County Associations throughout Wales.

The meeting of delegates from County Associations at Shrewsbury in August 1877 went almost entirely according to John Thomas's plan. The discussion on the college

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<sup>91</sup> Bangor MS, Coetmor Papers, L. Letter from John Thomas to William J. Parry, 24 July 1877. 'Yna daw achos y Colegdy. Cyn dechreu ar hwn buasem yn mynnu gwybod pob peth a ellir wybod am benderfyniad Aberystwyth, pryniad Bodiwan, a'r holl dodges a fu ynglyn ag ef. Rhoddwn Wm Davies ar ei lw, a thrown yr hen frawd o Landrillo ai draed i fynu er cael ohono bob peth sydd ynddo, fel y gwelo pawb nad yw y Prif Athraw dim mor onest a hunanaberthol ag y mynir i'r byd gredu.'

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. 'Os ymgyndyna M.D.J. yn erbyn gadael Bodiwan gwerther ef yn ol iddo am y pris roddwyd amdano, a symuder y Coleg i Wrexham, y bydded cyfrifoldeb y symudiad ar M.D.J. Arhoswn yn y Bala os cawn y oll o Bodiwan at wasanaeth y Coleg ond os gwrthodir rhoddi Bodiwan i fynu yna symuder. Bydd yn eithaf cri i fyned at y wlad. Bodiwan i gyd at wasanaeth y Coleg, neu ymaith a ni or Bala, a dyna fyddai yn iachawdwriaeth.'



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building was postponed, but he succeeded in introducing a New Constitution for Bala College. John Thomas was one of the six individuals who were chosen to sit on the special committee that was appointed by the delegates, and it was he who drew out a scheme that would alter the entire administrative structure of the College.<sup>93</sup> Under Thomas's New Constitution, the requirements for voting at the Committee meetings would remain the same, but only ministers could represent the churches contributing £1 or more to the College. A subscriber's name had to be published in the most recent Annual Report before he could vote,<sup>94</sup> and thirteen trustees were to be appointed 'from different parts of the Principality, and English towns' to 'ensure that the property was used to serve the College'.<sup>95</sup> However, these were not the most controversial clauses of the New Constitution. The meeting of subscribers, held twice a year under the 'Old Constitution', was to be held annually. Moreover, the purpose of the annual subscribers' meeting would no longer be to manage the College's affairs, but to elect a chairperson, secretaries, treasurers and auditors to be members of an executive committee.<sup>96</sup> Tutors, in their official capacity, would also have a place on the Executive Committee,<sup>97</sup> along with representatives from 'English towns': one from each town contributing £10 per annum, and two from those contributing £30 or more.<sup>98</sup>

The most contentious part of the New Constitution stated that the Executive Committee would also comprise of two delegates from each of the 22 Congregational

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<sup>93</sup> John Thomas, *Coleg Y Bala: Llythyrau Dr John Thomas*, p.8.

<sup>94</sup> Appendix II, Clause 5. See also, *Y Dysgedydd* (October 1877), 321-2.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. Clause 3.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. Clause 7.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. Clause 8.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. Clause 9.



County Associations throughout Wales.<sup>99</sup> Of the sixty or so individuals who would form the Executive Committee, 44 of them would be elected by County Associations. Under the New Constitution, it was the members of the Executive Committee, rather than the subscribers, who would meet twice a year to manage the College's affairs. Although the subscribers' meeting retained its power to set rules and discuss or disapprove of any proceedings,<sup>100</sup> the New Constitution transferred most of the responsibilities and, in effect, the control of the institution, to this newly formed Executive Committee. In an attempt to weaken the Meirionnydd vote at the meetings, the New Constitution had taken the management of Bala College almost entirely away from the subscribers and placed it in the hands of the County Associations.

The New Constitution party proved to be too strong for Michael D. Jones, despite his efforts to gather voters to Bala to oppose the scheme. On 5 September 1877, 180 subscribers convened at Bala, and after a 'protracted fight', the majority gave their approval to the New Constitution.<sup>101</sup> In order to ensure that there were no illegitimate voters present, the subscribers who were not named in the Annual Report were prevented from taking part in the meeting – a move that would later give Michael D. Jones and his supporters a reason to deny the authority of the New Constitution.<sup>102</sup> Nevertheless, Michael D. Jones initially accepted this change. He attended the meeting that approved the New Constitution, and there was no mention of opposition from Jones in the press reports.<sup>103</sup> Thirteen months elapsed before Michael D. Jones finally took against the New Constitution. He attended the first subscribers' meeting

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid..

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. Clause 14.

<sup>101</sup> Bangor MS 11468. Case for Counsel's Opinion, W. D. Jeremy, February 1879.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (October 1877), 321-2.

under the New Constitution in March 1878, and was present at the Executive Committee's first meeting in September 1878.

Richard G. Owen, who has provided the most detailed account of the dispute to date, offered little explanation for Michael D. Jones's hesitation before stating his opposition to the New Constitution. Owen suggested that perhaps Jones was undecided about the constitution and that he attended the Executive Committee's meeting to 'see for himself the nature of the situation'.<sup>104</sup> If so, Jones did not behave as though he were merely an observer. As Owen noted, Michael D. Jones took an active part in the meeting by presenting one of the motions to the Committee, and Cadwaladr R. Jones seconded it.<sup>105</sup> Jones was certainly aware of the threat that the New Constitution posed to his position at the College and to his residency at Bodiwan. He feared that the new management of the College would give the advantage to his opponents, that the decision to build an extension would be overruled and that Bodiwan would be sold in order to construct a new building. It was for this reason that he wrote a letter to 'influential' figures at the Welsh Settlement in October 1877. He claimed that, in the letter, 'there are many denominational troubles which are connected to the Settlement and I wish that the settlers would endeavour to give me deliverance by giving enough financial support to buy Bodiwan back. In pleading thus I ask only for the money that I have spent on the Settlement'.<sup>106</sup> Later in the letter, he wrote:

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<sup>104</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.158.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., pp.155-8.

<sup>106</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to friends at the Settlement, 1 October 1877. 'Mae ynðo gryn lawer o helyntion enwadol vel y maent yn arweðu arnav vi mewn cysylltiad a'r Wladva a dymunav arnynt wneud eu goreu i roi ymwarded i mi drwy roði help arianol i mi brynu Bodiwan *yn ol*. Drwy ervyn hyn arnox nid wyv ond govyn am arian yr wyv wedi ei gwario gyda'r Wladva.'



There is a notice of ejection now hanging over my head. But I am likely to be given an opportunity *to buy Bodiwan*. Now my plea to the Settlement is to help me achieve this. ... The settlers know that I sold Bodiwan and that £2,000, and much more, went towards the establishment of the Settlement. If I am forced to leave Bodiwan, I do not know where I will rest my head. There are no houses available to rent in Bala and it would be a great inconvenience to move away ... I beg you most sincerely to buy my home, which I sold for your sake.<sup>107</sup>

Clearly, Jones had not yet given up hope that the Settlement would repay him promptly so that he could purchase Bodiwan from the College, and that this explains his hesitation before opposing the New Constitution. He had heard that the settlers could raise as much as £8,000 in a single harvest, which meant that his urgent plea for £2,000 was by no means unreasonable. However, since harvest in the Chupat Valley would not take place until the new year, Michael D. Jones would have had to wait another six months for a response to his plea.

While Michael D. Jones was hoping for some form of relief from the Patagonian Settlement, he also seemed intent on taking matters into his own hands. In September 1877, it was decided that the resolution which had been made by the Aberystwyth

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid. 'Mae y notice of ejection yn awr yn hongian uwx vy mhen. Ond y mae cynygiad yn debyg o gael ei rodi i mi i *brynu Bodiwan yn ol*. Yn awr vy nghan at y Wladva yw, i'm helpu i wneud hyn. ... Gwyr y Gwladvawyr vy mod wedi gwerthu Bodiwan a bod yr arian £2000 wedi myned i blanu'r Wladva a llawer yn ychwaneg i'w canlyn os byðav yn cael vy nhroi o Bodiwan am gam yn y byd yn mha le y byðav yn rhoði vy mhen i lawr. Nid oes un ty i'w gael ar rent yn y Bala a byð yn anghyvleusdra mawr i mi symud oði yma ... Eryner arnox yn y *mod taerav* i brynu vy ngartrev yn ol i mi, yr hwn a werthais er eix mwyn.'

conference in 1869 to raise £8,000 for the construction of a new College building should be annulled. Since the approval of the New Constitution, Michael D. Jones's hopes of an extension to Bodiwan had also faded. Nevertheless, late in 1877, Jones entered negotiations with Thomas Lloyd Anwyl, a local landowner, over the possible purchase of a tract of land entitled 'Cae'r Fron'.<sup>108</sup> It seems that, with little heed for the Committee's wishes, Michael D. Jones hoped to secure Cae'r Fron as a site for the construction of a new building for the College, thus avoiding eviction from Bodiwan. However, matters were complicated by the fact that Cae'r Fron was in chancery and that Michael D. Jones and Anwyl could not agree upon the conditions of purchase.<sup>109</sup> These issues were not resolved, and Jones's idea came to nothing.

By the autumn of 1878, it was clear to Michael D. Jones that the payment from the Patagonian Settlement was not forthcoming, and that his attempts to hasten the construction of a new college building had failed. However, other factors gave his situation an added sense of urgency, and eventually caused him to revolt against the New Constitution. One of the motions approved at the subscribers' meeting in March 1878 was that the next annual subscribers' meeting should be held 'somewhere between north and south [Wales]'.<sup>110</sup> Nothing was made of the matter at the time, but,

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<sup>108</sup> Bangor MSS 7506. Letter from T. Anwyl to Michael D. Jones, 5 September 1877; 7509. Letter from Thomas Lloyd Anwyl to Michael D. Jones, 8 December 1877; 7513. An anonymous letter discussing the price of Cae'r Fron; 7514. Letter from Michael D. Jones to W. D. Jeremy, 20 December 1877; 7516. Letter from Thomas Lloyd Anwyl to Michael D. Jones, 14 January 1878; 7517. Letter from W. D. Jeremy to Michael D. Jones, undated; 7519. Letter from E. Herber Evans to Michael D. Jones, 21 January 1878. This location was suggested by D. J. Davies (Bismark), who had launched an attack on Michael D. Jones and on the intention to build an extension to Bodiwan in the columns of *Yr Herald Cymraeg* in 1876. *Y Dydd* (14 April 1876), 8-9.

<sup>109</sup> Bangor MS 7518. Letter from Thomas Lloyd Anwyl to Michael D. Jones, 16 January 1878.

<sup>110</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (12 April 1878), 3.



the following September, it was announced that the subscribers would convene at Shrewsbury on the last Wednesday in March 1879, the day after the Executive Committee meeting at Bala.<sup>111</sup> Aware that the bulk of his support was in Meirionnydd, Michael D. Jones knew that holding the annual meeting at Shrewsbury would make it easier for the subscribers from other areas to attend, particularly from Liverpool, and indeed, he had noticed an increase in the number of subscribers from John Thomas's church.<sup>112</sup> To Jones, it seems that this was a scheme to weaken the Meirionnydd vote in order to ensure that any motions that were prepared by the Executive Committee the previous day would gain the approval of the subscribers at Shrewsbury. Even under the New Constitution, the subscribers' meetings could be manipulated in such a way as to guarantee the desired outcome. In fact, the discussion on the College building had been postponed until the meeting at Shrewsbury.<sup>113</sup> Clearly, Jones feared that the Executive Committee would prepare a motion to evict him and his family from Bodiwan, and if the attendance of the Shrewsbury meeting turned out to be predominantly Liverpool Congregationalists, he saw little chance of preventing the motion from being carried. Michael D. Jones was forced into action in October 1878, not because of any deep convictions about Congregational principle, but from sheer desperation.

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<sup>111</sup> 'Llyfr Cofnodion Perthynol i'r Cyfansoddiad Newydd', p.287, quoted in R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.156.

<sup>112</sup> *Y Celt* (7 March 1879), 4.

<sup>113</sup> 'Llyfr Cofnodion Perthynol i'r Cyfansoddiad Newydd', pp.246-70, quoted in R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.150. John Thomas also noted that Jones was not comfortable at all with the decision to discuss the future of Bodiwan 'somewhere central between north and south'. *Coleg Y Bala: Llythrau Dr John Thomas*, p.12.

### John Thomas and the 'Clique'

Michael D. Jones launched a formidable counter-attack on the New Constitution. His articles on the subject appeared in the columns of *Y Celt*, a fortnightly newspaper launched a few months earlier to compete with *Y Tyst a'r Dydd*, the mouthpiece for the supporters of the New Constitution.<sup>114</sup> Jones called attention to the 'empire-building scheme of Presbyterian *Turn coats* in our midst', referring to individuals such as John Thomas, Gwilym Hiraethog and David Roberts of Wrexham, who had been raised as Methodists.<sup>115</sup> According to Jones, these former-Methodists, with the assistance of some life-long Congregationalists, had formed a 'clique' that was hungry for power. He pointed out that members of this 'clique' had promoted the movement to establish a single college in the 1860s, and that it was clear that they had not yet given up on the idea. John Thomas had returned to Bala to seek revenge by putting the 'extinguisher' on the College, as he had threatened in 1863.<sup>116</sup> He also claimed that their conspiracy to take over the management of Bala College was merely part of a much grander scheme to seize control of the Congregational churches of Wales by giving County Associations the same kind of authority as the Calvinistic Methodists' monthly meetings.

Many of Michael D. Jones's attacks focused on John Thomas, whom he perceived to be the enemy of the College. It was John Thomas who had designed the New Constitution for Bala College. On various occasions, Thomas was labelled by Jones as 'hen Drefnydd' (old Methodist),<sup>117</sup> 'Dr Penygoeden' (Dr Top-of-the-tree),<sup>118</sup> and

<sup>114</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Cwmni'r "Celt" a Dyfodol Cymru', *Trans. Cymm.* (1987), 113-4.

<sup>115</sup> *Y Celt* (4 Hydref 1878), 9. See also, R. Tudur Jones, *Yr Undeb*, pp.43-64.

<sup>116</sup> *Y Celt* (11 October 1878), 8-9.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, (25 October 1878), 8.



‘Coeg Ymerawdwr Annibynia’ (pseudo-Emperor of Independia).<sup>119</sup> Jones compared Thomas’s control over the ‘Clique’ to someone distributing Everton toffee to his obedient servants. He wrote:

In Liverpool, there is a sweet shop for these fickle children ... He [John Thomas] has a paper for one of them to read at the Union meeting – he’ll give him a good piece of *India Rock*. Another will propose a vote of thanks for the paper – a small peppermint cake for him. Another will second it – some candy for him. So and so has been recommended for a church somewhere because of the paper read at the meetings of the Union – a good slice of gingerbread for him. ... It is a sad thing to say, [but] it is this kind of manipulating of men, or children in this case, that has created the clique, and for years, I have looked upon them as cunning players who, for all this work, achieve little.<sup>120</sup>

As the confidential letter written prior to the conference at Shrewsbury in August 1877 suggests, John Thomas was a conspirator. He was more tactful and cunning than Michael D. Jones, and his stubborn determination made him a formidable adversary.<sup>121</sup> The son of a flax-dresser from Holyhead, Anglesey, John Thomas was raised a Calvinistic Methodist, and became a Congregationalist during his teenage years. He received little formal education, but he was far from ‘mediocre in ability’,

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., (22 November 1878), 11. In 1876, John Thomas was awarded a D. D. by the University of Middleburgh, Vermont, during his visit to the United States in 1876. O. Thomas and T. Rees, *Cofiant y Parch John Thomas*, p.301.

<sup>119</sup> *Y Celt*, (22 November 1878), 11.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., (6 December 1878), 12.

<sup>121</sup> C. Davies, ‘The Rev John Thomas, D.D., (1821-92)’, in J. Vyrnwy Morgan, *Welsh Religious Leaders in the Victorian Era* (London, 1905), p.251.

as Michael D. Jones described members of the 'Clique'.<sup>122</sup> Thomas developed into one of the most active and prolific Welsh Nonconformist ministers of his generation. He had a talent for preaching and public-speaking, which contributed to his high profile and gave him considerable influence over the Congregational ministry and churches in Wales.<sup>123</sup>

The years that Thomas had spent in Liverpool after his induction at Tabernacle, Great Crosshall Street, in 1854 seem to have shaped his views just as Meirionnydd had shaped those of Michael D. Jones. Thomas's views on the future of Congregationalism, for example, seem to have been inspired by the English Congregationalists. Following developments in England, he led the attempt to systematize the denomination. Indeed, he had played as much part in the establishment of the Union of Welsh Independents in 1871 as he did in the preparation of the New Constitution for Bala College in 1877.<sup>124</sup> Liverpool also seems to have shaped Thomas's attitude towards the Welsh language, an issue on which Michael D. Jones held strong feelings. Thomas was a supporter of 'English causes', the establishment of English-medium churches in Wales to provide services for immigrants from England, which Michael D. Jones fiercely opposed.

Liverpool was regarded by Michael D. Jones as the headquarters of John Thomas and the 'Clique'. Not all members of the 'Clique' lived in Liverpool. C. R. Jones came

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<sup>122</sup> *Y Celt* (6 December 1878), 11-2.

<sup>123</sup> *Y Geninen* (1892), 162-8; *Y Dysgedydd* (1881), 77-83; (1892), 311-2, 315-6, 324-37; *Y Diwygiwr* (1892), 229-35; *Cymru* (1892), 177-81; (1893), 11-20; J. Vyrnwy Morgan, *Welsh Religious Leaders in the Victorian Era*, pp.248-76; O. Thomas and T. Rees, *Cofiant y Parch John Thomas*; *DWB*; *DNB*.

<sup>124</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Yr Undeb*, pp.52-4.



from Llanfyllin, Josiah Jones from Machynlleth,<sup>125</sup> Thomas Rees and Benjamin Jones from Swansea.<sup>126</sup> However, Jones claimed that the ‘Clique’s’ philosophy was that ‘Liverpool is the Capital of Wales’, that ‘the cream of the Welsh ministry went to Liverpool’ and that ‘any minister who leaves Liverpool goes down in the world’.<sup>127</sup> The Liverpool ‘Clique’ was not only a threat to the College. They represented everything that Michael D. Jones opposed in nineteenth-century Welshmen. In Liverpool, he saw the immorality and pride as well as the hallmarks of English culture which he had observed at Carmarthen in the early 1850s. There were long-standing tensions between Liverpool and Bala College. They could be traced back to the uproar that followed Henry Griffiths’s suggestion that the College be moved to Liverpool, and the subsequent clash between Michael D. Jones and Gwilym Hiraethog. Indeed, Hiraethog was one of the New Constitution’s keen supporters when it was adopted at Bala College in 1877.

Michael D. Jones’s opposition to the New Constitution was not merely an unsolicited attack on John Thomas and his friends. Allegations about the activity of a ‘Clique’ of ministers were by no means new to Welsh Congregationalists. In 1875, Robert Parry wrote to Jones warning him that ‘we have here a great *clique*, and the people are beginning to see it, expose it, and despise it’.<sup>128</sup> The source of these grievances was the County Associations’ increasing tendency to interfere in the affairs of individual churches, and the ‘Clique’ was a group of influential ministers who seemed intent on

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<sup>125</sup> For Josiah Jones (1830-1915), see *DWB*.

<sup>126</sup> For Thomas Rees (1815-85), see J. Thomas, *Cofiant y Parch. Thomas Rees, D. D.*, Abertawy (Dolgellau, 1888); *DWB*.

<sup>127</sup> *Y Celt* (6 December 1878), 12.

<sup>128</sup> Bangor MS 7501. Letter from Robert Parry (Robin Ddu Eryri) to Michael D. Jones, 4 October 1875. ‘*Clique* mawr sydd yn bresennol, a’r wlad yn dechreu ei weled, ei ddarlunio a’i ddirmygu.’

strengthening that role. The aim of the 'Clique', wrote David Lloyd Jones, was 'one denominational chair, one college, one paper and one monthly [journal], all of them in the hands of the clique and its followers'.<sup>129</sup> When Michael D. Jones turned against the New Constitution, he raised points that struck a chord with Congregationalists who felt passionately about preserving the independence of their churches and institutions. He emphasized that the threat that John Thomas and the 'Clique' posed to Bala College and, indeed, to the whole denomination, was not to be taken lightly. He warned that 'every true Congregationalist should feel that the battle between the 'Clique' and the old friends of Bala College is not a mere squabble but a battle of principles'.<sup>130</sup> Writing in the third person, his message to the readers was that 'every true Congregationalist should support him, and feel that he is fighting for the freedom of every person in the denomination'.<sup>131</sup> He presented himself as a guardian of 'true Congregationalism', a man who was 'fighting a battle for the freedom and independence of every minister, deacon, and member of the denomination'.<sup>132</sup> The 'Clique' were 'self-elected bishops', or as he explained in more moderate terms, '[affiliates of the Clique] are responsible enough as members of society, and I can imagine them to be pleasant neighbours, but they are not Congregationalists'.<sup>133</sup> Michael D. Jones's impassioned rhetoric expressed sentiments that had been growing among Welsh Congregationalists long before the outbreak of the dispute at Bala. In spite of all the personal tensions and material interests that formed the background to the dispute, Jones sought to make the conflict at Bala College a matter of principle.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 7622. Letter from David Lloyd Jones to Michael D. Jones, 1 August 1878. 'Un gadair enwadol, un coleg ac un papur ac un misolyn ac un trevnolyn a'r cyfan yn nwyllaw y clique a'i gynffon.'

<sup>130</sup> *Y Celt* (6 December 1878), 11.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid. The content of those articles have been examined in detail by R. G. Owen in 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.159-177.

<sup>133</sup> *Y Celt* (24 October 1884), 5.



Michael D. Jones succeeded in associating the long-standing grievances of Congregationalists with the dispute over the management of Bala College. A correspondent in *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* in 1879 commented that 'none of us have seen anything like it ... there is no episode in the history of Welsh Congregationalism can be compared to this'.<sup>134</sup> The dispute's impact on the Welsh Congregational churches should not be underestimated. Differing opinions on the dispute divided Congregations and led to the formation of new churches throughout Wales, from Llanrwst to Llanelli, and from Trawsfynydd to Caerleon.<sup>135</sup> The churches that contributed financially towards the running of the College, and the scores of ministers who had been trained at Bala College, could not have ignored the dispute. The vast majority of the individuals who played an active role in the unfolding of events were ministers, who would no doubt have stirred up interest within their churches. R. G. Owen also pointed out that articles relating to the dispute appeared in inter-denominational publications such as *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, *Yr Herald Cymraeg*, *Llais y Wlad* and *Y Genedl Gymreig*, as well as Congregational publications such as *Y Tyst a'r Dydd*, *Y Celt*, *Y Dysgedydd* and *Y Cronicl*.<sup>136</sup> The high profile of the individuals involved drew attention to the dispute. Even in the churches which had no direct connections with Bala College, the names of Michael D. Jones and John Thomas would have been familiar, not only for their work as Congregational ministers, but also for their participation in social movements and political campaigns.

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<sup>134</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (3 October 1879), 5.

<sup>135</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.295.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.247-8.

### Congregationalism and the College

In his study of Free Churchmanship in England, J. W. Grant noted that, during the late nineteenth century, the doctrine of the church had been losing ground among Congregationalists. There was a movement away from an exclusively Biblical basis for church order, and the meaning of Congregationalism was becoming unclear.<sup>137</sup> In his history of Welsh Congregationalism, R. Tudur Jones describes Michael D. Jones as one of the few who resisted these developments:

While his fellow Independents were busy forgetting the virtues of their fathers' teaching about the Church of Christ, neglecting the church covenant and abolishing the church meeting, Michael D. Jones saw their value. To him, the Christian life flourished in a covenanted, visible, local, responsible and sovereign society under God. These societies expressed an awareness of each other's value through forming fraternal communions of coequal congregations.<sup>138</sup>

However, R. G. Owen's evaluation of Michael D. Jones's role in the dispute was different from that of Tudur Jones. Owen claimed that Michael D. Jones's argument in the Bala College dispute was 'less systematic' than that of John Thomas.<sup>139</sup> For Owen, Michael D. Jones's defence of Congregational principles was little more than a denial that the County Associations were a legitimate representation of the churches' views. In fact, there was more to Michael D. Jones's argument than R. G. Owen suggests, although it seems that he was not as loyal to Congregational principle as R.

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<sup>137</sup> J. W. Grant, *Freechurchmanship in England, 1870-1940* (London, 1955), pp.68-74.

<sup>138</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.271.

<sup>139</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.271.



Tudur Jones had supposed. Before analysing Michael D. Jones's views on Congregationalism, however, it is worth looking first at John Thomas's response to the accusations made against him.

Despite Michael D. Jones's claims to the contrary, John Thomas did not believe that his involvement in the affairs of Bala College, or any other aspect of his work, was contrary to the fundamental principles of Congregationalism. About a year after Michael D. Jones revolted against the New Constitution, Thomas made a positive statement of Congregational principles in an address, entitled 'Annibyniaeth a Threfn' (Independency and Order), which he delivered at a Welsh chapel in Manchester in late 1879 and published in *Y Tyst a'r Dydd*.<sup>140</sup> Clearly, the address was a response to the accusations made against him in *Y Celt* over the previous months. Congregationalism, Thomas claimed, had been 'misunderstood and misused', because 'many believe that Congregationalism is every individual and every church behaving as they see right, while they have no real concern for what is righteous, only what is good for them'.<sup>141</sup> To dispel this misconception, he outlined his understanding of Congregational principles in unambiguous terms.

'The great principle of Congregationalism,' Thomas declared, 'is that the church is a self-governing body, and its authority final'.<sup>142</sup> He proceeded to explain that a Congregational church could not appoint a representative without undermining its own sovereignty, but an individual could be deputed to attend an Association, or any other conference, so that they may return to the church with whatever resolutions that

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<sup>140</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (28 November 1879), 2; (5 December 1879), 2-3.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, (28 November 1879), 2.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>140</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (28 November 1879), 2; (5 December 1879), 2-3.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, (28 November 1879), 2.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*



were made. It was entirely the choice of the church whether or not it would accept and implement those resolutions. This argument was consistent with Congregational principles as set out in the Savoy Declaration of 1658, the first Congregational statement of church polity. The Declaration stated that Christ had ‘given all that power and authority, which is in any way needful for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he had instituted for them to observe, with commands and rules for the due and right exerting of that power’.<sup>143</sup> This power and authority was conferred on the church through covenant with Christ. While Thomas made no mention of the covenant as the foundation of the church, it was clear that he believed that the sovereignty of the local church was paramount. He may have been raised a Methodist, but ‘Annibyniaeth a Threfn’ reveals without question that Thomas had no uncertainties about the principles which made him a Congregationalist.

Having delivered his statement of Congregational principles, Thomas stressed that, while the sovereignty of the church must be upheld, it should not prevent churches from co-operating with each other to achieve common aims. Again, this was his response to Michael D. Jones’s complaint that the ‘Clique’ was imposing centralization on Welsh Congregationalism. Rather than refuting this claim, Thomas admitted that, in some ways, he welcomed the ‘centralization’ of Welsh Congregationalism. The previous thirty years, he claimed, had been the most successful in the history of Congregationalism, not because of an increase in the number of adherents or churches, but because ‘the might of the churches is being centralized, and all of our strength is channelled towards achieving the same aim’.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> ‘The Savoy Declaration’, in D. Thompson (ed.) *Stating the Gospel* (Edinburgh, 1990), p.112.

<sup>144</sup> *Y Tyst a’r Dydd* (5 December 1879), 2.

John Thomas maintained that this could, and should, be achieved without undermining the principle that the authority of any decision made by an Association or conference would always depend on the churches' approval.<sup>145</sup>

In the weeks following the appearance of 'Annibyniaeth a Threfn' in *Y Tyst a'r Dydd*, John Thomas also published an explanation of his role in the adoption of a New Constitution for Bala Independent College. His reason for placing the management of Bala College in the hands of the County Associations was not that Welsh Congregationalism needed to be centralized. He admitted that it would have been desirable for the subscribers to maintain full control of the College, as they had done under the Old Constitution. However, Thomas explained that 'the peculiarity of the circumstances at Bala College', namely Michael D. Jones's manipulation of the voting system, had been justifiable reason for transferring the authority to the County Associations.<sup>146</sup> This was not a contravention of Congregational principles. Whatever may be said of John Thomas's personal reasons for undermining Michael D. Jones's influence on the College, his argument that Congregationalism applied specifically to the rights of churches, and did not include educational institutions, was well-founded. Again, Thomas made no mention of the covenant, the basis of this unique relationship between Christ and the church, but his emphasis was correct. For Congregationalists, the local church was a holy society, separate and different from any other social organization. Thomas therefore justified his actions by noting that Bala Independent College had been established to serve the needs of the churches, and that placing the

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> J. Thomas, *Coleg Y Bala: Llythyrau Dr John Thomas*, p.13.



institution in the hands of the Associations strengthened the churches' role in its administration.<sup>147</sup>

While Michael D. Jones, in his opposition to the New Constitution, claimed to be the guardian of 'true Congregationalism', his articles were an exposition of the 'Clique's' plot against him rather than a discussion of the principles at stake. Unlike John Thomas, Michael D. Jones gave no positive statement of his Congregational principles or any critical analysis of his opponents' ideas on church government. This was yet another example of Jones's failure to present his views in a clear and comprehensive manner, and further evidence that he was, above all, a polemicist rather than a thinker. Nevertheless, by analysing his opposition to the New Constitution and the 'Clique', it is possible to draw some conclusions regarding his views on Congregationalism and how they related to the dispute at Bala College.

Michael D. Jones's opposition to the New Constitution sprang from his disapproval of the County Associations' prominent role in the management of the College. As R. G. Owen noted, Jones refused to accept that delegates from the County Associations could represent the churches on the College's Executive Committee. The delegates from County Associations, he argued, could only represent the Associations which had selected them. Furthermore, he claimed that the 'Clique's' attempt to place Bala College virtually in the hands of the County Associations was clear evidence of a scheme to 'presbyterianize' Welsh Congregationalism by devolving authority to unelected committees. Even if the County Associations had been elected by the

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p.14.

churches, they would be Presbyterian,<sup>148</sup> though Jones admitted dryly that ‘it would be better for the denomination to be governed by a constitutional presbytery ... than by self-elected committees’.<sup>149</sup> It was an argument that may well have pleased those who were opposed to the increasing influence of County Associations within Welsh Congregationalism, but it still does not explain how the New Constitution at Bala College contravened the principles of Congregational polity.

It is significant that, despite presenting himself as the guardian of Congregational principles, Michael D. Jones hardly mentioned the sovereignty of the church during the dispute at Bala College. Indeed, he hardly mentioned the doctrine of the Church at all. Had he done so, his views on the sovereignty of the local church would, in all probability, have been similar to those of John Thomas. Michael D. Jones saw the New Constitution as a threat, not to the sovereignty of the local church, but the sovereignty of the College and its subscribers. The crucial issue separating Michael D. Jones and John Thomas was not the definition of Congregational principles, but the application of those principles to institutions and organizations apart from the local church.

While John Thomas believed that Congregational principles were applicable only to the local church, Michael D. Jones argued that there was no consistency between upholding the sovereignty of the churches while, at the same time, attempting to bring Bala College under the control of the County Associations. The fundamental principle in his argument was that Congregational principles applied not only to churches but to any institution, be it a college, literary society or even a County Association. He

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<sup>148</sup> *Y Celt* (18 October 1878), 8.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, (29 October 1886), 1.



wrote: 'Our public institutions, which include our colleges, our newspapers, our monthlies, and our societies are as independent as our churches, and it is the shameless impudence of a few people which has led the Associations to claim authority over other bodies'.<sup>150</sup>

The emphasis that Michael D. Jones placed on consistency of principle in all spheres of life stemmed from his basic understanding of moral philosophy. As an advocate of a universal moral law, a basic rule of conduct that was applicable to all forms of human society, it is hardly surprising that he should argue that the control of Bala College should be based on Congregational polity. Nevertheless, this was not a question of 'true Congregationalism', as Jones claimed. Congregationalists upheld the spiritual autonomy of the local church, which stemmed from its covenant with Christ. Like John Thomas, Michael D. Jones made no reference to the church covenant, but Thomas did not claim that educational institutions should be autonomous on the basis of Congregational principle. By asserting that all organizations and institutions had a right to govern their own affairs on the same basis as churches, it seems that Michael D. Jones attached much less value to the church covenant than previously believed.<sup>151</sup>

### **Congregationalism and Democracy**

Contemporary trends were as much an influence on Michael D. Jones's views on Congregationalism as they were for John Thomas and his systematist ideas. In the same way as John Thomas's views on Congregationalism had been shaped by the increasing potential of Nonconformists to influence Welsh society and politics from the mid-nineteenth century, Michael D. Jones's interpretation of Congregational

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., (2 November 1883), 9; (6 December 1878), 12; (22 August 1884), 8.

<sup>151</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru*, p.271.

principles was shaped by developments in contemporary political thought. Jones claimed that his views were supported by Scripture, but political convictions seem to have been a far stronger influence on his Congregationalism. Over the years, Jones had shown more interest in political agitation than theological issues. He had participated in political activity in Meirionnydd since the 1850s, and, by the late 1870s, he was publishing his political views on a regular basis in *Y Celt*. He had rarely mentioned Congregational principles in the previous thirty years. He had objected to the 'One College movement', not because he believed it to be contrary to Congregational principle, but because of the 'trickery' of the scheme.<sup>152</sup> It is noteworthy that he had hoped that those who migrated to the Patagonian Settlement would not take their denominational differences with them, and that they would form non-denominational churches in the Chupat Valley.<sup>153</sup> In fact, Michael D. Jones does not seem to have held any particularly strong convictions on Congregationalism as a church order until the Bala dispute began in the late 1870s.

The fusion of Congregationalism and democracy in Jones's mind was revealed in his response to the 'clericalism' which he perceived among Nonconformist ministers, and especially within the 'Clique'. During the nineteenth century, the professionalization of the ministry, the role of education in ministerial training, and the concomitant broadening of interest into literary, political and social spheres, had all contributed towards empowering the Nonconformist ministry, both in the public perception and in

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<sup>152</sup> NLW, J. Dyfnallt Owen Papers A2002/27. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Edward Williams, Dinas Mawddwy, 23 May 1863.

<sup>153</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, c.1876. 'Gwyðox vy mod wedi ceisio gwneud heb enwadaeth yn y Wladva. Gyda doethineb credav y gallasem wneud heb yr ymraniadau syð yn ein mysg vel cenedl.'



the lives of the churches.<sup>154</sup> This became part of the dispute at Bala College when Michael D. Jones claimed that the 'Clique's' endorsement of ministerial status was apparent in the New Constitution. The New Constitution stated that only ministers were allowed to represent their churches at the annual subscribers' meeting, whereas the Old Constitution allowed laymen as well as ministers to be selected to represent their churches.<sup>155</sup> Moreover, Jones claimed that County Associations were nothing more than an opportunity for ambitious ministers to extend their influence over the churches. They were conducive to 'episcopacy, and a denial of the democratic principles of Congregationalism'.<sup>156</sup> 'Is this Congregationalism?' he asked when discussing the increasing status and influence of the ministry, before declaring unequivocally, 'No, but a dangerous clericalism, and the scheme leads to the Association, and from the Association to the bishop, and from the bishop to Rome'.<sup>157</sup>

In response to these 'clerical' tendencies, Jones maintained that, according to Congregational principle, the individual member had a right and responsibility to participate in the government of the church. This is most ironic bearing in mind that one of the accusations against Michael D. Jones was that he behaved like an autocrat and intimidated other members of the College Committee to conform to his wishes.<sup>158</sup> However, he contended that 'there is no mention of a church meeting or a conference in the New Testament without the *whole church* participating in the voting',<sup>159</sup> and in the 'one or two conferences' discussed in the Book of Acts, '*every member* of the

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<sup>154</sup> M. R. Watts, *The Dissenters*, II (Oxford, 1995), p.601; R. Tudur Jones, *Ffydd ac Argyfwng Cenedl*, II (Swansea, 1982), p.229.

<sup>155</sup> *Y Dysgedydd* (1877), 321. Clause 4.

<sup>156</sup> *Y Celt* (25 October 1878), 8.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>158</sup> *Y Dydd* (14 April 1876), 8-9; *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (6 April 1877), 1

<sup>159</sup> *Y Celt* (9 November 1883), 8.

church' participated in the decision-making.<sup>160</sup> Elsewhere, he claimed that 'the Christian church was, at first, a pure democracy, and as it became corrupt, it became more aristocratic, until its polity eventually turned military, and the bishops were made the source of authority instead of the people'.<sup>161</sup> On this basis, he argued that it was the responsibility of all Congregationalists to uphold 'the democratic principles and the legitimacy of royal priesthood',<sup>162</sup> though he admitted that church order in the New Testament was not set out in detail and that much was left to reason.

While Michael D. Jones was a fierce individualist, he was not opposed to the notion of delegating responsibilities to committees and conferences when it was considered practical. Most notably, Michael D. Jones was not opposed to an Executive Committee replacing the subscribers' meeting in order to manage Bala College.<sup>163</sup> In a private letter written soon after the revolt against the New Constitution, he stated that he had 'nothing against an administration managing the College by carrying out the will of the subscribers'.<sup>164</sup> More significantly, he admitted on another occasion that there were times when it was more practical for a Congregational church to appoint a committee to fulfil a specific task rather than discuss it in the presence of all its members.<sup>165</sup>

For Michael D. Jones, the 'democratic' principle of Congregationalism was that the entire church should have the final word in all matters. Each and every decision made

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., (27 June 1884), 9; (7 November 1884), 5; (29 October 1886), 1-2.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., (1 July 1887), 2.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., (17 May 1889), 1. The quotations come from Mt. 29:8-9.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>164</sup> Bangor MS 8052. Copies of letters sent by Michael D. Jones, 1863-92. 'Nid oes genyv ðim yn erbyn cael gweinyðiaeth i gario allan ewyllys y tanysgrifwyr yn rheolaeth yr athrofa'.

<sup>165</sup> *Y Celt* (22 August 1884), 8.



by a committee or a conference, even if it had been appointed by the church, needed the approval of the whole church in order to be legitimate. John Thomas presented a similar argument in his statement of Congregational principles. What is significant, however, is that Michael D. Jones referred to it as 'democratic' while John Thomas did not. In Congregationalism, the participation of all members in the government of the church was not essentially 'democratic' because Christ was its Head. Christ had entrusted to the church its power and authority, so 'that they may walk before him in all the ways of obedience, which he prescribeth to them in his Word'.<sup>166</sup> The local church was not to be governed arbitrarily by majority. It was supposed to seek 'unanimity in Christ' with the guidance of Scripture. 'Christocracy' would therefore be a more appropriate term than 'democracy' to describe the form of Congregational church government.<sup>167</sup> Yet Michael D. Jones did not refer to Christ as Head of the Church. For him, the local church, or the people, was the source of authority, and it was accountable to the universal moral law, but there was no mention of Christ. For example, he claimed that, in the New Testament, bishops and ordinary members were considered equal in the early churches,<sup>168</sup> and the role of ministers was to 'implement the will of the people'.<sup>169</sup> The Savoy Declaration stated that the church should 'choose persons fitted by the Holy Ghost ... to be over them, and to minister to them in the Lord'.<sup>170</sup> Although the Declaration did not discuss the minister's relationship with the church, it is clear that, while the ministers were certainly viewed as servants of the church, they and the people were meant to implement the will of Christ. However, this relationship between Christ and the local church was not apparent in

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<sup>166</sup> 'The Savoy Declaration', p.112.

<sup>167</sup> A. P. F. Sell, *Saints: Visible, Orderly and Catholic: The Congregational Idea of the Church* (Geneva, 1986), p.4.

<sup>168</sup> *Y Celt* (23 November 1883), 4.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, (9 November 1883), 8.

<sup>170</sup> 'The Savoy Declaration', p.113.

Michael D. Jones's work. In fact, he declared that 'the essence of Congregationalism is that *the people are the source of all authority*',<sup>171</sup> and that this was the Congregationalists' 'message to the world'.<sup>172</sup> There was certainly a 'close connection' between his 'ideas about church order' and his 'political creed',<sup>173</sup> but it was democracy, 'the only form of government that answers to the rights, development, and dignity of humanity',<sup>174</sup> that provided the basis for his definition of Congregationalism, rather than *vice versa*. Clearly, by claiming that Congregational principles could be applied to every form of social organization, Michael D. Jones had lost the crucial distinction that separated the church from other social organizations. Indeed, his claim that the people, rather than God or Christ, were the source of authority reveals a clear confusion between the principles of Congregationalism and democracy.

There is little doubt that both John Thomas and Michael D. Jones had personal reasons for taking their respective positions in the 'Battle of the Two Constitutions'. John Thomas's attempt to undermine Michael D. Jones's influence at Bala College was fuelled by both personal resentment and a sense of duty. Jones, on the other hand, was desperately hoping to avoid eviction from Bodiwan, and in his efforts, he sought the sympathy of those who had long suspected the centralist tendencies within Welsh Congregationalism. Despite being in firm opposition to each other, the arguments of Michael D. Jones and John Thomas were shaped by their views on contemporary political and religious trends. John Thomas sought to consolidate the gains made by the Welsh Congregational churches during the previous century, whereas Michael D.

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<sup>171</sup> *Y Celt* (9 November 1883), 8.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, (26 October 1883), 9.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, (1 July 1887), 2.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, (22 August 1884), 8.



Jones's ideas were shaped by contemporary liberal political thought, particularly the concept of democracy. Yet, while Michael D. Jones had confused Congregationalism and democracy, John Thomas held clear views on the sovereignty of the local church not only as an autonomous entity, but also as a holy society. Indeed, it was the argument of John Thomas that was most consistent with the principles of Congregational polity, but it was Michael D. Jones who gained a reputation as a steadfast Congregationalist. Rather than being an accurate reflection of his argument in the dispute, Jones's success in convincing many of his contemporaries, and following generations of Nonconformists, that he was the guardian of 'true Congregationalism' reveals his talents as a polemicist.

### **The Decapitation Committee**

When Michael D. Jones launched his first series of attacks on the 'Clique' in *Y Celt*, John Thomas may have thought it best not to respond. In the past, Jones's tirades had inflicted more damage on his own reputation than on those of others. But Michael D. Jones had further ideas. In March 1879, a few weeks prior to the subscribers' meeting that was to be held at Shrewsbury, Michael D. Jones and his supporters announced in the press that a committee was to meet under the Old Constitution at Bala on the same day.<sup>175</sup> That meeting declared the illegitimacy of all that had been carried out under the New Constitution, and reaffirmed the authority of the Old Constitution. It called upon the College treasurer, John H. Jones of Aberdyfi, to transfer the £1,200 which had been collected by Michael D. Jones and S. R. over the previous years, and condemned its use for any purpose other than the construction of a college building at

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid., (7 March 1879), 8; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.176-7.

Bala.<sup>176</sup> It also requested that the trusteeship of the College property be transferred to a board of 27 trustees, of whom a list had already been drawn out.<sup>177</sup> Clearly, the intention was to seize control of Bodiwan before the New Constitution committee could do so. Nevertheless, being aware of the risks, Michael D. Jones sought alternative lodgings should he be evicted from Bodiwan.<sup>178</sup>

This open rebellion threw the College's Executive Committee into disarray. At the subscribers' meeting, it was decided that the only solution to the situation was to convert Bodiwan into a college building. Michael D. Jones was to receive an additional £50 as his annual salary, and given as much time as was reasonably needed to find, or construct, another home.<sup>179</sup> However, a committee which had been appointed by the Executive Committee on the previous day failed to nominate thirteen trustees to administer the College's property. Another committee was appointed to prepare a 'Basis of Arbitration' between the two parties involved in the dispute, but it failed to find terms that were acceptable to both sides.<sup>180</sup> By the end of May, the supporters of the New Constitution had decided that they had no choice but to take further measures against Michael D. Jones. A meeting would be held at Shrewsbury in July 1879, at which the subscribers would be faced with the decision

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<sup>176</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (4 April 1879), 5; *Y Celt* (4 April 1879), 1, 14; *Y Celt* (19 September 1884), 8-9; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.182-5.

<sup>177</sup> *Y Celt* (4 April 1879), 11; Bangor MS 7525. Letter from Llywelyn Adams to Thomas Davies, 21 May 1879.

<sup>178</sup> Bangor MS 8052. Copies of letters sent by Michael D. Jones, 1863-92.

<sup>179</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (4 April 1879), 3-4; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.178-82.

<sup>180</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.185-94.



of 'whether to drop the Constitution and the Government of the College underfoot, or sever every connection with the Rev. M. D. Jones as tutor'.<sup>181</sup>

Michael D. Jones had little doubt as to what would be the outcome of the meeting at the Welsh Congregational Chapel in Shrewsbury on 15 July 1879. In a private letter to Herber Evans, minister at Caernarfon, Michael D. Jones stated that 'the only aim of the Shrewsbury meeting is to decide whether or not to expel M. D. Jones'. But he added that 'the gallows had been raised before it was known whether M. D. Jones would offend' and 'the decision to hang' had been made in May.<sup>182</sup> Attended by over 160 of the College's subscribers, the meeting was chaired by Edward Stephen, minister at Tanymarian. Significantly, Stephen opened the meeting by declaring his pleasure of being 'in at the death'.<sup>183</sup> Shortly after the opening addresses, Michael D. Jones was asked whether he would acknowledge the legitimacy of the New Constitution, to which he replied that those present were well aware of his views on the matter. Despite calls from Jones's supporters for a vote of 'no confidence' in the Executive Committee's proceedings, Michael D. Jones was again asked to acknowledge the legitimacy of the New Constitution. Again, he refused. After further discussion on the matter, Jones stated that he refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the meeting, at which point the chapel began to resound with chants of 'vote, vote'. Ap Vychan warned those present that 'caution should be taken before decapitating a

<sup>181</sup> *Athrofa Annibynnol y Bala*. A pamphlet announcing a special meeting of subscribers at Shrewsbury on 25 June 1879. It was later rescheduled for 15 July 1879. NLW, J. Dyfnallt Owen Papers. '... naill ai gollwng y Cyfansoddiad a Llywodraeth y Coleg dan draed, neu ynte dori pob cysylltiad â'r Parch M. D. Jones fel athraw'. See also, *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (13 June 1879), 9-10.

<sup>182</sup> Bangor MS 8052. Copy of a letter from Michael D. Jones to E. Herber Evans, 11 July 1879. 'Cofiwch mai unig amcan cwrð yr Amwythig yw diarðel M. D. Jones neu beidio. Yr oed y crogbren wedi ei godi cyn gwybod a bechai M. D. Jones.'

<sup>183</sup> For Edward Stephen ('Tanymarian', 1822-85), see W. J. Parry, *Cofiant Tanymarian* (Dolgellau, 1886); *DWB*.

man away from home', which caused an uproar and led to his words having to be withdrawn. Michael D. Jones was accused of canvassing the whole country to gather 'faggot votes' to manipulate the outcome of the meeting, an allegation that, in light of his former activity, was by no means unreasonable. Jones was then asked for a third and final time to acknowledge the New Constitution, this time by signing a document, but yet again, he refused. Consequently, a vote was called on the motion of 'severing every connection between Michael D. Jones and Bala College'. 156 voted in favour of the motion, and only 8 opposed it. The decision was enacted from that day, and that momentous meeting at Shrewsbury became known by both parties as 'the Decapitation Committee'.<sup>184</sup>

Michael D. Jones returned to Bala with the intention of gathering the students who supported him and of reopening the College under the Old Constitution. He won the support of only four students, but from that time, two Congregational Colleges were kept at Bala, each claiming to be the *bona fide* Bala Independent College. Both Colleges held their classes at Bodiwan for a little over a month, until the Old Constitution College Committee readmitted eight students who had initially turned their backs on Michael D. Jones but had later changed their minds.<sup>185</sup> The Committee convened on Thursday, 4 September 1879, and the following day, Thomas Lewis and 35 of the New Constitution College were locked out of Bodiwan.<sup>186</sup> The New Constitution College kept the £1,200 that was raised in the 1870s towards the new college building, much to Michael D. Jones's consternation. However, the trustees,

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<sup>184</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (25 July 1879), 9; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.195-201.

<sup>185</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.206.

<sup>186</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (19 September 1879), 10; R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.207.



who had been appointed by the Old Constitution party, refused to transfer Bodiwan to the New Constitution College, and it was forced to move to Plas Tryweryn, and then to Plas-yn-dre at Bala. It remained there until 1886, when Samuel Morley, a Nonconformist Member of Parliament, offered £1,500 to the New Constitution College on the condition that it was moved to Bangor.

### **Reconciliation**

Three attempts were made to reconcile the two parties following the schism in 1879, but all were in vain.<sup>187</sup> A decade elapsed before the two Colleges reunited. In view of Michael D. Jones's steadfast defence of the Old Constitution after 1879, it came as a surprise when he suggested at a Committee meeting in April 1889 that an effort should be made to come to an understanding with the other party.<sup>188</sup> This sudden willingness to settle the differences was stimulated by the £5,000 which had been bequeathed to 'Bala Independent College' by John Rylands, a successful merchant from the north of England. Michael D. Jones's concern was that the money would be spent on legal expenses while seeking to determine which of the two institutions could be considered as the authentic 'Bala College'. Nevertheless, Jones did not compromise his position in his appeal for reconciliation, which he made at a meeting of the College Committee in April 1889. Indeed, he reiterated that the College should be governed by the subscribers, before closing his address with an explanation that he had reached old age and that 'at the end of a stormy voyage, it would be pleasant to have fair weather for his vessel to sail into the harbour, with the sun of success beaming on the sails'.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.219-45.

<sup>188</sup> *Y Celt* (17 May 1889), 1.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

Michael D. Jones played little further part in the reconciliation, but his initial contribution, and his approval of the proceedings, were crucial to the process that culminated in the unification of the two Colleges in September 1890.<sup>190</sup> All but one of the College's departments were moved to Bangor, and the entire College had been moved by 1892. As for the constitution, the control of Bala College was returned to the subscribers as it had been under the Old Constitution. Michael D. Jones retired because of ill health before the terms of the agreement were enacted, under which he retained his title as principal and was permitted to spend the rest of his life at Bodiwan.

Evan Pan Jones was diplomatic in his final assessment of the dispute. He asserted that 'the peace was so complete that none of the parties could claim victory over the other, and neither could feel that it had lost anything'.<sup>191</sup> John Thomas was, according to his biographers, satisfied with the terms of the agreement.<sup>192</sup> Yet, even though the College was moved from Bala to Bangor, it is difficult not to agree with R. G. Owen's conclusion that it was Michael D. Jones who had won the day, not because the College's management was placed back in the hands of the subscribers, but because he was allowed to stay at Bodiwan and receive a full annual salary for the rest of his life.<sup>193</sup> After all, this had been Jones's primary aim.

The 'Battle of the Two Constitutions' was a climax to years of mounting tension between Michael D. Jones and other Welsh Congregationalists. Since his appointment

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<sup>190</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', pp.279-85.

<sup>191</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.165.

<sup>192</sup> O. Thomas a J. M. Rees, *Cofiant John Thomas, D. D.*, p.356.

<sup>193</sup> R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', p.285.



as principal of the College, Jones had turned others against him because of his impulsive response to criticism, and his refusal to co-operate with the intentions of the 'One College' movement. His decision to sell Bodiwan to the College in an attempt to avoid financial ruin also incurred the resentment of others who were closely associated with the institution, and made him vulnerable to criticism from his established adversaries. Indeed, there is little doubt that the New Constitution was devised in order to undermine Michael D. Jones's position at Bala Independent College, and hold him accountable for allowing his personal situation to affect the running of the institution. Having realized that the approval of the New Constitution by the College Committee could lead to his eviction from Bodiwan, Michael D. Jones was faced with little choice but to revolt against it. However, the ensuing 'battle' turned into a clash of principle. No threat was posed to the sovereignty of the churches. Rather, it was a dispute over the application of Congregational principle to other institutions and organizations, and the role of the County Associations within Welsh Congregationalism. It was Michael D. Jones who brought these issues into the discussion. By so doing, he led fellow Congregationalists to believe that a dispute which had been caused by his own financial difficulties was a 'battle for the freedom of every person in the denomination'.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> *Y Celt* (6 December 1878), 11-12.

## Chapter 9

## The Patagonian Settlement

1865-92

The first thirty years of the Patagonian Settlement's existence have been described as a 'Golden Age' for the Welsh language. The socio-linguist Robert Owen Jones has claimed that it was during those years that the Welsh community in the Chupat Valley showed 'what could be achieved in social, religious, educational and economic terms by people who controlled their own lives and destinies'.<sup>1</sup> Michael D. Jones's involvement in the Patagonian movement was virtually coterminous with this period. For years, he promoted the movement in the Welsh press, before he finally retired from public life in 1892. Yet, despite his crucial role in financing the venture, his relationship with the Welsh community in the Chupat Valley has received scant attention from historians. This chapter will discuss Michael D. Jones's relationship with the Patagonian Settlement following its establishment in 1865. An evaluation of

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<sup>1</sup> R. O. Jones, 'The Welsh Language in Patagonia', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cardiff, 1998), p.287; R. O. Jones, *Yr Efengyl yn y Wladfa* (Swansea, 1987), p.8.



his promotional work will reveal his increasing separation from other participants in the movement and his difficulties in gathering widespread support for the Settlement. Alongside an analysis of Jones's role within the movement, the chapter will also discuss his aspirations for the Settlement as tensions developed between the settlers and the Argentine government. In addition, an evaluation will be made of Jones's influence on life in the Chupat Valley during a period that would determine the success or the failure of the Patagonian venture.

### **Promoting the Settlement**

The period that followed the establishment of the Settlement in 1865 was one of hardship, not only for Michael D. Jones, but also for those who had made the journey to Patagonia. While Jones struggled to keep his finances under control, the arid terrain caused difficulty for the settlers in their attempts to cultivate the land. Almost immediately, the inadequacy of the Liverpool Committee's arrangements was revealed to the settlers. Grievances soon intensified. Disappointment with the poor quality of the land was compounded by the anxiety caused by the settlers' dependence on food and provisions that were imported from Rio Negro or Buenos Aires at the expense of the Argentine government. In November 1865, tensions erupted. Lewis Jones, the Settlement's President, came under the criticism of settlers who challenged his account of pledges made by the Argentine government.<sup>2</sup> Disheartened by this uprising, Lewis Jones abandoned the Settlement and moved to Buenos Aires, where he worked as a printer for *The Buenos Aires Standard*. For more than a year, the settlers persevered in their efforts to cultivate the land on the banks of the Chupat River, but following the failure of another harvest in 1866-7, a significant

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<sup>2</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa* (Cardiff, 1962), pp.98-103.

number of them<sup>3</sup> expressed to the Argentine government their desire to abandon the Chupat Valley for a more suitable location.<sup>4</sup>

Upon hearing of these developments, Lewis Jones entered into negotiations with the Argentine government and secured another year's supply of provisions for the Welsh settlers on condition that they remained on the banks of the Chupat. He then returned to Patagonia and persuaded the majority of the settlers to stay for another harvest season to see whether or not their circumstances improved.<sup>5</sup> Soon afterwards, the settlers made a timely breakthrough that ensured a successful harvest in 1867-8. Rather than awaiting rainfall, it was realized that the land could be irrigated by diverting water from the Chupat River.<sup>6</sup> While this discovery was by no means the end of the Settlement's problems, it would prove vital to its continued existence.<sup>7</sup>

Michael D. Jones played little part in these events. Given the distance which separated him from the Settlement (some seven thousand miles), it is hardly surprising that the details of life in Patagonia, its geography and climate, were a mystery to him. The slow and unreliable means of communication with the Settlement meant that Jones's understanding of the circumstances faced by the

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<sup>3</sup> There is some degree of uncertainty regarding the number of settlers who wanted to abandon the Chupat Valley. According to R. J. Berwyn, one of the settlers who were reluctant to move, about half of them were willing to stay in the Chupat Valley. E. MacDonald, *Yr Hirdaith* (Llandysul, 1999), p.126. According to R. Bryn Williams, three families were to stay in the Chupat Valley, another three families wanted to move to the banks of the Rio Negro, and the rest intended to leave for the province of Santa Fé. R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.115.

<sup>4</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.114-5.

<sup>5</sup> Three families left for the province of Rio Negro, which is about two hundred miles to the north of the Chupat Valley. R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.115.

<sup>6</sup> E. F. Hunt, 'Aaron Jenkins, The Man who Saved the Welsh Colony, Patagonia', *The Welsh Outlook* (1929), p.327; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.118-9.

<sup>7</sup> E. MacDonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, p.148; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.118-9.



settlers was severely limited. He visited Patagonia only once, in 1882, and spent no more than four months at the Settlement. He monitored the settlers' progress by corresponding with the community's leading figures and reading letters that settlers had sent to friends and relatives in Wales. In fact, Michael D. Jones drew on as wide a variety of information as he could in order to form an opinion on the Settlement's progress.

Not only were Michael D. Jones's connections with the Settlement weak and unreliable, but he also seemed isolated in his promotion of the movement in Wales. In the months following the departure of *Mimosa*, a rift developed between Jones and members of the Liverpool Committee who had also chosen not to make the journey. As has been mentioned, the rift occurred following Michael D. Jones's decision to support Thomas Cadivor Wood's Colonizing Company. While Michael D. Jones saw potential in the Company as a means of accelerating the development of the Settlement, the Liverpool Committee disapproved of the scheme because of its suspicion of Cadivor Wood's interest in the Patagonian venture.<sup>8</sup> The Committee made its views known to Michael D. Jones, who, unsurprisingly, refused to change his position. This ended his association with the Committee.

None of the remaining members of the Committee rose to prominence as promoters of the movement following the Settlement's establishment.<sup>9</sup> Those who had been most active in Liverpool over the previous years, namely Hugh Hughes, Lewis Jones and Edwin Roberts, had travelled to Patagonia in 1865. Indeed, it would appear that,

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<sup>8</sup> Bangor MS 7565. Letter from the Liverpool Committee to Michael D. Jones, 7 December 1865.

<sup>9</sup> The individuals who had signed the letter were H. M. Jones, A. Williams, J. Edwards, O. Edwards, J. Hughes, J. Griffiths and W. D. Jones.

following the disagreement with Michael D. Jones, the Committee discontinued its work.<sup>10</sup> Owen Edwards, who had been a member of the Committee since the 1850s, supported Michael D. Jones in this dispute and became a director of the Colonizing Company. In fact, as the Liverpool Committee became inactive, the Company emerged as the focal point of the movement. Yet, none of the Company's directors – Captain Richard Delahoyde of Aberystwyth; Griffith William Thomas, accountant from Chester; and Thomas Wood, estate agent in Chester and father of Thomas Cadivor Wood – seemed to take any part in the promotion of the movement.<sup>11</sup>

Lewis Jones, in his account of the Settlement's history, noted that Michael D. Jones had a 'cluster of believing disciples' in Wales.<sup>12</sup> He was probably referring to the Bala students – David Rees, Lewis Humphreys and David Lloyd Jones – who, despite having no part in the promotion of the Settlement in the early 1860s, stayed with the passengers in Liverpool while *Mimosa* was prepared for sea.<sup>13</sup> Lewis Humphreys travelled to Patagonia with the first group of settlers in 1865, but he returned to Wales the following year having suffered an illness, and he went on to serve churches in Meirionnydd, Carmarthenshire and Merthyr. He remained a keen supporter of the Welsh Settlement throughout the years, and eventually returned to

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<sup>10</sup> The only member of the Company who participated in the formation of the original committee was Owen Edwards, Williamson Square. There is no mention of the Liverpool Society after this episode. Bangor MS 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company'; 7570. Letter from Owen Edwards to Michael D. Jones, 22 May 1871; NLW 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends at the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>11</sup> *Llythyrâu a ddaethant o'r sefydlwyr yn y Wladfa Gymreig, Gweriniaeth Arianin, Deheudir America* (1866), p.1.

<sup>12</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig: Tiriogaeth Chubut, yn y Weriniaeth Arianin, De Amerig* (Caernarfon, 1898), p.91.

<sup>13</sup> *Y Drafod* (24 February 1911), 3; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.81; A. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig yn Patagonia* (Aberdare, 1894), p.12; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), p.200; *Y Drafod* (25 March 1910), 1.



Patagonia in 1886.<sup>14</sup> David Rees served as a minister in his native county of Cardiganshire, and later in Anglesey and Dowlais.<sup>15</sup> Rees was supportive of the movement's aims, and accompanied Michael D. Jones on his visit to Patagonia in 1882, but he did not participate much in its promotion. The most active of the three was David Lloyd Jones, minister at Ffestiniog.<sup>16</sup> Lloyd Jones increased his involvement in the movement by becoming the Colonizing Company's secretary in 1865, and in 1870 the Company's offices were moved from Bala to Rhuthun, where he was minister.<sup>17</sup> In the press, however, Michael D. Jones seemed to be the only person who was promoting the Patagonian movement. His reports of the Settlement's development appeared in papers that were supportive of the movement's aims, such as *Y Dydd* and *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*.<sup>18</sup> While Jones had struggled to influence the movement prior to the establishment of the Settlement, he found, only a few years later, that he was virtually alone in promoting the venture.

Opposition to the Patagonian movement did not seem particularly widespread in the Welsh press, though some papers, such as *Yr Herald Cymraeg* and *Y Gwladgarwr*, were more critical than others of the venture.<sup>19</sup> The uncertainty over the future of the community in the Chupat Valley, especially between 1865 and 1867, gave rise to all

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<sup>14</sup> For Lewis Humphreys (1837-1910), see NLW, Typescript. D. J. Williams, 'Hanes Coleg Bala-Bangor'.

<sup>15</sup> For David Rees (1839-1917), see NLW, Typescript. D. J. Williams, 'Hanes Coleg Bala-Bangor'.

<sup>16</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 7 July 1871.

<sup>17</sup> Bangor MS 819. Minute book of 'The Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company'.

<sup>18</sup> *Y Dydd* (13 December 1873), 11; (23 January 1874), 4-5; (10 April 1874), 4-5; (4 September 1874), 11; (5 December 1873), 9; *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (21 January 1874), 14; (11 February 1874), 13; (10 October 1866), 13; (20 December 1871), 13; (11 February 1874), 13.

<sup>19</sup> NLW 4616 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to D. S. Davies, 7 August 1872.

kinds of speculation. In January 1866, *Yr Herald Cymraeg* published a rumour that a third of the passengers on *Mimosa* had died of famine, while many others were working in guano mines, and being paid next to nothing for their labour.<sup>20</sup> In order to quash these rumours, the Colonizing Company published a collection of letters which settlers had sent to their families and friends in Wales.<sup>21</sup> Michael D. Jones knew that the situation at the Settlement was not as reassuring as he had suggested in his letters to the press, but he was aware that any bad news from Patagonia could threaten the movement's prospects. For example, when the venture seemed to be on the verge of collapse in 1866, he advised Lewis Jones that a small group of settlers should stay in the Chupat Valley while the others moved to Patagones, another settlement which lay about two hundred miles north on the estuary of the Rio Negro.<sup>22</sup> Despite calling on the Liverpool Committee to direct the settlers to Rio Negro rather than Chupat, he was at this time reluctant to see the settlers abandon the Chupat Valley. He feared that, if the Chupat Valley were abandoned altogether, the Settlement would lose whatever 'prestige' it had.<sup>23</sup>

The positive spin that Michael D. Jones put on the news arriving from Patagonia may have counterbalanced the occasional criticism which appeared in the press,<sup>24</sup> but there was little sign that he was gathering additional support for the movement. Jones had hoped that a second group of settlers would sail to Patagonia soon after *Mimosa*, but this had not materialized, probably due to a shortage of financial resources and

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<sup>20</sup> *Yr Herald Cymraeg* (27 January 1866), 5.

<sup>21</sup> *Llythyrâu a ddaethant o'r sefydlwyr yn y Wladfa Gymreig, Gweriniaeth Arianin, Deheudir America* (1866).

<sup>22</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.102.

<sup>23</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 17 November 1868. 'Os collir dyffryn y Camwy, byð *prestige* y Wladva wedi myned.'

<sup>24</sup> *Yr Herald Cymraeg* (3 March 1866), 7; (17 March 1866), 7.



passengers. He had announced as early as 1866 that ships travelling to Buenos Aires departed from Liverpool on a fortnightly basis,<sup>25</sup> yet no significant increase in the Settlement's population was registered until 1875.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, it was a lack of public support that also prevented the Colonizing Company from raising sufficient capital to hire or purchase a vessel to carry immigrants from Wales to the Settlement. The Settlement was given a considerable amount of column space in papers such as *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* and *Y Dydd*, which were generally supportive to its aims, but the negligible flow of Welsh immigrants to Patagonia and the Colonizing Company's difficulty in raising capital would suggest that Michael D. Jones's promotional work had either little or no effect on the population at large.

Alongside this, Jones had little success in his efforts to promote the Settlement among expatriate Welsh communities in Australia and the United States. There is nothing to suggest that Jones had promoted the movement in Australia prior to May 1866, when he received a letter from a Welshman in Ballarat, Victoria, who stated that he and eight others intended to travel to the Patagonian Settlement. The letter had been passed on to him by one John Roberts of Brynsiencyn, Anglesey, though he began to doubt its authenticity when he failed to contact Roberts in order to question him about its content.<sup>27</sup> The following August, Jones received a visit from Evan Ellis Jones, a Welshman from Mold who had been to Australia but returned to Wales with the intention of joining the settlers in the Chupat Valley. At the request of his visitor, Jones wrote a promotional letter to the Welsh-Australian periodical *Yr Awstralydd*.<sup>28</sup>

In one of his letters to Lewis Jones, Michael D. Jones also claimed that a group of

<sup>25</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (28 March 1866), 14.

<sup>26</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.320.

<sup>27</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (23 May 1866), 13-14.

<sup>28</sup> *Yr Awstralydd* (January 1867), 100-4.

thirty people in Australia were planning to travel to the Settlement in December 1866.<sup>29</sup> However, there is no suggestion that this group ever departed for, or arrived at, the Patagonian Settlement, and there is no reason to believe that Jones's correspondence with the Welsh in Australia was, for practical reasons, anything but brief and unfruitful.

As the movement seemed to be making little progress in Wales, Jones found new hope of success in the United States. In 1868, he received an encouraging letter from David Stephen Davies, Welsh Congregational minister in Youngstown, Ohio. In the letter, Davies claimed to be writing on behalf of a number of wealthy Welsh farmers in the United States who had expressed a desire to emigrate to Patagonia. He also claimed that he could get fifty thousand American Welsh to Patagonia in five years.<sup>30</sup> This figure was grossly over-estimated, but Michael D. Jones found comfort in the belief that the next immigrants to the Welsh Settlement would come from the United States, and he had always believed that the American Welsh would be better pioneers of the movement.<sup>31</sup> In 1870-1, he promoted the Settlement and the Colonizing Company while touring the United States to raise funds for Bala Independent College. Between August 1870 and February 1871, his itinerary took him to the four eastern states of New York, Virginia, New Jersey and Ohio,<sup>32</sup> and he left the United States claiming that his promotional work had provided a good foundation for further

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<sup>29</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 12 July 1866.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 October 1868.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*; 17 November 1868; 22 November 1872.

<sup>32</sup> Bangor MS 7949. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1870; Bangor MS 7950. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1871.



activity.<sup>33</sup> ‘America,’ he wrote, ‘is now my greatest hope for immigration, and support for the company’.<sup>34</sup> Yet the apparent success of the movement in the United States, under the leadership of David S. Davies, in the early 1870s highlights Michael D. Jones’s failure to gather support for the movement in Wales. In November 1871, William S. Jones, editor of the Welsh American periodical *Baner America*, wrote to Michael D. Jones to the effect that: ‘If you [the movement] are succeeding in Wales as you are in America,’ he wrote, ‘I believe that there will be genuine success’.<sup>35</sup> This was clearly not the case.

Michael D. Jones’s view of the Settlement’s needs and requirements was somewhat simplistic. His primary concern, especially once the settlers had successfully raised crops in the Chupat Valley, was the need for more emigration to Patagonia. This, he believed, would secure the dominance of the Welsh language, and, in the long term, secure provincial status for the Settlement. Yet, bearing in mind his limited understanding of the circumstances at the Settlement, this could have resulted in disaster. Indeed, his belief that a wave of immigrants would soon travel from the United States to the Patagonian Settlement caused some alarm to H. G. MacDonnell, the British government’s representative in Buenos Aires. In 1871, MacDonnell received a letter from Michael D. Jones informing him that hundreds of Welsh Americans were preparing to leave for Patagonia. Having heard that the Settlement

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<sup>33</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 7 July 1871.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. ‘O’r America mae vy mrv obaith yn awr am ymvudiaeth, a xevnogaeth i’r cwmni.’

<sup>35</sup> Bangor MS 7571. Letter from W. S. Jones, Scranton, to Michael D. Jones, 3 November 1871. ‘Os ydych yn llwyddo yn Nghymru fel yn America, credym y daw yn llwyddiant mewn gwirionedd.’ For more information on the development of the movement in the United States, see L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, pp.24-8; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.142, 144.

could barely provide for 150 settlers, he requested that the British Emigration Committee circulate cautionary posters in the press in Wales and the United States. This was met by what G. Dyfnallt Owen described as an 'unequivocal declaration of faith in the future of the colony' from Michael D. Jones, which led to the poster being withdrawn.<sup>36</sup> 'To stop emigration would be to damage the colony,' Jones warned MacDonnell. 'What is needed is more emigrants with more capital and more labour to work with the canal'.<sup>37</sup>

Again, Michael D. Jones had over-estimated the extent of support for the Patagonian movement. Between 1871 and 1876, the Colonizing Company in the United States purchased and supervised three vessels: *Rush*, *Electric Spark* and *Lucerne*. In 1872, 29 passengers travelled aboard *Rush*, but most of them dispersed at Montevideo. In 1874, 33 passengers sailed on *Electric Spark*, but it was shipwrecked off the coast of Brazil, though without the loss of any lives. The only ship to reach the Settlement was *Lucerne*, which arrived with 49 settlers in early 1876.<sup>38</sup> Had all of these ships reached their final destination, it is possible that they would have been able to carry more settlers from the United States to Patagonia, but it is unlikely that they would have carried the wave of immigrants that Michael D. Jones had hoped would travel to the Settlement.

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<sup>36</sup> G. D. Owen, *Crisis in Chubut* (Swansea, 1977), pp.22-3.

<sup>37</sup> Public Record Office. Foreign Office 6/309. Letter from Michael D. Jones to H. G. MacDonnell, 25 October 1871, quoted in G. D. Owen, *Crisis in Chubut*, p.22. He was referring to the Settlement's irrigation system, which comprised of a network of canals branching from the Chupat River.

<sup>38</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.141-5.



Circumstances at the Settlement improved considerably in the early 1870s. The number of hectares that were sown increased from 250 in 1871 to 867 in 1875.<sup>39</sup> In 1874, Michael D. Jones could declare triumphantly that ‘the settlers have won a victory amid the complaints of thousands of censors and a host of fierce enemies. The Settlement is a small yet solemn fact, such as a little leaven in a large tubful of flour, and no one can afford to deride it any more’.<sup>40</sup> Yet while the Settlement was showing encouraging signs of economic progress, it experienced little population growth until 1875-6, when about four hundred immigrants, mostly from south Wales, arrived within the space of four months.<sup>41</sup> Promotion of the movement in Wales continued to have little effect, but Jones seemed to consider the progress of the Settlement a victory not only for the settlers, but also for himself. Clearly, however, this progress was not the result of Jones’s promotional work but of the hard work of the Welsh community in Patagonia.

### **The Welsh Settlement and Congregationalism in Wales**

The tensions at Bala Independent College during the 1870s and their apparent effect on attempts to promote the Patagonian movement give further reason to question the value of Michael D. Jones’s contribution to the Settlement’s development. Within Congregational circles, resentment mounted against Jones when, in 1870, it became public knowledge that he had sold his home to the College in order to pay debts which he had incurred through his involvement in the Patagonian scheme. Moreover, the fortunes of the Welsh Settlement suddenly became of particular interest to Welsh Congregationalists. Opinions on the Patagonian venture were polarized between

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.320.

<sup>40</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (11 February 1874), 13.

<sup>41</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.152.

those who were supportive of Michael D. Jones, such as S. R. of Llanbryn-mair,<sup>42</sup> and those who were most critical of the College's purchase of Bodiwan, such as John Thomas. Michael D. Jones's claims that a 'clique' was attempting to centralize Congregationalism in Wales was answered by similar claims that a 'Patagonian *clique*' had taken control of the College. In 1876, for example, one critic wrote:

We have known for years that there is a *clique* in the Bala College Committee, namely the Patagonian *clique*. We also know that there is nothing too low for this *clique* in its efforts to control the committee, and in altering the purposes of the institution so that they support their own foolish hobby.<sup>43</sup>

Such was the extent of this hostility that it was even claimed that leading Congregationalists had conspired against Michael D. Jones's efforts on behalf of the Patagonian venture, and had tried to prevent him from receiving financial support from his friends. In August 1871, for example, a testimonial for Michael D. Jones was launched 'as a token of respect and esteem' and 'an expression of sympathy for his present troubles'.<sup>44</sup> The amount raised in testimonials could vary considerably, depending on the time given to collect the money, the number of other testimonials that were collected at the time, and also the profile of the individual. S. R. received a testimonial of nearly £700 on his return from the United States in 1868,<sup>45</sup> while Hugh Pugh, one of the earliest campaigners in Wales for the disestablishment of the

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<sup>42</sup> *Yr Herald Cymraeg* (11 May 1877), quoted in R. G. Owen, 'Brwydr y Ddau Gyfansoddiad, 1877-85', (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Wales, 1941), p.91.

<sup>43</sup> *Y Dydd* (10 November 1876), 10.

<sup>44</sup> Bangor MS 728. Testimonial of the Revd M. D. Jones, Bala. 1871.

<sup>45</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (18 March 1868), 16.



Anglican Church, received little more than £50 in 1867.<sup>46</sup> The collection for Michael D. Jones reached £400, a respectable sum by the standards of the age, and the contributors included reputable individuals such as Lewis Edwards, principal of the Calvinistic Methodist College in Bala; Henry Richard, MP for Merthyr Tydfil; and Charles de Gaulle, a Celtic scholar from Brittany who had expressed interest in the Welsh Settlement in 1865.<sup>47</sup>

However, writing in *Y Dydd* in August 1872, Rhys Mynwy Thomas, minister at Llanuwchllyn,<sup>48</sup> suggested that the collection for Michael D. Jones had been less than expected because of a plot against him. Thomas claimed that a number of testimonials had been launched soon after the one for Jones with the intention of adversely affecting the sum collected. The blame for this, he declared, could be laid squarely on the Liverpool ministry and *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (the Congregational weekly paper) with specific mention made of the latter's editor.<sup>49</sup> One of the two editors was none other than John Thomas of Liverpool, who would become Jones's fiercest opponent when the dispute broke out over Bala College's constitution in later years. In a letter to Lewis Jones, Michael D. Jones also noted the sinister intentions that were behind the other testimonials which had been launched in 1871. Ambrose Lloyd of Liverpool had received £200, John Davies of Cardiff £400, William Griffiths of

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., (26 June 1867), 16.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., (9 October 1872), 15; Bangor MS 728. Testimonial of the Revd M. D. Jones, Bala. 1871; 7564. Letter from Charles de Gaulle to Michael D. Jones, 21 April 1865.

<sup>48</sup> For Rhys Mynwy Thomas (1830-1920), see R. T. Jenkins, *Hanes Cynulleidfa Hen Gapel Llanuwchllyn* (Bala, 1937), pp.186-8.

<sup>49</sup> *Y Dydd* (9 August 1872), 11.

Holyhead £250, and Samuel Evans of Llandegle £150. 'It was the *Clique*,' he wrote, 'that did this'.<sup>50</sup>

Jones was particularly suspicious of John Thomas. In a letter published in November 1871, for example, he declared that he had 'no confidence' in Thomas's 'friendliness towards the College, the testimonial, or the Settlement'.<sup>51</sup> In a letter written to David Stephen Davies the following August, he wrote: '*Y Tyst a'r Dydd* is denominational in purpose, but its editors have been hostile to the Settlement from the outset,' and he noted that 'John Thomas is the leader of the opposition with Noah Stephens [co-editor of *Y Tyst a'r Dydd*]'.<sup>52</sup> Relations between Jones and *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* deteriorated further in early 1873 when he took legal action against the paper for publishing the libellous comments of 'Cymro Cloff' (A Lame Welshman). In December 1872, Cymro Cloff accused him of making false promises to Welsh immigrants and sending them to Patagonia, a 'worldly paradise', where they would, in fact, be no more than slaves.<sup>53</sup> Having refused to reveal the writer's identity, Joseph Williams, the paper's proprietor, was ordered to pay £30.16s.2d. in damages.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 21 October 1872. '*Y Clique* syδ wedi gwneud hyn.'

<sup>51</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (29 November 1871), 13.

<sup>52</sup> NLW MS 4616 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to D. S. Davies, 7 August 1872. 'Y mae'r "Tyst a'r Dyδ" yn enwadol mewn pwrpas, ond gelynlol i'r Wladva yw ei olygyδion o'r dexreu, er eu bod yn Anybynwyr, a John Thomas Liverpool yw aweinyδ yr elyniaeth a Noah Stephens. Y maent hwy wedi bod yn elynol i'n hathrova yn eu ffordδ eu hunain o vod, ond y maent wedi eu trexu.' For Noah Stephens (1823-74), see J. Thomas, *Cofiant y Tri Brawd* (Liverpool, 1876), pp.120-232.

<sup>53</sup> *Y Tyst a'r Dydd* (6 December 1872), 10.

<sup>54</sup> Bangor MS 7497. Letter from Joseph Williams to Michael D. Jones, 18 April 1873; 7579. Letter from D. Jones, Merthyr Tydfil, to Michael D. Jones, 18 March 1873; 7580. Letter from Joseph Williams, Merthyr Tydfil, to R. Knowles, 21 April 1873; 7581. Letter from R. Knowles to Michael D. Jones, 31 July 1873.



Michael D. Jones made similar claims after experiencing difficulties with the Patagonian mission, which he launched in 1873. Many years earlier, he had hoped that the Settlement would become the force for evangelizing South America, but financial difficulties had prevented him from raising funds to achieve this aim. By early 1873, his situation had stabilized and he found sufficient relief to pursue this objective once more by organizing the collection of funds for a Patagonian mission.<sup>55</sup>

*Cymdeithas Genhadol Patagonia* (The Patagonian Missionary Society) was founded with Thomas Gee, editor and publisher of *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, as its treasurer, and while Michael D. Jones does not seem to have held any formal office, he was its chief promoter. The venture was publicized as a non-denominational scheme, but most of the people involved were Congregationalists. Thomas Gee was a Calvinistic Methodist, but the deputy treasurers – William Edwards of Aberdare and William Thomas of Bwlchnewydd – were both Congregationalists, as were the two missionaries – Abraham Matthews and David Lloyd Jones – both of whom were also former students of Bala Independent College. As a venture that was primarily conducted by Congregationalists, Michael D. Jones had hoped that the bulk of support would come from the Congregational churches of Wales.<sup>56</sup>

However, the mission suffered financial difficulties from the outset. It struggled to secure contributions either from missionary societies or from the public. Jones was unsuccessful with his applications for support from the Calvinistic Methodist Missionary Society, the Colonial Missionary Society, and the London Missionary

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<sup>55</sup> *Y Dydd* (3 October 1873), 8; Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 3 April 1868.

<sup>56</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (14 January 1874), 13; (21 January 1874), 14; (4 February 1874), 13.

Society, from whom he received only £25.<sup>57</sup> After a year, the collection had reached only £181.1s.7½d., £42 of which was paid to Gee while the rest was used to pay David Lloyd Jones's salary and travel costs.<sup>58</sup> Michael D. Jones was hoping to secure an annual collection of £200 to £300 for the mission, so that the children of indigenous tribes could be supported, clothed and educated, but he struggled to raise more than £50.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, David Lloyd Jones and Abraham Matthews travelled to Patagonia aboard the vessel *Hipparchus* in April 1874. Lloyd Jones was to evangelize to the indigenous tribes, while Matthews, one of the ministers who had travelled aboard *Mimosa* in 1865 but who had visited Wales and the United States in 1873-4, would continue to minister to the settlers.<sup>60</sup>

Michael D. Jones's response to the mission's failure is noteworthy. In a letter sent to the Settlement in 1877, he claimed that his colleagues at Bala Independent College, Ioan Pedr and Edward Williams, had sabotaged the Patagonian mission.<sup>61</sup> Jones had been at loggerheads with Ioan Pedr and Williams ever since they had disagreed in 1873 over the salary of Thomas Lewis, a new tutor at the College, and he suspected that they had been discouraging people from contributing to the Patagonian mission because of their resentment towards him. Although it was rumoured later that Ioan Pedr hoped to oust Michael D. Jones from his position as principal of Bala College,<sup>62</sup> it would appear that Jones blamed him, Edward Williams and John Thomas for

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<sup>57</sup> *Y Dydd* (3 October 1873), 8.

<sup>58</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.146. Jones gave reasons for the lack of financial support for the Patagonian mission in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (29 April 1874), 14.

<sup>59</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends of the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>60</sup> Bangor MS 8060. Brasluniad o Hanes Bywyd A. Matthews.

<sup>61</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends at the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>62</sup> Bangor MS 3622. David Lloyd's recollections of his time at Bala.



difficulties which had hampered the Patagonian movement from the outset, namely its failure to gain popular support. Moreover, whatever opposition may have been incited by these Congregationalists, it was partly Michael D. Jones's own doing, because it was his financial crisis which had linked the Patagonian venture to Bala Independent College.

### **The Settlement's Debt**

The precarious financial situation in which Michael D. Jones had found himself in the early 1870s placed increasing pressure on his relationship with the Welsh Settlement. Initially, the settlers seemed unaware of the seriousness of Jones's situation. In July 1866, he had informed Lewis Jones that 'the whole burden of the Settlement's debts is on my shoulders'.<sup>63</sup> Yet, when visiting Wales in 1869, Lewis Jones requested £60 to cover his travelling costs, and Michael D. Jones had difficulty in persuading him that his resources had been completely exhausted.<sup>64</sup> The failure of the settlers to respond to Michael D. Jones's testimonial, which was launched shortly after he was announced bankrupt in July 1871, caused considerable ill feeling. In December 1871, Richard Jones Berwyn, the Welsh Settlement's registrar, pleaded ignorance: 'Doubtless more is known in Wales about Rev M. D. Jones's difficulties than we know at present. We have heard only a little, and consequently, we are ignorant of the state of things in the mother country'.<sup>65</sup> Writing a few months later, Abraham Matthews also noted the settlers' ignorance, claiming that they had not been made

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<sup>63</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 13 December 1866. 'Y mae holl faix dyled y wladva hon yn gyvan ar vy ysgwyδau i. Yr wyv yn hiraethu am amser ymwarded.'

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 October 1869.

<sup>65</sup> *Y Dydd* (27 July 1872), 10.

aware of the testimonial until it was too late.<sup>66</sup> Yet this counted for little in Michael D. Jones's mind. His annoyance was obvious in a letter to Lewis Jones in October 1872, in which he complained that he had received only £9 from the Settlement.<sup>67</sup>

Michael D. Jones may have rejoiced in the progress made by the Settlement after 1870, but, as repayment was still not forthcoming, the improvement in the settlers' circumstances made the outstanding debt a greater source of frustration. In a private letter to Lewis Jones, he wrote: 'It embitters me to think that the Settlement is getting rich, and taking no notice of my earnest requests for money, while I am in so much debt, ashamed to face my creditors, and forced to spend continuously on the settlers'.<sup>68</sup> This tension peaked in 1875. The Settlement Council reached the momentous decision that it was time to issue a full repayment to Michael D. Jones. However, Hugh Hughes, in his capacity as President of the Settlement, vetoed the decision. Hughes argued that repayment was unnecessary because bankruptcy had freed Jones from any legal obligations to his creditors.<sup>69</sup> His decision to use the veto was probably influenced by the fact that the money owed to Michael D. Jones was only part of the Settlement's overall debt. For example, Jones noted in 1871 that nearly £800 was owed to J. H. Denby, a merchant in Buenos Aires, and that the total debt of the Settlement was close to £9,000.<sup>70</sup> It would appear that Hugh Hughes felt

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., (4 October 1872), 10.

<sup>67</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 21 October 1872.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 14 September 1875. 'Mae e yn deimlad xwerw i mi vod y Wladva yn ymgyvoethogi, a dim sylw yn cael ei roddi i'm cwynion dwys am arian, a minau mewn cymaint o dyled, a xywilyδ arnav wynebu vy nghoelwyr, ac yn gorvod gwario o hyd dros y Gwaldvawyr.'

<sup>69</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends at the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>70</sup> Bangor MS 11313. Letter from Michael D. Jones to D. Lloyd Jones, 29 June 1871.



that, because Jones's bankruptcy had given him protection from his creditors, there was no urgent need for the money and that the Settlement could therefore concentrate on repaying its other debts.

Michael D. Jones responded with ferocity to the news from the Settlement. Hugh Hughes was an 'Arch-False Welshman' who 'administered English laws in the Settlement' while natural justice demanded that the debt be paid.<sup>71</sup> Jones's anger towards Hughes still lingered two years later, by which time he urgently needed the money in order to buy Bodiwan from the College and thereby avoid eviction. Once more, he held forth against Hughes, describing him as 'a traitor to the Settlement movement', 'an ungrateful and unprincipled savage' and 'a bombastic and pretentious false-patriot'.<sup>72</sup> In a letter to Lewis Jones, Jones claimed that, in years to come, Hughes's 'crime' would be 'one of the blackest marks' on the character of the Settlement.<sup>73</sup> Michael D. Jones's frustration is understandable, but this episode reveals his lack of tact in volatile situations, a tendency which he had displayed frequently over the years. Nevertheless, having lost all trust in the Settlement's governing Council because of its failure to take action on the repayment of the debt,<sup>74</sup> Jones wrote directly to his supporters in the Settlement, such as Lewis Jones and

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<sup>71</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 14 September 1875. 'Mae Cadvan yn Arx Ffug Gymro am weinydu cyvreithiau Lloegr yn y Wladva! Mae arnav vi eisiau talu pawb o'm govynwyr gonest, a xam a xreulonder yw goðev i ðyn vel Cadvan i gael ei amcanion.'

<sup>72</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends at the Settlement', 1 October 1877. '... yn vradwr i'r axos Gwladvaol', 'anwarðyn di-ðiolch a di-egwyðor', '[y] gauwladgarwr gwyntog ac ymhongar Cadvan'. See also, Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 11 October 1878.

<sup>73</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 11 October 1878. '... un o'r ysmotiau duav ar ei xymeriad'.

<sup>74</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends in the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

Richard Jones Berwyn,<sup>75</sup> requesting them to exert pressure on the settlers on his behalf.

The sharp increase in the population of the Settlement in 1875-6 may have raised Michael D. Jones's hopes of reimbursement, but it led to conflicting opinions on who should be responsible for making the payment. Recent arrivals at the Settlement felt that it was a matter for those who had been passengers on *Mimosa*, whereas the oldest settlers argued that the hardship that they had suffered during the early years should relieve them from having to pay more than the others.<sup>76</sup> Two letters published in *Ein Breiniad*, the Settlement's first published periodical, represent the differing views on the matter.<sup>77</sup> The first letter, written by a 'new' settler, referred to 'some old account' that the 'old settlers' had in Bala, and argued that any money that the Settlement's Council paid to Jones should not come from 'new settlers'.<sup>78</sup> In another letter, an 'old' settler claimed that he was willing to repay Michael D. Jones for his passage to Patagonia, but he insisted that the whole Settlement should pay for the thousands of pounds' worth of supplies. Those materials, he argued, provided the foundation for subsequent developments, the advantages of which were enjoyed by both 'old' and 'new' settlers.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letters from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 5 May 1876; 26 July 1876; 3 June 1878; 11 October 1878; Bangor MS 7589. Letter from Michael D. Jones to R. J. Berwyn, 16 September 1875.

<sup>76</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends in the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>77</sup> Six issues of *Ein Breiniad* were published between September and November 1878, two supplementary issues in 1879, and another special issue in 1881.

<sup>78</sup> *Ein Breiniad* (5 April 1879), 1.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, (19 April 1879), 2.



in a letter written to his friends at the Settlement in 1877, Michael D. Jones stressed that his reputation was 'in the balance', and that the settlers' apparent reluctance to repay their debts 'sometimes caused [him to show] hard feelings towards the Settlement'.<sup>80</sup> He was particularly incensed by the rumour that the Council had £50 in its treasury, but had no intention of sending it to him. The Council eventually sent him the money,<sup>81</sup> and he received a testimonial of £300 from the Settlement in 1880, which he used to finance his visit there in 1882. It was hardly the sum of £4,000 that he had requested in 1871 or the £2,000 that he needed to purchase Bodiwan in 1877.<sup>82</sup> However, a few months before his visit to Patagonia, Michael D. Jones pleaded with Lewis Jones to collect money from the settlers so that another repayment would be ready in time for his arrival.<sup>83</sup> There is no evidence that any such collection was made, or that he received any repayments during his time at the Settlement. He suggested to Lewis Jones that the settlers should be taxed so that the debts could be settled, and he vowed not to rest 'until every penny that has been spent on the Settlement is paid'.<sup>84</sup> No further payments were made to him, and most of the debt remained outstanding when he died in December 1898.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>80</sup> NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends in the Settlement', 1 October 1877. '... yn peri i mi deimlo'n galed ar adegau at y Wladva.'

<sup>81</sup> *Ein Breiniad* (22 March 1879), 2; (5 April 1879), 1.

<sup>82</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 7 July 1871; NLW MS 18181 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to 'Friends in the Settlement', 1 October 1877.

<sup>83</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 27 September 1881.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 December 1880. 'Nid wyv am orffwys nes y bydo pob dimau syδ wedi eu gwario gyda'r Wladva wedi eu talu.'

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

## Collaborating with the Argentine Government

The political progress of the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia was just as important to Michael D. Jones as its economic development. Since the 1850s, he had argued that there was a close connection between political self-government and cultural sustainability, but he also realized that full independence from any state government would be virtually impossible. The aim of the movement was to secure provincial status for the Settlement within the Argentine Republic by diverting over twenty thousand Welsh people to Patagonia.<sup>86</sup> ‘Buenos Aires has a right to Patagonia,’ he wrote in 1881, ‘and the leaders of the Patagonian movement acknowledge that right’.

He wrote that this was

... an understanding from the outset ... All that they [the leaders of the Patagonian movement] can expect fairly, and all that they do expect, are the provincial advantages extended by the Buenos Aires Government, and that they are recognized as a province of the Republic once their population reaches a specific number. That was, and is, the settlers’ aim.<sup>87</sup>

Indeed, despite emphasizing the importance of self-government to the success of the Welsh Settlement, Jones complained in the late 1860s that the Argentine government had not pledged more resources to the Settlement.<sup>88</sup> In fact, it is doubtful that the

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<sup>86</sup> H. Hughes, *Llaw-lyfr y Wladychfa* (Liverpool, 1862), p.41; D. S. Davies, *Y Cymro, sev, Llyfr y Wladfa Gymreig* (New York, 1872), p.17.

<sup>87</sup> M. D. Jones and D. Rees, *Patagonia: Ymweliad y Parchn Michael D. Jones a David Rees a'r Wladfa Gymreig* (Bangor, 1882), p.18.

<sup>88</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letters from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 3 June 1868; 7 October 1868; 31 October 1868; 17 November 1868.



unforeseen difficulties which the settlers faced between 1865 and 1869 could have been endured without the support of the Argentine government in Buenos Aires.

While Michael D. Jones held unequivocal views on the political aspirations of the Welsh Settlement, he seems to have been unaware that the aims of the Patagonian movement conflicted with the centralist policies of the Argentine Republic. When negotiations began with the Argentine consul in Liverpool in the early 1860s, the provinces which formed the Argentine Confederation were virtually autonomous, and the prosperous province of Buenos Aires was independent. However, in 1862, the Argentine Republic was formed under the presidency of Bartolomé Mitre, who had led the armies of Buenos Aires to victory over the Argentine Confederation at the battle of Pavón in September 1861. The Congress that was elected in 1862 formed a strong central government in Buenos Aires. It sought to impose its hegemony on the provinces, and showed little toleration of anyone who challenged its authority.<sup>89</sup>

Within six weeks after the arrival of *Mimosa*, the Argentine government sent a delegation to the Chupat Valley in order to raise the national flag as a symbol of its authority over the Settlement.<sup>90</sup>

Nevertheless, for the first decade of its existence, the Welsh Settlement enjoyed a considerable degree of freedom and self-government. The attention of the Argentine government was fixed on its protracted war with Paraguay, and apart from supplying food and animals for the Welsh settlers, its influence on life in the Chupat Valley was

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<sup>89</sup> N. Shamway, *The Invention of Argentina* (California, 1991), pp.226-8; J. Lynch, 'Independence to National Organization', in L. Bethell (ed.), *Argentina since Independence* (Cambridge, 1993), pp.40-1; D. Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987* (California, 1987), pp.120-31.

<sup>90</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.98.

minimal. In 1874, Michael D. Jones declared that the Settlement was achieving its objectives:

The movement's initiators have gained all that they wished to achieve; a Welsh Settlement has been established in a vast uninhabited country, where they are the dominant element, and all of their organizations are conducted in the Welsh language, and the maintenance of this depends entirely on the loyalty of the Welsh to the original aims of the settlement.<sup>91</sup>

Clearly, this was not achieved through any recognition or consent by the Argentine government. It had more important issues on the agenda, namely the war with Paraguay, and it had little reason to worry about a group of 150 Welsh settlers who were struggling to maintain themselves in the Chupat Valley.

In the late 1860s, Jones discussed the relationship between the Settlement and the Argentine government in terms of mutual benefit. Government support would be crucial for the economic and political welfare of the Settlement, while the Welsh, whom he saw as moral and hard-working people, would be a valuable asset to the Argentine Republic.<sup>92</sup> Yet the Welsh had little bargaining power in their negotiations with the government in Buenos Aires. In 1875, a decade after the arrival of the first settlers, the population of the Welsh Settlement had still only reached 380.<sup>93</sup> This

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<sup>91</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (21 January 1874), 14. See also, (21 January 1874), 14; *Y Dydd* (23 January 1874), 5.

<sup>92</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 31 October 1868.

<sup>93</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.320.



figure was minuscule in the general context of immigration to Argentina during the nineteenth century, which increased from an average of 50,000 per annum in the 1850s to over 200,000 in 1889.<sup>94</sup> It is hardly surprising that the Settlement Council's representatives sometimes encountered difficulties when attempting to draw the attention of the Argentine government to the needs and requirements of the Welsh Settlement.<sup>95</sup> Lewis Jones claimed that, during one visit to Buenos Aires, he called at the government buildings approximately 84 times before he was given a hearing.<sup>96</sup>

Michael D. Jones's desire to enhance the Settlement's bargaining power with the Argentine Government may explain what is perhaps the most puzzling aspect of his personal life: his connections with Freemasonry. Jones was among the first five men to be initiated as Freemasons when the lodge was established at Bala in early 1872, and though the extent of his involvement in the lodge's activities is not known, he rose to the rank of Master Mason, before resigning from the guild in 1889.<sup>97</sup> This association with the Freemasons seems contrary to Michael D. Jones's personality and the values that he espoused. Not only was Masonic activity renowned for its ceremonialism, which Michael D. Jones usually found distasteful, but it also had close connections with British patronage. Watkin Williams Wynn, the wealthy

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<sup>94</sup> D. Rock, *Argentina, 1516-1987*, p.132; R. C. Conde, 'The Growth of the Argentine Economy, c.1870-1914', in L. Bethell (ed.), *Argentina since Independence*, p.55.

<sup>95</sup> E. MacDonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, p.139.

<sup>96</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.86.

<sup>97</sup> Gwynedd County Archives, Z/M/4971. *Bala Lodge. The 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* (Bala, 1952), p.12. His rank can be identified from the pattern on his Masonic apron, which is kept at Museo Historico Gaiman, Patagonia. It has a sky-blue lining and a rosette on the flap. See J. Hamill, *The History of English Freemasonry* (Surrey, 1994), pp.84-5.

landowner in Meirionnydd and one of Michael D. Jones's oldest adversaries, was the Provincial Grand Master.<sup>98</sup>

The Masonic tradition of South America was significantly different from that of Britain. In fact, there was an intimate connection between Freemasonry and the liberation of South American countries from Spanish rule in the early nineteenth century.<sup>99</sup> But it would appear that it was practical considerations rather than matters of principle that led to Michael D. Jones's association with the guild. It seems that several members of the Argentine administration in Buenos Aires were Freemasons. Domingo F. Sarmiento, President of the Republic when Jones was initiated to the guild, was certainly a Freemason.<sup>100</sup> Elvey MacDonald has already suggested that being a Freemason may have been helpful when negotiating with the Argentine government.<sup>101</sup> This would certainly explain why David Lloyd Jones and Abraham Matthews, the two men who were working under the auspices of the Patagonian Missionary Society, were elected as Freemasons in an 'emergency' meeting of the Bala Lodge on 15 April 1874, the day before their departure for Patagonia aboard the vessel *Hipparchus*.<sup>102</sup> Moreover, Llwyd ap Iwan, Michael D. Jones's son, was also inducted as a Freemason in 1885, the official reason for his nomination being that he was 'leaving shortly for Patagonia'.<sup>103</sup> All three men were nominated by Michael D. Jones prior to their departure for the Settlement, which suggests that there was some advantage to be gained from being a Freemason in Argentina.

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<sup>98</sup> Gwynedd County Archives, Z/M/4971. *Bala Lodge. The 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*, p.13.

<sup>99</sup> J. Ridley, *The Freemasons* (New York, 2001), pp.191-204.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p.202.

<sup>101</sup> E. MacDonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, pp.174, 210.

<sup>102</sup> Papers in the hands of Geraint R. Thomas. Minutes of Bala Lodge No. 1369; Bangor MS 7930. Michael D. Jones's diary, 1874.

<sup>103</sup> Papers in the hands of Geraint R. Thomas. Minutes of Bala Lodge No. 1369.



Jones again demonstrated his attitude towards collaboration with the Argentine government by accepting a position offered to him by the Argentine Emigration Commission. Early in 1876, Francisco Torromé, the Argentine Emigration Agent in London, sent Michael D. Jones a memorandum that he had received from the General Commissioner of Emigration in Buenos Aires outlining the content of a bill passed in September 1875. Under this legislation, the first settlers would receive official title to their land and new procedures would be installed for prospective settlers. In addition to this, the government agreed to offer five hundred free passages to Welsh settlers, which was a significant number considering that the Settlement had a population of less than four hundred at the time. The government's desire, according to the memorandum, was 'to see 40,000 Welshmen established in Chubut during the next 4 years to form a new Province with its Governor, its legislature, its special laws and its Representatives in the National Parliament'. It seemed that the Argentine government's aims were consistent with the objectives of the Welsh Patagonian movement, though it had no intention of losing its political hold on the territory:

Assistance from the Government will not be wanting but it is incumbent upon the Colonists themselves to co-operate by fomenting the emigration of useful individuals and by inducing the more efficient of their number to study the language of the country so as to enable them to represent the colony more effectively in the Capital of the Republic.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Bangor MS 7590. Letter from Francisco Torromé to Michael D. Jones, 13 November 1875.

10 this end, Michael D. Jones was offered a post as sub-agent to the Argentine Emigration Commission, receiving \$60 a month towards his costs.<sup>105</sup> The advantages that this post offered him were clear: it would provide him with an income for work he had previously been doing at his own expense and allow him to ensure that the flow of migrants was consistent with the cultural aims of the Settlement. Unfortunately for Jones, this appointment was discontinued in April 1876 for unspecified reasons. That Jones would have otherwise accepted the offer underlines once more that he had no uncertainty about co-operating closely with the Argentine government, and that he saw it as the only means of achieving the aims of the Patagonian movement.

### **The Settlement and the State**

The offer of a job to Michael D. Jones in 1876 was indicative of the Argentine government's increasing interest in the Welsh community in Patagonia. As its hostilities with Paraguay ended, it dedicated an increasing amount of time to administrative centralization, which involved the introduction of a colonial style of administration in its outermost territories.<sup>106</sup> This alteration in the government's position proved both beneficial and detrimental to the Welsh Settlement. On the one hand, the Argentine government encouraged the development of the Settlement, while, on the other, it increased its efforts to incorporate the region into the Argentine state with little sympathy for the aspirations of the Welsh. The government was planning to implement its colonial policies throughout the provinces, but the arrival

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.; 7591. Letter from Francisco Torromé to Michael D. Jones, 21 December 1875; 7592. Letter from Francisco Torromé to Michael D. Jones, 4 January 1876; 7593. Letter from Francisco Torromé to Michael D. Jones, 18 April 1876; 7494. Copy of a letter from Francisco Torromé to Michael D. Jones, 18 April 1876; 7495. Letter from Francisco Torromé to Michael D. Jones, 22 June 1876.

<sup>106</sup> G. D. Owen, *Crisis in Chubut*, p.26.



of two groups of settlers in 1874, one from Wales and the other from the United States, seem to have aroused fears that a prospering Welsh Settlement would lead to stronger regional identity. The appointment of a Port Official in 1874, and a National Commissary in 1875, marked the beginning of a decade of political tension between the Settlement's elected council and the Argentine government's officials.<sup>107</sup> While the settlers had become accustomed to an extensive degree of autonomy over the previous years, the officials required that the Settlement be governed in accordance with the laws of the Argentine Republic, under which the Commissary held authority over the elected Council.<sup>108</sup> In fact, the Commissary's apparent lack of concern for the Welsh settlers and the presence of military forces from Buenos Aires became a source of tension in the Valley.<sup>109</sup> The indignation of the settlers was intensified by the government officials' reluctance to recognize the validity of marriage services held in the Settlement's chapels, the introduction of taxation and custom dues on exports.<sup>110</sup> They also seemed indifferent to the Colonization Law, passed by Congress in 1876, which stipulated that the Settlement, as a community comprising more than fifty families, was entitled to elect its own municipal authorities.<sup>111</sup>

It is unclear whether Michael D. Jones was aware of the deterioration in the relationship between the Settlement and the Argentine government. Tension was already escalating when he accepted the position offered by the Argentine Emigration Commission in 1876, which would suggest that he was oblivious of the settlers' ill

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<sup>107</sup> For an account of the relationship between the Settlement and the Argentine Government during those years, see L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, pp.96-113; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.169-85.

<sup>108</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.170-2.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.169-85.

<sup>110</sup> G. D. Owen, *Crisis in Chubut*, pp.30-33; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.174-7.

<sup>111</sup> G. D. Owen, *Crisis in Chubut*, p.33.

feeling towards the authorities. Lewis Jones claimed that, when Michael D. Jones set out for Patagonia in 1882, 'he knew nothing of the difficulties and the oppression that the Settlement suffered'.<sup>112</sup> Yet some of the letters that Michael D. Jones wrote to Lewis Jones prior to his visit suggest that he was aware that the government's officials had been interfering in the Settlement's affairs. For example, he was suspicious of the government's motives in appointing the Italian Antonio Oñeto as Commissary: 'I can see from Dr Avellaneda's instructions to Señor Oñeto that he proposes to divest the Settlement of its Welshness ... If there is no Welshness, we might as well be in New Zealand, Australia, or Canada'.<sup>113</sup> But it seems that Jones also knew that it was not in the interest of the movement to discuss these hostilities in the press, and so they were not mentioned in his reports on the Settlement's progress. This would explain why he claimed that the movement's opponents had fabricated a rumour that the Commissary had been appointed to weaken the Council's authority.<sup>114</sup> Clearly, speculation on the Settlement's circumstances was to be avoided at all costs.

Michael D. Jones's tendency to give priority to population figures over practical considerations again became evident when political tensions between the Welsh immigrants and the Argentine government were most acute.<sup>115</sup> In 1881, for example, Lewis Jones warned David Stephen Davies, who had by then moved from the United States to Wales, not to send any more settlers unless they travelled directly to the

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<sup>112</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.139.

<sup>113</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 29 February 1876. 'Yr wyv yn gweled vod Dr Avellaneda yn amcanu llað Cymreigiaeth y Wladva, yn ôl ei gyvarwydiadau i Senor Oñeto. ... Os na xawn Gymreigiaeth yna, ni waeth i ni New Zealand, neu Australia, neu Canada.'

<sup>114</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (March 1877), 31.

<sup>115</sup> L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, pp.128-38; R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.172-4.



Settlement without stopping at Buenos Aires. The Emigration Office, he claimed, was opposed to the Welsh Settlement.<sup>116</sup> Michael D. Jones seems to have received a similar letter, but, evidently, he paid little heed to the warning. He was blinded by the fact that Wales was facing a severe agricultural depression. 'The emigration cannot be stopped,' he told Lewis Jones. 'Hundreds have left their homes, because they must move away'.<sup>117</sup> The rate of emigration was certainly on the increase, though a large-scale movement of labour occurred as thousands left rural areas for industrial south Wales, where the coalfields were expanding rapidly.<sup>118</sup> Meirionnydd was heavily affected by this exodus of labour; net migration from the county increased from 1,548 between 1871 and 1881 to 10,713 between 1881 and 1891.<sup>119</sup> In his reply to Lewis Jones, written in November 1881, he argued that migration to the Settlement could not be stalled unless there were reports of famine, and he gave Lewis Jones a stern warning: 'Don't you say that there is no land left, and do not speak of refusing people ... People are crying out for emigration, and more will come. We must endeavour to give them deliverance'.<sup>120</sup> Again, however, Jones's efforts were frustrated by a shortage of capital. Having failed to reach an agreement with private shipping companies,<sup>121</sup> he wrote to President Julio A. Roca in the hope that the government would be willing to give free passage to new settlers, but there is nothing to suggest

<sup>116</sup> NLW MS 4616 B. Letter from Lewis Jones to Michael D. Jones, 23 August 1881.

<sup>117</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 27 September 1881. 'Nis gellir atal yr ymvudiaeth. Mae canoed o bobl yn troi eu cartrevi i vyny, a rhaid symud odiyima.'

<sup>118</sup> G. Williams, *The Desert and the Dream* (Cardiff, 1975), p.72; J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics*, I (Cardiff, 1985), pp.68-78.

<sup>119</sup> J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics*, I, p.72.

<sup>120</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 24 November 1881. 'Peidiwx xwi yna a dyweud vod tir yn darvod, a peidiwx xwi yna a dyweud am atal pobl ... Mae pobl yn gwaedi am gawel ymvudo, a daw mwy. Rhaid i ninau geisio rhoedi ymwarded idynt.'

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

that anything came of this.<sup>122</sup> Still hoping to attract people to the Settlement, he wrote in *Y Celt* in 1881 that ‘this is an opportune time for the Welsh to occupy this magnificent land’,<sup>123</sup> and the following October, he assured his readers that preparations were being made to accommodate ‘all of our migration [from Wales]’.<sup>124</sup> Michael D. Jones’s obsession with the Welsh Settlement continued, with little regard for his reputation, and clearly, he remained naïvely optimistic that it would soon attract thousands of immigrants from Wales.

### Visiting the Welsh Settlement

Financial constraints prevented Michael D. Jones from visiting the Patagonian Settlement in the late 1860s and 1870s. In a letter to Lewis Jones in October 1872, he claimed that, had his debts been paid, he would have visited the Settlement and brought more immigrants with him. Under the circumstances, however, he ‘would not dare to leave the country’.<sup>125</sup> By the end of the 1870s, Jones’s situation had stabilized, and a testimonial of £300 which he received from the Settlement in 1880 gave him an opportunity to visit the Patagonia for the first and only time.

Jones travelled to South America in the company of David Rees, a former student at Bala College who had shown sporadic interest in the movement. Rees was one of the students who had ministered to the first group of settlers at Liverpool in May 1865, and had recruited settlers during his ministry in Dowlais, near Merthyr Tydfil,

<sup>122</sup> Archivo General de la Nación, Buenos Aires. Sala VII, Legajo:1383. Fondo Julio Albertino Roca, 1833-1914. S/F. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Julio A. Roca, 19 April 1881.

<sup>123</sup> *Y Celt* (17 June 1881), 3.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, (7 October 1881), 9.

<sup>125</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 21 October 1872. ‘Buaswn yn dyvod i weled y Wladva er mwyn codi ymvudwyr i dyvod yn pe buasai vy nyledion wedi eu talu, ond ni veiðiaf adael y wlad.’



between 1874 and 1878, before moving to Capel Mawr in Anglesey.<sup>126</sup> Jones and Rees departed from Liverpool aboard the steamship *Maskylene* on 28 January 1882 and arrived in Buenos Aires on 25 February 1882. They stayed in Buenos Aires for a week, and sailed to the Welsh Settlement on 4 March 1882. They stayed at the Settlement for about three months before returning to Buenos Aires by the second week of July. They stayed in the capital for another week before returning to Wales aboard the vessel *Kepler* on 21 July 1882.<sup>127</sup>

In addition to seeing the Settlement for the first time, Michael D. Jones seems to have had two aims in mind when travelling to South America, neither of which he accomplished. The first was the repayment of the debt owed to him, and the second was to acquire new land to facilitate the future expansion of the Settlement. The sudden growth of the Settlement in the Chupat Valley in 1875-6 gave urgency to this issue. Several possible locations were considered, including Santa Fé, which lay on the western banks of the Paraná River in northern Argentina,<sup>128</sup> the banks of the Rio Negro, about two hundred miles to the north,<sup>129</sup> and Puerto Deseado, further south along the coast of Patagonia.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Initially, Michael D. Jones was to be accompanied by his son, Llwyd ap Iwan. *Ibid.*, 27 September 1881.

<sup>127</sup> *Buenos Aires Standard* (21 July 1882), 2.

<sup>128</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 26 July 1876.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 February 1876; 24 November 1881. Jones corresponded with John Jones, head of a family that moved to Rio Negro soon after the Settlement's establishment in the Chupat Valley. See A. Jones de Zampini, *Reunión de familias en el Sur II*, p.65.

<sup>130</sup> Archivo General de la Nación, Buenos Aires. Sala VII, Legajo:1383. Fondo Julio Albertino Roca, 1833-1914. S/F. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Julio A. Roca, 19 April 1881.

Michael D. Jones continued his enquiries when he met President Roca in Buenos Aires in late February 1882. Roca's response was encouraging. He assured Michael D. Jones that he would do all that was within his power to assist the movement's objectives. The visitors were offered land at Misiones, but Jones and Rees feared that the climate would be too warm. Roca then promised to support the establishment of another Welsh settlement at Rio Negro, and if ten thousand Welsh farmers could be transported within a designated period, the government would be willing to contribute £5 per head towards their passage.<sup>131</sup> Again, this was a highly ambitious project bearing in mind the lack of support for the movement in Wales, and that the population of the Settlement had only reached about 1,300 people in fifteen years.

The negotiations received a good coverage in the *Buenos Aires Standard*, the editor and owner of which, Edward Mulhall, assisted Jones and Rees in their negotiations with the government. The *Standard's* reports revealed a confidence that an agreement had been reached to begin another settlement at Rio Negro.<sup>132</sup> However, a few months later, Michael D. Jones announced his decision not to encourage immigrants to settle on the Rio Negro because the government's campaigns against the indigenous people had made the area susceptible to retributive attacks.<sup>133</sup> Indeed, it is claimed that, during their meeting at Buenos Aires, Michael D. Jones condemned President Roca for the government's treatment of the indigenous tribes, a move that seems characteristic of Jones, but rather reckless bearing in mind that he had little

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<sup>131</sup> *Buenos Aires Standard* (28 February 1882), 2.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, (28 February 1882), 2; (1 March 1882), 3.

<sup>133</sup> M. D. Jones and D. Rees, *Patagonia: Ymweliad y Parchn Michael D. Jones a David Rees a'r Wladfa Gymreig*, pp.3-4.



bargaining power in the negotiations.<sup>134</sup> Thus, the matter remained unsettled, and Michael D. Jones was undecided. On his return to Buenos Aires in July 1882, he consulted a Professor Lewis of the Argentine National College on this matter. Lewis agreed to discuss terms with the government for another settlement to be established at Santa Cruz, which lay about five hundred miles to the south of the Chupat estuary.<sup>135</sup> However, none of the schemes for the establishment of new settlements were implemented. Additional lands for the Welsh settlers were not secured until 1888, when a group of settlers inhabited 'Cwm Hyfryd' at the foot of the Andes Mountains.

Michael D. Jones may have failed to secure repayment of the debt owed to him, but his observations and experiences during the visit seems to have softened his opinion of the settlers. David Lloyd Jones claimed in later years that he had confronted Michael D. Jones during his visit to the Settlement, and asked: 'Had he known the truth about the place and its circumstances, would we have sent the first settlers?' He recorded that Michael D. Jones immediately replied, 'No such thing'.<sup>136</sup> Having appreciated the hardship faced by the settlers in previous years, Jones left the Settlement with a much better understanding of its economic and political circumstances and needs.

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<sup>134</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.162; K. E. Skinner, 'The Welsh Colonies in Chubut and the Argentine Government, with special reference to the work of E. J. Williams, 1875-1905' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales, 1977), p.61.

<sup>135</sup> M. D. Jones and D. Rees, *Patagonia: Ymweliad y Parchn Michael D. Jones a David Rees a'r Wladfa Gymreig*, p.23.

<sup>136</sup> *Y Drafod* (10 March 1899), 1.

His understanding of the political tensions between the Welsh settlers and the Argentine authorities seems to have improved as a result of his role in the preparation of a petition signed by 247 heads of households and presented to the government in Buenos Aires. It requested that control of the municipal sector – roads, canals, health, security and education – be transferred from the National Commissary to a council elected by the settlers.<sup>137</sup> The government responded to the petition with a promise that the Settlement would be granted a municipal council in accordance with the law as it was applied to other provinces, but its attention was diverted by campaigns against indigenous tribes.<sup>138</sup> Another two years of tension between the settlers and the government elapsed before Chubut was,<sup>139</sup> under the National Territories Act of 16 October 1884, permitted to elect a legitimate municipal council and given the right to provincial status once its population reached thirty thousand people.<sup>140</sup>

Unfortunately, there is little reliable evidence of Jones's impressions of the Welsh Settlement. Following his return to Wales, rumours were circulated that he had been disappointed by what he had seen. Again, it was claimed that Michael D. Jones's opponents in the Bala College dispute were attempting to sabotage the Patagonian venture by 'spreading the word that Mr Jones has been hugely disappointed, that he has no good news and that the Settlement is not up to his expectations'.<sup>141</sup> More recently, Kenneth Skinner repeated this claim that Michael D. Jones had been disappointed by the Settlement. Jones's visit, he claimed, 'convinced him that the

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<sup>137</sup> A copy of the petition can be found in L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, p.140.

<sup>138</sup> K. E. Skinner, 'The Welsh Colonies in Chubut and the Argentine Government, with special reference to the work of E. J. Williams, 1875-1905', p.65.

<sup>139</sup> Chubut was the official name given to the Chupat territory in 1884.

<sup>140</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.179-82.

<sup>141</sup> *Y Celt* (6 October 1882), 8.



was only a shadow of the pantisocracy which he had hoped to set up on the banks of the broad river'.<sup>142</sup>

There is no evidence to confirm the claim that Michael D. Jones was disappointed by the Settlement. Despite the military presence in the Chupat Valley, the aim of forming a distinctly Welsh community had been achieved, even if it was on a much smaller scale than he had expected. In fact, other sources suggest that Michael D. Jones's impressions of the Welsh Settlement had been generally favourable. When he and David Rees returned to Buenos Aires in July 1882, reports in the *Buenos Aires Standard* stated that they were 'eminently pleased with what they saw, and received many marks of appreciation from the colonists'.<sup>143</sup> A letter from Michael D. Jones, published in the same paper, also stated that he and David Rees were 'highly pleased with the prospects of the colony, and with the courtesy and promptitude the Argentine Government has shown'.<sup>144</sup> Admittedly, these favourable reports could be as misleading as the pernicious rumours that were circulated at the time. It was for promotional reasons that Michael D. Jones and David Rees sent four letters from Patagonia to be published in *Y Celt* in Wales.<sup>145</sup> Virtually no negative comments were to be found in them. Their only regret, it seems, was the prevalence of excessive drinking among the settlers and their sale of spirits to the indigenous people.<sup>146</sup> The letters contained information on various aspects of life at the Settlement, advice to prospective settlers, and reports of his negotiations with the government. The description of the Settlement seemed judicious, but there was clearly a positive spin

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<sup>142</sup> K. E. Skinner, *Railway in the Desert* (Wolverhampton, 1984), p.47.

<sup>143</sup> *Buenos Aires Standard* (15 July 1882), 1.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, (22 July 1882), 1.

<sup>145</sup> *Y Celt* (10 November 1882), 1-2; (17 November 1882), 1-2; (24 November 1882), 1-2; (1 December 1882), 1-3.

<sup>146</sup> *Y Celt* (24 November 1882), 2; (1 December 1882), 1.

on what would otherwise discourage possible settlers, such as the emphasis on its promising future rather than its difficult past. For example, when discussing the irrigation of the Valley, it was noted that there would be ‘a scheme to irrigate every furrow of the valley, from the highest peaks to the sea, within a matter of years ... It is said that already the canals which have been constructed in the Settlement are worth £25,000, so the whole valley will be like a garden in a few years’.<sup>147</sup> Moreover, the last of the four letters read: ‘the success of the Settlement has, so far, been gradual. Taking everything into account, that may have been for the best. But we believe without doubt that this early success is merely the dawn in comparison with what will flourish there in a few years’.<sup>148</sup> Jones had failed in his efforts to find new land for the expansion of the Settlement and to secure repayment of the money which he had spent in previous years. But he continued to believe that the community in the Chupat Valley would safeguard the national identity of Welsh immigrants and that it could provide them with social, political and economic opportunities that were unavailable to them in Wales.<sup>149</sup>

Michael D. Jones’s vigorous promotion of the movement in the Welsh press following his return to Wales reveals his confidence that the Welsh Settlement would achieve its aims, and attract a consistent flow of immigrants from Wales. ‘We must not fear its failure in the future,’ he wrote. ‘The Settlement’s sun is still rising, and I pray that Heaven will help us and our nation’.<sup>150</sup> This was a period of unprecedented change for the Settlement. Settlers used the profits from the agricultural expansion of

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., (17 November 1882), 1.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., (1 December 1882), 2.

<sup>149</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 21 July 1882.

<sup>150</sup> *Y Celt* (18 May 1883), 9.



the 1870s to invest in the mechanization of agricultural practices,<sup>151</sup> a co-operative society established in 1885 maximized the profits from the sale of crops,<sup>152</sup> the irrigation network was extended and enhanced,<sup>153</sup> and a number of expeditions were mounted into adjacent lands.<sup>154</sup> The population of the Settlement also continued to increase, as Jones had hoped. Between 1880 and 1882, it increased from 778 to 1,286, and, by 1890, there would be 2,200 people in the Welsh Settlement. Moreover, it was during this period that Jones's two sons, Llwyd and Mihangel ap Iwan, joined the Welsh community in Patagonia, though neither of them stayed in the Chupat Valley. Llwyd was 24 years old and a qualified land surveyor when he travelled to Patagonia in 1886. He found work with the railway company, but went on to pioneer the second Welsh Settlement in the foothills of the Andes.<sup>155</sup> Mihangel was a year younger than Llwyd, and he migrated to the Settlement soon after graduating in medicine at Edinburgh University in 1887. He spent only a year in the Chupat Valley before moving to the province of Buenos Aires, where he spent most of his life.<sup>156</sup>

### **The Welsh Settlement under threat**

While describing the period between 1865 and 1895 as the 'Golden Age' of the Patagonian Settlement, Robert Owen Jones noted that the 'seeds of decay' were sown before the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>157</sup> He referred in particular to developments in the field of education. The Argentine government had begun to interfere in the

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<sup>151</sup> G. Williams, *The Desert and the Dream*, p.67.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.79-80.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.161-2.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.96-109.

<sup>155</sup> For Llwyd ap Iwan (1862-1909), see R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.222-4, 244-7.

<sup>156</sup> Papers in the hands of Owen ap Iwan, Esquel.

<sup>157</sup> R. O. Jones, *Yr Efengyl yn y Wladfa*, p.8; R. O. Jones, 'The Welsh Language in Patagonia', p.315.

Settlement's education during the late 1870s, and the following years saw the gradual introduction of Spanish-medium education in the Chupat Valley.<sup>158</sup> Michael D. Jones seemed satisfied with the schools in the Settlement when he visited in 1882, and the full impact of Spanish education on the Welsh community in the Chupat Valley did not become evident until the turn of the twentieth century. Yet, during the late 1880s, Michael D. Jones did sense more immediate threats to the Settlement.

The cause of Jones's concern was the probable impact of the construction of a railroad linking the Chupat Valley with New Bay, where the first settlers had landed in 1865. He was not opposed to the construction of a railway *per se*.<sup>159</sup> In 1866, within a year of the Settlement's establishment, he had suggested the possibility that the Argentine government pass a bill for the construction of a railroad from Porth Madryn, where the first settlers had landed in 1865, to the heartland.<sup>160</sup> His views had not changed by the 1880s, for he still welcomed the settlers' decision in 1885 to construct a railroad in the belief that it would bring advantages for trade.<sup>161</sup> Rather, his concern stemmed from the role of English companies in its construction. Initially, the settlers had decided to form a co-operative to carry out the task, and Lewis Jones visited Wales in 1885 to raise capital. Disappointed by the response of the Welsh to the project, Lewis Jones came to an agreement with an English engineer named Azhabel P. Bell and the idea of forming a co-operative was abandoned.<sup>162</sup> This arrangement met with disapproval from Michael D. Jones, who believed that the

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<sup>158</sup> R. O. Jones, 'The Welsh Language in Patagonia', pp.310-2.

<sup>159</sup> *Y Celt* (12 March 1886), 10; (30 April 1886), 8; (14 May 1886), 10; (21 May 1886), 2.

<sup>160</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (10 October 1866), 13.

<sup>161</sup> *Y Celt* (12 March 1886), 10; (30 April 1886), 8; (14 May 1886), 10; (21 May 1886), 2.

<sup>162</sup> K. E. Skinner, *Railway in the Desert*, pp.62-3.



settlers could have amassed sufficient capital among themselves.<sup>163</sup> Yet again, this could be interpreted as over-optimism on Michael D. Jones's part, though this probably is to misunderstand his primary motive, which was to avoid the Settlement's loss of control over its own resources.

With land being offered to those working on the railway, it was Michael D. Jones's awareness of the importance of attracting Welsh workers rather than his enthusiasm for the project that lay behind his journey to various parts of Wales to recruit workers in April and May 1886.<sup>164</sup> In June 1886, only days before the departure of the recruits from Liverpool aboard *Vesta*, Michael D. Jones expressed his fears in a letter to Lewis Jones:

I have let Mr Lamb know that the minute that foreigners come to the Welsh Settlement, we will cease our work. *Beware of this*. They may try to bribe you with money, or land, so that you give up the notion of a Welsh Settlement. I trust in you, that the Settlement is safe from being secured 'commercially' by anyone, whoever it is, and whatever the price.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>163</sup> *Y Celt* (9 May 1890), 1.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, (30 April 1886), 8; (21 May 1886), 2; (28 May 1886), 2; (18 June 1886), 4.

<sup>165</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 18 June 1886. '... yr wyv wedi rhoði ar deall i Mr Lamb, yr eiliad y daw dyeithriaid i'r Wladva, byðwn yn peidio gweithio yma dros y lle vel Gwladva Gymreig. *Govalwx am hyn*. Dixon y treir eix prynu ag arian, neu dir, i geisio rhoði y syniad gwladvaol i vyny. Yr wyv yn ymðiried ynox, vod sevyll dros Wladvaeth yn beth dyogel i beidio gael ei sicrhau yn 'commercially' i neb, pwy bynag vyðo, beth bynag vyðo ei gynyg.'

The suspicion that was apparent in this letter did not recede with time. Jones was particularly suspicious of Azhabel P. Bell, whom he believed was attempting to ‘Italianize the Settlement’ when forty Italian migrants were recruited early in 1887 to compensate for a declining number of bachelor railway workers, and it was Bell who was blamed for the government’s refusal to issue free passage to Welsh immigrants from Buenos Aires to the Settlement.<sup>166</sup> ‘I am *certain*,’ he wrote, ‘that the aim of the company is to transport Scots, Englishmen and Irishmen to populate the Settlement, thereby destroying the notion of a Welsh Settlement’.<sup>167</sup> Bell and his company were probably indifferent, rather than hostile, to the aims of the Settlement, and Jones was probably too suspicious of their motives, but he remained wary of the threat that Bell’s commercial interests posed to the future of the Settlement.

Michael D. Jones expressed similar concerns for the future of the Settlement when it was rumoured in 1886 that the Welsh had discovered gold near the Andes. While realizing that the discovery could be the answer to his personal financial crisis, he feared that it would attract immigrants from all directions, again posing a threat to Welsh cultural ascendancy in the Settlement. He pledged his support to the attempted exploitation of these resources in 1891,<sup>168</sup> but he remained apprehensive, hoping that ‘the country will not yet be taken from the Welsh, after they have raised its value’.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 17 November 1887. ‘Italeiðio’r Wladva’. See also, K. E. Skinner, *Railway in the Desert*, pp.80-1.

<sup>167</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 17 March 1888. ‘Hevyd y mae *sicrwyð* genyv mai amcan y cwmni yna yw cludo Ysgotiaid, Seison, a Gwyðelod i boblogi y Wladva, ac velly tynu i lawr y syniad o Wladva Gymreig.’

<sup>168</sup> E. MacDonald, *Yr Hirdaith*, pp.185-94; L. Jones, *Hanes y Wladva Gymreig*, pp.173-8.

<sup>169</sup> NLW MS 16509 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones, 28 July 1892. Recipient unknown. ‘Gobeithiav na xymerir y wlad oðiar y Cymry, ar ol iðynt osod gwerth arni.’



The discovery was therefore to be discussed with the strictest confidentiality and excavations carried out ‘*vigorously, but in complete silence*’.<sup>170</sup>

Following negotiations with the Argentine government, David Richards, formerly of Harlech, returned to Wales to form ‘The Welsh Patagonian Gold Field Syndicate’. It was intended that a capital of £10,000, sold in shares valued at £1 each, would finance further excavations as well as the cultivation of land, the rearing of livestock, a trade in wood, and the construction of factories and ships. Michael D. Jones must have hoped for a share of the profits if the venture proved successful for he was a signatory of the Welsh Patagonian Gold Fields Syndicate.<sup>171</sup> However, despite a promising start, the Syndicate made little progress in the following two years and ran into debts of £13,000.<sup>172</sup> Jones’s initial fears of a ‘gold rush’ turned into concern that the work had fallen into the hands of companies, such as ‘The Phoenix Patagonian Mining Company’, which employed Welsh settlers but were not controlled by them.<sup>173</sup> Nevertheless, sediments were found, but none of the companies succeeded in finding a gold vein in the foothills of the Andes.

While Michael D. Jones feared an influx of non-Welsh immigrants to the Welsh Settlement, he was also apprehensive about the decline in immigration from Wales. More immigration from Wales was required to counterbalance the increasing non-Welsh population at the Settlement, but it was not forthcoming. He complained that

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<sup>170</sup> NLW MS 4616 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to D. S. Davies, 13 September 1886. ‘Mae acw aur a xyrxu ar ei ol, *egniol*, ond *pur distaw*.’

<sup>171</sup> W. R. P. George, *Lloyd George: Backbencher* (Llandysul, 1983), p.113.

<sup>172</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, pp.234-7.

<sup>173</sup> Museo Historico Gaiman. Letter written by Michael D. Jones, 26 May 1891. Recipient unknown.

no one else was promoting the venture in Wales,<sup>174</sup> and accused the settlers of complacency for not writing positive reports of the Settlement's progress to the Welsh press.<sup>175</sup> He claimed that a 'national awakening' was under way in Wales, and yet the future of the Welsh Settlement was in doubt: 'Unless you get more Welsh immigrants and maintain your hold on things,' he wrote, 'that place will be ruined as a Welsh Settlement ... whatever you do, endeavour to *keep that place Welsh*'.<sup>176</sup> Clearly, Jones felt powerless to influence developments in the Settlement. He continued to promote the Settlement until his retirement in September 1892 though he published significantly fewer reports in the final two years.

Data relating to the population of the Settlement during the 1890s reveal that Michael D. Jones's fears about the cultural dominance of the Welsh were justified. The number of immigrants from Wales had declined sharply since the mid-1880s.<sup>177</sup> By 1895, the overall population of the Settlement had reached over 3,700 people,<sup>178</sup> but the census returns of that year demonstrate that while the population of rural areas was almost entirely of Welsh descent, Welsh people constituted only 48 per cent of the urban population.<sup>179</sup> Part of this was due to a shift in the Argentine government's immigration policy,<sup>180</sup> but the fact that fewer Welsh people were arriving at the

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., Letter from Michael D. Jones to Lewis Jones, 28 May 1887.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 17 April 1889.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 13 March 1888. 'Oni xewx xwi ymvudwyr Cymreig yna, i gadw clap y ffon yn eix llaw, bydy van yna ar ben vel Geladva Gymreig yn union. A oes dim moð i xwi gael rhyw delerau gwell gan Chile i gyxwyn lle newyð o vewn ei threvynau hi. Er mwyn pob peth, ymdrexwx yn awr er *cadw y lle yna yn Gymreig*.'

<sup>177</sup> G. Williams, *The Welsh in Patagonia: The State and the Ethnic Community* (Cardiff, 1991), p.41.

<sup>178</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.320.

<sup>179</sup> G. Williams, *The Welsh in Patagonia*, pp.44-6.

<sup>180</sup> G. D. Owen, *Crisis in Chubut*, p.40. Immigration had been unrestricted until fears of regional organization among specific ethnic groups. Consequently, a policy



Settlement was part of a general decline in the rate of emigration from Wales during the 1890s.

The establishment of the Patagonian Settlement was, beyond doubt, a bold and courageous enterprise that could easily have resulted in disaster. Bearing in mind the harsh circumstances that the settlers endured, their success in turning an arid and desolate region of Patagonia into arable land, and, in fact, that the Welsh language was still spoken in the Chupat Valley at the turn of the twenty-first century, the venture may be considered as a remarkable triumph over adversity.

However, when considering the original aims of its promoters, it is difficult to consider the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia as anything but a failure. Michael D. Jones had hoped that the hundreds of emigrants who left Wales each year could be diverted to the Settlement. According to the 1890 census, 100,079 people of Welsh birth were living in the United States.<sup>181</sup> The Patagonian settlement, on the other hand, had attracted less than two thousand people from Wales.<sup>182</sup> There is little doubt that the previous twenty-five years had been a 'Golden Age' for the Welsh language in social, religious, educational and economic terms. But those benefits were enjoyed by only a small number of people who had emigrated from Wales. It was far from the 30,000 people that were needed to secure provincial status, which Michael D. Jones saw as key to the success of the Settlement. Chubut was not declared a province of the Argentine Republic until 1955. Yet there was little that Michael D. Jones could have done to alter this situation. His inability to secure repayment of the debt, the

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was advocated whereby immigrants would be more widely dispersed throughout the Republic's territories.

<sup>181</sup> R. O. Jones, 'The Welsh Language in Patagonia', p.288.

<sup>182</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa*, p.320.

failure to achieve positive results from his promotion of the venture and his powerlessness to influence developments in the Settlement, have shown that his relationship with the Welsh community in Patagonia was never as strong as he wished it to be.



## Chapter 10

## National Awakening

1876-92

Wales did not exist as a political entity in mid-nineteenth century British politics. In the four centuries which had elapsed since the 1536 Act of Union, only one act of Parliament had applied to Wales as separate from England.<sup>1</sup> The Court of Great Sessions, the only institution that was exclusive to Wales at the turn of the nineteenth century, was abolished in 1830.<sup>2</sup> As far as government was concerned, there was nothing to suggest any distinction between the Welsh and their English neighbours. Despite differences in language and custom, both people were treated as a homogeneous British nation. In the mid-nineteenth century, there was little sign of the change that would later occur in the way that Wales was perceived in British politics. Yet, by the 1880s, the situation had changed significantly. Wales was recognized in political circles as having needs and interests that were separate from those of

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<sup>1</sup> The Act for the Better Propagation and Preaching of the Gospel in Wales (1650).

<sup>2</sup> D. Williams, *A History of Modern Wales* (London, 1950), pp.269-70.

England, and Welsh MPs campaigned for measures that were specific to Wales. Such was the change in Wales's political standing, which was accompanied by a renaissance in Welsh language and literature, that some contemporaries believed that Wales was experiencing nothing less than a 'national awakening'.<sup>3</sup>

When the 'national awakening' made its impact on Wales, Michael D. Jones's colleagues were eager to point out that he had expressed similar patriotic sentiments long before anyone else. One admirer described him as the 'vanguard of the national awakening',<sup>4</sup> while another noted that 'the historian who writes the history of the Welsh Awakening must give detailed consideration to Michael D. Jones's vigorous attempts to bring it about'.<sup>5</sup> More recently, Gwynfor Evans claimed that Michael D. Jones was the one who did most to generate 'the hope that Wales ... would enjoy a national future'.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, R. Tudur Jones believed that, despite being 'a loner', Michael D. Jones contributed to the awakening by influencing leaders of the national movement with his ideas about Welsh identity.<sup>7</sup>

However, Michael D. Jones's influence on the Welsh national awakening of the 1880s needs careful assessment. While it is clear that Jones had developed his ideas

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<sup>3</sup> *Cymru* (January 1893), 16; *Y Celt* (4 August 1893), 1-2. The use of the term 'national' was a refers to the nature rather than the scale of the 'awakening'. Twentieth-century historians have also noted this surge of national consciousness that occurred in Wales during the late nineteenth century. D. Williams, *A History of Modern Wales*, pp.269-85; D. Gareth Evans, *A History of Wales, 1815-1906* (Cardiff, 1989), pp.314-7; K. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales, 1880-1980* (New York, 1981), pp.90-121.

<sup>4</sup> *Cymru* (January 1893), 16.

<sup>5</sup> *Y Celt* (4 August 1893), 1-2. See also, *Y Cronicl* (January 1899), 16, 18.

<sup>6</sup> G. Evans, *Welsh Nation Builders* (Llandysul, 1988), p.267. See also, G. Evans, *Land of my Fathers: 2000 years of Welsh History* (Swansea, 1974), pp.404-8.

<sup>7</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Religion, Nationality and State in Wales, 1840-1890', in D. A. Kerr (ed.), *Comparative Studies on Government and Non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850-1940*, II (Dartmouth, 1992), pp.274-5.



on Welsh national identity many years earlier, his 'attempts' to initiate a national movement had not been 'vigorous' in any way. Realizing that the British political system offered little opportunity to advance his national aspirations for Wales, he had focused his attentions on the establishment of a Welsh Settlement in Patagonia.<sup>8</sup> Only in the mid-1870s, when the Settlement was showing signs of progress, did Jones begin to promote his nationalist aspirations in the Welsh press. By that time, prominent figures in the campaign for the disestablishment of the Anglican Church based their argument on national differences rather than religious principle, while a Welsh university had been established in Aberystwyth in 1872. These two developments have been considered to be the primary stimuli behind the national awakening.<sup>9</sup> For Michael D. Jones, the task was to convince his compatriots that Wales's needs would be better met by achieving national self-government. For more than fifteen years, he promoted his nationalist principles in the press, first in the Patagonian movement's paper *Y Ddraig Goch* (1876-7) and then in the Congregational journal *Y Celt* (1878-92).<sup>10</sup> Jones argued that a movement should be initiated in Wales 'to teach the Welsh about their political rights', by which he meant the right of the Welsh people, as a nation separate from England, to govern their own affairs. A national movement, he claimed, should 'stir the whole country, from Holyhead to Cardiff, to call for a Welsh Parliament at Aberystwyth'.<sup>11</sup> Although Jones did little more than publish his views in the Welsh press, this chapter will

<sup>8</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (31 October 1863), 2.

<sup>9</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922* (Rev. edn, Cardiff, 1970), pp.28-75; K. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales, 1880-1980*, pp.90-121. See also, M. Cragoe, *Culture, Politics, and National Identity in Wales 1832-1886* (Oxford, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> Between 1885 and 1890 Jones was also co-editor with W. Keinion Thomas of the Congregational monthly periodical *Y Cronicl*. However, it would appear that most of this work was done by Keinion Thomas.

<sup>11</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (June 1876), 66.

evaluate his effort to gather support for his nationalist aims and assess his role in the 'national awakening' of the 1880s to determine whether his contribution was as noteworthy as it is claimed.

### **Nonconformity and the Liberal Party**

Having formed a united front in response to the Blue Books of 1847, Welsh Nonconformists looked to the Liberal Party for the redress of political grievances. It was hardly surprising that a close relationship should develop between Nonconformists and the Liberal Party. Pledging their support to the Tories, who represented the Anglican Church and landed aristocracy, was never a viable option. But the intensity of Nonconformist loyalty to the Liberal Party, and particularly to its leader, William Gladstone, was remarkable.<sup>12</sup> It was crystallized by a series of measures introduced by the Gladstone's administration in the late 1860s and early 1870s. These included the abolition of the Church Rate in 1868, the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland in 1869, and the opening of the ancient English universities to Nonconformists in 1871.<sup>13</sup> For Nonconformists, it was clear which political party was most likely to redress their grievances. Indeed, soon after replacing the Conservative government in 1880, the Liberal Party introduced the Burial Act, so that Nonconformists were no longer required to use the Anglican service at burials in parish graveyards. It was followed in 1881 by the Sunday Closing Act, which prohibited the opening of public houses on Sunday in Wales. In fact, during the 1880s, the support of Nonconformists in both England and Wales became

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<sup>12</sup> See K. O. Morgan, 'Gladstone, Wales and the New Liberalism', in P. J. Jagger (ed.), *Gladstone* (London, 1998). For William Ewart Gladstone (1809-98), see P. M. Magnus, *Gladstone, a Biography* (London, 1954); P. J. Jagger (ed.), *Gladstone*; M. Partridge, *Gladstone* (London and New York, 2003); *DNB*.

<sup>13</sup> D. W. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience* (London, 1982), p.8.



increasingly important to the Liberal Party's position in parliament. Realizing this, Nonconformists exerted a powerful moral influence, popularly known as the 'Nonconformist Conscience', on the Liberal Party's policies. The Nonconformist Conscience was characterized by its concern for the moral standard of society. Its aims were usually negative and its methods assertive and uncompromising.<sup>14</sup>

The belligerent style of Michael D. Jones's articles in *Y Celt* was characteristic of Nonconformist political agitation. He often criticized Welsh MPs<sup>15</sup> and he showed little appreciation for gradual political progress, though he rarely offered new ideas or suggested an alternative course of action. However, his concerns were different from those of most Nonconformists. The problem was that the Welsh agenda that was emerging within British politics had a distinct Nonconformist character.<sup>16</sup> For example, the Sunday Closing Act was a typically Nonconformist measure, yet it was particularly significant because it was the first legislation in over two centuries to treat Wales as a separate entity from England.<sup>17</sup> Although Jones acknowledged that the Sunday Closing Act was an important recognition of Wales's national status, he complained that it was 'utterly harmless, and worthless as deliverance for an oppressed nation'.<sup>18</sup> For him, the redress of Nonconformist grievances would not solve the social, economic and cultural issues that needed to be addressed in Wales. He believed that those issues, which included disestablishment, could be addressed only by striking at the root of the problem, namely English oppression, with a demand for national self-government.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp.15-7.

<sup>15</sup> *Y Celt* (23 February 1883), 8; (11 June 1886), 3; (22 July 1887), 4.

<sup>16</sup> E. W. Williams, 'Liberalism in Wales and the Politics of Welsh Home Rule', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* (1990), 192.

<sup>17</sup> G. A. Williams, *When was Wales?* (Cardiff, 1985), p.219.

<sup>18</sup> *Y Celt* (23 February 1887), 1.

Michael D. Jones's concern for Welsh rather than Nonconformist interests was also apparent in his attitude towards the Liberal Party. Initially, he had condemned the Tories as enemies not only of democratic reform, but also of national rights, claiming that they 'always wish to keep nations and subjects under the feet of oppressors'.<sup>19</sup> But when the Liberal Party came into power in 1880, Jones soon concluded that the Tories were the 'enemies' of national rights not because they were Tories, but because they were English. He seems to have drawn this conclusion by observing the Liberal government's expansionist foreign policy. He noted, for example, that 'the Liberals of this country are not free from supporting the Englishman's spirit of conquest, as revealed in their papers which support the attacks on Afghanistan'.<sup>20</sup>

Jones argued that the English nation's domination of parliament was a stronger influence on government policy than the ideology of any political party. He regarded the rivalry between political parties as a mere distraction from the underlying conflict, namely that between the interests of England and those of the Celtic nations. He maintained that, whichever party formed the government, the agenda of the British parliament would always be English. 'The British Parliament,' he asserted in 1885, 'at present makes legislation that is necessary to the English'.<sup>21</sup> He expressed the same view in more satirical terms in 1887:

It is John Bull that orders the lunch for us all according to his own wishes, and he insists on being the carver, but the Welshman, the Scot,

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., (10 May 1878), 9.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., (4 October 1878), 8.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., (3 April 1885), 7. See also, (1 May 1885), 1-2.



and the Irishman all have to pay for the food ... The Scot calls for milk and porridge, the Welshman would like some leek soup, and the Irishman chooses potato soup, and they all claim that they would be cheaper, tastier and far better than what they are given. But John Bull says that he is stronger than the three, and that he will throw his heavy fist at them, unless they agree to take his preferred roast beef and plum pudding.<sup>22</sup>

Behind this satire was a shrewd observation on Wales's situation in British politics. Jones knew that the realization of the demands of Welsh MPs would always rest on the consent of English MPs, simply because the latter formed the majority in parliament. Welsh representatives constituted only about 4 per cent of the total MPs who sat in the House of Commons,<sup>23</sup> and the English vote had greater weight in the decision-making process than those of Ireland, Scotland and Wales combined.<sup>24</sup> Referring again to the control that English MPs had over parliament, Jones explained that 'since the vast majority of English people refuse to carry out our legislative work in accordance with our requests [in Wales], there is nothing to do but strive to gain self-government for Wales'.<sup>25</sup>

Michael D. Jones had no clear strategy for attaining self-government for Wales. The reform of the British political system in the late 1860s and 1870s had no doubt raised his expectations of better representation of Welsh interests in parliament. Not only had the franchise been extended to a larger proportion of the population in 1867, but

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., (28 October 1887), 1.

<sup>23</sup> M. Cragoe, *Culture, Politics, and National Identity in Wales 1832-1886*, p.241.

<sup>24</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (July 1876), 77.

<sup>25</sup> *Y Celt* (24 May 1889), 1.

the introduction of the Secret Ballot in 1872 had provided tenant farmers with security from the retributive action of landlords – something which the tenant farmers of Meirionnydd knew only too well. It is therefore hardly surprising that, initially, he believed that the Liberal Party was the only medium through which there was any hope that Wales's demands would be heard at the highest levels of British politics. The first step towards self-government was to improve the Welsh constituencies' parliamentary representation. 'Because we are a nation, different in our language, religion, and custom,' he argued, 'we should have men in Parliament who take care of our interests'.<sup>26</sup> Wales, he maintained, needed 'enlightened men from among the people' – 'enlightened' meaning that they understood the needs of the Welsh people.<sup>27</sup> Yet despite the strength of the Liberal vote in Wales, the social background of MPs changed at a much slower pace than the demands of Welsh electors in the 1870s and 1880s. Electioneering continued to be an expensive undertaking, and only after the Corrupt Practices Act of 1883 was there a clear change, and Welsh MPs from aristocratic and Anglican backgrounds were replaced by individuals from the middle- and lower middle-class.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, it is doubtful that Michael D. Jones's call for better parliamentary representation would have opened the way to self-determination, as he seemed to suggest.<sup>29</sup> He had observed the weakness of the Welsh vote in parliament, so that even if the Welsh elected representatives of the kind that Michael D. Jones described, there was a danger that their efforts to represent Welsh national interests would be thwarted by the British political system. Evidently, he had encountered a dilemma. He was a firm believer in constitutional reform, so violent

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., (3 April 1885), 7.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., (11 June 1886), 3. See also, (3 April 1885), 7; (5 June 1885), 1.

<sup>28</sup> M. Cragoe, *Culture, Politics, and National Identity in Wales 1832-1886*, pp.242-51.

<sup>29</sup> *Y Celt* (28 March 1890), 1.



protest was out of the question. However, the domination of two parties within British politics left him with few options in his campaign for self-government. While being certain of his views on nationalism, Jones showed little vision when promoting them. Indeed, his inspiration would eventually come from Ireland.

### **The Parliamentary Party**

Michael D. Jones was inspired by the progress that the Irish national movement had made within British politics since the early 1870s,<sup>30</sup> and he hoped that the Welsh would follow its example. The Irish Home Rule League, formed in 1873, had succeeded in virtually eliminating the Liberal Party in Ireland when its Home Rule candidates captured 59 seats in the 1874 general election, leaving the Liberals with only 12. Soon after this victory, the Home Rule MPs organized themselves into an independent parliamentary party under the leadership of the Irish Protestant lawyer Isaac Butt. In theory, the Irish Parliamentary Party could vote on various issues *en bloc*, whereas, in reality, the weakness of Butt's leadership and the wide range of opinions among the Party's members prevented it from achieving its potential.<sup>31</sup> In the 1880s, however, the Home Rule Party found cohesion behind the charismatic Charles Stewart Parnell, MP for Meath.<sup>32</sup>

Following the collapse of the Land League in 1882, a new political organization, the National League, was formed in order to rally the support of Irish people for 'national

<sup>30</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (June 1876), 78; (May 1877), 53-7.

<sup>31</sup> F. S. L. Lyons, *Ireland since the Famine* (London, 1971), pp.131-50; P. S. O'Hegarty, *A History of Ireland under the Union, 1801 to 1922* (London, 1952), pp.472-6; J. C. Beckett, *The Making of Modern Ireland, 1603-1923* (London, 1966), pp.376-88.

<sup>32</sup> For Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-91), see F. S. L. Lyons, *Charles Stewart Parnell* (New York, 1977); R. Kee, *The Laurel and the Ivy. Parnell and Irish Nationalism* (London, 1993); *DNB*.

self-government'. The National League was to provide a firm basis for the Irish Parliamentary Party during this momentous period in Irish political history. Coupled with this popular support for Home Rule was the domineering influence of Charles Stewart Parnell. As leader of the Parliamentary Party, Parnell imposed strict discipline on his fellow Irish MPs. They were required to sign a pledge to vote on all matters in accordance with the Irish Parliamentary Party. Indeed, dissatisfied with the proposal in early 1885 that Ireland should be given a 'Central Board' instead of a parliament,<sup>33</sup> Parnell ordered the Irish MPs to vote with the Conservatives rather than with the Liberals. This, along with the abstention of several Liberal MPs, resulted in Gladstone's resignation as Prime Minister. In the following general election, held in December 1885, the Irish Parliamentary Party won 86 parliamentary seats. This was equal to the margin separating the Liberal and Conservative parties, which meant that the Irish held the balance of power in the House of Commons. Gladstone, who was reappointed Prime Minister in the subsequent election, had little choice but to declare his support for the Irish party, thus placing Irish Home Rule at the top of the agenda of the new Liberal government that was formed in 1886.<sup>34</sup>

Michael D. Jones referred to Irish political leaders such as Daniel O'Connell and Charles Stewart Parnell as the kind of leaders that Wales needed.<sup>35</sup> Jones's admiration for O'Connell is hardly surprising. O'Connell was an iconic figure in Irish politics during the first half of the nineteenth century. He had an undistinguished background,

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<sup>33</sup> For Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914), see *DNB*.

<sup>34</sup> R. Kee, *The Green Flag: A History of Irish Nationalism* (Omnibus edn, London, 2000), p.384; P. S. O'Hegarty, *A History of Ireland under the Union, 1800 to 1922*, pp.519-60; J. C. Beckett, *The Making of Modern Ireland, 1603-1923*, pp.394-8.

<sup>35</sup> *Y Celt* (19 October 1888), 1-2. Jones also referred to the need for a Welsh Daniel O'Connell, see *Y Celt* (3 April 1885), 7; (19 August 1887), 6-7.



but he was well-educated, and he could address his audiences in both Irish and English. Most importantly to Jones, he was a vociferous advocate of Irish interests for most of his political career. The same is true of Charles Stewart Parnell, whom Michael D. Jones suggested could stand as a parliamentary candidate for Meirionnydd in the mid-1880s.<sup>36</sup> Yet Parnell was not the kind of representative that would be expected to gain Jones's approval. The son of an Irish Protestant father and American-born mother, Parnell was a wealthy landowner who had been educated at Cambridge before he chose to dedicate his life to politics. He was aged 29 when he was elected MP for County Meath in 1875. Parnell was an unlikely leader of the national movement and he was certainly not the representative 'from among the people' that Michael D. Jones wanted for Welsh constituencies. Jones's proposal that Parnell should be invited to stand for Meirionnydd in a general election was most remarkable. His suggestion that a good representative for Ireland would be a good representative for Wales undermined his lifelong campaign to assert the distinct needs of the Welsh people as a separate cultural community.

The Irish Parliamentary Party's success in bringing down Gladstone's administration convinced Michael D. Jones that a similar body was needed to demand '*self-government for Wales and resolve the land question*'.<sup>37</sup> Having failed to propose a scheme that was tailored to Wales's political situation, Jones's only suggestion was to follow the example of the Irish. In April 1885, he argued in favour of a Welsh parliamentary party in the columns of *Y Celt*,<sup>38</sup> and the following August, he called on

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., (19 April 1889), 1.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., (5 October 1888), 6-7.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., (3 April 1885), 7.

anyone who supported the call for a Welsh party to contact him.<sup>39</sup> By October 1885, he was writing to colleagues requesting their support and any suggestions they may have had for the

... formation of a Society to establish understanding, union and co-operation throughout the Principality and in Parliament, in the task of selecting and supporting representatives for Wales in the House of Commons who will demand attention and legislation for Wales from the British Government ...<sup>40</sup>

However, nothing seems to have come of this attempt to gather support for the formation of a Welsh parliamentary party. William J. Parry's reply to Michael D. Jones's circular letter was published in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, but both *Y Werin*, which was edited by Parry, and *Y Celt* expressed dissatisfaction at the weak response.<sup>41</sup>

Soon after promoting the formation of a Welsh parliamentary party in *Y Celt* for the first time, Michael D. Jones complained that John Thomas, his fiercest adversary in the dispute at Bala College had disapproved of the idea at a public meeting in

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., (15 August 1885), 9.

<sup>40</sup> NLW MS 18438 B. Letter from Michael D. Jones to Henry Tobit Evans, 17 October 1885. '... Cymdeithas er sefydlu cyd-ddealldwriaeth, undeb a chydweithrediad drwy y Dywysogaeth, ac yn y Senedd, mewn dewis a chynorthwyo cynrychiolwyr i Gymru yn Nhy y Bobl i hawlio sylw a mesurau i Gymru o'diar law Llywodraeth Prydain ...'. See also, 8836 C. Letter from Michael D. Jones to W. J. Parry, 17 October 1885; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), pp.262-3.

<sup>41</sup> *Y Celt* (30 October 1885), 7.



Blaenau Ffestiniog.<sup>42</sup> He had made similar accusations during the 1870s when his efforts to promote a mission in Patagonia had met with little success. There may have been some truth in Jones's claim, but as was the case with the Patagonian mission, the weak response to his promotion of the parliamentary party was attributable to more than the acrimony between him and the 'Clique'. Michael D. Jones's difficulty was that the campaign for disestablishment was the focal point of the Welsh Nonconformist agenda which had emerged within the Liberal Party. Initially, Welsh and English Nonconformists had demanded nothing less than the complete separation of Church and State, but Welsh campaigners had reconsidered their objectives in 1869 when the Anglican Church was disestablished in Ireland because of the superior position of the Catholic Church. Within a year, Welsh MP Watkin Williams called for Welsh disestablishment on the same premise, namely that Nonconformity was stronger than the Anglican Church in Wales. Williams's motion was defeated heavily in parliament,<sup>43</sup> but it was an important landmark in Welsh parliamentary politics. For the following decades, disestablishment would become the overriding issue in Welsh politics.<sup>44</sup> As John Morley, Liberal statesman and journalist,<sup>45</sup> asserted in 1890, 'Home Rule is not more essentially the Irish national question than disestablishment and disendowment are the Welsh national question.'<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., (17 April 1885), 1.

<sup>43</sup> The motion was defeated by 209 votes to 45.

<sup>44</sup> R. Wallace, *Organise! Organise! Organise!: A Study of Reform Agitations in Wales, 1840-1886* (Cardiff, 1991), p.185; NLW, Gee Papers 8311 D, 572. Letter from John Thomas to Thomas Gee, 21 March 1887; Owen Thomas and J. Machreth Rees, *Cofiant y Parch John Thomas, D.D.* (London, 1898), p.407; K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922*, p.104.

<sup>45</sup> For John Morley (1838-1923), see *DNB*.

<sup>46</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Freedom or Sacrilege? A History of the Campaign for Welsh Disestablishment* (Cardiff, 1965), p.3.

The rise of disestablishment as the predominant political issue in Wales was assisted by an increase in the activity of the Liberation Society in Wales. The Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control, or the Anti-State-Church Association as it was called until 1853, was established in 1844 to oppose the connection between the Church and State throughout Britain. The period between 1840s and 1850s were decades of gradual growth and structural organization for the Society in Wales.<sup>47</sup> In the 1860s and 1870s, the Society sought to utilize the potential strength of Welsh Nonconformist support by intensifying its activities in Wales. Local men were recruited to work in specific areas and propaganda was translated into Welsh. By the 1880s, its public collections had increased considerably and regional councils were formed in north and south Wales.<sup>48</sup> Not only was disestablishment the primary demand of Welsh Nonconformist radicals, but the Liberation Society channelled their energy and resources in the right direction. The strength of the movement in Wales was reflected by the fact that, in 1886, 27 of the 30 Liberal MPs gave their support to the cause.<sup>49</sup> Under the leadership of the Liberation Society, the disestablishment campaign in Wales gathered momentum, leaving Michael D. Jones with little chance of success with his scheme.

Michael D. Jones's hope that a successful Irish nationalist campaign would prepare the way for a similar campaign in Wales was dashed when Gladstone's Irish Home Rule Bill was rejected by parliament, thus leading to Gladstone's resignation in June 1886. He seems to have taken heart from the fact that, despite being rejected by 343

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<sup>47</sup> I. G. Jones, 'The Liberation Society and Welsh Politics, 1844 to 1868', in I. G. Jones, *Explorations and Explanations: Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales* (Llandysul, 1981), pp.236-68.

<sup>48</sup> R. Wallace, *Organise! Organise! Organise!*, pp.197-211.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.207.



votes to 313, the Irish Home Rule Bill won a clear majority in Wales with 22 of the 29 Welsh Liberal MPs voting in favour of the motion.<sup>50</sup> Support for a motion of Home Rule for Wales seemed to be increasing.<sup>51</sup> However, Jones was wrong to claim that ‘there is no way that one could be in favour of Irish Home Rule without also supporting Welsh Home Rule’.<sup>52</sup> Welsh MPs supported Irish Home Rule not because of any conviction that nations had a right to govern their own affairs but because of their loyalty to Gladstone and their hope that the passage of the Bill would be soon followed by disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Wales.<sup>53</sup>

### **Michael Davitt and the Land Movement in Wales**

In the 1870s, advances in farming methods and the construction of railways in the United States led to a sharp increase in the import of American grain into Europe, which resulted in a sharp decline in the value of European produce.<sup>54</sup> In the mid-1880s, as the rural crisis in Wales deepened, Michael D. Jones took a particular interest in the Irish movement for land reform. In January 1884, Michael D. Jones and Evan Pan Jones arranged to meet the Irish radical Michael Davitt,<sup>55</sup> whom they invited to address meetings in Wales.<sup>56</sup> Davitt, whose family was evicted from a smallholding in County Mayo, moved to Lancashire when he was a child. Years later, he joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood (also known as the Fenians), an

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<sup>50</sup> D. Rowland Hughes, ‘Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig’ (unpublished M. A. dissertation, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1987), p.30.

<sup>51</sup> M. Cragoe, *Culture, Politics, and National Identity in Wales 1832-1886*, pp.76-7.

<sup>52</sup> *Y Celt* (25 October 1889), 1.

<sup>53</sup> K. O. Morgan, ‘Gladstone, Wales and New Radicalism’, pp.124, 128; E. W. Williams, ‘Liberalism in Wales and the Politics of Welsh Home Rule’, 194.

<sup>54</sup> D. W. Howell, *Land and People in Nineteenth Century Wales* (London, 1977), pp.13, 55-6; G. A. Williams, *When was Wales?*, p.176.

<sup>55</sup> Bangor MS 2072 (46). Letter from Michael D. Jones to Evan Pan Jones, January 1884. For Michael Davitt (1846-1906), see F. Sheehy-Skeffington, *Michael Davitt: Revolutionary, Agitator and Labour Leader* (London, 1908); *DNB*.

<sup>56</sup> *Y Celt* (12 March 1886), 1.

organization renowned for its aggressive tactics, as a result of which he spent seven years in prison between 1870 and 1877 on a conviction of treason-felony. At the end of this sentence, Davitt visited the United States, before returning to Ireland, where he rose to prominence as a leader of agrarian radicalism.<sup>57</sup> Davitt was one of the founders of the National Land League, the organization that was most associated with the Land War in Ireland between 1879 and 1882. The response of the British government to the clashes between tenants and landowners in Ireland was twofold. Its opposition to the agitation was expressed by passing a Coercion Bill early in 1881, but before the end of the year, it also passed a new Land Act which introduced the '3Fs': 'Fair Rents', 'Fixity of Tenure' and 'Free Sale'.<sup>58</sup> The 1881 Land Act was seen as a victory for the Land League, though several of its agitators, including Michael Davitt and Charles Stewart Parnell, were imprisoned in Kilmainham gaol in October 1882 for 'assailing and disrupting' the working of this new legislation. The concessions granted by the 1881 Land Act had already made the Land League virtually redundant, but the final blow was the imprisonment of its leaders by the British government.<sup>59</sup>

Michael D. Jones and Pan Jones believed that the experienced Michael Davitt could be useful as an 'instructor and adviser' to a movement in Wales which could be established along the same lines as the Irish Land League.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, Pan Jones's slogan 'Y Ddaear i'r Bobl' was an exact translation of the Land League's slogan,

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<sup>57</sup> R. Kee, *The Green Flag*, pp.370-1; P. S. O'Hegarty, *A History of Ireland under the Union, 1801 to 1922*, pp.481-98.

<sup>58</sup> F. S. L. Lyons, *Ireland since the Famine*, pp.136, 164.

<sup>59</sup> R. Kee, *The Green Flag*, p.380.

<sup>60</sup> *Y Celt* (19 February 1886), 1; E. Pan Jones, *Oes Gofion* (Bala, 1912), p.176.



‘Land for the People’.<sup>61</sup> However, despite negotiating with Michael D. Jones and Pan Jones in 1884, Davitt did not visit Wales until February 1886. According to Pan Jones, William J. Parry,<sup>62</sup> leader of the North Wales quarrying community, wanted to postpone the visit for a year or two, though the reasons for doing so were not stated.<sup>63</sup> This concern for the support of the quarrying community, and the venues for Davitt’s public meetings – Flint, Blaenau Ffestiniog and Llandudno – would suggest that Michael D. Jones and Pan Jones were eager to draw support from workers in the industrial towns as well as the surrounding rural communities, even though it was essentially a rural issue. Davitt was a well-known figure in British politics, and the organizers would have been eager to draw in a good audience. It was hoped that his visit would attract local interest regardless of whether it was supportive to the cause, and towns such as Flint, Blaenau Ffestiniog and Llandudno, provided an audience as well as large venues. Flint had a prospering coal industry, but it also lay within a short distance of Mostyn, where Evan Pan Jones was minister. Blaenau Ffestiniog was the largest town in Michael D. Jones’s native county of Meirionnydd, which was predominantly rural. Llandudno had good connections with the north coast and was a convenient meeting place for the agricultural communities of the Conwy Valley.

Although Michael Davitt’s visit attracted large audiences and a great deal of local interest, it also proved to be highly controversial.<sup>64</sup> Many who supported the land movement had reservations about the wisdom of Davitt’s presence in Wales,<sup>65</sup> most

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<sup>61</sup> R. Tudur Jones, ‘Cwmni’r Celt a Dyfodol Cymru’, *Trans. Cymm.* (1987), 138.

<sup>62</sup> For William John Parry (1842-1927), see *DWB*.

<sup>63</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes Gofion*, p.176.

<sup>64</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (17 February 1886), 6-7.

<sup>65</sup> *Y Celt* (19 February 1886), 1; (12 March 1886), 1.

notably, Thomas Gee.<sup>66</sup> These reservations were understandable. Davitt had not only been associated with violent protest through his connections with the Fenians, but he had been a leading figure in the Land League, which had caused turmoil in rural Ireland. Moreover, at the time, Gladstone's decision in late 1885 to support Irish Home Rule had brought the Irish national movement to the forefront of British politics. Thomas Gee would later regret his decision to condemn Gladstone's espousal of Irish Home Rule, for the majority of Welsh MPs continued to support the Prime Minister. However, bearing in mind Davitt's reputation, Gee cannot be blamed for fearing that bringing this Irishman to Wales would 'spell disaster for Liberalism in the Principality'.<sup>67</sup> In his biography of Thomas Gee, T. Gwynn Jones also noted that Gee believed that 'Welsh people knew what were the needs of Wales'.<sup>68</sup> Bearing in mind Michael D. Jones's nationalist views, this is particularly noteworthy. Jones had protested throughout his life that Wales was a separate nation with its unique cultural characteristics, yet, when attempting to organize political campaigns, he looked to Ireland for leadership and inspiration.

It was the organizers of Davitt's visit who bore the brunt of the criticism. In fact, when publicizing Davitt's visit in early 1886, Michael D. Jones had emphasized the fact that it was he and Evan Pan Jones who had extended the invitation, and that they had done so independently of any society or movement.<sup>69</sup> In so doing, he may have hoped to broaden the appeal of the movement, or perhaps he was drawing attention to his personal contribution while Thomas Gee had refused to support the event. Whatever the case, the outcome was that Michael D. Jones's name, more than any

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<sup>66</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (29 January 1890). 1.

<sup>67</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes Gofion*, p.176.

<sup>68</sup> T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee* (Denbigh, 1913), p.496.

<sup>69</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (10 February 1886), 13; *Y Celt* (12 February 1886), 7.



other, was associated with the visit.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, when the time came, Pan Jones was unable to take part in the activity due to illness, and so it was Michael D. Jones who was seen at Davitt's side in the meetings. He delivered the opening address at the first meeting in Flint on 11 February 1886, and chaired the second meeting at Blaenau Ffestiniog the following evening, though there is no mention of his participation in the third meeting at Llandudno.<sup>71</sup>

One who was present at the meeting in Blaenau Ffestiniog gave voice to his unease by calling for 'a vote of disapproval of the men who brought Michael Davitt to such a quiet place as Ffestiniog'.<sup>72</sup> He failed to find others among the audience who were willing to admit that they shared his view. Michael D. Jones had volunteered to cover the costs of the meeting himself,<sup>73</sup> but there may still be some significance in the fact that the donations towards the costs of the meeting were insufficient to pay the rent of the room not to mention supplementary expenses.<sup>74</sup> Davitt's visit also met with considerable opposition in the press. The *North Wales Chronicle* described the meeting at Llandudno as the work of 'Nonconformist divines, who had the impertinence to tell the world that they represented the people of Wales'.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, *Y Gwilyddydd* claimed that Davitt had been invited to Wales by 'certain preachers

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<sup>70</sup> William George, *Cymru Fydd: Hanes y Mudiad Cenedlaethol Cyntaf* (Liverpool, 1945), p.19.

<sup>71</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (17 February 1886), 6-7.

<sup>72</sup> *Y Celt* (19 February 1886), 3.

<sup>73</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.243.

<sup>74</sup> J. Graham Jones, 'Michael Davitt, David Lloyd George and T. E. Ellis: The Welsh Experience, 1886', *Welsh History Review* (1997), 462.

<sup>75</sup> *North Wales Chronicle* (20 February 1886), quoted in J. Graham Jones, 'Michael Davitt, David Lloyd George and T. E. Ellis: The Welsh Experience, 1886', p.471.

who have a reputation for eccentricity,' and assured 'that the farmers will gain nothing by accepting eccentric preachers and Fenians as their leaders'.<sup>76</sup>

As David W. Howell noted in his study of nineteenth-century rural Wales, the land reformers' attempt to draw parallels between the situations in Wales and Ireland was ill-founded. Relations between tenants and landowners had not deteriorated in Wales to the same extent as they had in Ireland. Absenteeism was not a problem in Wales, and despite the religious and political differences that usually existed between landowner and tenant, the cultural divide that was prevalent in Ireland was not as clear in Wales where landowners, although Anglicized, were predominantly of Welsh descent.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, attempts to draw similarities between Wales and Ireland were also hampered by the frequent outbreak of violent protest in rural Ireland, which, when added to the religious differences and anti-Irish prejudices, meant that the Celtic neighbours found little sympathy in Wales.<sup>78</sup>

Michael D. Jones had a reputation as a thorn in the side of Meirionnydd landowners, but his views on land reform were moderate in comparison to those of Michael Davitt and Evan Pan Jones. Davitt was a renowned advocate of land nationalization, and, sharing a similar position, Pan Jones argued that all land should be transferred to the state so that 'every British subject [would be] free to share in the benefits that come with the possession of land for personal use'.<sup>79</sup> Following Davitt's visit, Michael D. Jones was also associated with these ideas, which were those of the most radical wing

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<sup>76</sup> *Y Gwyllydydd* (23 February 1886), in J. Graham Jones, 'Michael Davitt, David Lloyd George and T. E. Ellis: The Welsh Experience, 1886', p.472.

<sup>77</sup> D. W. Howell, *Land and People in Nineteenth Century Wales*, pp.87-8.

<sup>78</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922*, pp.68-9.

<sup>79</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes Gofion*, pp.182-3. See also, P. Jones-Evans, 'Evan Pan Jones – Land Reformer', *Welsh History Review* (1938), 143-59.



of the land movement in Wales. However, Michael D. Jones advocated tenant ownership rather than land nationalization.<sup>80</sup> He made clear at Davitt's meeting in Blaenau Ffestiniog that, rather than transfer their land to the state, landowners should be compelled to sell it to their tenants.<sup>81</sup> It seems that Jones had reason to fear that his role in Davitt's visit had associated him with the most radical wing of the land movement in Wales. Merely a week after Michael Davitt's meetings in Wales, moves were made to exclude Michael D. Jones from a farmers' meeting at Denbigh. Jones had travelled there to listen to Gavin Brown Clarke, MP for Caithness and a member of the Crofters' Party,<sup>82</sup> who was to address a meeting organized by the Denbigh Farmers' Society.<sup>83</sup> Jones claimed that he was at the meeting, and indeed, on the stage, when Thomas Gee asked him to join the audience because he 'spoke of things that were too extreme, and that his presence would be detrimental to the land movement in Denbigh'.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Kenneth O. Morgan mistakenly described Michael D. Jones as an 'apostle of land nationalization'. K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics 1868-1922*, p.19; *Y Celt* (5 June 1885), 1-2. Some biographers of David Lloyd George, who delivered one of his first public addresses at Davitt's meeting in Blaenau Ffestiniog, also made this mistake. See F. Owen, *Tempestuous Journey: Lloyd George, his life and times* (London, 1954), p.46; R. Lloyd George, *Lloyd George* (London, 1960), p.25.

<sup>81</sup> J. Graham Jones, 'Michael Davitt, David Lloyd George and T. E. Ellis: The Welsh Experience, 1886', p.462. A few months later he denied that he had ever supported the cry for land nationalization and there is no evidence that he did so later. *Y Celt* (5 November 1886), 1.

<sup>82</sup> The Crofters' Party was the first British independent common people's political party. See D. W. Crowley, 'The Crofters' Party - 1885 to 1892', *Scottish Historical Review*, 35 (1956), 110-26.

<sup>83</sup> For Gavin Brown Clarke (1846-1930), see R. Goring (ed.), *Chambers' Scottish Biographical Dictionary* (Edinburgh, 1992), p.85.

<sup>84</sup> *Y Celt* (5 November 1886), 1. See also, E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.244-5. There is no certainty which account is the more accurate. A few years later, Daniel Roberts of Bathafarn, president of the Denbigh Farmers' Society, gave a different account of the events. According to Roberts, he had taken request that Michael D. Jones did not speak at the meeting to Thomas Gee's house prior to the meeting. *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (29 January 1890), 1; T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee*, pp.506-7.

If Michael D. Jones's views on land reform were so different from those of Michael Davitt and Evan Pan Jones, it is reasonable to ask why he took such a prominent role in Davitt's visit to Wales. It would appear that Jones hoped that a land movement in Wales would support the nationalist cause. Bearing in mind his perception of Wales as distinctly rural, it is hardly surprising that he took an interest in the connection between the nationalist movement and land agitation in Ireland. There, the national movement developed into a vehicle for the grievances of the agricultural communities.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, Michael Davitt's personal views on land reform were not entirely consistent with the official position of the Irish Land League. Despite being associated with individuals who were eager to see the complete abolition of landownership, the aim of the Irish Land League was more moderate. It sought to obtain 'such reform in the laws relating to the land as will enable every tenant to become the owner of his holding by paying a fair rent for a limited number of years', namely tenant ownership.<sup>86</sup>

The moderating influence on the Irish Land League was the MP for County Meath, Charles Stewart Parnell, who preferred the notion of co-operating with landowners than abolishing landownership altogether. Indeed, Parnell, who was president of the Land League, would have been a more suitable choice of visitor to Wales. As a prominent figure in parliament, he would probably have received a warmer welcome than Davitt from Welsh rural communities, and his moderate views on land reform were certainly more in line with Michael D. Jones's views. In fact, it is clear from

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<sup>85</sup> R. Kee, *The Green Flag*, p.384.

<sup>86</sup> N. D. Palmer, *The Irish Land League Crisis* (New Haven, 1940), pp.141-2. See also, R. Kee, *The Green Flag*, p.373.



Jones's letters to William J. Parry that he had hoped that Parnell would accompany Davitt on his visit to Wales.<sup>87</sup> Parnell's views on land reform were not unusually radical, for he advocated tenant ownership rather than land nationalization, but he had seen an opportunity to fuse land reform with the Home Rule League, of which he was also the president.<sup>88</sup> Michael D. Jones's hope of bringing Parnell to Wales was in vain. It seems that he had hoped that the grievances which had been stirred up by the agricultural depression would be channelled to support a national movement in Wales as they had been in Ireland. Indeed, T. Gwynn Jones noted that Thomas Gee refused to participate in Michael Davitt's visit partly because he believed that it would be better not to associate the proposed land league with a Welsh parliamentary party.<sup>89</sup> This would suggest that Michael D. Jones and Evan Pan Jones had intended that the proposed land league and Welsh parliamentary party should co-operate.

Michael D. Jones's hope of using the land movement to further his nationalist aims was influenced by his clash with Thomas Gee at the meeting of the Denbigh Farmers' Society. For many years, Jones's relationship with Gee had been cordial. They had shared the stage as promoters of the Liberal campaigns in the General Election of 1868,<sup>90</sup> and Gee had provided support and publicity for the campaign for the Welsh Settlement in the columns of *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*. He had also been treasurer of the Patagonian Missionary Society formed by Michael D. Jones in the 1870s.<sup>91</sup> However, Thomas Gee was publicly opposed to Irish Home Rule, and he sought to

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<sup>87</sup> NLW MSS 8823 C. Letters from Michael D. Jones to W. J. Parry, 30 December 1885; 7 January 1886; 11 January 1886.

<sup>88</sup> R. Kee, *The Green Flag*, p.384.

<sup>89</sup> T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee*, p.496.

<sup>90</sup> I. Wyn Jones, *Y Llinyn Arian: Agweddau o Fywyd a Chyfnod Thomas Gee* (Denbigh, 1998), pp.96-8.

<sup>91</sup> R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa* (Cardiff, 1962), p.146.

encourage his compatriots to focus their attention on securing disestablishment for Wales.<sup>92</sup> More significantly, Gee's disapproval of Davitt's visit and the episode at Denbigh seems to have left a considerable degree of ill feeling between him and Jones.

Having disapproved of Michael D. Jones and Evan Pan Jones's efforts to bring Michael Davitt to Wales, Thomas Gee set about the formation of his own Welsh National League by amalgamating local farmers' leagues.<sup>93</sup> Avoiding nationalist politics altogether, the new league would focus on tithe rates, a tax levied by the Anglican Church on farmers' produce and labour. Indeed, within months of the incident at Denbigh, rural communities vented their frustrations, not against the landowners, but against the Anglican Church. When the agricultural crisis in Wales deepened during the mid-1880s, many landowners made substantial reductions in rent so that tenants could cope with the collapse in livestock prices, but Anglican clergymen proved far more reluctant to grant reductions in tithe rates. In the summer of 1886, anti-tithe meetings were held in several parts of Wales, and farmers' resentment of the Church intensified when property was confiscated by the authorities at Llanarmon yn Iâl in August 1886, and Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd in early September 1886, because of tenants' refusal to pay the tithe.<sup>94</sup> Thomas Gee was a central figure in the riots that ensued. *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* featured weekly reports of disturbances in various parts of the country, and Denbigh was seen as a focal point for the campaign. As Frank Price Jones noted, the whole campaign was 'cleverly

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<sup>92</sup> F. P. Jones, 'Rhyfel y Degwm', in F. P. Jones, *Radicaliaeth a'r Werin Gymreig* (Denbigh, 1975), p.95.

<sup>93</sup> P. Jones-Evans, 'Evan Pan Jones – Land Reformer', 153; T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee*, p.496.

<sup>94</sup> F. P. Jones, 'Rhyfel y Degwm', pp.78-9.



planned' – it is for this reason that it has often been described as a 'war' rather than a 'riot' – and Thomas Gee was most influential in the work.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, in July 1887, Gee was elected as the first president of a 'Welsh Land, Commercial and Labour League', which advanced his reputation as a spokesperson for the rural communities of Wales.

The prominence of Thomas Gee's role in the tithe riots contrasts with Michael D. Jones's scant involvement. Jones's participation seemed limited to local meetings such as those held at Llanuwchllyn in April 1887<sup>96</sup> and nearby Soar in June 1887.<sup>97</sup> An article that Jones published in November 1886, soon after the outbreak of the riots, suggests that his apparent detachment from the movement was a result of the incident at the meeting of the Denbigh Farmers' Society earlier in the year. Refuting the claim that his ideas were 'too extreme', he stated firmly that he had not supported land nationalization. More importantly, he explained that the demands of the Denbigh Farmers' Society in the heat of the tithe riots – fair rent, fixity of tenure, free sale, and payment for improvements – were, in fact, part of his own 'creed'.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, of the 150 articles and more that Michael D. Jones published in *Y Celt* between the summer of 1886 and the end of 1890, only five of them discussed the tithe riots.<sup>99</sup> None of the five articles mentioned the national question; they called only for disestablishment and better parliamentary representation of Welsh interests.

Matters were complicated by the response of Evan Pan Jones to the formation of

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p.94.

<sup>96</sup> *Y Celt* (8 April 1887), 4.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., (2 July 1886), 7.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., (5 November 1886), 1.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., (5 November 1886), 1; (10 June 1887), 1-2; (22 July 1887), 4; (5 August 1887), 7; (5 December 1889), 6-7.

Thomas Gee's Welsh National League. Openly hostile to its aims, Pan Jones claimed that the local land leagues were organizations of substantial farmers who would never accept wider measures of reform.<sup>100</sup> In response to the National League's activities, he toured south Wales to promote the more radical Land Nationalization Society, the aims of which he had supported for years.<sup>101</sup>

In disagreement with the ideas of Pan Jones and holding a grudge against Thomas Gee, Michael D. Jones was torn between the two branches of the land movement in Wales. Furthermore, it seems that loyalties and hostilities at Bala College also played their part. Evan Pan Jones had been a loyal supporter of Michael D. Jones in the dispute at Bala College, while there is evidence that Thomas Gee was corresponding with John Thomas, Jones's fiercest adversary, in an effort to combine the efforts of the disestablishment campaign and the land movement in Wales.<sup>102</sup> Early in 1888, Thomas Gee and John Thomas shared a platform at a meeting in Blaenau Ffestiniog,<sup>103</sup> where, a couple of years earlier, John Thomas was claimed to have blasted Michael D. Jones's idea of forming a Welsh parliamentary party.<sup>104</sup>

Regardless of the differences between them, Michael D. Jones sided with Evan Pan Jones. In September 1886, they and W. Keinion Thomas, editor of *Y Celt*, visited Bonar Bridge, Sutherland, in the north of Scotland to discuss the possible formation of a Celtic League. The previous month, the Irish Home Rule Bill had won the support of most Liberal MPs in Wales and Scotland as well as in Ireland, and it had

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., (12 March 1886), 1-2.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., (13 August 1886), 10.

<sup>102</sup> NLW, Gee Papers 8311 D, 572. Letter from John Thomas to Thomas Gee, 21 March 1887.

<sup>103</sup> T. Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee*, pp.499-502.

<sup>104</sup> *Y Celt* (17 April 1885), 1.



only been outweighed by the votes of English MPs. This seems to have opened Michael D. Jones's mind to the possibility of Welsh, Irish and Scottish MPs combining their votes to 'bring about necessary reforms and safeguard the interests of the Celts'.<sup>105</sup> Prior to this, Jones had shown little interest in Scottish politics, probably because, unlike in Ireland, only a tiny minority called for Home Rule for Scotland during the 1870s and early 1880s.<sup>106</sup>

Five Scottish MPs and four hundred delegates from Scottish land societies attended the conference at Bonar Bridge. No Welsh MPs were present, and Irish MPs needed to be in London to support a bill drawn out by Parnell.<sup>107</sup> The absence of any Welsh or Irish MPs suggests a lack of interest in the scheme. Parnell, for example, showed little interest in this development.<sup>108</sup> A Celtic League was formed, but it was stillborn. 'Several resolutions were passed,' wrote Keinion Thomas in later years, 'but the Celts all went home happy to do *nothing*'.<sup>109</sup> Michael D. Jones made no further efforts to emulate, or to promote co-operation with, other Celtic nations.

Had there not been a conflict of political views between Michael D. Jones and Evan Pan Jones, on the one hand, and Thomas Gee and John Thomas, on the other, there is reason to believe that the sentiments which led to the outbreak of the tithe riots could perhaps have been channelled in support of a nationalist movement. Thomas Edward

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., (8 October 1886), 1-2. See also, D. G. Boyce, *The Irish Question and British Politics 1868-1986* (Hampshire, 1988), p.33.

<sup>106</sup> H. J. Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism* (London, 1969), pp.91-4.

<sup>107</sup> *Y Celt* (1 October 1886), 6.

<sup>108</sup> P. Jones-Evans, 'Evan Pan Jones – Land Reformer', 153.

<sup>109</sup> *Y Cronicl* (January 1899), 4.

Ellis, the newly elected MP for Meirionnydd,<sup>110</sup> described the tithe riots as ‘a form of awakening of Wales’,<sup>111</sup> while David Lloyd George,<sup>112</sup> at the time a promising young politician, saw an opportunity to ‘raise the spirit of the people’.<sup>113</sup> It was even claimed that cries of ‘Home Rule for Wales’ were heard at a tithe sale in Aberarth, Cardiganshire, in December 1887.<sup>114</sup> Sporadic clashes between farmers and the authorities lasted until 1890, when a measure was introduced to place the onus for the payment of tithes on the landowner rather than the tenant.<sup>115</sup> However, the opportunity to exploit these nationalist sentiments had all but disappeared by the time Michael D. Jones and Thomas Gee had settled their differences in 1888, when Gee pledged the support of his newspaper to Jones’s campaign during the Council elections.<sup>116</sup>

### *Cymru Fydd*

Although Michael D. Jones had failed in his attempts to emulate the Irish national and land movements, there were signs that the Welsh ‘national awakening’ was gathering momentum. Jones declared confidently in 1887, for example, that ‘the tide is rapidly

<sup>110</sup> For Thomas Edward Ellis (1859-99), see T. I. Ellis, *Thomas Edward Ellis, Cofiant*, I (Liverpool, 1944); II (Liverpool, 1948); G. Jones, ‘Thomas Edward Ellis’, in G. Pierce (ed.), *Triwyr Penllyn* (Cardiff, 1956), pp.38-59; N. Masterman, *The Forerunner: the dilemmas of Tom Ellis, 1859-1899* (Llandybie, 1972); *DWB*.

<sup>111</sup> NLW, Daniel Papers 325. Letter from T. E. Ellis to D. R. Daniel, 1 October 1886.

<sup>112</sup> For David Lloyd George (1863-1945), see F. Owen, *Tempestuous Journey: Lloyd George, his life and times*; R. Lloyd George, *Lloyd George*; K. O. Morgan, *David Lloyd George, 1863-1945* (Cardiff, 1981); B. B. Gilbert, *David Lloyd George: A Political Life* (London, 1987); *DNB*.

<sup>113</sup> NLW, Ellis Papers 679, quoted in K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics 1868-1922*, pp.86, 95.

<sup>114</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (16 December 1887), quoted in F. P. Jones, ‘Rhyfel y Degwm’, p.107f.

<sup>115</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics 1868-1922*, p.89.

<sup>116</sup> *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (29 January 1890), 1; E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.248-9.



changing,' and that it was 'flowing again in the Welsh direction'.<sup>117</sup> A national movement, calling itself *Cymru Fydd*, was emerging in Wales, and it was compared to Thomas Davis's 'Young Ireland' movement of the 1840s.<sup>118</sup> It was a somewhat amorphous movement,<sup>119</sup> and Michael D. Jones had no direct influence on its inauguration or its subsequent development.<sup>120</sup> The first *Cymru Fydd* society was formed in May 1886 by a group of Welshmen in London.<sup>121</sup> Other societies were formed over the following five years, but they did not organize themselves into a broader structure until 1894, when they formed a *Cymru Fydd* League and entertained the possibility of merging with the North and South Wales Liberal federations that were formed in 1887 'to promote the interests of Welsh Liberalism'.<sup>122</sup> *Cymru Fydd* was, first and foremost, a cultural rather than a political movement. The movement's passion for Welsh nationhood derived from its appreciation of language and customs, and it shared its origins with societies such as *Cymdeithas y Brythonwys* in London, *Cymdeithas Dafydd ap Gwilym* in Oxford, and *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* which campaigned for Welsh-medium education in Wales. *Cymru Fydd* also had links with the University of Wales in Aberystwyth, where many of its most enthusiastic members had been educated.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> *Y Celt* (11 November 1887), 2. See also, (28 October 1887), 2.

<sup>118</sup> See S. Cronin, *Irish Nationalism: A History of its Roots and Ideology* (London, 1980), pp.65-85.

<sup>119</sup> W. George, *Cymru Fydd: Hanes y Mudiad Cenedlaethol Cyntaf*, pp.10-11; E. W. Williams, 'Liberalism in Wales and the Politics of Welsh Home Rule', 191.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.10-22; D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig'. Michael D. Jones did not contribute any articles to the movement's monthly publication, entitled *Cymru Fydd*, which first appeared in January 1888.

<sup>121</sup> D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig', pp.18-19, 27-9.

<sup>122</sup> G. Jones, 'Thomas Edward Ellis', p.47; D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig', pp.176-85.

<sup>123</sup> D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig', pp.19, 195.

Michael D. Jones's closest connection with the *Cymru Fydd* movement was Thomas Edward Ellis of Cynlas, near Bala. Although Ellis was raised as a Calvinistic Methodist, he acknowledged in later life that Michael D. Jones's promotion of Welsh identity – his costume, his promotion of the Welsh Settlement, and his children's names – had been an inspiration to him.<sup>124</sup> Indeed, it is claimed that Michael D. Jones visited Ellis as a boy 'to foster interest in a national future for Wales'.<sup>125</sup> Ellis studied at Aberystwyth and Oxford, before moving to work in London, where, in May 1886, he became one of the founding members of the first *Cymru Fydd* society. A few months later, at the age of twenty-seven, he was elected as MP for his native county of Meirionnydd.

There is little evidence of correspondence between Michael D. Jones and Thomas Ellis,<sup>126</sup> but they shared the view that the primary aim of the national movement should be self-government for Wales, and that a Welsh parliament would lead to rejuvenation within every sphere of Welsh life.<sup>127</sup> In October 1886, shortly after his election as MP, he declared his hope that Wales would

... speak clearly in favour of Self-government, for the right and convenience to develop its resources, and to live its life as a distinct nation. Wales requests religious equality, land reform, a national education system which links elementary, intermediate and higher levels

<sup>124</sup> Letter from T. E. Ellis to M. E. Ellis, 10 February 1891, quoted in T. I. Ellis, *Thomas Edward Ellis, Cofiant*, II, p.126. See also, N. Masterman, *The Forerunner*, p.270.

<sup>125</sup> G. Evans, *Welsh Nation Builders*, p.266.

<sup>126</sup> NLW, T. E. Ellis Papers 116. Letter from Michael D. Jones to T. E. Ellis, 2 November 1886; NLW, T. E. Ellis Papers, 1165. Letter from Michael D. Jones to T. E. Ellis, 20 January 1893.

<sup>127</sup> W. Jones, *Thomas Edward Ellis, 1859-1899* (Cardiff, 1986), p.23.



as one strong chain; but above all, its request should be, and its request no doubt will be, for Self-government. Seek this first, and all these things shall be added unto you.<sup>128</sup>

While it cannot be proven that this aspect of Ellis's politics was directly influenced by Michael D. Jones, the two men held strikingly similar views on the subject. In fact, it was Ellis's conviction of the need for national self-government that defined his early contribution to the *Cymru Fydd* movement. From the outset, there were different opinions on the degree to which *Cymru Fydd* should be involved in politics, which is hardly surprising bearing in mind that the initial impetus for the movement came from cultural activity.<sup>129</sup> Political issues were not mentioned at all in the London *Cymru Fydd* society's programme in October 1886,<sup>130</sup> for example, and it was only through Thomas Ellis's influence that national self-government was later given a central place in its manifesto.<sup>131</sup>

Ellis was the first Welsh MP to call for national self-government, although he was joined by William Abraham (Mabon)<sup>132</sup> and Alfred Thomas<sup>133</sup> by the end of 1886. Moreover, the increasing influence of the Welsh national movement in British politics was apparent in August 1886 when widespread dismay at William Gladstone's absence from a parliamentary vote on the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in

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<sup>128</sup> *Y Traethodydd* (October 1886), 492.

<sup>129</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922*, pp.105-6.

<sup>130</sup> D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig', p.39.

<sup>131</sup> *Y Celt* (5 October 1888), 6-7; D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig', pp.42-3.

<sup>132</sup> For William Abraham ('Mabon'; 1842-1922), see *DWB*.

<sup>133</sup> For Alfred Thomas (1840-1927), see *DWB*.

Wales led to calls for a Welsh parliamentary party.<sup>134</sup> On 26 August 1886, a group of Welsh Liberal MPs convened to form a parliamentary committee that would meet on a fortnightly basis to discuss issues concerning Wales, and vote independently of the Liberal Party if necessary.<sup>135</sup> With Henry Richard as its leader,<sup>136</sup> the Committee was not likely to call for any radical departure from Liberal policy in the immediate future, nor would it do so after the appointment of Stuart Rendel as Richard's successor in 1888.<sup>137</sup> Both Richard and Rendel were at the end of long political careers in the Liberal Party, and neither was likely to defect from it. Nevertheless, the success of the Committee led William Rathbone to suggest that a standing committee be formed to include every Welsh MP. This was rejected by parliament in March 1888, but it was clear that attitudes were changing – only 8 of Wales's 27 Liberal MPs were opposed to the idea.<sup>138</sup>

Bearing in mind that Michael D. Jones had attempted to gather support for a Welsh parliamentary party in 1885, he was remarkably critical of the parliamentary committee of Welsh Liberal MPs. He accepted that its aims were honourable and praiseworthy, but he feared that its connections with the Liberal Party were too close and that its members were not accountable to any popular movement in the same way as the Irish Party felt accountable to the Irish National League.<sup>139</sup> Moreover, Jones still felt that insufficient emphasis was placed on self-government for Wales. In October 1888, for example, he criticized the *Cymru Fydd* movement because of its

<sup>134</sup> D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig', p.87.

<sup>135</sup> R. Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism: A Study* (London, 1954), p.228.

<sup>136</sup> For Henry Richard (1812-88), see I. G. Jones, *Henry Richard: Apostol Heddwch, 1812-1888* (Llandysul, 1988); *DWB*.

<sup>137</sup> For Stuart Rendel (1834-1913), see K. O. Morgan, "'The Member for Wales": Stuart Rendel (1834-1915)', *Trans. Cymm.* (1984), 149-71; *DWB*.

<sup>138</sup> D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig', p.97.

<sup>139</sup> *Y Celt* (11 March 1887), 1.



apparent reluctance to campaign for self-government.<sup>140</sup> Even though the prospect of Welsh national interests being represented in parliament seemed better than ever, Jones's frustration over this issue was apparent in his response to the proposal made by Alfred Thomas, MP for East Glamorgan, in 1890 that Wales should have its own Secretary of State. It was described by Michael D. Jones as 'very weak', and he maintained that 'if we are to have self-government, *let us have a Welsh Parliament at Aberystwyth*'.<sup>141</sup> This uncompromising approach to politics, which was again characteristic of Nonconformist agitation, was also evident in Jones's response to the preparation in 1892 of a National Institutions Bill for Wales. The Bill proposed the appointment of a Welsh Secretary of State, a national council to take responsibility for education and local government in Wales, and also the establishment of a national museum.<sup>142</sup> If approved by parliament, it would have been an unprecedented recognition of Welsh nationhood. Yet Michael D. Jones again revealed that, despite emphasizing constitutional reform as the only legitimate means of achieving his nationalist aims, he had little time for gradual progress in politics. He claimed that the National Institutions Bill was a step in the right direction, but he still considered it insufficient to answer the requirements of the Welsh nation.<sup>143</sup> However, discussions on the Bill did not bear fruit because of diverging opinions among Welsh Liberal MPs.<sup>144</sup>

Even though Michael D. Jones criticized Welsh MPs for their reluctance to call for full self-governing powers for Wales, his promotion of nationalist principles certainly

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., (5 October 1888), 6.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., (7 March 1890), 1.

<sup>142</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922*, p.109.

<sup>143</sup> *Y Celt* (4 September 1891), 1-2.

<sup>144</sup> K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics 1868-1922*, pp.109-10.

had its weaknesses. While Jones's demand for a Welsh parliament was firm and unequivocal, he never set out in detail his views on the subject. Moreover, the haphazard manner in which he wrote to *Y Celt* tended to obscure his intentions. There was no telling what would be the subject of his articles from one week to the next, and he wrote on a range of subjects, the most recurrent being the Welsh settlement in Patagonia, the dispute at Bala College, his views on the Welsh language and the actions of the British government. He was often distracted from the issue at hand, especially by personal grudges, one example being his clash with Thomas Gee in 1886, which later deterred him from using the land movement in Wales to gather support for his nationalist aims.

Michael D. Jones's response to the Local Government Act, which was approved by parliament in 1888, is another example of his tendency to be distracted. Supporters of Home Rule for Wales saw this measure as an opportunity to achieve some degree of national self-government for Wales.<sup>145</sup> According to the Act, the new County Councils could form Joint Committees between them 'for any purpose in respect of which they are jointly interested'.<sup>146</sup> Despite their limited powers, there was no reason why County Councils could not form a joint-committee to discuss issues of Welsh interest. Jones was not only aware of the potential role of the County Councils in securing self-determination for Wales but also confident that their powers would be extended in future.<sup>147</sup> As the first County Council elections approached, however, Jones seemed more interested in challenging the control of landowners over

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<sup>145</sup> E. W. Williams, 'Liberalism in Wales and the Politics of Welsh Home Rule', 196-7.

<sup>146</sup> R. Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism*, p.229.

<sup>147</sup> *Y Geninen* (1894), quoted in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.251; *Y Celt* (21 December 1888), 2.



agricultural regions such as Meirionnydd. According to Evan Pan Jones, it was upon hearing that the candidate for Llanuwchllyn was John Williams of Gwernhefin, the steward whom he blamed for evicting his mother from Y Weirglodd Wen in 1859, that Michael D. Jones was persuaded to stand as the candidate for the Liberal Party in January 1888.<sup>148</sup> He defeated Williams by a slender majority of eight votes, and while he claimed that the victory had reassured him of Llanuwchllyn's political welfare,<sup>149</sup> he seemed frustrated by the conservative attitudes of his fellow councillors.<sup>150</sup> While participating in this campaign, Jones seems to have lost interest in the wider possibilities offered by the Local Government Act.

Michael D. Jones was easily distracted by personal tensions which still lingered after the dispute at Bala. When discussing 'oppressive government', for example, he not only condemned the actions of the British government, but he also took the opportunity to criticize the 'Clique'.<sup>151</sup> Since *Y Celt* was published by supporters of the Old Constitution, Jones may have hoped to convince his supporters in the Bala College dispute that his political views were also worthy of their support. However, by mentioning in the same article both the Bala College dispute and the actions of the British government, issues which were hardly comparable, Jones's concerns not only appeared to be puerile, but he also obscured his argument on more pressing political issues. The result was a collection of articles which seemed more like impulsive tirades than a premeditated campaign to promote his nationalist aspirations.

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<sup>148</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.245-6.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p.248.

<sup>150</sup> *Y Geninen* (1894), quoted in E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.251; *Y Celt* (15 March 1889), 1-2; (22 March 1889), 1; (11 October 1889), 1; (18 October 1889), 1.

<sup>151</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (March 1876), 29; *Y Celt* (6 July 1883), 4-5; (18 November 1887), 1-2; (17 April 1885), 1-2; (10 September 1886), 2-3; (10 June 1887), 1-2.

Furthermore, Jones made no effort to promote his political aspirations by seeking collaboration with individuals such as John Thomas and Cadwaladr R. Jones, who were leading figures in the campaign for disestablishment in north Wales.<sup>152</sup> On the contrary, he associated disestablishment and self-government with the opposing factions in the Bala College dispute, thereby presenting them to Welsh Congregationalists as rival campaigns. In 1886, for example, he noted that ‘the dispute between us as supporters of self-government and Messrs C. R. Jones and John Thomas and their followers in Liverpool, is that the primary task is to get the whole loaf, while they say that the slice of should be the sole objective’.<sup>153</sup> A few years later, Jones again presented the two campaigns in these terms. Comparing Wales to a sick person, he explained that Dr Liverpool (John Thomas) and Dr Llanfyllin (C. R. Jones) were attempting to cure our ‘nation’s finger’ with disestablishment, while Dr Cynlas (Thomas Ellis) hoped to cure its whole constitution by securing national self-government.<sup>154</sup> Congregational churches were already polarized by their opinions on the dispute at Bala Independent College, and by associating the disestablishment campaign with his opponent in that dispute, Michael D. Jones had little chance of broadening the support for national self-government to include those who had opposed his actions at the College. He wondered why so many felt that they could not support both the campaign for disestablishment and that in favour of national self-government.<sup>155</sup> The answer is that they associated these separate campaigns with the opposing parties in the dispute which had divided Welsh Congregationalism.

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<sup>152</sup> R. Wallace, *Organise! Organise! Organise!*, p.204.

<sup>153</sup> *Y Celt* (10 December 1886), 1.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, (28 March 1890), 1.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, (21 March 1890), 1.



There is little doubt that Michael D. Jones had shaped the attitudes of many young men who had studied at Bala College, though Jenkyn Thomas's claim that the two hundred students who had been under Jones's tutelage were all converted to nationalism is doubtful to say the least.<sup>156</sup> None of his former students rose to prominence as leaders of the *Cymru Fydd* movement. Owen M. Edwards, Welsh scholar who was raised in Llanuwchllyn, acknowledged Jones's influence on his sense of Welsh identity.<sup>157</sup> Edwards was associated with the cultural aspects of the *Cymru Fydd* movement, but he was not involved in the political campaign that Jones considered so important to the future of Wales. In Thomas Edward Ellis, however, Michael D. Jones saw a strong leader for the Welsh national movement,<sup>158</sup> and he hoped that further support would come from David Lloyd George of Criccieth, who had delivered an inspiring address at Michael Davitt's meeting in Blaenau Ffestiniog in 1886 and was elected MP for the Caernarfon boroughs in 1890.<sup>159</sup> He considered Thomas Ellis in particular to be his protégé. As one who rarely expressed anything but criticism of others, it was remarkable how Jones took comfort in Ellis's promotion of Welsh national interests and his leadership of a new generation of Welsh politicians.

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid., (4 August 1893), 2.

<sup>157</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, pp.96-9.

<sup>158</sup> *Y Celt* (16 July 1886), 4; (5 November 1886), 1; (10 December 1886), 1; (11 March 1887), 2; (3 August 1887), 7; (16 March 1888), 4; (19 October 1888), 1; R. Coupland, *Welsh and Scottish Nationalism*, p.232.

<sup>159</sup> *Y Celt* (5 October 1888), 1. It has been claimed that Michael D. Jones was Lloyd George's 'political mentor', but although they shared the platform at Michael Davitt's meeting at Blaenau Ffestiniog in 1886, there is no evidence of correspondence between the two men. See B. Evans, *The Life Romance of Lloyd George* (London, 1915), pp.18-19.

While visiting Egypt in late 1890, Thomas Ellis was struck with typhoid, from which he never entirely recovered.<sup>160</sup> Having regained sufficient health to return to Wales, Ellis soon departed for South Africa between October 1890 and April 1891 in the hope that it would aid his recovery. During his stay, he came under the influence of Cecil Rhodes, prime minister of the South African Cape of Good Hope,<sup>161</sup> and underwent a change of outlook which had a momentous impact on his political career and delivered a blow to Michael D. Jones's confidence in the future of Welsh politics. Within the space of a few months, Thomas Edward Ellis had turned into a cautious Liberal Unionist.<sup>162</sup> There is no record of Michael D. Jones's response to Ellis's shift in outlook, although changes in the content of his articles suggest that he was disillusioned by the development. Despite David Lloyd George's rise to prominence as the leader of the *Cymru Fydd* movement, Jones's commentary on Welsh parliamentary politics virtually ceased. Instead, he dedicated his time to the criticism of British imperialism and the defence of the Welsh language. Certainly, this was not a reflection of any decline in the activity of the parliamentary *Cymru Fydd* movement which continued to campaign on issues relating to Wales in spite of Ellis's defection. Indeed, *Cymru Fydd*'s greatest success was achieved without the leadership of Thomas Ellis, and certainly without that of Michael D. Jones. In 1893, the movement experienced a surge of support, leading to the formation of a National League in 1894. With nearly fifty branches formed throughout Wales and over ten thousand subscriptions in south Wales alone, it became the most influential pressure group in Wales at the time. The *Cymru Fydd* movement's achievements in parliament did not reflect the extent of its popular support, and although it was more politically active

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<sup>160</sup> T. I. Ellis, *Thomas Edward Ellis, Cofiant*, II, pp.93-4.

<sup>161</sup> For Cecil Rhodes (1853-1902), see *DNB*.

<sup>162</sup> T. I. Ellis, *Thomas Edward Ellis*, II, pp.119-34; N. Masterman, *The Forerunner*, pp.134-60.



than previously, self-determination never superseded disestablishment as the primary aim of Welsh radicals.<sup>163</sup>

During the 1880s, the 'national awakening' seemed to have provided fertile soil for Michael D. Jones's aspirations for Wales. David Stephen Davies noted in 1892 that 'he is [now] considered a moderate man because public opinion has progressed so quickly in recent years'.<sup>164</sup> Yet it is clear that Jones's views on national self-government were still considerably more radical than those of most Nonconformist radicals. Wales was considered a political entity, but its interests in parliament seemed almost exclusively Nonconformist. Even when the 'national awakening' seemed to have increased appreciation of Welsh cultural identity, Welsh MPs proved reluctant to demand full national self-government for Wales. Owen M. Edwards, the eminent Welsh scholar, wrote of Jones's continuing solitude:

... I remember a time when Michael D. Jones was in a state of conspicuous loneliness, because he was far ahead of everyone else with his ideas. I saw him afterwards in later life in inconspicuous loneliness, because several others had reached the same ground as that on which he had stood alone so bravely and for so long.<sup>165</sup>

The new generation of Welsh MPs which appeared after 1886 was more willing to consider Welsh interests as separate from Nonconformity, but the disestablishment

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<sup>163</sup> D. Rowland Hughes, 'Cymru Fydd a Strwythur Rhyddfrydiaeth Gymreig', pp.161-201; E. W. Williams, 'Liberalism in Wales and the Politics of Welsh Home Rule', 199-207.

<sup>164</sup> *Y Drafod* (29 September 1892), 3.

<sup>165</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.96.

campaign was unshakeable. Even during the so-called 'national awakening' of the late 1880s and 1890s, limited support for Michael D. Jones's demand for national self-government made him a peripheral figure in Welsh politics.

Nevertheless, other factors contributed to Jones's failure to gather support for his political aims. He lacked the resources to pursue his political ambitions and the ability to win the hearts and minds of other Nonconformists. Jones would always struggle to find support for his nationalist aims since his efforts were limited to publishing articles in *Y Celt*. It is noteworthy, for example, that, when promoting land nationalization, Evan Pan Jones launched the periodical *Cwrs y Byd* in 1891 because he felt that *Y Celt* was read only by Congregationalists, and that he wanted his ideas to reach a wider audience.<sup>166</sup> Michael D. Jones's hope of gaining support for his views by publishing them in the columns of *Y Celt* was further undermined by his involvement in the dispute at Bala Independent College, which had excited considerable resentment towards him among Congregationalists. Moreover, as his quarrel with Thomas Gee has shown, Jones struggled to co-operate even with individuals who held views that were similar to his, let alone change the minds of those who disagreed with him. Most significantly, however, Michael D. Jones failed to devise a clear strategy to achieve his nationalist aspirations. His political activity in the 1880s was largely restricted to criticizing the work of Welsh MPs, condemning the actions of the British government and calling on his compatriots to follow the example of the Irish national movement – an approach that hardly befitted one who

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<sup>166</sup> P. Jones-Evans, 'Evan Pan Jones – Land Reformer', 155.



has been described as 'the first in modern times to offer the Welsh a rational political solution to the question of how best to maintain their identity'.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> *NCWL*, p.395.

## Conclusion

This study has given detailed examination to Michael D. Jones's life, work and thought. The first part of this study discussed the formation and development of his thought, with chapters focusing on his religion, radicalism, identity and nationalism. The second part analysed his participation in the Patagonian movement, the dispute at Bala College, and the 'national awakening' in late nineteenth-century Wales. In conclusion, a review will be offered of the conclusions that were reached over the course of this study, and what they have revealed about Michael D. Jones's contribution to religion, society and politics in nineteenth-century Wales.

Michael D. Jones's thought was analysed in order to identify influences, to clarify his views and to compare them with the general attitudes of Welsh Nonconformists in the nineteenth century. This has added to the understanding of his thought and thrown light on aspects which have not been previously discussed. Other studies of Jones's thought have noted the importance of his religion to other aspects of his thought,



though none of them analysed it in detail.<sup>1</sup> This is hardly surprising bearing in mind the dearth of source material and Jones's lack of discussion on theological issues. In fact, the ambiguity that surrounds his views on issues of theology is significant in itself. Michael D. Jones was deeply influenced by his father's moderate Calvinist views, though it was not revealed in any theological discussion. Unlike his father, Jones showed little interest in Christian doctrine. Rather, his theological inclinations were apparent in his humanitarian concerns, which were clearly supported by Edward Williams's 'New System'. Indeed, it would appear that Jones's theological standpoint developed into Arminianism. More importantly, however, Michael D. Jones's religion was both a stimulus to, and a justification for, his interest in nineteenth-century politics and society. Most notably, his moral philosophy, which had been influenced by Enlightenment thought, underlined the ability of humankind, through all methods of enquiry, to 'strive for a small heaven on earth'.<sup>2</sup>

Michael D. Jones's political radicalism was, like his theological standpoint, influenced by contemporary developments in Wales. His attitudes were typical of mid-nineteenth century Nonconformist radicalism, his early political activity being directed towards the Anglican Church and the wealthy landowners of Meirionnydd. Jones was active in local politics, and especially in the Liberal parliamentary campaign in Meirionnydd in 1859, though his contribution was not as significant as Pan Jones suggested.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, Michael D. Jones's political views were also influenced by the social contract theory, and particularly the philosophy of John

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<sup>1</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Michael D. Jones a Thynged y Genedl', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl* (Llandysul, 1986), p.106; D. Gwenallt Jones, 'Michael D. Jones', in G. O. Roberts (ed.), *Triwyr Penllyn* (Cardiff, 1956), p.16; G. Williams, 'Nationalism in nineteenth century Wales: The discourse of Michael D. Jones', in G. Williams (ed.), *Crisis of Economy and Ideology: Essays on Welsh Society 1840-1980* (Bangor, 1983), p.182.

<sup>2</sup> *Y Celt* (28 October 1887), 2.

<sup>3</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith y Prif Athraw, y Parch. Michael Daniel Jones, Bala* (Bala, 1903), p.215.

Locke. When discussing issues of state and government, he emphasized that the actions of the state should reflect ‘the will of the people’.<sup>4</sup> The details of his political views on issues such as suffrage and representation were ambiguous, but he was clearly a staunch democrat and a firm believer in constitutional reform. This is significant in light of the fact that, in later life, Jones campaigned for national self-government, a political ideal that was never close to being achieved through the democratic and constitutional methods that he endorsed.

Other studies of Michael D. Jones have noted that his views on national identity separated him from contemporaries, but none of them has elaborated on the development of this aspect of his thought. When this is studied more deeply, it can be seen that Jones’s appreciation of Welsh national characteristics, which resulted from his experiences in the United States and in Wales, stemmed from a connection that he observed between language and religion. He believed that loss of the Welsh language coincided with the neglect of religious practices in expatriate Welsh communities and in Anglicized regions of Wales, which led him to the conclusion that the preservation of national characteristics was essential to the well-being of the Welsh people.

For Michael D. Jones, national identity was subjective in that the individual was ultimately faced with a choice whether to embrace or neglect their national characteristics. While being fiercely critical of his compatriots who chose to adopt English language and customs, Jones sought to make his Welsh identity a pervasive influence on his life. Although it was his experiences in the United States in 1848-9 that awakened his appreciation of national characteristics, his perception of Welsh identity was deeply influenced by his upbringing in Meirionnydd. His sense of national identity was based on three primary characteristics – the Welsh language,

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<sup>4</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (March 1876), 29; (June 1877), 65; (July 1876), 77; *Y Celt* (8 April 1887), 4; (28 October 1887), 2.



Protestant Nonconformity and the rural way of life – all of which were defining characteristics of Jones's native county of Meirionnydd. In fact, bearing in mind that Jones was involved in the establishment of the Patagonian Settlement and that he displayed a general interest in international politics, his perception of Welsh nationhood was remarkably parochial. While there were dynamic elements to Michael D. Jones's expression of national identity, it may also be seen as a reaction to the forces of industrialization and Anglicization that affected Wales during the nineteenth century. Moreover, Jones's sense of Welsh identity combined aspects of both the Romantic Movement of the eighteenth-century, with its emphasis on culture and heritage, and the national consciousness that emerged among nineteenth-century Welsh Nonconformists, which emphasized the moral character of the people.

Although he recognized the value of national characteristics in the late 1840s, it was during the 1850s that Michael D. Jones developed his political aspirations for the Welsh nation. In addition to being influenced by the Hungarian revolutionary Lajos Kossuth, Jones's thought was shaped by his observations on language status and cultural sustainability, which led him to view the connection between England and Wales in colonial rather than in contractual terms. He realized that the status of the Welsh language was no higher in Wales than in any other part of the world, and he claimed that the English language had been unjustly imposed on the Welsh people as the medium of power and prestige. Using history, Scripture and moral principle to support his position, Jones argued that the Welsh language should be given 'official' status in Wales, and that only a Welsh parliament could respond effectively to the distinct needs of the Welsh people.

For this pioneering vision of a self-governing Wales, where legislation and government would reflect the distinct character of the people and secure the future of the Welsh language, Michael D. Jones deserves to be hailed as 'the founding father of

modern political nationalism in Wales'.<sup>5</sup> His nationalism was, indeed, 'democratic and non-violent, internationalist and anti-imperialist'.<sup>6</sup> However, bearing in mind the parochial element of Jones's national identity, there is room to question the extent to which his national vision incorporated the regional differences that were emerging in Wales during the nineteenth century. Moreover, he had no clear strategy for achieving self-government for Wales or any suggestion on how it would be implemented. Unable to see how his political aspirations could be realized in Wales, Jones focused his attention on the Patagonian movement as another means of 'perfecting the national character'.<sup>7</sup>

Michael D. Jones has been hailed as the 'father' of the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia, but his role in the movement was more complex than this title would suggest. Jones was not the first to suggest the establishment of a Welsh Settlement, and despite contributing to the discussion on the subject during his visit to the United States in 1848-9, he made no effort to promote the idea in Wales until 1856. It was in response to a request from the Welsh in the United States that he organized his first meeting to discuss the idea at Bala in August 1856. Although Jones was the initiator of the movement in Wales, he was not its leader. Indeed, once the movement was under way, Jones's views on the Welsh Settlement were influenced by the direction that was taken under the leadership of other supporters, particularly Hugh Hughes. Jones had been reluctant to consider Patagonia as a location for the Settlement but he was swayed by the tide of public opinion, and, following the collapse of the movement in the United States, he had been forced to accept that the proposed Settlement would be pioneered by settlers from Wales rather than North America.

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<sup>5</sup> R. Tudur Jones, 'Religion, Nationality and State in Wales, 1840-1890', in D. A. Kerr (ed.), *Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1840-1940*, II (Dartmouth, 1992), p.271; *DNB*.

<sup>6</sup> G. Evans, *Welsh Nation Builders* (Llandysul, 1988), p.263.

<sup>7</sup> *Y Ddraig Goch* (31 October 1863), 2.



It was the lack of public support for the venture and a succession of unforeseen events that led to Michael D. Jones's most important contribution to the establishment of the Patagonian Settlement. Even though he had emphasized in the late 1850s that the financial basis should be secured before proceeding further,<sup>8</sup> the Liverpool Committee struggled to find sufficient funds to take full advantage of its negotiations with the Argentine government. Through the support of his wife, Anne, and his mother-in-law, Mary Davies, Michael D. Jones subsidized the activities of the Liverpool Committee. He first contributed towards the passage of two agents to Buenos Aires in 1862, and, when their agreement was rejected by the Argentine Congress in 1863, Jones paid the expenses of the Argentine consul to travel to Buenos Aires to restart the negotiations. Fearing that his expenditure had been in vain, Michael D. Jones compromised the initial demands of the Liverpool Committee by suggesting that the Welsh settled in the Chupat Valley on the same terms as ordinary immigrants – a decision that influenced the political development of the Settlement in later years. Finally, when the venture was on the verge of collapse in 1865, Jones paid from his own pocket for the charter and preparation of *Mimosa*, a replacement vessel for *Halton Castle*, and provided lodgings for the 150 passengers who sailed from Liverpool to establish the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia. Although Michael D. Jones had hoped that the money which he had spent, about £2,500 in total, would soon be returned to him with interest, the significance of his involvement in the Patagonian movement should not be underestimated. Michael D. Jones was not the conceptual 'father' of the Welsh Settlement, but it is clear that his contribution was crucial for the initial success of the venture.

It is not surprising that Evan Pan Jones deliberately overlooked the financial troubles which plagued Michael D. Jones as a result of his expenditure on the establishment of the Patagonian Settlement. Yet to do so leaves us in a far weaker position from which

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<sup>8</sup> *Yr Amserau* (3 March 1858), 7; *Yr Arweinydd* (10 March 1859), 3.

to understand Jones's life and contribution. Michael D. Jones had expected that the money which he spent in May 1865 would be returned to him without much delay. However, the failure of the Liverpool Committee and the Settlement to make a swift repayment plunged him into financial crisis. Jones hoped to find some relief by participating in the activities of the Welsh Colonizing and General Trading Company, but when this proved unsuccessful, he sold his home to Bala College for £2,000. Again, this provided little relief, as the College was unable to make the payment. Consequently, Michael D. Jones ran the risk of purchasing a vessel, *Myfanwy*, for the Colonizing Company, in the hope that it would reap profits and accelerate the development of the Patagonian Settlement. Delays in the construction of *Myfanwy* and the Company's shortage of credit eventually led Jones to bankruptcy.

In his biography, Evan Pan Jones chose to discuss the 'storms' at Bala College before discussing Michael D. Jones's involvement in the Patagonian venture. Michael D. Jones had clashed with other Congregational ministers during the 1850s, and there was already speculation over the future of Bala College. However, the primary cause of the dispute at the College was Jones's role in the Welsh Settlement movement and its impact on his financial situation. Despite being presented as a clash of Congregational principles, the central issue in the 'Battle of the Two Constitutions' was Michael D. Jones's position as principal of the College. It was justifiably claimed that, by selling Bodiwan to the College without informing the Committee of his financial situation, Jones had exploited his position at Bala College to his own advantage, and had manipulated the voting system at the College to ensure that there was a possibility that he could repurchase Bodiwan in the future. The New Constitution was therefore a means of weakening Jones's influence on the College Committee and of resolving the Bodiwan issue. Moreover, it was the threat of eviction from Bodiwan that compelled Jones to rebel against the New Constitution. By disclosing the details of the dispute, this study has challenged Michael D. Jones's



reputation as a staunch Congregationalist, which stemmed from his opposition to the New Constitution. Not only it is true that Jones's opposition to the Constitution was provoked by personal circumstances, but the position of his adversary, John Thomas, can be seen to be more consistent with Congregational principles, whereas Michael D. Jones's Congregationalism appears to have been based on his political ideals of democracy rather than on any theological, or particularly ecclesiological, conviction.

Analysis of Michael D. Jones's role in the Patagonian movement following the establishment of the Settlement in 1865 reveals that, despite his tireless promotion of the venture in the Welsh press, he had virtually no influence on developments in the Chupat Valley. The success of the Settlement was essential if Jones was to be reimbursed, and in his desperation, he revealed his ignorance of the circumstances in Patagonia. He was determined to increase the population of the Settlement and showed little concern for its ability to support additional settlers. Moreover, during the mid-1870s, he hoped to collaborate with the Argentine government, even though the relationship between the settlers and the government's officials was deteriorating rapidly. By the time the Settlement was making economic progress, Michael D. Jones had been declared bankrupt and tension was mounting at Bala College. Jones never received full repayment for the £2,500 which he had spent in 1865, and the economic development of the Settlement, which he hoped would ensure his reimbursement, ultimately contributed towards undermining its fundamental aim, namely the preservation of Welsh national characteristics.

In the 1870s, when the Patagonian Settlement was showing signs of progress, Michael D. Jones turned his attention back to Wales and began to express his nationalist aspirations in the Welsh press. Indeed, in the late nineteenth century, significant changes occurred in the way in which Wales was perceived in British politics. For the first time in centuries, it was recognized as a political entity that was

separate from England. However, Jones's campaign for national self-government still lacked direction, and he seemed unable to devise a political strategy that was tailored to the situation in Wales. He eventually drew his inspiration from the Irish national movement. He tried to emulate both the Irish land movement and the Irish Parliamentary Party, but with little success. Nevertheless, in the late 1880s, Jones was given new hope by the emergence of the *Cymru Fydd* movement, though its emphasis was on cultural rather than on political activity. In fact, despite being described as the 'vanguard of the national awakening',<sup>9</sup> Michael D. Jones's connections with *Cymru Fydd* were weak. Thomas Edward Ellis was the only prominent member of *Cymru Fydd* who gave voice to Jones's nationalist aspirations, but there was little support in Wales for the form of self-government that was demanded by Irish MPs. Disestablishment of the Anglican Church rather than national self-government was the primary aim of Welsh radicals, and while there may have been a 'national awakening' in Wales, it was not a '*nationalist* awakening', as Jones had hoped.

Taking these points into consideration, it is possible to conclude that Evan Pan Jones's portrayal of Michael D. Jones was particularly one-sided. While emphasizing Michael D. Jones's 'greatness' and 'talent',<sup>10</sup> Pan Jones failed to mention that he was in many ways a paradoxical figure. When discussing national politics, Jones was an internationalist, yet his perception of Welsh nationhood was remarkably parochial. He held firm views on national self-government, and he expressed them forcefully, but he had no scheme or strategy to achieve his political aims. He took pride in the characteristics of his national community, yet, clearly, he had great difficulty in co-operating with his compatriots. Michael D. Jones presented himself as a steadfast and uncompromising figure, though it is clear that he had lost control of his financial

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<sup>9</sup> *Cymru* (January 1893), 16.

<sup>10</sup> E. Pan Jones, *Oes a Gwaith ...*, p.v.



situation, and that, in his desperation, he acted pragmatically without giving much heed to principle.

While it has been possible to identify many influences on Michael D. Jones's thought, there is little doubt that he was a remarkably perceptive individual. He displayed an ability to stand apart from contemporary attitudes and trends, and to approach society and politics from an entirely different perspective. However, Jones was a polemicist rather than a politician. Having formed his opinions on a certain subject, he spent more time criticizing the conflicting attitudes of his contemporaries or the immoral actions of state governments than explaining his own views in detail. While displaying an absolute commitment to his ideas, he had difficulty in communicating them to others or in devising a strategy that would lead to their realization. His vision for Wales, the defining aspect of his thought, never gained widespread support among his contemporaries, and he had little success in his efforts to promote the Welsh Settlement. Michael D. Jones's particular understanding of national characteristics, together with his foresight and resolve, made him a pioneer of Welsh nationalism, but he had neither the personal qualities nor the resources to gain the popular support that could have turned his aspirations into achievements.

## APPENDIX I

**Schematic Representation of the Ideas of Michael D. Jones**  
Glyn Williams, 'Nationalism in Nineteenth-century Wales: The Discourse of Michael D. Jones',  
in G. Williams (ed.), *Crisis of Economy and Ideology* (Bangor, 1983), p.183.

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# APPENDIX II

## Yr Hen Gyfansoddiad

- I. Fod yr Athrofa hon i gael ei galw yn “Athrofa Annibynol y Bala.”
- II. Fod unrhyw berson a anfonir o Eglwys Annibynol a fyddo yn cyfranu £1, ac uchod, yn flynyddol (heb gyfrif y cyfranidau o 5s. ac uchod yn flynyddol), a phob person a gyfrano 5s. ac uchod yn flynyddol, yn aelod o'r Pwyllgor Cyffredinol.
- III. Fod Pwyllgor y gwanwyn i gael ei gynal y Mercher olaf o fis Mawrth, a Phwyllgor yr Hydref i gael ei gynal y Mercher cyntaf o fis Medi, o flwyddyn i flwyddyn.
- \*IV. Fod pob ymgeisydd am fanteision yr Athrofa i anfon crynodeb o'i olygiadau a'i brofiad crefyddol i'r Ysgrfenyddion, yn nghyda chymeradwyaeth ei weinidog a'r eglwys y perthyna iddi.
- \*V. Nad oes neb i gael derbyniad i'r Athrofa ond yn nghyfarfod y Pwyllgor yn Mawrth, pan y disgwylir i'r ymgeisydd fod yn bresenol.
- \*VI. Fod pob efrydydd i dderbyn £20 yn flynyddol.
- \*VII. Fod tymor arosiad pob Myfyriwr yn yr Athrofa i barhau am bedair blynedd, yn cynwys y chwe' mis prawf.
- \*VIII. Fod sylw neillduol i gael ei dalu i lenyddiaeth Gymreig a Seisnig.
- \*IX. Fod pob ymgeisydd i sefyll arholiad, ac i ddangos ei fod yn gyfarwydd yn y llyfrau canlynol:- Arithmetic (Chambers) to the end of Vulgar Fractions; History of England (Curtis's Outlines); Welsh Grammar; Morell's English Grammar; Todd's Student's Manual (to translate); and the Gospel of Mark. Yn ychwanegol at yr arholiad am dderbyniad, bydd arholiad arall yn cael ei chynnal, pryd y rhoddir gwobrwyon o £10, £7, a £5 i'r tri llwyddianus, ac a ragora yn y llyfrau canlynol – Elements of Greek and Latin Grammar, Xenophon's Anabasis (book i.), Algebra (first four rules), and Euclid (book i.)
- \*X. Fod pob ymgeisydd i fod yn y dref nos Lun blaenorol i'r Pwyllgor yn barod i'r arholiad y boreu canlynol.

- \*XI. Fod y rheolau sydd yn dal perthynas â derbyniad efrydwyr i gael eu hargraffu yn yr Adroddiad.
- XII. Fod y rheolau hyn i gael eu cyfnewid, neu ychwanegu atynt, fel y byddo amgylchiadau yn galw, yn y Pwyllgor Cyffredinol.

\* Rheolau derbyniad myfyrwyr. Y mae deg o reolau ar hyn yn nglyn â'r Cyfansoddiad Newydd, ond ar eu pen eu hun yn yr Adroddiad (*Report*).

### **Y Cyfansoddiad Newydd**

- I. Fod y sefydliad i gael ei alw 'Athrofa Annibynol y Bala,' neu unrhyw enw arall y cytunir arno gan gyfarfod cyffredinol arbenig wedi ei alw yn rheolaidd yn ol darbodion y weithred.
- II. Mai amcan y sefydliad ydyw addysgu dynion ieuainc o dduwioldeb a thalentau i'r Weinidogaeth Gristionogol yn mysg yr Ymneillduwyr Protestanaidd o'r enwad Annibynol, neu Gynulleidfaol, yn bedyddio babanod; ac os bernir yn oreu gan yr etholaeth, er addysg i ddynion ieuainc o gymeriad na byddo eu gwyneb ar y weinidogaeth, ar delerau a osodir i lawr o bryd i bryd gan y cyfarfod blynyddol.
- III. Fod yr eiddo i gael ei sicrhau i wasanaeth yr Athrofa, drwy ddeuddeg o ymddiriedolwyr a fyddont yn gyflawn aelodau gyda'r Annibynwyr, ac yn parhau felly, wedi eu dewis o wahanol ranau y Dywysogaeth, yn nghyda'r trefi Seisnig.
- IV. Fod pob person fyddo'n aelod o eglwys Annibynol, yr hwn a gyfrano £10 ac uchod yn un swm at y sefydliad, i'w ystyried yn aelod dros fywyd o etholaeth y Coleg, os bydd yn parhau yn aelod gyda'r Annibynwyr; a phob person a fyddo'n aelod gyda'r Annibynwyr a gyfrano bum' swllt ac uchod yn flynyddol i fod yn aelod o'r etholaeth; a phob gweinidog ar eglwys Annibynol, y cyfrana'r eglwys neu'r eglwysi dan ei ofal bunt ac uchod yn flynyddol, neu gynrychiolydd anfonedig gan eglwys Annibynol a fyddo'n amddifad o weinidog a gyfrano bunt ac uchod yn flynyddol (heb gyfrif y tanysgirfiadau o bum' swllt ac uchod yn flynyddol) i fod yn aelod o'r etholaeth, ac felly yn meddu hawl i bleidleisio yn nghyfarfodydd blynyddol a chyffredinol y Coleg.



- V. Fod y tanysgrifiadau sydd yn rhoddi pleidlais yn nghyfarfodydd blynyddol a chyffredinol y Coleg i fod yn mhob amgylchiad yn gofrestredig yn adroddiad diweddfaf y Coleg a gyhoeddwyd, oddieithr y gellir dangos ei fod, trwy amryfusedd, wedi ei adael allan.
- VI. Fod Cyfarfod Blynyddol y Coleg o gael ei gynnal ar ddiwrnod penodol yn mis Mawrth, ac i gyfarfod yn y lle ar amser y cytunir arno o bryd i bryd gan y Pwyllgor; a bod hysbysiad o hono i gael ei wneud, o leiaf, un diwrnod ar hugain cyn amser ei gynaliad, naill ai drwy hysbysiad mewn dau gyhoeddiad, neu ddau newyddiadur sydd yn cylchredef yn mysg yr enwad, neu drwy gylchlythyr wedi ei anfon drwy y post at bob aelod o'r etholaeth, yn nodi lle, dydd, ac awr y cyfarfod. Ac am bob cyfarfod cyffredinol arbenig, y mae i gael ei alw yn yr un modd, gydag o leiaf un diwrnod ar hugain o rybudd, a hysbysiad o'r amcan neillduol, er mwyn pa un y mae yn cael ei alw.
- VII. Fod y cyfarfod blynyddol, neu fwyafrif yr aelodau a fyddont yn bresenol, i ddewis Cadeirydd, Trysorydd neu Drysorwyr, Ysgrifenydd neu Ysgrifenyddion, ac Archwilwyr am y flwyddyn ddilynol allan o etholaeth y Coleg – i fod yn eu swyddi am flwyddyn, ond yn agored i gael eu hail ethol, ac yn meddu pleidlais yn holl bwyllgorau y sefydliad.
- VIII. Fod Athrawon y Coleg, yn rhinwedd eu swydd, yn aelodau o'r pwyllgor.
- IX. Fod rheolaeth y Coleg o gael ei gyflwyno i bwyllgor dewisedig gan y cyfarfod blynyddol yn Mawrth, cynwysedig o Athrawon y Coleg, Cadeirydd, Trysorydd ney Drysorwyr, Ysgrifenydd neu Ysgrifenyddion, Archwilwyr, yn nghyda dau dros bob Cyfundeb yn Nghymru, a dau dros eglwysi Cymreig y trefi Seisnig sydd yn casglu 30p. ac uchod yn flynyddol, ac un dros eglwysi Cymreig y trefi Seisnig sydd yn casglu 10p. yn flynyddol, ac islaw 30p., at y Coleg; a bod awdurdod yn cael ei roddi i bob cyfundeb i enwi y personau a ddewisont i fod ar y Pwyllgor; a bod y cyfarfod cyffredinol i dderbyn y rhai a gymeradwyir, os byddant yn etholadwy; ac os bydd unrhyw gyfundeb wedi esgeuluso enwi personau, neu wedi enwi personau heb fod yn etholadwy, yna fod y cyfarfod blynyddol i wneud y diffyg i fyny trwy ddewis personau o'r cyfryw gyfundebau.
- X. Fod y Pwyllgor i gyfarfod ddwy waith yn y flwyddyn, ar y Mawrth olaf yn mis Medi, gydag awdurdod i unrhyw saith aelod o'r Pwyllgor i ofyn gan yr Ysgrifenyddion i alw cyfarfod neillduol o'r Pwyllgor, neu gyfarfod cyffredinol o'r etholaeth – y Pwyllgor i'w alw yn nghyd drwy rybudd personol i bob aelod, a'r cyfarfod cyffredinol arbenig fel y trefnwyd uchod.

- XI. Fod y Pwyllgor am y flwyddyn yn meddu hawl i dderbyn myfyrwyr, trefnu cwrs eu haddysg, neu ddiarddel o'r Coleg unrhyw fyfyrwr, ond yn gyfrifol am ei weithrediadau i'r cyfarfod blynyddol. Fod awdurdod hefyd yn llaw y pwyllgor i benodi, atal, neu ddiswyddo Athraw neu Athrawon, ond na byddo unrhyw benodiad, ataliad, neu ddiswyddiad a wnelo ar [sic] Athrawon neu ar Athrawon yn derfynol nes y byddo wedi ei gadarnhai gan gyfarfod cyffredinol arbenig wedi ei alw yn rheolaidd i'r perwyl, gydag un diwrnod ar hugain o rybudd, yn y dull a'r modd a nodwyd yn flaenorol.
- XII. Fod haner y Pwyllgor i fynd allan yn rheolaidd bob blwyddyn, ond yr athrawon, sydd yn aelodau yn rhinwedd eu swydd, fel na bydd gan y cyfundebau ond un enw i'w gyflwyno i sylw y cyfarfod blynyddol ar ol y flwyddyn gyntaf, ond fod yr aelodau fyddo'n myned allan yn agored i gael eu hail ethol, os byddant yn parhau yn aelodau o'r etholaeth; a bod i'r pwyllgor cyntaf a ddewisir fwrw coelbren yn eu plith eu hunain pa un o'r ddau yn mhob cyfundeb sydd i fyned allan ar ddiwedd y flwyddyn gyntaf.
- XIII. Fod pump o'r aelodau, heb gyfrif yr athrawon a swyddogion y pwyllgor, yn ddigon i weithredu; ac ni bydd dim a wneir, oni bydd y nifer hwnw yn bresenol, yn awdurdodedig – y mwyafrif yn y pwyllgor, fel yn y cyfarfod cyffredinol, i benderfynu pob mater; ac os dygwydd fod y pleidleisiau yn gyfartal, fod gan y cadeirydd bleidlais derfynol yn ychwanegol at ei bleidlais fel aelod.
- XIV. Fod y cyfarfod blynyddol yn meddu awdurdod i arolygu a rheoli holl amgylchiadau y sefydliad – i ffurfio deddfau a rheolau neillduol er llywodraethiad y Coleg, ac i gymeradwyo neu anghymeradwyo gweithrediadau y pwyllgor am y flwyddyn pan y cyflwynna ei adorddiad, a bod i'r adroddiad hwnw gael ei gyhoeddi, a bod gan gyfarfod cyffredinol arbenig, wedi ei alw yn rheolaidd i'r perwyl, awdurdod i newid enw y sefydliad. A lle ei gynaliad, ac i wneud unrhyw gyfnewidiad a dybir yn angenrheidiol yn ei drefniad a'i reolaeth – yn unig fod amcan gwreiddiol y Coleg fel sefydliad i ddwyn dynion ieuainc i'r weinidogaeth Gristionogol yn mysg yr Annibynwyr i gael ei gadw yn bur a dilwgr.

***Coleg y Bala (Pwllheli, 1879); Y Dysgedydd (October 1877), 321-2.***

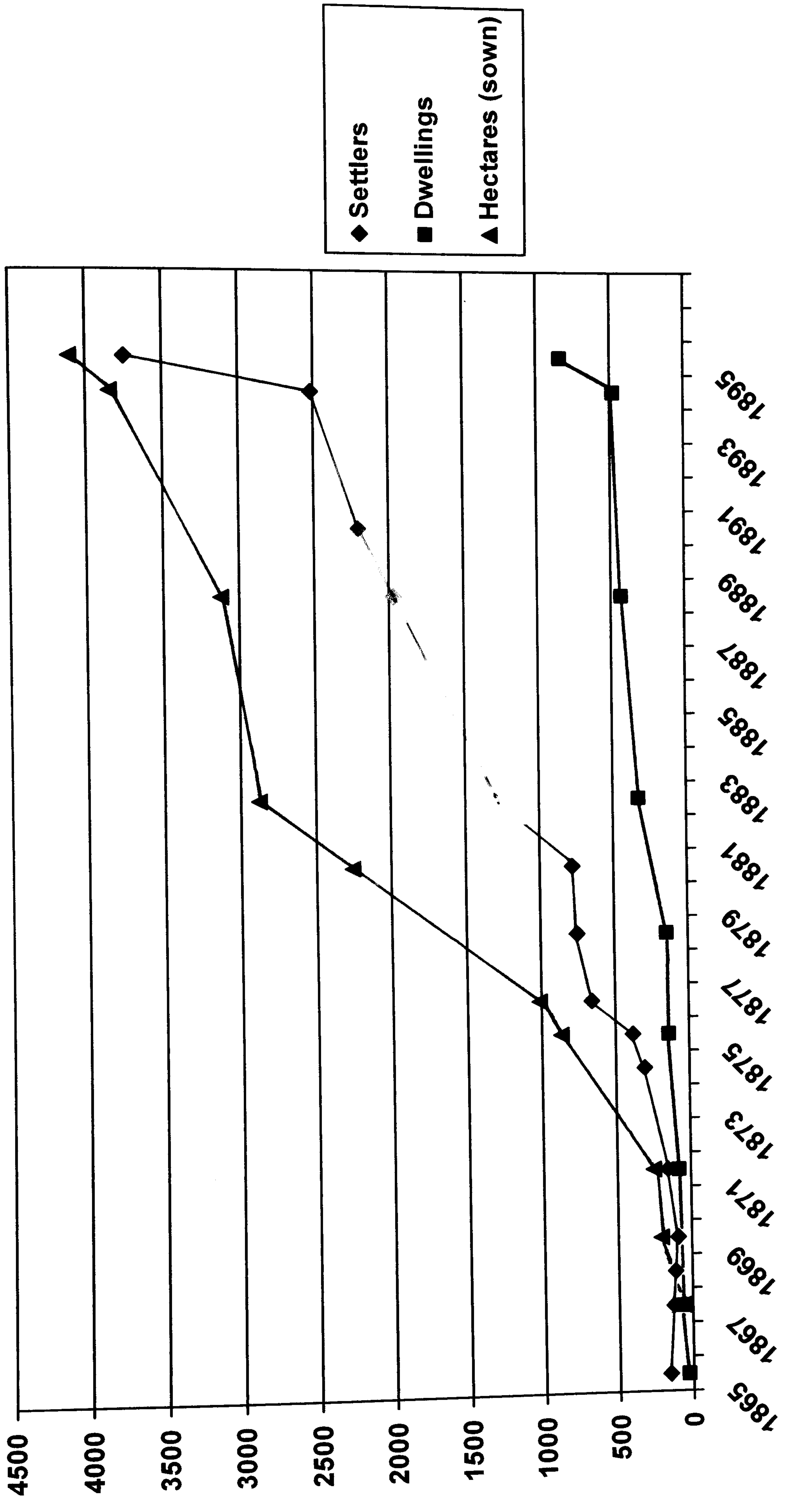


## Appendix III

### **Population and Property in the Patagonian Settlement 1865-95**

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Please refer to original text to see this material.

**R. Bryn Williams, *Y Wladfa* (Cardiff, 1962), Appendix XI.**





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