

CONSTRAINTS ON THE MOTHER FOUNDRESSES: CONTRASTS IN
ANGLICAN AND ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS HEADSHIP IN
VICTORIAN ENGLAND

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THE CANDIDATE CONFIRMS THAT THE WORK SUBMITTED IS HER OWN
AND THAT APPROPRIATE CREDIT HAD BEEN GIVEN WHERE
REFERENCE HAS BEEN MADE TO THE WORK OF OTHERS.

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates some of the most important constraints placed upon the mother foundresses of Anglican and Roman Catholic religious communities in Victorian England. It begins by considering how, re-establishing and establishing active, female, religious foundations, these societies offered single women of the time an unusually useful and dedicated life. It demonstrates that the foundresses initiated, administered, and coordinated works of charity, education, nursing, and other missions. They also sought professional status for their members. Finally, they were often supported in their work by lay men and women, especially women. In general, however, they were constrained in this work by society, the family, and the clergy of their respective churches. Of these constraints, anti-Catholicism was the most important. It affected not only Roman Catholics, but also Anglo-Catholics and caused both groups of religious to lead what was, in many respects, a "hidden life". The religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience were unduly condemned as undermining family values. And their relationship with the clergy was problematic: bishops were most concerned with their own jurisdiction and authority and parish priests with their own influence. Finally, secessions of sisters caused serious internal problems, but none so severe as to bring about the

abdication of the foundresses. And, paradoxically, if obstacles beset the foundresses in establishing their works at home, abroad they were welcomed by diocesans. Hence, their work expanded around the world: throughout the British Empire amongst the Anglicans; into historically Catholic nations for the Romans; and to the United States of America for both Anglicans and Roman Catholics. In these places, foundresses furnish examples of female leadership rare in the nineteenth century. The thesis concludes by showing how tenaciously both Anglican and Roman foundresses sought the recognition of their respective churches, and yet in achieving it, whether informally or formally, placed the most significant constraint of all upon their work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY	ii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	iv
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION: THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CLIMATE	1
2. ESTABLISHING THE RULE	48
3. RECRUITING AND FUNDING	84
4. MAJOR EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CONSTRAINTS: ANTI-CATHOLICISM AND SECESSIONS	130
5. GOOD WORKS I: NURSING AND EDUCATION	179
6. GOOD WORKS II: THE FALLEN AND THE FOUNDLINGS	222
7. EXPANSION: OTHER WORKS, OTHER FIELDS	251
8. CONCLUSION	284
BIBLIOGRAPHY	298

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NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY

The choice of the nineteenth-century term 'mother foundresses' to describe the women who founded religious communities is a deliberate one. It is the style in which they were referred to in the records of their communities. Mother foundresses in the Roman Catholic Church often, but not always, took the names of saints when they entered the religious life; Anglican foundresses usually retained their baptismal name. To avoid duplication of names involved in referring to the mother foundress by her title (more than one 'Mother Mary Francis' or 'Mother Harriet'), I have chosen to call them by their surnames. The terms 'women religious', 'nuns', and 'sisters' can be confusing. 'Nuns' actually refers to the women in enclosed communities under solemn vows and 'sisters' to those in active groups under simple vows. 'Women religious' in common usage today covers women in both active and enclosed orders. The active communities of the nineteenth century called their members 'sisters' and so will I.

Terminology continues to be troublesome when describing the women of two churches involved in the religious life. In order to eliminate frequent explanations as to whether I am referring to Roman Catholics or Anglo-Catholics I have set up some guidelines. I am aware Roman Catholics believe they are the one, true Catholic faith, but equally the Anglo-Catholics believe they are a part of Catholic Christianity. The word 'Catholic', therefore, when used

alone will refer to both groups. The members of the Church of Rome are referred to as Roman Catholics and those of the Church of England are referred to as Anglicans or Anglo-Catholics. I have used the term 'sisterhoods' exclusively for the Anglicans, 'congregations' or 'institutes' exclusively for the Romans, and 'communities' when discussing aspects that apply to both. Should any confusion remain the 'list of abbreviations' is both alphabetical by foundress and by the church affiliation of the foundress.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MOTHER FOUNDRESSES (in alphabetical order)¹:

Ayckbowm	(CSC) ²	Anglican
Basil	(FSMH)	Roman
Benett	(SSB)	Anglican
Brownlow Byron	(SAS)	Anglican
Connelly	(SHCJ)	Roman
Crosse	(CAH)	Anglican
Cusack	(CSJP)	Roman
Field	(CSMA)	Anglican
Gream	(SSM)	Anglican
Hughes	(SHUT)	Anglican
Ingham	(FMSJ)	Roman
Lockhart	(CSMV)	Anglican
Lockhart	(FMIC)	Roman ³
Martin	(IBVM)	Roman ⁴
Mason	(CHF)	Anglican
Monsell	(CSJB)	Anglican
Murphy	(FSM)	Roman
Potter	(LCM)	Roman
Prout	(SCP)	Roman
Sellon	(SHT)	Anglican
Taylor	(SMG)	Roman

ROMAN CATHOLIC FOUNDRESSES AND THEIR CONGREGATIONS:

BASIL (FSMH)

Mother Mary Francis Basil (Mary Basil)
Franciscan Congregation of the Five
Wounds (1868)

1 This list includes only the mother foundresses (and their communities) referred to in the text and is not intended as a complete list of nineteenth-century foundresses.

2 The abbreviated titles of the communities may not be the ones in current use by that community, but they are used here simply to distinguish one community from another for the reader.

3 Elizabeth Lockhart co-founded the CSMV in the Church of England and, later, founded the Franciscans of the Immaculate Conception at Braintree in the Roman Catholic Church.

4 The IBVM was founded in the 1609 by Mary Ward and is not a nineteenth-century foundation, however, since Mother Mary Juliana Martin is referred to in the text she and the IBVM are included in this list.

CONNELLY (SHCJ)

Mother Connelly (Cornelia Augusta Connelly)
Society of the Holy Child Jesus (1846)

CUSACK (CSJP)

Mother Mary Francis (Margaret Anna Cusack)⁵
Community of St Joseph of Peace, Newark (1884)

INGHAM (FMSJ)

Mother Mary Francis Ingham (Alice Ingham)
Franciscan Missionaries of St Joseph (1883)

LOCKHART (FMIC)

Mother Elizabeth Lockhart (Elizabeth Lockhart)
Franciscans of the Immaculate Conception of
Braintree (1857)

MARTIN (IBVM)

Mother Mary Juliana Martin (Mary Ann Martin)
Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (1609)

MURPHY (FSM)

Mother Mary Francis Murphy (Margaret Murphy)
Franciscan Minoreesses (1888)

POTTER (LCM)

Mother Mary (Mary Potter)
Little Company of Mary (1877)

PROUT (SCP)

Mother Mary Joseph (Elizabeth Prout)
Sisters of the Cross and Passion (1850)

TAYLOR (SMG)

Mother Mary Magdalen (Fanny Margaret Taylor)
Poor Servants of the Mother of God (1869)

5 Peter F. Anson, The Religious Orders and Congregations of Great Britain and Ireland (Worcester: Stanbrook Abbey, 1949), p. 303; Susan O'Brien, 'Terra Incognita: The Nun in Nineteenth-Century England', in Past and Present 121 (1988) 134; Rosalie McQuaide, CSJP, '"My Dear Lord": Letters from Margaret Anna Cusack to Winand Michael Wigger. A Testimony to Feminine Solidarity', paper given at the History of Women Religious Conference, Tarrytown, New York, 29 June 1992. Anson regards Mother Evangelista Gaffney as the foundress of this order, but he wrote before Vatican II. O'Brien, though writing in 1988 states the same. But McQuaide's paper stated that after Vatican II Margaret Anna Cusack was reinstated as foundress of the Sisters of St Joseph of Newark (New Jersey) and the sisters at general chapter in 1970 'returned to the original name of the congregation, Sisters of St Joseph of Peace. Therefore, I am including Cusack as the foundress of the CSJP.

ANGLICAN MOTHER FOUNDRESSES AND THEIR SISTERHOODS:

AYCKBOWM (CSC)

Mother Emily (Emily Harriet Elizabeth Ayckbowm)
 Community of the Sisters of the Church (1870)
 aka, Kilburn Sisters

BENETT (SSB)

Mother Etheldreda (Etheldreda Anna Benett)
 Society of the Sisters of Bethany (1866)

BROWNLOW BYRON (SAS)

Mother Harriet (Harriet Brownlow Byron)
 Society of All Saints (Sisters of the
 Poor) (1851), aka, Margaret Street
 Sisterhood

CROSSE (CAH)

Mother Lavinia (Lavinia Crosse)
 Community of All Hallows (1854)
 aka, Ditchingham Sisterhood

FIELD (CSMA)

Mother Ellen (Ellen Field)
 Community of St Michael and All Angels (1895)

GREAM (SSM)

Mother Ann (Ann Gream)
 Society of St Margaret (1855)
 aka, East Grinstead Sisterhood

LOCKHART (CSMV)

Mother Elizabeth (Elizabeth Lockhart)
 Community of St Mary the Virgin (1848)
 aka, Wantage Sisterhood

MASON (CHF)

Mother Agnes (Agnes Mason)
 Community of the Holy Family (1898)

MONSELL (CSJB)

Mother Harriet (Harriet O'Brien Monsell)
 Community of St John Baptist (1851)
 aka, Clewer Sisterhood

SELLON (SHT)

Mother Lydia (Priscilla Lydia Sellon)
 Society of the Holy Trinity (1848)
 aka, Devonport and Plymouth Sisterhood

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND RELIGIOUS CLIMATE

'The Lady Abbess of England' was a term used in a disparaging manner to describe the person and aspirations of Priscilla Lydia Sellon when she founded the Church of England Sisterhood of Mercy at Devonport and Plymouth in 1848. The reception of her work brought cries of 'Romanism', 'Popery', and 'un-English'. The opprobrious public response was followed by the withdrawal of episcopal sanction.¹ She was viewed as a threat to the English family.² Yet, after death, this mother foundress was deemed the 'Restorer after Three Centuries of the Religious Life in the English Church' in the epitaph inscribed for her by Edward Bouverie Pusey.³ She and others like her, both in the Established Church and in the Roman Catholic Church, saw themselves as called of God to respond to the needs of the poor. For this they were often condemned and constrained in their efforts by the family, the clergy, and the 'Protestant underworld'.⁴

1 Peter F. Anson, The Call of the Cloister: Religious Communities and Kindred Bodies in the Anglican Communion. rev. edn (London: SPCK, 1964), pp. 259-279.

2 W. M. Colles, 'Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Misery: or Miss Sellon in the Family, with some Remarks on "A Reply to the Rev James Spurrell"; Two Letters to the Rev Edward Coleridge, etc., etc.' (London: T. Hatchard, 1852), p. 17.

3 Thomas Jay Williams, Priscilla Lydia Sellon: The Restorer after Three Centuries of the Religious Life in the English Church. rev. edn (London: SPCK, 1965), p. 258.

4 Thomas Jay Williams, 'Beginnings of Anglican Sisterhoods', Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 16 (1947), 350-372 (p. 355).

Sellon's reception encapsulates the problems faced by Victorian foundresses.

The mother foundresses in Victorian England, whether Anglo-Catholic or Roman Catholic, faced the societal, familial and ecclesiastical opposition that their foremothers had encountered throughout the history of monasticism.⁵ Primarily, their work was directed toward alleviating the conditions of the poor. To this end they established schools, hospitals, penitentiaries, orphanages, missions, and assisted in parochial works. Their appearance, and that of their sisters, in habit, with crucifixes and rosaries brought their communities to the attention of a Protestant nation.⁶ Immediately, they were accused of furtively sequestering the daughters of respectable families behind convent walls against their will in order to gain access to the property of their families.⁷ Pamphlets abounded condemning their organizations as being against the interests of the

5 C. H. Lawrence, Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in the Middle Ages. 2nd edn (London: Longman, 1989), passim.

6 The most notable among these occurrences evoked the inquiry of Henry Phillpotts, Bishop of Exeter, into the Devonport Sisterhood as recorded in Report of the Inquiry Instituted by the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Exeter (Plymouth: Roger Lidstone, 1849). Similar reactions are found in the letters and diaries of the mother foundresses in convent archives and Pusey House.

7 John M. Scobell, A Reply to the Postscript of the Rev J. M. Neale, Warden of Sackville College, East Grinstead (London: Nisbet, 1858); John Eddowes Gladstone, Protestant Nunneries: Or, the Mystery of Iniquity Working in the Church of England; A Letter...Concerning Ann Maria Lane, Now a Sister of Mercy Against Her Father's Wish, in Miss Sellon's Institution at Eldad, Plymouth (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue, 1853); Margaret Goodman, Experiences of an English Sister of Mercy (London: Smith, Elder, 1863); and numerous others.

family.⁸ They worked in the slums of towns and cities, and in rural cottages, unescorted. These acts were interpreted as being against the prevailing ideal of how ladies should act.⁹ They organized and directed works of philanthropy, something that women were not seen as capable of doing. Yet they were doing just that. Men were recognised as the only ones who could do such things. If they had no male co-founder, the public and the press let their distaste for their effrontery be known. The clergy, especially the bishops, looked upon these women as undermining their jurisdiction and assuming a role that threatened their power.¹⁰ Most Anglican diocesans refused them support, while Roman

8 There is a vast amount of pamphlet literature. See for example: Colles, Sisters of Mercy; Charles Bird, Anglican Sisterhoods. Protestant Alliance Tract No. 61. (London: Protestant Alliance, 1864); The Nunnery Question. 3rd edn (London: Protestant Alliance, 1853); A Plea for the Inspection or Suppression of Convents (London: Protestant Evangelical Mission & Electoral Union, [1870]); M. Hobart Seymour Convents or Nunneries (Bath: R.E. Peach, 1852).

9 Sarah Stickney Ellis, The Daughters of English: Their Position in Society, Character, and Responsibilities (London: Fisher, Son & Co., 1842); Frances Power Cobbe, Essays on the Pursuits of Women (London: Emily Faithfull, 1863); Harriet Martineau, 'Female Industry', Edinburgh Review, 10 (1864), pp. 293-336; Mrs Stewart, The Missing Law; or, Woman's Birthright, (London: W. Tweedle, 1869); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1950 (London: Hutchinson, 1985), pp. 181-183; Jane Rendall, The Origins of Modern Feminism: Women in Britain, France and the United States 1780-1860 (London: Macmillan, 1985), p. 231; Lilian Lewis Shiman, Women and Leadership in Nineteenth-Century England (London: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 69-70.

10 Lambeth Palace Library (hereafter LPL), C. Blomfield Papers, Blomfield to Pusey Letter, 57 ff 165-6 (2 March 1855); Henry Phillpotts, A Letter to Miss Sellon (London: John Murray, 1852); Alan Becher Webb, Sisterhood Life and Woman's Work; in the Mission-Field of the Church (London: Skeffington & Son, 1883).

bishops tried to regulate their activities. This thesis is about these constraints and the way in which the mother foundresses, Anglican or Roman, dealt with them.

To face these problems, the mother foundresses had to be strong-willed, knowledgeable women. They believed that they were called of God and, therefore, whatever obstacles were placed in their way they could find the strength to overcome them through their spiritual life. Surrounded by a community of like-minded women, they had added support. The religious life, unencumbered by family duties, was to them the best manner in which to minister to the poor. Within a period of approximately fifty years, the mother foundresses brought a modicum of acceptance for their work and its methods from the ranks of family, society, and clergy that had originally opposed them.

The calling of the nineteenth-century mother foundresses was not unique. Christian women had sought religious life in community from the fourth century onwards. The Victorian mother foundresses were heirs to a long and respected tradition of English monasticism that began with St Augustine's arrival at Canterbury in 596. For instance, Hilda of Whitby was abbess of a dual monastery in Northumbria in the seventh century considered a 'vital centre' of English Christianity. She participated in the Synod of Whitby (664)¹¹ at which the

11 For a detailed account of the Synod of Whitby see the Venerable Bede, The Ecclesiastical History of the English People, trans. by Leo Sherley-Price (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1955), pp. 182-188.

Church in England chose to follow the Roman, rather than the Celtic form, of Christianity.¹² Thereafter the position and influence of women was diminished. Such a distinguished ecclesiastical historian as David Knowles found that 'from the mid-thirteenth century onwards there was a dearth of...[female] saints in England...[none] arose such as the Catherines of Siena and Genoa'.¹³ He deplored the lack of records regarding the spiritual life in the nunneries and looked upon their financial records as of little consequence. However, Lina Eckenstein in 1896 and Eileen Power in 1922 successfully documented the lives of nuns down to the sixteenth century.¹⁴ Indeed, throughout this period in England, as on the continent, convents were used by the aristocracy for their own purposes. Lawrence points out that in the thirteenth century Cistercian nuns were 'aristocratic ladies accustomed to directing their affairs in relative freedom did not take kindly to the constraints of a highly disciplined organization that was governed by men'.¹⁵ (This attitude reappears in the nineteenth century). Moreover, after the Act of Dissolution of the Smaller Monasteries, in 1536, some of the convents were allowed to re-establish. Those which did included Austin

12 Lawrence, p. 60. Hilda sided with the Celtic Church.

13 David Knowles, The Religious Orders in England, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), III, 464.

14 Lina Eckenstein, Women Under Monasticism: Chapters on Saint-Lore and Convent Life Between A.D. 500 and A.D. 1500 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896); Eileen Power, Medieval English Nunneries, 1275-1535 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922).

15 Lawrence, pp. 228-229.

Canonesses, Benedictines, and Poor Clares. Since their re-founding was under the King and not the Holy See, they were considered the first Anglican communities.¹⁶

Communities that left, again, during Edward VI's reign, were re-founded during Mary's reign. The latter foundations included the Brigittine nuns at Syon, who were driven out when Elizabeth ascended the throne.¹⁷

Accordingly, until the Dissolution, religious life for women had been an integral part of the history of the nation. So much so that Eckenstein, viewing this era from the perspective of the late nineteenth century, argued that the Dissolution meant far more to the women involved than to the men.

In losing the possibility of religious profession at the beginning of the sixteenth century, women lost the last chance that remained to them of an activity outside the home circle. The subjection of women to a round of domestic duties became more complete when nunneries were dissolved, and marriage for generations afterwards was women's only recognised vocation.¹⁸

Only one English foundation ties the Stuart period to the Victorian period; the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary founded by Mary Ward in 1609. It has existed in York, continuously, from the mid-seventeenth century until the present day. Mary Ward's intent was for her

16 Anson, Call, p. 2.

17 Peter F. Anson, Religious Orders and Congregations of Great Britain and Ireland (Worcester: Stanbrook Abbey Press, 1949), p. 184.

18 Eckenstein, p. viii.

community to lead an active life similar to that of the Society of Jesus. But they did not. Like other female foundations of her time, enclosure was demanded by canon law not so much for the institution but for the sex of its members.¹⁹ There were no more new orders. The penal laws effectively precluded any other religious orders of the Roman Church in England and caused the IBVM to remain discreet.

Why was it then that three hundred years after the Dissolution of the Monasteries there was a resurgence of Catholicism and a place for women to found the active religious life within both the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church? Part of the answer lies in the 'Catholic Question' and its incomplete resolution in the early nineteenth century, and part of the answer lies in the question of women coming to national attention in the early to mid-nineteenth century.

The 'Catholic Question' became one of political importance at the end of the eighteenth century and it dominated the first third of the nineteenth century.²⁰ Until the late Georgian era religion was a 'family

19 IBVM archives, Histories, pp. 75-97; Life of Mary Ward: Foundress of the Institute of the B.V.M. (London: Burns & Oates, Limited, [1909]).

20 G.I.T. Machin, The Catholic Question in English Politics, 1820-1830 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); G.F.A. Best, Temporal Pillars: Queen Anne's Bounty, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Church of England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964); Norman Gash, Pillars of Government and Other Essays on State and Society c. 1770-c.1880 (London: Edward Arnold, 1986).

matter' for both Old English Catholics and Evangelical Anglicans.²¹ The gentry controlled the clergy.

During the centuries of the Penal Laws, it was the landed gentry who took on the responsibility for preserving English Catholicism. The recusants, as they came to be known, held on tenaciously to their outlawed faith.²² They moved priests from estate to estate in order to receive the blessed sacrament and remain in communion with universal Catholicism. Priests were, in effect, under their control rather than under the control of the vicars apostolic of the Holy See. Indeed, the recusants rejected the southern European influence dominated by the papacy, resulting in a specifically English form of Catholicism. Characteristically, they sent their sons to Douai and Valladolid for their education and their daughters to the English convents, in exile, on the continent for their training. When the Jesuits were expelled from St Omer in 1763 as a part of their world-wide censure, the Society of Jesus continued

21 This is not to say that religion was only a family matter. Of course it wasn't. For a complete discussion see, especially, J.C.D. Clark, English Society 1688-1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime. Cambridge Studies in History and Theory of Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

22 'Recusants' was a pejorative term for Roman Catholics who refused to attend Church of England services and became a source of pride to the bearers. It was used as early as 1593 in 'Act against Recusants'. 35 Elizabeth, cap.2: Statutes of the Realm, iv. pt. ii. 843 in Documents of the Christian Church, ed. by Henry Bettenson (London: Oxford University Press, 1943), p. 342.

in England as the 'Gentlemen of Stonyhurst'.²³ The Cisalpine Movement (1783-1829) perpetuated English Catholicism's separation from continental Catholicism. It acted independently of Rome and was anti-clerical in nature. The bishops who belonged to this movement did not want English affairs controlled from Rome. They did not, however, question papal supremacy. What they wanted most was an end to domestic persecution.²⁴ State issues were more important to them than Church organization. They wanted to select their own bishops without foreign intervention. 'Papal doctrine and Rome itself seemed, although true, extremely uninteresting'. This Catholic tradition was imbued with a 'conscious Englishness'.²⁵ The 'Englishness' was subsequently to become important defence of communities of women religious.

The eighteenth-century Evangelicals revived a Church of England riddled with absenteeism and pluralism. One of their number, John Wesley, went throughout the land stressing a faith that was individual in nature. He wanted to instil in the people 'a spirit of industry, economy and piety'.²⁶ Initially, the Established Church wanted none of his 'Methodism', but it did adopt his evangelicalism. Indeed, as the century went on it

23 David Mathew, Catholicism in England: The Portrait of a Minority - Its Culture and Tradition. 3rd edn (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1955), pp. 134, 171.

24 David L. Edwards, Christian England, Volume 3: From the Eighteenth Century to the First World War (London: Collins, 1984), p. 123.

25 Mathew, pp. 146-148.

26 David Thomson, England in the Nineteenth Century, 1815-1914 (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1957), p. 441.

espoused more evangelical leanings. Charles Simeon brought that evangelical spirit to Cambridge.²⁷ He called for a more caring and effective clergy and sent out the newly ordained to instil life into the country parishes of Church of England. This Evangelical Revival sought to impose on society 'an old fashioned form of Protestant piety' with 'its code of Sabbath observance, responsibility, and philanthropy'. An important part of its message was 'discipline in the home and regularity in affairs'.²⁸ Both of which had implications for women.

The death of the last papally recognized Stuart Pretender to the throne signalled the beginning of the repeal of the penal laws.²⁹ The first evidence of this was the Relief Act of 1778, a measure which led John Wesley to remark that 'the purple power of Rome [was] advancing...to overspread this once happy land'.³⁰ Each alleviation of restrictions brought with it anti-Catholic rhetoric. The next Relief Act came in 1791 and permitted Roman Catholics to join religious orders, among other things. But by this time the attention of Westminster

27 Charles Smyth, Simeon and Church Order: A Study of the Origins of the Evangelical Revival in Cambridge in the Eighteenth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940).

28 D.W. Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp. 105, 129.

29 Mathew, p. 137. James Edward was considered the de jure sovereign, by Rome, until his death in 1765, but the pope never recognised the claim of Charles Edward who died in 1788.

30 Edward Norman, Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England Historical Problems: Studies and Documents (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1968), p. 55.

was centered on the Irish problem.³¹ Irish Roman Catholics had received the parliamentary vote, but not the right of sitting in Parliament in 1793. This offered them partial relief but they were still discontented. A discontented Ireland was a danger to England during the French Revolution. The possibility of a French foothold in Ireland was seen by the English as a threat to their supremacy. The savage 'risings' in Ulster, Wexford and Connaught brought to the fore the 'Catholic Question'. The problem from the English point of view was how to adjudicate this problem while still maintaining a Protestant Ascendancy in the legislature. Pitt's solution was the Act of Union in 1800. It allowed for representation in the House of Commons by one hundred Irish members, Free Trade between the two countries and the unification of the two established churches. To acquire the allegiance of Roman Catholics to the Union, he held out the olive branch of emancipation. The Commons seats allotted to Ireland were taken by the Anglo-Irish gentry--Protestants--as Catholics were still prohibited by the Test and Corporation Acts. However, the King resisted emancipation. And the Anglican clergy were 'militantly anti-Papist' for, in Irish affairs, the 'ancient and unchanging enemy, [was] Rome'.³²

31 See; R.F. Forster, Modern Ireland, 1600-1972 (London: Allen Lane, 1988).

32 J.C.D. Clark, pp. 349-420.

'The years 1800-32 witnessed...the gradual erosion of a social, religious and political hegemony.'³³ To J.C.D. Clark it was the demise of the Anglican ancien regime. In this scheme of things Repeal and Emancipation took precedence over Reform. Pressure from Dissenters brought about the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828; Catholic Emancipation followed in 1829. The Catholic Relief Act itself denied the papacy any 'temporal or civil jurisdiction' in England. Catholics were to swear not to 'subvert' the Church of England.³⁴ It also banned religious orders (aimed at the Jesuits), although this aspect was not put into effect. All male religious orders, especially the Jesuits, were obliged to register with the clerk of the peace. No new members were to be allowed. Nuns, however, were not affected.³⁵ After 1829 many of the old penal laws still remained on the books. Most of them were repealed by 1884 and those that survived by that time were inoperable.³⁶

The way was clear for the Reform Act of 1832. It was a 'moderate, liberal and final measure designed to frustrate revolution by conciliation of the middle classes'.³⁷ The unrest of the middling classes had been noted and in some quarters considered assuaged. As a result, after 1832 the English elite, and the Anglican

33 Ibid., p. 409.

34 Norman, p. 63.

35 Owen Chadwick, The Victorian Church: an Ecclesiastical History of England, Part 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 19.

36 Norman, p. 64.

37 J.C.D. Clark, p. 409.

Church, particularly, were obliged to fight for survival within a plural society.³⁸ That plural society was a reforming society. Radical reform of such old institutions as education, the professions and the poor law was second only to attacks on the Church of England. But those attacks in turn stimulated defences. These defences assumed two forms: firstly, state sponsored reform, above all else Peel's establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1835; and secondly, the Oxford Movement.

It was a group of Oriel men at Oxford who called for a return to the sacraments, the saints and the self-less life. To this end they began to publish the 'Tracts for the Times'.³⁹ They became known as Tractarians, and their coalition, the Oxford Movement. A major objective of the Tractarians was to rouse the Church from its lethargy and to purify religion. It was not a popular appeal but rather one designed to teach the teachers.⁴⁰ By the late 1830s it had already done so. At that time the British Critic stated that their work had already 'insinuated' itself into 'popular churches and fashionable chapels and the columns of newspapers'.⁴¹ As Moorman points out, by 1839 the Oxford movement was composed of three groups: those who wanted to restore

38 Ibid., p. 411.

39 C.P.S. Clarke, The Oxford Movement and After (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., 1932), p. 61. The full title was, 'Tracts for the Times Against Popery and Dissent'.

40 R.W. Church, The Oxford Movement: Twelve Years 1833-1845, 3rd edn (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1932), p. 127.

41 Ibid., p. 197.

devotion and godliness led by John Keble; those who wanted to maintain the via media led by Edward Bouverie Pusey; and those who were beginning to doubt of the validity of the Anglicanism itself led by John Henry Newman.⁴² Newman had originally been the strongest voice for the legitimate reclamation of the Catholicism of the primitive church. He 'made up his mind to force on the public mind...the great article of the Creed -- "I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church"'.⁴³ Going back to the ascetic life reclaimed the refounding of the religious life in the Church of England. To this end, Newman experimented with a religious community at Littlemore. Inevitably, the Oxford Movement was accused of taints of 'Romanism'. Tractarians initially denied this, arguing that 'the theological knowledge and learning were wanting which would have been familiar with the broad line of difference between what is Catholic and what is especially Roman'.⁴⁴ By 1846 the theoretical Oxford Movement was over; its practical form was beginning. A necessary part of the reclamation of the primitive church and a necessary part of the Catholicism of Anglicanism and the ascetic life was the refounding of religious orders. Anglican sisterhoods answered the needs of both the Evangelicals and the Oxford Movement in bringing church missions to the masses. The Evangelicals emphasized moral superiority and

42 John R. H. Moorman, A History of the Church of England, 3rd edn (London: Morehouse/Barlow, 1980), p. 342.

43 Church, p. 33.

44 Ibid., p. 121.

responsibility to other classes: the Oxford Movement emphasized the sacramental and wanted emancipation from State control. The sisterhoods combined these forces for 'moral and social change'.⁴⁵

The Church of England was not alone with its internal divisions and the place these divisions opened for the advent of the sisterhoods. The Roman Catholic Church in England needed active women religious to work with the new divergent elements of its membership. Waves of Irish immigrants who entered the country after the Act of Union were predominantly Roman Catholic. They changed the complexion of their church from one that was essentially private, rural, and aristocratic to one that necessarily accommodated public, urban, and peasant stock.⁴⁶ The indigenous, surviving recusants were unwilling to adjust to this change.⁴⁷ But the bishops welcomed the growing numbers in their flocks and looked forward to regaining episcopal control of their lay members.⁴⁸ The ground rules for existence as a Church in England had changed. Roman Catholicism in Protestant

45 Harold Perkin, The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780-1880 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 361; Peter Virgin, The Church in an Age of Negligence: Ecclesiastical Structure and Problems in Church Reform 1700-1840 (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1989), p. 23.

46 J. F. Supple-Green, The Catholic Revival in Yorkshire, 1850-1900 (Leeds: The Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society Ltd, 1990), p. 5.

47 Bernard Elliot, 'Laura Phillips de Lisle: A Nineteenth-Century Catholic Lady', Recusant History: A Journal of Research in Post-Reformation Catholic History in the British Isles, 20 (May 1991), 371-379 (p. 374). The de Lisle's parish was 'a purely English congregation without any Irish'.

48 Supple-Green, pp. 2-3.

England after 1829 was no longer kept outside the halls of civil power. It was free to be open with its membership and its beliefs. By 1840 the four districts of the vicars apostolic, which had existed from 1685, were increased to eight districts.⁴⁹ There was talk in Rome that England, as a nation, was ready for wholesale conversion from a Protestant past to a Catholic future.

No one believed this more than Nicholas Patrick Stephen Wiseman (1802-1865). He came to England, when still rector of the English College in Rome, to give lectures on the Roman Catholic faith in 1835 and 1836. In 1840 he returned to England as coadjutor of the new Central District and president of Oscott College.⁵⁰ He brought with him the tenets of Ultramontanism. The Ultramontane was a growing movement within the church, fuelled by the French Revolution, for centralization of authority in the papal Curia rather than in national or diocesan independence.⁵¹ This change was opposed by the Old English Catholics.⁵² Wiseman had help in bringing this centralization of power to the Church in England as

49 Mathew, p. 192. To the districts of London, Midland, Western and Northern were added Central, Welsh, Lancashire, and Yorkshire.

50 Ibid., p. 193.

51 J. F. Bosher, 'French Administration and Public Finance in their European Setting', in The American and French Revolution, 1763-1793, ed. by A. Goodwin. The Cambridge Modern History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 565-591 (p. 565). The French Revolution destroyed the power of the Roman Church as well as the power of the nobility. Ultramontanism was part of the church's effort to regain power in France under papal, rather than local, authority.

52 F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds, 2nd edn, rev. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (Oxford: The Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 1405.

the *Sollicitudo Omnium Ecclesiarum* of 1814, restored the Society of Jesus throughout the world. The Jesuits were always the mainstay of the Curia and opposed local authority.⁵³ To Wiseman, the Ultramontane was the necessary vehicle to bring Roman Catholicism to the mission territory of England.

The crowning glory of Wiseman's career was the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850 with his appointment as Cardinal and first Archbishop of Westminster by Pope Pius IX.⁵⁴ Wiseman called it the 'restoration of its true Catholic hierarchical government, in communion with the See of Peter'.⁵⁵ He saw the need of his church for a new kind of women religious--those who espoused the active life. They would appeal to converts, unite the Old Catholics with those of the Ultramontanes and work with him for conversion of the nation.

Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism in England were both in a state of flux. The Evangelicals vied with the Tractarians for expression of their views in the English Church; the recusants vied with the Ultramontanes for expression of their views in the Roman Church. Ritual and ceremony were restored to places of prominence in both churches. The Catholic Revival was at hand. Roman Catholics were freed from most civil disabilities. Their

53 Ibid., p. 735. The Jesuits had been suppressed by Pope Clement XIV's brief *Dominus ac Redemptor* in 1773.

54 Cross, p. 1494. The Metropolitan See of Westminster plus the dioceses of Beverley, Birmingham, Clifton, Hexham, Liverpool, Newport and Menevia, Northampton, Nottingham, Plymouth, Salford, Shrewsbury and Southwark.

55 John R. H. Moorman, The Anglican Spiritual Tradition (Springfield, IL: Templegate, 1983), p. 161.

numbers were swelled by Irish immigration which led their bishops to call for the restoration of the hierarchy. Paradoxically, Catholic Emancipation and the restoration of the hierarchy were necessary to the English government in order to control, at least partially, the urban masses. Regardless of Lord Russell's outrage at the tone of the announcement of the restoration, he was aware of the benefits a strong religious presence in the midst of the poor would bring to the nation. If the Anglicans and the Dissenters had no influence on the Irish then the Romans should be recognized and their authority used for civil purposes. The Roman Catholic Church in England was no longer the private property of the Old English Catholics and the Church of England was no longer the elitist preserve of the aristocracy.

The changing face of religion brought with it a reliance on the family as the basic unit of stability. Therefore, the question of women and their place in the home became a relevant issue. Lawrence Stone argues that the 'authoritarian family and the authoritarian nation state were a solution to an intolerable sense of anxiety, and a deep yearning for order'.⁵⁶ If the home was to provide stability for the family and the nation, then it fell upon women to create and maintain this 'solution' to a social problem.

⁵⁶ Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage In England, 1500-1800 (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 217.

Woman's place in the home had been firmly entrenched by the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century. Sarah Ellis and Harriet Martineau, writing in the 1830s and 1840s, 'propagandized for the family as a repository of stability and firm values'.⁵⁷ The woman in her private sphere of the home was morally superior; outside it she was not.⁵⁸ Ellis believed that 'women's influence could be felt far beyond her own limited circle'.⁵⁹ To early Victorian society

Woman's virtuosity lay in her containment, like the plant in the pot, limited and domesticated, sexually controlled, not spilling out into spheres in which she did not belong nor being overpowered by 'weeds' of social disorder.⁶⁰

As long as these 'contained' women ensured the adherence of the family to their religion, they were 'respectable' and viewed as 'pious, pure, submissive and domestic'.⁶¹ Therefore, any woman desiring to leave the private sphere of the family found that religion provided one socially acceptable escape route--possibly the main one.⁶² Among the first women to leave the home to work in the world outside were the mother foundresses of religious orders.

57 Davidoff and Hall, p. 180.

58 Linda Colley, Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 263. Colley argues that the separate spheres were of a 'profoundly contractual' nature and that when the contract was broken, by the man, it gave the woman entrance into the public sphere.

59 Davidoff and Hall, p. 183.

60 Ibid., pp. 191-192.

61 Barbara Welter, 'The Cult of True Womanhood', American Quarterly, 18 (1966), 151-174 (p. 173).

62 Shiman, p. 62.

Women's revered place in the home was associated with the Protestantism of the nation. Post-Reformation Protestant English values were based on the success of the nation as a Protestant country with the practical applications of its associated work ethic. 'God, Duty and the Family' was the creed of most Englishmen. Their devotion to God ran a close race with their veneration of Duty. England had long been proud of its Protestant heritage and equated its political success with the fact that it was not a Catholic nation.⁶³ The churches, in order to reach the masses of people, placed their emphasis on the 'Englishness' of their endeavours. Good works were a sign of good people. If the churches were to grow, they had to reach out with good works of their own. Humanitarian societies were already calling for social reform and wanting more piety in personal actions at the end of the eighteenth century. The English people had a way of life they thought best for the rest of the world. If it was English, then it was decent and proper.

To ride this tide of public sentiment and bring about the acceptance of religious orders in the Protestant nation, the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglo-Catholics of the Church of England drew upon the Englishness of their leadership and the good works of their members. The communities of women religious were a visible aspect of these good works.

63 Colley, p. 327. Protestantism to 'ordinary Britons' shaped the way in which they viewed their nation and 'made sense of the land they lived in'.

These women came from English middle-class families. The families were divided into spheres of authority. The father lived in the outside world providing for his household, while the mother remained within the family home directing the children and the servants. His was the public sphere, hers the private. According to law, they were legally one person.⁶⁴ A married woman belonged to her husband in much the same way that their children belonged to him. Both wife and children were minors in the eyes of the law. Any property of hers or earnings from her labour, also belonged to him.⁶⁵ Sons were trained to follow their fathers. They were educated in their father's profession and, should he die, they became the guardians of their mothers. Daughters were trained to become wives. They were to spend their lives dependent on father, brother or husband for food, housing, and financial allowance. The woman, as idealized in the poetry of Lord Byron, was a delicate, ornate, creature.⁶⁶ In fact, as social standing rose, the less a woman did physically, the more highly valued

64 Arthur Rackman Cleveland, Woman Under the English Law: From the Landing of the Saxons to the Present Time (London: Hurst and Blackett, Limited, 1896), p. 141. The common law that states that man and woman are one person was in existence until the Married Woman's Property Act of 1884.

65 Ibid., p. 270.

66 The Poetical Works of Lord Byron (London: Oxford University Press, 1945) [1904], p. 79. 'She Walks in Beauty' emblematically describes his view of women with the lines: 'The smiles that win, the tints that glow,/But tell of days in goodness spent'. Her pure heart and soft physical appearance represented the ideal woman to the poet and his readers. His works are representative of the Romantic Movement which in its concentration on the hero and the (male) artist moulded contemporary English views of womanhood.

ornament she became. Clothing restricted her movements and added to this fragile, dependent status. The family fostered these notions of dependency. The control of the family over the lives of women cannot be stressed too strongly. Woodham-Smith quotes Florence Nightingale as saying, 'Women don't consider themselves as human beings at all. There is absolutely no God, no country, no duty to them at all, except family...I know nothing like the petty grinding tyranny of a good English family'.⁶⁷

There was no place in this scenario for the unmarried woman. She was ostracized as the 'spinster'.

The Saturday Review in 1857 stated:

Married life is woman's profession; and to this life her training - that of dependence - is modelled. Of course, by not getting a husband, or losing him, she may find that she is without resources. All that can be said for her is, she has failed in business, and no social reform can prevent such failure.⁶⁸

However, the census of 1851 revealed that there were 1,407,225 spinsters between the age of twenty and forty and 359,969 confirmed 'old maids' over forty. These women were characterized by W.R. Greg in the National Review of April 1862 as 'redundant' women.⁶⁹

[H]undreds of thousands of women... proportionally most numerous in the middle and upperclasses, -- who have to earn their own living...have to carve out artificial and painfully-sought occupations for themselves; who in place of completing, sweetening, and

67 Cecil Woodham-Smith, Florence Nightingale, 1820-1910 (London: Constable and Company, Ltd., 1950), p. 64.

68 Ray Strachey, 'The Cause': A Short History of the Women's Movement in Great Britain (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1928), p. 92.

69 Pat Jalland, Women, Marriage and Politics, 1860-1914 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 254.

embellishing the existence of others, are compelled to lead an independent and incomplete existence of their own.⁷⁰

A natural way of avoiding this 'failed' life and finding 'painfully-sought occupations for themselves' was suggested by the press:

If they were [redundant], it was because the silly creatures would not marry. And if, after all, women really were found to be too thick on the ground, let them be exported to marry overseas! Away with all this nonsense of trying to make the single life remunerative and pleasant for women.
...why could they not become domestic servants?⁷¹

According to the press, a women's prime reason for living was to be supported by men and to minister to men. Married women were removed from doing anything useful outside the home; single women were chided for not being married and refused a living wage in enterprises away from the family. Vicinus suggested that because women were 'redundant', they turned to the religious life.⁷² Rather, it was part of a search for a useful life. These were ambitious women who saw a task that needed to be done and were not afraid of jeopardizing their social rank to do it. In religious community they could construct worthwhile activities, such as: alleviating the suffering of the poor in the slums, burying their dead, tending to them in epidemics, teaching the ragged children, sheltering the orphans, and providing refuges

70 Martha Vicinus, Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920 (London: Virago, 1985), p. 4.

71 Strachey, p. 92.

72 Vicinus, p. 14.

for 'fallen women'. These were not jobs for the faint of heart. The strong women who took on such work preferred to give their lives to God rather than to give it to the family. In this way they could make a contribution to society as a whole, something that was denied them by Victorian norms.

The women who founded the religious communities had lived under the yoke of the English family. The first generation of foundresses had reached maturity during the advent of the Tractarianism and introduction of the Ultramontaniam. They came either from monied or clerical families. The Roman Catholics were, for the most part, converts from the Anglican faith, while the members of the Church of England belonged to the high church segment of that church. Many were forty years of age before they entered the religious life. Some had been wives; some had been wives and mothers. A number were well connected with old and titled families. Before entering the life, these women waited for the death of the last remaining parent. This vestige of compliance to the expectations of the time was the strongest residue of familial duty. Founding a religious community, therefore, was seen as a renunciation of the family. These women were no longer dependent on the family, protected from the public sphere by enclosure in the private sphere, nor were they immune to mental and physical labour. When women left the sanctum of the family, even for the call of God, they lost their moral superiority and were seen as a threat to

the stability of society. In a nation where religion played such a strong role in every day life, there was curiously no toleration for women who followed Christ's admonition, 'Go sell everything you own and give the money to the poor...then come, follow me'.⁷³

The women who did turn their backs on the demands of the family to found religious communities were not immune from other facets of their society. Victorian society was inherently based on class difference. Though the mark of a lady was idleness, the women of the lower classes had always worked. As children, adolescents, and as adults, they had shared the labour of the household in cottage industries or factories. Such were the class distinctions that these women were not ladies, merely women. Any woman who had to work for pay lost all claim to being considered a lady. Even genteel females who had been cast upon hard times and become governesses were viewed as having slipped from their perches of respectability. They had accepted pay for their labour.⁷⁴ Ladies volunteered their work free of charge. Women, trained in the trades, were not educated women. Educated women were those who had been brought up in the art of attracting a husband and keeping his home. They might have a smattering of languages, some literature, art and music in their backgrounds. They were seen as nobler creatures than the unschooled working women.

73 Mark 10.21 (The Jerusalem Bible).

74 Kathryn Hughes, The Victorian Governess (London: The Hambledon Press, 1993), passim.

This division, according to class, carried on in the beginning^{of} religious institutions. Ladies became choir sisters, while women became lay sisters. The census rolls state the distinction quite well: choir sisters were listed as 'teachers' (or nurses); lay sisters were listed as 'domestic servants'. In the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IBVM), choir sisters were titled 'Mother', while lay sisters were titled 'Sister'.⁷⁵ Anglican sisterhoods, too, continued this distinction with choir sisters called 'The Sister' and lay sisters 'Sister'.⁷⁶ 'The Sisters' held office in the institutes and went into the community to provide services for the poor. 'Sisters' stayed at the convent and cleaned and scrubbed. Many termed this dichotomy 'Mary and Martha'. Without Martha's work, Mary could not pray at the foot of the cross (or, in other words, do the work of Christ). It was Martha's routine work that allowed Mary to go forth and minister to the poor. Access to money was also a factor in making the distinction between who was a choir sister and who was a lay sister. Roman congregations had long expected a dowry from entrants; Anglican sisterhoods expected at least fifty pounds per annum from the entrants' interest on her capital.⁷⁷ Without financial backing the postulant had to work for her keep, hence she became a lay sister. While the

75 IBVM archives, Constitutions & Customs &c. [1857].

76 Peter Mayhew, All Saints: Birth and Growth of a Community (Oxford: privately printed, 1987), p. 37.

77 CSC archives, Instructions on the Rule of the Sisters of the Church, 'Income'; Chapter 3, *infra*.

religious women posed a threat to the societal norms for the life and actions of ladies, they were also the children of their age and continued class separation within the convent walls.

The Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England were both in need of active orders of women religious to implement the Catholic Revival in mission areas of Victorian England. Roman canon law was virtually unchanged in six-hundred years. The Church of England had been without religious, men or women, since the Dissolution of the Monasteries. How, then, was an active apostolate for women to evolve in the Roman Church and women religious to gain acceptance in the Established Church?

THE ROMAN CATHOLICS

Religious orders in the Roman Catholic Church are governed by canon law. This law can be modified by 'decrees of ecumenical and national councils, decisions of Roman congregations, and various kinds of papal documents'. Such modification took place, especially in the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century, to accommodate women religious desiring not to be enclosed. Mary Ewens, O.P., states that, 'No official collection of church laws was made from 1317 until

1917'.⁷⁸ The Visitandines and the Ursulines, started as active communities, were forced into enclosure by the Circa Pastoralis of 1566. This bull was designed to constrain women within convent walls because of their frail nature could 'not act responsibly or virtuously' outside the walls. It was also to placate the desire of parents to make sure that their daughters 'placed' in a convent could not have legal redress to any inheritance after the parents' death. Pius V's bull, necessary in a time when inmates were unwillingly put away, was to remain influential for three hundred years.⁷⁹

Congregations of women who did not make solemn vows were looked upon as suppressed. (Suppressed congregations were not allowed to receive new members.)⁸⁰ By 1667 the popes were wavering in their restrictions on women religious. Clement IX made an exception for a group of Dominicans because of the good work they did outside the cloister.⁸¹ Enclosure was incompatible with works of charity. More and more the Church saw the 'utility and blessings' of these congregations, but they 'constantly declared , when treating these female congregations, that

78 Mary Ewens, The Role of the Nun in Nineteenth-Century America, The American Catholic Tradition series (Salem, New Hampshire: Ayer, 1978), p. 14.

79 Ibid., p. 19.

80 Solemn vows are associated, usually, with pre-Tridentine orders that required enclosure and were taken for life. Simple vows are associated with post-Tridentine congregations leading an active life and were taken for a set number of years. Strictly speaking, a nun is a woman who has taken solemn vows and a sister is a woman who has taken simple vows. The term 'women religious' encompasses both nuns and sisters.

81 Ewens, p. 20.

they simply tolerated them, they did not approve them'.⁸² An example of this 'toleration without approval' and the questions it brought forth is found in the archives of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Founded by Mary Ward in 1609 to be an active order similar in government to the Society of Jesus, the IBVM was suppressed by Urban VIII in 1630. These Jesuitesses, as they were called, caused the Bishop of Freising to ask for a ruling on their status as religious.

[Pursuant to the] regulations of the Council of Trent & of Pope Pius V was he to require the Members of the Institute of English Ladies to observe Enclosure and in case of refusal if he was to send them back to their own families. The Congregation of Bishops and the Regulars made answer 'Neither the one nor the other was to be done'. And when his 'Ordinariat' was of opinion that in consequence of the decree of Pope Clement XI, in which the Rule were approved, the before mentioned English Ladies being now true Religious ought to be treated as other Nuns, the Holy See declared in answer to the mutual demand of the two parties as to 'whether the said English Ladies who lead a Community Life according to a Rule approved by the Holy See were true Religious'. 'NO'. They were not to be considered as such.

To this plea the Congregation of Bishops made answer that Enclosure was not prescribed for the Order but for the sex; but as this objection could be met with the fact that there then existed certain Ecclesiastical Congregations of pious females without Enclosure, sanctioned by the Holy See, this objection was considered as dismissed and was not again brought forward.⁸³

Exceptional positions were dealt with so much that the phrase Adprobatio Adprobamus came into frequent use. In this way they could avoid raising a congregation to the

82 IBVM archives, Histories, Vol. 32, pp. 75-97.

83 Ibid., emphasis mine.

rank of order within the Church. Benedict XIV (1740-58) 'gave religious congregations without solemn vows and cloister legitimate and jurisdictional existence'.⁸⁴ Prior to 1900 the constitutions of religious congregations could receive approbation but not the congregations themselves. They were tolerated as merely bands of pious women. The *Conditae a Christo* of 1900 has been called the Magna Carta for congregations with simple vows.⁸⁵ Together with the *Normae* (1901), it structured the definition of sisters until the new Code of Canon Law in 1918, when they became considered 'true religious'.⁸⁶

Throughout the nineteenth century, the newly founded congregations, though able to receive approbation, were not seen as 'true religious' by their church. Under simple vows and leading an active life, their status within the church was outside of canon law. Controlled by a hierarchy, without redress in law, women religious were in a very difficult situation. Yet, because of this very circumstance, congregations were able to do more prior to 1900 than immediately after 1900.

Paradoxically, the nineteenth century in England was a time when sisters had more control over their lives and the objectives of their communities, if they were aware of church law and if the mother foundress was well connected in Rome. Without formal canonical recognition,

84 Ewens, p. 19. Cites Clement Orth, The Approbation of Religious Institutes (1931), p. 54.

85 Ibid., p. 255.

86 Ibid.

the foundress's vision was critical to the survival and growth of new congregations. This period for the sisters in the Roman Church was not unlike that of the sisters in the English Church.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The three hundred years from the Reformation and its Dissolution of the Monasteries to the refounding of religious orders had the same effect on the women desiring to be religious in the English Church as the Counter-Reformation and the rulings of the Council of Trent had on the pious groups of women desiring to be religious under simple vows without enclosure in the Roman Church. Both the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation attacked abuses that had grown within monasticism prior to the sixteenth century. In the English Church, after the Reformation, there were many men and women who recognised the value of the monastic life, cleansed of abuses, to the church and the nation. As early as 1626, the Caroline divine, Nicholas Ferrar, introduced a form of communal religious life at Little Gidding.⁸⁷ He and his family dedicated their lives to religious seclusion. They observed the day offices and a 'Night Watch'. The latter was the recital of the Psalter said in a kneeling position. They also taught the children of the area and worked to help the sick and

87 Moorman, History, p. 233.

poor. Though Ferrar died in 1637, the work continued until 1646 when Little Gidding was destroyed in the Civil War.⁸⁸ Ferrar's plan became reality because he was a man of property and had the means to make it come true.

Mary Astell's A Serious Proposal to the Ladies (1694), though mainly a plea for the education of women, included a plan for 'an asylum for those whom misfortune and studious habits, or other circumstances, should render desirous of retiring from the world'. The project that was halted by Bishop Burnet on grounds 'its resemblance to a conventual institution would reflect scandal on the Reformation'.⁸⁹ However, it did show that women saw the need for the religious life and were thinking and planning for its return to their church. Astell's scheme failed to become reality because she did not have the personal finances to make it so. Money having always been (and would continue to be) an essential prerequisite for such foundations.

The nonjuror, William Law, wrote his A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life in 1728. It was a 'forceful exhortation to the Christian life in its moral and ascetical fullness'.⁹⁰ Denied his living for refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance on the accession of George I, he retired into a conventual setting with Mrs.

88 Ibid., p. 236.

89 Dale Spender, Women of Ideas and What Men Have Done to Them From Aphra Behn to Adrienne Rich (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), pp. 53, 60.

90 Cross, p. 805.

Hutcheson and Miss Hester Gibbon where they organized schools, almshouses, and pursued other acts of charity.⁹¹

Sir William Cunninghame suggested to the Archbishop of York, in 1737, 'a Nunnery of Protestant religious and virtuous persons, well born, of the female sex, conforming themselves to the worship of the Church of England, as by law established'.⁹² He stressed that it was not an imitation of the Church of Rome, since vows would not be expected and any member could withdraw at will. These ladies would be allowed to 'leave no more than one-third of their estate to the society and the remainder to their family'.⁹³ (The control of family money, out of the hands of its female members, was a recurring consideration in these matters, as was the ability of the member to withdraw at will from the institution. The nineteenth-century communities were again to face this same consideration.) The Archbishop of York, John Sharp, suspected that women might be behind this proposal, and said so. He doubted whether such an institution 'can be proper and useful in this our Protestant kingdom'.⁹⁴ The suspicion of women originating an idea and the hint of Romishness caused its demise.

91 Ibid.

92 A. M. Allchin, 'Revival of the Religious Life in the Church of England during the Nineteenth Century' (unpublished B. Litt., Oxford, 1956), p. 27.

93 Ibid., p. 29.

94 Ibid., p. 30.

Robert Southey once more directed thought to the religious life in his Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society (1829). In Colloquy XIII, he addressed the position of women in society and the difficulties of the 'respectably born' that have been ill provided for and suggested 'communities of women'. He used Sir Thomas More to state his case. More stated that 'there are no employments which an educated woman can undertake without losing caste'. And there are 'no convents, no religious communities in which such persons may be received and sheltered'.⁹⁵ How has this need been overlooked?

Zeal abounds among you; enthusiasm - I use the word in its virtuous sense - is already to answer any call made upon it....But where is the woman who shall be the Clara or Teresa of Protestant England, labouring for the certain benefit of her sex with their ardour, but without their delusion and fatal superstition, which have entailed such misery upon thousands!

96

Here Southey saw the need for women religious, but with it came his defence of traditional Protestant and English values that had to denigrate the perceived 'superstition' of the Roman Church. Yet he went on to have More say, 'No Vincent de Paul has been heard in your pulpits: no Louise de Gras has appeared among the daughters of Great Britain!' ⁹⁷ And then, to soothe the Protestant conscience, 'There is nothing Romish, nothing

95 Allchin, p. 46. Cites Robert Southey, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society (1829), p. 302.

96 Allchin, pp. 46-7. Cites Southey, pp. 304-5.

97 Ibid.

superstitious, nothing fanatical in such associations; nothing but what is righteous and holy'.⁹⁸

With regard to women religious, the churches, whether in canon law or church tradition, held an ambivalent view, if not an outright distrust, of women's mission within their structures. The very presence of women religious unleashed the fury of the 'Protestant underworld'.⁹⁹ The new congregations and the sisterhoods also brought about a mixed reception of their aims from their own members. Expectations and realities clashed. The views of the spiritual advisors or those of the diocesan were not always compatible with those of the mother foundresses. But even in these very hierarchical churches, the office of the clergyman could be circumvented - and was.

SPIRITUALITY OF THE MOTHER FOUNDRESSES

Though the immediate heritage of the Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic religious was different, one unifying factor among the foundresses stands out--spirituality. The call of God was stronger than any societal and ecclesiastical disapproval. The mother foundresses could not have succeeded against the constraints placed upon them without their calling. They relied on their spirituality to see them through difficult times.

98 Allchin, pp. 48-9. Cites Southey, pp. 330-1.

99 Williams, 'Beginnings', p. 352. Quotes Bishop Hensley Henson.

Whether outwardly apparent, or not, they had a special connexion with God transcending the material. Habitual prayer and Eucharist enforced this alliance. The conventual life they chose reflected their spirituality with its basis in poverty, chastity and obedience. By eliminating the excesses of the material, denying the demands of the flesh, and freeing themselves of self-will, they opened their minds to the direction of the Holy Spirit. Love of God, above all else, was the characteristic common to the majority of foundresses in Victorian England.

This spirituality took diverse forms among the Anglicans and Romans. Devotional materials were necessary aids. While the Anglican foundresses were, initially, limited to the Book of Common Prayer, the Day Hours of the Church, the works of the church fathers, and, in some cases, the Sarum Breviary, Roman foundresses had the Missal and the Roman Breviary and were free to explore the myriad of writings of and by the saints, current devotional material, and various litanies already in use. As the century went on, Anglicans, too, explored devotional materials that had been censored by the clergy for the original foundations because of their 'Romish' cast. Both groups based their spiritual lives and, hence, the strength for their work on prayer and the regular communion.

The Virgin Mary, too, had a special place in their spirituality. She had always been an important figure in Christianity, but in the nineteenth century her veneration was enhanced by a series of miracles and the papal bull *Ineffabilis Deus* declaring the Immaculate Conception (1854).¹⁰⁰ It has been said that 'As Mary goes so goes the Church'. Barbara Pope suggests that in the nineteenth century this was reversed and it should be restated 'As the Church goes so goes Mary'.¹⁰¹ For in the 'emotional cults' of adoration of the Eucharist, the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, and the promulgation of the use of the Rosary, the papacy sought to defeat secularism and materialism.¹⁰² The mother foundresses of Roman congregations, quite naturally, adhered to these forms of devotion to strengthen their communities against assaults from the 'world'. Anglican foundresses, too, sought them out.

To turn the focus from the material world, many foundresses used the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola. At a time when Christianity, let alone Catholicism, was under siege from secular sources, the militant saint offered reinforcements to the somewhat

100 Marina Warner, Alone of All Her Sex (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976). Gives a full account of Mariology through the ages; Barbara Corrado Pope, 'Immaculate and Powerful: the Marian Revival in the Nineteenth Century', in Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality, ed. by Clarissa W. Atkinson and Constance H. Buchanan and Margaret R. Miles, The Harvard Women's Studies in Religion Series (London: Crucible, 1985), pp. 173-200.

101 Pope, p. 196.

102 Ibid., p. 183.

isolated camps of believers. Ignatian Exercises were designed to promote 'a living, intimate knowledge of Christ...sought in the Gospel, in their hearts and in the ordinary round of their daily lives and those they met'.¹⁰³ These devotions offered comfort to the mother foundresses. When their families, or their societies, or even their church acted against them, it was only their spirituality on which they could depend for solace.

For Cornelia Connelly, foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ), the Exercises of St Ignatius were the bulwark of her constitutions. She gave conferences on them and used them throughout the year in order to be governed by God and not by self-will. They gave her a 'repose...in obedience and confidence in God'.¹⁰⁴ She practiced an 'interior death, to be followed by a spiritual resurrection,' so that she could see things from a 'supernatural point of view'.¹⁰⁵ The imitation of the life of Christ could only be fruitful if it was shored up by prayer and contemplation. In her pocket-book she carried the maxims of St Teresa that included:

Let nothing disturb thee
Let nothing affright thee
All things are passing
God alone suffices.¹⁰⁶

103 Radegunde Flaxman, A Woman Styled Bold: The Life of Cornelia Connelly 1809-1879 (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1991), p. 297.

104 Ibid.

105 [Mary Catherine Gompertz], Cornelia Connelly, 1809-1879: Foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. 4th edn (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1950), p. 229.

106 Ibid., p. 233.

For her personal meditations, she began with the Hail Mary and then left herself open for the Holy Spirit. Not all her spirituality came from the past. She translated Pere Regoleuc's mystical work Walking with God. The Sacred Heart of Jesus and Our Lady of Sorrows were important to her devotional life. In this devotion she was not without humour.

I never quarrel with Our Lord and Our Lady at the same time. If I am out with Our Lord I keep in with Our Lady, and so I am never entirely in desolation.¹⁰⁷

Striving for a life of religious perfection sustained her through personal sadness and diocesan conflicts.

Priscilla Sellon's spirituality took another form. She dedicated a good deal of time to the study of St Benedict. From her knowledge of the Benedictine life she drew the rule for the first order of her community. Sellon might well be called an inventive religious when it came to devotions. She wrote the Manual of Prayers according to the Use at Devonport. In a letter to C.L. Wood, later Lord Halifax, one of the community's associate members (Companions for the Love of Jesus), she describes some of the sections of the Manual: 'The Cell', 'Chapel', and 'Refectory'. The rooms denoted where the devotions were to be used. She hoped to finish the second part on her voyage to Hawaii for she had completed the third part while on the Nile and explains, 'Part iii

107 Ibid., p. 241.

was finished because the Companions were urgent while my children were patient'.¹⁰⁸ While her 'children' waited, they used a partial translation of the Sarum Breviary in manuscript form by Sister Amelia Warren. In 1854 Sellon had sent Warren to a quiet cottage with a companion, to finish the complete translation of the ancient Breviary. The Breviary of the Renowned Church of Salisbury, Rendered into English according to the use of The Society of the Holy Trinity, Devonport was completed by 1869, but not published until 1889.¹⁰⁹

Sellon was of a practical nature. She shared with Wood her thoughts concerning his presidency of the English Church Union (E.C.U.).

'As thy day, so shall thy strength.'
I felt that He would be your strength amidst the raging waves of the stormy sea of theological and controversial action into which your lot had for the present been cast. I know of but one remedy for the heart sickness, impatience and weariness...which is to look at the Crucifix, or to think of some part of the Life of, or some of the words of JESUS.¹¹⁰

Like many other Anglican foundresses, her prayers and thoughts were concerned with the issues that confronted the Anglo-Catholic segment of the church. When Pusey withdrew from the E.C.U. over the invasion of ritualistic practices into the high church, she again wrote to Wood.

108 Pusey House, (hereafter PH), 'Letters from Dr Pusey to the Hon C.L. Wood, Vol. I, 1866-74', No. 17, [1867]. 'The Companions' were the associates and 'my children' were the sisters.

109 Thomas Jay Williams, 'Anglican Versions of the Breviary', Cowley, n.d., p. 4.

110 PH, Pusey to Wood, No. 32. 10 Sept. 1868.

It is utterly impossible that any one can imagine these fine points of outward observance to be Gospel truth: it may be very well to introduce them gradually as outward indicators of the truth but there is no hindrance to preaching true doctrine; every body is allowed to preach the Catholic faith.¹¹¹

She pleaded for a gradual change for the sake of the older generation that included Pusey.

In setting up her second order, she made sure there was time for the perpetual adoration of the sacrament by her 'Englishe Nuns'. The rule of these sisters, written by Sellon, showed a 'close familiarity' with the letter and spirit of constitutions of the Poor Clares after the Reform of St Colette.¹¹² So when she heard, in 1876, that the plain state of the chapel at Ascot was because of her disbelief in the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament, she was taken aback. 'This isn't pleasant, is it?'¹¹³ She explained to Wood that the money was needed elsewhere and the plainness of the chapel had nothing to do with her belief. It was purely financial. Connelly's attitude was just the opposite. Her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament included altar adornment as 'costly and beautiful as possible'.¹¹⁴

In Sellon's last letter to her friend, Wood, she closed with a request for the new translation of the Benedictine Breviary she had seen advertised.¹¹⁵

111 PH, 'Letters from Dr Pusey to the Hon C.L. Wood, Vol. II, 1875-1882, No. 15, 14 June 1875.

112 Anson, Call, p. 274.

113 PH, Pusey to Wood, Vol. II, No. 23.

114 Gompertz, p. 241.

115 PH, Pusey to Wood, Vol. II, No. 23.

Throughout her religious life St Benedict was her prime inspiration. Thornton, in describing English spirituality, finds that 'Christian militarism, so loved by St Ignatius Loyola is rarely found. St Benedict's family theme remains constant: it may be a hard home but it is not a barracks'.¹¹⁶

Mary Potter's spirituality was of a mystical nature. She believed that her plan for the Little Company of Mary had been revealed to her by God. Her spiritual directors were sceptical of this, but she persevered. 'God wished to exercise His Mercy...by raising up an Order in His Church devoted to the work of rescuing the dying sinners in the last hour'.¹¹⁷ Her reverence for the Virgin Mary was exemplified in her commentary on St Louis Grignon de Montfort's Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin. In the Path of Mary, she wrote a practical and instructive guide that was not 'repulsive to...English Catholics' who knew it only from Faber's translation.¹¹⁸ When she finally went to Rome to plead the case for her community, she described it as 'one united body in the Heart of Our Lady'.¹¹⁹ After permission was granted to begin her foundation, she envisioned a statue of Mary Immaculate with a lily transfixed by a sword upon her heart for its symbol. This interpretation of the

¹¹⁶ Martin Thornton, English Spirituality: An Outline of Ascetical Theology according to the English Pastoral Tradition (London: SPCK, 1963), p. 50.

¹¹⁷ Patrick Dougherty, Mother Mary Potter: Foundress of the Little Company of Mary (1847-1913) (London: Sands & Co., Ltd., 1961), p. 42.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 49.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 63.

Maternal Heart of Mary combines both militancy and love. Such was her love and adoration of Mary, that when she came to build her hospital in Rome she designed it with the chapel at the centre (Christ centered life) in the shape of Mary's heart.¹²⁰ Though mystical in expression, Potter's life relied on the sacrament and on the intercession of the Virgin Mary.

Silentium et Spes was the motto for the Sisters of Bethany chosen by Etheldreda Benett. Faber translated it as 'In silence there is safety, power escapes with words'. But Philip Pusey, son of Dr Pusey, found the Vulgate translation more fitting to the foundress: 'In quietness, as in confidence, shall be your strength'.¹²¹ Benett had sought spiritual insight from early high church Anglicans that included Pusey, Dodsworth, and Manning, and from later members of the clergy house at St Alban's, Holborn that included Mackonochie. But she was most impressed by the views shared with her by her cousins in the Roman Catholic Order of Marie Reparatrice. Among the few letters Benett saved was one that spoke of the veneration of Mary.

We are specially consecrated to the Blessed Virgin whom we strive to imitate in her love and devotedness for Jesus. It is one of the things that has most grown upon me since I have been a Catholic. The understanding of what Our Lord was to His Blessed Mother, and of the Love we should bear her for His sake.¹²²

120 Ibid., p. 219.

121 SSB archives, Letter from Philip Pusey to Etheldreda Benett, n.d.

122 Ibid., Letter from Harriet Benett to Ethel Benett, n.d.

In another letter from her cousin Lydia she was asked if she had a 'great devotion to the Holy Spirit', and advised that it was essential for superiors to seek divine inspiration by saying the Veni sancte spiritus.¹²³ Later, cousin Harriet sent her an embroidered Sacred Heart in an envelope marked 'private'.¹²⁴ These letters document the search for growth in spirituality by Benett. As a foundress and superior she needed sustenance to maintain her dedication to the life and the work of her community. She was not afraid to go outside her church for this. Part of her sisterhood's mission was to pray for the unification of all Catholicism--Eastern, Roman and Anglican. She exemplified that mission.

While Anglican foundresses and early Roman foundresses retained their baptismal names, this was not the case for Fanny Margaret Taylor. She founded the Poor Servants of the Mother of God (SMG). Upon profession she became Mother Mary Magdalen of the Sacred Heart. Her spirituality was imbued with Ignatian thought. As a convert, the beauties of her Catholic faith never ceased to inspire her.

I have been a Catholic 27 years, and day by day
I bless the more the goodness of God Who gave
me the precious gift of faith. Perhaps you
born Catholics hardly know the joy of a

123 Ibid., Letter from Lydia Benett to Ethel Benett, 14 November 1872.

124 Ibid., Enclosure in letter from Harriet Benett to Ethel Benett, 23 February 1897.

convert, finding out year by year new beauties
in Holy Church.¹²⁵

She used the Spiritual Exercises in deciding the form her community should take. In her mind novenas to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to the saints smoothed the path for the work. She established Mary Immaculate as their patroness and gave the community to the special protection of St Mary Magdalen. Each of her 'children' was remembered on her own saint's day. Christ's presence in the chapel and daily attendance at Mass sustained her. Her friendship grew with the Jesuits and superiors of the Sacred Heart and Marie Reparatrice from mutual spiritual insights. She translated devotional materials from both French and Italian, besides writing books on the lives of saints. So familiar was she with the churches and religious treasures of Rome that she wrote a Catholic Pilgrim's Guide to Rome, to make sure that others might experience it as she had.¹²⁶

Her contemporary Emily Ayckbowm, the Anglican foundress of the Community of the Sisters of the Church, wanted her religious to dedicate themselves 'soul and body to Jesus Christ' and to take as their model 'the blessed Mary, Virgin Mother of God'.¹²⁷ Private devotions should prepare her sisters for the Holy Eucharist, which was to be celebrated 'as frequently as

125 SMG archives, Letter to Mary [niece-in-law] from M Magdalen, 4 July 1882.

126 Francis Charles Devas, Mother Mary Magdalen of the Sacred Heart (Fanny Margaret Taylor): Foundress of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God 1832-1900 (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1927), p. 322. The Pilgrim's Guide went to three editions.

127 CSC archives, The General Rule, pp. 22-23.

circumstances allow'.¹²⁸ As superior she was to 'make liberal provision for the spiritual needs of the Sisters,' but 'watchful against anything at variance with the revealed truth, or not strictly in accordance with the tenets of the English Branch of the Catholic Church'.¹²⁹ Yet she, too, turned to the study of St Ignatius for spiritual insight. Speaking of the Jesuits, she acknowledged 'the great work accomplished by that noble Order and the immense service they have rendered the Church'.¹³⁰ The study of the Bible was also her concern. In addressing her sisters who exercised authority she said:

Like a priest, she also is--in the words of St Paul--'an ambassador for CHRIST', charged to declare His orders and to interpret His will to those under her.¹³¹

Ayckbowm selected St Michael and his Angels as the patron of the Community of the Sisters of the Church. This has been interpreted as showing her 'militant' spirit, since she chose to 'fight under the captain of the Lord of Hosts'.¹³² She read many of the great spiritual writers and she was not reluctant to select devotions that added to the richness of the religious life--no matter what their Catholic origins. Spirituality, for Ayckbowm, was not limited to the prie-dieu or the chapel, it

128 Ibid., p. 48.

129 CSC archives, The Rule of the Sisters of the Church, No. 8.

130 CSC archives, Address given by Mother Emily, 5 December 1886.

131 Ibid.

132 Anson, Call, p. 444; A Valiant Victorian: The Life and Times of Mother Emily Ayckbowm (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co., 1964), p. 53.

encompassed her entire crusade to instill in the poor the love of God and His church.

Spirituality, among the mother foundresses, came from differing sources and was used to varying ends, but whatever its source, it sustained them and their work.

The histories of mother foundresses have been addressed in hagiographies and monographs by clergy and male historians. This male-centered view of a women's religious life cannot be the view of women within the organization. Looking at this life through the records and writings of the mother foundresses gives it a new perspective, which is the objective of this thesis. Their concern with structure of the life, the direction of the work, and the doctrinal position of their church were paramount in their actions. It took dedicated, strong women to sustain the fledgling institutes. They had to be able administrators, visionaries, leaders, and educators. Women familiar with the internal workings of their church. This was not a position that brought with it popularity. Theirs was not an easy task. Family objections had to be overcome. Hierarchical restraints had to be dealt with. Public enmity had to be erased. To found a community was to become the focus of attention for these divergent agents of society.

Chapter 2

ESTABLISHING THE RULE

The mother foundresses, whether Anglican or Roman, set down the objectives of their foundation in their rule and constitution. If they were Roman Catholics their rule had to meet criteria established in canon law; if they were Anglo-Catholics there were no such criteria for their rule in the Established Church. The Roman foundresses would turn to a clerical canonist for advice; the Anglican foundresses would seek legal advice for their statutes. Each group desired the approval of their church for their rule. Both branches of the Catholic faith offered some leeway in proceeding with the rule and constitutions. Vows became a most important question in the formulation of these statutes. While the three vows of religion: poverty, chastity and obedience, were taken for granted in the Roman Catholic Church, the sisterhoods of the Church of England spent forty years dealing with diocesan objections to vows. It was the 1880s before the Anglicans were openly taking vows. The diocesans of the Roman congregations approved of vows, but they used them to deny an order stability by regulating the term of the vows. The vow of obedience was also problematic. The Roman women were confronted with objections to the ultimate superior of their organization and so were the Anglicans. The formation of the rule and constitutions and the issue of vows, especially obedience, will be discussed in three distinct phases in foundress/hierarchy relationships:

experimentation (prior to restoration of the Catholic hierarchy and of the Anglican Convocation);
 implementation ('free trade' or a watch and see period);
 and assimilation (acknowledgement and control).

The initial phase, experimentation, concerned seeking approbation, formal or not. The first communities were seen as totally reliant on the clergy and brotherhoods for their knowledge of the religious life. Allchin states that the founding of the sisterhoods was notably done by Thomas Thellusson Carter, William John Butler and John Mason Neale and that the most knowledgeable person of nineteenth-century religious life was Richard M eux Benson of the Cowley Fathers.¹ Yet, there is evidence that the women took a more active role in this revival. Some sisterhoods were founded by women without assistance from clergy; some were founded together with clergy; and some, indeed, were founded by clergy alone. Without this total picture, Allchin was wrong to say that the founders were all men and that it was their knowledge of the religious life that fuelled this revival. The women who espoused the religious life did their homework; or rather their field work. They traveled to the continent to visit established convents and from the rules and constitutions of the ones they thought adaptable to a Church of England

1 A.M.Allchin, Revival, p. v.

sisterhood they selected the aspects they needed and refined their rule and constitution.

There is no parallel work, such as Allchin's for the Church of England, on nineteenth-century Roman Catholic women's religious institutes. Roman foundations were established under simple vows with relaxed enclosure. Their members were no longer strictly confined to the convent. These women, like their Anglican counter-parts were a component of a new venture for their church in England. As a mission country, England came under the jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda (SCP) in Rome. Because it was Protestant soil, different methods were needed for expansion of the faith. Canon law, as regards enclosure for women religious, was modified or simply ignored in some instances.² The transitional period from emancipation to the restoration of the hierarchy brought with it confused notions of episcopal jurisdiction. Bishops tried to control everything in their domain, groups of pious women coming in for the lion's share of attention. Disputes between regular and secular clergy caused many secular bishops to distrust any female congregation advised by clerical regulars, especially the Jesuits. Since the Jesuits advised most of the women religious of the new institutes, this was an important factor in the lives of sisters beginning their foundations. The controversy

² Sara Maitland, A Map of the New Country: Women and Christianity (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 59.

between regulars and seculars in the Roman Church was like that of the controversy between Evangelical and high church clergy and bishops in the English Church. An Evangelical bishop was not likely to sanction an Anglo-Catholic sisterhood in his diocese any more than a secular bishop would go out of his way to assist a congregation advised by regulars. These clerical divisions worked against the interests of women religious in both churches.

Initially the Anglican foundresses looked for a rule that was compatible with the active life and eventually they sought diocesan approval of that rule. The Roman foundresses had approbation foremost in their minds while they constructed the rule. The Anglicans visited existing sisterhoods, went to the continent to see Roman orders and corresponded with Roman Catholic friends in the religious life for perceptions helpful to their vision for a community. While these women remained true to the doctrine of the Established Church, which was sometimes doubted by society at large, they were not afraid of finding useful insights in the Roman Catholic tradition. They were concerned with making their communities viable, not with the origin of the ideas that would make them so. The majority of women in the Roman Church who founded congregations were converts to the faith.³ Time spent visiting convents or testing their

vocation was also a part of their background. They took aspects of existing rules to form their own rule and constitution. Papal or diocesan approbation of the rule and constitution was of prime importance to their existence as a congregation.⁴ The mother foundresses had freedom in the construction of the rule. They could, and often did, include a fourth vow to the purpose of their institute, i.e., nursing, education, etc. Yet even when the rule was based on previously approved rules, this was no guarantee that it would receive approbation. A bishop could ask that it be examined for 'its spiritual principles and practices'.⁵ In the case of papal approbation this meant long delays while the rule was translated into French or Italian, the languages required by SCP, for its minute inspection by canonists as to the purity of its Catholic thought. Mothers who found a champion among the members of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda would often stay in Rome consulting with them for months and sometimes years. The hardship this inflicted on the institute was incalculable. Another house had to be procured, the mothers were distant from the work of their community, and the community was without the guiding hand of the mothers. The expense of 'walking' the documents through the procedure was

3 Susan O'Brien, 'Terra Incognita: The Nun in Nineteenth-Century England', Past and Present 121 (November 1988), 110-140 (p. 119).

4 Ewens, p. 254. Until 1900 there was no approbation for the congregation under simple vows, only for the rule and the constitution of the congregation. Approbation sanctioned the existence of a community in the eyes of the Church.

5 Flaxman, p. 202.

considerable. Several institutes found it logical to open a branch house in Rome and travel to England as the occasion demanded. This branch house could, and sometimes did, become the mother house of the congregation. One reason for this was that Rome was so welcoming to the religious who had fought/negotiated constantly with their English bishops for the right to exist. A second reason was a community of mothers superior available for advice and solace. Rome was not as isolating as their English home could be. When a congregation was ready to open a branch in Rome, it was usually at a point in its development when the founding mother superior had become the mother-general and had delegated authority to her subordinates at home who were now sisters superior in charge of the work of their group.

Approbation could also be used by the hierarchy to show its favour or disdain for a community, like the love of a parent being withheld from an unruly child until the child behaves. The IBVM was in existence for more than 300 years before it received approbation. Other congregations that may have caused embarrassment for the church were denied approval until the persons involved had died.⁶ None of this had anything to do with

6 Gompertz, pp. 479-480. In 1850, Pierce Connelly sued for restitution of his conjugal rights in the Court of Arches and then in the Privy Council. Though married to Cornelia Connelly 'a deed of separation' granted in Rome allowed him to enter the Roman priesthood and subsequently for her to enter the religious life. The English press followed the court proceedings. Cornelia died in 1879; Pierce in 1883. Five-year approbation followed in 1887 and then final approbation in 1893.

the value of the work of the institutions. Rules written by the foundresses were re-written by the diocesan. This, too, caused Propaganda to withhold sanction, especially when the bishop involved had given himself more authority than the Sacred Congregation deemed appropriate.⁷

Because the Anglican foundresses borrowed aspects of ancient religious rules, along with those of more current rules that lent themselves to the active life and adapted them to be acceptable to the doctrine of the Church of England, they have been accused of imitating the Roman Catholic institutes. This charge is not wholly true. They were high church Anglicans--Anglo-Catholics--who had no other model to turn to for the religious life. Just as Newman looked to the primitive church for his inspiration during the Oxford Movement, these women were retrieving their ancient heritage through the only means available to them. It would be fairer to say that they judiciously selected aspects of Roman religious life that had once been a mutual heritage, and made them their own; not imitation so much as adaptation. That adaptation was ongoing. The first rule of a sisterhood was revised several times before the end of the century, and then again in the years that followed. These revisions reflected its actual use and the need for change to fit the life, as well as adjustments that made the rule

⁷ Dougherty, p. 143. The Sacred Congregation ruled that Bishop Bagshawe had given himself too much authority in the rule he wrote for the LCM.

acceptable to the church hierarchy. In their search for approval, the freedom of the foundresses to create their own community was, thereby, more constrained as the century proceeded.

The biographies of Butler, Pusey, Carter, and Neale stressed the importance of the reliance upon the cleric for the mothers superior knowledge of the religious life.⁸ In fact, most Anglican priests had no more concept of living the life of a religious than the first women to found sisterhoods. It would take time and actual experience before workable tenets could be distilled. Yet the brotherhoods, which began twenty years later than most sisterhoods, thought they had some kind of greater knowledge and tried to impose their views on the older sisterhoods.⁹ Many of the brotherhoods were short lived. Of the seventeen Anglican communities for men founded in the nineteenth century, only four existed

8 A. J. Butler, Life and Letters of William John Butler: Late Dean of Lincoln and Sometime Vicar of Wantage (London: Macmillan, 1897); Henry Parry Liddon, Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey, 4 vols (London: Longmans Green, and Co., 1893); W. H. Hutchings, Life and Letters of Thomas Thellusson Carter: Warden of the House of Mercy, Clewer, Hon. Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, and for Thirty-Six Years Rector of Clewer (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1903); Eleanor A. Towle, John Mason Neale, D.D.: A Memoir (London: Longmans Green, and Co., 1906).

9 LPL Benson Papers, 42 ff 320. This was especially true of R. M. Benson of the Cowley Fathers. He appealed to Archbishop Benson for the Society of All Saints to change their rule so that the chaplain, his post, would control their chapter meetings by presiding and setting the agenda. He stated, 'the Chaplain must have a regulative & the Visitor [Archbishop] a corrective authority'.

into the twentieth century.¹⁰ One of these was founded by Father Richard Meux Benson, the Society of St John the Evangelist (SSJE) known as the Cowley Fathers. He made their services as chaplains, or extraordinaries, or as the leaders of retreats, available to the Anglican sisterhoods. As Ayckbown (CSC) wrote in her journal of Father Benson, 'Will he ever learn...that God may have ideas for the Religious Life of the English Church other than his own?'¹¹ She firmly believed that one had to live the life for twenty years before its nuances could be grasped.

The concept that the clergy, or the brothers, alone, knew of the religious life was carried over to the thinking on the mother foundresses' knowledge of religious rules and constitutions. Indeed, the first sisterhood was founded by a committee of men and its rule written by Dr. Pusey.¹² Sellon (SHT) thought his rule was too severe for an active order and when she founded her community wanted a more workable statute. Never one to worry about the opinions of others when she thought herself right, she drew up her first rule in 1848,

10 Anson, Call, p. 590. It should also be noted that three communities of men joined the Roman Church. While the clergy worried at length about the danger of sisterhoods 'going to Rome,' none did so, as a unit, in the nineteenth century.

11 CSC Archives, Mother Emily's Journal, 9 February 1885.

12 PH, Mother Marian's Diary, Vol. I, 1841-1852, p. 31. Pusey consulted Marian Rebecca Hughes before he wrote the rule for the Park Village Sisterhood; Anson, 289. Hughes is considered the first Anglican sister for she took the vow of celibacy, using 'a translation of the Roman Pontifical for the rite'. Pusey read the rite and Newman administered her 'first Communion'.

combining the rule Pusey had written for the Park Village Sisterhood, the Society of the Holy Cross (SHC), with the rule of St Benedict. This rule was approved by the Bishop of Exeter, Henry Phillpotts, for the Devonport Society. After Phillpotts withdrew his sanction of the community, Sellon rewrote the rule, known to contemporaries as 'The Seven Great Rules'. These were to last but five years; the Rule of 1856 was the one that was to endure. Peter Anson points out that 'no detail, no matter how minute, was forgotten in these statutes.... They reveal what a close study the Lady Abbess must have made of the Rule of St Benedict, but she was not content with this source, she adopted the customs and usages from the rules of many other orders, especially that of the Poor Clares'.¹³ After eight years in the religious life she saw the need in having not only the active life, so acceptable to a broader spectrum of churchmen, but also the contemplative and the mixed life. She realized that all worked together for strength in community. The prayers of the contemplative supported the work of the active. Sellon wanted unceasing prayer to flow from her enclosed order. She divided the Companions of Jesus, as the contemplatives were called, into nine Choir Watchers, each for an aspect of Christ's Passion. There were eight groups for twenty-four hours with one group left open.¹⁴ The associates, who for one reason or another could not enter the sisterhood full-time, led the mixed life and

13 Anson, Call, p. 269.

14 Ibid., p. 278.

were upheld by a life of prayer and good works. Originally, Sellon had her enclosed 'Englishe nuns' 'denominated of the Sacred Heart', but after 1861 that was changed to 'the Love of Jesus',¹⁵ because an open acknowledgement of the Sacred Heart veneration in mid-century was too Roman for even a fiercely independent foundress.¹⁶

Mother foundresses in the nineteenth-century Roman Catholic Church in England, too, were not without previous knowledge of the religious life. Though some had not gone through a regular novitiate, they had experienced living the life in one form or another. Cornelia Connelly (SHCJ) had spent years living with the Sisters of the Sacred Heart both in Rome and in America.¹⁷ Fanny Taylor (SMG) had tried her vocation in Paris with the Sisters of Charity.¹⁸ Mary Potter had actually been a novice with the Sisters of Mercy in Brighton.¹⁹ Yet each was treated as if she knew nothing of her church, nor of what the religious life entailed, by their diocesans or spiritual directors. Taylor had gone from convent to convent on the continent searching

15 Ibid., p. 269.

16 Sister Violet, All Hallows: Ditchingham: The Story of an East Anglian Community (Oxford: Becket Publications, 1986), p. 16. All Hallows sisterhood, too, saw a need for the enclosed life of a religious. The demand at CAH came from the members themselves, and the Rev William Scudamore wrote a 'Rule for the Companions of Jesus' in 1868 for them.

17 Gompertz, p. 71; Flaxman, p. 149.

18 Devas, p. 62.

19 Dougherty, p. 30.

out a rule for her proposed congregation.²⁰ In her travels she encountered many forms of the religious life and chose the rule that came from an institute that most corresponded to her perception of the work she needed to do. She even thought of her congregation as becoming the English branch of this order. However, Archbishop Manning refused this connection, for it would have meant that women in his country were under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the prelate of another country.²¹ Mother Marie Therese was quite right when she stated that the three thorny issues of the restored hierarchy were 'ecclesiastical property, education and episcopal jurisdiction'.²² The judgement, sincerity and knowledge of women were condemned without trial. Since they were 'the frail daughters of Eve', as Bishop Wiseman had called them, it was assumed they knew nothing.²³

While Sellon 'answered the call' of Bishop Phillpotts to assist with the widows and orphans in Devonport and Plymouth, Connelly was selected by Bishop Wiseman and Pope Gregory XVI to head the first of the new congregations in England. Before she founded her

20 SMG archives, 'Annals of the Congregation of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God, Mary Immaculate, in England', August - September 1869. Taylor was the author of Religious Orders, a book on the orders for women existing in Ireland in the 1860s.

21 Devas, p. 131. Current sisters believe that this was a concept of Devas' and not an actual fact. As he wrote it, it would have been consistent with the episcopal jurisdiction disputes of prelates.

22 Mother Marie Therese, SHCJ, Cornelia Connelly: A Study in Fidelity (London: Burns & Oates, 1961), p. vii.

23 Flaxman, p. 117.

society, she was 'instructed' to draw up its rules and regulations. She was familiar with the rule of St Ignatius and the rule of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Using this information, together with her study of St Francis de Sales and St Francis of Assisi, she wrote her first rule. Fr Grassi assisted her with his knowledge as a canonist.²⁴ This effort was 'verbally' sanctioned by Pope Gregory and Cardinal Fransoni of Propaganda in 1846.²⁵ She received episcopal approbation from Bishop Wiseman in 1850. The rule of 1846 was the rule the sisters of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus loved and revered, but it was not to receive papal approbation for forty-seven years.

Experimentation, implementation and assimilation acted in a different way in the Roman congregations. Prior to the restoration of the hierarchy the need of the church for women religious in the mixed or active life was great. The Ultramontane wanted to encourage such groups to promote Catholic education. After the restoration episcopal jurisdictional disputes impeded the work of the congregations and the unification of the disparate segments of Roman Catholics. As the women religious, despite obstacles placed in their way, proceeded to bring together recusants, converts and the Irish, the hierarchy was forced to see their work as important to the Catholic movement. Thus by the late

24 Gompertz, pp. 87-91.

25 Ibid., p. 312.

century congregations were encouraged to work closely with the hierarchy and supported by them for so doing.

The restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in 1850 had repercussions throughout England in ecclesiastical and political circles. When Wiseman was recalled to Rome to be elevated to Cardinal, he thought his time in England was over. He also thought that he would have to put aside his dream for the Ultramontane to restore Catholic glory to this Protestant land. His joy knew no bounds when he became the first Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. His overly exuberant pastoral letter 'Out of the Flaminian Gate,' of October 7, 1850 as good as welcomed England back into the Catholic fold. The Queen was affronted. The Prime Minister, Lord Russell, lost no time in writing publicly to the Bishop of Durham 'linking the enormities of the Pope with the excesses of the Puseyites in the State Church' and ushering in a new wave of anti-Catholicism.²⁶ Catholic Emancipation had already restricted the Roman hierarchy from using titles held by the established Church. Rome thought long and hard before choosing the title Westminster as the See for its representative. But the clamour that followed Russell's letter demanded action and it came in the form of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act in August 1851. The Act essentially restated what had been already enacted and limited the Roman prelates to titles not held by the Anglican Church.²⁷ The vicars apostolic were no more.

26 Norman, p. 57.

27 Ibid., p. 71. It was repealed by Gladstone in 1871.

Now where there had been eight districts, there were twelve dioceses under the arch-diocese of Westminster.

Four years after the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy, Convocation in the Church of England was restored.²⁸ As the Roman ecclesiastics were regaining control of their church from the laity, so, too, the Anglican clerics were standing up for control of their church against Parliament. Now they had a formal body in which to voice their case for the church as a church. The first active orders for women religious were formed in both churches prior to these moves by the prelates to regain control of authority in their churches.

For Connelly the new diocesan of Southwark, Bishop Grant, had jurisdiction over SHCJ after 1851. Bishop Grant at once set about controlling her community. He was informed of the two sets of rules and constitutions that were at Propaganda, but it took him ten years to pass on that information to the mother foundress. When he did, she annotated his letter thus, 'Rule presented in 1848 not known to us. C.C.'²⁹ This was 1864. In 1869, Bishop Grant decided that it would be good for Connelly to go to Rome, before the first Vatican Council took place as it would address 'confirmation of modern religious orders'.³⁰ Now Cardinal Fransoni was gone and Cardinal Barnabo had replaced him. He required that the

28 Edward William Watson, The Church of England, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 127. Convocation was suspended in 1717 and restored in 1855.

29 Gompertz, p. 403.

30 Ibid., p. 407.

rule be redrawn. Connelly accepted changes she did not want hoping by so doing to finally achieve approbation. It was no longer 'her' rule. When it was completed, it was sent to the members of the community for their approval. They thought that Connelly had made the changes without consulting them in the matter and complained to Rome. The complaint itself held up approbation. By this time Dr Grant had died and been replaced by Dr Danell as Bishop of Southwark. From 1872 until 1874, he allowed the sisters to use their original rule. Wrongly, Connelly thought that all would be well. When he finally consented to preside over the first General Chapter meeting, he brought a 'new' rule with him. In it his new title was 'Bishop Superior of the Institute'.³¹ He obliged the sisters to try the rule for three years. When Connelly heard this she meditated, 'St Ignatius had calculated the time he would require to resign himself to the annihilation of his Society and reckoned it at ten minutes'. The sisters tried the rule for three years. When asked by the Bishop for their opinions, a young sister replied. 'My Lord, it seems to me that the new rule has been drawn up to correct abuses that never existed, and it does not lead us to love and obey our Superiors'.³² This was the same reaction Ayckbown had to Fr Benson's view of the religious life.³³ Undeterred the Bishop ordered another three year trial. Connelly did not live another three years. In fact, the

31 Ibid., p. 418.

32 Ibid., p. 454.

33 CSC archives, Journal, 9 February 1885.

approbation of the rule, her original rule, was not to come until she, Danell, and Pierce Connelly were all dead. It was not the content of the rule so much, as it was the embarrassment to the hierarchy caused by the scandalous behavior of Pierce Connelly suing in the British courts for restitution of his conjugal rights, he in holy orders and she a nun. Once the personae of this drama were off the stage, then and only then could the rule, written by Cornelia Connelly and used by her sisters for almost thirty-years, be granted Papal approbation. 'Her masculine fearlessness and integrity of purpose startled and unnerved Grant [and] exasperated Wiseman...' She was not mentioned in either of their biographies.³⁴ Yet through all the years of uncertainty about the rule, Connelly managed to keep her sense of humour. To a sister of the community, planning a visit to the mother house, she wrote and called the trip 'a pilgrimage to the shrine of St Leonards' Martyrs - living though they be'.³⁵

Anglican foundresses such as Marian Rebecca Hughes, Society of the Holy and Undivided Trinity (SHUT), and the Hon. Harriet O'Brien Monsell, Community of St John Baptist (CSJB), had researched the religious life. Hughes had gone to the continent prior to founding SHUT. She visited the Hotel Dieu, the Ursulines, and the Visitandines at Caen.³⁶ Pusey consulted with her before

34 Mother Marie Therese, Connelly, p. vii.

35 Gompertz, Connelly, p. 419.

36 PH, Marian's Diary, p. 19.

he drew up the rule for the first sisterhood (SHC). Though she visited with the Park Village Sisterhood from time to time she was 'less at home there than [she] had been with the Ursulines in Bayeux'.³⁷ Monsell, too, had toured the continent. Prior to the death of her husband, they visited convents with the express purpose of looking at the religious life as it was lived and the workings of the rule and constitution.³⁸ When she went to Clewer, she was not without knowledge of the religious life.

Other Anglicans were not so well versed. Harriet Brownlow Byron, Society of All Saints (SAS), had spent a number of years in France as a young woman. While she visited convents of the Sisters of St Vincent de Paul,³⁹ there is no record of her researching the rule of the order. The rule for All Saints, the society she founded, was largely written by Upton Richards, her spiritual director, with practical input from her as to the dedication of the society. Ann Gream, the first superior of East Grinstead, Society of St Margaret (SSM), knew little of the religious until she encountered John Mason Neale; neither did Emma Langston, the first superior of the Society of the Holy Cross, nor Harriet Day, recognized as the first superior of the Community of St. Mary the Virgin (CSMV) after the secession of Elizabeth

37 Ibid., p. 45.

38 Thomas T. Carter, Harriet Monsell: A Memoir (London: J. Masters and Co., 1884), p. 112. The Rev Charles Monsell, before his early death, had thought of starting a sisterhood and this trip was a part of his research.

39 Mayhew, p. 25.

Lockhart to the Roman Church. Dr Pusey instructed Langston, as Dean Butler instructed Day. The withering SHC was assimilated into Sellon's community and the CSMV remained a small society during the lifetime of Butler. Monsell and Brownlow Byron were willing to adjust their initial rule to meet with episcopal approval. Butler, too, in his concept of the life, catered to the bishop. Neither Sellon nor Neale was willing to do so. These were the early days of Anglican sisterhoods. It was more amazing that some foundresses were well versed in the religious life than it was that some were not. All believed that they were called of God to the life and were willing to live it and learn its ways.

There was one other difficulty the Anglican foundresses had that the Roman foundresses did not. The hierarchy of the Church of England would not accept the vows of women religious because they were vows and there was no convention within the church to dispense these women from them. The idea of a woman vowing for life to remain chaste, espouse poverty, and live under obedience was inconceivable to many clerics. Even Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, who was an open supporter of the sisterhoods, would not countenance vows. He insisted that any sisterhoods he dealt with would only 'promise', not vow, obedience, poverty and chastity. This way, should a member decide to return to the world she could do so at any time. The sisters at Clewer made 'promises' to their diocesan in public and vows to their warden in private to placate Bishop Wilberforce. Such was the

determination of the sisters to devote their lives to religion that they actively sought vows. Those sisterhoods under the influence of Dr Pusey took vows from the beginning, i.e., Society of the Holy Trinity, Society of the Holy Cross, Society of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, and Society of the Sisters of Bethany. He recognized lifelong devotion as an integral part of the religious life which other clerics were unable to do. Naturally, they did not publicize what they were doing. The main intent of the hierarchy was to force these women to remain free from vows so that they could return to a normal life, should they change their minds. There was a strong male belief that this religious devotion was some sort of aberration in a woman's life that would eventually pass. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury insisted that the rule dealing with the right of any sister to leave the SAS at any time be read to the sisters regularly. He had heard from the Bishop of Lincoln that '...vows or promises intended to be binding for life are administered at All Saint's, Margaret Street. It is my duty as Visitor to ask you to state to me explicitly in writing, whether this allegation is true or not'.⁴⁰ Brownlow Byron replied, 'We have never prevented a Sister leaving the Community when she desired to do so....' ⁴¹ It should be noted that she never wrote that they did not take vows. She simply supplied Tait with a copy of the rule and he decided that Rule I, the

40 LPL, Tait Papers 235 ff 383-4. 28 May 1878.

41 Ibid., 235 ff 387-8. 23 October 1878.

rule that allowed a sister to leave the community at any time, '...should be read with the other rules at stated times....'⁴² Vows were seen as preventing sisters from easily retiring from the community when they chose. Such prevention would stop a woman from returning to the expected life of wife and mother.

By the late 1860s the experimentation period ended and the time of implementation had begun. The communities had lived with the rule and constitution and now it was necessary to adjust them accordingly. Nearly all the societies founded in the early years of the forties and the fifties showed in their initial rule obedience first to the mother superior who interpreted the rule and then to the chaplain in all matters spiritual. As the years progressed, in order to gain the support of the diocesan if not his open approval, this was changed to obedience, first, to the bishop, then to the mother. What the foundresses could not gain from their initial instinct in the matter was gained by adjustment to, or addition of, the implied wishes of the diocesan, hence the implementation era. Hughes' handwritten first Statutes Book states, 'The Society shall consist of a Lady Superior and Sisters and shall be assisted by a Visitor....'⁴³ Monsell's first rule written for the sisterhood⁴⁴ had a 'promise of

42 Ibid., 235 ff 395-6, 29 October 1878.

43 PH, 'Sisterhood of Mercy of the Holy and Undivided Trinity', 1861, Statute III.

44 Valerie Bonham, A Place in Life: The Clewer House of Mercy, 1849-83 (Windsor: Valerie Bonham, 1992), p. 57.

obedience' to the 'Rules and Regulations of the Community', and that those wishing to join must have the approval of both the 'Warden and Superior'.⁴⁵ Brownlow Byron's first rule for All Saints also stressed obedience to the 'The General Rule and Admonitions' (1854), but in her case more authority was given to the mother superior and to the bishop in the 'Rules and Admonitions of the Sisters of the Poor' (1859). The mother superior's approval of a new member became equal to that of the 'Incumbent of All Saints'. 'Obedience was now declared to be owed to 'the Visitor', i.e., the bishop, as well as to 'the Superior and the Chaplain'.⁴⁶ Statute XII, the ability of a member to leave the society and any time, was there only, according Brownlow Byron, 'to meet the wishes and the objections of the Bishop'.⁴⁷ So while the mother foundresses intended to be in charge of their own institutions, clerical forces that threatened the work had to be appeased and the rules rewritten for this purpose. The accomplishment of the work was more important to these women than who received the paramount obedience on paper. Within the convent, it was the mother to whom obedience was shown on a daily basis. Since they were left alone to deal with internal problems, their natural domestic sphere, it was easy for

Mariquita Tennant, the widow of an Anglican clergyman, founded the House of Mercy, Clewer (1849) and wrote the basics of a rule for it before her retirement in 1851. Initially, the Community of St John Baptist was founded to take over her work.

45 CSJB archives, 'Rule of 1854'.

46 Mayhew, pp. 39, 42-43.

47 Ibid., p. 45.

them to acquiesce to the hierarchy who wanted the outward, public, acknowledgment of deeds done and daughters protected.

The need for the hierarchy to exert control over women religious was seen in the Roman Church, too. Earlier in the century the IBVM, the first apostolic congregation of women religious in England, had been stripped of its obedience to the 'General Superioress' by Papal rescript, and was placed immediately under the bishop.⁴⁸ Mother Mary Josephina wrote that when Dr Briggs came, in 1836, 'He told each of us that he knew nothing about nuns, which was very true. No Bps [sic] till Dr B. touched the constitutions.'⁴⁹ Dr Briggs went so far as to draw up new constitutions and customs in 1857, that time when episcopal jurisdiction was foremost in the minds of the newly formed dioceses. His 'exhortation' sums up his appraisal of his situation and theirs.

... Bishops, according to the constant discipline and sacred canons of the church, are the legitimate and regular Superiors of Religious Communities....Bishops...must ever have an ecclesiastical jurisdiction over Nuns in their diocese.⁵⁰

48 IBVM archives, Mother Hilda, 'A Short History of St. Mary's Convent, York, 1911', p. 29.

49 Ibid., p. 30.

50 IBVM archives, 'Constitutions & Customs &c. of the Institute of the B.V. Mary at St Mary's Convent, Micklegate Bar, York,' Revised and approved by the Superior thereof The Right Rev. John Briggs, D.D. Bishop of Trachis and Vicar Apostolic of the District of York [1857].

Bishops were the legitimate - male and apostolic - directors of the lives of women and nuns. Although the IBVM nuns had respect for the hierarchy, they also had respect if not veneration for the rule and constitutions under which they had lived for hundreds of years. This new wave of uncalled for flaunting of 'legitimate' authority was intensely disliked. Touching the constitutions led the institute into forty troubling years in which the mothers superior never knew from one day to the next how the rules were changed and if they were complying with them. Mother Agnes Dunn was concerned enough to search for the 'legitimacy of the transference of authority from the Chief Superior to the Ordinary'. Her search led her into conflict with the bishop that resulted in her dismissal from office.⁵¹ Rome's objection 'to the position, office and name of a General Superioress' stemmed from its belief that 'Monarchical power was in no wise to be entrusted to the female sex'.⁵² Searching out reasons for not having approbation granted earlier and to defend themselves, with the advice of Fr. Morris, SJ, the IBVM argued:

General Superioress...had never possessed a Monarchical power similar to that exercised by the General of the Jesuits over his Order. That she neither possessed nor wished for a regular jurisdiction; that each house of the Institute is entirely under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Bishop of the place; and that her whole power is purely maternal, like that of the Mother of a family over her

51 IBVM archives, 'Necrology'.

52 IBVM archives, 'Histories', Vol. 31. This information came from the sisters' search to find why they had not been given approbation earlier in their communal lives.

children, and directed, especially, to preserving of the whole Institution in love, peace and union, and the friendly exchange of assistance and good offices between the different Sister houses.⁵³

The threat of a woman with an assumed power equal to that of the General of the Jesuits had put the IBVM in harm's way. By resorting to the acceptable role of any woman, the maternal, they hoped to bring about the papal sanction of their rule and constitution, which is indeed what happened.

This bending to the hierarchy in the fifties in both churches, saw a backlash in the sixties in the persons of Anglican's Etheldreda Benett and Emily Ayckbowm and the Roman's Mary Potter. Benett stated staunchly that she did not want her sisterhood referred to as 'Mr. _____'s Sisters'.⁵⁴ There is no record of Benett visiting convents on the continent, but she was a friend of Dr Pusey's daughter, Lucy. Lucy Pusey had wanted to be a religious and Pusey originally investigated the various orders so that he could sponsor an Anglican order for her to join. She died in her teens, however, with her dreams unrealized. Benett's London friends included Brownlow Byron and the Hon. Georgina Hoare. Together with these women she attended All Saint's, Margaret Street and heard the sermons of Pusey, Manning, Dodsworth and Upton Richards. The three women visited the Park Village

53 Ibid.

54 SSB archives, 'Society of the Sisters of Bethany, 1866-1966', p. 5.

Sisterhood on numerous occasions.⁵⁵ In forming her rule Benett proceeded in a business-like manner and consulted the law firm of Hussey and Hulbert to obtain a copy of the Statutes of Clewer, the East Grinstead Statutes, and those of the Convent at Stone. The latter, the Roman Catholic community of Dominicans of St. Catherine of Siena, could only be obtained with the permission of Bishop Ullathorne, which the firm did not believe they would receive. 'When you are able to furnish us with the extracts from your Rules, we can prepare a draft of the Statutes for consideration by you'.⁵⁶ Her business-like approach to the writing of the rule was something new for a mother foundress. She wanted the best rule and constitution for her mixed-life community. If there was something she had overlooked, she hoped that others had found it. She took the work of the law firm, together with Pusey's Rule for the Society of the Holy Cross, the 'Rule and Spiritual Directory of the Order of the Visitation' and 'a row of little brown books, rules of different Orders' gave them to Mr Russell, her chaplain, and sent him to the island of Cumbrae to prepare the rule of the Sisters of Bethany in 1874.⁵⁷ Whenever a question arose concerning the rule or the constitution, she consulted not her chaplain but her cousins, Harriet and Lydia Benett, known in religion as Mother Mary St John

55 Anson, Call, p. 319. Also recorded in the archives of SAS, SSB and CSJB. Brownlow Byron founded SAS and Georgina Hoare became a member of CSJB.

56 SSB archives, Loose Letter from Hussey and Hulbert to Etheldreda Benett, 28 July 1868.

57 SSB archives, 'Society of the Sisters of Bethany', p. 9.

and Mother Mary St Joseph, superiors in the Roman Catholic order of Marie Reparatrice. From them she was able to ascertain more workable information than from her own clergy, for they lived the life, the clergy did not.⁵⁸ Her thorough research, and, no doubt, the information given by her cousins left her convinced that life vows were to be taken. From its very beginning, the SSB took those vows.⁵⁹

Ayckbown did not arrive in London until after the failing Park Village Sisterhood had already been combined with Sellon's Devonport Sisterhood to form the Society of the Holy Trinity. But she and her sister had visited convents in Italy and Germany on their Grand Tour. After the death of her sister and her step-mother, she went to France to stay with sisters in the convent of Dames de l'Annunciade.⁶⁰ Here she found two conditions that she would not allow in her community: inadequate food and ignorance of the outside world. But she did return to England with the Rule of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart (1852), a book that made a lasting impression on her. So much so that it was to be always available at her bedside for the rest of her life. Ayckbowm did very extensive research in preparing the Rule for the CSC. Her first

58 SSB archives, Loose letters: Harriet Benett to Etheldreda Benett, 14 July [1870]; Lydia Benett to Etheldreda Benett, 20 July 1872, 14 November [1872].

59 SAS archives, Loose item, 'Vows Memorandum'. Note on SSB use of vows.

60 [Community of the Sisters of the Church], Emily H.E. Ayckbowm: Mother Foundress of the Community of the Sisters of the Church (London: Church Extension Association, 1914), p. 39.

rule was very like that of the SAS and the CSJB, in that sisters made a 'promise of obedience to the Rules of the Home'. But as she worked on it over a sixteen year period, 1870 to 1886, drawing on Cassian and the Desert Fathers, Sts Benedict, Augustine, Bernard, Thomas Aquinas, Teresa, Francis de Sales, Vincent de Paul, Jeanne de Chantal, Ignatius Loyola and the French Bishop, Monsignor Gay, it evolved quite differently.⁶¹ Her research took her to the library of the British Museum for more writings of Ignatius Loyola. She recorded, 'Went by appointment to the British Museum to meet Miss Walker who promised to help me search out some books, which I hoped might be of use in writing 'the Customs'. Found some really useful books on Jesuit organization'.⁶² As time went by the adaptations came less from St Francis de Sales and more from St Ignatius Loyola and Mother Sophie Barat. (Benett, too, had found Ignatian methods helpful to her mixed-life community.) In Ayckbowm's printed rule she defines the office of Mother Superior thus:

The Mother Superior, as head of the whole order, is vested with paramount authority.... It rests with her to decide all matters which are not defined by Constitution and the Rule. To her authority -- personal or deputed -- Sisters shall one and all, submit, implicitly. They shall ever speak of her, and address her with respect, and refrain from discussing her motives or conduct.⁶³

61 Ibid., p. 37.

62 CSC archives, Journal, 15 February 1887.

63 CSC archives, Rule of the Sisters of the Church, London: 1911, p. 26.

Her sisters were to be 'faithful members of the Holy Catholic Church' and the society was to follow the 'doctrines and formularies of the English Church'.⁶⁴ No authority for the community was in any way given to the chaplain (though he was there for spiritual advice), nor to a diocesan, as she wanted no Visitor for her order. The mother superior was to 'seek advice only from those whom the Rule points out to be her counsellors and assistants'.⁶⁵ In the CSC, the mother superior was indeed the 'paramount' authority.

Mary Potter took a more adversarial approach to the fidelity of her rule than Connelly had taken. It was no longer the early years of the new institutes when she decided to found her own order. It was the 1860s. She had left the Sisters of Mercy because, as she said, 'I could not enter a convent unless it were directed to that purpose, the perpetual care of the dying'.⁶⁶ She gave her plan for her own society to her spiritual director, Monsignor Virtue, bit by bit as it was 'revealed' to her. He referred her to the Convent of the Agonizing Heart in Lyons. They were a contemplative order who prayed for the dying and what she wanted was to actually be with people who were dying. Finally, he sent her to Dr Danell, Bishop of Southwark. He allowed the work to go forward, but would not allow her and her associates to

64 Ibid., p. 7, 13.

65 Emily Ayckbowm, 'Rule and Instructions for Sisters Holding Posts of Authority', [printed 1911], Part III, I.

66 Dougherty, p. 42.

consider themselves religious. In 1876 she went over his head and wrote to Pius IX stating the objectives of her community as one for 'those members who have the greatest need [those who] die daily'.⁶⁷ She estimated that number at '80,000'. Danell heard of the letter and withdrew his permission for her work to go forward. Bishop Bagshawe, through her brother's introduction, welcomed her to Nottingham. He was convinced that the community needed his guidance and made sure that obedience to the diocesan was a part of the rule. He went so far as to dismiss Potter as the superior. After she was elected superior in 1879, he proceeded to 'make up' more and more rules.⁶⁸ She gained permission to go to Rome and stated, 'Who was it who went out with a sling? I feel like that'.⁶⁹ There she found help in the person of Dr Gualdi. The Sacred Congregation of Propaganda (SCP) would not accept Bagshawe's rule, but they would incorporate modifications that she thought necessary. She asked for authority to be given to the mother and the council and for the bishop to be retained as ordinary. She also wanted a long novitiate. To her thinking it was necessary for the unity lacking in the young congregation.⁷⁰ Bagshawe had undermined the function of the novice mistress and, thereby, inhibited the process of assimilation of new

67 Ibid., p. 63.

68 Ibid., p. 122.

69 Ibid., p. 133.

70 It is in the novitiate that a sister learns to separate herself from the outside world and to commit herself to the community--its objectives and its members. Its importance is paramount in the formation of viable religious community.

members. When Bagshawe wrote that she had permission to go to Rome, but not to change his rule, it was Gualdi who told her to reply that Cardinal Simeoni asked for clarification. In this way he showed Potter how to use obedience as a tool to frustrate the plans of the Bishop by referring him to his superior the Cardinal, just as so often the Bishop had used her obedience to him to inhibit her actions.⁷¹ In 1883, the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda informed Bagshawe that he was 'no longer Superior of the Little Company'.⁷² The rule received approbation for five years. Still, Bagshawe restricted the movements of Potter and she resolved one last change before final approbation, that of the move of the mother house from Hysom Green to Rome. She had done with his interference. She managed the change. Of course, as her diocesan, Bagshawe's favourable appraisal of the LCM was necessary for final approbation. He wrote a glowing letter about the work of the sisters, but he could not resist one last jibe at the foundress. Bagshawe had refused permission for her visit to the Papal See for the final approbation. When the SCP overrode his decision he allowed her to go, but not to take any of her Council with her. So in his letter of approval of the work, he stated that when he had visited the house 'the Mother was not in residence', as should have ordinarily been the case.⁷³ Final approbation was received in 1893 from Pope

71 Ibid., p. 143.

72 Ibid., p. 146.

73 Ibid., p. 183.

Leo XIII and a grateful Potter named her new hospital and convent in Malta 'Casa Leone' in his honour.⁷⁴

The mother foundresses entered an era of assimilation. The strong stance taken by Benett, Ayckbowm and Potter was not to become the way for succeeding orders. Towards the end of the century, as the Church of England recognised that the sisterhoods would not go away, there was more hierarchical involvement in the creation and running of new sisterhoods. The Church of Rome was nearing its *Conditae a Christo* (1900) and *Normae* (1901) that established rules for women under simple vows and recognised them as true religious, but not without added restraints.⁷⁵ The foundresses began to have better educational backgrounds in the Anglican sisterhoods, as evidenced by Agnes Mason, who taught Moral Science at Bedford College, London. Her intent was to found a community of teaching sisters. To gather information on existing communities she visited the Sisters of the Assumption, Paris, the Congregation of Teaching Dominicans, Nancy and a second house of Dominicans, Lucerne. From these institutes she found the workable knowledge to construct an order whose primary function was study and education.⁷⁶ But the times had

74 Ibid., pp. 184-193.

75 Ewens, p. 21; Maitland, p. 56. These documents laid down 'a rigid and uniform system' for approbation. Recognition was more difficult for new orders and established orders had to have their rules re-vetted.

76 CHF archives, 'The First Sixty Years: A Short History of the Community of the Holy Family', 1958, p. 4. Mason studied Moral Science under Henry Sidgwick at Newnham College and did a Tripos.

changed. Even with the benefit of a hard-won education, her efforts were limited by the church hierarchy's new-found sense of control over the lives of women religious. Before she even began her community, she went over its rule and constitution with the Bishop of London. After the Community of the Holy Family was established, she continued to pass changes in the constitution on to the episcopate for approval.

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77 LPL, F. Temple Papers, 55 ff 25-8.

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book after using S.J. Summary'. After stating the aim of the society, 'the salvation of souls, especially the poor', she went on to state that the government would be 'determined by general chapter' and that the chapter would elect the mother superior for a period of six years. The bishop was to be the 'ecclesiastical Superior of the Congregation'. The mother's advice and council was to come from her chapter. The apostolic vows were for life. The rule of St Ignatius of Loyola formed the basis of her rule.⁷⁸ By 1878, her rule had been given to Fr Dignam for his advice before seeking approbation. The now 'Rule and Constitutions of the Congregation of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God, Mary Immaculate,' had as 'Superior General of the Congregation' the bishop 'of the diocese in which the Mother House is situated'.⁷⁹ The 'Superioress General was to be elected for five years' and the vows of the members were for three years. The members were free to leave when this term had expired. A postulant could neither receive the habit nor be dismissed without the consent of the superior general, i.e., the bishop. Clearly between the first rule and the rule of 1878 the basic thinking had changed. The diocesan now had more power and the mother less. This limitation, on the term of the vows, gave more control to the diocesan in determining the stability of the congregation. But Taylor gloried in what she perceived

78 SMG archives, 'First Rule after using the S.J. Summary', [n.d.], pp. 4, 20.

79 SMG archives, 'Rule of the Congregation of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God, Mary Immaculate in England', [1878], p. 1.

to be the precision of canon law. She went to Rome with the rule of 1878 and in 1879 received the Lauda read to her community by Cardinal Archbishop Manning, himself. Why was the approval of the SMG so much less painful than that of the SHCJ or the LCM? Like Connelly, Taylor was acquainted with the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster; Connelly with Wiseman and Taylor with Manning. Taylor had not 'embarrassed' the princes of the church by airing family problems in the courts of England. And Potter? She was not as well connected as Connelly or Taylor. She had to assert herself to win the recognition she knew her order deserved. In taking her case directly to Propaganda, she found an advocate for her cause. Papal approbation was used by her and by other women religious as a way out from under the diocesan's control.

In the Church of England the 1840s and 1850s the relative independence of the mother foundresses was gradually diminished by their search for hierarchical approval. By the late 1860s and early 1870s the founders were strong enough in their own religious convictions and personal capabilities, not to look for either direction or approval from outside their own communities. As the century drew to a close, so did the independent self-confidence of the founders. Reliance on hierarchical approval became a constant. The process of founding and establishing a sisterhood moved from experimentation to implementation and on to assimilation. What caused these changes? The Church itself was fighting for its

own existence when the sisterhoods began. When the sisterhoods attracted attention they were dealt with; if they remained 'hidden' they were left alone. With twenty years of precedence the second wave of religious had more confidence. The church in its conferences and convocations was pondering the reality of sisterhoods.⁸⁰ The records began to show a call to authorize sisterhoods as a part of the church. Only in this way could they be controlled. Recognition, in other words, had its price. Formally educated women were also educated in the system of hierarchy. They had now been taught that there was a pecking order that must be followed. As well-educated women, they began to adjust to the hierarchical game.

80 Chronicles of Convocation, 1858; Chronicles of Convocation, 1862; Chronicles of Convocation, 1878; Church Congress Reports, 1883; Conference of Bishops, Lambeth Palace, 'Encyclical Letter', 1897.

Chapter 3

RECRUITING AND FUNDING

Once the initial rule was in place, the mother foundresses began looking for members and funding to help meet the objective of their communities. These members came from a number of different sources: penitents of the clergy, friends or acquaintances of the foundress, relatives of the foundresses or their members, and later on, teachers and students from their schools. Some prospective members were sent to the mother foundresses by interested clerics, usually the confessor of a penitent.¹ In the case of the Roman orders many of these 'penitents' were new converts from the Church of England; others were women in the diocese who had been looking for an institute to join and had found none compatible with their own spiritual or philanthropic interests. The Anglican communities drew more members from friends of the foundresses, women of the same class background. Biological sisters might enter the same community or choose separate communities to enter. There were instances of one sister entering an Anglican sisterhood and another a Roman Catholic congregation. Nieces of the foundress often joined her society. While the first Roman institutes attracted the middle and upper classes, later institutes drew their membership from the Irish working class in England or from Ireland for an English

¹ Penitents, in this instance, were women who sought out a cleric as confessor for a deeper understanding of the Christian life. The penitent/confessor relationship was found in both Anglican and Roman Catholicism.

foundation. Since the number of sisters at any one time was never sufficient for the work of the community the superior relied on third order sisters or associates to swell the number of available workers.² These women, in some instances, numbered ten times those of the inmates.

Initial membership was small, but as their work spread and their existence became known they grew rapidly. Women who had worked as teachers in their schools applied for membership; likewise, students from their schools were another source of membership. How the mother foundresses enlisted their membership and their role in the selection of new members, is the subject of the first segment of this chapter. Besides members, the foundresses needed funding to make their objectives reality. 'St Teresa and five ducats, could do nothing, but St Teresa and five ducats and God, could do everything'. This old saying was also true for the mother foundresses. They created funding where none existed, not for themselves, but to do God's work through their communities. Armed with their belief, they were able to fly in the face of the dictates of nineteenth-century conventions for women in general. Where this funding came from and how it was amassed will be the subject of the second segment of this chapter.

² Third order sisters, or associates, were women who, for whatever reason, lived in their own homes, but worked with the sisters in their philanthropies and kept a regular spiritual life based on the life of the community with which they worked. Often they had their own prayer book or special breviary. Men were also recruited as associates.

RECRUITING

In finding recruits, Ayckbowm and Taylor recorded the type of woman they were looking for and the way they went about assimilating new members. Emily Ayckbown laid down a complete description of the women she was looking for in her book on the customs of the CSC. Her concept of the ideal member became her prototype for desirable candidates in the last third of the century. With just some rephrasing, as to class, her ideas were sound for the entire era. She wanted no 'capricious' or 'intractable' spirits, rather to her 'a flock is composed of sheep, not mules'. Eccentrics and people of high rank caused dissension as much as people of low rank who would revel in their new 'luxury', both factions would be disturbing to the community as a whole. This was a place for women with a common background; a place that reflected the coming of age of the middle class in English life.³ Those women who wished to 'try their vocation' were to have unblemished reputations, good health (no physical or mental defect), be at least sixteen years of age, of good temper and cheerful disposition, and desire to devote themselves to the service of 'God and His poor'. There was to be no

3 G. M. Young, Victorian England: Portrait of an Age (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), pp. 149-157, 174; G. Kitson Clark, The Making of Victorian England (London: Methuen, 1962), chap. 5; F. M. L. Thompson, The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain, 1830-1900 (London: Fontana, 1988), passim.; Perkin, chap. 6.

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service for postulants entering the community so that they might feel free to withdraw at any time, or for that matter, be asked to leave. Their trial period was to be of six to twelve months and during this time they were asked to contribute one guinea a week for their keep. Ayckbowm used the words of St Gregory to describe the postulancy as a period of time during which a young woman found out if she could 'sacrifice one's friends, family, fortune and pleasure -- one's will and judgement; to make this sacrifice in the flower of one's age'.⁴

For someone intending to 'try her vocation', the process began when she entered as a postulant for a period of at least six months. If she chose to continue in the life and desired to enter the novitiate, then she had to be approved, in some cases by the bishop, warden or incumbent of a parish as well as the mother superior. In the case of the CSC, it was only the mother who needed to approve, provided her council did not disagree. If accepted as a novice, she would receive the habit with a white veil to signify that she had not yet taken final vows. For the next two years, in some cases a longer period, she would live the life of a religious and attend classes to deepen her understanding of the spiritual life. This was a time of separating herself from the outside world and her relations and focusing on the new world of devotion and the works of her order -- an

4 CSC archives, Instructions on the Rule of the Sisters of the Church, 'Customs', pp. 4-5.

internship. At the end of this period, provided she wanted to remain and the society wanted her to remain, she made her profession taking the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The new sister took these vows for life or for a stated period of time, but her intent was that they were for life. (Many of the Anglican sisterhoods were prohibited from taking vows publicly, but did so privately. The hierarchy of the Church of England said that they could not dispense vows once taken and therefore were not willing to receive the vows of women. Rather than vows, the episcopate received 'promises'.) A lifetime commitment was important to these women. 'Postulant', 'novice', 'professed sister' were terms for which the early Anglican sisterhoods were chastised. These terms were considered 'too Romish' and so, though the traditional steps remained, they were called by different names. Some foundresses called the postulant an 'aspirant'; the novice a 'Sister Probationer'; the professed a 'Confirmed Sister'.⁵ Sellon designated a sister 'Child' and then 'Eldress' and used 'Dame' for those of high achievement.⁶ This practice of avoiding 'Romish' terms lasted through the first generation of sisters in the Church of England. Whatever these steps were called, they were virtually the same in Anglican sisterhood or Roman institute.

5 CSJB archives, 1854 Rule, nos. 1-4.

6 Anson, Call, p. 277; Williams, 'Breviary', p. 7. Williams gives a description of Dame Amelia Warren's translation of the Sarum Breviary for SMHT use.

An Anglican woman desiring to enter a sisterhood, came first for a visit. This visit might last a week or a church season, such as Lent. At the end of the visit she might request to enter the community or join the associates if her family duties prevented her from complete involvement. The detailed annals of the CSC, recorded by Emily Ayckbowm, witness this process:

Miss Spearing came for a visit of several weeks with the intention of trying the Life.
 Miss Burdon... wrote to say she'd changed her mind, at least for the present.
 Miss Ashdown left after a visit of several weeks her parents not consenting to her becoming a Sister.
 Miss Owen left having no vocation for the Sister's life.⁷

Of the four women listed above, three eventually became Sisters of the Church. Miss Ashdown and her sister both joined and lived out their lives as Kilburn sisters. Another sister combination was that of Elizabeth and Adelaide Mitchell, long time friends of the foundress. Parental consent was a determining factor for a young woman desiring to enter the religious life. Miss Ashdown's parents refused their permission and she withdrew. When she later joined the community it was either because her parents relented or that they had died. The rules of each sisterhood stressed parental consent. The members of the Victorian family owed their first allegiance to their parents. This allegiance fell heavily upon unmarried daughters who were expected to remain in the home to care for their aging parents.

7 CSC archives, Annals, September, October, April 1871 and February 1876, respectively.

Parents worried about family property that might be held by an unmarried daughter. If that daughter joined a religious community that property might fall from family control. A family objection to a woman's joining a religious community was a *fait accompli*. The woman would not go against parental wishes, as long as they objected or remained alive. Etheldreda Benett desired to become a religious in the late 1840s, but she did not do so until 1864--five years after her father's death. He had withheld his permission and so entailed his estate to keep her from entering the life for nearly twenty years.⁸ English families were not the only ones to refuse permission for their daughters to join a convent; Irish families, too, refused permission. Taylor notes, 'Regis' niece is not coming, her father would not consent....'⁹

Not all aspirants were successful, as Taylor wrote, 'I have declined that girl. I didn't like the account of her'.¹⁰ Similarly, she noted that 'Hannah' was a 'very naughty self-willed stuck-up girl', who 'went off at 8 am the other day'.¹¹ In each instance, the mother foundress kept the members informed of her progress in finding new postulants, and likewise, the growth of their communal body. Thus the anticipation of a new member of the community (their new family) was heightened and the disappointment of one not coming was lessened.

8 SSB archives, Letter from Etheldreda Anna Benett to Trustees of her father's will, July 7, 1865.

9 SMG archives, Volume C, 1892-1897, 30 August 1892.

10 Ibid., Volume A3, 1850-1885, 16 April 1884.

11 Ibid., Volume B, 1887-1891, 27 June 1891.

Some women were referred to other communities as being more suitable for them. Ayckbowm records:

Miss Fraser came to stay at the Home with the intention of trying the life of the Sisters of the Ch., but finding the work too hard was recommended by them to the Home of the Retreat.¹²

Margaret Skene Fraser entered the Sisters of Bethany, 'the Home of the Retreat', as a postulant on June 6, 1871 and was professed there two years later.¹³ So a 'failed' vocation at one Anglican sisterhood did not mean the applicant had no calling, any more than it did in the Roman institutes. Taylor, herself, had been told by the superior of the Sisters of Charity in Paris that she had 'no vocation', yet she went on to found her own community.¹⁴ Each individual case required the acceptance of the rule by the applicant and the acceptance of the applicant by the superior and her council.

Taylor provides glimpses of how these postulants and novices were formed into a community. In her recruiting, as in other aspects of her society, her delightful sense of humour shows through. From Kinsale she wrote to her Brentford convent:

There are a great number of new children coming -- so I shall be obliged to send away those in whom I find the smallest imperfection on my return, to make room for the others.¹⁵

12 CSC archives, Annals, May 1871.

13 SSB archives, Roll.

14 Devas, p. 62.

15 SMG archives, Volume A3, Letter dated 18 August 1876.

She treated her sisters as children, which was natural considering she was at least twenty years older than most of them. She tried to amuse her children.

We are expecting a postulant this morning. We had great recreation guessing her name and you can give the same at Beaumont. Tell them it is two saints put together. (Rosanna) She is a penitent of Fr Ronan's, so might be very good. ¹⁶

These letters had a specific function. They united the members of the community into one body. By making a game of guessing the name of a possible new member, she involved present members in the process of recruitment -- made them one with her decision. Hence 'new children' were not a threat to the old children, but rather an expectation of the best in each individual as they all became a single unit.

Where did the foundresses find their 'flock'? Some were sent by interested clerics, some were friends or associates, some were relatives, and some were drawn by the specific intention of the community -- either the work or the devotion.

Cornelia Connelly had many of her members selected for her by clergy and diocesans. John Henry Newman, when at the Oratory in Birmingham, sent along his penitent, Emily Bowles.¹⁷ Connelly had no choice but to accept her. Bowles was a recent convert and still full of self--a disruptive factor in any community. (Religious vows

¹⁶ Ibid., 12 September 1872.

¹⁷ Gompertz, p. 104.

were designed for such a situation. Through obedience the sin of pride could be overcome.)¹⁸ Mary Potter, too, had her members chosen by her director and then by her diocesan. Father Edward Selley, Marist Priest at St Anne's, Spitalfields, furnished her with the first postulants.¹⁹ Bishop Bagshawe not only chose postulants, but appointed them to offices in the community.²⁰ He could not believe that this woman was capable of administering her own community, primarily because of Potter's lower middle-class origins. Her background was a factor in her not attracting members from her circle of friends, but rather women who were searching for a meaningful life and had become known to the clerics. The growth of the Little Company of Mary, like that of the Society of All Saints, Community of Saint John Baptist, and Community of Saint Mary the Virgin in the Church of England, was slow until the foundress herself could select the membership and the community's rule received papal approbation.

The Anglican sisterhoods, too, received penitents of the clergy. The first mother superior of Wantage, Elizabeth Lockhart, was a penitent of Archdeacon Manning

18 SAS archives. 'Letters from Mother Foundress to Various Sisters', March 1867. The Anglican Brownlow Byron admonished a nursing sister, 'There is so much of the great letter "I" about you'; Gompertz, p. 389. Connelly told her sisters their greatest enemy was 'that little I'; Suzanne Campbell-Jones, In Habit: A Study of Working Nuns (New York: Pantheon, 1978), p. 89. Campbell-Jones discusses how religious vows conquer sin: poverty over avarice; obedience over ambition; and chastity over gluttony.

19 Dougherty, p. 57.

20 Ibid., p. 109.

and her successor, Harriet Day, was a penitent of the Rev Henry Wilberforce. Only Harriet Day of these four, Lockhart, Manning, Day and H. Wilberforce, remained in the Church of England.²¹ Margaret Cusack, later the foundress of the Sisters of Peace in the Roman Church, began her life in religion in the Anglican SHC. She had been a penitent of Dr Pusey.²² Sisterhoods and institutes had their share of penitents referred to them by the clergy. There is no evidence that this method was any less successful than any other method in enlarging a community but greater diplomacy was necessary should the applicant not prove amenable.

Eventually, if not from the start, the religious foundations were joined by like-minded women. Connelly was joined by women she had known in Rome and at Alton Towers, Lord Shrewsbury's home. Sr Austin, a lay sister, had been a housemaid for the Earl.²³ Harriet Hanson, Sr Teresa, had met Connelly at Trinità dei Monti when she was newly converted to Roman Catholicism. Others joined as women came to retreats held at the convent. Miss Buckle, also a convert, became Sr Maria Joseph Buckle. As with all strong individuals, she had problems at the start being too prone to 'self-analysis and subtle vanity'.²⁴ The Anglican Sellon sought out like-minded women. Catherine Chambers was the daughter of a naval officer, as was Sellon. She chose to work with Sellon

21 Anson, Call, pp. 244-45.

22 Ibid., p. 237; Margaret Anna Cusack, The Story of My Life (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1891), p. 62.

23 Gompertz, p. 117.

24 Ibid., p. 134.

rather than with the Park Village Sisterhood, in which her brother was involved as a founder, preferring Sellon's concepts of the religious life over those she had seen imposed at SHC. Sr Jane Terrot, a member of the SHC, felt much the same as Chambers and left Park Village West to join the Devonport community.²⁵

Recruiting was a continuous task. In 1868, Sellon writes to C.L. Wood:

There is but one grief that there is no possibility of supplying the urgent demands for 'Branches' so fast.

This reminds me -- pray if you come across any people fit for it, try and turn them into [religious] or as soon as I am better send them to me. Don't send people with no two ideas to rub against each other. You know the sort of women I like.²⁶

This request, for possible applicants, shows her concern to have women of ideas around her. She did not want to be bothered with the small details of daily activity while she pursued an overall plan for her community. Sellon was described as autocratic and many of the women who entered her community also left it. Some departed because of the personality of the foundress; some because of unrealistic ideas of what the religious life entailed.²⁷ For a number of ladies who rejected the idea of being an ornament could not adjust to the actual day-

25 Anson, Call, p. 268.

26 PH, Volume I, 1866-1874, Letter from Sellon to C. L. Wood, No. 32, 10 September 1868.

27 Cusack, p. 64-71. Cusack wrote that Sr Jane called the Devonport Sisterhood 'hell upon earth'. Cusack called Sellon a 'tyrant' and a 'bully'; Williams, p. 135. Margaret Goodman went to Devonport for its 'benevolent works' and left because of the requirements of the 'dedicated life'.

to-day drudgery.²⁸ Hence there was a large turnover in the Devonport membership.

Fanny Margaret Taylor, whose sister Emma Taylor belonged to the SHT, brought a different aspect to recruiting when she founded the SMG. She relied primarily on aspirants from Ireland. An Anglican convert, she became a Roman Catholic during the Crimean War, where she was a Lady nurse. This experience took her to Ireland where she wrote Irish Homes and Irish Hearts in 1867. She was not only a convert in the religious sense, she was also a convert to what she perceived as the outlook of the Irish people. This second conversion is best stated in her own words, used as the dedication to Irish Hearts:

To those who under Strange Skies and amid still stranger scenes of Eastern Hospitals First taught me the worth of the Irish Character, the Warmth of Irish Hearts, and Depth of Irish Faith.²⁹

This dedication became the dedication of her life. She made innumerable trips to Ireland in search of new recruits for her foundation. She was assisted in this effort by a Mrs Eaton, the equivalent of a 'matchmaker' between families of religious, who informed her of young women desirous of entering the religious life. In a letter to her children Taylor writes, 'Mrs Eaton had

28 Margaret Goodman, Experiences of an English Sister of Mercy (London: Smith Elder, 1862); [M. Cusack] Five Years in a Protestant Sisterhood and Five Years in a Catholic Convent (London: Hodder and Stoughton,)1869; and Margaret Anna Cusack, The Nun of Kenmare (London: Josiah Child, 1888).

29 Fanny Margaret Taylor, Irish Homes and Irish Hearts (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1867), unnumbered.

four postulants for me to see'. One is described as 'undecided', two as 'good', and the fourth as 'an angel'. Miss Baste was the fourth.

... only difficulty [is] love of family and they adore her and the clergy with 'cousins in country convents.' But Miss Baste you can pray for, as she will be a treasure.³⁰

'Love of family' required diligent effort on the part of the mother and the novice mistress to replace it with love of God and obedience to the rule. The influence of local 'clergy' was a warning that the young woman's vocation might be directed to another community. Such was the case in this instance. But Taylor's community was now well known and other women presented themselves directly to her to become postulants.

Some 'like-minded' women spent their novitiate in the foundations of their friends before establishing their own community. Etheldreda Benett, lifelong friend of Harriet Brownlow Byron, took her novitiate at All Saints before founding the Society of the Sisters of Bethany. Benett, who had accompanied Brownlow Byron to many services at All Saints, Margaret Street, was fifteen years in following her friend in establishing her own community. A novice at forty and professed at forty-two, she still had forty-seven years to devote to the religious life.³¹ Thus like-minded women and friends formed a nucleus of the communities.

30 SMG archives, Volume B , 3 July 1891.

31 SSB archives, Letters to E. A. Benett when she left All Saints' Novitiate, an enclosure.

As friends were often the cornerstone of a community or the impetus to found a new society, so relatives were influenced to become either members of the foundresses community or to seek the religious life elsewhere. In the Society of the Sisters of Bethany (SSB), Etheldreda Benett's cousin, Ethel Grace Benett, became a member of her community. Ethel Grace Benett's sisters, Harriet and Lydia, were members of the Society^{of} Marie Reparatrice in the Roman Church. Both of them became superiors of different branches of that order.³² This association was not incidental to Etheldreda choosing a mixed life community to found. Her community strongly resembles Marie Reparatrice in its objectives. By 1875, when the SSB was only eight years old they had a membership of thirty members. These women were not in their twenties, as were many of the recruits of other communities. They were actually between their late twenties and early fifties. This may have had something to do with the age of the foundress. The average age of an entrant was 32.5 years. Their years of membership averaged 40.2 years, so devotion to the community was not a passing fancy in their lives but a central force.³³ Benett, who eschewed male domination of her society, had seventy-seven members by 1900.

Cornelia Connelly's sister, Mary Peacock, joined the Sisters of the Sacred Heart and later became Mother Mary Frances Peacock, superior in Rochester. She first became

32 SSB archives, Letters from Harriet and Lydia Benett to Etheldreda Benett and the Roll of the SSB.

33 SSB archives, Roll.

acquainted with the Sacred Heart on a visit to her sister in Louisiana.³⁴ One of the first members of Sellon's sisterhood was Emma Taylor, sister of Fanny Taylor. There is inconclusive evidence as to whether Fanny was a member of SHT or just a visitor during the cholera epidemic of 1849. Since she was in her teens at the time and Emma ten years her senior, it is most likely that she was a visitor. The Sellonites work in the epidemic attracted members as did their excellent work in the Crimean War.

Also among the biological sisters who became religious sisters were the Greams and the Fields. While Ann Gream was the first superior of SSM, her sister Mary joined the SAS. Ann Gream had become involved in the work at East Grinstead before the death of her father. After his death, her brother George became the head of their family. While she had her father's permission to pursue the religious life her sister did not. Mary needed her brother's consent to join a sisterhood and for this she received the backing of her sister. In a letter to George, Ann states how his opinion of sisterhoods has changed:

What I said about the change in your opinion of Mr Richards came from this, that whereas at one time you would not allow anyone to go to church at Margaret Street if you could help it, and you were continually speaking against all that was done there, you are now quite satisfied

34 Gompertz, p. 452. Mother Peacock was superior of the Rochester branch house, but the text does not designate which Rochester -- New York or Minnesota.

that we should go there, and that M.A. should try the sisterhood.³⁵

Here was an instance of a superior defending the high church to her brother and gaining his approval for their sister to enter another society. Around mid-century, this was a hard won victory. Ellen Field, a member of CSC and later the foundress of CSMA, attended her sister's clothing at CSMV.³⁶ Her other sister, Frances, became a postulant at CSC when Ellen was still a member of that society.³⁷ These events question the assertion by Vicinus that 'Sisters were discouraged from getting to know women in other orders', because they were jealous of their membership and afraid of members being poached.³⁸ Contrary to this contemporary scholarship, these women were more cooperative than divisive.

Nieces joined the societies founded by their aunts. Harriet Monsell's nieces, Alicia Amabel O'Brien and Mary Louise O'Brien (Srs Amabel and Mary Louise), daughters of her brother, Lucius O'Brien, 13th Baron Inchiquin³⁹; Mary Potter's niece, Marguerite Potter (Sr M. Florida), daughter of her brother, Thomas Potter⁴⁰; and Fanny Taylor's nieces, Amy Lucy Sobieski Dean (Sr M. Magdalen Aimee) and Mary Dorothea Dean (Sr M. Clare Aloysius),

35 SSM archives, No. 104, 'Letters to her brother, 1856-1861', 19 June 1856; Mayhew, p. 34. Mary Ann Gream joined the SAS in July 1856 and was professed in December 1857. Mr Richards was the incumbent of All Saints, Margaret Street.

36 CSC archives, Annals, 30 November 1874.

37 Ibid., 15 December 1874.

38 Vicinus, Independent, p. 62.

39 Bonham, Place, p. 136.

40 Dougherty, p. 200.

daughters of her sister Charlotte Dean⁴¹, to mention just five. Monsell's nieces entered Clewer after her death and Potter's niece died of tuberculosis while still a postulant, though she was permitted to take vows on her death bed. Of the five, only Sr M. Magdalen Aimee and Sr M. Clare Aloysius lived the life under their aunt's rule. Taylor wrote to Amy, ' I am so thankful all is settled and Our dearest Lady will have you for her own ere her sweet month closes'.⁴² Mother Magdalen looked to the Virgin Mary as the supreme head of her congregation. Thus, Sr M. Magdalen Aimee was not 'won' for the SMG, but rather for Our Lady. Whatever the outcome of these nieces entering their aunts' foundations, they were most certainly attracted to the religious life by the their knowledge of these women. When they chose how to spend their lives, they chose what seemed to them a most agreeable commitment. They emulated the life of a single woman involved in work with the poor and vowed to poverty, chastity and obedience in full personal knowledge of what that life entailed.

Other women who were familiar with the religious life, close-up, were the teachers and students in the schools run by the sisters. Throughout the history of

41 SMG archives, Roll, p. 39, 'Mary Magdalen Aimee of the Sacred Heart', vows received by His Eminence Cardinal Parrochi, Vicar General to His Holiness Leo XIII, 19 January 1888.

42 SMG archives, Volume A3, 28 May 1885. Aimee was one of the few Englishwomen among the sisters and she was never completely assimilated into the community. She was most comfortable in the convent in Rome.

the societies, women who had come to teach in their schools joined their membership. And if not that specific order, then one involved in the same work. Margaret Gaynor had been a teacher at St Leonards-on-Sea for SHCJ in 1849. The next year she joined the IBVM and became Mother Mary Christina. This connection came to light in 1965 when a sister researching the 'Cause' of Mother Connelly, came upon a letter dated 20 April 1879 written by Mother Christina after hearing of Connelly's death. 'I knew your dear venerated Mother well, and experienced much of her maternal kindness....'⁴³ Her joining another community had not presented a problem in the esteem they held for one another. Ayckbowm had a number of teachers become novices. One such entry states, 'Miss Frances Field who had been living at the Home for the past 7 months as an "Acting Teacher" was received as a Postulant'.⁴⁴ Mary Burdon, Amelia Spearing, and Charlotte Wordsworth also became sisters and remained on as teachers.⁴⁵

As the student population matured they too were a source of recruits. The SHCJ recruited the two daughters of Charles Laprimaudaye, convert and curate of Manning, Srs M. Catherine and M. Theophilia, and Emily Honoria Patmore, daughter of Coventry Patmore.⁴⁶ By attracting

43 IBVM archives, Loose letter from Mother Marie Madelaine, SHCJ, to IBVM dated 25 November 1965. It should be noted that sisters who taught in the IBVM were designated 'Mother' and that in this case she was not a superior.

44 CSC archives, Annals, 4 September 1872.

45 Ibid., 21 November 1872; Roll.

46 Gompertz, pp. 320, 330, 407; DNB, Supplement, pp. 248-251. Coventry Patmore (1823-1896) wrote the long

their students to the community, the SHCJ integrated members of Old Catholic families with converts of the middle and upper classes. Connelly was in the forefront of uniting these divergent aspects of English Catholicism and, after a generation, making them one with each other and their church. Her ability to do this was based on her position as an outsider (an American by birth) to the English concept of what was acceptable and what was not. Unimpeded by this way of thinking, she went ahead and united into one society women of differing Catholic backgrounds.

Besides relatives, friends, penitents, teachers and students, there were always a few women who defied categorization. Such was the case of Trevor Louisa Troughton. Though most of the postulants were in their early twenties, she was an exception. Taylor wrote her sister-in-charge asking her to put an exceptional case to the superior of the Sacred Heart Convent in Roehampton:

I want you to ask the Rev Mother if she thinks a person would be received into her Order like this; -- Age 39. Pretty good health, educated; nice musician and sings, not much French; 14 years a Protestant nun; no money; 18 months in the Church.

If you guess who I mean you are not to say it. Say this is all you know; you don't know her name.⁴⁷

poem 'The Angel in the House' (1854-1862), an 'apotheosis of married life'. This poem inspired John Ruskin to write Sesame and Lilies (1865). The heroine of 'Angel' was Honoria. Patmore converted to Roman Catholicism in 1865, three years after the death of his first wife Emily.

47 SMG archives, Volume C. Letter dated 26 April 1893.

'Reverend Mother's' advice is not recorded. But Trevor Louisa Troughton, Sister Trevor of SSM, left that sisterhood after having been superior in Aberdeen and novice mistress in Boston, converted to Roman Catholicism, and became Sister Mary Campion, SMG, during this time. She became a companion to Taylor in the convent in Rome and was to write the life of the foundress. This instance proved to be a fruitful association. There was always the possibility of such a move going wrong for one or both parties. Although there were numerous instances where Anglo-Catholic sisters became Roman Catholic sisters, there appears to be no evidence that Roman Catholic sisters became Anglican sisters. The age of Sr Mary Campion made her case unique. During Taylor's thirty-one years in religion 257 women were clothed in the SMG. Their average age at entrance was twenty-three with the range of age being sixteen to fifty-one years.⁴⁸

FUNDING

Money was always a constraint and its prominence was evident in the founding these communities. In the Church of England many of the women who founded communities were women of means. They spent their own money on their communities and their works. At a time when a married woman's property belonged to her husband and not to her, these women chose to remain single and therefore

48 SMG archives, Profession Roll. My calculations.

to control their own property and the remuneration for their own labour. Inheritance was the primary source of this capital. The women who founded the new Roman congregations were rarely women of means. Cornelia Connelly may have been the exception.⁴⁹ The dower system, the financial backbone of the enclosed orders, was no longer the qualification for entry into the religious life. In medieval times the dower was essential, though even then it was a lesser amount than what was expected for a woman entering marriage. The nineteenth century witnessed the consideration of talent as a value to a community. Innate ability sometimes replaced financial capital as a prerequisite for entrance. This change in requirements provided a further constraint and a heavy responsibility upon the foundress to find alternate methods of funding.

For both religious groups gifts from patrons, members, and associates were secondary sources. When a society wished to be independent of obligations to benefactors then self-supporting enterprises were sought. These came in the form of tuition for schools, charges for maintaining orphans, fees for laundry work, sales of church embroidery and illuminations, resale of cast-off clothing, and, the most ancient method of all, begging. When these were not enough, the foundresses were called upon to search out other means, such as, government grants, diocesan funding, unclaimed legacies,

49 There is conflicting evidence as to whether or not she had money in her own right. She most certainly had the social connexions to obtain financial backing.

etc. It was a constant quest, much like that of the directors of charities today--the ideal being money without conditions attached to its use.

The initial Anglican and Roman communities relied, in part, on the social connections of the foundresses if not their wealth. Sellon, Monsell and Connelly were all on friendly terms with men of wealth and power: Sellon with Lord Halifax; Monsell with Mr Gladstone; and Connelly with Lord Shrewsbury. Each of these women could draw upon family financial resources and each had personal access to influential clergy: Sellon to Dr Pusey; Monsell to Archbishop Tait; Connelly to Cardinal Archbishop Wiseman. Their association with these men encouraged potential patrons to join in their efforts as well as like-minded women to join their communities.

Priscilla Sellon inherited wealth from her mother and received financial backing from her father during his lifetime.⁵⁰ She used these funds to purchase property for her convents. 'In 1860 the Rev'd Mother purchased the ground at Ascot for the site of a Priory and engaged Mr Scott to make designs from her own sketch of the place'.⁵¹ Sellon was not the only woman of means in the Anglican sisterhoods. Harriet Monsell was the widowed daughter of an Irish Baronet. When she wanted to fund a convalescent hospital in 1866 no member of her council of laymen would sign for the #7,000 needed, so she

50 Williams, Sellon, p. 8. Her mother, Priscilla Lydia White, had her fortune in trust prior to her marriage and thus kept it separate from her husband.

51 Ascot Priory archives, Red Volume, p. 40.

guaranteed the amount herself. Then the work could begin on St Andrew's Convalescent Hospital. Her action 'inspired Archbishop Longley to raise funds for the hospital'. The combined effort was so successful, that even Queen Victoria, though not kindly disposed to the sisterhoods in general, subscribed 20 guineas for the St Barnabas Ward for infectious diseases.⁵² Another Harriet, Harriet Brownlow Byron, was the daughter of MP Thomas Byron from the Borough of Hertford and the 'immensely wealthy' Louisa Brassy Byron. She was also planning a hospital in 1866. She bought the land and an existing building in Eastbourne for All Saints' Hospital.⁵³ This same year Etheldreda Benett founded her mixed life community. As the heiress to Pyt House in Tisbury, she was admonished by her cousin Ethel Grace Benett, 'You have the fortune and position to found your own community'.⁵⁴ From the records of the community it is difficult to discern just which properties the foundress purchased, for she firmly believed in leading the hidden life and not seeking adulation for worldly actions. When she 'took' a house in Lloyd Street, Clerkenwell, she may either have purchased it or rented it for her work. Such a mundane formality, in her estimation, was not recorded.

Patrons were necessary for the societies. Dealing with patrons was never a sure thing and never the easy

52 Valerie Bonham, A Joyous Service: The Clewer Sisters & Their Work (Windsor: Valerie Bonham/CSJB, 1989), pp. 36-37.

53 Mayhew, pp. 23-24.

54 SSB archives, '1866-1966', p. 2.

way. For Connelly, her association with the Duchess of Leeds, Louise Catherine Osborne, began when the Duchess became a boarder at the convent in St Leonards-on-Sea.⁵⁵ The Duchess, also an American by birth, gave the SHCJ 2,000 acres in Lycoming County and 150 acres in Bradford County, Pennsylvania.⁵⁶ This was all quite straightforward. But patrons were not always easy people with whom to deal. 1862 saw the Old Palace, Mayfield, announced for sale by auction. Connelly wanted the ancient site with its 119 acres and a house with ten rooms for her novitiate. She wrote to the Bishop of Southwark, Dr Grant, and asked permission to bid on the property, as major investments could not be entered into without the approval of the diocesan. He refused. However, the Duchess of Leeds ordered her agent to secure the property at any cost. And so she did, for £5250.⁵⁷ But she did not give the property to the community, rather she offered it, first to the Jesuits, then to the Benedictines and finally to Bishop Grant 'for a seminary'.⁵⁸ The bishop suggested that she give it to Connelly. The Duchess did so, but on the condition that the ruins should be restored. This obligation added an additional expense for the society.

When Brownlow Byron bought the land for All Saints Hospital, Eastbourne, the building itself was the gift

55 Gompertz, p. 334. Louisa Catherine Osborne was the granddaughter of Charles Carroll, the only Roman Catholic to sign of the Declaration of Independence.

56 Flaxman, p. 257.

57 Ibid., pp. 266-267.

58 Gompertz, p. 358.

of Miss Katherine Rennie.⁵⁹ The architect Woodyer donated his services in the design of its Gothic Chapel.⁶⁰ Prior to this, in 1856, when 'Brownie', as she was called, was establishing her community on Margaret Street, she and Mr Upton Richards took a lease on three buildings that, according to Mayhew 'were either bought by the sisters with a contribution from Mrs Sidebottom of £1,000 to complete the transaction' or they were rented.⁶¹ Whatever the case, Mrs Sidebottom must have given the donation to the sisters or her gift would not have been recorded. Miss Rennie and Mrs Sidebottom, together with the sisters themselves, are evidence of women financially supporting the work of women. These women were not the titled patrons so often alluded to, but women concerned enough with the work to invest their own money in the projects.

An unexpected source of patronage came to the CSC from the guilds of London. The Guild of Worshipful Mercers, the Guild of Worshipful Goldsmiths and the Guild of Worshipful Grocers backed the work of the sisterhood with financial support. Most probably these funds came in response to 'begging' letters that appeared in Our Work.⁶² (Our Work was a magazine published by the CEA to keep subscribers informed about the work of the

59 SAS archives, 'History of the Community', by Sr. Elspeth.

60 Mayhew, p. 119. Mayhew differs with Sr Elspeth and states that the hospital was financed by two women friends of Byron.

61 Ibid., p. 29.

62 CSC archives, 1890, Report of the Church Extension Association (Incorporated) and 1892, Report of the Church Extension Association (Incorporated).

Sisters of the Church.) Ayckbowm's personal journal entries of 1881 and 1882 record the semi-annual sale of hand made items at the Grosvenor Hall and Marlborough Rooms that netted £300 and £200 respectively. It also showed donations for the convalescent home at Broadstairs, from two individuals totaling £700.⁶³ Ayckbowm judiciously named the schools and orphanages of the Kilburn Sisters after members of the Royal Family or clergymen of note who had recently died. This measure elicited more patronage from the public at large. She had used a list of male and female patrons on her annual reports until Edward Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury, started an enquiry into the CSC. At that time, she removed the male patrons from the masthead of her reports, saying it was no great financial loss to the community. In defending the action of maintaining the list of patronesses, Church Extension Association (CEA) secretary, Frances Ashdown (Sr Frances), argued Ayckbowm's reasoning in a letter to the Times:

The Patrons had no authority over the Society and their connection with it was merely nominal....They did not contribute to the funds of the Society nor did they visit our Homes or acquaint themselves with the system on which they worked. With regard to our Patronesses the case is very different. They almost without exception take a real personal interest in the work of the CEA. They visit our Homes, make themselves acquainted with the details of our management, are a help to us with advice, contributions and personal assistance as opportunity may offer.⁶⁴

63 CSC, Annals, August 29, 1881-December 11, 1882.

64 CSC archives, Troubles Journal, p. 47.

For both the Anglicans and the Romans, patronage and all its ramifications had a price. For the most part, women religious were concerned that patronage could compromise the control and the direction of the community and make it dependent on the whims of outsiders.

Smaller communities struggled along with lesser patrons. Marian Hughes noted in her Diary that 'Miss Croley has promised £170 for one year for the King Street Mission'.⁶⁵ She relied on the donations of many women to back her society's work, not just one individual. Funds were always tight for the Society of the Holy and Undivided Trinity (SHUT). When a novice left the community in 1893, Hughes had to dip into her own capital to repay the money the would-be member had entrusted to the society--in this case £200.⁶⁶ Hughes was not an heiress, but the daughter of a clergyman and £200 was a great sum. But she persevered none the less. Patrons for Potter's LCM did not appear until the society was established in Rome, fifteen years after its founding. Then Mrs Monteith gave them a house in Islesworth and two 'protestant ladies' gave them a house in Florence.⁶⁷ Again, women financing women.

On a larger scale, Lady Georgiana Fullerton was truly a 'lady bountiful' to the SMG and Taylor. She gave freely of funds and used her social connections to aid

65 PH, Mother Marian's Diary, Vol. II, 1875-1882, 4 March 1875.

66 PH, Mother Marian's Diary, Vol. III, 1893-1902, February 1893.

67 Dougherty, p. 196.

the society in many ways. Lady Georgiana was with Taylor when she 'took' the house in Tower Hill as well as when she 'took' the houses in Roehampton. Whether 'took' meant 'bought' or 'leased' is, again, a matter of conjecture. But the presence of the patron on these occasions could lead to the supposition that this was a purchase. After Lady Georgiana's death, her husband, Mr Fullerton, continued to be very generous to the SMG. He purchased the house on Via San Sebastiano in Rome for them in 1886 and funded the chapel and refectory at Roehampton with a gift of £2,000.⁶⁸ The chapel of the English Martyrs in Rome was also executed with his backing. He, incidentally, paid for many of Taylor's numerous trips from England to Italy and back again. Not all her patronage experiences were successful, however. Taylor leaves behind a record of a 'failed' endeavour that shows how she went about assessing the probabilities of success in her ventures. She assessed the necessary funding as well as the backing of the professional community that would be involved in setting up a cottage hospital in Scotland. When the funds and the support did not materialize, she cut her losses and withdrew from the situation. She stated her requirements:

- 1st -- the support of the community for one year -- house, furnished, rent free.
- 2nd -- after the first year, we could support ourselves, because we did not like to live permanently on alms.

68 SMG archives, Annals, August 1886 and 15 February 1889.

After the first year, she found that the doctors in the town 'took no interest in the Cottage Hospital' and if she had known that would have been the case 'it would be useless to begin such a work'. The woman who promised funding 'repudiated her obligations'. Taylor calmly closed the episode by stating, 'I am to blame for not having the promises in writing, but I have been so accustomed to deal with ladies whose word is their bond that it never occurred to me that such a precaution was necessary'.⁶⁹

Besides external patronage, the communities were also funded internally by their members. Sellon's SHT kept a log of such potential sources of income:

Eldress (Emma) Phoebe (Taylor). Aged 45. Has no property, and a small sum which will be due her: does not think her relatives will give her.

Sister Clara (Powell). Age 45. Gave her property to purchase the site for St Savior's....Her mother promises to leave her annuity. [Added in 1867.] Her mother left her £404 per annum for her life.

Child Clara (Sharpe). Sold all her own property at her special desire, about £6,000 for the Society.... 70

Although these records of members' monetary possibilities were kept, they appear to have had no bearing on the value of the member to the society. Rather they were a business log that enabled the community to weigh its financial potential. Just as Sellon's log recorded the

69 SMG archives, 'Narrative of our foundation in Scotland'.

70 Ascot Priory archives, Red Volume, p. 7.

gift of Sr Clarissa Powell to purchase the site for St Savior's, Osnaburgh Road, so the Community of St John Baptist at Clewer was given many of its buildings by Sr Elizabeth Moreton, who was their prime benefactress.⁷¹ The Annual Reports of the CEA record that the major share of their funding was supplemented by the 'General Fund'. The latter was the money of the sisters, either given as gifts or from their annual £50 for their support. This figure of £50 annually was the accustomed amount expected from sisters in the Anglican sisterhoods, but it could be negotiated with the mother superior.⁷²

Bequests were another source of funding. As with so many other situations that involved a religious community with the public at large, this form of funding was not without complications for either Roman or Anglican orders. A bequest from Sr Mary Francis Kenworthy to the SHCJ in 1876 brought about a furore. She had made the society 'residuary legatee' of her £40,000 estate, which amounted to £20,000. The family objected and took the community to court basing their case on 'undue influence'. The case attracted the attention of the press and sixteen nuns were called to testify in Westminster. At the last minute the plea was withdrawn and the proceedings closed and Connelly's community received the money.⁷³ This was not unlike the 'Lewes

71 Bonham, Joyous, p. 12.

72 Norman Gash, Aristocracy and People: Britain 1815-1865 (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), p. 21. Gash considers that £50 per annum was the 'line of demarcation' for the middle class.

73 Gompertz, p. 460.

Riot' of 1857 for the SSM. The East Grinstead sisters had not been called into court, but they were accused of undue influence by the family of Sr Amy Scobell. She had left £400 to the sisterhood and her father, the Rev Mr Scobell, accused their warden, J. M. Neale, of deliberately sending his daughter to nurse a scarlet fever victim so that she would contract the disease, die and the society inherit her money. Her funeral resulted in the Lewes Riot.⁷⁴ Ann Gream recorded how she wrote to Mr Scobell informing him that she and Mr Neale intended to proceed with 'dear Sr Amy's will'. Then she consulted a solicitor about the bequest and tried to stop the Bishop of Chichester removing his support from her community over the incident. Her diary states, 'The Mother went to Chichester, to see the Bishop but was refused admittance'.⁷⁵ The interests of the natural family were so strong that few people, either in 1857 or 1877, Roman or Anglican, were able to believe that a woman would leave her money to the community she loved.

With or without inheritance to rely on, subscriptions were the next most popular form of funding. Early in her days of helping the poor, Emily Ayckbowm, the daughter of a clergyman, realized the potential of subscriptions. When she founded the Church Extension Association (CEA) in 1864, she gave the members the option of donating their sewing and illuminating and

74 Towle, p. 264; Anson, Call, p. 344.

75 SSM archives, 'Diary 6/10/57-1/11/60', 28 November; 2-3 December 1857.

paying 2s. 6d. year or doing no work and paying 5s. per year.⁷⁶ As news of her work spread, so did the subscription list. She began sending out a quarterly paper to insure that knowledge of the work was disseminated. The finances of the CEA were critical in the establishment of the Sisters of the Church which she founded in 1870. Subscriptions were not only sought from the members of the CEA, but Ayckbowm also advertised in the newspapers for aid.

The 'Sisters of the Church' appeal for HELP in providing dinner and breakfasts for destitute children throughout the winter. More than 400 children receive a weekly meal in their schools. Gifts of clothing, either new or old, can be turned to some account or exchanged for what is more suitable. Address the Mother Superior, 29 Kilburn-park-road, London, NW. Post-office orders may be made payable to Emily Ayckbowm.⁷⁷

Thus advertising was added to the list of ways to obtain funding. And she was not alone in the use of this method. Mother Kate Warburton of St Saviour's Priory, Haggerston, also used it. Warburton was a member of the Society of St Margaret, East Grinstead. The affiliated houses of the Society of St Margaret were responsible for their own financing. St Saviour's Priory began a Work Society. Similar to the methods of the CEA, it required members to make two new items a month or to subscribe for 5 shillings a year. Those interested were to contact:

76 Valiant, p. 9.

77 The Guardian, 27 January 1875, cited in [Community of the Sisters of the Church], Emily H.E. Ayckbowm: Mother Foundress of the Community of the Sisters of the Church (London: Church Extension Association, 1914), p. 118.

The MOTHER, S. Saviour's Priory, Great Cambridge Street, Hackney Road, E. Cheques and Post-office orders may be made payable to Kate Egerton Warburton, at the above address....⁷⁸

Ayckbowm devised another scheme to increase funding. Brown paper sacks with 'CEA DEPOT' printed on them, were sent by return mail to anyone who sent in a postcard requesting them. Subscribers to Our Work, 50,000 people, read of this effort. A van was obtained, as a gift, that went about to collect the bags that had been filled by the recipients with old clothes, curtains, toys, blankets, vests, frying pans, etc. An 'Unpacking Room' was set up at the convent where the contents of each bag were listed. This was a precaution against someone accidentally sending something by mistake and asking for its return. Contributors' interests had to be taken care of. Even worthless items, such as dolls with missing arms or legs, were put into 'mystery bundles' and sold from 'halfpenny to sixpence'.⁷⁹

Of the various forms of self-help funding, tuition for schools gave the communities an almost immediate income. Connelly looked to tuition from teaching children from middle-class families to support her community. Her advertisement in the Catholic Directory of 1847 shows how she went about it:

78 [Katherine Warburton], 'Mother Kate', Memories of a Sister of S. Saviour's Priory (Oxford: Mowbray, 1903), p. 80.

79 Valiant, pp. 60-61.

ST. MARY'S CONVENT, DERBY, OF THE HOLY CHILD
JESUS

The objects which are contemplated in this Convent are to give, upon the sound basis of the practice of all their religious duties, such a solid education to a large and increasing class of Girls as will best enable them to fill their office in Society, while, at the same time, they will be thoroughly instructed in the details of domestic life, and in all such arts as are the most practically useful in the service of our Holy Mother the Church.

Terms for Board and Education

Twenty-five pounds per annum, to be paid half-yearly in advance. Entrance, two pounds.⁸⁰

A community such as SHCJ needed time to develop a reputation as a teaching community. To gain this time and still be self-supporting, Connelly advertised in that same issue of the Directory, 'Ladies received as boarders, at the discretion of the Mother Superior,' for retreats or temporary 'religious retirement'. This was the most immediate way of bringing in funds.⁸¹ The Anglican enclosed order of Benedictine nuns at West Malling Abbey supplemented their income with boarders, though their prime work was prayer. A notation on a letter from the Bishop of Dover to Archbishop Temple that described the life at St Mary's Abbey and informed the Archbishop of the character of Mother Hilda was very telling of the Church of England's view of enclosed nuns. Temple wrote back, 'Do they profess to do any work?' Dover's reply was the following: 'The work of the Community is done within the walls. They receive sick

80 The Catholic Directory, Almanack and Ecclesiastical Register for the Year 1847, p. 114.

81 Catholic Directory, p. 137.

cases and nurse them' as boarders until they are well.⁸² To the Benedictines their primary work was prayer; to the episcopate that was not enough.

The ideal of a self-supporting community appealed to all the foundresses. Monsell's Clewer Sisters supported their work, in part, by a laundry. The volume of business done by the laundry was not incidental to the funding of the sisterhood. The penitents of the House of Mercy, together with lay sisters and poor women of the community, worked on the enterprise. Their main custom came from Eton College and the British Orphan Asylum. A report in the local press gave an idea of their operation. An 'Alarming Fire' in December of 1884 caused the destruction of materials 'prepared and packed' for the return of the children after the Christmas break. While the property of the sisters was insured 'the clothes not the property of the Institution' were lost at an estimated cost of £2,000.⁸³

Taylor, too, relied on the laundry business to fund the SMG. Her prospective members were not of a class that could give the institution a large dowry. Initially, she thought that fine needlework might answer the need, but found that only those already highly trained could bring in work.⁸⁴ She then decided that laundries would answer the need for income and at the same time give employment to poor lay women nearby.⁸⁵

82 LPL, F. Temple, 25ff68-9.

83 CSJB archives, loose newspaper clipping, n.d.

84 SMG archives, 'Annals', p. 4.

85 Sr Rose Joseph Kennedy, 'Mother Magdalen', p. 8.

The Servants of the Sacred Heart in Antwerp ran a successful laundry. Taylor visited them and they insisted that she send a sister to learn their techniques. She sent 'Mrs Deverill [Sr M. Elizabeth] who arrived Aug. 22nd and remained till Oct. 5th'.⁸⁶

Through the offices of the Baroness de Beaulieu she found her first custom. The laundries remained the basis of SMG funding throughout Taylor's lifetime. In a letter dated 'Rome, March 10, 1896', she explained the importance to the community of the laundry:

...our Sisters never wash. I don't consider them strong enough, and for many years now we don't receive the class only suited for Lay Sisters, as we found our other works demanded that all should be educated. So for the washing we employ externs and are able to do good to many poor families by thus giving work.⁸⁷

The laundries not only funded the community, they employed the poor and led to the elimination of class distinction within the order. Where once lay sisters had done the heavy household and laundry work, they were replaced by local female labour. Sisters were recruited to oversee the work. As the century progressed lay sisters were gradually eliminated. Taylor's experience was similar to that of other communities that at one time had had lay sisters.

86 SMG archives, 'Annals', p. 6.

87 SMG archives, Loose letter, 10 March 1896.

All communities, Anglican or Roman, begged for funds in one way or another. Some merely approached friends of the society when monies were needed, others walked the city streets and country lanes in that same search. The sight of Sisters of Charity begging on the streets was not an unusual one. Brownlow Byron took delight in going to the servants' entrance of houses she once entered as a guest through the front door, to beg for food and clothing for her incurable patients.⁸⁸ Connelly described the SHCJ as a 'mendicant order' during the holidays from teaching when the sisters 'begged' their way across Europe.⁸⁹ For the CSC as for the SHCJ, summer vacation meant begging tours. 'Srs Mary and Caroline went on a begging tour and returned bringing £70'.⁹⁰ Such was the reputation of religious asking for alms that Ayckbowm, while traveling in Newcastle, had 'several very poor Irish' run after her and Sr Ellen and 'thrust pence into our hands -- taking us for R.C.'s'.⁹¹ Ann Gream had enough of an inheritance to pay the expected £50 per annum at the SSM, and for that she had to constantly write to her brother, the administrator of their father's estate. Yet she too, took her turn on the begging circuit. In 1859, she left on a begging tour that reads like a list of local stations a railway conductor might call out for the passengers.

88 Mayhew, p. 29.

89 Gompertz, p. 289.

90 CSC archives, Annals, 5 August 1882.

91 CSC archives, Mother's Journal, 22 November 1884.

The Mother returned from her tour having visited Worcester, Bredon, Kennerton, Malvern, Tedbury, Eastown, Gloucester, Cheltenham, Cirencester, Stinchcombe, Frethorne, Bristol, Clifton, Horfield, Bisley & Bussage, Bath, Moruse, Wells, Glastonbury, East Brend, Highbridge, Hambridge, Taunton, Exeter, Torquay, Plymouth, Staple Gitzpaine, Buckland St Mary, Ilton, Shepton Beauchamp and Salisbury. She collected £108 above her expenses; she saw about 200 people, amongst them the Rev Isaac Williams, Archdeacon Thorpe, Archdeacon Denison, Dr Wolfe, The Rev W. Bennett, the Bishop of Bath & Wells, and the Bishop of Salisbury.⁹²

Considering the number of members of the Church hierarchy on her list, it can be assumed that their financial support of the sisterhood was not overwhelming. Benett, like Connelly, took her begging to the continent. She was admonished by the British Vice Consul in France:

...allow me to impress upon you the absolute necessity...as long as you appear in the dress of a Sister of Charity not for an instant to give rise to the idea, by any words or deeds, that you have a mission for collecting subscription for religious or other purposes, as such subscriptions are contrary to the municipal law of this country -- unless agents for the same have received permission for collecting from proper authorities.⁹³

There were reports of sisters being stoned in rural England on their trips, but most of the societies took this as a natural form of Protestant resistance, even a sign that their work was making some inroads for Catholicism. Although this was the sad side of begging, Potter experienced an even more cruel form. After her mastectomy for breast cancer in 1878, Bishop Bagshawe

92 SSM archives, 'Mother Ann's Diary, 6.10.57-1.11.60', 10 March 1859.

93 SSB archives, Letter from Acting Vice Consul John de Courcy to Mother Etheldreda, n.d.

allowed her to go home to recuperate provided she begged in both directions.⁹⁴

Publications, either produced by the communities or printed by them, were a source of income. Ayckbowm's Annual Reports in the 1890s show that the CEA printing press in Paternoster Row was making a reasonable profit. Their bookshop sold books and pamphlets on education and teaching written by Ayckbowm, as well as standard hymn books and catechisms.⁹⁵ These reports also showed an increase in Government grants to the schools under their charge. By 1900 the CSC had an income of £42,986.⁹⁶ Taylor, too, had a talent for writing and, indeed, had supported her mother and brother in this way before she began her community. The books she wrote, both before and after she entered the religious life, were numerous. How much of an income she had from these publications is unknown. Yet they too should be noted as a means of funding her institution. She obtained from Newman the publication rights to 'Dream of Gerontius'. It was printed privately by the community and continued to contribute to its funds.⁹⁷

94 Dougherty, p. 113. Potter could not be given anaesthetic during the operation because she had a bad heart.

95 Valiant, p. 68.

96 Using the currently acceptable conversion of 1890s pounds into 1990s pounds (multiplying by 25) that sum would equate to £1,074,650. This is a significant amount in anyone's book.

97 Devas, pp. 320-321; SMG Archives, notarized bill of sale.

Not all funding came in large sums. Many of the donations were moderate. Bazaars provided needed funds for the SMG. Cardinal Manning was not a supporter of bazaars.⁹⁸ He stated that he had a 'deepening' and 'increasing conviction' that the 'self-denial of charity' had been lowered 'by such ways of funding'.⁹⁹ Yet Taylor continued to hold bazaars. One held in 1896 earned £120 that 'cleared the hospital of all debt and left a good balance on hand'.¹⁰⁰ She also brought in people to give magic lantern lectures that provided money for the hospital.¹⁰¹ Even the occasion of Sr Mary Winifride's wake found the money box 'quite full'.¹⁰² Nothing escaped her thoroughness in funding her enterprises.

Sellon's fund-raising encompassed other avenues. When she needed money for a joint project with the Metropolitan Asylum Board, she, true to her father's naval background, used seamen's terminology to describe what was wrong with the methods in use. 'The Committee...requires a little 'right siding' as sailors

98 Manning was not the only churchman to feel this way about bazaars. The question of the morality of bazaars as fund raisers versus traditional methods such as subscriptions troubled the clergy at large. See S. J. D. Green, 'The Death of Pew-Rents, the Rise of Bazaars, and the End of the Traditional Political Economy of Voluntary Religious Organizations: The Case of the West Riding of Yorkshire, c. 1870-1914', Northern History, 27 (1991), 198-235 (pp. 229-235).

99 SMG archives, Letter from Cardinal Manning to the Rev Mother, 28 July 1884.

100 SMG archives, 'The London Diary', 29 June 1896.

101 Ibid., 18 February 1889.

102 SMG archives, Volume A3, 29 November 1883.

call it--for I have daily letters from people asking if their cheques have been received--since we gave out funds into other hands'.¹⁰³ Observing the social requisites (acknowledging gifts in this instance) was essential to her operations. Her stalwart supporter, Charles Wood, later Lord Halifax, assisted in finding others to subscribe to her projects. During the smallpox epidemic of 1870, she proposed the following form of funding a new hospital:

If ten persons guaranteed this sum [£2750] that would be less than £300 for each guarantee. Dr Pusey will take two parts of the ten shares -- to guarantee -- my brother will take another, I another -- so we have only six more to find, and then the order can be given and two or three weeks the Hospital will be ready. If you should know of anyone who would be likely to be answerable for one tenth will you ask them?¹⁰⁴

She did not ask her friend, directly, but it was understood that with his one tenth, half the goal had already been reached. In other hospital fund raising appeals, she had accepted £380 from the Archbishop's fund.¹⁰⁵ She also informed Wood:

I hope to publish soon a long list of our subscribers which from its complexion will shew that men of every hue of political and religious opinion are willing to assist and do assist.¹⁰⁶

103 PH, Pusey to C.L. Wood, Vol. I, 1866-1874, 31 March 1870.

104 Ibid.

105 LPL, Tait Papers, 145 ff 274-7, 6 September 1866.

106 PH, Pusey to Wood, Vol. I, March 1870.

T.T. Carter, co-founder of the CSJB with Monsell, acknowledged £500 from the Church Penitentiary Association and an additional £200 from them for maintenance of the inmates of the House of Mercy.¹⁰⁷ He placed the receipts of the CSJB during its first five years at £10,954. This included real estate, furniture and money toward the chapel and infirmary. At the time of his writing, the community consisted of eight members.

Mary Potter, like Connelly, had to deal with the bishop of her diocese to secure a building for her convent. Bishop Bagshawe told her to sign his name to the lease when she found a suitable structure. He would provide the shelter, but the sisters were to earn their own keep. For the 'old tumble-down factory' in Hysom Green the lease for £33.12.00 per year, payable quarterly, was signed by 'The Right Reverend Edward Gilpin Bagshawe'.¹⁰⁸ Others had offered her financial support, but with conditions that were unacceptable to Potter. Even her brother, Thomas, had offered the family home, but their mother made him take back the gesture.¹⁰⁹

Taylor was perhaps the most ingenious of the superiors in finding the means to accomplish her ends. She most certainly left behind the best records of her thinking in these efforts. After she had established a hospital in St Helens, she sent 'An Appeal to the Gentlemen of St Helens About the Hospital'. She

107 CSJB archives, T. T. Carter, The First Five Years of the House of Mercy, Clewer (London: Joseph Masters, 1855), pp. 17, 28-29.

108 Dougherty, pp. 96-97.

109 Ibid., p. 55.

requested the legacy of £1500 from Mr Joseph Greenough's estate which was 'left by him to the Managers of the first public General Hospital which should be opened in the town of St Helens within 21 years of his death'.¹¹⁰ She avoided the obvious objection, as to her faith, by stating: 'No distinction is made as regards religion, and the Protestants and Catholics have come to us'. Her letter was signed, 'F. M. Taylor (Superior of the Hospital)', not Mother Mary Magdalen Taylor, Superior General of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God, another astute aspect of her request. She passed this business sense on to her sister superiors. When looking for property in 1891 she advised the sisters to engage an estate agent and select a house that 'will suit'. They were to make sure that the land belonged to the Duke of Bedford. They were not to let the agent know that it was for a refuge nor that they were planning to get the property as a gift. For Taylor would 'ask him for that'. Then, in her usual optimistic style she added, 'Remember, I want a good house with some yard behind'.¹¹¹ She never doubted that she could persuade the good Duke into giving her the site.

Connelly found that gifts of property, even those from the clergy, were not certain. The diocesan might give with one hand and take with the other, especially if he had been translated to another jurisdiction. When Bishop Wiseman of the Midland District became Cardinal

110 SMG Archives, Volume A3, n.d.

111 Ibid., Volume B, 17 June 1891.

Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Westminster, the funding he had been providing for the convent at Derby ceased. Connelly found her small community saddled with a £3,000 debt they had not originated.¹¹² Wiseman was offered a convent or seminary at St Leonards-on-Sea in his new district, which he offered to the SHCJ. He sent word to Connelly of this property. The ground, a house, schools and a church were 'for any Order or convent that I wish; and that on my naming yours, he has not only acceded to it, but has expressed himself most anxious to have you, or any of the religious on the spot....'¹¹³ He, 'Mr Jones', as priests were called at the time, had offered the land to six other religious orders and all had turned him down. After Mr. Jones' death she found out why. He had told her that the convent and the property would belong to the SHCJ, but he had never changed his will and it went to the nephew of the previous owner. Then the parish church of St Leonards contended for the property.¹¹⁴ Years later in 1877, perhaps with the help of Sr Kenworthy's bequest, Connelly was able to buy 'Petit Chateau' of the Duc d'Orleans in Neuilly for £12,000 -- outright.¹¹⁵

Anglican or Roman, the mother foundresses were responsible for recruiting and funding of their

112 Pugin's convent was financed in part by Lord Shrewsbury and was also underwritten by the new Birmingham diocesan, Dr Ullathorne.

113 Gompertz, p. 144.

114 Ibid., p. 191. Moving to St Leonards embroiled Connelly in a land dispute that was to continue for eighteen years.

115 Ibid., p. 428.

communities and their works. Their members were referred to them by clerics, family and friends. Many more women than the number who finally joined had experienced the religious life as postulants or aspirants. Those who left with 'no vocation' or because of parental refusal, often were the very ones to assist the foundation as benefactors and friends. To those who remained the community became their family, as shown in the bequests and gifts to the societies. The temperament, personality, and dedication of a foundress gave each community its special appeal to possible members. Through her charisma the society grew. The mother foundresses devoted not only their lives to their communities, but also their fortunes and their fundraising ability. In this effort, they enlisted the assistance of other women in all walks of life. The assistance of highly placed clerics and laymen was helpful, especially in the early years, but the ongoing support of members and concerned women of means was more crucial to the success of a community. Funding was not a one-time event. The foundresses of religious communities for women had to be continually inventive, creative, in touch with current technology and grounded in old fashioned good manners.

Chapter 4

MAJOR EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CONSTRAINTS: ANTI-CATHOLICISM AND SECESSIONS

Constraints on the mother foundresses came from external and internal forces. In establishing their communities they faced the objections of the English family and, in some instances, their own clergy. Finding members and funding their endeavours had likewise antagonized various segments of society. But these were specific in nature compared to the overriding anti-Catholicism that cut across class lines and permeated mid-Victorian society. Anti-Catholicism was the major external constraint upon the foundresses. Internal constraints were of a different complexion. They involved postulants, novices, or sisters. The very women the foundresses had selected for their communities. There were upsets in these 'new families'. They became a major internal constraint when members seceded singly or in groups. Such secessions were seen as a betrayal of trust and as such shook the confidence of even the most competent foundresses. This chapter will explore the effect of anti-Catholicism and secessions upon the mother foundresses.

The generalized anti-Catholicism of nineteenth-century England particularly affected both Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic mother foundresses. The legislative fiat of Catholic Emancipation did not mean that the presence of women religious was acceptable to the vast

majority of the English public.¹ Three hundred years of distrust died hard. Indeed, relief from civil disabilities led to a new upsurge of anti-Catholic rhetoric, especially after the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy.² One manifestation of it was that the people of this Protestant nation were more than willing to accept reported distortions of the religious life, especially those dealing with women, as one more aspect of the 'old error' the Reformation had corrected.³

Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England was directed not only against Roman Catholics, but also against the emerging Anglo-Catholics of the Church of England.⁴ To the English people Catholicism, Anglican or Roman, stood for everything that was foreign and superstitious. The question of whether Roman Catholics owed their first allegiance to the pope or the sovereign of England remained an issue. The Mass in a foreign language was

1 Machin, Politics, 1832-1868, pp. 22, 77; Bebbington, pp. 275-276; Perkin, p. 203.

2 D. G. Paz, Popular Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 226-247; John Wolfe, The Protestant Crusade in Great Britain, 1829-1860 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) pp. 193-194; Walter L. Arnstein, Protestant Versus Catholic: Mr. Newdegate and the Nuns (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1982), p. 48.

3 Lyndal Roper, The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg. Oxford Studies in Social History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 5. Roper argues that 'convents offered the one institutional focus of real and lasting opposition to the triumph of evangelical moralism'. Although she refers to the time of the Reformation, the same might well be said of the nineteenth-century revival of the conventual life.

4 Paz, chap 5; John Wolfe, 'Protestant Societies and Anti-Catholic Agitations in Great Britain, 1829-1860' (D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1985), pp. 309-10, 337-39; Arnstein, pp. 156-157 ; Machin, Politics 1832-1868, p. 209.

also controversial. The highly ritualistic ceremonies in both churches with the use of incense, candles, and embroidered vestments that bespoke southern European origins added to these aspersions. Everything in the Anglo-Catholic churches was designed to look 'pre-Reformation' which was tantamount to a denunciation of Protestantism.⁵ More specifically Papalism rejected 'progress', the catchword of the middle classes and therefore was envisioned by them as a threat to their growing prosperity.⁶ The popular view was that England had cast off Romanism and all it stood for at the time of the Reformation, yet in 1829 the major penal laws against Roman Catholicism were done away with by the Catholic Relief Act and in 1850 the Catholic hierarchy was restored in the nation. Mass emigration of Irish people, mostly Roman Catholics, swelled the numbers of the Roman Church. At the same time as the Church of England was reclaiming its Catholic heritage Catholicism was looked upon as 'superstitious and idolatrous'.⁷ And concurrently the first sisterhoods were founded in the English Church while more active congregations of women were founded in the Roman Church. Throughout the Victorian era anti-Catholic attacks in their various forms from Non-Conformists and Evangelical Anglicans affected the daily lives of the women religious and acted as a constraint on their works.

5 Moorman, Spiritual Tradition, p. 163.

6 E. J. Hobsbawm, The Age of Empire 1875-1914 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987), p. 265.

7 Norman, p. 33.

The main outpouring of anti-Catholicism was triggered when the newly elevated Cardinal Archbishop Wiseman issued his first pastoral letter 'From Out the Flaminian Gate' (29 October 1850) . His triumphal tone incensed the English people as a whole and the prime minister, Lord Russell, in particular.

[W]e govern and shall continue to govern the counties of Middlesex, Hertford and Essex as ordinary thereof, and those of Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Berkshire, and Hampshire, with the islands annexed, as administrator with ordinary jurisdiction. ⁸

Queen Victoria was affronted. Russell in his letter to the Bishop of Durham (4 November 1850) called Wiseman's statement 'a pretension of supremacy over the realm of England...inconsistent with the Queen's supremacy...and the spiritual independence of the nation'.⁹ Even the old English Catholics were split over the reception of Wiseman's declaration. The Duke of Norfolk found 'ultramontane opinions are totally incompatible with allegiance to our Sovereign and with our Constitution'.¹⁰ The press thought that Wiseman had done 'Protestantism a service'.

Many a waverer, inclined to go astray in the flowery paths that lead to the pitfalls of Puseyism or the precipices of Romanism, will stop in his career, and go back in safety to the quiet folds of the Church.¹¹

8 G. M. Young and W. D. Handcock, eds., English Historical Documents, xii. I, 1833-74 (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1956), pp. 365-366.

9 Norman, pp. 159-160, as cited in G. I. T. Machin, Politics 1832-1868, p. 217.

10 Wilfrid Ward, Wiseman, ii. 15, as cited in Machin, Politics, 1832-1868, p. 217.

11 Illustrated London News, 2 November 1850, p. 341. Emphasis mine.

On the popular level anti-Catholicism brought forth renewed Guy Fawkes Day celebrations, disruption of church services, penny press revelations of priestly misdeeds, and attacks on convents. Amongst these many aspects Paz argues that these anti-Catholic actions in England were 'a more exclusively male activity' than female.¹² This seems understandable since women in their separate sphere were 'excluded . . . from talking about issues' and deemed 'unfit to fill leadership roles in religion'.¹³ It was more remarkable that women were attracted to Catholicism. One Anglo-Catholic woman described how she viewed this attraction: 'Activity, progress, beauty, refinement, and devotion allying themselves with the Catholic side, and Protestantism finds its chief adherents among the vulgar and money-gaining classes'.¹⁴ She and others like her brooked family objections to avail themselves of the worthwhile activity they found in Catholicism.¹⁵

Viewed in this manner Catholicism, Anglican or Roman, was seen to undermine the family. The confessional, for instance, was seen as a danger to 'the authority of husbands and fathers over wives and

12 Paz, p. 274.

13 Ibid., p. 275-277; Davidoff and Hall, chap 3. Discusses woman's place in the 'domestic ideology and the middle class'.

14 [Mrs. J. W. Lea], 'The Last Thirty Years in the English Church: an Autobiography,' cited in John Shelton Reed, '"A Female Movement": The Feminization of Nineteenth-Century Anglo-Catholicism', Anglican and Episcopal History 57 (June 1988) 208.

15 Richard Mudie-Smith, Religious Life in London (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), pp. 97-126, as cited in Reed, p. 204. From Mudie-Smith's figures of church attendance Reed calculates that women made up between 70% and 75% of Anglo-Catholic congregations.

daughters'.¹⁶ Reed argues that the 'anti-confessional polemic' was addressed to men and not to women for the confessional was a threat to male privilege¹⁷, as men believed it put the 'sins of the flesh' into language.¹⁸ This was not a proper subject for discussion between a woman and a man let alone a husband and a wife. ?

Therefore, communities of women religious were even more of a peril to the family than the women who took part in church activities and lived at home. The confessional was, or was to become, part of their lives. Sisterhoods and congregations challenged the family for they 'were republics...that offered [women] leadership roles, space, and, at least within the orders, liberation...'¹⁹

The 'challenge' to authority was exacerbated by their taking the vows of poverty, obedience and chastity. To the Protestant mind these were foreign in origin and repugnant to the spirit of progress. The middle class viewed affluence and acquisition as a symbol of their progress²⁰; the women religious saw them as an impediment to the selfless life they espoused. In denying the importance of wealth and position, they offended contemporary society. The question of vows in the Church of England was aggravated because the church had no way to dispense a person from the vows. Hence the reluctance on the part of the episcopate to sanction them in the

16 Paz, p. 277.

17 Reed, p. 216.

18 Ibid., p. 220.

19 Paz, pp. 277-278.

20 Hobsbawm, pp. 165-191. Hobsbawm defines middle-class boundaries and aspirations.

first place. Vows were seen as irrevocable and therefore those who took them lost forever to the family.

Archbishop Tait expressed his view on the difference between an oath and a vow in response to a letter by 'a London Curate'. The curate described how a young woman came to him in tears wanting him to accept her vow in a rite that would give her joy and happiness. Reluctantly the clergyman saw his duty to this member of his flock and proceeded to answer her request. He added that at the same time he performed this rite for a young man--it was, of course, a marriage. The clergyman argued there was no difference between the marriage vow and the vows of a religious. Tait angrily disagreed, 'The writer is an ass who does not know the difference between an oath like the Marriage vow sanctioned by an act of Parl. (Act of Uniformity) and an oath not administered under an act of Parl.'²¹

Letters to the Archbishop Tait from concerned clergy, relatives, and friends, attested to the anguish caused by 'headstrong' young women taking the vows of religion. In one such instance, Mrs Worcester had visited the Rev E. B. Elliot in Brighton 'having just received [a letter] from a niece announcing that she was about to receive the black veil as a Nun at Clewer'. Elliot forwarded to Tait an extract from that letter hoping 'that perhaps a communication from you to the Bishop of Oxford might prevent that open scandal'. The

²¹ LPL, Tait Papers 429 ff 125-6, n.d. Tait's response was in the form of an annotation in the margins of this newspaper clipping.

letter from Miss Lucy Anne Carden told her 'dear Aunt' of those who were coming to celebrate her 'blessed vocation'. She closed by saying, 'Afterwards, if you write to me please direct to Sister Lucy Anne, C.S.J.B'. The lack of a surname in her signature was taken as an denunciation of family and therefore as a possible 'scandal'. The Archbishop tried to calm the situation by saying that the Bishop of Oxford had 'made it a sine qua non of his patronage and superintendence of the Sisterhood there should be no vows', and that the sisters were 'free to leave the Sisterhood...when they please'. Tait went on to explain that should this 'zeal' not be allowed there would be a 'drift to the Church of Rome'. He closed the letter with the cautionary remark that 'Bps cannot ignore any party which conscientiously believes itself to be working for the Church of England'.²²

Underlying this distrust of women joining religious communities was the literature of the time. Novels, pamphlets, and panoramas fed the popular notions of what 'actually' went on behind the convent walls. Tales such as the Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk crossed the Atlantic from America in the 1830s.²³ Brave Maria had escaped her confinement in the Hotel Dieu in Montreal to tell her 'true story' of convent life to the sympathetic

22 Ibid., 207 ff 283-6 (March 1875).

23 Paz., p. 299. The full title of Maria Monk's book is Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal (1836). Susan Mumm, 'Lady Guerillas of Philanthropy': Anglican Sisterhoods in Victorian England' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Sussex, 1993), p. 235. Monk's revelations were followed by An Awful Exposure of the Awful Disclosures of Those Two Lying Females, Rebecca Reed and Maria Monk (1836).

ears of Protestant laymen. Her serialized misadventures were depicted in drawings and text in 'The Downfall of Babylon', edited by Samuel B. Smith, 'Late a Popish Priest'. There one read how the walls, bars, and gates were to keep young women from escaping the demonic priests within, and how the infants resulting from their immoral conduct were buried in the cellars of the building, their bodies covered with lime so that the 'evidence' of carnal acts could not be proved.²⁴ Maria Monk was as well known to nineteenth-century Protestants, as Foxe's Book of Martyrs had been to their seventeenth-century forebears. The ready acceptance of the public of this tale of female abuse in a convent setting led the way for similar 'true' stories to be published. Lord Russell had written one such novel 'on the sinfulness of chastity'.²⁵ His tale stressed the Protestant belief that the married state was 'holier' than the celibate state. In the mind of the public, any woman in a convent was held there against her will and kept by her religious vows from marriage. Equally, she had been deprived of her fortune by unscrupulous methods.

Prior to the resurgence of anti-Catholicism at the time of the restoration of the hierarchy, the reading public had been deluged with the evils of the convents

24 Samuel B. Smith, The Downfall of Babylon, April 2, 1836-November 12, 1836, Vol. II, Nos. 15-31. I wish^{to} thank Maureen McCarthy of Rutgers University for drawing my attention to this publication.

25 John Russell, The Nun of Arrouca (London: 1822), cited in Richard Brent, Liberal Anglican Politics: Whiggery, Religion and Reform, 1830-1841 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 57.

and priests. Suspicion of Roman practices had been attributed to the Tractarians or Puseyites. After 1850 attacks on Catholicism and convents in particular took the form of lectures as well as literature. The Rev M. Hobart Seymour was invited by 'the ladies of Bath' to address them on the subject of nunneries in 1852. It is unclear why his audience was one of 1500 men, unless his subject matter was deemed inappropriate for 'ladies'. He told his male audience how nunneries were 'vicious in principle, and mischievous in practice'. He stressed that Rome thought celibacy more holy a state than marriage. Then he went on to say, 'If ladies choose to dress themselves in monastic fashion, black, white, and grey, with rosaries and crucifixes, it may all seem to us extremely silly, but we have no right to interfere'.²⁶ But if the purpose of the 'engagement' of sixteen year old girls with 'a view of obtaining power over every right and property' was the intention, then he did object. His stress was on the connexion of convents to family property. Seymour said that Protestant ladies could 'dispense charity and read their Bibles' without the 'protection of walls and gates'. He quoted Wiseman as writing that walls and gates were to keep men out. Seymour saw this as an insult to men. He went on to say that the Roman prelate did not believe that the English were superior to other people. Seymour interprets this,

26 The Rev M. Hobart Seymour, 'Convents or Nunneries. A Lecture in Reply to Cardinal Wiseman, delivered at the Assembly Rooms, Bath, on Monday, June 7, 1852'. (Bath: R. E. Peach, 1852), p. 8.

to his male audience, as implying a slur on their Protestant character.

We are [seen to be] quite as slavish as the serfs of Russia, uncivilized as the Mussulmen of Turkey, as fickle and as changeable as the French, as ignorant and superstitious as the Spanish, as immoral and uneducated as the Italians, to hear him speaking of England as having no advantage over any other nation of the world'.²⁷

He finished with the declaration, 'I will exert my energies as much against the establishment of Protestant nunneries as against the establishment of Roman Catholic nunneries'. The assembly called for visitation of all nunneries by Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace and the resolution was carried by acclamation.²⁸ Protestantism, patriotism, and property were all used by Seymour to fire hatred against Catholicism and the evils of the conventual system whether Anglican or Roman.

The Rev Michael Gathercole warned his 'Fellow Britons to keep your little daughters from popish schools, for they are nurseries out of which the handsomest may be selected for seraglios of the Popish priests called nunneries'.²⁹ The vicar could well have read of this in Foxe's Book of Martyrs where Cobbin's 'Essay on Popery' equated convents with brothels. Foxe's book was so in demand that it was again republished in 1874 and, as Norman states, was as well known to Victorians as the Bible itself.³⁰ Charlotte Elizabeth

27 Ibid., pp. 7-24.

28 Ibid., p. 50.

29 Gray, p. 103.

30 Norman, p. xi.

Tonna, editor of The Englishwoman's Magazine recalled her father giving her Foxe's book and how she wanted to be a martyr. To this her father replied:

Why, Charlotte, if the government ever gives power to the Papists again, as they talk of doing, you may, very probably, live to be a martyr.³¹

In the next issue of her magazine she stated that Puseyism was 'visibly stamped with some of the main characteristics of Popery'.³² Tonna was one of the few women involved in organized anti-Catholic activities as witnessed by her writings.³³

Respected writers such as Charlotte Bronte gave credibility to the public notion of the 'leakage' of family funds to convents in Jane Eyre. In this novel Jane's cousin, Eliza, took the money left to her upon the death of her mother and left Yorkshire announcing her plans to try the religious life in France. Bronte, in beginning the narrative of the second book, informed the reader:

Eliza took the veil and is at this day superior of the convent where she passed the period of her novitiate and which she endowed with her fortune³⁴

Bronte expressed her anti-Catholic propensities in

31 Charlotte Elizabeth, ed., The Englishwoman's Magazine (September 1846): 516.

32 Ibid., (December 1846): 731.

33 Paz, p. 271; DNB, XIX, 961-62. Charlotte Elizabeth Browne Phelan Tonna (1790-1846), daughter of a Norwich priest. Twice married. Her second husband, Lewis Tonna was also an anti-Catholic writer.

34 Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre, Vol. 2 (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1978), p. 2.

Villette. Her view of the lot of women in convents was shown when the heroine, Lucy Snowe, found

the portal of a vault, imprisoning deep beneath the ground, on whose surface grass grew and flowers bloomed, the bones of a girl whom monkish conclave of the drear middle ages had here buried alive for some sin against her vow.³⁵

The cost of three volume novels limited their availability to the middle classes.³⁶ This was not true of panoramas and the penny dreadfuls. 'No Popery' panoramas took advantage of Papal Aggression hysteria. One such leaflet with 21 panels used its doggerel to envision the problems of Cardinal Wiseman in London and took jibes at Lord Russell, the Anglican sisterhoods and the Jesuits at the same time.

Here you have "little Jack" who was asleep (as he generally is) while the Popish Bull broke into the Protestant China Shop.

Here you have Cardinal Foolishman sitting on the top of St Paul's and thinking that his scarlet hat will overshadow the whole of London, Westminster and Southwark.

Here you have London, Westminster, Southwark and Mary le bone telling him that it wo'nt [sic] do anything of the sort.

Here you have Miss Angelina De L'Aisle, who, though she does'nt [sic] object to be a Protestant 'Sister of Mercy' and a member of a Belgravian Nunnery, positively declares that she 'wont be a nun'.

Here you have Father Pignatius at a fruit stall, thinking what nice desserts his brethren

35 Charlotte Bronte, Villette, chap 12, cited in Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination (London: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 410.

36 Paz, p. 57. For a fuller discussion of popular literature dealing with anti-Catholicism, see Paz, pp. 56-70.

can have when Covent Garden becomes Convent Garden again.³⁷

The writer disguised his subjects so thinly that they might be readily identified. The 'Belgravian Nunnery' had already been spoken of in Punch. It told of frivolous young Protestant ladies of high birth engaged in the conventual life pro tem.

That the Anglican Convent, thus constituted, will lead to perversion there is no fear. Alas! the hard multitude will rather say that the Puseyite sisters are only playing at Roman Catholics, and the vile punster will remark that their Convent is more a Monkey-ry than a Nunnery.³⁸

'Father Pignatius' referred to the Jesuits who were seen as a secretive group which lured young women behind the bars of convents and into their cellars. The intimation was that these institutions were in actuality brothels for priests. That the masses knew the references of the panorama showed how widespread anti-Catholicism was. It evidenced that not only political and literary notables equated Roman Catholicism with Anglo-Catholicism, but also the public at large.

While organized anti-Catholicism waned in the last quarter of the century, the literature of that period continued its attacks on Catholicism. Wilkie Collins wrote The Black Robe in 1881. This tale about the duplicity of Jesuits centered on anti-Catholicism's concerns of family and property. A titled young man signed over his ancestral home, which had belonged to

37 Anti-Guy, 'No-Popery', (n.p., n.d. [1851]).

38 'Convent of the Belgravians', Punch, or the London Charivari, 19 (1850): 163.

the Roman Catholic Church before the Dissolution of the Monasteries, to a man from the continent he thought a friend, but who turned out to be a Jesuit in disguise. Somewhere along the way the hero married and had a child. The triumphant finish of the tale was the man's realization that home and family must come first and he burns the deed he had signed over to the Jesuits so that his son might inherit.³⁹ The family reigned supreme over Jesuitry. Collins was once more stating the Protestant fear, that family land and monies would go to the 'Catholic' church through the religious enthusiasm of young men and women. What rightfully belonged to the family would be purloined by the church. This genre of literature also dealt with the religious enthusiasm of young women and addressed the dangers of Protestant daughters being enrolled in Roman Catholic schools. Convent Life, a novel written in 1876, was unsigned, as were so many of these books. It followed a Protestant girl's entrance into a convent school, where she was groomed by the nuns first for conversion and then for taking the veil. Her recalcitrant father arrived just in time to save her from the starvation imposed on her by the sisters when she refused to make her life-long profession.⁴⁰ The idea that a young woman would freely chose to enter a convent remained unthinkable to most of Victorian manhood and to much of Victorian womanhood.

39 Wilkie Collins, The Black Robe, The Works of Wilkie Collins, Vol. 23 (New York: Peter Fenelon Collier, Publisher, [1881]).

40 Convent Life (New York: Evangelical Knowledge Society, 1876).

Public concern about the conventual life was represented in art as well as literature. Casteras has shown how nuns were presented in art throughout the nineteenth century. They were always represented as novices (young), never as professed sisters. The white veil of their purity also signaled the fact that it was not too late for them to be saved from the walls that will enclose them for life. They might yet be wives and mothers. The paintings became almost a plea for their salvation from the fate of final vows. An example of such works Millais' 'The Vale of Rest', painted in 1859, depicts two novices within the convent walls. One, with her veil tied back, is digging a grave, the other watches her. The two women look remarkably alike--so much so that contemporary critics thought the nun was digging her own grave, an idea with which gallery patrons could empathize.⁴¹

These forms of anti-Catholicism affected women religious in both branches of the Catholic faith. For instance, the Roman Catholic Mary Anne Martin of Wakefield was twenty-one when she entered the IBVM novitiate in York in 1849. 'News got abroad' that she was about to enter a 'nunnery'.

The ridiculous rumor [sic] got afloat and found its way into the local papers that Mary Ann [sic] was the victim of parental tyranny and had been forced into the cloister against her will... among the non-Catholic acquaintances of the Martins, there were some who never

41 Susan P. Casteras, 'Virgin Vows: The Early Victorian Artists' Portraits of Nuns and Novices', Victorian Studies 24 (Winter 1981): 169-184.

relinquished the delusion that Mary Ann [sic] was an unfortunate vestal sacrificed on the altar of a cruel fanaticism.⁴²

This 'victim of parental tyranny' spent forty-one years in the religious life; twenty-one of them as superior of the Bar Convent.⁴³

It was the Lewes Riot, however, that was to focus public attention on conventual influence and property rights of family.⁴⁴ It fitted the preconceived notions found in anti-Catholic propaganda. The Anglican community of East Grinstead, SSM, was founded by an inhibited priest, John Mason Neale.⁴⁵ The sisters nursed and cared for the poor in the cottages of the surrounding countryside. Emily Ann Scobell became Sister Amy in 1854. Like the other sisters she nursed the sick. While tending to a scarlet fever victim she contracted the disease and died. Her will gave £400 to the community. Her father, the Reverend John Scobell of Lewes, objected. He said that Neale had deliberately sent her to nurse this person so that she would contract the disease and leave the money to the SSM. The whole issue was inflamed when the sisterhood took the position normally held by

42 'Sketch of the Life of Mother Mary Joseph Juliana Martin, Superior of St. Mary's Convent, York, from 1862 to 1883', Niagara Rainbow March 1895 - February 1896.

43 Ibid. Martin wanted to 'thoroughly investigate the case of Mary Ward' and to write a biography to clear her name. She was advised that the timing was wrong for such an effort. Instead she collected the records that formed the basis of Fr Coleridge's history of the Bar Convent.

44 Both the Lewes Riot and the Kenworthy funeral have already been partially discussed in chapter 3.

45 An 'inhibited' priest was restricted in his clerical functions by the bishop of the diocese. In Neale's case Bishop Gilbert would not license him for sixteen years (1847-1863). This meant that he could only officiate at services connected with Sackville College, where he was the Warden, and the Society of Saint Margaret's.

the family at Sr Amy's funeral. An irate mob stoned the sisters and chased Neale until he had to jump a wall to escape their wrath. Ann Gream, the first superior, consulted their attorney the next day and said they were proceeding to receive the bequest. She went to see their diocesan, the Bishop Gilbert of Chichester, but was refused admission.⁴⁶ The newspapers were filled with the Reverend Scobell's accusations of 'undue influence' on his 'stolen daughter' by the sisterhood, in general, and Neale, in particular.⁴⁷ This was an instance where an Anglo-Catholic community was accused of luring an innocent child (34 year old woman) behind the convent bars (working openly in the community at large) and causing family funds (her own property) to go to the community that 'caused' her premature death.

The Roman congregations, like the Anglican sisterhoods, were not without familial problems when it came to the subject of property. Twenty years after the Lewes Riot the Society of the Holy Child Jesus was bequeathed £20,000 upon the death of Sr Mary Francis Kenworthy. Her family charged 'undue influence' and went to court to state their case. The press picked up the item and anticipated '40 nuns' to attend trial at Westminster, March 6, 1878. Actually, sixteen sisters arrived for the proceedings and had to elbow their way to the court, so great was the crowd. But the public was

46 SSM archives, Mother Ann's Diary, (November 18-December 3, 1857).

47 Mumm, p. 242.

disappointed when the family retracted its accusation and the charges were dropped.⁴⁸

With this constant assault of anti-Catholic propaganda it was understandable why a Victorian father and mother with no more knowledge of the religious life than what had been fed to them by their friends, neighbours, and clergy, familiar with these depictions, should be against their daughters entering such establishments. To them she would be locked away forever and her property, taken no doubt by deceit, used for other than family purposes. Roman Catholic families, proud of their daughter's decision, often had to fend off condolences of well meaning Protestant neighbours, as in the case of Mary Anne Martin's family discussed above.

Parliament and government ministers played their part in anti-Catholicism, too. Cardinal Wiseman's flamboyant statement at the restoration of the hierarchy caused Lord Russell to join Roman Catholicism with Anglo-Catholicism as subversive threats to England's sovereignty. Machin argues that the timing of the pastoral letter, just prior to the 5th of November, brought on vigorous Guy Fawkes demonstrations. He suggests that the difference apparent in these demonstrations compared to previous 'anti-Catholic upheavals was that the Government now joined the crowd'.⁴⁹ In the year following the restoration the

48 Gompertz, p. 460.

49 Machin, Politics, 1832-1868, p. 218.

Ecclesiastical Titles Act was passed by Parliament, restricting the Roman episcopate to titles not used by the Established Church.⁵⁰ Thus the government, seemingly, took action against the papal incursion.

While Parliament was discussing the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, it was also deciding whether or not to enact the Religious Houses Bill. Mr Lacy, MP for Bodmin, put forward a bill that would cause all religious houses to be registered and magistrates appointed to visit them quarterly without advance notice and 'if they found any lady who wished to come out, they should have the power to remove her'. (Clauses of the bill were taken directly from the Lunatic Asylums Bill.)⁵¹ He specified:

[T]he measure applied to religious houses for ladies--not to religious houses for Catholic ladies only, but that it would refer also to the religious houses for Protestants, of which he was informed there were some to be found.⁵²

Lacy's object was to protect between 500 and 1000 women from pursuing 'to their life's end...that course of life'. He believed 'it was not possible that every one could be perfectly contented to remain in those houses to their life's end'. The evidence he presented to show that 'escapes did exist' and that they were 'hushed up' came mostly from European countries and Mexico, which the other members of the house were quick to point out.⁵³

Sir George Grey, the Home Secretary, said that Lacy had

50 The Catholic Relief Act of 1829 had already prohibited the use of Church of England titles to the Church of Rome.

51 Hansard, 3rd series, 1851, CXVI, 966.

52 Ibid., 949.

53 Ibid., 949-950.

'failed to show that forcible detention of females in religious houses does exist in this kingdom'. Grattan went further and declared

Indeed, the hon. Gentleman had shown the grossest ignorance upon the whole question. Convents were not the establishments that they had been described. They were founded for the purposes of charity and education; their inmates discharged those duties at times and at seasons when others neglected theirs; and those labours did not deserve to be rewarded by a Bill so infamous as this.⁵⁴

Grattan had visited convents in Europe and in Ireland and he 'could tell the House that for intellectual culture the ladies of those establishments were unequalled by any that were to be found in Protestant establishments'.⁵⁵

The Solicitor General, Sir Alexander J. E. Cockburn, stated that Lacy's evidence showed that these women were 'detained by means of spiritual influence' and that no bill designed to 'prevent forcible detention' would have any effect upon those detained 'by the force of moral exertion'.⁵⁶ Serjeant Murphy, MP for Cork, quoted a letter from Teresa Arundell of Wardour to the Times:

To Catholic ladies who, like myself, have sisters and relatives in convents, it is indeed humiliating and most painful, that in England, hitherto considered the land of liberty, we should be forced to exert our influence to save those loved ones from the grossest insults, the most unmanly attempts now being made to deprive them of a security which even the meanest women slaves have insured to them.⁵⁷

54 Ibid., 966-967.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid., 975.

57 Ibid., 983.

Sidney Herbert stressed the difference between 'enforced contemplative life' and those 'engaged in works of mercy', the latter were 'useful' and the two should not be confused.⁵⁸ Herbert, along with future archbishops of Canterbury, could understand the value of the charitable works undertaken by the sisters, but could not justify in his mind a life spent in prayer and devotion as being 'useful' in any way. The second reading of the bill was put off for six months.

There is no record of a public defence of the Anglican sisterhoods by the prelates of their church of this Bill. But the Roman Catholic Bishop of Birmingham, William Ullathorne, along with Wiseman, printed defences of the conventual system. Ullathorne responded directly to Lacy's proposed Religious Houses Bill. The bill, as quoted by Ullathorne was 'to make provision for preventing the forcible detention of females in Houses wherein persons bound by religious or monastic vows are resident'. The Bishop said that such a bill would inflict 'upon a considerable number of ladies amongst the most refined high minded, and accomplished in the country' a degradation worse than workhouse inmates. He presented his experience as 'the ecclesiastical superior of full half the convents in the country'.⁵⁹ He argued that the 'religious women are truly the most happy, the most cheerful, and the most peace-loving persons on

58 Ibid., 987.

59 Bishop Ullathorne, 'A Plea for the Rights and Liberties of Religious Women, with reference to the Bill proposed by Mr. Lacy', 2nd edn (London: Thomas Richardson and Son, 1851), pp. 3-4.

earth'. Then he went on to plead, 'What interest can they have in detaining any person against her will, when such a person would only interfere with the common content'?⁶⁰ The bill proposed sending Justices to inspect the Houses twice a year and not even prelates are allowed that many visitations.⁶¹ He concluded:

Are we in England or in Turkey? But I should only wrong that nation. All over the East the abode of women is inviolable, as the abode of men continues to be in England.

The bill was 'un-English, and would be the first step against a great constitutional principle, the inviolability of domicile'.⁶² Ullathorne emphasized allegiance to the nation in his conclusion, as part of anti-Catholicism was the suspicion that Catholicism of its very nature was a form of treason. He also declared that these women living away from family guidance were happy with their lot. To the average Englishman such a situation was unimaginable.

The Religious Houses Bill was in effect 'killed' by the second reading being postponed for six months. Other attempts at regulatory bills were presented in 1852 and 1853, but they also failed. Major legislation concerning female convents did not reappear until after the Vatican Council's announcement of Papal Infallibility in 1870 rekindled anti-Catholic fervour. Newspapers were filled for weeks with stories of ineffectual attempts of nuns to escape from convents. An unnamed recent convert to Roman

60 Ibid., p. 14.

61 Ibid., p. 19.

62 Ibid., p. 20.

Catholicism was surprised by an article in the Tablet that said the bars on convent windows were there to keep people out and not the sisters in. He had never thought of that before.⁶³ Parliament reacted to the latest papal bull with renewed interest in regulating convents and monasteries by law. A Select Committee, headed by Charles Newdegate, MP from Warwickshire, was formed to inquire into Conventual and Monastic Institutions. Primarily interested in government inspection of private church property, it, once again, wanted to be able to 'free' any inmate who desired to leave. In an effort to extend the powers of his committee Newdegate stressed the outcome of *Saurin v Star and Kennedy* in the Court of the Queen's Bench.

[It] decided that this lady was the victim of a conspiracy; that she had suffered most undue severity; she appealed to the justice of English law and...compensation has been awarded to her.⁶⁴

Newdegate did not know if the lady had been released from her vows, but he did want the power to make sure that no more young women were living under 'undue severity'. Sir Henry Hoare asked if the Anglican sisterhoods would also be investigated. He qualified his question by adding, 'He did not wish anybody to suppose that he was affected by any love of the Roman Catholic religion, but it was impossible to play fast and loose with religious

63 Norman, p. 84.

64 Hansard, 3rd series, 1870, CC, 887; Arnstein, Protestant, pp. 108-122. Arnstein gives the details of *Star vs Saurin*.

principles'.⁶⁵ Hoare's daughters had long been active in high church Anglicanism and the Hon Georgina Hoare was a member of the Clewer community one of the three Anglican sisterhoods eventually called to give evidence - - All Saints and Wantage being the other two. In questioning the laymen who represented the sisters, the MPs asked if the inmates did not owe their allegiance to the Cardinal of Westminster rather than the Archbishop of Canterbury.⁶⁶ It was inconceivable to them that these women were members of the Established Church.

Newdegate, pursuing his personal Protestant crusade in committee, was challenged by Mr Winterbotham, MP for Stroud, who repudiated his references to a Roman Catholic threat to the nation. Winterbotham asked:

How many doctors, lawyers, merchants, mechanics, or artizans were ever heard of as becoming Roman Catholics? The converts were women, parsons, and peers. Of these three classes the two latter were certainly not growing in power or in influence; there was nothing about the clergy or the peers of which the country need be afraid. As to the converts who were made among the women, the House had no right to complain on this head until they gave to women a higher, and he would add, a more manly education--until they opened to them larger spheres of usefulness and activity. Till this was done, the House would have no right to be surprised that some women--and those not the least noble of their sex--preferred the devotions and even the austerities of the convents to the frivolities of outdoor daily life.⁶⁷

Winterbotham acknowledged women's desire for a meaningful rather than a frivolous existence, whatever the cost, and

65 Hansard, 3rd series, 1870, CCI, 82.

66 Hansard, 3rd series, 1870, CCI, 1244.

67 Ibid., p. 63.

in what was becoming a more secular middle-class nation he discounted the influence of clergy and peers.⁶⁸

While Winterbotham was denying any power connected with convert clergy and peers, Manning, now Archbishop of Westminster, was dismissive of the Parliamentary inquiry into religious orders. As he wrote to Gladstone:

The Court of Rome rather like Mr Newdegate's inquiry because they think that anything like persecution only strengthens the Faith of the Faithful and invariably increases the collection of Peter's Pence, just as they hate peace among Christians which they think only promotes Indifferentism generally."⁶⁹

Newdegate's inquiry resulted in no legislation.

The proposed acts of Parliament in 1851 and 1870 did not become law, but they were symptomatic of national anti-Catholic expressions. As Wolfe points out in The Protestant Crusade, various anti-Catholic groups were active at different times in the nineteenth century. In the 1860s and 1870s they turned to legal means of furthering their aims with attacks on Ritualism within the Church of England. By this time Ritualism had supplanted Tractarianism and Puseyism as the focal point of Anglo-Catholicism. These pressure groups influenced Archbishop Tait in his successful attempt to introduce and have enacted the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874. Here was a legal tool to prohibit 'Catholic' practices in the Church of England. Ritualistic

68 G. I. T. Machin, Politics and the Churches in Great Britain, 1869-1921 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 34. Henry Winterbotham was a Baptist, who died in 1873.
69 Norman, 84. Quoted from Gladstone papers Add. MSS 4426 f 222 (15 May 1870).

practices and ceremonies were supported by a number of convents. These elaborate rites were not tolerated by radical Evangelicals within the church.

One mother foundress, Harriet Monsell, had the ear of the Archbishop for he was her cousin by marriage. She was not shy in expressing her opinions to him in 'private' letters. When charges were brought against Ritualists through the new legislation, Monsell wrote Tait:

I cannot be good, & keep silence. Your 'Irish cousin' cannot contain the Celtic Spirit within her.

What will the English Episcopate gain by sending the Eastern, the Western Church, the civilized heathen all over the world such an estimate of their clergy?

I have seen no paper, know not how your sons will take it, but your daughter feels very much aggrieved for them.⁷⁰

She wrote to him again when Mackonochie, rector of St Albans, Holborn, was tried for 'illegal' acts, i.e., raising the host, mixing the water and the wine, facing east, wearing a chasuble, etc.

My whole soul is moved today by the thought of that Silent Altar at St Albans. In the midst of all that sin & misery no longer saying 'Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden & I will refresh you'.

She went on to call upon Tait in his 'Office as The Healer':

Dear Archbishop there must be great courage to break thru the entanglement that fears & misconceptions & antagonisms has woven round the Church of England. My whole soul gets tired when I read the appeals for more help &

70 LPL, Tait Papers, 94 ff 127-8 (March 10, 1875).

of the increasing population overwhelming the Church's power of reaching them & knowing as I do from practical experience how our teaching does win souls and give a definite faith. ...instead of struggling with & disparaging & wounding each other...unite to seek private solutions instead of antagonism....⁷¹

This mother foundress looked upon the constraints of legislation on Ritualist practices as a divisive measure. She felt it restricted the work of her church and therefore of her own community that worked side-by-side with Ritualist priests.

Tait's stand against the Ritualists, however, did not stop him and his wife, Catherine, from being vilified in the 'Rock', an evangelical low church publication, in 1878. The Primate and his 'consort' were accused of sheltering fledgling Roman orders near their marine residence at Broadstairs. The Community of St Peter (CSP) had founded an orphanage of which Mrs Tait was a patroness. Yet in a story that took up the entire front page of this church paper, her desire to help orphans through the sisterhood was blown up into an invasion of Roman practices into the Established Church. The Archbishop's protection of these 'nurseries for Papists', these 'nests' that have insinuated themselves into our towns and villages, were seen as descendents of the 'infamous' Miss Sellon. What the article writer had, as the basis of this diatribe, was the discovery of a Roman Missal in St Peter's Thanet parish church. It was the personal property of Sr Catharine and was not used by the community nor by the parish priest in his services. The

71 Ibid., Tait, 94 ff 252-5 (June 27, 1875).

sister was made to apologize and Susan White, the foundress of CSP, wrote the Archbishop:

I was not aware that she had the book in question but I am quite sure from my intimate knowledge of her during 12 years of our working together that she did not use it for purposes of devotion but for Liturgical research and study--a subject in which she is much interested.⁷²

Yet the incident had served its purpose. The Archbishop, who was a very tolerant man, had been served notice by the anti-Catholic wing of his church that they would not suffer him to be tolerant of high church practices. A parish priest, Jas. Fleming, wrote to the Archbishop about the report and put the story in perspective:

I have seen the statement in the Rock, (as I take both it & the Church Times that I may learn lessons of charity, by the utter absence of it in both those Papers.)⁷³

The public at large was affected by the anti-Catholic mood. Renewed Guy Fawkes celebrations followed in the wake of Wiseman's 'triumphal' return to England. One such display had Guy dressed as the Cardinal with his 'wife' dressed as SHCJ nun.⁷⁴ Besides Guy Fawkes celebrations, Anti-Papal processions were popular. One such event was scheduled to coincide with Wiseman's visit to Connelly's convent at St Leonards. The press reported:

72 Ibid., Tait, 238 ff 402-16 (January 11-24, 1878).

73 Ibid., Tait, 238 ff 419 (January 1878).

74 Wolffe, pp. 193-194; Gompertz, p. 210.

King James I took the lead; on each side of him stalked an English Protestant Bishop. Then came the Pope, and after the Pope walked Cardinal Wiseman and Dy. In front was a 'No-Popery' banner, in the centre some 'V.Rs.' and in the rear were a few flags with 'Faith', 'Hope', and 'Charity' on them.⁷⁵

Irish labourers assembled to protect the convent when police dispersed the procession and, later, 'the Pope' was burned in effigy on the beach.⁷⁶

Anti-Catholic tracts such as 'Monasticism Unveiled', were still appearing in the 1890s. Sixty years had passed since The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk, yet the tune of the hate-monger had not changed. 'Monasticism Unveiled' was published by the Conventual Inquiry Committee, not a committee of Parliament but sounding as if it were. The poem 'Convent Bells' was purportedly written by a lady 'M.A.C.'. These are but two of its eight stanzas that appealed to the true Englishman to act:

No father and no mother knows
 The DEPTH of our distresses;
 You saw our basement builded, with
 Its coffin-like recesses;
 You KNOW there comes no funeral
 Without the convent gate;
 You THINK there may be PITS and LIME
 Where INFANTS LIE IN STATE!!

Men of the world, come in, come in,
 Of what are you afraid?
 Each convent has its prison bars,
 Of strongest iron made.
 Each MOTHER (Heaven avenge the LIE)
 Has keys, and scrolls, and THONGS;
 Men of the world, come in, come in,
 And scan the CONVENT WRONGS!⁷⁷

75 Hastings and St Leonards Gazette, 10 January, 1851, p. 1.

76 Gompertz, p. 212.

77 General Sir Robert P. Hayne, 'Monasticism Unveiled, Part II--The Climax', (n.p.: Conventual Inquiry

The 'hidden life', as the religious life has been called, was a suitable cognomen for the women religious of the nineteenth century. (Indeed the first religious communities to appear in England and settle in the countryside after the French Revolution, forsook their habits to avoid confrontations with the townspeople.) Connelly's foundation had yet to choose its habit in 1846 and, publicly, appeared to be a group of women in 'unadorned' clothes.⁷⁸ When the SHCJ established a school in London in 1851 they dared not wear their habit and risk 'a pelting with stones'. The sisters wore the only secular clothes available to them--the 'cast-off clothing of postulants'. Connelly had first choice of apparel and chose a 'tight fitting black silk jacket, a bonnet that had been rather stylish, and a blue gauze veil'.⁷⁹ Even the older congregations took cabs when moving from one school to another, so that their habit might not attract attention on the streets.⁸⁰ The Anglican Community of St Mary the Virgin wore clothes 'not unlike other women, only in black' so ^{as} not to incite the ire of the very Protestant citizenry of Wantage.⁸¹ Sellon's sisterhood, even though its dress was similar to that of contemporary widows, made the mistake of wearing

Committee, July 1890). 'Convent Bells' was written by a lady, M.A.C. It would be of interest to know if those initials stand for Margaret Anna Cusack, 'late of the Roman Church', and in 1890 earning her living as a speaker on the 'Protestant' circuit, or if they are only there to make the reader think she is the author.

78 Gompertz, p. 111.

79 Ibid., pp. 213-214.

80 IBVM archives, 'Sketch', (1895).

81 CSMV archives, Miss Lampet, 'Notes on the Earliest Days of the Community', p. 4.

crucifixes. This act brought them into the public limelight and caused an inquiry by their diocesan. Henry Phillpotts, Bishop of Exeter, disliked controversy. Although he had given approval for the work and the first rule, he quickly distanced himself from the sisterhood. The press reported that the Bishop who had once 'wrapped Miss Sellon in the silken robes of his approval, proceeded to throw her overboard'.⁸² A pamphlet war ensued. Righteous clergymen spoke of 'Miss Sellon in the family,' objecting strongly to the word 'mother' being applied to one who was seen to usurp the authority of the true mother.⁸³ They wanted to know why women were vowing allegiance to someone outside the family. Commander Sellon, her father, tried to quiet the turmoil by comparing the vows of religion to those of the bride. If a parent was happy when a daughter married, why then could they not be happy when she had chosen God for her devotion? ⁸⁴ His appeal, like that of 'A London Curate' whose thoughts were similar, was not taken to heart by the literate public. These instances generally occurred at mid-century. But as late as 1883, Taylor resorted to secular dress when in densely populated Protestant territory. She and another sister of the SMG 'looked like a widow and her daughter' when she went in search of

82 Williams, Sellon, p. 116.

83 Rev W. M. Colles, 'Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Misery: or Miss Sellon in the Family, with some remarks on 'A Reply to the Rev. James Spurrell'; 'Two Letters to the Rev Edward Coleridge', etc., etc.', (London: T. Hatchard, 1852), p. 6.

84 [Commander Sellon], 'Sisters of Mercy in the Church of England', (London: Joseph Masters, 1850), p. 14.

a possible convent site in St Helens.⁸⁵ It is paradoxical that the same habit that offered the sisters protection in their work with the poor exposed them to physical harm at other times. With all the constraints upon the actions of the foundresses and their communities from anti-Catholicism, one, at least, was able to see the humour in confused reports about her. In 1877 Monsell, after she had retired as superior of CSJB, had time to review current books on Catholicism. She recommended two of them (one by Manning) to Tait and then added:

I hear some Hampshire paper has a wonderful paragraph about me. That I was received into the Roman Church 40 years ago and am a female Jesuit [sent] to corrupt the Aristocracy. You see a specimen of it in my sending you these books.⁸⁶

To avoid anti-Catholic defences of property such as the Lewes Riot, sisterhoods wrote into their rules proper procedure for the disposition of a sister's property. It was to be decided by the sister without the knowledge of the mother superior or the chaplain. At All Saints the original rule of 1855 stated:

Each Sister according to her ability will be expected to contribute a certain sum annually out of her income, if she possess any, towards the maintenance of the House as long as she shall remain a member of the Community.⁸⁷

85 SMG archives, 'Mother as we knew her'.

86 LPL, Tait Papers, 97 ff 280-281.

87 SAS archives, 'Rules and Admonitions for the Sisters of the Poor', [1855] Statute XII.

The revised Rules and Admonitions of 1859, after the Lewes Riot, added this sentence:

Each Sister will be at liberty to dispose of her own private property as she may see fit, without any interference either as to the capital or the income.⁸⁸

By The Constitution and Rule of Life in 1898 there could be no question of the intent of this statute:

Before her Profession she shall arrange for the disposal of her property in any way she thinks fit, either to her relations or the Community...."⁸⁹

Clewer addressed this potential problem from the very beginning:

In the event of any sister desiring to give or bequeath any property to the House, she shall satisfy the Visitor that she has informed the next of kin or the next in equal degree, of more than one (or give the Visitor a sufficient reason for her not having done so) of her intention that she may have weighed their objections if any & that they may have the opportunity of laying their objections before the Visitor. ⁹⁰

The family must know in advance any plans a member has about her property, so that there is no possibility of the charge of undue influence being leveled against the sisterhood. Together with the episcopate's insistence on statutes dealing with the freedom of a sister to leave the community (discussed above), the statute defining disposition of property was of great importance. They answered two of the 'evils' of convent life put forward

88 Mayhew, p. 47.

89 Ibid.

90 CSJB archives, '1854 Rule', No. 7.

by anti-Catholicism--the freedom of inmates to leave and family property rights.

Paz states that anti-Catholicism had reached its peak in the middle decades of the century.⁹¹ Norman shows that the anti-Catholic tradition survived 'in the popular opposition to the Ritualist movement in the Church of England'.⁹² This did not mean that it came to an end. In the final decade of the century there were outbursts of opposition to the Catholicism of the Ritualists. The 'last great Victorian society, John Kensit's Protestant Truth Society' was formed in 1889.⁹³ Kensit revelled in disrupting high church ceremonies. At a Good Friday service in South Kensington he attended the 'Veneration of the Cross'. When it came his turn to kiss the cross, he grabbed it and discoursed on the idolatry in the Church of England.⁹⁴ Ayckbown (CSC) wrote in her journal:

Read a cutting about a silly idolatrous sort of service at St Cuthbert's Kensington on Good Friday. Seemed to be what Mr K[irkpatrick] calls 'Creeping to the Cross' and what he utterly condemns. Mr Kensit was there and protested. He was taken into custody. One cannot but respect his courage, though he seems shockingly irreverent at times.⁹⁵

91 Paz, p. 19.

92 Norman, p. 22.

93 G. I. T. Machin, 'The Last Victorian Anti-Ritualist Campaign, 1895-1906,' Victorian Studies, 25 (1981-1982), p. 277.

94 Ibid., p. 285-290.

95 CSC archives, Journal, 9 April 1898; Machin, 'The Last', p. 286. Machin cites the Guardian, 13 April 1898, 547. While Ayckbown calls the venue of the disturbance St Cuthbert's, Kensington and Machin calls it St Cuthbert's, South Kensington, they are one in the same event.

Her view of Ritualism was obviously different from that of Monsell, yet they were both foundresses of Anglican sisterhoods.

The anti-Catholicism described in this chapter was directed equally at Anglo-Catholics and Roman Catholics. Its concern was that of family authority over the lives of daughters and any property daughters might possess as much as it was concerned with religion. The final authority over the private sphere of women was the family and not either church. Anti-Catholicism played on parental fears for the safety and well-being of their daughters and parental investment in those daughters. Thus it constrained the actions of the foundresses of religious orders and community members. It conflated power and property, the moral and the immoral, under the banner of family and patriotism. Anti-Catholicism was alive and well as the century closed.

SECESSIONS

The mother foundresses were not only constrained by external forces, such as anti-Catholicism, but also by tensions within their own communities. These internal constraints took various forms from unhappy postulants and aggrieved sisters to the actual secession of a number of sisters. Their leaving the community in small numbers caused rumblings, but when they left in large numbers it caused financial as well as organizational hardships.

Such major events challenged the authority of the foundresses and their plans for the work of their community. When one of those who left was second in command to the foundress, she often began a new community in which she assumed the role of mother foundress. Others who defected joined existing communities or, in the case of Anglican sisters, converted to Roman Catholicism. These options were not mutually exclusive, as Anglican sisters seceded from the community of their novitiate, converted to Roman Catholicism, and founded an institute within their new religion.⁹⁶

A survey of Anglican sisterhoods revealed the most frequently stated reasons for sisters leaving: conversion to Roman Catholicism, 36.4%; transfer to another Anglican community, 22.8%; and dismissed from the community, 14.1%. Those who left to found a new order were 2.4%.⁹⁷ Leaving a religious community was not peculiar to Anglican sisterhoods alone. Roman institutes had their share of defections, none, so far as is known, to Anglicanism.⁹⁸ The records of the Taylor's Roman

96 Sisters who seceded from Anglican sisterhoods and founded Roman congregations included Mary Basil from the SSM to the Franciscan Sisters at Mill Hill and Elizabeth Lockhart from CSMV to the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.

97 Mumm, Appendix 11, p. 365. Her database is composed of the populations of thirty-one communities totaling 2204 members. It should be noted that only 1.9% of the sisters left the religious life in order to marry. This option was of major concern to the Anglican clergy.

98 Margaret Anna Cusack is, perhaps, the most well 'travelled' of the nineteenth-century religious. She began her religious life in an Anglican sisterhood, converted to Roman Catholicism, entered the Poor Clares,

congregation reveal 257 sisters clothed between 1869 and 1900. Of these sisters twenty eight left the community. The main reason given was 'vows expired', as the SMG took renewable vows every three years.⁹⁹ The reasons for leaving were not always given on the Profession Roll, but some that were given included 'went to America', 'lost her mind', and 'joined Poor Clares'.¹⁰⁰

The problems of public antagonism faced by Sellon in the early years at Devonport and Plymouth were aggravated by unhappy members of her community. Margaret Goodman, and Margaret Anna Cusack, after they left the Devonport Sisterhood, each wrote a book that depicted the foundress as proud, selfish and tyrannical, as well as expressing their displeasure with her administration.¹⁰¹ Cusack appraised the first superior of the Park Village sisterhood, Emma Langston, as 'a lady of great refinement and goodness', but found her 'wanting in strength of character'. In comparing her with Sellon, she came to the realization that the 'easiest solution of many difficulties' for the superior was to choose 'deliberately' to be a tyrant.¹⁰² Sellon acknowledged that impatience was the only way to get 'small things'

left them to found the Sisters of Peace, and, eventually, left the Roman Church to return to the Church of England.

99 SMG Archives, 'Rule and Constitution of the Congregation of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God, Mary Immaculate', Part II, No. 11, p. 45.

100 SMG Archives, 'Profession Roll'.

101 Margaret Goodman, Experiences of an English Sister of Mercy (London: Smith Elder, 1862); Margaret Anna Cusack, Five Years in a Protestant Sisterhood and Ten Years in a Catholic Convent (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1869).

102 Cusack, The Story of My Life, p. 64.

done quickly.¹⁰³ Goodman was attracted to the Devonport Sisterhood by 'benevolent works' rather than by the 'dedicated life'.¹⁰⁴ She and other Anglicans, trying their vocation in a church experiencing organized religious life for the first time in centuries, failed to understand the difference. Her attacks on Sellon were not as restrained as those of Cusack. She could not understand obeying without questioning. But then, she had not Cusack's experience with Roman congregations in which unquestioned obedience was accepted as a natural part of the religious life. The 'literature' written by these sisters after their departure from her community impeded Sellon, but it did not stop her work.

Brownlow Byron, an Anglican foundress, expressed well the attitude of foundresses to defections: 'You must not fret about Novices leaving. It is a perpetual occurrence in Roman Convents and it must ever be'.¹⁰⁵ She thought it better for the community to have a novice leave than to have a fully professed sister leave. The superior knew only of the progress of the novices from the novice mistress (who had direct daily contact with them), whereas a professed sister would have been given work for which she was responsible to the superior. If, or indeed when, one of the professed sisters left, it presented more of a problem to the foundress and by implication it questioned her judgement and wisdom in

103 PH, Pusey to Wood Letters, no. 17, [1867].

104 Williams, Sellon, p. 135.

105 SAS Archives, 'Letters from the Foundress to Various Sisters,' No. 29.

admitting the sister to full profession. More damaging still were questions it raised about her modus operandi.

Professed sisters did leave communities. Benett admonished her sisters on their behavior after one such sister had 'run off':

I could not remain silent after the great trouble, & I must say--in a manner--disgrace, which has befallen the Society, in the defection, or, as it should be called, the apostasy of Sister Maria. For her own sake it is a comfort to me to know that she would have repented & returned, had I felt able to allow her to do so; but her flight was but the climax to a long series of misconduct...I do beg you during this Advent to examine yourselves...using every means of helping one another on in a higher life, instead of coldly condemning, or criticising or looking on superciliously, if you saw a Sister falling--especially if you are not drawn to that Sister.¹⁰⁶

She extolled them to 'proceed from love', but never again to allow a sister to fall into 'carelessness' and not 'to help her out of it'.¹⁰⁷ From her description of the event, it was evident that she felt the 'apostasy' was preventable. She took measures to prevent it from reoccurring. Benett's own cousin, Sr Ethel Grace, had left the community in 1877. In this case, however, Benett gave her a pension for the rest of her life, as it was a family as well as a community concern.¹⁰⁸

Evidently, to have a sister 'run off', was not an unusual occurrence. Brownlow Byron was asked to clarify

106 SSB Archives, Letter to Sisters at Bournemouth, Advent 1881.

107 Ibid.

108 SSB Archives, Letter from Etheldreda Benett to Mr Hulbert, solicitor, March 13, 1899.

such a situation by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1880. Tait had received a letter from a concerned friend of a woman who had 'run off' requesting that the lady's Bible, a gift from her mother, be returned. He wrote to Brownlow Byron of this incident. She replied that, 'Miss Ashton was a...Lay Sister, not a Lady', and that 'had she left properly' her belongings would have gone with her.¹⁰⁹ She explained how lay sisters had to work for their keep and how this woman had been taken in by the sisters although she was not capable of the work required. Miss Ashton's friend countered that she may have been a 'Lay Sister' but that she was 'a thorough Lady', though 'penniless', for her sister was a 'governess in a good family'.¹¹⁰ In instances such as this, the reflection of the class system can be seen in the sisterhoods. A woman, reduced to penury, had no longer the right to be considered a lady. Indeed, Miss Ashton's flight may, in part, have had to do with her reduced circumstance and the daily reminder of fall from caste by the choir/lay division of the community. Brownlow Byron, although devoted to the sick poor, was a product of the Victorian class system as this evidenced. A defection of this nature was an annoyance as well as a loss to the foundress because it brought her sisterhood under the scrutiny of the archdiocesan, an additional problem she could do without.

109 LPL, Tait Papers, 258ff90-97, July 1880.

110 LPL, Tait Papers, 258ff98-109 August 1880.

The most notable defection from the early sisterhoods was that of Elizabeth Lockhart, co-foundress of CSMV with the Rev W. J. Butler. Manning, still in the Church of England and then Archdeacon of Chichester, was her spiritual advisor when she went to Wantage. She began her religious life as the mother superior there in 1848, but converted to Roman Catholicism two years later after the Gorham Judgement.¹¹¹ Her departure left the new community with only two members. Butler consulted Bishop Wilberforce and then decided to proceed with the sisterhood. It was four years before he named a superior to replace Lockhart. The Wantage Community successfully survived the blow and so did Elizabeth Lockhart. Seven years later, again with Manning, now Monsignor, as her spiritual director, she founded a Third Order Franciscan community, Franciscans of the Immaculate Conception at Bayswater.¹¹²

The secession of a sister with authority was very distressing to the foundress. Few communities were without this experience, as these examples indicate: Sellon's assistant superior and long time friend, Catherine Chambers (1875); Connelly's initial member and branch superior, Emily Bowles (1857); Taylor's ninth member in charge of the Soho work, Margaret Murphy

111 The Gorham Judgement of March 1850, given by the Privy Council, stated that belief in regeneration at baptism was not essential for clergymen in the Church of England. Manning, like many other Anglo-Catholics, interpreted this decision as the State dictating religious tenets to the Church. His conversion followed shortly thereafter in 1851.

112 Anson, Religious, p. 268.

(1888); Gream's sister in charge of East London work, Mary Basil (1868); and Ayckbowm's assistant superior and novice mistress, both long time friends, Ellen Field (1895) and Adelaide Mitchell (1894). These defections had varying repercussions. The less public the nature of their leaving, then the less turmoil that ensued within the community.

Catherine Chambers had been assistant superior to Sellon for almost twenty-eight years when she left to convert to Roman Catholicism and become a choir member of the IBVM.¹¹³ It has been suggested that she left the SMT only after she found out that Sellon intended Sr Bertha Turnbull to succeed her as superior and not Chambers.¹¹⁴ This is probable, but it could also have been a longing on her part for the more assured surroundings of the IBVM the one long established English community (available only in the Roman Church).

Emily Bowles considered herself the co-foundress of the SHCJ. As sister in charge of the Liverpool training college, she involved the institute in debt without proper permission, an act that was not acceptable. During the ensuing disagreement with Connelly and the diocesan, she left the order. Although she petitioned to return, Connelly would not allow it. Bowles had put a

113 Williams, Sellon, p. 234; IBVM Archives, Profession Roll. A photograph of Chambers hangs in the Bar Convent Museum, York, as she wrote a history of the IBVM.

114 Williams, Sellon, p. 248.

bad light on the methods of her congregation though her financial indiscretion.¹¹⁵

When Murphy wrote to Taylor that she was about to depart her institute, she had been with the SMG for eighteen years. She was 'Sister in Charge' of the Refuge of Our Lady of Pity, Percy Street, in 1887.¹¹⁶ Based there, she saw the need for another community to extend the work. Manning, now Cardinal, agreed with her assessment of the situation and encouraged her decision.¹¹⁷ Her departure in 1888 came as a shock to Taylor, who esteemed Murphy as one of the strong, dependable sisters in her congregation. Father Dignam tried to reassure Taylor, 'You would be very, very wrong to let your present immense difficulties abate your confidence'.¹¹⁸ Devas, in his history of Taylor's life, gave a plausible explanation for defectors who, like Murphy, went on to found other institutions:

The grievance--old as religious life--was one that not even Mother Magdalen could remove: the growing realization of one's own power and ability, the conviction that one is not appreciated as one should be, that one could do better work for God under other circumstances with greater freedom, that one is called rather to lead than to be led....¹¹⁹

115 Flaxman, pp. 209-228. The dispute over the debt and the community's liability led to six years of conflict.

116 SMG Archives, 'Institute of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God and Servants of the Poor, Catalogue for 1887', p. 5.

117 Jeanette Clare McDonnell, The Franciscan Sisters Minoress: Response in Faith 1888-1988 (n.p.:privately printed, n.d. [1988], p. 10.

118 Devas, p. 275.

119 Ibid.

Margaret Murphy became Mother Francis Murphy, foundress of the Franciscan Sisters Minorees in 1888. She took two, or possibly three sisters with her.¹²⁰ Taylor waited for more to follow, but none did. The work of the SMG went on in Soho with other sisters in charge. But such events did threaten the confidence needed by the foundress to proceed from day to day.

Gream, co-foundress of SSM, had a more devastating defection in 1868. Sr Mary Basil, together with another sister, had begun a mission in Soho in 1858. By 1866 Basil became the first mother superior of St Mary's Priory, Hackney. Two years later she 'left with most of her Sisters and Novices to go over to Rome'.¹²¹ Some attribute this to the conversion of R. Tuke, rector of St John's, Hackney, their spiritual advisor, just prior to the secession.¹²² Sr Mary of the SSM became Mother Mary Francis Basil, foundress and first abbess of the Franciscan Third Order Congregation of the Five Wounds. The five original members of this new institute had all been Anglican sisters.¹²³ The SSM continued its work with Sr Kate Warburton, later Mother Kate of S Saviour's Priory. For a time, the new and the old communities existed side by side in East London.¹²⁴ This situation was not all that different from individuals severing a

120 McDonnell, p. 11.

121 SSM Archives, Profession Card.

122 Anson, Call, p. 348.

123 Anson, Religious, p. 269; Ibid. By the 1960s, Basil's order were more numerous than the SSM.

124 [Katherine Warburton] Mother Kate, Old Soho Days and other Memories (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1906), p. 60-65.

close relationship and remaining in the same neighbourhood. The tensions grow until one or the other moves on. The new Franciscan order moved to Mill Hill.

The direction of several of these secessions reflects the resurgence of interest in the Franciscan way of life (in the latter half of the century). This was evidenced by the foundations of Lockhart, Murphy, Basil and others. Alice Ingham, Mother Mary Francis Ingham, founded an English order of Franciscan Missionaries of St Joseph in 1883.¹²⁵ O'Brien suggests that in Franciscan spirituality 'dislike of hierarchy and bureaucracy were closely connected'.¹²⁶ This may well be one reason for its popularity among the new orders of women religious, many of them founded by Anglican converts.

Professed sisters leaving Ayckbowm's community were not new to her. She recorded in her Journal in December 1886:

Sr Bertha's Habit, ring and cross were returned today without a word to explain her conduct. We therefore see she deliberately means to leave the Community. She's evidently quite unfit for the R. L. [Religious Life].¹²⁷

Earlier she expressed her view of such a departure:

I never could regret the departure of half-hearted people, but looked upon it as God's good providence towards the community, relieving us of those who might become terrible trouble as they grew older.¹²⁸

125 Susan O'Brien, 'Lay-sisters and Good Mothers: Working-class Women in English Convents, 1840-1910', in Women in the Church: Studies in Church History, 27, ed. by W. J. Shiels and Diana Wood (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), pp. 453-466.

126 Ibid., p. 462.

29 CSC Archives, Journal, 30 December 1886.

128 Ibid., 21 December 1886.

But Sr Bertha's leave taking could not have prepared her for the disruptions of 1894 and 1895. After the death of Sr Elizabeth Mitchell, her sister, Sr Adelaide Mitchell led the secession of nine sisters and three novices. She founded the Community of the Ascension in Mayfair, with the approval of Bishop Frederick Temple. She thought the CSC sisters overworked and with no regular council meetings in which to express their grievance. Both the CSC and the new community accused each other of wanting more 'Romish' practices. The seceders saw the original community as wanting more 'advanced services and ritual', while the parent community spoke of the Roman 'proclivities' of those who left.¹²⁹ The following year Sr Ellen Field left taking six sisters with her. She, too, founded a community with the approval of the Bishop of London--the Community of St Michael and All Angels, at Hammersmith. Her reasons for leaving were 'unclear' to the CSC.¹³⁰ Devas' hypothesis, stated previously, might well apply to Field. She had been Ayckbowm's assistant for twenty-five years and might well have thought that she 'could do better work for God under other circumstances, with greater freedom'. She was getting on in age and if she were ever to stand alone the time had presented itself. Field also took with her several of the patronesses. All these difficulties must have weighed heavily on Ayckbowm. Unfortunately, her thoughts

129 CSC Archives, Troubles Journal, p. 43; Valiant, pp. 148-149.

130 Valiant, p. 149.

on these years have not survived.¹³¹ She had grown in the religious life with Sr Ellen and Sr Adelaide. Ayckbown was reported to have said that 'if Sr Elizabeth [Sr Adelaide's sister] had lived, many difficulties in the community would never have taken place'.¹³² Ayckbown was no hand-wringer; she was a realist. She began to restructure her community. At the time of Mitchell's and Field's departures, there were one hundred professed sisters and forty novices in the CSC.¹³³ The loss of the sisters and the patronesses called for redeployment of the existing sisters. Reduced funding was also an issue. Expansion in the United States was curtailed.¹³⁴ The financial loss, however, was aggravated by the press. The English Churchman, in a column entitled 'The Protestant Alliance', called the event 'a very large secession of the wealthier Sisters'.¹³⁵ While the 'Radical' Henry Labouchere's Truth called for the public to 'withhold their support'.¹³⁶ These events coincided with the archbishop's displeasure with Ayckbown's foundling home.¹³⁷ It took Ayckbown several years to regain the backing she had received prior to the secessions, but she did begin the rebuilding with the support of the remaining sisters before her death.

131 CSC Archives, Journal. Pages for the years involved were removed by some well-meaning sister, sometime in the past, who thought it an appropriate measure to take.

132 Valiant, p. 148.

133 Ibid.

134 See chapter 7, 'Expansion'.

135 The English Churchman, May 23, 1895.

136 Truth, June 1896.

137 The problems with the archbishop over the foundling home are discussed in chapter 6.

No matter how unsettling these occurrences could be, all the mother foundresses persevered. In a way, it was a tribute to the skills of the foundresses that secessions did not signal the end of their work. Indeed, the work with the poor grew from the proliferation of communities. The women who left to found new communities, were women the foundresses had trained. While their departures were experienced as a constraint (and at the time a betrayal) in the short term, they were overcome in that in all cases the foundress retained the position of superior. Departure did not once result in deposition or abdication.

Chapter 5

GOOD WORKS I: NURSING AND EDUCATION

The mother foundresses were committed to nursing and education as a part of their mission to the poor. They entered the field of nursing at precisely the time that nursing was changing. Epidemics of cholera, typhus and smallpox witnessed their involvement as nurses, but it was the Crimean War that was to test their skills and gain acceptance for them with the public. Florence Nightingale used their services in Scutari and Koulali hospitals as she envisioned the need for trained nurses. During this period of change the sisters influenced the coming professionalization of nursing and were in turn influenced by it. It was no longer sufficient for a lady to donate to the sick her 'tenderness, sympathy, goodness, and patience'.¹ If women were to be nurses they would have to be trained in medical knowledge and clinical procedure. During the second half of the century the women religious went from being trained as nurses to giving nurses' training to secular women. Prominent nursing communities moved from ward nursing to the administration of hospitals. By 1900, much, but not all, of their work had been given over to secular nurses and the administration returned to doctors and other personnel. Thus, from 1845 to 1900 the mother foundresses had influenced changes in nursing and been influenced by those changes. Throughout this period the

1 Woodham-Smith, p. 48.

mother foundresses were constrained in their efforts by conflicts with the authority of the doctors, clerical imposed qualifications for the religion of patients, and, initially, the suspicion of the poor themselves.

A similar theme can be found in their involvement in education during the same period. It was socially acceptable for ladies to be involved in teaching in the ragged schools for the poor.² The foundresses entered teaching as education in England was moving from a voluntary system towards a compulsory system. As laws regarding the training of teachers came into existence they sent their sisters to obtain teaching certificates, while they became school administrators. When the Education Act of 1870 was passed they fought for the retention of state funding for voluntary schools; they met professional standards for their teachers; and, they gave support to women teachers striving for professional status. In education the foundresses were constrained by school inspectors, Protestant interest groups, and government legislation. Constraints experienced by the foundresses in both nursing and education in England were not experienced by them abroad. There the proven

2 Davidoff and Hall, p. 171. Hannah More had argued in the first third of the century that a lady's proper calling was care of the poor and education of the poor was a proper extension of that calling; Frank K. Prochaska, Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 5-11; Carol Dyhouse, 'The Domestic Ideology and Women's Education', in The Nineteenth-Century Woman (London: Croom Helm, 1978), ed. by Sarah Delamont and Lorna Duffin, pp. 164-187.

ability of the nursing and education communities was welcomed by diocesans who needed their help with native populations.

NURSING

The history of improved nursing in England was intertwined with Florence Nightingale and the Crimean War. The acceptance of women religious was likewise connected with their role in nursing during that war. Until the mid-nineteenth-century any woman was thought capable of being a nurse.³ Working-class women who nursed the sick for pay were often thought of as the 'Sairy Gamp' type--immoral and drunkards--after Dickens' depiction in Martin Chuzzlewit.⁴ Payment for services was an important issue. Ladies volunteered their work. They were not concerned with remuneration, but purely with good works.⁵ This social concept proved to be a

3 Woodham-Smith, Nightingale 'realized the necessity of training in nursing' in 1845. This 'discovery' came as a shock to her for it 'was universally assumed that the only qualification needed for taking care of the sick was being a woman'.

4 Anne Summers, 'Ministering Angels', in Victorian Values: Personalities and Perspectives in Nineteenth-Century Society, ed. by Gordon Marsden (London: Longman, 1990), p. 126. Summers calls this a 'savage caricature' and untrue of most lower-class women who nursed the sick, but this was the public concept of a nurse at the time.

5 Josephine Kamm, Hope Deferred: Girls Education in English History (London, 1965), pp. 170-173, as cited in M. Jeanne Peterson, 'The Victorian Governess: Status Incongruence in Family and Society', in Suffer and Be Still, ed. by Martha Vicinus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p. 5. For a lady to earn wages was 'considered mean and illiberal' as wages 'belonged to a class beneath them in social rank'.

constraint on the professionalization of nursing and on the actions of the religious orders.

Nightingale sought nurse training for herself in Germany with Theodore Fliedner's Kaiserswerth deaconesses, where she studied their nursing methods.⁶ When the call went out for women to assist with nursing in the Crimean War she was ready. Ready, too, were the women religious, who had dealt with epidemics of cholera and typhus at home and obtained training at local hospitals. The Anglican Devonport and Plymouth Sisterhood (SHT) and the Park Village West Sisterhood (SHC) sent eight sisters; St John's House, a Church of England institute of nurses, sent six nurses; and the Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy, Bermondsey, and the Daughters of the Faithful Virgin, Norwood, sent fifteen sisters. Woodham-Smith states that 'of the thirty-eight nurses, twenty-four were either professed nuns or Anglican sisters'. The remaining fourteen, the hospital nurses, 'were...of no particular religion unless the worship of Bacchus should be revived'.⁷ For Nightingale's tastes the hospital nurses were too concerned with the bodies of their patients and the sisters too concerned with their souls.⁸ Yet when

6 Woodham-Smith, pp. 71-72. The Lutheran pastor Theodore Fliedner and his wife began the Kaiserswerth Institution in 1833. Kaiserswerth included a hospital, orphanage, penitentiary, and a training school for school mistresses. The deaconesses, mostly peasants, lived 'a Spartan life' in a Protestant religious atmosphere.

7 Ibid., p. 107.

8 Mary McAuley Gilgannon, 'The Sisters of Mercy as Crimean War Nurses'. (Ph.D. thesis, University of Notre Dame, 1962), passim. This well documented work balances Woodham-Smith's view of the Roman Catholic nuns from Nightingale's perspective with the nuns' first hand experiences with Miss Nightingale.

the war ended the Sellonite sisters, those 'ancient dames in black serge' had proved to be 'among the best of her nurses'.⁹

The composition of the second contingent of nurses sent to the war zone, the Mary Stanley party, was described by Frances Hoare in a letter to Etheldreda Benett. Hoare met the Stanley group when they stopped in Paris en route. There were eleven ladies, fifteen sisters of mercy, seventeen nurses, and four cooks. She asked Miss Taylor about her training and related:

Miss T. had been refreshing her knowledge of sickness by seeing some wounds dressed, & an operation, but the surgeon told her, that after knowing the ordinary process of washing & dressing common sores & wounds, one week at Scutari would teach her more than she could learn in England, where there are no gunshot & lance wounds.¹⁰

Taylor, one of the lady nurses of this expedition, had nursed cholera victims for the Devonport Sisterhood in 1849. (The same epidemic that traversed the country and nearly took the life of W. M. Thackeray in London.)¹¹ Taylor became Mother Mary Magdalen of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God in 1870. When she returned from the war she wrote of her experiences in Eastern Hospitals and English Nurses (1857). In it she concluded:

The employment of ladies in this work has been strongly recommended. It can be done rightly

9 Woodham-Smith, p. 254; Vicinus, p. 89. Vicinus points out that when the sisters and nurses volunteered for the Crimean War 'the Evangelicals refused to send anyone'.

10 SSB archives, Letter from the Hon. Frances Hoare to Etheldreda Benett, n.d. [December 1854].

11 Winifred Gerin, Anne Thackeray Ritchie: A Biography (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 40.

only by those who can go through long years of preparation....It cannot be performed by ladies possessing home ties and duties."¹²

Just as Nightingale called nursing a 'vocation' and thought of forming lay communities of women nurses¹³, Taylor foresaw the need for expert training and the suitability of women unencumbered by family responsibilities for the task. She went on to plead for the 'tone of nurses' to be raised and saw an 'unencumbered' approach as the best means of so doing.

The raising of the tone of nurses was one of the matters Brownlow Byron had in mind when she founded the SAS in 1851. She had undergone training at Kings College Hospital, London, 'in the disused workhouse of St Clement Danes in Portugal Street' in 1845. As a lady, 'she probably benefited from special training by the doctors'.¹⁴ She taught her sisters how to dress and bandage the wounds brought to their dispensary in Margaret Street. 'She always used forceps rather than her fingers...[because] of the danger of hospital gangrene'.¹⁵ By 1860 her sisters were asked to nurse in two wards of University College Hospital. The hospital wanted responsible ladies with strong principles, high standards of nursing and a group that could augment its numbers in time of emergency.¹⁶ Eventually, the SAS

12 [Fanny Margaret Taylor], English Hospitals and English Nurses: The Narrative of Twelve Months Experience in the Hospitals of Koulali and Scutari, 2 Vols (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1856), p. 355.

13 Vicinus, Independent, p. 89.

14 Mayhew, p. 28.

15 Ibid., p. 34.

16 Ibid., p. 108.

became responsible for the entire hospital nursing staff. This was understandable when the 'nurses' they replaced were discharged for drunkenness, mistreating patients, selling morphine to patients, and stealing sheets, blankets, tables and chairs.¹⁷ Although the SAS was not involved ⁱⁿ the Crimean War nursing, they did send nurses to the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. Sister Catherine recalled:

We had the wounded in different Chateau's belonging to the German Army. The Emperor of Germany sent an iron cross for the Mother of the Sisters of All Saints as an acknowledgement of their services.¹⁸

It was through the foundresses' involvement in war nursing that they received public approval and that improved secular nursing at home grew in importance.

Throughout the 'pioneer age' of nursing the mother superiors became active in varying aspects of the field. The Anglican sisterhoods were involved in nursing apart from battle scenes and away from London. The SSM provided nursing for the poor of Sussex. John Mason Neale, co-founder of the SSM, arranged in 1855 for the sisters to have two months of training at Westminster Hospital' as preliminary to going into cottages to

17 E. Davenhall, UCH Matrons (London: Faber and Faber, 1983), p. 35.

18 SAS archives, 'Recollections of an Old Woman', pp. 12-13. Whether the "iron cross" is fact or fancy cannot be verified in the records of the SAS, but they do have photographs of Mother 'Brownie' and the sisters at Epernay.

nurse'.¹⁹ Gream, co-foundress of the SSM, prepared her sisters to be dependent on the hospitality of their patients. She was the daughter of a clergyman and accustomed to parochial work. One of her sisters described her as having 'a special, old world dignity'.²⁰ Gream's sisters might have to sleep in a loft or in a neighbouring house. Their food was usually whatever was at hand. 'Come in Miss; you can have your tea; pig has had his supper'.²¹ The priority of the household came first. Requests for their nursing were so numerous that formal application had to be made. The applicant, usually a clergyman who agreed to their working in his parish, had to state: what was the specific need; how long they were needed; and where they would lodge. He was responsible for their safety while they were there. The sisters were to see to the medical needs of the family, but the clergyman was to provide for any other needs. Friends of a sick woman once requested their help by telegram. When the sister, 'a lady by birth and education' arrived, the clergyman was alarmed over her 'high church tendencies'. The husband of the woman said she would have to leave or he would lose his job. The Church Times accused the clergyman of instigating the opposition,²² which he may have done. There was great

19 'Doing the Impossible: A Short Historical Sketch of St. Margaret's Convent, East Grinstead, 1855-1980,' p. 9. Later the sisters went on to other hospitals to train.

20 Old Soho, p. 176.

21 'Doing', p. 10.

22 Ibid., pp. 11-13.

strength of feeling when it came to the Romish sisterhoods.

The arrival of the railway in East Grinstead on July 9, 1855 gave the sisters speedy access to their many calls for help.²³ Two sisters were sent to nurse 200 scarlet fever victims in Hertfordshire and another pair of sisters were sent to nurse 120 scarlet fever victims in Lincolnshire in 1863. Better nursing by the sisters caused a conflict for them between their 'normal' religious life in community and the isolation imposed by travelling to the scene of outbreaks of disease. It was only after the scarlet fever experience that the SSM ventured into the realm of hospitals. 'For nearly two years the Sisters were responsible for Hampstead Hospital during an epidemic of smallpox'.²⁴ In 1873 they were asked to take over the Boston Children's Hospital in the United States. The hospital was begun by Unitarians, but the board asked the SSM to reorganize its internal workings. The sisters did so to the satisfaction of all parties. Beginning with three English sisters sent by Mother Alice, the work continued with American women who later joined the new foundation.²⁵

The mother foundresses worked together in times of epidemics. While the SSM was busy with the cottagers, the SHT was engaged in fighting disease in London. A report 'Miss Sellon's Sisters' to the Archbishop of Canterbury described their work:

23 Ibid., p. 11.

24 Ibid., p. 28.

25 Ibid., pp. 38-9.

In August Fever, chiefly Typhus, broke out. The Sisters nursed, fed, cleaned, and ventilated the rooms of those too ill to be moved, and at last the Fever Hospital declined taking more patients.

The Sisters had one week in these thickly populated streets seven cases...and to prevent the further spread of disease they at considerable expense white washed, ventilated, and cleaned their rooms, and after burning their wretched bedding, enough of itself to produce pestilence, they gave them good mattresses and kept an eye upon their patients till they were comparatively restored to health. [The] skill of the Doctor...foiled by inadequate nourishment necessary for convalescence.²⁶

This report was a plea for funding from the archdiocese. Whether successful or not, it vividly described the conditions under which the sisters nursed. More graphic still were the words of Mother Kate Warburton, S Savior's Priory, about the conditions under which her sisters lived in the East End in 1866:

...there were certain Sisters of S Margaret's living a place called S Saviour's Priory, in the wilds of Haggerston and their house was mightily besieged with rats. Brigades of rats tramped up and down the stairs nightly; companies of rats invaded the slender larder and carried off cheese and other comestibles; more aspiring rats gnawed through lead pipes and drain pipes, thereby endangering, not only the comfort of the Sisters, but the safety of the building. Rats raced, and scampered, and shrieked, and squeaked behind the wainscot, and rats dying under the floors threatened the house with attacks of typhoid.²⁷

Prior to giving her neighbours help in sickness, Warburton had been 'pelted down the row with somewhat decayed fish'.²⁸ She was deeply concerned for the health

26 LPL, Tait 124 ff 155 a-e.

27 S Saviour's, p. 197. S Saviour's was an affiliated house of SSM.

28 Old Soho, p. 29.

of these people and vividly described the 'dirt which might be smelt, touched and inhaled, and from which there was no possibility of escape'.²⁹ Her reception had not lessened her commitment.

Together with the SHT, the sisters of S Saviours¹ nursed the poor in the cholera epidemic of 1866. Sellon had a temporary cholera hospital on Commercial Street in Spitalfields with which Warburton's sisters assisted. They worked together again in 1870 when smallpox^o invaded the same area. In February, March, and April of that year there were 491, 462, and 262 cases, respectively, in London. The sisters laid out the dead and burned clothing and bedding. Warburton tells of an undertaker who came to collect two dead children, but there were four children in the bed and he could not see which were alive and which were dead their bodies were 'so intermingled'. People passed by on the other side of the road from the temporary hospital. Twice a week ambulances took those recovering from the disease to the Sisters of St Michael's home at Ringe and to the Society of the Most Holy Trinity's home at Ascot. The Sisters of S Saviours¹ were responsible for assigning the convalescents. The sanitary committee of Haggerston was criticized for using sisters in this work. Once the critics heard that their work was voluntary, however, the sisters became 'brave, true Christian women'.³⁰

29 Ibid., p. 3.

30 Ibid., pp. 30-41.

Administration was another aspect of the nursing work of the mother foundress. Sellon was not a trained nurse, but she was a capable executive. She told her side of that epidemic.

I am at the East End--where we have a large staff of nurses to supplement the efforts of the Metropolitan Asylum Board until the tent hospitals are ready. [The] death rate is rising--and new suburbs are partially affected. [A] tent hospital for Convalescents now erecting at Ascot...some difficulties to be got over.³¹

Her concern was administrative. The 'difficulty' she refers to was the availability of water for the hospital at Ascot. This problem was overcome, but Sellon thought there had to be a better way of dealing with the epidemic. She wrote to Wood in March:

I am anxious that the sphere of operations of the committee should be enlarged...the health of London demands it. The epidemic has greatly and rapidly increased during the past weeks.³²

She asked Wood to attend a private meeting at Cannon Street Station Hotel to discuss the possibility of merging their effort with others into a metropolitan committee. Sellon exhorted him to exert 'all human means to deliver London from the calamity which is spreading' because 'public attention is not sufficiently arrested'. It would be 'highly advisable' to divest themselves of their private enterprise and work with others to stop 'so rapidly increasing evil'.³³ She checked with the Poor

31 PH, Pusey to C.L. Wood Volume I, 1866-1874. Letter from P.L.S. to C.L. Wood, Feb. 25 [1870].

32 Ibid., March [1870].

33 Ibid.

Law Board to make sure there would be no difficulties in combining efforts. She also appealed for clothing for the 60 to 80 men, women and children convalescents who went to Ascot each week of the smallpox epidemic. Her sisters were not trained nurses, but the combination of the fresh air of Ascot, the cleanliness of the hospital, the newer clothing, and the regularity of food gave the refugees from the East End a chance of survival. Sellon reported to Wood that the recovering patients 'say it was almost worth having the small pox [sic] to have such an enjoyable holiday in the country afterwards'.³⁴

Jerrold's description of London tends to lend credence to this remark:

This bare earnestness of everything, this colossal sameness, this machine-like movement, this moroseness of joy itself, this exaggerated London, oppresses the imagination and rends the heart in twain...multitudes elbowing, scrambling, grinding their hearts to powder for their daily bread.³⁵

There seems to be no connection between the cholera epidemic of 1866 and the building of St Andrew's Convalescent Hospital at Clewer that same year. St Andrew's was a 'purpose built' hospital, planned by Monsell, to take cases discharged from the Brompton Chest Hospital. She toured existing hospitals to come up with the best specifications.³⁶ Because of its ultimate success, she was asked to take over St Lucy's Hospital

34 Ibid.

35 Blanchard Jerrold and Gustav Dore, London: A Pilgrimage (London: n.p., 1872), pp. 41-2.

36 Bonham, Joyous, p. 30.

for Children in Gloucester. But she would not go blindly into an existing situation until it was determined who was to raise the money for the hospital and who was to maintain the building. Only then would she agree to the Clewer Sisters taking on this added responsibility.³⁷ Monsell, like Sellon, was a able administrator and fund raiser, especially when it came to hospitals. Her diplomacy was evident in correspondence with Archbishop Tait. When planning a convalescent hospital for Folkestone, she wrote, 'I send you the first prospectus of our new hospital'.³⁸ Through such discreet comments, her works rarely lacked support.

One of the foremost nursing societies among the Anglican sisterhoods did not begin as a religious community.³⁹ The Training Institution for Nurses founded in 1848, under the presidency of the diocesan bishop, was formed by a group of men including the duke of Cambridge, the earl of Harrowby and the bishops of London, Salisbury and Norwich. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York approved. All this approval came from the fact that it was not to be a sisterhood--no vows. The nurses were to be under a resident 'Master', the incumbent of St John the Evangelist, who took his meals with the superior and

37 Bonham, Place, pp. 257-61.

38 LPL, Tait Papers 94 ff 86-7.

39 Only a short summary of the work of St John's House is offered here because it did not begin as a religious community. For their history, see The Community of the Nursing Sisters of St John the Divine, 1848-1948 and R. Few, 'An History of St John's House...with a Full Account of the Circumstances which led to the Withdrawal Therefrom of the Entire Sisterhood' (London: W. Skeffington, 1884).

the inmates. Initially the nurses were trained at Middlesex Hospital, later at Westminster Hospital. They lived in St John's House. Six of their nursing sisters and twenty of the nurses trained by them went to Scutari with Nightingale. In 1857 they took charge of Kings College Hospital and maintained a training school for nurses. They engaged in maternity work in 1866. Ten years later they established St John's Midwifery Training Home in Chelsea, the first one of its kind in England.

Their first superior resigned because of the continual interference of the 'Master'. The second superior went along with the council and the lay authorities of the hospitals. The outlook for the institution changed when Caroline Lloyd became superior in 1870. Under her direction the sisters withdrew from Kings College, started a hospital in Bloomsbury and St Gabriel's Hospital for Infants in Pimlico--also the first of its kind in London--and continued the maternity hospital in Chelsea. She saw them as an independent body and recognised the need for a spiritual life to underpin their nursing. The Institute's council did not agree with her thinking. Constrained by her council from espousing the strength that the religious life offered for her work (a tension centuries old), she broke from their control. Ayckbown well understood this constraint and noted in her Journal on April 11, 1883:

Having read in the Guardian that the S John's Sisters are in much trouble with their extraordinary council, I remembered I had long promised the Superior a visit to explain how we managed to govern without aid from men. I

resolved to turn it now into a visit of sympathy, and went from the Docks straight to Norfolk St., Strand. Saw the Superior, rather a stiff old lady, evidently turning out and packing up--looked terribly pale and worn.⁴⁰

Lloyd did pack up. She left St John's House, moved to Chelsea and renamed the institute the 'Community of the Nursing Sisters of St John the Divine'. The new constitution invested 'the sole management and government in the hands of the Sister Superior' and the senior sisters of the chapter. After thirty years it had evolved into a religious community.⁴¹

The St John's Sisters had their Roman counterpart in Potter's Little Company of Mary. It became the first Roman Catholic order since the Reformation to be founded to nurse the sick in England. In 1877 their convent became an unofficial first aid station in Hysom Green. The sisters were trained by the local doctor.⁴² By 1900 Potter had set up three year training courses for nurses at Lewisham, Limerick and Adelaide.⁴³ These twenty-three years of development towards professional status were not without incident. Although the main dedication of the 'Blue Nuns' was to the dying, Bishop Bagshawe asked Potter to nurse maternity cases in Nottingham. Once Cardinal Manning heard of this he told her to stop. Potter, agreeing with Bagshawe in the need for such nursing, formed 'Our Lady's Nurses'. They were lay women who worked in conjunction with the LCM. To overcome the

40 CSC archives, Mother Emily's Journal, April 11, 1883.

41 Anson, Call, pp. 280-283.

42 Dougherty, p. 126.

43 Ibid., p. 232.

episcopate's objections she reminded the prelates of Mary going to assist Elizabeth in her confinement. Cardinal Gualdi, SCP, said she had chosen the right words and that she should ask that the sisters be allowed to do 'confinement nursing'. The ruling came back from Rome in 1886:

...at those cases, such as child-birth, capable of arousing the imagination and exposing modesty to danger sisters were forbidden, except in cases of indispensable and extreme necessity and only when prudent measures were taken.⁴⁴

Thus it appears that the episcopate was primarily concerned with protecting the modesty of nursing sisters attending maternity cases. Potter interpreted the ruling as meaning 'the moment of child-birth' and that what was not forbidden was pre-natal and post-natal care. The time between pre and post was given to 'Our Ladies Nurses'. In 1903 priests refused to send postulants to communities engaging in maternity cases. Again Potter asked for a ruling. It came two years later stating that maternity cases were allowed 'provided' more mature sisters were sent. This ruling was for the LCM alone, as they were considered an exception and other communities were not encouraged to follow their example.⁴⁵ Though Potter, and other foundresses, recognised the need for trained nurses in maternity cases, she constantly had to battle with ecclesiastical authorities for the right to proceed.

44 Ibid., p. 237.

45 Ibid., p. 238-9.

There is no record that Taylor (SMG) was aware of Potter's work. She knew of the work of most Roman communities and especially those with close Jesuit ties--which Potter did not have. As Taylor had nursed with SHT in Devonport in 1849 and as a 'lady volunteer' in the Crimea, she had a background in this area. When she founded the SMG it was for work with the poor, not necessarily the sick poor. Yet Fr Dignam's call for help with the plight of the people in St Helens, Lancashire, did not go unheeded. He described the growing town of glass works, chemical works, and coal mines:

The town is spotted over with great wastes and cinder heaps, and refuse chemicals. The air is charged with sulfur and other strange things, so that when you get up on a wet morning you find the sheets coated with blue slime. Clean hands are a thing you give up. The children burrow for cinders, while they are still smoking....⁴⁶

Dignam's provincial, Fr Cardwell, had applied several times for the SMG to come to St Helens. The Bishop refused saying there were enough nuns (Sisters of Notre Dame) in his diocese. Taylor went to see the Bishop twice before he granted permission for her congregation to work there.⁴⁷ She telegraphed four sisters to come at once. Looking over the situation she saw the need for a free hospital. Her sisters needed to be trained in nursing. She obtained the backing of Lady Georgiana and Cardinal Manning before she wrote to Mr Wegg-Prasser,

46 Devas, p. 207.

47 Ibid., p. 214.

administrator of St George's Hospital, London. In her letter, dated December 22, 1882, she described St Helens as having a population of 60,000 people, mostly working-class. They had no hospital only a Protestant cottage hospital for men where they had to pay for admission. 'The field is open for Catholics in a very special way, but will not remain so, as the need is great'. She went on:

But the great, pressing need is Hospital training. We do not want nursing inferior to that of Protestant hospitals and only knowledge and experience of one of our large hospitals can afford this training.⁴⁸

And she closed by asking for his 'valuable help'. Her sisters were trained at St George's Hospital, London. Taylor's description of the need for Roman Catholic representation in the hospital field in a largely Protestant community underscored the ancient religious fear of losing their members 'at the moment of death'. While she insisted on superior care for patients, she also made it understood that people in her hospital need not be Roman Catholics in order to receive treatment. The public was accustomed to religious groups helping their own and no one else. She was constrained by public attitudes as she fought to eliminate this dichotomy.

By December of 1883 in the hospital at St Helens she had opened wards for women and children; wards for men were added in November of the next year. She made it clear that 'no payment should be exacted from the poor'

⁴⁸ SMG archives, Volume 3A, Letter from Mother Magdalen to Mr Wegg-Prasser, December 22, 1882.

and 'no distinction' would be made 'as regards religion'.⁴⁹ Between 1883 and 1884 'Holy Cross Hospital' became Providence Hospital. Protestant resistance was growing to the hospital.⁵⁰ The new local vicar was encouraging his communicants to stay away. This called for bold action on Taylor's part. She immediately made plans to build a new wing and have a member of European royalty lay the stone. Her move attracted backers; the opposition was overcome. Later, she warned the sister-in-charge not to be in a hurry 'to fill the Hospital and above all be careful not to take any chronic cases'.⁵¹ The hospital was for acute care and she did not want its funds depleted by long term patients. Her approach differed from that of Brownlow Byron and the SAS when they took over a hospital for incurables in Oxford in 1880.

The National Hospital for Incurables at Cowley St John, Oxford, was the failed project of Fr Benson. His concept of the hospital was one 'strictly Church of England' in which patients could be denied access if thought to be 'unfit through previous immorality of any kind'. His thinking reflected the constraint faced by Taylor in St Helens. The National Hospital was begun in

49 Ibid., Letter 'Appeal to the Gentlemen of St. Helen's about the Hospital', n.d.

50 There is disagreement over the 'Protestant opposition' in the biographies of Taylor. According to Devas, it was growing, but according to Campion, 'The Protestants are getting more and more friendly'. Campion cites the Annals of the congregation as her source. Mary Campion Troughton, Life of Mother Foundress (London: privately printed, 1969), p. 169.

51 Ibid., Letter to 'Dear Child'.

1869 and housed only six patients in one small building by 1874. By 1879 it was temporarily closed. Brownlow Byron came to Benson's rescue. She took over the administration of the hospital for a ten year period. At the end of seven years the council transferred the property to the SAS in perpetuity. She changed the requirement for admission to 'female patients either incurable or requiring long periods of treatment'.⁵² She, like Taylor, 'blurred' the religious requirement of admission. The mother foundresses addressed specific needs when running or building a hospital.

For the SAS, re-organization became a strong segment of their nursing operation. Brownlow Byron's Sr Helen, who had worked in the Chorlton Workhouse Hospital, Manchester, and with the foundress in the Franco-Prussian War, headed the contingent of sisters that established a branch house in Baltimore. Upon arrival in America Sr Helen was called to Bellevue Hospital in New York to improve its nursing structure. The Baltimore clergy involved with the branch house refused to let her go to New York calling her 'disobedient', but Brownlow Byron approved her project. Sr Helen remained at Bellevue for three years until Brownlow Byron called her to set up the Cape Town Hospital in Africa.⁵³ After the death of the foundress the hospital work continued. The SAS set up a Nursing School for Anglo-Indian women in Poona, India in 1890. Nurses from this school took over from Indian

52 Mayhew, p. 133.

53 Ibid., p. 139. Sr Helen nursed in the front lines during the Boer War.

ward-boys who looked after the men and ayahs who looked after the women. They had first been asked to administer St George's Hospital for Europeans, 1884, and later took on a three hospital compound that included Jamsetji Jejibhai Hospital, Bai Moltibai Maternity hospital and Dinshaw Petit Hospital for Women and Children. The sisters had won the trust of the Hindu women and these three hospitals served the native population.⁵⁴

At the end of the century, a number of the communities were involved as nurses in the Boer War. Ayckbowm and Taylor were concerned with the war news. Taylor, who had experienced war first hand in Turkey, now had a hospital she could, and did, offer to the Secretary for War for the treatment of returning wounded soldiers.⁵⁵ She had heard from her former confessor, who had just returned from Africa, that 'our people really have far under-estimated the difficulties. I expect it will be a long and terrible war'.⁵⁶ Ayckbowm sent five sisters to nurse in the military hospital at Pietermaritzburg. One of their number, Sr Theresa, a novice and a trained nurse, instructed the others on the voyage to the Cape. They were joined there by Sr May who had requested to leave Burma and go to South Africa as two of her brothers were in the army there.⁵⁷ Mary Kingsley, the noted West African traveller and defender

54 Ibid., p. 169.

55 SMG archives, Vol. C, January 1900; Devas, p. 337.

56 Ibid.; Devas, p. 338.

57 Valiant, pp. 202-203. Both brothers of Sr May were killed; one died at Spion Kop and the other at Ladysmith.

of African culture, described conditions in one of the war hospitals and her reaction to it:

All this work here, the stench, the washing, the enemas, the bed pans, the blood, is my world, not London Society, politics, that gallery into which I so strangely wandered-- into which I don't care a hairpin if I never wander again.⁵⁸

She, too, expressed the desire of women for useful work no matter what the circumstance. Mary Kingsley died of typhoid fever three months after her arrival at the front; Sr Theresa died of dysentery four months after her arrival. Before Ayckbowm heard the news of Sr Theresa's death, she wrote to Sr May:

...so terrible the list of casualties, that one feels convinced that there must be more work among the sick and wounded waiting for workers, [more] than our whole Sisterhood could fulfil.⁵⁹

The foundress, constrained by the impossibility of answering the so many needs, was forced to set achievable objectives. The continuing desire, however, to do more for those in need of their services was the hallmark of the mother foundresses.

The mother foundresses working in the field of nursing may have lacked the medical knowledge that comes from years of study, but they did seek out training for their sisters. Cleanliness, orderliness, and constant

58 Dea Birkett, 'Mary Kingsley and West Africa', in Victorian Values, ed. by Marsden, p. 184.

59 CSC archives, Journal, 14 Jan 1900. This was the last entry in Ayckbowm's Journal as she died in June.

care were the attributes they brought to nursing. As the century progressed and as the religious communities became involved in the war nursing, they gained in expertise and were seen as capable and reliable by the public at large. The involvement of the sisters with the sick poor encouraged other ladies to enter the field. (This was necessary to raise the public esteem of nursing.) Their experience paralleled the 'pioneer age' of nursing from the 1850s to the 1880s. At the end of this 'age', nursing was an overcrowded field. Religious nursing communities took their knowledge abroad and, for the most part, relinquished the home field to secular nurses. The change in the approach of the foundresses to the business of nursing followed the secular stream toward professionalization and in some instances preceded it. The women religious established 'sacrifice and service' as a hallmark of nursing. Their influence contributed to celibacy becoming the norm for nursing professionals for decades into the twentieth century.⁶⁰ Clerical restraints on the work was circumvented by the foundresses for the benefit of the sick. The foundresses' work continued against the echoing cries of anti-Catholicism.

EDUCATION

60 Gail Malmgren, ed. Religion in the Lives of English Women, 1760-1930 (London & Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985), p. 8.

The mother foundresses entered the field of education to instruct various classes of society and instill their Christian beliefs in young people. Changes in the law regarding education caused them to accommodate their approach to the requirements of the time. Complying with government school inspectors constrained their plans in teaching the poor, the professional, and the middle and upper classes.

The dedication of most communities was to the relief of the poor, therefore poor schools were a logical outreach of that dedication. Teaching was considered the natural work of a ladies in much the same way as was nursing. 'Every lady is and must be a teacher--of some person or other, of children, sisters, the poor'.⁶¹ Ayckbowm and Taylor had their first teaching experience in 'ragged schools', such as the one described by the editor of The Christian Mother's Magazine in September 1845:

[A] Ragged school is a school established and supported by private benevolence for the instruction of children, who, into any other place of education would be refused admittance; a school situated in some mean, crowded, and squalid district of a populous town; receiving as pupils neglected, and often diseased sons and daughters of indigent, debased or dishonest parents; - children reared from their cradles in crime and wretchedness, and whose very appearance would close the doors of any reputable establishment against them.⁶²

61 F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, et al., 'Introductory Lectures delivered at Queen's College, London (London, 1849), pp. 4-5, as cited in Peterson, 'Victorian Governess', in Suffer and Be Still, ed. by Vicinus, pp. 17-18.

62 Christian Mother's Magazine, 2 (September 1845) 603.

This description of a ragged school revealed both the type of children who attended and society's view of the poor, in general.

Connelly opened a poor school at Derby in 1846 and, within months, had two hundred pupils on their rolls with an average attendance of sixty a day.⁶³ The next year she began a night school for factory girls, over one hundred of them, in which her sisters taught 'reading, writing and the rudiments of arithmetic'.⁶⁴ Her poor schools flourished from the beginning. By 1854 she had schools in London; Soho, Gate Street, Bunhill Row, Baldwin Gardens; St Leonards-on-Sea; Preston; and Liverpool. These schools were inspected by the Government Inspector of Poor Schools and the Catholic Poor School Committee (CPSC). Passing inspections meant grants for the continuance of the work. (Until 1847 Roman Catholic schools were not eligible for government grants.)⁶⁵ When materials for studies were lacking for the classes they taught, the foundress, or her sisters, wrote the material and had it printed. Connelly requested and edited ^aSchool History of England, written by Maria Buckle, Sister Teresa.⁶⁶ The SHCJ became known later on for their middle and upper schools, but initially they were 'strangled by scandal and lack of

63 Flaxman, p. 116.

64 Ibid., p. 117.

65 Mary Andrew Armour, Cornelia: The Story of Cornelia Connelly (1809-1879): Foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus (n.p.: privately printed, 1979) p. 31.

66 Ibid., p. 208.

means'.⁶⁷ Since the poor schools met a specific social need they prospered. Through the newly authorized pupil-teacher system, the communities prospered, too.

The pupil-teacher system affected the educational work of many foundresses. James Kay-Shuttleworth, Secretary to the Committee of Council on Education, put forward a pupil-teacher, or teacher apprenticeship system in 1839. Under this system children of thirteen would receive seven and one-half hours of instruction each week and in return would teach five and one-half hours each day. The five-year apprenticeship programme would pay the pupil-teacher '£10 per annum rising by annual increments of £2 10s. to £20 per annum'.⁶⁸ There was one pupil-teacher to every twenty-five scholars. The head teachers were paid an additional '£5 for one pupil-teacher, £9 for two, and £3 for every additional one'. The goal for the pupil-teacher, when sixteen or seventeen, was to sit for a Queens Scholarship that would allow her, or him, to go to a training college for two or three years. If at the end of that time the student passed the government examinations, the student would qualify as a teacher and be able to take charge of a school. The graduate would also qualify, after fifteen years of successful teaching, for a government old-age

67 Ibid., p. 229; Gompertz, pp. 151-188. The suit of Pierce Connelly for the restitution of his conjugal rights, 1850-1851, and the reluctance of the faithful to back an institution that might never reach stability.

68 S. J. Curtis, History of Education in Great Britain 5th ed., (London: University Tutorial Press Ltd., 1963), pp. 241-3.

pension. This scheme gave hope to a bright student of a rewarding future and an additional income to the institutions providing the instruction. The pupil-teacher scheme was implemented in 1846 and played an important part in the education offered by women religious.

Prior^{to} 1847 Roman Catholic poor schools had not been eligible for government education grants.⁶⁹ The Kay-Shuttleworth scheme presented a need for Catholic training colleges that Connelly desired to fulfil. Connelly, with assistance from the Catholic Poor School Committee, began a teacher's training college in Liverpool in 1854. She assigned it to Sr Emily Bowles. Because of financial debts incurred personally by Bowles, the effort was given up and taken over by the Sisters of Notre Dame. At the time there were twenty-two Church of England training colleges and no Roman Catholic ones.⁷⁰ In 1856 Connelly began another training college in the south of England at St Leonards with the help of the CPSC. The college initially had sixty students. To maintain it the sisters had to pass examinations and a government syllabus had to be met. They had four hours of lectures every morning.⁷¹ Connelly wrote a syllabus for geography that the government inspector of Catholic schools, T. W. Marshall, found 'too ambitious', but overall he was impressed with the staff's aim to promote

68 Armour, p. 31.

70 Curtis, p. 235.

71 Flaxman, p. 234.

the best in each student.⁷² Marshall was replaced in 1860 by S. N. Stokes, however, who found fault with the mixed account keeping of the convent and the school, and barely acknowledged the seven firsts and no failures of the sixteen students sitting government examinations. Connelly objected to his treatment and requested another inspector. The inspector was retained and Connelly resigned as principal teacher. This upset, coupled with Robert Lowe's plan to cut the cost of education by giving grants only to those training teachers who themselves had two years of college, was to signal the end of SHCJ involvement in teaching colleges. Lowe's plan went into effect in 1864. The growing professionalization of education in the hands of a more secularized society constrained the growth of the mother foundresses' schools and colleges. St Leonards dropped its program for their teachers did not meet the new requirement. Unhappy with the result, Connelly wrote, 'no doubt there is, if not apathy, at least a want of spirit somewhere for the general good'.⁷³

Nonetheless, Connelly wrote Book of the Order of Studies, in 1863. She called it Our Ratio after the Jesuits' Ratio Studiorum. It contained syllabuses, timetables, book lists and sample lessons adapted for ages four to eighteen. The principles and methods of teaching each subject, special directions for teachers,

72 Ibid., p. 248.

73 Ibid., p. 255.

school rules and government requirements for Poor Law schools training pupil-teachers were also covered. Her major objective was for the students to achieve a 'cultivation of understanding'.⁷⁴ While she understood the law and good teaching methods, she was not without an understanding of the pupils themselves, as witnessed by a notice placed on the bulletin board:

Be it known unto all you, my well-beloved little and big darlings, that for very excellent reasons, all appertaining to your greater good, the Whit Tuesday Picnic will be transferred to 21st of June. N B. No grumbling allowed!!! You would not think of such a thing? Oh No!⁷⁵

Her efforts were not without constraints by the clergy and the lay members of the CPSC. Mr Sing, the priest at Derby, accused her society of 'playing at nuns' and said that would only stop when they came 'under episcopal control'.⁷⁶ The CPSC did not take the side of the college against the unfavourable report of the government inspector (a report that had nothing to do with the quality of teaching) even though it meant the loss of a teacher's training college to the Roman Catholic community at large.⁷⁷

The Anglican Community of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage, was begun by the Reverend William John Butler in

74 Ibid., p. 240.

75 Ibid., p. 246.

76 Ibid., p. 121.

77 George Andrew Beck, ed., The English Catholics, 1850-1950 (London: Burns & Oates, 1950), p. 357. After Connelly's death the SHCJ established a College for Catholic Secondary Teachers at Cavendish Square (1896). Today it is Heythrop College, University of London.

1848 with the idea that education should be its main objective. But it became involved with penitentiary work under the guidance of his co-founder and its first mother superior, Elizabeth Lockhart. This did not stop the community from establishing a middle school in 1864. Its objective was the training of pupil-teachers. Those trained at St Michael's in Wantage went on to the training college at Salisbury. It was to be another nine years before they founded their famous boarding school for 'young ladies', St Mary's.⁷⁸

Katherine Warburton, 'Mother Kate' of S Saviour's Priory, described the Priory schools as 'little removed from the old dame schools at the beginning of the century'.⁷⁹ In her writings she provided some of the more humorous replies to the pupil questioning by government inspectors: 'Sr Mary Magdalene helped Moses across the Red Sea', and the critical evaluation by a youngster that Adam and Eve were turned out of the Garden of Eden for 'thieving apples'.⁸⁰ Sr Mary, later Mother Mary Francis Basil, foundress of the Franciscan Third Order at Mill Hill, maintained discipline in the classroom by 'boxing the ears' of those not paying attention. Warburton had been reluctant to use such harsh methods, but found that the students both expected and responded to such treatment.⁸¹ Therefore, even the

78 Anson, Call, p. 252. Although the Wantage Sisters became the best known educators among the Anglican sisterhoods, their work was not guided by the mother foundress and therefore will not be addressed here.

79 Old Soho, p. 24.

80 Ibid., p. 28.

81 Ibid., p. 29.

pupils of the foundresses' schools were sometimes a constraint to their work.

The Education Act of 1870 was critical to religious communities involved in teaching.⁸² W. E. Foster stated the object of the bill was 'to bring elementary education within the reach of every English home.'⁸³ The reception of the bill by the various faiths was met with angry defence of their 'denominational' schools: Non-Conformists were afraid of more control over their schools by the Established Church; Roman Catholics were distressed that it would blur the 'distinctiveness' of their training; and the Church of England feared more erosion of its status as the major educator of the nation.⁸⁴ In an attempt to placate these objections, the Cowper-Temple clause was added to the bill. It stated:

No religious catechisms or religious formulary, which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught in the school.⁸⁵

But such a ~~purely~~ secular education was unwelcome to Non-Conformists, Anglo-Catholics and Roman Catholics alike.⁸⁶

82 W. H. G. Armytage, Four Hundred Years of English Education (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 140-155; David Wardle, English Popular Education 1780-1970 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 160-162; H. C. Barnard, A Short History of English Education from 1760 to 1944 (London: University of London Press Ltd., 1947), pp. 135-137.

83 Curtis, p. 277.

84 Machin, Politics, 1869-1914, p. 31-37.

85 Curtis, p. 278.

86 Bebbington, pp. 120-125, for the Evangelical reaction. Supple-Green, pp. 37-44, for the Roman Catholic reception of the Act. Binfield, So Down to Prayers: Studies in English Nonconformity, 1780-1920 (London: J.M. Dent, 1977), pp. 80-91, 209, presents the Nonconformist side of the issue.

The resultant Elementary Education Act, though it did not salve the objections of these differing faiths, was an 'important recognition of the religious plurality in society'.⁸⁷ The Act had four major components that affected the schools of the mother foundresses. Firstly, it created School Boards in municipal boroughs and country parishes with the power to erect 'board schools' where voluntary schools were inadequate for the civil district. Secondly, the Boards were empowered to levy rates to meet the needs of the board schools, but not the voluntary schools. The voluntary schools were, however, entitled to receive twice the government grant formerly paid to them. Thirdly, the board schools could continue denominational teaching, but a 'conscience clause' allowed parents who objected to this instruction to withdraw their children at the time of religious teaching. The new board schools prevented denominational instruction by way of the Cowper-Temple Clause and taught only the Bible. And finally, the board schools were fee-paying schools, but the boards could remit fees or establish free schools.⁸⁸

While the foundresses were in favour of educating the masses, they were not in favour of education without a religious basis. Ayckbown (1836-1900), whose generation was coming to the fore, waged a battle to keep

87 Machin, p. 37.

88 William Edwards, Notes on British History. 5 vols (London: Rivington, 1971) IV: 1046. There were two other points in the Act: age of attendance raised to thirteen and 'London to have one School Board'.

English schooling from falling into secular hands; Sellon (1821?-1876), whose generation was ebbing, was more concerned with the continued existence of her schools. In a letter from Sellon to Wood can be heard the affront taken by a lady to have her methods questioned by dubious 'gentlemen' and her community's livelihood endangered by a government 'experiment'.

It strikes me as a very singular thing, that these two young men are allowed to come down and pronounce upon the Schools of Plymouth, as inefficient, wholly on their own responsibility. [For these schools are conducted by] highly accomplished Ladies [assisted by a] well paid School mistress. [This would] appear to be an experiment not conducted by Government with sufficient caution.⁸⁹

Robert Lowe realized as early as 1867 the political necessity 'to compel our future masters to learn their letters'.⁹⁰ But Sellon's schools were as much a part of the obligatory good works of her class as much as they were her religious duty. The conflicts resulting from a changing class structure were evident in her reaction to the implementation of the Education Act. In an effort to understand what options she might have in this situation she asked Wood for a clarification of the existing law for any school pronounced 'inefficient'. Would they lose their custom to those passed as efficient? She saw the possibility of her schools losing their students and her community losing a source of funding.

89 PH, 'Pusey letters to C.L. Wood, Vol. II', No. 208, October 30 [1870].

90 Asa Briggs, The Age of Improvement, 1783-1867 (London: Longmans, 1959), p. 521.

Ayckbowm began her community the same year as the Education Act. She did not begin her school without a signed agreement with the Poor Law guardians and the approval of her solicitor.⁹¹ In October the first school was 'obliged to be removed...on account of the opposition of the Protestants'. Ayckbowm, defiantly, processed 150 children from the first site of the school to the new site.⁹² Though she showed her contempt for opposition, she readily complied with the new regulations pertaining to teachers. Mr French, Master of Christchurch School, Marylebone, was engaged in March of 1871 to tutor the sisters for the December certification examinations.

Sisters Elizabeth, Ellen and Adelaide went to Brighton for 4 days in order to attend the examination at the Training College. They were very kindly received by the authorities, though they were evidently the cause of some wonder and curiosity.⁹³

In March they received notice that all the sisters who had 'gone up' for the examinations had passed.⁹⁴ In November of 1873 these sisters 'finished their two years probation as teachers'. They were the first Anglican sisters to be certified as qualified teachers.⁹⁵ Ayckbowm accepted and overcame the secular constraints imposed on her teaching staff.

Each year Ayckbowm's schools were inspected and each year they received an ever increasing government grant as

91 CSC archives, Annals, April 20, 1870.

92 Ibid., October 1870.

93 Ibid., December 1871.

94 Ibid., March 23, 1872.

95 Valiant, p. 77.

the number of schools and students increased.⁹⁶ She ventured into pupil-teacher training in January 1874. There were so many applications for 'PTs', as she referred to the pupil-teachers, that the community voted to train only those 'who are our Orphans'.⁹⁷ At this time there were 900 girls and infants in the Kilburn schools. Elocution lessons were given the sisters 'for improving the style of reading' in their schools.⁹⁸ Ever on the look out for ways of improving her schools, Ayckbowm went to see an American Christian Brother teaching at a technical school.

Their style of teaching is indeed marvelous and the results seemed to us miraculous compared to the English Scholars best efforts. I felt how sadly little I had made of the Schools, and how easily we all had been satisfied with mediocrity....⁹⁹

In November of the same year she went to the 'Nuns on Marylebone Lane' to find out how they managed their PTs. They used 'much repetition' and had 'strict but kind discipline'. Ayckbowm noted that one of their 'girls came out first on the Scholarship list'. She even went to the Roman Catholic Training College at Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, to see how they ran their operation. She found that 'they had not time for rebellious students and sent them away'.¹⁰⁰ The fact that she was learning from Roman Catholic institutions did not trouble her in the

96 CSC archives, Annals. February 1873, £39; March 1875, £133; March 1882, 'over £400'.

97 Ibid., March 1883.

98 Ibid., November 1884.

99 CSC archives, Journal, July 20, 1884.

100 Ibid., November 23, 1884.

least. She believed in the Holy Catholic Church and was criticized for not drawing a rigid line between Anglo-Catholicism and Roman Catholicism.¹⁰¹ The main intent of her visits was to learn all she could about workable methods of teaching. During this year she began work on 'The Kilburn Series' of books that dealt with elementary education. In them she included the teaching philosophy of Pestalozzi as interpreted by Froebel. She believed in a system that broke with mechanical learning methods and, thereby, she resisted and overcame the constraint of contemporary mediocrity. Her books are filled with various ways of presenting a subject and making it interesting to the student.¹⁰²

As she had visited the Roman Catholic institutions for insights into their methods of education, she, in turn, was visited by other foundresses of Church of England communities. In a letter to Benett, one such visitor, she described the lot of a teaching sister:

We have 4 Government Schools..., 6 Sisters work them, but no Sister works alone--each has her assistant, who is capable of taking her place....The training of pupil teachers is also

101 CSC archives, Troubles Journal, p. 44. A letter to the editor of Church Bells, July 10, 1896, referred to Ayckbowm's invitation to Brother Noah of the Christian Brothers in 1892 to lecture her sisters on his teaching methods as 'Romish'; LPL, Lambeth Conference 1908, LC 63, 'Anglican Sisterhoods'. Margaret Bru denell Bruce (Lady Frederick Bruce) was appointed by ^{the} bishop of Marlborough 'to collect evidence...of work conducted by Kilburn Sisters'. Among the 'evidence' is the knowing statement that Ayckbowm 'spent some time in a Roman Catholic convent abroad' before she founded the sisterhood.

102 Two of the series are: Elementary Education (London: The Education Union, n.d.) and The Kilburn Manual of Elementary Education (London: The Education Union, n.d.).

shared between several Sisters each undertaking one subject...I think School-keeping in these days is terribly hard work and I doubt very much whether any Religious could undertake the entire responsibility of a National School, without injury either to her health or her inner life, & perhaps both. I believe all the Wantage Sisters who have tried it, have broken down.

I enclose one of the Profd. Sisters time-tables, & shall be glad indeed if it prove of any use to you.¹⁰³

The time-table showed the sister rising at 6.00, teaching from 9.15 until 12.15 and again from 2.10 until 4.30, and then going to bed at 10.30. The letter suggested that Cocoa or beef tea may be needed at 11.00, but not usually. Conscientious, committed even to the state of exhaustion, concerned for not only their work but also their devotions, was the picture she drew of a sister's teaching life. Ayckbowm was also concerned with the life of teachers outside of religious communities. To assist them she founded the Church Teachers Union in 1882, where retreats and quiet days were designed to refresh even Board School teachers.

Besides the methods and implementation of education, Ayckbowm was also concerned with religion as the basis of this education. Her objective was 'to stir up in the English Church a spirit of enthusiasm for Christian education'.¹⁰⁴ From 1870-1893 she built eight schools in London as well as schools in Liverpool, Croydon, York, Canada and Australia.¹⁰⁵ In the Quarterly, a newsletter

103 SSB archives, 25 Feb. 1876.

104 Valiant, p. 74.

105 Ayckbowm, 74. The London schools of the CSC alone had over 6,000 scholars.

for the sisters, she wrote, 'We must not be content for our schools to be merely as good as Board Schools, they must be better', and for this 'we must also be diligent learners'.¹⁰⁶ She implemented her words. Whereas the first sisters had had a tutor, later sisters were sent to training colleges and for secondary teaching to Bedford College for Women. She wrote special instructions for these sisters. She wanted them 'to show an unbelieving generation that Christians and especially Religious' would do as much as 'children of the world' to advance their own interest.¹⁰⁷ She built the Gordon School, placed deliberately in the centre of a very poor part of Kilburn. Ayckbowm was determined to have a church school rather than a Board School in that location. Her CSC and CEA bore the entire cost of its building.¹⁰⁸

To encourage others to fight for voluntary English Church schools, she began the Religious Education Union in 1885. Through this Union, grants were given to Church schools that lacked funds to compete with the new Board Schools.¹⁰⁹ She took her fight to the Royal Commission of 1887. Her sisters traversed England for signatures on a memorial that stated:

Entreats that all persons who can furnish satisfactory evidence that they contribute to a Voluntary School within the same parochial limits a sum equal to the School Board rate,

106 Ibid., p. 77.

107 Ibid., p. 78.

108 Ibid., p. 79.

109 Ibid., p. 92.

shall in future be relieved from paying that rate.¹¹⁰

Presented to the Commission on February 21, 1888, it contained 250,000 signatures. This was a success for a woman who believed that her community was 'raised up for the purpose of fighting the battle of Religious Education'. By 1889 she found that even their enemies were beginning to speak 'of the Denominational system with respect'.¹¹¹ Warburton took a different path. Her approach was to work from the inside of the new system. She became the manager of a Board School and 'deeply regretted her exclusion from the School by the London County Council'.¹¹²

The Roman foundations, old and new, advertised for students stressing their teaching of a 'complete' or 'thorough English Education'. At the IBVM in York or the Franciscan Convent at Mill Hill, parents could find both a religious and an English education for their daughters.¹¹³ The Franciscan Minoreesses, founded by Margaret Murphy, former SMG, in 1888, established day programmes for the poor in 1897, but found that night classes for young people above school age were more popular. The Anglican, Agnes Mason, was to find the same change in the educational need in 1896. Sister run

110 Ibid., p. 86.

111 Ibid., p. 90.

112 Old Soho, p. ix.

113 Religious Houses of the United Kingdom: containing a Short History of every Order and House (London: Burns and Oates, Ltd., 1887), n.p. Advertisements for education in the back of the book.

schools, for the most part, were going out of fashion. Mason's Community of the Holy Family (CHF) was founded as a teaching community that stressed 'elementary Greek and Latin, Mathematics and Froebel subjects'.¹¹⁴ She had been secretary to the Guild of the Epiphany for teachers founded by Canon Francis Holland. Letters to the guild about combining the religious life with teaching gave impetus to the CHF. It was also the reason the CHF began retreats for teachers almost at once and held them annually for a number of years. Mason, perhaps even more so than Ayckbowm, believed in on-going education for her sisters. Whenever possible her sisters, university trained from the start, would attend university lectures.¹¹⁵

The emergence of active congregations and the sisterhoods in the nineteenth century paralleled the growing national interest in education. From the start of their communities the foundresses were involved in education. This meant knowledge of the law and training of their sisters as teachers to comply with the law. Devising new and better methods of classroom procedures became a part of their lives. Although they fought

114 The First Sixty Years: A Short History of the Community of the Holy Family (n.p.: privately printed, 1958), p. 6.

115 Sixty, p. 8. The first branch house of the CHF was a hostel for women at the University of Leeds (4a Hillary Place). It was open from 1906 until 1911 when the University established its own hostel. The sisters then moved the branch house to Cambridge.

against the secularization of education, they did provide support for women who turned to teaching as a profession. The law itself constrained their activities, especially after 1870. During the period under discussion the mother foundresses went from being 'ladies' involved in teaching to professional teachers and administrators; from running ragged schools to attending university lectures; from setting down the rules of the schools to obeying the government rules for schools; and from independence to control by school inspectors. In becoming professionals they gave up the original autonomy of their educational activities and were driven back, at the end of the century, to control by their church.

Throughout the Victorian era, mother foundresses with their communities entered the fields of education and nursing. They both influenced and were influenced by the growing professionalization in both these missions. Eventually, qualified secular nurses and teachers replaced many of the sisters in hospitals and schools. Yet even as the foundresses and their followers withdrew from administration of hospitals and from comprising the complete staff of schools, they left behind a 'vocational' legacy. For decades into the twentieth century, female nurses and teachers were women totally devoted to their work. Indeed, celibacy became viewed as a requirement to be a teacher or a nurse. Marriage was incompatible with total dedication and meant retirement from ^{one's} career. The endeavours of the mother foundresses, whether in nursing or in education, brought them more

public acceptance of religious communities and,
paradoxically, fostered renewed concerns among ^{the} clerical
hierarchy as to the growing influence of women religious
within each church.

Chapter 6

GOOD WORKS II: THE 'FALLEN' AND THE FOUNDLINGS

The restoration of fallen women by 'nuns' was bound to produce tensions in a society ambivalent about both categories. Penitentiaries were established in the nineteenth century for the reform of fallen women (prostitutes). These institutions were taken over, or originated, by women religious. At the onset of this work the mother foundresses considered its primary function that of the salvation of ^{the} 'fallen'. The longer they worked with the penitents (the repentant prostitute) the more they came to see that this was not solely a moral question, but one intertwined with the ability of a woman to support herself financially.¹ Often the 'fall' had nothing to do with the virtue of the woman but everything to do with her circumstance and the society's double-standard for women and men.² It is important to remember that not all inmates of the penitentiaries were prostitutes: some were widows with no relatives; some

1 Ann Frances Norton, 'The Consolidation and Expansion of the Community of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage, 1857-1907' (M. Phil. thesis, University of London, King's College, 1978), p. 120. Cited in Mumm, p. 126. A spokesman for one of the sisterhoods stated in the 1881 Convocation, 'I have found the girls...are not at all worse...than ordinary maid-servants...with proper advantages they are not worse than many other girls'. I am grateful to Susan Mumm for discussions in this field. Her forthcoming conference paper 'Nuns and Whores: The Institutional Rehabilitation of Prostitutes and 'Fallen Women' in Victorian England', will be too late for inclusion in this chapter.

2 Penitentiary Work in the Church of England (London: Harrison and Son, 1873), p. 27. Cited in Mumm, p. 128. The sisterhoods thought the 'social stigma [of 'the fall'] should be extended to men as well' and that men's standards should be 'raised to those of women'.

were wives placed there by their husbands; and some were servants sent by their employers for stealing or having taken to drink. As long as the foundresses emphasized the moral deprivation of their charges they were in accord with society at large and were, therefore, left unconstrained in their work. If, however, they realized that the cause of the condition of their penitents was something other than morality, they were once again constrained.

The penitentiaries, or refuges as they were also called, began in England in 1806 under the supervision of men. By the 1840s there were less than a dozen institutions, but by 1903 there were 238 Church of England refuges and the majority of these, 200, were directed by sisterhoods.³ The Newdegate Committee Report shows that 379 penitents were in the care of Roman congregations in 1870.⁴ This was a small number compared to the 7,000 women in Anglican sisterhood refuges in 1893, where two-thirds of their seventy-five communities were involved in rescue work.⁵

3 W. H. Hutchings, The Life and Letters of Thomas Thellusson Carter: Warden of the House of Mercy, Clewer, Hon. Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, and for Thirty-Six Years Rector of Clewer (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1903), p. 92.

4 Great Britain Report from the Select Committee on Conventual and Monastic Institutions [1870], question 903, p. 45. These were orders that originated on the continent and not in England.

5 Mrs Boyd Carpenter, "Woman's Work in Connection with the Church of England," in Woman's Mission: A Series of Congress Papers on the Philanthropic Work of Women, ed. by Angela Burdett-Coutts (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1893), p. 118.

Mumm states 'it is incongruous that the growth in attempts for the rehabilitation of prostitutes should have accompanied the growth of conventual order: moral and social distance between the whore and the nun, to Victorian eyes, must have seemed immense'.⁶ Yet this was precisely what happened. The needs of both groups of women coincided. In order for sisterhoods to justify their existence they acknowledged that 'ordinary women, those who were married or likely to marry, could not be permitted to work with the fallen' for it might create 'feelings of disgust and indignation [towards men] where there should have been admiration and obedience'.⁷ Hence it was an appropriate work for women who would never marry and would devote their lives to religion. They encouraged 'domestic service as the only way in which their girls could be placed to earn their keep'.⁸ Yet while the sisterhoods used this work to justify their existence, they could not get away from the fact of rampant anti-Catholicism. The work was disparaged as resembling 'popish convents' as it was carried on behind the walls of 'female penitentiaries'.⁹ A layman wrote to Archbishop Tait 'in confidence' of the 'Romish' posture of the Clewer sisters :

6 Mumm, p. 190.

7 Anna Jameson, 'Sisters of Charity and the Commerce of Labour', (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1859), p. 39.

8 Jane Rendall, Women in an Industrializing Society: England 1750-1880. Historical Association Studies (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 99.

9 Edward Bristow, Vice and Vigilance: Purity Movements in Britain Since 1700 (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1977), p. 64.

I doubt not you have heard of the large establishment called the 'House of Mercy'-- 'Reformatory' we have here. They would be excellent and I would as a layman aid them to my utmost, but for the dressing up exactly like Nuns, wearing crosses and all to make a show...Ladies and others secure themselves in the House of Mercy and the Reformatory for reclaiming fallen women consequent our Windsor being a Garrison Town. They are nicknamed the 'Nunnery' and the 'Lock Hospital'.¹⁰

The sisterhoods, unlike most people of this era, did not see the prostitute as irrevocably fallen or irretrievably damaged. The longer they managed these institutions, the more they began to have different ideas about these 'problem' women. Like their contemporary Anna Jameson, they believed that these women were 'starving and they sell themselves for food'.¹¹ The sisters who worked in the penitentiaries came to look upon the magdalens (the penitents) as the victims of 'an artificial distinction between this [sin] and all other sins'.¹²

Society did make this distinction. It supported the refuges to restore the victim of the double standard--the prostitute.¹³ Monies given to these institutions eased

10 LPL, Tait Papers 198 ff 377-384. 26 October 1874. Walkowitz, p. 57-58. 'Lock Hospitals' were where inpatient care was provided for venereal disease patients. These patients were 'deemed unrespectable'.

11 Jameson, p. 39.

12 Mumm, p. 205.

13 Judith R. Walkowitz, Prostitution in Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 13-31. Walkowitz argues that some of these women were not victims, but used prostitution as an interim measure for their support before marriage.

the collective conscience of society. Indeed, prostitution was seen by many as a necessary adjunct for military garrisons (as shown in the above letter to Tait) whose soldiers were discouraged from marrying.¹⁴ The resultant venereal disease from such situations was addressed in the Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864, 1866 and 1869, which punished the victim. Josephine Butler, who took up the cause of the unfair treatment of women in the C. D. Acts, as they were called, testified before the Royal Commission on the Administration and Operation of the Contagious Diseases Acts in 1871: '[S]o long as men are vicious and women have no employment this evil [prostitution] will go on'.¹⁵

The 'age of consent' was seen as contributory to the growth of prostitution. While the mother foundresses provided penitentiaries to reclaim respectable lives for the women already fallen, Butler formed the 'Committee to amend the law in points wherein it is Injurious to Women' (CALPIW) in an effort to prevent the fall. With Elizabeth Wolstenholme and Lydia Becker, she proposed that Parliament should 'raise the age of consent...to prevent very young girls from seduction'.¹⁶ In 1871 the age of consent was twelve; under the law it was a felony to seduce a girl under ten and a misdemeanour to

14 For a complete discussion of this phenomenon see Walkowitz; and Linda Mahood, The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth Century (London: Routledge, 1990).

15 Susan Kent, Sex and Suffrage in Britain, 1860-1914 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 68, as cited in Mary Lyndon Shanley, Feminism, Marriage, and the Law in Victorian England (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 86.

16 Shanley, p. 90.

seduce a girl under twelve. The Offences Against the Person Bill was presented in Parliament in 1875 having been recommended by a Commission on the Contagious Diseases Act for 'greater protection of female children'.¹⁷ Through 'some misunderstanding' the age of consent originally proposed in the Bill, 'fourteen', was inserted by the Recorder as 'thirteen' which the House of Lords proceeded to reduce to twelve. The House of Commons compromised with the age of thirteen as that was the age in the Factory Acts and the Education Act 'at which childhood ended'.¹⁸ The age of consent came before Parliament again in 1885 in the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. The proposed age of sixteen was finally agreed upon. The earl of Beauchamp thought that the 'raised age of consent from 13 to 16' was treated by some as 'rich against the poor' and he found that assumption 'unjust and unfounded'.¹⁹ Perhaps the 'some' he referred to were the CALPIW who had been calling the age of consent of twelve 'indefensible' since it was a 'felony to seduce an heiress under twenty-one' and that Parliament was willing to protect property but not young girls.²⁰ The Anglican sisterhoods had offered

17 Hansard, 3rd series, 1875, CCXXIV, 1518.

18 Hansard, 3rd series, 1875, CCXXVI, 867.

19 Hansard, 3rd series, 1885, CCC, 1550; Walkowitz, p. 246-251. Walkowitz argues that W. T. Stead's 'Maiden Tribute to Modern Babylon' in the Pall Mall Gazette, describing child prostitution and electrifying public opinion had a great deal to do with the passage of the increase in the age of consent. She also argues that it ironically gave the 'police far greater summary jurisdiction over poor working women and children, and brought on the call for social-purity.

20 Shanley, p. 91.

rehabilitation to these girls and women for nearly thirty years prior^{to} the initial reform of the age of consent. So had the French foundation of Roman Catholic Sisters of the Good Shepherd at Hammersmith.²¹ The Anglican penitentiaries at Wantage (CSMV), Clewer (CSJB), and Ditchingham (CAH) provided the largest of these operations.

The co-foundress of Wantage, Elizabeth Lockhart, aimed the work of the sisters away from education--the work desired by their co-founder, William Butler--toward penitentiary work. Yet the penitentiary continued after Lockhart became a Roman Catholic under the second mother superior, Harriet Day. Before Harriet Monsell went to Clewer, work with penitents had already been established in 1849 as the work of an individual, Mariquita Tennant. Tennant's work was taken over by the sisterhood after her retirement (1852). Lavinia Crosse's penitentiary work at Ditchingham was likewise begun before the advent of her Community of All Hallows (CAH).²² Marian Rebecca Hughes espoused both refuge and prevention work, though

21 Anson, Religious, pp. 280-2. The Good Shepherd Nuns were founded at Tours in 1815. Their foundress, Rose Virginie Pelletier, later St Mary of St Euphasia, originally limited the work to fallen women, but moved on to prevention and rehabilitation of inebriates and drug addicts. The foundation in England dates from 1841. Most Roman Catholic congregations were not permitted to undertake penitentiary work. The Sisters of the Good Shepherd were an exception.

22 Sr Violet, p. 20. Miss Cozens, who had assisted Mrs Tennant at Clewer, began the penitentiary at Shipmeadow that was taken over almost at once by Crosse. Crosse then established her sisterhood for continuity in the treatment of the 'rough and difficult' girls.

on a limited scale, when in 1849 she founded the Society of the Holy and Undivided Trinity (SHUT).

Hughes wrote in her first Statute Book of 1849 the aims of her community. Firstly, they were to receive girls, 13 years of age and older, and to 'fit them for useful and appropriate occupation...to earn their own living in some honest & respectable calling'. The purpose being 'to afford them a secure asylum from temptation to which at that age and poverty and evil example of (also in but too many cases) near relatives especially expose them'.²³ She seemed aware that incest was a precursor to prostitution in many instances and there was no law addressing incest until 1908 when it became a punishable offence.²⁴ Secondly, her statutes stated, 'Sisters shall seek out and endeavor to lead to true penitence those unhappy beings of their own sex who have fallen into deadly sin'.²⁵ In her diary she described how the work with penitents had been previously carried on in Oxford by 'a kind woman but quite out of Catholic teaching'.²⁶ Hughes' aim was to combine this work with the Anglo-Catholicism emerging in the Established Church. Her procedure was 'to receive any

23 PH, Statute Book, 'Sisterhood of Charity', 1849. Enclosed loose sheets, p. iv; Walkowitz, p. 19. She quotes The Thirty-first Annual Report of the Rescue Society 1883 (p. 27) as stating, 'May God have mercy on the destroyers of these children--sometimes their own'. (Emphasis in original.)

24 Hansard, 4th series, 1908, CXCVIII, 2346. Leading to the Royal Assent of this Act was a discussion as to whether Parliament could legislate morality.

25 Statute Book, p. vi.

26 PH, Mother Marian's Diary, Volume I, 1841-52, p. 68.

penitent from the streets & then pass them on to Penitentiaries out of Oxford'.²⁷

One, quite a child, I took to London to the Convent of the Good Shepherd at Hammersmith... this noble establishment [was] founded by two foreign Nuns.²⁸

Hughes worked 'to put a stop to the unmorality going on in Oxford' and would go to see 'poor girls who would have gone to prison to persuade them to go the Penitentiaries'.²⁹ She took a house in Speedwell for one year in which to keep the penitents before sending them on to the Wantage sisters. Other young women of Oxford were aware of her efforts. Hughes wrote, 'One poor girl stirred my heart by saying she supposed unless she became a naughty girl Ladies would do nothing for her!!!!!!'³⁰

When Monsell took over the penitentiary work at Clewer, she put it under the auspices of her sisterhood.³¹ The records of Clewer, though incomplete, give the best accounting of how an Anglican 'House of Mercy' was run. Though the CSJB said that no one was sent away, there were categories of women they did not accept, i.e., pregnant and diseased. However, they did attempt to deal with the mentally ill and the mentally impaired. The major criteria for admission was that the applicant must be willing to submit to the rule. When

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid., p. 70.

30 Ibid., p. 73.

31 Bonham, Place, p. 86-90. The records of the Clewer 'House of Mercy' were restricted for use by Valerie Bonham during the period of my research, therefore I am dependent on her publication for much of this material.

women left early or unexpectedly, it was usually owing to the discipline of the house rather than the hard work. Part of their training in order to return to the world with a service skill was 'knowing one's place in life, and learning to be deferential to one's superiors'.³² In many cases this was the reason these women were there in the first place--they were not 'deferential'. It was also true that many of these women were illiterate and had no idea of the concept of sin or repentance. This made the work of the sisters difficult. The penitents were received for two years and spent most of their time pursuing either needlework or laundry work. If they were sponsored, a fee of £5 per year was expected. If they weren't, funding from the Church Penitentiary Association helped with expenses. The House of Mercy accepted 'lady penitents', i.e., courtesans. They were 'treated differently' with 'separate accommodation'.³³ They were also charged differently, £50 per year. Some of the penitents had truly found a home and wanted to remain at Clewer. A Magdalen order was formed. These vowed women worked with the penitents and had the role of 'trusted upper servant'.³⁴

Carter and Monsell took a position that denied the constraint of contemporary assumptions about the 'fallen'. They believed that these women were 'more sinned against than sinning', yet it was necessary to present a different face to wealthy benefactors. The

32 Ibid., p. 207.

33 Ibid., p. 220.

34 Ibid., p. 231.

patrons expected their gifts to save 'sinners of the worst kind'.³⁵ And that was what they heard. Carter did try to ameliorate this stance by writing that 'it is never from deliberate choice of the deadly sin that the woman falls, but from other lesser faults, developed under untoward circumstance....'³⁶

The records of the House of Mercy reflected an ecumenical tone. Bonham cites the case of Ellen Sullivan who asked for admittance in 1856. She was an Irish Roman Catholic who had tried to gain entry into the penitentiary of the Good Shepherd at Hammersmith, but they were full so she went on to Clewer. Whether she was referred there is not known, but it does seem possible. At Clewer she was trained as a servant and after one year went into service at a Roman Catholic convent and later married.³⁷ Most Roman Catholics were sent directly to Hammersmith by Clewer. There appears to have been a respectful working relationship between the two religious communities.

The inmates themselves recognised the advantage of a house of mercy over the workhouse. Here they received training for higher levels of domestic service; they were allowed contact with their children (often housed in the convent's orphanage); they were given a complete new

35 Ibid., p. 218. The rest of quote from Carter about the 'penitents' states, '...who not sinning alone, yet bear on earth the undivided burden of their guilt; cast forth through their sin to utter despair, yet in most cases led into it by unnatural circumstance'.

36 CSJB archives, T. T. Carter, 'House of Mercy for the recovery of Fallen Women, Clewer, near Windsor', February 1856.

37 Bonham, p. 192.

outfit of clothes upon leaving; and they received good references and assistance in finding jobs.³⁸ The envy of the penitents' 'advantages' by women without adequate skills, such as Hughes' young girl in Oxford, can be understood. If a penitent served her time and learned a domestic skill, she had a chance for an improved life.

Of the Roman Catholic English foundations, only Taylor's SMG opened a refuge and then not until 1885. The refuge was opened on April 23rd 'at the wish of Her Grace the Dowager Duchess of Buccleuch, and with the approval of His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster'.³⁹ A description of the work was printed to bring in donations and subscriptions:

The fearful increase in the so-called 'social evil' by which so many of our poor Catholic girls are lost...A small refuge...would change their lives immediately.

There are many Protestant shelters of this kind, but hitherto none for our own poor Catholic girls. As it is unadvisable for them to remain long in a small London house, a branch of the Refuge must be shortly established in the country.⁴⁰

The duchess, a convert, was afraid some of the 'poor Catholic girls' in this fallen state might be lured into the Protestant religion. She provided Taylor with the funds to begin the work. Until the country branch was begun, 'The Sisters hope to pass them on to Houses of the

38 Mumm, p. 200.

39 SMG archives, 'Report of the Refuge of Our Lady of Pity, for the Rescue of Catholic Girls and Women', p. 3. The duchess also aided in establishing a permanent fund for the country branch by donating £1,000.

40 SMG archives, brochure, 'Refuge of Our Lady of Pity'.

Good Shepherd..., restore them to their friends, or get work for them'.⁴¹ Two years experience showed that 'passing the girls on' to other asylums 'after a few days residence in London' was only feasible to a certain extent. Many flatly refused to go the Good Shepherd Asylums. Some had already been there three or four times and the nuns could not receive them back again'.⁴² Dealing with recidivism was a problem faced by all communities involved; the sisters were effectively constrained by the different moral perceptions of their 'penitents'. Seasonally, women would return in the cold winter months and leave in the warm months of spring, thus coming for the shelter rather than the rehabilitation.⁴³

Taylor's initial refuge, located at Golden Square, was transferred to Tottenham Court Road in 1887 and became known as the Refuge of St Mary Magdalen. The 'country branch', St Mary Magdalen's Refuge, was opened in Streatham in 1888. Russell House, the country refuge, had been a home of the Protestant Prisoners Aid Society and only had to be 'fitted up with...[a] good laundry'.⁴⁴ The laundry work, as at Clewer, was vital for the funding of the penitentiary work. In the first year at Streatham

41 Anson, Religious, p. 282. Anson states that the Good Shepherd Sisters kept the penitents strictly apart from the sisters, even in church. Like Clewer, they had a Magdalen order with its own rule of work and prayer.

42 Ibid., SMG archives, 'Report of the Refuge...'

43 Bonham, Place, p. 199.

44 SMG archives, 'Refuge of St Mary Magdalen, 4, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road; Country Branch: St Mary Magdalen's Refuge, Russell House, Streatham', p. 5.

the money earned from the laundry accounted for 87% of the maintenance, rent, taxes and incidental expenses.⁴⁵

Records were kept of the circumstance that brought a woman to the refuge and where she went when she left. Streatham, with a capacity of thirty inmates, had eighty-six women pass through its services in the first year of operation. Of that number 40% 'came of their own accord', 23% came from Protestant ladies and sisters, 16% from Catholic ladies and sisters, and the rest from regular and secular clergy. The breakdown of results showed that 39% were sent to other asylums, hospitals or their relatives, 30% left or were dismissed, 17% remained, and 14% went into service or other employment. If success was measured by the number sent on to employment or service, then for the first four years of refuge operation there was a 26% rate of success.⁴⁶ It is difficult to compare these figures with those described by Bishop Wilberforce about Clewer's first eight years (1849-1857) for he used very different terms.⁴⁷ He spoke of the inmates as 'doing well', 'middling', 'doubtful', 'bad', and 'ran away'.⁴⁸ If 'doing well' equates with 'sent to service', then Clewer's success rate was 33% for this period. These figures suggest that approximately 30% of the women who entered the penitentiaries or refuges were sent on to paid, respectable, employment.

45 Ibid., p. 7.

46 Ibid., pp. 2,3,6.

47 Bonham, Place, p. 190. In 1853 Clewer had a capacity of seventy inmates in their House of Mercy.

48 Ibid., p. 221.

While Monsell made it clear that she expected that her sisters were not to talk to the penitents about their past lives and were to maintain the class difference between them in all matters, Taylor was explicit in the conduct she expected from her sisters. In a note headed, 'By Mother's Own Orders', she listed items to be read to the sisters once a month in the refectory:

It is strictly & positively forbidden for any Sister to touch the Refuge girls, their clothes, beds, bedding, or anything belonging to them.

...no Sister is to have anything to do with the girls only the Sisters appointed.

...those Sisters appointed are never to make free with the girls always kind and polite but very firm.

No favourites....⁴⁹

The admonishment not 'to touch' the girls nor any of their belongings might at first seem to stem from a fear of disease, but was more likely to have been a way of preserving their vow of chastity. The restrictions on the sisters' interaction with the girls did not reflect class differences (many of the sisters of the SMG were of the same class as the penitents), but did show an acceptance of contemporary penal standards. Taylor went on to instruct the sisters that no girl should be threatened with being reported to the sister superior unless 'you really mean to do it'.⁵⁰ She knew how people reacted to empty threats and that her sisters would lose

49 SMG archives, 'By Mother's Own Orders', [handwritten note. n.d.]

50 Ibid.

any power to control the girls if idle threats were once begun.

Sundays presented a different problem to both the Roman and Anglican foundresses. Formal rules of treatment were modified. While the inmates of the refuge or house of mercy were kept busy during the week with laundry work, this was not the case on the Lord's day. At Clewer the penitents rose at 6.00 am. After chapel and breakfast they studied the Collect, Epistle and Gospel until the 11.00 am morning service and sermon, and then again from 2.00 pm to 3.00 pm. There was a longer recreation from tea until night prayer and then bed at 9.00 pm.⁵¹ Taylor wrote to the Good Shepherd sisters for information about how they conducted their refuge girls on Sunday. A sister responding to her letter wrote that their 'details are minute & full, but that perhaps is a fault on the right-side & your Sisters can take or leave as they see fit'.⁵²

With the love of pleasure which now possesses everyone we see more & more the necessity of making the children happy as our great means of making them contented and good. [And let the] children see you take an interest in what gives them pleasure.⁵³

She enclosed 'The Penitents Rule of Time at Finchley'. For Sundays it allowed rising one half hour later than on other days, followed by Holy Communion, breakfast and High Mass. There were forty-five minutes to read or talk

51 Bonham, Place, p. 207.

52 SMG archives, Letter dated 29 October 1898.

53 Ibid.

before the Office of the Immaculate Conception, then dinner and recreation until 1.30 pm, when hymns and rosary took place. Between 2.00 pm and bed at 8.30 pm there were book readings, vespers, more recreation, an outdoor walk, supper, recreation and more stories. Taylor used this advice where it would improve her own operation.⁵⁴

In July of 1888, Taylor deliberately went to Streatham to celebrate her Feast day--she was, after all, Mother Mary Magdalen. There she knelt 'surrounded by the poor girls so happy now'. These, too, were her children 'rescued from evil...taught and helped by [her] community'.⁵⁵ She established another refuge when 'Liverpool magistrates...ordered the immediate closure of no less than 300 disorderly houses'; this resulted in their inhabitants being turned out onto the streets.⁵⁶ Sr Mary Agnes remembered that she made sure the girls there had plenty of lemon water when ironing in the laundry. Taylor also made it a point to speak to each of the girls and give each a picture. One of the girls was reported to have said, 'To think that Reverend Mother would go round with these pictures instead of making us go...on our knees to her'.⁵⁷ Her remark sounded like one of a woman who had lived in more than one refuge.

All was not sweetness and light. A newspaper report of October 10, 1893, tells 'the extraordinary adventure

54 Ibid., Time-table enclosed in letter.

55 SMG archives, Volume B, 1887-1891.

56 Devas, p. 283.

57 SMG archives, Mother As We Knew Her, Sr Mary Agnes' testimony.

of a servant girl left alone in London'. One of the inmates of the SMG refuge felt she had been dealt with unfairly. She told a magistrate that she had been made to work from eight in the morning until nine or twelve at night. She also said that the promised clothes were not given by the refuge and that the position they secured for her was unsuitable. A missionary brought the matter before the court to secure proper clothes for her in which to secure respectable work.⁵⁸ A letter to the editor of The Universe refuted the charges saying that the girl had been given a suitable wardrobe, was not made to work those long hours, and the employment--from which she ran away--was respectable. The author of the letter wrote that had the missionary checked the girl's story with the nuns, it need never have gone to court. These episodes were bound to happen while the 'good sisters' were dealing with this 'difficult class of women'.⁵⁹ Communities involved in rescue work were exposed to abuse by 'informants'. The 'children' could become traitors for any perceived slight by the sisters and they were, therefore, open to any anti-Catholic approach in which they could see revenge or personal gain.

Moncell usually referred to the women in her house of mercy as 'the penitents'. Taylor referred to the women in her refuge as 'children' or 'girls'. Their choice of words may have been dictated by their stations

58 SMG archives, Morning Leader & Daily Chronicle, October 14, 1893, clippings, no page number.

59 SMG archives, The Universe, October 15, 1893, clipping, no page number.

in secular life. Monsell was the Hon Harriet Monsell, daughter of Sir Edward O'Brien, Baronet of Dromoland, the widow of the Rev Charles Monsell, and the friend of W. E. Gladstone. Fanny Margaret Taylor was the daughter of the Rev Henry Taylor, Rector of Stoke Rochford, a convert to Roman Catholicism, and the author of numerous books on nursing, religious orders and Catholic martyrs. Though their backgrounds showed a distinct contrast, both Monsell and Taylor were trying to save these women for their own church, yet each had a very different attitude toward their charges.

Ayckbowm, like Taylor, recognised the fallen as women to be restored to society and not necessarily as perpetrators of sin.

Around whom would our Lord hang the millstone today? We seem to see the righteous judge attaching it to the neck of the selfish and unprincipled man who could abandon the poor woman, whom he often deceived under promise of marriage, who could feed, while his baby fasted, who clothed his body in warm clothes, while he cared not what became of his shivering infant of whom God's angel wrote him as 'father'.⁶⁰

FOUNDLINGS

Ayckbowm did not have a refuge, but she addressed an often resultant need--the foundling. Nothing illustrates the continuing controversy between a mother foundress and the hierarchy within the Church of England as well as Ayckbowm's correspondence with Archbishop Benson over the

60 Valiant, p. 151.

establishment of a foundling hospital by her community. In this instance the tables were turned and the constraints were placed on the actions of the hierarchy. Coming as it does towards the end of the period under discussion, its influence in alerting the primacy to need to acknowledge (and thereby control) the sisterhoods is of importance. It will, therefore, be discussed in detail.

From the beginning of her community's work with orphans, foundlings were among the children admitted. Three of the first eight orphans were foundlings from the workhouse.⁶¹ But these were older children. It was not until 1892 that Ayckbowm looked into the need for a foundling home that included infants. This came about because she and her sisters were:

...distressed at the fearful statistics of baby-murder⁶², we resolved to take in some little foundlings. We tried (by way of experiment) advertising under initials for a child to adopt and found it was only too true that many mothers (of illegitimate children) will give them away to anyone so they can rid themselves of the burden. Asked the Sisters if we might try an experiment on a larger scale of a Foundling Home--which they all seemed in favour of.⁶³

She prepared and sent out a circular on this subject. In June of 1894, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edward White

61 LPL, Benson 158 ff 40; Valiant, 147.

62 J. Brandon Curgenvin, On Baby-Farming and the Registration of Nurses (London, 1869), p. 3. Infants in the care of baby-farmers died from 'starvation or administration of opiates' and 'many of them [the baby-farmers] knew that they were expected to let the infants in their care die'. Cited in Shanley, p. 88-89.

63 CSC archives, Journal, 1892.

Benson⁶⁴, heard of this work. In his papers there is an undated, loose resolution:

That the representatives of the Ladies Association in London for Rescue & Preventative Work desire to enter their protest against the principles on which the Homes for Illegitimate Children are conducted by the Church Extension Association Sisterhood at Kilburn on the grounds that they are calculated to increase immorality amongst Society at large and are entirely opposed to all sound Rescue Work. ⁶⁵

These Anglican philanthropic ladies reflect Monsell's attitude toward her 'penitents' in their view of 'immorality amongst Society'. They called the Archbishop's attention to what they considered 'unsuitable' charity. Benson, as a patron of the CSC, inquired about this to the mother superior. Ayckbowm wrote that 'orphans and illegitimate children [were] a class we have always tried to raise and benefit' and that to her knowledge there had been but one such circular prepared. She forwarded it to him. This document was to spark a year-long correspondence that furthered the estrangement of the sisterhood from the archiepiscopate and provided an interesting insight into late Victorian concepts of vice and the appropriate manner in which to deal with it.

Foundling Homes
In connection with the

64 Arthur Christopher Benson, The Life of Edward White Benson . 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1899), passim. Benson was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1883 until his death in 1896.

65 LPL, Benson 158 ff 2. The CSC difficulties with Benson dealt with more than just the foundling issue, but for the purpose of this thesis the emphasis has been placed on that issue and the removal of the Archbishop as patron.

Church Extension Association
 Secretary, Fanny Sheppard
 Office: 44 Randolph Gardens, London NW

Application to our office by Letter; or, if personal between the hours [missing] Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays only.

This Institution has been founded for the purpose of providing a comfortable and happy home for Illegitimate Children.

The Managers adopt them entirely, provide liberally for all their needs, give them an excellent education, and, when old enough, start them in life.

The boys remain under the care of the Managers until they are old enough to earn their own living; the girls until they are 21.

The Managers have no desire to enquire into the private affairs of those who desire to place children in the Home. Accordingly no name or address either of parent or child need be given. All clues to the identity of such children will in this case be destroyed, and they will be henceforward known only by the name chosen for them by the Managers.

Suppose the one true name and address are given, a duly witnessed paper must be signed by the parent, stating that the child was entirely given up to, and adopted by, the Managers of the Home, and promising to make no attempt in the future to see it, or to interfere in any way with its education; also engaging--if these conditions should be at any time violated--to pay the rate of £30 per annum for every year the child has been under the care of the Managers of the Institutions before attempting to claim it.

Children adopted by the Managers must be healthy and not subject to fits. They must have perfect use of their limbs and senses, and be sound in mind and body.

ENTRANCE FEES

The kind of education bestowed on a child depends on the entrance fee paid by the parent or guardian.

(1) The Lowest fee is £20. Children for whom this is paid must be old enough to walk. They will be brought up usually to earn their living as domestic servants, etc. For Infants of the same class £40 must be paid.

A few very destitute cases are received for a lower fee, as funds of the Institution admit of it.

(2) Entrance Fee of £100. children (over two), for whom this sum is paid, will receive a superior education; and be fitted to follow the professions, teaching, etc. If Infants, £120 must be paid.

Should still further advantages be sought for a child, a higher fee must be given.

Two suits of clothes should be sent with each child.

The entrance fee cannot be received in instalments.

When paid, a formal receipt [missing] be given by the Managers, stating that they [missing] responsibility of the child for the future [missing] no further claim upon the parent.

The Managers now have six homes for children in England and three in the colonies, they are all open to inspection every day between the hours of [missing] 4 pm.⁶⁶

To Benson, the approach of the CSC to the problem of the baby-farmers⁶⁷ was a form of encouraging vice. That the sisters should not require the name of the mother upon the entrance of a child into the home was yet again a way of not punishing the guilty party.⁶⁸ He wrote to the 'Mother Superior':

The 4th paragraph states that 'no name or address of either parent or child need be given & that all clues to the identity of such children will in this case be destroyed'. This mode of working I cannot approve. It tends to remove one strong motive which might operate in restraint of evil by the destruction of the knowledge of the facts, and it precludes a repentant parent from recovering in the time to come the unfortunate child or making

66 Ibid, 158 ff 21-2. The document is badly worn and some words have been obliterated by use.

67 Op. cit., Curgenvén and Shanley. Baby-farmers were women, or couples, who took in numerous infants for either a one-time fee of £4 or for weekly fees of varying amounts. Implicit in the arrangement between parties was that the child would not live.

68 This debate continues to this day in the difficulties single mothers have in obtaining social services.

reparation. I could not remain connected with an institution that worked in this manner.⁶⁹

The Archbishop of York, William Dalrymple Maclagan, wrote to Benson asserting that adopting illegitimate children 'without any questions being asked', was 'indirectly [putting] a premium upon vice'.⁷⁰ Earl Nelson, president of the CEA, felt called upon to write a defence of the foundling home. In a paper, sent to the Church Times, he looked at the effort as 'a check to the fearful evil of baby-farming'. He went on to reject the position of Benson and others that this was removing a 'check upon the father'.

I very much doubt if in the selfish gratification of his desires such a thought would ever enter the father's mind or have a deterrent effect at all...The baby-farmer is still known to him.⁷¹

Nelson then asserted the help this home would be to the mothers of the children in giving them a new start in life.

There are others who declare that the most effective way of dealing with the unfortunate mother is not to take her away from the child...but there are many cases where a respectable man would offer a woman marriage but would refuse to take care of the child. There are parents, too, who would receive back the poor mother but would shrink from the disgrace of acknowledging the little one, and the mother, of course, could never go back to

69 Ibid., 158 ff 10-1. 'Precluding' a parent from regaining the child was the object of the release. Some parents were known to reclaim children when they were old enough to contribute their earnings to the family. Ayckbowm wanted to avoid this possibility.

70 Ibid., 158 ff 17-19. His emphasis.

71 Ibid., 158 ff 40.

service without disposing of her charge somehow.⁷²

He closed with an impassioned plea for a Christian attitude.

Many a poor woman forsaken by the world has thus been saved from a life of sin; perchance from the temptation to actual murder and suicide in the depth of despair. But the proffered assistance to her child has opened her heart, brought her to repentance, and maintained her Christian profession.⁷³

Ayckbowm tried to save her community from Benson's indignation by qualifying the provisions for acceptance of foundlings. She wrote to the Archbishop:

A complete record of the children received has been kept, and in each case can be at once identified by merely referring to our books. I ought to say that in five or six instances the name of the mother has been withheld from us by the wish of her parents or other relatives who dreaded exposure. But even in these instances the child could be readily traced by referring to the date of its admission--its age and general description. In future we shall insist upon the name of every mother being given and entered in our books.⁷⁴

Then, just as in the case of members of the community being free to leave at their own wish (which was a strong part of Tait's episcopal concern), she added that 'three mothers who have their children restored to them, have had their request immediately complied with'.⁷⁵ It seems that Benson questioned Ayckbowm's integrity in this matter, for he received assurance from Nelson that such a

72 Ibid. It would be interesting to know Nelson's definition of a 'respectable man'.

73 Ibid., 158 ff 41.

74 Ibid., 158 ff 50-2.

75 Ibid.

promise, from the mother superior, 'will be strictly adhered to'.⁷⁶

These recurring assaults on the CSC brought Ayckbowm and her senior sisters to write to Benson a letter explaining their position.

We know well that our work is likely to become more unpopular as time goes on. Our warm espousal of the cause of Religious Education, Foundlings, starving men, and tortured animals all goes against the spirit of the age and brings us much ill-will and opposition. During the past year, we have seriously considered the subject of patronage and decided to remove the list of Patrons from our circulars in future...We value your approval and encouragement...⁷⁷

By removing the archbishops, as well as other titled gentlemen, from the list of patrons, Ayckbowm claimed to protect these men from the opprobrium being vented against the sisterhood. It was not seen as such by the Archbishop. In disbelief, Benson wrote to Frederick Temple, Bishop of London:

I can't be [taken] off as Patron in the middle of an enquiry [based] on the ground of my being Patron. But I cannot now withdraw from it (that I can see) without saying so publicly. What do you think of this matter???

Temple lost no time in replying.

The Kilburn Sisters are the most comical people I have yet come across. The outrageous audacity of asking the Archbishops to be their Patrons and presently afterwards sending a

76 Ibid., 158 ff 54.

77 Ibid., 158 ff 218.

78 Ibid., 158 ff 222.

message to say they did not want any Patrons any longer is all together too delicious.⁷⁹

Ayckbowm, in removing the Archbishop as patron, had effectively stopped his inquiry into the business of the CSC and its parent corporation the CEA. After a year of correspondence, Ayckbowm was summoned to Lambeth Palace, or as Benson put it, 'I think it very desirable that I should have a conference with you'.⁸⁰ He also requested the presence of Lord Nelson. Ayckbowm put off the first date set by Benson saying she had pressing community business, but they did meet on March 16, 1895. After the meeting, Ayckbowm removed Nelson as president of the CEA and refused to answer any more of the Archbishop's requests for an enquiry. In his diary, dated May 22, 1895, Benson referred to Ayckbowm as 'the most comically audacious Mother in the Universe'.⁸¹ He continued to believe that 'her method of receiving illegitimate children, sum down, no questions asked, entirely taken charge of for life, [was] facilitating vice'.⁸² But his hands were tied. Without the title of patron, granted by the sisterhood, he had no authority under which to pursue an inquiry. Because of the publicity engendered by this ongoing controversy, and other aspects attendant to it, the funding of the CSC suffered until after the death of Ayckbown, indeed, until after the death of Temple in 1902. By maintaining her position and denying the

79 Ibid., 158 ff 223. Unfortunately for the CSC, Temple was to succeed Benson as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1896.

80 Ibid., 158 ff 234.

81 Benson, p. 636.

82 Ibid.

Archbishop an open inquiry into her sisterhood's operation, she had stirred the Church of England into acknowledging the work of the sisterhoods (and brotherhoods) at the Lambeth Conference of 1897 fifty years after their founding.⁸³

The penitentiary work of the sisterhoods was originally based on a class obligation. Monsell believed that she and her community were saving lost women for the church. From the work she came to realize that the sin of the fallen was not solely a moral problem, but one of economics as well. The women under her care were trapped by lack of education, both secular and religious, and must be trained to support themselves honourably. The methods of Taylor, entering the refuge work later in the century and from the Roman Catholic viewpoint, differed only slightly (by its lack of visible class constraints) from Monsell in understanding that all women, without adequate means and a proper faith, might come to the same situation. She looked upon the penitents as her children who needed her help and not from a benevolent noblesse oblige prospect. She offered a helping hand along the way rather than a stigmatized reform system. In addition she was saving them for her

83 LPL, Lambeth Conference 1908, Reports and Encyclical Letter, 'Report of the Committee appointed in 1897 to consider the relation of Religious Communities within the Church to the Episcopate'. In the evidence supporting 'A Letter to the Bishops assembled in Conference at Lambeth, July 1897', there are direct references to Emily Ayckbowm and the Sisters of the Church. These items will be discussed in chapter 7 of this thesis.

faith. The penitentiaries run by these foundresses were supported by both lay and clerical members of their respective churches. Ayckbowm, however, took a more militant approach in defending the right of the fallen to a second chance by providing a foundling home. Her work was seen by the episcopate and lay rescue workers as encouraging vice, not preventing it. She may have constrained the power of the archbishop by refusing the constraint of his inquiry, but for her strong stance she suffered a reduction in her community's funding from a public that agreed, in part, with Benson. She did enable the fallen woman who had a child to rebuild her life and at the same time offered that child a life arguably better than the one that would have resulted from the mother retaining her offspring. Women, religious women in this case, were seeing that the unfortunate of their sex needed help not condemnation, and they were ready with that help despite occasionally resistant 'penitents', social and ecclesiastical disapproval and the cost to their own communities.

Chapter 7

EXPANSION: OTHER WORKS, OTHER FIELDS

The mother foundresses faced additional constraints as their work expanded throughout the world. While at home they operated schools, hospitals, penitentiaries, and foundling homes, they also opened orphanages, convalescent homes, mission houses and creches; established depots, printing shops, embroidery classes, and wafer making; pioneered teacher's guilds and prevention centers; and provided parochial assistance. From Bournemouth to Newcastle-upon-Tyne and from Broadstairs to Liverpool they started branch works. Branches also emerged in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Cardiff, and Dublin within the United Kingdom and Rome, Florence, Paris, and Malta in Europe. World-wide they put down roots in Sydney, Bombay, Johannesburg, Urmi, Montreal, Honolulu, and Boston. Within fifty-five years of their initial foundations, in effect, they provided social services for the world's underclasses as well as educational institutions for all classes. The projects of the foundresses took many forms. This chapter will highlight examples of the work they entered into and the constraints placed upon them in England, then contrast those experiences with the relatively welcoming atmosphere of their foreign filiations. The epilogue will show how episcopal response to their growth and independence at the turn of the century became the ultimate constraint.

MISSIONS

Mission work took various forms. Two of the forms were family, especially women and children, and men. These missions brought upon them constraints by the clergy, the Charity Organization Society, the public and the poor themselves. While most mission work was directed toward the family, Ayckbowm founded missions for men.

Ayckbowm entered an area rarely addressed by women religious--missions for men. One such case was the navvies building the Metropolitan Railway between Kilburn and Brondesbury in the winter of 1878-79. When snow stopped the work, the men huddled in groups on the street. She invited ten of them in for hot tea, bread and butter. Within weeks, there were 130 navvies arriving for 'Men's Sunday Teas'. This led to a night shelter and then a place where they could come to read, write letters and play games. When the railway work moved on to Harrow in 1880, she built a hut for hot meals and another 'lounge'. Finally, there was a permanent coffee house in Kilburn for them.¹

Food depots became an integral adjunct to the work of Ayckbowm's CSC, just as school meals had been to their education efforts. Penny basins of soup were sold to the labourers, sailors, porters and factory workers at the London Docks. A restaurant was started in Paternoster Row which sold beer with the meals. For this Ayckbowm

1 Valiant, pp. 171-176.

was criticized by the temperance forces.² She replied that if the men could have beer with their meal then they would not go to public houses where only beer was served. She was a believer in moderation not abstention. From the Paternoster location vans took hot soup, pudding and bread to the docks. For a half-penny working men could have a meal. During the London Dock strike in 1889 the price was reduced to a farthing.³ In a circular letter to the sisters, Ayckbowm wrote:

There was something very remarkable in the way in which a vast body of men (over 100,000) clung together and supported one another...It gave one an insight into the strength and endurance of our working population... One feature of the Strike, most gratifying to ourselves, was the attitude of the strikers towards the Sisters. While they upset and forced back the barrows of other vendors who ventured into the Dock, the Sisters' trucks were left unmolested, the men recognising in them their true friends and sympathizers.⁴

The behaviour of the dockworkers with their 'emphasis upon order, discipline and self-restraint' won them not only Ayckbowm's approval, but also that of the middle classes. Indeed, the London Dock Strike established these men as

2 Brian Harrison, Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872 (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), pp. 389-405; Lilian Lewis Shiman, Crusade against Drink in Victorian England (London: Macmillan, 1988), pp. 4-17. Harrison argues the political and religious reactions to the temperance movement with emphasis on the early nineteenth century. Shiman shows that 'early temperance advocates believed controlled, moderate drinking to be the best'. This was known as the 'moderation movement'. It was succeeded in the 1880s and 1890s by 'teetotalers' who believed in abstinence as 'all drinking of alcoholic beverages was wrong'. Ayckbowm's belief in moderation was unpopular because many teetotalers were 'firmly established in local political circles' by this time.

3 CSC archives, Our Work (November 1881).

4 CSC archives, Quarterly, (Winter 1881).

'respectable working class'.⁵ Ayckbowm, remembering their behaviour, sent Sr Etheldreda to the Port of Hull to establish the same kind of work in 1897.⁶

Of the various works entered into by the foundresses orphanages proved to be a popular work, especially among the Anglicans, but government inspection of these institutions brought the sisterhoods under secular scrutiny. If the foundress accepted grants from poor law guardians, then inspection was mandatory. Rarely was there a problem, but the threat of intervention was always present. Sellon established soup kitchens as early as 1852. In Devonport she fed between eighty and one hundred old people a day. She also had six 'Houses of Hope'. These were 'model lodging houses' for poor families which had schools for the children associated with them. In some instances her work preceded that of Octavia Hill's settlement houses.⁷

In conjunction with orphanages convalescent homes were operated--as much as they were with hospitals. Ayckbowm began her work with orphans in 1875. She looked upon the work with orphans as a 'preventive' enterprise. By bringing up these children in happy surroundings and training them for service, away from the workhouse, she felt she diminished the possibility of their falling into sin. Her first orphans came from the workhouse in Chester and were brought to Kilburn, London. By 1876

5 Gareth Stedman Jones, Outcast London: A Study in the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 315-321.

6 Valiant, p. 187.

7 Anson, Call, p. 263.

there were sixty-three girls in the orphanage. That number increased to three hundred in 1886, including some small boys. She devised an 'adopt an orphan' scheme. For £12 per year a person could become an 'Adopter'. The 'adopter' was referred to as the 'Lady'. She was also responsible for treats for the children on birthdays, Christmas, and special days. One child was delighted to find out, 'My lady is a gentleman!'⁸ Convalescent homes were set up at the seaside for the children to renew their health with a change of air. Many of the slum children had never seen the seashore and begged to remain away from their homes. One girl of nine from the East End dreaded returning to her home where she was 'whacked and cut up' if she did not make her quota of seven dozen matchboxes daily.⁹ Sellon established an orphanage in Devonport in 1850. There twenty-seven children were boarded, lodged, clothed and educated.¹⁰ Monsell, too, had an orphanage at Clewer.

When hard times drove women to work in factories and away from home, the foundresses opened creches for them. Creches were of utmost importance to women who could no longer work in their homes. Such was the case in Norwich, when those working in the shoe trade were thrown out of work in 1885. Mothers who had to go to factories to work had no place for their younger children. Lavinia Crosse and her co-foundress, Adele Tayler, of the Community of All Hallows began a creche in a vacant non-

8 Valiant, pp. 95-102.

9 CSC archives, Our Work (July 1873).

10 Anson, Call, p. 263.

conformist chapel in 1885. Tayler described the surroundings:

...cots, a 'fold' consisting of a large mattress fenced in for the adventurous rovers of two and three, while the older ones enjoyed themselves on swings and with various games. All wore a white pinafore over a red dress, a necessary precaution as most of them came from 'rat-infested' courts and over-crowded yards.¹¹

A second creche was established during the Boer War when wives replaced soldier husbands in the factories.¹²

Printing shops were a form of missionary work. The sisters published catechisms, minutes of retreats, children's Bible stories and religious educational guides, as well as training young women in the printing trade. Ayckbowm opened a 'Publishing department and Bookshop at 5 and 6 Paternoster Row'.¹³ The sisters sold books, Sunday School materials, pamphlets on education and teaching (written by Ayckbowm), also hymn books, catechisms, and leaflets 'explaining the Christian faith'.¹⁴ She produced the Banner of Faith, suitable for an 'inset' in parish papers, which cost a halfpenny a month. The Banner contained 'anecdotes from the mission field, stories of adventure, tales from Church history and explanations of the Faith and Church services'. It quickly reached a large circulation. One thousand copies of the Banner were 'despatched to Calcutta' only five

11 Sr Violet, p. 45.

12 Ibid., p. 48.

13 Valiant, p. 68.

14 Ibid.

months after its origination in May of 1882.¹⁵ Ayckbowm saw it as an answer to the 'need of wholesome, cheap and attractive literature to counteract the flood of infidel and vicious publications ... forcibly brought home to us'.¹⁶

The Annals of SMG record that Taylor had 'a printing press...set up in St Anne and St Joseph's convent, Percy Street and orders taken for work'.¹⁷ Her long association with the Month and the Messenger made her no stranger to the value of religious publications in spreading the faith.

Printing presses offered training for poor women under the management of the sisters. Embroidery, too, offered training for poor women. Classes brought together women who donated their time, the sisters and young women learning the craft--all for the benefit of the missions. Altar clothes, copes, mitres, other vestments and furnishings brought high prices and acknowledgement to the makers. Benett began production of vestments and church furnishings for community use in 1873. A few years later she established an embroidery school at Lloyd Square, Pentonville, to train young women and accept orders from the outside. Through their chaplain, Rev G. Hollings, she came into contact with J. N. Comper, later Sir Ninian Comper. The women produced

15 CSC archives, Annals (May 5, 1882).

16 CSC archives, Our Work (September 1881).

17 SMG archives, Annals, January 1886.

ecclesiastical vestments to his exacting designs. One order received came from Sir Stuart Coats, Papal Chamberlain, who gave a full set of vestments to Cardinal Verdier of Paris for use in Notre Dame Cathedral. Wafer making became an adjunct to orders for vestments.¹⁸ Monsell prevailed upon C. E. Kempe to design vestments and furnishings for the CSJB.¹⁹ Hers was a similar experience to Benett's. Embroidery work was, seemingly, welcomed by the prelates, as it was 'woman's work' or, perhaps more than that, because they could see the usefulness of it in their own lives. 'Usefulness' was the key to Anglican clerical approval of the sisterhoods.

Depots were not as glamorous as embroidery. They were shops, much like the Oxfam stores of today. Cast-off clothing and usable items were donated for sale, at a nominal price, to benefit the works of the sisters. They served a dual role, providing affordable clothing for the poor and financing other mission activity. Ayckbowm's depots, as described in the section on funding, were an initial source of income for the mission efforts of her foundation. Warburton, too, sold clothing, only she sold it to the poor of the East End rather than those of north London. Her assistance in epidemics unlocked the defensive barrier put up by the poor for the sisters of St Saviour's Priory. She established the Guild of St Michael and All Angels for girls aged ten to twenty five, as a preventive measure, to give them some place to spend

18 SSB archives, 1866-1966, p. 10.

19 Bonham, Joyous, p. 45.

their free time other than the public house or the music hall. As most of them worked from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm, the guild room was open from 6.00 pm until 10.00 pm. There they had books, a piano, and a warm fire available to them. Once a week there was a sale 'partly of old dresses, boots and underclothing...and partly new material, which the Sisters procured at wholesale cost'.²⁰ There was also a 'Boot Club' where the girls could deposit money, that earned interest, to purchase new, or newer, boots. It cost the girls 1 d. per week to belong to the guild and the membership numbered about two hundred. Cookery lessons, too, were a part of the guild's activity.²¹ The result of the work in guilds and confraternities was to reach the young people with the Christian message as well as to provide them with clothes and a venue for recreation.

Teacher's guilds became very popular in the last quarter of the century. Ayckbowm became involved because of her concern about the lack of religious education in the new Board schools. She founded the Church Teachers' Union (CTU) in 1885 for teachers who were church women whether they taught in Church or Government schools.²² The CTU provided retreats, quiet days and conferences for these teachers' spiritual refreshment. If religion could not be taught in the schools, then she wanted the teachers to be afforded the strength she believed it offered. She also founded the Religious Education Union

20 Warburton, S Saviour's, p. 48.

21 Ibid., p. 44.

22 Valiant, p. 83.

to help and improve church schools. It helped many priests persist against the Board Schools by giving them grants to make necessary repairs on schools.²³ Mason was involved in guilds for teachers before she founded the Community of the Holy Family. She served as secretary for seven years to the Guild of the Epiphany founded by Canon Francis Holland. Later her community held retreats for the members of this guild.²⁴

Parish work for the foundresses was the most problematical of all their works for it was dependent upon the incumbent of the church involved. While one vicar might desire the assistance of the communities the next might not. This was especially the case in the Anglican sisterhoods. A high church priest might be replaced by one of evangelical or broad church leanings who wanted nothing to do with the 'Romish' sisterhoods. Brownlow Byron's experience at St Jude's recorded this dependance and also related the kinds of parish work undertaken. The Rev John Eddowes of St Jude's, Manningham, Bradford, asked Brownlow Byron for some of her sisters to do much-needed parochial work. He made an appeal in the parish magazine:

It has long been my wish to secure for the parish the ministries of mercy which a Sisterhood alone affords...through the kindness of the Mother of the All Saints' Sisterhood...[there will be] a Branch House in this parish.²⁵

23 Ibid., p. 84.

24 Sixty Years, pp. 2, 7.

25 Mayhew, pp. 72-73.

The sisters helped with confirmation instruction, organized confraternities and appealed for cast-off clothing for the children in their ragged schools. They started 'Quiet Half-Days' and an annual 'Retreat for the Ladies'. Eddowes provided daily communion for the sisters. That was in 1873. In 1886 he gave up his living and was replaced by the Rev Edward Brice. Brice fell out with the sisters over auricular confession. They wanted it taught and practised; he did not. He wrote to his parishioners:

For many years the Sisterhood had done admirable work in the Church and parish, and under the wise rule of the superior had at all times worked harmoniously with, but in due subservience to the Vicar, as the responsible head of the parish. All this is now changed.²⁶

'Due subservience' to a new vicar would be more than difficult for sisterhoods if he were an evangelical and would not provide them with confession and daily communion. This was the main reason for parish work to be given up. These women were older than many 'new vicars' and had been doing parish work longer than most. But it was the vicar who remained the 'responsible head' of the parish. The ministry of the sisterhood in parish work was conducted only within his jurisdictional authority. Shiman incorrectly assessed that deaconesses were more 'widely known' by the public than the sisterhoods.²⁷ She assumed that from the knowledge of deaconess work measured by the priest in charge. Deaconesses had to

26 Ibid., pp. 74-75.

27 Lilian Lewis Shiman, Women and Leadership, p. 96.

take their orders from him; sisters did not. If deaconesses were favourably assessed it reflected directly on the parish incumbent. Foundresses were free to send their members where they were wanted, provided there was someone there to work with them. They were also free to withdraw the sisters when obstacles were put in the way and prevented them from sustaining their spiritual life. Deaconesses had no such choice. As Ayckbowm recorded:

A Mildmay Deaconess called. They also find the English clergy very difficult sometimes to work with so jealous of their influence.²⁸

Potter tried to avoid the entanglements of parochial work. It took her away from the main dedication of her institute to the care of the dying. Bishop Bagshawe insisted that her sisters 'work at any task he assigned them, not matter in what district it be'.²⁹ She had an insufficient number of members to answer his directions and still continue with her objective. She wanted to minister to the sick, to have 'the suffering consoled and comforted; the poor fed; [and] the children instructed'.³⁰ Bagshawe constrained the objectives of Potter with his insistence on parish work. Once her institute left his diocesan control, she regained the direction of the work and with increased membership was able to enter into parochial services of her own accord.

28 CSC archives, Journal, January 21, 1885. Ayckbowm's emphasis.

29 Dougherty, p. 130.

30 Ibid., p. 132.

Constraints were encountered by the mother foundresses in their work with missions for men, orphans, women, and in their parochial work. Ayckbowm was ostracized by the followers of the Charity Organization Society (COS) for not vetting the recipients of her charity.³¹ Although the navvies were underemployed and not unemployed, they were members of the working class who should have been fending for themselves and not been the recipients of charity. Sellon had been similarly accused, though not by the COS, during her relocation of silk workers in 1861.³² Ayckbowm's attitude was straight forward, if people were starving, she fed them. The work of orphanages was constrained by the clergy especially when communities, like Clewer, had penitentiaries. The fear held by the clergy was that the public might assume that these were the children of the fallen women. Bishop Wilberforce, who had not wanted the two works undertaken by the same community, made it clear that, 'The Orphanage is in no way connected with the House of Mercy...The children are orphans, the children of respectable parents...Illegitimate children are not admitted.'³³ Ayckbowm's sisters in Paternoster Row needed a confessor

31 Gertrude Himmelfarb, Poverty and Compassion: The Moral Imagination of the Late Victorians (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), pp. 185-206. The Charity Organisation Society was founded between 1868-1870 to 'coordinate and rationalize' the efforts of charities so that they did not 'aggravate the problem of poverty by the evil' of "indiscriminate" giving to the poor. Charity should be reserved for the 'deserving poor'.

32 LPL, Tait Papers, 124 ff 155, a-e. A panic in the silk trade caused many firms to close and some of the workers were transplanted into Yorkshire to be retrained for the cotton industry.

33 Bonham, Joyous, p. 29.

nearby to maintain their spiritual life. Ayckbowm sought the Rev Robert Suckling from St Alban's, Holborn for the task 'once a fortnight'. His reply to her request was 'stiff and cold'. The sisters could come to him, but only on Fridays at 10.15 a.m. She wrote in her journal:

Four or five Sisters to go in all weather and wait about, in a church, to save one man a five minutes drive in an omnibus! Cannot help thinking he has been badly advised, for have always heard he is a humble and good man, and why should he all of a sudden take to writing as if he were Pope or Cardinal--a man not to be taken liberties with.

I don't think either they could get there at 10.15, indeed I remember I told him they could only make their confessions in the afternoon--so he might as well say he would see them on the 31st of April or Sept.³⁴

The public, too, constrained the mission work. The efforts of Tayler and the CAH were criticized by such men as C. B. Hawkins in his Norwich, a Social Study, as being the dangerous kind of dole that blinded 'the Guardians to their responsibilities'.³⁵ Such criticism, however, did not stop their work. Even the embroidery work was not without difficulties and constraints. Gream, the co-foundress of SSM, began an embroidery school at East Grinstead. Her successor moved it to Queen Square, London, where poor women and girls were trained to earn a living. They supplied cathedrals and churches in England and overseas. This endeavour brought about an unforeseen constraint. The sisters involved separated from SSM in 1902 and 'went over to Rome', taking many of the

34 CSC archives, Journal, 20 January 1885. Suckling was the brother of Anna Maria Suckling who became Mother Mary Augustine of the Society of All Saints in 1913.

35 Ibid., p. 44.

'embroideresses' with them. The wafer-making equipment was returned to the SSM, but embroidered 'treasures' went with them to the Benedictines of Farnborough Abbey, Hampshire.³⁶ Besides difficulties with their own personnel, the foundresses also experienced constraints from the very people they were dedicated to serve. Their works with the poor were not as welcoming an enterprise as might be assumed. An example of the reception of women religious into a slum area was that of Elizabeth Neale's encounter with the populace of Wellclose Square, St George's-in-the-East. She founded the Community of the Holy Cross, and worked with Rev Charles Lowder at St Peter's London docks. When she appeared with her companions in this neighbourhood it gave rise to local curiosity. As she and her sisters were settling in several boys and girls climbed up the railings to look in, and said 'Oh! see! they eat like other people!' She went to shut the shutters when a woman appeared and stayed her hand with a knife saying that she would 'cut it off' if they could not watch.³⁷ Such was the climate in which the sisters lived and worked. The task of gaining the confidence of the poor proved to be a constraint which took time and effort to overcome. The perseverance of the foundresses overcame the obstacles to their work presented by these constraints.

36 SSM archives, Doing, p. 45.

37 CHC archives, undocumented loose printed pages on Lowder, possibly from Charles Fuge Lowder, Ten Years in S George's Mission (London, 1867), p. 16.

EXPANSION

When the sisterhoods and congregations expanded outside England, they were welcomed by bishops and clergy alike. The Anglicans were sought by bishops in the colonies and in the United States to teach church doctrine to the native populations; the Romans were encouraged to add their numbers to the religious already present in Catholic countries and, like the Anglicans, to provide lessons in church doctrine for indigenous people.

All America for our own. Ah, St Peter who walked on waters by faith, take us to America, to California, Texas, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston & Cincinnati.³⁸

Thus wrote Connelly in 1854. As an American convert, founding a community in England, she contemplated expanding her work to her native land at this early date. Most foundresses were anxious to establish their communities and let dreams of expansion come in due course. In this process there is a noticeable contrast between the Anglican sisterhoods and the Roman congregations; the Anglicans expanded throughout the British Empire and the Romans expanded into Catholic Europe. The one exception to their filiations was that both chose to set down foundations in the United States.

The expansion itself did not begin until the late 1860s and early 1870s. Where the Anglicans had met with diocesan disdain at home, they were welcomed readily by

38 Flaxman, p. 230.

the bishops of foreign climes as a way of assisting the growth of the church among the native populations. The Romans found that opposition, so prevalent at home, was almost non-existent in the welcoming Catholic national atmosphere.

Sellon was the first of the Anglo-Catholics to establish a branch house outside of England. In 1866 she was approached by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha of the Sandwich Islands to begin mission houses in their land. Bishop Stanley supported the idea. As Sellon wrote to Wood in December of that year:

If all is well I believe I must go to Honolulu for a couple of months; the Bishop thinks it would assist our plans there and proposes accompanying me round the various Islands to settle on the best locations for the Mission Sisters' Stations.³⁹

Accompanied by three sisters she sailed to the Hawaiian archipelago and began work among the native girls. She was the only Anglican foundress to go overseas for a first foundation outside England--others sent sisters, while they remained at home. Two years later, Sellon compared the welcoming attitude of bishops outside the British Isles to her experience in setting up her community:

My thoughts have this year been as much occupied almost on foreign as on home work. One thing has greatly refreshed me--the Bishop of Calcutta offers me, himself to administer the three vows of a public religious profession to the Sisters when I found a House there. But I tell you this in confidence as I do not wish to expose him to trouble and controversy prematurely on this subject... and I cannot go

39 PH, Pusey to Wood, Vol. I, No. 14.

to India this year. Also I have received a very pleasant hearty address from the American Church offering cordial assistance and welcome to a detachment of the Society.

... this is sufficient to shew you how the Religious Life is valued and welcomed in all quarters of the globe.

Twenty one years ago I was nearly killed for wearing the black dress and black cross and now I can only say 'See what hath God wrought!'⁴⁰

After years of controversy in England with the bishops and the public, she saw her efforts vindicated.

Shortly after this (1870), Connelly set up a branch work in Toul, Alsace-Lorraine. The school her sisters began consisted of both French and German children. This was not the most auspicious time for such a venture. Three days after she bought the Hotel de Rigny and returned to England, France declared war on Germany. She wrote to an unidentified 'Monsieur':

The sisters have chosen to remain at Toul in order to devote themselves to the poor wounded of this frightful war. I have sent them money for their journey in order to tempt them to return, but I have had no answer.⁴¹

Then she added that she prayed for 'our dear France'. The sisters did return to England, leaving the German children with the Swiss consul in Paris and bringing the French children with them. One month after the peace was signed they returned to Toul. Connelly was determined 'not to leave France'.⁴² She gave up the foundation in Toul in 1875, but she returned to Neuilly-sur-Seine to begin again. She wanted her community to have 'contact

40 Ibid., September 10 [1868]. Emphasis hers.

41 Flaxman, p. 320.

42 Ibid., p. 321. Support of the SHCJ school was impossible for parents nearly destitute after the Franco-Prussian War.

with the French Church', and so it did.⁴³ Connelly, like Sellon, travelled to the foreign branches. She made the journey to the United States in 1867 after years of discussion of the foundation with the Bishop of Philadelphia, James Wood.⁴⁴

Brownlow Byron, who nursed the German soldiers in the Franco-Prussian War, was requested to send her sisters to Baltimore to begin a branch house. Late in 1872 at a chapter meeting she named three sisters to sail to the United States the next week. Two of them heard of this that day for the first time.⁴⁵ The priest at the Chapel of St Mary the Virgin in Baltimore was anxious to find good schooling for the children of his congregation. He had had difficulty in finding financial support for his proposed schools. 'The colored [sic] people are ambitious for their children', he told the sisters. By 1874 they had established St Mary's Home for Little Colored [sic] Boys and St Katharine's Home for Colored [sic] Girls. It was said that 'the children were beginning to speak with an English accent'.⁴⁶ The sisters also assisted black women in the church to begin their own religious society, the Community of St Mary and All Saints.⁴⁷

43 Ibid., p. 322. The SHCJ were forced out of France by the Combes Law of 1904 that called for the expulsion of all teaching congregations.

44 Gompertz, pp. 334ff. Connelly's institute's trials in beginning this work are related in the chapter on funding.

45 Mayhew, p. 138.

46 Ibid., p. 141.

47 Ibid. The last remaining sister of this community joined a Canadian sisterhood in 1917.

The next year the Bishop of Capetown appealed to Brownlow Byron for sisters to teach the whites, blacks, and 'coloureds' of his diocese. Again she sent a contingent of sisters. A call from Bombay was answered in 1878 to both teach and nurse the native population.⁴⁸ By the time of her death, her community had branch houses on four continents. She never visited any of the new branches.

Mary Francis Basil, foundress of the Franciscan Congregation of the Five Wounds at Mill Hill and former member of the Society of St Margaret's East Grinstead, was called by Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore in 1881 to undertake work with the 'coloured people of the United States'.⁴⁹ Like Brownlow Byron's work in the same city, it led Basil to establish a branch house that became its American Province headquarters.

Potter opened a branch house in Rome in 1882 for the LCM and then one in Florence in 1886. She had been informed that Florence had more English people than Rome. Then she was called to build a hospital in Sydney (1889) and one in Chicago (1892). When she at last managed to extricate her community from the control of Bishop Bagshawe she moved her mother house to Rome upon final approbation of her rule. She went on to found hospitals in County Cloyne, Ireland and in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. She was never well enough to travel to other

48 Ibid., pp. 151, 163.

49 Anson, Religious, p. 269.

continents, but she sent qualified sisters to begin these works.⁵⁰

Before the final approbation of her rule and constitution, Taylor began a branch house in Rome. She wrote^{to} the sisters at home: 'We are to have a house in Rome, by the special desire of the Holy Father'.⁵¹ She could not believe her good fortune. Other congregations waited years to establish in Rome and hers did so at the request of Pope Leo, himself. She lost no time in printing a circular:

The Institute of the Poor Servants of the
Mother of God
16 Via San Sebastianello, 1st Floor

Scope of the Institute

1st The perfection of the Sisters themselves by the faithful imitation of the Mother of God.
2nd The moral and religious instruction of the young, especially among the English.
3rd The washing, mending and care of Church linen and vestments.

The washing and ironing of the linen of private families.

And all this in order to aid the poor.⁵²

All the methods that had held her community together for fifteen years were still in place. The laundry that had always been the financial backbone of houses and works continued in the Eternal City. To Taylor, a house in Rome was a dream come true yet joy of success did not make her change the ways that had got her there.

Four years later she began a foundation in Paris.

50 Dougherty, pp. 183-193.

51 SMG archives, December 1885.

52 Devas, pp. 257-258.

I write to give you news of a new foundation, and a very important one--namely Paris--that great and wonderful City. Other religious orders beg and pray to get into Rome and Paris--we are invited to both places.⁵³

In her exuberance at this news, she still had time to admonish sisters who were not remorseful for breaking silence. She then held out the reward of a transfer to the new branches for a true nun: '...at Paris--Rome, London, Dublin and everywhere, we want true nuns'.⁵⁴ The religious well-being of her 'children' as well as the growth of the community in the world were complementary to each other, a fact she never lost sight of. It was only after her death that the SMG established houses in the United States, Africa and South America.

The co-foundress of All Hallows, Tayler, was approached by Bishop Sillitoe of New Westminster, British Columbia, 'to bring Christian faith to the Indian population' of western Canada in 1884. Five sisters began the branch mission in Yale on the Frazer River, one hundred miles north of Vancouver. By 1888 they received a Government grant of £1500 for the education of twenty-five native children.⁵⁵

Perhaps the most complete record of founding foreign branch houses was left by Ayckbowm. In Our Work, September 1890, she wrote:

The Sisters of the Church have for years been almost overwhelmed with entreaties to undertake work abroad.

53 SMG archives, Volume B, 1887-1890, September 23, 1890. Emphasis hers.

54 Ibid.

55 All Hallows, pp. 36-39.

We have felt that Canada with its vast multitude of emigrants, claims imperatively such help as we may be able to give.⁵⁶

Her reasoning came from her work with the poor in London who often voiced the belief that emigration was their only hope. From this she wondered about those who had arrived in a strange land and found themselves alone. In the community magazine she told how she sent an advance party of two sisters--later followed four sisters and eight orphans. The larger party sailed from Liverpool to Montreal for a total sum of £132. Ayckbowm wrote to Sr May on October 21, 1890:

You may have had our cable, 'Start both centres!'

The way seems quite clear, and we should not have spared a second very capable sister except with the idea that she could head another Centre.⁵⁷

Both centres were started; one in Hamilton and one in Toronto. The letter also told the sisters to open new and second-hand clothing stores and bookshops. Because of the trouble she encountered selling the controversial Lux Mundi⁵⁸ in their store on Paternoster Row, she advised them to devote 'only a small part of the establishment' to books. But her greatest joy came from

56 CSC archives, Our Work (September 1890).

57 CSC archives. Sr May was Mary Buchanan-Riddell and the other sister, Sr Frederica, was Frederica Paget. Both were professed in 1884.

58 Moorman, History, p. 397. The Lux Mundi was a volume of essays by Oxford scholars edited by Charles Gore that accepted the 'new critical views' of the Old Testament and broke with the conservative position of older high churchman of the Pusey and Tractarian school such as H. P. Liddon. It was Gore's 'The Holy Spirit and Inspiration' that caused the greatest uproar. He believed the Bible a 'vehicle for spiritual truth' and that its contents were not 'literally' true.

hearing that the sisters were met at the boat by the Bishop and welcomed into his diocese. Her December 1891 Our Work bore witness to her pride in this acknowledgement by the Canadian diocesans:

The Sisters have been repeatedly asked by bishops and clergy in various provinces of Canada, to begin educational work under their auspices.

1892 brought a call from Madras, and Ayckbowm again sent two sisters to begin the work. In one year they had over one hundred pupils in an Anglo-Indian school for girls. In 1894 she opened a boarding school for English children at Ootacamund and were asked to start one in Rangoon, Burma. With all this acceptance of her work coming so rapidly from all over the globe, it was tempting for Ayckbowm to open a 'high class' boarding school in New York City. There the pupils could be charged the great sum of £200 a year. But there, also, expenses were very dear. She had to give up the work in 1899, when troubles at home lessened the society's overall income.⁵⁹ After the flush of success in Canada, the Bishop of Adelaide wrote 'I ask in my own name, and I ask you in the interest of my diocese...to come and help us'. In her diary she recorded how she sent four sisters with 'five of the best orphans...I took them out before the start and got them workboxes, satchels, and many useful things with which they were delighted'.⁶⁰

59 CSC archives, Our Work (November 1894).

60 CSC archives, Mother's Diary, August 4, 1892.

But when she expanded into Sydney, she encountered a evangelical Bishop of Sydney, Saumarez Smith, who refused to welcome the sisters. Nevertheless, within the year, her community had branch houses in Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Hobart, as well as Dunedin, New Zealand. She summed up her view on the expansion of the Sisters of the Church in a circular letter:

It is essential...that our Sisters should be able and willing to found Centres of Church life and labour, not only among the teeming population of the great towns of England, but also in her most distant colonies and dependencies. Consequently, our Mother House must now be regarded more and more as the Training quarters of the Society, the place where its members will be instructed and exercised in that unity of thought, aim and action, which is so indispensable to success.⁶¹

Ayckbowm's community was in a period of rapid expansion. Within two years she was to become embroiled in the disheartening conflict over foundlings with Archbishop Benson. But in the expansion of her community and its acceptance in the dominions, she tasted the joy of spreading the Christian message throughout the world.

The controversies experienced by the foundresses in their missionary works in England were rare in their expansion works around the world. While some foundresses were able to make trips abroad to the new missions, others were not. Yet all were confident in the ability of the sisters they sent in their stead. It was not only for Ayckbowm that expansion brought a vindication of her labours, but also for other

61 CSC archives, Quarterly (Spring 1892).

foundresses, Roman and Anglican alike. Constraints in England were the 'fire' that hardened their resolve. Through prayer and works, many of them lived to see their foundations making a difference.

EPILOGUE

On June 7th, 1884, Mother Emily Ayckbowm, Community of the Sisters of the Church (CSC), recorded in her journal a conversation she had had with Mr Kirkpatrick, Rector of St Augustine's, Kilburn:

Asked him [Mr Kirkpatrick] what he thought about Bishop Webb's book on Sisterhoods--and agreed his ideas about their government (by a father) are quite preposterous. Also his saying that it is for men to originate plans and women to carry them out. In real truth the only Sisterhoods (in the English Church) that have done well, have been originated by women, and men have made such a mess of Religious communities among themselves that it is absurd they should try to subject Sisterhoods now to their control.⁶²

The book she referred to was Sisterhood Life and Woman's Work: in the Mission-Field of the Church, by Allan Becher Webb, Bishop of Grahamstown, published in 1883. The seeds of their basic disagreement, as to the form and governance of a sisterhood, were to surface again in the notes of the Lambeth Conference's committee delegated to 'consider the subject of the Relation of Religious Communities with the Church to the Episcopate'.⁶³

⁶² CSC archives, Mother Emily's Journal, 7 June 1884.

⁶³ LPL, Conference of Bishops of the Anglican Communion Holden at Lambeth Palace in July 1897. Encyclical Letter from the Bishops with the Resolutions and Reports, (London: Society for the Promoting of Christian Knowledge, 1897), p. 57.

Webb was a member of the report committee. The distrust of women and their ability of leadership, evident in the three centuries from the Dissolution to the refounding of the sisterhoods, was still present at the close of the Victorian Era.

The mother foundresses of the 1870s and 1880s were at the height of their individual powers. They organized, administered, trained, funded, and envisioned their communities. There were between sixty and seventy sisterhoods in the Church of England in 1897, and only four viable brotherhoods--Society of St John the Evangelist (1866), Order of St Paul (1889), Community of the Resurrection (1892), and Society of the Sacred Mission (1893).⁶⁴ Nine other brotherhoods founded in this era did not succeed.⁶⁵ The object of the Lambeth committee's investigation was not to acknowledge the work of the religious of its church so much as it was to establish episcopal jurisdiction over sisterhoods and brotherhoods.

All liberty, however, must be so regulated as to ensure the maintenance of the Faith, and the order and discipline of the Church, together with due recognition of the family claims and rights of individual members.⁶⁶

Forty years after the founding of the sisterhoods, the hierarchy was still concerned with 'family claims' and 'individual members'. The episcopate valued the

64 Alistair Mason, 'History of the Society of the Sacred Mission' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Leeds, 1993), pp. 4-5.

65 Anson, Call, pp. 590-591.

66 LPL, Conference of Bishops, p. 58A. Emphasis mine.

religious life only in its active form provided its members were free to leave at any time. The perfection of soul may have been important to a sister but to the diocesan the property rights of the family came first. The intent of the committee was to talk to the heads of communities, men and women, primarily about 'vows and obligations'.⁶⁷ Aside from vows and the diocesan right of visitation, they were concerned with the real property of the community and the disposition of same.⁶⁸ The questions which bothered Lambeth were the same that had brought about the Monastic and Conventual Investigations by Parliament's Newdegate Committee in 1870--property, vows, episcopal rights.⁶⁹

Ayckbowm in response to the bishops' request for information about the sisterhoods drew up a circular letter to be sent to the members of the Lambeth Committee. Her objective was to supply them 'with fuller information as to the origin and objects' of the Kilburn sisters.⁷⁰ She stressed the loyalty of her community to the Church of England. That was in June of 1897. In September 1897, the resolution of the committee was published by the bishops. After she read it she wrote to her sisters:

It will interest the Sisters to know that in the 'Encyclical' published by the Bishops after the Lambeth Conference, the few words referring to Sisterhoods were cautious, and on the whole reassuring. By what we can gather, the

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid., p. 61C.

69 Hansard, 3rd series, 1870, CC, 872-894; Hansard, 3rd series, 1870, CCI, 46-73.

70 Valiant, p. 194.

attention of the Bishops seems to have been chiefly directed to the danger of vows, and though there is a slight allusion to the relation of Sisterhoods to the Episcopate, they almost confess their inability at present to define what they mean by this.⁷¹

Resolution 11, the one to which she referred, stated:

That this conference recognises with thankfulness the revival alike of Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods and of the Office of Deaconess in our branch of the Church and commends to the attention of the Church the Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Relation of the Religious Communities to the Episcopate.⁷²

By the next Lambeth Conference in 1908 eight of the twenty-one bishops on the committee had died, and so had Mother Emily Ayckbowm. The report of the committee was published in 1902. It found that for a due relation of the communities and the episcopate that the 'Episcopate' should recognise the communities and the religious life within the Church of England and that the 'Communities' should recognise the 'authority' of the episcopate. They proposed what the authority of the visitor should be and how the constitutions of the communities should be changed to admit that authority. Within their 'terms of reference' they made no comment on 'the means by which the inner life of their members can be directed, their mental powers strengthened, their capacities for usefulness in the Kingdom of our Blessed Lord developed'.⁷³

In 'Documents in the possession of the Committee', upon which it based its suggestions, was the

71 Ibid., p. 195.

72 LPL, 'Lambeth Conference 1908, Reports and Encyclical Letter', p. 28.

73 LPL, 1908 Conference, 'Report', p. 4 A-D.

'Constitution of the Community of the Resurrection', Grahamstown. This brotherhood, founded in 1892, had established a branch house in Bishop Webb's diocese. Its constitution bore a strong resemblance to the one the bishop suggested for sisterhoods. Indeed, Webb established the women's Community of the Resurrection of Our Lord (1884) to do the 'Woman's Work' he had written about. This constitution stressed the unerring authority of the bishop over every action of the sisterhood. These were the views Mother Emily had called 'preposterous'. They were, however, taken to heart by the bishops at Lambeth. Primarily, it seems, because of the other documents in the possession of the committee, notably letters from Lady Frederick Bruce and Edith Wethered of the London Diocesan Council and of Paddington and Marylebone Ladies Association for Rescue and Preventive Work. The bishops considered this 'trusted' information. Included in this category was a statement that Ayckbowm had spent some time in a Roman Catholic convent abroad. In fact, she had spent three weeks visiting with Dames de l'Annunciade while she worked out how she wanted to structure her English Church sisterhood. That was not the tone of the disclosure. It was made to sound as if it were a subversive act. The CEA depots that she ran to fund the charitable works of the sisterhood were condescendingly described as 'regular trade'.⁷⁴ Even the letter from the CEA to the Times that declared their allegiance to ecclesiastical authority was deprecated.

74 LPL, LC 63, p. 2.

of America and Ireland⁷⁹, brought them to the attention of the Vatican. Within England alone there were an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 women religious.⁸⁰ The congregations under simple vows were acknowledged in *Conditae a Christo* (1900) as 'bona fide religious'.⁸¹ The *Conditae* which dealt with the jurisdiction of bishops and the *Normae* (1901) which dealt with procedures for approbation, together, established a 'uniform system for granting official approval to the constitutions of religious orders'.⁸² These were steps in preparation for the new code of canon law in 1918. The conservative elements within the Roman Catholic Church vied for power with the 'modernists'. The modernists wanted the church to acknowledge the current scientific and social changes in the world.⁸³ The conservatives viewed the active women religious as too independent-minded and therefore a threat to clerical authority. The Sacred Congregation of Religious was created in 1908 by Pope Pius X to deal with all matters pertaining to religious communities, male and female.⁸⁴ The new canon law imposed a form of enclosure upon active orders of women and restricted changes in

79 Mary Ewens, 'Removing the Veil', in Women of Spirit ed. by R. Ruether and E. McLaughlin (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979), p. 272. In the United States the number of Roman Catholic sisters rose from 1375 in 1850 to almost 40,000 sisters by 1900; Maria Luddy, 'An Agenda for Women's History in Ireland, 1500-1900, Part II: 1800-1900', Irish Historical Studies 28 (May 1992), 19-37 (p. 22). In Ireland the number of women religious rose from 1500 in 1851 to over 8,000 in 1901.

80 O'Brien, p. 110.

81 Ewens, Nuns, p. 255.

82 Maitland, p. 56.

83 Maitland, p. 56. The 'modernists' were declared heretical in 1908.

84 Anson, Call, p. 480.

their work and in the design of their habits. These restrictions led to many hardships that lasted until Vatican II (1962-65). It was not until after Vatican II that congregations gained a freedom similar to that experienced by the foundresses in the nineteenth century.⁸⁵

The days of the 'pious groups' of women in the Roman Church and the 'free lance troops' of women in the Church of England ended with the final years of the nineteenth century. The ultimate constraint of formal and informal recognition came in the new century. The women religious had made a place for themselves in their respective churches. The mother foundresses of the nineteenth century fought intrepidly for the option of useful lives for single women living in community. They opened the way for many women to leave the confines of the Victorian family and express their talents in a wider sphere.

85 Ewens, Nuns, pp. 254-260.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

During this investigation of the constraints placed upon the mother foundresses of the religious life in the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches in Victorian England certain themes have emerged. First, it became clear that the political, social and religious climate of early nineteenth-century England was, paradoxically, both the initial cause of and one of the most important constraints upon the re-establishment of religious orders in the Church of England and the founding of active orders of women religious in the Church of Rome. Chapter one demonstrated how the mother foundresses owed their opportunity to enter the religious life to the constitutional and ecclesiastical reforms of the late 1820s and early 1830s. Roman Catholics were emancipated as a political expedient for the Irish Question and their new civil status led to a restructuring of their church in England. The resurgent Ultramontanes within the Roman Church sought to unite the old English Catholics, the converts, and the Irish Catholics. English foundations of active women religious offered their church a way to coalesce these disparate groups, primarily through education. At the same time, the Church of England redefined its position as a 'church', placing less emphasis upon Erastianism and on obedience to the state. The Oxford Movement within the Established Church called for renewed attention to the sacraments and the self-less life; the Evangelicals likewise heralded the self-less

life, but placed their emphasis on good works. In reclaiming the early church, the Tractarians noted the absence of the conventual life and increasingly argued for its reinstatement. Given this encouragement, women came forward to offer themselves to full time service in their church in the monastic tradition. In this way, their sisterhoods added validity to the reclamation of the Church of England's Catholic heritage. Indeed, they were one of the most important practical outcomes of Tractarianism. However, by living independently, these women were seen as a threat to the traditional family unit. The cult of domesticity required women to dedicate their lives to fathers, husbands, or brothers. Unmarried women were not exempt from this dictum. Hence, perceived neglect of their primary duty to the family caused the first of many constraints placed in the way of mother foundresses.

It has been shown that the primary objection of "family rhetoric" in this sense was to the religious vows of poverty, obedience and chastity. To its adherents such vows were an anathema. Above all, they were contrary to the essentially middle class belief in the correlation of Protestantism with the prosperity and greatness of the nation. Catholic countries were seen as lesser nations steeped in poverty. Hence, all three vows were seen not only as anti-family, but also unpatriotic. Vows also presented a problem for the Anglican episcopate as there was no mechanism for the dispensation from vows once taken. And, by denying the sisterhoods' vows, the

Church of England bishops undermined the basic reason for their religious life. While some sisterhoods took vows privately in the 1850s, it was thirty-five years before the episcopate would accept them publicly. In the Roman Church the episcopate expected the religious to take vows, but they could and often did limit the term of vows taken by sisters with the effect of denying stability to an order. In that way, the mother foundresses were constrained by their own churches in an aspect fundamental to their chosen life.

The next problem in starting communities was the establishment of the rule. Previous work in this area has largely been written from the viewpoint of the clergy. This thesis represents an effort to give voice to the women involved in founding the religious life. Contemporaries presumed that the mother foundresses knew only what the clergy could tell them of the religious life and therefore of the formation of the rule. The archival records, however, show that many of the foundresses knew of the religious life from their own research or from actually living with another community. The evidence presented in chapter two shows that they constructed their rule from their own knowledge as well as with guidance. The Roman foundresses needed experts in canon law to assist them for there were established criteria to be met. Anglican foundresses borrowed from rules of existing Roman communities and adapted them to the Church of England. All drew upon one, or a mixture, of the ancient rules of St Benedict, St Augustine, or St

Francis of Assisi, and on the more modern rules of St Ignatius Loyola, St Francis de Sales, St Vincent de Paul or St Madeleine Sophie Barat. The rule for a new community was something that had to be formed, lived with and adapted to the work. It has been shown that this development formed three distinct phases:

experimentation, application, and implementation.

Anglicans often revised their original rule to overcome diocesan objections, though this was not an obligation for there was no formal approbation procedure in the Church of England. Even though the Roman congregations had guidelines, they often went through the same adaptive stages as the Anglicans in order to deal with their diocesan objections, for he could require that it be assessed for its spiritual content. Ironically, in both cases initial drafts show that obedience was owed to the 'mother', but this was later changed to the diocesan in order to obtain approval.

In recruiting members for their institutions both groups of foundresses relied initially on like-minded women of their own class. Later aspirants were found amongst the penitents of priests known to them, teachers and students in their own schools, relatives of members, and other women attracted to the work of the order. The implications of the material presented in chapter three suggests that class was of greater concern to the Anglican sisterhoods than to the Roman congregations. This did not mean that the sisters had to be of the upper-classes, but the evidence suggests that similarity

of background led to a more homogeneous unit. Only the Roman congregations, however, included foundresses from the lower classes. And theirs was an uphill battle, for all communities relied on patronage of some sort and foundresses from the working classes had greater difficulty in obtaining patronage. Moreover, Roman Catholic bishops discouraged women of the lower classes from establishing communities. They preferred to have them enter existing communities as lay sisters. There is no evidence of women of the lower classes desiring to found a religious community in the Church of England. Had such a request been made there is no reason to believe that the Anglican episcopate's reaction would have been different than the Roman prelates.

There was a strong relationship between recruiting and funding. The Anglican sisterhoods did not rely upon a dowry per se from their members, but they did expect what was considered a 'middle-class' income from the capital of their sisters. This was not a hard and fast condition of membership, but rather a usual one. Roman congregations set no specific amount for entrance although some financial arrangement was expected. The cloistered orders had for centuries expected a substantial dowry (second only to that which would have been given had the woman married.) Originally, monetary considerations were a major factor in determining who became a choir sister and who a lay sister. A choir sister supported the community with her funds while a lay sister supplied it with her domestic labour. The

better the social connections of the mother foundresses the easier the task of raising funds. Fund raising was an ongoing task for all the foundresses for as the good works grew, so did the need for larger accommodations-- bigger schools, hospitals, penitentiaries as well as additional convents and chapels. In many ways, of course, the constraints involved in funding and recruiting were much the same as those encountered by any newly formed organization. And, secular women were notably generous in their financial contributions to the communities.

It was demonstrated in chapter four that the major constraint faced by the mother foundresses once their communities were formed was undoubtedly anti-Catholicism and that the resurgence of anti-Catholicism after the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy was directed at both Romans and Anglo-Catholics. In this way, the 'hidden life' of the religious took on an added dimension when, in order to avoid confrontations with the public, the sisters resorted to secular dress. Guy Fawkes celebrations and anti-papal processions included depictions of notable Roman and Anglican clergy and 'nuns'. Both popular and middle-class literature reinforced the notion that 'Catholicism' was superstitious, and treacherous, and the emphasis of its religious on the state of celibacy, unnatural. It bolstered the idea that nuns were locked behind convent walls against their will, separated from both family and family fortune, and abused by an 'un-English' priesthood.

Power struggles were waged between families and religious communities over the bequests of sisters to their communities. However, the unquestioning acceptance by the public of tales of convent life lessened as the century progressed. Indeed, in the last decades of the century much of the anti-Catholic rhetoric was deflected from Catholicism, in general, and directed towards the Ritualists in the Church of England and took the form of legal restraints rather than demonstrations. The major external constraint, especially from the 1850s to the 1870s, was anti-Catholicism, whilst secession proved a serious internal constraint.

To be sure, secessions of sisters caused the foundresses great distress, misgivings and possibly financial hardship. But these internal constraints neither displaced the foundresses nor stopped the work of their communities. However, as English foundations matured and the mother foundresses had been in office, either as a, mother superior or mother general, for a decade or more many communities experienced a crisis within the organization. This phenomenon occurred in both Roman and Anglican communities. Typically, a sister with proven leadership qualities left the community. There were a variety of reasons for her going. One was the growing certainty that she would never be the superior of that community, another was the desire to found her own community, and the third (applicable to the Anglican sisters) was to convert to Roman Catholicism. Indeed, some Anglican sisters converted to Roman

Catholicism and founded new communities. Although these departures caused a momentary loss of confidence for the foundresses and in some cases financial hardship for the community, they did not result in a demand for new leadership. The foundresses maintained control. The defectors were women the foundresses had trained. In many instances seceders went on to found other communities and thus spread the work of their church.

The constraints covered in chapters one to four were products of the very existence of communities for women religious and of their initial interaction with the clergy and the public. The major works which they undertook as part of their active religious life in turn produced immense opportunity but concomitant limitation and constraint. It was shown in chapter five that legislation and secular professionalization affected the good works of the foundresses involved in education and nursing. They began by giving charitable assistance to the poor then became professionally committed as they met government qualifications. The authority of class, essential for the foundresses of the late 1840s and early 1850s, was surpassed by the authority of skill and knowledge towards the end of the century. Instrumental in this change was the acceptance of the calibre and dedication of the sisters' nursing in the Crimean War and government qualified sister-teachers produced in compliance with the Education Act of 1870. The foundresses insisted that their personnel move from

amateurs with good intentions to professionals with earned certification. Throughout this period of development, the foundresses both influenced and were influenced as these professions emerged. Through their work 'vocation' became associated with teaching and nursing. So strong was this legacy that for years into the twentieth century women were expected to leave such professions upon marriage.

While chapter five dealt with good works familiar to our time, chapter six investigated a particularly Victorian institution: the penitentiary for fallen women and its sometimes associated institution, the foundling home. Each of these works gave the foundresses the opportunity to intervene on behalf of a 'victim' of a social double-standard -- whether unmarried mother or fatherless child. Although this field was dominated by Anglican institutions, the Roman foundresses came to believe their intervention on behalf of 'poor Catholic girls' was essential, too. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the attitude of society toward the fallen was shared initially by the foundresses involved in the work. But as they worked with the fallen several realized and recorded that the greatest differences between the sisters and the penitents were those of class and circumstance. In popular perception the great 'social evil' was raised above all other sins so that the fallen might repent and respectable society donate to their redemption. Yet whilst the mother foundresses addressed that need of their time, they were not totally unaware of

congregation of sisters in each diocese. The Anglicans could move into a different diocese even if the bishop did not approve of women religious. His approval was not necessary for branch houses to be established. The bishops' approval was necessary for the Roman congregations to open a branch work. Wherever the foundresses did move into a new territory, Roman and Anglican, they provided work for the poorer women of the neighbourhood in their laundries, printing shops, depots, embroidery sessions, and other mission work.

By contrast it has been shown that foundresses who had fought for the right to exist in different parts of England were asked by prelates of their respective churches to establish branch houses throughout the world. The Anglican sisters were called to the colonies of the British Empire to assist with the education and needs of the native populations, while the Roman sisters were called to work in Catholic nations. Both groups of religious were wanted in the United States of America.

By the end of the nineteenth century the episcopate of both churches began to act in a way which suggested these active communities of women religious were, in their understanding, far too independent and in need of recognition (and thereby control). Recognition, therefore, became the ultimate constraint. The Anglican episcopate as a body did not discuss the work of the sisterhoods for their church until the Lambeth Conference of 1897. When they did acknowledge their existence they took steps to ensure diocesan control of the activities

of the communities. However, the Anglican sisterhoods were not formally brought into their church organization. The Roman congregations under simple vows were formally acknowledged as 'true religious' by the *Conditae a Christo* (1900) and the *Normae* (1901). The first revision of canon law in six hundred years (1918) restricted the actions of these now 'true religious'. A modified enclosure was prescribed. The work of the congregations, and even their habits, were frozen in time to remain virtually unchanged until Vatican II (1962-65). They were no longer permitted the initiative to identify, and act upon, given problems. They were obliged simply to carry on with what they were doing when they applied for approbation -- and nothing else. Congregations that had grown and thrived on diversity were limited by the new Sacred Congregation of Religious (1908). Vatican II called upon congregations to search out the intentions of their 'founders' and reassess their work. This ruling seems to have influenced the Anglican sisterhoods in much the same way as it did the Roman congregations. Although Anglicans were not bound by Vatican II's findings the decade saw an overall adjustment of the religious life.

This investigation suggests the following conclusions. First, that there was no stereotypical mother foundress any more than there is a stereotypical Victorian. Each of the mother foundresses brought to their church and their community unique skills and objectives. Most brought with them a greater knowledge

of the religious life than had been previously thought. The foundresses could and did circumvent diocesans. Episcopal jurisdiction and clerical influence were problematical. Most Anglican foundresses' communities existed (then and now) without formal episcopal sanction. These foundresses wanted a proper place in their church, but many felt that the additional constraints on their activities were not worth the approval. Roman foundresses had to have a form of episcopal sanction but they could by-pass diocesan objections by obtaining papal approbation. It was only when the works or actions of foundresses came to public notice that the wrath or disapproval of the episcopate directly affected their communities. However, this did not result in avoidance of public issues likely to bring them into the limelight. This was true for both Anglicans and Romans.

Most importantly, in establishing religious communities for women, the mother foundresses of the nineteenth-century offered single women a useful, dedicated life. These were women who administered, coordinated, and initiated works of charity, education, nursing, and other missions. They trained, encouraged, and sustained other women within their communities and within their ministry. They were supported in their work by lay women and men, but especially by women. They went into the poorest sections of towns and cities to tend the sick, teach the children and reclaim the fallen. Their work spread round the world. They set an example of female leadership in the Victorian era where women in

charge of world-wide organizations were a rarity. They did none of this for personal gain, yet throughout this time they were constrained by the family, the church, and society in general. Many of the works they began were taken over by the welfare state of the twentieth century. Yet, most of their communities still exist today. These communities may be involved in different work, but they still honour the women who founded them.

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