

PROBLEMS CONCERNING AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,  
1857-1894,  
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE CONVOCATION, COURTS  
AND DIOCESE OF YORK

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines some problems concerning authority that confronted the Church of England in the second half of the 19th century in the Province and Diocese of York. The emergence of "the chattering Church", with new institutions such as the Church Congress and revived bodies such as Convocation, is examined as a context and response to questions of authority which arose from internal theological and doctrinal disputes caused when private judgment came into conflict with an uncertainly-defined orthodoxy. The Church's response was panic and militancy at the same time as toleration, pragmatism and common sense, leading eventually to greater comprehensiveness. Meanwhile a more chronic problem was the Church's loss of authority in the community at large. Thus the thesis is also concerned with the ways in which the worshipping Church was being marginalised - by Dissent, by economic and demographic change, by the growth of democracy and the development of class consciousness, and through the erosion by statute of the authority and near-monopoly the Church held as part of the Establishment. The emergence of the chattering Church was one response, although it secured no legislative powers; sacramentalism, a more systematic outreach to the poor, and eventual calls for greater social justice were others as the Church sought new roles and influence. The thesis is based on records of the Convocation and Diocese of York, and confirms some trends based on better-known sources for Canterbury. But new emphases include the loss of Church authority in rural as well as urban Yorkshire, and the adverse impact of the widespread annual hiring of child and adult labour, as well as the part played in the evolution of the Church of England by some lesser-known northern Churchmen, ranging from humble vicars to their archdeacons and archbishops.

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## PREFACE

Thirty years ago, Kitson Clark stressed the need to question long-established generalisations about 19th century English social and political history, and the need for much more work on local Victorian sources in order to monitor varying experiences between different parts of the country and different classes of people. He admitted that this would produce a patchwork effect for a long time before the mass of detail accumulated could be accepted into history, and "a new general story" produced.<sup>1</sup>

In the field of religious history that work had already begun in 1957, with the publication of Bishop Wickham's seminal study of the Church in Sheffield.<sup>2</sup> Ironically, however, by focusing on a large industrial town and analysing its church attendance problems, Wickham unintentionally helped to prolong an already long-lived assumption, namely, that parsons had far more difficulty in coaxing folk to church in urban sprawls than in far-flung rural parishes. But evidence used in this thesis from diocesan records for the second half of the 19th century shows that, in York Diocese, much rural attendance was as poor as that in urban parishes; and poor church attendance, wherever and for whatever reasons it occurred, presented a serious problem to the Church's authority.

Since Wickham's contribution, many other valuable local studies have been made, though most of them have investigated particular slants at the same time, thus making straight comparisons difficult. For example, Stephen Yeo's study on the crisis in religion and voluntary organisations in Reading has an underlying interest in "different phases of capitalist development" and their effects on the crisis.<sup>3</sup> Jim Obelkevich, when dealing with societal changes in Lincolnshire, a

substantial part of his thesis, argues the case for "the decline of the 'crowd' and the complex rise of individualism"<sup>4</sup> as the most significant societal change, as far as labourers were concerned. Rosemary Chadwick, in looking at Church and people in Bradford, devotes the whole of the second part of her study to a survey of the Churches' adaptations to non-churchgoing habits.<sup>5</sup> This is not to detract from the value of these informative and well-argued theses. But these examples illustrate that the patchwork that has emerged over the past thirty years is not only geographical but also topical (or thematic); and the topic aspects have usually indicated the influence of sociology on recent historical research, and therefore the examination of religion has been conducted, not simply as confined within and concerned about Church or Churches, but as related to Society.

In addition to local topical studies there has also been much valuable output of general topic work in the past thirty years,<sup>6</sup> such as Worden's work on the conflict in the 1860's amongst Anglican clergy, arising from critical study of the Bible; Roberts's study of the changing role of the laity between 1850 and 1880; Withycombe's examination of the moves towards constitutional autonomy for the Church in the second half of the 19th century; and Kemp's detailed account of the development of Church government from the distant past to the 19th century revival of the two Convocations and beyond.<sup>7</sup> Hence, sewing the patchwork together will not be as straightforward as it would have been in the unlikely event - some would argue, the calamitous event - of each researcher being required simply to follow similar lines of inquiry but in different locations.

This study is mostly in the familiar mould of the local topical approach and takes account of societal

factors, particularly in those chapters [3 and 4] dealing with "de-Churchment"<sup>8</sup> and the attempts to wrest monopolies from the Church. But, particularly in examining the responses the Church made to its authority problems, I have often taken an "old-fashioned" look at the Church of England as an entity in itself. I feel that this approach is justified in view of the caution now felt about the danger of imbalance in over-emphasising the thinking and events going on in society - in other words outside a religious institution - and giving too little weight to the thinking and events going on within the institution.<sup>9</sup>

The thesis draws almost all of its evidence from sources relating to the northern province - principally the debates of the Convocation of York - and otherwise narrows down to various documents relating to the Diocese of York. "Narrows down" is a little misleading. York Diocesan officials in the past have preserved many documents that other dioceses had discarded. As a result, the Borthwick Institute in York holds an unusually rich store of ecclesiastical records relating to the Church in York Diocese in the 19th century. Although abundant, they have been little used by previous researchers.<sup>10</sup> In addition, other valuable diocesan material for the period rests in the York Minster and York Public Reference Libraries, and also in the Doncaster and Sheffield public archives.

Hence, much of the research has involved the examination of a large amount of previously untapped material that reveals the work and thought of the clergy of the Church of England in the north of the country at all levels, from parish to province, during the period. These include Parish Vestry Minutes from across the diocese, several East Riding Rural Deanery Minute Books, and the Doncaster Deanery Minutes; the East Riding

Archdeacons' Charges to their clergy; the Articles of Enquiry sent every three years from the archbishop to all churchwardens before he visited their part of an archdeaconry, requiring their comments on the state of church and parish, and the conduct of the clergy; and the Archbishop's Visitation Returns in which clergy from the whole diocese sent him answers to searching questions about their parishes and ministry, usually every three years. A complete set of Visitation Returns exists for William Thomson's archiepiscopate (1863-1890). The York Diocesan Calendars from their first being published in 1863 contain, amongst other information, minutes of various meetings. Other manuscript records include Archbishop Thomson's correspondence; the Diocesan Statistics first collected for Archbishop Maclagan in 1891-2 and annually thereafter; and the records of cases tried in York's Consistory (Diocesan) Court and Chancery (Provincial) Court during the period.

The Archbishop's Visitation Returns are particularly rich sources of clerical opinion. Those of 1865 and 1894 have been particularly thoroughly combed, in order to provide a contrast between the earlier part of the period and the situation thirty years later. Additional information has been drawn from the Returns of 1868, 1871, 1877 and 1884.

Much use has also been made of the Reports of the Church Congresses, the joint annual meetings of clergy and lay folk held to discuss - but by agreement never to vote upon - a wide variety of topics relevant to Church and Society from 1861 onwards. Two important northern documentary sources not housed in Yorkshire but at Pusey House, Oxford, are the sets of Churton Papers containing Edward Churton's letters, and his archidiaconal Charges to Cleveland clergy between 1846 and 1872.<sup>11</sup> Churton became

Rector of Crayke, north of York, in 1838, and was Archdeacon of Cleveland from 1846 to 1874. His gifts of moderation and common sense, together with wide historical and theological understanding, permeate his Charges and also his speeches in Convocation. His thought makes a major contribution to this thesis.

Similarly, the hitherto largely ignored debates in York Convocation figure prominently, providing a valuable mirror of clerical and episcopal opinion on many important and contentious issues. Although contemporary respect for the revived Convocation was slow to form, this was rather unfair. Granted that a few clergy who stood for election as proctors probably hoped to further their ambitions by making a name for themselves in Convocation, and that many were very long-winded, most members aired much honest thought and, as the period progressed, uttered an increasing amount of wisdom. These Convocation members helped sow the seeds of tolerance and common sense, thus nurturing the greater comprehensiveness that contained all parties reasonably happily in the one Church by the end of the period.

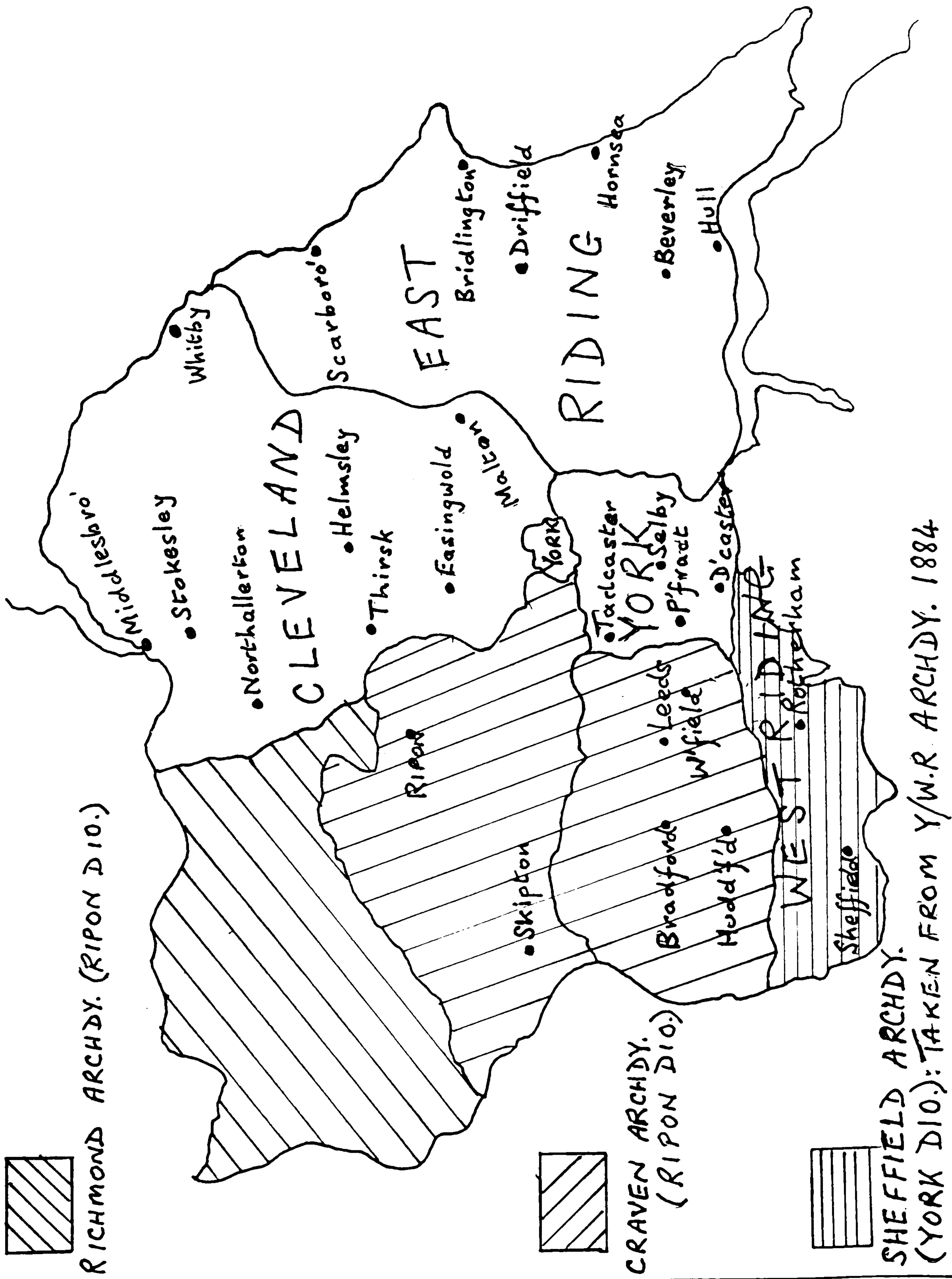
This wealth of material is solidly clerical. Yet, clergy opinions are not to be despised, especially when they represent the whole range of Victorian partisanship - and none. Most parish clergy were prepared to state their views forthrightly, even to the extent of openly criticising the archbishop and the way the Church was run. Many clergy were also ready to be genuinely self-critical - some perhaps even too harshly so. And whilst some complained about their parishioners, there were many who sympathised with their difficulties, could even understand the reasons for their non-attendance at Church and, in the case of a few, were readier to criticise the way society had developed to the disadvantage of the labouring classes

than to criticise those classes per se. Many of these clergy had a good relationship with their parishioners, whether Church-goers, Nonconformists or Nothingarians, and many were obviously well respected. This amalgam of clerical views is valuable, too, because clergy were still very much the acknowledged leaders of the Church - indeed, became increasingly so - in all aspects of its life throughout the period, despite being assisted gradually more and more by laymen.

Not only does this thesis rely on a wealth of documents, it also covers a wide geographical area. York Diocese consisted of three archdeaconries in 1857: Cleveland, covering the North Riding except for the Archdeaconry of Richmond;<sup>12</sup> the East Riding, covering the eastern parishes of the Vale of York, Holderness and Hull, the coast from the Humber nearly to Whitby, and the Wolds; and York/West Riding, which included the City of York and several sizeable towns such as Castleford, Doncaster, Pontefract and Rotherham, in addition to Sheffield, by far the biggest town in the diocese. Whilst remaining in York Diocese until the turn of the century, a separate Archdeaconry of Sheffield was carved out of the York/West Riding Archdeaconry in 1884. During that reorganisation the remainder of the West Riding part of York Diocese became known as York Archdeaconry, and the rural deaneries were increased in number in the populous parts of each of the archdeaconries.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, although it had lost the Archdeaconry of Nottingham (to Lincoln) much earlier, York Diocese still covered a vast, mainly rural area, [See Map on p. 8] though it also included urbanised industrial sprawls in Hull (population already over 45,000 in 1865), Middlesbrough (population over 20,000) and Sheffield (population over 115,000). Throughout the period, the

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diocese never totalled fewer than 565 parishes - and in 1894 it totalled 592 - by any standards, a sizeable sample for seeking opinions, information and statistics. In fact, at the end of the period the parishes of York Diocese constituted just over one-fifth of the total number of parishes in the whole northern province.<sup>14</sup> This large sample provides a very valuable and varied source of grassroots evidence, from thinly populated but wide-ranging rural parishes, sometimes with a sprinkling of hamlets in them, to fairly compact villages, to market and manufacturing towns, and on to the huge conurbations destined eventually to become cities.

The major authority problems that challenged the Church of England during the second half of the 19th century, and the responses the Church made - not least setting up the chattering Church as a valuable means for exchanging ideas - are outlined in the Introduction and amplified in the chapters that follow. Whilst the thesis focuses mostly on the Church and largely relies on Church documents for its conclusions, it could not ignore the influence of societal factors where appropriate.

Similarly, it would be wrong to ignore the secularisation debate, although mention of it requires caution nowadays. The debate has contributed greatly to the knowledge and understanding of religious history since the Reformation. I have tried to avoid using the word "secularisation" in the text. This is partly because the vagueness of the term brings the danger of misunderstanding. But I have avoided the word because it is more accurate to speak about "the de-Churchment process" and the eventual arrival of "religionless Christianity" rather than secularisation or de-Christianisation. However, I have given a brief account in the Introduction of the relevance of the debate to this

study; and the influence of the debate will be apparent in other parts of the thesis, especially when looking at de-Churchment and the erosion of the Church's established position in society.

As Hugh McLeod wrote quite recently,<sup>15</sup> whilst the use of social history techniques to aid the interpretation of religious history has been commendable and useful, it has led too often to the exclusion of certain aspects of religion from religious history - and particularly the role of theology and religious ideas. I hope that this thesis makes a small contribution to rectifying the balance, based as it is on a very considerable amount of thinking, much of it expressed by bishops, deans, archdeacons, canons and other clergy in the chattering Church in the second half of the 19th century, and in the replies the parish clergy of York Diocese wrote to their archbishop's inquiries about their life and work during the same period. It is possible to see the growing concern of these men, not only for the spiritual welfare of their flocks, but for their mental and physical well-being, too. In the process these clerics, and their proctors and bishops in Convocation, were helping to shape history in their own right.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

John Lang, the recently retired Dean of Lichfield, warned in the early 1990's that "the most fundamental difficulty for the Church of England is, and always has been, the question of authority."<sup>1</sup> He was right. Just how fundamental a problem authority continues to be was illustrated again when the Church's General Synod voted on 11 November 1992 to move towards the ordination of women, and subsequently on 5 November 1993 when well over two hundred M.P.'s were present in the Commons on a Friday - an unusually high turnout for that day in the week - to endorse the General Synod's resolution. Archbishop Carey of Canterbury commented that Parliament's backing for Synod ensured the continued comprehensiveness of the Church;<sup>2</sup> but, a few days later, Archbishop Habgood of York had to express the hope that the confusion caused by some bishops and clergy continuing their resistance to women's ordination would be "resolved by common sense."<sup>3</sup>

This thesis looks at problems concerning authority in the Church of England between 1857, the year in which York Convocation almost revived its debating functions after being muted for 140 years, and 1894, when the Local Government (Parish Councils) Act might have put another nail in the coffin of the Established Church - but produced remarkably little dismay in the process. In looking at the years 1857-94 the thesis will demonstrate that this was a vitally important period for the development of the Church of England, partly because the authority issues that arose - whether stemming from inside or outside the Church - were serious in themselves, and partly because the Church's responses to those problems shaped its future well into the 20th century.

In the process, the thesis fills a gap. There has been much research and writing produced over the past thirty years on many of the Church's major problems relating to its ministry, both ordained and lay, and to its theology, doctrine, ritual, worship, administration, and government, all of which touched on authority matters to some extent. But there has been no sustained examination of the Church of England during the second half of the 19th century using authority problems as the basic issue through which to view events, ideas and developments that deeply affected the thoughts, attitudes and actions of Churchmen. That this gap exists is the more surprising when it is realised - as this study will illustrate - that authority certainly was the basic issue, and that the period from the mid-1850's to the mid-1890's saw the Church fundamentally challenged by particularly complex problems relating to authority. And it was in responding to those challenges that Church leaders of the day laid the foundations for unspecific and general forms of authority, including opinion-seeking and consensus-forming machinery, that still largely determines the way in which the Church of England operates. In other words, it was during this period that the Church of England developed workable, if rather vague and, some might believe, over-comprehensive concepts of authority, both in running itself and in influencing the society within which it exists.

Thus, in the process of examining authority-related themes in this thesis it will be shown that, after bitter internal controversy in the early part of the period between the pillars of so-called traditional orthodoxy - "so-called" because, as still happens, those claiming to uphold traditional orthodoxy were often clinging to quite modern varieties of "orthodoxy" - comprehensiveness became an over-riding aim of all reasonable Churchmen to an extent

that would delight more recent "broad" Archbishops such as Runcie, Carey and Habgood. At the very same time, it will be seen in this study that "common sense", to which Archbishop Habgood recently appealed, gained its modern meaning during the second half of the 19th century. Quite quickly, the phrase lost the pejorative sense in which it was still used, for example, by Archdeacon Robert Wilberforce of the East Riding in 1854, when he condemned the lack of collective episcopal authority in the Church of England, and the making of decisions based on the sum of what he considered to be erroneous private judgments, based too often on the ignorance of the human herd - or, as he put it, on the use of "common sense".<sup>4</sup> His alarm at the spread of this misguided "human reason" and "common sense" pushed him to seek a less vague brand of authority in Rome shortly afterwards.

However, some clergy who remained within the Church of England began to realise that the Church would never succeed in eradicating the exercise of private judgment - even if that were desirable - but needed to employ pragmatism and common sense (in its modern sense) in order to re-establish the comprehensive via media of the Elizabethan Settlement. These Churchmen increasingly favoured the application of pragmatism and common sense not only to the Church's internal controversies over theology, doctrine, ritual and ornaments, or over the authority of bishops and clergy, and over church government, and over the use of the laity in that government, as well as in pastoral, preaching, and liturgical ministry; they sought also quite speedily to apply pragmatism and common sense, as opposed to last-ditch authoritarianism and bigotry, when handling authority problems - whether these stemmed from inside or outside the Church.

Thus, this thesis examines the responses Churchmen made to authority problems as much as the problems themselves, and will reveal that those responses began to change the Church in important and permanent ways. If, perhaps, more Churchmen in the 1990's were aware of the extent to which judgments based on pragmatism and common sense, and on the desirability of preserving comprehensiveness, had become accepted practice by the mid-1890's, then much painful misunderstanding and misguided defence of a flawed "orthodoxy" might have been avoided in the post-Honest to God years of the 20th century.

Authority - whether that means power and influence over individuals and groups, or the ability to command respect, or the means of maintaining a hold over people, and whether that power and influence, that command, and those means are wielded impersonally and objectively by the rules of the institution, or more subjectively through the personality of its leaders - is of basic importance to all human institutions, whether local, regional and national governments; or courts and police forces; places of healing; places of work; educational institutions; or churches, pastors and priests. As far as the Church of England was concerned in the second half of the 19th century, the basic, over-riding problem it faced was the erosion of its authority in every possible sense of the word. And the Church's next problem, in order of importance, was to find suitable ways in which to respond to that erosion, and to seek ways of coping with it, without making the Church's position more precarious in the process.

At the root of most of these authority problems - though exacerbated by more recent demographic and economic trends - lay the expanding exercise of private judgment since

Reformation times. Article XXXIV - 'Of the Traditions of the Church' - in the Thirty-nine Articles had warned of the danger and the penalty: "Whosoever through his private judgement willingly and purposely doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly."<sup>5</sup> But Article XXXIV was not the only Article to beg as many questions as it answered; and deciding what was repugnant to God's Word, and what was duly ordained and approved - and by what acceptable common authority - were all very controversial matters. Controversy was often so intense that, not surprisingly, seventy years after the Elizabethan Settlement with its hopes of a sustained via media, the increased use of private judgment, in politics, now, as well as religion, helped to cause the English Civil War.

Then, forty years after the death of Charles I, the Toleration Act, with reasonable safeguards, gave protection to the continuing exercise of private judgment in religion within all sections of society. One important result was the eventual emergence of Methodism, and its development with comparative ease as an irregular movement, spilling over the accepted boundaries of Church authority. In the longer term, another important result of the statutory safeguarding of private judgment in religion was that, by the middle of the 19th century, toleration towards differences of belief had often deteriorated into indifference. Thus, for instance, half the population exercised its private judgment by neglecting any regular worship in any kind of church. These folk, though not necessarily "de-Christianised" by any means, were becoming "the Nothingarians". It was clear that of the remainder only about half worshipped in parish churches, and the other half was exercising its private judgment by deciding



to worship in the conventicles of Old Dissent or in the chapels and meeting places of varying forms of Methodism. Together, Dissent and Nothingarianism presented two of the severest external challenges that faced the Church of England in the mid-19th century.

This twin challenge from Dissent and Nothingarianism was so strong and so widespread, that it was no longer possible for clergy of the Church of England to take for granted that they held sway over the majority of their parishioners. In some parishes the grip of Dissent or of Nothingarianism was far, far stronger than that of the Established Church; and - an important feature of the Church's authority problems that this thesis will demonstrate - the parson's lack of hold over his parishioners could be as seriously diminished in tiny rural parishes, where it might have been expected to remain strong, as in over-populated, under-resourced, urbanised and industrialised parishes.

In addition to the internal conflicts that arose in the Church over theology, doctrine and worship - conflicts that preoccupied Church leaders for most of the 1860's and 1870's, often diverting their attention from the more serious challenges created by Dissent and Nothingarianism - and in addition to the problems that accrued for the Church owing to de-Churchment, the thesis also examines serious challenges presented by hostile activists outside the Church who aimed to remove its near monopoly over the rites of passage and in the provision of elementary education, for example, and if possible to disestablish the Church altogether. The fear Victorian Churchmen had of disestablishment was largely unfounded, not least because it could have benefited the Church had it taken place, and

given the Church the same freedom to run its own affairs as that enjoyed by all other Churches and sects in Britain.

However, it will be shown that the Church's increasingly tolerant responses to the challenge of these external problems helped to create a change of role for the Church, particularly through its pragmatic acceptance of its place as a competitor with other denominations, and thus, too, through acceptance of its need to attract custom by various means: through the increased professionalisation of its clergy; through growing emphasis on voluntary, continuing education; through experiments with parochial missions; and through sacramental worship, which tended to create a denominational clique in the process. The changing role also included late, and eventually quite confident moves, particularly in Convocation, Church Congress, and other bodies such as Ruri-decatal and Diocesan Conferences, towards making the Church a collective agitator for social justice.

These responses could only be harnessed by a great deal of exchange of ideas amongst Churchmen. Thus, another very important feature examined in this study is the need for, and the unsuccessful efforts to set up, self-government for the Church, resulting in the rapid and amazing proliferation of new and revived bodies that I have called "the chattering Church". This term is not derogatory. Though all of these bodies except the Church Congresses could pass resolutions they were denied any ultimate legislative functions. Thus the "chatter" became their most important function. And this was an increasingly valuable asset in a Church whose local and provincial leaders had been denied, for most of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century, any opportunity to meet and discuss matters of moment concerning the Church. The

move from virtual silence to prolonged chatter was rather extreme. But whereas the silence had almost paralysed the Church, the chatter brought re-vitalisation, became an enormously significant factor in the Church's response to its authority problems in the 1860's and 1870's, and continued to play a major role in shaping its responses thereafter. Most of the material used in this thesis to portray the contribution of the chattering Church looks at the work of northern Churchmen in northern bodies - York Convocation, York Diocesan Conferences, Ruri-decanal Chapters in York Diocese - or of northern Churchmen in the national Church Congresses. Hardly any of this material has seen the light of day before. Hence, another important feature of the thesis is its revealing of the previously hidden wisdom and tolerance of some remarkable northern Church leaders who operated in the chattering Church - though they were not always helped by the cautious and legalistic attitude of William Thomson, who was Archbishop of York for most of the period.

It is important to keep in mind that the Church's authority problems in the second half of the 19th century, and the Church's responses to them, have to be seen against a background of ongoing societal change which proceeded at an increasing rate. Politics and economics, social conditions and class structure, philosophy and religion, communications, education and knowledge were all affected, all involved. And the speed of these changes, though variable, was often hectic, making it difficult for contemporaries to accommodate themselves to it, or to see ways of maintaining control.

These same years of change saw many contrasts and much contradiction. For instance, it is possible to see the simultaneous growth of individualism and collectivism, each

of which was regarded highly, but in different and often hostile sections of society. This was also an age of increasing democratisation and extension of the Parliamentary franchise to male workers. But change often heralded improvement and "progress" rather than introducing it. Some people fared better than others, but the biggest group in society - the workers - exercised little more control over their lives in the second half of the 19th century than workers did in pre-industrial times. This makes it necessary to be cautious about the extent to which workers could actually avail themselves of the supposedly increased freedom to exercise private judgment either in religion or politics.

The thesis pinpoints one very important freedom that was actively denied in many parts of York Diocese. The employers of many hired workers in the diocese would not allow them to go to church, nor to classes or other activities run by the local church. True, the de-Churchment of many of these workers in Yorkshire might still have occurred had they been able to exercise a choice; but, denied that choice, their de-Churchment stemmed from the indifferent or even hostile attitudes of their employers - particularly farmers - towards the Established Church. It also needs to be stressed that many of these workers were girls and boys under the age of 12 who, for the same reason, were unable to attend Sunday Schools or Confirmation classes, let alone church worship. Again, many probably would not have gone, if given the choice. But the vital issue is that, despite the onset of democratisation, and despite "reform" legislation requiring children to attend school, children and adults alike often worked in appalling and underpaid situations over which they had no control, and were denied any links with the

Church of England in out-of-work-hours by their "Masters" and "Mistresses".

Another important aspect of the social background to bear in mind is that the titles by which the workers were known - "the lower orders", "the masses", or "hands", for instance - indicated the increased class-consciousness of 19th century England, and the often widening gulf between the workers and their employers or landowners, whose accruing of wealth depended on the labour of those same lower orders. It is not surprising, either, that some clergy were still sometimes too strongly associated in people's minds with the upper and middle, or the employing and prosperous classes, especially those clergy who still sought support from squire and employer to hound the lower orders into church.

The Church of England's problems concerning authority in the period need to be constantly seen against this background of changes and contrasts, but also as part of the changes pervading society at the time. Certainly the Church was greatly affected by changes taking place in society; but it also initiated change, both within itself and in the world around. And, like the rest of society, the Church could project a contrasting and sometimes conflicting image of itself. Most clergy, even those ministering in small rural parishes, were by no means unaware of living in an age of rapid change. Clerical comments at the end of the period showed perception and, all too often, a recognition that societal changes had made their work much more difficult.

For example, the priest-in-charge for over twenty years at Christ Church, Attercliffe, in Sheffield, wrote that when he first arrived there in 1863 some families were "in

easy circumstances." But by 1894 all of these families had disappeared, leaving a population that consisted entirely of wage-earners in local industry.<sup>6</sup> A nearby incumbent who had found financial resources always difficult - and he was by no means alone in that! - said that "the present agricultural depression [this was the 1890's, not the 1880's] makes it difficult to obtain the necessary funds to maintain two parish churches and the schools in so small a population [of 712], and the principal landowners are now non-resident."<sup>7</sup> Yet another mentioned the division of his parish into two distinct classes of worker over the years - the agricultural labourers and the miners - and nothing could induce them to work together in any way, whether for secular or religious activity.<sup>8</sup> Some clergy regretted the absence of moneyed people with leisure-time to offer to the Church, for this limited the Church's outreach to parishioners. This development hit both rural and urban parishes.<sup>9</sup> Again, shift work in the collieries could be a problem for conscientious parsons, with "the men always at work, night and day."<sup>10</sup> Parsons in the 1890's showed an increased sympathy with the plight of their parishioners: "The present times are very hard upon our poor population, and they are kept looking after an earthly livelihood too much to think of doing any spiritual work."<sup>11</sup>

In other words, whilst showing that authority problems arising within the Church itself were important - including problems over what to believe, what to teach, and how to worship - this thesis has to take account of the effects of external societal factors upon the Church's authority problems. However, in addition, even when dealing with the complex matter of de-Churchment which owed much to societal factors, this thesis shows that generalisation is to be avoided. The picture was often very different even in apparently similar parishes in rural

parts of York Diocese, and low or high attendance at worship could depend on totally local factors such as the personality of the parish priest, the atmosphere or state of repair of the church, or even the proximity of the church to the parishioners, rather than on profound concepts concerned with "secularisation".

Hugh McLeod's synopsis of a vast amount of continental research underlines this plea for caution about generalisation. McLeod pinpoints important issues that were evident in authority problems that confronted the Diocese and Convocation of York. For example, he points out that in many parts of Europe there was a prolonged revolt against the "official churches" that had emerged during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation period, and the unity imposed upon religion had begun to break down. After the French Revolution this process continued to play a part in any attack on existing political and social orders and, says McLeod, demands for the right to choose one's church - or none - "became an essential part in any programme of liberal reform."<sup>12</sup> The attempts made by the Liberation Society to destroy the established status of the Church of England - the "official church" - immediately spring to mind as an example of this, for the Society was very active in parts of York Diocese. However, McLeod's examination of the countryside reveals much local variation in practice. These variations existed from region to region in the same country, and within the same apparent type of Christianity. In both Catholic and Protestant areas there were many parishes, each with its own traditions of commitment to the Church or apathy towards it, and there were frequent instances of remote rural areas being just as neglected as new industrial areas.<sup>13</sup> The complaints of mid-19th century country parsons in the York Diocese illustrate the effects of a similar lack of

commitment, of apathy, of past neglect, and of apparent failure by the Church in some parishes to make any impact over a period of many years. But there are many instances where Church life in a neighbouring parish appeared to flourish, all of which points, again, to the danger of over-generalisation.

Acknowledging the work of sociologists Durkheim and Weber in focusing attention on the role of religion as one factor in contemporary society, and on the extent to which society influences religion, Owen Chadwick stresses the importance of the notion that the Reformation had made "all secular life into a vocation of God,...like a baptism of the secular world." Paradoxically, this basically theological concept sowed the seeds of modern religionless Christianity. One result of making all secular life vocational, so the argument went, was that layman and priest were potentially on a par, and potentially so were all members of a society. As Chadwick says, the elevation of the individual helped towards the Enlightenment of the 18th century and, as he puts it: Enlightenment came to a privileged few, whereas secularisation became available to the many.<sup>14</sup> Possibly a less obvious result was that an ideology based on the Protestant work ethic eventually helped to bring the appalling conditions, including long hours and low wages, suffered by the labourers in England both in industrialised areas and in the countryside in the 19th century. Over-work prevented many labourers from attending church worship, even if they had wanted to attend.

For his part, Alan Gilbert sought to analyse religious history as a specifically social phenomenon, and hence to emphasise key points in the development of organised religion in relation to society, rather than to stress



"ecclesiastical landmarks". Thus, for instance, he rightly sees the Toleration Act of 1689 as a point at which the Church of England substantially lost status in society.<sup>15</sup> Kenneth Inglis's examination of working class indifference to Church worship shows how highly complex factors smacking of secularisation were challenging the position of the mainstream Churches in society. The assumption in the early 19th century that Church attendance was not a normal habit of the English working class was made worse by the unpopularity the Church of England suffered from its partnership with the State; by the handicaps of the Church's parochial system; and by the opposition to radicalism from some clergy, which presented difficulties for others who might wish to woo working class people back to Church. Yet, as Inglis correctly points out, widespread concern about the "spiritual destitution" prevalent in England<sup>16</sup> did not arise in the Church of England until very late, that is, in the early 1880's.<sup>17</sup>

Again, another paradox, the growth of class and collective consciousness, as well as individualism and increased personal choice in politics as well as religion, though contradictory, grew alongside each other, and were all linked with the decline of the institutional and established Church. As Harold Perkin says, in a striking metaphor, sectarian religion acted as "midwife" at the birth of the "new class society".<sup>18</sup>

The contribution made to this thesis by the work of historians such as these is very considerable, including their secularisation theories about societal factors which exacerbated, even if they did not create, authority problems for the Church of England during the period; and also in their pointing out that some factors that affected the Churches most deeply and basically were beyond any hope

of the Churches to control. But this does not mean that the basic problem for the Church boiled down to increasing "secularisation" as might have been thought at one time. It seems that religion lingered on, or at least subscription to Christian principles did so, even in places where the Church-at-worship was marginalised, and sometimes quite strongly even there. Furthermore, the debate about the meaning and significance of secularisation has moved on. Thus, as S.J.D. Green notes when introducing his thesis on 'Religion and the Industrial Town', in the 1970's, at the very time when many historians were beginning to adopt the theory of secularisation into their explanation of religious change and decline in 19th and 20th century English history, the sociologists were already themselves beginning to drop it as a suitable means of interpreting and understanding the processes summarised in the concept of "modernisation."<sup>19</sup>

One of the greatest drawbacks of the secularisation concept was the problem of agreeing about the meaning of what was always a vague and potentially confusing term. A salutary illustration of the vagueness comes in a complaint made in 1894 by the incumbent at Sutton-on-Forest, near Easingwold, a parish with a population of 986. He wrote that "secular affairs" of the parish were occupying an increasing amount of his time. He had to support two schools; attend committee meetings; be available during Inspectors' visits; be responsible for the Savings Bank, the Clothing Club, and keep many parochial accounts. Unlike the accepted custom in Chapel circles, he concluded, "in a country parish all Church work has to be done by the Vicar and his family."<sup>20</sup>

This parson was not suggesting that those "secular affairs" he dealt with were part of a hostile

secularisation process that was the antithesis of religion. He knew these affairs were part of his ministry. His problem was that lay co-operation in that ministry was essential, yet sadly lacking. That was his real complaint. And he was right to complain. The lack of local lay involvement, and the lack of commitment and concern among ordinary people - stemming largely from their growing freedom to be involved or not as they pleased - was a serious weakness for the Church of England. And when the dust had settled on its internal theological and doctrinal disputes, it was this weakness which continued to lie near the heart of the Church's authority problems in parishes such as Sutton-on-Forest in the second half of the 19th century.

This weakness was increased by a growing insistence amongst parishioners of all classes that they would do as much or as little about religion as they pleased, they would believe as much or as little as they pleased, and they would cling to old ideas or adopt new ones as and when they pleased. Thus, in addition to the more obvious economic and social changes taking place in the period, there are reminders in those changes of attitudes towards religion and the Churches mentioned by parsons, of the fundamental importance of the part played by the increased exercise of private judgment in the erosion of the Church's authority. The following varied remarks all imply this. One parson cited "the very widely prevailing idea that provided 'we all want to get to the same place' it is perfectly immaterial whether we follow the guidance of the Church or any one of the sects."<sup>21</sup> Another, more succinctly, said that some of his parishioners held agnostic views.<sup>22</sup> And amidst so much change, whether obvious or subtle, there was the inevitable and natural resistance to any change for its own sake, such as met the

incumbent who had visited every house in the parish and been welcomed by all, but found the people's ways and habits "very stereotyped, and they only like what they have been used to, and we have to take them as they are, and do the best we can for them;"<sup>23</sup> and the parson who said that "the force of old habits and associations are very great."<sup>24</sup> Perhaps least likely to change, and maybe deserving of more serious study than this brief mention, was what some clergy - sometimes admitting they had come from other dioceses - variously described as "the natural defects of the Yorkshire character - want of sympathy and enthusiasm,"<sup>25</sup> or simply "the touchiness of Yorkshire people."<sup>26</sup>

Within the Church of England during the first two decades of the period, a fundamentally serious and difficult internal problem was to determine the extent to which the exercise of private judgment in matters of teaching, belief, order and worship was permissible, and beyond what point that exercise would threaten or eventually become intolerable to the Church's authority. As early as 1814, the Oxford scholar John Dupré, preaching in St. Mary's, warned that

vain is every argument in behalf of Private Judgment...[and] there is no possibility of defining the latitude to which this principle may be carried....Forms, and sects, and opinions, as numerous as the vagaries of human fancy, will each be entitled to an equal deference, as the result of persuasion and sincerity....Truly this will be a state of consummate liberty, in which shall be put down all rule, and all authority and power....There never was a time in which it was employed with so profound a skill and so refined

a policy to undermine the Church of England as in the present age.<sup>27</sup>

Much of this thesis is about the further development of that "consummate liberty", so strongly feared by John Dupré, and about its effects in York Diocese and the Northern Province. But in the end, as this study will show, the compromises achieved by Churchmen in order to widen and cement the Church's comprehensiveness, produced one of the supreme surprises of the late 19th century. Even as late as the 1870's only a handful of the most tolerant and broadest-minded Churchmen would have dared believe it could happen. And by becoming more comprehensive, the Church was not only putting its own house in order, it was becoming a Church that provoked less hostility from those who did not belong to it, and therefore becoming once again a more worthy National Church, available even to serve those de-Churchmented folk who might call for its aid when in need.

This new respect for the Church was helped by the increasing sympathy of parsons for their flocks in their suffering. Although some clergy tended to feel more cut off from their poorer parishioners by class consciousness, they still continued the honourable tradition of extending pastoral care to all parishioners, rich and poor alike, worshippers or not. Increasingly this pastoral care involved particular concern for the poor, and ministering ameliorative aid to them. But in addition, and this is a very important aspect of the thesis, it should be no surprise to find that some of these caring clergy eventually became involved in demands for social justice for the poor and under-privileged members of society, in both town and country. For the clergy involved, this quest for social justice constituted the most meaningful outreach

possible: ministering to those who most needed the Church's help, by seeking to remove abuses from society itself.

It will be seen that the years 1857 to 1894 were indeed packed with remarkable, significant and permanent developments for the Church of England, as it faced its authority problems and found ways to restore its influence in society.

## PART I

### INTERNAL DIVISIONS AND THE INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES

#### CHAPTER 1

##### FROM MUTED CHURCH TO CHATTERING CHURCH:<sup>1</sup> THE CHURCH'S SEARCH FOR A PLATFORM

(i) What sort of bodies; what sort of tasks?

In his first Charge to the Cleveland clergy in 1846, Archdeacon Churton said it was a "painful fact" that many clergy often toiled faithfully in their parishes in almost complete isolation from all other clergy, knowing and consulting each other less than any other group of men anywhere. Churton blamed this lack of contact and its sad results on the disappearance of diocesan synods soon after the Reformation. By starting to meet regularly again, said the Archdeacon, the clergy could create "a better spirit of concord and a better understanding of the duties and services of our charge."<sup>2</sup>

At the time, Churton was applauding Archbishop Musgrave of York for encouraging the revival of ruri-decanal chapter meetings in the York Diocese. But his comments about the lack of contact between clergy, and especially their lack of opportunity to discuss matters of common interest or importance, had wider application. In the first half of the 19th century, the Church of England suffered great handicaps at national and provincial levels, in addition to diocesan and ruri-decanal levels, as a result of the muting of its voice for well over a century. During the muted

years, almost the only voice heard speaking for the Church was that of the predominantly conservative and anti-reform bishops who took part in House of Lords debates, and whose contribution earned little respect from any quarter, thus doing little to enhance the Church's standing.

Nowadays, near the end of the 20th century and with a chattering Church taken for granted after its existence for nearly 150 years, it is difficult to appreciate how effectively muted the Church of England had been - particularly from 1717 onwards, when Parliament stopped the two Convocations from exercising anything more than brief and formal functions at the beginning of new sessions of Parliament. Similarly, the increasing acceptance since the 1880's of the desirability of having a lay voice in Church government - other than the pluralist voice of the House of Commons<sup>3</sup> - makes it difficult to appreciate the anxiety caused in the middle of the 19th century, when the notion of lay participation began to gain ground. Yet the concept presented many Victorian Churchmen with many problems - laity as well as clergy, whether strongly in favour of introducing lay involvement or equally strongly against it. For instance, on what Church bodies should laymen<sup>4</sup> be allowed to have representation? Which laymen should be eligible to join those bodies? In the event of electing representatives, who should be eligible to vote? On what matters might lay folk be expected or allowed to express their opinions? And how competent were they to discuss doctrine, for example?

When Edward Churton delivered his first Charge in 1846, fifteen years had elapsed since agitation for the revival of Convocation had begun.<sup>5</sup> Thus, it is interesting and significant that Churton did not refer to the possible revival of Convocation in his 1846 Charge, and talked



instead about rural deaneries and diocesan synods. Very soon, however, like many other clergy who were worried about the implications of the Gorham and Hampden Cases and the so-called papal aggression of 1850,<sup>6</sup> Churton became a stalwart supporter of the revival of Convocation. Later, as an active member of the revived York Convocation until his death, he was noted for his continuing advocacy of lay involvement in Church government, a stance in which he made his mark in the years before Convocation was even revived.<sup>7</sup>

Canon George Trevor, another senior clergyman in York Diocese, also gave early support to the idea of Convocation revival. But he was always more cautious than Churton about lay membership, on the reasonable grounds that a Convocation consisting of other than bishops and clergy could no longer actually be Convocation. As he put it: the admission of lay representatives into Convocation would overthrow "the peculiar constitution of the English Church";<sup>8</sup> and like most Churchmen, Trevor was not prepared to endanger the established union of Church and State. On the other hand, he was adamant that the laity should somehow be involved in the deliberations of both bishops and clergy, and should help in reaching agreement on the conduct of Church affairs.<sup>9</sup>

Also like Archdeacon Churton, Canon Trevor favoured the revival of diocesan synods as a first priority, with the revival of Convocation in second place. Thus, for instance, speaking at a meeting of clergy and laity at Derby in 1851, Trevor reminded his audience that the 16th century English Reformers, represented by Cranmer and other bishops, and supported by common lawyers, had insisted that all bishops should hold diocesan synods where they could consult their clergy.<sup>10</sup> Trevor conceded that the Church could expect difficulties in attempting to

revive any institutions long disused. But he argued that the need was urgent if the Church were to eradicate "the grievous hindrances to true Religion that arise from the present defective Administration of our Church Discipline."<sup>11</sup> Once ways of reviving synods were decided, he suggested, ways to include lay involvement should be tackled. This would revive

the [Church's] deliberative function which at present is totally and without law suspended<sup>12</sup>.... [Otherwise] the Church of England must soon be at her last gasp as a National Establishment.<sup>13</sup>

Without doubt, a muted Church was virtually powerless to meet the massive changes that were challenging the Church's position in 19th century English life. It was also questionable whether a Church with a restored voice, but devoid of legislative rights, could ever hope to exercise much more influence within English society. Nevertheless, the bodies of the chattering Church, when established, played a valuable part in steering the Church into comprehensiveness and common sense, and into acceptance of its role as one Church amongst several. In the process, these bodies also helped the Church to continue to wield a significant influence on life in the parishes - if not over the life of the nation. Sometimes this influence was strongest not, as might be expected, in the Tory dominated and sparsely populated rural parishes, nor even in market towns, but in the over-populated parishes of towns such as Sheffield, Hull, Middlesbrough, Castleford and Rotherham, where Church-directed activity could influence the local community far more than the tiny proportion attending parish church worship might suggest. Meantime in the mid-19th century there was urgent need for the Church - both clergy and interested laity - to deliberate on the

challenges facing the Church internally and externally and, where possible, to formulate action.

Of course it can be argued that the energy expended on establishing the bodies of the chattering Church might have been better used in other directions. And it can be more strongly argued that too many bodies were eventually set up - and in too short a time - to fill the void of the muted years. It can also be argued that, once established, the revived bodies, and especially Convocation, were often too introspective, seeing the main problems of the Church as Church-based rather than - as was the case - society-based. But by contrast the newly formed bodies - the Church Congress, the Lambeth Conference and a host of national, diocesan and local Church organisations, with their largely lay committees, and many of them aiming to improve the condition of society - gave a lead in looking outwards.[See Appendix 2] Gradually, the revived bodies began to follow suit, and lost some of their introspection.

With hindsight it is clear that a straightforward revival of the two Convocations was a mistake. Two provincial Convocations were less likely to provide urgently needed solutions to problems than one national Convention might have done. This was quickly recognised. Thus, for example, a petition to York Convocation from the inhabitants of St. John's Bowling, in Bradford, as early as 1860 (only a year after York re-started its debating function) asked for a committee to be appointed to consider how best to bring the representatives of the two provinces together to deliberate on matters of common interest.<sup>14</sup> The forming of joint committees soon became common practice on important issues. But one national body from the outset would have been better than two, if only

because it would have needed the appointment of one committee to investigate important matters instead of two.

Another weakness linked with the revival of the two Convocations was the seven year gap between their revival.<sup>15</sup> There was still roughly the same gap, over thirty years later, between the emergence of the two Houses of Laity.<sup>16</sup> York Convocation never seemed to make good those years between the revival of action in Canterbury Convocation and its own revival. In addition, Archbishop Thomson's caution often led him to procrastinate, thus contributing to York's delayed actions. The immediate result was that York Convocation was usually forming a committee, or considering a committee report, long after Canterbury, and sometimes even after Canterbury had already passed a resolution on the issue. A longer term and more serious result was that York Convocation was seen in the Church at large to be delaying reform, and thus to be complicating the Church's responses to its authority problems. In 1863 there was criticism about this at the Manchester Church Congress. R. Seymour, Rector of Kinwarton in Warwickshire, asking why Convocation had stopped short of any actual legislation, suggested that the reason was "the inaction of the provincial synod of York. [Applause] York in many respects stopped the way."<sup>17</sup>

However, this is not to suggest that there was a lack of talent and wisdom in York Convocation. Sufficient material from debates in York Convocation will figure in the course of this study to show that the reverse was the case. And certainly York had better representation of clergy than Canterbury, which was over-weighted with dignitaries such as deans and archdeacons compared with York. But hindsight suggests that, far from reviving both Convocations - and at different times - it would have been better to create

instead a totally new Convention to include the talents of both provinces, not only from among the bishops and clergy, but also the laity, on the lines of those already operating in several overseas provinces of the Anglican Church in the mid-19th century, and most notably in the Episcopal Church of America.

A further handicap that became apparent after revival of the Convocations was the fact that they could never wrest from Parliament the right to legislate on ecclesiastical matters - whether doctrinal, liturgical or administrative. However, recognition of the impasse brought fruitful compensation: Church leaders began to adopt the pragmatic responses to authority problems that eventually became a hallmark of the period. This pragmatism in turn symbolised the increasing adoption by the chattering Church of common sense approaches to problems. It is no accident that the period saw the development throughout society of the modern meaning of the term "common sense".<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, pragmatism was not the only form of common sense required. Simultaneously there grew awareness of the need for the Church to be taking initiatives. This is evident in many areas, such as in the mid-century agitation for synodical action - even if the strengths and influences the revivalists aimed to restore were over-idealised and based on a mythical past - and in the growth of professionalism amongst the clergy. But these initiatives, whether pragmatic or planned, mostly emerged after many Churchmen had pinned their hopes too much, and mostly unsuccessfully, on a militant form of conservatism. Only then did they listen to the advice a handful had been proffering for years and seek, through pragmatism, common

sense and initiative-taking, to face the Church's enemies, whether internal or external.

Whilst failing to achieve the restoration of any power to legislate, the chattering Church gave valuable opportunities for the exchange of ideas. Above all, in the process of exchange it provided the means for the Church to strengthen its comprehensiveness. Ironically, among the various revived bodies in York Diocese, the ruri-decanal chapters and the diocesan conferences enjoyed more unchallenged autonomy in their decision-making than York Convocation, the supposedly superior body. This was partly because Archbishop Thomson was often not at ease in Convocation and resisted radicalism, whereas he felt much less threatened in his diocesan conferences. As for ruri-decanal chapter meetings, it was not physically possible for the Archbishop to attend them - though he set up a system for keeping some check on the subjects they discussed.

It was even more ironical that the totally new bodies of the chattering Church - the Church Congresses and the Lambeth Conferences - were not part of synodical government at all, yet they wielded an enormous influence for good on the Church and its policies, and both served a much wider field than any of the other bodies. Until the establishment of the National Representative Council in 1904 (the fore-runner of the Church Assembly established in 1921) the annual Church Congress constituted the only national body in the chattering Church. Though it had no official structure and passed no resolutions, it admitted clerical and lay participants on equal terms, and played at least as much part in revivifying the Church, and redirecting it towards a stronger comprehensiveness by the

end of the 19th century, as any of the more official bodies of the Church.

Similarly, the Lambeth Conference, whilst serving the whole Anglican Communion, had no authority to govern the Communion. But its deliberations and the reports of its committees commanded increasing respect during the period. And through the Conference the generally more enlightened views of the younger Churches overseas began to affect the generally more conservative leaders of the Church of England. Together, the Church Congresses and the Lambeth Conferences contributed immeasurably to many of the better decisions the Church of England made during the period; though it would be wrong to discount the good effects of the discussions and debates that took place in the bodies that were revived during the period: the ruri-decanal chapters and diocesan conferences, as well as those that took place in Convocation.

(ii) The new bodies of the chattering Church

(a) The Church Congress

The positive influence of the annual Church Congress stemmed from its freedom from precedent, aided from the outset by the involvement of laymen equally with clergy. The first two Congresses were ad hoc affairs in Cambridge (1861) and Oxford (1862), the lay contingent at both being mostly members of the universities.<sup>19</sup> Four laymen, including Henry Hoare, co-founder of the Society for the Revival of Convocation, were also present at the meeting held in Oxford Town Hall that approved and planned

the bold step to pass from Oxford to Manchester, from the seat of learning to the centre of commerce,..from the halls of the university to other halls, where the doctrine of free trade is extended even to matters of religion.<sup>20</sup>

Bishop James Prince Lee of Manchester, who had invited Congress to meet in the city in 1863 for the first full-scale Congress, reminded everyone in his opening address that though it would discuss highly important questions, the Church Congress would come to no binding decisions. Everyone present could "propound his own individual opinions [and] hear them discussed in a spirit of charity and candour."<sup>21</sup>

Dean Hook of Chichester, formerly Vicar of Leeds, likewise stressed the need for mutual respect and frank expression. In his sermon in the Cathedral at the start of the Congress, he pointed out how much the Congress owed to lay example. Whilst the previous generation, in which he



included himself, had zealously sought truth, it had been too often gripped by fanaticism on opposing sides; and it had been damaging to Christianity when infidels could say, "See how these Christians hate."<sup>22</sup> He claimed it was the political world that had given the lead in showing how honest, sincere men could "agree to differ and live together in brotherly love and mutual respect." Society, he said, was tired of religious controversy, and there was a growing spirit of toleration amongst men of different opinions. Hook acknowledged that it was

to this reaction that we may attribute the formation of the Church Congress and various other voluntary associations, with the object of bringing into contact...men whose opinions on some doctrinal points may not be identical; though generally we find that, when a spirit of love prevails, the differences are more apparent than real.<sup>23</sup>

These were remarkable sentiments at a time when theological, ritual and doctrinal controversies still raged passionately within the Church of England.

Three years later, in his inaugural address to the York Congress, Archbishop Thomson referred to the contribution Church Congresses could make to the forming of mature public opinion and thereby to positive action. Like Dean Hook, Thomson acknowledged the debt the Church Congresses owed to the lay world. For the Congresses were modelled on the secular professional conferences that had grown up earlier in the century; and, as the Archbishop pointed out, "the Congress plays the same part with ecclesiastical questions as one society does towards physical enquiry and another towards social science."<sup>24</sup> As for those who felt

there was too much discussion and too little action, the Archbishop insisted they were wrong, believing that

words here spoken may set chords vibrating in many breasts, and the vibration may meet its next response in the parishes to which we go back....People will take back ideas on a multitude of subjects touched on and discussed here.<sup>25</sup>

Twelve years later at Sheffield Congress, Archbishop Thomson looked back on the York Congress of 1866 and suggested that the intervening years had seen the Congresses come to maturity. Hence he regretted that the Evangelicals, many of them influenced by die-hard anti-ritualists, had almost entirely boycotted the Sheffield Congress. He emphasised that, by staying away, they missed the chance to express their views:

[for] as you know this Congress only works by way of general impression; it neither enacts laws nor passes resolutions, which might be irksome to a minority, and might be a very good reason for the silent protest of absence. [But] as every opinion will receive here a fair and patient hearing, it is difficult to understand what is gained to the cause of truth by letting slip one great occasion in every year for uttering the truth as we regard it.<sup>26</sup>

The statement makes clear how high Thomson's regard was for Congress by 1878.

From 1863 onwards, the annual Congress was open to any interested clergy or lay folk who could obtain tickets for the meetings. Anyone present, given sufficient time, could take part in discussions after the reading of papers by

previously invited speakers. During the York Congress (1866) Archbishop Thomson received a deputation of working men requesting an evening meeting, because they were at work in the daytime when Congress met. These men declared their interest in the matters under discussion, and "felt they were as much members of the Church as any of those who met together to discuss Church matters." The Archbishop responded readily, if somewhat patronisingly:

By all means. We will give up our Congress Hall one evening for the purpose of inviting the working men to come and hear what we have to say about Church matters.

Thereafter, a special meeting always took place for working men at Church Congresses - and eventually for their wives too;<sup>27</sup> but their role seems to have remained that of passive listeners until after the 1880 Congress at Leicester. There D.J. Vaughan, Vicar of St. Martin's, Leicester, suggested that every evening during Congress meetings should be held, at which subjects of special interest to the working classes could be presented with free debate afterwards.<sup>28</sup>

The subjects covered at Church Congresses were chosen by an executive committee which met monthly from January to October and to which new members were elected regularly. The list of subjects and the names of speakers emerged at these meetings. In 1866, for instance, the committee had twenty-six provisional subjects to consider, narrowing them down to fifteen during the year. Introductory papers and addresses were limited to two per subject in order to allow time for the highly popular open discussion at the end of each paper. Speakers were selected to represent the different strands of opinion in the Church at large on any given subject.<sup>29</sup>

Sufficient material from Church Congress discussions appears in later chapters to illustrate the good sense and tolerance generally to be found there. Even a modest account of the vast amount of work done in Congress over the years on major, recurring topics would require a substantial book. Thus it must suffice only to mention here the range of topics discussed over the years, illustrating the freedom of discussion the Congresses enjoyed, as well as the wide interests and deep concerns that Churchmen shared with each other by means of the Congresses. They examined: The Church as an Institution; Church Reform; The Church and Other Bodies; The Disadvantaged and Social Reform; Education; Evangelism; and Worship. Towards the end of the period, and up to 1898, there was a striking rise in emphasis on social and economic problems in society, demonstrated by discussions on subjects such as Housing, Strikes, The Responsibilities of Employers, Boards of Arbitration and Conciliation, and Trade Unionism.<sup>30</sup>

The influence of the Congresses on many aspects of Church life in the last four decades of the century was considerable. Two interesting tributes to the continuing contribution made by Congresses to the reduction of bigotry and intolerance, and to their help in nurturing comprehensiveness in the Church, were given by two well-known bishops of the northern province. Bishop Fraser of Manchester said that a discussion in Congress took place in such a manner as to help Christianity to become "more human and more reasonable, and these are the only conditions on which it could be put forward as a working power to the world."<sup>31</sup>

The other noteworthy and glowing tribute came from Bishop Joseph Lightfoot. Speaking at the 21st Church Congress at

Newcastle in 1881, he admitted that as one who attended the first Congress in King's College, Cambridge, he would have thought it "the wildest romance, a very dream of dreams" to have imagined the success the Congresses had achieved since. They had contributed to the increased ability among Churchmen to get matters into proportion, especially in accepting the advance of other disciplines than theology, and in welcoming the truths they revealed. Therefore, he believed, the Congresses were enabling the Church to give more thought, and rightly so, to those vast masses of people "whom the conditions of modern life have herded together, only to remove them further and further from the control of the Gospel."

As for the criticism that Congresses were all talk, and ended in talk, Bishop Lightfoot rejected it as simply not true. "They do not end in talk," he said; "they stimulate both individual and collective action."<sup>32</sup> His words indicate that the Church Congress was wholly appropriate to the day and age which produced it.

## (b) The Lambeth Conference

The Lambeth Conferences provided similar benefits to the world-wide Anglican Communion as the Church Congresses did to the Mother Church in England. Lambeth Conferences and Church Congresses were able to set an agenda appropriate to the times. They could discuss contentious issues, yet simultaneously grow in charity and tolerance. But they were spared from passing authoritative resolutions.

The links between the two are further underlined by the fact that the first Lambeth Conference (in 1867) took place when it did, and in the form it did, largely because of the example the Church Congresses had given since 1861.<sup>33</sup> However, a big difference was that the lay presence, which was an essential feature of the Congresses, remained insignificant at Lambeth Conferences for a hundred years. So, too, did the presence of clergy other than bishops - although the original plan had envisaged forming a world-wide synod involving both clergy and laity alongside the bishops. Thus, by default, as one commentator put it: "The Lambeth Conferences were episcopalised Church Congresses."<sup>34</sup>

Three Lambeth Conferences met during the period: in 1867, 1878 and 1888. Bishops of the northern province, led by Archbishop Thomson, boycotted the first Conference, largely on the grounds that the agenda was insufficiently Bible-based.<sup>35</sup> However, by the time of the second Conference in 1878 they were reconciled, and all attended except Baring of Durham, a strong Evangelical.<sup>36</sup> In contrast with his suspicious attitude to the first Conference, Thomson praised the achievements of the 1878 Conference during his opening address at the Sheffield

Congress. There had been "a charitable and valuable exchange of opinions," he said, and

the proceedings of the Lambeth Conference, taken as a whole, seem to show clearly the nature of the task that lies before the Anglican Church, the means and the methods which it has to follow, and the errors which it hopes to avoid.

He was proud to mention that the hundred representatives at Lambeth had included bishops from Australia, China, and India as well as the United States and Canada,<sup>37</sup> whence the initiative for the first Conference had come in the mid-1860's, during anxiety over the onset of Biblical criticism.<sup>38</sup> Thomson was clearly happy to quote from the Statement of Faith drawn up at the 1878 Conference which, whilst affirming the supremacy of Scripture as the arbiter of faith, the essential nature of the Catholic Creeds, and the Apostolic order of bishops, priests and deacons, yet asserted "the just liberties of particular or national Churches", and declared against the need for "rigid uniformity" in the Church.<sup>39</sup>

The work of the Lambeth Conferences had a profound effect on the Anglican Communion; and especially in advertising the advantages of synodical government, with the involvement of lay folk equally with bishops and clergy; in preserving the comprehensiveness of the Church; and in encouraging open discussion of differences in search of a consensus. The Conferences set a pattern for modern Anglicanism in refusing to try to exert a specific authority and opting instead for general guidance. As a result the general authority of Lambeth Conferences was - and still is - highly respected. Indeed, it could well be

argued that the Lambeth Conferences gave the Anglican Communion a philosophy to carry it into the 20th century.

Undoubtedly, one of the most important matters communicated to English bishops from overseas was the feasibility of synodical government. Even before the first Lambeth Conference gathered in 1867, it was already clear that the Anglican Church overseas was exercising an influence on moves towards the revival of synods in the Church of England. After 1867, when he became Bishop of Lichfield, these synodical developments received much encouragement from Bishop George Selwyn's previous experience of the synodical government he had initiated in New Zealand,<sup>40</sup> and also from the Lambeth Conferences themselves, where the bishops grew ever happier to rub shoulders and learn from each other's experience.

The success of the model of synodical government in the American Episcopal Church - and of lay participation in it - was paramount. Its Book of Common Prayer had been ratified in 1789 by the Convention of Bishops, Clergy and Laity; and its (Thirty-seven) Articles of Religion by a similar tri-partite Convention in 1801.<sup>41</sup> Respect existed in England before the first Lambeth Conference for this shared form of Church government. Asked by Archbishop Thomson to address the 1866 Congress at York on the workings of synodical action in the American Church, Henry John Whitehouse, the visiting Bishop of Illinois did so. He also mentioned that, during his travels in Europe, he had been struck by the wide respect for the American Church amongst other Christian bodies, a respect based largely on the way it ran itself. Whitehouse also pointed to the resemblance between the government of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America and the American Constitution.



Both, he said, were "very close in principle," and ended enthusiastically:

I think I only express the sentiment of the American Church at large when I say that, next to the institution authorised by God himself in the orders of the ministry, the last thing we should think of abandoning or changing would be the synodical action of the laity in conjunction with the clergy in the administration of the Church.<sup>42</sup>

It became increasingly clear during the period that never to have been faced with the problem of reviving Convocations was a great advantage to the overseas provinces of the Anglican Church. It took just over a hundred years from the Bishop of Illinois' address to the York Congress (in 1868) before the Church of England and Parliament at last agreed (in 1969) that it should set up a General Synod, consisting of three Houses for bishops, clergy and laity, with equal voting powers for each House. By that time, Convocation's importance had receded almost totally; but the decennial Lambeth Conference seemed set to continue its useful contribution to the Anglican Church for many years yet to come.

(iii) The revived bodies of the Chattering Church

(a) York Convocation and "revival of action"

Dr. Samuel Johnson asked in 1763 why "the presbyterian kirk of Scotland [should] have its general assembly, and the Church of England be denied its convocation?"<sup>43</sup> Johnson was right to question this anomaly. For well over a hundred years after 1717, when both Convocations were prohibited by Parliament from undertaking more than the most perfunctory and formal actions, the Church of England had virtually no voice.<sup>44</sup>

However, the first serious suggestion that the near-impotence of Convocation should end did not come until 1830, closely following the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts and the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act. Vernon Harcourt, Archdeacon of Cleveland at the time, advocated the revival of Convocation, together with a National Synod for England and Ireland.<sup>45</sup> But Harcourt was well ahead of his time and for more than a decade the idea of revival remained dormant.

But, with the repeal of the Test Acts in 1828 and the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829, the concept of the Commons as the Lay House of the Church of England had become patently anomalous if not anachronistic. In addition, none of the clergy, apart from the bishops, had any representation in a legislative or consultative body of any significant sort. The only Church forum that met was the occasional rural deanery chapter, and only here and there. In the national sphere, clergy were even forbidden by statute from standing for election as M.P.'s.<sup>46</sup>

Yet, at the beginning of Victoria's reign, and for many subsequent years, the House of Commons continued to be regarded as the representative body of Anglican laity.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, with a largely inactive and muted Convocation, and very limited clergy representation elsewhere, the House of Commons remained, despite anomalies and anachronism, the nearest approximation to a representative legislature or consultative body that the Church of England possessed. But, the concept of the Commons as a Lay House that was in some way parallel to the non-existent Convocations of the clergy, came under increased questioning from frustrated and reformist Churchmen.

Between the revival of the two Convocations in the 1850's Robert Wilberforce, then Archdeacon of the East Riding, wrote about the changing character of the relationship between Crown and Church over the previous two hundred years. He ended by criticising the Hanoverians for allowing "the principle of pure Private Judgment to predominate...(which) has ascendancy at present."<sup>48</sup> Wilberforce wanted the revival of Convocation believing, with other Churchmen, that a revived Convocation would challenge the exercise of private judgment and generally tighten the Church's discipline.

Fear of private judgment was an important motivator; but the reasons behind the call for revival were complex, and are implicit in much of the turmoil over authority described in the chapters that follow. Put very briefly and simply, however, the revival of the two Convocations arose as an important part of a positive response to the challenges presented to the Church's authority by a rapidly changing society, and not least by the increasing plurality of society, with its new liberties for previously deprived groups such as Nonconformists and Roman Catholics. When

Archdeacon Harcourt called for the revival of Convocation in 1830, he was not opposing the increased freedom recently granted to Dissenters and Roman Catholics. He was simply asking for the Church of England to be given freedom of action as the logical outcome of the freedom just granted to Nonconformists and Roman Catholics by the repeal of Test Acts and the granting of Catholic emancipation.<sup>49</sup>

In 1836, the Tory Richard Oastler, who had leapt to fame five years earlier as initiator of the campaign for factory reform in the Yorkshire textile mills, took up the cause of Convocation revival. It was no coincidence that 1836 was the year in which the Whig-dominated Parliament passed the new Births, Deaths and Marriages Act - a threat to the Church's near monopoly of the rites of passage. Oastler wrote to the Archbishop of York, pointing out that the Church of England

seems to have forgotten that she possesses a Convocation, and that such is the proper place to discuss questions appertaining her, and not the floor of the House of Commons....Let her be restored!<sup>50</sup>

Also in 1836, Francis Close, the Evangelical Vicar of Cheltenham, and later (when Dean of Carlisle) a pillar of the revived York Convocation, recorded his belief in revival of the Convocations as an absolute necessity.<sup>51</sup>

Occasionally over the next few years the question of restoring Convocation's fuller functions figured during the election of proctors to the northern Convocation.<sup>52</sup> The matter also began to receive strong episcopal support, particularly in the southern province, after the papal aggression (of 1850) and the Gorham Judgment (in 1851).<sup>53</sup> The briefest examination of the views they expressed

provides a useful summary of the issues as seen at the time. Thus, for example, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol criticised the growth in Parliament of hostility to the Church, and argued that the difficulties could not be removed without the Church receiving legislative powers, "exercised in its legitimate Synod."<sup>54</sup>

The Bishop of London claimed that the Church, theoretically, legally and constitutionally had the right to deliberate as a body on matters of doctrine and discipline. Thus the muted existence of the Church should give way to the restoration of Convocation with "more than its present cursory duties."<sup>55</sup> The Bishop of Oxford argued not only for the revival of Convocation's powers to debate and legislate, but also for lay representation there, in order to counteract the work of "the mischievous, self-styled lay representatives of the Church of England in the House of Commons."<sup>56</sup>

The Catena in which these views were brought together contained the thoughts of only one northern bishop, Dr. Prince Lee, the Bishop of Manchester, who expressed reservations that would have found favour with Dr. Musgrave, the Archbishop of York. Lee thought it unrealistic to revive an old institution with a new and previously unknown authority. The venture could expect little success and might even be a calamity. For if such a body were revived, he argued, it would be necessary to admit laymen, with all the related problems then of deciding the qualifications of the electors. Thus, the best course would be to avoid any clashes between Church and State; not to try to set up an 'imperium in imperio'; but to seek instead, very idealistically,

to bring the State into closer union with the Church, by seeking to render the spirit of its institutions, public and private and social, in all respects more Christian.<sup>57</sup>

An indication of the respect felt for Edward Churton (now Archdeacon of Cleveland) within the Society for the Revival of Convocation is the inclusion, in an otherwise exclusively episcopal Catena, of those parts of his 1851 Charge in which he had dealt with the subject of Convocation revival. Churton stressed that because the Church had long lived without Convocation did not mean that it always should. The silencing of Convocation had helped strip the Church "of all power and authority...lowering its esteem in men's eyes." Those who feared the revival of Convocation should remember that a body unable to govern itself was not fit to survive, and would not do so for long. He therefore insisted that the Church should not remain muted any longer.<sup>58</sup>

The following year (1852), after intense campaigning by the Society for the Revival of Convocation in both provinces, the southern Convocation held a lively debate about the wisdom of extending its role. The debate led to no firm resolutions; but because it was a debate, it set the required precedent for future debates and for departing from the mere formalities associated with the opening of Parliament.<sup>59</sup>

York Convocation was less fortunate. Robert Wilberforce, in an Occasional Charge to the East Riding clergy, urged them all as a duty to cast their vote in the election of proctors, describing the inability of the Church to have effective Convocations as a danger both to its principles and its life. But on arriving at the Minster chapter house

a little later in 1852, the duly elected proctors learnt that there were to be no proceedings of any sort. The doors were locked against them; and, in spite of the matter being raised in the House of Lords on three separate occasions, York proctors were allowed to meet only three times, very briefly, and for only the customary formalities, during the next four years. Archbishop Musgrave remained immovable in his opposition until his death in 1860.<sup>60</sup>

But Musgrave was by no means the only cleric in York Diocese who had serious reservations about the revival of Convocation. A month before Convocation was to meet in 1857, the elections of proctors demonstrated that many parochial clergy were not enthusiastic about revival, either. In the York/West Riding Archdeaconry election, the clergy rejected the two candidates, Canons Trevor and Howard, who had been proctors for the previous five years, and who now stood as revival supporters. Nevertheless, both defeated candidates took the opportunity to give their views an airing. Predictably, Trevor's speech insisted that synodical action was essential; and Canon Howard outlined his view that the reform of abuses, the adaptation of the Church to the growing needs of the day, and "steadfastness to the sacred faith and distinct doctrines of the Church of England," required the revival of the northern Convocation. But Canon Hey, Head of St. Peter's School in York (later to become Archdeacon of Cleveland) and Canon Sale, Vicar of Sheffield, polled more than twice the votes gained by the revivalists.<sup>61</sup>

By contrast, the meeting held to elect the East Riding proctors showed more readiness to press for revived activity in Convocation. The incumbent of Beverley Minster, J.B. Birtwhistle - later a frequent speaker in the

revived Convocation - proposing John King, Vicar of Christ Church, Hull, for election, took a positive stand for revival and produced an interesting justification for doing so. These were "serious and stirring times," he said, and events were moving so rapidly that no one could say how circumstances might change before they met for an election again. The revivalist Mr. King was duly elected to serve alongside Mr. Palmes, Vicar of Hornsea, who was the non-activist nominee, (and who was much later in life to become Archdeacon of the East Riding).<sup>62</sup>

Thereafter, frustration and impatience grew rapidly in the north. On 2 May 1857, Canon Trevor, defeated the previous month in his bid to remain one of the proctors for York archdeanory, was the preacher in York Minster, at the traditional service for the start of Convocation. He dismissed the opposition to the restoration of synodical action, saying that

perhaps the majority, even of good men, are as yet unconvinced of the advantages of synodical action. [But] the majority are not always in the right, and it is neither Christian nor English to disdain the arguments of the few.<sup>63</sup>

However, the revival of an active York Convocation was still beset with controversy. In the Convocation that met for formalities at York in February 1859, the revivalists demonstrated such frustration and determination and created such a Gilbertian atmosphere, that part of the proceedings received the honour of a description by Mr. Punch.<sup>64</sup> The new Dean of York, the aristocratic Augustus Duncombe, in the chair for the first time as Archbishop Musgrave's Commissioner, was convinced that Convocation should be as brief and pointless as throughout the past 130 years. But



the revivalists were well represented, amongst them being Archdeacon Churton, Archdeacon Thorp of Durham, and the Hon. and Rev. Francis Grey, proctor for Lindisfarne and a son of the politician whose name was most strongly associated with the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832.

When the brief formalities ended, Mr. Dodd, proctor for Durham, requested permission for the proctors to elect a Prolector. The Dean refused. Dodd then sought permission to read a petition on behalf of Henry Hoare, founder-chairman of the Society for the Revival of Convocation, who was present with a few lay spectators. Predictably, the Dean refused to allow this, but said Dodd could "present it" instead. Dodd refused, and handed the petition back to Hoare. Dean Duncombe now declared Convocation prorogued until the summer. But before the Dean could sigh with relief, Francis Grey was protesting that the proroguing was "unconstitutional and illegal." However, the chairman was already leaving the Chapter House. In his view the meeting had ended.<sup>65</sup>

Several thwarted members thought otherwise. They re-assembled at the Black Swan in Coney Street, with Archdeacon Thorp presiding. Hoare addressed the meeting, calling for "the revival of the active powers of Convocation," and complaining strongly at the blocking of his petition. He doubtless enjoyed revealing to the press that the same petition would be read the following week by none other than the Bishop of Oxford to the Upper House of Canterbury Convocation. Furthermore, he stated, his petition represented the views of many hundreds of other laymen, including Wesleyans.

Speaking in support, William Walker, Bradford businessman and friend of Richard Oastler, a leading lay supporter of synodical action in the north, asked

why, when both clergy and laity of the Church of England [want] to promote true religion, they should not be allowed to possess the privileges and advantages of meeting in Convocation.<sup>66</sup>

When York Convocation met again in June 1859, a similar confrontation took place. Dean Duncombe, was again in the chair. Several written petitions were presented and received; some protests were also presented, but rejected. Duncombe then prorogued Convocation.

Once again, however, the revivalists sprang into action. This time, Francis Grey and John Thwaytes, proctor for Carlisle, proposed and seconded the election of a Prolocutor for the Lower House, once again nominating Charles Thorp, Archdeacon of Durham. Dean Duncombe brusquely pointed out that he did not recognise the election.<sup>67</sup> Immediately, the revivalists introduced a motion for a Loyal Address to the Queen. Duncombe refused to receive it.<sup>68</sup> Proceedings rapidly degenerated. Duncombe and Dodd resorted to a duet, in which the Dean recited the writ of prorogation, whilst Dodd read a petition complaining about the autocratic denial of Convocation's freedom to deliberate.<sup>69</sup>

Behind these antics lay two serious points. First, through his Commissioner in Convocation, Archbishop Musgrave was demonstrating the powerful authority an archbishop could still wield over an issue, simply by exercising his own private opinion. Second, for their part the supporters of synodical action were demonstrating

their determination to maintain the battle against the Archbishop's authority - and to win. However, the next Convocation, called in January 1860, was to be Musgrave's last, for he died just over three months later. Had he lived longer it is probable that he would have had to surrender to the revivalists, as the pressure for revival in the north had grown enormously, not least because the revived Canterbury Convocation had now debated Church affairs freely for eight years.

When in January 1860 Dean Duncombe insisted that he would again prorogue Convocation on the Archbishop's behalf, it was obvious that nearly all the clergy present were bent on reviving deliberative activity that very day. If they could once start some deliberation, they would have formed the precedent required for holding future debates - just as Canterbury's proctors had done eight years earlier. Thus, when Duncombe swept out of the Chapter House to the vestry, the clergy who remained behind again appointed Archdeacon Thorp of Durham as their Prolocutor, and immediately drafted a Loyal Address to the Queen, acquainting her with the situation, and pointing out that their

sole object in desiring the exercise of deliberative functions is...the more effectually [to] secure the progress of that spiritual work to which our lives are consecrated.

The rebels sent Archbishop Musgrave a copy of their Loyal Address.<sup>70</sup>

When Convocation reconvened next day, neither the Commissioner, nor any of his deputies, appears to have joined Convocation.<sup>71</sup> This implied that the Lower House

of York Convocation had won the battle. Members now assumed that York Convocation had the same rights as Canterbury. To consolidate victory, and without support or hindrance from the Upper House or from the Archbishop, the Lower House defiantly sent its Loyal Address to the Queen via the Home Office; and despatched a deputation to the Lower House of Canterbury Convocation in order to confer about Church Rates.<sup>72</sup>

Finally - not without significance - the York Lower House discussed a long statement addressed to them from layman William Walker, making several recommendations, including co-operation between the two Convocations, and lay involvement in their discussions; and, where meetings of clergy in rural deaneries did not yet take place, that they should be encouraged by all the bishops, in order to bring uniformity of practice in this matter throughout England and Wales. In addition, Walker recommended that archdeacons and rural deans in all dioceses should aim to set up "consultative committees" which the laity from neighbouring parishes could be requested to attend for mutual consultation. Thus, with victory for the Convocation revivalists apparently secured at last in the northern province, consideration was already being given to the possibilities of expanding the chattering potential of the Church, and of involving the laity in the process.<sup>73</sup>

During the next thirty years, as many had predicted before revival, there were times when two Convocations lacking the teeth of legislative powers proved at best a mixed blessing. In his Primary Charge to York Diocese in 1865 Archbishop Thomson very aptly indicated some of the advantages and disadvantages already emerging in the northern Convocation, and made some sound suggestions:

What are the actual functions of Convocation now that its legislative functions are in abeyance? Its aim ought to be to direct and to express the opinion of the Church upon ecclesiastical matters, and so to suggest to the Crown and to the legislature such measures as may seem desirable. But Convocation as at present constituted is scarcely the most natural representative of the opinion of the whole Church, though it may represent the views of certain important classes. It must therefore earn its position as an adviser by good sense and moderation, and by the soundness of the resolutions which it adopts....Meanwhile we must be content to do little except to promote free discussion of useful subjects. But I do not undervalue the uses of discussion.<sup>74</sup>

Thomson also underlined the decision he had made the year after he became Archbishop to revive "the ancient practice" of having the Upper and Lower Houses sitting and debating together. He felt this brought more interest into debates; but obviously it also conveniently allowed him to direct the affairs of both Houses, and thus to exert his authority on them simultaneously. Depending on the subject under discussion, he could either be very accommodating, or brusque and overbearing. At times, his approach generated disquiet both inside and outside Convocation. Thus, for example, in 1867 a correspondent to the Yorkshire Gazette criticised the Archbishop's peremptory ban on a debate concerning ritualism on the dubious ground that "there was no time, and that many of the Proctors wished to dispose of the question then and there."<sup>75</sup>

Twenty years later Archbishop Thomson abandoned the practice of both Houses sitting together. In doing so he

implied criticism of Convocation's tendency to get bogged down in matters of procedure. The action also illustrated two of his own weaknesses - namely, his inconsistency, and his readiness to wave an authoritarian stick at clergy who disagreed with him, or whom he disliked. There had been tension between Thomson and Dean Purey-Cust of York ever since the Dean became Prolocutor of the Lower House of Convocation in 1881.<sup>76</sup> Following some misunderstandings, Purey-Cust suggested that the Lower House needed a separate meeting. At the same time the Archbishop expressed concern about "irritation" in recent Convocation debates on ritual - Purey-Cust was a High Churchman - and suggested that the Dean's desire for the Lower House to meet separately constituted an attack on the Upper House. The Archbishop went on to accuse Purey-Cust of fabricating the idea that there was "ancient custom" to support the practice of the two Houses meeting jointly, claiming that there was not. This was both unfair on the Dean, and inconsistent on the Archbishop's part, for he had himself used the argument of "ancient custom" in 1863<sup>77</sup> to justify his introduction of the practice. Hurt by Thomson's personal vindictiveness, and complaining about being used as a "doormat" by the Archbishop and being subjected to his "sarcasms", the Dean at last resigned the Prolocutorship in 1888.<sup>78</sup>

As early as 1866, at the York Church Congress, Archbishop Thomson mentioned weaknesses that were already besetting Convocation, the gravest being its lack of legislative powers. He argued:

If Convocation's hands were free, as they ought to be, there would be work for it to do in revising our obsolete Canons and making new ones....At present, its

proper work of legislation being superseded, it is almost forced to do what does not belong to it.

Another weakness was that Convocation members could develop bees in their bonnets. Thus for example, between the Essays and Reviews heresy trials and Charles Voysey's heresy trial<sup>79</sup> Thomson warned that

in assuming the power to try and condemn books Convocation runs a risk of infringing the liberties of the clergy as...secured by law.<sup>80</sup>

At intervals, Convocation's defects attracted attention outside. For instance, Canon J.C. Ryle, Vicar of Stradbroke and later the first Bishop of Liverpool, expressed concern at the Leeds Congress, in 1872, about the extent to which Convocation did not truly represent the Church at large - though York Convocation was less at fault in this respect than Canterbury, which included a much higher proportion of archdeacons and deans. Ryle also criticised the tendency of Convocation to be too resistant to change, "as though advocacy of change is automatically 'revolution'." But he had no sympathy with any who thought it would therefore be best to abolish Convocation altogether. Instead, he wanted it to become truly representative of the Church. He also advocated the combining of the two Convocations, a subject that had arisen periodically after the revival of debates in York Convocation in 1860; and - another chestnut - he wanted lay representation in Convocation, and on equal terms with clergy. At present, he thought, the laity were too much like sleeping partners; but once they were in Convocation, he believed, clergy could know their thoughts on many difficult questions of the day, and the Church would be better for that.<sup>81</sup>

In his Presidential Address to Convocation in 1887, Archbishop Thomson listed some of Convocation's continuing weaknesses. There was widespread feeling that the Church needed one national assembly, rather than two provincial ones, for discussing and transacting business, he said. Convocation had still failed to wrench any legislative powers from Parliament. Within the Church there was growing feeling that Convocation should be more useful, and some folk had disparaged the northern Convocation, "as though it were an effete relic of a bygone condition of importance and influence." Thomson refuted this on the grounds that population in the north had increased so much since York Convocation was revived, that it now represented "a far larger and intelligent population by a more numerous and efficient representation than ever before."<sup>82</sup>

In his penultimate Presidential Address to York Convocation, Archbishop Thomson showed that he was becoming ever more willing to admit that Convocation was not all faults and weaknesses. He suggested that,

turning our backs on the past, this Convocation may feel confident that...a strong and earnest desire prevails amongst us to make our congress useful and respected, a worthy engine for the work of God in this nation.<sup>83</sup>

Thomson could have been even more complimentary about the past. York Convocation had paid attention to a wide variety of important matters which often desperately needed airing, on which it was important for Churchmen to be forming opinions, and about which they had to learn to be tolerant and charitable in order to foster the comprehensiveness of the Church. Very frequently, the topics for discussion arose from petitions submitted by clergy and laity representing rural deaneries and



archdeaonries scattered throughout the province; and Convocation's debates and resolutions often provoked further useful petitions. In this way Convocation received important intimations of interested public opinion, and its discussions and resolutions obviously played their part also in shaping opinion.

The range of Convocation's subject matter increased considerably over the period. It covered the exercise of private judgment; divisions over doctrine, theology and liturgy, and revision of the Book of Common Prayer; relations between Church and State; the ordained and lay ministries; the role to be played by the laity in Church work and Church government in an increasingly voluntaryist age; clergy discipline; education, especially of the young; the de-Churchmented majority; Dissent; moral issues, such as temperance (on which matter York Convocation gave a lead in 1874) and, increasingly towards the end of period, the need to examine social conditions as well as to question some of the basic assumptions of a competitive, capitalist society. All of this involved a great deal of chatter - but by no means all of it was idle chatter. As Archbishop Thomson himself insisted, it would be wrong to undervalue the uses of discussion.

(b) The Ruri-decanal chapter: an end to isolation

In his first Charge to the Cleveland clergy in 1846, Archdeacon Edward Churton remarked with pleasure that his Archbishop, Edward Vernon Harcourt (who died the following year) and other bishops were reviving the office of rural dean. Churton praised the work of the late Bishop Otter of Chichester, who had encouraged regular ruri-decanal meetings, where clergy could confer about the state of their parishes, Church worship and schools; or exchange information about fund-raising for Church Societies; or discuss pastoral care.<sup>84</sup>

The fact that ruri-decanal chapters had begun to revive in York Diocese by 1846 put the diocese ahead of some parts of the country. The piecemeal nature of revival illustrates authority dependent on the individual whim of the diocesan bishops, and probably of archdeacons, too. But as Archdeacon Wilberforce pointed out (in 1854): "If the Church be really meant to exercise its authority, there must be some media through which its authority is to be exerted."<sup>85</sup> After the revival of active Convocations (in 1852 and 1859) and the setting up of the Church Congresses (1861), which between them brought large numbers of clergy together to exchange ideas, the revival of active rural deanery chapters and the movement towards regular diocesan conferences accelerated. Conferring at all levels in the Church was obviously in fashion. It was no coincidence that one of the first petitions to the revived York Convocation in 1860 asked bishops to encourage ruri-decanal meetings in those places where they did not yet take place. Then, at the third annual Church Congress held in 1863 at Manchester, there was pressure from the Rev. W.J. Beamont, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, for "the revival of

the ancient custom of a rural dean assembling chapters of clergy within his district." Acknowledging that this revival had already partially happened, Beamont insisted it should become universal, so that clergy could learn from each other "the skills of tact and skilful management" - a reminder that, by 1863, there was already some movement towards professionalisation of the clergy.<sup>86</sup> Beamont also suggested that the development of the chapter meeting would help diminish "the danger of a sectarian spirit" compared with the voluntary clergy associations that were springing up and were usually "party"-linked.<sup>87</sup>

The arguments were well reasoned. It was relatively easy, especially through the extensive railway system now available, to assemble twenty or so clergymen living in the same part of an archdeaconry, for mutual support and for the discussion of relevant subjects in a ruri-decanal chapter meeting. However, those East Riding ruri-decanal minute books which have survived (providing records from the 1860's onwards) show that clergy were not content to confer only about professional matters, such as pastoralia, worship, Biblical studies or prayer life, but often wished to discuss subjects that were attracting attention nationally. Discussion sometimes led to the passing of a chapter resolution which was then sent as a petition directly to Parliament or indirectly via archdeaconry proctors and Convocation. Thus, for instance, Weighton Deanery sent a resolution to Convocation in 1872 "that the proposed changes in the Prayer Book require to be further known and considered before legislative action is taken"; and in 1873, by the same route, a resolution "against any alteration in the Athanasian Creed or its use in services of the Church."<sup>88</sup> The Hull Deanery Chapter in 1880 directly petitioned the House of Lords to vote against any Burial Bill that might authorise other than Anglican clergy

to conduct burials in churchyards or consecrated parts of cemeteries;<sup>89</sup> and Helmsley Deanery Chapter, in 1882, agreed three petitions be sent to the House of Commons: (i) against a Bill to legalise marriage with a man's deceased wife's sister; (ii) for a Bill to release contumacious prisoners; and (iii) for a Bill to close public houses on a Sunday in Yorkshire.<sup>90</sup>

However, as might be expected, the various elements of the chattering Church encouraged several conflicting developments - particularly the expression of private judgment, at the same time as the shaping of an increasing volume of collective resolutions (and, on occasion, gestures of solidarity) against archiepiscopal attempts to impose authority from above. The Archbishop's initiatives were not always welcomed. This was apparent, for instance, in 1878, when Thomson sent to all his rural deans a circular entitled 'Directions for Ruri-decanal Meetings in the Diocese of York'.<sup>91</sup> The Archbishop had already begun the practice of asking his rural deans to draw up lists of possible subjects for discussion at such conferences; and some of the requirements in the 'Directions' were very reasonable, aimed as they were at standardising ruri-decanal practice in the diocese. For example, deanery chapters had now to meet at least twice a year unless the clergy resolved it was not desirable to meet. This was a safeguard against chapters dwindling to a halt owing to indolence on the part of a rural dean or of chapter members. The Vicar of Leake and Silton Nether in Thirsk Deanery had complained back in 1865 that "we have no Rural Dean and have never had Ruri-decanal Meetings." But that was still in the days of synodical revival. Much more significantly, well after those early revival days, Doncaster Deanery Chapter appears to have met only once a

year at the most until it resolved, in November 1879, to hold two meetings every year in future.<sup>92</sup>

On the other hand, several of the Archbishop's directives, although they might have indicated good sense in trying to standardise practice in a large diocese, implied that he intended to check the increasing use of chapters for the exposition of private judgment, or for passing resolutions of which he might not approve. Thus, for example, the Archbishop insisted that a deanery chapter should always give precedence to discussing matters sent for consideration by the Archbishop (Instruction no. 4). A record of meetings, with the numbers voting for resolutions - though not necessarily names - were to be sent from time to time to the archbishop (Instruction no. 6). The directive that seemed most to implant archiepiscopal control - and yet could be justified as a reasonable requirement, in view of the increasing bodies that constituted the chattering Church - was the one stating that, as each rural deanery was an integral part of "a kind of Synod of the Diocese", resolutions should be in the form of an address to the Archbishop if the matters required action by him, or Convocation, or Parliament (Instruction no. 5).<sup>93</sup>

In response, Helmsley Chapter resolved nem. con. that

in accepting this clause the Chapter desires to record its judgment that its inherent right to petition is in no way to be considered to be limited thereby.<sup>94</sup>

The implications behind the vote are important: the Helmsley clergy were not only making a stand against interference on the part of the archbishop, but were also underlining the freedom given to every English subject in

the Bill of Rights to petition directly even to the monarch should need arise. In an age of rapid development towards democracy and collectivism, the Helmsley clergy were clearly not prepared to be browbeaten by their archbishop.

However, it should not be assumed that their resistance was offered in a cantankerous spirit. Augustus White Wetherall, the Rural Dean of Helmsley at the time, was described in the Guardian as

a thorough Christian gentleman and full of charity [who], with all his gentleness and love of peace,...never hesitated to stand up and state in the most courteous, yet in the most straightforward way, what he believed to be the true view when he thought it his duty to do so.<sup>95</sup>

The Archbishop's authoritarian manner needed "standing up" to from time to time. Only a year after the Helmsley vote - at the second York Diocesan Conference - when speaking about his letter requesting collections for diocesan societies, Thomson revealed his authoritarian intentions when he explained,

it was made as a request, but still he felt that, coming from himself as head of the diocese, and being sanctioned by the general opinion of the clergy, it could be trusted...and have the same force almost as if it had been a command and take its place as a duty.<sup>96</sup>

During the period, the subjects discussed and voted upon by deanery chapters ranged widely: the work of the Ritual Commission and the clauses of the Public Worship Regulation Bill; Prayer Book and rubric revision; changes to laws affecting the rites of passage; reform of the

ecclesiastical courts; and, in the later years, social problems, including intemperance, prostitution and slum dwellings. Despite some wariness about the Archbishop's motives in his dealings with them, rural deanery chapters proved useful to the Archbishop as a sounding board of local opinion, and thus became an important part of the ecclesiastical consultation machine, together with the consensus-forming process that was also developing throughout the period. The rural deans' reports to the archbishop must have comprised an impressive poll of (largely) clergy opinion in this large diocese, covering the full range of parishes, from over-populated industrial to tiny rural.

An important development linked with rural-decanal chapters concerned lay participation in the diocesan opinion-gathering process. It is clear that, by the autumn of 1863, quite widespread lay consultation was happening at rural deanery level, and laymen were occasionally being invited to join meetings of clergy on an ad hoc basis. J.B. Sweet, Rector of Colkirk, Norfolk, revealed at the 1863 Church Congress in Manchester that throughout England "an extension of the lay consultee system [is] already happily at work in 400 of our 700 rural deaneries." This was a high proportion, considering that parts of the country had not yet even started to revive chapter meetings, let alone to consider the presence of laity at them.<sup>97</sup> In the York Diocese, there was quite an early instance of lay co-operation in the West Harthill Rural Deanery Chapter which met in October 1863, to discuss a local collection to help unemployed workers in Lancashire. The minutes record that the rural dean, 12 clergy and their Churchwardens were present, and unanimously agreed the collection should take place. Equally significant as the year in which this resolution was passed is the fact that

the presence of the wardens was not recorded as being particularly unusual.<sup>98</sup>

However, speeches about "synodal government" in the early 1860's show that the desirability of lay participation in Church government was not an automatic assumption by any means. Many clergy were not so much reluctant to involve the laity, as wary of introducing them to bodies which, for all they had been defunct for many years, had been limited to clergy membership before their revival. Thus the subject of lay participation was controversial even in relation to revived deanery synods. At the 1863 Church Congress, Canon Trevor of York favoured clergy and laity combining in "lesser synods" than Convocation, suggesting that their joint deliberations in diocesan synods would be useful for Convocation as well as for members of any particular Diocesan Synods.<sup>99</sup> But at the same Congress the Rev. J.B. Sweet, although supporting the need for lay co-operation, opposed the election of laymen - or even their "infusion" - into rural deanery synods that he considered were properly and constitutionally for clergy only. Nevertheless, he agreed that deanery chapters should be revived, and "with a system of lay co-operation attached to them."<sup>100</sup>

Sweet also analysed the famous proposals from Frant Deanery, in Chichester Diocese, for the election of lay representatives to diocesan synods. He claimed that the difficulties applied equally to ruri-decanal chapters which, like diocesan synods, were constitutionally clerical bodies.<sup>101</sup> Sweet dismissed the Frant suggestions that electors of lay representatives could be the parishioners, or the Vestry, or adult male Churchgoers, or the Communicants of the parish, because in each case there were problems of definition. His own suggestion was very close



to that adopted in York Diocese, namely, that a joint meeting of the clergy of a ruri-decanal chapter should take place with lay "consultees" - in practice usually Churchwardens - and together they should elect four laymen to attend the diocesan synods.<sup>102</sup> But this required first the establishment of diocesan synods, and then the acceptance of lay members.

(c) The Diocesan Conference: archiepiscopal action and consensus-forming

High Churchman Henry Phillpotts, Bishop of Exeter, first revived the ancient practice of holding a diocesan synod, in June 1851. Phillpotts was directly involved in the case, of course, but the move was part of a widespread response to the furore over the Gorham Judgment and the papal aggression.<sup>103</sup> As Owen Chadwick says, "The mountain of papal aggression piled upon the mountain of Gorham incited everyone to action."<sup>104</sup> The Tractarian John Keble had reminded Phillpotts that lay involvement in diocesan synods was an occasional practice in the primitive Church; and Keble encouraged Phillpotts, not only to call a synod of clergy to examine the problems linked with the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, but also to include laymen in it, in order to learn their mind.<sup>105</sup>

A few months after the Exeter diocesan synod had met, Canon George Trevor of York, in his speech on the subject at Derby in October 1851, outlined the advantages that revived diocesan synods would have over revived Convocations. He held the reasonable belief that diocesan synods would be more "manageable" than Convocations. They could therefore be expected to help remove divisions in the Church and give individual bishops the chance to "restore unanimity". Together with a growing band of reformists, Canon Trevor also hoped that laymen would help to establish these diocesan synods, although he had reservations about their inclusion too soon.<sup>106</sup> For a Synod, he said, was by definition an "assembly of the Clergy of a diocese to consult with their Bishop." There

was therefore much to settle before laity could be admitted either to diocesan synods or to Convocation.<sup>107</sup>

Possibly the most important argument Canon Trevor advanced for the revival of diocesan synods was that they should become an antidote to the increased exercise of private judgment by diocesan bishops. He said:

Christ had not intended that the Church be ruled by the arbitrary decrees of one man; but the public opinion of those who have intelligence and authority to discuss them should be brought to bear upon all subjects of Legislation and Government. Without this, power degenerates into Force.

The restoration of diocesan synods would, he insisted, "be the first step to exercising a good constitutional check by the Public Voice of the Church."<sup>108</sup>

However, there was a gap of fifteen years before the first meeting took place of a body intended to be an ongoing diocesan synod (or "conference", the term eventually used). The instigator was Bishop Harold Browne of Ely, who had prepared the way by encouraging meetings of clergy and laity in the ruri-decanal chapters of his diocese. Eventually, when these were running smoothly, he required them to elect lay representatives to a diocesan conference in 1866. This was a fairly small affair, composed of the bishop, the dean, the archdeacons, canons, Convocation proctors, and one layman from each deanery.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, it was a start; and the next fifteen years saw most dioceses establish a diocesan conference. By 1882, only three dioceses in England and Wales had no such conferences - serving as a reminder of

the autonomy of diocesan bishops, who could insist on their creation or oppose their introduction at will.<sup>110</sup>

In the years between 1851 and 1866, many of those who had fought strongly for Convocation revival had started to fight equally hard for the revival of some form of diocesan synod. Some of these reformists, though not all, contended that lay representation was either desirable or a necessity. Some, like George Trevor, thought it would certainly be easier to introduce lay members to diocesan conferences than into Convocation.

Part of the argument used in favour of diocesan conferences was the same as that used in support of reviving rural deanery chapter meetings: they would reduce feelings of isolation. Even in 1865, by which time rural deaneries had been revived across York Diocese, R.W. Hiley, Vicar of Wighill near Tadcaster, said he had been struck since coming to the diocese (in 1863) by the isolation of the clergy, not helped in many cases, he felt, "by their indifference to each other."<sup>111</sup> In the case of ruri-decanal meetings, they would bring clergy closer to each other initially, and then involve laymen, too.<sup>112</sup> In the case of diocesan conferences, they would bring clergy closer to their bishop, and then involve laymen, too. It was all very well Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford protesting that he felt much less isolated than some reformists were suggesting that bishops felt. Wilberforce was particularly noted for being less distant from clergy and people than many of his colleagues, including William Thomson, Archbishop of York.<sup>113</sup>

Wilberforce's reputation for getting amongst his people was known in the north; and Joseph Foxley, Vicar and Rural Dean of Market Weighton in the East Riding, praised

him for the episcopal "mission" he undertook every Lent. He then turned to criticise the situation in York Diocese. Foxley wanted Archiepiscopal Visitations to be held in each rural deanery, lasting three or four days, with opportunities for conferences between clergy and laity, and for presenting Church folk, such as Sunday School teachers and District Visitors, to the Archbishop. He wanted Confirmation services to be much more spread around the archdeaconry to give more contact between archbishop and people; and, he continued:

such a Visitation of the Diocese should occupy the six months assigned by law; and Episcopacy might then begin to be FELT by the Church at large as a living and spiritual ministry. At present, nine tenths of the people in this Diocese care little more for their Chief Pastor than for the Emperor of China. But no one Bishop is sufficient for this Diocese.

A major step towards remedy, Foxley recommended, would be for the East Riding Archdeaconry to become a Diocese, with Beverley as the cathedral city.<sup>114</sup> The wisdom of his suggestion received some recognition when suffragan bishoprics for both Hull and Beverley were established in York Diocese in the 1880's.

Despite the stress laid by reformists on the part diocesan conferences could play in reducing isolation between clergy, bishop and lay people, Archbishop Thomson was slow to take action. But he hinted at the York Congress in 1866 - the year in which Ely Diocese set up the first diocesan conference - that the ways in which lay participation contributed informally and indirectly to Church Congresses might be a guide for future Church government. He said:

the assistance of laymen in [the Church] Congress gives it a great advantage in informing public opinion....But whenever the legislative body of the Church is reconstructed, the experience of the Church Congress on this subject is not likely to be forgotten.<sup>115</sup>

At the same Congress Canon Trevor was as enthusiastic as ever for reform, and was confident that diocesan synods would improve interest in Convocation and thus improve the work done by it. When he was first ordained, he said, to be called to a synod seemed "as likely as being picked up by a dinosaur." But now,

of the many rapid developments of our age...hardly any has effected such a leap out of darkness into light as the movement for synodal action....What we want now is the Diocesan Synod to instruct and invigorate Convocation. If the clergy were in the habit of meeting personally in the Diocese, they would quickly take their proper interest in the proceedings of the Province where they appear by representation.<sup>116</sup>

As for lay representation, Trevor said he saw no principle endangered if there were to be lay representatives in a diocesan synod, but very great practical advantages. In synod, the laity could influence both Houses of Convocation, whereas at present, ironically,

the only place where a layman can be heard on Church matters is Parliament; and Parliament is daily becoming the last place where a Church layman would wish to make the attempt. In Diocesan Synod, the lay mind might come fully and freely into contact with the clerical, and by mutual discussion elicit the mind of

Canon Trevor acknowledged that the thorniest problems still outstanding were those raised by Frant Deanery in 1863: Who should represent whom? And who should elect those representatives to a synodical body?

A further difficulty that caused delay in starting diocesan conferences was that purists were still insisting on drawing a distinction between a diocesan "conference" and a diocesan "synod". To the purists, a diocesan synod would involve the revival of an ancient clerical body, with no place for laymen; whereas a conference would be modern and innovative, and would therefore have no problems about including a lay element, beyond the very difficult one of determining who the electors should be. At the York Church Congress Canon Trevor, who had previously been a purist on the matter, had publicly admitted the desirability of having lay representatives at diocesan synods. Augustus Duncombe, the Dean of York, joining in the discussion that followed Trevor's speech at this Congress, took the purist stance. Synods, he argued, were simply the machine whereby a diocesan bishop

took counsel with the clergy of the diocese on the spiritual affairs of the Church. This is the legal constitution of a Diocesan Synod.<sup>118</sup>

However, it was this same discussion that ended with Bishop Whitehouse of Illinois' strong recommendation of the Convention system of the American Episcopal Church, in which bishops, clergy and laity met on equal terms to make all the important decisions required for Church government. This system had developed as the mainstay of government of the American Church since the late 18th

century.<sup>119</sup> Very probably it was Bishop Whitehouse's persuasiveness that began to turn Archbishop Thomson more favourably towards the idea of a York diocesan conference, with lay representation. Maybe George Trevor's arguments had also helped, as he was a persuasive man, too. It was, after all, Trevor's famous speech at Derby, in 1851, that had given Henry Hoare, founder of the Society for the Revival of Convocation,

his first clear insight into the synodal question...and the impossibility of admitting a lay element into Convocation.

Hoare pressed instead, thereafter, for lay representation at diocesan and rural deanery level.<sup>120</sup>

In 1869, Archbishop Thomson took his first step towards holding a York Diocesan Conference. He called a conference at Sheffield of a handful of deaneries, on the Tuesday and Wednesday of Whit Week. The conference included both clergy and laity. The subjects discussed were relevant to the Church's needs generally: the causes of the insufficient supply of clergy; the rights and duties of lay workers in the Church; the influence of working class people in Church work, and the means of extending it in large towns; the importance of the Church retaining a hold on young people; and compulsory elementary education.<sup>121</sup> Later in the year, two similar district Church Conferences were held in Scarborough and Hull.<sup>122</sup> Here was an exercise to discover the laity's mind on issues, without involving them in Convocation.

But Archbishop Thomson's caution about holding a full-scale diocesan conference lingered, and was shared by an influential York High Church layman, the Hon. C.L. Wood.



He maintained that historically Church authority was present in the whole body, that is, in the laity as well as in the clergy, and vice versa. Nevertheless, Wood argued that admitting laity to Church government would give them

a false idea of their spiritual position, leading them to imagine themselves possessed of an authority which they cannot have.

Wood advised, instead, the setting up of diocesan "conferences" to work alongside diocesan "synods". The synods would be composed of bishops and clergy; the conferences would have equal lay and clergy representatives with the diocesan bishop presiding at both. The synods would decide what should be done; conferences would determine how it should be done.<sup>123</sup>

Thus, after twenty years of debate about diocesan synods as against conferences, and about the possibility of lay involvement in them, this was a lingering attempt to distinguish between the two. But Wood's ideas were now unrealistic and verging on the absurd. The chattering Church - still lacking any final legislative powers - was growing big enough, and was already looking unwieldy enough, without introducing two types of diocesan gathering. However, with such reservations in existence, coupled with Archbishop Thomson's customary procrastination, it is not surprising that it was 1876 before he called the first full-blown York Diocesan Conference.<sup>124</sup>

Described as a "representative body", the Conference demonstrated an interesting and significant compromise between the nomination and election of members.<sup>125</sup> The

Archbishop nominated as ex officio clerical members the dean and chapter of York; the archdeacons and rural deans of the entire diocese; the archdeaconry proctors from York Diocese in Convocation; and the diocesan inspector of religious education, invariably a clergyman at the time. Among those he nominated as ex officio lay members - provided they were members of the Church of England, but with no indication of what being a member entailed - were the Lords Lieutenant of the three Ridings; the High Sheriff; all Peers of Parliament resident in the diocese; the M.P.'s representing constituencies in the diocese; the Chairmen of the Quarter Sessions; the Lord Mayor of York; and the Mayors of corporate towns in the diocese. In addition, the Archbishop had power to invite not more than twenty laymen to be members, and selected seventeen for this first Conference.<sup>126</sup>

The rank-and-file clergy representatives at the Conference were elected by ballot at deanery elections, on the basis of one representative for every five parishes in a deanery. Lay members were elected by a group consisting of two lay Church members from each parish in the deanery. Again, there was no indication of what being a member entailed, but it seems they were usually wardens or sidesmen, which by 1876 implied some regular, "voluntary" involvement in Church life and activity. The numbers elected matched the numbers of parishes in the same way as the representatives of the deanery clergy. Thus, for example, 6 clergy and 6 laymen represented the Deanery of York, and 7 clergy and 7 laymen represented the Deanery of Sheffield.<sup>127</sup>

Initially, standing orders assumed there would be a Diocesan Conference every three years - "oftener if required". After five years of variation, an annual

conference became the custom. Any members of the Diocesan Conference could send suggestions to the secretary about possible subjects for discussion, at least three months before Conference met; but - another indication of Thomson's authoritarianism - the subjects would be determined by the Archbishop, and confirmed by the Conference. However, no motion of the Conference could be carried without a majority of voters of both clergy and laity.

The first York Diocesan Conference met from Wednesday to Friday at the end of October 1876. The subjects discussed were wide-ranging, although rather narrower than those tackled at the smaller conferences held in Sheffield, Scarborough and Hull four years earlier. They included Diocesan and Parochial Finance; the Burials Question; the Organisation of a Church Temperance Society; and the Awakening of spiritual life. Meetings also took place to improve and confirm the Conference Constitution.

The previous week, the local press had published a small handful of letters questioning the wisdom of holding such a Conference.<sup>128</sup> On first coming to the diocese just over thirteen years earlier, Archbishop Thomson himself was by no means convinced of the wisdom of such conferences, either; and we have seen that he remained cautious for several more years. But, his conversion was evident in the long opening speech he gave to this first Diocesan Conference.

The Archbishop had called the Conference, he said, in response to "a general wish" - an interesting acknowledgement on the part of an archbishop who tended to rule his Convocation in an authoritarian manner. In addition to his hope that the Conference could advise on

the efficiency of the means and methods the Church was using for promoting "the spiritual welfare of the people," he also saw its aims as the discovery of

the means for winning souls to the Lord; for promoting sound instruction; for raising the moral and religious tone of the people; and for securing a sufficient ministry of the Word and Sacraments amidst the increase of the population and the changes of modern life.<sup>129</sup>

More mundanely, Thomson also took the opportunity to issue a warning, reminding all present that the Conference had no legal sanction, but was a free and voluntary meeting of the laity, the clergy, and the diocesan bishop. There was need for forbearance and caution, and for "a tolerance that does not snatch party triumphs". As for the Conference itself: the Archbishop warned that its rules and regulations needed the assent of all three components, the laity, clergy, and bishop.<sup>130</sup> He was clearly ensuring his right of veto.

As a means of sounding the "mind" of the diocesan clergy and the lay representatives, the Conference laid down good precedents. There was much discussion about better financial provision at both parochial and diocesan levels, and a resolution taken to appoint a committee to investigate. There was a debate on burials, followed by a resolution against allowing Dissenting Ministers to officiate "as of right" in churchyards. There was a resolution to assist the Church of England Temperance Society to establish branches in towns and parishes throughout the diocese. Inevitably there was a deal of discussion about the Constitution of the Conference and about its Standing Orders. But there was also much

discussion about awakening the spiritual life of the diocese by means of missions "and other agencies"; about the supply of the clergy and the increase of the episcopate, the extension of the diaconate and the employment of lay helpers.<sup>131</sup>

Six months before the Conference took place, the Yorkshire Gazette had been optimistic in a Leader:

We augur good results from this gathering [of] probably 400 persons present from all parts of the Diocese...half clergy and half laymen. Their discussions and deliberations we may fairly anticipate will produce good fruit and, above all, the bringing together a large and influential body of Churchmen who will thus feel their identity and common interest, and be enabled to act in unison for the general welfare of the Established Church.<sup>132</sup>

After the Conference another Leader described the event in quite glowing terms, declaring that "this week has been of great importance and value to the Church of England in this diocese."<sup>133</sup>

By the following year (1877) three Conference committees had been formed: Standing, Finance and Temperance. An Education Committee came into existence in 1879 and there was a resolution at the full Conference that year to give more aid to schools in poor and rural districts through the Diocesan Education Society. Indeed these and other developments indicated that the Diocesan Conference was rapidly proving useful to the diocese. Thus, Conference also discussed the work of the Minster in relation to the Diocese; education, including religious education in Sunday Schools and adult classes, and

voluntary and Board schools; the mode of dealing with critical and scientific objections to Christianity; and the maintenance of the spiritual life. A resolution was passed that "it is desirable there should be a Celebration of Holy Communion in every parish every Sunday" - a measure of the quiet and steady expansion of Tractarian emphasis on sacramental worship.<sup>134</sup> Further signs of the growth of clerical professionalism in this period - and of the powers of a diocesan bishop - were evident in two resolutions: one stating "that the sale of next presentation to benefices should be forbidden"; the other "that some greater power of refusal of the admission of unfit persons to benefices should be vested in the Bishop."<sup>135</sup>

Without doubt, the diocesan conferences were becoming a valuable asset in the chattering Church. A Yorkshire Gazette Leader pinpointed several advantages:

The Diocesan Conferences held in every part of the kingdom appear to offer a suitable platform whereon the clergy and the laity, High and Low Churchmen, can meet for consultation and in mutual confidence, and by united actions, strengthen and invigorate the usefulness of the Church....The Diocesan Conference puts on record deliberate conclusions, and contributes largely both to the formation and expression of Church opinion....Such assistance must be of immense use to a bishop in the administration of his diocese [and] also be satisfactory to clergy and laity...giving them a voice in the counsels which sway a bishop's mind. These conferences are the best substitute for that national synod of clergy and laity which some desire to see, but the possibility of which is at present indefinitely remote....The Conferences across the

nation give an 'aggregate force' of Church opinion - and this affects public opinion, both in the mass of the population and also in M.P.'s.<sup>136</sup>

But the diocesan conference had two faults: the laity available to attend were predominantly, and inevitably, middle or upper class;<sup>137</sup> and the subjects tended to be about the workings of the Church as an institution - although by no means entirely, for education and the propagation of the Gospel appeared regularly in various forms on the agenda and, towards the end of the period, there was a small shift towards the discussion of social problems. One outcome of this, for example, was the appointment of an Itinerant Population Committee at the York Diocesan Conference held in 1889. This Committee existed until 1893, spanning a time of increased concern about social problems in the northern Convocation as well.<sup>138</sup>

Over ten years before the York Diocesan Conferences first began, several parochial clergy had mentioned in the 1865 Visitation Returns the possible developments they would like to see in Church government. Thus, for example, the incumbent of Holme-on-Spalding Moor<sup>139</sup> suggested there was a need for "regular episcopal conferences with the whole body of rural deans and others." He was suggesting a diocesan synod in all but name. But the diocesan conference, as it emerged, cannot have been displeasing to that incumbent, even though "the others" he mentioned had expanded to include many more clergy than rural deans, and an equal number of lay representatives from the deaneries.

Perhaps the most prophetic grass-roots view of synodical reform in 1865 was that taken by Mr. Oxlee,

incumbent of the tiny village of Cowesby.<sup>140</sup> He had suggested that

a return to Diocesan Synods and the original platform of Church Government would be productive of much good in the opinion of many.

He and "the many" must have been reasonably well pleased with the way diocesan conferences fitted into the emergent chattering Church, adding their wisdom and ideas to "the aggregate force of Church opinion."<sup>141</sup>



(d) The Vestry, Parish (and Church) Councils, and the  
Local Government Act, 1894

23/3/1893 - From minutes of a meeting held in the vestry of Wales Church: "that we send a vote of thanks to the government for giving us the Parish Councils Bill."

30/3/1894 - From minutes of a meeting held in the vestry of Wales Church: "Church wardens elected; Church Accounts approved. Vicar and 8 present."

23/4/1894 - From minutes of Wales Vestry Meeting: "Mr. Emerson gave an interesting account of the Parish Councils Bill, explaining the chief clauses, after which the meeting terminated. c.50 people present."

10/5/1894 - Final minute in Wales Church vestry minute book: "Resolved: that the Surveyor be instructed to remove the dangerous post in Kid Lane and substitute a proper gate and fence."<sup>142</sup>

Most Vestry Meetings paid scant attention, if any, to the passing of the Local Government (Parish Councils) Act of 1894.<sup>143</sup> Thus the Minutes from Wales Church in Sheffield Deanery provide some useful insights. Far from opposing the Act, the members of the Vestry welcomed it; fifty parishioners were interested enough to hear a talk about it; but the traditional task of the Vestry to appoint the Churchwardens attracted less than one-sixth of that number. And, hinting at the hiatus between the end of the Vestry Meeting's responsibility for a host of "secular" matters and the new, totally secular, Parish Council taking over, the Vestry needed to meet "extraordinarily" to authorise the local surveyor to attend to a local danger. For all that the Parish Councils Act ended an ancient form of local rule headed by the parson, normal village life continued virtually untouched and unmoved.

Ironically, the Vestry Meeting chaired by the local incumbent was, in most parts of the country, the only hint of a chattering Church in the first thirty years or so of the 19th century. Much of the Vestry chatter involved the day to day secular affairs of the parish as well as the ecclesiastical: appointing, supervising and paying the guardians of the poor, surveyors of local highways, mole and sparrow catchers and constables, as well as sextons and organists. In addition, the laity elected the people's warden each year, and the Vicar appointed his. The wardens arranged the collection of the Church Rate, which was agreed at the annual Vestry; and they paid the local officials, and produced annual accounts for the next Vestry Meeting. The irony is that this part of the chattering Church, with its often healthy integration of parish and Church affairs, was left with only the power to elect the wardens; otherwise it disappeared altogether at the very end of the period, having begun to disappear in towns from the 1840's onwards, with successive changes - by statute - to the machinery of local government.

However, in the rural areas where the Vestry Meeting had retained its secular as well as its ecclesiastical duties until 1894, few mourned its passing. It had become an anachronism in a voluntaryist age, when far fewer people in a parish now worshipped in the parish church than worshipped elsewhere - or nowhere at all; in an age when the "Church Rate" had become voluntary, if it still existed, and when the compulsory rate was exacted from house owners by "local authority". Yet this was the same period in which the chattering Church emerged in strength; and - a further irony - during this period the seeds were sown, in a handful of active Vestries, for one of the healthiest developments in the chattering Church, namely, the parochial church council system which was introduced

to all parishes after the First World War. For any "modern" church needs some sort of committee composed ideally of interested, keen and sensible members of the congregation, to help run local Church affairs.

Before 1894, Vestry practice varied enormously, ranging from town parish Vestries where there was only the one formal meeting every Easter, exclusively to appoint wardens and other parish officials, to those rural parishes where quite regular meetings took place during the year to discuss a multitude of church and parish affairs.<sup>144</sup> This difference in practice points to the different views held by clergy and parishioners of the importance or otherwise of the Vestry Meeting, and to the differing traditions that had grown up from parish to parish over many years.

It is appropriate that the last function left to the Vestry after the passing of the Local Government (Parish Councils) Act in 1894 was (and still is) to meet annually at Easter-tide to elect the two wardens: an ecclesiastical function. By 1894, in many parishes, depending on the range of secular matters the Vestry had been in the habit of overseeing, there must have been sighs of relief that the new Act reduced the burden they were carrying, often with a minimum of resources. As for opposition "on principle", the vestry minutes generally imply a lack of consciousness amongst parishioners that the Act was part of the erosion of the Church's authority and influence in each parish. Or if they were conscious, they did not count this erosion as important. And, of course, compared with the threat of Acts to disestablish the Church, or to remove its monopoly in education, rites of passage, and local rates, the introduction of secular parish councils in rural areas, elected in similar manner to Parliament - and

Borough, County or City or any other Councils - was not only a mere pinprick, it was also common sense.

Another reason for the apparent lack of concern about the Parish Councils Bill at parish Vestry Meetings is the fact that the Bill received rather more attention at deanery chapters, and was greeted there very favourably. Thus, for instance, the Rural Dean spoke to Helmsley Chapter at some length on the subject of the Bill, and expressed hope that "if passed [it] would have the effect of educating the rustic mind into ideas of Public Business."<sup>145</sup> Hull Chapter, having discussed the Bill, unanimously agreed "that an efficient system is commendable."<sup>146</sup> Just as the Bill became law, Pocklington Deanery Chapter passed a unanimous resolution (in April 1894) "that it is the duty of the clergy to give a loyal support to the Parish Councils Act, 1894."<sup>147</sup>

The only contentious aspect of the Act was the question of the future of church "possessions" and of charity funds traditionally administered by the parson and the Vestry Meeting. Some attempts were made - again, largely at rural deanery level - to clarify these issues and make the transition to the new Parish Council system smoother. Thus, for instance, Pocklington Deanery after "a somewhat lengthy conversation on the Parish Councils Bill" in November, 1893, had resolved unanimously

that it be made clear that the existing parish chests, parish books and parish accounts which have been hitherto in the possession and custody of the clergyman and church wardens shall remain in such possession and custody; [and] that parish and district councils as proposed by the Local Government Bill...may be accepted as necessary to complete the scheme of local government

begun with the County Councils, provided that the exemption of Church property from the operation of the Bill is made clear to the satisfaction of Churchmen.<sup>148</sup>

The government was not unmindful of these problems. Helmsley Deanery Chapter listened in November 1893 to a paper by Canon Temple on the proposed Bill. Temple mentioned that the Archbishop of Canterbury had had talks in relevant quarters, and the outcome "was satisfactory as to the nature of those points in the Bill upon which clergy were in doubt - except the clause relating to Doles."<sup>149</sup> Ecclesfield vestry minutes provide a useful glimpse of the local complications the Act could create in the future administration of charity funds. In December, 1895, a local committee held a meeting arranged by the newly elected Parish Council to agree the list of charities in the parish and to divide them into "Ecclesiastical", "Private" and "Parochial". The list, when finally agreed, gave the Church responsibility for eight charity funds; private individuals or trustees responsibility for five; and the Council responsibility for ten. Each of the three divisions had responsibility for administering a hospital fund.<sup>150</sup>

Ecclesfield's Vestry minutes also give a useful example of the way in which a lively Vestry could prepare the way for the development of a parochial church council, where the incumbent would be in the chair - as at Vestry Meetings - but where there would be freedom to raise matters from the floor, and voting would be democratic among those present. In Ecclesfield in 1876, where Alfred Gatty was in the chair, and where he had now been Vicar for thirty years, discussion about local charities was prolonged. A parishioner, Mr. Shaw, questioned the authority for giving £15 from the Sylvester Charity to school building purposes.

This Charity was specifically intended for "the poor in Grenofirth", he said. Another parishioner, Mr. Cocker, called the action "a breach of trust". Eventually the meeting resolved to ask the Charity Commissioners to examine the various charities of the Parish, and set up a committee of four men to contact the Commissioners.

Months later the Commissioners' reply upheld the use of the £15 for the school, stating that they were sure

the class of recipients contemplated by the founder will be benefited by the erection of the school and perhaps even to a greater extent than if the small sum in question had been distributed in money doles.

After further lengthy discussion the Vestry accepted the result of the enquiries, though one parishioner, a Mr. Bell, proposed an unsupported amendment "that the replies of the Commissioners are not satisfactory."

The most significant aspect of this dispute is that Gatty is not on record as having intervened at any point, although he probably felt that the complainants were implying that he was in some measure at fault. Rather than intervene, this wise and experienced parson allowed the affair to proceed in a democratic manner. In this, he was sowing a seed for the future; and it is no surprise to find that fifteen years later (1891) the Vestry showed great respect when it unanimously resolved

to return its thanks to God that its esteemed Vicar, the Rev. Alfred Gatty, D.D., has been spared to a ministry of fifty years in the parish, and further trusts that under God's blessing he may be longer spared to his beloved people and family.<sup>151</sup>

It is no surprise, either, to find that Archdeacon Edward Churton, noted for his wisdom in York Diocese a generation earlier had already, so long before, encouraged democratic decision-making in his parish at Crayke, by involving all parishioners in voting the plans when the church and churchyard required extension in 1863.<sup>152</sup> Similarly, the incumbent at St. Mary's, Worsborough, near Barnsley, had the galleries removed from the church and all the large appropriated pews replaced by free open seats, with the approval not only of the chief landowner but also with "the unanimous consent of the parishioners at a Public Vestry Meeting."<sup>153</sup>

In the 1870's, some experiments with voluntary church councils<sup>154</sup> were developing in a few parishes, nearly always in more populous areas of the diocese and province. The Archbishop's Visitation Returns in 1871 asked clergy to give their opinions of such church councils. Answers if given - and 133 clergy did not respond - tended to be cautious, focusing on the problems of who should qualify for membership of a church council, or whether councils would become sounding boards for parishioners with grievances and hinder rather than help parochial clergy in their ministry. The favourable comments came from Middlesbrough and Hull where some clergy were already experimenting with church councils and found them supportive, and helpful in keeping them informed of lay opinion.<sup>155</sup> In the mid-1870's, Archdeacon Blunt of the East Riding commended those church councils that had been established in Hull as a good weapon for Church Defence.<sup>156</sup>

Just over twenty years later, in 1893, York Diocese, which contained about a quarter of the total number of parishes in the northern province and was predominantly

Voluntary Parochial Councils, Northern Province, 1893:

[Note: Type and Number of parishes in each diocese, followed (underneath) by Number of Voluntary Parochial Councils in existence:]

Type of parish:	Small	Medium	Large	Very Lge	Total
Diocese					
York	372	117	82	49	620
	1	4	18	22	45
Durham	42	64	99	38	243
	2	9	14	11	36
Sodor & Man	11	13	7	0	31
	0	1	0	0	1
Carlisle	200	60	24	10	294
	3	5	3	3	14
Chester	105	77	65	18	265
	5	7	13	5	30
Ripon	168	59	89	31	347
	2	4	12	8	26
Manchester	67	123	206	114	510
	4	16	37	30	87
Newcastle	79	35	42	19	175
	5	1	5	2	13

[Table 1]



Liverpool	10	37	92	61	200
	0	5	14	16	35
Wakefield	13	40	93	19	165
	1	5	6	2	14

Provincial Totals -

Parishes:	Small	Medium	Large	Very Lge	Total
	1,067	625	799	359	<u>2,850</u>
Councils:	23	57	122	99	<u>301</u>

% of total parishes with Councils: 10.5%

% of small/medium parishes with Councils: 4.7%

% of large/very large parishes with Councils: 19.2%

Table 1: Voluntary Parochial Councils in the Northern Province in 1893. [Source: YCJ Nov. 1893, Appx. pp. xlviiii-xlix]

rural, had only 15% of the total of Voluntary Church Councils in the whole province. By contrast, Manchester, with a hundred fewer parishes but predominantly urbanised, had 29% of the total of these Councils. "The Desirability of Setting up Parochial Church Councils" was a subject discussed at the Sheffield Church Congress in 1878. And it

is interesting to note that the term "parochial church council" was officially adopted by the Church Assembly prior to the passing of the Parochial Church Councils Measure in 1921, which required every parish in the country to establish such a Council, if it did not already exist. However, in 1894 when the Vestry Meetings had their powers restricted to the election of wardens, these experiments had not expanded greatly. There were only 301 bodies (that is, in 10.5% of the total number of parishes) recognised by parochial clergy as voluntary church councils spread across all the 2,850 parishes in the northern province. [See Table 1, above] Of the 45 Church Councils that existed in York Diocese, two were in Middlesbrough parishes, two in Hull parishes, seven in parishes in the Sheffield area, and one in York.<sup>157</sup>

The parish of St. Stephen's, Eastwood, in Sheffield Deanery was one whose Vestry Meeting had already evolved into a Church Council in the early 1870's.<sup>158</sup> Council meetings took place irregularly and discussed the mundane practicalities of a parish church: the re-roofing of the nave;<sup>159</sup> the apportioning of collections;<sup>160</sup> the introduction of a different hymn book and the singing of an offertory hymn; problems with choir members who resigned en bloc,<sup>161</sup> and an ongoing dispute, that eventually required the Archbishop's intervention, about the choir and music for services;<sup>162</sup> and special seating in church for the council members so that a rota of them could be on hand "to give attention to strangers [and] to keeping order and assisting in the offertory."<sup>163</sup> Unfortunately, it appears that the dispute with the choir might have led to the disbandment of the church council in the parish, possibly on the suggestion of the Archbishop. Nevertheless, seeds had been sown for further exercises involving free

discussion and democratic voting in the parochial church council system that was to come later.

Small and medium sized parishes probably felt little need for a parochial church council, with people better able to know each other and to discuss affairs informally often, quite likely, in the village inn. The need for, and the assumed benefit of, parochial councils in large and very large parishes is demonstrated in Manchester, where 20% of these parishes had formed councils, compared with an average of 10.5% of the parishes across all the northern dioceses. [See Table 1 above] But the fact that a majority of larger parishes, where it was more difficult to know everyone in a large congregation, did not form councils is probably explained by clergy reservations. These were well summed up by James Moorhouse, the Bishop of Manchester, in 1893 when he commented:

If we give to the laity voluntary church councils, it is certain that the clergy will have to permit them some sort of authority. Englishmen would never meet to discuss merely theoretical questions; they will never come together unless they are given some power.

This does not mean that he opposed such councils. The bishop claimed he had appointed one of the very earliest - maybe even the first in all England: it emerged out of his inner consciousness, he explained. But then he had had to face "the difficult question: what duties and what privileges should be conferred on the council when it was elected."<sup>164</sup>

Soon after the passing of the Parish Councils Act, the Rev. H.L. Puxley, Rural Dean of Pocklington, made some

revealing comments. Addressing a meeting of clergy and laity in the town he pointed out that

the Local Government Act...is one that for good or evil will exercise an enormous influence on rural life in England, perhaps be even revolutionary. Its success or failure, the blessing or the curse it may bring us, will vastly depend...upon the manner and the spirit in which it is carried out by those to whom the power is committed.

Puxley's words are a reminder that the terms of the Act were, of course, applicable only to the rural parts of the country. He expressed sadness at some of the discord prevalent at meetings before the Act was passed, and at the suspicion shown that clergy of the Church of England might try to manipulate the outcome of elections for Parish and District Councillors, through petty party motives, rather than for the good of the people. He believed that the stock phrase "tyranny of squire and parson" was invented for party political purposes, and claimed that he had not met a parson who was not totally committed to the welfare of labourers and the poor. The great problem in the past, he thought, was that there had been too much civic apathy. Thus, he appealed, "Let us use this Bill - through our elected councillors - to the benefit of all the community."<sup>165</sup>

The year 1894 in which the Local Government (Parish Councils) Act was passed, marks the end of the period of this study. Compared with other Acts that eroded the Church's established position during the period, this Act is small fry. Yet it has its quiet significance. It symbolises the societal changes in the 19th century that were pushing the Church of England on to the margins of

life in many places. Nevertheless, it also illustrates clergy and people in the Vestries accepting with common sense the end of an era, and the handing over of a Church monopoly sensibly, even with relief, to the secular arm. It also illustrates the end of a secular job well handled by the Vestry Meetings in many parishes.

And, where it had been well handled, this work had prepared folk to undertake responsibility both as parish councillors in civil local government and, after the First World War, for ecclesiastical local government in a parish as parochial church councillors. That things had gone well before the 1894 Act was passed, is probably best indicated when local Church folk felt ready and able to serve on the new Parish Councils - and local electors were pleased to vote for them. Thus, for instance, the 74 year old Vicar of Kirby Moorside in Helmsley Deanery, was happy to report that "without any outward action, 5 out of 7 Parish Councillors elected were Churchmen."<sup>166</sup> The incumbent at Walkington in Beverley Deanery was even happier. He had been appointed Chairman of the new Parish Council, he said, having "headed the Poll" at the 1894 election.<sup>167</sup> Church and parson clearly still had considerable influence in such parishes as these.

(iv) The vexed question of lay representation  
in Church government

The question of lay involvement in Church government recurred at intervals in the second half of the 19th century. It was a controversial matter, and Churchmen showed some ambivalence towards it.

A key problem was the pressure for including lay representation in revived ecclesiastical bodies. Synods, whether rural deanery, diocesan or provincial, might have had occasional lay participation in their earliest days, as was sometimes argued; but they had had none at all since long before the Reformation. Thus, purists could argue, lay representation in revived synods would be unconstitutional. But, in an age of increasing voluntaryism, collectivism and democratisation, the dilemma kept returning: Could a traditionally clerical body, when revived, really continue to be that revived body if it admitted lay membership; but was it reasonable or wise to keep out lay representation?

Anomalies arose from the mid-19th century onwards. The revived rural deanery chapters had already begun to invite laymen to meetings when there were particularly important issues to discuss. These invitations became formal and regular once a diocese established a diocesan conference, with attendance of both clerical and lay representatives elected by rural deaneries. The diocesan conferences themselves provided the best illustration of ambivalence. After heeding the argument for fifteen years that revived synods could only be clerical bodies, and could not therefore include laymen, diocesan bishops began to follow the lead of Bishop Browne of Ely in 1866. They simply used the term diocesan "conference" a Latin-rooted word -

instead of "synod" - from a Greek root - and brought together clergy and laymen as members of what was, in every other respect, a revived diocesan synod.

Since these diocesan conferences very soon proved their value in the chattering Church, and since the equal presence of clergy and laity was part of that emerging value, hindsight suggests that the two provincial Convocations should not have been revived as such, either. Had there been one national Convocation,<sup>168</sup> with the name changed to "Convention" or "Assembly", and had this national body then included a lay element, it would have become a more appropriate arm of Church government for the time, as well as being more efficient. This point is underlined by the success, not only of the diocesan conferences, but also of the Church Congresses which also included a lay element from the outset, and on equal terms with the clergy.

Not surprisingly, despite the constitutional difficulties, some wise and forward-looking Churchmen pressed for lay representation in a revived Convocation from the earliest days of revival agitation - for example, men like Henry Hoare (though he soon changed his mind, swayed by Canon George Trevor of York), William Walker and Archdeacon Churton. The first public intimation of Churton's support for lay representatives in Convocation came in 1851, the year of the Gorham Judgment and the year in which Hoare founded the Society for the Revival of Convocation. At a meeting of the Yorkshire Church Union, Churton proposed a motion favouring the appointment of lay representatives to Convocation. The motion was adjourned; but thereafter, Churton remained steadfast in support of the idea.<sup>169</sup> More significantly - and prophetically, in view of the eventual developments in Church government in

the 20th century - a little later in 1851 Archdeacon Churton privately expressed his liking for

the American version of Church Assemblies, with bishops in one house, and clergy and laity in the other, and motions needing majorities of all three groups.<sup>170</sup>

But it was many years before lay representation came into existence at provincial level, and more years still before the Church of England had an Assembly that warranted any comparison with the American model.<sup>171</sup> The main reasons for the long delay, apart from the innate conservatism of Victorian Churchmen and their qualms about admitting lay folk to clerical redoubts, were the cautionary attitudes of Archbishops Tait and Thomson, and the lingering, traditional, yet anachronistic view, that the House of Commons still constituted the legal, lay representative element in the government of the Church of England. As early as 1852, Churton wrote that the question of lay membership in any revived Convocation "must be settled."<sup>172</sup> He was right. But he died (in 1874) long before the issue was resolved.

Meantime, both Convocations achieved revived action, but without lay presence; and there was some questioning of that lack in York Convocation from the start.<sup>173</sup> But it was 1869 before Canon T.F. Simmons, Rector of Howden, and proctor for the East Riding, questioned the conservative notion that simply by being represented in Parliament the laity were, by implication, helping to govern the Church. He pointed out that the clergy, too, had supposedly been represented in Parliament ever since 1664, "in respect of their ecclesiastical freeholds;"<sup>174</sup> yet the clergy had the privilege of their own "Parliament" in Convocation.



But, it seemed, most clergy simply did not wish Convocation to undergo constitutional change. Thus, it did not change; and the slow and cautious progress towards the election of laymen, first to ruri-decanal discussions and diocesan conferences, and later still to the two Houses of Laity of both Convocations, increased in irony - especially in view of the enormously increased involvement of laymen in discussions about most aspects of Church life in the other chattering Church bodies, and also in view of the extension of the Parliamentary franchise that went on during the period. A stumbling block for some clergy was the question of lay competence to discuss - let alone to judge - doctrinal issues such as those that arose in Convocation or, to the annoyance of many clergy, came before the lay dominated Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The frustrating predicament of the clergy themselves added to the irony. After Convocation was revived, bishops and clergy could only recommend changes. Convocation could not legislate for the Church; and even if a proposed change concerned canons, or forms of worship, or a revised translation of the Bible, a predominantly lay, and increasingly non-Anglican, Parliament was the final arbiter.

Further difficulties in the way of lay involvement in government stemmed from the problems of determining who "the laity" were in an age of increasing voluntaryism, when definitions and roles were blurred. When, for instance, had a faithful member of the Church ceased to be such and become a Dissenter, rather than one who tried to support both Churches? Again, from how far down the social scale was it reasonable to expect representatives to come - and from how far down the scale should people expect to be represented? And from 1884, when the question arose in a discussion in York Convocation about including women in a

permanent diaconate,<sup>175</sup> there lurked the potential issue about women's representation and women representatives in Church government - although it did not re-surface seriously until the late 1890's.<sup>176</sup>

In view of these practical problems, added to the matters of principle involved, together with the caution of the archbishops, it is not surprising that a majority of clergy opposed the introduction of a lay element in the revived Convocations during most of the period, and that discussion focused, meantime, on the desirability of including laymen at rural deanery level, and then in diocesan synods.<sup>177</sup>

Archbishop Thomson tried hard to divert attention away from the issue of lay representation in York Convocation and to emphasise, instead, the need to increase the lay pastoral ministry during the period. Thus, for instance, in the early days of his archiepiscopate he declared his support for "lay agents" to help the clergy in their parishes, especially in the large towns of the diocese,<sup>178</sup> where there was an obvious and genuine need for lay folk to minister to lay folk, especially amongst the working classes.

Thomson's caution about lay involvement in Church government stemmed from several sources. He was always keen to uphold the special aura surrounding the ordained man, and exclusively clerical Convocations were a valuable support to this intention. At a more mundane legal level, he was disquieted, during two major Convocation debates in 1869 and 1870, by the force of arguments put by a minority of clergy who favoured lay representation in Convocation. At that time, Thomson was showing a preference for holding quite small conferences of clergy and laity in different

parts of the diocese. Moreover, the 1869 and 1870 debates on lay representation in Convocation came very shortly after Disraeli's extension of the parliamentary franchise in the Second Parliamentary Reform Act of 1867, and were in part a response to the implications of that Act. But Archbishop Thomson was not happy at the thought of lay participation in Convocation leading to agitation for increased democratisation of Church government too. This was a cause for which, during his entire archiepiscopate, he showed no inclination at all. And, to be fair, for much of the period the majority of other members of Convocation shared his reservations.

There were other reasons why Thomson feared the admission of lay representation into Convocation. Bowing to the pressure for it might have antagonised the House of Commons - still, constitutionally, the Church's legislative body - at the very time when the Church was under threat from Parliament over the Church Rates Act and Irish Disestablishment. Again, therefore, a majority of bishops and clergy in Convocation shared the Archbishop's caution.

However in 1869 - a sign of the impact of Disraeli's Parliamentary Reform Act - a surge of petitions reached York Convocation asking for lay representation. Archdeacon Prest of Durham alone presented 24 of these petitions, signed by 19 clergy and 390 laity.<sup>179</sup> The Rev. John Bell (proctor for Craven) whose petition came from the clergy of the whole Archdeaconry (which included populous towns such as Bradford and Huddersfield) said there was growing feeling amongst both clergy and laity that Convocation should have its power to legislate for the Church restored, especially in matters of doctrine and discipline. Then Bell went on to suggest that Convocation's greatest

difficulty concerned the representation of the laity. He admitted that he personally would prefer lay representation to be in and through diocesan synods; but he was glad to know that Archdeacon Prest of Durham was about to put the case for lay representation to Convocation.<sup>180</sup>

Without mentioning the Reform Act directly, Archdeacon Prest hinted at its importance when he mentioned the need to prepare for "an inevitable demand" for speeding up consideration of the best way to introduce lay representation. He then argued three main points:

1. that the laity strongly wanted representation in Convocation;
2. that this was not unreasonable; and
3. that the conceding of lay representation would not totally contravene any principle or precedent.<sup>181</sup>

Prest made clear that the main source of lay pressure, understandably, was

laymen of education, of position, and of commercial eminence, anxious to assert what they believe to be their right;

and he left no doubt, either, that this was the class of laymen he considered should be involved in Church government. In supporting the reasonableness of this middle class pressure, the Archdeacon seized both nettles - about representation and representatives - suggesting it would be best to opt for "communicants". Finally, with an eye on the recent reform of the parliamentary franchise, he added pragmatically:

If the need for lay representation is as urgent as seems to be the case, it is foolish to delay [by] looking for precedent.<sup>182</sup>

Supporting Archdeacon Prest, Canon Sale, Vicar of Sheffield, spoke of the growing discontent of the laity at being expected to give financial support to the Church, yet not being admitted to "any consultation of the Church as a Church." He thought this consultation should not be limited: it would be unfortunate if laymen were accepted as members of diocesan synods and not the provincial Convocation. Francis Close, the Dean of Carlisle, also asked Convocation why laymen could be thought "suitable for one synod and not the other" - a very logical question.<sup>183</sup>

However, in the course of what became a long debate, and despite the strength of the arguments put in favour, there was not yet much support for lay representation in Convocation and, predictably, the supporters of it were defeated by more than three to one.<sup>184</sup> Meanwhile, pressure for lay representation continued to come from outside Convocation, and a year later (February 1870) there were 47 petitions calling for lay representation. A petition from Weighton Deanery asked for "the restoration to clergy and laity of the Church, especially in this Province, the power to regulate their own affairs."<sup>185</sup>

Following presentation of these petitions, there unfolded what was probably a plot amongst convinced lay representation supporters to force another debate on the issue. First, the scholarly Yorkshireman, John Saul Howson, Dean of Chester, proposed the rather vague motion

that Convocation regards with much satisfaction the increasing recognition of the Laity in the counsels and

actions of the Church; but that a larger and more accredited employment of the unpaid services of Laymen than yet exists among us is imperatively called for.<sup>186</sup>

Significantly, in view of the speech he was shortly going to give, Archdeacon Churton seconded the motion.

At once, Archbishop Thomson fell into the trap - whether intended or not. Opening the debate on rather a pained note, he said there were already adequate means for carrying out the aims of this motion. The bishops had agreed some years earlier, he said, to license Lay Agents for specific tasks.<sup>187</sup> However, with the motion accepted after little amendment, and with Convocation thus tuned in to the subject of lay involvement, Archdeacon Churton began a speech, not about lay ministry in the parishes, but about lay involvement in Church government. He cited early examples of lay participation in the Church's decision-making, for example at the First General Council at Nicea in 325 A.D. and at the Synod of Whitby in 664. Then he urged that the reason why the laity should share in Church government was the same as for all representative government: Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus tractari et approbari - [What impinges on everyone should be discussed and approved by everyone] - a strong hint that the Archdeacon favoured the advance of democratisation. Churton said he wanted to include the laity even in discussing doctrinal matters, because they were

matters on which...neither clergy nor laity have any power. They are 'the same yesterday, today and for ever'. But in matters subordinate to these, [such as] regulations for Divine Worship, constitutions and canons ecclesiastical, and such points of discipline as are not of perpetual obligation, the right course is

that, after Bishops and clergy have agreed upon any such regulations, they should be proposed to the laity for adoption.

Next, as he had done nearly twenty years earlier, Churton praised the method of government by bishops, clergy and laity used in the General Assembly of the American Episcopal Church.<sup>188</sup> He stressed the need for urgency in the matter of lay representation because:

1. it was a hindrance to the Church for it to cling to a system that left it no legislature of its own;
2. the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council was meantime gradually acquiring "legislative power by degrees", owing to its involvement in appeals against judgments concerned with doctrine and theology; and
3. the lack of a truly representative body in which to present the Church's mind had driven some clergy and laymen to form their own clubs and associations, and some of these hampered the arrival at moderate solutions.<sup>189</sup>

Churton's views provoked considerable debate. In the course of it the ambivalence of John Saul Howson exemplified the prevailing difficulties. Howson, who had just strongly advocated the extension of lay involvement in ruri-decanal and diocesan conferences, but who had expressed caution the previous year about lay representation in Convocation, now admitted he was worried about the House of Commons' response if Convocation pressed hard for lay representation. M.P.'s might press for disestablishment. On the other hand, he admitted that the House of Commons might equally "welcome the increased wisdom that the laity would bring to Convocation." Thus, he finally argued that Convocation should take account of the rapid growth of public opinion in favour of lay

representation, instanced by the increase in petitions to Convocation; and he supported Churton's desire to include lay involvement even in doctrinal issues.<sup>190</sup>

The immediate outcome was that York Convocation agreed to appoint a committee to consider ways of getting the help and approval of the laity in matters related to religion and the Church.<sup>191</sup> It was exactly two years (February 1872) before it reported back. Almost inevitably, Edward Churton presented the report to Convocation, pointing out that recent experiments in holding synods, at which both clergy and laity met their bishops, had raised hopes of using the laity more regularly in deliberations. The report stated:

1. that the clergy could not claim any right to legislate for the Church by themselves;

2. that if in post-Reformation times it was envisaged that the laity would participate in Church government through their representation in Parliament, this was clearly no longer a tenable proposition; thus

3. there was no longer an appropriate Assembly in England where the laity had "effectual representation" and where they could "vote with authority on Church questions." Being still the established Church need not prevent the Church of England from organising an effectual Assembly, with lay representation in it, by obtaining Crown authority to do so.<sup>192</sup>

This report reflected Churton's continuing admiration for the Convention of the American Episcopal Church. Accepting the need for such an Assembly in England, the report suggested the appointment of lay assessors in as near equality as possible to clerical members of the Assembly. Clerical members and lay assessors should meet



together but vote separately, and no resolution would be passed without the assent of bishops, clergy and laity, given in separate votes. The suggestion was that lay assessors would be appointed partly by nomination of the Crown and bishops, and partly by election through the lay members of diocesan synods. Remarkably, Convocation adopted the report nem. con., and unanimously resolved to send an address to the Queen requesting that she issue 'Letters of Business' requiring York Convocation "to consider the question of the due representation of the laity in Convocation, and to report thereon."<sup>193</sup>

Thus, in February 1872, lay representation in the northern Convocation seemed a near hope - even if it required a significant change in Convocation's composition, and a change of name to "Assembly" or "Convention". The positive response to the report was a tribute to the wisdom of Archdeacon Churton and of the report itself. It was also a surprising achievement in view of the large majority of members who had opposed lay representation in Convocation only two years before. Remarkably, too, York Convocation at this point was actually ahead of Canterbury Convocation on the issue - a very rare occurrence.

But hope quickly receded; and exactly twenty years were to elapse before York set up its House of Laity - by then six years behind Canterbury. Part of the reason for that delay lies with Archbishop Thomson; but, to be fair, part also lies with Archbishop Tait of Canterbury, who wanted all legislation for the Church to be by statute, and never by canon.<sup>194</sup>

Thomson's delaying tactics began in 1872 as soon as York Convocation agreed to introduce lay representation by seeking Letters of Business from the Queen. At his

legalistic and hair-splitting best, Thomson informed Convocation that both resolutions were out of order. There had been insufficient advance notice of the motion to adopt Churton's report and, as a result, all discussion of the report and all resolutions were "informal". In order to regularise its own procedure in the matter, Convocation felt compelled to rescind both the acceptance of the report and the resolution to seek Letters of Business.<sup>195</sup>

Considering Convocation's unanimity on the issue, this was a serious setback, and a personal blow for Edward Churton. Yet there is evidence that feeling amongst Churchmen outside Convocation at the time (1872) was as cautious about lay representation as it had been inside York Convocation during the debates of 1869 and 1870. And caution was not limited to clergy. Thus, for instance, at the Leeds Church Congress held in 1872, in a discussion on "Lay Co-operation", the Hon. C.L. Wood a conservative Churchman from York, although insisting that Church authority resided in the laity as well as the clergy, argued strongly against admitting the laity to Church government beyond the level of diocesan conferences.<sup>196</sup>

At this time, the establishment of diocesan conferences and the development of lay participation in them was proceeding apace. But it must also be remembered that there was increasing preoccupation in the Church with the ritual controversy and with several measures threatening to erode the Establishment; and these distractions helped divert attention from the issue of lay representation in Convocation. Indeed, there was to be only one more look at the matter in York Convocation in the 1870's. Thereafter, silence fell until the question of forming a House of Laity emerged in 1886.

In March 1874, Canon Simmons, proctor for the East Riding, introduced a motion on 'The Laity in Church Councils'. Simmons wanted Convocation to require lay approval, through duly appointed representatives, before seeking permission from the Queen to initiate any changes to canons, or before pressing Parliament to legislate on Church affairs. He made it clear that he was not envisaging that the bishops would seek this approval simply by consulting laymen in diocesan synods or conferences. That approach, he felt, would not be strong nor uniform enough. Nor did he favour laymen being "constituent members" of Convocation, for that - as many Churchmen had pointed out for the past twenty-five years - would destroy the traditional and legal character of Convocation. Instead, he would prefer the appointment of lay assessors on the lines suggested in the report approved by Convocation two years earlier, in 1872. But he wanted these men to be "duly appointed representatives", and not invited merely at the Archbishop's pleasure.<sup>197</sup> This last stipulation was a rebuff for Archbishop Thomson, who had started calling together clergy representatives, with some laymen he had selected on an ad hoc basis, to join other laymen who had been duly elected as representatives from the deaneries, to discuss the agenda for the small clergy-lay conferences he was holding in different parts of the diocese.<sup>198</sup>

Following quite a lengthy debate, in which the main argument was against the constitutional change to Convocation that the admission of laity implied, Simmons's proposal was strongly rejected - by 28 votes to 11 in the Lower House, and 4 to nil in the Upper House.<sup>199</sup> This decision doubtless encouraged the continuing emphasis on developing diocesan and rural deanery synods throughout the province.<sup>200</sup> And there, as far as the northern province was concerned, the matter rested for twelve more years.

At last, following the death of Archbishop Tait in 1882 - he had remained ever reluctant to press for legislative powers for the Church - and also following the further extension of the Parliamentary franchise in 1884, Canterbury Convocation established its House of Laymen at the beginning of 1886. That House had already been sitting for several days under Lord Selborne's chairmanship, when Archdeacon Hamilton of Northumberland disturbed the long silence over the subject of lay involvement in the government of the northern province. Hamilton proposed the election by each diocesan conference of lay members to sit in a northern House of Laymen. He wanted these representatives to be empowered to bring to the Provincial Synod any ecclesiastical matters which they deemed important; and reminded members that York Convocation, having held the initiative on lay representation in 1872, was now lagging well behind Canterbury.<sup>201</sup>

By 1886, however, Archbishop Thomson was keener on the formation of a National Synod on the American pattern, and composed of bishops, clergy and laity, than for elective Lay Houses existing alongside each Convocation. Although he said he was ready to follow Canterbury and establish a consultative body of laymen, he warned that to do this would not suddenly make Convocation into the National Synod that he now saw as necessary.<sup>202</sup>

Nevertheless, the following day Bishop Lightfoot of Durham put Archdeacon Hamilton's motion to the Upper House,<sup>203</sup> explaining that it envisaged a House of Laymen "sitting side by side with Convocation as at Canterbury", and suggesting that such a House would benefit the Church's work in the northern province. He said he was aware of objectors, particularly those who feared that lay power could impede the work of Convocation, but warned wisely

that "any legislation for change must engender some conflict."<sup>204</sup>

Harvey Goodwin, Bishop of Carlisle, wanted to push the issue to its democratic conclusion. The notion of a House of Laymen could no longer be dismissed as "the response to panic," he said. But, he conceded, an infusion of laity into Convocation was more than mere reform: it was "an absolute revolution." To emphasise that this was the case, he wanted Convocation to elect lay representatives

of the great masses of population...[not] mere puppets of the clergy, but representatives of their own feelings and wishes and opinions.<sup>205</sup>

Indicating a growing radicalism among the northern bishops, and despite Archbishop Thomson's stated preference for a national synod, the bishops duly adopted Archdeacon Hamilton's motion to elect a provincial House of Laymen.<sup>206</sup> But the next day in Convocation, Thomson struck back. He told members that he would place limitations on the powers of a House of Laity, and would insist on having the type of lay membership he preferred. To be fair, the ideas he catalogued contained some enlightenment and common sense, as well as the usual jealous regard for his standing in Convocation. Thus, he argued that the privileges of clergy in Convocation must not be at all reduced by anything to do with a lay element. Whilst he would not wish to limit the House of Laity in the range of subjects it discussed, he would not allow it the power to pass anything binding. Nor would he even agree that Convocation should consult lay representatives on everything it passed - a suggestion first made in 1872. Moreover, revealing the tightness of rein he envisaged keeping in his hands, he insisted that the approach of the Lay House to Convocation must always

be by address to the President; and Convocation must have "a perfect right without consulting any lay body, if it so thinks fit, to do anything and to assert anything."<sup>207</sup>

On the question of membership Thomson showed more enlightenment. He said he would be sorry to see diocesan conferences used as the only means of electing lay representatives to the Lay House, because existing members of the conferences were largely those who liked dealing with Church affairs, or were "on good terms with the clergy." He would prefer lay representatives to come from a wider spectrum. For the same reason, he was unhappy about limiting membership to communicants, because of the difficulties involved in defining them, and also because lay representation should not involve only Church folk "living on a strict rule", but also those who were "on the whole well-wishers of the Church [and] prepared to declare their membership of it."<sup>208</sup>

Sobered by these constraints, the two Houses of Convocation together discussed the mode of electing lay representatives, and decided the number of elected members for each diocese.<sup>209</sup> They agreed that all bishops should have the authority to nominate a smaller number of members than were elected. The Lower House then met separately and passed Archdeacon Hamilton's original resolution, together with a very pointed variation about limiting membership to communicants only - a decision not likely to please Archbishop Thomson.<sup>210</sup> And there the matter rested for yet another year.

In 1887, following further discussions about the House of Laity, and the wisdom or otherwise of appointing such a House in view of proposals for a National Synod, Convocation agreed to waive the matter of an election until

the mechanics of possible joint action between York and Canterbury had been ironed out.<sup>211</sup> So the issue had died again in the north.

In April 1890, Bishop Goodwin had given notice that he intended to propose to York Convocation

that it is highly expedient that means should be taken for procuring the appointment of a representative body of the laity of the northern province to sit with, and vote with, the House of Laymen which has been organised in...the Convocation of Canterbury.<sup>212</sup>

His motion was never introduced. The death of Archbishop Thomson at the end of 1890 and of his successor Archbishop Magee early in 1891 threw provincial and diocesan affairs into confusion, adding to the delay.

In 1892, presiding over his first York Convocation, Archbishop Maclagan said he knew that Archbishop Magee had intended to form a House of Laymen. Maclagan thought it "very desirable" now to do this.<sup>213</sup> Thus, after forty years of debate and dashed hopes, the reformists had their way: a Lay House was formed; and on 3 March 1893, the Prolocutor of the Lower House of York Convocation announced that the Church Patronage Bill would be put before the House of Laymen, scheduled to meet in a month's time.<sup>214</sup> Lay assessment of Convocations's work had begun. As a result, in ten years' time the National Representative Council would emerge and, beyond that, the Church Assembly of bishops, clergy and laity, in 1921 - a triumph at last for the American model, advocated privately by Edward Churton in 1851.<sup>215</sup> Yet, the question of who should represent whom amongst lay Church folk has remained a problem for another hundred years.<sup>216</sup>

## CHAPTER 2

### AUTHORITY AND ADJUSTMENTS IN THEOLOGY, DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP: FROM "MILITANT INSTITUTIONALISM"<sup>1</sup> TO TRUCE WITH PRIVATE JUDGMENT

#### (i) Aspects of the conflict

"We cannot make a religion for others, and we ought not to let others make a religion for us."<sup>2</sup> The words come from W.R. Inge's "Confessio Fidei", written in 1922 when he was Dean of St. Paul's. By then it was widely accepted that, in a society where freedom of choice exists, the individual can choose what religion or church to adhere to - or none. Theoretically, this choice had existed in England ever since the Elizabethan Settlement provided a religious via media, in hopes of producing a broad enough Church to embrace all English people. But the remnant of Roman Catholicism and the emergence of sects showed that the Settlement was not quite broad enough; and the Civil War and the exodus of 2,000 clergy from the Church of England in 1662 underlined this fact.

However, the spread first of the Enlightenment and then of Evangelicalism in the 18th century brought new slants to the matter of exercising private judgment in religion. Whereas Enlightenment positively encouraged the exercise of private judgment, Evangelicalism positively discouraged it, once the choice had been made or the conversion experienced. Hence, as Evangelicalism with its stress on Biblical authority permeated the Church of England in the



late 18th and early 19th centuries, it is not surprising to find that suspicion of the exercise of private judgment became widespread.

Since most leaders of the Oxford Movement came from Evangelical backgrounds, it is not surprising to find that they, too, whilst emphasising episcopal authority at least equally with Biblical authority, remained suspicious of the exercise of private judgment. But as the Movement progressed into its second and third generation, the suspicion of private judgement was thought to stem from its Catholic roots, rather than from its Evangelicalism. Thus, those not happy in this revived English form of Catholicism seceded to the Roman Catholic Church, rather than moving back into Evangelicalism. Significantly, also, it was the introduction of ritual practices by second and third generation inheritors of the Movement - rather than different viewpoints on doctrine - that sparked off great conflict in some quarters. This was because ritual practices were feared as "Romish" on the one hand, or else denounced simply as the exercise of private judgment, or as a corruption of Anglican practice, by troublesome Anglo-Catholic priests on the other.

Into this controversial atmosphere came the further complication of German-based Biblical criticism, with its questioning of the historicity of Scripture, of claims made about its inspiration and hence, to a degree, of its revelatory content. This questioning was welcomed, by and large, by those Churchmen branded as "Broad Church". But reaction to Biblical criticism, once it left the calm world of the universities, was as strong and bitter as that against ritualism - and for a similar reason. Whilst ritualism was seen as Romish, Biblical criticism was seen as a pernicious aspect of German Protestantism, and too far

off course from the rather misguided via media of the Church of England in the mid-19th century. Crucially, Biblical criticism was suspicious because it appeared to encourage the extreme exercise of private judgment.

Reactions of Churchmen to the reformulation of Catholic doctrine, to the re-introduction of ritual deemed suitable for the English Church, and to advances in theology and Biblical studies, were made the more aggressive by two other factors. Firstly, Darwin's Origin of Species was published in 1859 only the year before Essays and Reviews. The latter contained the work of seven English scholars who publicised the extent to which Biblical criticism had taken hold in some English circles. Thus, the traditionalists in the Church seemed simultaneously threatened by science from outside, and from inside by one fifth column trying to make the Church Roman, and now by another that was attacking the Bible. Secondly, the orthodox traditionalists who rose to defend the Church from these evils were mostly imbued with Evangelical certainty about religious truth, and some of them even by the modern fundamentalism that had emerged during the Millenarianism sparked off by the French Revolution.<sup>3</sup> Hence they were uncompromising about the validity of their cause. In addition, some strong opponents of Biblical criticism, also, were simply traditionalist Churchmen who were neither Evangelical nor fundamentalist; and some of the strongest opponents were Anglo-Catholics who abhorred the brand of private judgment typified in Biblical criticism.

To be fair, it is probable that a majority of Church of England parish clergy were too preoccupied by local problems - not least the effects of the decline in Church attendance - to be much concerned about these controversies. But, in the very recently revived York

Convocation the picture was very different. There was a lengthy period of bitter debates, with denunciation of the new theology, of doctrinal shifts, and of ritual. But, of far more significance in the long term, almost throughout the period of denunciation an element of moderation persisted in Convocation. Initially, this stemmed largely from Archdeacon Edward Churton of Cleveland.<sup>4</sup> The Church of England owed much to his moderate voice; and his work in Convocation helps to explain why, in less than thirty years, bitter recrimination between different parties had almost ceased, and the Church of England had reached a truce between the exercise of private judgment on the one hand and militant defence of the supposed orthodoxy of the institutional Church on the other.

It is also worth noting that William Inge, liberal Anglican theologian, part-Establishment figure and part-rebel, whose "charter" for the individual's freedom to choose and develop his own religion opened this chapter, was born in the Yorkshire parish of Crayke in 1860 - the year in which Essays and Reviews appeared. Two years earlier, William Inge's father had become curate to Edward Churton, who was Rector of the parish of Crayke as well as being Archdeacon of Cleveland. During the first fourteen years of his life spent in Crayke, W.R. Inge must have learnt much of lasting value from Archdeacon Churton, his Rector: not least, perhaps, his tolerance for differing opinions, his conviction that there were no "new" heresies, and his belief that underlying doctrine was far more important than outward signs such as ornaments and ritual. Inge must have begun to learn in those years how to become a "modern Anglican"; that is, how to remain part of a traditional, conservative establishment whilst also following his own thoughts and letting his own critical faculties take him as far as they might lead him

in theology, doctrine and worship. For Churton epitomised the kind of balance that thinking Anglicans had sought and treasured ever since the Reformation.

In 1838, very soon after Churton became Rector of Crayke, and long before the mid-century disputes over private judgment, theology, doctrine and ritual, he wrote a fascinating letter<sup>5</sup> to the recently appointed Vicar of Leeds, W.F. Hook, another Tractarian sympathiser. In it, he pointed out that all the divided groups within Christendom were founded on the tension between private judgment and Church authority. Churton posed the question, "Are we to be governed by our private judgment [on] what to believe and what to do, or are we to submit our judgment to the authority of others?" He then proceeded to summarise the possible answers of a Jesuit and a Protestant.

The Jesuit, he said, would insist on total renunciation of private judgment, following with faith those guides appointed over him by the Church. The Protestant would insist that it was impossible to renounce private judgment, because man's reason was the ultimate appeal in all disputes, and no earthly power could supersede it. But Churton argued that absolute submission to authority on the one hand, and unlimited private judgment on the other, were "equally destructive" of faith. What was required was an acceptable balance between the exercise of private judgment and the Church's authority. Thus, he pointed out,

if we are to submit to authority, private judgment must tell us what is that authority to which we ought to submit....There is no escape from this intrusive private judgment.<sup>6</sup>

Here was the traditional Anglican via media,<sup>7</sup> and a

reminder of the Catholic heritage of the Church of England, yet also of its Reformed nature in post-Reformation times. Archdeacon Churton's respect for the right of his fellow Churchmen to hold different opinions, placed him in the vanguard of the moderate movement that would help to cool the fashionable militant institutionalism of the 1860's and 1870's. Thus, for instance, Churton recommended a conciliatory approach to divisions within the Church when, in his last words to the Cleveland clergy on the Gorham Case,<sup>8</sup> he advised that disputes be treated with "quietness" even though some might confuse quietness with indifference. The best defence of the Church of England's reformed brand of Catholicism, he maintained, would be "silence and moderation."<sup>9</sup>

When in 1860 the book Essays and Reviews was published,<sup>10</sup> the seven contributors expressed their hitherto privately held judgments so confidently, and so openly expounded "liberal" theology, that they profoundly shocked upholders of the prevailing Church of England orthodoxy. From 1860 onwards, attempts by Churchmen to behave as though the Church of England were a monochromatic institution were doomed to fail. Its members could not be kept indefinitely toeing a narrow, and largely Evangelical and sometimes fundamentalist "orthodox" line which, compared with the traditional via media, was actually much removed from mainstream Anglicanism. Nevertheless, during the stormy time that followed the publication of Essays and Reviews, militant institutionalists in the Church pressed for authoritarian gestures both from the bishops and the ecclesiastical courts; attacked the bishops for their lack of leadership; and they demanded that those tainted by heterodoxy be disciplined and, if necessary, deprived of their livings if not of their Orders. This panic response would eventually lead to the trial of three clergymen for

heresy in the 1860's, including Charles Voysey, the Vicar of Healaugh in York Diocese, whose ideas went beyond anything expressed in Essays and Reviews and who was deprived of his living. During those years in mid-century, the possibility of a truce between orthodoxy and private judgment, and the eventual acceptance of a reformed or "liberal" type of English Catholicism, seemed at best far distant and at worst an absurd dream.

Indeed in 1889, when the book Lux Mundi, a collection of doctrinal and theological essays edited by the Anglo-Catholic scholar Charles Gore was published, it caused as much alarm amongst Anglo-Catholic clergy<sup>11</sup> as Essays and Reviews had caused throughout the Church generally almost thirty years before. Yet Lux Mundi provided an important gauge as to how far modern, intelligent Anglicanism had already developed during that period. In the 1860's, it would have been utterly impossible for anyone other than a Broad Churchman to write Gore's Preface to the book; for High Churchmen and Evangelicals alike felt committed in 1860 to defend the Bible against the apparent ravages of Biblical criticism on the German model.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the Broad Churchmen who contributed to Essays and Reviews in 1860 would have been unable to envisage that within thirty years it would be possible for a person to combine Broad Churchmanship with Anglo-Catholicism.

However, in the Preface to Lux Mundi, Gore stressed that he and his colleagues felt the need to underline the claims of the Church of England to Catholicity, whilst also attempting "to put the Catholic faith into its right relation to modern intellectual and moral problems." In attempting this, they asserted that

if men can rid themselves of prejudices and mistakes, (for which it must be said the Church is often as responsible as they), and will look afresh at what the Christian faith really means, they will find that it is as adequate as ever to interpret life and knowledge in its several departments, and to impart not less intellectual than moral freedom. But we are conscious also that, if the true meaning of the faith is to be made sufficiently conspicuous, it needs dismembering, reinterpreting, and explaining....The epoch in which we live is one of profound transformation, intellectual and social, abounding in new needs, new points of view.<sup>13</sup>

So, Lux Mundi sought to synthesise the core of Catholic Christianity with contemporary thought and current problems. Whether the book achieved this synthesis is not the main point here. What is more important is that no Broad Churchman could have disagreed with such aims. Nor would Broad Churchmen, nor any other reasonable Churchmen, have disagreed with the general aims of another significant work, The Foundations of the Creed, published the year after Lux Mundi. This was the work of a single author, Harvey Goodwin, Bishop of Carlisle, noted for his perceptive contributions in York Convocation, and one time theologian of the liberal Cambridge School. As it appeared in 1890, his book was inevitably overshadowed by Lux Mundi. However, the Bishop had written The Foundations in an attempt to update Bishop Pearson's 17th century work [Exposition of the Creed] on the Apostles' Creed. He was modest about any comparison between The Foundations and Bishop Pearson's Exposition. But, he suggested, pointing to the changed climate in the Church in the 1890's,

in some respects Bishop Pearson's book belongs to the 17th century rather than to the 19th century. Few

books are independent of the century in which they are written....Arguments will be addressed to a condition of thought which has passed away; or the whole surroundings of a subject will have been so altered that the views which are effective in one age cease to be effective in another, and things have to be reconsidered in new lights.<sup>14</sup>

Like Pearson, Bishop Goodwin sought to "hold fast that faith that was once delivered to the saints."<sup>15</sup> But he introduced a vitally important argument that deserved attention. This was that the faith that remains the same is actually a very small kernel; and that those Christians who insisted on the acceptance of too many beliefs that had been formulated and encapsulated in a past age, and had then been preserved and taught, as if unalterable for ever, could do great harm. Many people were saddened and made anxious, said Goodwin,

by unauthorised claims made on behalf of matters concerning which the Church has not required that faith should be expressed [and which] may never have been marked by any adequate authority, as of such a kind that profession of it should be required from the rank and file....In fact...the simpler the profession of faith, so much the better.<sup>16</sup>

Bishop Goodwin then proceeded to examine several of the Thirty-nine Articles and to show that, for all that the ideas they contained might be wholesome, there was no mention of them in the basic "Faith" expressed in the Apostles' Creed. So, intimating that Church folk should be free to explore truth broadly, he gave the reminder that "no test of belief beyond the Apostles' Creed may be, or



is, required as the condition of being a professed Christian."<sup>17</sup>

The development of liberal thought illustrated in works such as Lux Mundi and The Foundations of the Creed was itself an essential part of the "profound transformation", mentioned by Charles Gore in the Preface to Lux Mundi, that had rapidly taken place between the start of the 1860's and the end of the 1880's. This transformation had been impossible to foresee thirty years earlier. However, we must remember, part of the mellowing of attitude involved in this transformation was caused, not simply by Church scholars encouraging adjustments to hitherto widely accepted Christian orthodoxy, but also by a growing feeling amongst many intellectuals (including some Churchmen) that issues such as Biblical criticism, and the effect of increased scientific knowledge on religion, were mere pinpricks when compared with the new views of mankind being depicted in psychological, historical and sociological studies. Thus, one modern student of this transformation has even suggested that by 1870 "it was the agnostics rather than the orthodox who had the sense of being official," and even that the agnostics formed "an intellectual establishment more powerful than the Church establishment."<sup>18</sup>

But before the mellowing in the Church itself could take place, and before most Anglicans learnt to tolerate those whom they had previously castigated, much bigotry and fear prevailed. There were desperate attempts to insist that the Church of England must cling to beliefs that went well beyond Harvey Goodwin's kernel of faith, and to insist that Churchmen should continue to regard them as essential parts of "orthodoxy".

For the perceptive there had been warning signs of these impending developments in the Church well before Essays and Reviews drew public attention to the controversial area of Biblical criticism. Serious threats to orthodoxy had come from outside the Church through developments in natural, biological and social science - the "triple onslaught"<sup>19</sup> - and within the Church from ritualism, and from shifts in emphasis in doctrine. But, the conflict caused by the radicalism typified in Essays and Reviews, and in Bishop Colenso's work, for a short time belied this,<sup>20</sup> and focused attention firmly on theology.

There is a large amount of published material which analyses these developments and dangers in detail.<sup>21</sup> Thus, as a major aim of this chapter is to examine more closely the truce with private judgment that emerged in York Convocation and Diocese, it must suffice to give only the briefest summary of some of the main points made by contributors to Essays and Reviews, and by Bishop Colenso of Natal, in order to clarify the theological debate. For example, there was criticism that the word "inspiration" as applied to Scripture had too often assumed a relatively new, technical and somewhat misguided sense, maintaining that the Scriptures were "verbally" inspired by God, as distinct from the earlier use of the word "inspiration" to convey "the prophetic spirit of Scripture;" and there was relief expressed at signs of a return to an earlier and deeper insight into inspiration.<sup>22</sup> There was acknowledgement, too, that the Bible had been wrongly used to condemn Galileo and, more recently, geology.<sup>23</sup> There was opposition to the tendency among Church apologists to shout down any point of view other than supposed orthodoxy; and a plea for calm discussion and for full freedom of conviction in the course of theological

argument, rather than the pressing of partisan views. There was also a call for a fundamental shift of emphasis on the miraculous element in Scripture by recognising that "the essential question...is not the mere fact....The cause or explanation of it is the point at issue;"<sup>24</sup> and criticism of the idea that revelation could be used to repress the individual conscience, as though revelation and conscience were enemies.<sup>25</sup>

This was inflammatory material for the militant institutionalists. Two contributors, Wilson and Williams, eventually stood trial on heresy charges, at the instigation of Archbishop Tait of Canterbury and several other bishops, though they were acquitted on technical grounds on appeal. Meantime however, in 1861, (the year after Essays and Reviews was published) the militant institutionalists received another shock when Bishop John Colenso's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans appeared, in which he questioned the morality of the concept of eternal punishment as being part of the purposes of a supposedly loving God. Before the orthodox could recover from the publicity this book received, Colenso's first paper on The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined also appeared (in 1862), challenging traditionally held beliefs about the authorship and historicity of those six books; and the storm of antagonism against Colenso's work was the greater simply because he was a bishop.

But even before Wilson and Williams went on trial there were signs of more amenable attitudes forming. Some, such as the Cambridge theologians Lightfoot and Westcott,<sup>26</sup> openly objected to their treatment. And it is also worth noting, that before the furore had even started, Frederick Temple had written in his contribution to Essays and Reviews:

Toleration is the opposite of dogmatism. It implies...a confession that there are insoluble problems upon which even revelation throws little light....Men are beginning to take a wider view [helped] by physical science, historical research, and greater knowledge of the world....And all these have an influence, whether we will or no, on our determination of religious truth.<sup>27</sup>

Eight years later, Frederick Temple relinquished the Headmastership of Rugby to become Bishop of Exeter - and, not surprisingly, the appointment caused much opposition. But twenty-nine years later still, in 1897, he was translated to Canterbury, having spent the previous thirteen years as Bishop of London. That Temple, a contributor to Essays and Reviews,<sup>28</sup> could hold those last two appointments in particular is a telling proof of the extent to which conservative, militant institutionalism had lost ground in the Church of England; how extensively tolerant and modern, critical views had replaced the old dogmatism; and how strong a truce had been declared between the so-called (and not very long-lived) near-fundamentalist "orthodoxy" of the first half of the 19th century on the one hand, and the need to exercise private judgment on the other.

(ii) The theological debate in the North

(a) From condemnation to toleration

In 1865, the incumbent of Nunthorpe in the North Riding wrote that "the dread of Puseyism and Essayism<sup>29</sup> in the Church," was among the impediments to his ministry. The Visitation Return for the neighbouring parish of Newton-in-Cleveland records the main impediment as: "Ranters - and their objections against the Church, suspecting it of half Popery and half Colensoism".<sup>30</sup> These impediments, were endured by the same parson, the Rev. J. Ibbetson being the incumbent in both places.<sup>31</sup>

Ibbetson was the only incumbent in the whole of York Diocese to mention in the Visitation Returns any local problems caused by the views expressed in Essays and Reviews or by Bishop Colenso. For that matter, he was also the only one to make a direct reference to the ritual controversy, which is presumably what he intended by his rather unfair reference to "Puseyism".<sup>32</sup> Yet, 578 other Visitation Returns were sent to the Archbishop that year, and only three incumbents out of those 578 parishes complained about "infidelity", a term often vaguely used to describe any teaching that threatened the "true Faith".<sup>33</sup> In addition, a fourth parson, the Rector of Kildale,<sup>34</sup> in the same Deanery as Ibbetson, said he had to contend with "unbelief", which he might well have described as "infidelity". Perhaps similar problems existed also at Monk Fryston in Tadcaster Deanery where the incumbent was hampered by "Lukewarmness and Latitudinarianism". The latter old fashioned term could have been a euphemism for the private judgments made public in Essays and Reviews and Colensoism.<sup>35</sup>

Two more parsons in the diocese expressed concern that year about "the laxity of Church discipline," and "the total want of Discipline in the Church of England...a special hindrance to her progress."<sup>36</sup> So it is possible that both these clergymen were expressing disappointment about lack of success (in 1864) in the heresy cases against Williams and Wilson, or about the Archbishop of York's reluctance to allow proceedings to start against Charles Voysey, Vicar of Healaugh in York Diocese, who was publishing extremely radical theological views at the time. Maybe both were also suggesting that tighter discipline with "heretics" would increase the ardour of ordinary folk for the Church. On the other hand, of course, they might simply have been complaining about the lack of discipline indicated by the low Church attendance from which both suffered in their parishes.<sup>37</sup>

Clearly the vast majority of clergy in York Diocese did not consider theological and doctrinal arguments sufficiently threatening or damaging to their parochial work to mention them in the Visitation Returns. Hidden among that majority, there would also have been some parochial clergy who made no mention because the religious debate simply did not interest them, nor could they envisage it interesting any of their parishioners.<sup>38</sup>

Doubtless other parsons were not so much disinterested as sickened between 1861 and 1865, both by the heat of the theological debate, and by the publicity surrounding the heresy trials, with another trial involving Yorkshire colleague Charles Voysey possibly in the offing. Many clergy probably felt that enough had already been said. But amongst the "silent", too, would be some clergy who were themselves inclining towards the "new" ideas in

theology, finding that they spoke to them, reassuring them that others shared their anxiety about the rigidity of the traditional faith handed down to them. Because of the aggression of the "orthodox" militants, the silence of broader-minded Churchmen is understandable. But because of their silence, of course, we cannot know how big this group was; though we do know that fewer than half the clergy throughout England signed Pusey and Denison's declaration maintaining "without reserve or qualification" the inspiration and divine authority of the Bible, and the belief that those who were "cursed" would remain so everlastingly.<sup>39</sup>

By contrast with the picture at parochial level, however, the determination to defend orthodoxy in Convocation occupied the bishops and other clergy for a large proportion of their sessions from 1861 to 1866; and the ritual controversy occupied much of the remaining time. The extent of hatred for Essays and Reviews amongst Convocation members is apparent in the first debate in Convocation in March, 1861. This debate also illustrated a deep-seated fear of private judgment. Thus, part of a lengthy motion proposed by the Convocation Lower House Prolocutor, Archdeacon Charles Thorp of Durham, an old style "High and Dry" Churchman, contained a condemnation of private judgment, which he referred to as "the verifying faculty". He moved:

That on one of the principles advocated in that Volume [Essays and Reviews] - the principle of making what is called the 'verifying faculty' in man, the test whereby he is to sit in eclectic judgment on the contents of the Bible, determining which are human, which true and which false - we are of the opinion the fundamental and distinguishing truths of Christianity

must, in all consistency, be rejected; seeing that the Ever Blessed Trinity, the Holy Incarnation and the Resurrection of the flesh, are mysteries not to be received by any verifying faculty in man, but only in submission of mind to a reasonably attested Revelation from God.

Thorp's motion called for total rejection of the verifying faculty and related principles expressed in the book.<sup>40</sup>

In the course of the debate, the representatives of the northern clergy, almost to a man, took the firm orthodox stance. R. Greenall, proctor for Chester, said that the book had already attracted too much harmful notoriety; the bishops had already condemned it unanimously, as had the Lower House of Canterbury Convocation; and 8,000 clergy had signed a condemnation of it. He therefore wanted York Lower House to suppress the "insidious poison" which had already spread in people's minds in many parts of the northern province.<sup>41</sup> F.R. Grey, proctor for Lindisfarne, also described Essays and Reviews as poison that had spread in many directions, and hoped Convocation would condemn its Latitudinarianism.

The debate demonstrates how serious a threat to the Church's authority the book was seen to be - or made to be - by the behaviour of the militants. It also implies that the prevailing orthodoxy represented in Convocation was under the spell of the "modern" fundamentalism, with its insistence on the unchanging reliability and authority of Scripture. In addition, the debate registered the pain felt at ordained men being paid by the Church,<sup>42</sup> and publishing such apparently anti-Church material. Thus C. Gator, proctor for Cleveland, insisted that it was wrong



for the writers to receive their stipends or even to continue in the Church's Ministry, because they had

set conscience and intellect above Divine Revelation and the Holy Spirit...and misunderstood and misapplied some of the plainest and most beautiful prophecies... thereby rendering the Gospel of none effect.<sup>43</sup>

Yet, in spite of the aggressive speeches that filled two days of debate, and the overwhelming advocacy of a strongly Protestant-tilted authority for the Bible as the mainstay of orthodoxy, two moderate clergymen spoke before Archdeacon Thorp's condemnatory motion was inevitably passed. The first was Canon E.J.G. Hornby, proctor for Manchester, who did not want anyone to think he agreed with Essays and Reviews, for he had been one who signed the petition to the Bishops against it. But he felt that the motion should not apply to two of the seven Essays. The other moderate member, as might be expected, was Archdeacon Churton who said that, although he also supported the motion, he agreed with Hornby, that some Essays were more innocent than others. Nevertheless, with a typical attempt at balance, he argued that each author shared some responsibility for the entire book, because each had ignored many opportunities to disclaim his association with the other contributors.<sup>44</sup>

In his Charge to the Cleveland clergy the following year, (1862) without making any direct mention of Essays and Reviews, Churton tried to give an unbiased account of the battle that was growing in intensity between the liberals and the orthodox conservatives. He mentioned a statement made a few months earlier by Lord John Russell, during a House of Lords debate about Church and State (27 May 1862), in which he spoke about "an internal and

growing danger from the growing independence of mind and spirit of enquiry." Archdeacon Churton questioned whether this development was actually new and suggested that the Church had probably called out "far more sacred artillery [than] necessary for the case." If the opinions being expressed were simply revived older ones, he thought Churchmen should question the ignorance and presumption of those who were reviving them, rather than credit any great weight to the opinions themselves. He ended his remarks with some perceptive words:

It is vain for a man to assert the rights of his individual reason when he defends opinions which the common consent of Christianity has rejected. If he fairly used his reason he would submit to the voice of such authority. For what is true authority but... 'truth discovered by force of reason, and commended to our use as a legacy from our Christian forefathers.'<sup>45</sup>

Churton had thus recapitulated his view, expressed nearly twenty-five years earlier, that there was no escape from private judgment;<sup>46</sup> but that private judgment needed to be balanced with the Church's authority, as reached by the all-important "common consent" of the Church.

In the same year (1862) there appeared the book Aids to Faith, edited by William Thomson, the recently appointed Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, who was destined within two years to become Archbishop of York. The book contained a series of theological essays written by scholars selected by Bishop Thomson for their orthodoxy. They wrote independently of each other - as had the contributors to Essays and Reviews - to answer the critical approaches used in Essays and Reviews. H. Kirk-

Smith, Thomson's biographer, describes him as having a "fundamentalist" attitude to Biblical study.<sup>47</sup> The essays in Aids to Faith suggest that this might have been the case during the theological conflict of the 1860's. But a more apt description of Thomson's general position comes from the contemporary who wrote that he exemplified "the bonhomie and ripe scholarship of the Establishment."<sup>48</sup> Thus, whilst a supporter of contemporary orthodoxy, he was not a typical militant institutionalist, nor a thorough-going fundamentalist, even in those turbulent years just before he began his archiepiscopate. In due course he was to mellow further, and make adjustments to his theology. In the later 1860's his reluctance to start heresy proceedings against Charles Voysey<sup>49</sup> demonstrated a more Broad Church than fundamentalist position, and his further development in Broad Churchmanship by the closing years of his life is shown, for example, in his readiness to wed advancing scientific knowledge with his theology.<sup>50</sup>

However, in the early 1860's Archbishop Thomson held much common ground with the prevailing opposition to Essays and Reviews. This was evident in his Preface to Aids to Faith which, he said, was intended to help those whose faith in the Bible as the inspired Word of God had recently been shaken.<sup>51</sup> The contributors to Thomson's book wrote with predictable conservatism. There was the argument that literal belief in miracles was indispensable to Christianity;<sup>52</sup> the existence of two separate Creation stories in chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis was denied;<sup>53</sup> and, despite an acknowledgement that latitude on some points might be possible, insistence that Scripture was an infallible source of religious truth.<sup>54</sup>

Meanwhile, Bishop John Colenso's Commentary on the

Epistle to the Romans (1861) and The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined (1862) had appeared, adding fuel to the fire.<sup>55</sup> In April 1863, York Convocation unanimously passed a motion proposed by C. Cator, proctor for Cleveland, expressing sadness and disapproval of Colenso's ideas, declaring that his writings were

opposed in parts to the Articles, Creeds, Rules and Formularies of our Church, and also inconsistent with truth, and subversive of the confidence of the people in the authenticity of the Holy Bible.

In a very long introductory speech, Cator castigated Colenso's work as

a most lamentable instance of distorted judgment in a dignitary of the Church esteemed to be a learned and an amiable man, the honesty of whose original misgivings I dare not impugn, and whose courage might have commanded our admiration, had it not been displayed in any other than the unprofitable reiteration of old arguments.<sup>56</sup>

The worst consequence, he thought, was that Colenso had shaken the confidence of ordinary people in the reliability of Scripture. He pointed to a basic problem concerning the Church of England's authority when he expressed regret that the bishops had insufficient power to restrain Colenso.<sup>57</sup> All that Convocation could do, therefore, was to offer sympathy to those hurt by such writings, and to protest against the harm being done. Here, in a nutshell, was the fundamental dilemma facing the Church of England when theological and doctrinal issues threatened its authority. To restrain someone like

Colenso required a specific authority that the Church of England simply did not possess.

During this debate, the moderate voice of Canon Hornby, proctor for Manchester, was raised again.<sup>58</sup> He said he was reluctant to speak because everyone in Convocation opposed Colenso's views on the authenticity of the Pentateuch. But he wondered whether Convocation could insist that Colenso's opinions were positively against the creeds of the Church. Inevitably, however, one voice from the Lower House could not stem the tide of indignation, and Cator's motion condemning Colenso was passed.<sup>59</sup>

But Canon Hornby was raising authority issues of equal importance to those raised by Cator. True, the Catholic Church, of which the Church of England claimed to be part, had always maintained the Nicene Creed to be a necessary and unalterable statement of the Church's beliefs about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Church. But doctrine - what the Church taught about these matters - could be adjusted to accommodate changes in knowledge about the world and the universe. And it was the growing appreciation of this fact that led Gore and his fellow-Anglo-Catholics to produce their restatement of doctrine in Lux Mundi just over twenty-five years later.

Meantime, Archdeacon Churton's 'Charge' later in the year (1863) makes clear why he had not spoken in the Convocation debate on Colenso's works. Very uncharacteristically, he seemed to be nearing the end of his patience and his usual moderate outlook when he said:

I have not thought it necessary to read through the unhappy publications of a colonial Bishop whose name has become lately a proverb of reproach to the Church,

to which it was once hoped he would have been an ornament. I have had his writings in my hands; but, as the wise Dr. Johnson said, there are some books of which one may well judge without reading them through.<sup>60</sup>

That Archdeacon Churton felt driven to speak in such terms, was a sign of the deep distress being caused by the publicising of Biblical criticism and the open expression of opinions formerly held privately in scholarly circles - or amongst friends. It is not surprising, therefore, that Archbishop Thomson decided to seize the nettle in his inaugural address as President of the Church Congress held at York in 1866. He said:

The Church of Christ is passing through a severe trial, ...in this and other countries. Every tenet of our religion will be searched and sifted. Already criticism has been busy, not about subordinate questions, but about the person of the Lord, and the nature of His revelation, and the future life of the soul. Will faith at last triumph over doubt? I firmly believe it. But all the facts of the struggle impose on us a great responsibility meanwhile.<sup>61</sup>

Earlier that year (in February 1866) York Convocation had briefly discussed a motion linked with the Colenso Case and tabled by Archdeacon Churton, expressing support for episcopal authority in the Church of England in South Africa.<sup>62</sup> Churton wore his old-style Tractarian, pro-episcopal hat when proposing that, as the Privy Council had shown the Church in South Africa to be "as independent of the [British] State as any Nonconformist communities", then York Convocation should support the view that the South African Church was

fully competent to elect its own bishops, following such laws and customs of election as prevail in other Churches with which the English Church is in communion; and that it is the duty of the Church of England to recognise such elections as regular and valid...as she does with the Bishops of the Episcopal Church in Scotland and in the American States.<sup>63</sup>

This was a strong argument in favour of regarding the duly constituted government of each Anglican Province as holding, not only the power to elect its own bishops, but eventually the independent authority to determine all decisions relevant to it - whether concerning order, discipline, worship or belief.<sup>64</sup> However, Churton's motion was more strongly pro-bishop and pro-synodical action than most of his York Convocation colleagues, with their predominantly Evangelical and often Erastian views, could approve. After little discussion, the motion was drastically altered, becoming instead a diatribe against Colenso, and a series of rather vague assurances of moral and prayerful support for the Church in South Africa.<sup>65</sup>

The anxious and bewildering atmosphere caused by theological divisions was made more complex and controversial by events surrounding Henry Bristow Wilson and Rowland Williams, both of them contributors to Essays and Reviews. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council overturned the verdict of the Court of Arches (that Wilson's teaching had been contrary to the Church of England's doctrine) on the grounds that the Thirty-nine Articles did not define "inspiration", the subject on which Wilson had written critically. He therefore continued to exercise his parochial ministry. Similarly, Rowland Williams, originally found guilty of contradicting the Church's Articles of Religion by implying doubts about

eternal punishment, had the verdict reversed by the Privy Council on technical grounds.<sup>66</sup>

The result was frustration in the orthodox ranks. The Privy Council's decisions seemingly gave clergy the freedom to defy the authority claimed for the Church by the traditionalists. Petitions came to York Convocation in October 1864. The clergy of Otley Deanery (Ripon Diocese), for example, protested that although Essays and Reviews had been condemned as "unsound and dangerous" by the bishops collectively, Wilson and Williams were still free to undermine the Church's doctrine whilst serving under its authority. They considered this anomaly a miscarriage of justice, and wanted - not unreasonably - a reconstituted Court of Ultimate Appeal in which the Church could exercise its own jurisdiction over matters of doctrine and discipline independently of the secular courts.<sup>67</sup> The clergy of Bamburgh Deanery (Durham Diocese) protested that the decisions to uphold the Wilson and Williams appeals implied

that the Church of England does not hold the plenary Inspiration of Holy Scripture as being the Word of God, nor the everlasting punishment of the wicked who die impenitent.<sup>68</sup>

In February 1865 a debate on these and other petitions took place in York Convocation. J. Thwaytes, proctor for Carlisle, introduced a motion calling - again not unreasonably - for the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council only to oversee the Church's temporal affairs, with Convocation overseeing the doctrine and discipline of the clergy.<sup>69</sup> Archbishop Thomson, explaining to Convocation the technical reasons that gave the Judicial Committee no option but to acquit Wilson and Williams, and



agreeing that the judgments were sad for the Church, stressed that the Judicial Committee's acquittal of the two unfortunately implied that statements made in Essays and Reviews about inspiration and eternal punishment were unimportant.<sup>70</sup>

The Archbishop warned of the great dangers in ignoring that the Bible was "the inspired word and will of God". However, on the matter of eternal punishment he pointed out that the court had not actually approved Williams's teaching. Furthermore, he said, Williams himself had asked "may we not hope?" that there is no eternal punishment, rather than state specifically that no such punishment existed.<sup>71</sup> Thomson's last point gave an indication of a relaxing of attitudes towards Hell, and implied that the Archbishop himself sympathised with someone - even a priest - who could not give a dogmatic defence of belief in eternal damnation.

Another indication of this growing relaxation was the previous year's discussion (in 1864) of the Burial Service in Weighton Deanery Chapter, and whether the words "sure and certain hope" suggested to the faithful that there was "an automatic passage to heaven."<sup>72</sup> Such doubts were obviously leading some Churchmen to question the extent to which any long-accepted interpretation of doctrine might be defended at all, let alone militantly. In addition, a simultaneously growing awareness of the honesty underlying Biblical criticism - and the earnestness of those seeking truth - helped its credibility.<sup>73</sup>

Towards the end of discussion in the 1865 Convocation debate, the Prolocutor, Augustus Duncombe, the Dean of York, expressed the hope that moderation, good judgment and sound sense would prevail in Convocation.<sup>74</sup> The

outcome was an amendment to Thwaytes's motion, more moderate in its tone and less specific in its demands, proposed by Dr. Bickersteth, Bishop of Ripon, and seconded by Charles Long, Archdeacon of the East Riding: "That the mode of proceeding in the Courts which deal with cases of doctrine and discipline of the Clergy should be amended." This milder motion was passed unanimously.<sup>75</sup>

This change gave another important indication that moderation was present, and was possibly already growing, amidst the anxiety of the theological and doctrinal conflict. Here was a hint that the habitual militancy of the past five years was not always going to dominate. But the development of moderation was not going to be smooth. Charles Voysey, Vicar of Healaugh near Tadcaster, was already building a national reputation for radical theology, and his ideas were to become a new cause of turbulence.

Meantime, the effects of the conflict so far had not been limited to the Church of England itself. As Archdeacon Churton pointed out in his Charge of 1864:

Lately, perilous doctrines have been taught from which the laws of the land have seemed to afford us no safeguard; and the failure has been hailed by the advocates of the Church of Rome as a proof of unsoundness in the principles of the English Reformation.<sup>76</sup>

The effects of these "perilous doctrines" were significant not only for the Church of Rome but for the Anglican Communion at large. In his 'Charge' to clergy delivered in 1864, John Travers Lewis, the Bishop of Ontario, revealed his hopes for a Council of the Anglican

Church, with every Anglican province represented.<sup>77</sup> The Canadian bishops subsequently wrote to Canterbury and York Convocations suggesting such a General Council. Their suggestion stemmed from disquiet about the controversies provoked by Essays and Reviews and Colensoism, and led to the first Lambeth Conference,<sup>78</sup> which soon became a very important part of the chattering Church.

The focus on Essays and Reviews and Colenso, and the shocks caused by Biblical criticism in the 1860's, tended to crowd out the threat to prevailing orthodoxy brought by contemporary advances in physical science. Of course, the advance of scientific knowledge was less alarming, partly because evolutionary ideas had circulated for over thirty years by the time Origin of Species appeared in 1859; partly because the more serious threat was from scientism, with its misunderstandings of what both science and theology were saying; and also because the threat from science was regarded as coming mostly from outside the Church, whereas Biblical criticism was seen as a "fifth column" inside. This is illustrated in some words of Alfred Gatty, Vicar and Rural Dean of Ecclesfield, in a sermon he preached in 1875 at York Minster in his capacity as Sub-dean. He briefly alluded to the threat from science, then quickly dismissed it, saying:

the activity of the age has stirred the human mind to its depths, and invitations on all sides beset us to question the simple truths....[using] either additional dogma of human invention or scientific theories which carry no proof.<sup>79</sup>

However, nearly ten years later, in his (1884) Presidential Address to Convocation, Archbishop Thomson spoke with no signs of anxiety about "the tremendous

development in physical science" made in the previous twenty-five years; and in his Presidential Address in 1886 admitted that he did not find

the new views of natural history summed [up] under the word 'evolution'...inconsistent with true belief in God and in the Lord's resurrection and loving work for us.  
80

On similar lines, but more profoundly, Bishop Harvey Goodwin of Carlisle had suggested a possible rapprochement between liberal theology and science (as distinct from scientism), saying:

We want a new word to express the fact that all physical science, properly so called, is compelled by its very nature to take no account of the being of God; as soon as it does this, it trenches upon theology, and ceases to be physical science....Its investigations and reasonings are by agreement conversant simply with observed facts and conclusions drawn from them, and in this sense it is 'atheous', or without recognition of God. And because it is so, it does not in any way trench upon 'theism' or 'theology', and cannot be atheistic, or in the condition of denying the being of God.<sup>81</sup>

Such reasoning from a respected bishop gave valuable support to the cause of moderation and toleration. By the 1880's it was becoming clear that the future of the Church lay in comprehensiveness of belief.

(b) Charles Voysey - Yorkshire's Heretic

Some...believers are rather worse for their creed, more censorious, more self-righteous and conceited, and sometimes more selfish and unkind than others who disbelieve altogether. [It is] too often more important that a man be orthodox [than that] his love be a sign of a loving God.<sup>82</sup>

In those words the Rev. Charles Voysey made clear his view of the militant institutionalists, and there is no doubting the hostility such words would arouse in the climate of the 1860's. In addition, Voysey's ideas and attitude exposed some of the underlying difficulties facing the Church in the exertion of a disciplinary authority in the mid-19th century.

Voysey had much to say that was unorthodox - on morality, theology, doctrine, authority and, by no means least, on the way the faithful should use the Bible. Thus he told his small flock at Healaugh, near Tadcaster, and any who read his published sermons:

I want you to get and to keep a good common sense view of what the Bible really is, and then you will take a deeper and more intelligent interest in it than you ever had before.

Here was a modern use of the phrase "common sense". And Voysey's welcome for the brand of common sense to be seen in Biblical criticism was shown in his insistence that Scripture contained no infallible records of Christ's thought; that some sayings attributed to him were false; and that many of the supposed utterances of Christ were so different from Apostolic teaching that "the doctrine of

Church Authority breaks down completely." Thus, he concluded, "the supreme ideal of religion [is the] sense of God's presence, and...entire confidence in it, coupled with a sense of our own faults."<sup>83</sup> This was advocacy of private judgment in religion par excellence.

When Voysey's principles and stubbornness clashed head-on with the might of militant orthodoxy in the 1860's, it was clear which side would win the day. Similarly, when Voysey's principles about the exercise of private judgment clashed with his "temporal welfare", he sacrificed the latter. And in his case the renunciation was a very serious matter, eventually involving deprivation from his living, and thus having to take his mother, his wife, and presumably most, if not all, of his eight children away from Healaugh with him.

Only a few months after the Privy Council had acquitted Wilson and Williams, Charles Voysey published a sermon he had recently preached at Healaugh asking "Is Every Statement in the Bible about our Heavenly Father Strictly True?" In this he introduced the sort of moral questioning that was increasingly to be his style, and criticised parts of the Old Testament that portrayed God with characteristics other than those of justice and mercy. The sermon sold well. Clearly his views had an interested public. But he agreed to withdraw the publication when the Archbishop reprimanded his patron, the Rev. Edward Hawke Brooksbank, who had paid for the printing.<sup>84</sup>

In 1865 Voysey began to publish collections of his liberal sermons under the title The Sling and the Stone. In the earliest of these he aimed to popularise Biblical criticism. Gradually, he also began to stress the need to believe in a morally upright and just God. It was this

insistence on the morality of God - and its corollary, his insistence on the immorality of the God who is often portrayed in the Bible - that finally led to his prosecution. Meantime, Voysey had continued to publish his radical sermons for over four years without any obvious action being taken against him.

At last, in February 1869, Francis Grey, proctor for Lindisfarne, suggesting that his question might be the most serious ever to come before Convocation, asked what action was going to be taken against Charles Voysey. He described the publication of The Sling and the Stone by a priest of the Church of England as a grievous scandal on the whole Church, but especially on the diocese in which that priest exercised his ministry. Grey had even heard from America that Churchmen both High and Low were shocked at Voysey's "blasphemies", and wanted to know what steps had been taken, or would be taken, to redeem the situation.<sup>85</sup>

In reply, Archbishop Thomson gave three reasons for his apparent lack of action - other than having remonstrated with Voysey both verbally and in writing. But none of the three reasons revealed the sympathy and respect which the Archbishop undoubtedly had for Charles Voysey as a person. Thus, whilst it underlined a serious deficiency in episcopal authority, his first reason was rather typically technical. Against those who insisted that a bishop's ordination vows committed him to prosecute anyone teaching heterodoxy, Thomson argued that a bishop simply made the same vow on admission to office as a priest did at admission to his. This was an undertaking generally "to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's word." A bishop's "peculiar promise", as distinct from the priest's, was admittedly "to correct and

punish...such as be unquiet, disobedient and criminous" within his diocese. However, Archbishop Thomson said, English law made it very difficult for a bishop to carry out that promise.<sup>86</sup>

The Archbishop's second reason for not taking action against Voysey was more serious and convincing. He claimed that failure of the courts already to reach suitable conclusions in doctrinal cases had caused positive harm to the Church. Without mentioning Rowland Williams by name, but referring to "a recent case", the Archbishop said that the failure of orthodoxy had caused the public to think that the Church of England stood by the success of the appeal against judgment; whereas, he insisted, the Church had not approved, nor could it ever approve, the teaching that had led to the prosecution.<sup>87</sup>

Archbishop Thomson's third reason for lack of action involved degrees of importance. Whilst some writings caused harm through their own intrinsic importance, he said, other writings had no importance except that given by the status of the writer.<sup>88</sup> Thus, for example, Thomson could have cited Bishop Colenso as one whose writings had virtually no importance at all, but received attention only because he was a bishop.

But the Archbishop might well have presented a fourth reason - and at least as convincing as any of the three he gave to Convocation - for not taking strong measures against Charles Voysey. In his opening address at the York Church Congress held three years earlier (in 1866), the Archbishop had referred to suggestions made in York Convocation about banning radical theological works. Without mentioning Essays and Reviews or Bishop Colenso, Dr. Thomson pointed out the powerless position of



Convocation - beyond the freedom to register its feelings. Thus he warned:

in assuming the power to try and condemn books, Convocation runs the risk of infringing the liberties of the clergy as...secured by law; and, however great the demerits of a book, however desirable that an authoritative opinion should be pronounced against it,...the law has appointed one mode of proceeding and one only for ecclesiastical offences....If the present process be defective, let it be improved, rather than that the legislative body should supply judicial defects by assuming the office of a judge.<sup>89</sup>

This view was too legalistic to reveal Thomson's Broad Churchmanship; but it was too liberal to suggest he was a fundamentalist. Thomson also made clear in the same address that he was fully aware that the Christian Church was under pressure, not only in England but in other countries. Every belief would be searched and sifted, and Biblical criticism continue to ask basic questions

about the person of the Lord, and the nature of His revelation, and the future life of the soul. Will faith at last triumph over doubt? I firmly believe it. But all the facts of the struggle impose on us a great responsibility meanwhile.<sup>90</sup>

Obviously the Archbishop did not consider Charles Voysey's writings of any great potential harm. Voysey was not comparable to a Jowett nor even a Colenso; and his works had received attention only because of their extremism.<sup>91</sup> But despite Voysey's extreme views, the Archbishop treated him always with tolerance and mildness, quite a remarkable fact in view of the mood of

orthodoxy in the 1860's. And it is understandable why the Archbishop did not reveal to Convocation that Voysey had sent a prospectus of his sermons to him and that he had expressed to Voysey his chief concern, which was not about the subject matter, but the fact that the sermons were published by Thomas Scott, a prominent free-thinker. The Archbishop had therefore warned Voysey that Scott could simply be using him to test how far divergence of opinion might stretch in the Church of England.<sup>92</sup>

During this period of the Archbishop's life, he felt strongly that it was inexpedient to prosecute people for their religious opinions, and was conscious that it was people furthest from York who pressed hardest for Voysey's prosecution. His own diocesan clergy exerted no pressure on him to prosecute until the end of 1868. Only then did "a certain deanery in the diocese" request him to prosecute,<sup>93</sup> and it was this action that prompted the proctor for Lindisfarne to ask in Convocation, in February 1869, what action the Archbishop was going to take. Even then, after the Archbishop had given his three reasons for not prosecuting, Francis Grey gracefully said he was "perfectly satisfied."<sup>94</sup>

Nevertheless, the militant opposition against Voysey grew, helped by his determination to continue to publish The Sling and the Stone. Thus, towards the end of 1869 he was charged in the Chancellor's Court in York with five offences relating to views expressed in that work in the previous two years. The charges were brought under the Clergy Discipline Act of 1840 and claimed that he had offended against the Thirty-nine Articles. Predictably, it was alleged that he had "depraved Holy Scripture" in stating that revelation of the knowledge of God was impossible through any book, including the Bible; that

knowledge of God could come only from people's own sense of what God required of them; that there were irreconcilable contradictions in Scripture; and that the authority of St. John's Gospel was so doubtful that it should not be used to establish any doctrine.<sup>95</sup>

With hindsight, it is possible to see that many of Voysey's views were reaching towards what would become acceptable beliefs within the mainstream of theology three and four generations later. But it did not help him (nor his judges) that he seemed too often to set out deliberately to shock. With hindsight, too, it is a pity that he did not dwell more on his belief that humanity was growing nearer to maturity, rather than on contentious issues concerning Biblical criticism.<sup>96</sup>

Almost inevitably, Charles Voysey was found guilty of heresy in December 1869. Given the right to appeal he did so; but in February 1871, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council upheld the decisions of York Chancery Court, declaring that he must be deprived of his living. The Committee did this reluctantly, and only after Voysey had refused to retract any opinions for which he had been condemned.<sup>97</sup>

Before the end of the year, with the help of free-thinker friends, Voysey was ministering in a Theist Chapel in Langham Place. He continued to publish The Sling and the Stone - an ironical reminder to the Establishment that his chief offence, upheld in a predominantly lay and secular court, had been to expound radical theology as a serving priest of the Church. Now, in the same land, under the same laws, he could - and did - continue legally to teach the same radical beliefs as Minister of a Chapel until the turn of the century.

Thirty years after Voysey was deprived of his living, it is interesting - and another irony - to find the famous 19th century philosopher William James, in his Gifford Lectures of 1901-2, honouring Charles Voysey with mention, not for his radical convictions, but for his awareness of God. In a chapter on 'Saintliness' in The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature, James quoted some of Voysey's words which would have brought nods of assent from Anglicans and Nonconformists, and from churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike:

It is the experience of myriads of trustful souls, that this sense of God's unfailing presence with them in their going out and coming in...is a source of absolute repose and calmness;...they are in a state of mind equally ready to be safe or to meet with injury....The worst is conquered, and the sting taken out of it altogether, by the thought that God is our loving and sleepless keeper.<sup>98</sup>

The Voysey Case has significant features attached to it, quite apart from what it reveals about Archbishop Thomson's forbearance, and about the toleration of some of Voysey's northern colleagues - though both were remarkable during a decade of often bitter theological conflict. Aspects of the Case are a reminder, as Frederick Temple had written at the start of the decade, that

on the whole, the steady progress of toleration is unmistakable [and] the mature mind of our race is beginning to modify and soften the hardness.<sup>99</sup>

Another significant feature of the Voysey Case is that at no stage was there any ill-will between Voysey and his Archbishop. When Archbishop Thomson died at the end of

December, 1890, Voysey wrote to The Times about Thomson's reluctance to prosecute him over thirty years earlier.

Our friendly relations were never disturbed by our official conflict, and it is now many years since he begged me to put away from my mind all feeling of regret at the trouble and expense he had incurred on my account.<sup>100</sup>

Voysey also added that "every parishioner [at Healaugh] was a loved and loving friend,"<sup>101</sup> an apt reminder that a parson's relationship with his flock is usually far more important in their minds than his heresies - or his orthodoxy.

(iii) From ritual controversy to mutual acceptance

(a) Aspects of the ritual controversy

Whereas certain vestments and ritual observances have recently been introduced into the services of the Church of England, this House desires to place on record its deliberate opinion that these innovations are to be deprecated as tending to favour errors rejected by that Church.<sup>102</sup>

The motion was proposed in York Convocation in October 1867, by Canon Hey, Headmaster of St. Peter's School, York, Proctor for the Chapter of York and a leading Evangelical. So began the first debate in the northern province on the "ornaments and ritual" issue, Canterbury Convocation having recently expressed its own opposition to the spread of ritualism. And so, too, began a serious diversion by Church leaders from the pressing authority problems they faced from societal factors, a diversion that often coincided with, and was every bit as bitter and time-consuming as, the debates over theology and Biblical criticism.

The year 1867 constituted a peak - though not yet the final peak - in the Victorian controversy over ritual and the resurgence of Catholic doctrine in the Church of England. In 1867, in addition to Canon Hey's motion in York Convocation, a series of prosecutions were initiated by the strongly Protestant Church Association,<sup>103</sup> notably against A.H. Mackonochie, priest in charge of St. Alban's, Holborn, a leading Anglo-Catholic ritualist, and W.J.E. Bennett, famous for his ritualist practices and Catholic teaching since 1840, who had been driven to resign his

living in London diocese by Bishop Blomfield in 1852 and subsequently, as Vicar of Frome, had become noted for his toleration and his good relations with the other Anglican incumbents in the town.<sup>104</sup> The prosecution of ritualists begun in 1867 received considerable publicity in the press; but publicity over ritual practices was not new. As Archbishop Thomson observed during the 1867 ritual debate in Convocation: "The newspapers have been teeming with this subject for two years."<sup>105</sup>

Only the year before that, (1866) Thomson himself had caught the attention of the press in an "ornaments" matter concerning St. John's Church, Middlesbrough, when he had questioned the legality of the Agnus Dei and two adoring angels on the reredos. The Vicar discovered that they were legal, and the English Church Union offered to support him in taking the matter to court for a "proper" decision. But, when the Archbishop wrote ordering the Vicar to remove the figures, he did so: not, reported the local newspaper, on grounds of legality, but of "prudence".<sup>106</sup>

Meanwhile, also in 1867, York clergyman Canon George Trevor, with the encouragement of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and of twenty-three other bishops of the Anglican Communion, began writing his book, The Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrifice and Participation of the Holy Eucharist, in which he outlined the fallacy of the claim of Anglo-Catholics to hold common ground with the Tridentine view of the Sacrifice of the Mass. He argued that the whole service was regarded by the entire Church, before the 11th century split, as "a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving", a concept still held by the Church of England as part of its truly Catholic heritage, dating from centuries before the Council of Trent,<sup>107</sup> and enshrined in the post-Communion prayer of thanksgiving in the 1662 Book

of Common Prayer.

In 1867, too, the first Lambeth Conference took place, the initiative originally stemming from overseas bishops who wanted to "put down the Rationalists." However, before the Conference met, Archbishop Longley (now at Canterbury) received the suggestion that "putting down the Ritualists" should also be on the agenda,<sup>108</sup> although it was omitted in the event. Also in 1867, a Royal Commission began to investigate ritualism; and the leading Evangelical, Lord Shaftesbury, introduced a Bill aimed at making vestments unambiguously illegal.<sup>109</sup>

The York Convocation debate on ritual and ornaments in 1867 underlined the complex situation that the controversy was thrusting upon the Church of England by that date. For the previous twenty-five years, the ritual controversy, together with the more deeply significant doctrinal controversy that underlay the revival of ritualism, had recurred at intervals. The most obvious aspect of the controversy was prompted by the reintroduction by some High Church clergy of long neglected ornaments, vestments and ritual. But the underlying doctrinal emphasis, developing as it did from the Oxford Movement's stress on the sacraments (especially the Eucharist), and on the role and authority of the priesthood (including the encouragement and, in the case of some extreme Anglo-Catholic clergy, teaching the necessity, of auricular confession to a priest), was an even more serious challenge to the broadly Protestant and militant institutionalism that permeated the Church of England in the first half of the 19th century.

The opposition to auricular confession was typified in an address given to the Yorkshire Church Association



meeting in York in February 1868, by the Rev. C.F. McCarthy, Superintendent of the Irish Church Mission to Roman Catholics in Dublin. He referred to "the evil" of confession and absolution, involving the absolving power of the priesthood. He acknowledged that Anglicans did not practise confession exactly as Roman Catholics, but "they were of a similar kind and brought the most pernicious results," he said.<sup>110</sup> Opposition to auricular confession created strange allies. Bishop Wilberforce and Archbishop Thomson, not always on the most amicable terms as Wilberforce had hoped to become Archbishop of York when Thomson did so, agreed that confession to a priest seriously threatened the stability of Victorian family life.<sup>111</sup>

Like the contemporary theological challenges from Broad Churchmen,<sup>112</sup> the ritual practices of the Anglo-Catholics demonstrated a facet of the growth of private judgment, with its inevitable erosion of any centralised authority in the Church. But unlike most Broad Churchmen, Anglo-Catholic ritualists tended to adopt as militant a stance as their Low Church and Evangelical opponents. For the Anglo-Catholic believed that he was restoring the true doctrine and orthodox forms of historic Anglicanism, rather than exercising his private judgment in these matters. Thus the Anglo-Catholic ritualist was as much an extremist in the eyes of Tractarians, as a radical like Charles Voysey was in the eyes of most Broad Churchmen.

The original Tractarians, unlike some of their second and third generation descendants, placed no importance on vestments and ornaments. Instead they emphasised the need to restore a long neglected doctrinal balance within the Church of England, and with that balance to enrich the Church's life. Thus in 1836, in the earliest days of

Tractarianism, and just before he became Rector of Crayke, Edward Churton preached on the subject of "The Church of England as Witness and Keeper of the Catholic Tradition", drawing attention to the sad decline in the Church of the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Eucharist. This loss had resulted, he said, from the

great Papal Schism of the 16th century, [which had] frightened Protestant Christians...away from adoring the mercy of our God in the Eucharistic sacrifice, for we are taught [instead] to check the fervour of the heart lest we should believe or feel too much; or, in the prevailing dread of forms, we reject all outward means of Grace...thus forgetting that as our martyred Ridley taught: 'God's word and sacraments are the beames of Christ, the Sunne of Righteousness' who is 'here presente in his Godhead.'<sup>113</sup>

Churton also pointed out that in its refusal to bow to Rome, the Church of England did not have to go to Protestant extremes and model itself "to the fashion of the hour" - a warning about over-indulgence in the exercise of private judgment. Instead, he said,

while we maintain the Holy Scriptures as the ultimate rule, we yet give the Church 'authority in controversies of faith' [and] look to her as the 'witness and keeper' and also the expounder of the Word of God.<sup>114</sup>

Churton's words were typical of early Tractarian thought. The Oxford Movement was all about doctrine and authority, about the centrality of the Eucharist in worship and, originally, nothing at all to do with Romish ritual. Men like Churton and Pusey never deviated from this early

form of Tractarianism. Typically, therefore, Robert Wilberforce, Archdeacon of the East Riding, a Tractarian friend and one-time contemporary of Pusey and Churton as a Fellow at Oriel, warned both Broad Churchmen and Anglo-Catholics in 1854 that if the Church heeded private judgment, or ran itself on decisions made by a mere combination of individuals, then it was being unfaithful to its Catholic past and standing on human authority alone.<sup>115</sup> The Body of Christ, which to Wilberforce was "the real Church", had to receive its authority from Christ through what he called "the collective episcopate."<sup>116</sup>

Such issues were far more important to Tractarians than ritual practices and church ornaments. But, of course, Wilberforce was never going to find the compact and specific form of collective episcopal authority that he yearned for in the Victorian Church of England. And this realisation, together with his increasing reservations about the Royal Supremacy in the Church, led to his secession to Rome in the same year (1854) in which he had published these thoughts - a big loss to the Church of England,<sup>117</sup> and a loss that added to existing anxiety about the Catholic movement in the Church of England being a Romish fifth column.

In Yorkshire, anxiety had stemmed particularly from the secession of nine Anglican clergy to Rome from St. Saviour's, Leeds, between 1845 and 1850. Many lay people also seceded from St. Saviour's after Charles Longley, then Bishop of Ripon, reprimanded one of the clergy for teaching the necessity of auricular confession. Three years earlier (in 1847) Archdeacon Churton had already felt it necessary to make the Anglican position on confession very clear in his Charge to the Cleveland clergy. The

Prayer Book, he reminded them, recommended confession to a priest

in cases of doubting or troubled consciences....But we are not authorised to speak of such Confession as a Sacrament such as Baptism and Holy Communion....The practice may be expedient to some; but it is not necessary to salvation to any.<sup>118</sup>

It has been claimed that the lay secessions from St. Saviour's, Leeds, in 1850 were so alarming that they mark "the real beginning of the ritual controversy."<sup>119</sup> Be that as it may, those who opposed the St. Saviour's practices illustrated how much easier it was to attack the outward signs of the Catholic revival as Romist, rather than to analyse the possible soundness of the underlying doctrines. And the secessions themselves showed how confused some Anglican Catholic revivalists themselves were about distinctions between Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism - thus reinforcing anxiety about their possibly Romish tendencies. But a rump of Tractarians and their sympathisers, including clerics such as Archdeacon Churton and Canon George Trevor in York Diocese, always advised caution about drawing the wrong implications from mere ritual practice. Sometimes it was the sign only of love of the past; and at other times it could be a useful sign of totally acceptable doctrine. Thus, for instance, in 1850 Archdeacon Churton wrote that he had

no love for anything like fanciful ceremonies [but] a strong desire for ample toleration in things indifferent, and some compassion for those whose love of antiquity leads them to wish to revive what is certainly of early and ante-papal precedent.<sup>120</sup>

And almost twenty years later Canon Trevor wrote: "It is the diversity of Doctrine which creates and gives importance to our Ritual diversities."<sup>121</sup>

Thus, for nearly twenty years before the first ritual debate in Convocation in 1867, the controversy over ritualism and the suspicion of Romanist doctrine had been recurring at intervals, sometimes occupying much more time and attention than hindsight suggests it should have done. Indeed, Archbishop Thomson himself pointed out perceptively, as early as the 1867 debate in Convocation, that serious though the divisions caused by the ritual controversy might be, the time was coming when it would

not be the issues of stole and chasuble [nor] this mode of worship or that...but whether God exists, whether Christ is Lord indeed, whether a man has a soul, and whether he may entertain the hope of a blessed immortality.<sup>122</sup>

However, events were to show him that even this shrewd prophecy was not wholly correct and, in the 1880's, Thomson himself was to grow increasingly aware that the Church was also facing enormous and even more deeply based problems created by utter indifference, amongst a large proportion of the nation, towards the doctrine, the theology and the worship of the institutionalised Church, as well as towards the controversies these subjects aroused. Meantime, during the 1850's and 1860's the ritual controversy was being fought through debate; through occasional mob violence, in attempts to deter parsons from their ritual practices; and more importantly, and too often, through litigation, with occasional appeals via the Chancery Courts of Canterbury and York to the lay dominated Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Eventually, in

the 1870's, the controversy led to the Public Worship Regulation Act,<sup>123</sup> prompted largely by the Queen, Prime Minister Disraeli, and Archbishop Tait of Canterbury.

Yet it is important to bear in mind that, as with the contemporaneous strife over theology and Biblical criticism, throughout the period of controversy there were voices pleading for calm and toleration. These voices gently and gradually led Churchmen to accept the Church's internal divisions, and to regard each differing strand as a potentially positive contribution to the Church's comprehensiveness - an attitude that it had largely achieved by the mid-1890's.

Equally important, and fundamental to the development of the concept of a general and unspecific authority in a comprehensive Church of England, the ritualists had demonstrated during this period that Churchmen who were not given to ritual themselves were capable of making adjustments in both doctrine and worship, despite the strong initial opposition to such changes from many quarters - including the Episcopate, Parliament and a majority in both Convocations. In the process, aided by the chattering Church, the right of the clergyman to direct worship as he wished in his own parish had been ratified, as had the right of the parishioner to express his (or her) support for change - or opposition to it.

But, the tolerant attitudes of the mid-1890's were not easily attained. For some twenty years after York Convocation first debated ritual practices in 1867, the bitter divisions persisted; and so bitter was the conflict, at times, that five priests had to endure imprisonment for ritual practices, in the 1870's and 1880's, before reason and tolerance began to prevail. On the other hand, it is

possible to argue that it was because of the destructive nature of this controversy, and because of the way it diverted the Church's attention away from more serious and urgent problems, that a more tolerant attitude simply had to emerge, and relatively quickly.

Meanwhile, the Cambridge School of theologians and the contributors to Lux Mundi succeeded in locating Catholic principles in the Church of England, and expounded them in their, admittedly paradoxical, "liberal Catholicism". Alongside this came changes in doctrinal emphasis symbolised in the much more frequent celebration of Holy Communion at the end of the period compared with the beginning, and in the deeper reverence surrounding the sacramental worship that had now spread to all Anglican parties.<sup>124</sup>

Meantime, too, private judgment had remained very much alive; and any hope of attaining infallibility, whether of "the Church" or of a "collective episcopate", had receded. Similarly, the orthodoxy prevalent at the start of the period, with its notion of the infallibility of Scripture, had also taken a significant battering. By the mid-1890's, the Church of England was discovering its new, though incompletely formed, general, guiding and collective type of authority - a much wider, albeit sometimes clumsier authority, than a collective episcopal or priestly authority. This new authority rested on the frequent sounding of opinion, including the sounding of lay opinion, in the chattering Church bodies. And the need to resolve ritual, doctrinal and theological controversies during the period had played a significant part in that development.

(b) Toleration, together with apprehension and litigation  
in the North.

In the summer of 1875, Edward Johnson, the Archdeacon  
of Chester told York Convocation

there is room for all in the Church of England - room  
not only for us to allow each other to exist, but to  
admit that the existence of all parties is, to some  
extent, necessary to the welfare of the Church....The  
days are gone when we excommunicated those who did not  
come up to our ideas of uniformity; we now admit many  
as brethren, though we may not altogether agree.<sup>125</sup>

Remarkably, the Archdeacon expressed this liberal view  
less than six months after the passing of the Public  
Worship Regulation Act - hardly a time when toleration of  
differing points of view might be expected. To a degree,  
the Archdeacon placed optimism before realism. The days  
might be over for excommunicating those with different  
beliefs; but ritual and doctrinal controversy was still to  
cause a deal of strife.

In 1875, the Church Association, representing the  
extreme Protestant wing of the Church, was confident that  
the Public Worship Regulation Act would eradicate  
ritualism and Catholic tendencies in the Church of  
England. For a short time, events suggested that the  
Association's confidence was well founded. It was too  
early, yet, to talk of peaceful co-existence having  
arrived, or to consider that all Churchmen could recognise  
all parties as "necessary to the welfare of the Church."

The divisions between the ritualists and their  
opponents that helped lead to the Public Worship



Regulation Act - but, at the same time, the attempts by thoughtful Churchmen on both sides to be reasonable - had been well illustrated at two meetings in York a little earlier. At the first of these meetings, held by the Yorkshire Church Association in York in March 1869, J.C. Ryle, later the first Bishop of Liverpool, said that English people would not return to Rome because they were determined to maintain "the Protestant Church...in all its integrity," whereas the ritualists aimed "to turn sacraments into sacrifices...to bring back into the Church of England the Popish mass...discarded 300 years ago." Yet, despite his opposition, Ryle tempered his remarks by generously describing the ritualists as "earnest, conscientious, and zealous."<sup>126</sup>

In November that same year (1869) Archdeacon Churton, when addressing a meeting of the English Church Union at All Saints, North Street, in York, regretted that some Church Association members spoke "as though Protestant, Calvinist and Evangelical all meant the same thing." Yet he tempered his opposition with talk of unity, stating that the Church of England

could never become a Calvinistic sect, or a Protestant establishment. [But] Evangelical we trust it is, and pray that it may ever be in the truest sense, uniting evangelical truth with apostolic order.<sup>127</sup>

Amidst the strife that reached its climax in the persecution of Anglo-Catholic clergy in the late 1870's, it is easy to overlook the fact that toleration of differences in the Church of England had long been - and to some extent still remained - a well established characteristic of some Churchmen.

In 1866, all three archdeacons in York Diocese had seized the nettle of ritual controversy which, they believed, received more publicity than it deserved. With differences in emphasis each had tried to put the controversy into perspective. Thus, Stephen Creyke, Archdeacon of York, said that ritualism tended to preoccupy Churchmen to the exclusion of other much more important matters.<sup>128</sup> Charles Long, Archdeacon of the East Riding, said that although York Diocese had been fortunate to have few cases where ritual observances had been publicised there was, nevertheless, "a danger to the souls of many in overdue attention to outward forms."<sup>129</sup> Long had no cause to mention in this Charge, of course, that he had been involved as archdeacon in one of those few cases in the diocese. In 1857 he had ordered the removal of an ornate stone altar from St. Stephen's, Hull, declaring it to be illegal. The incumbent and wardens complied, replacing the stone altar with "a handsome oak table of a suitable character."<sup>130</sup> For his part, Archdeacon Churton said it was difficult for someone who heard of conflict about ritual only from distant parts of the country, to understand why the practices engendered such fierce opposition and defence. After all, he said: "They do not seem to concern an Article of the Faith, or to involve the breach of any Commandment of the Decalogue."<sup>131</sup>

The following year (1867) saw an interim peak in anti-ritualist activity, and the appointment of the Royal Commission into ritual. This appointment prompted the main subject of Archdeacon Churton's 'Charge' of 1867, in which he still carried his banner for toleration. Indeed, the Literary Churchman, which reviewed his 'Charge' later the same year, enthused about the Archdeacon's "cool, calm

judiciousness", and his "most lofty toleration." Churton had quoted William Law's words:

I will venture to say that if each Church could produce but one man apiece that had the piety of an Apostle, and the impartial love of the first Christians in the first Church of Jerusalem - a Protestant and a Papist of this stamp would not want half a sheet of paper to hold their Articles of Union, nor be half an hour before they were of one religion.<sup>132</sup>

Churton warned that all attempts to check Christian opinion by persecution would eventually fail. Both Christian reason and policy-making should therefore be against the use of persecution. He repeated the advice of St. Augustine "not to stop calling schismatics 'brethren' until they stopped reciting the same Lord's Prayer."<sup>133</sup> However, it was in this same year (1867) in which Archdeacon Churton warned against persecution, that Canon Hey, Proctor for York Chapter, opening the first ritual and ornaments debate in York Convocation, proposed his motion deprecating Eucharistic vestments and ritual observances, and advocated the continued use of surplice, academic hood, and the scarf or stole - "these having received the sanction of long-continued usage," he said.<sup>134</sup>

Churton, though never a ritualist, could understand the reasoning of those who were. Thus, proposing an amendment to Canon Hey's motion, he pointed out that the law was actually very vague about ritual and ornaments.<sup>135</sup> In saying this, Churton was trying to be fair both to Low Churchmen and Evangelicals, who claimed that the recent "revivals" were more accurately "innovations" and

illegal, as well as to Tractarians, who mostly held that the Ornaments Rubric in the Book of Common Prayer sanctioned the use of pre-Reformation vestments and ornaments.<sup>136</sup> In fact, the legalities were so disputable that both sides could reasonably hold that their interpretation of the Rubric was correct and therefore legal.

Hence Churton asked Convocation, and anyone whose intention was to drive the ritualists from their churches, to consider carefully what they were doing, and why they were doing it. He insisted that ritualist clergy had denied no article of the Christian faith, and concluded his case by reminding Convocation that good men such as George Whitfield, despite their "glowing attachment to the Church", were driven, through lack of understanding, from the Church into Wesleyanism to the Church's own cost.<sup>137</sup> The Church should not repeat such a mistake with the ritualist clergy, Churton said.

Only two other speakers did not attack the ritualists during this (1867) Convocation debate. The Rev. Beilby Porteus, Proctor for Carlisle, pointed out that if the ritualists were at fault for their inattention to Prayer Book rubrics, then it should be acknowledged that Low Churchmen were equally at fault. "Few clergy are the class of ritualists they ought all to be," he said.<sup>138</sup> The point Porteus was making was not new. Ten years earlier, a letter-writer to the Yorkshire Gazette had pointed out that Low Churchmen had initiated the ritual case against Fr. Liddel of Knightsbridge on the grounds that he did not follow the Church's rubrics. Yet, the writer asked,

is it not well known that the same 'Low Church' itself adopts practices of addition and omission as to ritual, and some therefore are at variance with the enjoined order of the Church?<sup>139</sup>

The other speaker in the Convocation debate who did not attack ritualists was the moderate Canon Hornby, Proctor for Manchester, who pointed out that

the intention of ritualists in improving the services of the Church is not to go to Rome...but to God,...the object of all branches of the Church Catholic.

Like Churton, Hornby did not defend the ritualists as a practising ritualist himself. He did not favour copes, for instance, considering them "unnecessary things." But he insisted that ritualism was spoken about "in exaggerated terms"; and that usually the ritualist was aiming simply at "a more solemn and decent celebration of the service." Furthermore, he added, he did not believe that public feeling was as high against ritualists as Canon Hey had stated<sup>140</sup> when proposing the motion.

However, Archbishop Thomson informed Canon Hornby that ritualism was quite widespread in the northern province, and each week the Archbishop was receiving requests from lay people, as well as clergy, asking him what was to be done about its spread.<sup>141</sup> These anxious requests continued for some considerable time, probably right up to the passing of the Public Worship Regulation Act. Thus, for example, Ethel Thomson records that as late as 1872 the Archbishop received a letter from the Conference of Clerical and Lay Associations, and branches of the Church Association in many counties and towns, expressing

anxiety about any changes in the conduct of public worship which defied the law and were not a necessity.<sup>142</sup>

Also unfortunate, in his attempt to take heat out of the Convocation debate, Canon Hornby had suggested that wearing vestments "did not involve doctrinal points as it was supposed it did."<sup>143</sup> Again, Archbishop Thomson refuted the Canon's statement. He conceded that the ritualists "were men of courage...[and] had not worked in the dark;" but they had openly said

the platform of the Reformation was not that on which they wished to stand. They wished to draw the Church back to a totally different position, whether they called it 'Catholic truth' or 'Romish truth', but they did not wish the Church of England to stand as it was left at the Reformation.

It simply was not accurate, therefore, the Archbishop insisted, to suggest that there was no link between doctrine and ritualism.<sup>144</sup> Indeed, Thomson left no doubt about his deep concern over the problems the ritual controversy was causing. It was contributing to disunity in the Church, he claimed, and was thus disrupting the Church's authority. As a result, the more pressing questions of the day - the very existence of God, Christ's place in the scheme of things, the matter of eternal life - were all in danger of being thrust to one side. There was "never a time," he said, "when union was more needed," and he hoped that growing awareness of the dangers confronting the Church would prompt Convocation to give a lead by uniting against the principle that every man could do what was right in his own eyes.<sup>145</sup>

Despite appearances, Archbishop Thomson tried to maintain a non-party stance during the ritual controversy. Although a mixture of Low and Broad Churchmanship, and sympathetic towards Evangelicals in that he believed the Church's most important task was its mission to an increasingly materialist society, he nevertheless recommended regular celebrations of the Communion Service. He could acknowledge the courage of the ritualists and respect their openness about their intentions. His refusal to wear a party label was also evident in his readiness to see the benefit of "private confession", in the circumstances laid down in the Prayer Book, for a person who could not "quieten his conscience" before receiving Communion - especially if that person be grievously ill. He considered that the Prayer Book provided "excellent means" for repentance, confession and absolution.<sup>146</sup>

In his last words in response to the 1867 ritual debate, Thomson made it clear that he would not

in his diocese wish to press any man in the free exercise of his liberty..., nor force the law against the humblest clergyman that ministered to the people.<sup>147</sup>

Thus, for instance, he did not get involved at All Saints, North Street, in York, when there was a complaint about the use of incense in 1868.<sup>148</sup> Instead, he tried hard to avoid ritual conflict in his own diocese simply by not appointing known Anglo-Catholic clergy to vacancies over which he had any control; and he would not ordain men with known ritualist inclinations.<sup>149</sup> The effectiveness of this diocesan policy is underlined by the fact that no

ritual cases went before York Consistory Court during the whole period of controversy.

On the other hand, the Archbishop's policy of avoiding conflict by not appointing ritualists could be subverted by an incumbent already in situ introducing ritual or ornaments. In such cases, therefore, Thomson would risk controversy by insisting on modifications, as with the reredos at St. John's Middlesbrough in 1866,<sup>150</sup> and the altar and cross at St. Michael's, Sheffield. In these instances the incumbents felt constrained to obey Thomson's injunction to alter the reredos, or lower the altar and remove the cross,<sup>151</sup> though the law was on their side rather than his.

In two cases Archbishop Thomson acted unwisely, not least because he could not hope to win his case. In May 1879, the Dean and Chapter of York, as patrons, appointed Simon Hardy Bennett to the vacant incumbency at St. Mary Bishophill Junior in York, the previous incumbent - C. J. Buncombe - having died in April. In August, the Archbishop began to receive letters from Honorary Canons, initially complaining that the Chapter Meeting called to appoint Bennett had given very short notice.<sup>152</sup> Thomson wrote to Dean Duncombe and the Cathedral Chapter asking them to call a meeting to reconsider the appointment; but Duncombe refused.

Meantime, Thomson was informed that Bennett was a member of the Society of the Holy Cross,<sup>153</sup> (the same Anglo-Catholic fellowship to which Father Foster belonged, whom Thomson refused to license as curate at St. Martin's, Scarborough)<sup>153</sup> though members of the Chapter claimed that Bennett's membership of the Society was not known when the appointment was made.<sup>154</sup> After prolonged correspondence



between clergy and Archbishop, and a trickle of anonymous letters to the local press from parishioners pleading for their duly appointed parish priest to be instituted - as pastoral work in the parish was suffering<sup>155</sup> - Thomson had to allow the processes to go ahead.<sup>156</sup> Unless Duncombe and the Residentiary Canons of the Minster climbed down - and they were unlikely to do so, because of the Archbishop's tendency sometimes to interfere with the Dean's improvements to worship in the Minster - that was the only possible outcome. Short of some grave immorality or criminal conduct on the part of an appointee, it was impossible for a diocesan bishop to over-rule an appointment made by the patrons of any living in England. The Gorham Judgment against Bishop Henry Phillpotts in 1851 had demonstrated that.

The second instance of Thomson's unwise involvement with the appointment of an incumbent was at St. Matthew's, Sheffield. In 1882, High Churchman W.E. Gladstone was involved in the appointment there of G.C. Ommanney, already a well-known Anglo-Catholic, and a member of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament. In this case, Thomson was more cautious about being drawn into the controversy, no doubt having learnt from the St. Mary Bishophill experience. However, Sheffield being notoriously Low Church and Protestant, there were protests against Ommanney from most of the Sheffield clergy, and an extremely Protestant Churchwarden at St. Matthew's stirred up as much trouble as he could. Eventually Archbishop Thomson censured Ommanney; but a subsequent Commission of Inquiry vindicated him, apart from his disobedience to the Archbishop. Ommanney stayed in the incumbency long enough to earn censure from the first Bishop of Sheffield in the early 20th century; but a stained glass window in

Sheffield Cathedral honours him as a faithful parish priest - as most ritualist clergy proved to be.<sup>157</sup>

Within two years of the first ritual debate in York Convocation (1867), and during the tense period when Bills came before Parliament in attempts to regulate ritual and ornaments in church, the Archbishop of York's Chancery Court handled the ritual cases passed to it on appeal from the consistory courts of other northern bishops. These cases totalled only five between 1869 and 1873, and then only a further two cases were brought to the court in 1879 and 1885, both of them linked with the Public Worship Regulation Act. These cases probably represented only the tip of the iceberg of ritual controversy in the northern province. Most complaints about ritual practices would be settled at parish or archdeaconry level, if only for the simple reason that litigation was very expensive. Difficult cases only would go to the diocesan Consistory Court, and from there the merest handful went to the provincial court in York.

The most important feature to stress in these ritual and ornaments cases is the degree of tolerance they illustrated, both on the part of the court and on the part of diocesan bishops in the northern province. Yet, ironically, this was the period of supposed polarisation that produced the Public Worship Regulation Act. The two cases that reached York Chancery Court from Manchester Diocese were similar. In both, the charges were against Churchwardens who had so strongly objected to the introduction of "ornaments" - in one case a wooden cross placed behind the altar, in the other banners used in processions - that they had taken matters into their own hands and removed them. The cross case, involving St. Clement's, Spotland, Rochdale, ended when the Churchwarden

apologised to the incumbent. But it was significant that the cross was almost certainly in the church with the knowledge, and thus the implied sanction, of Bishop Fraser of Manchester,<sup>158</sup> who had little time for ritual practices, yet was obviously prepared to refrain from imposing his view on a satisfied congregation.

In the banners case, involving the Rector of St. John the Divine, Hulme, a Churchwarden had removed sixteen banners from the church and thrown them into the nearby school yard. The case ended with the Rector being awarded costs against the warden; and the judgment of the Chancery Court in York made clear that it was more serious for a layman - albeit a Churchwarden - to take the law into his own hands and remove ornaments that offended him, than for the Rector to introduce the ornaments in the first place.<sup>159</sup>

In a case that came to York Chancery Court from Carlisle Diocese, concerning St. George's, Barrow, a cross was again the main ornament at issue. The Principal of the Carlisle Consistory Court had dismissed the case; but as he had made no order about costs, the case went to the Archbishop's Chancery Court,<sup>160</sup> which duly upheld the original dismissal. Thus, both Consistory and Chancery Courts refused to rule against an incumbent who had introduced ornaments, but who was apparently beyond reproach in all other aspects of his ministry.

This was again true in the very protracted case that began in 1873, involving the extreme Anglo-Catholic practices at St. Margaret's, Toxteth (then in Chester Diocese and later in the newly formed Liverpool Diocese). Charles Parnell, the incumbent, appeared to have committed every offence detested by the Church

Association: he wore a cope; his servers used incense; a large cross was carried at the head of processions, followed by banners; and there were lighted candles on the altar "not wanted for giving light". Parnell wore a chasuble, and at times, "divers ceremonial vestments". He also consecrated a mixed chalice; adopted the eastward position at the altar; elevated the paten in a ceremonial manner, and the chalice similarly; and made the sign of the Cross when administering the sacrament.<sup>161</sup>

The Toxteth case came to the Chancery Court in York by Letters of Request from Chester. During the course of the trial, the complainant (a parishioner called Roughton) admitted that Parnell had many virtues, not least his diligence and zeal in his ministry in the parish.<sup>162</sup> The complainant also admitted that, until the beginning of this law suit, there had been no complaint made to Parnell by the diocesan bishop, nor the archdeacon, nor the wardens of the church - a significant insight into the tolerance extended by the diocesan authorities to such a faithful, albeit strongly ritualistic, priest. Nor had Parnell ever failed to obey his bishop's instructions about the conduct of Divine Service.<sup>163</sup>

However, the case dragged on until 1877. By then, of course, the Public Worship Regulation Act was in force. Parnell would still have been unlikely to give up his ritual practices at St. Margaret's, even if the Privy Council had eventually ordered him to do so. But now, following the passing of the Act, his refusal could have led him to prison; and this is very likely the reason why the case was resolved in the simplest and most obvious way when the complainant, Parnell and their respective solicitors signed an agreement to end all further proceedings.<sup>164</sup>

Unfortunately, the settlement did not last for ever, and there was to be more trouble over ritual practices at St. Margaret's, Toxteth, a decade later. Meantime, however, the strong backlash against the Public Worship Regulation Act was strengthening the moderate cause. This eventually brought wide acceptance of the need for greater tolerance - and therefore comprehensiveness - within the Church of England.

(c) Legislation and persecution, followed by comprehensiveness in the North

The Royal Commission on Ritual, appointed in 1867, issued four reports by 1870, the members having met nearly two hundred times. With each report they had issued revised rubrics for all the services in the Prayer Book. But they had been unable to agree on revision of the Ornaments Rubric, or the priest's position during the consecration prayer in Holy Communion - the two most contentious matters in the whole ritual controversy.<sup>165</sup> This failure added to the frustration felt by ritualists and anti-ritualists alike.

Between 1867 and 1874, both Convocations ignored the ritual and doctrinal controversies in their debates. There are two obvious reasons for this inaction. The Convocations could not expect to provide answers which so many meetings of the experts on the Ritual Commission had failed to produce. In addition, Convocation was increasingly aware of its handicap in possessing neither executive nor legislative powers. This meant that, even if Convocation (or the Commission) had produced possible solutions, parliamentary legislation would have been necessary to implement them.

At last, on 15 January 1874, Queen Victoria told Archbishop Tait that legislation must be passed to give the bishops greater powers against the Roman tendencies of ritualist clergy.<sup>166</sup> The rest of the sometimes stormy passage of Tait's Public Worship Regulation Bill through Parliament is well recorded.<sup>167</sup> It is sufficient only to mention here two important matters which had repercussions for the future development of the ritual controversy and of the Church's authority. First, Tait insisted

throughout the debates on the Bill that the Act, when passed, must retain the right of diocesan bishops to veto any proceedings brought against clergy.<sup>168</sup> Secondly, Tait made the mistake of starting work on a draft bill without consulting either his episcopal colleagues or the two Convocations. He had his reasons. Like Archbishop Thomson, Tait regarded ritualist excesses as tiresome; and the ritual controversy was far less important to him than the need for the Church to re-state Christian beliefs in an age of increasing scepticism. Tait was also sure that the majority of bishops shared his dislike of ritualists, making it unnecessary to consult them about the Bill.<sup>169</sup>

In the short term, however, his neglect to consult resulted in a very outspoken debate in York Convocation in April 1874. In the longer term, when the Act was passed and the appalling implications of it began to dawn, it ensured that Convocation won the right to debate any proposed ecclesiastical law from 1875 onwards.<sup>170</sup>

Archbishop Thomson distributed nine questions to the members of the northern Convocation when they met in April 1874.<sup>171</sup> The questions were about procedures to adopt if people lodged complaints about the conduct of worship in a particular church. More importantly, they concerned matters that lay at the heart of the power and authority not only of the bishops, but also of parochial clergy and the laity. Thomson explained to Convocation that he had resorted to these questions because it was not right for Convocation to discuss details of a Bill actually before Parliament.<sup>172</sup>

Nevertheless, before the end of almost a full day's debate on the questions, members began to criticise Tait's

Bill. Their frank opinions demonstrated that the Church's authority problems over ritual were not confined to the relatively small group of extreme Anglo-Catholics. H.R. Dodd, for instance, Proctor for Chester, said he knew that many of his "constituents" would agree there was need for some legislation, but that very few would approve of this particular Bill. T.P. Hudson, Proctor for Cleveland, felt the Bill should deal with those who "erred by defect", just as much as those who "offended by way of excess." This was a return to the criticism of Low Church clergy who omitted as much from Prayer Book rubrics as ritualist Churchmen added to them. Hudson suggested that the revision of Canons and Rubrics would be a better solution than legislation.<sup>173</sup>

A more direct attack on the Bill came from Henry Temple, Proctor for Craven, who had just come to Convocation from a meeting of Leeds Deanery Chapter where, he said, hardly anyone had been in favour of any part of the Bill. Though he considered himself far from being a ritualist - he had preached in a black gown many, many times, and was ready to do so whenever called upon - he thought the Bill "one-sided". Temple sympathised with the bishops' difficulties, but would have preferred them to have difficulties rather than any priest suffer oppression through changes in the law. Moreover, he reminded his colleagues, the Bill was aimed at clergy who were mostly

conscientious men...deeply religious men...[with] good points, which it would be wise for their fathers in God to draw out to the very utmost for the benefit of the Church of God.

Hence Temple felt unable to support the Bill.<sup>174</sup>



The views of proctors such as Hudson and Temple serve as reminder that there were moderate men in the northern Convocation during those days of conflict. These moderates were prepared to resist Tait's plans for disciplining clergy long before they became law. This opposition, which was rapidly increasing, together with the disgust the Act itself eventually produced, explains why the campaign against ritualists would almost die by the mid-1880's. But, before the end of that day's debate in April 1874, Archbishop Tait was the subject of more criticism from York Convocation.

It began after the Evangelical Dean of Carlisle, Francis Close, disturbed a hornets' nest by proposing a motion of thanks and a record of Convocation's approval of the Bill be sent from Convocation to Archbishop Tait.<sup>175</sup> Canon Henry Ware, Proctor for Westmorland in the same diocese as Dean Close, quickly pointed out that a large majority of the clergy represented in York Convocation held very different feelings. Though many questions divided the Church and clergy, said Ware, he had never before seen such unanimity as there was against the introduction of this Bill.<sup>176</sup> He was aware of widespread and deep pain caused by the two Archbishops when, in introducing this Bill, they implied that all clergy who "taught the Real Presence in the memorial of Communion" were disloyal to the Church of England.<sup>177</sup> Canon Ware was giving a timely reminder that many rank-and-file, non-ritualist clergy, Low Churchmen as well as High Churchmen, believed and taught some version or other of the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Eucharist.<sup>178</sup>

Before Convocation dispersed, there was disagreement about who should have the right - or duty - to complain about the conduct of worship. George Hamilton, the

Tractarian Archdeacon of Lindisfarne, considered he had good relationships with his own parishioners, but he would prefer that only Communicants received a statutory power to complain. After all, he argued, there were too many people around who called themselves Churchmen, but never came to Church; and these could use the right simply to annoy clergy and cause them the expense of a law-suit.<sup>179</sup> However, Canon Henry Tristram, Proctor for Durham, thought Hamilton was unduly alarmed. Clergy should remember, he said, that they were the servants of the laity; and lay folk ought to have the right, as parishioners, to put a case to their bishop.<sup>180</sup> William Lake, the Dean of Durham, agreed with Canon Tristram, saying that clergy should not exclude laity, and that Convocation itself "would earn respect if seen to be encouraging parishioners to have and to use the right to have their feelings consulted."<sup>181</sup>

The stress on lay rights is significant. Convocation had debated a motion, only the month before, recommending that lay representatives be elected to approve the decisions of Clergy-in-Convocation.<sup>182</sup> This was an ecclesiastical gesture towards the on-going democratisation process in Britain, which had taken a major step forward in the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1867. It was also a hint of the groundswell of feeling in the Church of the need for a consultative body composed of bishops, clergy and laity - an awareness fostered greatly by the Church Congresses that had now met annually for twelve years, and by the more recently formed Diocesan Conferences of clergy and laity.

In the event, York Convocation agreed, as a compromise, that if a bishop "be put in motion by a complaint" then it should be through the relevant archdeacon, rural dean, or

patron - provided he was a member of the Church of England  
183 - or the Church or Chapel warden, or three resident  
parishioners who were communicants. However, the Public  
Worship Regulation Act when passed narrowed down the  
complainant group still further to: archdeacon,  
churchwardens, or any three parishioners. It also  
required the archbishops to appoint a barrister or ex-  
judge of the provincial courts of Canterbury and York to  
try ritual cases; appeals were to go to the Judicial  
Committee of the Privy Council; and - very importantly -  
bishops were to have the right to veto proceedings.

Passed on 7 August 1874, the Act came into force the  
following March and very soon demonstrated a long  
established fact: that it is impossible to change people's  
beliefs, consciences and attitudes by legislation alone.  
Only new situations, new insights, and new challenges will  
effect such changes. However, one great benefit accrued  
from Archbishop Tait's determination to "test the water"  
and to seek to end the doctrinal and ritual controversy by  
statute: it forced the Church to explore other and better  
ways of solving its authority problems than through  
punitive legislation.

An excellent example of this type of exploration in  
the north came from Canon E.J. Randolph, Vicar of  
Dunnington near York (and later to be Chancellor of the  
diocese). In January, 1875, between the passing of the  
Act and its coming into force, he addressed a meeting of  
clergy in York Minster on 'The due limits of parliamentary  
interference with the doctrine or discipline of the Church  
of England.' He considered whether Convocation was in  
danger of being silenced by the archbishops in Parliament;  
whether it was right for the State to intervene without  
the previous agreement of the Church in Convocation; and

whether the Public Worship Regulation Act broke "the compact" between Church and State. Randolph suggested that "episcopal legislation-mania incited Parliament to treat Aestheticism [that is, ritualism] as a crime;" and feared that the time had arrived when the episcopate had too much power, thus encouraging the bishops to act independently of the rest of the clergy. After these challenging thoughts, Canon Randolph ended with a common sense call for

internal peace and quietness, more of bearing and forbearing, live and let live....[For] why should not those who value Aestheticism have it unmolested, whilst those who value it not remain without it? It should not be the ground of uncharitable dispute.<sup>184</sup>

Richard Blunt, Archdeacon of the East Riding,<sup>185</sup> still rather conservative, but rapidly moving towards his campaign for comprehensiveness in the Church, expressed thanks that his Archdeaconry suffered little of the "bitterness and polemical rancour which is elsewhere keenly felt,"<sup>186</sup> then seized the nettle of the Public Worship Regulation Act saying:

Its distastefulness to many, I think, is due less to the principle it affirms, or the general character of its provisions - though one or two appear anomalous - than to the discussions which accompanied its passage through Parliament.<sup>187</sup>

But he immediately voiced the hope that there would be few occasions when parishioners would wish to use the Act; that those few would accept the diocesan bishop's judgment and not insist on taking matters further; and that the operation of the Act would "not narrow that just

comprehensiveness which is the blessed heritage of our National Church."<sup>188</sup>

Just before the Public Worship Regulation Act came into force, York Convocation held a mammoth debate on the Ornaments Rubric and the Eastward Position.<sup>189</sup> Similar debates took place at intervals until the early 1880's.<sup>190</sup> None could reach any satisfactory conclusion from the point of view of encouraging Parliament to change or clarify the law concerning ornaments, ritual and vestments. But gradually, over the next ten years, the need to legislate receded as more clergy introduced vestments, adopted the eastward position, and introduced other "ritualist" practices that had previously caused dismay to many Churchmen. Those who did not innovate generally became more tolerant of others who did.

As a preview of the transformation in attitudes that went on in the Church during the years after 1875, the 1875 York Convocation debate on ornaments and the eastward position provided a fascinating, almost prophetic atmosphere which was more important than what proved - inevitably - to be rather a sterile debate about what to do, or not to do, about the Ornaments Rubric. During the debate, several clergy mentioned practices that were clearly already widely taken for granted. For example, Edward Johnson, Archdeacon of Chester, referred to the surpliced choir, "now quite widely accepted", and to church organs, reminding members that Puritans would have been startled by both.<sup>191</sup> Benjamin Cowie, Dean of Manchester, said that his own rural deanery had passed a resolution, proposed and seconded by two laymen, opposing any alterations to rubrics, for fear that any new ones would go towards exclusion rather than comprehensiveness, thus ruling out practices accepted happily in recent

years.<sup>192</sup> Canon Howard, Proctor for York Chapter, revealed that he had adopted the eastward position since 1839 when he was a Low Church curate and put no doctrinal significance on the stance. He had now become much more High Church; but would continue to adopt the eastward position simply because he always had, and not because it was "High Church practice" to do so.<sup>193</sup>

Canon Simmons, Proctor for the East Riding, reminded members about comprehensiveness. The Act of Uniformity did not require all to do the same thing, but to "come to a common agreement as to what they should do;"<sup>194</sup> and he was supported by Bishop Harvey Goodwin of Carlisle, himself a member of the Ritual Commission, who said the Commission had aimed to relax, not to tighten, the laws governing the Church. "Rubrics are made for man, not men for Rubrics,"<sup>195</sup> he warned.

Also in the 1875 debate there was acknowledgement that free-ranging discussion in other bodies of the chattering Church was contributing towards greater understanding of the principle of comprehensiveness in the Church. Hence, for instance, John Saul Howson, the Dean of Chester, paid tribute to the help Convocation received from the views that permeated from ruri-decanal meetings, and mixed conferences of both clergy and laity.<sup>196</sup>

Meanwhile, increasing numbers of Low Churchmen were adopting the surplice as the normal garb for taking all types of service in their churches. By 1883, the Record estimated that over one third of parsons in London diocese were wearing the surplice when preaching,<sup>197</sup> so considerably more were probably wearing it when celebrating Communion. However, in York Diocese two years earlier, the progress of the surplice over the preaching

gown was already considerably in advance of London, despite York Diocese having had far less of an upsurge of ritualism than London. The York Articles of Enquiry for 1881, covering 259 parishes in the Redcar, Thirsk, Hull, York and Sheffield areas, revealed that only 34 parsons were persisting in wearing the gown when preaching: a mere 13%. Of those, 20 were in the Sheffield area, noted for its Evangelicalism.<sup>198</sup> In so far as the abandonment of the gown is a useful indicator, Anne Bentley suggests that the Evangelical cause was "at its nadir" in 1883, after twenty years of litigation,<sup>199</sup> and York Diocese appears to have been in the forefront of this development.

Twenty years after the passing of the Public Worship Regulation Act, comprehensiveness within the Church, the need for which some northern Churchmen had urged from the outset of the doctrinal and ritual controversies, was widely accepted as necessary, and even as a virtue. However, during the first seven years after the passing of the Act, there was a crop of ritual cases, mostly instigated by the Church Association, whose members could hardly be blamed for rejoicing in the new law.

Archbishop Thomson was not directly involved in litigation in the York Diocese, as no ritual cases came to his Consistory Court; and he eventually mellowed in his attitude towards ritualism, especially as profound problems outside the Church loomed larger than ever in the 1880's. But meantime, in 1878, he made one of his gestures of opposition to ritualists when he refused to license a curate - Father Foster, a member of the Society of the Holy Cross - to work with the Anglo-Catholic Vicar of St. Martin's, Scarborough. Thomson had made the licence conditional on the incumbent modifying his ritual practices. When he refused, the Archbishop refused the

licence: a simple and effective expedient, leaving the incumbents of York Diocese in no doubt about the source of authority in such matters.<sup>200</sup>

As is well known, five priests went to gaol as a result of the Public Worship Regulation Act.<sup>201</sup> The most famous and protracted case occurred in the northern province, and presented Archbishop Thomson with testing problems. In December 1878, the Church Association accused S.R. Green, Vicar of St. John's, Miles Platting, Manchester, of eleven illegalities in regular use at St. John's. Bishop Fraser, anti-ritualist though he was, asked Green to give up only two of these practices: the use of vestments and the mixed chalice. He refused, but asked Bishop Fraser to exercise his veto. Despite a strong petition from Green's parishioners, the Bishop refused. Apart from Fraser's dislike of ritualism, the suggestion has been made that his refusal was caused, at least in part, by Green's tendency to be flippant. For instance, he had claimed that the incense used at St. John's was not for doctrinal reasons, but to counter "the effluvia from the chemical works."<sup>202</sup> However, the most likely reason for the Bishop's refusal to exercise his veto is the strong view he expressed in York Convocation in April 1881, a month after Green went to Lancaster Gaol. Fraser wanted rid of the Ornaments Rubric altogether, and "a clear and distinct rule in this matter established."<sup>203</sup> Meantime, he regarded Green as flouting Church order.

The clergy of Manchester petitioned Fraser for Green's release; but he was as determined as the recalcitrant priest not to give way. The longer Green stayed in prison - and he was there eventually from March 1881 until November 1882 - the more difficult it was, of course,



even for extreme Protestants, to go on believing that either litigation or statute law held the answers to the Church's internal authority and discipline problems. Nor did it make any moral sense to persecute men who were, whatever their other faults, generally regarded as upright and faithful pastors in their parishes. So protest spread. For example, Helmsley Deanery Chapter in Cleveland Archdeaconry, unanimously resolved its

hearty sympathy with Mr. Green in his imprisonment as the result of a prosecution for obedience to plain directions of the Book of Common Prayer, and in his suffering for the constitutional liberties of the Church.<sup>204</sup>

Another resolution, passed by Pocklington Deanery Chapter in the East Riding, pushed the matter from Green's imprisonment into the general undesirability of the Public Worship Regulating Act, stating

its unfeigned regret at the imprisonment of the Rev. S.R. Green in consequence of his conscientious convictions in matters of religion, and that his case, like others, furnishes strong reasons for the repeal of the Public Worship Regulation Act.<sup>205</sup>

Such resolutions showed the synodical apparatus operating well. In Convocation, too, sympathy for the ritualists was growing, together with the principles of forbearance and comprehensiveness already noted. In the course of yet another debate on the Ornaments Rubric in York Convocation in April 1881, Canon Hornby of Manchester pointed out that the High Church party, many of whom were not ritualists, had defended ritualists simply because forced to do so by the hard line of the Church

Association. The ritualists had had unfair treatment, he believed, "otherwise, the energy, devotedness, and faith with which they applied themselves to their work" would have received credit.<sup>206</sup>

In the same session of Convocation, Dean Purey-Cust of York illustrated the changing mood. He made a memorable appeal for tolerance and the settling of party differences, proposing a motion to call on the northern bishops to "discourage, as far as may be, proceedings in courts of law concerning matters of ritual." He then appealed to the Church press, of whatever party, to be less aggressive and contentious, and more disposed to conciliation and charity. Finally - the most remarkable part of his appeal - he spoke about conciliation between the English Church Union and the Church Association, to neither of which had he ever belonged. He wanted both organisations to drop their antagonism, to work "with a common object," and to become reconciled enough to receive Holy Communion together.<sup>207</sup> No-one, however moderate and tolerant five or six years earlier, could have envisaged such a suggestion being made in Convocation, let alone listened to.

In February 1882 York Convocation heard the Prolocutor of the Lower House, now Benjamin Cowie, Dean of Manchester - the diocese most affected by the Green case - propose the motion that

the continued imprisonment of the Rev. S.R. Green...is a perplexity and a scandal to me and to the Church at large.

The perplexity, Cowie explained, was that if Green had deserved some punishment for illegal conduct, he had

surely had enough. And the scandal was that Green was a parson, albeit holding strong views, who had been ready to evangelise "in the darkest places of our towns." Mr. Green needed encouragement not gaol, he said, and the whole affair hindered the Church's ministry.<sup>208</sup> After much discussion, the Dean's motion was carried by 38 votes to 18 - a proportion of two to one:<sup>209</sup> an interesting comment on the lack of influence wielded over Convocation members in this matter by Archbishop Thomson and Bishop Fraser.

But Fraser asserted his authority so adamantly outside Convocation that nine more months elapsed before the "martyr" gained his release. Not until the bishop had the Lord Chancellor's assurance that the benefice of Miles Platting was legally void, and another incumbent could therefore be appointed, would he apply for Green's release under the terms of the Public Worship Regulation Act.

Partly owing to the distaste caused by the incarceration of S.R. Green and the four other ritualist priests, and partly through the gradually increasing trends towards comprehensiveness and sacramentalism in the Church over many years, by the time Green was released the Evangelical party in the Church of England was itself largely against the use of litigation. In order to survive in the 1880's Evangelicals were seeking unity with the rest of the Church of England; and, almost incredibly, some Evangelicals were even adopting ritualist externals in their worship, another indication of the growing emphasis on Eucharistic worship.<sup>210</sup> As a result, membership of the Church Association was declining, as was its public image.<sup>211</sup> Hence, compared with the spate of litigation the Association had embarked upon back in 1867, and its jubilation at the passing of the Public Worship

Regulation Act in 1874, the message in the 1884 Church Association Report showed remarkable pragmatism:

In the name of charity and peace, we are counselled to let the Ritualists alone...and to consider them, instead of 'Ritualist foes', as 'Ritualist brethren' [simply] erring in excess....Present convenience dictates a present peace.<sup>212</sup>

However, the last ritualist parson to be imprisoned - and in the northern province, too - was James Bell Cox, who spent sixteen days in prison as late as 1887. Cox had succeeded Charles Parnell as Vicar of St. Margaret's, Toxteth, and was suspended by the Evangelical John Ryle, recently appointed Bishop of Liverpool, for ritual excesses. Like Bishop Fraser, who was now dead, Ryle was respected other than for his anachronistic way of dealing with ritualists. Again like Fraser in the Green case, Bishop Ryle refused to use the veto to release Cox,<sup>213</sup> thus demonstrating how nebulous ecclesiastical law and authority still were, and how much could depend, not only on a parson's whims in a parish, but also on a bishop's prejudices about the way to run a diocese. Ironically, however, the hard line attitudes of Fraser and Ryle, as well as of the Church Association, aided the spread of conciliatory attitudes in the Church. The need to accept the Church of England as embracing a multitude of different views on theology, doctrine, order and worship was becoming paramount. Amidst the turmoil and frequent bitterness of the 1860's, 1870's, and early 1880's, therefore, a firm base of common sense and mutual acceptance had evolved - a truce between passionate defence of "orthodoxy" and private judgment - that would ensure the truth of Joseph Lightfoot's prophetic words, spoken in 1879 when he became Bishop of Durham:

I venture to think that future generations will look upon these miserable squabbles about vestments with the same wonder and pity with which we regard the disputes respecting the shape of the tonsure in the Middle Ages.<sup>214</sup>

PART II THE CHURCH'S LOSS OF AUTHORITY IN COMMUNITY AND  
NATION

CHAPTER 3

FROM MONOPOLY TO FREE MARKET COMPETITION: THE PROCESS OF  
DE-CHURCHMENT<sup>1</sup>

(i) "A complex, silent revolution"

In his Primary Charge as Archbishop of York, William Thomson spoke with concern about the de-Churchment of large sections of the younger generation. For instance, in Sheffield there were boys

almost grown up...as ignorant as if living on the Zambesi. Lads of 17 or 18 do not know the name of Christ, of the Bible, of the Queen....What is true of Sheffield is likely to be true of Middlesbrough district where the employment is of the same kind.<sup>2</sup>

The archbishop realised that the problem was not confined to large industrial towns. There was urgent need for improvements in agricultural districts, too, where often

the boys leave school at the age of 9 or 10, that they may earn a little. A few years later they are hired as regular servants in the farmhouse. Those who know them speak of the 'utter want of moral or religious training' that pervades this class....They too... are ignorant of the very plainest elements of religion, [and] are growing up without any regard for character, Church, or worship.<sup>3</sup>

This situation was not new. For many years even before 1851, when the famous Religious Census publicised that half the English population did not attend Church, the Church of England had been competing for authority over the souls of England, not only with the forces of "darkness" (which might well have included the exploitation, and resultant ignorance, of the working classes), but also with other Christian denominations. Many of the Church of England's authority problems in the period stemmed from the presence of various forms of institutionalised, denominational Christianity as consumer commodities in a free market society of competing operators.<sup>4</sup> In other words, private judgment and the freedom to choose gave new power not only to the individual, but also new incentives to the various Christian Churches to attract the choosers into "buying" their wares. No longer did the Church of England hold a state-subsidised monopoly, by means of which to provide a rather inefficient welfare service for the bodily and spiritual needs of all English people.

In 1851, the Census indicated that Church attendance was already grave in some areas of the York Diocese, and at least serious elsewhere. On the Census Sunday, as in many other parts of England, less than half the population attended any place of worship, for example, in the Cleveland (North Riding) and East Riding Archdeaconries, and in York City. Of those who did attend, under half went to a Church of England parish church. This demonstrated to clergy, when Horace Mann's Census Report appeared in 1854, that if they were unaware of it before, they had now to recognise their role as competitors in the religion market. [See Table 2 below] In the mid-1860's, as in 1851, many clergymen in York Diocese, and not only in the largest

Share of church attendance across the Churches, 1851:

N. RIDING: 44.5% of total pop. were present at worship;  
C of E attendance = 19.5% of total pop.;

The proportion or "market share" of the 44.5% that went to the most numerously attended services =

C of E	43.9%;
Prot/Diss.	52.9%;
R.C.	3.3%

E.R. & YORK: 38.7% of total pop. were present at worship;  
C of E attendance = 15.2% of total pop.;

The proportion or "market share" of the 38.7% of pop. that went to the most numerously attended services =

C of E	39.3%;
Prot/Diss.	56.6%;
R.C.	3.8%

Table 2 Comparison of C of E/Dissent/R.C. Church Attendance in North Riding, East Riding & York City, 1851.

[Source: Religious Census Report, 1854, Table N]

conurbations, were indicating that considerably more people in the diocese did not regularly attend [See Table 3 below] Church of England churches than did. The Church's



Approximate percentage<sup>5</sup> of population regularly attending C of E in the archdeaonries of York Diocese, 1865:

Part (i)

CLEVELAND: c.24.0% of pop. attended C of E.

EAST RIDING: c.21.6% of pop. attended C of E.

YORK/W.R.: c.20.4% of pop. attended C of E.

DIOCESAN AVERAGE: c.22.0% of pop. attended C of E.

Part (ii)

Low attendance was not limited to highly populated, urban parishes. THUS: Excluding the more urbanised and/or industrialised parishes in Middlesbrough, Thornaby, Hull, Drypool, Sculcoates, and Sheffield makes little difference to archdeaconry and diocesan attendance pointers:

CLEVELAND: 24.6% (Middlesbrough/Thornaby av. c.4.6%)

EAST RIDING: 21.7% (Hull/Drypool/Sculcoates av. c.9.6%)

YORK/W.R: 22.0% (Sheffield av. c.8%)

DIOCESAN AVERAGE % = c.22.7% (i.e., only 0.7% increase).

Table 3 Average/Percentage Church Attendance Pointers - York Diocese, 1865

[Source: V/R 1865]

power to draw people to worship was obviously tenuous.

The 1881 Church and Chapel Attendance Census, conducted by local newspapers in 77 towns, suggests that the pattern presented in 1851 and 1865 still continued. The combined

Northern Towns - Church/Chapel Attendance, 1881:

Part (i) Yorkshire Towns:

[Key to Columns:

Column 1: Total population of town.

Column 2: Total of attendances at worship in Church and Chapel shown as % of population.

Column 3: % of total attendances that involved C of E.

Column 4: % of C of E attendances in population.]

Column 5: Indicates whether figures are based on morning, [= m] afternoon, [= a] evening [= e] attendances.]

NOTE - The Nonconformist and Independent warned:

It will be seen at a glance that the statistics having been obtained by different methods, uniformity of treatment is impossible. Some of them contain only a single attendance....Some include and others exclude Sunday-school attendance....But from this diverse material we have endeavoured to draw such conclusions as circumstances would permit.

Town	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Hull	154,250	40.9	21.0	8.6	me
Mexboro'	6,271	51.0	14.3	7.3	mae [Table 4,
Rother'm	34,782	32.2	33.5	10.8	me <u>part (i)]</u>

Scarboro'	30,484	64.2	32.1	20.6	me
Sheffield	284,410	31.4	38.3	12.0	mae
Barnsley	29,789	33.6	26.1	8.8	me
Bradford	194,467	36.6	13.3	4.8	me

Part (ii) Other Northern Towns:

Town	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Accrington	31,435	24.0	28.4	6.8	m
Barrow	47,276	32.8	28.4	9.3	mae
Bolton	108,963	32.1	39.5	12.7	me
Colne	10,312	48.6	21.4	10.4	me
Darlington	35,102	35.3	28.5	10.0	me
Egremont	5,976	39.3	27.4	10.7	me
Gateshead	65,873	9.5	32.6	3.1	m
Liverpool	552,425	26.4	37.3	9.8	me
Nantwich	7,488	55.8	?	?	me
Newcastle	149,549	15.1	28.6	4.3	m
Padiham	8,436	36.1	17.7	6.4	me
Runcorn	15,133	62.4	21.1	13.2	mae
Stockport	59,544	20.2	26.7	5.4	e
Stockton	41,040	35.7	35.2	12.6	mae
Warrington	40,960	32.1	34.0	10.9	mae
Warrington*	8,000	31.1	54.0	16.8	mae
Whitehaven	19,321	35.9	31.5	11.3	mae
Widnes	24,919	16.6	43.5	7.2	mae
Worksop	11,625	44.4	25.0	11.1	mae
Wrexham	12,333	66.9	31.2	20.9	me

Table 4 Comparison of Church/Chapel Attendance in North of England, 1881, Parts (i) & (ii)

Source: Supplement to the Nonconformist & Independent, 2/2/1882.

total of Nonconformist attendances in 1881 usually exceeded those in the Church of England;<sup>6</sup> and the total of different people who worshipped (that is not the total attendances they made) amounted to more than half the population in only 13 of the 77 places surveyed.<sup>7</sup> Five towns in York Diocese were covered in this survey, [See Table 4 Part (i) above] together with two other Yorkshire towns (Barnsley and Bradford), and eighteen other northern towns. [See Table 4 part (ii) above]

Table 4 parts (i) and (ii), for all that the Nonconformist and Independent rightly warned that these statistics are only a rough guide, suggest the continuance of a familiar pattern, with Church of England attendance being consistently less than Nonconformist attendance - an important indication that Church had less "pull" on parishioners, where worship was concerned, than Chapel. But there is another equally significant feature to notice. First, there is no consistent pattern that relates the density of population to high or low Church attendance. Thus, for example, only Scarborough (pop. 30,484) and Wrexham (pop. 12,333) achieved Church of England attendances of more than 15% of the total population (with 20% and 20.9% respectively). Bradford (nearly 200,000 population), and Newcastle-on-Tyne (c.150,000) had very low percentages of the population attending the Church of England - all under 5%. But towns of much more varied size only just beat them: Stockport (nearly 60,000) had 5.4%; Padiham (only 8,436) had 6.4%; and Accrington (31,435) had 6.8%. On the other hand, Liverpool (552,425) had 9.8%; Hull (154,250) had 8.6%; and Sheffield (284,410) had a remarkable 12.0%. In fact, Sheffield's proportion of Anglican attendances to population put it in sixth place amongst all the northern towns surveyed.

However, it is very important to reiterate that Church attendance figures require cautious interpretation. As they were not uniformly collected, any uniform treatment of them must also be cautiously done. Moreover - and most important - on their own they do not necessarily present an accurate picture of the strength of religion and Christianity in any one place, particularly where the "lower orders" are concerned.

Sunday School Scholars in all Churches, 1851:

	<u>Nos. of S.S. Scholars</u>	<u>Propn. % of Pop.</u>
YORKS. W.R.	224,018	16.9%
" N.R.	26,412	12.2%
" E.R.	23,267	10.5%
HULL	8,112	9.5%
SHEFFIELD	14,919	11.0%

Table 5      Total Sunday School Scholars for All  
Denominations in Yorkshire, 1851

[Source:    British Parliamentary Papers, (BPP) vol. 11,  
'Population', Table 23, p. lxxvi]

Similarly, there is a danger in giving too much significance to the poor attendance at Sunday Schools revealed by the 1851 Census - except to point out that all the Churches considered Sunday School work to be important.<sup>9</sup> Poor attendance was therefore a measure of the

Sunday School Scholars, York Diocese, 1894-5:

[Key: I = Infants; B = Boys; G = Girls.]

CLEVELAND                    I 4,281) out of pop. of 287,786  
                                  B 6,009)  
                                  G 6,898) = 5.9%

E. RIDING                    I 5,839) out of pop. of 376,829  
                                  B 7,824)  
                                  G 9,122) = 6.0%

YORK                         I 5,712) out of pop. of 287,009  
                                  B 8,144)  
                                  G 8,757) = 7.9%

SHEFFIELD                 I 9,185) out of pop. of 540,432  
                                  B 13,321)  
                                  G 14,695) = 5.2%

Diocesan Total of Sunday School Scholars, 1894-5:

I 25,017) = (Total of 99,787  
G 35,298) (out of a pop.  
B 39,472) (of 1,483,050

DIOCESAN AV.:         6.7%

Table 6         Church of England Sunday School Attendance  
relative to Population in York Diocese, 1894-5

[Source: Bp. Dio. 11/4, 1894-5]

lack of success of all the competing Churches with their policy of Sunday School provision, indicating a lack of authority over both parents and children. [See Table 5 above] There is a significant similarity of attendance figures for Hull, Sheffield and rural East Riding in 1851, (when Hull and Sheffield were calculated separately); and the figures for rural Cleveland and West Yorkshire, with its mining and manufacturing towns, suggest that there was not much difference of attitude towards Sunday Schools, taking the county as a whole. It was clearly wrong to assume, as many Victorian Churchmen tended to, that responses to the Church came more readily in rural parishes than in industrialised/urban ones.

At the end of the period, attendance in Anglican Sunday Schools was poor. [See Table 6 above] This was partly for the same reasons that it was poor at the beginning of the period,<sup>10</sup> but also because there had been an increasing acceptance in many places that Sunday Schools were out of fashion and other means of outreach to the young had to be employed. But the attendance figures are still remarkably consistent across the (now) four rather different archdeaconries in York Diocese.

York Convocation's first ever discussion on "the Masses and the Church" (in 1884) came just after Archbishop Thomson's assertion that almost the greatest silent revolution ever to take place was going on all around.<sup>11</sup> Hindsight reveals that this "silent revolution" involved an enormous complexity of movements for which historians and sociologists later invented a new vocabulary: words like industrialisation, urbanisation, collectivisation, democratisation, commercialisation, and - as far as the Church's relationship to society was concerned - secularisation, de-Christianisation and marginalisation.

Sometimes this terminology is helpful. At other times it can cloak the complexity of the movements that it describes.

The debate has already received some attention in the Introduction to this thesis and, as the main purpose is to examine authority problems in the Church of England, it must suffice here to make only three points, briefly, by way of clarification. First, the term "de-Churchment" is used rather than the vague term "secularisation" or the over-strong term "de-Christianisation", to describe the situation that confronted clergy when large sections of the community had deserted from active Church life, and especially from corporate worship.

Second, it is important to bear in mind that the factors that had caused the de-Churchment process were not simply a matter of Nonconformity gaining popularity at the expense of the Church of England. For a de-Churchment process from Nonconformity to Nothingarianism began soon after that from the Church of England to Chapel; and thereafter there was some further parallel de-Churchment involving the movement of people from the Church direct to Nothingarianism. Whilst this de-Churchment, both from Church and Chapel, was caused in part by the inability of all institutionalised forms of Christianity to sell their wares sufficiently well, or by their insistence on trying to sell inappropriate products to people who desperately needed something very different, there were other vitally important causes of the process over which neither Church nor Chapel had much control, if any. The arguments about these "societal factors" will continue for a long time yet. But the fact that they are controversial does not detract from the importance of their contribution to the growing estrangement from organised, institutionalised Christianity



that went on well before the start of the period, and whose effects continued throughout the period.

Third, many working class people became estranged from the Churches without exercising much choice in the matter. For these people, the exercise of private judgment was very limited, except within the secret depths of their minds. The choice was largely made for the lower orders according to the class they were born into, where the whole business of keeping body and soul together, ironically, seemed to bear little relation to what any of the Churches were doing or saying. This was because a purely "spiritual" message is of little help to most people who are below the poverty line. Nevertheless, it is possible to sympathise with those parsons and ministers of all Churches who believed that the most important thing they were called to undertake was the preaching of a "spiritual" message, part of which involved the necessity of joining in corporate worship. But, unfortunately for these usually sincere and hardworking men, the message was not only largely irrelevant because the "targets" were too preoccupied with survival, it was possibly irrelevant also in terms of losing sight of the heart of Christianity. And it can be argued that indifference to an irrelevant message - however the indifference might have arisen - was not so disastrous as it seemed at the time. If, after all, people were trying to be truly human, despite the often dehumanising conditions in which they lived and worked, and to respect and care for each other, and to sustain Judaeo-Christian ethics in an increasingly competitive and commercial society, they were possibly nearer the heart of Christianity than were the purveyors - or the buyers - of a purely "spiritual Gospel".

So perhaps the perpetuation of the traditional pastoral role of parson and minister, aided more and more during this period by lay people - district visitors, and the like - and also the recognition that a few parsons and ministers were in the prophetic mould, denouncing the evils which lay at the heart of society itself and clamouring for fundamental reform in the quality of human life, were more important than concentrating on driving or coaxing parishioners into worship in their parish churches - insisting, meantime, that they should believe the "right" things about "the Faith". In short, "religionless Christianity", which threatened slowly to emerge during the period, helped by "Socialism" (including "Christian Socialism"), seems to have been already heralding the eventual replacement of strongly institutionalised and competing Churches. But the institutional Churches battled on, with their orthodoxies largely fixed in an halcyon past when everyone was (at least outwardly) a "believer" and everyone, so it was thought, went to church.

Also, in the second half of the 19th century, when the effects of large-scale de-Churchment were becoming clearer and were slowly receiving more attention, several significant steps were being taken forward after all. During this hectic and controversial period some de-Churchmented people themselves were overtaking the Churches' most radical leaders, by recognising, however faintly,

the world's coming of age [which is] no longer an occasion for polemics and apologetics...[but realising] God is teaching us that we must live as men who can get along very well without him....The process of coming of age amounts to the abandonment of a false conception of God and a clearing of the decks for the God of the

Bible, who conquers power and space in the world by his weakness.<sup>12</sup>

Although active Church and Chapel membership was stabilising during the period for the most part, the de-Churchment already suffered by institutionalised Christianity had marginalised the Church in many places. But it seems that the authoritative moral and ethical influence of the Christian tradition within English society was not yet seriously marginalised except, perhaps, in the important fields covered by "commercialisation" and "industrialisation".<sup>13</sup>

It is also important to bear in mind that a degree of indifference towards the Church and some neglect of it has probably been a permanent feature in the history of any "Christian" country. As David L. Edwards says,

there have been no ages of faith - if we have in mind a whole society's acceptance of a religious faith....Among the mass of the population religious observance and the profession of religious beliefs would seem to have been more or less unthinking. Popular religion was largely the product of convention, [wishing] to be like others rather than to be like God.<sup>14</sup>

More specifically Keith Thomas states that "orthodox religion had never had complete hold on English people;" and by the 17th century, he claims, it was debatable whether some parts of the population had any religion of any sort.<sup>15</sup>

Alfred Gatty, one of Yorkshire's wisest and most faithful Victorian parsons, for over fifty years Vicar of

Ecclesfield just north of Sheffield, and for most of those years Rural Dean as well, wrote in 1853 about the changing tasks that confronted any parson in Yorkshire's industrial areas.<sup>16</sup> Such a man was beset by a "tide of population... of an unmanageable level, [making] his proper post...altogether untenable." Immigration had overwhelmed the Church of England in the industrial parts of England, said Gatty, who maintained, nevertheless, that in recent years the Church had begun to proclaim its message again "to good purpose" in the most densely populated areas.<sup>17</sup>

Dr. Gatty was being a little ambivalent. It was true that in some highly industrialised and urbanised areas the parson, with a gradually increasing body of lay support, both men and women, managed to foster good relations with a population in which the majority no longer attended Church regularly. As Gatty himself reported twelve years later (in 1865): in Ecclesfield "the poor are inveterately bad Church-comers, though always grateful for ministerial attentions."<sup>18</sup> It could be argued, with some accuracy, that this situation pointed to the marginalisation of the Church as an institution in Ecclesfield. But it would be less accurate to argue that it had involved the de-Christianisation or secularisation of the lives of Gatty's parishioners. It is more accurate to say that the people of Ecclesfield had deserted the institutionalised and established Church, particularly its acts of worship; and it is easier and more precise (albeit inelegant!) to say that these people were clearly "de-Churchmented". They did not consider attendance at church, nor listening to the preaching of the Word, nor the recitation of ancient creeds in company with other members of the Church, in a building built and set aside for those purposes, as an important feature of their lives. But it is likely that many of these people who scarcely ever worshipped in church

retained aspects of Christian belief and practice and would, for example, especially resort to quite regular prayer.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, turning away from the Church's worship did not prevent them from remaining friendly in their attitude towards the Church as a body, nor to its local leadership. Nevertheless, the extent of de-Churchment that had taken place in industrial, urbanised England by the time of the 1851 Census, would never be fully recovered.<sup>20</sup>

Soon after the appearance of Mann's Report in 1854, Archdeacon Churton addressed his Cleveland clergy and questioned the Report's accuracy when dealing with the proportions of religious or irreligious people in the community. He claimed that the proportion of attenders and non-attenders at Church could scarcely be gleaned accurately from the information presented. However, he suggested that the most accurate part of the Report was that dealing with the original purpose of the Census, namely the amount of accommodation available in churches and chapels compared with population needs. These figures, he said, confirmed what was "previously suspected or known": the paradox that England's large towns had insufficient seats, yet a lack of worshippers too.<sup>21</sup>

But lack of accommodation in churches in large towns was only one ancillary factor leading to de-Churchment. For the de-Churchment process - and many of the problems associated with it - was not confined to the industrial town parish about which Alfred Gatty wrote in 1853. At the time he wrote, Gatty still held a common impression that the position of the rural parson was relatively much rosier where church attendance was concerned. As he said himself, books depicting the life of the clergy usually portrayed

the quiet virtues and patriarchal habits of country parsons [in villages where] the pastor was king and priest, an influential chief of society, and an undisputed oracle at church.<sup>22</sup>

However, by the mid-1860's, a significant proportion of clergy in the rural parishes of York Diocese would already question that description. There was little joy in being "an undisputed oracle at church" if hardly anyone was there. And if the people were not inclined to go to church, they were not likely to hold the parson in any great awe, although they might respect him, or even like him, if he was sympathetic to their needs.

W.R. Ward pin-points the early French Revolutionary period in England as the significant breeding time of movements towards independence from traditional superiors - including independence from local domination by Anglican clergy. As two leading Congregational ministers of the early 19th century pointed out, there grew "a more common idea among [the] inferior classes that it is reasonable [that] everyone should judge for himself in matters of religion." Thus, where the local aristocrat or squire laid down no prohibition, the lower orders went "more readily to hear a minister of a different denomination from their own."<sup>23</sup> As a result, during the 1790's there was large-scale de-Churchment towards Wesleyanism and, from 1811 onwards, towards Primitive Methodism, especially in the East and West Ridings of the county.

Besides the attractions of Dissent, however, there were several other factors at work which contributed to the end of the Church of England's monopolist position.<sup>24</sup> Some of these factors were "inside" the Church itself and, apart from insufficient church accommodation (usually a problem

only in urbanised areas), included unsuitable and badly located churches; boring worship; unpopular parsons; class divisions, sometimes still accentuated in mid-century by pew appropriation and rents, and the social gulf between parson and people; and sometimes insufficient finance, and/or insufficient clergy and other workers, to remedy the situation.

Other factors were "outside" the Church and, in addition to the counter-attraction of Dissent and the increased use of private judgment in religion, included the confusion and half-truths of scientism and the growing respectability of agnosticism; the massive decrease in squirearchical control of the working classes, together with loss of interest, on the squire's part, in living permanently in a rural area or in maintaining his alliance with the parson. Lastly, but by no means least in importance in York Diocese, there were the effects of an enormous amount of movement of working class people, whether permanently or as labourers on a year's contract, sometimes far away from the parishes in which they were born and had spent their early childhood. The effects of migration on Church attendance, let alone on behaviour and attitudes, were often disastrous, whether the movement was to large towns or to villages. And it is important to stress that most working class migrants must have been the exception to the rule concerning the increased use of private judgment in Victorian times. For them, economic necessity, rather than personal choice, determined both their physical and religious lives. Once economic forces led them to be hired, they found that many employers gave them no opportunity, whether as adults or children (and whether they were inclined or not) to attend Church or Sunday School.

Without doubt, during the period many clergy were becoming aware that the widespread de-Churchment process had brought the most serious of all the challenges to their authority in the parishes. And in many parts of the York Diocese that challenge was made the more complex because of migration, and not least by the annual hiring system. Whilst the Church of England's chattering bodies were coming to terms with those challenges to authority brought by the increased exercise of private judgment within the Church itself, and whilst the Church was gradually accepting the need to be comprehensive and to embrace differing views about theology, doctrine and worship, it was considerably more difficult for Church leaders, whether at national, diocesan or parish levels, to accept that the Church had lost its age-old monopoly in religion owing to pressures from outside. Competing with Dissent, Indifferentism and the small pockets of Secularism that arose, was a hard task for the clergy to handle.

In responding to de-Churchment, clergy had three main courses open to them. They could face the fact that the trend in society was away from regular worship in the parish church and react by shrugging their shoulders; or they could accept the fact and heap recriminations on the backsliders, and on those who encouraged their neglect. Or else they could seek ways of continuing to minister to those parishioners who had passed through the de-Churchment process. For all the people in a parish were still "parishioners", legally and therefore pastorally, whether regular worshippers within other denominations or utterly estranged from the Church. So long as the Church of England remained established by law, there was practical as well as legal truth in Bishop Magee's reminder (in 1860) that the Church supplied a service for everyone in a parish, and the poor parishioner had the same right to the



services of the clergyman that he had to those of the local doctor, both being "officers of the State, appointed to minister to him gratuitously."<sup>25</sup>

Very often it was difficult for clergy to know how to respond to those challenges that resulted from the Church's loss of various monopolies. Adding to the difficulties at the grass roots of the parish, it cannot have been easy for clergy to detect the de-Churchment process, whether of an individual or of parishioners generally, until it had developed to quite a serious degree. In his study of the changing role of the laity during the second half of the 19th century, Michael Roberts issued a relevant warning about the subtlety, and often the indiscernibility, of change. He pointed out that, during this period, there was a move away from the assumption that every Englishman, "by birth and baptism," belonged to the National Church, towards "the denominational assumption" that, to become a member of the Church of England, a man had to make some positive act of assent to its beliefs, and participate in its activities, preferably including worship. In other words, said Roberts, it eventually became clear that the layman's role in the Church of England stopped being involuntary and became a voluntary one. But, he rightly concluded, it is misleading to regard change as "a simple transition from one generalised state to another," because the exact point at which transition took place is impossible to define accurately.<sup>26</sup>

Put briefly, private judgment and freedom in religion implied the right to de-Churchment, whether partially or completely. And because this de-Churchment process by no means implied a wholesale rejection of Christianity - and might even have implied a strong, wholesome and meaningful continuance of personal religion - it could well be seen

as an important stage in the eventual development of 20th century "religionless Christianity". But meantime, by helping to destroy the Church of England's religious monopoly, and by thrusting it into the role of a free market competitor, the effects of the increased exercise of private judgment on the Church's authority, together with the effects of ongoing migration to seek work, were to present constant problems to clergy at all levels, and in a variety of parishes throughout the period.

(ii) From Church to Chapel

The numbers of worshippers in the pews and the effectiveness of a parson's parochial ministry were seen as inseparable, because clergy regarded regular worship as essential to a Christian.<sup>26</sup> The comments of large numbers of Yorkshire clergy in the Visitation Returns reflect the essential place of worship in the Christian scheme of things. Thus for instance, W. Smith the incumbent of Cowick, a village in Selby Deanery, expressed his frustration about church attendance, stating that in 1865 "too many go nowhere and perhaps two-thirds of the families profess something otherwise than Churchism".<sup>27</sup>

Smith's problems at Cowick are a reminder that a large amount of the de-Churchment process up to mid-century had involved an opting out of the Established Church of England - out of "Churchism" - but not out of worship in one of the Nonconformist denominations. Many who left the Church became firm, official members of Dissenting Chapels. As the incumbent of Foston-on-the-Wolds reported in 1865: "The whole people may be said to be dissenters, or at any event not Church."<sup>28</sup>

But quite often the process was not so clear cut. The incumbent at Ellerton, in Weighton Deanery, wrote:

In country districts it is difficult to say who are and who are not Dissenters, as there are very few who confine their attendance to one particular place of worship. Amongst those who go to any place of worship there are not many who are chapel goers exclusively.<sup>29</sup>

In some areas the indistinctness was greater because the Church still held the monopoly of the rites of passage in the mid-1860's. At Hinderwell, for example, a small Cleveland coastal village served by one Ranter, one Calvinist and two Methodist churches in addition to the parish church, the Rector reported that

the people are married at Church, none of the Dissenting places being licensed. The children are nearly all brought to Church for Baptism. The mothers are nearly all churched - [that is, went through the rite of 'The Churching of Women after Child-birth']. And there is no Burial Ground but that belonging to the Church.

The Rector listed no impediments to his ministry, although he partly attributed to the "prevalence of Dissent" the poor proportion of the population that worshipped in the parish church. His not specifying Dissent as an impediment implies that he was at least ready to accept his ministry to his Nonconformist parishioners, and that they were reasonably happy with his ministry to them.<sup>30</sup>

In Barmbrough in Doncaster Deanery, the relationship between Wesleyans and the Church was similar, the Rector stating in 1865 that Wesleyans continued to bring their children to Church for confirmation as well as baptism.<sup>31</sup> And at Hawnby in Cleveland, with one Dissenter meeting place in the village, the incumbent reported that

the Dissenters are not of that virulent class which exists in many towns. All have their children baptised; but it is difficult to convince them of the need for Confirmation.<sup>32</sup>

At Adwick-le-Street,<sup>33</sup> which supported one Wesleyan and one Primitive chapel, relations with the Church were such that the Wesleyans did not hold Services during Church times.

Some Wesleyans in 1865, still faithful to the stipulation of John Wesley, were continuing to attend Holy Communion and receive the Sacrament in their parish churches. This was the case at Felkirk in Pontefract Deanery, for example.<sup>34</sup> So keen were some Wesleyans to obey John Wesley's injunction to regard the local parish church as theirs that, as the incumbent of Holme-on-Spalding Moor reported, "many Wesleyans attend Church and do not like to be called Dissenters."<sup>35</sup>

Thus, in various ways and in different parts of the diocese, the Church continued to exert some authority over parishioners who, though continuing to seek the Church's rites and sacraments, were well on the way to de-Churchment into Chapel worship and membership; and the Wesleyans in particular, being still so often half-in and half-out of the Church of England during the period, earned quite widespread tolerance. Thus in 1856 Archdeacon Churton spoke of the Wesleyans as "a great body of those Christians among us who now worship either occasionally or exclusively in other places than the parish church." Churton said that Wesleyans had recently claimed that they could "do more good to their friends in the Church by remaining as they are." This view must be respected, said Churton. But he hoped that if ever the tensions within Methodism became too great for them to hold together, "the Church will always open her ports of refuge to the distressed."<sup>36</sup> It is interesting to see a High Church dignitary, who shared Wesley's devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, recognising that movement from Anglicanism to Dissent did not constitute a movement beyond redemption.

At the same time, the more worldly-wise might have felt that Archdeacon Churton was responding well to the demands of the market place. Like an experienced village shopkeeper, he was happy to welcome back customers who had flirted with the shops and market stalls in town, but now wanted to buy his goods again. For in this age of increasing awareness of the right to choose, there was much "shopping around" to be done. And there were several stalls from which to choose even, sometimes, in surprisingly small villages.

But many clergy even in Churton's own archdeaconry were less tolerant than he, and felt that Dissent was the major cause of the decline in Church of England congregations. For these clergy the advance of Dissent constituted the major impediment to their parochial ministry - or so they claimed. Hence, in 1865 44% of the clergy across York Diocese considered that their church attendance figures did not represent a fair proportion of the population; and 71% of these clergy blamed "the prevalence of Dissent". In fact, clergy blamed Dissent more than any other single cause for the de-Churchment process. [See Table 7 below]

Significantly, in the East Riding Archdeaconry there are fewer examples of tolerable relationships and co-operation to be found between clergy and Nonconformists in 1865, and fewest of all amongst the Wolds parishes where Primitive Methodism had held sway for some forty years. There, 78% of the incumbents considered the prevalence of Dissent a major cause of their having smaller congregations than they felt they should have. In view of the general alarm amongst Anglican clergy at the de-Churchment process, and the link in so many clergy minds between de-Churchment and Dissent, it is not surprising that even among the 34.3% of clergy in the diocese who felt they had a fair proportion

(i) Congregation not a fair proportion of population, 1865:

CLEVELAND	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R.
73/169 = 43%	73/187 = 39%	106/209 = 51%

DIOCESAN AVERAGE % = 44.3%

Of these, some said "Caused by prevalence of Dissent":

CLEVELAND	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R.
52/73 = 71%	56/73 = 78%	67/106 = 63%

DIOCESAN AVERAGE % = 71%

(ii) Congregation a fair proportion of population:

CLEVELAND:	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R.
57/169 = 34%	71/187 = 38%	64/209 = 31%

DIOCESAN AVERAGE % = 34.3%

Of these, some clergy said "Fair proportion of population considering the extent of Dissent":

CLEVELAND	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R.
12/57 = 21%	12/71 = 17%	6/64 = 9%

Table 7 Clergy view of links between de-Churchment and Dissent, York Diocese, 1865

Source: V/R 1865

of parishioners attending regular worship in church in 1865, a few (15.6%) felt it necessary to add that the proportion was only fair considering the extent of Dissent in their parishes. [See Table 7 above] This indicated a somewhat reluctant resignation to the spread of Dissent.

Despite the blurred distinctions and the tolerant attitudes towards Wesleyanism in some parishes, a brief look at the comments of parsons in other parishes will show how threatened by Dissent they felt, and how many forms the threat took. There were complaints in Cleveland that Wesleyans met during Church Service hours;<sup>37</sup> that Dissenting farmers took their families and servants to chapel in adjoining villages;<sup>38</sup> that "here as everywhere else their tenets have a fascination for a certain large amount of the population;"<sup>39</sup> that the chief local landowners were Dissenters, wielding an authority over their workers that reduced the Church's authority;<sup>40</sup> and that Methodism had been unopposed for so many years in the past (through neglect by former incumbents) that it had "destroyed Churchmanship".<sup>41</sup>

In both parishes in Middlesbrough, there was despondency about the amount of church accommodation available for Dissenting worshippers compared with Anglican, a comparison that underlined how little hold the Church maintained over the majority of parishioners. In St. Hilda's parish, there was accommodation for 1,800 Dissenter worshippers in various chapels, but the parish church had accommodation for a congregation of only 500. Similarly in the neighbouring parish of St. John there were sittings for only 400 in the parish church, but sittings in chapels for 900 Wesleyans, 700 Independents, 500 Presbyterians, and 550 for other denominations. True, only the Wesleyan chapels were more than half to two-thirds filled on



Sundays. But the situation in Middlesbrough - typical of the urbanised parts of the Diocese - led both incumbents to press for the building of more churches, seeing that as the only way to remain in the market for worshippers.<sup>42</sup>

In the East Riding Archdeaconry clergy complained about the Dissenters' "notion of sudden conversion," and their "making light of the sanctity of marriage by marrying those refused marriage at Church".<sup>43</sup> A fairly unusual complaint was about the misuse of church land. At Nafferton, for instance, the lessee of the Rectoral lands and tithes in the 1820's had built a school on Church property, and then appropriated it to the Dissenters.<sup>44</sup>

In York/West Riding Archdeaconry, a parson pointed out that most of the poor were Wesleyans, that is "if they go to any place of worship;"<sup>45</sup> and another complained that "the Wesleyans have had sole sway in religion, helped by the...large employers of labour who are strict Wesleyans." As a result, there had been "violent opposition from ignorant Dissenters." Even so, all was not lost: the same incumbent could report that whilst in 1857 only six people went to the parish church, now (in 1865) 150 attended Morning Prayer and 350 Evening Prayer.<sup>46</sup>

Although 71% of clergy who considered their church attendance unsatisfactory saw Dissent as the most serious challenge to their position, it is interesting to note that in those parishes with the lowest attendance pointers (a.p.'s) in the whole diocese, by no means all the incumbents cited Dissent as the main threat, nor as the main cause of their small congregations. Indeed, of the 66 parishes across the diocese with a.p.'s of less than 10% - 15 in Cleveland, 20 in East Riding, and 31 in York/West Riding - 37 [that is, 55.1%] mentioned Dissent as

constituting a problem. In York/West Riding slightly under half [48.9%] of the incumbents with very poor church attendance said Dissent was a problem.<sup>47</sup>

The consistency of this proportion across the three archdeaconries indicates that, although the challenge from Dissent was thought to be very serious across the diocese, there were other factors that loomed larger in the minds of 45% of the clergy who had the most difficulty in encouraging worshippers into their churches. Thus, for example, though Dissent had brief mention, the important problems at Ormesby [a.p. only 5%] were the influx of workers to the iron works, the need for the men to work on Sundays, and the "multitude" of public houses available.<sup>48</sup> The incumbent of Sunk Island, whilst acknowledging that 300 of his 376 parishioners were full members of the Methodist Church, felt that his chief impediment was the lack of a vicarage and his "having" to live nine miles away.<sup>49</sup> His colleague at Patrington said that nearly all the poor in the parish were Dissenters because they were "excluded from the Church by the Pews", and this was his basic problem. He hoped to remove the pews soon.<sup>50</sup> Brightside, Sheffield, with the lowest a.p. in the whole diocese [1.5%], suffered most from the lack of help from local employers of workers in the parish.<sup>51</sup>

During the thirty years after 1865, Anglican incumbents showed less tendency to complain about the effects of Dissent on their ministry. No doubt resignation grew about the opportunities and limits facing any ministry that sought to "recapture" de-Churchmented parishioners - whether they had left the Church for Nonconformity or no Church. Furthermore, this was the period of ritual, doctrinal and theological conflict which, in their turn, contributed to clerical pragmatism and to a readier

acceptance of the exercise of private judgment. Most clergy recognised that Dissent would never be eradicated, and there was little to be gained by continuing to complain about it.

An unusual but significant example of the growth of some pragmatic grass roots ecumenism took place in the predominantly Roman Catholic parish of Ampleforth. In 1865 the Vicar complained about there being three Dissenting places of worship in the parish: Roman Catholic, Wesleyan and Ranter. The large Roman Catholic college, symbolising opulence, gave employment to appreciable numbers of the population, and the parson felt some resentment.<sup>52</sup> Three years later the position was still very mixed. The Vicar was awaiting the opening of a new church, certain that it would improve attendance. Meanwhile, he calculated that 25% of the parish were Roman Catholics, another 25% were Wesleyans, and the rest could be counted as in some degree Church folk. But he deprecated "the antagonism of one sect towards another, and the influence of the Romanists especially over the many who receive temporal benefit from them".<sup>53</sup> In 1894, however, the then incumbent was still saddened by the divided interests in what was a comparatively small village, and yearned for "more unity amongst those who profess and call themselves Christians - in spite of 'diversities of operations'".<sup>54</sup>

Across the diocese by 1877, 46% of incumbents thought they did not have a fair proportion of their parishioners attending church worship - little changed from the 44.3% in 1865. But the proportion of incumbents who complained that Dissent was a major contributor to their low attendance figures had dropped greatly from 71% (in 1865) to 34%.<sup>55</sup> By 1894 the proportion of clergy across the diocese

who regarded the prevalence of Dissent as a major problem had dropped dramatically again. [See Table 8 below]

Dissent presenting problems in parishes in 1894:<sup>56</sup>

CLEVELAND	E. RIDING
17/168 = 10.1%	32/191 = 16.8%
YORK/W.R	SHEFFIELD
15/136 = 11.0%	13/97 = 13.4%
DIOCESAN AVERAGE % = <u>13.0%</u>	

Table 8 Dissent seen as a problem, York Diocese, 1894

Source: V/R 1894

This considerable fall is not so much a sign of a great surge of ecumenism as an indication of clergy pragmatism. Nonconformity had become accepted as a permanent feature of parish life. Thus Alfred Gatty, after 55 years as Vicar of Ecclesfield, could record that there was "a highly respectable Wesleyan minister residing in the village."<sup>57</sup>

In 1894 in the 592 parishes of York Diocese there were over 1,300 non-Anglican places of worship in regular use served by about 400 full-time ministers (and Roman Catholic priests), probably helped by at least as many local preachers. In 1894, too, the bulk of the parish churches in those parishes had considerably less accommodation available than the total population would have required

had it wanted (or been persuaded) to join in Anglican worship. [See Table 9 below]

Percentage of parishes with insufficient accommodation\* for population in 1894:

CLEVELAND	125	parishes	out	of	166	=	75.3%
E. RIDING	151	"	"	"	195	=	77.4%
YORK	122	"	"	"	136	=	89.7%
SHEFFIELD	93	"	"	"	97	=	95.9%

[\* The shortfall is calculated on the assumption that there could be a need to accommodate the whole population of a parish at one Service at Easter, Christmas or special local festival; and on the assumption that in parishes below 300 pop. c. 50 more could be accommodated than normal seating allowed, in parishes of 300 to 1,000 pop. c. 100 more could be accommodated than usual, and in parishes of more than 1,000 pop. c. 250 extra could be accommodated.]

Table 9 Shortfall in accommodation available in Parish Churches, York Diocese, 1894

Source: 1894 V/R.

This was as true for small rural parishes as it was for industrialised/urbanised ones; and the extent of the deficit indicates how much of a denomination amongst denominations the Church of England had now become.<sup>58</sup>

(iii) Over-population, migration, and de-Churchment

(a) De-Churchment in town and country

Bishop James Fraser of Manchester warned in 1872 that the parochial system, as ordinarily conceived, admirably efficient in rural parishes and among limited populations where the pastor knows and is known to everyone committed to his charge, breaks down...in the thickly populated areas of our manufacturing towns.<sup>59</sup>

Bishop Fraser was half right. By 1872, the parochial system was already an anachronism in some densely populated areas, and problems for clergy increased as population increased. Even in the last four years of the period, the population rose significantly in three archdeaconries of York Diocese - especially in York Archdeaconry, where the mining deaneries of Doncaster, Pontefract and Snaith, largely through immigration, had increases totalling nearly 96,000 between 1892 and 1895. [See Table 10 below]

Continuing Growth of Population, York Diocese, 1891-5:

	<u>1891-2</u>	<u>1894-5</u>	<u>% incr.</u>
CLEVELAND	207,855	278,780	34.1%
E. RIDING	298,253	376,829	26.3%
YORK	179,848	287,009	59.6%
SHEFFIELD	494,998	540,432	11.2%
DIOCESAN TOTALS:	1,190,954	1,483,050	25.6%

Table 10 Population Increase, York Diocese, 1892-95

Source: Bp. Dio. 11/1 & 4, 1891-2; 1894-5]

But Fraser was incorrect in asserting that the parochial system continued to run superbly well in all rural parishes with a small population. Many clergy in rural parishes in York Diocese during the period faced serious difficulties. They found especially that the movement of population, and particularly of young people, was so disruptive that it constituted a major impediment to their ministry and was a major cause of their loss of influence over working class parishioners. Some of the church attendance figures strongly indicate that the loss of authority in rural parishes could be every bit as serious - in proportion to the population - as in the more densely populated parishes of industrialised towns. And, in rural parishes with low population, or in slightly larger mining and quarrying communities, with often fewer talents to draw upon than in a large town, the effect of small congregations in the parish church was certain to be bad for morale, creating a vicious circle where church attendance was concerned.

Twenty years after Bishop Fraser made his assertion about success in rural parishes compared with breakdown in industrial ones, I.M. Dalton, Vicar of Hickleton, a sparsely populated parish in Wath Deanery, insisted that "the country has always been harder to work than town."<sup>60</sup> A look at the 66 parishes in York Diocese with attendance pointers under 10% in 1865, confirms that poor support for worship in church was quite likely to exist in parishes with a population of less than 500, and 17 (that is 26%) of the 66 parishes were places with population under 900. Those 66 parishes represented all types, and some quite small villages had depressingly low numbers of regular worshippers. For example, Foston-on-the-Wolds in the East Riding had 30 worshippers out of a population of 759 (a.p. 3.9%); Sand Hutton 21 out of 395 (5.3%); and Hawnby 50

out of 746 (6.7%), both parishes being in Cleveland. Whatever factors were affecting church attendance, dense population was obviously by no means the only one.<sup>61</sup>

No Church of England parish by the mid-19th century had a monopoly of the religious allegiance of the inhabitants, except in very rare and tiny rural parishes set apart from Dissenting places of worship.<sup>62</sup> On the other hand, many clergy in the poorest and most heavily populated parishes in the diocese were coping with an amazing degree of success - taking as the main criterion the size of congregation that attended church regularly on a Sunday, and irrespective of whether a high proportion of those attending came from the working classes.

Thus, for instance, a congregation of 1,000 on Sunday morning and 500 on Sunday evening at Sheffield parish church, or 800 at Rotherham parish church, must have encouraged those present to feel that Christianity was not as marginalised in densely populated areas as some might have feared. From such numbers of worshippers the two Vicars and their curates had the chance to recruit talented lay volunteers for a variety of evangelistic, educational and social work. Also, in a large, well-filled church with a good choir and a loud organ there is a feeling of strength in numbers. It would be easy, therefore, to forget that the attendance pointer for Rotherham was 5.3% and that for Sheffield parish church a mere 3%.<sup>63</sup>

By contrast just outside Sheffield, at the village church in Tinsley (a.p. 13%) the attendance represented proportionately almost three to four times that in the parish churches of Sheffield and Rotherham. At Tinsley the congregation numbered about 90 adults. The Vicar considered this "a fair proportion compared with parishes



of similar population," although he thought attendance would have been better if the public houses closed on Sundays.<sup>64</sup> But the sense of strength and togetherness engendered among Church folk in a place the size of Tinsley, and the chance of drawing lay talent from that congregation into "church work", must have been considerably less than at Sheffield or Rotherham.

Bearing in mind the danger of relying too much, either on raw score church attendance figures or on attendance pointers, in order to measure the Church's health in any given place, there follows a summary of some important problems that arose for the Church because of over-population following migration. These problems hampered clergy when trying to minister to parishes in the urban parts of the diocese and, in turn, encouraged further de-Churchment.

(b) The sheer weight of numbers

Of the ten churches in Hull in 1865, only one priest-in-charge - at St. Paul's - suggested that his congregation represented a fair proportion of the population, and even he qualified the claim by adding "compared with other parishes".<sup>65</sup> J.W. Hunt, priest-in-charge of St. James's, who had four Dissenting chapels in his district, three of them large, thought that "probably the real Church people number 1,000 out of the 15,000" living in St. James's district.<sup>66</sup> J. Ellam, incumbent at St. Peter's, Drypool, reported that he had congregations of "700 to 800, tending to increase". As in many populous parishes, this congregation was large and probably very lively; but it earned an a.p. of only 12% from the population of nearly six and a half thousand. Obviously, the Church in Drypool

commanded no great allegiance; but it certainly was not dead.<sup>67</sup>

As for over-population itself, local clergy in Hull, Sheffield, Rotherham, Middlesbrough, or anywhere else, had insufficient power to alter that, although Mr. Ellam, the Vicar at St. Peter's, Drypool, and Mr. Livesey, incumbent at St. Philip's, the most highly populated parish in Sheffield, did plead with the diocesan authorities for the division of parishes in order to give them some chance of maintaining a reasonable level of pastoral ministry. Mr. Ellam's plea<sup>68</sup> was eventually answered by the creation of St. Andrew's parish in Drypool. In addition, the Rev. Field Flowers Goe, priest-in-charge at Christ Church, Sculcoates, which had an inadequate chapel of ease serving a populous but ill-defined district, thought that "the rapid increase of the population demands the immediate addition of five new Churches" in Hull.<sup>69</sup>

The effects of over-population on the urban parishes during the period are reflected in the attendance pointers. The sixteen Sheffield parishes for which a.p.'s are calculable in 1865 averaged a.p.'s of c.8%; the Hull parishes/districts averaged a.p.'s of c.9/5%; and the two Middlesbrough parishes, which were still growing, averaged an a.p. of only c.4.5%.<sup>70</sup> The City of York, undergoing some immigration in 1865, had the highest score of any densely populated conurbation in the diocese, averaging an a.p. of 21.9%.<sup>71</sup>

M. Mercer, incumbent of St. George's, Sheffield, summed up many problems facing clergy and people in densely populated parishes - and also ways in which a degree of vision could help the Church retain some relevance in the lives of the people - when he wrote:

Deep poverty abounds,...insufficient clothing, confirmed vice...an inability to handle the Prayer Book...utter estrangement from all religious ordinances...[and] long alienation from the Church....If I could enfranchise one part, e.g., the gallery, [the] considerable attendance of poor...would be still larger.<sup>72</sup>

Mercer, who had been at St. George's since 1840 and had only one curate, had gathered around him three Scripture Readers and "an efficient body of 40 Tract-distributors, mostly ladies" to assist him. They conscientiously visited the poorest members of the 11,000 population in the parish - "not a single poor family unvisited" - though Mercer claimed that, with three more Scripture Readers, he could guarantee monthly visits and expect better results.

Significantly, the Sheffield parish with the highest population was the one whose incumbent found the sheer weight of numbers so daunting that the parochial system threatened to break down. This was St. Philip's (population 20,269) where Mr. Livesey, the incumbent, considered his morning congregation of 500 and evening attendance of 1,000 was not a fair proportion of the population. Impediments to his work included the exhausting employment of parishioners, their intemperate habits, and "the degraded character of the neighbouring population." Even so, like most of the slum clergy, in whatever town, Livesey sought to be positive. He wrote: "The obvious remedy is the division of the parish; the erection of new Churches and schools; [and] augmented pastoral supervision." But even the most obvious needs were often too difficult to meet.<sup>73</sup>

(c) Financial problems and constraints on church building/new parish creation

The Rev. Field Flowers Goe of Christ Church, Sculcoates, thought his suggestion of five new parishes in Hull was unlikely to materialise, admitting that one would prove costly enough. Finance was a serious problem when it came to reorganising parishes, which had to be endowed, or building churches, which had to be paid for. [See Table 11, p. 250] In the seven years immediately before William Thomson came to York (in 1863), ten new churches had been built and consecrated in the diocese in parishes with large populations. Two of these were in Sheffield, one each in Hull, Whitby and York. But no new parishes had been created, nor were any new licences issued for the use of parish rooms for worship during those seven years.

With Archbishop Thomson's encouragement - not least in establishing and funding the York Church Extension Society - the picture seven years on, in 1870, was very different. A further 20 new churches had been built and consecrated: six in Sheffield, three in York, two each in Castleford, Rotherham, Middlesbrough and Scarborough, and one in Whitby and Hull. There were also two "re-consecrations" in Hull of churches that had received much restructuring and extension. Twenty-seven new parishes had been created; there were 120 parish rooms licensed for worship; and 192 livings had had their emoluments raised to £100 or more.<sup>74</sup> This was an impressive programme, and a tribute to the generosity of people who contributed to it - and, no doubt, an indication of the wealth that existed in some parts of the county and which Thomson could tap.

Despite the fine work done, however, Flowers Goe of Sculcoates was right: there had not been sufficient funding

for five new churches in Hull. Only one new church had materialised, as well as the two considerably restored. But over the next twenty-five years Hull would have seven more new parishes created, Sheffield fourteen and Middlesbrough three.<sup>75</sup> The hindrance to carving out new parishes was not simply a matter of finding the money needed to build a new parish church - with which groups such as the Diocesan Extension Society, the (national) Church Building Society and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners could help - but finding the large sums of money deemed necessary to provide sufficient endowment for a new parish to survive most eventualities. Unlike the Nonconformists, Anglicans seemed unable to grasp the concept of self-sufficiency whereby each generation had to pay its own way.

In 1894 the incumbent of the new parish of St. Thomas, Hull, pointed to the difficulties that accrued for an under-endowed parish:

I have too much begging for funds to do. This has led to my giving my strength to the congregation and so leaving little time for the Parish.<sup>76</sup>

This was a serious situation for any parish. Lack of financial stability could obviously force the Church into a denominational role, in which the parson looked after his "confessional" flock at the cost of other parishioners. True, many parishioners were probably unaware of the parson's changed role - nor would they care. But it would worry the parson and possibly some of his most committed lay people; for the Church, they would argue, was intended to serve all parishioners.

Further complications in the way of creating new parishes was the parson's freehold and the difficulty in carving out a stipend for the incumbent of a new parish. Hull was hampered in a somewhat extreme way by J.H. Bromby, the Vicar of Kingston parish church, who had clung to his freehold in absentia since 1798. Not only was he aged but also inactive. It was rare for clergy at this time to retire from active service, unless very wealthy; but Bromby was a long-term absentee cleric in the tradition of an earlier age.<sup>77</sup>

Mr. Bonnin, curate-in-charge of St. Mary, Sculcoates, claimed that the Vicar of Hull's absence was the reason for district churches in Hull receiving no grant from the Pastoral Aid or Additional Curates Societies. He admitted that the Vicar's advanced age made it advisable to leave things alone, which meant that the three large churches of St. John, St. James and Christ Church, Sculcoates, all set amidst dense population, had no legal Districts defined for their ministry. But Flowers Goe was even more forthright, insisting that Bromby's absenteeism was why "the Church in Hull is weak;" and this anachronistic situation was no help to the Church's efforts to retain its authority in Hull.<sup>78</sup>

(d) Financial problems and constraints on manpower

Often a more important handicap than finding the money to build new churches was shortage of money for the provision of adequate manpower. Some help with lay assistants could come from the Diocesan Scripture Readers' Society, founded in 1837. Help with both men and women lay assistants, and with curates, could come from the Church Pastoral Aid Society, founded by members of the Evangelical

Clapham Sect in 1836. Help with funds for curates could come also from the Additional Curates' Society, founded soon after the C.P.A.S. by Joshua Watson (Archdeacon Churton's father-in-law) and other members of the Hackney Phalanx. Without aid from these sources, incumbents had to pay curates' stipends themselves.<sup>79</sup>

Without money for extra manpower, over-stretched clergy in over-populated urbanised parishes, or in far-flung rural ones, felt unable to retain their hold on parishioners, let alone expand their ministry in the parish. As the senior curate at Holy Trinity, Hull, wrote: a major impediment was simply "the immensity of the work," and he hoped for "more labourers".<sup>80</sup> The priest-in-charge at St. James's, Hull, was more specific. He was accustomed to having two assistant priests but, without any at all in 1865, he warned that it was impossible for the Church with its existing means to "occupy her true position in this District." Yet, with the remarkable determination typical of many slum parsons, he continued to emphasise positive aspects of his ministry, saying that there had been much improvement in the feelings of people towards the Church during the last two and a half years.<sup>81</sup>

However, the Church's resources clearly were not inexhaustible, either at diocesan or national levels. In pointing this out in 1865, Mr. Bailey, the incumbent at new St. Paul's in Hull, was no doubt expressing a widely shared frustration and sense of ineffectiveness when a source of aid dried up. But he, too, refused to be beaten when he wrote:

There used to be a grant from the C.P.A.S. of £70 for a Lay Assistant as well as £100 for a Curate - 5 or 6 years since. They withdrew both grants. The want of a

Lay Assistant hinders my keeping so good a hold of the working people as I had. District Visitors [unpaid] do much; but the proportion of poor is too large for Visitors to reach them all....With a Lay Assistant my list of Communicants was much more perfect, as I compared it monthly with his list. Indeed, a Lay Agent, properly employed, is of more value than a Curate in bringing to the Church working men....It would be desirable if a Diocesan Society could be made to include a provision to supply Lay Assistants for populous places.<sup>82</sup>

But, besides being a financial problem the extension of the lay ministry was a controversial topic. And it did not help that Archbishop Thomson held reservations about extending lay ministry throughout his archiepiscopate. [See Chapter 5, part (vi) passim]

(e) Problems continue to 1894

Believing it would be "a great boon for the very wretched poor of Sheffield," Mr. Mercer, incumbent of St. George's in 1865, wanted to place a "Ragged Church" at one end of the parish. Mercer was aware that problems in his densely populated parish were not limited to the overwhelming numbers and the lack of resources, but were exacerbated by class divisions. It often proved difficult to persuade members of the poorest classes who wanted to attend church to do so in company with the better off. True, a ragged church or school drew attention to the existence of class divisions; but it also showed some respect for the sensitivities of the poorest people in a parish. Without its ragged church, however, St. George's still seemed to thrive. There were congregations of 1,000



- "remarkably steady; if anything increasing"; there were regularly 110 to 120 Communicants; and evening school for young men and boys, with attendance varying from 190 to 200. There were also several Bible classes and active Sunday Schools in the parish, although Mercer regretted he did not retain scholars beyond the age of twenty.<sup>83</sup> Most of his colleagues in rural parishes would have envied him. A majority of them could not retain scholars beyond the school leaving age, which varied from 8 years of age to 12.

An illuminating aspect of the attitude of many slum clergy was this readiness to experiment and innovate. Hindsight might question some of the experiments and some of the innovations. But generally, rather than clinging to outdated custom and machinery, what the Church needed during this period was the chance, as well as the resources, to make bold changes. Unfortunately, in facing the effects of societal changes, such as migration and over-population in some areas, the Church of England had too many inbuilt hindrances. The parochial system could prove a particular handicap. Based on a totally rural society and reinforced by the parson's freehold, it gave each parson too much freedom as to how he ministered, and as to how much work he did or did not do. Not surprisingly, in view of the Church's limited resources in money and manpower, together with its inflexible and archaic machinery, major problems continued to face the over-populated parishes in York Diocese over the next thirty years.

Thus in 1894 in Sheffield, for example, clergy problems still had a familiar ring. "Finance difficult, and insufficient staff," wrote the incumbent at Attercliffe. The A.C.S. had said this parish should have two curates, but wanted the parish to find more money than possible

Parochial problems with finance and staffing, York Diocese, 1894:

CLEVELAND

54 parishes out of 168 had problems -  
16 = 30% wanted more clergy; 14 = 26% wanted lay help;  
18 = 33% parish needed money; 6 = 11% parson needed it.

E. RIDING

69 out of 191 parishes had problems -  
19 = 28% wanted more clergy; 17 = 25% wanted lay help;  
22 = 32% parish needed money; 11 = 16% parson needed it.

YORK

43 parishes out of 136 had problems -  
23 = 53% wanted more clergy; 16 = 37% wanted lay help;  
17 = 40% parish needed money; 1 = 2% parson needed it.

SHEFFIELD

64 parishes out of 97 had problems -  
21 = 33% wanted more clergy; 25 = 39% wanted lay help;  
16 = 25% parish needed money; 2 = 3% parson needed it.

Table 11: Shortage of parish resources in Archdeaconries, York Diocese, 1894 [Source: V/R 1894] able to do. So

and the incumbent had to soldier on with only one curate, whilst the A.C.S. withdrew most of the grant.<sup>84</sup> The incumbent at St. Matthew's, Sheffield, also wrote about financial and manpower problems:

We have difficulty in raising enough money to carry on the work properly. We want more lay helpers. We want some Sisters of Mercy. A promise to send some has been obtained from Horbury; but the funds are not forthcoming.<sup>85</sup>

Frequently there were pleas for manpower for use in specific spheres where the Church was in danger of losing its influence. "There is a want of qualified helpers to help with Sunday School teaching and District Visiting," wrote the incumbent at St. Jude's, Eldon Street, Sheffield.<sup>86</sup> And the incumbent at St. John in the Park, a heavily populated parish, wrote of similar needs but with greater passion, extending a challenge to Church folk living in more privileged areas of the town to come over and help, saying:

Our need is of well instructed helpers, especially Sunday School teachers....We have largely attended Sunday Schools, with nearly 60 teachers, but most ill qualified for this important work. This is a very illiterate and rough district. Some of my most earnest Communicants cannot read! The supply of capable teachers is most inadequate. If West End parishes would look into this matter, they would find vast scope for Christian effort in poor parishes. We are swarming with young people needing training.<sup>87</sup>

Understandably, considering the discrepancy between population and accommodation available in all these

Sheffield parishes, [See Table 9, p. 237] there were calls for help in providing more room for teaching and mission work. St. Michael's Neepsend, Sheffield, with total accommodation for less than one-seventh of its population, needed a mission room for the West End of the parish;<sup>88</sup> Sheffield St. Giles, Gilcar, (with accommodation for less than one-eleventh) needed a parish room.<sup>89</sup> St. Mary's, with a huge population, needed to enlarge its two mission buildings as there were now over 2,000 youngsters in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes, "and we could take more if we had the room."<sup>90</sup>

Similar problems abounded in Hull in 1894, despite the reorganisation of the town into more parishes. Thus, for example, the incumbent of Holy Trinity, the original Hull parish (but now reduced by reorganisation to a population of "only" 13,449), still had accommodation in church for only 1,500. He had 12 lay people who might be able to assist with worship in mission rooms, [See Table 11, p. 250] and wanted at least 100 more District Visitors "as all houses are such as require visiting, there being many tenements." But he had only 36 visitors.<sup>91</sup> In the same year (1894) eleven of the other Hull parishes made urgent appeals for more clergy and/or lay assistance, particularly for house-to-house visiting.<sup>92</sup>

Some problems for the Church arose because of the continuing increase of population in large towns in the diocese during the period.<sup>93</sup> As a result the "downtown" area often changed character. Thus, for example, the incumbent of St. Stephen's, Hull, wrote that thirty years earlier this had been "a rich parish", but had become poorer as Hull increased in size. Now it housed at least 6,000 poor, who made up more than half the population; and he would have liked another assistant priest to work with

the two curates he had already. However, the parish work was "greatly crippled" for want of money. The parish required at least two curates to carry on the necessary work, and about £300 instead of the £54 grant so far received to maintain a third curate. The extra staff would have allowed "house-to-house visitation to be zealously carried on" whereas, at the moment, the sick alone required the full-time services of one of the clergy.<sup>94</sup>

In the highly populated parts of the diocese in 1894 the Church was scarcely keeping its head above water, let alone expanding. Apart from the lack of manpower, of mission buildings and of finances that hampered the Church's hopes of expansion in heavily populated areas, the discrepancy that existed by 1894 between the number of inhabitants in each parish and the amount of Anglican accommodation available for worship, demonstrated that the Church had not only lost its monopoly of religion in densely populated areas, but had simply become one competitor amongst several denominations - and quite a small competitor in some of the more heavily populated parishes. [See Table 9 on p. 237]

Furthermore, the proportion of church accommodation to population was so small in most of these parishes, that any marked expansion of the number of worshippers would have created impossible logistical problems, given the assumptions of the day that (a) specially erected buildings were essential for those who wished to join for the assumed essential of congregational worship; and (b) that the Church of England would not follow the Roman Catholic example and provide extra services in existing churches, rather than build more churches.<sup>95</sup>

(f) The migration to villages

In 1894 Archdeacon Blakeney, Rector of Sheffield parish church, mentioned that the only hindrance to his work was "the migratory character of the people."<sup>96</sup> He was chiefly referring to the constant movement of people within the town of Sheffield itself, and in particular movement away from his town-centre parish. As people moved further from the centre, his congregations were adversely affected, as also was the staffing of his Sunday Schools, or some of the lay support for the Church's "downtown" pastoral ministry, for example. By the end of the period far more parsons were complaining about migration away from their parishes than about migration into them. This was an indication of the growth of denominationalism in the Church of England. Thirty years earlier, clergy had been more concerned about being overwhelmed by an influx of population, or by the legacies of such an influx, because they felt a responsibility towards every parishioner. By 1894, clergy accepted the existence of other denominations, of an often large majority of people who never darkened the church door and, amongst those, some who were totally indifferent towards the Church. They knew they could not minister to everyone in a densely populated area. Thus, they rued losing any faithful members of their flocks, as any Nonconformist ministers would. [See Table 12 below]

Archdeacon Blakeney's mention of migration is a reminder that some quite large-scale migration had been taking place throughout the period; and in the early years it was not always emigration that caused the major problems but sometimes immigration, particularly in quarrying villages in the North Riding and mining and glass producing

Clergy complaints about migration:

CLEVELAND 78/168 = 46.4% of parishes complained:  
20.5% of them about entry;  
79.5% about exit.

EAST RIDING 81/191 = 42.4% of parishes complained:  
27.1% of them about entry;  
72.8% about exit.

YORK 46/136 = 33.8% of parishes complained:  
23.9% of them about entry;  
71.7% about exit.

SHEFFIELD 28/97 = 28.9% of parishes complained:  
14.3% of them about entry;  
85.7% about exit.

DIOCESAN AV: 233/592 = 39.4% of parishes complained:  
21.5% of them about entry;  
77.4% about exit.

Table 12: Clergy complaints about migration, into and out  
of parishes, York Diocese, 1894. [Source: V/R 1894]

villages in the West Riding. In the absence of any diocesan policy dictating how the Church should try to cope with migration, it fell to the parson in situ simply to do his best. He might have to cope with an influx of several thousand people, and yet have as his main resources a tiny church and a village school built for a small, rural population. Whether he had a curate

or not would depend on his own inclination and, very often, his own pocket rather than on the extent of local needs.

An excellent example was the parish of Eston in Cleveland. In the 1860's, this village was so small that it was treated as part of the parish of Ormesby - itself being hit by migrant iron workers at the time - and did not even warrant its own Visitation Return. But by 1894, Eston was a parish with a population of nearly 20,000, and had church accommodation for only 600. There were twenty other places of worship in what was now a sizeable town, with a dozen other ministers and clergy, including Roman Catholic priests. E.F.S Besly, the Vicar, wrote:

We are undermanned and cannot keep pace with the work. We have no schools or centres of work available. We need more clergy; more buildings; more money; a more thoroughly organised system of work through the Rural Deanery. We are isolated.<sup>97</sup>

Besly's suggestion for some 'regional' policy-making at deanery level was perceptive and positive. But it was much easier said than done for the Church to ignore its traditional and rigid parochial system, and for parochial clergy to cut across parish boundaries, in order to weld themselves into a more effective regional team at rural deanery level, as the Methodists did in their circuits.

It is easy to understand the anxiety about immigration expressed by J. Bailey, incumbent at Grosmont on the North York moors, when he wrote that his poor congregations were

attributable to the ignorance and indifference of the older population, and to the migratory character of the



Navvies, Miners and Furnace-men.

An indication of the negligible influence this parson could hope to exert single-handedly over church attendance - let alone over matters of economics and labour in his parish - is given by his acceptance that Sunday work at the local Ironworks was "unavoidable." And the immigrant families brought to Grosmont other problems over which Bailey had little or no control. Thus he wrote:

A striking feature is the fewness of the women who attend Church...owing to the number of 'lodgers', attendance upon whom requires their whole time and attention. [There is] an awful prevalence of ignorance and drunkenness, and other evils arising from the crowded state of the dwellings.

But Bailey, like many stalwart clergy in poor parishes in the large towns, was not without hope of improving the situation - though he realised he had not the power to do so unaided. He said,

I hope, with the co-operation of the employers, which is cheerfully afforded, these evils may, with God's blessing, be remedied.

Indeed, there were some hopeful signs in the parish already, with the Sunday School fulfilling a particularly important role, not least in attracting older working class boys to two very large classes. Adult evening classes in the parish were far less successful; yet this hard-pressed parson had sympathetic words for those he most hoped to attract to them. He considered the youths were so tired

after their work in the mines and ironworks that they just could not attend.<sup>98</sup>

Similarly, in the West Riding many small villages had their influx of immigrants and grew into larger villages or small towns, in which the Church found it difficult to integrate the new population. One such instance was Featherstone, whose Vicar wrote, having served there for forty years:

[The parish] has changed and now consists of colliers, glass blowers, potters, etc., and persons imported from copper mines in Ireland, workhouses, Devonport orphans of soldiers and seamen.

He implied that these workers had brought problems enough. However, the situation was worsened by there being room for only one tenth of the population in the church, and by the Vicarage being in "an unenviable position", isolated in two square miles where there was "not a single labourer's house". In addition, the population was split between five townships, making visiting the more difficult. Clearly this parson wanted to be accessible to the workers amongst his parishioners, and to visit them regularly. But, cut off from them geographically, he had made little headway.<sup>99</sup>

The incumbent of Elsecar, a mining and iron-working village in Rotherham Deanery, seemed to have made a little more impact:

The mixed population [is] drawn here for the sake of employment from various parts of the country and from Ireland. Their hours of labour (frequently 'night shifts') are unfavourable to the forming of regular

habits. Many of them are exposed to the evil of Sunday labour....They are very migratory in their habits, much given to intemperance....[But] the Church is gradually making progress.<sup>100</sup>

This notion of "migratory habits", meaning anti-social attitudes or behaviour, recurs quite frequently. Undoubtedly, migration must have caused emotional disturbance to migrant families; and signs of disturbance must often have seemed anti-social to the community they joined. Hence, there are some mildly derogatory comments from clergy, especially about temporary migrants, of whom there were many. "Most of the population are either lime-burners or watermen. The former are addicted to drink; the latter are absent a lot," wrote the Vicar of Brotherton.<sup>101</sup> The incumbent at neighbouring Knottingley mentioned the effect of the canal watermen and mariners' way of life on church attendance. "It unsettles them from religious duties," he said.<sup>102</sup> This unsettlement, with resultant de-Churchment, was as much at the heart of the Church's problems concerning migration as was the over-population it had caused in many parishes.

In addition to this migration resulting from industrial and commercial development, the Martinmas hiring system in rural areas also caused a large annual migration of both adults and children which threatened the Church's parochial system, its pastoral ministry, and its influence in country parishes, just as much as the migration to towns caused problems for urban clergy.<sup>103</sup> As one East Riding incumbent wrote: "Hiring takes away all our young people and introduces others who...remain a year only."<sup>104</sup>

(iv) De-Churchment through failure to hold the children

(a) The "holding" problem

In his primary Charge in 1865, Archbishop Thomson blamed the annual hiring system for the ignorance of religion amongst youths, both in the populous towns of York Diocese and in the rural parishes. He said:

The whole system of contacts with farm labourers in this county is so unfavourable to religion and good morals, that I do not suppose there is one minister of religion who does not desire to see it altered....I trust the time will come when people will hear with incredulity that farmers used to take into their houses...young servants of both sexes without the slightest enquiry into their character... [and] did not attempt to exercise any influence over their character or general behaviour.<sup>105</sup>

Nearly twenty years later, in the first debate York Convocation held on the evangelisation of the masses (in 1884), Bishop Harvey Goodwin of Carlisle spoke of the urgent need for the Church to get hold of the children. He said:

If we want to bring home Christian truth to our people, we have a grand opportunity of bringing it before children. It is in the education of the children more than in preaching of the Gospel, either by ordinary or extraordinary modes, that...the great solution of the question is to be found.<sup>106</sup>

Bishop Goodwin was not convinced - as his colleague Bishop Fraser of Manchester had just been suggesting - that

the power of preaching Christian truth in all its grandeur and in its simplicity,...earnestly, lovingly, sympathetically and intelligently to the masses of people...[is] the chiefest and best means of bringing them, through Christ, to God.<sup>107</sup>

However, in the course of the debate, Bishop Goodwin did concede that, if the Church of England were to rely on the educating of the children in the parishes as the main means of obviating any need later on to evangelise the masses, then everything depended on getting hold of the children in the first place. More crucially still, he admitted:

then the difficulty, as everybody knows, is to keep hold of them. It is the few years which intervene between childhood and adolescence which constitute the real difficulty.<sup>108</sup>

Bishop Goodwin's stress on the need for the Church to educate the young, and his admission of the enormous difficulties involved in retaining any hold on them, underlined one very important reason why "the evangelisation of the masses" loomed so large by 1884. The Church of England for many years now had largely failed to keep hold of the children. Part of that failure lay in the Church's inflexibility, particularly in its parochial system, and also in its inability to resist - or to adapt sufficiently to - those social attitudes and economic factors within society that militated against it. In particular, those economic forces that encouraged child labour, much of it procured in rural Yorkshire through the

Martinmas hiring system, played a major part in the Church's failure to hold the children in school. Alongside this, there was a widespread working class dislike of the middle class dominated Sunday School and suspicion of the value of education in the Church Day School.<sup>109</sup>

Put simply, the problems were these: the young workers, many of them on an annual hiring contract, left their native parishes largely because the attraction of board and lodging provided, together with a pittance, was economically preferable to the family than their seeking work locally and their parents having to pay for their upkeep. The young workers then landed temporarily in other parishes, which had often been similarly depleted of many young parishioners because they, for the same reasons, had been hired as workers in other parishes.

The widespread poverty that lay at the heart of child labour generally, [See Table 13 below] and the hiring system that played an important part in the employment of children and young persons in rural areas, were important societal factors against which the clergy were almost powerless. especially in view of the prevailing conservatism towards the social order in the mid-19th century. Whilst in mid-century most clergy were ready to administer charity by way of a palliative, not until the late 1860's did a growing number of Churchmen realise that injustice needed to be addressed and would require co-operation between Church and State to promote collectivist action.<sup>110</sup>

Whereabouts of children aged 3 to 13 in 1851:

Part (i) Boys:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Unknown where*</u>	<u>Employed</u>		<u>Scholars</u>	
3	179,681	-----		49,168	22.1%
4-5	131,242	-----		92,167	41.3%
5-6	106,779	425	0.2%	111,229	50.9%
6-7	89,817	1,050	0.4%	123,030	57.5%
7-8	73,084	2,128	1.0%	134,492	64.1%
8-9	72,919	7,032	3.4%	125,919	61.2%
9-10	65,972	44,287	19.1%	122,085	52.5%
11	60,690	27,508	13.9%	110,126	55.5%
11-12	62,229	43,173	22.1%	89,918	46.0%
12-13	54,609	69,275	36.0%	71,639	37.2%
13-14	54,502	88,485	46.5%	47,116	24.8%
14-15	29,655	128,431	68.4%	29,639	15.8%

Part (ii) Girls:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Unknown where*</u>	<u>Employed</u>		<u>Scholars</u>	
3	177,478	-----		50,621	22.2%
4-5	135,962	-----		86,661	38.9%
5-6	127,153	780	0.4%	89,544	41.2%
6-7	110,344	1,213	0.6%	101,099	47.5%
7-8	98,646	2,570	1.2%	107,216	51.4%
8-9	96,548	5,400	2.6%	102,488	49.8%
9-10	88,224	9,674	4.9%	101,235	50.8%
10-11	89,995	14,787	7.6%	89,401	46.0%
11-12	95,342	21,110	11.0%	75,298	39.7%
12-13	88,420	35,586	18.8%	65,547	34.9%
13-14	92,661	52,066	27.7%	43,050	23.1%
14-15	83,070	74,869	40.2%	28,160	15.1%

[\*Some "unknown" would be "Employed"]

Table 13 Children aged 3 to 15 at school/employed England and Wales, 1851. [Source: BPP, 'Population', vol. 11, 1851 Census, from Table 'Education' pp. 132-3]

Meantime, the neglect of education was certainly a corollary of the use of child labour, and both the neglect and the use were well established and recognised by 1851. In that year, at least 22% of boys aged 11-12 were working, and between that age and 15 the percentage of boys at work rose steeply as might be expected. The percentage of both girls and boys aged 5-9 who were at work was very similar. After that age the girls did not keep up with the boys' steep rise in employment, [See Table 13 above] but this is probably accounted for by older girls being more helpful at home, doing housework and caring for younger children. In addition, it is likely that in the age groups 4-14 quite a high proportion of the children about whom it was "not known" whether they were employed or at school, were actually employed, at least for part of the year, especially at grain harvest, or picking vegetables and fruit in season. Against such economic pressure, it is not surprising that the Church had difficulty in retaining children in both Day and Sunday School long enough to capture their life-long allegiance to the Church.

(b) Problems with Day School attendance

The percentage of boys aged 5-11 who were attending day school in 1851 was never less than 50%, but the situation for girls was very different. Only in the age group 7-10 were as many as 50% of girls attending school. In other age groups the girls' percentage attending school was under 50%. It is clear that both boys' and girls' school attendances reached their peak at the early age of 9; and at that age, the employment rate for both boys and girls increased, though the boys' rate was almost twice the speed of the girls'. [See Table 13 above]



The Report on the 1851 Census stated that out of about three million children on school books in that year almost a million aged between 5 and 12, though healthy and not employed, were not attending. Lack of school accommodation was considered the least of the reasons for this colossal absence. Far more important were the poverty of the parents; the low parental appreciation of the "value of instruction" for their children; and the existence of too many destitute children, either orphaned or simply "cast adrift" in the large towns and cities. These, it was claimed, fell into vagrancy and crime.<sup>111</sup> Undoubtedly, poverty was a key factor in causing child labour and poor school attendance. Put simply, poverty-stricken parents had the assurance of knowing that even very young children in employment could keep the wolf from the family door.<sup>112</sup>

In 1865, the Rector of Cherry Burton in Beverley Deanery remarked:

Among the labouring classes, and not infrequently among the farmers, I find parents very careless of their religious duties towards their children. This I regard as a great evil. The only remedy I can suggest is the obvious one of seeking to impress upon the parents the great guilt they incur by pursuing such a line of conduct.<sup>113</sup>

It is interesting that the Rector mentioned that farmers as well as parents as were negligent towards education. In some parts of York Diocese, owing to the power held by local farmers, those children whose family circumstances allowed them to work locally, rather than forcing them to leave home as hired labour, were almost as likely to become intermittent in their attendance at the local day school as the incoming hired children. In 1865, for instance, the

incumbent of Eastoft near Goole reported, regretting that he knew no remedy, that

women, girls and boys work in the fields almost all the year round from an age as early as nine, as the farmers insist on labourers' wives and children working in the potato fields.<sup>114</sup>

For similar reasons, many parishes experienced difficulty in enforcing regular attendance of local children at day school. As the Rector of South Dalton with Holme-on-the-Wolds complained, "there are 68 on the [day school] books; but except on Sundays, and in the winter months, the elder boys are away at work."<sup>115</sup>

It is evident that some employers of child labour, whether hired from distant parishes or locally, were no more concerned than the parents to ensure that the youngsters continued their day schooling. The chief considerations were doubtless economic ones, both on the part of parents who were very poor and of employers who paid the children's wages and, in the case of those who hired labourers at Martinmas, paid for their upkeep, too.

But the problem was not confined to farming parishes. At Ferry Fryston in the Pontefract Deanery, the incumbent said that "many of the children in Sunday School are employed in the Pottery and Glass houses." They apparently did not attend day school, and their attendance at Sunday School was the Church's principal means of trying to fill the educational gap.<sup>116</sup> In the nearby mixed agricultural and mining parish of Aston, where problems were exacerbated by "the too frequently demoralised condition of the Labouring Class", the Rector implied that attendance was poor at both day and Sunday Schools, but the parish had a

very successful evening class, conducted by the Vicar's wife, and attended by boys and young men who worked in the local colliery.<sup>117</sup>

The non-attendance of these labouring children for elementary education in what was almost always a church school, constituted a massive undermining of the Church's authority. Absent from the school and its indoctrination, many children were estranged, long before reaching adulthood, from the worship, teaching and beliefs of the Church. And this employment of young children during day school hours persisted for some years after the passing of Forster's Education Act in 1870. In the East Riding some of the small rural parishes in the Pocklington Deanery, for instance, had regular problems with the children's day school attendance, implying that children were often still supplementing the family income from a very early age. There was mention of difficulties over the "usual irregularity of attendance" at day school at Hambleton; and the children "still [being] irregular in attendance" at Barlow, in both cases in 1875.<sup>118</sup> In 1880, a letter was circulated to parents of children in Brayton, Barlow and Hambleton schools urging them to send their children on the inspection/examination day in May, because grants from public money were based on the attendance that day. This letter suggested that attendance had been too frequently hit-and-miss at other times.<sup>119</sup> Also in 1880, there was a purge on attendance at day school in Millington, and a similar request for especially good attendance on inspection day;<sup>120</sup> and in the same year, there was a strong complaint that parents of children at Warter school "could not be induced to send them regularly".<sup>121</sup>

Quite often, of course, problems surrounding day school attendance were complicated for children by the distance

they lived from school; and the above complaints in Pocklington Deanery in 1880 show that little had changed since 1865, when Mr. Ellis, incumbent at Laxton in the nearby Howden Deanery wrote:

As soon as they are able to earn their bread [the children] are sent off into service a distance from schools etc., I mean to farm houses miles from a school, where they are frequently kept at labour tending cattle or watching the crows on the seven days.<sup>122</sup>

At last, an Act of Parliament in 1882 made attendance compulsory until the age of 12. Only then did the situation have a chance to improve.<sup>123</sup>

#### (c) Problems with Sunday School attendance

Whilst day school attendance caused anxiety for clergy in York Diocese in the 1860's, 1870's and early 1880's, the difficulty of retaining children in Sunday School after they left day school presented as great a problem to the authority of parochial clergy. And many clergy cited the annual hiring of labour as a major obstacle to Sunday School attendance. This subject had received a considerable airing in the Church Congress held at Manchester in 1863.<sup>124</sup> In 1865, in his first Charge to York Diocese, Archbishop Thomson had blamed the practice for much of the ignorance of young people in his diocese and hoped it would fall into disuse.<sup>125</sup> In the same year, Canon E.J. Randolph, Vicar of Dunnington near York, and Rural Dean of Bulmer - a man given to outspoken common sense on contemporary issues - used the Archbishop's Visitation Return in order to register sharp criticism of employers

for their "indifference...to the religious interests of those whom they employ."<sup>126</sup> Next year, when speaking about the Martinmas hirings at the Church Congress in York (in 1866) Canon Randolph went considerably further when he pleaded,

Oh! that our chief proprietors could be persuaded to bestir themselves, and to use their influence with their tenantry, in promoting an item of social reform than which there is none more loudly called for, more imperatively required!<sup>127</sup>

Child labour, whether involving migration after hiring or not, was so common and its effects on the attendance at both parochial Day and Sunday Schools were so calamitous, that it is little wonder that, when asked in 1865 in the Archbishop's Visitation Returns about the retention of children in his Sunday School, the Vicar of Featherstone in the West Riding exploded with exasperation and wrote:

The question implies but little knowledge of the State of the Poor in England - especially the labouring poor in Agricultural - Arable - and Clay districts.<sup>128</sup>

This parson knew only too well, as did the majority of his fellow clergy, that a family's poverty and a child's absence from Day and Sunday School were too often linked, and had been for many years; and short of joining in agitation for a major reform, the parish clergy were powerless against it.

On the other hand, although it is impossible to know exactly what went on in the majority of Victorian Sunday Schools, some of them were probably so badly run that they contributed to the absentee problem. S.J.D. Green's

recent valuable work on church organisations in the West Riding reveals that Sunday School teachers - as well as preachers! - were generally aware that their words went unheeded. If they were not "rudely ignored" they received only "polite tolerance", a foreshadowing of the indifference to religion that the Victorian Sunday School scholar would develop even further in adult life. And this portent of future indifference was, Green says, the most striking feature of the Sunday Schools that came across to mid-Victorian Churchmen themselves.<sup>129</sup>

So Sunday Schools were a mixed blessing. Nevertheless, in so far as most parishes in York Diocese had a Sunday School, and clergy hoped to have children of the parish in regular attendance there, the amount of support given to it is some measure of the extent of the local Church and parson's authority - or lack of it. And from this point of view the picture is mostly poor. [See Table 14 below] Moreover, it was often poorest in those parishes where the Martinmas hirings governed the lives of a large body of child labourers. Going out to service and other employment clearly prevented many children from attending Sunday School from a very early age. Most of these "deprived" children were country children: it was the rural parishes that struggled against the heaviest odds to keep children at Sunday School. Thus, for example, Beverley, Bridlington, Buckrose and Harthill Deaneries in the East Riding - all of them predominantly rural - had no parishes in 1865 claiming any retention of children in Sunday School beyond day school leaving age; and, as might be expected, had a fairly high proportion of clergy blaming "service" or employment elsewhere for the situation. Weighton Deanery,

Proportion of parishes retaining children in Sunday School, York Diocese, 1865:

CLEVELAND	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R.
20/169* = 11.8%	14/190* = 7.4%	53/209* = 25.4%

DIOCESAN AVERAGE: 87/568 = 15.3% of parishes retained

Parishes not retaining children (or very few):

CLEVELAND	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R.
114/169* = 67.5%	135/190* = 71.0%	127/209* = 61%

DIOCESAN AVERAGE: 376/568 = 66.1%

[\* Second figure is total of parishes responding]

Parishes not retaining children in Sunday School who blamed "Service/Employment" for the lack of retention:

CLEVELAND	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R..
42/114" = 36.8%	62/135" = 46%	38/127" = 30%

DIOCESAN AVERAGE: 142/376 = 37.8%

["Second figure is total of parishes responding]

Table 14. Retention/Non-retention of children in Sunday Schools after school leaving age (up to 12), and links with service or employment out of home parish, 1865

Source: V/R 1865

also in the East Riding, had only one parish claiming some retention, and had the highest score for blaming service and employment elsewhere. Ironically, in Sheffield Deanery, despite problems brought by over-population, 62% of clergy claimed they retained children beyond school leaving age.<sup>130</sup> In Sheffield, the problems for Sunday Schools were much more to do with the recruitment of teachers and finding enough accommodation for the large numbers of children who attended.

This absence of many country children from Sunday School helped to continue the process of de-Churchment. Obedience to the Master or Mistress who had hired the child labourer came before obedience to the Church. Thus, those children forced to work seven days a week, and others who were simply the victims of employers who were themselves de-Churchmented and refused to let their young employees attend church or Sunday School, never caught the habits of regular worship or of listening attentively to the tenets of "the Faith", and were almost certainly permanently lost to the Church.

The incumbent of Ingleby Greenhow was pragmatic about not being able to retain children in his Sunday School, acknowledging that "as soon as they begin work the Parents will exercise no control over their children in this respect." But, he added, "I am very glad to get them to Church."<sup>131</sup> This parson was applying common sense. Perhaps, after all, the best way to overcome the drift of children and young people from the Church was to encourage them to attend the church rather than Sunday School. But it is interesting to see how determined most parsons in the mid-1860's were to run Sunday Schools, even when they were manifestly unsuccessful - an indication of the inflexible mentality of some Church leadership at the time. By the



mid-1890's, however, the new archbishop did not ask questions about Sunday Schools. He asked instead about the retention of young communicants within the active life of the Church.<sup>132</sup>

Meantime, some parsons were clinging to their Sunday Schools as though they were part of orthodoxy itself. Yet the Sunday School movement itself had first begun during an age when the Catechism Class in church was outgrowing its usefulness in many parishes. As early as 1764 (before Sunday Schools were even heard of) some parishes had abandoned Catechism Classes or were on the point of doing so. At East Ardsley near Doncaster, for instance, the incumbent admitted that he held classes only "as long as any children continue to come,"<sup>133</sup> suggesting that he did not put pressure on them to do so. Clearly instruction in doctrine was not popular everywhere. Nevertheless, the Vicar of Ecclesfield in 1764 expressed similar sentiments to those of Bishop Goodwin, over a hundred years later, about educating the children as distinct from preaching at the congregation. He said:

I look upon Catechising, and afterwards expounding the Church Catechism...to be a more eligible service than preaching, as thereby the younger sort are taught in a plain manner the Principles of their Religion and early imbibe the Doctrines and Truths of Christianity.<sup>134</sup>

But, whatever popularity Sunday Schools might have enjoyed in parts of the north of England in the early years of the 19th century, it is very clear that they were running out of steam in many parts of York Diocese by the time of the 1865 Visitation Returns. Yet, there were some interesting discrepancies. The parishes in the York/West Riding Archdeaconry were relatively much more successful in

retaining children in Sunday Schools beyond day school leaving age than the other two archdeaconries. In Cleveland only 11.8% of parishes, and in the East Riding an even smaller proportion of 7.4%, could claim some retention. In York/West Riding, however, 25.4% of parishes made this claim - more than doubling the Cleveland figure, and tripling that in the East Riding. [See Table 14 above]

Furthermore, it is impossible to ignore that Sheffield Deanery, with the highest ratio of parishes claiming retention in Sunday School (62%), had not one clergy complaint in 1865 about children going out to service. A partial but very obvious explanation is that there was more opportunity in a densely populated area such as Sheffield for youngsters to find local employment, if their family circumstances required them to do so, and therefore to be on hand to attend school on Sunday. This explanation applies also to the densely populated migrant parishes in York City Deanery, Hull, and Middlesbrough. In York the proportion of parishes retaining children was fairly high (25%) and, exactly as in Sheffield, no clergy at all complained about children going out to service. Indeed, in York the commonest complaint about Sunday Schools was unique in the diocese: many clergy felt that they lacked direct control over them, because most of them were run on a non-parochial basis.<sup>135</sup>

The situation in both Hull and Middlesbrough is veiled by their inclusion in deaneries consisting mainly of sparsely populated rural parishes. However, five of the eight Hull churches reported that children were retained, and three that they were not; and only one parson said that retention in Sunday School was adversely affected by children going out to service.<sup>136</sup> In Middlesbrough, the incumbent of St. Hilda's reported that resources were his

main problem: he had no Church day school, and not even a schoolroom in which to hold any Sunday School. Indeed, the chief impediment to his ministry was "the want of three or four more churches, and as many schools". The inference is that he had no Sunday School meeting anywhere, despite the population of over 10,000 of whom most were members of immigrant families.<sup>137</sup> The incumbent of Middlesbrough St. John retained "a fair number" of children in his Sunday School, some of whom became teachers.<sup>138</sup> Neither of these incumbents mentions "out to service" as a problem, probably again because of the availability of local employment, as suggested for the Sheffield and York migrant parishes. But elsewhere in the York Diocese, the commonest explanation given by clergy in 1865 for their poor retention in Sunday School was that children left the parishes at an early age for "service" or some form of employment requiring residence elsewhere. In this respect, the East Riding rural deaneries (46% average) experienced the most difficulty, with the West Riding (average 34%) and Cleveland (average 38%) almost on a level.<sup>139</sup>

However, as a caution against generalising, it is important to note some apparently "rogue" rural deaneries. For example, 71% of the parishes in Malton Deanery did not retain children in Sunday School, but only 10% of the incumbents blamed "out to service". Similarly, 70% of the Tadcaster Deanery parishes were non-retainers, but only 14% of the clergy blamed the hiring system. We could expect such rural areas to have a large proportion of youngsters leaving for service. Perhaps the system was so much a part of local life that clergy took it for granted and neglected to mention it. Many clergy in rural areas could probably have echoed Mr. Preston, the Rector of Bulmer, who had no Sunday School at all, explaining that

in our Rural Villages the population being for the most part farm labourers, the children attend school perhaps up to 12 years of age, and are then placed in service of some kind or other, from home; [so] that attendance at any kind of school is rendered almost fruitless and inexpedient.<sup>140</sup>

Preston had been Rector of Bulmer since 1806. It is clear that, in his long experience, the hiring system made education in Day or Sunday School virtually impossible after the age of twelve. He therefore took a pragmatic view of things. And it seems very reasonable to assume that the average non-retention percentage for the diocese in 1865 (66%) was even higher than that reported, especially in the strongly agricultural deaneries of the diocese. Similarly, some of the many clergy who gave no explanation for their inability to retain children in their Sunday Schools, as in Malton and Tadcaster Deaneries, would probably have agreed, had they been specifically asked, that the hiring of child labour was chiefly to blame.

For the most part, in mid-century the Church in York Diocese had very serious problems in getting hold of the children and in retaining that hold, and largely because of the prevalence of child labour. Hence some children, at best, would receive only intermittent Church ministrations during the rest of their lives: perhaps a brief course of instruction before Confirmation, or a clerical visit if grievously ill. Most clergy obviously felt they must bow to the de-Churchment of children caused by the necessity of their earning a living - though this does not necessarily mean that they all approved of it. In addition to Archbishop Thomson and a few senior clerics in the diocese, such as Archdeacon Blunt and Canon Randolph, there were a few parochial clergymen who registered some protest; and

probably others would have done so, had they thought it would lead to change. As the incumbent of Hook wrote in 1865: "The employment of my young lads in farm labour is a crying evil. They are taken from school before they can learn much."<sup>141</sup> And T. Holmes, incumbent of Wilberfoss since 1822, raised a gentle voice of dissatisfaction. "The children being chiefly poor," he wrote, "have to leave home for places as servants - earlier perhaps than they ought."<sup>142</sup>

Nevertheless, the 1877 Visitation Returns (the last year in which the Archbishop asked for information about Sunday School attendance) showed an improvement in the retention rate in Sunday Schools [See Table 15 below] in the most rural parts of the diocese compared with 1865. On the other hand, the non-retention rate also increased in the East Riding; and the Returns were possibly affected by more clergy giving details than in 1865 (when some 20% gave no indication of their retention or non-retention of children). However, any real improvement was probably the result of increased emphasis on elementary education brought by Forster's Education Act in 1870, coupled with the increasingly professional attitude of clergy towards pastoral work during the period. Thus, for a time at least - until the Sunday School was widely regarded as unfashionable of itself - the Sunday Schools in the rural parts of the diocese benefited.

It is perhaps more significant that more parsons in both Cleveland and West Yorkshire mentioned in 1877 that they lost their hold on children because they were going out to service or other employment out of the parish. In the East Riding exactly the same high proportion of parsons (46%) complained about this problem in 1877 as in 1865. Clearly the practice was so entrenched in local custom,

Proportion of Parishes retaining children in Sunday School,  
York Diocese, 1877 compared with 1865

[N.B. 1865 % in brackets after 1877 %]

CLEVELAND	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R.
31/165 = <u>19%</u> (11.8)	2/175 = <u>18%</u> (7.4)	50/207 = <u>24%</u> (25.4)
DIOCESAN AVERAGE % = <u>21%</u> (15.3)		

Parishes not retaining children (or very few):

CLEVELAND	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R.
100/165 = <u>61%</u> (67.5)	106/175 = <u>71%</u> (66.1)	122/207 = <u>60%</u> (61)
DIOCESAN AVERAGE % = <u>60.6%</u> (66.1)		

Parishes not retaining children in Sunday School who blamed  
"Service/Employment" for lack of retention:

CLEVELAND	EAST RIDING	YORK/W.R.
<u>23%</u> (36.8)	<u>46%</u> (46)	<u>23%</u> (30)
DIOCESAN AVERAGE: = <u>31%</u> (26)		

Table 15 Retention/non-retention of children in Sunday  
Schools after school leaving age (up to 12) and links with  
"Service/Employment" out of Home Parish, 1877 compared with  
1865

[Sources: V/R 1877; V/R 1865]

and was deemed so necessary both to employers seeking cheap labour and to impoverished parents, that neither the new emphasis on elementary education nor increased professionalism amongst the clergy could yet make any great impact.

In the long term, the Anglican Sunday Schools suffered as a result of Forster's Education Act (and the Act of 1882 that introduced compulsory elementary education to the age of ten). Increasingly after 1870 Sunday Schools slowly declined because the compulsory education provided in Day Schools was taking over their work and, for the most part, doing it much better.<sup>143</sup>

Despite any temporary gains, therefore, it was already becoming clear during the 1860's and 1870's that if the local parson were to retain any hold on young people, whether on those whose parents were already themselves de-Churchmented, or on children who were the victims of poverty - and of its corollary, the hiring system - it had to be by other means than the Sunday School. New avenues and new emphases were necessary. Significantly, by 1894 the archbishop's question about retention of children in Sunday School had been replaced by an inquiry into the strength of Confirmation classes, the extent of retention of young communicants in the life of the Church, and the means used to retain their active participation in the life of the Church.<sup>144</sup> Much had changed by 1894.

(v) Other reasons for de-Churchment

It is impossible to make clear-cut divisions into "internal factors" and "external factors" when looking at reasons for de-Churchment. Some factors are simply a bit more clear-cut than others. Thus, in the movement from Church towards Dissent, for example, much early motivation sprang from the faults within the Church of England; yet some of it - especially the spread of freedom to exercise private judgment - came both from inside and outside the Church. Nevertheless, simply for convenience, the division into "factors inside the Church" and "factors outside the Church" has been used in looking briefly at various reasons for de-Churchment.

1. Factors inside the Church

(a) Pew renting and appropriation

In his study of the Church in Sheffield, Bishop Wickham drew attention to the divisive effects of "pewing-up".<sup>145</sup> He showed that, by the 18th century, the "proprietary nature" brought into both Anglican and Dissenting churches by pew rents and appropriation, almost certainly gave poorer folk the feeling that they did not "belong".<sup>146</sup>

The divisive effects of pew renting and appropriation were bound to become more apparent in an age that was growing more class conscious - and to a Church growing conscious, also, of the absence of the labouring classes from church worship. Even as early as 1818, a condition required for churches built from the last government grant allocated for that purpose, stipulated that 20% of seats



had to be free and, in the event, 60% were free. But pew rents were a valuable source of income, and pew appropriation encouraged middle class attendance; thus, the business of scrapping rents and appropriation was not straightforward. And there was the added difficulty that, whilst the presence of the poor in church was desirable from a Christian viewpoint, the poorest usually smelt badly, and if they came to fill most of the free seats available, the wealthier classes tended to be driven away.<sup>147</sup>

Even so, by the mid-19th century in parishes where these two irritants persisted, clergy were increasingly deciding for abolition, although it would involve some of them in finding other ways than pew rents to augment their stipends and, in some parishes, would cause friction with the well-to-do who had prized their appropriated pews. Hence the Vicar of Pontefract, for instance, who mentioned the pew system as the only impediment to his ministry in 1865, had to admit he had had no success with any attempts to change things for the better.<sup>148</sup>

In the 1865 York Visitation Returns only 8.6% of the parochial clergy said pews presented some form of hindrance to the effectiveness of their ministry. [See Table 16 below] By no means all of those clergy who said pews were a problem specified pew renting or appropriation as being the difficulty. Some were concerned about too few pews, uncomfortable pews, or the poor positioning of them. In any case, an appreciable amount of freeing of pews had already taken place by 1865; and some clergy experiencing difficulty with renting and appropriation probably saw no point in mentioning pews in the Visitation Returns. Thus, H.M. Clifford, Vicar of Fulford on the

Pew problems in York Diocese, 1865:

CLEVELAND: 13 parishes out of 169 = 9%  
E. RIDING: 8 " " " 187 = 4%  
YORK/W.R.: 28 " " " 209 = 13%

DIOCESE: 49 " " " 565 = 8.6% av.

Table 16 Parishes having problems with pews, York  
Diocese, 1865. Source: V/R 1865

outskirts of York, was one who made no mention of the pew system in the 1865 Returns. But he announced in his parish magazine in March 1870 that in Fulford parish church "the seats are strictly 'free', and no householder can claim any 'special right' to any particular pew." However, some controversy presumably ensued because an announcement in the Fulford magazine in January 1871 included a resolution reached by the Churchwardens, that in future the church bell would

cease to ring five minutes before Service, whereupon appropriated seats can be filled at the discretion of the Wardens, and with the permission of the holders of those seats.<sup>149</sup>

The comments of parish clergy who mentioned appropriation show that they linked it with non-attendance at church. As one said:

several families refuse to come because they have no pews assigned; and the Squire's household occupies more than entitled to.<sup>150</sup>

Another said that the proportion attending church would remain poor "till the Pews are removed from the Church, which I hope soon to accomplish."<sup>151</sup> Joseph Foxley, for many years Vicar of Market Weighton and Rural Dean, and a shrewd analyst of Church problems wrote: "The pew system sends many to Dissenter meetings. The Church is so be-pewed as to exclude most of the shop-keeping class;"<sup>152</sup> and the incumbent of Driffield went to the root of the issue, describing the pew system as "unrighteous and unchristian."<sup>153</sup>

Of course, it is relatively easy to see that pew appropriation and rents would strengthen class divisions within churches, and doubtless within parishes at large. But it must be remembered that class divisions themselves arose from a complexity of factors during the agrarian and industrial revolutions. Pew rents and appropriation of pews in church exacerbated those divisions, rather than forming a root cause. Again, class divisions in a parish church's seating arrangements could provide an excuse for poorer folk's non-attendance, when the real reasons for non-attendance went deeper. But as far as the de-Churchment process and the Church's lack of hold over the lower classes is concerned, the effect is the same. Even if the poor of a parish used the pew system only as an excuse for not going to church, the consequent de-Churchment was as real as it would have been if the complaint were genuine. And, excuse or real reason, and for all the decline in renting and appropriation by 1865, the pew system where it persisted must have made the

poorer members of a parish feel they were of such little account that it amounted to unwantedness.

But whilst clergy could easily see the bad effects, it was more difficult for them to work towards its removal, particularly if they hoped to retain the support of local squires, landowners and employers. The Vicar of Stokesley<sup>154</sup> pinpointed this when he reported that his resistance to the sale of pews "has brought on me a powerful and unrelenting adversary" - obviously an influential parishioner and pew-holder. Yet, if a parson shrank from condemnation, he was unlikely ever to see the end of class divisions in his church or parish.

Thus, an increasing number of clergy felt that the struggle against pew rents and pew appropriation had to continue, whatever antagonism it caused amidst wealthy parishioners. Even in a parish where pew renting and appropriation were not total, or where the wardens could at least use appropriated pews for other church-goers when not occupied by those whose hassocks reserved them, class division could still be fostered - or, perhaps, inverted snobbery - as an indirect consequence of the system. Both could produce an excuse for non-attendance, as in Easington-with-Liverton, for instance, where the immigrant alum workers "dislike going into Pews belonging to other people,"<sup>155</sup> and in mushrooming Thornaby-on-Tees where there were 500 free sittings, but "some do not like to come and not pay."<sup>156</sup>

A further and obvious complication, particularly for newly carved-out parishes with a new church but very little endowment, was that pew rents were deemed a necessary source of income. Yet, as J.E. Sampson, incumbent at St. Thomas's, Lowther Street, York, stressed:

the rate at which the pews are let (though not very high: 2/-, 3/-, 4/- per seat quarterly) places them beyond the reach of the better class of poor and causes most of those which are let to be occupied by non-parishioners to the extrusion of the poorer parishioners. The only remedy I can suggest is the abolition or reduction of the pewage.<sup>157</sup>

By contrast, a rare report of immediately beneficial results, following the abolition of appropriation, came from Wortley in Doncaster Deanery, where attendance was more regular after pews were unappropriated: an obvious moral victory.<sup>158</sup>

For all that the pew system was still causing some attendance problems in 1865, it would be wrong to place too much emphasis on it as a continuing, fundamental cause of the decline in church attendance. It had probably contributed quite strongly to de-Churchment in the earlier years of the century, whether for the valid reason of its adding to existing class divisions, or simply as an excuse for non-attendance. However, by the 1860's, even in the densely populated parts of Sheffield, the pew system 'per se' was no longer a major problem.

Of the 21 Sheffield parishes that sent in Returns in 1865, 14 had a population of more than 5,000; and, from these, only three clergy admitted to problems related to pews. Most notably, J. Livesey, incumbent at St. Philip's, felt that all seats should be free and open to local inhabitants, most of whom were very poor. Pew rents at St. Philip's were "failing as a source of income" - understandably in view of the poverty in the parish. Thus Livesey urged the Archbishop to persuade the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to endow the parish to the

full amount of £300, on condition that pew rents be abolished. Livesey was sure that these moves would increase the congregation, and this would mean that a weekly collection, when introduced, should meet all other

Free and appropriated seating in York Diocese in 1892-5:

	<u>1892-3</u>	<u>1894-5</u>
Parish church free sittings	152,039	196,330
Chapel of Ease free sittings	15,909	25,901
Free sittings in missions	20,967	32,187
Free in other buildings	<u>2,429</u>	<u>4,187</u>
<u>Total free</u>	<u>191,344</u>	<u>258,605</u>
Parish church appropri'd sittings	37,328	41,904
Chapel of Ease appropri'd sittings	1,605	2,163
Appropri'd sittings in missions etc.	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total appropri'd	<u>38,933</u>	<u>44,067</u>
<u>% free sittings</u>	<u>83.1%</u>	<u>85.4%</u>
<u>% appropri'd sittings</u>	<u>16.9%</u>	<u>14.6%</u>

Table 17 Comparison of free/appropriated sittings in York Diocese, 1891-2 and 1894-5.

Source: Bp. Dio. 11, 1891-2 & 1894-5

necessary expenses.<sup>159</sup> Of the seven parishes in Sheffield below 5,000 population, only one incumbent mentioned seating, admitting "all my seats are private property - no free seats," but he wanted more accommodation, presumably to be able to provide some free seats.<sup>160</sup>

By the end of the period, pew renting and appropriation were rapidly dying out altogether in York Diocese, [See Table 17 above] the number of free seats now being considerably greater than those appropriated. Only five clergy in the diocese mentioned in the 1894 Visitation Returns that pew renting or appropriation was an impediment to their ministry. This represented only 0.8% of all parishes. This tiny figure does not mean that appropriation and renting had disappeared altogether, of course; and right at the end of the period, between 1892 and 1895, pew appropriation in parish churches even increased a little (though far less than the increase in free sittings during the same years). [See Table 17 above] Indeed, the improved position relating to appropriated and free seats in parish churches across the diocese was very marked. This one improvement had virtually removed one former reason - or excuse - for non-attendance at church; and the loss of income involved does not seem to have added too seriously to the Church's problems.<sup>162</sup>

(b) The condition of the parish church

Despite a considerable majority of clergy reporting in 1865 that the repair of their churches was good, including all the churches in Sheffield Deanery, and despite many of them saying with pleasure that the church had been

completely restored within the previous ten years, 8.6% of clergy across York Diocese claimed in 1865 that cold, damp or poorly maintained churches had an adverse effect on their church attendances. If there really was a link between the condition of churches and attendance, it is understandable that the parish whose parson wrote that his church was "one of the most comfortless and dilapidated in His Grace's Diocese" had an attendance pointer of only 13% from a population of 774;<sup>163</sup> and the parson who wrote: "Repair not good: cold, damp and about half a mile from the village", had an even lower attendance pointer: only 7% from a population of 746.<sup>164</sup>

Churches in poor repair/cold/damp, York diocese, 1865:

CLEVELAND:	16	parishes	out	of	169	=	9%
E. RIDING:	22	"	"	"	187	=	12%
YORK/W.R.:	11	"	"	"	209	=	5%
DIOCESE:	49	"	"	"	565	=	<u>8.6%</u> av.

Table 18 Poor condition of church affecting attendance, York Diocese, 1865. [Source: V/R 1865]

However, a bad state of repair did not necessarily go hand in hand with vey poor attendance at church. This was



shown, for example, in two cases where the condition of the church was linked with some conflict between the parson and the local landowner or patron. Thus, the Rector of Burghwallis, near Doncaster, wrote:

I am sorry to say that the Church is not what it ought to be, and my attempt to restore it last summer failed, though I had ample funds for the work, through the opposition of the chief Landowner and a Churchwarden, one of his tenants.<sup>165</sup>

The recently appointed incumbent of West Acklam implied in 1868 that the patron was neglecting his duty, stating:

Church repair very bad; damp and the pews half-rotten. It is much to be wished that His Grace would use his great influence with the Patron of the Living, Thos. Hustler, Esquire, to erect a new Church. Mr. Hustler is a very wealthy man.<sup>166</sup>

Hindsight suggests that the need for restored and new churches was frequently over-estimated by clergy from the time of the appointment of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in the 1830's. On the other hand, it is likely that the appeal of new and warm chapels did add to the movement of people away from their parish churches into Nonconformist chapels. But the balance had to be right, and the reasonably good attendance pointers in parishes like Burghwallis and West Acklam (30% and 55% respectively) show that people would attend church despite clergy anxiety about the need for restoration or new buildings.

Rosemary Chadwick's analysis of the Churches in Bradford in the 1880's and beyond, shows that leaders of

all denominations were still too convinced of the need to build new church premises. These, once built, often created new problems, rather than automatically leading as hoped to greater numbers of people attending regular worship. Too often a major problem was the considerable debt caused, not only by the building programmes themselves, but by efforts to keep church buildings in decent repair once erected. It is probable that Bradford's experience was repeated, at least to some extent, in other parts of the northern province, and particularly in similarly industrialised, urbanised (and suburbanised) large towns.<sup>167</sup>

(c) The sympathy, or lack of it, between Master and employee, and between parson and parishioners

In 1865 Mr. Barnes, incumbent of St. Mary's, Bridlington, pointed out that

those whose Masters are Dissenters are almost always required to go to Chapel; whereas many Churchpeople are indifferent on this point.<sup>168</sup>

This is a revealing contrast in custom. Those Anglicans in St. Mary's parish who left their servants at home, and did not encourage them to attend worship at another time, implied a lack of concern about them. Their attitude compared badly with Nonconformist employers, who were less likely to be indifferent to their employees' potential as churchgoers. Such offhand treatment from Anglican employers must have spoken to at least some of the lower

classes, and convinced them that "church" was no place for them.

Similarly, Barnes's colleague, the incumbent of Christ Church, Bridlington Quay, in complaining about "the open ungodliness of sailors...and the influx of visitors during the season," and in ranking them both as impediments to his ministry, was portraying unfriendly and judgmental attitudes. Ungodly sailors were unlikely to relate to a parson so ready to condemn them. Again, the summer visitors helped to swell his summer evening congregation on a Sunday when the church was "quite full" - for all that he saw them as an impediment. Being visitors they were not likely to get to know him very well, which was fortunate for his tally of heads at Evening Prayer. Had they known his opinion of them, they would have been less likely to attend his church.<sup>169</sup>

Also related to the personality of the parson, and inevitably affecting the attitudes of the congregation, was the staid nature of much 19th century Anglican worship until well into the second half of the century. Boredom was a frequent experience, helped by the inordinate length of Morning and Evening Prayer, the wordiness of these services, and the minimal action in front of the congregation to attract the eye. It is significant that some clergy condemned the enthusiastic "extremes" of the Dissenters when worshipping; but there was probably a tinge of envy in their complaints. Hence the comment, from a parson with very poor attendance (a.p. only 4%) and whose sparse congregation was almost entirely middle or upper class, that "the Masses being steeped in Poverty and Ignorance [attend] these Schismatic Displays as they would Theatres."<sup>170</sup>

However, during much of the period steps were slowly being made to introduce shorter forms of service that would be acceptable both legally and liturgically. A positive move was the passing of the Act of Uniformity Amendment Act in 1872 allowing shortened forms of services in unconsecrated buildings. Significantly, in that same year Bishop Magee, twenty years later to become Archbishop of York, made clear in his episcopal 'Charge' to the Peterborough clergy that morning services lasting two hours, and evening services lasting one and a half hours, would put many people off attending, because they "had not the bodily strength to sit them out, or the spiritual culture to enjoy them."<sup>171</sup>

The curate at Barmby Moor in the East Riding made some pertinent comments in 1879 about the need for congregational participation as a means of enlivening Anglican services. He remarked that the Church of England, in recent years, had made "rapid strides in the improvement and devotion of her services." But, in country churches that had no choral tradition, there was too often a lack of liveliness in worship which did not do justice to the "happy possession" of the Book of Common Prayer. He also suggested that

nothing is so gratifying as a thoroughly congregational response in the General Confession, Versicles and the Psalms. I cannot think that the apparent coldness which I have noticed in many churches arises from indifference. Our church militant is, or should be, the reflection of the church triumphant!<sup>172</sup>

However, more time elapsed before the majority of parochial clergy took this sort of thinking to heart,

acknowledging, as it did, the physical, intellectual and cultural difficulties of parishioners, and the need to accept that the Church had to sell its wares in competition with Nonconformist forms of worship. Yet, even earlier than Bishop Magee's statement about the harm done by over-long services, there was a handful of clergy in York Diocese who would have readily agreed with him. The incumbent of the East Riding village of Rise (a.p. 43%), for instance, said sympathetically that the labouring classes, whilst not bitter towards the Church, felt little interest in her Services, and any zeal for religion tended to be found in Dissent.<sup>173</sup> An instance of inspired leadership comes from the father and son (T.W. and J.C Simpson) who were Vicar and Curate at Thurnscoe, in Doncaster Deanery. They evoked an excellent response to their efforts to make the parish church and its worship more attractive. They had had the church walls painted and the whole church reseated, with open and free seats; and a new heating apparatus installed at the Rector's expense. Above all, they had introduced Gregorian chant into services with great success, for it had encouraged congregational singing "and very much increased reverence for the House of God."<sup>174</sup>

Cold rigidity about worship on the part of clergy was probably as much a cause of poor relations with their parishioners, and therefore at least as much a contributory cause of the de-Churchment process - whether to Dissent or to no Church at all - as more obvious problems such as pew appropriation or Sunday employment. Likewise, rigid clerical severity over moral matters must have been off-putting. For example it is unlikely to be a coincidence that the parishioners of Atwick, in Hornsea Deanery, whose parson recommended the excommunication of "evil doers", had become so alienated

from the Church that, as the parson admitted, most people in the parish went to no place of worship, "preferring a day's idleness". A man of such scant sympathy, who doubtless communicated his harsh feelings to his flock, can have aroused little affection for himself, for the Church or for the worship he led in the parish church. It is presumably no coincidence, either, that his attendance pointer (9%) is far less than those of his more sympathetic and flexible colleagues at Rise (43%) and Thurnscoe (46%).<sup>175</sup>

(d) Bad roads and distance to walk to church

This factor is in the grey area between "inside" and "outside" the Church. It is not likely that the Church had much control - if any - over the past changes in a village that had led to the parish church becoming isolated from parishioners' houses. However, in places where they had to walk maybe as far as three or four miles, with the roads susceptible to flooding and exposed to all the elements of bad weather, the youngest and the oldest could understandably opt out of going to church. And the Church was very slow to adapt to this problem by allowing the conduct of worship at other places in the parish, such as school-rooms or in cottages.<sup>176</sup>

Where distance was a genuine impediment to parishioners, it presented a problem to the Church in trying to retain a hold on them and in seeking to compete with Dissent in attracting them to worship. In 1865 20% of clergy considered that the distance of the parish church from the bulk of population was an impediment.

Distance/bad roads affecting church attendance, 1865/1894:

Part (i) in 1865:

CLEVELAND:	42	parishes	out	of	168	=	25%
E. RIDING:	30	"	"	"	187	=	16%
YORK/W.R.:	42	"	"	"	209	=	20%
DIOCESE:	114	"	"	"	565	=	<u>20.3% av.</u>

Part (ii) in 1894:

CLEVELAND:	37	parishes	out	of	168	=	22.0%
E. RIDING:	11	"	"	"	191	=	5.8%
YORK:	16	"	"	"	136	=	11.8%
SHEFFIELD:	8	"	"	"	97	=	8.2%
DIOCESE:	72	"	"	"	592	=	<u>12.2% av.</u>

Table 19 Comparison of effect of distance to church and bad roads on church attendance, York Diocese, 1865 & 1894

[Sources: 1865 and 1894 V/R's]

This meant that the distance of the church from parishioners - in the eyes of the clergy - was the second most important hindrance to church attendance. It is quite remarkable that even in 1894, despite the church building programme that had taken place between 1865 and 1894 - even in Sheffield and Hull, but in many country parishes also - over 12% of clergy were still mentioning the distance of a place of worship from the people as an important factor affecting church attendance. [See Table 19 above]

It is even more remarkable that Sheffield Archdeaconry (with 8.2%), where the bulk of population could be expected to be within easy walking distance of an Anglican place of worship, had more problems with this than the more sprawling parishes of the East Riding (which registered only 5.8%). There are two possible explanations of this. First, such matters as bad roads, and the distance to walk to church, were being offered as excuses for non-attendance, when other matters might have been nearer the truth - such as enjoyment of the freedom to choose, or disaffection with the worship that went on once people arrived in church, or the regard in which they held the parson. Secondly, working class town dwellers would have become less regular keen walkers of any distance compared with workers in rural parishes. But this does not explain the scale of Cleveland's problem!

Neither distance from a church nor bad roads affected by the weather were bound to prevent people from worshipping if they really had a mind to do so. More important was the authority of the Church in making attendance a duty, and also what parishioners expected to find at the end of a long walk in bad weather. Hence, a delightful story told by the Vicar of Pocklington has some



relevance. He had a "very wet and disagreeable walk" in order to take the Ascension Day service at the little church at Yapham in 1879. Presumably it was equally wet and unpleasant for those lay folk who lived in distant cottages and farmhouses. However, the Vicar was

much cheered to find an excellent congregation assembled. The singing and the responding were particularly hearty and congregational.<sup>177</sup>

## 2. Factors outside the Church

### (a) Absentee/disinterested landowners and employers

An extreme case of problems with a local landowner involved the Worsley family at Hovingham in Cleveland Archdeaconry. From the information Mr. Munby, the incumbent, sent to the archbishop it seems possible that he was suffering from some sort of mental illness - especially as he wrote that both the late Archbishop Musgrave and Archdeacon Churton had "confirmed...the principal family in their opposition to the incumbent." Munby complained that the parish had been neglected for many years. (He was instituted over twenty years earlier in 1842). The church had been rebuilt four years earlier, but Munby said he "found even in the material church both religion and common decency violated." Neither warden, of whom Mr. Worsley - a leading landowner - was one, discharged their duties; and the incumbent claimed that Worsley had recently said he would do as he pleased, and Munby might punish him, if he could, for neglect.<sup>178</sup>

Was Worsley unusually domineering and difficult? Or was Munby impossible to bear? Whatever the roots of the problems were, the effects on Church life must have been disastrous; and it is no wonder that Munby admitted that church attendance was a small proportion of the population, and not increasing.

When relationships between a parson and a resident local landowner became intolerable, the landowner would doubtless wish that the parson did not possess the freehold of the living, and the parson would wish that the landowner were non-resident. But without reaching the extremes experienced in Hovingham, tensions between the spiritual and temporal leaders in a parish will explain why 7.7% of parochial clergy complained in 1865 about adverse effects on their ministry, caused by lack of support from a resident landowner, or about the presence of unhelpful farmers or local employers. And there were probably more clergy who could have complained, but wrote nothing on the subject in the Visitation Returns, realising that, if knowledge of their grievances leaked out, the situation in the parish could worsen.

Complaints about an unconcerned local landowner could sound anachronistic as well as plaintive - for the days of widespread, strong clergy/squirearchy alliances were already long past by 1865. Thus, the Rector of Nunnington could write that, far from being his ally, the squire was his main impediment, for he "seems not to care for the spiritual condition of his tenants. Till his death little can be done." The Rector said he would welcome a visit from the Archbishop

to see for himself [the parish's] condition, religiously and morally [and] urge upon the Squire the

Lack of support from landowners/employers 1865/1894:

Part (i) in 1865

CLEVELAND:	16	parishes	out of	169	=	9%
E. RIDING:	11	"	"	" 187	=	6%
YORK/W.R.:	17	"	"	" 209	=	8%
DIOCESE:	44	"	"	" 565	=	<u>7.6%</u>

Part (ii) in 1894

CLEVELAND:	14	parishes	out of	168	=	8.3%
E. RIDING:	16	"	"	" 191	=	8.4%
YORK:	15	"	"	" 136	=	11%
SHEFFIELD:	8	"	"	" 97	=	9.3%
DIOCESE:	<u>52</u>	"	"	" <u>592</u>	=	<u>8.8%</u>

Table 20 Comparison of clergy complaints about lack of support from landowners/farmers/employers in 1865 and 1894

duty of co-operating with the Rector, and not opposing him. Such a course could be productive of good.<sup>179</sup>

The Vicar of Coningsbrough near Doncaster complained about

the want of Godliness among the small farmers, who never attend any place of worship and care not about their servants' morals. And also the example of the few gentry we have, too often neglecting their duties. There is no remedy but years of education that I can see.<sup>180</sup>

On the other hand, in the same deanery, the Rector of Sprotborough unconsciously gave the lie to the assumption made by some clergy that, if only they would lead their servants to church worship, co-operative gentry could save the day where church attendance was concerned. He said his ministry faced no impediment of any sort; that the local landowners [Sir J. Copley, Bt., and W. Wrightson, Esq., M.P.] and the tenant farmers in the parish gave wholehearted support, attending Services regularly, and always accompanied by their servants. Yet, he revealed, many of the agricultural labourers and their families never attended any place of worship.<sup>181</sup> Even in such an old-fashioned parish, the lower orders were asserting their right to choose, to exercise their private judgment about religion and church, despite the example of the local gentry.

(b) Apathy, indifference and "infidelity"

Quite a significant proportion of clergy throughout

the period mentioned the prevalence of infidelity, or of indifference towards the Church and religion generally. Clergy differed in their approach, some pragmatically regarding indifference as a sign of the times, linked with changing attitudes and patterns of behaviour, and all part of a changing, pluralist society that was even reaching remote rural parishes. Other clergy were more anxious about indifference, finding it difficult to accept it as a situation with which they might have to come to terms. Quite often, the way the term is used will indicate as much about a parson's attitudes towards his flock - and his frame of mind about life generally - as about his parishioners' attitudes to the Church, or to its worship and beliefs, or to him.

The proportion of clergy mentioning indifference as an impediment to their work remained remarkably constant throughout the period - as also did the proportion across the archdeaconries, apart from an unaccountable temporary increase in Cleveland Archdeaconry in 1877. It is important to reiterate that mention of indifference was as likely to occur in tiny country parishes as elsewhere. By contrast, in 1865 mention was rare in the industrial towns of Sheffield, Hull and Middlesbrough, where the effects of poverty and migration were seen by clergy as presenting more problems. In Sheffield in 1865 the incumbent of St. Stephen's alone mentioned "spiritual indifference"; although the incumbent of St. George's wrote about "utter estrangement from all religious ordinances"; and the Vicar of St. Thomas, Crookes, reported longstanding neglectful habits and the predominance of "a spirit of radicalism in all classes"; but he hastened to add that respect and attraction for the Church of England was markedly increased in the town,

Indifference to Church/Religion, 1865, 1877, 1894:

Part (i) in 1865

CLEVELAND:	21	parishes	out	of	169	=	12.4%
E. RIDING:	22	"	"	"	187	=	11.8%
YORK/W.R.:	23	"	"	"	209	=	11.0%
DIOCESE:	66	"	"	"	565	=	<u>11.6%</u>

Part (ii) in 1877

CLEVELAND:	36	parishes	out	of	165	=	21.8%
E. RIDING:	23	"	"	"	175	=	13.1%
YORK/W.R.:	32	"	"	"	213	=	15.0%
DIOCESE:	91	"	"	"	553	=	<u>17.1%</u>

Part (iii) in 1894

CLEVELAND:	13	parishes	out	of	168	=	7.7%
E. RIDING:	13	"	"	"	191	=	15.1%
YORK:	17	"	"	"	136	=	12.5%
SHEFFIELD:	12	"	"	"	97	=	12.4%
DIOCESE:	55	"	"	"	592	=	<u>9.1%</u>

Table 21 Comparison of indifference to Church/Religion, York Diocese, 1865, 1877, 1894.

[Sources: V/R's 1865, 1877, 1894]

especially amongst "operatives".<sup>182</sup> In Hull, again there was only one suggestion of indifference: the incumbent at Drypool complained about the influx of artisans in recent years, bringing their "confirmed habit of heathenish indifference to religious duties."<sup>183</sup> In neither Middlesbrough parish did the incumbent mention indifference. Both were preoccupied with the shortage of buildings and, at St. John's, with the shortage of clergy, too.<sup>184</sup>

In the rural parts of the diocese the picture was different. As one country parson put it, there was

nothing but indifference among the labouring classes who imagine they have a right to do, on a Sunday, as inclination dictates, without anyone's interference.<sup>185</sup>

Another wrote: "they like to know they are their own masters on Sunday."<sup>186</sup> It is clear that parsons such as these were mainly concerned about indifference towards church attendance. Mr. Kenny, Rector of Kirby Knowle, probably was, too; but he described the situation a little more sympathetically when he wrote, "the people in this part do not like too close a supervision."<sup>187</sup>

Several parsons believed that the indifference to church worship amongst the labouring classes was encouraged by the bad example from landowners and farmers. This was another way of saying that indifference was not the monopoly of the labouring classes. Parishioners, irrespective of their class or degree of privileged status, were obviously asserting their right to choose what to do, and not to do, on a Sunday. Thus, the incumbent at Haxby wrote that he found great indifference

to religion amongst the labouring classes, encouraged by the bad example set by many of the farmers.<sup>138</sup> Significantly the same incumbent stated, "I don't know of anything that specially impedes my ministry here, more than I should meet in other villages."<sup>189</sup> This would suggest that other clergy felt that indifference was so general that it was not worth mentioning: hence, for example, the Rector of Scrayingham with Howsham and Leppington, who simply wrote: "I know of no hindrance special to this parish."<sup>190</sup> Maybe this hid the fact that indifference was quite serious in his parish, although the a.p. was 35%.

To some parsons this marginalisation of Church worship in small rural communities was obviously a problem to be confronted by all possible means. Thus, for instance, Mr. Gordon, Rector of sparsely populated Kildale having tersely listed the "worldliness, unbelief, indifference and dissent" in his parish, immediately made positive suggestions also for possible remedy, through the use of "lay assistants and itinerant preachers under the sanction of the Bishop."<sup>191</sup>

There were other clergy who made no complaint about indifference or apathy, but tacitly accepted the non-monopolistic situation which meant they could not expect to have all of their parishioners worshipping regularly with them on Sundays. Thus, Mr. Whaley, the incumbent at Askham Bryan in Ainsty Deanery, said that the proportion of population attending church in the parish (a.p. 33% from a population of only 362) was "as high as in most parishes;" but he found some folk in the parish simply could not be persuaded to attend any place of worship regularly, whilst a few others attended only



Nonconformist services. Yet Whaley believed there were no impediments peculiar to his parish.<sup>192</sup>

Another typical example of this pragmatic approach comes from the Archdeacon of Cleveland, Edward Churton. In the parish of Crayke in 1865 he had a few Roman Catholics, several varieties of Methodist, and some parishioners who went to church nowhere. The Archdeacon held weekly services of Holy Communion, averaging 60 to 70 communicants. He estimated there were about 300 attendances at Morning and Evening Prayer, with about 200 of those attending one service or the other. But he was another who specified no particular impediments to his ministry. Instead, he listed advantages. For instance, he and his curate were well received at almost every house in the parish; there were some cases of "irreligion and immorality", but he believed they were not increasing. Churton had clearly come to terms with the drift in society away from total attendance at the parish church on Sunday - if such a situation ever existed; and he was prepared to settle for the maintenance of harmonious relationships around the parish with all parishioners - whatever their church allegiance, if any.<sup>193</sup>

Despite these signs of increasing clerical pragmatism towards indifference and independence in 1865, clergy in York Diocese were still mentioning these as problems thirty years later in 1894, [See Table 21 above, p. 302] and still in very similar proportions as in 1865 and 1877. This is of additional significance in view of the emphasis on holding parish missions across the diocese in the 1880's. But clergy comments in 1894 still strike familiar notes. For instance: "Indifference: my parish is a scattered one, and I have practically no support. Need for more enthusiasm for the Church."<sup>194</sup> Others

complained quite simply about "worldliness;"<sup>195</sup> or "the sad amount of prevailing apathy;"<sup>196</sup> "indifference to all religious teaching;"<sup>197</sup> and "the great indifference as to the necessity of leading a religious life."<sup>198</sup>

An interesting development is the increased clergy recognition of indifference in Sheffield town in 1894. From the 31 parishes in the deanery 8 clergy (that is, 25.8%) mentioned indifference, compared with only one (St. Stephen's) in 1865. But alongside this came an interesting anomaly: in Hull (20 parishes) and Middlesbrough (4 town parishes) no clergy mentioned indifference as a problem, although the incumbents of North Ormesby (pop. 8,344) and Thornaby (pop. 15,400), both in Middlesbrough Deanery, did so.<sup>(199)</sup> Why Sheffield and Hull should be so different is puzzling.

Some other new slants on indifference were emerging in 1894. Thus, for example, an incumbent in a sparsely populated parish stressed "the dullness and materialism of the people."<sup>200</sup> Another, in a parish with more than fifty times the population, was also concerned about materialism, writing that "the people as a rule are not opposed to religion but are indifferent, absorbed in earthly things."<sup>201</sup> One incumbent, in a parish with a very small population, whilst admitting his own apathy, complained about "a dead level of respectability" in the parish,<sup>202</sup> a complaint not met in 1865 or 1877, and a hint that the thin Christian crust of middle class Victorian 'mores' was being questioned. And another parson in a small country parish criticised the indifference of well-to-do Church people in his parish,<sup>203</sup> hinting that he saw their church attendance as a public proclamation of their respectability, rather than of profoundly Christian principle.

The Vicar of Market Weighton was also alluding to a missing dimension when he admitted that "the stolid indifference of my parishioners" was the only serious handicap in the parish. Nevertheless, his congregations were good, his classes quite well attended, and communicants numbers increased from year to year.<sup>204</sup> Two Sheffield incumbents likewise criticised the standard of commitment amongst those from whom they expected more. One said there was indifference on the part of the poor; and neglect of Bible and Church on the part of the rich. "So little seems to satisfy," he concluded.<sup>205</sup> The other voiced a growing complaint about "a general indifference, engendered, I fear, by the laxity of life manifested by professedly religious people."<sup>206</sup>

Clearly, late 19th century indifference was not limited to the lower orders. Clergy were at least as concerned about the unsatisfactory attitudes, including, it seems, a certain hypocrisy amongst their better off, respectable worshippers.

### (c) Counter-attractions

Whether seen as part of the indifference on the part of parishioners, or as a sign of active opposition to the Church and its principles, excess with alcohol - especially on Sunday - was fairly widely condemned by clergy in 1865. Some clergy, such as the incumbents of Christ Church, Bridlington, and nearby Flamborough, complained simply of drunkenness.<sup>207</sup> Other clergy went further and argued that opening public houses on a Sunday should be forbidden. As the incumbent of Askham Richard wrote, "there is a need to close public houses at 10 p.m.

on Saturday till 9 a.m. on Monday."<sup>208</sup> Some complained that there were too many public houses for the size of the parish - particularly in rural districts;<sup>209</sup> and some called for changes in the statutes. The Vicar of Brafferton in Easingwold Deanery did both. He wrote: "Drinking habits of people a great impediment. Seven public houses in parish. Public house Act should be altered."<sup>210</sup>

No doubt, in some cases clergy were so condemnatory about the use of alcohol, that parishioners felt that attending church and drinking were incompatible; and therefore chose not to attend church. But, of course, apart from its effects on church attendance, the harmful effects of drunkenness on families in a parish would too often loom large in a parson's pastoral ministry. The Vicar of Huntington wrote that a handicap of being so near to York was that "men of lower habit frequent our public houses and often lead away the young men," though he thought this pattern was less evident than some years earlier.<sup>211</sup> He obviously had understandable social and moral reasons for disliking public houses.

Drink remained a problem for clergy throughout the period. Thus, for example, in 1894 the Vicar of Christ Church, Heeley, in Sheffield Deanery, wrote about difficulties with intemperance, particularly amongst women; and the Vicar of St. George's, Sheffield, regarded drinking as one of the "chief foes" of the Church.<sup>212</sup> The Vicar of Upper and Nether Poppleton, near York, felt it necessary only to remark: "Six public houses in the parish, with little over 600 inhabitants;" and the incumbent in nearby Rufforth simply noted: "Drunkenness - 2 public houses for under 50 houses."<sup>213</sup>

Another "secular" activity, less often complained about than drunkenness but also seen as contributing to the neglect of church worship, was the "excursion", made possible by the extension of the railway system during the 19th century. The incumbent of Askern and Fenwick in Doncaster Deanery noted as the only impediment to his ministry in 1865 "the influx of Sunday visitors in summer - from neighbouring towns in search of pleasure."<sup>214</sup> On the east coast, the incumbent of Christ Church, Bridlington, recorded his resentment at the summer influx of visitors;<sup>215</sup> and the incumbent at Tunstall-in-Holderness complained that the shore and vessels attracted sightseers on Sundays.<sup>216</sup> The excursion remained a contentious subject throughout the period. In 1894, the incumbent at Askern and Fenwick recognised that it was not simply the pleasure of an outing that added to de-churchment, but also the onus on workpeople to make the excursion possible, when he wrote: "Sunday Excursionist Traffic prevails largely through Spring and Summer months, creating Sunday work and keeping the people away from Church."<sup>217</sup>

In the parish of Seaton Ross the parson complained about "the Romanists cricketing on a Sunday - for which there seems no remedy."<sup>218</sup> He had insufficient influence to stop the practice, which he believed encouraged the principal impediment to his ministry, which he described as the local "carnal heart which is enmity against God". Parsons in Doncaster, Redcar and York, and in the vicinity of those towns, complained in 1865 about "the Races". The Vicar of Christ Church, Doncaster, for instance, considered they had "the most demoralising effect," whilst his less bigoted colleague at St. George's recognised there was division about "the right and wrong of them", but thought that "unease" about the moral issues

kept racegoers from attending church.<sup>219</sup> In 1894, the complaint was more specifically made about "gambling", - not the races as such - and more in the Sheffield Deanery than elsewhere. As with drink, the addictive effects of gambling were encountered by clergy in their pastoral work - an aspect mentioned in 1894 by R.H. Hammond, Vicar of Sheffield St. Mary in 1894, a densely populated parish. Hammond knew of boys and girls in the parish who were addicted as well as adults.<sup>220</sup>

Perhaps the most difficult "counter-attraction" to Sunday worship was Sunday employment. The more obvious instances of this are to be seen in remote rural areas and in villages that were developing into quarrying or mining towns. Church attendance could be poor, for example, if the service time clashed with "foddering time for the cattle."<sup>221</sup> Hindsight prompts the question why service times could not be re-scheduled around such activities. But parsons hankering after an authority they supposed their predecessors possessed, probably felt that such a concession would lose face for the Church in the eyes of what clergy saw as an irreligious community. Equally difficult were the secular demands on the labour force in crop-growing areas of the diocese. Thus, at Eastoft near Selby, where potatoes and flax were grown, "women, girls and boys find work in the fields almost all year round, from age as early as nine."<sup>222</sup> In the North Riding ore quarrying villages of Grosmont and Ormesby the incumbents mentioned that parishioners had to work in the local iron works on Sundays.<sup>223</sup>

The Vicar of St. George-with-St. James, Doncaster, was concerned about the effects of the late closing of the local market on Saturday nights upon church attendance, saying

I have sometimes wished that it might be closed by authority at an earlier hour, as is done (I believe) in Liverpool and doubtless elsewhere.<sup>224</sup>

There was similar concern from the incumbent at Dringhouses, near York, who thought the market gardeners in his parish, who with their wives and their children attended the Saturday night market at York, were not as regular at church worship as they should have been.<sup>225</sup>

Amidst the mound of difficulties clergy faced as a result of de-Churchment, and however much these results of de-Churchment undermined their authority, there was a remarkable amount of deep concern amongst clergy during the period about providing spiritual sustenance for their parishioners. Many clergy in the York Diocese were increasingly determined to adopt and project the "charter role" of the late 19th century priest. By 1894 the activity of church organisations in many parishes and the extent of devotion surrounding the Eucharist indicate their concern, their hard work, and their adoption of that charter role.<sup>226</sup>

## CHAPTER 4

### LOSS OF MONOPOLY THROUGH EROSION OF ESTABLISHMENT

#### (i) Panic and pragmatism

The fear of disestablishment periodically disturbed Church leaders in Victorian England. How well-founded that fear was is not always clear. What is clear, however, is that a gradual and erosive process of informal disestablishment went on throughout Victorian times, as well as some direct attacks on the Church's Establishment. Alongside the fear and the sometimes panicky reaction from some Church leaders, there was growing pragmatism and calm resignation from others; and the more confrontational and nervous reaction tended to decrease during the period as pragmatism increased.

The faddists of the Liberation Society<sup>1</sup> with some Nonconformists and some Liberals welcomed either reaction. Their obsessive aim was to bring about the formal disestablishment of the Church and to remove what they saw as the privileged position of the Church of England, particularly in relation to Church rates and in the provision of elementary education. Confrontation added to their publicity; pragmatism kept their hopes of victory alive.

However, long before the foundation of the Liberation Society, Parliamentary legislation from the 1830's onwards had started to share out the Church's former prerogatives, thus contributing to the erosion of the Church's established status and of its authority at grass-



roots in the parishes. This legislation was a logical consequence of England's development into a pluralist society and, from 1867 onwards, an increasingly democratic one.<sup>2</sup> Such legislation contributed not only to the erosion of disestablishment but also, as A.D. Gilbert pointed out, to the politicising of relations between Church and Chapel during Victorian times.<sup>3</sup> But astute Churchmen in the northern province took the common sense view that the Church could never hope to provide the many services to society represented in these Acts, and that therefore the Church should co-operate in these tasks as a partner with the State.

Other Churchmen saw this erosive legislation as a reduction of the Church's authority for its own sake, and as the initiation of what would eventually become a more formal type of disestablishment. It therefore seemed very threatening. Much of this erosion had already taken place by the mid-1850's. Hence in 1860 Richard Oastler, the famous Yorkshire Tory reformer and staunch Churchman, was complaining about

the inroads that have...crept into the Constitution of the Church by the vast changes that have been made...by granting the power of her government to the House of Commons [where] are to be found many of her most determined and avowed enemies....The Church has been rendered comparatively powerless for good.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, in the second half of the 19th century, the Church of England retained quite strong claims to be the National Church if not the Church of the nation, and not least in administering the majority of rites of passage. However, at times the full, formal disestablishment of the Church of England seemed a logical probability, and particularly

in 1869 and 1885 when the Liberals looked intent on this policy. Moreover, the elements of Church Establishment that were retained were only retained because Parliament had not yet chosen to remove them. Thus, the Church continued to be "by law established", but as the inferior partner in the nation's Establishment compared with National Government.

The superiority of Parliament in the partnership left the established Church often floundering during the middle decades of the century. Thus Oastler also complained in 1860 that he had questioned for years "why the Church of England should be the ONLY Christian Church without an ever watchful directing and governing AUTHORITY."<sup>5</sup> The question was justified. The Roman Catholic and Nonconformist churches ran their own affairs as they wished. But the emergent chattering Church - an important part of the Church's response to its predicament - was powerless to wrestle with Parliament or to do anything except debate its plight and suggest possible reforms. Any reforms other than those that could be dealt with at archdeaconry and diocesan levels required Parliamentary sanction and/or legislation. Not even the Convocations could legislate for the Church.

However, an important irony in the situation was this: irrespective of whether or not the Church of England was the "majority" Church in the land, it was obviously illogical for Parliament to disestablish the Church completely if it wished to retain authority over it. For once the Church of England was disestablished, Parliament and statute law would have no more authority over Anglican beliefs, practices and status than they had over the beliefs, practices and status of any other Church, denomination or sect in Britain. And the reverse side of

this ironical situation is that disestablishment would have freed the Church from State interference, placing it in the same position of running its own affairs as that enjoyed by the Nonconformists and Roman Catholics. Disestablishment would therefore have strengthened the Church enormously by increasing its flexibility and ability to adjust in an age of rapid change. This ability would have enhanced its authority.

As it was, some Church leaders - Archbishop Thomson amongst them - consistently fought for the maintenance of the Establishment. Yet as early as 1848, Archdeacon Churton had put his finger on the irony involved in the Church's established position. Now that the House of Commons included Roman Catholics, Scottish Presbyterians and other Dissenters among its members besides Churchmen, he said,

it is not the Roman Church but the United Church of England and Ireland which is now in bondage with her children. The English Communion has never received an equivalent for the repeal of the Test Acts. Her connection with the State subjects her to parliamentary enactments in which her adversaries now have a powerful voice.<sup>6</sup>

Just over a century later, in 1952, a Church Assembly Report listed the rights and privileges, together with the restrictions and limitations, that establishment status still brought to the Church of England. The list mentioned only two advantages of any great significance: the continued privilege which allowed the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and twenty-four other diocesan bishops to have seats in the House of Lords, and the maintenance, by law and custom, of a special relationship between the Anglican parish priest and his parishioners.<sup>7</sup> That list

could have been compiled before the end of the 19th century, for it described the debased condition of the Church's Establishment that had already arrived during Victoria's reign. In his Presidential Address to York Convocation in 1887, Archbishop Thomson said that the Establishment of the Church of England as a National Church was expressed by very few elements, and he listed six, none of which, ironically enough, included any obvious advantages to the Church as an institution. Indeed, all six involved powers of constraint held by the Crown in Parliament over the Church.<sup>8</sup>

For Churchmen voluntarily to suffer these handicaps, and even to fight to keep them, is mystifying - unless their maintenance was seen to guarantee the security of familiar custom within a basically conservative institution. Perhaps most important of all, anxiety about the erosion of the Establishment in 19th century England was misplaced, as is strongly evidenced by the continued existence to the end of the 20th century of the Church of Ireland and the Church in Wales, together with the Anglican Communion throughout the world, all of them totally disestablished Churches. It is now clear that where calm and pragmatic responses to erosion prevailed during the period they were generally more beneficial to the Church in the long term, than giving energy and time to anxieties about a total disestablishment that never happened, and would not have been disastrous if it had.

York Convocation did not discuss the issue of "Church and State" until 1881, although other bodies in the chattering Church had not been silent on related matters, such as the discussion on "The Church in relation to the State and Nonconformists" at Leeds Church Congress in 1872.<sup>9</sup> Even in 1881, however, York Convocation did not

come to grips with basic Church/State relationships, and the Report of the Lower House Committee which investigated "the Constitutional Relations between the Authorities Ecclesiastical and Civil in the Church and Realm", confined itself to the relationship between civil and ecclesiastical courts and the law. It did not tackle the wider issues of the relations between Church, Convocation, Crown, State and Parliament.<sup>10</sup> Nor did the discussion widen beyond the courts when it returned to the topic of relations between Church and State in 1884. And the reason was largely because, by this time, with a vociferous Nonconformist element in the Liberal Party strongly favouring disestablishment, it seemed prudent to leave the wider issues alone.

So long as the Church could not expect to fight a successful war against the erosion of its established status, the pragmatic response was the intelligent response to the increased power of the House of Commons. It was an equally intelligent response to the increasing influence of various other sources of authority outside the Church, whether it be that of statute law, of Nonconformity, or of public opinion as expressed by an increasingly enfranchised population. Leading moderates in York Convocation helped to establish this calm modus operandi. Amidst the consternation and foreboding that abounded, for example, when Gladstone announced his intention to disestablish the Church in Ireland, it took courage for Churchmen to stand up publicly and advocate calm and moderation. One who did was the Hon. and Rev. Canon Howard, proctor for York Chapter, who pointed out that in the past there had been many "ecclesiastical panics", such as that caused by the establishing of a Roman Catholic hierarchy in England in 1850. But these were the

sort of panics he least feared, he said, because they "all of them passed away."<sup>11</sup>

Part of the Church's response to the erosion of the Establishment involved the determination to reform the Church at all levels, without recourse to legislation. The Church Defence Institution, founded in 1860, was an important part of this response.<sup>12</sup> The Institution was open equally to clergy and laity and its policy forbade the discussion of doctrine at any of its meetings, for the chief aim was

to combine...Churchmen of every shade of political and religious opinion in the maintenance and support of the Established Church, and its rights and privileges in relation to the State, particularly as regards all questions...likely to become the subject of legislative action.<sup>13</sup>

The Church Defence Institution sought to establish branches in the rural deaneries and, by 1865, throughout England there were some 340 Ruri-decanal affiliated associations. Of these 138 had already appointed the required lay representative to the Central Council of the Institution.<sup>14</sup> A year later (1866) York Diocese had fifteen Deanery Associations, out of a possible total of twenty-seven, representing urbanised, industrialised and thoroughly rural areas.<sup>15</sup> It was hoped that Church Defence would spread to the parishes; and in 1875 Archdeacon Blunt, a strong supporter, reminded East Riding clergy of the importance of Church Defence "to keep the State Christian, and the Church comprehensive."<sup>16</sup> Thereafter, he continued to teach that strength in the parishes was the best defence for the Church against any disestablishment.<sup>17</sup> The argument was sound enough, albeit basically misguided.

(ii) Problems with Parliament - and "Church Defence"

At the Annual General Meeting of York Working Men's Conservative Association in April 1868 A.R. Fausset, Vicar of St. Cuthbert's, York, proposed the motion that

this meeting regards the proposed disestablishment of the Irish Branch of the United Church of England and Ireland as a violation of solemn compacts...and fraught with danger to our common country.

Fausset did not usually attend public political meetings; but, an Irishman himself, he regarded Parliament's proposal to disestablish the Irish Church as a crucial issue, and he quoted Lord Eldon who claimed

it was not only the Church which was in danger, but also the State....The Church was not established to make the Church secular, but to make the State religious.<sup>18</sup>

Less than a year later, Dean Duncombe of York expressed alarm in York Convocation at the proposed attempt to disestablish and disendow the Church of Ireland, considering it "a fatal encroachment upon the Prerogative of the Crown."<sup>19</sup>

Only the previous year, the newly elected Liberal Government had passed the Compulsory Church Rate Abolition Act. Now, in 1869, Gladstone was intent on pacifying Ireland. A first step, he believed, was to disestablish the Church of Ireland - a logical step, as that Church served only a small minority in a preponderantly Roman Catholic country.

The Irish Church Disestablishment Act was duly passed later in 1869. It left the Church of Ireland with two-thirds of its endowments and all of its buildings, a more generous treatment than had originally been expected. It is doubtful whether the Act did much to pacify Ireland; but it did revitalise support for Church Defence in England<sup>20</sup> and, by 1877, the number of local Church Defence associations in York Diocese had reached twenty-seven.<sup>21</sup>

The debate on the proposed Irish Bill in York Convocation in February 1869 illustrates some of the illogicality and over-anxiety aroused by the subject of disestablishment. Dean Duncombe's motion mentioned "sorrow and alarm" and, in his introductory speech, he claimed that Parliament's proposals for Irish disestablishment implied that the Church had failed in its mission to Ireland. These proposals, he said, were based on a misguided notion of "religious equality", a concept that he considered neither possible nor practicable under the British Constitution.<sup>22</sup> But, of course, he was wrong. A Disestablishment Act passed by a duly elected Parliament might have been considered unpleasant and even hostile by some Churchmen, but it was certainly "constitutional". And it was indeed possible to put the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches on an equal legal basis as competitors in the Irish religious market.

In seconding Duncombe's motion, Archdeacon Hamilton of Lindisfarne argued that any legislation that destroyed the established position of the Irish Church would be a violation of the Act of Union. Although a Tractarian, the Archdeacon also brought to the surface the widely held fear that disestablishment in Ireland was the more threatening because it involved a capitulation to Roman Catholicism, something abhorrent to a still predominantly



Protestant-minded and Evangelical Church of England. "No Pope," said Hamilton, "ever undertook such a dispensing power as that now assumed by Parliament."<sup>23</sup>

As implied by the strong vote in favour of Dean Duncombe's motion (29 to 6), other members of Convocation had spoken strongly in his support during the course of a long debate.<sup>24</sup> Even so, a few more moderate voices were raised. Thus, Canon Howard of York advised against ecclesiastical panic,<sup>25</sup> and Dean Howson of Chester wisely advised against "No surrender" language. First, he stressed, it left no space for negotiation. Second, very pragmatically, he asserted that, despite everything said to the contrary, disestablishment in Ireland was inevitable. Therefore the wise course was to bargain for more time, and give Irish Churchmen the chance to adjust to the inevitable being forced upon them.<sup>26</sup>

But the most aware and significant speech of all in this revealing debate was made by Archdeacon Durnford of Manchester. He was very conscious of the unpopularity the Church of England had suffered in the earlier years of the century - and still suffered in some areas. He was conscious, too, that this unpopularity had permeated the lower classes, many of whom lived in urban areas and had been granted the Parliamentary franchise only two years before.<sup>27</sup> The Archdeacon emphasised the need for Church leaders to take account of the increased democratisation that was taking place. Before the last election, he said, the Church had warned the electorate that the Church of Ireland was about to be disestablished, and had asked, "will you support that Church?" The verdict was now clear: the people wanted the Irish Church disestablished and its endowments secularised, and had duly given Gladstone his majority. Therefore, asked Durnford:

Is it wise to go before the public and say, 'Whatever the people vote for we will run directly counter to them?'...[and] exasperate the country, and bring about results disastrous to the Church of England?

The wiser course, he advised, was that suggested by the Dean of Chester: accept the inevitability of the impending legislation, and seek the best terms, rather than put up unyielding resistance.<sup>28</sup>

These pragmatic Churchmen were proved correct in their response. They had recognised that Irish disestablishment was both logical and inevitable. And, even if disestablishment were a regrettable step, the legislation had been greeted for the most part with calm stoicism in Ireland itself. Thus after a short space of further calm, concern in the Church of England returned to the ritual controversy and the furore over the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874, followed by ritual prosecutions and imprisonments. Nevertheless, hostility to the Church inside Parliament, and from Liberationists outside, meant that "Church Defence" was never far from the minds of some Churchmen, as the increase of local Defence Associations during the 1870's illustrated.

In his 'Charge' to the Cleveland clergy in 1870, Archdeacon Edward Churton spoke about the recently improved atmosphere in the Church of England:

Of late, at least, a little more of internal peace in the Church, and a little more of mutual forbearance between parties...a little more liberty allowed.

However, the Church's authority was being eroded, he admitted, by legislation, such as the abolition of the

University Tests Act and "new" Marriage Laws and he ended his 'Charge' with a rallying call to his clergy to "honour God, be patient and undismayed."<sup>29</sup>

In the 1870's, as the anxiety brought by Irish disestablishment subsided for a time, and the Church of England became absorbed in its internal conflicts, there was an increasing emphasis on improving parochial ministry as the best means of "Church Defence". Thus, for example, Archdeacon Blunt reminded the East Riding clergy in 1875 that the motto of the Church Defence Institution was "defence not defiance", and that it sought above all to show people

what disasters, especially in the country parishes, would accrue to the cause of our common Christianity as well as to our common Protestantism were the union of Church and State severed. [But] a well worked parish is the best Church defence....A united band of Churchmen, with their minister at their head, co-operating in every work of piety and benevolence, is the best apology for that wider union between Church and State which in miniature they represent.<sup>30</sup>

Other clergy of all ranks were beginning to stress this need for unity between clergy and laity, and for clergy to treat their lay folk in such a way as to create a more co-operative spirit. Thus, for instance, H.M. Clifford, Vicar of Fulford, York, writing to his people shortly before leaving for another incumbency in 1871 said:

It may be taken that that Parish is in the most healthy state, both ecclesiastically and spiritually, in which the laity help the most with a willing mind.

A clergyman in the midst of his people will succeed in all he undertakes if he makes and esteems the laity as the strength of his right hand - whether in Sunday School, various village clubs, in 1,001 calls in an active Parish.<sup>31</sup>

During the planning for York's first Diocesan Conference in 1876, Archbishop Thomson acknowledged that lurking disestablishment threats kept alive the need for Church Defence and for equal lay and clerical representation at the Conference. He received support from an anonymous writer purporting to be a working man, who attacked those who wanted to disestablish and disendow the Church of England. Compromise with such "spoliators" was useless, he claimed, as their aim was

to destroy the usefulness of the Church, and to bring down the high esteem in which the clergy are held.... Let the Church work harmoniously together; reform where reform is wanted. Let the clergy do their duty in every parish, and laymen assist and strengthen their hands....It will not do to say 'There is no danger'. Liberationists are using all means, fair and foul, seven days a week.<sup>32</sup>

Similarly, Bishop Bickersteth of Ripon, having spoken in 1878 to his first Diocesan Conference about the Liberation Society's fight for disestablishment, said that the Church's response to the challenge must seize the opportunity to clear away many misunderstandings about the Church's position - to tell people, for example, that clergy were not paid by "the State". The hostility, said Bickersteth, also pointed to the need for clergy and laity to meet on equal terms to exchange opinions, whether

in Diocesan Conferences or elsewhere, and to allow room for "latitude of opinions."<sup>33</sup>

There was some recognition in this emphasis on clerical and lay co-operation that part of the Church's problems, indeed the campaign for disestablishment itself, were rooted in poor relations between clergy and laity, or even in downright anti-clericalism, not only at parochial level, and in the more obvious antics of the Liberation Society, but also in the relationship between Church and Parliament. Shortly before the second York Diocesan Conference in 1879, Archdeacon Blunt expressed the hope that the Conference "would promote that mutual understanding which is so essential to the Church's well-being." But he went on to insist that the Church's well-being made it essential to establish a totally new lay body parallel to Convocation, so that "the living voice of the Church" could be ascertained. Blunt explained that this joint voice of clergy and laity

would receive a consideration from Parliament such as is never likely to be accorded to the resolutions of a Convocation composed of the clergy alone.

This would reduce the existing disestablishment agitation in Parliament, suggested Blunt.<sup>34</sup>

Anti-clericalism in Parliament was not new, of course. Almost twenty years earlier, Richard Oastler had warned that the House of Commons contained many of the Church's "most determined and avowed enemies."<sup>35</sup> Twenty years later, after the General Election in 1880 when Gladstone and the Liberals returned to power to start their Second Ministry, although the Liberal Party had made no declaration of intent to disestablish the Church of

England, Churchmen did not forget that it was Gladstone and the Liberals who had disestablished the Irish Church during their First Ministry. Archdeacon Blunt hinted at this when he broached the subject of "The clergy in political crises" in his Charge to the East Riding clergy just after the Liberals returned to power. He said

it would be a matter for deep regret if the clergy were exclusively attached to one of the two great political parties....Yet, clergy must not fail in the duty of asserting those principles of justice and honour, of righteousness and truth, which ought to lie at the very foundation of every Christian State.<sup>36</sup>

In that last wide-ranging assertion, the Archdeacon probably had in mind the injustices brought, for instance, by the annual hiring of labour in Yorkshire, a matter close to his heart. But there is no doubt that he was also implying that it would be unjust for the Government to seek to disestablish and disendow the National Church.

However, it was the more immediate issue of imprisoning priests for ritual practices - a matter that was uniting reasonable men of all church parties - that caused York Convocation to raise the matter of relations between Church and State. Introducing a motion in York Convocation in April 1881, proposing the appointment of a committee "to consider the relations between the authorities ecclesiastical and civil in this Church and Realm," Archdeacon Hamilton of Lindisfarne pointed out that the over-riding concern now was not so much the anti-Church antics of the disestablishment lobby, as for groups within the Church to find ways of preventing the imprisonment of conscientious clergy.<sup>37</sup>

Hamilton was asked to chair a Lower House Committee to look at "Constitutional Relations between the Authorities Ecclesiastical and Civil in the Church and Realm." But when the Committee's Report appeared in 1882 it was clear<sup>38</sup> that the imprisonment issue had led to the exclusive consideration of relations between civil and ecclesiastical courts. Once again, when York Convocation briefly looked at the subject of Church and State in 1884, it confined discussion to this relationship - despite Archbishop Thomson having made an ominous reference to disestablishment in his opening address saying, "I do not think anyone can now hesitate to say that disestablishment is at least a possibility."<sup>39</sup>

Certainly the issue did not disappear. Thus, in 1885 the incumbent at Brayton in the East Riding wrote:

The Church and State have always been one....It is wrong to say that the State has established the Church;... equally wrong to say that the Church has established the State. They have grown up together like twin sisters.<sup>40</sup>

The year was significant. A vocal minority of Liberal politicians, particularly those with a Welsh Nonconformist background, were indicating their determination to disestablish and disendow the Church in Wales after the elections. As when Irish disestablishment threatened in the late 1860's, some English Churchmen now panicked at the thought of Welsh disestablishment. They were sure that what the Liberals had done to the Irish Church in 1869, they would do to the Welsh Church in 1886 - and to the English Church at some date soon after that.

In the event, Gladstone was able to thwart the headstrong disestablishmentarians in the Liberal party; and Archbishop Thomson expressed appreciation of that in Convocation in 1886.<sup>41</sup> But some Churchmen continued to feel threatened; and the Archbishop of York was no exception. He warned that any assurances from the Liberals could only be temporary, and the Church's best course was to "strengthen its defences by passing good reforms," thus making disestablishment less of an issue. However, Thomson admitted, this policy highlighted a perpetual difficulty: most reforms would require Parliament's help if they were to become legal. But Thomson also stressed that the assumption often made, that Parliament would not help with schemes for Church reform, was not altogether just. It was not easy, admitted Thomson,

to point to any measure on which the Church itself clearly has made up its mind, and which the House of Commons has thrown back or refused to deal with.<sup>42</sup>

The Archbishop considered the most important reform needed was the setting up of a National Synod to bring representatives of the clergy and laity of Canterbury and York together. He hoped that this National Synod would be the answer to those Churchmen who thought that "Disestablishment with freedom might be preferable to Establishment with enforced inaction."<sup>43</sup>

Having acknowledged the existence of supporters of Disestablishment inside the Church, Archbishop Thomson then made some interesting comments about the support of a significant group of de-Churchmented people who were against Disestablishment. These he identified as those



captivated by new thought [and] led away from all interest in such doctrines [as] true belief in God and in the Lord's resurrection and loving work for us [but] content to see...the worship continue, and the prayer, and the popular hope and fear of things to come, from which the meaning has, for them, departed.

These folk were not unfriendly. They approved the Church's charitable work, "for unselfishness is philosophic as well as religious," and their numbers were increasing. Thomson's favourable comments about them is a significant admission that an identifiable group was maintaining a form of Christianity without bothering about Church observances. He obviously regarded this group as a positive force for good in the disestablishment struggle, for "whilst the nation is religious," he said, "she will not disestablish."<sup>44</sup>

Following this address Archbishop Thomson again brought Church Defence to the top of the Church's agenda, requesting all Rural Deans in York Diocese to put the question to their Deanery Chapters: "What steps can be taken to make known the facts as to the position of the Church of England as a national Church to all classes?" The answers provided were similar. Helmsley and Pocklington Deaneries, for instance, agreed that steps should be taken by the clergy to teach the people through lectures, sermons, debates and leaflets about the position and history of the Church; to give "definite teaching" to the children in National Schools about the Church's role as the guardian of the nation's Faith; and to broach the subject in Archdeacons' Visitation Charges when large numbers of Churchwardens were always present.<sup>45</sup>

The subject of disestablishment, linked with the reform of Convocation and the creation of a House of Laymen, arose regularly in York Convocation during the next three years. Thus, for instance, Archbishop Thomson warned in 1887 that disestablishment threats had to be kept in mind in any considerations about fusing the two Convocations as a step towards one National Assembly, for which there was growing support.<sup>46</sup> But strained relations between the Lower House and the Archbishop from 1887 until his death (in 1890)<sup>47</sup> did not help progress in these matters. Meantime, in 1889 Thomson again expressed his old anxiety about poor relations between Convocation and Parliament being a possible help to those who sought disestablishment; and again advised that Convocation should not press for legislation, as such pressure risked the Church

being pushed into Disestablishment both by those who are within the Church and impatient with the restraints on the Church's autonomy, and those outside who use the Church's demands for reforms against the Church.<sup>48</sup>

In fact Thomson was so anxious about disestablishment, and so opposed to it, that he suggested it was better to put up with some disadvantages than "to surrender the influence for good implied in the title of 'National Church'".<sup>49</sup> He also insisted that it was better for the Church to work towards practical reforms rather than legislative, and commended reforms in "missionary work, religious education and lay help." He also appealed for interest in "the great movements of social progress", mentioning subjects such as emigration, sanitary reform and gambling that showed concern about the welfare of the

people.<sup>50</sup> Those were his last words to Convocation on the issue, for he died the following year.

Archbishop Magee, in his first and only address to York Convocation,<sup>51</sup> made an appeal for closer relations between the two Convocations. He said he agreed with the judgment of Harvey Goodwin, the Bishop of Carlisle, who had described as "monstrous" the lack of cohesion between Canterbury and York. Magee believed the Church desperately needed "united counsel" in such dangerous times.<sup>52</sup> He did not specify the source of the danger. But, as the "Newcastle Programme" of 1891 had mentioned both Welsh and Scottish Disestablishment,<sup>53</sup> it was clear that the old anxiety over possible English Disestablishment was hovering over Churchmen again.

The following year, with William Dalrymple Maclagan, yet another Archbishop of York duly translated,<sup>54</sup> the Welsh issue was pressing again. Thus, for example, in March 1893, Pocklington Deanery Chapter passed "a vote of sympathy" with the Welsh Dioceses in view of the proposals threatening to disestablish them.(55) The following month, the clergy, Churchwardens and sidesmen of Weighton Deanery met to consider the Welsh Suspensory Bill, now before Parliament, and condemned it as "eminently mean and unfair". They also unanimously agreed that a petition against the Bill be sent to Parliament, and that all clergy, Churchwardens and sidesmen of the Deanery should sign it.(56) In October 1894, Helmsley Deanery passed a unanimous resolution against the proposals to disestablish the Church in Wales.<sup>57</sup>

The apparent threat posed by the Welsh Suspensory Bill prompted the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to commend to their provinces a scheme for every parish to

appoint a Lay Committee on Church Defence lines. Archbishop Maclagan asked in his 1894 Visitation Returns for a report on the formation of these Committees. [See Table 22 below]

The response in York Diocese gives an indication of the reservations held by clergy towards the threat of disestablishment - especially as it was still not a direct threat to the Church of England itself. The average response across the archdeaconries was more consistent

The proportion of parishes that had formed Lay Church Defence Committees in York Diocese, 1894

CLEVELAND:	73	out of	168	parishes	=	44%
E. RIDING:	84	"	"	191	"	= 44%
YORK:	41	"	"	136	"	= 30%
SHEFFIELD:	37	"	"	97	"	= 38%
DIOCESE:	235/592	=	<u>40%</u>			

Table 22 The response in parishes of York Diocese to the Archbishops' call for the formation of Lay Defence Committees, 1894. Source: 1894 V/R]

than might be expected, with the predominantly rural archdeaconries presenting a very similar picture to Sheffield. More than half the parishes had not formed Defence Committees, and considerably fewer hoped still to do so, with fewer still remaining uncertain.

The chief inferences to be drawn from this situation are that, by the mid-1890's, moderation and calm had become the predominant response in a majority of parishes, whether densely or sparsely populated, whether highly industrial or thoroughly rural, to any threat of disestablishment. And the reasons for the moderation and calm were mixed. Thus, a few clergy stressed the Archbishops' desire for the committees to be lay affairs, and were prepared to wait for lay folk to act - or to do nothing. Thus the incumbent of Sprotborough near Doncaster wrote that the parish was waiting for a Committee "of Church laymen...part of the Scheme of the two Archbishops."<sup>58</sup>

Some clergy awaited a consensus of clergy on the matter before committing their parishes one way or the other. In Bulmer Deanery (in the Cleveland Archdeaconry), for instance, no parish priest had formed a Defence Committee. This is not surprising in view of the fact that the Deanery Chapter had held a full discussion and then voted unanimously against such Committees as being "undesirable".<sup>59</sup> A Sheffield incumbent made clear that the feeling of his Deanery Chapter was vital to him: he was waiting for a Ruri-decanal meeting to see what his brother clergy were going to do.<sup>60</sup> These instances illustrate again the part that chattering Church bodies - ruri-decanal chapters in this instance - were playing in consensus-forming and collective decision-making.

There are signs, too, of the growing pragmatism typical amongst clergy during the period; and - very important - of political considerations determining the course clergy should take. Thus, for instance, some clergy in Easingwold Deanery stressed the need to avoid rocking the parochial boat. The Vicar of Haxby wrote:

If we did anything openly for Church Defence, it is thought the dissenting wire-pullers at York would at once start a Liberation Society branch; and there is at present a good feeling towards the Church, and occasionally some of the dissenters attend the Services.<sup>61</sup>

The incumbent at Sheriff Hutton was equally frank. He had consulted others on the issue and agreed with their advice that "it would be a gross error of judgment to risk provoking a contest...by appointing Church fighting Committees;"<sup>62</sup> and the Vicar of Sutton-on-Forest, who had also sounded out local opinion, thought it undesirable

to provoke active hostility to the Church in a parish where the bulk of the people, though often attending the Chapels are, on the whole, favourable to the Church.<sup>63</sup>

In deciding against Defence Committees, many clergy grasped a variety of political nettles. The Vicar of Garton-in-Holderness simply reported that everyone was Conservative.<sup>64</sup> The incumbent at nearby Winestead had to cope with the opposite party, producing the same result. He would not be forming a Committee because the squire was for Disestablishment and was also the Liberal Parliamentary candidate.<sup>65</sup> Common sense dictated that no Lay Church Defence Committee be formed there. Similarly

at Askham Richard, near York, the strongest Churchmen were Liberals, and the incumbent said, "the less we have to do with politics the better."<sup>66</sup> The Vicar of St. Paul's, Sheffield, demonstrated how far some Church of England parishes and their clergy had "progressed" in pragmatism and political tact by the end of the 19th century. There would be no Church Defence Committee - at least, not yet: one of his Churchwardens was "a very bitter Radical", but their relationship at present was very harmonious.<sup>67</sup>

As for the total disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of England: it has not even yet taken place. But in view of the gradual erosion of the Church's established status in England throughout most of the 19th century, and of events in Ireland and of those threatened in Wales, the nervousness of some Churchmen is understandable, even if not the panic.

Hindsight suggests that it was logical for Parliament to avoid a full-scale, frontal attack on the Establishment of the Church of England which, despite the competition from Nonconformity, remained the National Church in a sense never enjoyed by the minority Irish and Welsh Churches. Without the benefit of hindsight, however, and conscious of the Church's periodic unpopularity within society - and conscious, also, of legislation aimed at sharing out the Church's supposed monopoly of religion - many Churchmen understandably misread the true situation, assuming that Parliament would disestablish the Church of England well within their own lifetime.

Even so, it is important to remember that, throughout the times of anxiety over possible disestablishment during the period, a strong nucleus of respected Churchmen remained calm and undismayed. Their influence helped to

change attitudes towards the Church/State relationship - both within the Church and outside it. This meant that by the end of the century a majority of clergy in York Diocese were unwilling to provoke attacks by over-hastiness in forming unnecessary Defence Committees. But the great irony remains this: the Church could have been as autonomous and as free to handle its affairs as any other Church had it decided, of itself, to opt for disestablishment.



### (iii) Opposition to Church Rates

The process of eroding the State's patronage of the Church of England began rather ironically in 1833, with the setting up of the Ecclesiastical Commission. Part of the Commissioners' duties was to rationalise the Church's financial resources. They started so well on their task that Dissenters' hopes were raised: it seemed likely that the improved management and increased wealth brought to the Church of England by the Commissioners would make the levying of the controversial Church rate unnecessary. Soon, these hopes were partly realised, more often in town parishes than in the countryside, by the demise of the Church rate altogether. But this development came about in a very piecemeal way, and eventually required Parliamentary legislation to regularise it.

The same programme of Whig reforms that had introduced the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1833 also initiated factory, poor law and municipal government reforms, all of which required the raising of local funds to finance them. However, until 1835 the parish Vestry was the only form of local government, except in corporate towns, and it was an annual duty of the Vestry to lay the rate to cover all the costs of local government in country parishes. Thus, for instance, each Vestry had to levy rates for the maintenance of highways, the payment of overseers and guardians of the poor, mole-catching, "taking the sparrows",<sup>68</sup> and policing - including the enrolling of special constables when local crime waves necessitated them.<sup>69</sup> In cases where the Vestry could not cover costs through rate-laying alone, the Vestry Meeting had to find other ways of raising money, such as "to let lanes for eatings to farmers, etc.,"<sup>70</sup> or perhaps to sell property owned by the local Church.<sup>71</sup>

Even though the reformed town councils were able to raise rates themselves from 1835 onwards, the parish Vestries were sometimes asked to include in their rates a proportion for regional amenities provided, for example, by the municipal Board of Health.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, an Act of 1860 allowed two-thirds of the ratepayers in a parish or district to fix and levy a rate for "Public Improvements for general Benefit within their District."<sup>73</sup> But, in addition to all this - and here was the basis of the prolonged storm of protest - the costs of the repair and upkeep of at least parts of the parish church came out of the Vestry-raised Church rates.

In Victorian times, with increasing voluntaryism, resentment grew over this custom of using a proportion of Church rates to pay for the upkeep of the parish church, and for repairs to those parts of it that were not the direct responsibility of a lay rector, local squire or landowner to maintain. Thus, Joseph Lawson when writing in 1887 about boyhood memories of the West Riding town of Pudsey in the 1830's recalled the unpopularity of the Church rate with Dissenters, and said that there were still people living in the town who resented the days when they had to pay. He concluded: "But for it, men might have lived together as friends and neighbours ought."<sup>74</sup> Clarke, the Victorian historian of Howden in the East Riding, recorded in 1851 that the mention of a heavy rate "occasionally caused a heavy grumble;" but he reminded Howden parishioners that they had a parish church of unusual beauty "to humanise their minds, and to reward them an hundred fold for any call that has been made upon their purses."<sup>75</sup>

However, in addition to the maintenance of a possibly beautiful parish church, the Church rate also paid for more

mundane church expenses, such as the repair, washing and replacement of the surplice kept in the vestry for the parson's use during services;<sup>76</sup> and for the services of church employees such as organists and sextons, as well as the secular parish employees such as wayside surveyors and molers.<sup>77</sup> If a rate-payer were a full member of a Nonconformist Church it was understandable if he resented "the State's" requirement for him to contribute via the local rate to the upkeep of the parish church.<sup>78</sup>

Non-payment of Church rates had begun in the mid-1830's,<sup>79</sup> and an increase in complaints followed after the founding of the Liberation Society.<sup>80</sup> Only a minority of non-payment cases came to court; and a more typical example of dealing with non-payment is that presented by the Vestry at Acomb, near York. The wardens informed the Acomb Vestry in October 1861, that they were summoning a Mr. Mason for refusing to pay his rates. But when the Vestry heard that his chief objections were the charges made for the organist's dinners and for the wardens' expenses for actually collecting the rates, the members unanimously agreed that Mason's rate "be exempted proportionately from payment of these items."<sup>81</sup>

Complainants such as Mr. Mason were doubtless encouraged by the Liberation Society in its war against the Church rate during the late 1850's. But clergy as well as Churchwardens could respond pragmatically. For instance, in his 'Charge' to the Cleveland clergy in 1858, Archdeacon Churton expressed his confidence that if Church rates were abolished, clearly already a possibility, the Church would find a remedy; but he simply hoped that faithful Church folk would not have to face the burden alone, and that the churches would not become ruins.<sup>82</sup> On the other hand, clergy in the East Riding Deanery of Weighton were more

anxious. A year later (1859) they resolved that each parish in the Deanery should protest to the House of Commons, through various M.P.'s, against the Church being deprived of support from Church rates, and ask for no alteration in the law without provision of "some permanent and equivalent substitute."<sup>83</sup> Not surprisingly, just over two years later (in 1861) Weighton Deanery Chapter was one of the first in York Diocese to set up a local association of the Church Defence Institution.<sup>84</sup> For it was anxiety about the erosion of the Church's established status generally, and the rise in opposition to the Church rate in particular, that had led to the foundation of the central body of the Church Defence Institution in 1860.

Nevertheless, amidst the rising tension over the payment of Church rates, it is important to remember that both the Church Defence Institution and individual Churchmen sought calm and moderation. Thus Archdeacon Creyke, in his 'Charge' to the York Archdeaconry in 1866 - only two years before Gladstone's Compulsory Church Rate Abolition Act was passed - advocated "space for the conscientious Dissenter" in his remarks on Church rates.<sup>85</sup> Indeed, so inevitable had an abolition Act become that its passing was more a damp squib than a thunder-flash, and few saw it as any great victory for the Liberation Society. By 1868, a sizeable minority of people who were eligible to pay the rate but who objected to it in whole or in part were, like Mr. Mason of Acomb, being exempted by the local wardens and vestry members from paying the part to which they objected. Furthermore, a Report on "Church Rates" published in 1863 by the National Association for Promoting Freedom of Public Worship in the Church of England - whose aims included the adoption of systematic Weekly Offerings to replace pew rents - had revealed that out of 10,739 parishes that sent information to the N.A.P.F. 8,559

parishes in England and Wales were involved to some degree in a Church rate levy. This left a significant minority of just over 20% of parishes which were not involved at all with a compulsory Church rate. Equally significantly, the Report showed that during the previous seven years the parishes that sent returns had expended nearly £4½ million "for Church purposes", and of this gross sum just over half had come from voluntary rates or subscriptions.<sup>86</sup>

Logically enough, therefore, the Compulsory Church Rate Abolition Act began with an acknowledgement of the erosion that had already occurred, pointing out that the collection of Church rates had already ceased in many parishes because of the opposition to them, and that in some places this development had come about after "litigation and ill feeling."<sup>87</sup> As might be expected, despite the general pragmatism and moderation of Church leaders, there was a mixed response to the Act. Archdeacon Jones, for example, spoke at length about the Act in his Visitation to the York clergy in 1869, describing it as "a not very satisfactory compromise;"<sup>88</sup> whereas Archdeacon Churton, in his Cleveland 'Charge' in 1870, said that the amount of money lost to the Church would "not bring bankruptcy." He believed that Churchwardens who acted wisely would be able to levy compensatory voluntary rates.<sup>89</sup>

Even so, the abolition of Church rates did leave the Church with problems in some areas. Archdeacon Blunt told the East Riding Churchwardens in 1876 that the office of warden had acquired the opportunity for more usefulness, though it had lost some of its importance, since the abolition of Church rates. He admitted that there was "great weight now" on raising money to maintain the churches, and that this task was often not easy in country parishes. Thus, he suggested that where no voluntary

Church rate existed, a weekly offertory might be introduced after previous consultation with leading parishioners. He warned of possible prejudice against this, but felt it could be overcome by "a candid explanation of the reasonableness of a system in which each contributes, according to his ability." He also argued that the financial challenges now facing the Church, requiring the expansion of voluntary offertories, could bring advantages. For "being free and not compulsory," he said, "it is left to everyone's conscience to fix the limit of his responsibilities."<sup>90</sup>

In retrospect, it seems that the Act abolishing the Church Rate came as a welcome tidying up of an administrative mess, and was a logical consequence to earlier legislation, such as the Municipal Government Act of 1835 and the Public Health Act of 1848. In addition, the Church Rate Abolition Act was at least as much an acknowledgement of pluralism in English society as a direct attack upon the Church of England. This is hardly surprising with staunch High Churchman W.E. Gladstone leading the Government that passed the Act. As for Parliament's efforts to tidy up local government finances and to end State subsidies for the Church, a reasonable pattern was set in the clauses of the Abolition Act which allowed the Vestries to collect a voluntary Church rate specifically for church maintenance, and to appoint Trustees to administer such funds as were raised for the Church.

In the parishes there were signs of extra generosity amongst those who could afford to give, and also of the Vestries exercising their wits in various ways to fill the gap left by the abolition of the Church rate. Thus, for

example, at Boston Spa in 1870 the members agreed to pay for walling a gift of an acre of land

by voluntary contributions, or assessment made on the same footing as that upon which the expenses of the Church have lately been raised, and which, if responded to in like manner will, at 9d. in the £, produce the required amount.

Any surplus was to be divided between Leeds Infirmary and York County Hospital. Three years later, the Vestry decided that the sexton's grave-digging fees for all funerals of "non-parishioners" were to be doubled.<sup>91</sup> There is a hint of tit-for-tat in this financial arrangement. The legacy of the abolition of the compulsory Church rate was obviously still in evidence; but so, too, were the signs of the Church coping with its changed circumstances.

(iv) The loss of monopoly in rites of passage

(a) Marriage - and Divorce

By 1856, marriages in duly licensed chapels and registrars' offices had been a legal option in England for almost twenty years. Some Churchmen still reacted against the loss of a near monopoly of the solemnisation of marriages with the militant institutionalism typical of the period. Others had accepted pragmatically the Church's loss. In his Charge to Cleveland clergy in 1856, Archdeacon Churton felt the need to press home some truths about marriage generally, and non-Church marriages in particular. He pointed out, for instance, that "though marriage is a divine institution, [there is] no Scriptural form for it." Therefore, he argued, civil marriage could not, and should not, be treated as if it were no marriage at all. He went further and applauded those who preferred a civil ceremony because they had no religious beliefs. Such folk were acting honourably, he said.<sup>92</sup>

Churton then criticised the actions of some militants, such as a few young clergymen in the southern province, who had recently incurred legal penalties for supposedly "re-marrying" people who had been already married by the Superintendent Registrar of the District. He insisted that civil marriage could not be treated as if it were invalid or unwholesome, however antagonistic some Church folk might feel towards it.<sup>93</sup> In other words, Churton was telling his clergy that it was not only illegal to subvert the type of legislation that was reasonable in an increasingly pluralist society, but that it was also futile and unjust. However much the existence of civil marriage seemed to erode an earlier monopoly enjoyed by the Church, it was



valid and wholesome from the moment the Solemnisation of Marriages Act of 1836 became operative in July 1837.

Until 1836, Anglican clergy had held a virtual monopoly of marriage ceremonies, only Jews and Quakers having the right to conduct marriages in places other than parish churches, and conducted by other than Church of England clergy. Indeed, as Olive Anderson points out, from 1 July 1837, there were eight possible legal ways for English and Welsh people to enter into marriage - though some were only available to people who were financially well off.<sup>94</sup> The erosion of the Church's hold on this particular rite of passage was therefore beginning just before Victoria ascended the throne; and Anderson's contention is true that, if "mass choice" be the central characteristic of democratic capitalist society, democratic capitalist marriage emerged in England in July 1837.<sup>95</sup> Certainly the Act gave a filip to freedom of choice; and in so doing reduced the standing of the Church of England. Nevertheless, as Archdeacon Churton insisted, it was necessary for Churchmen to come to terms with this loss of a monopoly.

However, with hindsight, it is also important to bear in mind that the "monopoly" the Church of England was losing was a somewhat dubious form of monopoly. As Lawrence Stone points out, marriage law had become very confused by the middle of the 18th century, by which time, canon law and popular custom concerning marriage were by no means in agreement, and neither Church nor State exercised full control over it.<sup>96</sup> It was not until the Act of 1836 that a major change was initiated, and an "advanced piece of liberalism" came into the English marriage scene.<sup>97</sup>

But, the erosion of the assumed Anglican monopoly started by the 1836 Act was not a rapid process. Olive Anderson calculated that in 1864, nearly thirty years after the passing of the Act, even in those English and Welsh counties with the highest civil marriage rates, 78% of marriages still took place in parish churches, with only 9% and 8% respectively taking place in registered chapels and Registrar's offices. The figure for civil marriages in Yorkshire was not even high enough to appear in her 1864 Table of statistics. For she had discovered that in those areas where secularism and indifference to religion were strongest, that is, in London, the manufacturing districts, and the textile areas of Lancashire and Yorkshire, civil marriage rates were generally low in the mid-19th century.<sup>98</sup> Even thirty years later still (in 1894), only 11% of Yorkshire marriages and 10% of marriages in the North-west were civil ceremonies, whilst the national proportion of civil marriages had risen to 15%.<sup>99</sup>

Even so, the gradual decrease in the proportion of Church of England marriages nationally was sufficient for Anderson to suggest that by the 1870's it was reasonable for "progressives" to forecast that compulsory civil marriage would become universal in the near future.<sup>100</sup> They were wrong, of course. But this viewpoint gained some support from Archbishop Thomson who, at the end of the 1880's was sufficiently disturbed about the marriage situation to warn that

the next stage of the subject [concerning marriage] in the minds of many people is to make civil marriage universal, and to take away our position. That is the most likely thing to happen.<sup>101</sup>

He was also wrong, of course; and long before he made his rather gloomy forecast, many Churchmen had become far more anxious about divorce and the remarriage of divorcees than about the decline of Church of England marriages.

Even in the 1850's, divorce and remarriage had already become the main issue, rather than where marriages should take place and who should officiate at them; although some anxieties about the Church and marriage lingered on and were expressed in several debates in York Convocation at intervals from the 1860's to the 1880's. In 1856, Parliament considered the proposed Bill to clarify and facilitate divorce, and to permit remarriage of divorced persons, including their remarriage in parish churches if the incumbent permitted. This matter was more serious than the issue of civil marriage because it implied an attack on the Church's doctrine and Canons. In his 'Charge' of 1856, Archdeacon Churton warned of "problems ahead", and urged his clergy to be aware of the possibility of an increase in divorce.<sup>102</sup>

Two years later, Churton hinted at the underlying doctrinal issues involved in divorce and remarriage, but by that time the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act had already become law.<sup>103</sup> Pragmatically, he advocated "passive obedience" to the new law. On the other hand, he reminded clergy that the Act protected them from any penalties if they refused to marry "those who come together other than God's word doth allow."<sup>104</sup> In other words, clergy did not have to officiate at ceremonies involving divorcees; and Churton's reference to this "conscience clause", despite his advocacy of passive obedience, showed that he personally believed in the indissolubility of marriage. Parliament also, by including in the Act the safeguards from penalties for those who refused to

solemnise remarriage or to allow their churches to be used for such ceremonies, had recognised that many - probably most - clergy would share the archdeacon's view.

Yet, the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 initiated a revolution. The Act removed all powers held by the ecclesiastical courts concerning matrimonial matters and vested them in the new civil Court of Divorce and Matrimonial Causes.<sup>105</sup> Thus, for the first time a civil court had the jurisdiction to grant divorces a vinculo matrimonii;<sup>106</sup> and these changes were achieved at the expense of the Church's former monopoly, bringing a further erosion of the Church's established position. Previously, Canons 105, 106 and 108 of 1603, had laid down the essential involvement of archbishop, bishop or dean of arches in matrimonial causes, stipulating that any judge giving a divorce or separation

without keeping and observing the premisses, shall be, by the archbishop of the province or the bishop of the diocese, suspended from the exercise of his office for the space of a whole year.<sup>107</sup>

The Church's superior role in any divorce was evident. But not only did the 1857 Act take matters in one step out of the hands of the ecclesiastical courts and place them firmly in the hands of the new civil Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Court, it also negated those three Canons of the Church that had preserved the superior rights of the Church ever since the beginning of the 17th century. These two changes underline the strength of the revolution brought about by the Act. And the Victorian Church had neither the authority nor, apparently, the will to resist.

Ten years after the passing of the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act the subject of marriage arose in York Convocation (1867), because of growing dissatisfaction amongst clergy about Church marriages. Convocation unanimously passed a motion to appoint a committee to consider the existing law concerning marriage in church, and to suggest desirable amendments.<sup>108</sup> The following year (1868), a Royal Commission on Marriage was appointed; but nothing was heard on the matter in Convocation for another ten years. This is not surprising, in view of the Church's preoccupation with controversies over ritual and possible disestablishment, and Parliament's focus on foreign affairs and social reform meantime.

Eventually, in 1878, Canon Henry Temple, proctor for Craven Archdeaconry (and joint subjects secretary for the Church Congress where he spoke on Marriage Law that same year at Sheffield) proposed a motion in York Convocation, requesting the Archbishop to appoint a new committee to consider and report on the state of marriage law in England, and to look at the recommendations of the Royal Commission. This motion was a tactful reminder that the Report of the Royal Commission on Marriage had been before Parliament now for ten years, without any action on its recommendations - despite Lord Chelmsford's efforts in every session to date.<sup>109</sup>

In support of his motion, Canon Temple pointed out that there had been a decline in Church marriages in urban and industrialised areas. In 1875, the most recent year for which the Registrar-General's figures were available, about 75% of all marriages<sup>110</sup> had been solemnised in Church. Temple thought that a major contributor to the decline in Church marriages in densely populated parishes arose from the (necessary) division of large, ancient parishes into

"districts" with supposedly "indépendent incumbents". If the Rector of the old parish church insisted on banns being called in the district churches - on the face of it a sensible policy - this often upset families with long associations with the old church. Folk who were thus refused the calling of banns and the option of being married in the old church, were now going to the Registrar's Office, said Temple. As a result they were very often entirely lost to the Church thereafter. Whilst it is impossible at this distance in time to check the extent of the drift to Register Offices on the exact grounds claimed by Canon Temple, there is no reason to doubt his argument. The inability to have banns called and marriages solemnised in the church of people's choice had become a subsidiary cause of the Church's loss of standing in society, and had led to a further reduction in its involvement in the solemnisation of marriages.

A Committee was duly appointed to investigate marriage. and Convocation adopted its Report in 1879.<sup>111</sup> However, the Report was feeble. Its most important recommendation was that the Church should try to standardise the fees charged by clergy for weddings. This was of little significance, except to under-paid curates and to those clergy who were affected in the way described by Canon T.F. Simmons, Rector of South Dalton and Holme-on-the-Wolds and a proctor for the East Riding. He had complained in 1865 that both the welfare of the Church and morality were impeded by the exorbitant fees charged in some parishes for marriages after banns - or even by the full marriage fees charged in some parishes where only the banns were called, the wedding taking place elsewhere. As a result, in Simmons's parish a man was sleeping at his bride's house to evade the fees in his own parish.<sup>112</sup>

In 1881, quite suddenly it seems, John Darby, the Archdeacon of Chester, expressed strong concern about the position clergy were in over the calling of banns, the solemnising of marriages, and the loan of their churches to other parsons for the remarriage of divorced persons. He argued that if the clergy would only make their wishes known, legislation would ensue to help them - especially, he pointed out, as civil marriage was available to those divorcees who wanted to remarry and who "ought not to desecrate sacred edifices, nor ask clergy to countenance their marriage." Convocation unanimously passed a motion calling for legislation on the matter.<sup>111</sup>

Next year (1882) Darby again introduced a much less serious marriage-related subject, speaking against a Bill then before the House of Commons aiming to legalise marriage between a man and his deceased wife's sister. This subject, not a very serious problem in itself, was rapidly becoming a symbol of the frustration some Churchmen felt in face of what they saw as a general decline in social and filial morality. For in those households where a man welcomed the help of his deceased wife's sister as housekeeper and in rearing his children, there was little power that ecclesiastical or legal authority could exercise over their relationship and sexual behaviour. This was equally true, of course, if the wife's sister was already living under the same roof before the wife died.

A year later (1883) it was clear that the protests of Churchmen had gained sufficient support to oust the Bill. Archdeacon Darby proposed a motion of thanks to the House of Lords, and especially to the Archbishop of York and other bishops, who had opposed the Bill aimed at allowing the marriage of a man to his deceased wife's sister.

Indeed, the House of Lords had opposed the Bill without any dissent, showing its acceptance of the articulus cleri of the last Convocation, he said. However, Archdeacon Darby warned, those favouring this Bill would not stay quiet. And sure enough, in 1888 there was again a Bill before Parliament to allow the same sort of marriage. Once again York Convocation voted unanimously against it; and thereafter the subject disappeared from the agenda of Convocation.<sup>114</sup>

Early in 1889, Archbishop Thomson touched on a potentially more serious and wider-ranging issue when asked by Walsham How, the Bishop of Wakefield,<sup>115</sup> to comment on legislation that was being contemplated in relation to marriage. The Archbishop replied that it was necessary to keep in mind that, besides being a sacred ceremony, marriage was a very important civil question, and "the legislature will never allow us to take it out of their hands on that account." He then voiced his fear that civil marriage could soon become universal and compulsory by law.<sup>116</sup>

The Archbishop's words gave some support to growing clergy opposition to the remarriage of divorcees. Divorce and remarriage had become major issues relating to the Church's authority, especially as the incidence of divorce was steadily increasing in England at the time, and was seen as both a sign of social disturbance and a cause of it. Thus in 1893 C.N. Gray, the Vicar of Helmsley, proposed that York Convocation appoint a committee to consider the question of divorce and the difficulties the subject presented to clergy and faithful laity. Gray told Convocation that the subject was of great importance, with thousands of men and women "and above all thousands of children" continually affected by it. It was time, he



said, for Christians to take up the matter in order to protect both home life and the nation's spiritual life. He castigated the situation where a parson could be required to allow a church to be used for the remarriage of a divorced person, and where faithful laity realising these "so-called remarriages" took place in churches, knowing the Church pronounced a blessing over them, and hearing the words "Those whom God has joined let none put asunder" - also knew that the previous partner had indeed been put asunder and was living in the next street.<sup>117</sup>

No one opposed Gray's motion, and he was asked to convene a Committee on Divorce.<sup>118</sup> The Committee's Report, compiled by Gray, was ready for consideration by Convocation in March, 1894. It covered a vast field, indicating the wide-ranging and profound discussions that had taken place.<sup>119</sup> It included a survey of the "rapid increase" in divorce since the Act of 1857, with summaries of the important results of the increase; "the connivance of the Church of England in this matter"; the law and "the mind" of the whole Church and of the Church of England on the subject; and ended with brief recommendations to the bishops. Mention of "the mind of the Church" was an implied tribute to the contribution made by the chattering Church to consensus-forming.<sup>120</sup>

Gray's Report acknowledged that there had not been an increase in the number of divorces in every single year since 1857, but that each decade had shown a significant increase. The rate of successful applications remained fairly constant for men during those years, but showed an appreciable, if unsteady, increase for women. [See Table 23 below] Over 9,000 families had been broken up as a

The divorce situation post-1857:

<u>Years:</u>	<u>1858-67</u>	<u>Husbands</u>	<u>Wives</u>
	Petitions	1,337	860
	Successful	908	573
	<u>1868-77</u>		
	Petitions	1,945	1,383
	Successful	1,371	1,011
	<u>1878-87</u>		
	Petitions	2,897	2,139
	Successful	1,975	1,483
	<u>1888-92</u>		
	Petitions	1,560	1,102
	Successful	1,072	786

Table 23 Petitions for Divorce in England after 1857

[Source: YCJ Mar. 1894, Appx. p. xcv]

result of divorce, affecting a probable total of nearly 46,000 people.<sup>121</sup> As a result of the Act of 1857, claimed the Report, family life was steadily and rapidly disintegrating.

The Report also drew from the mind of worldwide Anglicanism quoting, for example, a Pastoral Letter signed by thirty-two American Bishops:

As the original mould in which all human life is cast, and within which authority blending with love first touches the will and lays the foundation of character, the family, not the individual, is the true unit of Society and of the Church....[But] beguiled by the spirit of the age, we have drifted out passively on the current of individualism, until we are now called upon to face the consequences.<sup>122</sup>

Similarly the Report quoted the Encyclical Letter of forty-five bishops at the most recent Lambeth Conference in 1888:

The sanctity of marriage as a Christian obligation implies the faithful union of one man and one woman until the union is severed by death.<sup>123</sup>

The York Report also mentioned a more recent reiteration of the view in a resolution of the Lower House of Canterbury Convocation in July 1891. This requested the bishops to discourage the granting of licences for the remarriage of divorced persons during the lifetime of a partner from a former marriage.<sup>124</sup>

Clearly, the mind of the Church of England had developed very differently on the divorce issue from the years of "passive obedience" begun in 1857. Clearly, too, as the York Convocation Report illustrated, the change of mind owed much to an increased social awareness, to growing concern about the breakdown of family life resulting from divorce, and to an increased confidence amongst clergy in resisting the tide and expecting to be heard. Less clear, but doubtless contributing to the change of mind, was the permeation of Catholic ideas on many matters as a result of the assimilation of Tractarian thought during the period. It was no coincidence that C.N. Gray of Helmsley, convenor

of the York Committee on Divorce and compiler of its Report, was a member of the Catholic wing, and that it was he who proposed to Convocation that the bishops be asked to stop licences being issued by diocesan registries enabling divorced persons to remarry. Nor was it a coincidence that the seconder of his proposal was Canon Henry Temple, a High Church sympathiser, now proctor for Cleveland who, on becoming Rector of of Oswaldkirk in the Helmsley Deanery, had also become immediate neighbour to Gray.<sup>125</sup>

As a staunch, though not extreme Catholic, C.N. Gray exercised a strong influence on his brother clergy in the Helmsley Deanery. In October 1894, he proposed a motion in the Ruri-decanal Chapter thanking Archbishop Maclagan for an "outspoken letter" reinforcing the Church's position on divorce and remarriage and assuring him that Helmsley Chapter intended

to act in loyal conformity with the law of the Church as laid down in Canons and Prayer Book, and [wishing] that the Church may be purged from all...complicity in the matter of the Union of divorced persons with fresh partners, their true partners being yet alive.

Mr. Hudson, the Rural Dean, was unhappy about the implication in Gray's resolution that there was no such thing as divorce; but the resolution still won the day by nine votes to four.<sup>126</sup>

On the other hand, as the vote in Helmsley Deanery demonstrated, the mind of the Church of England was not totally unanimous on this issue - any more than it is at the present day.<sup>127</sup> The complexity of the conflict was also apparent in the York Report on Divorce, where it tried to make allowance for the remarriage only of the "innocent

party", recommending that the Church, in charity, should not withhold its ministrations from such a person, nor from the person who married an innocent party.<sup>128</sup> Owen Chadwick comments on the way in which the famous Anglo-Catholic Bishop Edward King of Lincoln sought to resolve this same problem, and was almost alone among High Churchmen when arguing that, although the Church should always teach the binding nature of the marriage vow, "the final and overriding consideration" had to be charity and pastoral care.<sup>129</sup>

Perhaps, as was the case with other erosive measures, the changes made by Parliament to the laws governing marriage and divorce, tended to evoke more alarm amongst some Church leaders than they warranted. But this is understandable. To many Churchmen erosion spelt disestablishment; and this remained a major fear.

(iv)(b) Burial of the Dead

The Hon. and Rev. Canon Howard informed York Convocation in 1871 that

with some persons the more you concede to them, the more they seem to demand....By this Bill they might have political harangues at a funeral, even Fenian or Socialist orations, with a parade of flags...or any statement or attack on the doctrines and clergy of the Church, in the shape of a Baptist, Secularist or Infidel preachment.<sup>130</sup>

With the introduction by Welsh M.P., Osborne Morgan, of the first of a series of Bills aimed at removing the Church's monopoly of burials in its own churchyards, Canon Howard was behaving uncharacteristically. Usually critical of "ecclesiastical panics", and calm about erosion of the Establishment, he now sounded alarmed.<sup>131</sup>

Yet the Church's near monopoly of burial rites was illogical in an age of increasing democratisation and pluralism. The lack of choice of burial facility in some parts of the country was bound to be questioned eventually, as part of the movement to erode the Church's supposed monopolies. And Osborne Morgan's persistent attempts throughout the 1870's to get rid of the Anglican hold over burial services made most sense to the Nonconformist majority in his native Wales. An area as large as Anglesey - "said to be the most nonconformist county in Wales"<sup>132</sup> - had no municipal, Dissenter nor Roman Catholic cemeteries at all: thus, all burials had to be in Anglican churchyards.

However, the size of the problem throughout the rest of England and Wales was unknown. Between the Act of 1852, which allowed municipal cemeteries to be set up by local authorities, and the debate in York Convocation over the first of Morgan's Bills in 1871, the towns had experienced few problems. There was now usually some choice available for those not wishing, or not able, to have relatives buried in a churchyard. So, if there was a problem remaining, it was in the rural parts of the country served only by the parish churchyard burial grounds;<sup>133</sup> and, during the 1870's, many clergy - though by no means all of them - were determined to resist attempts to tamper with their monopoly of burying the dead.

Morgan's Bill of 1871 proposed that all clergy should be required to conduct the burial service over any deceased parishioner who was brought to be interred in the churchyard, whatever his life, beliefs and character might have been.<sup>134</sup> This was obviously an affront to conservative clergy who would - and did - rise to the bait by opposing this unwarranted interference from Parliament. Hence, they delighted the Liberationists, and doubtless awakened a supposedly "liberal mind" amongst many folk who had previously been indifferent to the issue of who buried the dead, and with what rites, or where. Much later, it is true, the generally reasonable Archdeacon Blunt of the East Riding spoke about the need for Churchmen to support the eradication of "genuine grievances"; but as late as 1882 he was deprecating Liberationists and the

insidious designs of those who manufacture grievances in order to make them the pretext for a policy of piecemeal disestablishment and disendowment.<sup>135</sup>

In 1871, meantime, Canon Howard was prominent amongst the conservative rearguard against Osborne Morgan's Burials Bill. And yet, in spite of his alarm, some of his customary moderation surfaced again when he admitted that the Bill would not create the completely stifling blanket that might have been feared. For clergy would not be required to attend those burials involving a religious service led by other persons; though they would have to attend funerals of those deceased de-Churchmented parishioners for whom no one else came forward to officiate. But overall, Howard insisted, the Bill invaded the rights and privileges of Churchmen - and not the clergy alone, he explained, for the parson held the freehold of the churchyard on behalf of the whole parish.<sup>136</sup> Some people, he continued, claimed that churchyards were national property; but he pointed out that the recent Compulsory Abolition of Church Rates Act had removed all pretence for claiming that Church buildings or churchyards were national property. Yet, Howard argued, Morgan's Bill would give Dissenters, who were no longer obliged to pay the Church rate, the right to burial in churchyards without the Prayer Book service at the grave,

and they might demand to bury their dead in our churchyards with religious services according to their own feelings and belief.<sup>137</sup>

George Hamilton, Archdeacon of Lindisfarne, another Convocation member noted normally for reason and moderation, regarded Osborne Morgan's first Bill as

the most dangerous piece of legislation which has been attempted since the great confiscation of the property of the Church of Ireland....More than dangerous, it is revolutionary, because it proposes to make common



property of that which has been conveyed for a special use...and solemnly consecrated for the burial of the dead according to the rites of their own Church.

If Parliament passed this Bill he believed it would constitute "a fatal step towards the confiscation of private property,"<sup>138</sup> an alarming prospect for many.

Archdeacon Boutflower of Carlisle, whilst agreeing that the Bill threatened injustice to the Church, struck a more conciliatory note by suggesting that a thorough examination of the issue in the House of Lords would be preferable to a total rejection of it. And a significant sign of Convocation's willingness to see reason was that Boutflower's suggestion became the unanimous resolution of the York Lower House.<sup>139</sup>

The strength of opposition to the Burial Bill expressed in York Convocation by Churchmen such as Canon Howard and Archdeacon Hamilton, tended to belie the situation outside the Minster chapter house. The towns were already reasonably happily catered for; and there were many rural parishes, also, where no conflict existed between Church, parson and dissenting parishioners over burial practices. Thus, for example, in those quite numerous parishes in York Diocese in which Wesleyan parishioners brought their babies to baptism in the parish church and their children to catechism and confirmation, and who regularly attended Holy Communion themselves, they were unlikely to object to their loved ones' remains being buried by the parson according to the Prayer Book Burial Service. Others, such as country-dwelling Roman Catholics who were generally happy to attend a Mass in the nearest Roman Catholic church, were content to hold silent interments in the

parish churchyard after their own denominational service in a local chapel.

But there was at least some disquiet outside Convocation. Thus, Helmsley Deanery having debated the issue voted its disapproval of Osborne Morgan's Burial Bill.<sup>140</sup> But goodwill seemed to predominate, particularly in rural parishes, as is well illustrated in the resolution passed in 1872 by the solidly rural part of York Diocese represented in Weighton Deanery. The Chapter was divided over the subject of allowing silent interment when required. Thus they resolved

that facilities should be afforded by law for providing burial grounds for nonconformists at the cost of the ratepayers.<sup>141</sup>

This was a reasonable proposal, showing appreciation of the pluralist society that now existed. What tended to create problems was the occasional well-publicised instance of rigidly uncharitable behaviour on the part of a parson - such as one in Oxford who insisted on reading the Prayer Book service over a mother whose six children had already been buried in silence.<sup>142</sup>

In 1874 another of Osborne Morgan's attempts at a Burial Bill was under discussion in York Convocation. In quite a long debate there were signs that more fear existed amongst clergy than the Bill actually warranted. Some clergy still seemed convinced that this attempt to erode the monopoly of the Church was one of the most serious authority issues to date. The main point in contention during the debate was whether suggested reforms, if passed, would give Nonconformists superiority over Anglican parsons. For example, there was anxiety that Nonconformist

ministers would be authorised to pronounce any words they thought fit during the interment of members of their flocks in the churchyard, and hence might even use "words of downright heresy" in the process.<sup>143</sup>

After this debate (in 1874) Convocation unanimously approved a proposal from Canon Howard that they appoint a "vigilance committee" to watch for any further proposals to alter the burial laws; and as successive new drafts of the Burial Bill came before Parliament, Convocation considered them. Thus, there were debates on drafts every year between 1875 and 1879. Also, in Pocklington Deanery Chapter in 1875, there was a long discussion on two questions: "What would be the effects of the alterations in the law proposed in the [Burial] Bill?" The eventual answer was succinct: "Endless confusion." And: "What safeguards would the clergy desire in the event of the main provision of the Bill being carried?" The answer was equally succinct: "There are no possible safeguards." The Chapter resolved

that inasmuch as churchyards are not national property, Parliament is not justified in interfering with their present disposal.<sup>144</sup>

By 1877, however, the note of moderation and pragmatism, which had usually constituted part of the response to any threats to erode the Establishment, was again beginning to assert itself. In the debate that year, William Lake, Dean of Durham, advocated a more charitable approach to dissenters. They were closely connected with Churchmen, he said,

their families having lived in the same parishes for centuries, and they very naturally desire to be buried

in the same graveyard....[And] the powerful and religious body of Wesleyan Methodists is nowhere more recognised for the excellent work they have done than in the north of England. They deserve kind treatment.<sup>145</sup>

But by the end of the decade there were signs of a rearguard action amongst some of the clergy. Thus, for instance, in June 1880 Hull Deanery Chapter, having discussed the latest draft of a Burial Bill, petitioned the House of Lords requesting members to insist that burials in churchyards or consecrated parts of cemeteries be conducted only by clergy of the Church of England.<sup>146</sup> But it was a forlorn last stand. The threatened Act - the Burial Laws Amendment Act - eventually materialised later in the year.

In the event, the Act was rather less of a compromise with the benign Nonconformity described three years earlier by the Dean of Durham, and more of a victory for the faddists of the Liberation Society. It extended an interesting new freedom to the de-Churchmented and disaffected inhabitants of parishes scattered mostly through the rural parts of England. The Act gave to those parishioners who, by rubric and canon law were forbidden to have burial according to the Prayer Book rite, the right to interment in the parish churchyard - or cemetery where such existed - with or without any form of Christian service.<sup>147</sup> This was further legal recognition of England's pluralism; and the Act hinted that the Church had possibly paid the price of rising too high to Osborne Morgan's abundant bait over the past decade. Archdeacon Blunt of the East Riding stated that he had been one of a small minority who felt before the passing of the Burials Amendment Act that

there was a two-fold grievance, real though not widespread:...Firstly, compelling friends of a deceased Nonconformist who had in life objected to the Church service to listen to it over their relative's grave in the hour of their sorrow; and secondly, compelling a parson to read the solemn service of the Church in a congregation of those who did not conscientiously approve it.

These matters had needed redress, and he had hoped in vain for the last government to deal with them. In fact, the Act was disappointing, he said. Now there could be worse legislation ahead which would ignore any distinctions between consecrated and unconsecrated ground and take away clerical and episcopal control over churchyards and consecrated parts of cemeteries.<sup>148</sup>

Archdeacon Blunt's anxieties were to prove largely unfounded. However, they led him to advocate positive Church Defence tactics based on sound pastoral ministry in the parishes, the stance he had adopted during earlier attacks on the established monopolies of the Church. He also wisely stressed the need for balance since

the Church of England's privileges as a National Church also give it responsibilities and duties. If she fails in the one she will deserve to forfeit the other....However important it may be to guard our privileges, it is still more important to discharge our duties in the most generous self-denying spirit.<sup>149</sup>

Blunt perceived that it was far more important for the Church of England to project the image of a dutiful servant in its ministry in the parishes, than to win a battle with politicians about the burial of the dead.

(v) Problems over elementary education

No erosion of their authority disturbed York Diocesan clergy more than the establishment, after Forster's Education Act of 1870, of the local School Boards and the building of Board Schools, with finances provided by local rates. [See Table 24 below] The disturbance tended to be greater if Church Schools disappeared in the process. Thus, for example, in 1894 the Vicar of Aston, near Rotherham, expressed his regret that "the only two Church Schools were handed years ago to the Board which reigns supreme in the parish almost."<sup>150</sup>

The big adjustment that many clergy found hard to make was to the fact that, whilst in 1865 almost all schools in the Diocese were linked with the Church of England in some way, by 1894 National and other types of Church school made up only about 52% of the elementary schools in the diocese, many of them tiny schools in villages.<sup>151</sup> The Education Boards provided about 32% of elementary schools, many of them considerably larger than the largest of Church schools. And an indication of clergy concern is shown in the increased number of Church schools that had affiliated with the National Society by 1894 compared with 1865. [See Table 24 p. 367 below]

The anxiety was not limited to the mere number of Board Schools and their size: some complainants linked the Board Schools with a decline in the quality of religious instruction. Hence, the Rector of Cottingham, Hull, wrote that since the Church School became a Board School some years before he came to the parish, the religious instruction, based on the Bible only, was now very poor indeed - and, judging by results, well below the average of the subject in Church Schools. The amateur staff in his Sunday School, he said, "found it impossible by any

Schools in Archdeaconries of York Diocese, 1865:

	<u>National Schools</u>	<u>Other C of E Schools</u>
CLEVELAND	16	110
E. RIDING	37	134
*YORK/W. RIDING	52	131
TOTALS	<u>105</u>	<u>375</u>
GRAND TOTAL	<u>480</u>	

Schools<sup>152</sup> in Archdeaconries of York Diocese, 1894:

	<u>Nat'al</u>	<u>Other C of E</u>	<u>Board</u>	<u>Other type</u>
CLEVELAND	48	65	58	39
E. RIDING	76	51	73	18
SHEFFIELD	71	8	69	6
*YORK	62	16	45	15
TOTALS	257	140	245	78
GRAND TOTALS	<u>397</u> (Nat.+C/E)		<u>323</u> (Bd.+Other)	

[\*Excluding York City Deanery] [See also Table 27 p. 380]

Table 24 Elementary Schools, York Diocese, 1865 and 1894

[Sources: V/R 1865; R.D. Ret., 1865; V/R 1894]

method to make up for the ground lost through the inefficiency of the Board School Religious Teaching."<sup>153</sup>

However, some clergy were more pragmatic about the situation. The priest-in-charge of Kellington-with-Whitley and Eggborough in the West Riding, for instance, reported there were no Church Schools in the parish. But there was a happy atmosphere resulting from the sheer chance of - or maybe the hard work underlying - good personal relationships within his far-flung parish. He explained:

Whitley and Eggborough form a School Board District. The Board School is at Whitley. I am not on the Board. [But] the Chairman is a friendly Wesleyan [and] the Superintendent of our Whitley Sunday School is on the Board. The Master is a Churchman and communicant, and so are the assistant mistresses. No definite religious instruction is given. The Master believes it more important to give all the teaching in a religious spirit than to give any definite Bible lessons.<sup>154</sup> Kellington, Beal and Birkin form another School Board District. The school is in Beal. I am Chairman of the Board. The Master is a Churchman and sings in our choir, but is not a communicant. The infant mistress is. Religious instruction is given twice a week by myself and the Rector of Birkin alternately. He is not on the Board, though the school is in his parish.<sup>155</sup>

These remarks illustrate the typically mixed response from clergy, during the last decade of the 19th century, towards the continuing erosion of the Church's previous near-monopoly of elementary education. By 1894, rather more clergy were inclined to complain about the Board Schools, and about the difficulties they experienced as a result of the development of these schools, than to praise them.



However, in the parishes the erosion involved not simply the arrival of the local School Boards and the increasing number of publicly-funded elementary schools provided by those Boards, but also the increased financial pressures placed on the Managers of Church Schools by demands for improvements from local Boards and HMI. [See Table 25 below] Thus, for example, the Vicar of Whitwood Mere near Pontefract complained that the local Education Department's demands adversely affected the financial

Financial difficulties with Church Schools in 1894:

CLEVELAND 21 parishes out of 167 = 12.6%

E. RIDING 25 parishes out of 197 = 12.7%

SHEFFIELD 23 parishes out of 99 = 23.2%

YORK 6 parishes out of 119 = 5.0%

DIOCESE: 75 parishes out of 582\* = 12.9%

[\*No. of responses, not of parishes in diocese]

Table 25 Parochial clergy in York Diocese admitting financial problems in maintaining Church Schools in 1894

[Source: V/R 1894]

security of the National School in a parish where a Board School existed in competition.<sup>156</sup> In addition, in those areas where the Church already faced some of its hardest problems - most notably in Sheffield Archdeaconry - some parishes understandably experienced the greatest difficulty in financing Church schools. [See Table 25, above]

Twenty-five years after the passing of Forster's Act clergy opinions differed about the effects of the Act. Antagonism towards the Boards and Board Schools was sharper than might have been foreseen in the generally pragmatic atmosphere just before the Act became operable. Apart from the tension between Church and State over elementary education provision there had also been a rift between the idealists on the one hand, who saw education as a gateway through which all children should pass to have their minds improved - and thereby benefit society at large; and, on the other hand, those practically minded folk who saw education as of secondary importance to most children, especially to those from very poor families. One writer said during the Education Bill debate in 1869:

Compulsory education and the condition of our rural poor will form the staple of a good many debates in the next session of Parliament. [There is] need for education;...but compulsory education could prove a strain. Are we to blame the father because he puts his son to work instead of to school?...True, education is neglected. But when a question of food comes into the field against a question of education, rest assured education is certain to get the worst of it....So, the farmer hires the lad.<sup>157</sup>

Earlier in 1869, Canon Richson of Manchester warned York Convocation that the most serious difficulties facing Church schools were those concerning finance - to Richson

the fundamental difficulty - school attendance, and sufficient qualified teachers. Finance continued to be the main problem until 1894, though the causes had changed by then. In 1865, financial problems for most Church Schools were partly caused and partly exacerbated by the irregular attendance of children, many of whom failed to put in the 200 attendances necessary to allow the school to qualify for the government grant, or through the failure of parents to pay the fees, whether through unwillingness, indifference or inability. In many poorer districts, Canon Richson acknowledged, people were unable to make the necessary voluntary contributions. Thus, he told Convocation, it was quite impossible for the Church ever to expect to educate all the nation's children without State aid. And since the Church had to depend on the State for aid, he insisted, it must co-operate with the State in any efforts towards educational improvement.<sup>158</sup>

In presenting the Report of Convocation's Committee on Education a year later (in February, 1870) Canon Richson pointed to several safeguards the Committee hoped to receive from the Government;<sup>159</sup> but the Committee wanted local authorities to be obliged to provide education wherever voluntary contributions were insufficient for the purpose.<sup>160</sup> As a result, the main subject for debate concerned the way local rating might operate under the Education Act.<sup>161</sup> Significantly, there was no opposition in Convocation to the principle of the State becoming much more heavily - and more directly - involved in elementary education through the proposed local Boards, and Convocation unanimously approved the Report of Canon Richson's Education Committee.<sup>162</sup>

Years later (in 1884), Bishop Fraser of Manchester proposed that Convocation appoint a Committee to look at "the spiritual needs of the masses of the people."<sup>163</sup>

Part of the subsequent Report of this Committee dealt with elementary education; and this educational aspect eventually came up again for consideration in Convocation in 1891. Parochial clergy throughout the province had been sent a questionnaire in 1884 asking them to estimate the religious influence of the Education Act of 1870 on both Church Schools and Board Schools. Altogether, only 117 replies came back, though they represented a good cross-section of parishes: from heavily populated and urbanised, to sparsely populated and rural. The replies revealed a surprising weighting of views:

Only one [0.85%] maintained that the Act had had disastrous effects on the Church Schools; eight [6.8%] said that the results had been "prejudicial"; and 43 [36.7%] stated that the reverse was the case, and that the Act had had no adverse effects on religious teaching. On the contrary, it had become "more systematic and definite, through the more thorough organisation of the Diocesan Inspection."

The Report further revealed that

None speak of the general influence of the Church as seriously interfered with or impaired by the operation of the Act. As regards Board Schools, our answers do not enable us to give definite information.

Only one respondent drew attention to a Board School in his neighbourhood where no religious teaching was given; but one other said that "the difference between the Church School and the Board School is inappreciable."<sup>164</sup>

It must be remembered that Forster's Act had been concerned with more than a necessary tidying up of the provision of elementary education for poorer children in England. The subject had been a political and

denominational hornets' nest for well over sixty years before the Act was passed - ever since the founding of the interdenominational British and Foreign Schools Society in 1808 to promote "the Education of the Labouring and Manufacturing Classes of Society of every Religious Persuasion", and the Church's counter-move to keep the near-monopoly of religious instruction in the hands of the Anglican clergy, aided by the rival National Society, founded in 1811 - supported by the archbishops and bishops - to promote "the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Church of England". Thereafter the denominational competition continued, additionally complicated by those who advocated a totally "secular" system of elementary education.

The issue was not simply a matter of who held the authority and resources for providing the rudiments of education to the poor, nor deciding what those rudiments ought to be. Nor was it simply that "the Church should educate the poor, because otherwise dissenters would."<sup>165</sup> In addition to these important factors, Dissenters resented the tendency of the Church school to teach children to be content with their station in life, and not to seek "social mobility". To many Nonconformists, the discovery of how to "get on in life" was an essential part of their chapel and school experience.<sup>166</sup> In short, the battle was as much about politics, ethics and aspirations in a pluralist society as about religious beliefs. Yet the battle over elementary education sometimes cut across denominational and political divisions. As Canon Richson of Manchester emphasised in 1869: even Forster's Education Bill "had wide agreement from men of both political parties."<sup>167</sup> Meantime, on the national scene the Central Society of Education, founded in 1836, had sought to persuade the State to initiate and pay for a national education scheme that would keep religion out of schools.<sup>168</sup> This

campaign was taken up and continued by the National Education League until its disbandment in 1873,<sup>169</sup> by which time the Liberals, via the 1870 Education Act, had introduced the dual system of State and Church elementary education.

By the mid-1890's, more clergy had accepted that the dual system of Board and Church Schools had come to stay, and some could even acknowledge that the Board Schools were doing a good job. But rather more clergy regretted, and still resented, the Church's loss of yet another of its previous monopolies; and most of those who had Church schools in their parishes intended to keep them as long as they possibly could. Apart from the general threat to the Church's authority at local level from the growth of a non-denominational, publicly-funded system of elementary education, and from the increasing financial constraints put upon the Church Schools after 1870, each individual Board School was a reminder of a reduction in the number of local children who were receiving from local clergy some regular religious instruction according to Anglican principles in day school. Thus, by the mid-1890's many clergy were keener than ever to retain control of religious instruction in their parochial day schools, and to maintain their personal involvement in it if at all possible. A few clergy were ready to acknowledge that they were not necessarily the best exponents of religious instruction; but even they would probably have agreed with the Vicar of Sheffield St. Andrew's, Sharrow, when he wrote: "The only reason for the [Church] School's existence is to give religious instruction."<sup>170</sup> The fact that Sheffield Archdeaconry had by far the highest proportion of parochial clergy involved in Religious Instruction in elementary schools, shows how solid was the agreement with the parson at St. Andrew's. But, failing

Clergy involvement in elementary school R.I., 1894:

CLEVELAND	107	parishes out of	163	=	65.6%
E. RIDING	122	"	"	"	194 = 62.9%
YORK	71	"	"	"	132 = 53.8%
SHEFFIELD	70	"	"	"	96 = 72.9%
DIOCESE:	370	"	"	"	585* = 63.2%

[\* Total no. of responses, not of parishes in diocese]

Table 26 Parochial clergy giving and/or retaining control of R.I. in elementary schools. [Source: V/R 1894]

their own control of religious instruction, or their direct involvement in it, the clergy at least welcomed the continuing inspection by the Diocesan Inspector of any religious instruction given in local schools.

When introducing his Education Bill in 1870, W.E. Foster had claimed that only two-fifths of the children of working class parents between the ages of 6 and 10, and one-third of those aged 10 to 12, were enrolled in elementary schools, all of which were either funded and run by the Church, or by other voluntary agencies.<sup>171</sup> Hence, Forster explained that his Bill was intended to ensure the provision of sufficient well-run elementary schools, not by destroying the existing voluntary provision, but by

filling those gaps where Church and other voluntary schools did not exist. The subsequent Act began this process by requiring the local School Boards to be established to investigate local needs and, where necessary, to raise money from local rates with which to give grants, where appropriate, to voluntary (including Church) schools that agreed to a "conscience clause", or to build Board Schools.

The largest and most obvious gaps in the Church's provision of elementary schools existed in urbanised/industrialised parishes where the density of population was too heavy, and where the population increase had often occurred too rapidly, for the Church and other voluntary bodies to cope alone with the provision of sufficient elementary school places. But in those same areas matters were to get worse. Whereas many parishes had already found the funds to provide elementary schools very difficult to raise before the 1870 Act, some found after 1870 that the next most crippling handicap, after the sheer weight of numbers of children, was the difficulty of finding enough money to maintain a Church School at the level now laid down by HMI or a local School Board.<sup>172</sup>

The situation in the City of York illustrates this problem, although York was atypical in its elementary school provision in that most parishes were too small and too numerous to support separate Church Schools - as was the practice elsewhere. Thus, York children attended schools that served as many as eight or nine different parishes to the north and south of the river. But the stringent situation regarding the financing of the schools in York was all too typical, and loomed large for the local National Society Committee in the late 1880's. Thus, for example, annual subscriptions to the Society in 1886 fell from £85/11/- (in 1885) to £78/16/-; and Church collections for Education fell from £62/9/- (in 1885) to £47/12/11.<sup>173</sup>



Most difficult of all, York City Education Department seemed incapable of calculating accurately the number of elementary school places required in the city. As a result, the National Society was maintaining far more places in its schools than were being filled: 5,976 compared with 4,217. Bitterness accrued until Dean Purey-Cust, the Chairman of the York National Society Committee, persuaded his colleagues that they must resolve to work in unity with the School Attendance Committee in order to meet the requirements of the Education Department.<sup>174</sup>

Again, in view of the large population and local financial constraints, it is no surprise to find that by 1894 in the Middlesbrough Deanery local Boards had had to establish 29 publicly-funded Board Schools,<sup>175</sup> with only seven Church schools and seven "other" types of voluntary elementary schools continuing to exist alongside them. In the heavily populated parishes of St. Hilda and St. Paul, Middlesbrough, there were serious financial problems. At St. Hilda's the Vicar reported a deficit of £100 in the school's finances in 1894, and its future maintenance was "very doubtful".<sup>176</sup> In the nearby parish of St. Paul there was a much larger debt of £650 because of new buildings to the schools required by the Education Department [at a cost of £256] and a previous annual loss. The Vicar tried to be optimistic about the future, but he had to concede that "present pressure...is very severe."<sup>177</sup>

The picture in the Deanery of Kingston-upon-Hull was very similar. There were 29 Board Schools,<sup>178</sup> thirteen Church Schools and one other school in the Deanery.<sup>179</sup> Eleven parishes in the deanery had Board Schools as their only type of school. The Rev. Plumpton Ramsden, Rector of Cottingham, which by 1894 was part of the Hull conurbation, described in some detail the pattern of development that had clearly overtaken many of the Hull

parishes since 1870 - and also registered his regret. The Cottingham Church School, which had become a National Society school in 1833, had been surrendered to the Board in 1888, thirteen years before Ramsden became Rector. As a result, by 1894 all elementary school children in the parish went either to one of the four Board Schools in Cottingham-with-Dunswell or one of the two "large Board Schools" in the nearby parish of Newland. As a former Diocesan Inspector of Schools (in Durham and Northumberland) Ramsden felt frustrated by the situation he inherited, which had completely annihilated the Church's stake in day school elementary education in the parish.<sup>180</sup> The Vicar of Newland also expressed his regret at the demise of the Church School which his predecessor had leased to the School Board.<sup>181</sup>

In Pontefract Deanery, by 1894 many of the mining parishes had Board Schools and Church Schools existing side by side.<sup>182</sup> In the populous parish of Castleford there was one charity school, which dated from the 16th century and now conformed to National Society regulations on religious teaching; but, by contrast, there were five large Board Schools. On the other hand, Pontefract town was rather exceptional for a highly populated area, in that neither of its parishes yet had a Board School, though the Vicar of St. Giles's warned that the National School Managers were in debt after making necessary enlargements to the school buildings, and this meant that future maintenance of the school was in some doubt.

Also in Pontefract Deanery both the Knottingley parishes maintained National Schools. But both incumbents reported financial problems following recent improvements and alterations; and there was a Board School in St. Botolph's parish. Altogether in this Deanery nine parishes (out of 34) reported financial problems with their

schools.<sup>182</sup> The incumbent at Altofts, for example, said his National School - the only school in the parish - received good reports from the Diocesan Inspector; and the school had "three very able masters" in whose hands he was glad to leave the religious instruction. But the school finances were in a precarious position, with a balance of only £7/10/- and two bills outstanding.<sup>183</sup>

Financial problems also loomed large in at least ten Sheffield parishes. The Education Department's ground rules, as in Middlesbrough and Hull, seem to have threatened breaking point for some of these parishes. Thus, for example, at St. Michael's, Neepsend, finances for the Church School were proving difficult - and would worsen if the managers were compelled to build cloak rooms.<sup>184</sup> Similarly, the incumbent at St. Matthias', Sheffield, said that the financial situation of the Church School was reasonably healthy with a balance of about £200 in hand, but that maintenance could only be assured if the Managers were not harassed by more Education Department demands.<sup>185</sup>

Whilst there were obviously overwhelming odds preventing the maintenance of any Church Schools at all in some of the heavily populated areas of the diocese; whilst the advance of the Board School was impossible to stem in those areas; and whilst some populous parishes had Board Schools only operating within them - making any thought of a Church monopoly of elementary education an absurdity - it is equally important to stress that there were also problems for the Church in attempting to continue the provision of elementary education in some of the predominantly rural areas of York Diocese. As in the urbanised/industrialised deaneries, this becomes apparent simply by comparing the proportion of Board Schools to Church (and other voluntary) Schools in different parts of the diocese by 1894. [See Table 27 below] But the problem

[Table 27]: Deanery elementary school provision, 1894:186

CLEVELAND ARCHDEACONRY

Deanery	Resp.	Nat.+Ch. Sch.'s	Bd. Sch.'s	Other
Bulmer	24/24	6+8 = 64%	2 = 9%	6 = 27%
Eas'wold	23/24	8+8 = 64%	4 = 16%	5 = 20%
Helmsley	24/25	4+14 = 58%	3 = 10%	10 = 32%
Malton	14/14	5+6 = 73%	3 = 20%	1 = 7%
Mid'bro	21/21	5+2 = 16%	29 = 67%	7 = 16%
N'al'ton	15/16	4+4 = 62%	3 = 23%	2 = 15%
Stok'ley	14/16	3+3 = 38%	6 = 38%	4 = 24%
Thirsk	16/16	8+12 = 87%	2 = 9%	1 = 4%
Whitby	16/16	5+8 = 59%	6 = 35%	3 = 13%

EAST RIDING ARCHDEACONRY

Deanery	Resp.	Nat.+Ch. Sch.'s	Bd. Sch.'s	Other
Beverley	9/9	4+3 = 70%	1 = 10%	2 = 20%
Brid'ton	15/15	2+4 = 46%	5 = 38%	2 = 16%
Buckrose	14/14	6+1 = 70%	2 = 20%	1 = 10%
Harthill	15/16	11+1 = 82%	3 = 18%	0-----
Hedon	21/22	7+3 = 45%	9 = 41%	3 = 14%
Hornsea	18/19	7+8 = 88%	2 = 12%	0-----
Howden	16/18	6+6 = 75%	4 = 25%	0-----
K'ton/Hul'	26/26	10+3 = 30%	29 = 68%	1 = 2%
Pock'ton	18/18	9+6 = 88%	1 = 6%	1 = 6%
Sc'b'ro'	15/16	7+4 = 46%	12 = 50%	1 = 4%
Sett'ton	16/16	1+7 = 53%	3 = 20%	4 = 27%
Weighton	15/16	6+3 = 75%	2 = 16%	1 = 4%

[Table 27...]

Table 27 (Cont....)

SHEFFIELD ARCHDEACONRY

Deanery	Resp.	Nat.+Ch. Sch.'s	Bd. Sch.'s	Other
Ecc'f'ld	12/12	7+2 = 47%	9 = 47%	2 = 11%
Rotherham	29/30	23+0 = 57%	15 = 37%	2 = 5%
Sheffield	37/37	24+6 = 47%	32 = 50%	1 = 2%
Wath	21/21	17+0 = 53%	14 = 44%	1 = 3%

YORK ARCHDEACONRY (Excluding York City Deanery)

Deanery	Resp.	Nat.+Ch. Sch.'s	Bd. Sch.'s	Other
Ainsty	11/12	6+3 = 82%	2 = 18%	0-----
Bi'thorpe	9/9	4+2 = 66%	2 = 23%	1 = 11%
D'caster	29/30	13+5 = 69%	4 = 15%	4 = 15%
Pon'fract	33/34	19+5 = 50%	20 = 42%	4 = 8%
Selby	20/21	12+1 = 65%	5 = 25%	2 = 10%
Snaitth	17/17	8+0 = 33%	12 = 50%	4 = 17%

DIOCESAN AV.: Nat./Church Sch's: 56%; Board Sch's: 35%.

Table 27 Comparison of strengths/weaknesses of the Church in elementary school provision in the Deaneries, York Diocese, 1894. [Source: V/R 1894]

in rural areas is further emphasised by making a comparison also of various deaneries in country areas with others in urbanised and industrialised areas.

Thus, for example, in the populous Sheffield Deanery about 50% of schools were Board Schools, but in the similarly populous deaneries of Middlesbrough and Kingston-upon-Hull about 67% and 68% respectively of the schools were Board Schools - in both cases a big majority. Not only is Sheffield's proportion of Board Schools considerably smaller than Middlesbrough and Hull's, it is also the same as in the deaneries of Scarborough and Snaith - which were both predominantly rural areas. Again, whilst both Sheffield (47%) and Scarborough Deaneries (46%) had virtually the same proportion of Church Schools, the proportion in the rural Snaith Deanery was much lower at only 33%. In the mining villages of Rotherham Deanery the proportion of Board Schools was only about 37%, whilst 50% of schools in the deanery were Church Schools; and this is very similar to the more rural and generally much more sparsely populated parishes of the Bridlington Deanery, where 38% of schools were Board Schools and 46% were Church Schools. [See Table 27 above]

Despite these surprising similarities between very different areas of the diocese, the deaneries with the highest proportions of Church Schools continuing to exist - virtually unthreatened by Board Schools - were to be found, as might be expected, in the rural parts of the diocese. Thus it is no surprise to find the Deaneries of Hornsea (88%), Pocklington (88%), Thirsk (87%), Ainsty (82%) and Harthill (82%) topping the Church School proportional scores, with the Deaneries of Malton, Buckrose, Howden and Weighton not far behind. But it is worth noting that Doncaster Deanery (69%), with its mining parishes often inundated by migrant workers' families, was managing to maintain marginally more of its Church Schools than the very rural and non-industrial deaneries of Bishopthorpe (66%), Bulmer (64%), Easingwold (64%) and Northallerton (62%) - and quite considerably more than the

rural area that made up Settrington Deanery (only 53%).  
[See Table 27 above]

Clearly, the Church's problems in wielding authority over elementary education were much more complex than a simple division caused by the obvious difficulties brought about by demographic changes in urbanised/industrialised areas and the supposed stability of predominantly rural ones. Moreover, the reasons for anomalies in elementary education provision in rural areas varied quite considerably. Sometimes the financial constraints were as serious as in urbanised/industrialised parishes. Thus, the small town of Market Weighton was typical of many parishes. There the National Schools were in debt and, although there were hopes of clearing the debt in time, the Vicar admitted there would be difficulty in maintaining the schools. Meantime, he said, there was "not yet a Board School, thank God!"<sup>187</sup>

In some country parishes the continued existence of the school depended entirely on the generosity of one local landowner and/or the incumbent. At Walton in the West Riding the incumbent wrote in 1894 that the school, though owned by the patron, Sir George Fox, no longer functioned because the parson, having supported it single-handed for eleven years, could no longer afford it; and no one else would help.<sup>188</sup> The parish of Crambe to the north of York was another where the school depended entirely on the goodwill of a local landowner and the incumbent. "The school is practically a charity on the part of Sir Charles W. Strickland and myself," wrote the Vicar who was sole Manager.<sup>189</sup>

Private ownership and maintenance of schools was relatively high in the Cleveland Archdeaconry. [See Table 27 above] With ten (32%) of its schools privately owned,

maintained and run, Helmsley Deanery had both the highest number and highest proportion of private schools in the whole of York Diocese. Private ownership could either be a boon to the Church or a great hindrance. The owners of five of the private schools in Helmsley Deanery were favourably disposed enough towards Church and clergy to allow the incumbents to give regular religious instruction in the schools.<sup>190</sup> However, in the other five parishes private ownership created problems or actively militated against the use of the school as a "Church School", or against the involvement of the clergy and/or the teaching of Scripture according to National Society regulations. For example at Sinnington, where the schoolroom was owned by Lord Lumley's trustees, the Vicar had no standing in the school, though the Trust Deeds required the master to give religious instruction according to Church of England principles.<sup>191</sup> At Bilsdale there were two day schools, miles apart, managed by the nearest farmers and residents who were practically self-elected. The incumbent declared simply that "religious instruction is not under clergy control."<sup>192</sup> At Old Byland, Sir George Wombwell owned the school, the Managers were all local farmers, and the incumbent was not involved in the religious instruction.<sup>193</sup>

Other types of anomaly existed across the diocese. At Northallerton there was a reminder, for instance, that National and other parochial Church Schools were not the only ones threatened with possible closure by the onset of Board Schools, or of new statutory standards governing facilities and maintenance, or by financial stringencies. The Vicar wrote that the recent closure of the Wesley School meant that his National School had to increase its accommodation - "otherwise a School Board will be required by the Education Department." So far, local financial support had been adequate, and he was hopeful of



maintaining the National School, despite the need for extensions.<sup>194</sup>

Another anomalous element was that of clergy entering Board Schools to give religious instruction and sometimes receiving a warmer welcome from the school authorities there than that received from Trustees of non-Board Schools. But some of these apparent anomalies are simply signs of an understandable amount of confusion in a time of change, with people reacting differently to similar situations in different localities.

But there are also signs of an atmosphere of compromise in some parishes by the mid-1890's. Thus, whilst there is no doubt that most clergy felt it important to control the religious instruction given in the local school if possible, and many felt it was best if they gave that instruction themselves, some had come to recognise that a well-trained and experienced lay teacher could actually do the work better than they could - and that this could even be true in a local Board School. Being a clergyman did not automatically bestow special gifts as a teacher, nor enable clergy to get alongside children better than lay teachers. A particularly good example is provided by the Vicar of St. John the Evangelist, Ranmoor, Sheffield. In that parish, the mistress gave the religious instruction in the small charity school that served as the Church School. The Diocesan Inspector reported in 1894:

The fundamental doctrines of the Church of England are taught....The institution is calculated to make [the children] Godfearing and consistent members of the Church of England....The religious instruction is a work of love to the Mistress. Her teaching of the Catechism, Church Seasons and Articles of Faith is of a high order.<sup>195</sup>

However effective or ineffective the clergy might have considered their religious instruction to be, the fact is that across the four archdeaconries of York diocese by 1894 they lost control and/or teaching of it in over 35% of the parishes - a significant erosion of the Church's direct influence on elementary education. This loss is made the more significant because many clergy still believed that their control over religious instruction, or regular involvement in it, should have been an integral part of their ministry and a crucial means of maintaining the Church's (and their own) authority in their parishes.

But it must not be overlooked that clergy still gave and/or controlled religious instruction in elementary schools in about 63% of the parishes in the diocese. And this is a tribute to the tenacity of the clergy and to the generosity of many Church folk who kept the schools afloat financially, often in very hard circumstances. In 1869, Canon Richson had warned <sup>196</sup> that it was, even then, already beyond the power of the Church to provide all the elementary education required by the nation's children. Hence, the Church's previous near monopoly of that provision was as doomed as its monopoly of the rites of passage had been in the previous generation. It was against this inevitability that Churchmen were fighting. And, by the end of the period, across the Diocese of York the degree of their success was very varied indeed.

PART III - CHANGES IN DIRECTION: THE RESPONSE TO  
AUTHORITY PROBLEMS THROUGH OUTREACH AND CONCERN

CHAPTER 5

OUTREACH TO THE "LOWER ORDERS"

(i) "Systematic movement towards better things"

Various problems concerning authority have already been examined, together with varied reactions to them: the militant reactions of the orthodox, and the pragmatism and growing common sense of more moderate Churchmen. And we have seen how tolerance and the desire for a comprehensive Church gained the ascendancy during the period.

Alongside the pragmatism it has also sometimes been possible to see a more positive and active response to the Church's authority problems, not least in the discussions and debates in the bodies of the chattering Church - itself a vitally important and conscious response by Churchmen to the diminution of the Church's authority. In addition, attention has been given to the conscious efforts made by some parish clergy to respond to those problems that impeded their ministry and reduced their influence in the parishes - particularly the problems caused by de-Churchment.

However, it is now necessary to examine more closely other conscious efforts made by clergy to face up to authority problems: by providing informal education, for example, through evening and adult classes; through evangelising and parochial missions; through encouraging

a faithful communicant life; through presentation of the Church in a more caring light; and, at diocesan and Convocation level, by discussing ways to develop a wider lay ministry to lay folk. At the end of the period, there were signs also that some Church leaders were seeking to express the Gospel through concern about major injustices which lay at the heart of society itself. These leaders were adding agitation for social reform and justice to the Church's long-established and traditional role in ameliorative work through pastoral ministry. But the major response to de-Churchment tended to remain the preaching of a "spiritual" message, or of an educative one about self-improvement, making the new calls for social justice little more than a glimpse of a Church of the future.

Long before 1884, when York Convocation first discussed the needs of the masses, some clergy had been trying hard to respond positively to the challenge presented by local apathy towards the Church and by declining congregations. They had moral support from Archbishop Thomson. He had spoken strongly in his primary 'Charge' in 1865 about the need and the challenge; about the "flagging interest of our people" and the need "to revive it and make a systematic movement towards better things." He stressed that the ignorant working boys in Sheffield, Castleford and Middlesbrough - and in the agricultural districts, too - had souls as dear to Christ as anyone's; though too many of them had not been made aware of "their own great inheritance, their right to a life for God."<sup>1</sup> Thomson was perceptive in recognising that there were serious problems facing the Church; and he was earnest in trying to face them. But his caution about the means to adopt in eradicating problems, or in coming to terms with those that could not be eradicated, too often delayed progress towards any sort of solution.

(ii) Evening and adult classes

An important example of the effort made by some clergy to move "towards better things" was the provision of evening schools and adult classes. Linked with them a parish would sometimes provide reading rooms with carefully vetted libraries. But these amenities never became as widespread as the parochial Sunday School, and were rarely any more successful. In 1865, fewer than half the clergy in the rural deaneries of Cleveland and the East Riding (38% and 35% respectively), and just over half (51%) in York/West Riding could claim that they had made any attempt to run them. [See Table 28 below] Throughout York Diocese, the highest score for attempting to set up evening/adult classes was in York City Deanery, where 83% of parishes made some attempt; but nearly all of them had failed.<sup>2</sup>

The retention problem in these evening classes was about as serious as that experienced in the Church's Sunday Schools. Attempts to run evening classes were almost equally divided into the categories of (at best) "some success" and "failure". The York/West Riding Archdeaconry, as might be expected with its higher proportion of urbanised parishes, recorded rather more attempts to launch evening and adult classes than the other two archdeaconries; but, interestingly enough, the proportions of success and failure were remarkably similar across all three archdeaconries, with York/West Riding reporting slightly more failure than Cleveland and the East Riding.

Unfortunately, most clergy who had not experimented with evening/adult classes by 1865 gave no explanation as to why not. Their reasons could have been enlightening, for the few comments given by clergy who had not tried to start evening or adult classes are every bit as revealing

The situation with adult/evening classes in Archdeaconries of York Diocese, 1865:

CLEVELAND: 68 out of 179 parishes attempted = 38%; of which 34 (= 50%) failed, and 31 (= 46%) had some success.

E. RIDING: 66 out of 190 parishes attempted = 35%; of which 33 (= 50%) failed, and 28 (= 41%) had some success.

YORK/W.R.: 110 out of 216 parishes attempted = 51%; of which 52 (= 47%) failed, and 51 (= 46%) had some success.

Table 28      Attempts to run adult/evening classes in Archdeaconries of York Diocese and extent of success/failure in 1865

[Source: V/R 1865]

as the comments of those who did start classes and then failed.

Hence, for instance, the incumbent at Whenby said he had tried neither evening nor adult classes simply because he considered this well nigh impossible in a rural district.<sup>3</sup> C. Abbott, incumbent at Tunstall-in-Holderness, who had not yet experimented with evening or adult classes - although he had been in the parish for seven years - but who hoped to start night classes soon, linked the need for them with the de-Churchment process. This was illustrated at Tunstall not by a drift towards Dissent, for there were only three

Dissenters in the parish, but by the indifference of many people, especially hired men, to all forms of religion. Abbott indicated an important factor in the Church's lack of influence locally: the farmers in his parish claimed they could not get hold of resident labourers if they required them to attend Church. The only remedies this parson could think of were to give lectures, and to establish a night school with a circulating library. He also hoped to convince the local farmers that they should make their employees attend Church.<sup>4</sup> Although Abbott intended at last to give evening classes a try, he makes it clear why many clergy, having no illusions about the difficulties involved, never even attempted to start them.

W. Bayles, the Vicar of Foston-on-the-Wolds, unable to retain children in his Sunday School - "all go to service at 12 or 13" - had decided to launch evening classes. The task confronting him was enormous. The area was dominated by Methodism, though he did not describe the five Dissenting chapels in the parish as an impediment to his ministry. But he did acknowledge a high degree of drift from his church [his a.p. was only 4%] when he said that the "whole of the people may be said to be Dissenters, or at any event not Church in practice or principle." Bayles's task in establishing and maintaining classes was uphill and depressing, and he linked the low state of education in the parish with the absence of any persons of independent means. This is a reminder that even the simplest forms of educational provision required some basic financial resources. Not only was the parish of Foston poor, it also contained four villages well apart from each other, making it difficult to bring groups together. In addition, there was no schoolroom available anywhere in the parish, so that Sunday School or any other classes had to be held in a room in the parsonage, which was inconveniently

situated at one extremity of the township of Foston. As a result, Bayles's daughter struggled to get two or three plough boys and servant girls on Sunday nights - never more than that - and ran an evening boys' school one night a week. But she had scant success, simply because the employers insisted on these youngsters working all hours.<sup>5</sup>

The scattered nature of a parish, a lack of resources, the scant co-operation from farmers or employers - either because of their support for Dissent, or their indifference to all religion - and the long, tiring hours of work demanded of employees, were particularly common problems. Thus, for example, the incumbent at Naburn, just outside York, said that he had attempted night school; but trying to get the class in from scattered farms was so difficult that he stopped it.<sup>6</sup> At Baldersby in Cleveland the incumbent also found his problems exacerbated by the scattered nature of the parish and abandoned evening school. As a substitute, he held cottage lectures during winter in each village in the parish.<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Saunders, the incumbent of Skidby near Beverley, echoed the complaint of many clergy about getting young hired workers to any form of evening or Sunday School when he criticised the overall neglectful attitude of local farmers - both towards the Church and their workers. He said,

the state of the farm lads, which is generally so deplorable in the country districts, seems to be owing to a great degree to the want of religious control and supervision over them; and we cannot expect this state of things to improve until the farmers themselves, as a class, exhibit a better degree of personal piety, and



acquire a sense of the responsibility that rests with them.

Unable to get the boys who came to work in the parish to attend his Sunday School, Saunders had for six years persevered with an evening school aimed specially at them. But the task was difficult. Their farm work made them late and irregular, then they stopped attending altogether. Saunders felt at last he had to admit defeat.<sup>8</sup>

Lack of co-operation from farmers was so common that some clergy actually commented when they received any. The incumbent at Speeton reported

we have about twelve farming men attend our Sunday School [who] were not formerly in our day school. This is achieved through the good influence of our Farmers and their families, though we have no evening school.

It was a great help to this parson that his Churchwardens were the three principal local farmers, who took on the office in rotation and gave liberally towards Church expenses and the Church Schools. It is also worth noting that the attendance pointer (50%) was high, with nearly all the inhabitants attending both Church and Chapel. This is an indication that the clergyman who took time and care to foster good relationships was more likely to have co-operation when he needed it, possibly even from farmers and employers who had left the Church for Dissent - or for no Church at all. It is true that the population in Speeton was only 140, but a small population did not automatically guarantee good relationships nor good church attendance.<sup>9</sup>

Again, in a much larger parish, despite many difficulties, a parson could still make some headway with

perseverance. The Vicar of Cottingham wrote that he could only retain a few children in his Sunday School because many left for work elsewhere; that his parish suffered through having few resident landlords; and that his own resources for work in the parish were limited because one non-resident lay landlord had, for many years, received the great tithes, while the clergyman had scarcely £100. But this parson had started an adult night school which had now (1865) existed for three years with marked success.<sup>10</sup>

However, the incumbent at Kexby, Pocklington, who had tried twice to establish evening classes and failed both times - despite being helped by an able schoolmaster - said that defeat arose, not only because most farms were a long way from the school, but also because the young servants themselves were unwilling to attend school - and the latter was "the main obstacle."<sup>11</sup> This last comment points to another important factor. Some of the youngsters whom the clergy were trying to encourage into night schools had imbued a degree of indifference towards the Church's institutional life, or had learned to live without it, whilst they were still very young children and working as hired labourers. Tackling their indifference at a slightly later stage in their lives was an essential but immensely difficult part of the challenge these rural clergy were trying to face.

A further and possibly subtler brand of this disaffection is illustrated in the failure of evening classes at Nafferton, near Driffield, whose Vicar wrote that evening classes had ebbed owing to attenders "claiming" they had duties to do on their farms.<sup>12</sup> It is the word "claiming", of course, that reveals this parson's suspicions. "Work

to do" was a plausible if invented excuse, and doubtless often used.

Another slant on the disaffection of the young comes from the other side of the diocese. At Woodsetts, on the Nottinghamshire border, where traditionally the girls left the parish at 15 to go into service and the boys were hired at earlier ages, a new feature had been the opening of Shireoaks Colliery. Fewer lads now went away as hired labour. Drawn by higher wages at the colliery they stayed with their parents, but grew up showing "less reverence for the Sabbath and the sanctuary."<sup>13</sup>

Here and there clergy showed much enlightenment about the needs of their people and the best ways in which to help them. The incumbent in the Wolds parish of Wetwang, for example, found that his evening classes for teaching the 3 R's were very well attended.<sup>14</sup> But the two most imaginative continuing education programmes outside any of the large towns of the diocese were those at Sherburn, near Malton, and at Greasebrough, near Rotherham. John Mason, the Vicar at Sherburn since 1834, had decided to help the people in his parish by providing them with periodical reading. In order to do this, he persuaded 70 heads of families to subscribe to one or more periodicals. They included the Churchmen's Penny Magazine, the Child's Companion, the Sunday at Home Cottager and the Church Missionary Juvenile Instructor. Mason had run this system for many years and found that it worked very well; and he was obviously not dissuaded from continuing this work by his low church attendance figures: an a.p. of only 10% from quite a small population.<sup>15</sup>

At Greasebrough, the Rev. T. Byers had a winter evening school of sixty boys and girls, and himself taught the men

who attended - all of them miners and ironworkers. Linked with the evening school was a reading room with newspapers and periodicals, and facilities for games such as chess and draughts. The Church also organised cricket and other clubs. It is not surprising to find in such a lively parish that the children also were retained in the Sunday School; that all the Sunday School staff had previously been scholars there; that the few who had left Sunday School attended Church instead; and that the incumbent had prepared a boy collier from the Sunday School for entry to the C.M.S. College at Islington - and this young man was now nearing ordination.<sup>16</sup> The production of ordinands was always regarded as a healthy sign in a parish. Yet Byers's schemes, in terms of their effect on church attendance, brought exactly the same attendance pointer (only 10%) as Mr. Mason's at Sherburn. On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that at Greasebrough the "critical mass" factor would be operating, with 300 worshippers from a population of 3,000 making for a solid congregation and a valuable sense of togetherness - a likely breeding ground for the occasional ordination candidate. Sherburn's attendance would only total about 70 at its very best.

Although no other parishes in the diocese could give better reports of perseverance, ingenuity and good relationships as the two just quoted (with the possible exception of Whitby, which had a very wide variety of evening activities for all ages of both sexes) there were certainly some active evening schools in more densely populated parts of the diocese. For example, at Sheffield St. George, where youngsters stayed in Sunday School until 20 years of age, there was also an evening school during the week for young men and boys, with an attendance varying from 190 to 200; and there were various Bible classes.<sup>17</sup> Sheffield St. Philip had adult and evening schools -

"tolerably well attended in winter" - together with a reading room and chess club available in winter, and a cricket club in summer.<sup>18</sup> Of the remaining parishes in Sheffield town, however, four had not yet (in 1865) attempted to start evening classes, and four made no mention of the subject at all. The shortage of clergy, lay helpers and money in some Sheffield parishes most likely helped to cause this situation.

The position in Hull was similar to Sheffield. Of the eleven churches in Hull, Drypool and Sculcoates, six had never had evening classes, four had made some attempt, and at Holy Trinity these had been successful when sufficient voluntary assistance was available.<sup>19</sup> The most consistently successful, from the point of view of numbers attending, was at St. Stephen's District Chapel, where for thirteen years the attendance at the adult school room had averaged over a hundred. Perhaps pointers to the success were that each person attending had to pay 1d. per night, and none was admitted under 18 years of age.<sup>20</sup>

In the highly populated parishes in north Cleveland, St. Hilda's, Middlesbrough provided neither Sunday School nor evening classes in 1865, because of a lack of suitable premises.<sup>21</sup> The incumbent of the neighbouring parish of St. John, however, was able to report that there were adult classes for young men; sewing classes for girls; and a well patronised Church Institute.<sup>22</sup> In the mushrooming ore town of Ormesby, too, there was much enthusiastic activity, with the majority of children retained in the parish Sunday School after leaving day school; a flourishing night school; a parochial institute providing reading room, lectures and a library, and evening classes on all subjects, including Bible instruction. It is worth bearing in mind that the incumbent must have been over 60 years

of age - for he was instituted in the parish in 1837 - yet he had only one curate, and admitted that a major impediment to his work was his own inability to cope with the increasing population of the parish, and the lack of a church and other means hampered his work.<sup>23</sup>

At first sight, the darkest picture for a populous area was in York. Of the 24 parishes in the City Deanery, ten made no mention of the subject of evening classes, eight mentioned that they had none, and the incumbents of only six said that they had attempted evening/adult classes, and only one, Mr. Robinson at St. Lawrence<sup>24</sup> could claim any sustained success over a period of years. Even so, attendance was small - obviously hit, Robinson felt, by the existence of adult evening classes at the York Mechanics Institute. However, it was perhaps more significant, from the point of view of the Church's outreach, that a Church Institute was also active in York; and this explains why some York parishes were apparently not interested in establishing night schools of their own. The existence of a good Institute in any community - whether "Church" or "secular" based - went some way towards meeting the challenge of ignorance, even if it did not raise church attendance.

Whatever the outcome, it was healthy for the livelier Church of the mid-1860's - a Church increasingly aware of the competitive market which now existed - to be seeking ways of coping with de-Churchment in general, and with the contribution made to that process by societal factors such as the negative educational and spiritual effects of child labour, by the high incidence of migration, and by widespread indifference amongst the labouring classes. This was a time for taking stock and for trying new techniques. But time would show that any hopes of filling

church seats were unlikely to be realised except in areas where the high population hid the real picture of indifference and de-Churchment. The drift away from active Church life had been going on for too many years virtually unchecked, and the causes of it were very deep-seated in society. And whilst adult/evening classes might have been valuable antidotes to some of the Church's problems in many parishes, they were not necessarily the best nor the only means. As a West Yorkshire parson in a large village commented:

We are subject to much fluctuation from emigration, from 'going into service' and a variety of causes....Those retained in Sunday School sometimes become teachers. [As for] evening classes: my evenings are fully employed in preparations, or sick visiting or Lectures, or other parochial work, [and] I have not much faith in mere secular classes, especially as the Poor are tired with their daily field labour, retiring early and rising early.<sup>25</sup>

Some parsons would not agree with this man's priorities regarding parochial ministry; but at least he had determined them; and this was a sign of the developing professionalism which was helping many parsons to face the problems of the day.

### (iii) The Parish Magazine

Any account of the Church's attempts to communicate with the lower orders must mention the local parish magazine with its inset containing varied articles. The publication of these grew rapidly as a means of communication from the early 1870's onwards; and, in addition to the interest they aroused, they were a valuable medium for keeping the Church and its purposes in the minds of parishioners.<sup>26</sup> In a period when the influence of the newspaper and journal on public opinion was increasing, the very existence of the parish magazine was an indication of the growing realisation amongst parochial clergy of the need to communicate with ordinary people on many matters, at a level they could understand and even enjoy.

An excellent summary of the aims of the parish magazine and of its usefulness comes from Canon Robert Jarratt Crosthwaite, Vicar of Brayton with Barlow and Hambleton in Selby Deanery (later to become Archdeacon of York and the first suffragan Bishop of Beverley). In his letter announcing the venture to the parish in 1875, he outlined his reasons for introducing a magazine saying it would be

useful to me as a means of communicating with my parishioners on subjects [about] which, from time to time, I may wish to give them information, or express my opinion; (ii) a means of promoting the interest of different parts of the parish in each other and in the general welfare of the whole parish.

Canon Crosthwaite said that such magazines had been found useful and a source of pleasure in other parishes.<sup>27</sup>



Crosthwaite kept to his stated aims. The Brayton magazine gave summaries every month of a variety of activities, "sacred" and "secular". There were regular lists of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials; advance notices of Special Services, Sermons, and Collections in Church - and reports about them afterwards. And, of course, there were reports about the special occasions, such as the re-opening by Archbishop Thomson of the parish church in July 1878, after a year's closure for renovations;<sup>28</sup> and the consecration of St. Mary's Church, Hambleton, "the most interesting and important event in the parish of Brayton in connection with the Church in the present generation."<sup>29</sup> There were many annual reports, too, such as the School Inspector's reports on the three schools in the parish, mentioning the warts as well as the excellence; accounts of events such as the Sunday School Festival, Harvest Services and Suppers; the meetings of supporters of the Church Missionary Society (in Low Church, Brayton) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (in High Church, Hambleton), and of the British and Foreign Bible Society; the election of lay representatives from the parish to vote for the laymen who would attend the Diocesan Conference; and the "Evening Entertainment" at Brayton National School given by scholars for parents and friends.<sup>30</sup>

All these reports, and many more, contained a valuable hidden agenda which regularly reminded parishioners not only of the Church's presence within the parish, but also of its concern with every facet of parish life. And this persistent message doubtless continued throughout the years in many similar magazines across the diocese.

J.F. Ellis, the Vicar of Pocklington, whose parish magazine served a group of eight other nearby parishes - quite a common practice in very rural areas - drew

attention to this usually hidden agenda following his New Year greeting in January, 1880. The magazine was

to draw attention to the things which concern our salvation, and to let people know about the Church's ministrations; [and] though there are people who carelessly say 'we don't want to be preached to', yet, we believe, there is not one of us who does not feel that he needs to be preached to, and told of better things than the things of self, and of another righteousness than his own.<sup>31</sup>

There were times, also, when the incumbent put the Church's problems to parishioners: the need for more clergy, for instance;<sup>32</sup> and the disestablishment threat.<sup>33</sup> Or an incumbent might broadcast a success of the Church, as in a report about the Church Congress held at Nottingham (in 1871, during the ritual controversy):

by far the most important gathering of Churchmen in the year, [where] attendance was very large, [and] men of opposite views sat side by side and freely expressed their opinions on vexed Church matters with an affableness and cordiality seldom seen of late in those who are the leaders of the two extreme sections in the Church.<sup>34</sup>

Obviously, too, the parish magazine gave a parson the chance to put a case to his parishioners:

I am thankful that the total and average number of our Communicants has so largely increased since my arrival in 1864....But I regret that many go away month after month...and [that] a large number of our Congregation NEVER communicate AT ALL.<sup>35</sup>

The magazine could also prove useful to an enlightened parson when he wished to float an idea with a view to getting a consensus of opinion from his congregation. Thus, in the conduct of services

changes even of the slightest nature, ought only to be by consultation with and the full sanction and approval of the Parishioners themselves, or at least that portion of them who regularly attend their Parish Church, and by reference to the Archbishop.<sup>36</sup>

Most of the parish magazine insets were produced in London; and one of the most popular of all was Home Words for Heart and Hearth which, in 1875, distributed 180,000 copies each month at 1d. each to parishes all over the country.<sup>37</sup> Others that circulated in York Diocese were The Banner of Faith,<sup>38</sup> The Dawn of Day,<sup>39</sup> and Parish Magazine.<sup>40</sup> These publications contained many pages, with material ranging from the pious and moral homily, to articles about the Christian faith, to stories about heroes of hearth, field, factory and empire, to hints on gardening and cooking, and to poetry.

Between them, the professionally produced inset and the locally produced parish magazine communicated much useful information, much food for thought, and many lessons about Christianity, the Church, and family and communal life. It is important to remember, too, that in the reports of clerical involvement in the lighter side of parish life - the tea parties and harvest suppers, the concerts and children's entertainments - parishioners could see the more "human" side of their parson's character alongside the professionalism they saw in his ministry. Thus, parishioners witnessed part of a large-scale process of liberalisation that was taking place: in the Church, in

the parson's role, and in society generally during the period.

In 1894 there were 82,107 parish magazine "takers" in the York Diocese.<sup>41</sup> If each taker represented an average readership of four, this means that parish magazines were being read by well over a quarter of a million people each month in York Diocese. That amounts to a significant and regular entry of the Church into the lives of many people, at least some of whom were de-Churchmented folk. For the latter, the arrival of a monthly magazine maintained an important link with the ongoing life of the local church.

#### (iv) Evangelisation and Missions

In July 1884 York Convocation held its first discussion about "The Church and the Masses", in response to an initiative from the southern Convocation. Members considered whether the Church needed to take any special action to meet the spiritual needs of the masses, and if so, what. At the close of the discussion, Archbishop Thomson directed the appointment of a committee to examine these matters.<sup>42</sup> Both Houses approved.<sup>43</sup>

At this time, parish missions were becoming quite popular in York Diocese, and especially in Sheffield and York. The holding of missions epitomises the conscious desire to reach out to the de-Churchmented members of society, particularly amongst the "lower orders". But, because of the insularity produced by the parochial system, the organising of missions was left to individual parishes, with the result that planning and effectiveness were piecemeal. Similarly, no amount of debate in Convocation on special action to meet spiritual needs could lead to concerted, enforced action on the part of the Church throughout the province. Neither Convocation nor Archbishop held sufficient specific authority to coerce. This meant that, however firm or unanimous Convocation's resolutions might be, they could only be seen as suggestions or guidelines to the parochial clergy.

But at least debates in Convocation stressed the seriousness of the situation, allowed the sharing of opinions, and sowed seeds of ideas for future action in parish, rural deanery, archdeaconry or diocese. And at least the missions that were held displayed a concern and willingness to act consciously and positively to win people

back to the Church - although winning them seems to have been a rare achievement.

The yawning gap in many places between Church and people - based on class, education, culture and economics - was a great anxiety to bishops and clergy by the 1880's, and rightly so. It was very late in the century to be realising that the Church needed to confront these issues, and then to discover that the Church, in whatever chattering bodies, could do no more than debate and pass resolutions which it had no authority to enforce.

However, by the mid-1880's there was at last a sense of urgency; and it is significant, for instance, that Convocation's first ever debate on the Church and the masses quickly developed into a debate on "The Evangelisation of the People" - indicating a switch from identification of the problem to suggesting a solution, and giving a glimpse of York Convocation at its adaptable best. Again, this Convocation debate was valuable if only for the summary by Bishop Fraser of Manchester of what he saw as the main hindrances to presenting Christian truth to those estranged from worship, and his list of faults that needed to be set right. He acknowledged that there were large numbers of people who never attended a place of worship. But he contended that, broadly speaking, Nonconformist ministrations were no more attractive than those of the Church of England, and that the extent of de-Churchment to Dissent had been exaggerated.<sup>44</sup> He also insisted that the attractiveness of worship was crucial in encouraging people to church or repelling them from it. He argued, rather simplistically, that whilst many churches were empty, a considerable number of churches that overflowed at every service did so because the services were "really attractive."<sup>45</sup> Fraser thought, too, that the

tendency for clergy to present Christian truth in terms of systematic theology had hindered the presentation of the Gospel "to the great body of the people".<sup>46</sup>

In addition, he expressed anxiety about mission rooms, considering it wrong to believe that people who could not be persuaded to attend church could instead be attracted to mission rooms. These he described as

a very poor and inadequate substitute for the church; and if it does not lead on to the church, as I am afraid in many instances it does not, I consider it is rather a hindrance than a help in our work....The secular uses of the mission rooms on weekdays, the inadequate provision for kneeling, the absence of proper musical accompaniment..., [and] the almost impossibility of administering the Holy Communion...with proper solemnity, are all of them great deficiencies.<sup>47</sup>

With hindsight, some of these observations seem shallow and theologically confused, particularly his reservations about mission rooms unless they "led on to the church" - indicating that he did not consider a mission room, nor the people in it, nor the activities that went on there, to be "church"; and that "church" was to him, in essence, the gathering together and the worship that took place in the more splendid and more permanent edifice located elsewhere in a parish.

Nevertheless, there was some common sense in the Bishop of Manchester's words, too; and there is no doubt that he was genuinely concerned about the importance of using techniques that would have permanently good effects on the masses who had turned away from the Church. His list of

faults needing correction makes some sense of his reservations about mission rooms. He admitted that a large number of people among the lower orders - "described as the residuum" - who rarely or never attended worship, seemed beyond the Church's reach, although experiments were taking place to attract them. The Bishop suggested that all Churchmen needed to admit that many services were too stiff or too difficult for uneducated and untrained minds to cope with. There was a need to use the greater freedom (brought by the Uniformity Amendment Act of 1872) to adapt and modify services so that these people could understand.<sup>48</sup> Experience in Manchester Diocese had shown that larger numbers of worshippers were drawn in by the use of such services.

Further aids, Bishop Fraser suggested, would be to encourage working women to come in from the streets and attend services in their shawls, and the men likewise in their working clothes. Choirs should remove their surplices, because their robes implied specialisation and that only the choir should sing. Sometimes, instead of a service, the clergyman and choristers should lead some "hearty congregational singing". The pew system, already fast disappearing, should go altogether, because

any arrangement which gives preference to the upper classes at the cost of the lower is not consistent with our position as a National Church....The soul of the artisan is just as precious in the sight of God, as it ought to be in ours, as the soul of the duke.

Furthermore, he said, there was too often too much anxiety

to get well-to-do churchwardens and sidesmen and other parochial officers all from the upper strata of the



congregation. Why should you not have the artisan or the agricultural labourer as your churchwarden?

Fraser recognised that clergy were afraid of losing the financial support of the wealthier classes; but, he argued, there was no reason to fear that the masses of the people would give other than liberal support to the Church. "They simply need an interest first," he said.<sup>49</sup> He stressed that sermons had to be interesting to ordinary people, and should not analyse abstruse points of theology; and - a very controversial viewpoint - that ritual and "spectacular services" were not an attraction to the masses. He claimed that he could see no evidence in Manchester Diocese, with its 2¼ million population, suggesting that "a highly developed ritual in the smallest degree affects their lives or wins their hearts to God." Instead, he regarded powerful preaching as the surest way of bringing the masses to God.<sup>50</sup>

In certain circumstances, everything Bishop Fraser said was true and applicable. But this is only to say that the problems associated with the de-Churchment process were extremely complex. Thus, in different circumstances everything he advocated could have proved quite useless. This point was mildly put by Canon George Body, proctor for Cleveland, who said he agreed generally with the Bishop of Manchester's list of hindrances. But, for example, Body said he knew parishes where the preaching was not particularly powerful, but where attendance at worship was good as a result of diligent pastoral work - especially house to house visiting - on the part of the parish priests, who in this way won the confidence and love of their people.<sup>51</sup> In a voluntaryist age with its increasing freedom to choose, this matter of the parson being respected by the people was very important. But so,

too, was the need to be cautious about regarding non-Church attenders as totally de-Christianised. Provided the ratio of clergy to population allowed regular clergy-people contact, it seems that the maintenance of a Christian community was more likely to continue, and church attendance could be expected to be higher than in parishes where regular contact was not possible.

W.R. Fremantle, the Dean of Ripon, reinforced this point. He had been an evangelist amongst the poor all his life, he said, and he felt that the Church was efficient enough at its work, and its work was acceptable to "the masses". But he thought that the chief reason why people were estranged from the Church was that population had often grown so much, and the Church was so undermanned in those areas, that it became impossible in huge parishes for clergy and people to sustain the required regular contact.<sup>52</sup>

Canon Body, a High Churchman, having questioned the Evangelical Bishop Fraser's assertion that ordinary people were indifferent to dogmatic affairs, though agreeing with him that ritualism could cause difficulties in a parish - but only because "the parson had not got the power of touch with the people" - then posed the crucial question: What had really alienated the people from the influence of the clergy? - and proceeded to supply a frank and political answer. The Church, he urged, had appeared to skilled workers to be opposed to the drift towards democracy, and to be against the realisation of their aspirations. He believed this was a serious handicap to the Church, made worse because politics were becoming "in a very great degree the religion of the working classes." This being the case, Canon Body suggested that a huge stumbling-block had recently been removed, and a significant barrier

between clergy and the working classes abolished, when the bishops, in "a critical division" in the House of Lords, had supported the Franchise Bill. At this, there were shouted objections in Convocation. Body said he had expected these; but he thought it was wonderful

that the time had come when Conservatism and Churchmanship had ceased to be necessarily equivalent terms. It was a thing for them to rejoice at, that there were now many clergy of the Church of England heart and soul in sympathy with the aspirations of the working classes.<sup>53</sup>

Ending the debate, Harvey Goodwin, Bishop of Carlisle, questioned gloomy assumptions too often made when dealing with difficult concepts involving large numbers of people. He reminded Convocation that thousands of clergy were regularly in contact with thousands of ordinary people. Too much talk suggested that there was a total lack of contact. In this context he questioned the use of the term "evangelisation of the masses". He could not understand, he said, why poor people were considered as "masses" more than rich people; and were spoken about as though they were "utter strangers", and as though clergy had met them as suddenly as missionaries might meet a tribe in Africa. Not long ago, said Goodwin, these so-called masses were "the children of the parishes"; and at this point he launched into his plea to guard against placing too much hope on preaching to the masses, and instead to educate the children, to get hold of them, and to keep hold of them.<sup>54</sup> But, like Bishop Fraser, who placed too great an emphasis on preaching, Goodwin was also begging several questions: for the elementary education of too many working class children was still often too short, and the Church was so

little involved in the process that it never got hold of them.

Before Convocation dispersed, it approved the formation of four new committees to investigate A Board of Missions; Woman's Work in the Church; The Needs of the Masses of the People; and The Special Needs of the Masses of the People. Each committee was to investigate the Church's lack of hold and influence on the bulk of the population.<sup>55</sup> It is clear that the chattering Church was not running short of material to discuss. But no resolution was put or passed at the end of this debate on evangelisation. This was understandable, in view of the divided opinion about the roots of the problem and about the best courses to pursue to win the masses for the Church, and also in view of the impossibility of agreeing or enforcing any concerted policies for the Church to follow.

The fundamental differences between Convocation members about the best modes of outreach amounted, on the one hand, to emphasis on the need for better and more attractive modes of worship in order to entice people back to church and, on the other hand, stress on the need for more thoughtful and constant pastoral care and education in the parishes. Certainly, Bishop Fraser's own admission that "the residuum" never darkened a church door pointed to the need for the Church to reach out to the lower orders in their own situation, rather than hope that one day they would come, presumably out of sheer curiosity, to see how appealing the new, lively services and the powerful preaching might be. But most parochial clergy would probably have agreed that a balance of good pastoral care and sound elementary education, together with attractive services and arresting preaching, was as good a recipe for church-attendance as any. For many clergy accepted that

this was an age when church-attendance was not a regular habit for the majority of people, and most people had seemingly worked out a modus vivendi based on religionless Christianity.

Amidst the increased concern and sense of urgency in the 1880's about the on-going effects of de-Churchment there had grown a movement - albeit never very strong in York Diocese - in favour of holding parochial missions. The climax of this movement in the Diocese came with the

Missions held in parishes of York Diocese by mid-1890's:

	<u>Mission held</u>	<u>Some good</u>	<u>No good/Uncertain</u>
CLEVELAND:	21/168 = 13%	8/21 = 38%	13/21 = 62%
E. RIDING:	20/191 = 11%	6/20 = 30%	14/20 = 70%
YORK:	48/136 = 35%	11/48 = 23%	37/48 = 77%
SHEFFIELD:	28/97 = 29%	13/28 = 46%	15/28 = 54%
DIOCESE:	117/592 = 20%	38/117 = 32%	79/117 = 68%

Table 29 Incidence of parish missions in York Diocese, in 1880's and up to 1894

[Source: V/R 1894]

Mission to the City of York in 1888. If de-Churchment were largely exemplified by the apathy and indifference mentioned by many parsons twenty years earlier - though of course it was much more complex than that - then the invasion of a parish by a lively group of missionaries, possibly led by a notable "evangelist", seemed to be worth trying.

However, asked by Archbishop Maclagan in 1894 whether there had been a mission in their parishes within the previous ten years, the clergy of York Diocese produced interestingly varied replies. Well under half (only 20%) of the parishes across the diocese had held a parochial mission during the previous ten years; and of these, 32% reported that there was some lasting good effect, whilst 68% felt either that there were no noticeably good effects, or were uncertain whether there were any. [See Table 29 above] One of the interesting features arising from Maclagan's investigation is the small number of parishes in Cleveland and the East Riding that ventured to hold missions compared with York - where figures were boosted by the 1888 Mission - and Sheffield. Both York and Sheffield held more than twice the number of missions than the Archdeaconries of Cleveland and the East Riding combined.

The movement for such missions was never very strong for a variety of reasons although, very occasionally, an incumbent reported enthusiastically on the results of a Mission. Thus, the parson at Thrybergh in Rotherham Deanery said that the mission held in 1885 had left impressions that were "very real, deep and lasting" and the parish remembered the occasion with gratitude.<sup>56</sup> But more usually, where there was felt to have been any advantage at all, it was in toning up the parishioners who were already Church-attached, rather than attracting estranged folk back

to church worship.<sup>57</sup> Some comments indicate that the parish mission was at best a mixed blessing. Thus, for instance, the incumbent at St. John's, Middlesbrough, was not enthusiastic:

The last Mission was held in 1880. We did not find it reached the class of people that we seemed not to get hold of in our regular visitations and ministrations; but then, our work may be said to be a continuous Mission.<sup>58</sup>

In the mushroom town of Eston, the incumbent reported that there had been missions in 1888 and 1890, but he found it difficult to assess the results which, on the whole, were disappointing.<sup>59</sup> At nearby Marske there had been two or three missions in the past, but the incumbent said that none of them had had sufficient preparation or follow-up, and the result was "nil".<sup>60</sup> The Vicar of St. Hilda's, Middlesbrough wrote that there had not been any mission in the last ten years, and that his past experience of them did not incline him towards holding another.<sup>61</sup>

Others were even less positive. The incumbent of Crambe reported that in his predecessor's time "missioners" had come every fortnight in winter and preached in the school. He was unable to say whether any good or otherwise had been done, but had discouraged these visits when he came to the parish. He believed it was not periodical "stirring up", but sound and persistent teaching that was required.<sup>62</sup> The incumbent of Huttons Ambo said there had been a well patronised mission in 1892, which he initially thought had left "a distinct effect for good"; but it did not last.<sup>63</sup>

Even in strongly Evangelical Sheffield there were similar doubts about the effectiveness of missions compared

with the daily slog of pastoral care. The Vicar of Sheffield St. George reported there had been no mission since 1882, because he believed in "the daily mission work of the Church, systematically pursued."<sup>64</sup> The incumbent at Sheffield St. Paul warned that a parochial mission was only useful when clergymen worked vigorously after it. If a mission took place simply to rouse a sleepy parish, and was not then followed up by really hard work, he claimed that it did positive harm.<sup>65</sup> This echoed the view of Canon George Body - an experienced conductor of parochial missions in York Diocese - who believed that the weakness of parochial missions lay in the failure of clergy to keep in touch with folk afterwards.<sup>66</sup>

It is not surprising that the popularity of the parochial mission declined in the 1890's, as also did discussion in Convocation about the problem of evangelising the masses. This decline was no doubt reinforced by the increasing acceptance that, whatever the Churches might do, many people were unlikely to start going to worship in any Church in an age that encouraged the exercise of private judgment in almost all spheres of life. Another reason for the decline of the parochial mission was that, of itself, it too often produced only temporary signs of new life in a parish; but any long term good effects were more elusive.

The last Convocation discussion during the period on the special needs of the masses of the people took place in February 1892. Members considered a Committee Report which drew attention to the importance of house to house visiting and other "ordinary machinery" in a parish as the best ways of dealing with the special needs of the masses. Convocation learnt that a recent conference in Bradford, held by Nonconformists to look at the position of the



Church in relation to other Christian bodies in the town, had agreed that the Church of England's local success was achieved mainly through pastoral visitation. The Convocation Report, in addition to emphasising the need for visiting and other pastoral work as the constant spearhead of outreach, briefly made other observations: for example, some dividing of parishes into smaller areas might be advisable; lay agency was growing healthier: a Church Training College was now available for lay workers in London, and there was now the facility in both Oxford and Cambridge for gathering lay workers together for training during the long vacation.<sup>67</sup>

In addition, the Report revealed experiments aimed at reducing the harmful insularising effects of the parochial system. For example, in a handful of northern rural deaneries the practice had been established of licensing lay readers to minister in different parishes on a pre-arranged cycle similar to the Methodist Quarterly Plan. This had proved very beneficial and was recommended for trial elsewhere. The Report also recommended that in exceptionally large parishes, "special service clergy" could be useful, and particularly if supported by donations from the laity.<sup>68</sup> This was a reminder that, in most cases, the parishes with the most problems had the lowest income: virtually an insoluble difficulty for the Church of England for as long as it persisted with the traditional endowment system.

So, by the end of the period, it was clear - and a matter for growing concern - that the effects of de-Churchment had not ceased to present the biggest authority problems to the Church, even though the bulk of the process had taken place two or three generations earlier. In addition, a serious on-going effect by the mid-1890's was

that those born to de-Churchmented parents could be expected to grow up as non-Church attenders, even if sent to Sunday School in early childhood. Thus, from the mid-1880's to the mid-1890's the chattering Church spent much time and energy earnestly discussing the best ways of reclaiming those apparently beyond the Church's influence, let alone its worship.

Not surprisingly, all-embracing answers proved elusive. This is no discredit to Victorian Churchmen who found it difficult, being so near to the causes, to realise that a host of complex factors - some of them societal - had simultaneously contributed to the drift away from the institutional Church. But even if they had been more aware of this, it is doubtful whether they could have eradicated the effects of de-Churchment. On the other hand, whilst it was commendable for Church leaders to seek to set their own house in order, a lack of appreciation of the profundity of societal factors upon the Church's authority problems did result in many discussions in the last quarter of the 19th century being conducted largely on the assumption that the main reasons for de-Churchment could be found within the Church itself, and therefore could be put right by the Church alone.

However, no single approach - nor multi-headed approach - could hope to turn the clock back. Nor was the work of the clergy alone sufficient to produce a coping machinery, despite increased clerical professionalism during the period. Thus, throughout the period thought was given to ways of extending lay ministry, and efforts were made by some Churchmen to promote it, as will shortly be shown.

(v) The sacramental life, Confirmation, and retention problems, 1894

Archbishop William Dalrymple Maclagan introduced himself to York Convocation in February 1892 by suggesting:

These are days not so much of special danger - we are too apt to think this of days in which we ourselves are living - but they are rather times full of promise, full of bright promise for the Church of England. They are times of great intellectual and spiritual energy.<sup>69</sup>

The new Archbishop's optimism was reasonably justified. Church life in York Diocese during the first four years of his archiepiscopate looked quite promising. [See Table 30 below] Obviously, four years is too short a time in which to establish long-lasting "trends"; so any comparisons must be made cautiously. But it seemed that young people in the diocese were growing a little more devout, or were yielding more readily to persuasive parish clergy, as they sought to learn more about communicant and prayer life, and about the Bible; joined newly formed Church Guilds and Communicant Classes for continuing post-Confirmation education; and became involved in various aspects of Church life, such as helping to care for the church buildings, the altar linen and vestments, or offering intercessions, or preparing themselves for Communion.

Clergy were also providing more Church Services, on weekdays especially. [See Table 30, sections 3 & 4 below] Between 1891 and 1895, week day and Holy Day Services increased at roughly three times the rate of Sunday Services. Parents were sending more children to Sunday School, and more of the youngsters were attending Bible Classes. In an age of continuing de-Churchment, and still

Developments in York Diocese at the end of the period:

1891-2

1894-5

1. Population:

Cleveland Archd'ry	207,855	278,780
East Riding	" 298,253	376,829
York	" 179,848	287,009
Sheffield	" 494,998	540,432

Total: 1,180,954 1,483,050

Increase: 25.6%

2. <u>Confirmations</u> (Male)	3,458	3,848
(Female)	5,112	5,355

Increase: 7.3%

3. Sun. Serv's in church,

chaps. of ease, miss. rms.	1,364	1,725	<u>Increase:</u>	<u>26.4%</u>
Ditto <u>on week days</u>	1,091	1,878	"	<u>72.1%</u>
Ditto <u>in Lent/Advent only</u>	250	324	"	<u>29.6%</u>
Ditto <u>on Holy Days only</u>	255	428	"	<u>67.8%</u>

4. Holy Communion Services:

Sunday a.m.	728 p.w.	1,153 p.w.
" mid-day	683 "	957 "
" after mid-day	113 "	116 "
Holy days	159 "	219 "
Week days	69 "	134 <u>Increase:</u> <u>57.4%</u>

5. <u>Communic't Class:</u> (Male)	1,918	3,494
" " (Female)	3,953	7,178 <u>Increase:</u> <u>81.7%</u>

6. (Estim'd) Communicants: 51,258 72,951 Increase: 70.3%

[Table 30....]

[Table 30 - Cont...]

7. <u>Guild members:</u> (Males)	2,916	4,216	<u>Increase:</u> <u>44.6%</u>
"    "    (Females)	9,194	12,383	<u>Increase:</u> <u>34.7%</u>
8. <u>Ch'n in Sun. Schools:</u>			
Infants	16,331	25,017	<u>Increase:</u> <u>53.2%</u>
Boys	28,007	35,298	<u>Increase:</u> <u>26.0%</u>
Girls	31,552	39,472	Increase: 25.1%
9. <u>Bible Cl's:</u> (Male)	6,690	9,483	<u>Increase:</u> <u>41.7%</u>
"    (Female)	6,014	8,626	<u>Increase:</u> <u>43.4%</u>

Table 30      Population, Services, Communicants, Guilds,  
Sunday Schools, & Bible Classes: A statistical  
comparison of York Diocese in 1891-2 & 1894-5.      [Source:  
 Bp. Dio. 11/2 & 4, 1891-2; 1894-5]

suffering the effects of earlier de-Churchment, as still often exemplified by indifference towards the institutional Church, these indications seem quite remarkable. However cautiously we should regard them, they are not to be dismissed lightly.

The more frequent Communion Services are particularly important. They were a sign of the continuing permeation of sacramentalism that stemmed originally from the Oxford Movement. York Diocese, notwithstanding Archbishop Thomson's well-known distaste for ritual - but not for Holy Communion - had clearly come under that sacramentalist influence. And the increased celebrations of the

Eucharist, with stress on the need for regular attendance, were more than a sign of the on-going effects of Tractarianism. The increase registers a clericised response to the challenges posed both by de-Churchment and by associated resistance to the Church's influence over "ordinary people".

There was a vital numinous element involved in this development. This was sometimes assisted by the increased wearing of the surplice in most churches, now, whether by parson or choir; or, in a few parishes in the diocese, by the donning of Eucharistic vestments, and the revival of ritualist practices. All the senses were catered for in the attempt to make sacramental worship and "the beauty of holiness" more appealing in the majority of places. Clergy were encouraging their flocks to become a little more steeped in mystery itself. For there was (and is) more mystery surrounding sacramental and ritualistic worship than in services such as Morning or Evening Prayer, both of which are based on words alone. Frederick Jackson, Vicar of Newton-on-Rawcliffe near Malton, admitted that there could be difficulties in all this. He found that both Confirmation and Communion had previously "lost their place in the religious thought and life of this place." Nevertheless he believed that "Catholic views of the Holy Eucharist have gained ground a good deal among the more serious adults who come with regularity to Church. Of these, more communicate, and more frequently, than a few years ago."<sup>70</sup>

The sacramentalism evident at the end of the period is a sign that the theological and doctrinal conflicts of thirty years earlier were resolving themselves through a wider, deeper and more mysterious vision of the Church's raison d'etre. As a relatively modern writer puts it: it is

theology's role, after all, "to stir vision, and to remind us of the mysterious."<sup>71</sup>

Equally important, of course - from the point of view of the clergy exerting authority over their flocks, and particularly in influencing the younger members - with the growing emphasis on sacramental worship there came also the bestowing of mystery and authority to those given the Church's blessing (through ordination to priesthood) to consecrate the bread and the wine and to bring the "sacred mysteries" into ordinary people's lives. Hence, the Rector of North Otterington with Thornton-le-Beans, near Thirsk, said he wished clergy could be freed from having to do mundane things, such as perpetually begging for money for schools, choirs, church expenses, curates' stipends and charities. He wanted the "freedom of the Priesthood from 'serving tables' [the function of the earliest diaconate] so that their time and powers be used exclusively to the Word and Sacraments."<sup>72</sup> Such thinking illustrates that, by the 1890's, the act of ordination in the Church of England was, of itself, regaining some of its pre-Reformation mystery, through which, it was believed, the recipient received ongoing and particular grace from God to do "divine things". In other words, by the 1890's the Oxford Movement's search for the lost authority of the Church of England was bearing some fruit - however mythical that supposed lost authority had actually been.

The incumbent at Aldborough-in-Holderness made some perceptive observations on these matters in 1894. He believed that the Church of England had suffered greatly through several generations of teaching from clergy, who although episcopally ordained, held "dissenting doctrines of some form or other." This priest approved the recognition given to the "reformed" nature of the Church of

England; but he also yearned for "the enforcement, by those who have the Divine Authority, of strict conformity in the priesthood to the doctrine of [that] Church." For the same reasons, he wanted Confirmation Services to be held in remote churches, and occasional Ordination Services in centrally situated parish churches, so that the faithful could know "the Chief Shepherd of Christ's flock."<sup>73</sup>

Linked with sacramentalism came the practical steps clergy were taking in the 1890's to retain their confirmees and steer them into lifelong commitment to the Eucharist. The clergy were encouraged in this by Archbishop Maclagan, who wanted to know what means the clergy employed to keep a hold on recently confirmed youngsters. Their replies typify the trend. For example the Vicar of South Kirby in the West Riding said he did it by encouraging them to be present at the Eucharist before they were confirmed, so that they became familiar with the Service and learned "to desire Communion."<sup>74</sup>

The incumbent at Holmpton-w.-Wellwick, a sparsely populated parish in Hedon Deanery, was deeply convinced of the centrality of the Eucharist to the life, not only of the individual, but also of the community represented in the Communicants of a parish. Thus he advocated

continuously reiterating the truth that every visit to the Blessed Sacrament brings [worshippers] to, and makes them one with, Him who is infinite Love, to whom they may take every secret trouble, certain of His help; and also making the celebration the great Family Service of the Parish every Sunday.<sup>75</sup>

As part of a growing attempt to instil the need for discipline into their parishioners, and particularly into



younger people, clergy were introducing Communicant Classes and Guilds into the parishes. Between 1891-92 and 1894-95, membership of Guilds rose by nearly 40%, and membership of Communicant Classes by over 80%. The actual numbers involved were not enormous: 16,599 people belonged to Guilds, and 10,672 belonged to Communicant Classes in 1894-95. [See Table 30 above] But the growing membership points both to growth in the priestly authority of clergy, and also to a willingness amongst devout people - particularly recent confirmees - to place themselves under that authority.

However, this growth is also a significant pointer to an increased denominationalisation of the Church of England. To be a regular, devout communicant, and one who was not content merely to attend Communion, nor even to receive the Sacrament regularly, but one who met with others of similar mind in out-of-worship groups, was to declare oneself a "card carrying", voluntaryist, end-of-century Anglican. This marked a distinct change from the situation in the early 19th century, when being English meant a person was automatically, and therefore very often vaguely, regarded as a member of the Church of England. Growing acceptance of the importance and centrality of the Communicant life to Anglicanism indicated that Anglican clergy and increasing numbers of their flocks had renounced, however unconsciously, any idea of becoming once again the Church-of-the-nation to which everyone might one day actively belong. Instead, they were bent on improving the quality of the religious product on sale, and on raising the spirituality of the consumers.

Time would show that this was creating a paradoxical situation for the Church. The comprehensiveness of belief and practice that had also become established in the Church

during the period was militating against the whole idea of an old-fashioned, pre-Reformation, authority-accepting, sacramentally-orientated and mystery-seeking body of devotees led by an old-style, authoritarian, sacrament-administering and mysterious priesthood. For the existence of such a laity and such a priesthood in a voluntaryist age which enjoyed increased freedom to choose, encouraged a denominational mentality of setting oneself apart from others. But only one parson, the incumbent at Sheriff Hutton in Easingwold Deanery, spoke in 1894 about the dangers of the type of denominationalism that was evolving. He disapproved of

special Communicants' Classes, because ALL Christians of full use ought to be Communicants, and the Congregation ought to be a Communicant Class. The people are only too ready to think that Communicants are a sort of inner circle of Christians.

Instead of encouraging this denominationalism, he insisted, the Church should seek attractiveness and relevance for all parishioners with

bright services [and] plenty of music. Straight speaking (not reading) from the pulpit must have an effect. My own experience is that the young of both sexes come to the Church, and I think ideas must be fixed in their minds which will help them on their way through the world.<sup>76</sup>.

Meantime, the Guilds and the Communicant Classes for the committed appear to have been equally popular and successful in all types of parish across the York Diocese in the early 1890's. The chief exception was strongly Evangelical Sheffield, where they scarcely emerged and

where parishes were more likely to continue with Bible Classes as places in which to conduct post-Confirmation education. Only St. George's in Sheffield had, in addition to its Bible Class, a Young Communicants' Union which met monthly; and the incumbent insisted that each Sunday School and Bible Class teacher accompanied the Communicants in their classes "to the Holy Table at least once a month." The requirement of monthly Communion shows a probably unconscious debt to the Oxford Movement, whilst mention of "the Holy Table" indicates a Protestant resistance to the use of the High Church word "altar".<sup>77</sup>

Elsewhere, Guilds and Communicant Classes sprang up in parishes of different size and character. Thus, for example, there were Communicant Classes in the tiny village of Whitwell, near Malton, with a population of 213;<sup>78</sup> at Hayton-w.-Beilby in Weighton Deanery, a village with twice the population,<sup>79</sup> and at Hull St. Matthew, a parish of nearly 9,000.<sup>80</sup> In more populous parishes such groups could exist alongside other parochially-run organisations - the Girls' Friendly Society and the Church Lads' Brigade for instance - all of them instilling discipline into young people, and encouraging them to continue a regular communicant life. Thus Hull St. Paul, with a population of nearly 18,000, had G.F.S. and C.L.B. meetings each week, and fortnightly Guild meetings.<sup>81</sup>

In addition to Guilds and Communicant Classes, many clergy sought to retain their influence over young Communicants by encouraging a variety of Church-based activities for Guild and Class members. These activities helped to ensure regular thinking about the Church as well as developing positive habits and attitudes. All these means, it was hoped, would lead to life-long regular attendance at Church worship, and especially at the

Eucharist. The incumbent of the thinly populated Cleveland parish of Scawton-w.-Kirby Cold summarised this approach. All members of the Communicants' Guild in the parish, he said, were "pledged to do some definite work for God."<sup>82</sup> The incumbent at Bolton-on-Dearne said he tried to interest the young Communicants in Church and Sunday School work, and to come back to annual Confirmation classes for refresher courses.<sup>82</sup>

Alongside this spread of sacramentalism, increased self-discipline and re-emphasis on priestly authority, there emerged - another paradox, perhaps - an apparently more approachable, friendly and caring parson. These characteristics seem to have become widely accepted as part of modern clerical professionalism by the 1890's. Numerous parish priests stated that the best way of retaining hold on young Communicants was to visit them regularly,<sup>83</sup> to issue special invitations to the Eucharist at major festivals;<sup>84</sup> to "share confidences when and as far as possible;"<sup>85</sup> and to show an interest in their position and work.<sup>86</sup> The incumbent at Bossall-w.-Buttercrambe insisted on the need for "general kindness of treatment and shewing an interest in them as opportunities arise."<sup>87</sup> And his near neighbour at Crambe mentioned the need for patience, too. "We must not be disappointed if the fruit is gathered only after many years," he wrote.<sup>88</sup> Mr. Jackson at Newton-on-Rawcliffe stated that, although most confirmees left the parish for work soon after Confirmation, they usually visited him at the Vicarage when making home visits. They would not have visited an unapproachable, unfriendly parson. In fact, Jackson himself realised that he was on good terms with nearly everyone in the parish, despite contentious elements, and was "generally spoken of, I believe, as 'a kind gentleman'."<sup>89</sup>

All of this activity, all of this care and concern and friendliness aimed at ensuring that recently confirmed youngsters became regular lifelong communicants, is a reminder that the Church had long lost its monopoly of religion in the market place. The new professional priesthood had to sell communicant membership to parishioners. Having sold, it had to keep the new Communicants totally committed to the product. This was all part of a positive and conscious effort to cope with the effects of the de-Churchment process and to restore the Church's local authority. In some parishes this was clearly not easy. A few parsons admitted, for instance, that members of the congregation were not happy about new trends. As the incumbent at Westerdale wrote, they clung "tenaciously to old traditions and customs."<sup>90</sup> Or, as the incumbent at Hutton Cranswick complained, the influence of "undenominationalism [and] lack of definite belief" were widespread and had led to the dislike amongst many Churchgoers of "definite doctrinal teaching."<sup>91</sup> In seeking to introduce change, rural clergy had a tougher job than those in highly populated town parishes, where there would usually be some following for a parson, whatever his ideas about doctrine and worship. The Vicar of Skipton-on-Swale, with only 242 parishioners, said:

There is a decided wish on the part of those who ought to be my principal supporters to oppose everything I do, unless it is with their special permission.<sup>92</sup>

But, behind much of the parson's difficulty in retaining the allegiance of the young people in 1894, as was the case thirty years earlier, there lingered the familiar and difficult problems brought about when young folk left a parish as hired labourers, or when parsons wanted to encourage hired labourers, who had come to work

in their parishes, to attend worship, or belong to organisations, or attend evening classes. Most parsons simply had not enough standing to beat those of the employing classes who benefited from the hirings system. The very rural Easingwold Deanery provides useful examples. The Rector of Crayke held a Communicants' Class, but only when he could be sure of getting the consent of the employers of labour, especially in the case of girls.<sup>93</sup> The incumbent at Dalby had great difficulty in getting in touch with hired labourers, partly on account of their shyness, but also because of the lack of sympathy that still existed between farmers and the labouring classes.<sup>94</sup>

As a result of some youngsters leaving, in order to work elsewhere before being confirmed, there was a deal of wastage. Clearly, many of them never had the chance to prepare for Confirmation, either in the home parish they had left, or in the parish where they were hired and lived, and where they were often cut off from the Church's ministrations. Thus it is not surprising that the only poor percentage increase in Church activity during Archbishop Maclagan's first four years in York was the 7.3% more people confirmed in the Diocese in 1894-95 compared with 1891-92. [See Table 30 p. 420 above] In actual figures, despite all the attempts to encourage sacramental worship, only 243 more people were confirmed in 1894-95 than in 1891-92. And an important part of the explanation for this low rate of confirmation lies with the Church's old enemy: the yearly migration of children and young people from their parishes. [See Table 31 p. 432 below]

The picture of non-retention of young confirmees [that is, those confirmed in the previous one or two years] summarised in Table 31 bears some similarity to the non-retention of scholars beyond school leaving age in 1865.

[See Appendices 4 & 5, pp. 491-4] Once again, the biggest problems were in rural areas. Bishopthorpe Deanery (only seven parishes) had 100% not retained - the worst figures in the Diocese, closely followed by the Deaneries of Easingwold (94% not retained), Whitby (92% not retained), Northallerton (87%), Pocklington (81%) and Ainsty (80%). In these deaneries there was generally quite a high proportion of parsons who blamed their poor retention rate on the fact that youngsters went out to service or found some form of employment in other parishes - (though some of the deaneries more strongly blaming service, and youngsters seeking employment elsewhere for their non-retention figures, scored slightly less alarming non-retention rates. For example, Hedon [69% non-retention] had 73% of those clergy blaming "out to service"; Selby [56% non-retention rate had 60% of those clergy blaming "out to service"). Yet Whitby [92% non-retention] had only 9% blaming Service. [See Appendix 5] Of the highly rural areas in the diocese only the Deaneries of Beverley, Buckrose, Selby and Wath had non-retention rates lower than 60%.

But by far the lowest non-retention rate of confirmees in 1894 was in Sheffield Archdeaconry, with only 52% of parishes claiming poor retention. The next lowest non-retention rate was in the East Riding Archdeaconry (65%). Similarly, the best deanery retention rate in the whole Diocese in 1894 was the 62% in the densely populated Sheffield Deanery. [See Appendix 5, pp. 493-4] Ecclesfield Deanery in the Sheffield Archdeaconry also had a good retention rate of 57%; and the populous deaneries of Kingston-on-Hull (50% retained) and Middlesbrough (44% retained) scored quite well, too.

An indication of the stability of the Church life of Sheffield youngsters, owing to their staying in their home

Retention/non-retention of recent confirmees, 1894:

	<u>Many retained</u>	<u>Few retained</u>	<u>Owing to Service</u>
CLEVELAND	35/133* = 26%	106/133* = 79%	48/106 = 45%
E. RIDING	56/161* = 35%	102/161* = 63%	53/102 = 52%
YORK	34/110* = 31%	76/110* = 69%	35/76 = 46%
SHEFFIELD	35/73* = 48%	38/73* = 52%	18/38 = 47%
DIOCESE	160/477* = <u>34%</u>	322/477* = <u>66%</u>	154/322 = <u>48%</u>

[\* Totals are of parishes giving usable figures]

Table 31      Young confirmee retention/non-retention and links with Service, in the Archdeaconries, York Diocese, 1894  
 [See also Appendices 5 and 6]

[Source: V/R 1894]

parishes, is the fact that only 6 out of 29 Sheffield parsons complained that the hiring system affected the retention of young people after Confirmation. Similarly, in the far north of Cleveland Archdeaconry, five of the eight parishes that claimed they retained most of their confirmees were in Middlesbrough town, where there was scarcely a mention of the hiring system. In Hull, also, only two parishes linked a problem over the retention of



confirmees with the hirings. A large handful of parsons in each archdeaconry in 1894 gave more detailed figures than others about the Communicant life of their most recent confirmees. These details are revealing. [See Appx. 6 pp. 495-502] They suggest that the retention rate amongst those who stayed in their native parishes ranged from quite good to very good. But some of these parsons expressed disappointment about migration from the parish. In other words, the hiring of labour had a bad effect on growth in the Communicant life, especially of young Confirmees.

Indeed, comments abound across the diocese about the ill effects of hiring labour and migration - even though fewer than half the parishes whose retention was poor openly blamed the hiring system. Some of the York parishes were hit by young Communicants seeking work elsewhere; and most of the Hull parishes were similarly affected - though only two mentioned the hiring system. Otherwise the hiring problem mainly affected rural parishes. Thus, for example, the incumbent at Heslington wrote that all communicated from time to time; but that it was difficult to devise 'a best means' to retain young Communicants when young people left the parish for service elsewhere.<sup>95</sup> Amongst many others, the Vicar of Whitwell echoed this, adding that of the 10 candidates presented for Confirmation recently, one had died, 5 had left the parish; and of the 4 remaining, 3 were regular Communicants. But he also pointed out that in the past year, owing to the change of servants and farm labourers, between twenty and thirty "regular Communicants" had left his parish.<sup>96</sup> Such migration was not unique; and for thinly populated parishes with small congregations must have been near devastating. [See Appendices 5 and 6]

Few clergy go beyond expressing their helplessness and frustration about the harm done by the hirings. Few seemed

to have any continuing interest in their absent young Communicant hired workers, no doubt an attitude encouraged by the rigidity of the parochial system. Thus one said, for example, that whilst most young Communicants who stayed in the parish remained faithful, he could not speak at all about those who had left.<sup>97</sup> Only a tiny handful mentioned that they wrote letters of commendation to fellow clergy, or kept in touch with individual young parishioners who had been confirmed but had left the parish.<sup>98</sup>

In the same way that only one parish priest (at Sheriff Hutton) questioned the fashionable tactic of trying to retain young communicants by means of Guilds and Communicant Classes, only one parson, the incumbent at Crathorne near Stokesley, questioned the even more fundamental issue of herding youngsters into Confirmation. It is surprising that no more clergy felt moved to write about their misgivings in the Visitation Returns, for there clearly were others who were similarly troubled. The loner at Crathorne wrote:

The [retention] figures are disappointing. Not a few of us, rural priests, feel that if we strictly did our duty we should refrain from presenting  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those we do present. Experience has told us that we cannot expect at most more than  $\frac{1}{4}$ , sometimes considerably less, to CONTINUE communicants; and if Confirmation does not lead up to continuous Communion, where can we see the benefit? But the Bishops, who are the chief pastors of the diocese and we merely their substitutes, love to have it so; i.e. pro. tem. (I hope only pro. tem.) it is the fashion and, in religious as well as in worldly matters, a man 'may as well be out of the world as out of the fashion'. A priest who attempts to restore Church discipline, even in this detail, for the good of

his flock, is pretty sure to be reckoned, by those who ought to know better, as an 'injudicious failure' or 'a crotchety stickler', or more probably still as 'an utterly negligent and careless priest' if he comes with his 3 candidates instead of five-and-thirty out of a population of 1,800.<sup>99</sup>

Obviously, as this parson said, much non-retention of young Communicants was caused by "natural" wastage through a misuse of Confirmation as some sort of initiation ceremony. On the other hand, the good retention rates claimed by many clergy amongst those who stayed in their home parishes suggests that the disruption through migration of hired workers caused serious "unnatural" wastage as well. And at least as big a problem as the misuse of Confirmation and the loss of Communicants to other parishes was the problem of preparing for confirmation those who left their home parishes as hired workers without already being confirmed. These were unlikely to get a further chance of preparation classes.

However, short of bringing about a revolution in society, the clergy were helpless against the hirings system. In the unlikely event of their attempting that revolution, their chances of success were low, the economic factors being heavily weighted against them. As in the days when Sunday Schools were more fashionable, but often decimated by the migration of children as hired labour, the clergy in 1894 still bowed to this adverse feature of the society in which they ministered. And, ironically, the problem was much more severe in the rural districts of the diocese, where parish clergy were thought to have an easier task than their colleagues in urbanised areas - on the grounds that they were better able to get to know their flock.

It is obvious that Bishop Winnington-Ingram's famous remark - about the Church never having lost the labouring classes of the towns because the Church had never actually captured them - applied equally to many of the rural parishes of York Diocese in the second half of the 19th century, at least as far as the youngsters were concerned. The situation created by long tradition in many rural parishes, quite apart from the hiring system, was well described by the Vicar of Strensall who said he had tried an "annual gathering" of all confirmees he could contact, but

I do not find the country people so much influenced by this as were the young people of my former parish in Sheffield. In this parish, consisting entirely of labourers of one rank in life, their own influence upon each other is greater than mine. A word of discouragement from a companion seems to outweigh a year's instruction from myself.<sup>100</sup>

Yet, despite the difficulties facing them, appreciable numbers of clergy were trying very hard in the last decades of the 19th century, and through many means - not least through the discipline of the Communicant life - to respond to the de-Churchment process.

(vi) The growth of lay ministry

Few questions occupied the chattering Church more than the extension of lay ministry; and no subject, except lay involvement in Church government, proved so fraught with difficulties nor took so long to blossom. The reluctant steps taken by Archbishop Thomson and some other Churchmen towards acceptance of a lay preaching and liturgical ministry during the period, illustrated a difficult and ironical tension. On the one hand, the Church was seeking positive ways to reach out to the working classes, and extension of lay ministry seemed a sensible way of improving communications with them. On the other hand, there were fears that if laymen performed too well when allowed to take services or to preach in parish churches, the mystique of the ordained man could be undermined and problems created for the clergy who, so far, had monopolised these activities.

Hence, the concept of extended lay ministry, including preaching, proved very threatening for most of the period to many bishops and clergy in the northern Convocation. Archbishop Thomson's caution was crucial in delaying developments. His reservations about laymen helping to lead worship stemmed from a commonly held, almost "magical" view of ordination, together with an ambivalent attitude towards laymen. An insight to this came in some remarks he made at the second Manchester Church Congress held in 1888. Having expressed pleasure at the favourable reception from working men lining the streets as Congress members processed to the assembly hall, he said wanly:

I would have been glad if we had been hustled a bit, [or] if someone had come up and said, 'How are you old

fellow? I am glad to see you here!' I feel there is something of a barrier between us and them.<sup>101</sup>

There was indeed a barrier; and the expression "us and them" underlined it.

Still apparently unaware of the innate harm those barriers brought to the Church, and the dubious Christianity implied in speaking of "us and them", it is not surprising to find Thomson making his own contribution to the maintenance of those barriers during discussions about lay ministry. Despite his sympathy for the lower orders, and his deep concern for their spiritual welfare, he displayed a mixture of paternalistic authoritarianism, and a suspicion of any developments that might involve them in Church work above their station. It made little difference to him whether that work were to be in Church government, or in teaching, preaching or the conduct of worship - except that in government he accepted a limited need for middle class participation. Only in pastoral work was he happy to bless lay help from all classes of men and women, recognising that the best communicators with the lower classes were often working class women and men, and that wealthy women, radiating genuine human kindness, could make good home visitors in poor parishes. But his main concern was that preaching and the conduct of worship should remain, as far as possible, the exclusive responsibility of the clergy.<sup>102</sup> So he procrastinated; and, when opportunities arose, he used as an excuse for delay those legal difficulties which - if allowed to - could effectively hamper any significant extension of lay ministry in the Church of England.

Yet, well before the start of the period, the need for a recognised form of lay minister, and the possible role of

such a minister, had been explored and drafted. The declared aims of the Church of England Scripture Readers' Society, on its establishment in 1837, made this clear:

Object: to provide Readers, whose time shall be either wholly or partially engaged in going from house to house to read the Scriptures to the Poor, with plain remarks, pointing their attention to the Saviour. Every Scripture Reader employed must be a Communicant of the Church of England.<sup>103</sup>

These aims revealed awareness in the Church of the need to recruit laymen in support of the clergy in their pastoral and teaching work. The emergence of the Scripture Reader also implied acknowledgement of communication problems between some of the clergy and their poorer parishioners. There was acknowledgement, too, that the communication barriers required new forms of outreach from the Church, involving ministry to individual families through house to house contact, using men capable of "plain remarks". In practice, this usually meant men from the same lower classes as the poor, able to speak to them in terms they could understand.

But progress in developing lay ministry always suffered from the lack of any national or provincial policy. If, as in York's case, the diocesan bishop was not keen, the chances were that lay ministry in a diocese would be neglected. If he were keen - as in the case of Bishop Ellicott who licensed the first Readers to assist with the conduct of worship in 1866 in Gloucester and Bristol Diocese - the story was different. Meanwhile, needs grew, as did complaints about a shortage of both clergy and suitable lay help in the parishes, particularly in populous areas of York Diocese. The Doncaster Deanery, for

instance, in passing two resolutions as late as April, 1884, expressed a double irony experienced in many parts of the diocese:

Resolved - supply of clergy is inadequate. Resolved - Lay Helpers univerrally needed but are exceptionally difficult to obtain, and it is more difficult [even] in the present state of the law to utilise their services to the best advantage.<sup>104</sup>

Yet, by the time of the Doncaster resolutions, lay ministry and related topics had been discussed at Church Congresses for over twenty years. From 1863 onwards - when the Manchester Congress discussed "Lay Co-operation in Ministerial Work", the "Management of a Large Parish", with stress on the need to use all lay help possible, and "Parochial Mission Women"<sup>105</sup> - the Congresses regularly discussed problems related to the de-Churchment of the working classes alongside ways of extending lay ministry. Thus, for example, Congress at York in 1866 discussed "Lay Agency" and "The best Mode of attaching the People to the Church of England";<sup>106</sup> the Leeds Congress in 1872 discussed "Lay Co-operation in the work of the Church";<sup>107</sup> and the following year at Bath Congress, there were discussions on "Lay Helpers" and "The Means of bringing the influence of the Church to bear upon the Masses of the People".<sup>108</sup> And already, back in 1865, a few parsons in York Diocese, particularly in Hull and Sheffield but also in a few rural parishes, had called for increased lay help with pastoral and mission work.<sup>109</sup>

In his address to the working men's meeting at the Leicester Congress - where several relevant topics were discussed<sup>110</sup> - the Bishop of Liverpool, J.C. Ryle, spoke about the urgent need of the Church to cut barriers. "If



we cannot gain the confidence of the working men," he said, "there is no hope for the Church of England."<sup>111</sup> Ironically enough, five years earlier, in 1875, Archbishop Thomson had sent a circular to all his rural deans requesting the chapters to discuss the subject of Lay Readers. Nearly ten years elapsed before the subject arose in Convocation; but in the same week as the Archbishop's circular reached the rural deans, Archdeacon Blunt of the East Riding drew attention to the subject in his Visitation Charge. Having mentioned the need for hamlet chapels and licensed rooms in small villages with no Church and too far distant from the parish church, he spoke at greater length on the need to enrol Lay Readers. He pointed out that the clergy would need extra manpower - an extended lay ministry - if these new buildings were to serve as centres of worship. He said

there must be, amongst the godly Church-people of our town and country districts, not a few who might be trained for definite Church work. Can we provide for such no fitting training, no sphere to fill when they are competent, without entrenching on the more sacred office of the ordained ministry, or promoting an arrangement whereby a stepping stone might be too easily provided for such to enter that Ministry?... Would not this do much to bring the Church home to the middle and poorer classes?<sup>112</sup>

Archdeacon Blunt was sure that any extension of lay ministry depended on the parochial clergy. It was they, he insisted, who must seek out suitable trainees from among their confirmation candidates and regular communicants. When qualified by examination set under the Archbishop's authority, these lay ministers could be admitted to the office of Lay Reader; and Blunt was pleased that a few

fit candidates had already been found by a handful of clergy in his archdeaconry.<sup>113</sup>

But an important stumbling-block was that clergy in the 1870's were still growing in self-consciousness of their professional status at the very time that lay help was becoming an urgent necessity. Clerical professionalism seemed threatened by a hasty extension of lay ministry that could impinge upon the parochial clergy's charter role. This explains why Archdeacon Blunt seized the nettles of the lay ministry "entrenching on" the priestly office, and of lay ministry becoming a back-door entry to ordained ministry.<sup>114</sup>

However, the need was so desperate in some areas that not all clergy felt threatened. In 1875 Pocklington and Weighton Deanery Chapters resolved to resist extension of the diaconate but favoured "lay helpers". At the same time, both Chapters went further, adding that such lay helpers, given suitable additional education and training should be able to go forward for ordination to the diaconate and, subsequently, the priesthood. Meantime, Pocklington wanted lay helpers to be able to assist at Divine Service and suggested they should probably be called "subdeacons".<sup>115</sup> Weighton Chapter also, meantime, suggested the title "catechist" rather than subdeacon, and produced some very radical suggestions about the catechist's role, resolving that

it is desirable so to modify the law that Lay Readers or Catechists might, with the Bishop's licence, do almost everything in the Church as well as out of it, which can now be done by a Deacon, except assisting at the Administration of the Lord's Supper.<sup>116</sup>

The Weighton clergy drew attention to the scheme operating in Lichfield Diocese, whereby lay ministers were being encouraged to prepare for ordination by a prescribed course of study, supervised by parish clergy, tested from time to time by examinations under the diocesan bishop's authority and doing some residential study at a theological college.<sup>117</sup>

By contrast, the clergy of Hull Deanery felt that the grave shortage of curates opened the gate for using lay helpers in over-stretched parishes, but they particularly favoured using graduate ordinands, a practice already operating in Liverpool Diocese, and they got as far as listing names of possible laymen for this ministry.<sup>118</sup> This points to an interesting difference of view between the clergy in the predominantly rural parishes around Pocklington and Weighton, and the predominantly urban parishes of Hull Deanery. The two rural Chapters strongly supported the notion of lay ministry becoming a positive route by which to train for ordination, whereas the clergy in Hull, with a much more serious shortage of manpower, wanted to play safe, and advocated the use of lay helpers who would soon be ordained anyway. More fundamentally, the rural clergy were expressing a willingness to encourage men with few, if any, formal qualifications to aspire to join the ordained ministry.

However, because of the growing urgency of their needs, the Hull clergy soon advanced. In June 1876 they suggested to the Archbishop that the York Diocesan Conference - York's first - should discuss the subject of "a lay diaconate".<sup>119</sup> This apparent contradiction-in-terms implies that they were drawing towards acceptance of a ministry similar to lay readers, but possibly permanently licensed, and drawn from men who might well be non-graduates. Quite

soon afterwards, in 1880, Hull Deanery proposed the forming of a deanery Lay Helpers' Association, and set up a general committee of clergy and laymen to plan it. This was another indication of a softening of approach towards the use of lay assistance in the Hull parishes, and also of the desperate need for assistance felt by many Hull clergy.<sup>120</sup>

At last, in 1884, nearly twenty years after Bishop Ellicott licensed the first post-Reformation Readers for work in England, York Convocation debated the question of extending the lay ministry. By February 1889 the positive attitude towards lay readers in Hull Deanery had developed enormously. The Archbishop having notified all rural deans that he was not licensing any more lay readers for the time being because of unspecified abuses, the clergy of Hull Deanery requested him to clarify the rules for their employment and his conditions for licensing them, because "the clergy in Hull are valuing the services of Lay Readers."<sup>121</sup> In view of the Archbishop's reservations about lay ministry - made public in Convocation in 1884<sup>122</sup> - he was probably glad of an excuse to hold up the granting of licences. But the Hull clergy were now so convinced of the value of their lay readers that they were prepared to express their impatience with the Archbishop.

The Convocation debates in 1884 and 1885 had proved very disappointing. Members mainly considered the possibility of forming a permanent diaconate, never a very popular idea, as already indicated in the East Riding deanery resolutions in 1875. Bishop Lightfoot of Durham warned in the 1884 debate, that a permanent diaconate could be a possible "Will-o'-the-wisp" which, if pursued, would be at the expense of the more important issue of "the help of the laity".<sup>123</sup> Convocation also debated the role of licensed lay readers in worship, especially in consecrated

buildings; and - to a much smaller extent - the role of other lay workers in pastoral and evangelistic spheres.

Despite the urgency of the need and despite the need having existed for over fifty years, the subject still caused so much controversy that it took fourteen months for the Joint Committee of the Convocations to compile the recommendations on which the debate was eventually focused. Yet another year elapsed before the debate took place in York Convocation.<sup>124</sup> Further delay had also followed because of disagreement between the northern and southern province representatives on the joint committee, with the York members opposing the licensing of lay readers to assist in conduct of worship in consecrated buildings, whilst those from Canterbury approved. Archbishop Thomson strongly shared the reservations of the York committee members.<sup>125</sup>

Not surprisingly, since he was very proud of the benefits his diocese gained from a variety of lay help, it was Bishop Harvey Goodwin of Carlisle who proposed to Convocation that

the needs of the time demand that every facility and encouragement should be given to the spiritual ministrations of the lay members of the Church, subject only to such restrictions as the laws of this Church and realm impose.<sup>126</sup>

Goodwin probably hoped that mere mention of legal restraint would appease Archbishop Thomson. Goodwin's own attitude to the legalities surrounding lay ministry was the same as Bishop Selwyn's, who was causing concern to some bishops in the southern province by licensing laymen to serve in Lichfield Diocese in ways beyond the legal bounds. But

Selwyn was adamant that lay assistance was so essential that he would not revoke any licences he had granted, even if he had broken the law.<sup>127</sup> In Carlisle Diocese, Bishop Goodwin revealed, there was one large town where sixty to seventy men, young and middle-aged, had formed a society and went out in pairs to those parishes where they could be of most help. Their work was much valued, and Goodwin wished there were many more similar helpers in far flung parts of his diocese.<sup>128</sup> He also commended other attempts to communicate with the lower orders, and mentioned good reports he had received from the few of his clergy who had Church Army captains working for them. Lay zeal, if properly channelled, said Goodwin, worked very effectively, and was well worth having.<sup>129</sup>

In his speech seconding Bishop Goodwin's motion, Bishop Lightfoot stated that, rather than ordain men to a permanent diaconate, the great need was "to employ laymen as laymen." He considered their remaining laymen to be important, first, because it would greatly assist the evangelisation of the masses, as laymen could more easily communicate beyond the barriers between de-Churchmented folk and the Church; and second, because it would bind laymen "more closely to the Church by giving them something to do." He then emphasised how much better Nonconformity had harnessed the talents of its lay people, suggesting that the Church of England should learn from the Nonconformists, "who are so much wiser in this matter than ourselves."<sup>130</sup>

Lightfoot also added to Goodwin's picture of the piecemeal way in which lay ministry was advancing in northern dioceses. Lightfoot had forty lay readers working in various parishes in Durham Diocese with very good

results. But he could gainfully use many more. In fact, he regarded their increased use as essential, especially in large urban parishes where "even three clergy" could not hope to cope with a population of 10,000 or more.<sup>131</sup>

In addition to the piecemeal and possibly illegal developments in their dioceses that Bishops Goodwin and Lightfoot were revealing, they were also indicating the growing autonomy of diocesan bishops during the period. The Archbishop could not stop these developments, and could only hope that his cautionary words might slow down similar innovation. However, Bishop Goodwin's earlier mention of legal restraint seems to have strengthened Archbishop Thomson's resolve to stress the legal difficulties surrounding lay ministry, and thus to indulge in further delaying tactics. During the debate, Thomson made clear not only his own position on lay readers, but also some of the reasons why the Church of England at large had so long delayed the harnessing of lay ministry into work traditionally done by the clergy.<sup>132</sup> For example, he argued that it was simply not lawful, because of Article 23 of the Thirty-nine Articles,<sup>133</sup> for any man other than a duly ordained deacon or priest to preach. To clarify Article 23, he quoted from the Ordination Service mentioning the deacon's authority through ordination to preach, and the priest's additional authority to administer the Sacraments.<sup>134</sup> Thomson added that he would be glad to be wrong, but he thought that "the regular services" of the Church were limited to deacons and priests, "bishops of course included."<sup>135</sup>

Next, the Archbishop shared his fears about lay ministry diluting the force and authority of ordination. He stressed that any extension of permission to preach was beset not only by legal difficulties but by what amounted to

professional ones, including the possible diminution of lay regard for the ordained ministry. In his anxiety to safeguard the mystique of ordination, and the professional status of the ordained man, he put forward the rather flimsy but emotive argument that good lay ministers assisting in a parish church could lead a congregation to conclude that it did "not make much difference whether a man has an episcopal ordination or not."<sup>136</sup>

Again, said Thomson, members of a congregation could challenge the layman's authority to preach to them and ask:

What is your commission? You are only like one of us. I could give as good a sermon as you have done, and with quite as much authority, practically speaking.<sup>137</sup>

The implications of all this anxiety are clear. Archbishop Thomson believed that a lay preacher or conductor of worship, however talented or well trained, or however authoritative his episcopal licence, was automatically at a disadvantage because he lacked the protective barrier that ordination provided between himself and other lay people. True, Thomson was not so much concerned with maintaining High Church belief in ordination as a sacramental act, as with stressing the importance of an episcopal licensing ceremony during which due authority was bestowed on the deacon or priest. But, the growing number of sacramentalist clergy in the Church of England could approve the Archbishop's emphasis on the authority given to clergy at their ordination.

At the same time, Archbishop Thomson's genuine concern for the de-Churchmented poor led him to favour the expansion of the Church's outreach beyond the parish church, and even beyond the parish mission room. He wanted



more going out "amongst the people", more outdoor preaching. After all, he said, there were

places in which you cannot get the poor to come to your Church: you may say and do what you like. It is sometimes a question of clothing, sometimes a sort of shyness or delicacy which the poor show in marked degree. They think they are in danger of being treated as intruders...[and] the poor man in great towns has got the impression that the Church is not a place into which 'the likes of him' should venture to go.<sup>138</sup>

This difficulty could only be overcome if the Church went out to those who would not come to the Church. In one or two places in York Diocese, he said, there had been successful open air services; and he conceded that a layman could legally preach in the open air. But once again his caution about lay ministry came to the fore when he suggested that if a clergyman were able to do this work rather than a layman, it would be preferable. "I think the difference between him and the layman will still be recognised," he said.<sup>139</sup>

Though welcoming open air preaching - albeit, preferably by clergymen - the Archbishop hated the Salvation Army's methods, although he acknowledged that Salvationist methods often reached persons with whom the Church totally failed to communicate. Similarly, he expressed doubts about the Church Army which, although required to conform to Church practice and principles, used much the same methods as the Salvation Army.<sup>140</sup>

Thomson said that his caution stemmed from his wish to sustain the authority of bishops and other clergy against "the injury of future movements." Then, in an attempt to

dampen any possible enthusiasm in Convocation for the extension of lay ministry, he asked:

Are there very many men whom you would wish to preach in the public services and assist the clergyman in that way?....Or is there only one here and there? I am afraid it is only in very few cases that you would be able to select proper men to do that.<sup>141</sup>

Equally dampening, Thomson then recommended that clergy restrict the use of laymen to those additional duties that were accruing in the parishes by the mid-1880's, and usually undertaken by the clergy themselves - "ten times more than when some of us were ordained" - such as dealing with charitable societies, conducting Bible-classes, and keeping financial accounts.<sup>142</sup> Even then, Thomson was reluctant to trust too much to laymen, and his final words on the subject were:

I think the duty of teaching will always, by the common voice of the parish, be thrown in largest measure on the clergyman. Our hope lies mainly in the providing of more curates, and giving them more lay help.<sup>143</sup>

The previous day, (5/4/1884) the Archbishop had appointed a joint committee on the diaconate. Its subsequent Report did not share the Archbishop's feelings about lay ministry. The Committee considered that extension of the diaconate was desirable. Equally, it said, so was an increase in lay readers, because the present population growth demanded a continuous and substantial increase of "ministerial agency". This need, said the Report, could not be met by increasing the numbers of assistant curates for two practical reasons: insufficient funds were available to pay them, and any additional curates would have to wait

too long for preferment. Increased incumbencies were not the answer either, suggested the Report. Because of insufficient endowments, most potentially new parishes would be too small to support a parson, consequently "swelling injuriously the number of underpaid clergy." But, in view of the legal restraints on lay readers' conduct of worship, the Committee strongly recommended the expansion of the diaconate by encouraging the ordination of professional men - barristers, medical men, schoolmasters, and gentlemen with private means. These could serve parishes without stipend, and be a valuable supplement to the work of the stipendiary parochial clergy.<sup>144</sup>

Understandably, however, fears re-emerged in Convocation about an extended, permanent diaconate becoming a back entrance to the priesthood. These fears, together with reservations about an extended lay ministry and with insufficient financial resources to ordain more clergy, left the Church to lumber on, with each bishop deciding how far to extend lay ministry in his own diocese. Barriers continued to exist between the clergy and the lower classes and increasingly, also, between the clergy and some sections of the middle classes - except where they ministered to a population small enough for them to know everyone. Even then, success in breaking barriers was not guaranteed; and sometimes it seemed that nothing would persuade non-Churchgoers to attend worship.

However, communication with the lower classes would never depend solely on the provision of more curates, more deacons, or more lay readers. And, during the years of discussion and controversy about extension of the liturgical and preaching ministry, there had been much movement towards better communication with the lower classes through other means, especially amongst the poor

Lay ministers and workers, York Diocese 1891-2 & 1894-5:

	<u>'91-'92</u>	<u>'94-5</u>
Lay Readers (licensed)	32	69
" " (unlicensed)	72	122
[No. of parochial clergy	708	867]
Sun. Sch. Teachers	2,027(M) 4,391(F)	2,621(M) 5,794(F)
District Visitors	218(M) 2,693(F)	250(M) 3,692(F)
Other lay helpers	1,222(M) 370(F)	1,608(M) 545(F)
Mission women	22	28
Choir Members	8,287(M) 2,300(F)	11,419(M) 3,167(F)
Bell-ringers	854(M & F)	1,050(M & F)
Sidesmen	1,657	2,692
Members of Par. Councils	840	1,415
Sisters	4	4
Nurses	29	48
Deaconesses	Nil	Nil

Table 32 Lay pastoral, preaching and teaching help, York Diocese, 1891-2 and 1894-5

[Source: Bp. Dio. 11/3 & 4, '91-2; '94-5]

and disadvantaged. Despite the time devoted to debating the issue, the proportion of lay readers to other lay Church workers remained very small, even though the number of those licensed in York Diocese more than doubled in the last four years of the period. Thus, as for many years, the mainstay of the "lay ministry" [See Table 32 above] continued to include far more Sunday School teachers and far more district visitors for example - and most of them women - than lay readers. Many of these lay folk worked in town slums, where some clergy would have been unwelcome, or even in danger, had they ventured there. In addition, there was a continuing and generally faithful "ministry" offered by Churchwardens, sidesmen, parish clerks and sextons; Church council members; organists - both women and men; and choirs led by choirmistresses and masters.

Many poor families, who were permanently de-Churchmented, and probably indifferent to any preaching or liturgical ministry being carved out for lay readers at the end of the period, welcomed this caring work done by the Church's lay servants. And this work was expanding appreciably at the end of the period. [See comparative figures, Table 32 above] As Alfred Gatty had said thirty years earlier: his parishioners in Ecclesfield might have ignored the Church at worship, but they always welcomed the pastoral ministry of the Church and its ministers.<sup>145</sup> In this age of developing lay pastoral ministry, those who were most in need no doubt still welcomed the Church's ministrations, whether from lay folk or clergy.

No doubt, too, many of those most in need were welcoming the increased attention being given by Churchmen, both ordained and lay, not simply to ameliorative work but also to the need for the country to become more basically just. This emphasis on social justice warrants some examination.

## CHAPTER 6

### CHURCHMEN AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: A POSTSCRIPT - AND A FUTURE ROLE

The concept of a quest for "social justice" covers those aims and actions deemed necessary to give all members of society, irrespective of background or class, an all-round fairness of treatment under the law in matters of employment, housing and health, and in the ability to care for their families. The extent to which this fairness requires a socialist system, possibly involving nationalisation of land, services and industries, or the extent to which it is attainable in a basically capitalist and therefore highly competitive society, is a very debatable issue.

The entry of Churchmen, including bishops, into the fight for this social justice in the last two decades of the 19th century, had vitally important ramifications for the Church and its authority. The adoption of an agitator role was a postscript: an end, for the time being, of the defensive role of the Church, when it had had to cope constantly with adverse authority problems. And it was also pointing to a new direction the Church would take, and a role Churchmen would increasingly adopt, in the 20th century - fostered especially by Archbishop William Temple - eventually finding its rationale in liberation theology.

However, the debate will continue about the motivation behind the involvement of Churchmen in the fight for social justice towards the end of the 19th century. Was it a matter of spiritual re-awakening, for example,

possibly linked with the incarnational theology exemplified in Lux Mundi; was it altruistic humanism; was it part of a search for the true heart of the Christian Gospel, for "Christian Socialism", often lost sight of previously; or was it mainly a gimmick aimed at winning support from the de-Churchmented working classes, in the hope that they would attach themselves to the worshipping church? Almost certainly each of these factors - or a mixture of them - motivated different Churchmen, and probably at different stages of their involvement.

What is totally beyond doubt is that this involvement with social justice, whatever its motivation, put these Churchmen into a new role à propos authority, compared with events during the earlier years of the period. For the first time in a very long time, Churchmen were not on the defensive, either in dealing with internal strife or in responding to erosion of the Church's authority. For the first time during the period Churchmen were in an attacking role. And similarly beyond doubt is the fact that, whereas a handful of radical and sometimes socialist Churchmen had criticised some of the basic tenets by which English society was governed in earlier decades, now, in the 1880's and 1890's, the numbers of Churchmen involved increased quite considerably.

The new, positive and even commanding position that was emerging was well exemplified in 1882 by Prebendary H. Jones of St. Paul's Cathedral. The Church and moral issues were inseparable, he claimed, and

the relation of the Church to politics, and its influence upon political morality, is of the closest, widest and most deeply radical source.

He went on to regret the tendency of bishops not to take part in debates on general political questions in the House of Lords. Their inaction encouraged the erroneous belief that Church and State were separated, he said. Prebendary Jones also felt that Convocation should be more concerned with political and moral issues, and that parish clergy were wrong to abstain from politics and wrong to confine themselves merely to involvement in "the crises of the vestry." He insisted that it was the Church's duty to promote political morality and constantly to affirm that there was such a thing.<sup>1</sup>

The confidence of these assertions is striking. Jones had no doubt about the potential ability of Churchmen to be more active in political issues, and no doubt that the Church had a role to play as the State's moral conscience and advisor. In other words, he personified a new self-respect felt by Churchmen; and this was part of a significant step towards the institutional Church itself regaining wider respect from English society at large.

In 1895, Bishop Westcott of Durham reiterated this self-respect, and demonstrated the Church's now strong confidence in its moral duty to Society. He said:

Christians have the duty of bringing new problems of conduct and duty into the divine light, and finding their solutions under the teaching of the Spirit. Each new generation must settle for itself whether the present order is according to the mind of Christ, and apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to social and economic affairs.

In the same address, Westcott went on to criticise the fact that these principles had not been applied to the new



large-scale manufacturing industries, in order to produce harmony between Capital and Labour and to eliminate the abuses of competition or the craze for cheapness.<sup>2</sup>

As Prebendary Jones showed in 1882 and Bishop Westcott in 1895, it could be strongly argued that the quest for social justice was an integral part of Christian principle, and that if the Church ignored this principle - or resisted or hindered the quest - it was losing sight of a major reason for its existence. In such circumstances, the Church would deserve to lose influence with ordinary people, and hence to lose its authority over them. And there is evidence that this is exactly what happened on occasions, and that working class people, especially men, not only in England but also in other parts of Europe, had sometimes shunned church attendance in the 19th century for such reasons.<sup>3</sup>

Almost throughout the entire history of the Church the poor had expected their parochial clergy to speak on their behalf in times of want or oppression. Thus, the identification of the English clergy with the middle and upper classes in the 18th and early 19th centuries had not helped them to retain respect, even though - or even because - some of them held authoritative positions in the magistracy, for instance. But the English clergy enjoyed rare freedoms, too, including the freedom to transcend class divisions; and it was therefore easier for a socially radical minority amongst them to start agitating on behalf of the poor than it would have been for their counterparts elsewhere in Europe. And by the last quarter of the 19th century some English clergy were deliberately identifying themselves with their working class parishioners.<sup>4</sup> But old habits of thinking in terms of superiority and inferiority - even if clergy were no

longer superior - did not suddenly die; and even in the early 1880's there was far from universal conviction that it was right for clergy to identify with lower classes.

Furthermore, irrespective of class divisions, as E.R. Norman points out, for most of the 19th century, and despite much reform work involving Churchmen, "the pursuit of eternity remained the first and absorbing preoccupation of organised religion."<sup>5</sup> Previous parts of this study have illustrated the prevalence of that priority, especially in the emphases it engendered on the necessity of holding "orthodox" beliefs, and on attending corporate worship. But by the second half of the 19th century, whilst the tradition of parochial pastoral care for the sick, the poor and the needy was taken for granted by Anglican clergy, most of whom exercised this part of their ministry very faithfully, some Churchmen were already feeling that the ameliorative approach to the needs of the under-privileged, as involved in most pastoral ministry, was simply not enough. Such Churchmen believed that more positive and fundamental initiatives towards reforming society itself - and/or its laws - were also necessary in order to help the oppressed.

The prime example of this was Richard Oastler. Shortly before he died he pleaded for the restoration of the "National Conscience", deplored the fact that the concept of a fair day's wages for a fair day's work no longer held good, and that both Houses of Parliament had "laughed out moral duty and Christian obligation" leaving the laws of supply and demand to solve everything. Oastler insisted that Church and State must work together, as a Christian duty, to reform the situation for the working classes, and especially exploited women and children.<sup>6</sup>

But, despite much social reform legislation in the 1870's, there was little sign of the Church of England playing its part as a partner with the State in pressing for such. Thus, Bishop James Kelly, the Archdeacon of Macclesfield, told York Convocation in 1881 that

it has been said that, if they wanted this country to have the opinion of just men upon questions of great morality, they were to look for it rather to those who were separated unhappily from the Church in religion than to the members of the Church now established in England. If there were any foundation for such a taunt as this, it is one which [Convocation] should by every means in its power remove.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, it could also be reasonably argued that, in a modern democratic and collectivist society, the quest for social justice had to be a matter for government guided by the electorate; and the Church as an institution had no direct part to play in the process. Recognising this, John Saul Howson, Dean of Chester, said when proposing a motion against the continuing opium trade from India to China, in 1881 - the first ever debate in York Convocation concerned with a social justice issue - that Convocation, as "a body of Churchmen meeting officially" was duty-bound to examine the matter, because it concerned the moral and social well-being of mankind. But, he conceded, the question of deciding how to cure this evil "is not a matter for the Convocation of York but for the Government."<sup>8</sup> In such circumstances, Churchmen who urged reforms linked with social justice could be accused of interfering in spheres better left to politicians and civil servants. They could also be accused - as could politicians, of course - of pursuing social justice causes in the hope of "winning votes" which meant, in the case of

Churchmen, winning support for the Church and, in particular, wooing worshippers into congregations. Once again, there are some indications that the Churches,<sup>9</sup> in preaching a practical rather than a more theological Christianity, and in pointing out the need for "better homes on earth rather than mansions in heaven" in the later years of the period, lost respect and laid themselves open to charges of hypocrisy.<sup>10</sup>

It was difficult for the Church to strike the correct balance in this matter. But despite some understandable suspicion of the motivation of Churchmen who expressed concern about social evils, there was a genuine, growing realisation among Churchmen, in the 1880's and 1890's, that it really was their Christian duty to press for better conditions for the working classes. There was also an assertive authority amongst these Churchmen, and a remarkable confidence that their voices received attention in appropriate quarters, both in local and national government, and that they were exerting an influence on public opinion far outweighing the proportion of the population that attended Church. In short, because some Churchmen were prepared to get involved in issues related to social reform and justice, and were projecting such matters as fundamental to the Christian Gospel, the Church was automatically earning increased respect and authority in society. As Canon Warr, proctor for Liverpool, said to Convocation in 1884, during the first debate on a domestic social justice issue:

the common sense of the clergy of Liverpool is waking up to the fact that they have more to do than merely look after the spiritual needs of the people.<sup>11</sup>

It is also significant that in 1884 Archbishop Thomson himself introduced and proposed the first motion on a domestic social matter to be debated in York Convocation - The Church and the homes of the poor - pointing out that it was important for clergy to take an active part in matters affecting the homes and health of the people, such questions having recently "assumed very great prominence." Thomson urged that

the lives of the people are the most precious treasure and trust of the Church, except the custody of their souls. No clergyman, I think, who wishes to do his duty can look with indifference on anything which affects the homes and health of the people.<sup>12</sup>

But it must be noted that Thomson did not go so far as to place the physical well-being of people above the need to care for their souls, nor even equate the two.

In his study of Churchmen and their varying degrees of concern about the need for social reform, Kitson Clark defined three overlapping phases in the 19th century. The first phase, before the Reform Act of 1832, saw traditional, hierarchical attitudes persisting, when politicians and Churchmen were ready to accept the people's right to good government, but not to self-government. Then came the phase of enormous and complex social, economic and demographic development between the 1832 Act and the moves towards further parliamentary reform starting in 1865. Lastly came the phase which saw the extension of the mandatory powers of government under both Disraeli and Gladstone, demonstrating the emergence of the modern collectivist State.<sup>13</sup>

The way was also beginning to open for possible ententes between different Christian bodies and other organisations, as well as local and national Government. Clark writes somewhat vaguely yet convincingly of "a rather mysterious movement", sometimes confused with religious revival but affecting many people outside mainstream religious activity, and bringing with it "an ever-increasing sense of moral responsibility and a growing sensitivity to the challenge of human suffering."<sup>14</sup>

None of these processes was straightforward, nor did they progress in a gradual traceable curve. Nor can a conclusive line be drawn between action for social justice that was largely Churchmen-inspired and led, or action that was inspired and led by Socialists or by ("secular") politicians. Even the two leading political reformers during the third and crucial phase - the Tory Disraeli and Liberal Gladstone - were both Anglicans, but of very different kinds. Also it is misleading to talk about "Evangelicals and reform", as though all Christians who were Evangelicals espoused the causes of social reform. Some, like Shaftesbury and Oastler, did so. But many remained convinced for most of the 19th century that salvation meant only ensuring the entry of the soul to heaven after death, rather than the integration of the entire personality and the creation of a better quality of life here and now.<sup>15</sup>

Again, not all Christian Socialists were High Churchmen; and it is even less true that all High Churchmen veered towards Socialism. For most of the period, most Churchmen were deeply suspicious of Socialism. But what is more important is that, by the end of the period Socialists who were seeking social justice, and Churchmen of varying

Churchmanship (as well as the members of different Nonconformist denominations, who were also seeking social justice) shared common ground on which to stand. The fact that Churchmen and Socialists were fighting the same causes for the same under-privileged working-classes - and for not very different reasons - partly helps to explain why the Church gained respect and wielded significant influence on these issues. Meantime, the loose partnership between socially conscious Churchmen on the one hand, and Socialists who were not Churchmen on the other, had received from the Lambeth Conference what might be regarded as the nearest equivalent to an official Anglican blessing. In 1888 the Lambeth Report on Socialism reflected a massive change in outlook when it said:

the Clergy may enter freely into friendly relations with Socialists, attending when possible their club meetings, and trying to understand their aims and methods. At the same time it will contribute no little to draw together the various classes of society if the Clergy endeavour, in sermons and lectures, to set forth the true principles of Society, showing how property is a trust to be administered for the good of humanity, and how much of what is good and true in Socialism is to be found in the precepts of Christ.<sup>16</sup>

The following year (1889) the Christian Social Union was founded, with B.F. Westcott, Bishop of Durham, as its President. Its aims showed how considerably attitudes and atmosphere in the Church had changed since mid-century. The Union sought

1. To claim for the Christian Law the ultimate authority to rule social practice;
2. Common study of how to apply the moral truths and

principles of Christianity to the economic difficulties of the present time;

3. To present Christ in practical life as living Master and King.

Interest in social questions and concern about them was spreading around the chattering Church at this time. Thus, in 1889 the Cardiff Church Congress discussed the Church's duty with regard to the well-being of the working classes;<sup>17</sup> in 1890 the Hull Church Congress discussed "Modern Theories and Aims of Socialism and Examination of them in the Light of Christianity", when Bishop Westcott was the opening speaker, supported by Walsham How the Bishop of Wakefield;<sup>18</sup> and in 1892 the Wakefield Diocesan Conference discussed "The Duty of the Church with regard to schemes for the Assistance of the Poor and the Bettering of the Condition of the Working Classes."<sup>19</sup> In 1891 York Diocesan Conference discussed "The Church's Duty to Farm Servants";<sup>20</sup> and in 1893 "Christian Socialism".<sup>21</sup>

In 1893, too, Bishop Westcott published his contribution to incarnational theology, The Incarnation and the Common Life. The influence of incarnational theology on these late 19th century concerns for social justice is unmistakable. The aims of the agitators implied a revived authority for the Church of England as the Established Church of the nation. But it was an authority projected in spiritual, moral and theological terms, and by no means political in the sense of being power-seeking. The fusion of the spiritual, moral and theological elements was seen in practice a little while earlier when Westcott settled a Durham miners' strike in 1892 - it was said, through his skill and through the affection in which the miners held him. Westcott saw this



action as "true bishop's work."<sup>22</sup> Here were the Incarnation and "common life" interweaving.

The Church of England had come a long way since the days when Christian Socialists caused widespread alarm in Church circles in the 1850's. It had also come a long way since Dissent, Nothingarianism and erosion of the Establishment were seen as its major enemies. For in addition to Churchmen and "secular" Socialists being rather unlikely allies in the quest for social justice, so too were some Churchmen and some Nonconformists. Thus, for instance, the Rev. Thomas Nicholson, formerly renowned amongst Congregationalists as an Evangelical preacher whose "orthodoxy" was unquestioned, began to expound a progressive social Gospel. Speaking to the Yorkshire Congregational Union at Huddersfield in 1893, he said there should be "a Democratic Church for a Democratic Age," and regretted

the Church itself has hardly ever instituted social reform [being] too timid, too blind, too selfish to apply her Christian principles. [Thus] the great social reforms of the last half century have been the work of the politicians and not of Churchmen.

The result was democracy, said Nicholson, but it was not a Christian democracy. Therefore Christians must work to make a Christian democracy, in which

there will be no throne prepared for the cruel law of supply and demand, [but recognition] that a living wage and the law of Christ are one...[where] the sacredness of human life and...the interests of humanity [are] above the interests of property.<sup>23</sup>

Also in 1893, at a united meeting of Nonconformists in Bradford, Percy Bunting, Editor of the Contemporary Review speaking on "The Social Mission of Contemporary Christianity", reminded the meeting that the Church's main purpose was to establish God's Kingdom on earth, and that the prime objective in this task should be to unite Christians and Churches into sharing with the State the promotion of legislation against poverty, degradation and vice; infusing industrial relations with Christian ideals of brotherhood and equality; and "urging upon the rich the duties of plain living, high thinking, loving work and wise stewardship."<sup>24</sup>

However, a major problem for the Church of England, compared with other Churches - and particularly the Roman Catholic Church - was its inability, on account of its increasingly non-authoritarian structures and its comprehensiveness, to produce authoritative and distinctively Anglican statements on political, moral and social issues.<sup>25</sup> By contrast, in 1891 Pope Leo XIII could begin the authoritative (if not binding) Encyclical Letter Rerum Novarum with an uncompromising revelation of the plight of working men enslaved by the rich, and the sinful actions of employers, saying

By degrees it has come to pass that working-men have been surrendered, isolated and helpless, to the hard-heartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition....To this must be added that the hiring of labour and the conduct of trade are concentrated in the hands of comparatively few; so that a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses...a yoke little better than that of slavery itself.<sup>26</sup>

The Encyclical could then continue with its arresting analysis of the international condition of the working classes, its Workers' Charter and, alongside suggested reforms, its equal condemnation of exploitation of the poor by the rich, or membership of "Dangerous Associations" against the rich on the part of the poor, and of Socialist insistence on the need to abolish private property. For all its faults in trying to reconcile the irreconcilable, Rerum Novarum must have brought hope to thousands of workers in many countries.

On the other hand, it is highly significant that, despite the different opinions that prevailed amongst Anglicans during debates on social matters in the bodies of the chattering Church, and although Anglican expressions of concern could not be as authoritative as those of the Roman Church, they nevertheless contained the power to persuade which, when it comes to influencing local or national government, is all-important. The complex development of this persuasive power in the last quarter of the 19th century had doubtless stemmed from the insistence of thinkers such as Coleridge and Southey, fifty years earlier, on the need for the National Church to concern itself with social and industrial matters; and had then grown through two phases of Christian Socialism, picking up momentum and acceptability, not least through the influence of philosopher T.H. Green, who argued that the traditional distinctions made between the natural and supernatural orders were false, and that there was one, single order of reality - "nature, man and God being essentially one."<sup>27</sup> Such concepts added weight to late 19th century political philosophy, as well as suggesting a theological justification for aiming at a moral overhaul of society. They proffered a form of realised eschatology, in the here and now of an imperfect society, whereas the

notion of unrealised eschatology in life after death was becoming a less important concern - and a less respected concept - than hitherto. From 1888 onwards the deliberations of the chattering Church showed that politics, economics, industry and commerce, and social issues, were seen to be embraced by religion, and were therefore matters for the Church's concern.<sup>28</sup>

Archdeacon Blunt of the East Riding was in the vanguard of this movement to encourage religious belief to spill out into everyday life and to govern it. Thus, for example, as early as 1876 he had criticised the growing practice of wealthy folk moving away from the towns where they had made their fortunes. They were too often deserting those whom they should support: "the families of their labourers and artisans in narrow streets and crowded alleys," he said. These folk were as much their dependents as were workers' families living in villages.<sup>29</sup> Then the archdeacon had attacked the Statute Hirings and made a remarkable and fundamental plea for change. He asserted that few people would defend them in principle and no one would want to introduce them to areas "where they are at present happily unknown." He believed they were wholly out of character with the present day, "belonging rather to the feudalism and vassalage of the past." Blunt dared to be optimistic about change, saying that

many reforms that have seemed far more impossible have been effected by the power not only of the wisdom of this world, but also of the great golden rule of Christendom.<sup>30</sup>

Ten years later, by which time agricultural workers had received the parliamentary franchise on similar terms to the town workers, there had been some changes in the

running of the hirings, but no significant change in the law. In his 'Charge' in 1885, Archdeacon Blunt reported that the last two years had seen "improvements in the evils brought by the system," and he was refusing to despair.<sup>31</sup>

Blunt had always pleaded for the Church to be true to herself by being "comprehensive" in order to serve the nation more effectively. He believed that the National Church should take the lead in fundamental reform, however unpopular some of these reforms might be to the moneyed classes, when he said,

We are clergy of the National Church. We claim to help, guide and teach every class. Our Church is not the Church of the upper classes, the middle classes, the lower classes, but of all. Still, everywhere, in all ages, the vast majority must belong to the poorer classes. Let us be, as the Divine Master was, their best friends, taking a real interest in everything affecting their welfare, temporal and spiritual. Let us be foremost in improving the sanitary conditions of their homes, in promoting the education of their children, in elevating their social conditions, in raising their tastes; fully sympathising in their honest amusements and recreations, and striving in all ways to be their truest and wisest friends...not in patronising or flattering or pauperising them, but in the more enlightened and truly Christian way of helping them to help themselves, by keeping before us and before them, their highest social, moral and spiritual welfare.<sup>32</sup>

The order of those three - social first, spiritual third - was decidedly radical. And perhaps it only needed a small

handful of men like Archdeacon Blunt to cause that "rather mysterious movement" that Kitson Clark saw pervading many folk with a greater sense of their moral responsibility towards those in society who suffered. Certainly a "mysterious" new confidence was already breaking into the Church in the early 1880's even at Ruri-decanal level. In 1882 the Hull clergy welcomed to their Chapter meeting Dr. Airey, from the Local Government Board, who was to investigate the sanitary conditions of the borough - the Chapter having already sent him several suggestions for sanitary improvements.<sup>33</sup>

Eighteen months later, the Hull Chapter considered Airey's Report and felt that it did not go far enough in its recommendations. The clergy thought that demolition of most of the poor dwellings would be the only adequate remedy, and suggested that this could and should be accomplished by a partnership between private philanthropy and public effort. With respect to the private and philanthropic efforts, the Chapter felt that local employers "should be called to their responsibility to assist in providing healthy dwelling-houses for those in their employ." As for public effort, they rightly believed that suitable powers already existed for public action through the Artisans' Dwellings Acts.<sup>34</sup>

This reform activity in Hull involved Archbishop Thomson, and led directly to his introducing to York Convocation the first debate to be held on domestic social reform.<sup>35</sup> A brief account of the connection gives an insight to the way the Church was rapidly increasing its authority in this sphere over local government in the 1880's. As Chairman of Hull's non-statutory Sanitary Association, formed by clergy and doctors, Thomson had had a request from the Mayor of Hull to get the Association to

inspect and condemn properties in certain parts of the town. This, the Mayor insisted, would give the Sanitary Authority of the Local Council "the weight of their influence and assistance - and so make it more ready to act; in fact, make it ashamed not to act."<sup>36</sup> Here was a telling indication of the authoritative influence exercised in such matters by an association of clergy and doctors who had the Archbishop of York as their chairman.

Shortly afterwards the Archbishop put to Convocation the motion

that it is important that the clergy should take an active part in questions affecting the homes and health of the people

recommending that associations such as the one he chaired in Hull be formed - if they did not already exist - by clergy, other ministers and doctors in all the large and important towns of the northern province. In seconding the Archbishop, Canon Warr of Liverpool pointed out that there was already a very active sanitary association there, formed by laymen. Again - a recognition of their influence and the respect in which they were held locally - Liverpool clergy and ministers were automatically sent the Reports of the local authority Health Committee.

During the ensuing debate, Canon Norman Straton, proctor for Craven, said that clergy should raise social issues in rural deanery chapters, in order to put pressure on local sanitary authorities and make them enforce relevant Acts that were only permissive.<sup>37</sup> Other speakers agreed, stressing that rural deaneries could exercise more influence and pressure than individual clergy.<sup>38</sup>

No doubt partly as a result of pressure from chattering Church and other "non-statutory" bodies all over the country, the Housing of Working Classes Act was eventually passed in 1890, defining wider powers for local authority sanitary officers. But in 1892 the subject of insanitary dwellings and overcrowding arose again in York Convocation. Canon W. Champneys, a Manchester incumbent and proctor for Blackburn Archdeaconry, proposed that

the dangers to health and morality caused by insanitary houses and overcrowding, call for some definite action by the Church for their remedy and removal.

Champneys' motion also asked for the appointment of a committee of Convocation to investigate the problems involved. Canon Champneys illustrates the growing spirit, not only of clergy concern about social problems and justice, but also of confidence about the worthwhile nature of their involvement. He was convinced that the Church was wielding significant authority upon society in general and the Legislature in particular. His motion needed no justification, he claimed, because Convocation, as part of the National Church, had the right and the duty to discuss

whatever affected the common life of the nation, and especially those conditions of the national life that hinder the Church's work.<sup>39</sup>

He acknowledged that the remedies would require Parliamentary legislation, and legislation was not Convocation's function; but there was still much they could do. He insisted that



the Church is the greatest religious body in the nation; and it possesses a power and wields an ever increasing influence on the people, as it shows itself more and more desirous of serving their best interests.

Hence, he argued, Convocation could use its influence on this vital question of working class conditions, state the case and suggest remedies, and inform "the public mind" and stir "the public conscience" to exert pressure, in order to remedy some of the gravest evils of the day.<sup>40</sup>

In seconding Champneys' motion Canon G.R. Feilden, proctor for Chester Chapter, reiterated the point that there had to be new legislation on these issues, and that part of this legislation must be directed at changing "permissive laws" into "compulsory laws". Even then, he insisted, public opinion would have to back the new legislation, otherwise it would remain inoperative. He added that the Church must not only continue to show interest, but also to educate public opinion in support of the reform movement.<sup>41</sup> This was a further indication of the confidence Churchmen were feeling about their quite recently acquired authority within the secular world, even to the extent of influencing public opinion into accepting its share of moral responsibility for social reform.

In such discussions on social justice in the chattering Church there is no hint that Churchmen were demanding justice in the hope that the lower orders would be suitably impressed and come trooping back to church on Sundays. The motivation seems to go much deeper than that (though clergy were unlikely to complain if better church attendance were a by-product). There appears to have been a complex mixture of increased awareness of the day-to-day

relevance of the Incarnation and of self-respect amongst Churchmen, giving them an increased confidence to speak out. This in turn led to increasing respect for the Church amongst officialdom. Thus, for instance, as a Chief Constable suggested in his response to a York Convocation Committee inquiry into betting and gambling in 1889,<sup>42</sup> all Christians needed to be aware of

their responsibilities in regard to these evils, and the need of earnest and sustained efforts if they are to be overcome.<sup>43</sup>

The most convincing explanation of this late century respect for the Church's authority and influence in social matters lies in the acceptance of the genuineness of motive among those who sought social justice. It was a worthwhile concept in its own right, at a purely human level. It was also possible to see it as a basic Christian concept. Thus, society and Church were in harmony. And amongst the factors which contributed to the broadening of outlook of many Churchmen, and the consequent strengthening of their authority during the last two decades of the period, two in particular require final brief mention. One is the important contribution made by Christian Socialism. The other is that made by incarnational theology, which had led to the appearance of the book Lux Mundi in 1889, with its liberal-Catholic restatements of doctrine and theology appropriate to the last years of the century. A testimony to T.H. Green's influence on Charles Gore, the editor, the book stresses the significance of the Incarnation and its centrality to Christianity, linking this with Green's philosophy of the "single order" in the Universe. The contributors to Lux Mundi insisted that religion and life had to be concerned with more than "spiritual" or "sacred" concepts. The one

man is mind and body as well as spirit. All three make the man. All three have needs to meet.

Bishop Westcott of Durham succinctly touched upon these matters in a sermon delivered at the opening of York Convocation in 1893, four years after the publication of Lux Mundi, and the same year in which his Incarnation and the Common Life appeared. He said that men

are divided from one another by barriers which belong to the very framework of our constitution....But in the Word become flesh, all...finds its place...and the presence of all humanity in Him becomes for all men a pledge of brotherhood....Our Faith covers all life and the whole of man....We need to make the way clear for Christ's entry to bring the fulness of our humanity. We need to allow the Spirit to work amongst us all to establish the unity whereby we are all one man in Christ.<sup>44</sup>

Westcott's words indicate his belief in the need to rid the land of all injustices, including those reinforced by the law. His words also provide a fitting summary of what the best forms of outreach to the lower orders involved, and what philosophy underpinned the quest made by genuinely motivated Churchmen for social justice in those last years of the period. At its best, outreach put the Church into the role of a servant, ministering to the needs of the least privileged and the most oppressed in society, and seeking nothing in return - except the knowledge that people had benefited from a worthwhile action, and had thereby acquired a little more power to help themselves.

An equally striking indication of the profound changes in attitudes and emphases that had developed among Churchmen during the final years of the period was the message Archbishop Maclagan himself gave to York Diocesan Conference in that same year (1893). He pointed out "the paramount duties of Christians in the furtherance of Christian Socialism."<sup>45</sup> Such duties, if proposed by an English archbishop twenty years earlier, would have been almost unthinkable, and certainly impossible to take seriously.

Archdeacon Robert Lefevre Blunt, now also Suffragan Bishop of Hull, and a reform campaigner since the 1870's, was still alive to hear Westcott's sermon to Convocation in York Minster and Maclagan's address to Conference in 1893. He doubtless rejoiced at the increasing acceptance of this servant role by the Church which he had helped to guide through those difficult earlier years when it was besieged by authority problems, and which he had helped to grow into reasonable comprehensiveness. This Church increasingly deserved the new respect in which it was held as its leaders spoke with confidence and authority about moral, social, economic and political affairs.

## CONCLUSION

This study has shown that the years 1857-94 were of great significance to the history of the Church of England, and of profound importance in determining its future development. Those years eventually saw the truce made between militant, institutionalised orthodoxy and the exercise of private judgment - with recognition, as Archdeacon Churton had put it as early as 1838, that "there is no escape from this intrusive private judgment." Those same years also saw much growth in the application of pragmatism and common sense, both to internal authority problems and to the even more serious challenges to authority that came from outside the Church; and the onset of a general and non-specific type of authority, based on consensus-seeking in the chattering Church. Thereby the comprehensive nature of the Church was re-created.

The changes with which the Church of England coped during the period, were proportionately as vast and as bewildering as the changes with which the whole of society was seeking to cope. The results were often as untidy and uneven, often as difficult to analyse with certainty, and as dangerous to generalise about. Not surprisingly, Churchmen made many mistakes, especially in their early attempts to behave as though the Church still possessed a strength that belonged to a mythical past, or in clinging to an orthodoxy that was often ill-founded, or concerning themselves too much about the Church as an institution and becoming introverted, when the major challenges to its authority came from an overworked, poorly paid and de-Churchmented majority. This mass of humanity often welcomed the Church's pastoral ministrations, for the mass was more inclined to religionless Christianity than to militant forms of Secularism, and was therefore more

inclined towards the Church than against it. Eventually, and with some success, some Churchmen began to look outwards and to consider the fundamental social needs of these under-privileged folk. Indeed, the increased respect the Church won because these men were prepared to agitate for social justice is an important feature of the later part of the period, and received attention in this thesis.

Despite the mistakes and failures, quite astounding advantages came to the Church as a result of its responses to the challenges presented to its authority. True, it did not succeed in eradicating all of the challenges. It circumvented some of them or, as shown, arrived at workable compromises. Most importantly, Churchmen realised that they could never fully remove the effects of the de-Churchment process, nor even hope to stop its continuation. Thus they also realised - in varying degrees - that in learning to accept the new society in which it existed, the Church of England had to find new attitudes, new reasons to continue to man the parishes, and new roles that gave meaning to its existence, not least where a tiny nucleus of worshippers and workers, apparently marginalised from the rest of a de-Churchmented population, was ready to serve the de-Churchmented.

To a large degree, as this study has demonstrated, the Church found those new attitudes, new purposes, and new roles. Most so-called orthodox traditionalists lost their militant institutionalism, having learnt to discuss with, and to live and work and even to worship alongside, men of broader, more critical, and usually more moderate views. Low Churchmen and Evangelicals learnt to accept comprehensiveness alongside ritualists. Anglo-Catholic scholars came to write about re-interpreting doctrine in a critical, liberal manner. Churchmen of all parties (and

none) learned to accept the permanent presence in society of Dissent and Nothingarianism. In addition, by the end of the period most clergymen had much less fear of the bogey of Disestablishment. At least, the majority were not sufficiently threatened by it to risk destabilising their parishes by forming Church Defence Committees, despite the wish for such Committees expressed by both archbishops.

In addition to the pragmatic responses adopted in face of authority problems, Churchmen devised, as we have seen, numerous more positive ways of trying to reach out to the de-Churchmented people in society: through evening classes, institutes and libraries; through parochial missions and parish magazines; through sacramentalism and the advocacy of disciplined communicant life. True, these ventures had mixed success, if success means raising church attendance. And throughout the period the annual hirings system continued to have a disastrous influence on much of the Church's outreach, especially to children and young people, upon large numbers of whom the clergy failed to keep hold.

Responses to authority problems, adaptation to change, and adoption of new roles did not usually happen by accident. Increasingly throughout the period the chattering Church played an important part in helping Churchmen to respond, adapt and adopt as necessary. The chattering Church enabled a muted and largely inert Church to become more lively, more competitive, more caring, and more comprehensive, as members met to exchange ideas on how to further the Church's work. This study has also shown the largely charitable nature of the exchanges that took place in the bodies of the chattering Church; and that charitable atmosphere played its own vital part in the development of pragmatism and common sense. Above all, the chattering Church encouraged a spirit of compromise that made it

possible to re-introduce the comprehensiveness that was, in fact, more traditionally the basis of the Church of England's authority and standing than the party divisions, the bigotry, or the narrow orthodoxy of the early years of the period.

In responding to challenges to its authority, the Church might not have had many direct successes; but it derived positive advantages in the process of adaptation. By the mid-1890's the Church of England, whilst accepting that it was no longer the Church of the nation and that it only differed from other denominations by its retention of a small token of legal establishment, was more aware of its role as the National Church. It was helped in this by its increased comprehensiveness; by its inclusion of the laity in its discussions in the chattering Church - and eventually by their inclusion in its decision-making; and by its new stress on the nation's need for social justice.

Ironically, the Church gained respect through its resignation and tolerance when losing most of its established privileges. It became more professionally led by its clergy. Worshippers were probably more devout. Churchmen cared as much as ever before about justice for the poor. And much of this achievement came through the vision and work of moderate northern Churchmen: Churton, Goodwin, Hornby, Howson and others, who have never had their praises sung. By revealing their ideas and achievements, this study should bring a little more balance to our knowledge of this period, when many Churchmen laboured, usually faithfully and increasingly wisely, to face the Church's authority problems and to shape new attitudes, new machinery, and new styles of authority based on consensus. Thus they equipped the Church to play its role as the National Church during the 20th century.



## APPENDIX 1: BISHOPS & CLERGY OF THE CHATTERING CHURCH

### The Archbishops of York:

1848-60 MUSGRAVE, Thomas (from Hereford); died aged 72.

1860-62 LONGLEY, Charles Thomas (from Durham); trans. Canterbury, died 1868 aged 74.

1863-90 THOMSON, William (from Gloucester & Bristol); died aged 71

1891 MAGEE, William Connor (from Peterborough); died aged 69.

From 1891: MACLAGAN, William Dalrymple

### Other Bishops in Northern Province:

BICKERSTETH, Robert, Bishop of Ripon 1857-84.

BLUNT, Richard Frederick Lefevre, First Suffragan Bishop of Hull from 1891. (Fellow King's Coll. Lond., (1st cl. Th.A. & M.A. Camb. 1857); Curacies Chelsea & Cheltenham; V of Scarborough from 1864; Archdn. of E. Riding 1873-91; Resid'y. Canon York 1882).

BOYD CARPENTER, William, Bishop of Ripon from 1884.

CROSTHWAITE, Robert Jarratt, First Suffragan Bishop of Beverley, York Dio. from 1889. (Fellow Trinity Camb., 8th Wrangler, 1860; Curacies in York Dio. incl. Bishopthorpe 1866-68 & Dom. Chaplain to Abp. of York 1866-9; V of Waghon 1869-73, Brayton 1874-83, York St. Lawrence 1883-5; R.D. Selby 1883-5, R.D. & Archdn. of York from 1885).

FRASER, James, Bishop of Manchester 1870-1885. (Scholar Lincoln Oxf., (1st cl. Lit. Hum. 1839; Fellow Oriel). R of Cholderton 1847-60; Inspector of Schools Oxf. Dio. 1860-70).

GOODWIN, Harvey, Bishop of Carlisle 1869-92. (Fellow Gonville & Gaius Camb.; critical scholar, several publications. Staunch moderate & advocate of lay ministry in York Convoc).

HOW, W. Walsham first Bishop of Wakefield from 1884

LIGHTFOOT, Joseph Barber, Bishop of Durham 1879-89. (Scholar & Fellow Trinity Camb.; 1861 Hulsean Professor of Divinity; an expert on Biblical criticism he worked 1870-80 as one of revisers of New Testament).

JACOBSON, William, Bishop of Chester 1865-84.

MOORHOUSE, James, Bishop of Manchester from 1886; (Bishop of Melbourne 1876-86).

RYLE, John Charles, First Bishop of Liverpool from 1880. (Exhibitioner & Fellow Christ Church, Oxf., 1st cl. Lit. Hum., 1837; Curacies in south; V of Stradbroke 1861-80).

STUBBS, William, Bishop of Chester from 1884, (formerly Bp. of Oxf).

THOMSON, William, 86th Archbishop of York 1863-90. (Queen's Oxf., 3rd cl. Lit. Hum., 1840, D.D. 1856. Fellow - finally Provost - Queen's 1855-62; R of All Souls Marylebone, 1855-61; Bp. of Gloucester & Bristol, 1861-63).

WESTCOTT, Brooke Foss, Bishop of Durham from 1890. (Scholar Trinity Camb., taught at Harrow; residy. canon Peterborough 1869; Regius Professor of Divinity Camb. 1870; critical works on St. John's Gospel, Epistles of John, Epistle to Hebrews; influenced by F.D. Maurice, as shown e.g. in Westcott's The Incarnation & Common Life, 1893).

WILBERFORCE, Ernest Roland, First Bishop of Newcastle from 1882.

[COLENSO, John, Bishop of Natal 1853. (Fellow St John's Camb., 2nd Wrangler 1836, D.D. 1853; taught at Harrow; R of Forncett St. Mary, Norfolk)].

#### The Deans:

CLOSE, Francis, Dean of Carlisle from 1856. (Scholar St. John's Camb.; B.A. 1820; D.D. 1857; R of Cheltenham 1826-56; many published sermons, works on liturgy).

COWIE, Benjamin Morgan, Dean of Manchester 1872-83; (St. John's Camb., Senior Wrangler 1839; Professor of Geometry

1854; D.D. 1880. Became Dean of Exeter 1883).

DUNCOMBE, Augustus, Dean of York 1858-80. (Sixth son of Lord Feversham, owner of large estates in Helmsley region).

PUREY-CUST, Arthur Percival, Dean of York from 1880. (Son of the Hon. August Cust, grandson of Lord Brownlow, and married to Lady Emma Bligh, sister of 5th Earl of Darnley. B.N.C. Oxf., Fellow of All Souls 1850-54; V of St. Mary Reading & R.D. 1862-75; Archdn. of Buckingham 1875; Prolocutor Lower House York Convoc. 1883-86).

#### The Archdeacons:

BLAKENEY, John, Vicar & First Archdeacon of Sheffield from 1884-95.

BLUNT, Robert Frederick Lefevre, Archdeacon of the East Riding: see under Bishops above.

CROSTHWAITE, Robert Jarratt, Archdeacon of York: see under Bishops above.

CHURTON, Edward, R Crayke from 1838; Archdeacon of Cleveland, 1846-74. (Fellow of Oriel - contemporary of Newman, Pusey, etc.; Spanish scholar, Church historian; leading moderate in Convoc. 1846-74. Died 1874).

DARBY, John Lionel, R of Chester St. Bridget-w.-St. Martin 1875; Archdeacon of Chester from 1877. (T.C.D. B.A. 1st cl. 1854; Curacies Chester Dio. from 1857; Inspector of Church [Teacher] Training Colleges; Hon. Canon of Chester 1873).

HAMILTON, George, Archdeacon of Lindisfarne from 1865. (T.C.D. B.A. 1845; Curate at Sunderland; R.D. Norham E. 1858-65; V of Berwick-on-Tweed, Hon. Canon Durham 1863; many 'Charges' published).

HEY, William, Archdeacon of Cleveland 1874-83.

JOHNSON Edward Ralph, Wadham Oxf., Hon. D.D. 1876. Archdeacon of Chester 1871-76. Consecrated Bishop of Calcutta 1876).

JONES, William Basil, Archdeacon of York 1867-74. (Scholar Trinity Oxf. 1840; D.D. 1874; Fellow Queen's Oxf. 1848-

51. V of Haxby [York Dioc.] 1863; V of Bishopthorpe 1865-74, & R.D. 1869-74 - & R.D. City of York 1873-4. Consecrated Bishop of St. David's 1874).

PALMES, James, Archdeacon of East Riding from 1892. B.A. Durham 1846; Member York Convoc. at intervals from 1853; R of Escrick).

WARE, Henry, Archdn. of Westmorland from 1874. (Fellow Trinity Camb. Wrangler & 1st cl. Classical Tripos 1853. V of Kirkby Lonsdale and R.D. 1862; Canon of Carlisle 1879).

#### Other Clergy:

BELL COX, James, V of St. Margaret, Toxteth, Liverpool [Chester then Liverpool Dio.] 1876. (Christ's Camb., B.A. 1859. Curate in Manchester & Middx. from 1863).

BODY, George, R of Kirby Misperton, 1870-84; Proctor for Cleveland 1880-85. (St. John's Camb. B.A. 1862, Hon. D.D. Durham 1885; Curacies in Midlands. Became Canon-Missioner of Durham 1885, continuing to hold parochial missions in north of York Diocese).

CATOR, Charles, R of Stokesley & R.D. from 1860's.

GATTY, Alfred, V & R.D. of Ecclesfield 1839-1901, Sub-Dean York Minster from 1862. (Exeter Coll. Oxf. B.A. 1836; D.D. 1860).

GRAY, Charles Norris, Vicar of Helmsley 1870 and Proctor in York Convoc. for Helmsley till after end of of period. (Univ. Coll. Oxf., B.A. 1864; Curacy in Midlands. Father was Bishop Gray of Capetown involved in Colenso Case).

GREY, Hon. Francis Richard. R of Morpeth from 1842. (Trinity Camb., M.A. 1834); Hon. Canon Durham 1863; Proctor for Lindisfarne from 1850's. Son of Lord Grey of Reform Bill fame).

HORNBY, Edward James Geoffrey, R of Bury Lancs. 1850 & Proctor for Blackburn. (R.D. Bury & Hon. Canon Manchester 1855. Merton Oxf., B.A. 2nd cl. Lit. Hum. 1839).

HUDSON, Thomas Percy, R of East Gilling; Proctor for

Cleveland 1874; (Fellow Trinity Camb.; B.A. 6th Wrangler 1855. Prebendary York 1879. Author books on mathematics).

PORTEUS, Bielby, V of Edenhall-w.-Longwathly, 1840-75 & Proctor for Westmorland; (Christ's Camb., B.A. 1833. Hon. Canon Carlisle 1871).

RANDOLPH, Edward John, R of Dunnington from 1845. Proctor in Convoc. for York Chapter 1874, re-elected 1880, 1886. (Student of Christ Church Oxf., B.A. 1836; Prebend of York 1848. Hon. Sec. to York Diocesan Board of Education; R.D. Bulmer; Chancellor of York Dio.).

SIMMONS, Thomas Frederick, Proctor for E. Riding from 1868 & re-elected at intervals. (Postmaster of Merton, B.A., 1st cl.); R. of Dalton-Holme 1853; Prebend of York 1869.

TEMPLE, Henry, Vicar St. John the Evangelist, Leeds 1867-83; Proctor in York Convoc. for Craven Archdy.; R of Oswaldkirk 1883 & Proctor for Cleveland. (B.N.C. Oxf. B.A. 1849; served Midlands, including Headship of Coventry School & Worcester G.S. Diocesan Inspector for Schools Worcester. Writer on the Catholic Faith, Anglican Beliefs).

TREVOR, George, R of York All Saints Pavement 1847-68; of Burton St. Peter 1868-71; of Beeford-w.-Lisset from 1871. Proctor for York Chapter 1847, and for York Archdeaconry 1852. Synodical Sec. to York Convoc. 1861-64. (Hertford Coll. Oxf., 4th cl. Lit Hum. 1836. Chaplain to H.E.I.C. Madras 1836-46. Prebendary of York 1847. Writer on Eucharist and Church Government).

## APPENDIX 2 THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE CHATTERING CHURCH

The "chattering Church" extended beyond the large, formal bodies described in Chapter 1 into a wide range of Church-based or affiliated organisations, each with its Organising Committee(s). Many of these had a National Committee with numerous Regional, Diocesan or even Deanery Committees. Others were based in the York Diocese, and doubtless similar organisations existed in all other dioceses. All of these involved Chairmen, Secretaries, and Treasurers as well as other Members. Almost all involved lay people, and some were entirely lay-led. These Committees gave opportunity for discussion and lay initiative within the Church and, despite what might seem, with hindsight, their possibly erroneous assumptions and emphases, they expressed the Church's outreach, and involved a great deal of goodwill and effort in helping people in the Church's name.

York Diocesan Calendar in 1894 (pp. 258ff) lists ninety of these societies. The following illustrate their variety:

1. E., (& N., & W. ) Riding Charitable Society (for relief of needs of clergy, their widows, orphans,, etc.)
2. Twelve other charities are listed each supporting clergy and their families. National include Corporation of Sons of Clergy; Diocesan include York Diocesan Clergy Seaside Home, Scarborough
3. C of E Institute (to promote Sunday School work)
4. York Diocesan Education Society
5. Missions to Seamen Society
6. The Navy Mission Society
7. C.P.A.S. & A.C.S. (for curate provision) both with district secretaries
8. S.P.G. & C.M.S. (for overseas mission support) each with organising secretaries in each archdeaconry and with

local secretaries in each deanery

9. Eight other overseas mission organisations are listed, most having diocesan committees at least
10. Book Hawking Association (to circulate wholesome literature throughout Yorkshire by means of Hawkers)
11. C of E White Cross League (to promote purity among men)
12. Lord's Day Observance Society
13. Central Association for Stopping Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (3 travelling regional secretaries)
14. Church Penitentiary Association
15. C of E Society for Promoting Kindness to Animals
16. Choral Unions, including York Diocesan Choral Union
17. Church Institutes at York, Beverley, Doncaster, Hull, Northallerton, North Ormesby, Sheffield
18. Sheffield Church Leisure Association
19. Hull Seamen's & General Orphan Asylum & Schools
20. English Church Union: branches in York, Barnsley, Doncaster, Howden, Hull, Middlesbrough, Redcar, Rotherham, Ryedale, Scarborough, Selby, Sheffield, Whitby, Worsborough, Cleveland. (Most local chairmen were laymen)
21. Church Association: branches in York, Drypool, Hull, Tadcaster, Treeton, Whitby. (Officers equally lay/clergy)
22. C of E Temperance Society: (diocese divided into 4 areas with local branches in York & North 12 Deaneries; Hull & District 9; Sheffield 5; Middlesbrough & Dist. 4)
23. Christian Evidence Society - Committee for York chaired by Bishop of Hull with Bishop of Beverley a member
24. Church Defence Institution: associations in each of the 4 archdeaconries and 22 deanery branches
25. Free & Open Church Association: local secretaries in Redcar, Sheffield, York. (Aimed to open all churches to all classes, and to keep churches open through day for private prayer)

APPENDIX 3. DISSENT A PROBLEM/NOT A PROBLEM IN  
PARISHES IN YORK DIOCESE WITH LOWEST CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN 1865

Part (i) The parishes where a.p. was below 10% and mentioning Dissent as a problem in 1865 (with pop. and a.p. noted):-

CLEVELAND

Bulmer Deanery: Sand Hutton (395, 8%);  
Helmsley Deanery: Hawnsby (746, 7%); Oswaldkirk (524, 8%);  
Guisborough Deanery: Lofthouse-w.-Lythe (1,103, 5%);  
Malton Deanery: Middleton-w.-Cropton/Lockton (1,674, 9%);  
Stokesley Deanery: Marske-w.-Saltburn (1,470, 9%);  
Middlesbrough, St. Hilda (10,235, 5%); Middlesbrough, St. John  
(12,301, 3%);  
Thirsk Deanery: Nether Silton (1,092, 9%).

Total: 9 parishes (out of 15 with a.p. below 10%) = 60%

EAST RIDING

Bridlington Deanery: Flamborough (1,287, 8%); Kilham (1,252, 6%);  
Buckrose Deanery: Norton (2,983, 3%);  
Harthill Deanery: Fimber (827, 4%); Hutton Cranswick (1,415, 4%); Middleton-on-the-Wolds (701, 9%);  
Hedon Deanery: Sunk Island (376, 5%);  
Hornsea Deanery: Atwick (319, 9%); Frodingham (837, 6%);  
Howden Deanery: Eastrington (1,906, 2%); Elloughton (688, 9%);  
Howden-w.-Barmby Marsh (3,963, 8%);  
Pocklington Deanery: Bishop Wilton (919, 9%)

Total: 13 parishes (out of 20 with a.p. below 10%) = 65%



## YORK/WEST RIDING

Doncaster Deanery: Thorne (3,381, 9%);

Ecclesfield Deanery: (Bradfield (1,750, 9%); Chapeltown, 4,063, 9%); Thorpe Hesley (1,966, 4%); Wadsley (1,221, 5%);

Pontefract Deanery: Normanton (1,922, 4%);

Rotherham Deanery: Rotherham (15,035, 5.3%);

Selby Deanery: Airmyn (580, 7%); Goole (5,613, 7%);  
Rawcliffe (1,630, 9%);

Sheffield Deanery: NOTE: Of the 16 (out of 21) parishes for which a.p.'s could be calculated only 5 were above a.p. 10%, the highest of which was an a.p. of 17%. Only 3 of the remaining 11 parishes mention Dissent as a problem. These were: Darnall (2,403, 3.7%); Sh'd St. John (9,014, 1.3%); Sh'd St. Luke, Hollis Croft (6,229, 2.4%);

Tadcaster Deanery: Tadcaster (3,126, 8%);

City of York Deanery: St. Dennis-w.-St. George (3,681, 5%).

Total: 15 parishes (out of 31 with a.p. below 10%) = 48.9%

Part (ii) Parishes with a.p. below 10% but not mentioning Dissent as a problem:

## CLEVELAND

Bulmer Deanery: Fulford (2,478, 5%);

Guisborough Deanery: Glaisdale (1,074, 7%);

Stokesley Deanery: Kirkleavington (543, 7%); Ormesby (3,464, 5%); Thornaby (3,126, 6%); Wilton (927, 8%)

Total: 6 parishes (out of 15 with a.p. below 10%) = 40%

## EAST RIDING

Beverley Deanery: Hull, Sculcoates St. Mary (17,685, 1.4%);  
North Cave-w.-Cliffe (128, 9%);

Buckrose Deanery: Wharram Percy (484, 9%);

Harthill Deanery: Beswick (200, 7%);

Hedon Deanery: Patrington (1,724, 6%); Preston-in-Holderness  
(1,061, 7%);

Scarborough Deanery: Folkton (559, 7%)

Total: 7 parishes (out of 20 with a.p. below 10%) = 35%

## YORK/WEST RIDING

Doncaster Deanery: Conisbrough (1,655, 9%); Darfield (5,078,  
6%); Hatfield-w.-Stainforth (2,564, 6%); Mexborough (2,665, 7%)

Pontefract Deanery: Wragby (1,815, 5%);

Rotherham Deanery: Brampton Bierlow (1,733, 6%);

Sheffield Deanery: Brightside (10,101, 1.5%); Pitsmoor  
(8,921, 8%); Sh'd St. George, (10,538, 9%); Sh'd St. Jude,  
Moorfields, (6,254, 8%); Sh'd St. Mary (16,224 (9%); Sh'd St.  
Philip (18,461, 5.4%); Sh'd Parish Church (33,425, 3%);

Tadcaster Deanery: Monk Fryston (1,093, 9%);

City of York Deanery: Holy Trinity Goodramgate-w.-St. Maurice &  
St John Delpike (3,432, 8%); St. Lawrence-w.-St. Nicholas  
(2,456, 6%).

Total: 16 parishes (out of 31 with a.p. below 10%) = 51.1%

APPENDIX 4: RETENTION/NON-RETENTION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL  
 CHILDREN IN DEANERIES OF YORK DIOCESE, 1865 - AND LINKS  
 WITH GOING OUT TO SERVICE/EMPLOYMENT

CLEVELAND (No. of parishes in brackets)

	<u>Pop.</u>		<u>Ret'd</u>	<u>Not Ret'd</u>	<u>Blamed Serv.</u>
Bulmer	(27) 16,514		15%	59%	31%
Easingwold	(25) 16,888		4%	76%	47%
Guisborough	(16) 29,764		13%	69%	36%
Helmsley	(23) 13,644		17%	57%	13%
Malton	(15) 13,475		7%	71%	10%
Northall'n	(17) 7,656		6%	65%	45%
Stokesley	(27) 45,836		15%	70%	37%
Thirsk	(19) 12,778		0%	74%	64%
(Total pop. 156,555)		<u>Av:</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>68%</u>	<u>35%</u>

E.RIDING

	<u>Pop.</u>		<u>Ret'd</u>	<u>Not Ret'd</u>	<u>Blamed Serv.</u>
Beverley	(32) 98,635		0%	77%	41%
Bridlington	(14) 14,240		0%	86%	50%
Buckrose	(21) 11,607		0%	76%	56%
Harthill	(17) 12,936		0%	82%	43%
Hedon	(20) 13,318		10%	70%	29%
Hornsea	(19) 12,110		16%	68%	23%
Howden	(13) 16,478		15%	77%	40%
Pocklington	(17) 9,437		18%	71%	75%
Scarborough	(23) 31,638		14%	52%	42%
Weighton	(14) 8,875		7%	50%	86%
(Total pop. 229,274)		<u>Av:</u>	<u>8%</u>	<u>71%</u>	<u>46%</u>

YORK/W. RIDING

	<u>Pop.</u>		<u>Ret'd</u>	<u>Not Ret'd</u>	<u>Blamed Serv.</u>
Ainsty	(14) 5,904		0%	86%	67%
Doncaster	(42) 50,677		17%	79%	30%
Ecclesfield	(11) 23,701		45%	27%	33%
Pontefract	(29) 39,469		24%	72%	38%
Rotherham	(34) 60,236		26%	62%	43%
Selby	(14) 22,619		14%	71%	50%
Sheffield	(21) 174,375		62%	38%	0%
Tadcaster	(20) 18,818		18%	70%	14%
York City	(24) 43,675		25%	21%	0%

(Total pop. 439,474)      Av:    26%            58%            31%

DIOCESAN    AV.    15%            66%            37%

APPENDIX 5 RETENTION/NON-RETENTION OF RECENT CONFIRMEES,  
 AND LINKS WITH LEAVING PARISH FOR SERVICE/EMPLOYMENT, IN  
 THE ARCHDEACONRIES/DEANERIES OF YORK DIOCESE, 1894

CLEVELAND:	<u>Resp.</u>	<u>*Few retd.</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>*Many retd.</u>
Bulmer	21/24	15/21 = 71%	7/15 = 47%	6/21 = 29%
Easingwold	18/23	17/18 = 94%	7/17 = 41%	1/18 = 6%
Helmsley	17/22	11/17 = 65%	4/11 = 36%	4/17 = 24%
Malton	12/14	8/12 = 67%	3/8 = 38%	4/12 = 33%
Mid'brough	18/20	10/18 = 56%	4/10 = 40%	8/18 = 44%
Northal'ton	15/15	13/15 = 87%	7/13 = 54%	2/15 = 13%
Stokesley	14/16	10/14 = 71%	3/10 = 30%	4/14 = 29%
Thirsk	14/16	11/14 = 79%	8/11 = 73%	3/14 = 21%
Whitby	12/17	11/12 = 92%	1/11 = 9%	1/12 = 8%
<u>Averages:</u>		<u>75%</u>	<u>42%</u>	<u>23%</u>

EAST RIDING:	<u>Resp.</u>	<u>*Few retd.</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>*Many retd.</u>
Beverley	6/9	2/6 = 33%	2/2 = 100%	4/6 = 67%
Bridlington	14/16	9/14 = 65%	5/9 = 56%	5/14 = 36%
Buckrose	9/12	5/9 = 56%	3/5 = 60%	4/9 = 44%
Harthill	13/13	8/13 = 62%	3/8 = 38%	5/13 = 39%
Hedon	16/19	11/16 = 69%	8/11 = 73%	5/16 = 31%
Hornsea	12/17	8/12 = 67%	4/8 = 50%	5/12 = 33%
Howden	10/12	7/10 = 70%	4/7 = 57%	3/10 = 30%
Hull	20/26	10/20 = 50%	6/10 = 60%	10/20 = 50%
Pocklington	16/18	13/16 = 81%	6/13 = 46%	3/16 = 19%
Scarborough	14/16	9/14 = 64%	5/9 = 56%	5/14 = 36%
Settrington	12/15	9/12 = 75%	3/9 = 33%	3/12 = 25%
Weighton	16/16	11/16 = 69%	4/11 = 36%	5/16 = 31%
<u>Averages:</u>		<u>65%</u>	<u>52%</u>	<u>36%</u>

YORK/W.R:	<u>Resp.</u>	<u>*Few retd.</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>*Many retd.</u>
Ainsty	10/11	8/10 = 80%	4/8 = 50%	2/10 = 20%
B'p'thorpe	7/8	7/7 = 100%	6/7 = 86%	0/7 = 0%
Doncaster	18/27	14/18 = 78%	6/14 = 43%	4/18 = 22%
Pontefract	26/32	17/26 = 65%	4/17 = 23%	9/26 = 35%
Selby	18/21	10/18 = 56%	6/10 = 60%	8/18 = 44%
Snaitth	12/14	8/12 = 67%	4/8 = 50%	4/12 = 33%
York City	19/23	12/19 = 63%	5/12 = 41%	7/19 = 37%
<u>Averages:</u>		<u>69%</u>	<u>46%</u>	<u>31</u>

SHEFFIELD:	<u>Resp.</u>	<u>*Few retd.</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>*Many retd.</u>
Ecclesfield	7/11	3/7 = 43%	1/3 = 33%	4/7 = 57%
Sheffield	29/37	11/29 = 38%	6/11 = 55%	18/29 = 62%
Rotherham	20/29	14/20 = 70%	7/14 = 50%	6/20 = 30%
Wath	17/22	10/17 = 59%	4/10 = 40%	7/17 = 41%
<u>Averages:</u>		<u>52%</u>	<u>47%</u>	<u>48%</u>

DIOCESAN AVERAGES: 65% 47% 35%

[\* Clergy figures of half or smaller are counted as "few retained", and above half as "many retained"]

[Source: V/R 1894]

APPENDIX 6: RETENTION OF RECENT CONFIRMEES:

THE PAROCHIAL SCENE, 1894.

[The list includes all parishes that gave meaningful figures. The wastage of confirmees speaks for itself.]

CLEVELAND - Bulmer:

Escrick, girls 11 out of 17; boys 9 out of 20.

Holtby, 4 candidates, 2 left parish, 1 regular.

Stockton-on-Forest, 33 (in last 3 years). 19 continue.

Wheldrake in last 5 years, girls 1 in 3 ; boys 1 in 10.

Whitwell, 10 candidates, 5 left parish, 4 remain 3 of them regular.

Easingwold

Strensall, in recent years: 68 candidates, 19 only communciated once, 33 left parish, 16 on Communicant list.

Helmsley

Appleton-le-St.,-w.-Amotherby, 19 candidates last year; 11 communicate at intervals; of other eight, 1 girl "fallen into sin", 1 girl become Wesleyan, 1 youth "something of a durnkard", other 5 "very slack."

E. Gilling, 80-90 Communicants on roll; last Easter 62, Christmas 51 Communicants.

Helmsley, of Confirmees in last 2 Confirmations ('93 & '94): Of those remaining in parish or of whom Vicar Gray knows whereabouts, 37 remain Communicants, 12 have "fallen back", that is 1 in every 3.

Nunnington, 5 out of 14 last confirmed - "better proportion than previous years."

Oswaldkirk, Nearly all at Easter. Perhaps half - a few times in year

Slingsby, in recent years: 77 confirmed, only 15 now in village, 11 of them Communicants (& few of them young men).

Middlesbrough

St. John, 11 confirmed last year made 1st Communion. 2/3 have continued, "but not regular."

All Saints: 148 candidates, 86 MOST satisfactory, 23 made only 1 Communion, 5 have left town, 4 have joined other Church, 30 Communicants irregular.

St. Peter, of candidates in last 6 years about 2/3 are Communicants, but some of them rarely communicate.

Ormesby, about half - but only 2 or 3 are REGULAR.

#### Stokesley

Hinderwell, No record of past Confirmation candidates. "There are only 48 Communicants out of pop. of 2,199."

#### Malton

Wykeham, in last 6 years: 36 candidates, 17 are Communicants, 11 have left parish, 6 have fallen away.

#### Northallerton

Brompton, "61.1% have left parish; of remainder 42.9% are Communicants."

W. Rounton, 5 candidates (May 1894), all have continued.

#### Thirsk

Carlton Minniott, in 1893 7 confirmed, 4 have left parish, 2 are Communicants.

Kilburn, in 1893, 42 confirmed, 30 have communicated at least once, only about 6 continue regularly.

Kirby Knowle, 8/10.

Bagby, 4/10.

Skipton-on-Swale, "Not more than 1. The parents discourage their remaining after the 1st time."

Thirsk, in 1894, 21 females confirmed, 11 continue as Communicants; 11 males confirmed, 8 continue.

#### E. RIDING - Beverley

Beverley Minster-w.-SS. John & Martin: "Hard to tell, but number of Communicants at Easter has doubled of late years."

Bishop Burton, 9 out of 10 leave this parish.

Lockington, 13 confirmed, 10 continue & have communicated at least twice in 6 months, 3 have left parish.



Walkington, in last 3 years, 13 confirmed, 5 remain Communicants, 6 have left parish, 2 have not yet communicated.

#### Bridlington

Barmston, "The candidates recently confirmed have left parish."

Burton Agnes, 7 candidates, 3 are regular Communicants. Sewerby-w.-Marton & Grindale & Egham, in last 17 years: Male 78, female 100 candidates. Still in parish as Communicants, 29; having fallen away from Communion tho' not from church attendance, 17; died 2. Left parish 92.

#### Buckrose

Butterwick, "All are Communicants who can be, having been confirmed - fathers, mothers, governesses, servants. Numbers at celebrations vary from 10 to 18."

#### Harthill

Garton-on-the-Wolds, in last 2 years: 23 candidates, 13 still in parish, 9 of the 13 continue Communicants.

Hutton Cranswick, About 7/10.

N. Dalton, 2/3 of last candidates, "but not 1/10 of those confirmed at the other 2 Confirmations since I came."

Walton-w.-Beswick, recent years, 14 candidates, 4 have left parish, others come regularly, tho' some less than monthly.

#### Hedon

Hedon, in '93-4, 22 confirmed; some have left parish; 11 communicate.

#### Hornsea

Beeford-w.-Lissett & Dunnington: in incumbency 40% have left parish, half of whom were regular Communicants; of the 60% remaining in parish, 66% continue to be Communicants tho'  $\frac{3}{4}$  only occasionally.

Brandesburton, in 1894, 10 candidates; 7 still regular monthly; 1 was till she left parish. "Far better proportion than ever before."

Catwick, in 2 previous Confirmations before incumbent came:

20 candidates. Only 1 has been to Communion since incumbent came. "Rest still in parish say they have never attended. Great sorrow. Have no hold as yet. Parish said to be for its size the most Nonconformist in Holderness." Goxhill, 9 is total of Communicants in parish, [pop. 84]. Skirlaugh: Confirmation register in 1890: 7 Communicants.  
 " " " in 1892: 3 "  
 " " " in 1893: 0 "

Howden

Brantingham-w.-Ellerker, Few parents seem to have ever been Communicants.

Hessle: in last 2 years, Female 27 Communicants out of 36 candidates; male 8 Communicants out of 17 candidates.

Wressel: "We lose them all; they go out to service."

Kingston-upon-Hull

Hull St. James, about 48 out of 64.

Sculcoates St. Philip, in '92, 46 confirmed, 31 continue;

" '93, 83 " , 58 " ;

" '94, 93 " , 65 " .

"But many candidates leave district."

Sculcoates St. Silas: 100%.

" All Saints, half of recent candidates - maybe more.

" Christ Church, "large proportion."

" St. Mary, c. half. Hull St. Barnabas, almost all.

" St. Matthew, "no more than 1/3."

" St. Thomas, nearly all, if not quite all, the girls; about half the boys.

Drypool St. Andrew, c. 90%

" St. Peter, c. half; but domestic servants soon leave home after Confirmation.

Skidby, of 9 confirmed, 3 left parish, 1 declined to communicate; 1 became Wesleyan; 4 are Communicants.

Pocklington

Catton, 2 out of 10.

Scarborough

Hackness, not more than 5%: scattered parish, tired workers.

Huston, 4/7.

Scarborough St. Mary, 96% of last year's Confirmees.

" St. James, c. three-quarters.

" St. Martin, "large proportion, but many leave parish after Confirmation - if possible handed over to others' pastoral care."

Scarborough St. Thomas, c. 9/10 boys; 7/10 girls. Many girls go to service in other parts of town.

Willerby, of 27 confirmed in '92 & '94, 10 have left parish, 12 have been Communicants with varying regularity, 5 attend fairly regularly "& I hope to win them."

Settrington

Norton, "All."

Weighton

Goodmanham, 3 out of 11 of last candidates.

Harswell, 2 were confirmed and are fairly regular.

YORK

Ainsty

Askham Bryan, 21 confirmed in '93. 1 has left parish, 6 attend regularly.

Askham Richard, 9/12 of recently confirmed, "but our losses through removal are always heavy."

Moor Monkton, 1/3 of those confirmed leave parish; half who remain are Communicants.

Bishopthorpe

Acaster Malbis, in 3 years: 12 confirmed, 4 left parish, 6 are Communicants.

Bishopthorpe, in 3 years: 62 confirmed, 27 left parish, 30 are Communicants.

Bolton Percy, in 7 years, 90 confirmed. Of these, the

Rector knows 54, 38 of whom are Communicants, but only 19 "with satisfactory regularity."

Dringhouses, c. half. Of other half, most have left parish.

#### Doncaster

Brodworth, of 21 recent candidates, 6 are Communicants.

Conisborough, "all last confirmed have continued."

Rossington, About 5 out of 20 have become regulars.

Stainforth, 21 confirmed (May '94) 3 left parish, 18 remain, "of whom 15 are fairly regular, and several MOST REGULAR."

Stainton: "Hardly any."

#### Pontefract

Aberford, 87 confirmed, 43 have left parish, 44 remain, 34 are Communicants.

Ferry Fryston, in last 6 years, 46 confirmed, 19 continue to communicate, 9 left parish; 16 definitely known to be non-Communicants; 2 still under instruction for Communion.

Hemsworth, c. 8 out of 36.

Kellington-w.-Whitley Bridge. Last Confirmation, 36, 12 have been more than once; too early to say how lasting.

Monk Bretton, 1/3 of those in '92;  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those in '94.

Skelbrooke, All but 1 or 2 of 14 candidates in last 2 years.

Wragby, 9 out of 16.

#### Selby

Clifford, 3 candidates in '93; 2 have left parish. The 1 boy left is regular every fortnight, and "stands up alone, being the only boy doing so."

Micklefield, 98 Communicants last Easter; only 20 eight years ago.

Saxton, Only 2 or 3. "Cannot be induced to continue regularly."

Selby St. James, 25 candidates in '93 & '94; 18 have continued as Communicants.

Snaitth

Hensall-w.-Heck, 90%.

Snaitth, 106 confirmed in last 8 years; 54 have removed from parish; 20 of remainder are regular.

Swinefleet: "All."

City of York

Heworth Holy Trinity, since '85, 98 confirmed, of whom 43 have left parish (including 1 died); 55 still resident, of whom 13 have never communicated, & 42 continue to communicate occasionally, majority of them at Easter.

SHEFFIELD - Ecclesfield

Bradfield, 5/6 of those who remain in parish.

Tankersley, in last 7 years: 174 confirmed; 37 left parish/died; of remaining 137, 92 are Communicants (tho' several only once a year) = 66%).

Sheffield

Attercliffe, "fair proportion continue for 2-3 years; "after, we lose a number of them."

St. Bartholomew, "all who remain in parish."

St. George, since 1892: 317 confirmed, 282 are regular Communicants; 8 have left parish.

St. John in the Park, "a great majority."

St. Jude, Eldon St., about 2/3.

St. Matthew, 70 out of 80 confirmed in 1894.

c. 31 " " 48 " " 1893.

c. 40 " " 75 " " 1892. Some have

left Sheffield, some have died.

St. Paul, perhaps 80% or more: varying regularity.

St. Simon: "all except those who have left parish."

St. Andrew, Sharrow, over 80%.

St. John, Ranmoor, 9 out of 11 boys/young men;

12 " " 16 girls/young women.

Wath

Hickleton, "nearly all."

Kilnshurst, c. 90%.

Thurnscoe, three-quarters communicate occasionally; one quarter very occasionally.

Wentworth, about 80%.

Rotherham

Ulley, 23 confirmed, 4 have left parish, 6 do not attend, 13 remain as Communicants.

Woodsetts: "5 of my recent candidates have communicated - a proportion of rather more than  $\frac{1}{4}$ ."

## GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

### 1. UNUSUAL TERMS USED IN THESIS:

De-Churchment - I have concocted the admittedly clumsy word "de-Churchment" (with its past participle "de-Churchmented"), and the phrase "de-Churchment process" to describe the movement of parishioners from worship in the parish church to worship in other Churches, as well as the movement from those other Churches (or directly from the Church of England) to non-Church attendance altogether. The reasons for inventing these words and phrases are explained in Note 8 to the Preface.

Chattering Church - As explained in the Introduction (p. 16) the muting of the Church for most of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th led to the revival of some Church bodies - e.g., Convocation, Ruri-decanal Chapters - and the birth of others - e.g., Lambeth Conferences, Church Congresses - in which Churchmen exchanged ideas to an unprecedented extent, although not even Convocation received the legislative powers some Churchmen had hoped for. I have called these revived and new bodies "the chattering Church", and examine them in Chapter 1. The term is not derogatory. Denied any ultimate legislative functions the "chatter" in these bodies became their most important function, and was an increasingly valuable asset in a Church whose thinkers and leaders at all levels had been for too long prevented from meeting to discuss matters which were often of vital concern to the Church.

Attendance pointers - I have used the figures - given by clergy in the 1865 Archbishop's Visitation Returns - of the numbers attending parish churches in York Diocese, to calculate "attendance pointers" ["a.p.'s"] expressed as a percentage of the total population of each parish. These

figures cannot be regarded as accurate for the reasons given in Note 5 of Chapter 3.

## 2. KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS:

(a) REFERENCES TO MANUSCRIPT SOURCES: [All in Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, York, unless otherwise indicated]

Art.                    Archbishop of York's 'Articles of Inquiry'

Bp. Dio. 11: York Diocesan 'Statistics'

BPP                    British Parliamentary Papers (University of York Library)

CCR                    Reports of the Proceedings of Church Congress

CHANC C.P.          York Chancery Court Cause 'Papers'

CHUR                  Archdeacon Edward Churton's 'Correspondence' (Churton Papers, Pusey House, Oxford)

CHUR 'Charge':      Archdeacon Churton's Visitation Charges' (Churton Papers, Pusey House, Oxford)

DONC/RD              Doncaster 'Rural Deanery Minutes' (Doncaster Archives)

DONC/PR              Doncaster Area 'Vestry Minutes' (Doncaster Archives)

E.R.V.C/B            East Riding Archdeacons' 'Visitation Charges'



ND/ National Society (York Committee) 'Minutes',  
1843-94

OYBCE Official Year Book of the Church of England

PR/ Vestry Meeting 'Minutes'

RD/ East Riding 'Rural Deanery Minutes'

RD/Ret. Rural Deans' (Statistical) 'Returns'

SHEFF/PR Sheffield Area 'Vestry Minutes' (Sheffield  
Archives)

V/R Archbishop of York's 'Visitation Returns'

YCJ York Convocation Journal

YDC York Diocesan Calendar

YG Yorkshire Gazette (York Public Ref. Lib.)

YML York Minster Library

YML/COLL Archbishop Thomson's 'Correspondence'

YPRL York Public Reference Library

(b) OTHER ABBREVIATIONS:

abp. archbishop

acc. accommodation in parish church

a.p. attendance pointer

a.p.n.c. attendance pointer not calculable

appx. appendix

archdn. archdeacon

archd'y archdeaconry

Bd. Sch. Board School

bp. bishop

Ch. Sch. Church School

Diss. Dissent/Dissenter/Dissenting/ in context

HEL Helmsley - (abbreviation in R.D. 'Minutes')

HUL Hull - " " " "

MW (Market) Weighton - " " " "

Nat. Sch. National School

om. omitting

POCK Pocklington - (abbreviation in R.D. 'Minutes')

pop. population in parish

propn. proportion

Resp. responses (e.g., from parishes in a Deanery)

R.D. Rural Dean/Rural Deanery

Notes: Preface

1. G.K. Clark, The Making of Victorian England, 1962, pp. 16-17.
2. E.R. Wickham, Church and People in an Industrial City, 1957.
3. S. Yeo, Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis, 1976, p. 1.
4. J. Obelkevich, Religion and Society in South Lindsey, 1825-75, 1976, p. 92.
5. Rosemary E. Chadwick, 'Church and People in Bradford and District, 1880-1914', Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1986.
6. Together, local topical and more general topical works totalling over sixty titles, published and unpublished, have some bearing on aspects of this thesis. All are included in the Bibliography.
7. M.A. Worden, 'Conflicts over Religious Inquiry among the Anglican Clergy in the 1860's', Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1968, later published as: M.A. Crowther, The Church Embattled, 1970; M.J.D Roberts, 'The Role of the Laity in the Church of England, c.1850-1885', Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1974; R.S.M. Withycombe, 'The Development of Constitutional Autonomy in the Established Church in Later Victorian England', Cambridge Ph.D. thesis, 1969; E.W. Kemp, Counsel and Consent - Aspects of Church Government, 1961.
8. I have concocted the admittedly clumsy word "de-Churchment" (with its past participle "de-Churchmented"),

and the phrase "de-Churchment process", to describe the movement of parishioners from worship in the parish church to worship in other Churches, as well as the movement from those other Churches (or directly from the Church of England) to non-Church attendance altogether. The words "de-Churched" or "un-Churched" might have been less clumsy, but are both unfortunately ambiguous in view of the technical meaning of the verb "to Church". The two uses - i.e., from Church-goer to Chapel-goer, or from Church/Chapel-goer to Nothingarian, will be clear from the context. People who went through either or both of these processes were "de-Churchmented" - an even clumsier word, used as little as possible in the text. But de-Churchment describes more accurately the process sometimes previously called "secularisation", which was too often too vague and occasionally too strong, or "de-Christianisation" which was nearly always too strong. There is much evidence to suggest that non-Church attenders were not usually anti-Church, nor were they more "secularised" - whatever that means - than most regular Church worshippers. Certainly they did not discard all Christian beliefs, however vaguely they clung to them, nor even practices such as prayer, nor Christian principles. They had simply stopped going to regular worship, which was de rigeur, of course, to institutionalised Churchmen. In addition, many continued to avail themselves and their families of rites of passage in the Church of England during the period. As A.D. Gilbert wrote of the situation in the 20th century, nearly 100 years later: "Widespread abandonment of churchgoing habits...has relatively little to do with the currency of basic religious beliefs and values. Perhaps what is often described as 'secularisation' represents a metamorphosis of religion rather than a decline." [A.D. Gilbert, The Making of Post-Christian Britain, 1980, p. 3]. Bonhoeffer's

"religionless Christianity" is a helpful description of that metamorphosis.

9. A matter looked at more fully in the Introduction. (See also the reference in the last paragraph of this Preface to H. McLeod's caution about the lack of balance, expressed in his paper on 'Urbanisation and Religion in 19th century Britain', p. 71.)

10. Important exceptions are: D.A. Jennings, The Revival of the Convocation of York, 1837-1861, York, 1975, (Borthwick Paper No. 47); H. Kirk-Smith, William Thomson, Archbishop of York - his Life and Times, 1819-90, SPCK, 1958; E. Royle, The Victorian Church in York, York, 1983, (Borthwick Paper No. 64); and C.H.N. Smith, 'The Development of Church Life in Cleveland Rural Deanery of the Diocese of York, c.1850-1880', Nottingham M.A. thesis, 1965.

11. Churton, the son of an archdeacon in the southern province, left Oriel, Oxford, (where he was a Fellow together with Newman, Pusey, and Robert Wilberforce) just as the Oxford Movement was starting. Unlike the Archbishops of York during the period, he earned a place in the Dictionary of National Biography - one of very few northern Churchmen of his day to do so - though chiefly on account of his noted Spanish scholarship. He deserves much wider recognition.

12. The Archdeaconry of Richmond went from Chester Diocese to become part of Ripon Diocese on its formation in 1838.

13. An earlier reorganisation of the rural deaneries took place across the whole diocese in 1866. To avoid

confusion, references to rural deanery records in the text of this thesis give them their 1866 names, unless otherwise indicated, until the reorganisation of 1884. After that, new names (e.g., Snaith, Wath, Bishopthorpe) are used. (The pre-1866 names were less informative: e.g., 'Parts of Pontefract 1, 2, and 3'; 'Parts of Rotherham, 1,2, and 3', gave little indication of the area concerned). An important part of the 1884 re-organisation was the creation of the Archdeaconry of Sheffield. After that, the Archdeaconry of York/West Riding became simply the Archdeaconry of York. [Note: despite its previous name, the Archdeaconry of York/West Riding did not include those extensive parts of the West Riding that were in the Craven Archdeaconry of Ripon Diocese, stretching from beyond Skipton in the north and to the manufacturing towns of Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield, Leeds and Barnsley in the south and south-west.]

14. YCJ Nov. 1893, Appx. p. xlix.

15. H. McLeod, 'Urbanisation and Religion in 19th century Britain', in Elm & Loock (eds.) Seelsorge und Diakonie in Berlin, p. 71.

Notes: Introduction

NOTE: In all Notes involving the name of a parish, the rural deanery is named immediately afterwards, with the word "Deanery" omitted to save space. Where the parish and deanery name are the same, the parish only is named: (e.g., Thirsk, Stokesley).

1. John Lang, 'Where the buck stops', Church Times, 12/1/1991.
2. Church Times, 5/11/1993.
3. The Guardian, 10/11/1993.
4. R.I. Wilberforce An Inquiry into the Principles of Church Authority: or reasons for recalling my subscription to the Royal Supremacy, 1854, pp. 36-39; 56-59; 89-90.
5. Thirty-nine Articles in Book of Common Prayer.
6. V/R 1894, Sheffield, Christ Church Attercliffe, pop. 16,057.
7. " " Laughton-en-le-Morthen, Rotherham, pop. 712.
8. " " Wragby, Pontefract, pop. 937.
9. " " Carlton St. John, Pontefract, pop. 1,401.
10. " " Monk Bretton, Pontefract, pop. 5,033.
11. " " St. Peter, Drypool, Hull, ppop. 7,691.
12. Hugh McLeod, Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789-1970, 1981, p. v.

13. Hugh McLeod, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-7; 121-2.
14. W.O. Chadwick, The Secularisation of the European Mind, 1975, pp. 7-8.
15. A.D. Gilbert, Religion and Society in Industrial England - Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914, 1976, p. 3.
16. K.S. Inglis, Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England, 1963, pp. 1,3. D.M. Thompson, 'The Churches and Society in Leicestershire, 1851-81', Cambridge Ph.D. thesis, 1969, p. 131, found this phrase often used in Leicestershire in the 1850's-1870's, on occasions when Churchmen felt most unable to cope with "the masses".
17. K.S. Inglis, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-5.
18. H. Perkin, The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780-1880, 1969, p. 196.
19. S.J.D. Green, 'Religion and the Industrial Town, with special reference to the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1870-1920', Oxford D. Phil. thesis, 1989, p. ii.
20. V/R 1894, Sutton-on-Forest, Easingwold, pop. 986.
21. " " Bradfield, Ecclesfield, pop. 1,549.
22. " " Hessle, Howden, pop. 3,118.
23. " " Haxby, Easingwold, pop. 613.
24. " " Stainton-in-Cleveland, Stokesley, pop. 707.
25. " " Guisborough, Middlesbrough, pop. 6,138.



26. " " Kellington w. Whitley Bridge, Pontefract, pop.  
1,063.

27. J. Dupré, Discourses for the Pulpit, vol. II, 1815,  
'Discourse XIII' , pp. 257-259.

Notes: Chapter 1

Chapter 1, part (i)

1. As explained in the Preface (Note 8 - and in the Glossary) I have invented the word "De-Churchment" and the phrase "De-Churchment process" to describe movement of parishioners from their parish churches to Dissent or Nothingarianism, and to avoid using the vague term "secularisation" or the stronger, misleading term "de-Christianisation".

2. CHUR 1/1/1, 'Charge' 1846, p. 24.

3. That is, since the formation of Houses of Laity in parallel with both Convocations: for Canterbury in 1886 and York in 1892.

4. The question of women's representation did not seriously arise until just after the end of the period, although the role of women in the Church, including the possibility of their ordination to the diaconate, arose in a long debate in York Convocation in July 1884. [See note 175 below]

5. Started by Archdeacon Harcourt, a predecessor of Churton as Archdeacon of Cleveland.

6. The Gorham Case arose in 1847, when Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter refused to institute G.C. Gorham to the living of Bramford Speke in his diocese, having objected to his views on baptismal regeneration. Gorham's appeal against this refusal went to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council which found Gorham's views to be not against Church of England doctrine. The Archbishop, J.B. Sumner,

eventually instituted Gorham to the living. The Case encouraged the founding of the Society for the Revival of Convocation. The Hampden case arose when High Churchmen objected strongly to Lord John Russell's appointment of the Broad Churchman and Oxford philosopher, Renn Dickinson Hampden, to the see of Hereford in 1847. The "papal aggression" was the description given to the actions of Pope Pius IX, who referred to the C of E as "the Anglican Schism", and made England and Wales a province of the R.C. Church, with an hierarchy of archbishop and bishops.

7. Archdeacon Prest of Durham, when introducing to York Convocation a motion for lay involvement in Convocation in 1869, reminded members that Archdeacon Churton had suggested such a scheme even "before the revival of the Northern Convocation". YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 16.

8. CCR Manchester 1863, p. 258.

9. Ibid., p. 257.

10. G. Trevor, A Speech on 'Diocesan Synods', delivered at Derby, 8/10/1851. He quoted from Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum, 1571, compiled by Cranmer and 31 others, and presented to Edward VI just before his death.

11. Ibid., pp. iii-iv.

12. " pp. iv-v.

13. Ibid., p. 7.

14. YCJ Jan. 1860, p 13.

15. Canterbury was revived in 1852; York (arguably) in 1857 but more securely in 1859.

16. In 1886 and 1892 respectively.

17. CCR Manchester 1863, p. 256.

18. In the early 19th century, "common sense" still had a generally pejorative sense, as illustrated by Archdeacon Wilberforce who castigated the defence of the use of "private interpretation [of Scripture] by each man's reason", asserting that "common sense" could not explain the meaning of "the Divine Words." He insisted that "the Church does not profess to be guided by 'common' sense, or 'human' reason". R.I. Wilberforce, An Inquiry into the Principles of Church Authority, 1854, p. 36. By the last quarter of the 19th century, "common sense" had acquired its modern meaning of sensible ideas and decisions reached by the use of innate intelligence - either on the part of a group or of an individual

Chapter 1, Part (ii)(a)

19. CCR Manchester 1863, Preface, p. v.

20. CCR Manchester 1863, p. v. The meeting was called by the Manchester Church Defence Association in Oxford Town Hall on 9 July 1862. Clergy present included the Archdeacon of Manchester and Canon Hornby. Invitations to the meeting were issued by Bishop Prince Lee of Manchester.

21. CCR Manchester 1863, pp. 5-6.

22. CCR Manchester 1863, p. 11.

23. CCR Manchester 1863, p. 6.
24. CCR York 1866, p. 18; e.g., the British Association for the Advancement of Science; and the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science.
25. CCR York 1866; p. 19.
26. CCR Sheffield 1878, p. 16.
27. CCR Leeds 1872, Preface p. vii. The Bishop of Ripon, addressing the working men's meeting at Leeds Congress, gave a short history of Congress's origins, and regretted that, as yet, the men's wives were not invited to attend.
28. CCR Leicester 1880, Preface, p. vii
29. CCR York 1866, pp. vii-viii.
30. The topics discussed at Bath (1873), Bradford (1898), Croydon (1877), Derby (1882), Leeds (1872), Leicester (1880, Manchester (1863), Sheffield (1878), Swansea (1879) and York (1866), under 7 headings - avoiding repetition of several topics which recurred at intervals:
1. THE CHURCH AS AN INSTITUTION: Church Extension, Church Architecture, Supply and Training of Clergy, Synodical Government, Parochial Church Councils, Internal Unity, The Cathedral System, Church Finance;
  2. THE CHURCH AND OTHER BODIES: Church Rates, The State and Prospects of the Churches of Western Europe, The Church in relation to the State and Nonconformists, Marriage Law as affecting the Church, The Difficulties of the Church in Wales, The Welsh Church Press, Reform in Foreign Churches, The Church and Dissent, Marriage and Divorce, The Jews, The

Political Relations of the Church;

3. CHURCH REFORM: Free and Open churches, Clergy Discipline, Lay Co-operation, Diocesan and Parochial Organisation, Church Reform, Church Comprehensiveness, The Ministry;

4. THE DISADVANTAGED and SOCIAL CONCERN: Social Conditions and Recreations of the Poorer Classes, Our Seafaring Population, Church Temperance Work, The Church and the Poor, The Church and Labour, the Penitentiary Work of the Church, Factory and Workshop Life, The Duty of the Church to Criminals, Paupers, Vagrants, and Canal Populations, The Church and Morals, the Legal and Social Protection of Girls, The Church in Relation to Domestic and Social Life;

5. EDUCATION: Day and Sunday Schools, Adult and Sunday School catechising, Modern Science and Civilisation and Vital Christianity, Higher and Intermediate Education, Voluntary and Board Schools, Religion and Science, Existing Forms of Unbelief;

6. EVANGELISM: Parochial Mission Women, Colonial Church and Foreign Missions, The best mode of attaching the People to the Church of England, Mission Services, Preaching, Daughter Churches, The Church's Influence over the Young, Home Mission Work, Evangelistic Work Abroad, Lord's Day Observance;

7. WORSHIP: Church Music, English Church Hymnody, Deepening Spiritual Life, The Liturgy.

SOCIAL TOPICS DISCUSSED IN CONGRESSES IN LATE 19th CENTURY (other than the ten mentioned in above list) included: The Attitude of the Church to Labour Combinations; The Homes of the Working Classes; Population Growth; Migration, Emigration and Colonisation; Thrift; Strikes and Wages Disputes; Sanitation; Trade Disputes; Co-operation; Responsibilities of Capital and Labour; Morality of Strikes and Lock-outs.

These subjects were examined at the Church Congresses held in Birmingham (1893); Bradford (1898); Cardiff (1889); Exeter (1894); Folkestone (1892); Hull (1890); Norwich (1895); Nottingham (1897); Shrewsbury (1896); Wakefield (1886); and Wolverhampton (1887).

31. Yorkshire Gazette, 8/6/1878.

32. Newcastle Daily Chronicle, 5/10/1881.

Chapter 1, part (ii)(b)

33. A.M.G. Stephenson, Anglicanism and the Lambeth Conferences, 1978, p. 16. Stephenson gives a detailed account of the origins of the Conferences.

34. Sidney Dark, The Lambeth Conferences. Their History and their Significance, 1929, p. 10, quoted in Stephenson, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

35. Stephenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 32, 34.

36. He and Philpott of Worcester stayed away, both feeling that to call the second Conference was as unwise as calling the first: Stephenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 59, 63.

37. CCR Sheffield 1878, pp. 19-20.

38. YCJ Feb. 1867, pp. 73-74, details the invitation from Canada to the northern bishops.

39. CCR Sheffield 1878, p. 20.

40. Selwyn became missionary bishop in New Zealand in 1841, and Bishop of Lichfield in 1867, the same year as the first Lambeth Conference.

41. The ratification appears in the American Book of Common Prayer immediately before the Preface.

42. CCR York 1866, p. 239.

Chapter 1, part (iii)(a)

43. Dr. Johnson quoted in R. Phillimore, The Ecclesiastical Law of the Church of England, (1873) vol. I, p. 364. Phillimore said Johnson made his point "with characteristic indignation."

44. From suspension in 1717, during the Bangorian Controversy, until the revival of activity in Canterbury Convocation in 1852. J.R.H. Moorman, A History of the Church of England, 1958 ed., pp. 276, 278, gives a useful summary. York had to wait a few years longer for revival. E.W. Kemp, Counsel and Consent: Aspects of Church Government, 1961, Lect. 7, gives a thorough account of the steps to revive Convocation generally; and D.A. Jennings, The Revival of the Convocation of York, 1837-1861, 1975, (Borthwick Paper No. 47), gives a detailed account of the revival of York Convocation. Whilst culling some material from both of these essential works, I have drawn from new material where possible when dealing with the revival of York Convocation.

45. Kemp, *op. cit.*, p. 173.



46. By the Clerical Disqualification Act of 1801 which largely resulted from the antics of the Rev. John Horne Tooke, the last C of E parson to sit in the H of C, and a former ally of John Wilkes.

47. This is not as absurd as might appear. Even in the late 1960's influential members of the Church of England argued that this was still the case, e.g., some members of the Archbishops' Commission on Church and State: see the Report of that Commission, (1970) p. 18, para. 51. Even in 1993, any major decision in the Church's General Synod requires parliamentary ratification; and in giving that ratification Parliament is still, technically and legally, putting the seal of the nation's laity on that act - or refusing it, as the case may be.

48. R.I. Wilberforce, An Inquiry..., pp. 273; 277.

49. Kemp, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-3.

50. R. Oastler, Convocation, the Church and the People, 1860, a Letter to William Walker, Esq., p. 4, in which Oastler describes his letter to the Archbishop.

51. D.A. Jennings, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

52. D.A. Jennings, *op. cit.*, e.g., pp. 1, 5, 7.

53. The Gorham Case arose in 1847, when Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter refused to institute G.C. Gorham to a living in his diocese and Gorham's appeal was upheld by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The "papal aggression" was the description given to the actions of Pope Pius IX in making England and Wales a province of the R.C. Church with an hierarchy. [See Note 6 above for more detail]

54. The Society for the Revival of Convocation, A Catena of Episcopal Authorities on the Synodal Question, 1851, pp. 5-6. This publication, which appeared in 1852 presented extracts from 'Charges' that had broached the subject of revival in 1851.
55. *ibid*, p. 7.
56. " p. 9.
57. A Catena pp. 31-3. Archbishop Musgrave's opposition to revived action in Convocation was chiefly based on his fear that Convocation would seek to codify matters too stringently, and would therefore endanger liberal thought. In its early years, Convocation sometimes seemed bent on proving the (now late) Archbishop's fears well founded. Musgrave also thought that if Convocation received a wider brief, then Canterbury Convocation was sufficient for the Church's needs. See Jennings, *op. cit.*, pp. 13, 21, 23. Much later, Bishop Goodwin of Carlisle put a case for the Archbishop of York to nominate laymen to represent the northern Convocation in Canterbury Convocation, following a resolution in Carlisle Diocesan Conference; but this was clearly an expression of impatience at the delay in getting a House of Laymen in the north. YCJ Apr. 1890, p. 9.
58. A Catena, pp. 15-16, quoting Churton's 'Charge' of 1851.
59. D.A. Jennings, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
60. Jennings, *ibid*, p. 21.
61. Yorkshire Gazette, 11/4/57.

62. " " 11/4/57.
63. " " 8/5/57.
64. Punch, vol. xxxvi, p. 254.
65. The Times, 7/2/59.
66. " " 7/2/59.
67. " " 4/6/59.
68. " " 4/6/59; YCJ Jun. 1859.
69. " " 6/6/59.
70. YCJ Jan. 1860, p. 14.
71. The Journal account is unclear; but the inference is that they did not attend.
72. YCJ Jan. 1860, p. 14.
73. " " " pp. 16-17.
74. YML: W. Thomson, Work and Prospects, 1865, p. 37.
75. Letter from 'A Layman, York', in Yorkshire Gazette, 21/3/67.
76. YCJ Apr. 1881, pp. 93-99; YCJ Feb. 1882, pp. 23-24.
77. " " " pp. 4-6. Thomson referred to the Houses sitting together as "reverting to ancient practice"

in his Primary Charge, 1865. YML: W. Thomson, Work & Prospects, pp. 37-38.

78. YCJ Apr. 1888, p. 8.

79. CCR York 1866, p. 19. Thomson was referring particularly to Essays and Reviews. M.A. Worden, 'Conflicts over Religious Inquiry among the Anglican Clergy in the 1860's', Oxford D.Phil., 1968, devotes a detailed chapter to each of the three clerics who underwent heresy trials: Williams, Wilson and Voysey.

80. CCR Leeds, 1872, pp. 210-212.

81. YCJ Feb. 1887, pp. 4-5. Thomson also pointed out that in 1863 three bishops usually attended, whilst now there were nine northern bishops "all of whom attend"; each new diocese had brought three more archdeaconries with additional representatives. York Diocese had eight representatives but would have had only two if following the Canterbury system of representation.

82. YCJ Feb. 1889, p. 8.

83. YCJ Feb. 1889, p. 8.

Chapter 1, part (iii)(b)

84. CHUR 1/1/1, 'Charge' 1846, p. 24.
85. R. I. Wilberforce, An Inquiry..., p. 56.
86. CCR Manchester 1863, pp. 154-5.
87. " " " p. 156.
88. RD/MW/1, Jan. 1871 and Jan. 1872.
89. RD/HUL/2, Jun. 1880.
90. RD/HEL/1, May 1882.
91. The Directions are recorded in full in RD/HUL/2, Jan. 1879.
92. DONC/RDn/1/1, Nov. 1879.
93. RD/HUL/2, Jan. 1879.
94. RD/HEL/1, Jun. 1878.
95. RD/HEL/1, Jun. 1890. Guardian obituary notice preserved in minute book. Wetherall was Rector of Stonegrave for 36 years from 1864, and was Rural Dean for the last 20 of those years.
96. Yorkshire Gazette, 1/11/79.
97. CCR Manchester 1863, p. 249.

98. RD/MW/1, Oct. 1862. West Harthill Deanery was divided in 1866 between Weighton and Pocklington Deaneries - hence the MW reference. Archdeacon Churton [CHUR 1/1/12, 'Charge' 1863] mentioned "bountiful aid" collected throughout the country during the "protracted failure in employment in Lancashire."

99. CCR Manchester 1863, p. 258.

100. " " " p. 249. Sweet had already given a paper on 'Co-operation of the Laity with the Clergy of a Diocese', at the first Congress at Cambridge in 1861.

101. There were similar definition problems when Houses of Laity were mooted for the Convocations in the 1880's.

102 CCR Manchester 1863, pp. 252-255.

#### Chapter 1, part (iii)(c)

103. The Gorham Judgment and the papal aggression are explained above in Note 6, part (i) of this Chapter.

104. W.O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 1, 1966, p. 314.

105. M.J.D. Roberts, 'The Role of the Laity in the Church of England, c.1850-1885', 1974, Oxford D.Phil. thesis, p. 242.

106. G. Trevor, Speech at Derby, 1851, p. 8.

107. G. Trevor, *ibid.*, p. 8.

108. G. Trevor, " pp. 13, 17. Trevor's underlining.
109. W. O. Chadwick, op. cit., vol. 2, 1970, p. 360.
110. The dioceses without conferences were Llandaff, London and Worcester.
111. V/R 1865, Wighill, Ainsty Deanery.
112. Clergy at the end of the period wrote about the support they derived from ruri-decanal meetings; thus, e.g., the Vicar of St. Anne's, Netherthorpe, Sheffield, who was waiting to see "what my brother clergy are doing" at a ruri-decanal chapter before himself deciding. V/R 1894, Question IX.
113. W.O. Chadwick, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 359.
114. V/R 1865, Market Weighton.
115. CCR York 1866, p. 20.
116. " " " pp. 119, 231.
117. " " " p. 232-3.
118. " " " p. 238. Such arguments epitomised the need felt by some Churchmen always to seek to revive the past, rather than to innovate for the future.
119. CCR York 1866, p. 239.
120. " " " p. 230.
121. YDC 1872.

122. Yorkshire Gazette, 17/4/69.
123. CCR Leeds 1872, pp. 52-57.
124. The practice spread rapidly in the 1870's. By 1882, all but three of the dioceses in England and Wales had established a diocesan conference. See note 110 above.
125. Yorkshire Gazette, 8/4/76. A long article gives details about the planning and composition of the Conference.
126. Yorkshire Gazette, 8/4/76.
127. " " 8/4/76.
128. " " 21/10/76.
129. " " 28/10/76.
130. " " 28/10/76.
131. YDC 1877, pp. 188-190. No minutes seem to have survived; but the Diocesan Calendars give quite good brief summaries of proceedings - (always in the Calendar published the year after a Conference took place). Also in YCJ 1883, Appendix p. xvii, there are some summaries of Diocesan Conferences held in York (1876-82), Carlisle (1870-82), and Chester (1870-82). Summaries of Diocesan Conferences in both provinces also began to appear in The Official Year Book of the Church of England from 1892.
132. Yorkshire Gazette, 8/4/76.
133. " " 8/10/76.



134. YDC 1880, pp. 196-207.

135. " " pp. 196-211.

136. Yorkshire Gazette, 26/10/78. A Leader at the time of the third York Diocesan Conference.

137. Thus, for instance, on the Standing Committee of York Diocesan Conference in 1893 the 15 lay members included one earl, one viscount, three other peers, one Hon., one Bart., and one M.P.

138. YDC 1890.

139. V/R 1865, Holme-on-Spalding Moor, Weighton.

140. " " Cowesby, Northallerton.

141 Yorkshire Gazette, 26/10/78. The phrase is quoted from the Leader above (see Note 136).

#### Chapter 1, Part (iii) (d)

142. SHEFF/PR/40/11, Vestry Minutes, Wales, Sheffield.

143. The parish of Drax, Selby Deanery, provides another rare instance of a Vestry Meeting paying some attention to the Act. The final Vestry on 24 May 1894 recorded:

"Resolved, 10 to 2, that we do not vote in favour of Parish Council until further consideration.

"Put: Are the ratepayers in favour of sending a Rural District Councillor?

"Yes".

"Are the ratepayers in favour of the Parish Council?"

"Yes." PR/DR/76, 24/5/94.

144. The minutes of the Vestry Meetings in York Diocese present quite a valuable source of social and ecclesiastical history during the period. Occasionally, as with Wales, a minute book provides a microcosm of local life at the time. However, apart from the annual election of wardens it is difficult to generalise about the composition, work and resolutions of Vestry Meetings.

145. RD/HEL/1, Nov. 1893.

146. RD/HUL/2, Sep. 1893.

147. RD/POCK/1-2, Apr. 1894.

148. RD/POCK/1-2, 27/11/93.

149. RD/HEL/1, Nov. 1893.

150. SHEFF/PR/54/97, 11/12/95. The Ecclesfield Vestry Meeting continued to accept the Accounts of the Ecclesiastical Charities until 1946.

151. SHEFF/PR 54/97, 17/4/76, 2/4/77, 30/3/91.

152. V/R 1865, Crayke, Easingwold. Churton wrote: "In 1863, the Archdeacon being also Rector, finding there was a vast want of more room in the Church, and that the Churchyard was becoming somewhat crowded, proposed a plan to the Parishioners for an enlarging of both; which, being unanimously accepted, was carried out; and the work was approved and the new ground consecrated by the Archbishop."

153. V/R 1865, Worsborough St. Mary, Rotherham.

154. These "Church Councils" were sometimes referred to as "Parochial Church Councils". Neither is to be confused with the new secular "Parish Council" set up in 1894.

155. V/R 1871, passim. H. Kirk-Smith, William Thomson, Archbishop of York - his Life and Times, 1819-90, 1958, pp. 72-3, gives a useful summary of clergy opinion from favourable to hostile in 1871. Thus, e.g., the generally enlightened T.F. Simmons, Vicar of Dalton-Home and East Riding Proctor in Convocation, whilst favouring Church Councils said he would not give a Council any decisive voting powers, except on questions referred to it by himself or the Archbishop.

156. E.R. V/CB, 27, 'Charge' 1876, p 89.

157. V/R 1894. The parishes were:

Middlesbrough: St. Paul, pop. 25,771; St. Peter, pop. 4,353;

Hull: St. James, pop. 5,273; Drypool St. Andrew, pop. 22,981;

Sheffield: Attercliffe, pop. 16,057, St. George, pop. 10,538; St. John in the Park, pop. 11,264; St. Luke, Hollis Croft, pop. 5,570; St. Matthew, pop. 3,727; St. John's, Owlerton, pop. 6,740; Chapeltown, pop. 7,052; York: Holy Trinity with St. Maurice and St. John, Goodramgate, pop. 6,890.

158. SHEFF/PR/48/24. The Minutes cover the period December 1876 to October 1890; but it is clear that the Council meetings were established some time before 1876.

159. *ibid.*, 18/10/76.

160. " 21/2/77.
161. SHEFF/PR/48/24. 8/2/83
162. " 3/10/90.
163. " 26/7/81.
164. YCJ Feb. 1893, p. 47.
165. RD/POCK/2, Oct. 1894.
166. V/R 1894, Kirby Moorside, Helmsley, pop. 2,005
167. " " Walkington, Beverley, pop. 596.

Chapter 1, part (iv)

168. One of the earliest petitions presented to York Convocation after its revival recognised the weakness of having two Convocations, and called for joint meetings of the two Convocations. Part of petition No. 2, YCJ Jan. 1860, p. 13.
169. CHUR 2/4/50, Letter to Archdeacon R.I. Wilberforce, 4/2/1851.
170. CHUR 2/4/61, Letter to Wilberforce, 26/6/1851.
171. Houses of Laity for Canterbury (1886) and York (1892); the National Representative Council (1904); the Church Assembly (1921); the General Synod (1969).
172. CHUR 2/4/77, Letter to Wilberforce, 31/8/1852.

173. YCJ Jan. 1860, p. 18.

174. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 26.

175. In a long debate on the 'Church Ministry of Women' (YCJ Apr. 1884, pp. 111-140), Dean Howson of Chester, who introduced the subject, asserted that the Biblical authority for women deacons [he carefully did not call them "deaconesses"] was stronger than for bishops; (YCJ Apr. 1884, pp. 112-113) and that, whatever the needs of the Primitive Church might have been, "our needs are more urgent." (Ibid., p.115).

176. B. Heeney, The Women's Movement in the Church of England, 1850-1930, Oxford, 1988, pp. 87; 94.

177. Parts (iii)(b) and (c) of this Chapter above examine these developments.

178. YCJ Feb. 1865, p. 291.

179. " " " p. 6.

180. " " " pp. 14-15.

181. " " " p. 16.

182. " " " pp. 17-22.

183. " " " p. 23.

184. " " " p, 28.

185. " " " pp. 110-111.

186. " " " p. 112.
187. YCJ Feb. 1870, p. 113.
188. " " " pp. 116-119.
189. " " " pp. 119-120.
190. " " " pp. 120-121.
191. " " " pp. 122-123. The committee included the Bishops of Carlisle, Chester and Ripon; the Dean of Chester, the Archdeacon of Lindisfarne, Canon Simmons, proctor for the East Riding, and the Hon. and Rev. F.R. Grey, proctor for Lindisfarne.
192. YCJ Feb. 1872, pp. 387-388.
193. " " " p. 388.
194. Hence, e.g., the Public Worship Regulation Act two years later. Tait's attitude was clarified to York Convocation by Archdeacon Hamilton of Northumberland in a debate about a House of Laity in Feb. 1886. YCJ Feb. 1886, p. 42.
195. YCJ Feb. 1872, p. 472.
196. CCR Leeds, 1872, p. 50. Woods's arguments are mentioned in some detail in section (iii)(c) of this chapter.
197. YCJ Mar 1872, pp. 71-2.
198. YDC 1872.

199. YCJ Mar.1874, p. 81.

200. Northern Diocesan Conferences established in the 1870's and early 1880's: Carlisle and Chester 1870; Manchester 1875; York 1876; Ripon 1878; Sodor and Man, and Durham 1880; Liverpool 1881. [YCJ 1883, p. 58: A Supplement gives year of founding and early years' proceedings of these Conferences].

201. YCJ Feb. 1886, p. 42.

202. YCJ Feb. 1886, pp. 5-6.

203. The two Houses were sitting separately, as had become the practice in 1884, following the quarrel between Archbishop Thomson and the Prolocutor of the Lower House, Dean Purey-Cust.

204. YCJ Feb. 1886, pp. 74-6.

205. " " " pp. 77-8.

206. " " " p. 81.

207. " " " pp. 120-1.

208. " " " p. 120-1.

209. The range went from 15 for York, Liverpool and Manchester, to 2 for Sodor and Man - giving an elected total of 144. When the Lay House was eventually formed these numbers were modified; York, e.g., having 12 members. (YDC 1898).

210. YCJ Feb. 1886, pp. 124-5.

211. YCJ Feb. 1887, pp. 30; 34-5; 91.
212. YCJ 1890, Appx. p. vi.
213. YCJ Feb. 1892, p. 79.
214. YCJ Mar. 1893 - [a special meeting of Convocation].
215. CHUR/2/4/61, Letter to Wilberforce 26/6/1851.
216. The problem of who represents whom is irresoluble for an Established, National Church which is not also the Church of the nation. In its early years the House of Laymen consisted almost entirely of men of standing from public life. The first Chairman and Vice-chairman of York House of Laymen were Viscounts Cross and Halifax respectively. The 12 representatives of York Diocese in that House consisted of 5 noblemen, 2 "Honourables", 2 Barts., one of them an M.P., another M.P. and one retired Captain R.N. At the present time (late 1993) reformists in the C of E are advocating a change in procedure for voting for representatives to General Synod at parochial level - giving the vote to those whose names are on parish electoral rolls, instead of voting being limited to rural deanery synods members. But the class composition of General Synod, and publicising the background of candidates, remain two of the many problems.



Chapter 2, Part (i)

1. The term "militant institutionalism" comes from the essay with which this chapter opens, i.e., W.R. Inge's 'Confessio Dei' in Outspoken Essays, (Second Series), 1922, p. 55. It is an apt description of the aggressive stance taken by conservative Churchmen to defend "orthodoxy".
2. W.R. Inge, op. cit., pp. 1, 26.
3. E.R. Sandeen, The Root of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930, Chicago 1970, pp. xviii, 103, and passim.
4. Edward Churton became a Fellow of Oriel in 1823, as did E.B. Pusey; J. H. Newman had been elected in 1822; Hurrell Froude and Robert Wilberforce became Fellows in 1826. Churton was appointed Rector of Crayke in the North Riding in 1836 and became Archdeacon of Cleveland in 1846.
5. Pusey House Pamphlet 3230: 'On Private Judgment and Authority', in Letters of a Reformed Catholic, No. II, 1838, p. 5. The letter is ascribed to Churton and is certainly in his style and conforms with his views.
6. 'On Private Judgment...', p. 5.
7. The use of the word "Anglican" to describe a statement made in 1838 is mildly anachronistic. A.M.G. Stephenson discusses the stages in the adoption of the terms "Anglican" and "Anglican Communion" in his Anglicanism and the Lambeth Conferences, 1978, pp. 5-8. The phrase "Anglican Communion" first appeared in 1851, though John

Fell, Bishop of Oxford, 1625-86, had written about "the old establishment of the Anglican Church" - as distinct from the "Roman" Church - in his Life of Henry Hammond, 1684, vol. 1. p. 12. The use of "Anglican" became more widespread in the second half of the 19th century, encouraged by the Lambeth Conferences.

8. Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter refused to institute G.C. Gorham to a living in his diocese in 1847, because of his views on baptismal regeneration. Gorham won his appeal after the case went to the lay-dominated Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the highest court of appeal for ecclesiastical causes.

9. CHUR 1/1/4 'Charge', 1850, p. 18, citing Taylor's Liberty of Propheying, 1647, Sect. ii, parts 8 & 41.

10. Essays and Reviews was the idea of Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol, whose contribution to the book was 'The Interpretation of Scripture', perhaps the most controversial essay of them all.

11. Some old style High and Low Churchmen, as well as a majority of Evangelicals, were unhappy about Lux Mundi for a variety of reasons.

12. Charles Gore had been a High Churchman from schooldays and, despite his increasingly liberal stance in theology and doctrine, his Anglo-Catholicism remained staunch: he became the first Principal of Pusey House, Oxford, in 1884; and founded the male monastic Community of the Resurrection in 1892, which moved to Mirfield, Yorkshire, in 1897.

13. C. Gore, (ed.) in his Preface to Lux Mundi, pp. vii-ix.

14. Harvey Goodwin, The Foundations of the Creed, 1890, pp. 7-8.

15. H. Goodwin, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

16. H. Goodwin, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

17. H. Goodwin, op. cit., pp. 14-16; 17. His selection consisted of the following Articles - (followed by a brief quotation from Goodwin's comments):-

Art. VI - "The Sufficiency of Scripture for Salvation" - "Nothing corresponding to this article is contained in the Apostles' Creed." p. 14.

Art. IX - "Original or Birth-sin" - "There is no reference to it in the Apostles' Creed: except so far as it is included in the simple and gracious sentence which speaks of 'the forgiveness of sins'." pp. 14-15.

Art. XI - "The Justification of Man" - In stating the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ "a reference [in the Creed] is made in the best possible way; but there is...no definition of the manner in which the sacrifice of Christ is applied." p. 15.

Art. XVII - Predestination and Election - "Few questions have agitated the Church more or for a longer time....[But] there is no trace of them in the Apostles' Creed." p. 15.

Art. XX - "Of the Authority of the Church" - In the Creed there is "nothing concerning the Church's authority, though this be an important subject in its proper place: but only this,- 'The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints'." p. 15.

Art. XXV - "The Sacraments" - "Perhaps...an oblique reference to baptism [is made] in the words 'the remission of sins'...expanded by the Nicene symbol into the words 'one baptism for the remission of sins'....[But] the fact

remains, and it is a striking one, that no declaration of belief concerning the Sacraments is contained in the Apostles' Creed." p. 16.

18. A.O.J. Cockshutt, Anglican Attitudes: A Study of Victorian Religious Controversies, 1959, p. 11.

19. H. Davies, Worship and Theology in England, vol. 4, 1850-1900, Princeton, 1962, p. 174.

20. "Doctrine" is what the Church taught, or held necessary for all members to believe, in a day and age when the Church could rule with "specific authority" - i.e., pre-Reformation. When that specific authority had ceased to exist, and was replaced by a general, guiding authority, doctrine became the body of teaching which was considered important by most Church leaders and some lay folk, but about which there could be considerable disagreement. "Theology" is what is revealed in the search for knowledge of God through the study of Scripture or through "natural" or "rational" sources, e.g., science, philosophy, etc. Thus, doctrinal divisions can seem more threatening than theological ones, because they distinguish one Church from another, or one party from another in the same Church; they are generally easier to see, have more immediacy and more obvious consequences to a Church, and can therefore arouse more rapid and aggressive reactions than theological divisions.

21. For example: W.O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 1, 1966, Chapter VIII; and vol. 2, 1970, Chapters I and II; Horton Davies, Worship and Theology in England, vol. 4, 1962, 1850-1900, Chapter VI; L.E. Elliott-Binns, The Development of English Theology in the Later 19th Century, 1952, pp. 1-32, 57-82; A. D. Gilbert, The Making

of Post-Christian Britain - a history of the secularisation of modern society, 1980, pp 54-70; and G. Rowell, Hell and the Victorians: a study of the nineteenth century theological controversies concerning eternal punishment and the future life, 1974, Chapter 6: 'Hell dismissed with costs', a valuable analysis of H.B. Wilson's contribution to the debate and his trial. M.A. Worden's Oxford D.Phil thesis, 'Conflicts over Religious Inquiry among the Anglican Clergy in the 1860's', 1968, passim - much of it later published as M.A. Crowther's The Church Embattled, 1970 - is very detailed and excellent; R.M. Young, 'The Impact of Darwin on Conventional Thought', in A. Symondson, (ed.), The Victorian Crisis of Faith, 1970, pp. 23-31.

22. B. Jowett, 'On the Interpretation of Scripture', Essays and Reviews, 1860, pp. 330-1.

23. F. Temple, 'The Education of the World', E & R, pp. 44-5. Temple's appointment to the episcopal bench by Gladstone was more of a "Liberal" appointment than a "liberal-theological" appointment, for Gladstone remained a strict, conservative High Churchman of the old school.

24. B. Powell, 'On the Study of the Evidence of Christianity', E & R, pp. 95; 141.

25. R. Williams, 'Bunsen's Biblical Researches', E & R, pp. 51, 53. Christian Bunsen, Prussian ambassador in London, 1841-54, was an amateur theologian held in high esteem in England as representative of European Protestantism at the time.

26. J.B. Lightfoot was appointed Hulsean Professor of Divinity at Cambridge in 1861, where he was a founder member of the liberal "Cambridge School" of theology. B.F.

Westcott was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge in 1870, and was Lightfoot's eventual successor as Bishop of Durham.

27. F. Temple, E & R, pp. 37; 40; 43-44.

28. Temple's contribution, dealing largely with education and maturity, caused little offence. His offences were to have been a contributor at all, and not to have distanced himself from the views expressed by other contributors.

Notes: Chapter 2, part (ii)(a)

29. "Essayism" was the word some clergy used to summarise the Biblical criticism that emanated from Germany and came to the attention of the British public after the publication of Essays and Reviews in 1860.

30. "Colensoism" was the word some clergy used to summarise Bishop John Colenso's work in Biblical criticism.

31. V/R 1865, Nunthorpe, pop. 169; V/R 1865, Newton-in-Cleveland, pop. 122; Ibbetson was also Vicar of Great Ayton where he apparently suffered no impediment from Essayism or Colensoism, but from Spurgeon's sermons which were "doing much mischief in the whole neighbourhood." V/R 1865, Great Ayton, pop. 1,528.

32. The reference was unfair because Pusey never became a ritualist and frequently advised against ritual practices, rightly considering them a potential source of misunderstanding about the more crucial doctrinal factors involved in the Catholic Revival.

33. These three parishes were: Osmotherley, Northallerton, whose Vicar blamed Methodism both for "infidelity and indifferentism"; York Holy Trinity, Micklegate, whose Rector complained about "infidel propagandism in the Railway Workshops"; and Hoyland, Rotherham, whose parson wrote about "practical infidelity" amongst working men as a problem. V/R 1865, Osmotherley, pop. 1,320; V/R 1865, York Holy Trinity, Micklegate, pop. 1,652; V/R 1865, Hoyland, Rotherham, pop. 3,654.

34. V/R 1865, Kildale, Stokesley, pop. 221.

35. V/R 1865, Monk Fryston, Pontefract, pop. 1.093.

36. V/R 1865, Driffield, Harthill, pop. 4,405; V/R 1868, East Acklam, Stokesley Deanery, pop. 774.

37. Both incumbents had church attendance problems. In V/R 1865, Browne, the Vicar of East Acklam, had complained that "out of a population of about 800 I should not think there are twenty real Churchmen." In V/R 1868, when reporting "many of the people are of no religion," he claimed that of those who had any religion "perhaps three-quarters are Dissenters." Allen, Vicar of Driffield, had communities of Wesleyans, Primitive Methodists, Independents, Baptists, Reformers, Mormons and Campbellites, "about three-quarters of the parish being Dissenters." So both parsons had much to contend with apart from any effects from the spread of liberal theology.

38. A. Tindall Hart, The 19th century Country Parson, Shrewsbury, 1955, p. 41, points out that most country clergy at the time were Oxford and Cambridge graduates with "very undistinguished degrees" who lived unspectacular lives in their parishes, untouched by Newman or Darwin.

39. W.O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 2, 1970, p. 84.
40. YCJ Mar. 1861, p. 31.
41. " " " pp. 63-4.
42. " " " p. 65.
43. " " " pp. 65-6.
44. " " " p. 69.
45. CHUR 1/1/11, 'Charge' 1862, pp. 6-8. He attributed the words in inverted commas to "a reasoner" in Alfred's time.
46. Churton had argued that "there is no escape from this intrusive private judgment", Letter of a Reformed Catholic", No. II, 1838, to W.F. Hook.
47. H. Kirk-Smith, William Thomson, Archbishop of York - His Life and Times, 1819-90, 1958, p. 35.
48. C.M. Davies, Orthodox London: or, Phases of Religious Life in the Church of England, 1873, (reprinted 1876), p. 451. Davies was contrasting Thomson with Archbishop Tait, whom he described as embodying the Establishment's "breadth and comprehensiveness."
49. See part (ii)(b) of this chapter below.
50. YCJ Feb. 1886, p. 12.
51. W. Thomson, Aids to Faith, 1862, Preface, p. iii.



52. H.L. Mansell, intro. to 'Miracles as Evidence of Christianity', Aids to Faith. Mansell was Waynflete Professor of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy, Oxford.

53. A. McCaul, intro. to 'The Mosaic Record of Creation', Aids to Faith. McCaul was Professor of Hebrew, King's College, London.

54. E.H. Browne, intro. to 'Inspiration', Aids to Faith. Browne was Norrisian Professor of Divinity, Cambridge.

55. See part (i) above for a brief summary of these two works.

56. YCJ Apr. 1863, p. 189.

57. " " " p. 193.

58. See p. 145 above.

59. YCJ Apr. 1863, p. 194.

60. CHUR 1/1/12, 'Charge' 1863, pp. 4-5.

61. CCR York, p. 19.

62. YCJ Feb. 1866, p. 4. In 1863 Bishop Colenso's Metropolitan, Bishop Gray of Capetown - father of the famous Anglo-Catholic "Vicar Gray" of Helmsley in Cleveland - had declared Colenso deposed from his see. Colenso refuted Gray's powers to act, and his appeal was upheld by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (in 1865). In 1866 Gray consecrated a successor as Bishop of Natal, but Colenso's supporters in Natal insisted he was still their

rightful bishop, and continued to regard themselves as "the Church of England in Natal".

63. YCJ Oct. 1866, p. 4.

64. A position gradually reached, helped by the Lambeth Conferences, and brought to notice in recent years during conflict over the ordination of women to the priesthood in self-governing Anglican provinces.

65. YCJ Oct. 1866, p. 4.

66. M.A. Worden, 'Conflicts over Religious Inquiry among the Anglican Clergy in the 1860's', Oxford D.Phil., 1968, Chapters III and IV, discusses the Williams and Wilson cases in detail.

67. YCJ Oct. 1864, p. 250.

68. " " " , p. 251.

69. YCJ Feb. 1865, p. 278.

70. " " ", pp. 179, 281. This was not the only occasion on which Thomson showed a ready grasp of legal intricacies and an ability to explain them to Convocation.

71. YCJ Feb. 1865, p. 282.

72. RD/MW/1, Aug. 1864. The Minutes state there was "a long theological discussion" on this, and "the Rural Dean [J. Foxley] was very wise and reasoned." Unfortunately the Minutes give no further details.

73. G. Rowell, Hell and the Victorians: A study of the 19th century theological controversies concerning eternal punishment and the future life, Oxford, 1974, pp. 121-3.

74. YCJ Feb. 1865, p. 283.

75. " " " , p. 284. See p. 152 above for Thwaytes's original motion.

76. CHUR 1/1/13, 'Charge' 1864, p. 2.

77. YCJ Mar. 1867, pp. 73-4.

78. A.M.G. Stephenson, Anglicanism and the Lambeth Conferences, 1978, pp. 26-7.

79. YPRL/Y252, Sermons at York.

80. YCJ, Apr. 1884, p. 5; YCJ Feb. 1886, p. 13.

81. H. Goodwin, Walks in the Regions of Science and Faith, 1883, p. 46, quoted in Goodwin's Foundations, p. 65.

Notes: Chapter 2 part (ii)(b)

82. 'York Chancery Court, Cause Papers' 1869/2, (CHANC C.P. 1869/2). This quotation and those that follow, together with the page references, are taken from the 54 page document prepared by the prosecution for Voysey's heresy trial. The words were written by Voysey in various parts of The Sling and the Stone (the versions of his sermons published in 1867), vol. II pts. i to xii; vol. III; and vol. IV pts. i and ii.

83. CHANC C.P. 1869/2, pp. 34, 36, 38.
84. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 14. That it was the Rev. Edward Brooksbank is clear from Archbishop Thomson's statement to Convocation that he had "inhibited the patron of the living [of Healaugh] - a parson - from officiating in the diocese."
85. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 10.
86. " " " p. 11.
87. " " " p. 12.
88. " " " p. 14.
89. CCR York 1866, p. 19.
90. " " " p. 20.
91. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 11.
92. M.A. Worden, op. cit., gives a detailed and very useful account of Voysey's life and thought in Chapter V.
93. E.H. Thomson, Life and Letters of William Thomson, Archbishop of York, p. 212. The Deanery was possibly Helmsley.
94. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 14.
95. CHANC C.P. 1869/2. The Articles alleged to have been contravened were: VI. 'Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation'; VIII. 'Of the Three Creeds' - ("for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy

Scripture"); XX. 'Of the Authority of the Church' - ("it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another.") - prosecution document, loc. cit.

96. His ideas about God and morality echo some of Thomas Arnold's thinking on the similarity between the progress of the individual and of mankind from childhood to manhood through the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom - examined in T.W. Bamford, Thomas Arnold on Education, Cambridge, 1970, citing Arnold's 'Sermons', vol. 4, pp. 17-30. Arnold's influence is evident also in Frederick Temple's essay 'The Education of the World' in Essays and Reviews, pp. 1-49. This develops the analogy at great length, and points out that the most encouraging sign of growing maturity is the increase of toleration in society (especially p. 43).

97. CHANC C.P. 1869/2, 'Judgment Document', loc. cit.

98. W. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience - a Study in Human Nature, 1904, pp. 275-6, quoting C. Voysey, The Mystery of Pain and Death, 1892, p. 258.

99. F. Temple, 'The Education of the World' in Essays and Reviews, 1860, p. 43.

100. E.H. Thomson, op. cit., p. 232. (The archbishop had to pay the initial costs of the trial.)

101. E.H. Thomson, op. cit., p. 232.

Notes: Chapter 2, part (iii)(a)

102. YCJ Oct. 1867, p. 33.
103. The Church Association was set up in 1865 by Protestant Anglicans to initiate litigation against ritualists.
104. W.O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 2, 1970, p. 314.
105. YCJ Oct. 1867, p. 65.
106. Middlesbrough Weekly News and Cleveland Advertiser, quoted by C.H.N. Smith, 'The Development of Church Life in the Cleveland Rural Deanery, c.1850-80', M.A. Nottingham, 1965, p. 185.
107. G. Trevor, The Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament and Participation of the Holy Eucharist, 1869, pp. iii-2.
108. A.M.G. Stephenson, op. cit., pp. 32, 41.
109. J. Bentley, Ritualism and Politics in Victorian Britain - the attempt to legislate for belief, 1978, gives a very detailed account of the attempts to legislate against the ritualists, especially in Chapter III.
110. Yorkshire Gazette, 29/2/1868.
111. Bishop Samuel Wilberforce feared auricular confession could supersede "God's appointed intimacy between husband and wife, father and children": J.W. Burgon, Lives of 12 Good Men, vol. II, 1888, p. 56, quoted in J. Bentley, op. cit., p. 31. Archbishop Thomson thought the practice exposed "the sacredness of the hearth to a prying and often

morbid curiosity": H. Kirk-Smith, William Thomson, Archbishop of York, 1958, p. 33.

112. See this Chapter, parts (i) and (ii)(a) above.

113. YML, XXII/FE, E. Churton, The Church of England as Witness and Keeper of the Catholic Tradition, p. 5. - a Sermon preached at the Visitation of Charles Thorp, D.D., Archdeacon of Durham, 18 July 1836. The phrase "witness and keeper" is quoted from Article XX of the 39 Articles, 'Of the Authority of the Church'.

114. YML, XXII/FE, E. Churton, Witness and Keeper, p. 7.

115. R.I. Wilberforce, Principles of Church Authority, 1854, pp. 56-9.

116. R.I. Wilberforce, op. cit., p. 90.

117. CHUR 1/1/7, 'Charge' 1855, p. 5.

118. CHUR 1/1/2, 'Charge' 1847, p. 20.

119. D. Bowen, The Idea of the Victorian Church, 1968, p. 117.

120. CHUR 2/3/19, Letter to his father-in-law Joshua Watson, 2/3/1850. In the same letter Churton revealed that he only used "altar lights" at Crayke at "Evening Service after sunset;" i.e., not as "ornaments".

121. G. Trevor, op. cit., p. iv.

122. YCJ Oct. 1867, p. 68.

123. The Public Worship Regulation Act receives attention in the next section of this Chapter part (iii)(c) below.

124. See Chapter 5 part (v) below, for details of the growth of sacramentalism in York Diocese by 1894.

Chapter 2 part (iii)(b)

125. YCJ, Aug. 1875, p. 27.

126. Yorkshire Gazette 13/3/1869.

127. " " 6/11/1869.

128. " " 14/4/1866, report on 'Charge' to York clergy.

129. Yorkshire Gazette 5/5/1866, report on Charge to East Riding clergy. .

130. Yorkshire Gazette, 28/2/1857.

131. CHUR 1/1/14, 'Charge' 1866, p. 13.

132. CHUR 1/1/15, 'Charge' 1867, p. 13.

133. CHUR 1/1/15, 'Charge' 1867, p. 2.

134. YCJ Oct. 1867, p. 33.

135. " " " p. 47.

136. Printed in the Book of Common Prayer immediately before the Order for Morning Prayer. The Rubric states that



ornaments of the Church and the ministers' vestments should be those in use by parliamentary authority in the second year of the reign of Edward VI. Anti-ritualists could point out that the second year of Edward's reign ended in January 1549, and that the first (1549) Prayer Book of Edward VI, containing the requirement for the priest to wear alb, chasuble and stole at the Eucharist, did not come into use until the following June. They could argue, therefore, that the use of vestments and ornaments was not widespread in the second year of Edward's reign, as claimed by the ritualists.

137. YCJ Oct. 1867, pp. 49-50.

138. " " " p. 60.

139. Yorkshire Gazette, 3/1/1857.

140. YCJ Oct. 1867, pp. 52-56.

141. " " " p. 68.

142. E.H. Thomson, Life and Letters, 1918, p. 179. The northern branches involved included those in Barnsley, Bradford, Carlisle, Cleveland, Huddersfield, Hull, Liverpool, Low Moor (Bradford), Sheffield, Southport, Wakefield, Wigan and York.

143. YCJ Oct. 1867, p. 56.

144. " " " p. 66.

145. E.H. Thomson, op. cit., p. 179.

146. " " op. cit., p. 186: an undated letter from Thomson "to a fellow bishop".
147. YCJ Oct. 1867, p. 68.
148. Yorkshire Gazette, 18/4/1868.
149. H. Kirk-Smith, William Thomson, Archbishop of York, 1958, pp. 85-86.
150. See p. 167 in part (iii)(a) of this Chapter above.
151. H. Kirk-Smith, op. cit., p. 41.
152. YML/COLL/1948/8/1. There are 14 letters in this COLL/1948 series relating to the S.H. Bennett case. News of the short notice came from Canon R.E. Brooke, Rector of Bath, and Vicar of North Newbald in the East Riding, in a letter dated 28/8/1879.
153. See p. 199, part (iii)(c) of this Chapter below.
154. YML/COLL/1948/8/12 - a letter, e.g., from Canon W. Howard, Rector of Whiston, Rotherham, dated 27/11/1879.
155. E.g., in Yorkshire Gazette, 22/11/1879, 29/11/1879, and 6/12/1879
156. YML/COLL/1948/8/16. In a letter to the Dean & Chapter Archbishop Thomson made a reasonable point about future appointments to Dean and Chapter livings, suggesting that time elapsing between a vacancy arising and an appointment made to fill it should be sufficient to allow the patrons to enquire into the background of each candidate.

157. H. Kirk-Smith, op. cit., pp. 43-5 gives a useful and detailed account of this case.

158. CHANC C.P. 1870/1, and 1871/1. The cross must have been there even more certainly with Bishop Prince Lee's knowledge, as he died in 1869 and Fraser only took over the diocese in 1870.

159. CHANC C.P. 1870/1.

160. " " 1871/1.

161. " " 1873/1.

162. " " 1873/1.

163. " " 1873/1.

164. " " 1873/1.

Notes: Chapter 2 part (iii)(c)

165. Royal Commission on Ritual: Fourth Report, HMSO, 1870

166. G.E. Buckle (ed.), Letters of Queen Victoria, vol. II, 1926, p. 327, cited in J. Bentley, Ritualism and Politics, Oxford, 1978, p. 42

167. Especially in J. Bentley, op. cit., who devotes the whole of Chapter III to a very detailed account.

168. J. Bentley, op. cit., p. 47; D. L. Edwards, Leaders of the Church of England, 1828 - 1944, Oxford, 1971, p. 117.

169. J. Bentley, op. cit., p. 42.

170. W.O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 2, Cambridge, 1970, p. 361-2. Chadwick points out that this was a mixed blessing, since Convocation's discussions and resolutions lacked respect at the time.

171. YCJ, Apr. 1874, pp. 138-139. The Archbishop's questions were:-

(i) In dealing with irregularities, is it desirable that the bishop should be bound to initiate proceedings himself or that he should be put in motion by complaint? If the latter, who should have the right or duty of complaining?

(ii) Should the bishop have discretion as to giving a formal hearing to a complaint in order to check trifling and vexatious charges? If so, should the complainant have any (and what) appeal from the bishop's discretion?

(iii) About the form of proceedings: by way of criminal censure or of monition?

(iv) About penalties under the Act of Uniformity.

(v) Should the court of first instance consist of the bishop and his chancellor?

(vi) What appeals should be allowed, if any?

(vii) In disputed points of law, would it be desirable for the court of first instance to state a case for the opinion and decision of the final court of appeal?

(viii) What penalties for a possible refusal to obey the decisions of the courts?

(ix) Should a monition from the first court take effect at once unless execution is stayed by the court itself or by court of appeal?

172. YCJ Apr. 1874, p. 109.

173. " " " p. 143.

174. " " " p. 147.

175. " " " p. 145.

176. " " " p. 145.

177. " " " p. 146.

178. G. Trevor, The Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrifice and Participation of the Holy Eucharist, p. iv, underlines this, saying that in the 17th century Bishop Cosin affirmed and proved that acceptance of the Real Presence - however interpreted - was "common to all Protestant Confessions....The churchmanship of our day happily revolts from all that goes to lower or rationalise the Christian mysteries. In view of the secular tendencies of the age, it clings the more fervently to the Catholic tradition."

179. YCJ Apr. 1874, p. 116.

180.     "   "     "     p. 117.

181.     "   "     "     p. 119.

182.    YCJ Mar. 1874, p. 73.

183.    The term "member of the Church of England" used here was a necessary though not very satisfactory compromise. No satisfactory definition was available. Sometimes "parishioner" was the most suitable term. The dilemma was never completely solved. It loomed large again in 1886 when Canterbury Convocation formed its House of Laity. York Convocation members debated at length whether voters for lay representatives should be Communicants, regular attenders at church, or as Archbishop Thomson preferred: "a tolerably comprehensive [body] who upon the whole wish well to the Church of England." YCJ Feb. 1886, p. 120. A very similar problem has arisen at the present time (1993) with the question: should the election of General Synod members be at parish level by Electoral Roll members, rather than indirectly at ruri-decanal level?

184.    YPRL/T252, Paper read in Minster Vestry by Canon E.J. Randolph, 11/1/1875.

185.    Blunt had succeeded the ailing Charles Long as Archdeacon in 1873.

186.    E.R.V/CB27, 1874, p. 31.

187.     "     "     "     p. 33.

188.     "     "     "     p. 33.

189. YCJ Feb. 1875. The York Convocation Journal account of the ritual debate totals 129 pages.

190. Debates included: later in 1875 on Fourth Report of the Ritual Commission; in 1876 on Rubrics, position of bishop at ordination, and Church discipline; in 1877 on Church discipline; in 1878 on auricular confession and Ornaments Rubric; in 1879 on Ornaments and other Rubrics; in 1881 on clergy prosecutions, the Public Worship Regulation Act and the Ornaments Rubric; in 1882 on imprisonment of S.R. Green; and in 1885 on Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.

191. YCJ Feb. 1875, p. 27.

192. " " " p. 29.

193. " " " pp. 103-104.

194. " " " p. 40.

195. " " " p. 93.

196. " " " p. 8.

197. Anne Bentley, 'The Transformation of the Evangelical Party in the Church of England in the later 19th Century', Ph.D., Durham, 1971, p. 163.

198. Art/1881, passim.

199. Anne Bentley, op cit., p. 171.

200. E.H. Thomson, Life and Letters of William Thomson, Bodley, 1918, pp. 193-4.

201. W.O. Chadwick, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 348, lists the five, with their parishes and dates of imprisonment.
202. J. Bentley, op. cit., p. 108.
203. YCJ Apr. 1881, p. 6.
204. RD/HEL/1, Nov. 1881.
205. RD/POCK/1-2, Oct. 1881.
206. YCJ Apr. 1881, pp. 36-7.
207. " " " p. 93-4.
208. YCJ Feb 1882, pp. 23-4.
209. " " " p. 33.
210. Anne Bentley, op. cit., pp. 167-171. Bentley states that the new liberal Evangelicals at an Islington meeting in Jan. 1883 cheered when speakers opposed the condemnation of "harmless aesthetic fashions."
211. Anne Bentley, op. cit., pp. 158-160.
212. Anne Bentley, op. cit., p. 160, quoting Church Association Annual Report, p. 64. .
213. J. Bentley, op. cit., p. 114.
214. YCJ Jul. 1879, p. 113.



## Notes: Chapter 3

### Chapter 3, part (i)

1. As explained in the Preface and Glossary, rather than use the over-strong "de-Christianisation" or the over-vague "secularisation" I have invented the phrase "de-Churchment process" to describe the movement of parishioners from the Church of England to Nonconformist Churches, as well as the movement from both the Church of England and Nonconformist Churches to non-Church worship and activity. The two uses will be clear from the context. As an authority issue, the de-Churchment of people into Dissent was every bit as important as the more general movement from active participation in the worship of any Church to no Church activity at all.

2. YML F XXII, p 12, W. Thomson, Work and Prospects, (the published version of Thomson's Primary Charge in 1865).

3. W. Thomson, Work, p. 14.

4. K.A Thompson, Bureaucracy and Church Reform, 1970, p. 15, uses marketing terms to describe the situation.

5. Attendance Pointers: The percentages of population attending parish churches in York Diocese in 1865, calculated from figures given by clergy in the 1865 Archbishop's Visitation Returns (V/R), are only "attendance pointers" ["a.p."], and cannot be regarded as accurate figures. This is because the Archbishop's Visitation Returns required incumbents to state the average attendance at Sunday morning and evening service over the year. But this average figure was less useful to know than, e.g., the number of the population in a parish that attended church

at least once each Sunday. Incumbents gave the figures in very different ways: e.g., a few gave the total attendance at each service followed by the average; others gave the average without stating the number of services held each Sunday - which could have been 1,2 or 3; or gave a figure without making clear whether it was an average or a raw score; or said that the attendance average lay, e.g., "somewhere between 75-100, a.m., 150-170 p.m." Others gave raw scores, without indicating how many were attending church more than once.

Thus, 1. where clergy gave the average without any other figure, that has had to suffice to calculate the a.p. % , but the raw score of individual attendance might have been higher. 2. Where clergy did not make clear whether they were giving the average or a raw score, or where they did give raw scores of a.m., p.m. and afternoon services, I have been generous. I have divided the largest figure given by the population to reach the a.p.%. Hence, all "a.p.%'s" are only guides to attendance in 1865 and, despite the low diocesan average a.p. of 22%, they err on the generous side. Nevertheless, these a.p.'s give a useful - and remarkably consistent - comparison across the three archdeaconries in the diocese. N.B: the abbreviation "n.c.a.p.", indicates that it was not possible to calculate any a.p. from the figures given by an incumbent.

6. Of the 77 places surveyed in 1881, only the following 12 had separate (i.e., individual) attendances of more than half the population spread across all Churches - (listed in rank order, with pop. in brackets):

Gosport	(21,571)	78.8%;
Melksham, Wilts.,	(3,727)	74.2%;
Trowbridge	(10,777)	62.1%;
Hastings/St. Leonard's	(47,735)	61.4%;

Needham Market	(1,350)	60.0%;
Shepton Mallet	(4,622)	56.4%;
Blisworth, Northants.	(1,060)	56.4%;
Bath	(51,790)	53.9%;
Long Buckby Northants.	(2,600)	53.0%;
Wrexham	(12,333)	52.9%;
Peterborough	(21,219)	52.2%;
Halstead , Essex	(6,701)	51.7%;
Towcester	(2,834)	50.3%.

Of the northern towns surveyed, Scarborough (12,333) 49.3% came nearest to inclusion in the above list.

7. Some caution is needed in comparing the attendance figures of 1851, 1865 and 1881 because of different assumptions made and emphases given. Thus, Mann assumed in analysing the 1851 Religious Census that half of those present at afternoon services and one third of those present in the evening had NOT been to Church previously that Sunday. In the 1865 York V/R, the request for average attendance led to much diversity of data, hence the "attendance pointers" calculated for this study (explained in Note 5 above). In 1881, the local newspapers gave the figure for "combined attendance" across all churches for morning/afternoon/evening; and also the figure for separate worshippers across all churches combined. But they only gave the combined Anglican attendance across all services, and no separate worshipper figure. Thus, the percentage comparison of Nonconformist/Anglican attendances calculated for this study had to be confined to the rather less useful figures for total attendances at 2 or 3 services, and not based on the total of individual, separate attendances.

The Nonconformist & Independent (2/2/1882), which gave a comprehensive summary of the 1881 Religious Census culled from the various local newspapers involved, having explained

that the Religious Census was set in motion at Newcastle during the 21st Church Congress in Oct. 1881, warns that, because the statistics were collected in different ways, "uniformity of treatment is impossible." Also, boundary changes not having been taken into consideration in some places precluded safe comparison with 1851 Census figures.

8. S.J.D.Green, 'Religion and the Industrial Town, with special reference to the West Riding of Yorkshire, c.1870-1920', Oxford D. Phil. thesis, 1989, pp. 11, 14, having discussed "divergence theory" (as popularised by Glock, 'The Religious Revival in America', in Jane Zahn (ed.), Religion and the Face of America, Berkeley, 1959, and Glock and Stark, Religion and Society in Tension, Chicago, 1965), convincingly argues that, although religious bodies declined during the period, religion per se must not be assumed to have declined. Instead, it became dispersed both into private life and into public institutions. And, contrary to earlier assumptions, the health of religion measured in terms of commitment to religious institutions, was (a) difficult to codify because of differing types of commitment expected even between different churches, and (b) because it was not sufficiently recognised that the commitment of the middle and upper classes was stronger in matters linked with social standing, such as being seen to be members of churches and attending them to keep up appearances, but was less inclined to let religion into daily life; whereas the lower classes were more likely to maintain a religion for daily life - albeit, often without church attendance - and to find regular consolation in prayer and religious belief.

9. The causes of poor Sunday School attendance are examined in part (iv) of this chapter.

10. M. Dick, 'The myth of the working class Sunday School', in History of Education, Vol. 9, No. 1, Mar. 1980, questions assumptions about Sunday Schools as working class developments in the early 19th century, or as institutions regarded by the working class as providing virtuous aspirations such as self-help and self-improvement, or as places that were not politically repressive and where working class children inculcated an upright "working class culture". (p. 28). Using various researchers' conclusions as well as his own, Dick argues that Sunday Schools were mostly paternalistic, that the Bible was used to explain the need for the existing social hierarchy and for obedience to legal authority, including work masters; (p. 28.) and that the teachers being usually of a higher class than the scholars - and generally Evangelical and conservative - tried to steer the children away from working class depravity, from the irreligion of their parents, and from radicalism, towards "spirituality" and deferential behaviour towards their betters. (pp. 34-36) Thus, Sunday Schools were disliked for their political and social propaganda as much as for their Established Church teaching, and it is not surprising that many parishes struggled to keep up attendances of children from working class families.

11. YCJ Apr. 1884, p. 6.

12. D. Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison, pp. 149, 164.

13. The Church's lack of authority over the commercialisation and industrialisation processes in society, and particularly over the exploitation of employees and their families, such as in requiring child labour, had serious consequences for the migrant lower

orders of society. See sections (iii) & (iv) of this Chapter.

14. D.L. Edwards, Religion and Change, 1969, pp. 18-19.

15. K. Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, p. 189.

16. Gatty was Vicar from 1833 to 1901.

17. A. Gatty, The Vicar and his Duties, 1853, p. x.

18. V/R 1865, Ecclesfield, pop. 5,000, a.p. 10%.

19. A point stressed by S.J.D. Green, op. cit., p. 14.

20. As indicated in Tables 2, 3 & 4 above.

21. CHUR 1/1/7, 'Charge' 1854, pp. 4-7.

22. A. Gatty, op. cit., p. ix.

23. D. Bogue and J. Bennett, History of Dissenters, 1808-12, vol. iv, pp. 204-5, quoted by W.R. Ward, Religion and Society in England, 1790-1850, 1972, pp. 46-47.

24. See parts (iii), (iv) & (v) of this Chapter. The question of "inside" and "outside" the Church is examined at the beginning of part (v).

25. W.C. Magee, then Bishop of Peterborough, later Archbishop of York, in The Voluntary System: Can it supply the place of the Established Church?, 1860, p. 48., quoted in M.J.D. Roberts, 'The Role of the Laity in the Church of England c.1850-1885', Oxford, D.Phil, thesis, 1974, p. 5.

Notes: Chapter 3 part (ii)

26. In the 19th century, membership of the Church of England was a vexed question partly because of the growth of voluntarism, partly because it was possible to worship regularly in the local parish church without ever being confirmed or becoming a communicant "member". But a further complication is that even regular church attendance has to be regarded as quite "modern", at least in some parts of Britain. Thus, G. Callum Brown, 'Religion and Social Change' in Devine & Mitchison (ed.), People and Society in Scotland, pp. 145-146, points out that, as before the 19th century the parish was the civil state as well as the ecclesiastical, and as the rural church therefore functioned as focus for magistracy, police, tax collection, and many other matters, "church attendance was not usually compulsory except for miscreants...[and] the only forms of religious 'alienation' were criminality, immorality or heresy....For people not overtly falling within these categories, non-churchgoing implied little about what later generations came to call their 'religious condition'. The concepts of irreligion and alienation, as developed by the Victorians and 20th century sociologists respectively, were themselves alien to the early modern period."

27. V/R 1865, Cowick, Selby, pop. 818, a.p. 18%.

28. V/R 1865, Foston-on-the-Wolds, Bridlington, pop. 338, a.p. 30%. This parson's comment mirrors the situation recorded for the area in the Religious Census of 1851. See Table 2, p. 208 above.

29. V/R 1865, Ellerton, Weighton, pop. 338, a.p. 24%.

30. V/R 1865, Hinderwell, Guisborough, pop. 234, a.p. not calculable (=a.p.n.c.).

31. V/R 1865, Barmbrough, Doncaster, pop. 462, a.p. 22%.

32. " " Hawnby, Helmsley, pop. 746, a.p. 7%.

33. " " Adwick-le-Street, Doncaster, pop. 440, a.p. 32%.

34. " " Felkirk, Pontefract, pop. 1,106, a.p. 14%.

35. " " Holme-on-Spalding Moor, Weighton, pop. 1,913, a.p. 10%.

36. CHUR 1/1/8, 'Charge' 1856, pp. 8-9.

37. 1865 V/R, Gate Helmsley, Bulmer, pop. 200, a.p. 45%.

38. " " Holtby, Bulmer, pop. 165, a.p. 42%.

39. " " Goatland, Guisborough, pop. 319, a.p. 19%.

40. " " Osbaldwick, Bulmer, pop. 342, a.p. 23%.

41. " " Danby, Guisborough, pop. 1,637, a.p. 11%]

42. V/R 1865, St. Hilda's, Middlesbrough, pop. 10,235, a.p. 5%; and St. John's, Middlesbrough, pop. 12,301, a.p. 3%. The incumbent at St. Hilda's simply wanted more churches, the fashionable plea of the day. Whether more churches constituted the real need is debatable and, to be fair, the incumbent of St. John's placed the need for more clergy on a par with more churches. Hindsight suggests that the Roman Catholic practice in urban areas was wiser, i.e., providing



more services at different times in the existing R.C. parish churches. Professor Robin Gill refers to "the crucial difference between Catholics and others in their far tighter control over church buildings," so that, for instance, whilst York's Anglican churches and Nonconformist chapels increased from 41 to 51 between 1851 and 1901, R.C. churches increased only from 2 to 3 - the third built in 1889. Yet R.C. share of the city's regular Church attendance increased from 6% to 14% during those years (and amounted to 31.7% of the Church of England's attendance figure in 1901: i.e., 2,360 compared with 7,453). R. Gill, 'York Churchgoing - Ten Propositions on Churchgoing Decline', a Paper at 'Religion in Victorian Britain' Conference, York University, 1990, pp. 2, 24.

43. V/R 1865, Bishop Wilton, Pocklington, pop. 919, a.p. 9%. The incumbent meant "refused" because within the "prohibited degrees" of marriage.

44. V/R 1865, Nafferton, Bridlington, pop. 535, a.p.16%.

45. " " Marston, Ainsty, pop. 586, a.p.n.c.

46. " " Chapelton, Ecclesfield, pop. 4,063, a.p. 9%.

47. See Appendix No. 3.

48. V/R 1865, Ormesby, Stokesley, pop. 3,464, a.p. 5%

49. " " Sunk Island, Hedon, pop. 376, a.p. 5%

50. " " Patrington, Hedon, pop. 1,724, a.p. 6%.

51. " " Sheffield Br'tside, pop. 10,101, a.p. 1.5%.
52. " " Ampleforth, Helmsley, pop. 450, a.p. 16%.
53. V/R 1877, Ampleforth.
54. V/R 1894, Ampleforth, Helmsley, pop. 764, accomm. 230.
55. Calculated from V/R 1877 across the diocese.
56. In 1894 clergy were not asked in the V/R to say whether church attendance was a fair proportion of population. Thus the 13% of clergy in 1894 who had problems because of Dissent represent a % of ALL 592 clergy responses from the diocese, and NOT, as in 1865 and 1877, a % of those who linked poor attendance with Dissent.

57. V/R 1894, Ecclesfield, pop. 6,017, acc. 750.

58. i.e., C of E accommodation only catered, at most, for a "confessional" gathering like the other Churches.

Notes: Chapter 3, part (iii)

59. Quoted in J.D. Gay, The Geography of Religion in England, 1971, p. 77. NOTE: Snaith Deanery reflects the problem: Pop. in 1892 = 9,341 with 13 clergy. Pop. in 1895 = 35,792 (incr. = 283%) and 21 clergy (incr. = 61.5%).

60. V/R 1894, Hickleton, Wath, pop. 170, acc. 200.

61. Lowest Attendance Pointers, York Diocese, 1865:  
 Across the archdeaconries 66 parishes had a.p.'s of less than 10%, 31 of them in York/West Riding Archdeaconry.

9 were parishes of over 10,000 pop.: (both the Middlesbrough parishes; 1 in Hull; 5 in Sheffield; 1 in Rotherham).

6 (all in Y/WR, 4 of them in Sheffield) were of 5,001 to 9,999 pop.

35 were parishes of 1,000 to 5,000 pop. Of these, 18 were in Y/WR (1 in Sheffield, 2 in Pontefract, 3 in Rotherham and 4 in City of York Deanery); 8 in Cleveland Archdeaconry; 9 in the East Riding.

11 were parishes between 500 and 999 pop.

6 were parishes of less than 500 pop., none of which was in Y/WR Archdeaconry.

Dissent was the cause most blamed for the very poor church attendance, but not universally: See also Appendix 3.

62. Only two parsons in 1865 claimed that they sometimes had 100% attendance. One was at Goxhill, Hornsea, with a pop. of 64 and a.p. 64%. It is puzzling that Winestead, Hedon, was the other where the incumbent claimed "almost everyone in the parish attends either Morning or Evening Prayer" - but had an a.p. of only 9.7% with a pop. of 927.

63. V/R 1865, Sheffield parish church, pop. officially 33,425, a.p. 3%; and Rotherham parish church, pop. 15,035, a.p. 5.3%. To be fair, neither Dr. Sale at Sheffield nor Mr. Mosley at Rotherham was complacent enough to consider that his congregation was a fair proportion of the pop.

64. V/R 1865, Tinsley, Rotherham, pop. 697, a.p. 13%.

65. St. Paul's is a.p.n.c. Although supposedly a parish with its own priest-in-charge and curate, St. Paul's pop. was still included in Holy Trinity's in 1865. St. Paul's was legally still the only other parish in Hull in addition

to Holy Trinity, Kingston-upon-Hull which, with an official pop. of 45,460, was staffed by three curates in the absence of the vicar. The eight other Hull "district" churches operated independently of Holy Trinity. Some of the priests-in-charge gave an approximate no. of pop. that their district church served. But officially these numbers were also included in Holy Trinity's figures.

66. V/R 1865, Hull St. James's - original underlining. Despite the Church pop. estimate given by Mr. Hunt, the a.p. is n.c. because he claimed he could not tell the number of people attending St. James's, though in evenings it was "very well filled - increasing."

67. V/R 1865, St. Peter's Drypool, pop. 6,421, a.p. 12%. Ellam reported congregations "700-800 - increasing."

68. V/R 1865, St. Peter's, Drypool; and Sheffield St. Philip, pop. 18,461, a.p. 5.4%.

69. V/R 1865, Christ Church, Sculcoates, a.p.n.c.

70. Calculated from V/R 1865. See Appendix 3.

71. Calculated from V/R 1865. The 21.9% does not include worshippers at the Minster.

72. V/R 1865, Sheffield St. George, pop. 10,538, a.p. 9%.

73. V/R 1865, Sheffield St. Philip, pop. 18,461, a.p. 5.4%. Note: Sheffield parish church had a larger but nominal pop. of 33,425, but its parish was not strictly limited to the area immediately around the church.

74. YML F XXII, W. Thomson, Charge 1870, p. 41.

75. V/R 1894 passim indicates these increases.
76. " " Hull St. Thomas, pop. 6,333, accomm. 710.
77. V/R 1865, " Holy Trinity, pop. 45,450, a.p.n.c.
78. " " " St. Mary Sculcoates, pop. 17,685, a.p. 1.4%.
79. The C.P.A.S. required clergy applicants for grants to pass doctrinal tests, and would dispense with the need for a bishop's licence for a suitable applicant. Though not intended to be a party organisation, the A.C.S. became more High Church as a counter to the C.P.A.S.'s Evangelical emphasis and its doctrinal tests. Tolerant Joshua Watson remained Treasurer of the A.C.S. until his death in 1855, and personally subscribed £500 per year to the Society. In populous parts of the York Diocese there were clergy ready to have help from either or both of these societies, indicating their desperation and hence, also, the relative unimportance of Churchmanship to them.
80. V/R 1865, Hull Holy Trinity, pop. 45,450.
81. " " " St. James, a.p.n.c.
82. " " " St. Paul, a.p.n.c.
83. " " Sheffield St. George, pop. 10,538.
84. V/R 1894, " Attercliffe, pop. 16,957.
85. " " " St. Matthew, pop, 3,727.
86. " " " St. Jude Eldon St., pop. 4,783.

87. V/R 1894, Sheffield St. John in the Park, pop. 11,264.
88. " " " St. Michael Neepsend, pop. 7,607
89. " " " St. Gilas Gilcar, pop. 11,427,  
acc. 800.
90. V/R 1894, " St. Mary, pop. 19,775.
91. V/R 1894, Hull Holy Trinity, pop. 13,449 - i.e., much  
of the old parish of Kingston-upon-Hull now carved up  
amongst the "new" parishes.
92. V/R 1894, passim.
93. See Appendix No. 3.
94. V/R 1894, Hull St. Stephen, pop. 11,511.
95. Robin Gill, 'York Churchgoing - Ten Propositions',  
1990, pp. 2, 24, examines this difference of practice in  
York where Anglicans had numerous under-used churches and  
Roman Catholics had far fewer churches - but well used.
96. V/R 1894, Sheffield parish church, pop. 6,159 acc.  
2,000.- i.e., like Holy Trinity, Hull, Sheffield parish  
church now had a slimmed down parish around it.
97. V/R 1894, Eston, Middlesbrough, pop. 19,823, acc. 600.
98. V/R 1865, Grosmont, Guisborough, pop. 1,700, a.p. 15%.  
Original underlining.
99. V/R 1865, Featherstone, Pontefract, pop. 2,406,  
a.p.n.c.

100. V/R 1865, Elsecar, Rotherham, pop. 1,912, a.p. 10%.
101. " " Brotherton, Pontefract, pop. 1,449, a.p. 13%.
102. " " Knottingley, Pontefract, pop. 2,181, a.p. 11%.
103. The effects of the hiring system on de-Churchment - especially of children and young people - are examined in the next section of this chapter.
104. V/R 1865, North Cave with Cliffe, Beverley Deanery, pop. 1,281, a.p. 9%.

Chapter 3, part (iv)

105. W. Thomson, Work & Prospects, 1865, p. 14.
106. YCJ Jul. 1884, p. 164.
107. YCJ Jul. 1884, p. 162.
108. YCJ Jul. 1884, p. 165.
109. M. Dick's findings on this dislike are summarised in Note 10 to this Chapter above.
110. G. K. Clark, Churchmen and the Condition of England, 1832-85, 1973, pp. 314-317.
111. BPP, 'Population', vol. 11, pp. xxviii-xl.

112. Yorkshire Gazette 12/12/1869, view expressed in an article about the proposed Education Act.
113. V/R 1865, Cherry Burton, Beverley, pop. 502, a.p. 20%.
114. " " Eastoft, Selby, pop. 624, a.p. 26%.
115. " " Dalton-Holme, Beverley, pop. 506, a.p. 26%.
116. " " Ferry Fryston, Pontefract, pop. 904, a.p. 13%.
117. " " Aston, Rotherham, pop. 995, a.p. 23%.
118. PR/BRAY/121, Brayton Parish Mag., Mar. 1875.
119. PR/BRAY/121, " " " , Feb. 1880.
120. PR/POCK/70, Pocklington Parish Mag., Feb. 1880.
121. PR/POCK/70, Pocklington Parish Mag., Apr. 1880.
122. V/R 1865, Laxton, Howden, pop. 790, a.p. 25%.
123. Education reform is examined in Chapter 4, part (v).
124. CCR Manchester, 1863, pp 277-299.
125. W. Thomson, Work and Prospects, pp. 13-15.
126. V/R 1865, Dunnington, Bulmer, pop. 906 a.p.n.c.
127. CCR York, 1866, p 41. Randolph made his appeal in a paper on 'The Social Condition and Recreation of the Poor'.



128. V/R 1865, Featherstone, Pontefract, pop. 2,406, a.p.n.c.

129. S.J.D. Green, 'Religion and the Industrial Town', Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1989, pp. 208-9. In Chapters 5-8 Green looks closely at Sunday Schools in Halifax, Keighley and Denholme where he estimates that roughly half the children spent time in Sunday Schools run by the various Churches. The hiring system that plagued other parts of Yorkshire does not seem to have had noticeable effects in those towns.

130. See Appendix No. 4.

131. V.R 1865, Ingleby Greenhow, Stokesley, pop. 481, a.p. 19%.

132. V/R 1894 - (V/R for Archbishop Maclagan.)

133. V/R 1764, East Ardsley.

134. " " Ecclesfield.

135. Thus, for instance, T. Myers, incumbent of Holy Trinity, Goodramgate, reported: "There is a Sunday School Society for York distinct from the daily schools. This occasions great practical inconvenience." S. Wainwright, Rector of Holy Trinity, Micklegate, despite being on the Sunday School Society Committee from 1857 to 1870 said he "very rarely" retained children, claiming that the situation would be much better "if the Sunday Schools were parochial and under efficient management....The exclusiveness of the Sunday School Committee...makes parochial action impossible." V/R 1865, Holy Trinity

Goodramgate, York, pop. 3,432, a.p. 8%; V/R 1865, Holy Trinity, Micklegate, York, pop. 1,652, a.p. 23%.

136. This was Bailey at the new parish of St. Paul's, who said "every exertion is used to retain them, (and) many whilst in service are allowed by their employers to come. But, of course, a large proportion take service or employment at a distance, and so are lost to the School." V/R 1865, Hull St. Paul, a.p.n.c.

137. V/R 1865, Midd'brough St. Hilda, pop. 10,235, a.p. 5%.

138. " " " St. John, pop. 12,301, a.p. 3%.

139. See Appendix 4 for details of the rural deaneries.

140. V/R 1865, Bulmer, Malton, pop. 1,077, a.p. 15%.

141. " " Hook, Selby, pop. 415, a.p. 12%.

142. " " Wilberfoss, Pocklington, (pop?) a.p.n.c.

143. W.O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church vol. 2, pp. 191-2.

144. Retention of young confirmees in 1894 is examined in Chapter 5 part (v) below.

Notes: Chapter 3, part (v)

145. E.R. Wickham, Church & People in an Industrial City, 1957, p. 45.

146., E.R. Wickham, op cit., p. 42. Pew renting went back at least as far as the 17th century and allowed the gentry to rent private pews, the rent often paying part of the incumbent's stipend. Among the remaining accommodation, some would be "free" and some appropriated. Pews appropriated were for regular worshippers who would often place their own hassocks or cushions in the pew as a sign of their "ownership". Both renting and appropriation had advantages: renting for the parish and incumbent's income; appropriation for encouraging a "sense of property in their church and pride in their cushion or hassock." W.O Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 1, 1966, pp. 330-1.

147. W.O. Chadwick, op. cit., vol 1, pp. 329-330, points out that the smell of the poor caused difficulties in R.C. and Dissenting churches, too.

148. V/R 1865, Pontefract, pop. 4,987, a.p. 15%.

149. YML Fulford Parish Magazine, Jan. 1871.

150. V/R 1865, Warthill, Bulmer, pop. 217, a.p. 28%.

151. " " Patrington, Hedon, pop. 1,724, a.p. 6%.

152. " " Mkt. Weighton, pop. 2,178, a.p. 11%.

153. " " Driffield, Harthill pop. 4,405, a.p. 11%.

154. " " Stokesley, pop. 2,401, a.p. 13%.

155. " " Easington, Guisboro', pop. 752, a.p. 15%.

156. " " Thornaby, Stokesley, pop. 3,126, a.p. 6%.

157. " " York St. Thomas Lowther St., pop. 3,669, a.p. 14%.

158. V/R 1865, Wortley, pop. 1,221, a.p. 12%.

159. " " Sheffield St. Philip, pop. 18,461, a.p. 5.4%. In addition, M. Mercer, incumbent of Sheffield St. George, pop. 10,538, a.p. 9%, where there was "a considerable attendance of poor", forecast even larger attendance if he could "suitably enfranchise one part, e.g., the gallery." [V/R 1865]. An unusual comment came from H. Barlow, incumbent of Pitsmoor pop. 8,921, a.p. 8%: "We could have more people attending if we could let more sittings." This implies that Barlow could encourage wealthier people to church if he charged rents for seats at present free. E.R. Wickham, *op. cit.*, pp. 71, 90, discovered that in 1841 there were 2,000 free sittings available in Sheffield churches. This was 1,700 more than in the mid-1830's when the population already had reached 60,000. But these 2,000 seats in 1841 were not filled.

160. V/R 1865, Sheffield St. James, pop. 4,659, a.p.n.c.

161. The five parishes were: Aberford, Pontefract, pop. 857, acc. 500; Bridlington St. Mary, pop. 3,588, acc. 1,000; Pocklington, pop. 2,785, acc. 600; Swinton, Wath, pop. 8,000, acc. 437; York St. Paul Holgate Lane, pop. 6,326, acc. 760. Pew renting lingered in parts of England well into the 20th century. Thus, e.g., Canon Bryan Green, on becoming Vicar of Holy Trinity, Broughton, London, in the early 1930's, started to abolish pew rents there. (Mentioned in Church Times obituary, 12/3/1993).

162. Total York diocesan income from pew rents in 1894-5 was only £5,351 (= 2.8% of the year's income) compared with

the remaining diocesan income of £188,384, (of which £65,286 was from commuted Tithe Rent Charges and £69,748 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.) Source: Bp Dio. 11/4, 1894-5

163. V/R 1865, E. Acklam, Stokesley, pop. 774, a.p. 13%.

164. " " Hawnby, Helmsley, pop. 746, a.p. 7%.

165. " " Burghwallis, Doncaster, pop. 237, a.p.. 30%. The relatively high a.p. suggests that the Rector's difficulties with the landowner did not affect attendance, despite there having already been proceedings over the dispute, in the Archbishop's Chancery Court in York in 1864. (CHANC C.P. 1864/2).

166. V/R 1868, W. Acklam, Stokesley, pop. 110, a.p. 55%. (The incumbent was technically also incumbent of Middlesbrough).

167. Rosemary Chadwick, 'Church and People in Bradford and District 1880-1914', Oxford D. Phil., 1985, passim, and especially chapter 5.

168. V/R 1865, Bridlington St. Mary, pop. 3,500, a.p. 26%.

169. " " " Christ Church, pop. 2,677, a.p. 26%.

170. " " Hutton Cranswick, Harthill, pop. 1,415, a.p. 4%.

171. Bishop Magee, 'Charge' to Peterborough clergy, 1872, p. 14, quoted in D.M. Thompson, 'The Churches & Society in Leicestershire, 1851-81', Cambridge Ph.D., 1969, p. 238.

172. PR/POCK/70-72, Pocklington Parish Mag., Jun. 1879.

173. V/R 1865, Rise, Hornsea, pop. 188, a.p. 43%.
174. " " Thurnscoe, Doncaster, pop. 196, a.p. 46%.
175. " " Atwick, Hornsea, pop. 319, a.p. 9%.
176. "The Church" here means those in highest authority; for such a tactic required legal sanction - or courage on the part of a parson prepared to bend the rules about the use of unconsecrated buildings.
177. PR/POCK/70-73, Pocklington Parish Mag., Jun. 1879.
178. V/R 1865, Hovingham, Helmsley, (pop?) a.p.n.c.
179. " " Nunnington, Helmsley, (pop?) a.p.n.c.
180. V/R 1865, Conisbrough, Doncaster, pop. 1,655, a.p. 9%.
181. " " Sprotborough, Doncaster, pop. 508, a.p. 59%.
182. V/R 1865, Sheffield:- St. Stephen, pop. 4,096, a.p. 17%; St. George, pop. 10,538, a.p. 9%; St. Thomas, Crookes, pop. 3,452, a.p. 14%.
183. V/R 1865, Drypool, Beverley, pop. 6,421, a.p. 12%.
184. " " Middlesbrough St. Hilda, pop. 10,235, a.p. 5%; St. John's, pop. 12,300, a.p. 3%.
185. V/R 1865, Upper Helmsley, Bulmer, pop. 240, a.p. 19%.
186. " " Escrick, Bulmer, pop. 855, a.p. 29%.
187. " " Kirby Knowle, Thirsk, pop. 504, a.p. 13%.

188. " " Haxby, Easingwold, pop. 596, a.p. 24%.
189. " " Haxby, " " " " " "
190. " " Scrayingham-w.-Howsham & Leppington,  
Pocklington, pop. 480, a.p. 35%.
191. V/R 1865 Kildale, Stokesley, pop. 221, a.p. 23%.
192. " " Askham Bryan, pop. 362, a.p. 33%.
193. " " Crayke, Easingwold, pop. 585, a.p. 51%.
194. V/R 1894, Kirkleatham, Midd'bro', pop. 532, acc. 270.
195. " " Bridlington St. Mary, pop. 3,588, acc. 1,000.
196. " " Hooton Pagnell, pop. 318, acc. 230.
197. " " Sheffield St. Matthew, pop. 3,727, acc. 700.
198. " " York St. John Ousebridge, pop. 591, acc. 440.
199. Source: V/R 1894.
200. V/R 1894, Askham Richard, pop. 212, acc. 150.
201. " " Sheffield St. Silas, pop. 11,427, acc. 800.
202. V/R 1894, Healaugh, Ainsty, pop. 301, acc. 100.
203. " " Burton Pidsea, Hedon, pop. 342, acc. 290.
204. " " Mkt. Weighton, pop. 1,867, acc. 480.

205. " " Pitsmoor, pop. 14,869, acc. 1,000.
206. V/R 1894, Sheffield St. Matthias, pop. 5,484, acc. 720.
207. V/R 1865, Flamborough, Bridlington, pop. 1,287, a.p. 8%; & Bridlington Christ Church, pop. 2,677, a.p. 26%. Several other clergy complained equally briefly: e.g., Cowick, Selby, pop. 818, a.p. 18%, had 5 pubs and "usual amount of drunkenness;" Kilvington, Thirsk, pop. 360, a.p. 22%; Hensall w. Heck, Selby, pop. 633, a.p. 16%; Sheffield St. Stephen, pop. 4,096, 17%.
208. V/R 1865, Askham Richard, Ainsty, pop. 235, a.p.n.c.
209. V/R 1865, e.g. Barmby Marsh, Pocklington, had 5, with pop. 456, a.p. 15%.
210. V/R 1865, Brafferton, pop. 904, a.p. 33%.
211. " " Huntington, Easingwold, pop. 671, a.p. 15%.
212. V/R 1894, Sheffield Christ Church, pop. 12,921, acc. 660; Sheffield St. George, pop. 10,538, acc. 1,650.
213. V/R 1894, Upper & Nether Poppleton, Ainsty, pop. 593, acc. 341; Rufforth, Ainsty, pop. 246, acc. 140.
214. V/R 1865, Askern & Fenwick, Doncaster, (pop?) a.p.n.c.
215. V/R 1865, B'ton Chr. Church, pop. 2,677, a.p. 26%.
216. " " Tunstall-in-H'ness, Hedon, pop. 166, a.p. 24%.
217. V/R 1894, Askern/Fenwick, Doncaster, pop. 650, acc. 230.



218. V/R 1865, Seaton Ross, W'ton, pop. 549, a.p. 15%.
219. " " Doncaster Christ Church, pop. 7,000, a.p. 11%; St. George w. St. James, pop. 9,819, a.p. 21%.
220. V/R 1894, Sheffield St. Mary, pop. 19,775, acc. 1,500
- 221.V/R 1865, Goatland, Guisboro', pop. 319, a.p. 19%.
222. " " Eastoft, Selby, pop. 624, a.p. 26%.
223. V/R 1894, Sheffield Christ Church, pop. 12,921, acc. 660; Sheffield St. George, pop. 10,538, acc. 1,650.
224. V/R 1865, Doncaster St. George, pop.9,819, a.p. 21%.
225. " " Dringhouses, Ainsty, pop. 400, a.p. 40%.
226. The subjects of the charter role and increased sacramentalism are examined in Chapter 5, part (v) below.

Notes: Chapter 4

Chapter 4, part (i)

1. The Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control was founded in 1853, successor to the British Anti-State-Church Association of 1844 which had been formed in the wake of the Scottish Disruption of 1843 (when 451 of the 1,203 ministers of the Established Church of Scotland broke away, over a veto for presbyteries in patronage matters, and formed the Free [Protestant] Church of Scotland). Both the Liberation Society and its predecessor were the inspiration of Congregationalist Minister Edward Miall, editor of the militant journal The Nonconformist, and M.P. for Rochdale since 1852.

2. A.D. Gilbert, Religion and Society in Industrial England - Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914, 1976, p. 163, lists 16 Acts that contributed to gradual disestablishment and to the acceptance of pluralism in society. These included: the Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths Act and the Solemnisation of Marriages Act (both passed 1836); the Compulsory Church Rates Abolition Act (1868); the Burial Laws Amendment Act (1880); and the Local Government (Parish Councils) Act (1894). Gilbert excluded educational legislation from his list, but drew attention to three measures which, he said, "aroused Church-Chapel animosities matched in intensity by the peaks of anti-church rate and disestablishment agitation." These were the defeated attempt to increase the Church's hold over education in the Factory Education Bill of 1843, Forster's Education Act of 1870 (setting up local authority elementary Board Schools), and Balfour's

Education Act of 1902, (to set up local authority secondary schools).

3. Gilbert, op. cit., p. 163.

4. R. Oastler, Convocation, the Church and the People, a letter to William Walker, Esq., of Bolling Hall, Bradford, [John Rylands Pamphlet 9 - D2369 - A111994], p. 30.

5. R. Oastler, op. cit., p. 16. Capital letters in original.

6. CHUR/1/1/3, 'Charge' 1848, pp. 27-8.

7. "Parishioners" = all the inhabitants of his parish. The rights and privileges listed in the Report were: only Anglican clergy may be Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons, and the same is true of some professorships and chaplaincies at Oxford, Cambridge and Durham; only the Archbishop of Canterbury may crown the Sovereign; Anglican clergy hold precedence in religious services marking important national events - (often modified into an equal partnership nowadays). The Archbishops and 24 other bishops of English dioceses in order of seniority represent the episcopate in the House of Lords; the Sovereign is obliged to join in Communion with the Church; the parish priest has a right to celebrate any marriages recognised as lawful, and he has the right to be the "persona" of his parish and not merely the minister of a "gathered congregation." Additional (and sometimes debatable) advantages listed were: The Church is available to all, even those who do nothing to support its existence; each person has the right to call on the parson of the parish; every parishioner has the right to a seat in his parish church and to have his child christened there and, as long

as there are no legal problems, to be married there. The appointment of bishops by the Prime Minister can prevent the prevailing "school of thought" in the Church from swamping the Bench, and also ensure the appointment of men with practical talents; whereas there might be an overloading of "theologians" if Church leaders alone appointed bishops. D. Morgan, The Church in Transition, (1970) pp. 70-1, quoting from 'Church and State', the Report of a Commission appointed by the Church Assembly, (Church Information Office, 1952) paraphrased here.

8. YCJ Feb. 1887, p. 5. Thomson's elements were:

1. the power of the Crown to summon Convocation;
2. the Crown's involvement in the nomination of bishops and archbishops;
3. visitatorial powers of the Crown;
4. appeals from ecclesiastical courts to the Crown;
5. no changes in doctrine or worship without the consent of the Crown expressed by Parliament;
6. the power of modifying the regulations of the Church by means of Statutes in doctrine, worship and ritual.

9. CCR Leeds 1872, p. 149.

10. YCJ Apr. 1882, Appx. xiv-xv.

11. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 80. Howard made his comments during a debate on Parliament's proposals to disestablish the Church of Ireland.

12. The Church Defence Institution, sometimes confusingly referred to in Victorian records as the "Church Defence Institute" or the "Church Defence Association", must not be confused with "The Church Institute", which was entirely educational and recreational in its aims, nor with the

"Church Association" the extreme Anglican Evangelical group set up to oppose ritual practices.

13. YDC 1863, p. 140.

14. The Institution's rules required representatives to be laymen, and to have strong links with the locality they represented, "by birth, property or otherwise", but to be resident (presumably for at least part of the year) in London. The earliest representatives from York Diocese included Sir Charles Anderson, Bt., (West Harthill), Colonel Duncombe, (Cleveland North), J. Somers, M.P., (Harthill South), and John Bailey, Q.C., (Rydall E. & W.). YDC 1863, p. 140.

15. The deaneries in 1866: Ainsty, Beverley, Bridlington, Buckrose, Ecclesfield, Guisborough, Harthill, Helmsley, Hornsea, Malton, Sheffield, Stokesley, Rotherham, Weighton, and York. YDC 1866, pp. 180-1. In 1878, when the associations peaked across the diocese, they were: In Cleveland - Bulmer, Easingwold, Guisborough, Helmsley, Malton Town and District and R.D., Northallerton, Stokesley Town and R.D., Middlesbrough; In East Riding - Beverley Town and R.D., Buckrose, Harthill, Hedon, Hornsea, Hull Town and R.D., Howden, Pocklington, Scarborough, Weighton; In York Archdeaconry - Knottingley, Rotherham, Rawmarsh, Sheffield, Wath, York. YCD 1866, pp. 180-1.

16. E.R.V/CB 27/1875, 'Charge', p. 35.

17. Enthusiasm for Church Defence Associations waned in the more populous parts of the diocese. In 1894 there were only 4 in York Archdeaconry and 3 in Sheffield. In the East Riding there was one more (13) than in 1878, and in

Cleveland the number was 19, as in 1888. [YCD 1894, pp.339-340; & 1888, p. 297.]

Notes: Chapter 4, part (ii)

18. Yorkshire Gazette, 18/4/1868.

19. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 78.

20. In 1872 the Church Defence Institution added to its objectives: "To resist all attempts to destroy or weaken the Union between Church and State." [See YDC 1877, under "Church Institution"].

21. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 67. R. Oastler, Convocation, the Church and the People, 1860, p. 14, put the opposite view, saying "The very existence of a National Church by law established rests upon the theory of that Church being the Church OF the whole people and FOR the whole people." But, he argued, as the majority of working class men were "not of the Church [of England]" it was clear that the Church "has failed in her mission."

22. YCJ Feb. 1869, pp. 69-70.

23. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 74.

24. YCJ Feb. 1869, pp. 66-103.

25. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 80.

26. " " " p. 91.

27. In the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1867 which gave the vote to all male householders and £10 lodgers in the boroughs, and reduced the occupation franchise in the counties from £50 to £12. This Act increased the electorate by more than a million - three times the number of voters added by the equally famous first Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832.

28. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 95.

29. CHUR/1/1/16, 'Charge' 1870, pp. 15, 20-1. Churton's reference to "new" marriage laws is puzzling. In 1868, the Royal Commission Report on Marriage appeared. But it was such a damp squib that for ten years it received no serious attention nor action; i.e., there was no new marriage law in or just before 1870. Possibly Churton feared that new laws were in the offing, e.g., to make divorce easier; certainly, after Churton's death (1874) divorce became an increasingly major issue to Churchmen.

30. E.R. V/CB 27, 'Charge' 1875, p. 35.

31. YML, Fulford Parish Magazine, June 1871.

32. Yorkshire Gazette, 8/4/1876.

33. Yorkshire Gazette, 12/10/1878.

34. E.R.V/CB 27, 'Charge' 1879, pp. 190-1.

35. R. Oastler, op. cit., p. 30.

36. E.R.V/CB 27, 'Charge' 1880, pp. 233-4.

37. YCJ Apr. 1881, p. 74.

38. YCJ 1882, Appendix pp. xiv-xv.
39. YCJ Apr. 1884, p. 6.
40. PR/BRAY/121, Brayton Parish Magazine, Nov. 1885.
41. YCJ Feb. 1886, p. 5, Archbishop Thomson told York Convocation he was glad of assurances given that "Disestablishment would not form part of the Liberal programme." D.A. Hamer, Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery, 1977, pp. 18-23, gives a useful account of Gladstone's approaches to the "faddist" element at this time.
42. YCJ Feb. 1886, p. 5.
43. YCJ Feb. 1886, pp. 5-7.
44. Here was "religionless Christianity", though the term is anachronistic, and Thomson would have regarded it as a contradiction-in-terms. He considered these people as vaguely "religious" (de-Churchmented) rather than as "de-Christianised". See his words in last sentence of the paragraph. YCJ Feb. 1886, pp. 12-13.
45. RD/HEL/1, 27/5/1886; RD/POCK/1-2, 15/7/1886. See also RD/MW/2, 23/11/1886.
46. YCJ Feb. 1887, p. 5.
47. The Archbishop was already losing vigour, and died aged 71 on Christmas Day 1890 after ill health. For details of his failing health see correspondence from October to December 1890 between members of his family: YML/COLL. 1948/1985//4 nos. 10-12, 14, 17-18.



48. During this time there were misunderstandings over the attitudes of the Lower House to the Archbishop's interventions in procedures and debates, and to the concept of a Lay House of Representatives. In 1888 Dean Purey-Cust of York resigned the Prolocutorship of the Lower House immediately after a quarrel with the Archbishop over procedures in Convocation. At this time, too, York Convocation ceased to sit as one House, though Thomson himself had introduced joint meetings on his translation to York. See chapter 1, section (iii)(a) above. See also correspondence from October to December 1880 between several clergy and Thomson: YML/COLL. 1948/9.

49. YCJ Feb. 1889, p. 6.

50. YCJ Feb. 1889, p. 7. Hull clergy would doubtless approve the Archbishop's call for interest in social movements. Hull Deanery Chapter had passed resolutions about health, sanitation and housing conditions in the town in 1882 and 1883. RD/HUL/2, Mar. 1882 and Nov. 1883.

51. Archbishop Magee was appointed to York after Thomson's death in December 1890, and ran the diocese for only a few months before his own death.

52. YCJ Apr. 1891, p. 15.

53. The Queen's Speech in 1892 also mentioned Welsh and Scottish Disestablishment.

54. Archbishop Maclagan was translated to York at the beginning of 1892.

55. RD/POCK/1-2, 14/3/1893.

56. RD/MW/2, Apr. 1893.
57. RD/HEL/1, 30/10/1894.
58. V/R 1894, Sprotborough, Doncaster, pop. 528, acc. 350. Underlining in original.
59. V/R 1894, Foston, Bulmer, pop. 350, acc. 100. The incumbent was not at the rural deanery meeting, but recorded what had happened. In the rest of Bulmer Deanery 3 clergy said their parishes would possibly form a committee, and 2 were even more uncertain.
60. V/R 1894, Sheffield St. Anne, Netherthorpe, pop. 4,835, acc. 650.
61. V/R 1894, Haxby, Easingwold, pop. 613, acc. 200.
62. " " Sheriff Hutton, Easingwold, pop. 1,083, acc. 510.
63. " " Sutton-on-Forest, Easingwold, pop. 986, acc. 350.
64. " " Garton-in-Holderness, Hedon, pop. 180, acc. 150.
65. " " Winestead, Hedon, pop. 151, acc. 136.
66. " " Askham Richard, Ainsty, pop. 212, acc. 150.
67. " " Sheffield St. Paul, pop. 4,300, acc. 1,400.

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68. Mentioned e.g., at Askham Richard in the 1850's, PR/ASK/R/11, and at Fishlake as late as 1894, where it was "resolved that the destruction of Moles and Sparrows be paid for as heretofore." DONC/P/FISH/1/1/1, Mar. 1894.

69. Mentioned, e.g., at Adwick-le-Street, where 26 inhabitants and householders including the Rector signed their willingness, in December 1856, to become special constables "for a Night-watch for the Protection of our Persons and Property within the bounds of our Township" because of much violence and robbery in the neighbourhood. The costs of a lantern, oil, a "Spring Rattle" and two pairs of handcuffs had to come out of Adwick Rates. DONC/P/ADW/2, Dec. 1856.

70. DONC/P/STA/1, Stainforth Vestry Minutes, 1851.

71. PR/DR/76 - Drax Vestry Minutes - record that in Feb. 1857 a meeting of the owners of property and ratepayers was held "to consider the expediency of selling 13 cottages in the occupation of the Poor," and adjourned for a year. However, the sale was agreed the following month, suggesting an urgent local need to supplement the Rates.

72. There are examples of this at St. George's, Doncaster, between 1848 and 1868, DONC/P1/4/A2.

73. 23 Vic. Cap. xxx, 3/7/60.

74. J. Lawson, Progress in Pudsey, 1887, p. 88.

75. ? Clarke, History of the Church, Parish and Manor of Howden, 1851, p. 43.

76. See, e.g., PR/ASK/R/11, Askham Richard Vestry Minutes in the 1850's. The surplice was washed three times a year. From 1864 onwards, by which time the Church rate was voluntary, it was washed four times a year.

77. If the sexton dug graves for deceased non-Church-attending folk, and tolled the bell for their funerals, there would obviously be less resentment than if they felt they were paying for him to ring the church bell for daily Matins and Evening Prayer and for the Sunday Services.

78. The exception was those rate-paying Wesleyans who continued to worship in their parish churches, particularly at Holy Communion. They would not object to a proportion of their rates assisting with the upkeep of the parish church.

79. W.O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 2, pp. 146-158, gives a useful and interesting account of the progress of the movement against payment of the Church rate.

80. There were 632 contested non-payment cases between 1833 and 1851, not a high number considering the apparent volume of agitation. These contests resulted in 484 successful resistances to payment of Church Rate and only 148 unsuccessful resistances. BPP 1851, ix, pp. 465-6, quoted in W.O. Chadwick, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 152.

81. PR/AC/41, Oct. 1861.

82. CHUR/1/1/9, 'Charge' 1858, pp. 3-4.

83. RD/MW/1/ Oct. 1859.

84. RD/MW/1/ Jan. 1862.

85. Yorkshire Gazette, 14/4/66, p. 2.

86. The figures (for 1856) showed that Church Rates raised almost £1,846,000; Voluntary Rates/Subscriptions raised almost £1,887,000. Proceedings and Report of The National Association for Promoting Freedom of Public Worship in the Church of England, 1863, YDC 1863, pp. 141-2.

87. The Act was considered important enough to be quoted in full in YDC 1869, pp. 164ff.

88. Yorkshire Gazette 10/4/1869.

89. CHUR/1/1/16, 'Charge' 1870, pp. 1-3.

90. E.R. V/CB27/1876, 'Charge', p. 189.

91. PR/BOS/7 & 8, Vestry Minutes 1870.

#### Chapter 4, Part (iv)(a)

92. CHUR/1/1/8, 'Charge' 1856, pp. 19-20.

93. CHUR/1/1/8, 'Charge' 1856, p. 19.

94. In addition to those just mentioned, there were four Scottish methods of marriage, with the bonus for English and Welsh people that, until 1856, Scottish law imposed no residence requirement. In England, as before the Act of 1836, there was also the option to marry after banns or with a licence or special licence.

94. O. Anderson, 'The incidence of civil marriage in Victorian England and Wales', Past & Present, No. 69, (1975), p. 50. The overall accuracy of her statement is questionable on the grounds that not everyone could afford every type of marriage ceremony available. Such a situation cannot be fully "democratic".

95. O. Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

96. L. Stone, Road to Divorce, Oxford, 1990, p. 11.

97. O. Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

98. The figures Olive Anderson gives show that in 1864 civil marriages in other parts of the North were as high as 23% of the total - much above the national average.

99. O. Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 55, 60, 62. R. Floud and P. Thane questioned some of Anderson's assumptions, pointing out that marriage rates - whether civil, Nonconformist or Anglican - varied locally. But all three agree that the numbers of Anglican marriages declined during the time that civil marriages increased, which is important from the point of view of a loss of monopolistic authority by the Church of England. [R. Floud and P. Thane, debate on 'The Incidence of Civil Marriage,' Past & Present No. 84, (1979), pp. 146-7, 154; and Olive Anderson's 'Rejoinder', (Past & Present No. 84 pp. 155-162, claiming that too much of Floud and Thane's argument came from a misinterpretation of the evidence of the Commons Select Committee in 1893 about compulsory attendance of Registrars at Nonconformist marriages.)]

100. O. Anderson, 'The incidence of civil marriage', *loc. cit.*, p. 85.

101. YCJ, Feb. 1889.

102. CHUR/1/1/8, 'Charge' 1856, p. 21.

103. This Act was passed in 1857.

104. CHUR/1/1/9, 'Charge' 1858, p. 5. These familiar words from the Prayer Book Marriage Service would remind clergy of the words that follow immediately after: i.e., those who do so come together "are not joined together by God; neither is their Matrimony lawful."

105. R. Phillimore, The Ecclesiastical Law of the Church of England, 1873, p. 638.

106. Phillimore, op. cit., p. 642. Stone's research reveals that before 1857, whilst the laws concerned with making marriages were hopelessly "obscure and contradictory", the laws about breaking a marriage were very clear: i.e., it was "virtually impossible" - but not wholly so, provided the ecclesiastical authorities could be persuaded to do a very rare thing and sanction it. L. Stone, op. cit., pp. 11, 16-17.

107. Cited in Phillimore, op. cit., p. 641.

108. YCJ Mar. 1867, p. 69.

109. YCJ Feb. 1878, p. 127; CCR 1878 Sheffield, pp. 284ff.

110. YCJ Feb. 1878, p. 127. 75% is only 3% less than the percentage calculated by O. Anderson for 1864. In 1875 the totals quoted by Temple were 201,212 marriages in England

of which 149,685 were solemnised in Church, and 127,762 of those after the calling of banns.

111. YCJ Feb. 1879, p. 37 & Appendix p. v.

112. V/R 1865, Dalton-Holme, Weighton, pop. 506, a.p. 26%.

113. YCJ Apr. 1881, p. 92.

114. YCJ Feb. 1882, p. 40. YCJ Apr. 1883, p. 63.

115. Wakefield Diocese was formed in 1888.

116. YCJ Feb. 1889, p. 12.

117. YCJ Feb. 1893, pp. 78-9.

118. The Committee included the Prolocutor, the Dean of Manchester; four Archdeacons, one of whom was Bishop Crosthwaite of Beverley (who was also Archdeacon of York), and four Canons, including Canon Temple now proctor for Cleveland. YCJ Feb. 1893, Appendix, p. lxxix.

119. YCJ Feb. 1895, pp. 87-9. This is inferred in some comments criticising the Report.

120. YCJ Mar. 1894, Appendix pp. lxxxix-cxc - i.e., the Report was quite long.

121. "Calculating on the usual average of five persons per family", said the Report. YCJ Mar. 1894, App. pp. xcv-xcvii.

122. YCJ Mar. 1894, App. p. xcvi. The Letter was signed in 1886 at the Triennial Convention of the Protestant



Episcopal Church of America at Chicago, quoted in Church Quarterly Review, April, 1887, p. 70.

123. YCJ Mar 1894, App. p. clxxiv; p. 9 of the Letter. A.M.G. Stephenson, Anglicanism and the Lambeth Conferences, p. 75, points out that the 1888 agenda "had been considerably broadened compared with the two previous Conferences." Item 4 included Divorce, discussed by a committee chaired by Bishop Stubbs of Chester, (formerly of Oxford). The Lambeth Committee's initial report was rather less stringent than the Encyclical just quoted. It said the Committee was "unwilling to permit any precise instructions in this matter, and recommend that, where the laws of the land permit, the determination should be left to the judgement of the Bishop of the Diocese [as to] whether the Clergy would be justified in refraining from pronouncing the blessing of the Church on such unions." Stephenson, *ibid.*, p. 88. This illustrates a significant development in Anglican authority. In the "non-Established" provinces and dioceses of the Anglican Communion, decisions were made in Synods of which the bishops were (only) a part; but the bishops' views were seen as vital in matters of doctrine and pastoralia.

124. YCJ Mar. 1894, p. clxxiv.

125. YCJ Feb. 1895, p. 94.

126. RD/HEL/1, Oct. 1894.

127. The debate continues to be over the strict application of the concept of the indissolubility of marriage - and therefore the impossibility of "remarriage" during the lifetime of a partner - set against the exercise of charity

in pastoral ministry to individuals who have already been hurt by an unsuccessful marriage.

128. YCJ Mar. 1894, App. p. clxxv.

129. W.O. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 439.

Notes: Chapter 4, part (iv)(b)

130. YCJ Mar. 1871, p. 313.

131. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 88.

132. W.O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 2, p. 203.

133. W.O. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 202-207, gives a very useful summary of the situation in town and country.

134. YCJ Mar. 1871, p. 310.

135. E.R. V/CB 27, Charge 1882, p. 303.

136. YCJ Mar. 1871, p. 310.

137. " " " p. 312.

138. " " " p. 315.

139. " " " p. 317.

140. RD/HEL/1, Oct. 1872.

141. RD/MW/1, Jan. 1872. These discussions took place as the result of a request from Archbishop Thomson sent to all rural deans, a point made clear in RD/HEL/1, Oct. 1872; but the deanery records do not show what other deaneries did about the request.

142. W.O. Chadwick, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 203-4.

143. YCJ Jan. 1874, pp. 36-9. The debate occupies 34 pages in York Convocation Journal.

144. RD/POCK/1-2, Oct. 1875.

145. YCJ Apr. 1877, p. 105.

146. RD/HUL/2, Jun. 1880.

147. YCJ Jan. 1874, pp. 36-37. Those traditionally excluded from the Burial Office by rubric were those who died unbaptised, or excommunicated, or through suicide.

148. E.R. V/CB 27, 'Charge' 1882, p. 303.

149. E.R. V/CB 27, 'Charge' 1882, p. 304.

Notes: Chapter 4, part (v)

150. V/R 1894, Aston, Rotherham.

151. These percentages are only approximate, particularly for the Board Schools. [See Note 152 below]

152. (a) The definition of "Church School" is complicated in some deaneries because of a proportion of schools being privately owned by individuals or trusts. These are classed as "Other" than Church Schools if there is any hint of difficulty for the parson (or parish) in regarding the school as one where the parson, or the National Society's regulations, controlled the prevailing philosophy and the R.I given there. (b) Clergy usually gave the exact figures for Board Schools in rural areas and small towns. But in large parishes they sometimes report "Board Schools here". If so, I have counted this as "2". In cases where clergy report "several Board Schools" I have counted this as "3". Obviously these figures should probably sometimes be bigger. Nevertheless, the picture of the Church's authority over elementary education being eroded by the Education Boards in some areas is well illustrated by comparing the National & Church School figures with those of the Board Schools, e.g., in York Archdeaconry.

153. V/R 1894, Cottingham, Kingston-upon-Hull.

154. There is an interesting hint here of the philosophy on religious education developed by Professor Goldman at Reading University in the early 1960's: i.e., don't teach it, project it through the atmosphere of the school.

155. V/R 1894, Kellington, w. Whitley & Eggborough, Pontefract.

156. V/R 1894, Whitwood Mere, Pontefract. It is also important to remember the adverse effects for the Church caused by absenteeism in parish Day and Sunday schools throughout the period, owing to the widespread practice of sending children out to service at an early age.

157. Yorkshire Gazette, 12/12/1869.
158. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 29. Only moments earlier Canon Richson had quoted figures from the Royal Commission's Report on Education of 1861, showing that 76% of weekday scholars were then in Church of England schools.
159. Feb. 1870, p. 108. These included: protection for the Church's work already long-established in elementary education; protection for the education of poorer children whose parents could not afford fees; "liability of local rates" to provide education for children for whom the State acted as parent; and a Conscience Clause.
160. YCJ Feb. 1870, p. 108.
161. " " " pp. 35.
162. " " " p. 108.
163. YCJ Jul. 1884, pp. 140, 157, 165. A long debate took place on the needs of the masses of the people. At the end, four committees were formed. The one that investigated "the needs of the people" eventually produced a Report on Education for Convocation in 1891.
164. YCJ Apr. 1891, Appx. pp. xxvii-xxviii.
165. Stephen H. Cassan, Lives of the Bishops of Bath and Wells, vol. II, 1830, pp. 221-2, quoted by W.O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. 1, p. 337.
166. W.R Ward, Religion and Society in England, 1790-1850, 1972, returns to this subject several times, e.g., pp. 12, 29, 63-9, 102. Also, what M. Dick says about

Sunday Schools has relevance to the parochial Church day school. Dick questions assumptions about Sunday Schools as working class developments in the early 19th century, and argues convincingly that they were mostly paternalistic institutions where the Bible was used to explain the need for the existing social hierarchy and for obedience to legal authority, including work masters; (p. 28.) and where the teachers, being usually of a higher class than the scholars, tried to steer the children away from working class habits and attitudes into deferential behaviour towards their betters. (pp. 34-36) Thus, the Sunday Schools were disliked for their political and social propaganda as much as for their "Church teaching". M. Dick, 'The myth of the working class Sunday School', in History of Education, Vol. 9, No. 1, Mar. 1980.

167. YCJ Feb. 1870, p. 31.

168. W.O. Chadwick, op cit., vol. 1, p. 337.

169. D.A. Hamer, The Politics of Electoral Pressure, 1977, p. 138.

170. V/R 1894, Sheffield St. Andrew, Sharrow.

171. In some parishes in York Diocese it is possible that the fraction of those aged 10 to 12 who were enrolled was smaller than Forster's estimate, because of the widespread practice of the annual hiring of child labour.

172. The requirements of the Act also brought problems to those parish schools which had stumbled along in reasonable solvency for years with barely adequate school premises and moderately competent, poorly paid teachers.

173. ND 83, National Society (York Committee) Minutes, 1886.
174. ND 83, A.G.M., Jan. 1887.
175. This is a minimum figure. [See explanation in Note 152 above].
176. V/R 1894, Middlesbrough St. Hilda.
177. V/R 1894, Middlesbrough St. Paul.
178. Again, as explained in Note 152 above, 29 is a minimum figure.
179. The "other" was the Trinity House Navigation School, where the priest-in-charge of the Mariners' Church - with no parish - acted as chaplain and teacher of Religious Instruction "according to the principles of the Church of England." V/R 1894, St. Mary's Mariners' Church, Kingston-upon-Hull.
180. V/R 1894, Cottingham, Kingston-upon-Hull.
181. V/R 1894, Newland, Kingston-upon-Hull.
182. For instance in Ackworth, Brotherton, Carlton (near Barnsley), Featherstone, Ferry Fryston, Knottingley, Ledsham and Normanton.
183. V/R 1894, Altofts, Pontefract.
184. V/R 1894, Sheffield St. Michael, Neepsend.
185. V/R 1894, Sheffield St. Matthias.

186. The figures for Board Schools in populous parishes are minimum figures. Thus the erosion of the Church's authority in elementary education was somewhat greater than the figures in Table 27 suggest.

187. V/R 1894, Market Weighton.

188. V/R 1894, Walton, Ainsty.

189. V/R 1894, Crambe, Bulmer. This could even occur in an urbanised area. At Sheffield Brightside, St. Thomas's school was maintained single-handedly through the generosity of the incumbent. V/R 1894, Sheffield St. Thomas, Brightside.

190. V/R 1894, Lastingham, Helmsley: at Lastingham, Miss Danby owned the school. At Hutton-le-Hole, (same parish) the lord of the manor owned it. V/R 1894, Salton, Helmsley: at Salton J. Woodall owned the school; and at Bradby (same parish) a former Vicar who had bought the school left it in trust to his successors and wardens. V/R 1894, Barton-le-Street, Helmsley: at Barton, the patron owned the school.

191. V/R 1894, Sinnington, Helmsley.

192. V/R 1894, Bilsdale, Helmsley.

193. V/R 1894, Old Byland, Helmsley.

194. V/R 1894, Northallerton parish.

195. V/R 1894, Sheffield St. John's, Ranmoor.

196. YCJ Feb. 1869, p. 29.



Notes: Chapter 5

Chapter 5, Part (i)

1. W. Thomson, Work & Prospects, pp. 12-13.

Chapter 5, part (ii)

2. See also Tables 24 and 27 [pp. 367, 380] for elementary education provision across the diocese in 1865 & 1894.

3. V/R 1865, Whenby, Easingwold, (pop?) a.p.n.c.

4. " " Tunstall, Hedon, pop. 106, a.p. 24%.

5. " " Foston, Bulmer, pop. 759, a.p. 4%.

6. " " Naburn, Bulmer, pop. 471, a.p. 42%.

7. " " Baldersby, Thirsk, pop. 713, a.p. 28%.

8. " " Skidby, Howden, pop. 384, a.p. 50%.

9. " " Speeton, Scarborough, pop. 140, a.p. 50%.

One parson with only 89 parishioners wrote, "I have had evening school for farm servants in my own house. But the masters are rather unwilling that their men should come."  
V/R 1865, Harswell, Weighton, pop. 89, a.p. 28%.

10. V/R 1865, Cottingham, Howden, pop, 3,131, a.p. 22%.

11. " " Kexby, Pocklington, pop. 182, a.p. 33%.

12. " " Nafferton, Bridlington, pop. 1,535, a.p. 16%.

13. V/R 1865, Woodsetts, Rotherham, pop. 996, a.p. 30%.
14. " " Wetwang, Bridlington, pop. 827, a.p. 12%.
15. " " Sherburn, Buckrose, pop. 744, a.p. 10%.
16. " " Greasebrough, Rotherham, pop. 2,837, a.p. 10%.
17. " " Sheffield St. George, pop. 10,538, a.p. 8%.
18. " " " St. Philip, pop. 18,461, a.p. 5%.
19. " " Hull Holy Trinity, pop. 45,460, a.p.n.c.
20. " " " St. Stephen, pop. (est.) 11,551, a.p.n.c.
21. V/R 1865, Middlesbrough St. Hilda, pop. 10,1235.
22. " " " St. John, pop. 12,301, a.p. 3%.
23. " " Ormesby, Stokesley, pop. 3,464, a.p. 5%. By 1894 the population had shrunk to under 600.
24. V/R 1865, York St. Lawrence, pop. 2,456, a.p. 6%.
25. " " Cowick, Selby, pop. 818, a.p. 18%.

Chapter 5, part (iii)

26. The Victorian "parish magazine" in the strictest sense was published each month nationally. The parish added an "inset" (some thicker than others) containing matters of local interest. However, the modern use of the term "parish magazine" as something locally produced, with a

printed "inset" produced elsewhere, was already coming into use during the period - e.g., the Vicar in Pocklington Magazine, Jan. 1880: (PR/POCK/70-73) used the term "parish magazine" to describe the ("inset" of) Pocklington local parish news, rather than the professionally produced part. As the "parish magazine" was getting its modern meaning during the period, I have used the term here in its modern sense in the hope of avoiding confusion.

27. PR/BRAY/121, Jan. 1875.
28. " Jul. 1878.
29. " May 1882.
30. " passim.
31. PR/POCK/70-73, Jan. 1880.
32. PR/BRAY/121, Dec. 1883.
33. " Nov. 1885 & May 1893.
34. YML - Fulford Magazine, Nov. 1871.
35. YML - " " May 1871.
36. YML - " " May 1871.
37. PR/BRAY/121, mentioned in Jan. 1875.
38. YML - Used in Seamer, Cayton & E. Ayton magazine.
39. YML - Used in Pickering magazine.

40. YML - Parish Magazine, ed. by J. Erskine Clarke in London.

41. Bp. Dio. 11/4, Diocesan Stats., 1894.

Chapter 5, part (iv)

42. YCJ Jul. 1884, p. 141.

43. " " " p. 157.

44. " " " p. 157.

45. " " " p. 157.

46. " " " pp. 157-8.

47. " " " p. 158.

48. " " " pp. 159-160.

49. " " " pp. 161-2.

50. " " " pp. 163-4.

51. YCJ Jul. 1884, p. 165.

52. " " " p. 165.

53. " " " pp. 163-4. This Bill when enacted (often called "the Third Parliamentary Reform Act") gave the vote to almost all male householders in the counties - i.e., virtually the same franchise as given to the boroughs in 1867. It was noteworthy that the bishops had voted for a

reform that favoured the working classes. Their record in earlier years had not been good; "as legislators they were the despair, not only of politicians, but of the plain average citizen." J. Clayton, The Bishops as Legislators, (1906), p. 11.

54. YCJ Jul. 1884, p. 164.

55. " " " p. 165.

56. V/R 1894, Thrybergh, Rotherham, pop. 245, acc. 110.

57. e.g., "Chief good was bringing back some few negligent in attendance [and] arousing several of our workers and others." V/R 1894, Hull, Drypool St. Andrew's, pop. 22,981, acc. 750; "It did little more, apparently, than deepen some few Church members." V/R 1894, Dringhouses, Bishopthorpe Deanery, pop. 713, acc. 225.

58. V/R 1894, Middlesbrough St. John, pop. 22,627, acc. 900 - underlining in original text.

59. V/R 1894, Eston, Middlesbrough, pop. 19,823, acc. 600.

60. " " Marske, Middlesbrough, pop. 2,662, acc. 700.

61. " " M'brough St. Hilda, pop. 12,104, acc 950.

62. " " Crambe, Bulmer, pop. 344, acc. 217.

63. " " Huttons Ambo, Bulmer, pop. 408, acc. 208.

64. " " Sheffield St. George, pop. 344, acc. 217.

65. " " " St. Paul, pop. 4,300, acc. 1,400.

66. V/R 1894, YCJ Jul. 1884, p. 164.

67. YCJ Feb. 1892, p. 47.

68. YCJ Feb. 1892, p. 47.

Chapter, 5 part (v)

69. YCJ Feb. 1892, pp. 17-18.

70. V/R 1894, Newton-on-Rawcliffe, Malton, pop. 512, acc. 135.

71. I.T. Ramsey, Models for Divine Activity, Oxford, 1964, p. 69.

72. V/R 1894, North Otterington-w.-Thornton-le-Beans, Thirsk, pop. 770, acc. 280.

73. V/R 1894, Aldborough-in-Holderness, Hornsea, pop. 864, acc. 500.

74. V/R 1894, South Kirby, Pontefract, pop. 2,372, acc. 405.

75. " " Holmpton-w.-Wellwick, Hedon, pop. 181, acc. 120.

76. " " Sheriff Hutton, Easingwold, pop. 1,083, acc. 510.

77. " " Sheffield St. George, pop. 10,358, acc. 1,650.

78. " " Whitwell, Bulmer, pop. 213, acc. 200.

79. " " Hayton-w.-Beilby, Weighton, pop. 400, acc. 280.
80. " " Hull St. Matthew, pop. 8,702, acc. 800.
81. " " Hull St. Paul, pop. 17,646, acc. 1,200.
82. " " Scawton-w.-Kirby Cold, Helmsley, pop. 342, acc. 270.
83. V/R 1894, Bolton-on-Dearne, Wath, pop. 1,205, acc. 225.
84. " " e.g., Kirklevington, Stokesley, pop. 548, acc. 150.
85. V/R 1894, e.g., Oughtibridge, Ecclesfield, pop. 2,106, acc. 475.
86. V/R 1894, e.g., Full Sutton, Pocklington, pop. 127, acc. 130.
87. V/R 1894, e.g., Bossall-w.-Buttercrambe, Bulmer, pop. 292, acc. 400.
88. V/R 1894, Crambe, Bulmer, pop. 344, acc. 217.
89. " " Newton-on-Rawcliffe, Malton, pop. 512, acc. 135.
90. " " Westerdale, Stokesley, pop. 245, acc. 174.
91. " " Hutton Cranswick, Harthill, pop. 1,170, acc. 266.
92. V/R 1894, Skipton-on-Swale, Thirsk, pop. 242, acc. 150.

93. " " Crayke, Easingwold, pop. 436, acc. 320.
94. " " Dalby, Easingwold, pop. 131, acc. 88.
95. " " Heslington, Bulmer, pop. 475, acc. 316.
96. " " Whitwell, Bulmer, pop. 213, acc. 200.
97. " " Marton-in-Cleveland, Middlesbrough, pop. 1,183, acc. 300.
98. V/R 1894, e.g., Hooton Pagnell, Wath, pop. 318, acc. 172.
99. " " Crathorne, Stokesley, pop. 216, cc. 120.
100. " " Strensall, Easingwold, pop. 523, acc. 200.

Notes: Chapter 5 part (vi)

101. CCR Manchester 1888, quoted in H. Woodcock, Sketches of Primitive Methodism in the Yorkshire Wolds, 1889, p. 238. Woodcock's comment implies even more than it actually says: "If his Lordship had been present at one of these [Primitive Methodist] gatherings he would have found that these barriers did not exist."

102. YCJ Apr. 1884, p. 87; e.g., he said: a "very zealous layman" sharing ministrations in a parish church with "an average curate" would "obliterate" the respect felt for Holy Orders "partly on account of their exclusive nature." [My underlining]



103. YDC 1865, p. 145.
104. DONC/RD, Apr. 1884.
105. CCR Manchester 1863, p. 11.
106. CCR York 1866, items 7 & 11.
107. CCR Leeds 1872, items 1 & 2.
108. CCR Bath 1873, items 2 & 12.
109. V/R 1865, e.g., Guisborough: "Want of some lay and clerical help." Kingston-upon-Hull: "More labourers clerical and lay." Pocklington: "Need for good Scripture Reader." Sheffield St. George had three Scripture Readers, wanted three more. Holme-on-Spalding Moor: "A proper authorised Lay Agency to meet the activity of the Wesleyans."
110. CCR Leicester 1880. They included: The Church and the Poor; the Religious Condition of the Nation; The Church and Labour; The Penitentiary Work of the Church; the Church and the Young; Temperance.
111. CCR Leicester 1880, p. 502.
112. E.R.V/CB 27, 'Charge' 1875, p. 39.
113. " " " 1875, pp. 37-8.
114. " " " 1875, pp 39-40.
115. RD/POCK.1-2, May 1875.

116. RD/MW/1, Oct 1875. This gradually became the situation for lay readers between 1905, when the two Archbishops clarified rules for licences, and 1921. Since the 1960's they have also been eligible to assist in the administration of the Blessed Sacrament (but not, of course, to consecrate).

117. RD/MW/1, Oct. 1875. These proposals are similar to those discussed as recently as May 1993 by diocesan directors of ordinands in England. [Source: Denys de la Hoyde, Director of Ordinands, Ripon Diocese.]

118. RD/HUL/1, Nov. 1875.

119. RD/HUL/2, Jun. 1876.

120. " Oct. 1880.

121. " Feb. 1889.

122. YCJ Apr. 1884, p. 87-9. .

123. " " " p. 81.

124. " " " Appx. p. xii.

125. " " " pp. 86-88.

126. " " " p. 81.

127. " " " p. 84.

128. " " " p. 81.

129. " " " p. 82.

130. " " " p. 85.

131. " " " p. 85.

132. " " " p. 86-88.

133. " " " p. 86.

134. Book of Common Prayer. Article 23 - 'Of Ministering in the Congregation' - prohibited "any man to take upon him the office of publick preaching, of ministering the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same."

Book of Common Prayer, 'The Ordering of Deacons': "Take thou authority to read the Gospel...and to preach the same...if licensed thereto by the bishop." 'The Ordering of Priests' confers the same authority to preach with additional power "to minister the Sacraments in the Congregation where thou shalt lawfully be appointed." (The Archbishop omitted to mention the priest's authority given at ordination: "Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven.")

135. YCJ Apr. 1884, p. 87.

136. " " " p. 87.

137. " " " p. 87.

138. " " " p. 87.

139. " " " p. 87.

140. " " " p. 87-8. [The Church Army's first hymn and service book, Hymns and Choruses of the Church Army illustrates this attempt to balance on a tight rope.

The most staid Victorian hymns appear alongside the most rousing revivalist choruses, a 'Short Mission Service' and 'Church Army Music for the Holy Communion'.]

141. YCJ Apr. 1884, pp. 88-9.

142. " " " p. 89.

143. " " " p. 89.

144. YCJ Jul. 1884, Appendix, pp. viii-xi. [See also Appendix pp. ix-x for points raised in Report on 'The Diaconate and Lay Readers'].

145. V/R 1865, Ecclesfield.

Notes: Chapter 6

1. CCR Derby 1882, pp. 298-300.
2. Address in Manchester, 28/1/1895, [source not clear] quoted by F.W Jones, 'Social Concern in the Church of England, as revealed in its pronouncements on social and economic matters, especially during the years 1880-1940', unpublished London Ph.D. thesis, 1968, p. 100.
3. P. d'A. Jones, The Socialist Revival, 1877-1914, p. 246, quoted in H. McLeod, Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789-1970, 1981, p. 27.
4. H. McLeod, op. cit., p. 27.
5. E.R. Norman, Church & Society in England, 1770-1970, 1976, p. 4. This emphasis exists still in some Churches.
6. R. Oastler, Convocation, the Church and the People, 1860 (A Letter to William Walker, Esq., of Bolling Hall, Bradford), pp. 215-6.
7. YCJ Apr. 1881, p. 72.
8. " " " p. 70.
9. In the 1880's some Methodist, Congregational and Baptist Churchmen were becoming as concerned as some Anglican Churchmen about the need for the Churches to press for social justice - hence use of "the Churches" here.
10. Rosemary E. Chadwick, 'Church & People in Bradford and District, 1880-1914: the Protestant Churches in an Urban

Industrial Environment', unpublished Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1986, pp. 215-216.

11. YCJ Jul. 1884, p. 148.

12. " " " p. 142.

13. G. Kitson Clark, Churchmen and the Condition of England, 1832-85, 1973, pp. xi-xiii.

14. G. Kitson Clark, op. cit., p. xvi.

15. Alan Richardson, (ed.) A Theological Word Book of the Bible, 1956: article by F.J. Taylor gives a useful summary of realised and unrealised eschatology under 'Save, Salvation'.

16. Alan M.G. Stephenson, Anglicanism and the Lambeth Conferences, p. 89, quoting the Report.

17. OYBCE 1890, p. 425.

18. " 1891, p. 436.

19. " 1893, p. 376.

20. YCD 1892, p. 240.

21. " 1894, p. 248.

22. F.W. Jones, op. cit., pp. 97-98; 100.

23. F. Wrigley, The History of the Yorkshire Congregational Union - A Story of Fifty Years, 1873-1923, 1923, pp. 91-2, quoting from a report of the meeting.

24. Rosemary Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

25. E.R. Norman, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3, discusses the significance of this, making a comparison with Roman Catholicism.

26. Encyclical Rerum Novarum on 'The Condition of the Working Classes', Catholic Truth Society, p. 8.

27. Bernard M.G. Reardon, 'T.H. Green as a theologian', in Andrew Vincent (ed.) The Philosophy of T.H. Green, p. 41. Reardon was here paraphrasing extracts from Green's speech on 'Temperance' to an Oxford Conference in 1880.

28. The increase in social subjects at Church Congresses continued as follows: 1886, Wakefield: Homes of the working classes; 1887, Wolverhampton: Population growth, migration, emigration, colonisation. 1889, Cardiff: The temporal well-being of the working classes; Housing; Thrift. 1890, Hull: Strikes and wages disputes; Sanitation; Condition of dwellings: Responsibilities of employers. 1892, Folkestone: The attitude of the Church to Labour Combinations; Thrift and the Poor Law; Provision for old age. 1893, Birmingham: Mutual duties of employers and employed; The Church and the Poor: housing, relief, thrift. 1894, Exeter: Care of the Poor; Pensions; Housing. 1895, Norwich: Trades Unionism; Co-operation. 1896, Shrewsbury: Industrial problems: The morality of strikes and lock-outs; Boards of arbitration and conciliation. 1897, Nottingham: Industrial problems, trade disputes; Methods of conciliation. 1898, Bradford: Social and Trade Relations; The Responsibilities of Capital and Labour; and Co-operation. The very good attendance at Bradford points to the respect and authoritative influence the Church was earning, at least

through the Church Congresses, for its growing concern and involvement in social issues.

29. E.R. V/CB27 'Charge' 1876 p. 89.
30. " " " " p. 89.
31. E.R. V/CB27 'Charge' 1885, p. 415.
32. " " " " p. 417.
33. RD/HUL/2, Mar. 1882.
34. " Nov. 1883 & Jul. 1884.
35. YCJ Jul. 1884, pp. 146-7.
36. " " " p. 150.
37. E.g., the Artisans' Dwellings Act gave authorities permission to improve - hence "permissive".
38. YCJ Jul. 1884, pp. 150-1.
39. " Apr. 1892, p. 171.
40. " " " pp. 174-5.
41. " " 1882, p. 176.
42. " " 1890, Appx. pp. xxx, xxxiv, xxxviii, xlii.
43. " " " Appx. pp. xliii, xlv, xlvii, xlviii.



44. " Feb. 1893, pp. 6-8. Underlining is in original text. 1893 saw publication of Westcott's book on incarnational theology: The Incarnation & the Common Life

45. OYBCE 1894, p. 398.

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