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THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROMAN CATHOLIC
EDUCATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, WITH
SOME REFERENCE TO THE DIOCESE OF HEXHAM AND
NEWCASTLE

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SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM, DEPARTMENT OF
THEOLOGY

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This thesis seeks to examine the development and growth of English Catholic education in the nineteenth century. Several important milestones mark the progress of Catholic education from the turn of the nineteenth century to the Education Act of 1902. The Relief Acts of the late eighteenth century brought Catholic education into the public domain. The Act of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, combined with mass Irish immigration, saw the need for greater educational provision for the children of poor Catholics. Grant Aid, first issued to Catholic schools in 1847, legitimised the Church's claim to educational equality with her Protestant neighbours, which was pursued vigorously by the Catholic Poor School Committee, founded in 1848. The 1870 Education Act, which stands at the centre of the educational politics of the nineteenth century, brought in a state-supported educational system which stood in opposition to the systems created by the various Christian denominations, chiefly the Church of England, and to an extent, the Methodists. This started an effort, mainly on the part of the Catholic Church, to secure Rate Aid for denominational schools. This was realised by the Education Act of 1902.

This thesis seeks to examine these events from the viewpoint of the Catholic community which saw education as part of the continuous teaching charism of the Church, dating back, in England, to Saxon times. It also seeks to show the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle as an example of how national events in education were interpreted and came to fruition in the local Catholic Church.

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CHAPTER ONE

ENGLISH SCHOOLS IN THE PRE-REFORMATION PERIOD

The schools of England are perhaps the country's oldest institutions. The school of St Peter at York, which claims to have a continuous history going back to Saxon times, has been described as 'An institution older than the House of Commons, older than the Universities, older than the Lord Mayor, older even than the nation or throne itself.'¹ It is contested as to which school, St Peter's, York, or the King's School, Canterbury, is actually the elder. The important matter is not so much which is the elder, but rather the notion that the schools of England, manifest prominently in these two institutions, both predate the idea that education is something received from by the state (these schools pre-existing the state) and that these schools, as with all schools for the next thousand years, were instigated by and under the general rule of the Church.

Early English Christianity and Saxon Christian Schools

St Augustine arrived in England in 597, and it can be assumed that the school at Canterbury dates from about the time of his main efforts of conversion. In those days a school was a collection of people, teacher and pupils, who gathered together for the purpose of being educated, rather than any physical building. In such a situation the teacher might be the bishop himself, instructing catechumens in the knowledge of the faith rather than teaching academic work to children. The only possible predecessors to the Saxon schools established in England were the schools of the Roman period. However, there is little evidence of what actually went on in Roman schools. Quintillian wrote at the end of the first century about education in Rome then, and while it is possible that many of the authorities and methods of

¹ A. F. Leach, *The Schools of Medieval England* (Methuen: London, 1915). Hereafter referred to as Leach, quoted in S. J. Curtis, *History of Education in Great Britain* (University Tutorial Press: London, 1967), p.1. Hereafter referred to as Curtis. Curtis gives no page reference for this quotation from Leach.

teaching that he wrote of continued over the subsequent four hundred years, it is not clear that this was so. Quintillian recommended a gradual introduction into formal education for children, and it seems that this method was being used in the fourteenth century at least, as demonstrated by the school boy martyr of Chaucer who was aged only seven when he was examined on his primer shortly after his entry into the Song School.² It is also uncertain that any school founded in Canterbury at this time followed a peculiarly Roman format, though this hypothesis is quite probable.

It seems certain that Saxon Christian schools were connected with the establishment of cathedral churches in the south of England. In his *History of the English Church and People* (*Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*) Bede wrote about Sigbert, the king of East Anglia returning to claim his throne around 631, and with the help of Bishop Felix of Kent, establishing a school where boys could learn grammar, employing the methods used at Canterbury.

These writings of Bede show that, by 631, there was a well-established school in Canterbury; that this school was based on, or similar to, schools already existing on the continent; and that such schools in England were set up in conjunction with the erection of new Sees. The school referred to by Bede was probably set up at Dunwich, a major town in East Anglia now lost to the waves, which along with Rochester and London were quickly established, after Canterbury, as centres of Christian life and worship. It is likely that a new school was set up with each cathedral. These, the earliest schools established in England (perhaps with the exception of any schools set up during Roman times) were to become the model for all later English schools. Some of these ancient Saxon schools still exist in one form or another to this day, and they were a great influence on, and formed the basis for, education in the Middle Ages.

² N. Orme, *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (Methuen and Co. Ltd.: London, 1973), pp.116-117. Hereafter referred to as Orme, *English Schools*.

Few records exist today of the very early Saxon schools. That Canterbury was the first is only an assumption based on the writings of Bede. In 669 Theodore of Tharsis came to be archbishop. Bede records his effect on the English Church:

Soon after he arrived, he visited every part of the island where the English peoples lived...because both of them [Theodore and his assistant Hadrian] were extremely learned in sacred and secular literature, they attracted a crowd of students into whose minds they poured the streams of wholesome learning. They gave their hearers instruction not only in the books of holy Scripture but also in the art of metre, astronomy, and ecclesiastical computation. As evidence of this, some of their students still survive who know Latin and Greek just as well as their native tongue.³

Theodore, of Byzantine origin, brought the Graeco-Roman world to England, and particularly Canterbury. The school there, as shown in Bede's writings, became famous for Latin and Greek study, theological studies, arithmetic and astronomy, and Gregorian chant.⁴ After this there are no more records of education in Canterbury for almost three hundred years. There is no particular reason to suppose that the school ceased to exist. That event may itself have warranted a record; these were after all the Dark Ages where few records were kept of any event. However, there is no actual proof of the continuation of the school.

There is some evidence for the school at York. It appears more prominently after the synod of Whitby (664) and is most famously associated with Alcuin of York who was made Master in 766. Alcuin founded the famous library at York, the catalogue of which still exists. Alcuin gives us a detailed description of the curriculum at York. It seems that all disciplines were taught there, from grammar to chant, from flute to 'the labours of the moon, the five belts of the sky, the seven planets, the laws of the fixed stars,' giving what seems to have been a very advanced education.⁵ At this time the north of England was considered to be the centre of civilised Europe, producing scores of illuminated manuscripts, the most famous of those

³ Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999), J. McClure and R. Collins (eds.), p.172.

⁴ J. Lawson and H. Silver, *A Social History of Education in England* (Methuen and Co. Ltd.: London, 1973), pp.9-10. Hereafter referred to as Lawson Silver.

surviving today being the Lindisfarne Gospels. The greatest scholars of the age were present there, making important decisions about the formation and governance of the Church. It seems then only right that the schools of the age ought to be suitably advanced. This was seen clearly by the emperor Charlemagne when he summoned Alcuin from York to found the Palace School at his court on the continent in about 782.⁶

It is not clear whether or not the Churches at Canterbury and York were monastic houses. Certainly many of the other monasteries in England at the time had schools attached to them. Bede was given over to the school attached to the monastery at Monkwearmouth when he was a child, to be educated as a monk. There was also presumably a school for novices at Lindisfarne. After 872 the philosopher Scotus Erigena, a successor of Alcuin at the Palace School, was called by Alfred the Great to head the school attached to the monastery at Malmesbury.⁷ The monasteries, with this rich inheritance of scholarship and artistic talent, were thriving places for the education of novices in their schools.

The Norman Conquest and Norman Influence on Education

There is little further evidence of organised education in England up to the end of the Saxon period. Following the Norman invasion of 1066 many cathedrals were destroyed and subsequently replaced in succeeding years. Many official institutions, such as the library at York in 1069, were destroyed by sheer acts of vandalism leaving the continuance of the Saxon schools in doubt. It is only with the mediaeval renaissance which swept across Europe at the end of the twelfth century, and with the establishment of the two Universities in England, that a clearer view of education in England appears.

Nicholas Orme asserts that it was only in the twelfth century, following the Norman conquest, that the history of English education began. It was, therefore, with the advent of the twelfth

⁵ Leach, p.58.

⁶ C. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c.650-c.850* (Leicester University Press: London and New York, 1995), p.157.

century renaissance that schools became more available to the local population rather than merely schools attached to monasteries established for a specific purpose and with a specific clientele in mind.⁸

The Norman Conquest had two major influences on education in England. Firstly, in the main, Saxon schoolmasters were replaced with Norman ones, so that the common practice of translating Latin into English petered out, Latin being translated into Norman-French instead.⁹ Secondly, Archbishop Lanfranc of Canterbury implemented a policy to reform the English Church by replacing with regulars those secular clergy who ran cathedrals and major ecclesiastical establishments. This he did at Canterbury, Rochester, Winchester and Durham. At Bath and Wells he persuaded the bishop to move his episcopal seat from the secular foundation at Wells to the Abbey at Bath.¹⁰ The school at Canterbury was taken away from the jurisdiction of the cathedral and placed under the direct authority of the bishop. It is possible that similar action was taken at other cathedral schools during Lanfranc's campaign to assert episcopal authority over the English cathedrals. At Canterbury he appointed his own school master from France, Ernuf. The school only educated novices for the monastery at this time.¹¹

It is possible that this partition of school from cathedral was done, specifically at those cathedrals or large churches now run by regular monastic clergy, to separate the instruction of novices to the order from that of other scholars traditionally educated at some cathedral schools at this time. This would seem plausible as, in the years following the Norman Conquest and further into the Middle Ages, specific types of schools were set up for specific purposes. This would also correspond with Orme's belief that schools became more open and available following the Norman conquest.

⁷ Curtis, p.10. According to William of Malmesbury, Scotus was stabbed to death with the pens of his angry pupils!

⁸ Orme, *English Schools*, p.167.

⁹ Curtis, p.12.

¹⁰ H. E. J. Cowdrey, *Lanfranc: Scholar, Monk and Archbishop* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003), pp.160-161.

¹¹ M. Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1978), p.177.

Between 1066 and 1200 thirty-six different places in England possessed some type of school, with another seventy in the hundred years following. Three of these schools were in London, including St Paul's Cathedral school,¹² and in virtually every cathedral city, as well as other important centres of population and commerce.¹³ Following the Norman Conquest the majority of cathedrals which were home to a secular chapter employed one of its number to be in charge of the cathedral school. At York this was done during the time of the first Norman archbishop, Thomas of Bayeux, between 1070 and 1100. At Salisbury in 1090 the chapter constitution mentions one of the chapter being the *archiscola*:

The schoolmaster ought to hear and determine the lessons, and carry the church seal, compose letters and deeds and mark the readers on the table.¹⁴

The *Scolasticus* also appears in the chapter constitution of St Paul's Cathedral in 1102. This title was later changed to schoolmaster sometime between 1111 and 1127.¹⁵ These changes came about at the time of the Third Lateran Council which issued a ruling on the provision of schools in 1179:

...in every cathedral church a competence benefice shall be bestowed upon a master who shall teach the clerks of the same church and poor scholars freely, so that both the necessities of the teacher shall be relieved and the way to learning laid open for the learners.¹⁶

This obligation was repeated again at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.¹⁷

In the parish context, instruction of the people was the responsibility of the priest. At the provincial Council of Lambeth in 1281, in the wake of religious obligations placed on lay people by the Lateran Council of 1215, a programme of catechesis, based on the Lord's

¹² Orme, *English Schools*, p.169.

¹³ N. Orme, *Education and Society in Mediaeval and Renaissance England* (The Hambledon Press: London and Ronceverte, 1989), p.5. Hereafter referred to as Orme, *Education and Society*.

¹⁴ Extract from the foundation statutes of Salisbury Cathedral, 1091. Translated by A. F. Leach, *Educational Charters and Documents* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1911), pp.73-75. Hereafter referred to as Leach, *Charters and Documents*. Reproduced in D. W. Sylvester, *Educational Documents 800-1816* (Methuen and Co. Ltd.: London, 1970), p.15. Hereafter referred to as Sylvester.

¹⁵ Orme, *English Schools*, p.168.

¹⁶ Extract from 'The Lateran Council and the Provision of Schools' in Leach, *Charters and Documents*, p.123, quoted in Sylvester, pp.14-15.

¹⁷ Lawson Silver, p.20.

Prayer, the Angelic Salutation (Hail Mary), and the Apostles' Creed was written for the benefit of the laity and to be taught by their parish priest.¹⁸ It was the objective of the *Ignorantia Sacerdotum* (the name of the instruction issued at the provincial council) to have the laity learn those three prayers, basing their knowledge and practise of the faith on them.¹⁹ The Lateran Council of 1215 imposed mandatory annual confession on the laity. This was an important turning point in the education of the whole people. It was important for them to understand the nature of sin, the rules of the faith and to have some understanding of them, the need for and spiritual benefits of absolution, and most importantly mandatory confession also presumed a presbyterate who were able to teach these things.²⁰

Several manuals of confession, to aid the clergy in their task, were published throughout the Middle Ages, and in England up to the Reformation. One document, the *Cura Clericalis*, defined the four major roles of the priest. He was to offer the Mass, to administer the sacraments, to hear confession, and to be a 'plebis doctor,' a teacher of his people in the faith.²¹ This implementation of the Lateran Council's instructions formed an important part of the wider renaissance that affected Europe in the thirteenth century. This renewed catechesis promoted greater literacy among the laity²² and was also the source of much of the instructional carvings and wall paintings that became a recognisable characteristic of mediaeval Catholicism.²³

Education in the Middle Ages: Categories of schools

Documents relating to education in the Middle Ages are very scant and it is difficult, if not impossible, to give an accurate description of the number and variety of schools existing throughout this period, or of the sort of curriculum they taught. Examples of schools being

¹⁸ E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (Yale University Press: Hew Haven and London, 1992), p.53. Hereafter referred to as Duffy.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.53.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.54-55.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.57.

²² *Ibid.*, pp.68-77.

mentioned in passing, in unrelated documents, and therefore leading to the discovery of the existence of the school, are not unusual. In 1558, the will of an elderly priest bequeathed some of his estate to a house of nuns because they were ‘...the fyrst creature that taughte me to know the lettres in my book.’²⁴ Another example is of a lawsuit in 1582 relating to the abbey of Furness. In the documents a school existing there before the Reformation is casually referred to.²⁵ In both these instances this is the only documentation that exists to indicate that any school existed in either of these places at this time.

As has been shown, education in England changed following the Norman Conquest. One scholar has suggested that modern English education only began in the twelfth century.²⁶ At this time the majority of men worked in agriculture. The skills needed for that work would be found ‘on the job,’ rather than in the class room. It is wrong to think, however, that all boys sent for some formal education were destined for the priesthood or religious life. Latin, and a formal education, were required for lawyers, Government officials and officials in other major households. Royalty and nobility acquired a taste for education. Edward II is the earliest king whose handwriting survives. Richard II was known to be a lover of books and Henry VIII has been described as ‘perhaps more learned than any of his predecessors.’²⁷

The schools established at the cathedrals were often, but not always, for the training of clerks for holy orders. Schools also began to appear in large towns that possessed a castle or important church. In Yorkshire in the twelfth century, for example, there were schools in Beverley, Guisborough, Hedon, Helmsley, Malton, Pontefract and Wakefield as well as the cathedral school at York.²⁸ These schools, sometimes referred to as Song Schools, sometimes referred to as Reading or Reading and Writing Schools, offered what we would today

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.63-68.

²⁴ J. C. Dickinson, *The Later Middle Ages* (Adam and Charles Black: London, 1979), p.387. Hereafter referred to as Dickinson.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.387.

²⁶ Orme, *English Schools*, p.167.

²⁷ Dickinson, pp.390-391.

²⁸ Orme, *English Schools*, p.170.

describe as an elementary education. Very little is known about the curriculum followed in these elementary schools²⁹, although more is known about the grammar curriculum.

In the monastic houses, the policy of the school sometimes allowed lay boys to be educated there. Conversely, some schools attached to monastic houses were set up for seculars, and/or for lay education. At St Albans monastery the school was in existence in 1097 and under the mastership of Geoffrey de Gorham, a secular from the continent. From 1185-1195 it was held by another secular, Alexander Nequam, who later became Bishop of Cirencester. This school was just another mediaeval school differing only in that it was under the direction of the abbot rather than the bishop. This school, under the mastership of seculars, educated boys and men with vocations to the secular priesthood, it's most famous son being Nicholas Breakspear, the only Englishman to be elected pope, under the name Adrian IV.³⁰

Elementary schooling throughout the Middle Ages was varied, depending on the nature of its foundation, the curriculum taught, the location of the school. Documentation is so rare, that it is difficult to categorise mediaeval education. Varying scholarship has tried to create an order to mediaeval schooling, naming different types of schools for different purposes and different levels of instruction. Some schools, such as Chantry schools, could be grouped together due to their common origins, but often this is where the similarity between the schools ends. It seems more logical, then to look at education in its historical context and note that, while many schools had similar objectives and methods of achieving them, there was no standardised system of education in mediaeval England.

Some historians have tried to separate out mediaeval education into the three strands of Reading School, Song School and Grammar School.³¹ This is to simplify a complex issue. Certainly, schools were run by the Church and, in the main, for the purposes of the Church.

²⁹ J. A. Hoepfner Moran, *The Growth of English Schooling 1340-1548* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1985), p.21. Hereafter referred to as Moran.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.13.

³¹ For evidence of this see Leach and Curtis, cited above, as examples. Also A. S. Barnes, *The Catholic Schools of England* (Williams and Norgate Ltd.: London, 1926). Hereafter referred to as Barnes. Barnes contains some important and interesting information about Catholic schooling, but his scholarship on mediaeval education is outdated. For a thorough investigation of Leach's work, see J. N. Miner, *The Grammar Schools of Medieval England: A. F. Leach in Histiographical Perspective* (McGill-Queen's University Press: London, 1990).

Any boy with a desire to enter the priesthood would be sent off to a Song School, where he would learn the Offices of the Church, the traditional chants of the ceremonial, and to be able to read, though not necessarily at this stage to understand, Latin. From here the boys would probably (though not necessarily) go on to continue their education at the Grammar School. Whether these schools were physically the same school or not is difficult to say and would almost certainly have varied from place to place. It is not until the fifteenth century, however, that two separate schools, Song/Reading/Writing and Grammar can be talked of. Even in Tudor times the two were not considered distinct.³² However, the school at Northallerton, founded in 1426, did have three distinct sections: Grammar, Song and Reading. Similarly, at Jesus College, Rotherham, three masters were employed to run the different parts of the school, £10 per annum for the Grammar master, £6 13s. 4d. per annum for the Song master and £5 6s. 8d. per annum for a writing master.³³ These may have been exceptions rather than the rule, but show the variety in the organisation of education at this time.

The Song School was important from a liturgical perspective. Each Mass offered required a server who had the responsibility of giving the responses of the Mass, in Latin. Mass was most often celebrated, except on a Sunday and major feast, while the men were at work. As women were forbidden to partake in this aspect of the Mass, boys were employed to assist the priest. They would not necessarily need to understand the Latin, but be able to deliver it as a response correctly.³⁴

An interesting insight into mediaeval elementary education is given in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. In 'The Prioresses Tale,' the Prioress describes the subject of her passage, a widow's son, as 'a little clergeon,' that is to say, an almost miniature or baby priest. The Prioress hints that the boy has the desire to become a priest, and that this would be the best place for such a vocation to develop. The boy in The Tale hears some children singing the antiphon *O Alma Redemptoris Mater* and asks one of the older boys what the words mean. The boy is unable to help him:

³² Moran, p.23.

³³ Curtis, p.14.

I kan namoore expoude in this mateere

I learne song, I kan but small grammeere³⁵

'The Prioress's Tale' shows us a boy almost certainly in a Reading and Writing School. He is very young and being taught his primer, something which would not necessarily be thought of as useful or important unless he was destined to be a cleric. Similarly, the seemingly close connection between this school and the Song School suggests that there was a natural progression between them. It is also possible that the schools were simply one and the same with a wide curriculum, which may have lead to instruction in Latin grammar higher up the school.

The mediaeval Grammar School, whether it was a separate establishment from the elementary school or part of the same institution, was the mainstay of further education in the Middle Ages. The term 'Grammar School' itself was not much used until the fourteenth century, first seen in John of Trevisa's translation of Ralph Higden's *Polychronicon*, as 'gramer scole.'³⁶

Throughout the Middle Ages, education for boys continued to grow and expand. While Grammar Schools remained the mainstay of education, especially for the clergy, other forms of education began to spring up throughout the country. Schools set up by Chantry endowments, Almonry Schools and Guild Schools formed an important basis for a more general form of education throughout England.

The cathedral and other major churches often made provision for the education of local poor boys. These 'Almonry boys,' as they were often known, had their expenses paid for by the Church, lodged there and most often had their education at the Grammar School connected with it. The boys would have been employed about the church itself as servers, as choristers and, presumably, as domestic servants. The most famous example of an Almonry School is at Westminster, where the Almonry became very large, numbering twenty-eight boys at the end

³⁴ Dickinson, pp.388-389.

³⁵ G. Chaucer, *The Prioress' Prologue and Tale* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1975), J. Winny (ed), p.40.

³⁶ Curtis, p.13.

of the fourteenth century. This was the foundation of the present Westminster School.³⁷ Almonry Schools were most often associated with Benedictine monasteries, one of the first being established at Ely in 1314, another at St Albans in 1330. A reference was also made to one at Durham: 'Ther weare certaine poor children...which weare called children of the Aumery going daily to the Fermery schole.'³⁸

The craft Guilds of the Middle Ages were often rich and powerful institutions, employing priests to officiate for them. Similarly, religious Guilds and fraternities maintained a cleric. These men were often employed to teach Latin and Grammar during the day, performing their liturgical duties most often in the morning allowing them to spend the rest of the day teaching. Ludlow Grammar School is an example of this, founded by the Palmers Guild. The Guild of St Nicholas founded a Grammar School at Worcester, and the Grammar School at Stratford upon Avon (probably attended by Shakespeare) had strong associations with the town's guilds.³⁹

Chantry Schools, too, played a major part in education in the middle and later Middle Ages. They were to be found throughout the country, from the smallest of villages to large towns, and, while considered to be minor affairs in the early Middle Ages (perhaps because they did not contribute directly to the education of the clergy), were often the foundations for important later Grammar Schools. Chantry Schools were generally founded by wealthy benefactors. On the death of a local magnate, money would be left in his Will to erect a 'Chantry Chapel' in the local church, attached to which would be a priest, paid out of the 'Chantry fund,' who would say Mass each day at this altar for the repose of the benefactor's soul, and often for the repose of the souls of his family.

Sometimes the terms of the foundation stipulated that the Chantry priest would spend his day teaching the children of the parish, in the same way as the Guild chaplain. Since his only other obligations were to say Mass and attend the offices, and as often the stipend of the

³⁷ Barnes, p.14.

³⁸ J. Bowen, *A History of Western Education*, 3 vols. (Methuen and Co. Ltd.: London, 1975), vol. 2, p.311.

³⁹ Curtis, p.40.

Chantry was not sufficient to maintain him, setting up a school offering some elementary education was a good way to supplement the priest's income.⁴⁰

The importance of the Mass to the lives of all people, both rich and poor, is also demonstrated here. The wealthy would not provide for a school on their death, but instead a way to ensure their souls reached heaven, with a school on the back of it.⁴¹ The level of education given to the children taught at these would depend on the priest instructing them, and would therefore vary from place to place. However, several important and prominent Grammar Schools of the later Middle Ages sprung from them, suggesting that their educational value was quite high in some places. Most Chantry schools offered free education to its pupils, though on occasion some charged fees. Some Chantries, such as that established by Richard Felaw, a merchant of Ipswich in 1483, and that founded by John Crosse of Liverpool in 1515 made provision that education should only be given freely to those whose family's wealth was under a certain amount. Those above would be charged.⁴²

Chantries, while being the foundation of many great Grammar Schools also supplied a form of education to the very humblest of the sons of the Church. Chantries in the rural parts of England supplied an education even to the sons of labourers, so that they could be taught in their faith and have a greater understanding of the world around them. This idea of education for all, seen also in the Almonry schools, is claimed as peculiarly Catholic.⁴³ The ideal of education for all is a theme which runs continuously throughout the history of Catholic education in England. The education of the poorest, in recent history, has only come second to the education of the clergy. It is not true to suggest that the notion of Protestant education is contrary to that. The Protestant ideal of educating all in the scriptures, however, reversed such a trend and, in continental Protestant countries especially, the general populace was often much better educated than in neighbouring Catholic countries.

⁴⁰ Dickinson, p.262.

⁴¹ Orme, *English Schools*, p.196.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.196.

⁴³ Barnes, p.15.

Chantries became increasingly popular through the course of the Middle Ages. By 1366 St Paul's Cathedral had seventy-four Chantries and at the Reformation there were fifty-six Chantries in York Minster. It is estimated that approximately 3,000 Chantries were dissolved at the English Reformation.⁴⁴

It is a debated point as to whether the reforming Chantry Acts of 1547 and 1548, which abolished the Chantries, contributed to the dissolution of more schools than they founded. The Argument is discussed in *Peace, Print and Protestantism* by C. S. L. Davies.⁴⁵ He compares the finding of W. K. Jordan, who calculated that at the end of Edward VI's reign (1547-1553) the number of Grammar Schools had increased from 217 to 272,⁴⁶ compared with the conventional view, first argued by A. F. Leach, that the number of schools had decreased mainly due to the reforms of the Chantry Acts. Davies concurs with Jordan, believing that many Chantry schools were re-founded, often with improved endowments and that any short falls in educational provision were made up by private foundations. This continued into Elizabeth I's reign (1558-1603).

The Chantry Acts were passed through Parliament in order for the Crown to confiscate the wealth of the Chantries in the same way as the monasteries. It was not the intention of the Act to close down the schools, but the closure of the Chantries sealed the fate of all but the largest and most successful Chantry Grammar Schools.

William of Wykeham and Winchester School

Perhaps the most important single figure in the history of education in England in the Middle Ages is William of Wykeham. William of Wykeham was born in 1324 and rose through the ranks of the civil service in England. He was rewarded for his work, as was the custom at the

⁴⁴ Dickinson, p.262.

⁴⁵ C. S. L. Davies, *Peace, Print and Protestantism* (Paladin Books: London, 1977), p.270. Hereafter referred to as Davies.

⁴⁶ W. K. Jordan, *Edward VI*, 2 vols. (1970), vol. 2, quoted in *ibid.*, p.270. No page reference to Jordan's work is given by Davies.

time, with various benefices. The first, a rectory in Norfolk, was given to him in 1349, the year of the Black Death.

He was further appointed to a vast number of clerical benefices, increasing his personal power and wealth. In 1359 he became a Canon of Southwell Minster, and in 1360 he became Dean of St Martin-le-Grand. In the following year he was made Canon and Archdeacon of Lincoln; Canon and Provost of Wells; Canon of St Paul's, Salisbury, Hereford, St David's, York and Dublin Cathedrals; and Canon of Beverley, Bridgenorth, Bromyard, Hastings, St Stephens Westminster, Abergwili and Llandewi-Brewi Collegiate Churches; and Prebendary in the Nunneries of Shaftesbury and Wherwell. Most of these he received before he was even invested as an Acolyte. He was ordained a priest in 1362.⁴⁷

Wykeham was made Bishop of Winchester in 1366 and became Chancellor of England the following year. While undoubtedly a great man in his own age and a formidable politician, he was concerned with the education of the English clergy. Following the Black Death of 1348-9 and the plagues of 1361 and 1367 almost half the population of England had succumbed. A major problem following these events was the chronic shortage of priests to tend to the faithful. Wykeham was also concerned with heresy, specifically Lollardy, a heresy which was sweeping across England at that time, preaching of general social reform, even revolution, as its basis. Wykeham was keen that all clergy should be educated within orthodoxy and the Church. In 1369 he bought land at Oxford with a view to set up a new foundation. In 1379 he presented a charter for 'Saint Marie College of Winchester in Oxford.' The college was formally opened seven years later and known as New College, to distinguish it from Oriel College, the other College dedicated to Our Lady. The reasons for the foundation of this college are clear from its statutes:

Further, compassionating the general disease of the clerical army, which through the want of clergy caused by pestilence, wars, and other miseries of the world, we have been grievously wounded, in order that one may be able partly to relieve it, since in

⁴⁷ V. Oglivie, *The English Public School* (B. T. Batsford Ltd.: London, 1957), pp.19-20. Hereafter referred to as Oglivie.

truth we cannot wholly cure it, for this truly in our small way we willingly spend our labours.

Wykeham set up his college in Oxford with the purpose of training secular clergy. This in itself was revolutionary, in that previously seculars had been trained in their native diocese, usually at the cathedral Grammar School, by other clergy. Now, the secular clergy were receiving the benefit of the academic training that the regular monastic clergy had received for many years before, and for the first time they were receiving such an education outside of their own dioceses. It was believed this would help in the battle against heresy in England.

In 1373 Wykeham set up a house in the parish of St John in Winchester for 'the poor scholars whom the said Lord Bishop maintains and will continue to maintain at his own expense.' In 1378 he obtained a Bull from Pope Urban VI for the founding of 'Saint Marie College of Winchester.' The College was opened in 1394 amid great ceremony.

The foundation of Winchester School, as it is known, was a very important event in the history of English education. The school was set up to educate boys who would eventually serve as priests, and in this the school was not exceptional. That was the inspiration for almost all schools set up and active throughout the Middle Ages. The school taught much the same curriculum as any other Grammar School, having as it did essentially the same purpose. The school was specifically connected to New College, Oxford, where the boys there would continue their studies. But this had already happened at Merton College, Oxford, which had its own Grammar School; and before that at Queens College, Oxford, by Robert of Eglesfield, and at Exeter College by Bishop Stapleton.⁴⁸

The distinct and unusual thing about Winchester was that the school was set up as a college in and of itself. Every other school throughout English history had been the result of, or a by-product from, an already existing institution. Here a collegiate body was set up with the specific purpose of managing and running a Grammar School:

The old Collegiate Churches had kept Grammar Schools, and flourishing Grammar Schools, but they were, though inseparable accidents, still accidents. The new

Collegiate Churches at the University, called Colleges, substituted grown scholars for priests, and study for services, as the essence of the institution, but the schoolboys remained an accident, and a rather unimportant accident. In Winchester College the accident became the essence. . . . For the first time a school was established as a sovereign and independent corporation existing by and for itself, self-centred, self-controlled.⁴⁹

In this, Winchester is exceptional, from an historical point of view. At the time the notion that only boys from this school could proceed to study at New College was unusual. However, the most striking thing about these two institutions, to those at the time, was undoubtedly the wealth with which they were endowed. Both were housed in grand, purpose-built buildings, constructed on a very large scale. It was in this, as much as anything, that they were notable, and founded to continue for many years to come.

The foundation of Winchester was a symbol and a sign that the education of children, as well as young men, had 'come of age.' Schools were no longer to be considered to be an appendage of something greater, a cathedral, or monastery, or Chantry, or Guild. By the end of the fourteenth century, education was considered to be so important that a school did not require a reason or pretext to exist. Wykeham realised this in a tangible way at Winchester, and his example was swiftly followed. Institutions that existed purely for education were now seen to be just as valid as any other major ecclesiastical body. The wealth that Wykeham was able to invest in Winchester helped a great deal to give it the validity that it required to succeed.

It would be accurate to describe Wykeham as a pioneer in seminary education. His foundations at Winchester and Oxford almost anticipate the Tridentine model of a Senior and Junior Seminary dedicated to the training of boys and young men for the priesthood, while at the same time making a small provision for lay students. That both these institutions, through the ravages of time, changed their purpose and now train secular students, does not detract

⁴⁸ Barnes, p.20.

⁴⁹ A. F. Leach, *A History of Winchester College* (Duckworth: London, 1899), pp.89-90.

from the fact that their main purpose was to try and create a set and firm model for priestly formation at a time when the orthodoxy of the Church was being challenged and when vocations and numbers in the priesthood were relatively low.

Schools in the later Medieval Period

Throughout the latter part of the Middle Ages schools were established in England by all different classes of people, from different walks of life and for different purposes. From the local population to the gentry, from the nobility, the Church and the king himself, new educational foundations were being set up creating the back bone of an educational structure in England.

The popularity of schools, particularly local Grammar Schools, increased throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. They were often regarded by local magnates and benefactors as a popular form of charity⁵⁰ and at least one case exists of the members of a parish, at Kingston-upon-Hull, petitioning a schoolmaster to come and teach the children of their area at their own expense.⁵¹ Schoolmasters would also set up shop in a town or village like any other tradesman and wait for pupils to arrive to be taught.⁵²

Most areas of the country had schools founded by lesser ranked laity. Those with large land holdings in the country, and merchants in the city, contributed to their society by founding a school for local children. This might be a Chantry school, but became, before or after the Chantry Acts, effectively a Grammar School.⁵³ In 1525, on the eve of the Reformation, Cardinal Wolsey attempted to establish a school in his home town of Ipswich. He re-founded an existing school on the lines of Wykeham's school at Winchester. Cardinal College was to have a Dean, twelve Fellows, eight Clerks, eight Choristers and fifty scholars with a master and two ushers to instruct them. The school also had a detailed curriculum using the new

⁵⁰ Orme, *English Schools*, p.194.

⁵¹ Lawson Silver, p.46. They contracted the schoolmaster of the Almonry School at Canterbury.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.46.

⁵³ Orme, *English Schools*, p.203.

Works of Lily and John Colet. Wolsey's fall from grace in 1530 saw the closure of this grand enterprise, along with his Cardinal College at Oxford.⁵⁴ Wolsey was emulating the actions of Henry IV in his foundation of Eton College in 1440. Like Wolsey the king wanted an institution to perpetuate his own name, basing it on the dual foundations of William of Wykeham. Similarly the king's fall from grace endangered the continuation of these. Eton, through its own efforts, has survived to this day.

Education was an expanding concern by the end of the Middle Ages, and one that could be used for many purposes. There was, however, a shortage among Grammar School teachers and also a problem of standards among those who were to teach in the schools. A petition was presented to the king in 1439 declaring that

all wisdom, knowledge, and governance standeth in, is like to be impaired and feebled, by the default and lack of Schoolmasters of Grammar, in so much that as your said poor beseecher hath found...over the East part of the way leading from Hampton to Coventry, and so forth no farther north than Ripon, seventy schools void or more that were occupied all at once within fifty years past, because there is so great scarcity of masters of Grammar, whereof as now be almost none, nor no more to be had in your Universities over those that needs be occupied still there.⁵⁵

William Byngham, who offered this petition, went on to describe how he was offering a mansion named 'God's House' where he would provide 'free abode of the poor scholars of Grammar.' As a result of this petition a teacher training college, for want of a better expression, was founded at God's House in Cambridge in 1439.

While this demonstrates a deficiency in the Grammar Schools of the later Middle Ages, it also provides evidence that Grammar Schools were extensive in the country and the need for them was increasing, rather than diminishing.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.201.

⁵⁵ Leach, *Charters and Documents*, pp.402-403, quoted in Sylvester, pp.28-29. Extract from a Petition by William Byngham to the king, c1439.

Conclusion

The period of English history from the first missions of St Augustine up to the Reformation shows a system of education in England which is at ease with itself. It is totally dominated by the Church: the major schools are run by Religious Houses; they are founded by important Churchmen or are established as a by-product of a wealthy man's desire to see heaven. The schools are founded with the main intention of educating boys and men who are to follow a career in the Church. The sons of the poor, however, are also sometimes included in this educational provision. The relationship between the Church and education is inextricably linked: it is a tool used by the Church for its own ends, and the Church has exclusive rights over it.

This image of education was one which remained with the English Catholic Church throughout the recusant period and into the nineteenth-century. The desire to return to a faithfully Catholic England, with a mediaeval edge, was the aim of many prominent Catholics of the nineteenth-century. The works of important mediaeval revivalists such as A. W. N. Pugin, Kenelm Digby, Ambrose Philipps de Lisle and George Spencer saw a conscious desire to see a mediaeval Catholic Church restored in England in all things, be it architecture, liturgy or education. It was to this image of education and to this age that the nineteenth-century Catholic educationalists looked for their ideal of an English Catholic education system.

CHAPTER TWO

CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE RECUSANT PERIOD

The Reformation in England began in the 1530's, during the reign of Henry VIII. Henry's policies were as much designed to increase the wealth of the crown and to secure him a divorce as they were for reasons of personal religious conscience. The closure of the monasteries under Henry condemned many, but not all, of the monastic Grammar Schools. However, the faith remained relatively intact during Henry's reign, only the monastic houses and the Papal supremacy were abolished. Under the reign of his son, Edward VI (1547-1553), and more particularly those who administered the country on his behalf (Lord Protectors Somerset (1547-1549) and Northumberland (1549-1553)) traditional English education systems underwent radical change. It was not until the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) that the position of education in the Church of England became confirmed.

The death of Queen Mary and accession of Elizabeth in 1558 marked the end, for over two hundred years, of formal Catholic education in England. With Elizabeth the Protestant succession in the English monarchy would become assured, resulting in many prominent Catholics, clergy and laity, going into exile on the continent. Many of the academics who fled were Oxford Fellows, chiefly from New College and Exeter College. They found themselves in Flanders at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, mainly because there was a new university there, established in the town of Douay and under the Chancellorship of Richard Smith, formerly a Fellow of Merton College, Oxford. These English academics remained in exile at Douay, concentrating on the events unfolding in their home country. The religious settlements of 1558-1563 brought the previously Church-run schools into the domain of the state, since the Church itself had come under state control. Schooling was to become a means by which to suppress Catholic teaching and faith in England, and to affirm and spread the teachings of the new Church of England. Catholic schooling was subsequently banned under penal legislation.

While Catholic schools did continue to exist in England throughout this time, they were in secret, and were often, though not always, with a limited life span.⁵⁶

Catholic Education Abroad

The mainly Oxford academics who fled to Flanders watched the unfolding of the English Reformation with interest and concern. By 1573, four years after the excommunication of Elizabeth by St Pius V, they had developed serious concerns for the future of English Catholicism, and especially for the training and provision of English priests. These men were mainly clerics themselves and feared that they might become the last of their kind. Many of them were teaching fellows of the Oxford colleges from where they had come, and, while teaching at the University of Douay, fell under the nominal leadership of William Allen, formerly Principal of St Mary's Hall, Oxford, and Fellow of Oriel College. His group consisted of Richard Smith, Fellow of Merton College; Richard White, Fellow of New College; Owen Lewis, Fellow of New College, Professor of Canon Law; Morgan Philips, Fellow and Tutor of Oriel College; Richard Bristow, Fellow of Exeter College; John Howlett, Fellow of Exeter College; John Marshall, Fellow of New College and Usher of Winchester; Thomas Stapleton, Fellow of New College; Thomas Ford, Fellow of Trinity College; Thomas Dorman, Fellow of All Souls College; Gregory Martin, Fellow of St John's College; Edmund Campion, Fellow of St John's College; and Edward Resden, M.A., of Exeter College. These men resolved, under Allen's leadership, to found a College as part of the University at Douay, where Englishmen could be trained outside the jurisdiction of the Protestant English laws, to supply priests to convert England back to the Faith. The College became known as the English College at Douay, or simply Douay (sometimes Douai) College. The college was founded by William Allen in 1568 and through the establishment of this college English

⁵⁶ J. Arthur, *The Ebbing Tide* (Gracewing: Herefordshire, 1995), p.9. Hereafter referred to as Arthur.

Catholic education not only continued,⁵⁷ but the line of seminary education begun by Wykeham in 1379 at Winchester was also carried on at Douay. Many of the clergy at Douay were successors to the Founding Fathers at New College, and they consciously based their College at Douay on an Oxford institution.

Allen worked closely with the Jesuit priest Robert Persons who had been bursar and dean of St Mary's Hall when Allen was Principal there. He left England in 1574 and became a Catholic at Louvain in France. These two men began their efforts with the specific aim to found educational institutions on the continent which would educate young men from England and Wales, who were to return to their home land in a effort to convert the people back to Catholicism. Their work has been described as the beginning of modern English Catholic education.⁵⁸

After founding Douay College in 1568, Cardinal Allen went on to establish another college in Rome in 1579. This college, the Venerabile, was founded on an existing institution, the 'Schola Anglorum' which had traditionally housed English pilgrims in the city. After only ten years, Douay had been compelled to move due to the unstable political climate. It was therefore felt important that another college, at the heart of the Catholic world, should be set up which was considered more secure.⁵⁹

The Jesuit Robert Persons travelled to Spain where he received the patronage of Philip II. Persons established a college at Valladolid, the home of the royal court, in 1589, and a further college in Seville in 1592. In the heart of Spain, these colleges were less likely to be at risk from attack or from the political turbulence experienced by the College at Douay.⁶⁰ These colleges were secular foundations, established for the training of secular priests but were, until the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain in 1767, administered by Jesuits.

⁵⁷ Barnes, p.57.

⁵⁸ A. C. F. Beales, *Education Under Penalty: English Catholic Education from the Reformation to the Fall of James II* (The Athlone Press, University of London: London, 1963), p.40. Hereafter referred to as Beales.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.45.

⁶⁰ W. H. G. Armytage, *Four Hundred Years of English Education* (Cambridge University Press: London, 1970), p.4. Hereafter referred to as Armytage.

In 1593 Robert Persons established a school at St Omer near Douay. It was founded as a Jesuit institution with the aim of being a preliminary school for boys who would then graduate to the larger seminary at Douay, or even the Spanish seminaries or the Venerabile in Rome. St Omer was the successor of a smaller school, attached to Douay, at the town of Eu. This was described by Cardinal Allen as a ‘novum seminarium’ and by Persons as ‘a seminary for English youth,’ but modern scholarship supports that this school was more general in its education and in the composition of its students.⁶¹ St Omer is an important school for several reasons. It was the first continental college set up to educate boys (rather than men) who had been sent by their parents, or in some cases had fled from their families, so they could receive a Catholic education in an English context. It fostered vocations, not only for the Jesuits but also for the secular clergy. It also, as already suggested, acted as a feeder for all the English continental colleges, in Spain and Rome. The composition of the student body, clerical to lay, in the sixteenth century cannot be ascertained, but we do know that in the seventeenth century, a large proportion of the students were not for the priesthood.⁶²

The Jesuits were not the only religious order to establish colleges and communities in northern France. In 1602, after much wrangling, the English Benedictines, who claimed to be descended from the community at Westminster, were given permission to establish a college in the Low Countries. The college of St Gregory was established at Douay in 1605. A year later, in 1606, another college, dedicated to St Lawrence, was established at Dieulouard in Lorraine by the English Benedictines. A further three houses were established in subsequent years, one at St Malo in 1611, one at Chelles in 1611 and one at Paris in 1615. The Benedictine Houses were reorganised in 1617 following the unification of the English Benedictine Community (which had divided into three strands) naming Dieulouard, Paris and Chelles as monasteries and Douay and St Malo as Colleges.⁶³

⁶¹ Beales, p.65.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.70.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.175.

The English Franciscans opened a House for postulants at Douay in 1614 which, up until it opened its own school in 1622, sent students to be educated by the Benedictines. They opened a school exclusively for lay students in 1672. The Dominicans, too, opened a continental house at Bornhem, but not until much later in the century, in 1657.

Separate institutions were also set up by exiled Catholics from Ireland and Scotland.

By the end of the seventeenth century there had been thirty five colleges or schools for boys established on the continent by Catholic exiles from the whole of the British Isles and of these twenty one were English foundations: the English College, Douay⁶⁴ (1568), the English College, Rome (1579), the English College, Eu (1582), the English College, Valladolid (1589), the English College, Seville (1592), the English College (school), St Omer⁶⁵ (1593), the English Benedictines, St Gregory's, Douay⁶⁶ (1605), the English Benedictines, St Laurence's, Dieulouard (1606), the English Jesuit Novitiate, Louvain (1607), the English Benedictines, St Malo (1611), the English Benedictines, Chelles (1611), the English College, Madrid (1612), the English Franciscans, Gravelines (1614?), the English Benedictines, St Edmund's, Paris (1617), the English Franciscans, St Bonaventure's, Paris (1617), the English Benedictines, St Vedast, Douay (1621), the English College, Lisbon (1628), the English Dominican Novitiate, Bornhem (1657), the English Dominican School, Bornhem (1660), the English College, St Gregory, Paris (1667), the English Benedictine School, St Laurence's, Dieulouard⁶⁷ (1669?),⁶⁸ the English Benedictine Abbey, Lampspringe, (mid-seventeenth century).

There were about thirty Irish foundations: five in Spain; three or four in Rome; two in Lisbon; eight in France, including three at Louvain and four in the Low Countries. Further the Irish Franciscans had colleges at Prague, Capranica in Italy, and Boulay in Lorraine. The Irish Capuchins had three colleges in France (one given up in 1684) and the Irish Augustinians had

⁶⁴ Later divided between Ushaw College, Durham and St Edmund's College, Ware (later Allen Hall, Chelsea).

⁶⁵ Later Stonyhurst School, Lancashire (1794).

⁶⁶ Later Downside Abbey, Somerset (1814).

⁶⁷ Later Ampleforth Abbey, Yorkshire (1802).

⁶⁸ Beales, pp.273-274.

a college in Rome up to 1661.⁶⁹ There were four Scottish foundations, colleges at Rome, Douay, Madrid (later Valladolid and after that Salamanca), and a Jesuit college at Tournai.

The English female religious orders also established schools and colleges on the continent. The Canonesses of St Augustine had founded a house at Louvain (1609), the Society of the Holy Sepulchre at Liege (1642), the Dominicanesses at Brussels (1660), the Franciscans at Brussels (1619), the Benedictines at Brussels (1597), the Benedictines at Ghent (1624), the Benedictines at Dunkirk (1662) and the Benedictines at Cambrai (1623). These houses often ran schools to supplement their income, but with the exception of the order established by Mary Ward (see below) they were contemplatives.⁷⁰

Catholic Education at Home

In England, some provision for the education of Catholic children did continue, but under increasing pressure from the authorities and new legislation against them. The English Government became seriously worried about Catholic influences over their children. In 1581 Lord Burghley initiated a scheme to have the children of Catholic gentry educated as Protestants, by force if necessary: 'You shall, under cover of education, have them hostages for their parents' fidelities.'⁷¹ In that year an eight year old Henry Wriothesley became the third Earl of Southampton. Both his parents had been Catholics, but as a ward of the Queen he was taken from his mother and brought up in Burghley's own home⁷². Further attempts were made to extend the powers of the crown to segregate all children from their recusant parents, but these did not come to fruition. The death of a noble father, as with Wriothesley, was really the only way a Catholic minor could be separated from his or her parents.

⁶⁹ C. Giblin, 'Irish Exiles in Catholic Europe', P. J. Corish (ed.), *A History of Irish Catholicism*, 6 vols. (Gill and Macmillan Ltd.: Dublin, 1971), vol. 4, p.3.

⁷⁰ A. C. F. Beales, 'The Struggle for the Schools', G. A. Beck (ed.), *The English Catholics* (Burns and Oates: London, 1950), p.339. Hereafter referred to as Beales in Beck.

⁷¹ Arthur, p.9 and Beales, p.58.

⁷² J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850* (Darton, Longman and Todd: London, 1975), p.162. Hereafter referred to as Bossy.

The situation in England became increasingly difficult with virtually no provision for Catholic education in England. 1583 saw the Privy Council ruling that all children should be educated within the Protestant Church of England, leaving Catholic parents with the choice of sending their children abroad to the schools set up there, or of sending them to the Protestant schools. The option of sending children away was only open to the very rich or to boys who wished to train for the priesthood.

A famous story was told of four brothers, aged twelve to sixteen of the Worthington family from Blainsford in Lancashire, who had been brought up by a Marian priest following the death of their parents. They were seized under the protection of the Bishop of Chester and the Earl of Derby. They refused to reject the Catholic faith, despite persuasion, separation and some torture. After escaping, being recaptured and escaping several more times they eventually fled to Douay where they were all eventually ordained, two returning to the English mission.⁷³

Sending Catholic children to English Protestant schools was also problematic, the children often suffered discrimination at school while at the same time were refused first Holy Communion, being accused of attending, and thereby supporting, a Protestant institution. In the 1650's a boy attending a school in Northumberland, the only Catholic in the school, was barred from receiving his first holy communion.⁷⁴

In 1610 Ralph Salvin, the son of Catholic gentry in Durham was expelled from his county Durham school after attacking a boy who taunted him for being a Papist. A Few years later a boy in school in Brentwood, it is recorded, was beaten after skipping Church having been told, inaccurately, that his father had conformed.⁷⁵

There are only a few examples, such as these, of the problems that faced Catholic children who attended Protestant schools in England, but it is possible that these tell of a wider situation.

⁷³ Beales, pp.59-60.

⁷⁴ Bossy, p.166.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.166.

Up until the reign of James II (1685-1688) very little in the way of Catholic education existed in England. Until recently, it was believed that any Catholic provision for the education of English children in England had been so rare and short lived that no records had survived. It was therefore asserted that no real provision for education during this one hundred year period really existed.⁷⁶ However, recent research has shown that several schools, run by both secular and regular clerics, did exist at this time. The schools themselves were seen as feeder schools to the continental colleges, to foster vocations among the boys of Catholic England and give them a grounding, not only in the knowledge of their faith, but in academic education as well. The schools were small and often did not last very long.

A regional survey of Catholics, Peacock's *Yorkshire Catholics of 1604* records thirty Catholic school masters in the county in that year, six of whom were in Sheffield.⁷⁷ Scarisbrick Hall in Lancashire, however, held a continuous Catholic tradition dating from Elizabethan times. It is recorded that a school functioned there in 1618, from 1628-1639, 1648-1652 (and possibly until 1679), 1698-1700, 1703 and 1723. Scholars from this school were sent to Rome (three in 1659) and Valladolid (1650).⁷⁸

Fernyhalgh, near Preston, was a school in existence in 1650. It lasted into the following century and is an example of a school that continued for a surprisingly long time.⁷⁹ It was known as 'Dame Alice's School' after its founder, Alice Harrison. It had boarders living in the nearby cottages.⁸⁰ The school itself educated some prominent Catholics of subsequent years, most notably three brothers named Kendal. Each of them would become priests and headmasters of prominent English Catholic schools: Richard Kendal at Standon Lordship, Hugh Kendal at Sedgley Park and Dr George Kendal, from 1744-1754, at Dame Alice's

⁷⁶ Barnes, p.97.

⁷⁷ Beales, p.197.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.200.

⁷⁹ Arthur, p.10.

⁸⁰ Curtis, p.131.

school itself.⁸¹ In the seventeenth century there were at least 120 Catholic schoolmasters, rising to 135 by the eighteenth century with at least 220 schools.⁸²

One of the largest day schools was run by the Jesuits at Savoy Place in London, an indication of the increasing toleration enjoyed by Catholics in the capital.⁸³ The Jesuits were very active in setting up missions in England, out of which, as in the days of St Augustine, schools often followed. Following the accession of the Catholic James II, a greater toleration of Catholicism was brought about in England. Many various denominations of Christianity flourished under his reign, although this was primarily allowed so that Catholicism could be practised freely.

In 1685 twelve schools were opened by the Jesuits in England. These schools often took non-Catholic pupils which was probably as much a tribute to the quality of the teaching they received as to toleration of Catholics at the time. These schools opened at Bury St Edmunds, Durham, Lincoln, Newcastle, Norwich, Pontefract-York, Stapehill (Wimborne), Welshpool, Wigan, Wolverhampton, and two in London⁸⁴. This was a time in which Catholicism really flourished, following the restrictions found during the reign of Elizabeth and her immediate successors.

The female religious orders also played a significant part in education at home during penal times. The work of Mary Ward and the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary is pre-eminent here. A Yorkshire woman, Mary Ward returned to England from St Omer in 1605 to establish an English convent of Poor Clares, setting up the Institute (IBVM) in 1609, dedicated to education as well as to contemplation. The institute spread rapidly, with twelve houses educating English girls by 1630. Her order was seen as dangerous, however, and by its nature violated many of the rules of the Council of Trent regarding the contemplative nature of female religious. They were suppressed in 1630.⁸⁵

The continuing legacy of Mary Ward is seen at two schools, one at the Bar Convent in York and the other at 'Pope's Corner' in Hammersmith, which continued unmolested, throughout

⁸¹ Barnes, p.108.

⁸² Beales in Beck, p.365.

⁸³ Barnes, p.97.

⁸⁴ Arthur, pp.10-11.

penal times, to give education to Catholic girls. These schools were established after the restoration of the Institute in 1639 and, while under powerful patronage (the school at Hammersmith was connected to the Portuguese embassy) they persisted.⁸⁶

The Catholic Church in England underwent reorganisation in 1688. The land was divided into four Districts, each with a Vicar Apostolic to lead it. A Vicar Apostolic has the sacramental and ecclesiastical powers of a bishop, but does not hold the full faculties of a diocesan territorial bishop, which through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries remained with Rome. This system continued, with some modifications, until the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850.

Education in the Eighteenth Century

The Glorious Revolution of 1688 brought about the abrupt end of James II's reign, and also ended much of the toleration that Catholics had enjoyed. Many schools, especially those run by Jesuits (seen as particularly potent agents of the Pope), were closed down and often attacked by anti-Catholic mobs. New anti-Catholic legislation was enacted which further drove into hiding Catholics, and public Catholic institutions, such as schools. Catholic schoolmasters were threatened with life imprisonment if caught teaching and the parents of children taught by Catholic teachers were to have their property confiscated. This legislation remained on the statute books until the Relief Acts of 1778 and 1791.⁸⁷

Despite these very strong measures, Catholic schools continued to exist in England, often supplied by priests from the continent, and Catholic parents still sent their children to be educated. One of the most important schools that survived the revolution of 1688 was based at Twyford, near Winchester. It is perhaps most notable for having educated Alexander Pope, who attended at the age of eight. But as a Catholic school it holds an important place in English Catholic history. In 1726 the headmaster was a Mr Fleetwood, a secular priest

⁸⁵ Beales, p.203.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.227.

educated at the English College in Valladolid.⁸⁸ Under him the school, which was in danger of being closed if revealed to the authorities, grew to more than one hundred boarders. It contained among its masters a Mr Needham, the first Catholic priest to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Following the Jacobite uprising of 1745, the school decided to close, but reopened in 1753 at a house in Standon Lordship, in Hertfordshire.

The house was the property of the Catholic Lord Aston, who had died in 1751 leaving only two infant daughters. Bishop Challoner leased the property with a view to re-establishing the school at Twyford as a school for Catholics in the south of England. The house itself was secluded and hidden making it a perfect location. It was also large enough to house many boys. The first master was Richard Kendal, educated at Dame Alice's school and at Douay College. In this he not only undoubtedly brought many of the customs and knowledge of Douay to the College, but he was also firmly in the tradition of English Catholic education, having been taught both at a clandestine penal school in England, and at the successor of ancient English education, Douay. This school at Standon Lordship was an appropriate successor of many aspects of the English Catholic educational institutions. Much of the daily routine of Standon School, as it became known, was based on that of Douay, and through this of the ancient schools of England. 'Small beer,' for example, was taken here in the summer, as it was at Eton at that time, a genuine tradition passed down from the Middle Ages to Douay, and thence to Standon Lordship. In 1767 the school moved to Hare Street because their accommodation at Standon Lordship was leased out above their heads. This was another Catholic house and, many years after the school moved in 1772, the house was bought by Mgr Hugh Benson. It later became the country home of the Archbishops of Westminster.

In 1772 the Vicar Apostolic of the London District bought Old Hall Green as accommodation for the school. The school was led by Rev. James Willacy and prospered mainly due to the relaxation of the Penal Laws. In 1778 the First Relief Act was passed through Parliament, relaxing some laws relating to Catholic education. In 1791 Catholic churches were recognised

⁸⁷ Arthur, p11.

⁸⁸ Barnes, p.97.

by law and, on 9 January 1793, Old Hall was officially registered as a place of Catholic worship.⁸⁹

In 1793 the school placed an advertisement in the *Catholic Directory*. It stated that for twenty five Guineas a year, a pupil at their school could expect to receive Board, lodgings, and washing, and taught Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Book-Keeping, Geography, and the use of the globes, English, Latin, Greek and French, which last they will be obliged to speak in their familiar conversation on certain days⁹⁰.

The Relief Acts and Greater Toleration of Catholicism

The Relief Acts of 1778 and 1791 were very important for all aspects of Catholic life, not least Catholic education. The first Act did not allow for the establishment of Catholic schools, but the toleration it gave, and the message of acceptance that it promoted throughout the country, allowed it to be interpreted as a permissive step. This was seen in the continuation of schools such as that at Old Hall, and in the fact that these schools found greater scope for relaxation and that new schools were founded at this time. 1791 saw the law for the perpetual imprisonment of Catholic schoolmasters revoked in the second Relief Act, despite strong opposition. However, even before this the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of Propaganda wrote to the Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District announcing that ‘since the law now allows schools for the instruction of youth under the care of Catholic masters, this Sacred Congregation is anxious that they should be established.’⁹¹

The years 1792-1794 saw the ‘Reign of Terror’ that engulfed France following the Revolution there. The French Revolution played a very important part in the development of English Catholic education. The anti-religious character of the French Revolution forced the various

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.101.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.101-102.

⁹¹ M. Gaine, ‘The Development of Official Roman Catholic Education Policy in England and Wales’, P. Jebb (ed), *Religious Education: Decision or Draft* (Darton, Longman and Todd: London, 1968), p.147, quoted in Arthur, p.11.

English training colleges to close, so that they had to return to England, where the law now allowed them to practise their religion with relative freedom.

Douay College itself split into two divisions. Some of the students joined the school at Old Hall Green to form a seminary in the south of England, but the bulk of students and staff travelled north to found a new Douay College. Ushaw College was eventually begun in 1808. 1794 marks an important watershed for the history and development of English Catholic education. For the first time, education was not centred on the training colleges of the continent. These colleges could no longer continue in their original form, and were struggling to exist.

The closure of the continental colleges in 1794 came during the early days of the Industrial Revolution, during which time the population of the country was slowly moving to the inner cities, a trend which grew during the subsequent one hundred years. The closure of these colleges also came at the advent of mass immigration from Ireland, **discussed below**. The ancient colleges, with their links going back to William of Wykeham and beyond, were no longer the centre of Catholic education, but merely became a part of it. The formation of the Catholics of England was taken in hand by the Vicars Apostolic themselves, and their priority, for the first time since the Reformation, was not the formation of priests, but the education of all Catholics, at an elementary level, and within the Faith. The education of the poor now became the main focus for the Vicars Apostolic and the Church in England.

Development of Educational Provision in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries

At the beginning of the nineteenth-century the education of the English poor was a rather ad hoc affair. Mainly supplied by the Churches, education was still considered to be a luxury that the poor could not, and had no need to, afford. A change in the political climate, the advance of the Industrial Revolution, and thus the expansion of the major cities and an influx of immigrants to England, created an ever increasing need to supply some form of education and supervision for the poorest of children.

The beginning of the nineteenth-century did see some measures taken by Parliament to care for the welfare of poor children. The *Health and Morals of Apprentices Bill* was introduced by Sir Robert Peel in 1802. The First Factory Act, which came out of this Bill, was limited in its scope but important for setting a trend that the State was responsible for regulation over the growing heavy industries.

The Act covered only those children sent by the authorities from the workhouse to the cotton and wool mills. They could work no more than twelve hours a day, night work was forbidden, and work places were to be kept clean and properly ventilated, and painted at least once a year. Importantly, there was provision in the Act that apprentices should be given basic instruction on reading and writing, and religious instruction on Sundays.⁹²

While this Bill was intended to improve standards for child workers, and was the beginning of a succession of attempts to improve both education and living standards for the poorest children, the Act itself proved ineffectual. It did not cover children sent to work by their parents, its methods of enforcing the various laws established were wholly inadequate, and it became redundant in 1814 following the abolition of the apprenticeship system in mills.

Establishment of Societies for the Promotion of Elementary Education

Various pressure groups established themselves at the beginning of the century to petition the Government for Grant Aid for the establishment of schools. The promotion of particular religious and philosophical ideas about children's education became just as important to these various groups as the establishment of the schools themselves.

The earliest of these groups, the Royal Lancasterian Society, set up in 1808⁹³ and later renamed the British and Foreign School Society in 1814,⁹⁴ was founded to preserve the

⁹² H. C. Barnard, *A History of English Education From 1760* (University of London Press: London, 1969), pp.63-64. Hereafter referred to as Barnard.

⁹³ M. Cruickshank, *Church and State in English Education* (Macmillan and Co. Ltd.: London, 1964), p.2. Hereafter referred to as Cruickshank.

⁹⁴ G. F. A. Best, 'The Religious Difficulties of National Education in England 1800-70', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1956), p.160. Hereafter referred to as Best. Between 1811 and 1814

Borough Road Schools, in Southwark. They had been set up by Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, whose educational philosophy of ‘general Christian principles’⁹⁵ was welcomed by the liberal politicians of the day. The greater part of the British and Foreign School Society was made up of Whigs, Quakers, Radicals and Evangelicals, who believed that all children should be taught basic Christian scriptural principles, but without any form of doctrinal or denominational instruction. The Society’s aims were the establishment of such schools for the education of poor children, created by private donation or state aid.

This effort by the Dissenting, or Nonconformist, churches quickly became a scandal to the Church of England. As the Established Church, it had taken the responsibility of the education of children as something specific to itself, indeed as a right. The local village school had always been under the patronage of the local cleric and similarly the large public schools were all nominally Church of England, many of them specifically religious foundations.

1811 saw the foundation of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church of England. The Society was based around the Church of England clergyman Andrew Bell. Bell had been an Anglican clergyman in Madras, where he had helped set up several Anglican schools. He was inspired to found the National Society after hearing the annual ‘Charity Schools Sermon’ in 1811, given at St Paul’s Cathedral by Bishop Herbert Marsh. Bishop Marsh’s sermon, and the foundation of the National Society as a response to it, was the culmination of a series of attacks on Joseph Lancaster’s educational principles. Various Anglican clerics had published criticisms of it throughout the previous years (notably, Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, brother of the famous poet), and a debate in various publications ensued. By 1811 it was clear that Lancaster’s ideas on education were in sympathy with liberal political ideas, beliefs held by many of the Nonconformist churches and by certain elements within the Church of England itself. The

this society was given a number of different names, including The Institution for Promoting the British System of the Education of the Labouring and Manufacturing Classes of Society of every Religious Persuasion. This perhaps gives some indication of the diverse nature of the British and Foreign School Society.

established Church, however, strongly believed that all schools in the land should not only teach and promote the Christian faith, but should also teach the specific doctrines of the Church of England. Importantly, Lancaster's ideas challenged the power of the Church of England over education, which it had always simply assumed as its own. To surrender this would be to lose the power to educate the nation's children as members of the Church of England.

It is interesting to note that the first battle over a national system of education in England was not between different warring Churches, nor between a Church and the Government. It was not between the notion of a religious education versus a secular education: both these new organisations wished to provide a Christian education to their charges. The battle was firstly about what a religious education really meant: was it doctrinal, or was it non-doctrinal?⁹⁶ Secondly, it was an attempt by the Church of England to reassert itself as the sole provider of education in England.

The British and Foreign Society and the National Society received no Government funding for the building of schools until 1833. The intervening twenty years or so saw major constitutional changes in the religious makeup of the British Isles, most notably full Catholic Emancipation in 1829. The Established Church was no longer at the heart of the Establishment in quite the same way as it once had been, and the election of a rather radical Whig Government in 1830 had sought to decrease its authority further. Indeed, the granting of funds for English schools in 1833 was in order to justify and balance funds granted to Irish schools in 1830.⁹⁷ Such a decision to fund English schools was by no means a change of Government policy in favour of an education system run by the Church. The granting of funds for the purpose of education of the poor was opposed publicly by the Government at the time. The motion was proposed by the radical J. A. Roebuck and was passed only by virtue of an almost empty House of Commons. Of the seventy-six members present in the commons on

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.161.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.161.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.164.

17 August 1833, fifty voted in favour and twenty-six voted against.⁹⁸ If anything, this was a move by politicians to take control of English education. Many people in the various Churches were concerned that this would mean an education based on non-Christian principles and ideas.

At the beginning of the nineteenth-century, elementary education of the poor was becoming an increasing concern for the English Catholic bishops. Much of the latter part of the eighteenth-century, and the early part of the nineteenth-century, saw a struggle for control of the Church in England between the increasingly powerful hierarchy and the old Catholic aristocracy. The division took on an organised form, the aristocratic lay-led party being based in the south and midlands, versus a clerical based group which was more ‘provincial and bourgeois in character.’⁹⁹ Power over the schools was a major question relating to this struggle and the eventual success of the clergy-led party was to reflect strongly on the organisation and management of the schools. When commenting on the nature of the struggle within English Catholicism at this time, Bishop Milner, Vicar Apostolic of the Midland District asked whether the English Catholic Church was to be run by ‘the successors of St Peter or the descendants of Lord Petre.’

The establishment of Catholic schools at the turn of the century was a slow and erratic process. Schools were largely set up where they were needed, and there was no specific educational policy other than supplying a need where there was a demand. Also, the Catholic population, while increasing, was not rising as dramatically as it would later in the century. The school set up by James Worswick in Newcastle, detailed in Chapter Six, is an example of this.

⁹⁸ Curtis, p.223.

The actual wording of the vote is as follows: ‘That a Sum, not exceeding £20,000, be granted to His Majesty, to be issued in aid of Private Subscriptions for the Erection of School Houses, for the education of the Children of the Poorer Classes in Great Britain, to the 31 day of March 1834; and that said sum be issued and paid without any fee or deduction whatsoever.’

⁹⁹ Arthur, pp.11-12.

In 1811 several Catholic charities were merged to form The Association of Catholic Charities. This body was committed to education, orphans and apprentices, but with an income of only £2,000 per annum it could do little in the support of Catholic schooling.¹⁰⁰

Catholic Emancipation in 1829 completed a legal process begun in 1778. While this was the beginning of full freedom for Catholics in England, the Act itself made little difference to the everyday life of the Church in England. Educationally, Catholics were as isolated as ever. Although several major Catholic institutions of education were now based in England following their exile from France, they were still separated from the life of the nation. Many were hidden away, quite literally, from public view. Catholics knew nothing of the universities, and the somewhat aloof attitudes of the still powerful Catholic aristocracy kept them, for much of the time, out of public life. A report of a Parliamentary select committee in 1835 estimated that there were only 86 day schools, 62 Sunday schools and one infant's school for Catholics in England.¹⁰¹ The Catholic community, though with legal equality, was still on the sidelines of English society. It was regarded with suspicion by the establishment, which was as reluctant to help them in the case of supplying an educational need as many of the bishops were reluctant to receive help from a Government which had vehemently persecuted them in the past.

¹⁰⁰ J. P. Marmion, 'The Beginnings of the Catholic Poor Schools in England', *Recusant History*, vol. 17, (May 1984), p.69. Hereafter referred to as Marmion.

¹⁰¹ Beales in Beck, p.366.

CHAPTER THREE

CATHOLIC EDUCATION FROM EMANCIPATION TO THE 1870 EDUCATION ACT

The injection of cash given annually since 1833 into the foundation and building of schools, some under the auspices of the Church of England's National Society, some under the non-doctrinal Christian British and Foreign Schools Society, inspired the Catholic bishops to attempt to gain Government funding for their own schools. They followed the example of the Established Church and the Nonconformists by setting up their own official educational body, The Catholic Institute of Great Britain. Despite being established by the bishops themselves The Catholic Institute was lay dominated. It was founded in 1838 and its chairman was the Earl of Shrewsbury, a layman who had been connected with the clerical party of earlier years.¹⁰² A year later, in July 1839, a public meeting of Catholics was held in the Freemason Hall, Great Queen Street, London. It was organised by the Irish politician Daniel O'Connell. At the time this meeting had virtually no political significance and had little or no effect on the Government. However, four important resolutions appeared from this meeting, regarded as the first public Catholic meeting in England since the Reformation. These resolutions would be the hallmark and guide for English Catholic educational policy for at least the next one hundred years.

- 1) the appropriation of public money to education; 2) the rights of all classes to share in such funds; 3) that moral and religious education must be combined with literacy and scientific instruction; and 4) that it would be unjust and iniquitous to grant money to particular denominations and exclude others.¹⁰³

These resolutions formed the basis of a petition to parliament, but it was their influence on Catholic opinion which remained as their enduring legacy.

Irish immigration

¹⁰² Beales in Beck, pp.366-367.

The growth of Catholicism in England in the nineteenth-century is inextricably linked with mass Irish immigration which resulted in both a large increase in the English Catholic population and a change in its cultural makeup.

Irish immigration to England, in the pursuit of work, was a tradition possibly going back as far as the thirteenth century, but certainly began in the early eighteenth century, the foundation of the 'Irish Charitable Society' in 1704¹⁰⁴ showing that English Catholics had always considered important their responsibilities regarding Irish Catholics in England.

By the beginning of the nineteenth-century, however, there were significant Irish communities beginning to appear, particularly in south west Scotland, Lancashire and London.¹⁰⁵ In 1821 there were twenty-five thousand Irish Catholics in Glasgow; in 1825 there were thirty-five thousand Irish Catholics in Manchester and twenty-four thousand in Liverpool.¹⁰⁶ An increase in population in Ireland coupled with the growing heavy industries emerging in the larger centres of population in England made emigrating increasingly attractive.

The domestic conditions of the majority of the English Catholic community, and particularly the immigrant Irish, were very impoverished at this time. Frederich Engels, the author of *The Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844*, noted that the domestic situation of the Irish immigrants, especially those in Manchester, led to consumption, typhus and other major health problems. He considered that the immigrant Irish were essential to the British Industrial Revolution but also saw that much of the social legislation passed by parliament was inspired by a fear of the rising of the impoverished working classes, as had happened in different parts of Europe.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Marmion, p.69.

¹⁰⁴ J. D. Holmes, *More Roman Than Rome: English Catholicism in the Nineteenth Century* (Burns and Oates: London, 1978), p.159. Hereafter referred to as Holmes.

¹⁰⁵ M. J. Hickman, *Religion, Class and Identity. The State, the Catholic Church and the Education of the Irish in Britain* (Avebury: Aldershot, 1996), p.65. Hereafter referred to as Hickman.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.65.

¹⁰⁷ Marmion, p.67.

Sheridan Gilley in his article 'The Roman Catholic Mission to the Irish in London, 1840-1860'¹⁰⁸ describes how, in the course of the nineteenth-century, English Catholicism was transformed from a small, invisible minority to a large and very visible section of society, from a faith based in the countryside to one centred on the major cities, from a faith of lords and labourers to one which encompassed the poorest sections of the English population. These changes were brought about, primarily, through the immigration of the Irish. A good example of this dramatic change in the composition of the English Church is shown in the life of the Newcastle priest James Worswick whose pastoral and educational work with the poor Irish is shown in Chapter Six.

The education of the majority of native Irish Catholics in Ireland had, traditionally, taken place in so-called 'hedge schools,' run by the local schoolmaster who was paid by parents to instruct their children. He was subject to no external examination, and was regarded with suspicion by the Protestant authorities. A national system of education was established in Ireland in 1831, with the support of the Catholic hierarchy; however, this was discredited with some of the bishops who became unhappy with the religious instruction, specifically the use of scripture texts, in the curriculum. In short, the majority of the labouring Irish were unfamiliar with the form of education being offered by the Catholic elementary schools in the large cities of England.¹⁰⁹ The needs of the Irish poor were often different from those of the English poor and there was a need to bridge the gap, particularly for children in the elementary schools, between living in Ireland and being educated in England.

Grant Aid and the Catholic Poor School Committee

As has been said, the monies granted by Parliament had, initially been restricted to the Church of England's National Society and the Nonconformist British and Foreign School Society. While anti-Catholic sentiment may have been a part of this, one of the reasons behind the

¹⁰⁸ S. Gilley, 'The Roman Catholic Mission to the Irish in London, 1840-1860', *Recusant History*, vol. 10 (October 1969), p.123.

refusal of funds to Catholic schools was the insistence by the Vicars Apostolic that the Authorised Version of the Bible not be used in Catholic schools, a prerequisite for funding under the Poor Law Guardians Act. In this, many Catholic children were being educated as members of the Church of England through the new elementary schools being set up with the increased funding. It has also been suggested that the Catholic schools were excluded due to the Government's refusal to set up a mechanism by which schools outside of the Established Church, and official dissenters, could successfully apply for funding.¹¹⁰

General grants became available for all schools in 1839. The annual grant, which had since 1833 been £20,000 was increased by a further £10,000 and a separate body, the Committee of the Privy Council (for education), was established. This committee was set up to administer the increased funding, and to take account of and to inspect those schools applying for funding.¹¹¹ It was not clear if Catholic schools were eligible for this new increased funding since they had been excluded from those annual grants voted by Parliament since 1833. In any case, the Vicars Apostolic were divided in their desire to apply for funding. State inspection, which was a condition of the grants, was unacceptable to many of the bishops. It had been only ten years since Catholic Emancipation, and anti-Catholic feelings in the country still ran high.

This time also saw an intellectual and academic aspect to English Catholicism being promoted. May 1836 saw the first edition of the *Dublin Review* to 'supply the need for a Catholic periodical of high literary merit that would command the attention of non-Catholics.'¹¹² *The Tablet* followed suit in 1840, founded by the fiery Frederick Lucas. This period was one of great excitement for the English Catholic Church. Phillipps de Lisle, the first Catholic to attend Cambridge University since the Reformation, went up in 1825. Kenelm Digby had converted while a student there two years before. George Spencer, another

¹⁰⁹ Hickman, pp.121-134.

¹¹⁰ B. Curren, 'Catholic Participation in the National System of Education, 1833-1860, in the North East', *Northern Catholic History*, vol. 37 (1996), p.26.

¹¹¹ E. Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1984), p.159. Hereafter referred to as Norman.

¹¹² Beales in Beck, p.366.

one of their circle, was converted in 1830, and Augustus Welby Pugin, the famous architect, also converted in 1835. All these men had a desire to return England to its mediaeval Catholic roots. A sense of new life and new beginnings was in the air, reinforced by the return to England of Nicholas Wiseman, former Rector of the English College in Rome, as a bishop, and the reorganisation of the four Vicariates into eight that followed in 1840.

Against this background of greater public Catholic academic achievements, the Catholic Institute, and afterwards the Catholic Poor School Committee, attempted to make petition to the Privy Council for Government funds to support Catholic schools. The most important man in this regard was Charles Langdale.

The Hon. Charles Langdale, MP for Knaresborough, has been described as ‘the most important Catholic educationalist of the century.’¹¹³ His membership of the Church was deep rooted and English, coming from an old Catholic gentry family of Yorkshire which had supported the clerical party in 1790. In 1845 he was appointed chairman of a standing committee set up by the Catholic Institute. Here he was at the forefront of efforts to try and secure Government grants for Catholic schools through the means of letter writing and general agitation.¹¹⁴

In 1847 the Catholic Institute applied for a Catholic school in Blackburn to receive Grant Aid from the Privy Council Committee. They showed that the school was open to all, not just Catholics, and that non-Catholics were not forced to attend any religious education classes. All tests were passed and the principle of grant-aid to Catholic schools was ceded.¹¹⁵ It was now perfectly possible for any Catholic school to apply for, and receive, Government aid.

When the Government suggested a non-denominational form of Christian education in factory schools, using the Authorised Version, the Vicars Apostolic did not greet this favourably. However, the lay-run Catholic Institute, expressed sympathy with the Government in its desire to spread education for all. The bishops reacted adversely and abolished the Institute,

¹¹³ Norman, p.167.

¹¹⁴ Arthur, p.13.

¹¹⁵ Norman, p.167.

replacing it with the Catholic Poor School Committee in December 1847, which comprised only two laymen to eight clerics.¹¹⁶

The end of the Catholic Institute was brought about by several factors, however: The 'Association of St Thomas of Canterbury for the Vindication of Catholic Rights' rapidly overshadowed the Institute. This was set up by Frederick Lucas in June 1847 and urged greater political pressure be brought to bear on the Government. It specifically appealed to parliamentary candidates to support openly Catholic educational rights.¹¹⁷ It had fallen foul of Bishop Brown, Vicar Apostolic of the Lancashire District, in 1844. Through a Pastoral Letter, he abolished all fund raising through the Institute within his Vicariate, and replaced this with his own District Board, which was entirely clerical in composition.¹¹⁸

Finally, its 1847 endorsement of the Authorised Version of the Bible was interpreted by the Vicars Apostolic as the laity's lack of understanding of many of the issues involved and the principles of Catholic Education. This was another major shift in the balance of power towards the clergy, begun at the beginning of the century and reaching its height in the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850.

The Catholic Poor School Committee was officially established, under the patronage of Our Lady and St Joseph, on 27 September 1847. It was under the leadership of Charles Langdale whose involvement in the Catholic Institute had not tarnished him in the eyes of the Vicars Apostolic.

With the exception of Charles Langdale, the major figures associated with the Catholic Poor School Committee were converts. Scott Naysmyth Stokes was the first secretary of the committee from 1847-1853. For thirty-eight years following this he was a Government inspector (HMI) for Catholic schools. He became a Catholic in 1847. He was succeeded as secretary by Thomas William Allies who served as secretary from 1853 to 1891 following time as an Anglican priest and his conversion, with his wife, to Catholicism in 1850. Thomas

¹¹⁶ Hexham and Newcastle Diocesan Archives (HNDA), RCD 21, *Report of the Catholic Poor School Committee, 1852, Fifth Annual Report*. Hereafter referred to as *RCPSC*.

¹¹⁷ Norman, pp.167-168.

¹¹⁸ Arthur, p.12.

William Marshall was also an Anglican priest between 1841 and 1845 when he was received into the Church. Between 1848 and 1860 he was an HMI for Catholic schools. He was well known, both by the Privy Council Committee and the Catholic Poor School Committee as a man with a great personal regard for the poor. In one school he found children so hungry that he insisted they be sent out to eat before he began to examine them.¹¹⁹ In 1848 he inspected St Andrew's Schools in Newcastle.

In 1848 the role of the Catholic Poor School Committee was clearly defined in a letter to it from the Vicars Apostolic:

We recognise your committee as the organ sanctioned by us of communication with the Government; and we have every confidence that your committee, in your communications and negotiations with Government for any Government Grants will be fully aware of our determination not to yield to the Ministers of the day any portion, however small, either of our ecclesiastical liberty, or our episcopal control over the religious education of the children of the poorer members of our flock.¹²⁰

This was something which the Catholic Institute had failed to do.

The work of the Catholic Poor School Committee began in earnest. Its main function was to concentrate on primary education and on the training of teachers.

In 1843 a survey carried out by the Catholic Institute showed that the Catholic population (which was estimated at less than one million at the time) possessed 236 day schools, and 60 Sunday Schools (33 of them in London), educating 38,207 Catholics. It estimated that 101,930 Catholic children were without Catholic schooling.¹²¹ The number of Catholic children were being lost to non-Catholic schools, or receiving no education at all, was increasing. In view of this the numbers of Catholic children receiving no schooling in the faith at all had almost certainly increased since the survey of 1843.

¹¹⁹ Marmion, pp.70-71. In 1848 he inspected St Andrew's School in Newcastle. The inspection is detailed in Chapter Six as an example of a Catholic school of the time.

¹²⁰ Norman, p.168, Westminster Dioc. Archives, ACTA, Meeting of the Bishops in Low Week (9 April 1869), 25.

¹²¹ Beales in Beck, p.367.

The establishment of the Catholic Poor School Committee was followed by an earnest joint Pastoral Letter, issued by the Vicars Apostolic on the 15 February 1848, outlining the gravity of the situation:

We clearly see and deeply lament the very general and most pressing want of a religious education for the children of the Poor in our respective Districts; and with our united voice, we now proclaim to you with all the earnestness of our souls, that on the success of this our common effort on behalf of the children of the Poor, not only our religious progress and prosperity, but also the eternal salvation of thousands does depend.¹²²

The Vicars Apostolic took very seriously the lack of education for English Catholic children at a time when many souls were being lost due to no education being available to them or 'leakage' to other non-Catholic institutions. They had the Catholic Poor School Committee at their disposal to carry out everything necessary to try and secure greater funding for existing schools and funding for the establishment of new schools.

The aims of the Catholic Poor School Committee were laid out clearly in its first annual report of 1848:

It is now commonly allowed, even by persons whose opinions force them to explain away the fact, that the Catholic religion alone is qualified to influence the masses. What these masses now are, it is beside the purpose to describe. Suffice to say, that the education of the Catholic Church, and not one or all of the many devices which have been tried, or may be tried, can, and, as far as that education is diffused, will convert these masses into useful citizens, loyal subjects, and good men.¹²³

Useful, loyal and good was the desired outcome of the Catholic elementary schools, and the schools of the North east were no different in their desire. *Catholic School*, the publication of

¹²² M. Whitehead, 'A View from the Bridge: The Catholic school', V. A. McClelland and M. Hodgetts (eds.), *From Without the Flaminian Gate* (Darton, Longman and Todd: London, 1999), p.218, Westminster Diocesan Archives, Joint Pastoral Letter of Vicars Apostolic, York, 15 February 1848; *The Tablet*, 26 February 1848. Hereafter referred to as Whitehead.

¹²³ *RCPSC, 1848*, p.13.

the Catholic Poor School Committee, published its desires for the children placed in the elementary Catholics schools of England:

A working man with a Cottage and garden, his own freehold property, and Catholic county voters are charming pictures; and it would rejoice us to think that nothing worse ever became of our School Boys.¹²⁴

In short, the Catholic Poor School Committee wanted their children to have the same opportunities as all other children, in spite of the disadvantage of being Catholic and, increasingly, the disadvantage of being Irish, both of those positions being open to discrimination.¹²⁵

From August 1848 to September 1858 the Catholic Poor School Committee published a journal, *The Catholic School*, which was used as a tool by the Catholic Poor School Committee to raise awareness about Catholic educational issues and give advice with regard to practice, funding etc.¹²⁶ An example of the efficiency of the Catholic Poor School Committee in its aim to inform and encourage Catholic schools about Grant Aid is shown in the October 1850 edition of *The Catholic School*. St John's Wood school is used to demonstrate the benefits of applying for Grant Aid. The school was shown to have received £150 in grants for each apprentice teacher, of whom there were eight in the school. Further grants towards books resulted in a total sum of £213 in Grant Aid being received by the school. The editor concluded that the Catholic schools of London could potentially be eligible for £3,000 worth of grants, which they had not applied for.¹²⁷ As with any major change in practise or policy, it was difficult to persuade school managers to apply for funding that they knew little about, and perhaps they did not at the time believe that such grants were necessary. However, a traditional suspicion of the Government by Roman Catholics, especially from recusants and Irish immigrants, may have discouraged people from seeking

¹²⁴ Hickman, p.164, *Catholic School*, no. 11 (1849), p.166.

¹²⁵ The subject of Catholic, and particularly Irish, discrimination in nineteenth century England is dealt with at some length in Mary Hickman's book, cited above.

¹²⁶ Marmion, p.70.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.72.

Government aid. This suspicion of the Government was voiced publicly by Bishop Ullathorne of Birmingham.

Religious Orders in Elementary Education

For many bishops, the religious orders were the answer to a lack of qualified Catholic teachers and a shortage of funds. Various orders came to England for various reasons. The Presentation nuns from Ireland came to Manchester in 1834 as an act of philanthropy on the part of Patrick Lavery, a local silk merchant. Many nuns came to avoid political problems in France and Germany. Teaching Brothers also arrived in England, such as the de la Salle Brothers to Clapham in 1855¹²⁸ and the Presentation Brothers to Newcastle in 1850.¹²⁹

The Sisters of Mercy were one such order which played a particularly important part in elementary education in Hexham and Newcastle, illustrated in Chapter Six. Their growth and influence on education throughout England was significant. By 1873 they were the largest congregation in the United Kingdom with forty-two houses in England and Wales. Their work consisted of tending to the sick, running poor schools, including Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 'middle class' schools and orphanages.¹³⁰ The order was begun in Dublin in 1827, and given Apostolic approval sometime before 1830.¹³¹ They first arrived in England in 1839, and spread quickly throughout the dioceses. The breadth of their work with the poor, particularly poor children, and their combined educational work with them, made them a very attractive order to the bishops at a time when education was becoming an increasingly large difficult problem. By 1873 there were convents in London, at Great Ormond Street with a hospital; Blandford Square with an orphanage; Cadogan terrace with three schools, Ladies boarding, middle class and poor school; Mercer's Place with a poor school; Crispin street

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.74.

¹²⁹ The work of the Presentation Brothers and of the Sisters of Mercy, at a local level in Newcastle, is detailed in Chapter Six.

¹³⁰ J. N. Murphy, *Terra Incognita or The Convents of the United Kingdom* (Longmans, Green, and Co.: London, 1873), pp.359-360. Hereafter referred to as Murphy, *Terra Incognita*.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p.164.

with a poor school, Walthamstow House with an orphanage for 138 girls; Bermondsey with an orphanage and poor school. Elsewhere, there were convents in Brighton with schools; Abingdon with a ladies' boarding school; Gravesend with a poor school; Guernsey with a boarding school, day school, girls' poor school and infant school; Clifford with a poor school; Hull with a poor school; Middlesbrough with a poor school; Alton with a poor school; Birmingham with a boarding school and poor school; Coventry with two boarding schools and a poor school; Handsworth with a boarding school and poor school; Longton with poor schools; Maryvale with a poor school and orphanage; Stourbridge with a poor school; Wolverhampton with a poor school; Bristol with an orphanage; four convents in Liverpool with poor schools and an Industrial School; Blackbrook with a Reformatory School; Lancaster with a poor school; Douglas on the Isle of Man with poor schools; two convents in Nottingham with a middle class school, poor school and orphanage; Derby with a poor school; Oldham with a poor school; Shrewsbury with a poor school and five further convents in Scotland, as well as seven schools in Hexham and Newcastle which are dealt with in detail in chapter six.¹³²

As well as the nature of their work, the Sisters of Mercy were attractive to the bishops as they did not require a salary. This was particularly utilised in Westminster diocese following the 1866 Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act. Several such institutions were set up by them following this Act with no financial recourse to the diocese which they served.¹³³ The work of this order, and its rapid rise and spread following its foundation to combat a growing need for education and care of poor children, had a significant impact on the efforts of the national drive for Catholic educational provision, as is shown in its importance to local educational provision in Hexham and Newcastle.

¹³² *Ibid.*, pp.360-361.

The Restored Hierarchy

The restored Catholic hierarchy of 1850 seemed to be divided, in some way, on almost every major issue that confronted them: Ultramontanism, episcopal authority over seminary education, church architecture, liturgical reform and evolution. On the subject of education, however, they were united in a common aim. Having secured grants for the building up and establishment of Catholic schools, they consciously began to work towards providing a network of schools across the country to provide education, within the Faith, for the poorest of children. They were divided in their methods but their aim was a common one, and their determination to see it fulfilled was passionate.

The Catholic bishops propagated two maxims that spelt out their own educational policy, and tried to impress upon the Government that this ought to be their own policy on education, namely i) that a parent has the right to have his child educated according to his conscience, and ii) that this should cost him no more than his neighbour who may hold a different conscience with regard to education. This principle had been expressed as ‘Her Majesty’s wish’ in 1839 by Lord John Russell,¹³⁴ and while it had been welcomed by some, the Government still had no official policy on education.¹³⁵

The restoration of the hierarchy in 1850, and the subsequent Pastoral Letter, *Without the Flaminian Gate*, written by Cardinal Wiseman, caused deep unrest in the country. *The Times* described Wiseman as ‘an English subject, who has thought fit to enter the service of a foreign Power and accept its spurious dignities’¹³⁶ in an attempt to fan the flames of anti-Catholicism which were still very present in England. In an attempt to discredit the Tractarian movement, which attracted parallels with Catholicism, enemies of the Tractarians also began to attack the restoration. Various Church of England bishops, including York, Oxford, Chichester and London wrote to the popular press condemning what became known as ‘papal

¹³³ V. A. McClelland, *Cardinal Manning, His Public Life and Influence 1865-1892* (Oxford University Press: London, 1962), pp.40-41. Hereafter referred to as McClelland.

¹³⁴ Beales in Beck, p.369.

¹³⁵ The Government’s first major policy on education would arise from the Education Act of 1870.

aggression.’ The Government also became involved, passing an Act through parliament which forbade Catholic bishops from assuming any territorial titles. This Act was never enforced and was only passed in the hope of appeasing the more radical opponents of Catholicism. It is interesting, however, that despite the hail of anti-Catholicism which even involved Lord Russell, the Prime Minister, personally,¹³⁷ the grants issued by the Government to Catholic schools were never questioned, and no threat was made to have them repealed. The first Synod of Westminster in 1852 gave an indication of the unity of the bishops over education. The Synodical letter issued to the clergy and people of England and Wales left Catholics in no doubt as to the priorities of the hierarchy at this time:

Do not rest until you see this want supplied; prefer the establishment of good schools to every other work. Indeed, wherever there may seem to be an opening for a new mission, we should prefer the erection of a school, so arranged to serve temporarily for a chapel, to that of a church without one. For the building raised of living and chosen stones (1 Pet. ii. 5), the spiritual sanctuary of the Church, is of far greater importance than the temple made with hands; and it is the good school that secures the virtuous and edifying congregation.¹³⁸

The bishops were keen to build on the previous years’ successes in claiming and receiving Government grants. They had further received the concession of having Catholic Inspectors to oversee their schools on behalf of the Government.¹³⁹ It was the desire of the bishops to increase the number and quality of Catholic schools and to have them seen as the equal of their Anglican, Nonconformist and ‘non-doctrinal’ counterparts.

As a result of this, many new churches were preceded by a school in that place or area. In the poorest areas, these buildings often not only served as places of worship (as well as schools), but as a means of keeping children off the streets and away from some of the dangers of

¹³⁶ Holmes, p.75, *The Times* (14 October 1850).

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.77.

¹³⁸ *RCPSC, 1852*, p.64, Appendix H, ‘Portions of the Synodical Letter of the Fathers Assembled in Provincial Council at St Mary’s, Oscott.’

¹³⁹ Norman, p.168.

extreme poverty.¹⁴⁰ It was the specific intention of those who founded the schools, both the bishops and the priests on the ground, to put to use the schools and the school buildings as best they could in the greatest variety of ways they could:

School buildings housed employment agencies for Catholic servants, shops for selling catholic tracts and handwork done by pupils, congregational libraries, and reading rooms. They provided headquarters for the catholic Friendly Societies, shelter for orphans, accommodation for the charitable work of groups of ‘mechanics’ and their wives and later on that of the Catholic Young Men’s Society and the St. Vincent de Paul Brotherhood. They became centres for the collection and distribution of clothes and linens for ‘lying-in’ and kitchens for the distribution of meals, soup and bread.¹⁴¹

A good example of this use of the school for purposes other than education, and specifically as a place for the work of the social care of poor Catholics by the Church is found, in a local context, at St Andrew’s School in Newcastle, detailed in chapter six.

The English Catholics were counted among the poorest section of society at the time, but they were determined to continue their efforts despite financial and other difficulties. The bishops’ priority was for the education of the poorest children.¹⁴²

While the bishops remained united in their efforts, the National Society of the Church of England and the British and Foreign School Society of the Nonconformist Churches were divided as to how to proceed. Despite the success of the National Society as the arm of the Established Church, it was divided between those willing to make concessions to secure further Government grants and those standing their ground on certain moral principles, such as the teaching of particular Church of England doctrines in their schools.¹⁴³ For many in the Church of England the answer to educating the poor was to turn a blind eye to the problem:

¹⁴⁰ Beales in Beck, p.374, letter to Gladstone from Wiseman (20 March 1870).

¹⁴¹ J. Kitching, ‘The Catholic Poor School 1800-1845 pt. 1: The Catholic Poor: Relief, Welfare and Schools’, *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, vol. 1 (1969), p.4.

¹⁴² Arthur, pp.15-16.

¹⁴³ Beales in Beck, p.369.

‘God has pointed out to us in the clearest manner, from Genesis to Revelation, that life is not to be gained through the tree of *knowledge*.’¹⁴⁴

Such answers to rising secularism were simply not acceptable to many in the Church of England who saw their hold over the religious development of children in the country slipping away.

Similarly, the Nonconformists tried to present a united front, shown explicitly in the British and Foreign Schools Society’s Memorandum of 1855:

We have often expressed our opinion, and now repeat it, that the B. and F. School Society was founded on the principle of religious equality as regarding all professing the Christian faith; that in order to carry out this principle the Scriptures were to be read in all schools, carefully excluding all Catechisms and all Formularies of Faith; and that this principle was to be applied in all oral teaching, as well as to the books read.¹⁴⁵

Within their ranks, however, they were divided. Many were uncomfortable with this agenda, such as Jabez Bunting, the distinguished Methodist leader. He condemned some Nonconformist teaching as ‘an education which looks only at the secular interests of an individual, which looks only at his condition as a member of civil society, and does not look at him as a man having an immortal soul.’ Similarly, J. E. Rigg, the prominent Methodist, argued in 1866 in his *Essays for the Times* for Rate Aid for a denominational system of education.

Funding through Rate Aid allowed local taxes to go towards financially supporting schools. From the time of the Catholic meeting of July 1838 until the passing of the 1902 Education Act, Catholic schools funded through the rates had always been a part of Catholic educational policy. The fight to allow Catholic (and other denominational faith schools) to be funded through Rate Aid would become a major issue following the Education Act of 1870.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.368, Mr Henley in the Commons (1858).

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.369.

While both the National Society and the British and Foreign Society may have been divided within themselves, they both had more schools under their protection than the Catholic Poor School Committee, and they took the lion's share of all Government funding available to denominational schools.

Financial support for Catholic schools from the Government was limited; by 1854 the Catholic schools had received £3,131 from the Government in Grant Aid compared to £415,000 given to the Church of England. There was suspicion among the bishops and prominent laity of the Government's intentions towards Catholic schools. For example the grants given for books by the Privy Council were limited to those books specifically approved by that Council, many of which were unacceptable to the Church for the purposes of a Catholic education.¹⁴⁶

Government grants did increase, however, so that in the year ending 31 August 1867 the income of Catholic schools was £55,842, of which £21,591 was given by the Government.¹⁴⁷

These Government grants did not go towards building schools, however. In 1862 only two Catholic schools received building grants, and only one in 1863, 1864 and 1865 respectively.

This trend continued so that, in the year 1866-1867 no Catholic schools at all received building grants from the Government, but thirty-six building grants were issued by the Catholic Poor School Committee. By 1866 the Catholic Community had received £39,599.4.3. in building grants from the Government, compared with £76,951.19.10. given to the Methodist community, considered at the time comparable in size and in need with the Catholic schools.¹⁴⁸

That Catholic schools, along with the Ragged schools, took the poorest children was a major obstacle to the expansion of Catholic education.¹⁴⁹ No school received maintenance from the Government unless it could provide 60% of the costs, nor was a grant issued unless 75% of the costs came from voluntary sources, in the case of Catholic schools from the Catholic

¹⁴⁶ Arthur, p.16.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.16.

¹⁴⁸ *RCPSC, 1868*, p.20.

¹⁴⁹ Cruickshank, p.9.

community itself. Concern for English Catholic children was expressed in 1854 by Pope Pius IX when his feelings were passed on to Cardinal Wiseman:

The Holy Father...is ever receiving most pitiful accounts of the Spiritual Destitution of the poor Irish Catholics. You cannot conceive how it pains him to hear that there are 50,000 Catholics in London who cannot go to Mass, and 20,000 children who never go to school.¹⁵⁰

In spite of this, the Catholic education network, as dreamed by the bishops, continued to grow, educating over 100,000 children by 1869.

Bishop Ullathorne

The Bishop of Birmingham, William Bernard Ullathorne, was a major figure of nineteenth-century Catholicism and a strong opponent to any Governmental interference on involvement in Catholic education.

In 1850 and 1857 he wrote extensively on Catholic schools and the method in which they received grants from the Government. His *Remarks on the Proposed Education Bill* (1850) asserted the rights of parents to have their children educated according to their faith. In his more important work,¹⁵¹ *Notes on the Education Question* (1857), he was critical of the terms imposed on Catholic schools by the Government for Government grants. He accused the Government of forcing the English Catholic Church to give up ‘...something of that absolute freedom and independence of action, which, whatever else we have suffered, has been our greatest earthly blessing.’¹⁵²

Ullathorne was fearful that people might think he supported the way in which Church schools received grants. To distance himself from the majority of his brother bishops, who opposed him on this matter, he wrote to *The Tablet* on 4 April 1857:

¹⁵⁰ Marmion, p.69, from the Talbot Papers, Bayswater.

¹⁵¹ Norman, p.165.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p.165, *Notes on the Education Question by the Right Rev. Bishop Ullathorne* (London, 1857), p.7.

It has industriously been stated that the bishops have formally approved the model trust deed. This is incorrect. Points in debate were repeatedly referred to the bishops, but the trust deed itself was never discussed by them.¹⁵³

Ullathorne expressed a larger Catholic suspicion of Government authorities, given the historical relationship between the Catholic Church and the British state. His own background was recusant, and he clashed publicly with Cardinal Wiseman over his 1857 publication. Wiseman was a strong defender of the grants, as shown in a letter to *The Tablet* in 1857, defending them as no threat to Catholic autonomy over their schools:

The faithful should not be harassed and perplexed by the raising anew of questions long since solved, after full and deliberate consideration. The whole question of education grants has been reopened, as if the model deed has not been maturely examined till now. Such a view is completely erroneous.¹⁵⁴

The 'model deed' in the letters of Wiseman and Ullathorne refers to the blue print document called The Kemerton Trust Model Deed which related to the terms under which building grants made to Catholic schools were to be administered. The 'model deed' insisted that some Government supervision should be applied to those schools which received building grants issued through it. The Catholic Poor School Committee had conceded this, and it was to this that Ullathorne, in his letter to *The Tablet*, specifically objected.

Bishop Ullathorne was supported in his suspicions with regard to Government funding for Catholic schools by Mother Margaret Hallahan. Mother Margaret had been Ullathorne's housekeeper since 1840, when he returned from work in Australia. She maintained an influence over him throughout her life, and entertained some strong ideas, especially about education. She had been a school mistress herself, having taught in a mission school in London before opening a girls school in Coventry. This was attended by factory girls, mainly Methodists, who would call by the school room in the evening where they would receive

¹⁵³ R. J. Schiefen, *Nicholas Wiseman and the Transformation of English Catholicism* (The Patmos Press: Shepherdstown, 1984), p.266, *The Tablet* (April 4 1857). Hereafter referred to as Schiefen.

¹⁵⁴ Schiefen, p.266.

instruction from Ullathorne.¹⁵⁵ She went on to head her own house of Dominican Nuns, eventually settling at Stone in Staffordshire in 1853.¹⁵⁶

Her suspicions of the Government grants offered to Catholic schools were heavily rooted. This 'deep-laid scheme of the devil'¹⁵⁷ was a covert plot to subvert Catholic education throughout England: 'I can hardly put into words my very great dislike of having anything to do with the Government or committees, or anything where there are a great many opinions and a multiplicity of voices and speeches.'¹⁵⁸

The expansion of Catholic schools also resulted in the expansion of formal training of teachers. A Teacher Training College for men was opened in 1850, a project undertaken by the Catholic Poor School committee. The College moved to Hammersmith in 1855 where a purpose built Gothic edifice was erected. An impressive drawing and plan of it were issued, impressing upon members of the Catholic community the importance with which teacher training was regarded by the hierarchy and the Catholic Poor School Committee, and the progress that was being made in that area.¹⁵⁹ It remained the only male training college until 1947, but others for women opened up all around the country, often established by the female teaching orders of religious.

The Newcastle Commission

In 1858 parliament set up a commission to enquire into the state of education in England, headed by the Duke of Newcastle. The commission's report, made in 1861, would be the forerunner and major consultative document to the significant 1870 Education Act.

Some confusion exists as to the Catholic bishops' attitude towards the commission. The commission relied on the good will of the schools to allow the commissioners to enter and assess them. In his *The Ebbing Tide: Policy and Principles of Catholic Education*, James

¹⁵⁵ Bossy, p.319.

¹⁵⁶ Norman, p.164.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.160.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.160.

Arthur states that: ‘the bishops refused to cooperate with certain parts of the enquiries made by the Newcastle Commission.’¹⁶⁰ While not strictly contradicted by Edward Norman in his *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth-century*, he states that, after consultations with Bishops Errington, Clifford, Grant and Langdale, Cardinal Wiseman advised co-operation with the questionnaires sent out by the commission, advising all bishops to do so for the good of the Church schools.¹⁶¹ Norman does state that the bishops refused to answer some questions regarding schools endowment, due to the uncertain state of the law regarding Catholic bequests. This, however, would not really constitute obstruction on their part.

Wiseman wrote to Bishop James Gillis in October 1858 suggesting:

...that the questions [of the commission] should be transmitted to the respective schools through the bishops, and the answers returned to them, to be forwarded by them to the secretary of the Poor School Committee for the Commission.¹⁶²

This was to try and maintain episcopal oversight of the Catholic responses given to the commission, and suggests that the bishops were happy to cooperate so long as this oversight could be maintained.

Further, however, it has been suggested by another historian¹⁶³ that the bishops, rather than generally cooperating with the commission, reacted defensively towards it. He states that the Catholic Poor School Committee failed to realise the existence of the commission until it was too late to react effectively to it, and that efforts to place Catholics on the commission itself failed. The bishops ‘saw it as a breach of faith on the part of the Government, an attempt to force Protestant inspectors on Catholic schools and to subject religious teaching to inspection.’¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ *RCPSC, 1855*, frontispiece.

¹⁶⁰ Arthur, p.16.

¹⁶¹ Norman, p.171.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p.171, Westminster Dioc. Archives, Wiseman paper R79/6, Wiseman to Gillis (1 October 1858).

¹⁶³ J. L. Altholz, *The Liberal Catholic Movement in England* (Burns and Oates: London, 1962), p.88. Hereafter referred to as Altholz.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.88.

That the matter was made public in *The Rambler* early in 1859 suggests that the bishops did feel some dismay with the situation. Scott Nasmyth Stokes, the Catholic inspector of schools and member of the Catholic Poor School Committee, wrote to *The Rambler* with a sense of dissatisfaction at the bishops' hostile reaction to the Newcastle Commission. He urged Catholics to cooperate with the commission and, while maintaining due reverence toward the hierarchy, condemned those who opposed it.¹⁶⁵

In the Diocese of Hexham, however, the instructions of Bishop William Hogarth are quite clear. In a letter to all his clergy he lays out the situation, making it clear that school managers were 'perfectly at liberty to receive or not to receive the visits of the assistant commissioners, and to answer or not answer their enquiries.' He goes on to say that a decision has been reached by all the bishops, and that they

...consequently consider it their duty to caution the clergy of their respective dioceses against permitting any inspection or examination of their schools not in accordance with the arrangement entered into between Catholics and the Government, by which none but certain recognised Catholic inspectors are authorised to inspect our schools, and religious instruction is expressly exempted from such inspection.¹⁶⁶

This can leave us in little doubt that the bishops decided to oppose the work of the commission, since there is little reason to suppose this is not the actual outcome of their deliberations. Certainly the priests of the diocese were left in no doubt as to their actions to the commissions inspectors: 'You will therefore be careful that no one except the usual Catholic inspector, at his due times, be allowed to inspect or examine into the circumstances of the schools entrusted to your care.'¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.17, Scott Nasmyth Stokes, 'The Royal Commission on Education', *Rambler*, vol. 2, no. 11 (January 1859), p.17. The Confusion over the Catholic bishops' reaction to the Newcastle Commission is also discussed in C. Hansen, *Roman Catholic Education in England in the Nineteenth Century, with special reference to William Bernard Ullathorne* (University of Durham MA Thesis, 1998), p.48.

¹⁶⁶ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letter 1857-1858', Letter Hogarth to Clergy, 9 November 1858, RCD 1/14.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Poor Law Schools and the Educational Policies of Cardinal Manning

A major concession for Catholic children in Poor Law Schools, or workhouses, was given by the Poor Law Board, which administered the workhouses, in August 1859. Up until this time all children cared for under the Poor Law Board were assumed to be members of the Church of England, unless proven otherwise. Since the majority of children there were orphans or abandoned, it was often difficult to prove that a particular child was a Catholic.

In 1859 a full scale campaign was mounted to secure the educational rights of Catholic children in the workhouse. This body was made up of Fr John Morris, secretary to Cardinal Wiseman, H. E. Manning, Charles Langdale, Sir John Acton, M.P., Sir George Bowyer, M.P., Lord Edward Howard, M.P., Edward Ryley and John Wallis, editor of *The Tablet*.¹⁶⁸ This campaign, which received strong support in the major Catholic publications of the time, was very successful. On the 23 August an order was issued which made it a mandatory obligation of the workhouse master to ensure that every child was educated in his or her own religion, being that specified as the religion of his or her father, or mother if the father's could not be ascertained. Further, no child under twelve years old was to be educated in any other religion other than his or her own.

The order faced heavy opposition from various Protestant factions, and after its legality was doubted, the Poor Law Board announced that it was not, in fact, mandatory. After further wrangling the Catholic leaders had, by 1860, become convinced that this concession was fundamentally flawed, and that the only way to ensure a genuine Catholic education for Catholic children in the workhouse was to establish such institutions of their own:

The only real remedy, all are agreed, is separate schools for Catholic paupers; and, as the Workhouse Visiting Society wants to get Workhouse inmates into Homes to be

¹⁶⁸ J. M. Feheny, 'The Poor Law Board August Order, 1859: A Case Study of Protestant-Catholic Conflict', *Recusant History*, vol. 17 (1984), p.85. Hereafter referred to as Feheny.

supported out of the rates, perhaps we may succeed in getting the children into our orphanages.¹⁶⁹

Against this background of anti-Catholic discrimination, particularly towards Catholic children in the workhouse, Henry Edward Manning was made Archbishop of Westminster in 1865. His episcopate, which lasted until his death in 1892, was dominated by the subject of education of the poor. In his first Pastoral Letter, two weeks after his consecration, he directly addressed the education of Catholic poor children:

Help us in gathering from the streets of this great wilderness of men the tens of thousands of poor Catholic children who are without instruction or training. It is our first appeal to you. But it will not be our last.¹⁷⁰

Manning followed this up, almost a year later, on the anniversary of his consecration, with a controversial Pastoral Letter issued on 8 June 1866 in which he directly addressed the problem of anti-Catholic discrimination against the workhouse children.

The latter defined three categories of children in need of his particular care: Catholic children without education; Catholic children without family and/or had fallen foul of the law; and

...lastly, there is a class of poor children of which we hardly know how to speak. It is believed that more than a thousand of our Catholic children are detained in the workhouses and workhouse schools of London...The education is exclusively Protestant.¹⁷¹

It was in this area, that of Catholic children in the workhouse, that the issue of Protestant discrimination against Catholics was most apparent and was also a major issue which resulted in a backlash of public feeling against Catholicism. The reaction by *The Times* to Manning's Pastoral Letter, quoted above, is an example of this. Turning the situation around, *The Times*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.90, Westminster Dioc. Archives, W/336, 94, Morris to Wiseman (24 May 1860), letter from Rev. John Morris to Cardinal Wiseman.

¹⁷⁰ McClelland, p.32.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.33.

accused the Catholic community of deserting their own most needy members, relying on 'good Protestant philanthropists'¹⁷² to care for them.

Due, in part, to Manning's influence the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Acts of 1866 sought to redress the balance of discrimination. Denominations were able to set up their own certified Poor Law Schools and Industrial Schools which were to be Rate Aided. The schools had to be founded and set up by voluntary effort, but despite this many such institutions were established, often run by religious orders. Such schools were set up throughout Westminster diocese: for girls Industrial Schools were set up in Eltham, Finchley and Isleworth, with Poor Law Schools at Hammersmith, Totteridge, Homerton, Portobello Road and Hampstead. All run by female religious orders. For boys the Sisters of Charity opened a school at Mill Hill and Leytonstone. An orphanage run by the Brothers of St Vincent de Paul was taken over by the Oblates of St Charles, Manning's own community of priests, and moved to Harrow Road. Manning placed one of his diocesan priests in a full time position to work with orphans which resulted in the opening of a home in the East End of London in 1889, with a further four opening from it in subsequent years.¹⁷³ Manning also encouraged such schools to be opened in other dioceses. In Salford,¹⁷⁴ Leeds, Nottingham¹⁷⁵ and Hexham and Newcastle¹⁷⁶ further Poor Law Schools or Industrial Schools were established. This is an excellent example of how pressure from those opposed to Catholic philanthropic efforts and efforts to propagate the faith through education spurred the Catholic Church on to establish more schools to educate more children than they otherwise might.¹⁷⁷

The real problem, that of the Board of Guardians, did not go away. The Boards had the power to release Catholic children from their care into the new Catholic institutions, but many of them refused to do so. Some cases suggest that Catholic children were often turned away

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p.34, *The Times* (12 June 1866).

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.41.

¹⁷⁴ D. Lannon, 'Bishop Turner, The Salford Diocese and Reformatory Provision 1854-1872', *Recusant History*, vol. 23 (1996-1997), pp.389-409.

¹⁷⁵ McClelland, p.42.

¹⁷⁶ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, *Catholic Certified Poor Law School for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle*, 23 December 1868.

¹⁷⁷ A product of this effort, Tudhoe School in County Durham, is detailed in Chapter Six.

from their faith by those in whose care they had been placed, as demonstrated with the school, at Tudhoe in Chapter Six. Manning's dealing with the Guardians was to affect his reaction to the proposed School Boards of the 1870 Education Act.

Manning's educational policies were rather less stringent and implacable than some of his fellow bishops. He believed that the Church would be stronger if it acted in conjunction with its allies on doctrinal education, namely with the National Society and some of the more sympathetic Nonconformists, such as the Methodists. As early as February 1868 he wrote to the bishops of England and Wales alerting them to the possibility of educational reform:

It is probable that the Conscience Clause, the Educational Rate, and Compulsory Education will be pressed upon the legislature...A Public meeting will soon be held by members of the Established Church to resist the proposals; and it has been thought expedient that the Poor-School Committee should in like manner express its sense, so as to unite in the general effort to protect the Denominational System.¹⁷⁸

Manning was to prove to be an advocate for educational rights generally, and for the right to a Christian education specifically, rather than just an advocate for the rights of Catholics to educate their children. In 1869 he issued a strong Pastoral Letter regarding education of the poor. This letter was not only intended for the ears of Catholics, but for all those involved in denominational education, as revealed in a letter to Cardinal Cullen of Dublin:

I have (between two sermons) drawn a rough draft. Your eminence will see at once that it is a *political* declaration. I have carefully avoided giving it a predominantly Catholic character. Christian education as the *genus* and denominational as the *species* will cover all we want. And if we are to rally the Anglicans and Nonconformists, we must, I fear use a language intelligible to them rather than our own.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ H. E. Manning, *Denominational Education* (Burns and Oates, 1869), p.15, quoted in D. E. Selby, 'Henry Edward Manning and the Educational Bill of 1870', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol. 18 (June 1970), pp.200-201. Hereafter referred to as Selby.

¹⁷⁹ Selby, p.200.

We can perhaps also assume from this that Cullen supported Manning in this effort to unite supporters of denominational education.

It has been suggested that Manning's policy towards education was based on a greater fear that the world was growing further and further away from the Christian ideal, and that the shadow of the French Revolution, and all that it implied with regard to civil disorder and the destruction of society, still loomed large over Europe.¹⁸⁰

It is important to remember, also, that all these policies, of Manning and his episcopal colleagues, were underpinned by a genuine pastoral concern for the souls of poor Catholics, and a fear that their eternal salvation would be lost through an erroneous education. The words of the Synodical Letter of the First Synod of Westminster in 1852 reinforce these sentiments:

Except through a laborious education, we cannot guarantee to our little ones a single sound principle, one saving truth; from the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity to the smallest precept of the Church.¹⁸¹

The importance of the pastoral care of souls, often lost among the disagreements and difficulties of securing an education system, was at the centre of the bishops' policies on education, throughout the nineteenth-century and both before and after it.¹⁸²

Forster, the Revised Code and the Education Act of 1870

In 1868, the chairman of the Catholic Poor School Committee wrote to the Prime Minister declaring the determination of the bishops to preserve Catholic autonomy in Catholic schools, especially with regard to religious education and in the light of the fact that the Privy Council Committee on Education had a certain amount of power over the schools they funded.¹⁸³ The

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p.198.

¹⁸¹ *RCPSC, 1852*, p.64.

¹⁸² These sentiments are also echoed in the Pastoral Letters of Bishop Hogarth, Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle 1850-1862, whose significant and important educational work at a local level is looked at in more detail in Chapter Six.

¹⁸³ Arthur, p.17.

General Election of the same year returned the Liberal party to power with a strong working majority. Their election had followed two aborted Education Bills, one in 1867 and one in 1868. These were brought before Parliament by H. A. Bruce¹⁸⁴ and introduced free and compulsory elementary education supported by the rates, applying to any existing schools that adopted a 'Conscience Clause'. This, which was eventually introduced as part of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 allowed parents to withdraw their children from religious instruction. These schools would not be subject to local control.¹⁸⁵

The idea of using Rate Aid for the construction of denominational schools was abhorrent, however, to those, including the majority of Nonconformists, who believed that state funds should not be used for sectarian purposes. The new Government, however, was not so sensitive to the particular ideologies of any individual pressure group, religious or otherwise. This was most especially seen in the Member of Parliament for Bradford, W. E. Forster.

Forster, a man well known for his views on social and economic matters, and for his interest in popular education, was appointed Vice-President of the Education Department following the General Election of 1868. He was married to the daughter of Thomas Arnold of Rugby School, the man often accredited with founding the modern Public School, and although a wealthy Bradford businessman he was regarded as a friend of the poor.

When Forster came to office at the Department of Education he found a system of education in England which still relied on the religious organisations to supply the need for schools, with the financial assistance of Parliament. The 'Revised Code,' issued in 1861 related to these grants, which had been first voted by Parliament in 1833.

In 1861 Robert Lowe, the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, expressed a desire to support schools with Government grants based on merit and academic achievement, whereby previously schools had been eligible for financial assistance on

¹⁸⁴ H. A. Bruce was a member of the Manchester Education Aid Society, established in 1864 to investigate and improve education in that city, which later became the Manchester Education Bill Committee upon the proposal of the 1868 and 1869 Bills to Parliament.

¹⁸⁵ J. Murphy, *The Education Act 1870, Text and Commentary* (David and Charles: Newton Abbot, 1972), p.28. Hereafter referred to as Murphy, *Text and Commentary*.

meeting certain criteria based on admissions policy, curriculum, and the nature of their foundation and funding.

Lowe, in the wake of the Newcastle Commission of 1858, was particularly concerned with the low levels of, and irregular, attendance in the schools. He attempted to solve this by basing the qualifications for funding on pupil attendance and on the results of the examination of individual pupils on the 'three R's' by an inspector: 'Hitherto we have been living under a system of bounties and protection. Now we propose to have a little free trade.'¹⁸⁶

The Revised Code was very successful in bringing up attendance, rising from 888,923 in 1862 to 1,048,493 in 1865. It also, for the first time, insisted on a national minimum standard of education for all children: they were to have the ability to read a short passage from a newspaper, to write it down from dictation, and to do basic arithmetic, e.g. to calculate a bill of parcels.¹⁸⁷ While 'payment by results,' as it became known, may not have been very popular with children, potentially overstretched and overstressed to produce results, and also with their teachers, not used to working too hard for the benefit of their charges, the Revised Code was a great success in the eyes of the Government. It was against this background of the Government taking a greater direct role in the education of the poor, and asserting definite restrictions, relating to the day-to-day workings of each individual school, that Forster introduced his Education Bill, with some confidence, on 17 February 1870.

Conclusion

In the light of history this period might be described as very successful for English Catholic education. An important body, the Catholic Poor School Committee, was set up with the particular purpose of promoting the educational needs of the English Catholic community. In this it was very effective, securing equality in the ability to apply for Grant Aid, with Church of England and Nonconformist schools. It also educated and enabled school managers to

¹⁸⁶ Barnard, p.112.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.112.

apply for Grant Aid through its publications, most notably its journal *Catholic School* and its annual reports, published from 1848. This was the first time the Catholic Church had secured any sort of Government equality with the established Church and marks an important departure both in the status of the English Catholic Church and the position of the Established Church in the national constitution.

The bishops also managed to overcome divisions among themselves which could have potentially split their efforts. In a Church traditionally struggling against a tide of prejudice and discrimination it is easy to see how solidarity kept their differences hidden when, in a different situation, they might easily have created a major division in educational policy.

This period up to 1870 was undeniably difficult and strewn with mass poverty in the Catholic community and extreme hardship. However, this would be looked on as a golden age, with regard to educational equality, following the Education Act of 1870.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1870 AND REACTION TO IT

Forster saw the Newcastle Commission of 1858 and the introduction of the Revised Code in 1861 as going part of the way to a system which would provide the poor with greater access to education. As he said in his opening address to the House of Commons when presenting his new Bill:

Our object is to complete the present voluntary system, to fill up gaps, sparing the public money where it can be done without, procuring as much as we can the assistance of the parents, and welcoming as much as we rightly can the co-operation and aid of those benevolent men who desire to assist their neighbours.¹⁸⁸

Forster's intentions were both radical and honourable. His desire to 'fill up gaps' in the education system, such as it was in England, was to see the English nation as a well-educated, law-abiding, God-fearing people, and to take a step toward reducing extreme poverty among the poorest subjects. It was also related to the 1867 Reform Act which reined in over one million new voters. Illiteracy in the country was still very high and the need to educate the new electorate became vitally important. The proposed Bill was radical in that, for the first time in English history, the Government had taken it upon itself to direct and organise a national system of education potentially at odds with the traditional supplier of education in England, the Church, and more specifically the Established Church.

Furthermore, where State Aid, since 1833, had been supplied to help and support schools, it had only been for schools set up and affiliated to a religious body, initially the National Society and the British and Foreign Society, and later the Catholic Poor School Committee. With the introduction of Forster's Bill the state confined itself, and the bulk of its support, to the sphere of purely non-doctrinal education.

¹⁸⁸ *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Third Series, 1870* (Cornelius Buck: London, 1870), vol. 199, p.444. Hereafter referred to as *Hansard*.

The Bill divided up the country into School Districts. In the larger cities they formed part of the municipal borough, in the country they were divided up by Church of England parish. London was one school District. The Education Department investigated each District and assessed whether there were any 'gaps' to be 'filled.' If such 'gaps' existed, the denominations were given a 'year of grace' provide for them. They were permitted to apply for a parliamentary grant to aid building, enlarging, improving or fitting up of the schools. If they were unable to do so, the School Board would be set up. Elected by the ratepayers, and with women eligible for election, it would sit for three years and have the power to establish new schools, and maintain those and other schools within the District which came into its care. It had the authority to appoint an officer or officers to enforce attendance at their schools for children between the ages of five and twelve, unless other arrangements for their education could be proven. The schools were not free:

Every child attending a school provided by any school board shall pay such weekly fee as may be prescribed by the school board, with the consent of the Education Department, but the school board may from time to time, for a renewable period not exceeding six months, remit the whole or any part of such fee in the case of any child when they are of opinion that the parent of such child is unable from poverty to pay the same.¹⁸⁹

Reaction of the Denominations to the Act

Opinion in England and Wales regarding the new Education Act was divided into four parties. The National Education League was against all denominational Voluntary Schools and counted many hard line Nonconformists in its number; the National Education Union expressed the Anglican view that wanted to keep the Voluntary System and secure its funding through the rates; Dr Henry Allen's moderate Nonconformists were of a similar opinion, but were a minority among Nonconformists; and the Catholic Poor School Committee wished for

a totally Voluntary School system of schools fully Rate Aided. These four positions covered the majority of opinions expressed on the Act from an official, or semi official position.¹⁹⁰

For many in the denominations, the 1870 Education Act was the final step on a journey towards purely secular instruction in schools, a journey which they claimed the Government had been making since the formation of the Newcastle Commission in 1858. However, whereas the Revised Code had been an attempt to reduce the importance of religious instruction, and the Conscience Clause had been a passive step toward making religious instruction optional given the convictions of the individual child and parent, the 1870 Education Act turned out to be an active step towards removing religious instruction from the normal school day, only allowing the Bible to be read out, without note or comment. This was an attempt to anaesthetize religion, and any denominational ethos, in state-funded schools.

This aspect of the Education Act of 1870 did not come as a complete surprise to the supporters of denominational education, who, in many ways, were relieved that the Bill did not go much further to establish a purely secular system of education in England. One of the greatest defenders of the legitimacy of the Church of England, the Earl of Shaftesbury, summed up the feeling of many of his fellow Anglicans when he spoke during the debate of the Bill in the House of Lords:

...the Government had saved a great deal for the friends of scriptural education...he felt as sure as he did of anything, that if this Bill were lost a measure of purely secular education would be passed by the House of Commons next year. He believed that even many of those who had stood up for the Bill this year would in another give up the struggle from mere weariness.¹⁹¹

The first reaction of the Established Church was not so much to criticise or oppose the Bill as to try and co-operate with it as quickly as possible. It started to exert its authority on the School Boards. In most places the supporters of the National Society, usually Tory Churchmen, came up against Liberal (or Radical) Dissenters. Most School Boards were made

¹⁸⁹ Murphy, *Text and Commentary*, paragraph 17 of the Education Act.

¹⁹⁰ Beales in Beck, p.373 and McClelland, p.76.

up of a combination of these two bodies, with the balance of power swaying one way or the other. With, the exception of the Liverpool School Board election, most School Board elections, which began in autumn 1870, were bitterly fought with the issue of doctrinal education versus non-doctrinal education as a major source of argument and discontent. Liverpool was the first School Board to be elected. By a significant achievement of diplomacy, the opposing parties reached a compromise on the composition of the body before the election, which then proceeded swiftly and without event.¹⁹²

In London, many distinguished and notable men and women of the day were elected: Lord Lawrence of India, became Chairman of the Board; Professor T. H. Huxley; various members of Parliament, such as Lord Sandon, W. H. Smith, Charles Reed and Samuel Morley; three College Principals, namely Dr Rigg of Westminster, Canon Cromwell of St Mark's, and Dr. Barry of King's College; and Emily Davis and Elizabeth Garret, considered to be leading professional women of the time.¹⁹³

Leeds, a major centre of Nonconformity, saw a resounding victory for the radical supporters of non-doctrinal education. In Manchester, which was a traditional inner-city stronghold of the Established Church, the pro-doctrinal education party gained control of the School Board. In Birmingham, however, which was the home of the Education League, a body committed to non-doctrinal education, the pro-doctrinal education party came home with a surprising victory. The non-doctrinal radicals, expecting victory, had put forward candidates for all fifteen seats available in the election. The Church of England, in a strategic move, only put forward eight candidates. The slogan of the radicals, 'The Bible without note or comment,' was not received well by the electorate. Possibly this slogan was interpreted as showing a negative attitude towards the Bible (though this was not its intention) and that this was thus interpreted negatively by those who read it. The election result saw all eight Anglicans elected to the Board, with the one Roman Catholic candidate receiving the highest number of votes, topping the poll. This particular victory for the Anglicans gave them increased confidence,

¹⁹¹ *Hansard*, vol. 203, p.1168.

¹⁹² Cruickshank, p.38.

both in their abilities to continue to influence education in England, and in their belief that they were able to make the new Education Act work to their advantage, and that the Act might even have been a positive thing, certainly if it kept their opponents at bay.¹⁹⁴

While the Established Church may have breathed a sigh of relief that the Education Act did not go as far as many had feared, those Nonconformist Churches which wished for a totally non-doctrinal education system in England and Wales, condemned the Act for not going far enough. G. Dixon M.P., the head of the Education League, in a proposed motion to the House of Commons in 1872, summed up the main objections that he, and other supporters of non-doctrinal education, held against the Education Act:

...the provisions of the Elementary Education Act are defective, and its workings unsatisfactory; and particularly that it fails to secure the general election of School Boards in towns and rural districts; that it does not render obligatory the attendance of children at school; that it deals in a partial and irregular manner with the remission and payment of school fees by School Boards; that it allows the School Boards to pay fees out of rates levied upon the community, to denominational schools, over which the ratepayers have no control; that it permits School Boards to use the money of the ratepayers for the purpose of imparting dogmatic religious instruction in schools established by School Boards; that by the concessions of these permissive powers it provokes religious discord throughout the country; and by the exercise of them it violates the rights of conscience.¹⁹⁵

These words marked both the detail of the Act which many Nonconformist Churchmen found so abhorrent, and the real passion with which many of them opposed the Act. In 1870 many Liberal and Dissenting Churchmen and politicians gravely condemned the Government for what they saw as a betrayal. '...there was scarcely a dissenting organization in the country that had not pronounced condemnation of this Bill' said Edward Miall in the House of Commons. The Liberal cause, the main force in bringing the Liberal Party to power, was now

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.38.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.38-39.

'once bit, twice shy.'¹⁹⁶ This was to prove a portent of the Liberals resounding defeat at the General Election of 1874.

While the Nonconformists were concerned about many aspects of the Education Act, Clause 25 became the central focus of their opposition towards it. Clause 25 of the Act reads:

The School Board may, if they think fit, from time to time, for a renewable period not exceeding six months, pay the whole or any part of the school fees payable at any public elementary school by any child resident in their District whose parent is in their opinion unable from poverty to pay the same.

This clause, it was argued by members of the Education League, allowed School Boards to pay the fees of children attending denominational schools, and were therefore being funded from the rates. In fact, this clause was somewhat further abused, from the Nonconformist viewpoint. In Manchester, many years passed before any School Board Schools were erected, the School Board using this clause to fund the existing Voluntary Schools through Rate Aid. In Birmingham, however, despite the defeat of the supporters of non-doctrinal education in the School Board elections, they still brought sufficient pressure to bear so that the School Board itself refused to apply Clause 25 under any circumstances.¹⁹⁷

As with the Church of England, the Dissenting Churchmen, and laymen who supported non-doctrinal education, fought their corner to gain as much influence as they could over the School Boards. As has been shown, the battles for control over the School Boards were, in the main, fought out between the Nonconformist and the Established Churches. The Leeds School Board, which following its election was predominantly Nonconformist, was one of the most active of all the School Boards throughout the history of the Boards. It was elected on 28 November 1870, and began its work straight away. At its election there was only accommodation for 27,329 children out of a child population of 48,787. To combat this, thirteen temporary schools were set up immediately in Sunday Schools and public halls, and attendance was made compulsory through bye-laws. The School Board issued a series of

¹⁹⁵ *Hansard*, vol. 209, p.1395.

¹⁹⁶ *Hansard*, vol. 203, p.742-743.

prizes to encourage regular attendance, which increased from 64% to 89% of those on the roll. It opened the first School Board School in 1873, with fourteen evening schools, and seven science and art classes. One of the first high grade schools in the country was opened by the Leeds School Board in 1885. The Leeds School Board is a good example of the zeal and enthusiasm shown by the Nonconformists and those with a belief in non-doctrinal education for educational provision for the poor and their desire to put to use their new powers as quickly and effectively as possible.¹⁹⁸

From the point of view of the Government, the Education Act of 1870 was an attempt to compromise between a system of education, supported by the state, based on religious denominations, and a system of education, supported by the state, based on a non-religious approach. That the Act pleased no one seemed to confirm its status as a compromise between two opposing forces. For the Catholic Church, however, the Education Act of 1870 was a further direct challenge to her authority: firstly, as the primary source of educational provision, a role always, throughout time, taken on by the Church; and secondly, as to her right to educate Catholic children in their faith under the auspices of the Church herself. For the Catholic Church the Education Act was a further step toward diminishing her power and authority to educate her own.

Catholic reaction to the Act

Due to the presence of the hierarchy in Rome during most of 1870, the Catholic reaction to the Act was two-fold. Firstly, before going to Rome Cardinal Manning had already begun correspondence and pressure on the Government, in particular the Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone, to secure the Church's objectives and to minimise any damage that might be made to the Catholic school system by this Act. Secondly, the laity in England mounted a concerted effort to preserve their educational advantages as best they could, and at the same time began

¹⁹⁷ Curtis, p.281.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.278.

what was, in the long term, a very successful fund raising campaign in an effort to preserve the existing Catholic schools should funding be removed from them.

Manning's earliest biographers have erroneously portrayed his actions over the 1870 Education Act as both apathetic and cowardly, there being 'no organised attempt...made by Catholics, in parliament or in the country, to resist the introduction of the Godless principle into the National system of Education.'¹⁹⁹ Purcell, Manning's first biographer is now largely discredited in this opinion as demonstrated by V. A. McClelland.²⁰⁰ Manning was in regular correspondence with the Prime Minister on the issue, had very definite goals regarding the Act which he had anticipated for several years before and was well prepared for the Act when it was passed. Manning's experience as an active member of the National Society, during his days as an Anglican clergymen, armed him well for the political battles and tactics used by the Government towards religious denominations. This was far more his world than it was that of his recusant and reserved fellow bishops, such as Bishop Ullathorne. While in Rome Cardinal Manning assured Ullathorne, and other sceptical members of the hierarchy, that co-operation was the only way forward. The School Boards were a reality, and much more was to be gained by the Catholic community through co-operation rather than by direct opposition, to individual School Boards at least.²⁰¹

It seems ironic, given Manning's strong advocacy of Rate Aid for Voluntary Schools at the Cross Commission, detailed in Chapter Five, that he lobbied for Catholic schools not to receive Rate Aid under the 1870 Act. The establishment of School Boards made under the Act brought too many parallels with the Boards of Guardians with whom, as shown above, Manning had great difficulty. Manning's fear about the Act was that, if the Catholic Schools became Rate Aided they would be administered by the School Board. Manning wrote to Gladstone from Rome on 24 February 1870:

¹⁹⁹ E. S. Purcell, *Life of Cardinal Manning*, 2 vols. (Macmillan and Co. Ltd.: London, 1872), vol. 2, pp.492-493. Hereafter referred to as Purcell.

²⁰⁰ McClelland, pp.61-86.

²⁰¹ This advice was taken up, with some success, in Hexham and Newcastle, which put forward candidates for the Newcastle School Board elections, detailed in Chapter Six.

I am anxiously waiting for a copy of Mr. Forster's Bill. From the Report I have both hopes and fears. The one year is too short a time; and the local management may become very dangerous, and oppressive to us. But till I see the Bill I will not risk more.²⁰²

Manning's other concern, revealed in this letter, was the 'year of grace' given over to the denominational societies to establish more schools before the Act came into being.

The bishops met in Rome on 28 February and were agreed that Clause 22, regarding Rate Aid to Voluntary Schools, ought to be scrapped.²⁰³ The proposed Bill allowed for these schools to be under School Board control, which was unacceptable to the bishops. The bishops further wished to retain their association with the Privy Council Committee, receiving any Government funds through that body rather than through any local administration, such as the School Boards.²⁰⁴ Manning and the bishops were advocating a 'dual system,' not considered to be ideal by Manning as he feared natural competition between the two systems, with the Voluntary Schools being at a disadvantage. At the time of their meeting Manning informed the bishops that he had already been in correspondence with the Government and had agreed to give up denominational inspectors in return for, what is presumed, Rate Aid for the Voluntary Schools. That the bishops were now rejecting Rate Aid concerned, and annoyed, the majority of bishops. Manning had given up a major concession, without their consultation, and seemingly in vain. Selby argues, however, that denominational inspectors would not have survived the Education Act, and so he was bargaining with something that Manning believed he was bound to lose anyway.²⁰⁵

Despite these differences of opinion, the bishops remained fundamentally united through the crisis of 1870, in harmony with the Catholic Poor School Committee. Bishop Ullathorne, who objected to the very existence of the committee due to the fact that it was created to receive and facilitate Government grants to Catholic schools, paid tribute to its fairness and success:

²⁰² Selby, p.205, and McClelland, p.65, Manning to Gladstone (24 February 1870).

²⁰³ Selby, pp.206-207.

²⁰⁴ *RCPSC, 1870*, pp.21-23.

²⁰⁵ Selby, pp.203-204.

‘It is only by our organization that, in this question of education, we can stand in our freedom.’²⁰⁶

Ideally, Manning had wanted an educational system based on the Industrial and Poor Law Schools whereby Catholic schools could be set up through Rate Aid, administered to them through central Government. For the Catholic Church this was an ideal method, but Governmental misgivings, and strong protests against any Grant Aid to denominational education from the Nonconformists, made this impossible.

It seems clear from the correspondence between Manning and Gladstone, and the eventual outcome of the Act, that Manning, while being in constant negotiation with Gladstone over the Act and dispelling any claim that he was apathetic to it, over estimated his influence with the Prime Minister. Clause 22 was dropped from the Bill due to pressure from the radical Nonconformists as well as through any effort of Manning’s. Deeply laid anti-Catholic sentiment reawakened by the controversial proceedings of the Vatican Council in Rome did not help Manning’s cause with the Government, and Gladstone in particular.²⁰⁷ His attitude towards the Council has been described as one of ‘intense hostility’²⁰⁸ and was alarmed by the ultramontane views emanating from it, of which Manning was a major proponent. Manning’s other main concern with the proposed Act, the ‘year of grace’ in which to establish new Voluntary Schools before the Act became effective, was not extended as he had requested, but was in fact reduced to six months, again under pressure from the Nonconformists.

Manning’s ‘dread’²⁰⁹ of the School Boards and their possible influence over the Catholic schools was enough for him to feel satisfied with the Act when it was passed in August 1870. ‘The education Bill is decidedly improved’ he wrote to Gladstone in July on reading the final draft.²¹⁰ As one who was happy to accept some form of state education, so long as religious education was not impaired, Manning believed that the 1870 Act had secured the future for

²⁰⁶ Norman, p.169.

²⁰⁷ D. Quinn, ‘Manning as Politician’, *Recusant History*, vol. 21 (October 1992), p.275. Hereafter referred to as Quinn.

²⁰⁸ Selby, p.208.

²⁰⁹ McClelland, p.68.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.70.

denominational schools in England. However, many of his episcopal colleagues, most notably Bishop Ullathorne, and many of the prominent laity did not share his satisfaction at the passing of the Act. Despite any perceived success in the final Act of August 1870, Manning ‘found himself negotiating with an administration wary of his ultramontanistism on behalf of a flock wary of his secularism.’²¹¹ Manning was not a secularist, but his position of urging co-operation with the School Boards found him being accused of this by those who opposed him. On the 16 June Gladstone announced that no funding would be given to Voluntary schools through the School Boards, but that they would continue to receive funding through increased Privy Council grants. The Privy Council Committee also won its argument over the denominational inspectors whose posts were dissolved under the Act as had been anticipated by Manning. The bishops were compelled to rely purely on their own internal inspectors, who had existed since 1852, to inspect religious instruction. Further, the bishops decided to set up diocesan education committees to protect themselves at a local level and to supervise and promote greater investment in educational projects and interests.²¹² A committee was set up for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle in November 1870.²¹³

On the passing of the Education Act in August, Cardinal Manning and the other bishops remained wary of the power of the School Boards, as is seen from a letter from the English bishops to the Catholic Poor School Committee while the bishops were in Rome:

The peculiar circumstances of England render it inevitable, that the administration of the local School Board and of the educational rate will always be in hands over which no control, sufficient to protect the children of the Catholic poor, can be exercised.

This has been abundantly proved by the long and painful experience of the Poor Law Boards.²¹⁴

²¹¹ Quinn, p.275.

²¹² Arthur, p.17.

²¹³ HNDA, *Report of the Executive Board of the Diocesan Poor School Committee of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle 1872* (R. B. Henzell: North Shields, 1872), p.4, Drawer A5, Catholic Education Council Various.

²¹⁴ RCPSC, 1870, p.21.

While there was no question of the School Boards having any influence over Catholic schools, they would educate some Catholic children. Fear for their spiritual welfare, as with the Poor Law children, remained a concern for the bishops. The fear of the bishops was vindicated, as can be seen in the case of the school at Tyne Dock, illustrated in Chapter Six. The bishops also feared that the 1870 Education Act established a principle that education was a state responsibility. All people had to pay for the Board Schools, even if they did not support them and would have, given the option, chosen to fund Voluntary Schools. Catholic schools were expected to reach the same standards as the rate funded Board Schools: in quality of teaching, in conditions of the work place (e.g. schools buildings), and in the facilities they offered. Any increase in expenditure on Catholic schools meant that Catholics would have to pay a higher rate, each time, as they would be supporting two schools.

The notion that the Government, rather than the Church, was taking responsibility for education went against the popular image of the new Catholic Church in England which was to be recreation of mediaeval England. Influential converts believed strongly that it was the Church, not the state, that should educate its children, that this was an intrinsic part of the Church's mission. It was also an essential link with the past. If the new Catholic Church was going to recreate the Christian ideal as seen in mediaeval England, all those things proper to it, including education, should be restored to it, not taken away. Some bishops too, on a less romantic level perhaps, saw a break with centuries of tradition, going from the pre-reformation period, throughout the period of religious exile in Europe, and at the threshold of their renaissance, an essential element of their mission, and did not want their authority over their children to be taken away. This was not, however, necessarily the position of Cardinal Manning.

Throughout the absence of the bishops, the prominent laity galvanised themselves as best they could without the episcopal leadership they had come to rely on.

The Laity and the Education Act of 1870

In the event of the hierarchy being in Rome, the Catholic Poor School Committee took a much greater part in the Catholic reaction to the imposition of the Act. A certain lack of leadership from the hierarchy, who were preoccupied with the Council, left the more prominent laity somewhat at a loss. Throughout 1870 the Catholic Poor School Committee did its utmost to smooth the path for Catholic education in the wake of the Act. It met nine times to discuss the proposed Bill, petitioned the Commons and interviewed the Catholic MPs and the Government four times. Allies, the secretary to the Committee, argued publicly that compulsory education was a necessity and as such that denominational education, in such a system, was an 'absolute right.' 'The moment this truth is made clear, the question of primary education is settled for Catholics. "Catholic schools for Catholic children" must be their motto.'²¹⁵

The Catholic Poor School Committee did not make an application to 'opt-out' of the general terms of the Bill, as the Jews did, possibly due to a lack of direction from the bishops. The fact that the first time the Catholic Poor School Committee met with the bishops to discuss the Bill was the day that it received Royal Assent, the 9 August, itself demonstrates the lack of preparation that the body of English Catholics had made for the Act.

The absence of the bishops from the country during the Bill's time in Parliament resulted in other lay organisations taking a role in the Catholic debate over the acceptability of the Bill. A 'Proposed Declaration of the Catholic Laity' was published in March 1870 by a group organised by Lord Howard of Glossop. They opposed the Bill vehemently, claiming that Catholics would be 'compelled to support schools contrary to the plain dictates of their consciences.'²¹⁶

The full force of Catholic opposition to the Bill came about on the 19 March. The laity published a declaration pointing to the dangers of secularisation under five main proposals to

²¹⁵ Beales in Beck, p.374.

²¹⁶ Norman, p.172.

amend the Bill in their favour: i) that public support for a denominational school in a particular place would warrant building grants and other Rate Aided support; ii) increased building grants to balance the effect of Rate Aid to the Board Schools; iii) a longer period of grace, to establish more Catholic schools where they were desired before the provisions of the Act came into full effect; iv) the facility to lease and mortgage property; v) greater care over the definition of a parent, so that any child without parents or with parents unable to care for him or her would remain in the care of his or her own community, in this case the Catholic community.²¹⁷

Out of fear that their requests would go unanswered, a crisis fund was established by Lord Howard of Glossop on the 13 June 1870. He started this in the belief that many, if not all, Catholic schools would have to remove themselves from Government funding. He also organised a public meeting of lay Catholics to oppose the Bill openly. His efforts were not in vain. The fund raised £390,000 and created 71,518 school places. By 1890 there were 964 Catholic schools with 223,645 pupils that could claim to have been helped from this fund.²¹⁸ Lord Howard became the nominal leader of Catholics in England during the Educational Crisis, to Manning's consternation.²¹⁹ Howard, and several of his fellow old Catholics, privately opposed Manning's apparent complicity to the Bill which they saw as potentially disastrous for Catholic education. While Manning was attempting to negotiate behind the scenes, Howard and his supporters were advocating out and out opposition to it.²²⁰

The Cowper-Temple Clause

The Cowper-Temple clause, named after William Francis Cowper-Temple (later Lord Mount-Temple), the Vice-President of the Privy Council Committee from 1857 to 1858, forbade Board Schools from teaching any religious doctrines or formularies distinctive to any

²¹⁷ Beales in Beck, p.375 and Norman, p.172.

²¹⁸ Arthur, p.18.

²¹⁹ McClelland, p.78.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.79.

denomination, thus ensuring their totally non-doctrinal character. The clause itself came under substantial attack in the house during the debate on the Education Bill. On the 20 June Disraeli said of it:

[the teacher] cannot teach, explain and enforce the Holy Scriptures when he reads...without drawing some inferences and conclusions, and what will these inferences and conclusions be but dogmas?...You are inventing and establishing a new sacerdotal class.²²¹

Despite these protestations, the Cowper-Temple clause was included in the new Act. The clause destroyed any hope of co-operation between the Voluntary Schools and the Board Schools. This separation of the two systems was never part of Gladstone's vision of education in England. At the Bill's third reading in the House of Commons on 22 July, Gladstone noted that the idea that the Voluntary Schools should not be part of the national system, but being merely a stop gap of education, to be tolerated rather than encouraged, had 'never been the theory of the Government.'

Provision made in the Act for religious education allowed the individual School Boards to decide upon the level and nature of religious instruction within their schools, but it was firmly stated that 'no religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught.'²²² The Government, by this clause, set up on its own a Government-run system of education in competition to those run by the different religious denominations. While this act was a compromise between the two, inasmuch as the Government did not seek to close down any denominational schools and did not stop them from receiving the grants given to them since 1833, it set up a system wholly separate from the denominational schools with greater access to funding and controlled by elected bodies with significant powers.

²²¹ Beales in Beck, p.375.

²²² Murphy, *Text and Commentary*, p.91, paragraph 14.2 of the Education Act.

Immediate effects of the Act

In 1870 it was estimated that there were still 44% of Catholic children going with a formal education who would, inevitably, attend the Board Schools. It became clear that the Catholic community would now have to pay for two systems of education, through voluntary aid and through the rates. As the poorest single social group in the country, the Catholic Church did not have the historical backing, nor the generous benefactors, enjoyed by the Church of England. The continued maintenance of the Catholic schools was arduous and through the efforts of the poorest members of society.

After the bishops' return to England, a series of correspondence between Manning and Ullathorne over the question of the School Boards was thrashed out. Eventually Manning explained as concisely as possible his reasons behind advising co-operation with the School Boards:

The Boards may destroy our lesser schools by reporting them to be insufficient or inefficient. The effect of this in London would be to destroy one half of our schools. By opening negotiations with the Boards, as I have done with the Privy Council, I hope to save these. By standing aloof from the Boards we should be exposed to the danger of their hostility.²²³

Although Ullathorne was violently opposed to the very idea of School Boards, and their funding through Rate Aid, he saw the idea of putting Catholics up for election for the School Boards as a necessary evil: 'It is certain that the School Boards system is full of danger to the Religious Education of England, and most especially to our Catholic schools,' he wrote in 1870. However, he saw the election of Catholics to the School Boards as not implying 'approbation of the system, or co-operation in any acts against which such a Catholic member may vote.' Since, by way of example, the London School Board had 'acted with perfect fairness' thus far, he concluded that 'the only securities we possess for the safety of our Catholic children' was the presence of Catholics on the School Boards. To remove them now

would 'diminish the check which at this time hinders a more rapid and dangerous development of the system.'²²⁴

Forms of religious toleration or co-operation did begin to emerge within certain School Boards. This was normally between the Radicals or Nonconformists and the representatives of the Established Church. Rather than uniting towards a common goal, however, this often saw the surrender of the local Church of England and Nonconformist Voluntary Schools to the School Boards. The Manchester School Board is a case in point. A compromise between the Secularists and the Anglicans allowed a certain modicum of what might be called Biblical Religion to be taught in all Board Schools, slightly more substantial than merely reading out passages from the Bible. This allowed for harmony on the Boards between certain parties, the religion allowed in the Board Schools was often acceptable to many of the Nonconformist schools then part of the Voluntary system, and also acceptable to certain Church of England Voluntary Schools. Certainly, many of the school managers were happy to give up some of their religious instruction in favour of the much better financial situation in which they would find themselves under the School Board. In Manchester, this had the effect of isolating the Catholic members of the Board (four Catholics to eleven others), and of increasing the power of the School Board itself.²²⁵ This evolution of the School Boards would come to be problematic for the bishops in the succeeding years.

Conclusion

For the Catholic Church, the 1870 Education Act made a difficult situation more difficult, but not as difficult as it might have been. The ideal for the bishops was to receive Rate Aid for their schools directly from central Government, in the same way that they could for Poor Law Schools. The worst situation that could have arisen from the Act was the removal of all funding for Voluntary Schools. The bishops anticipated that neither of these scenarios was

²²³ McClelland, p.71.

²²⁴ Norman, p.173, St Dominic's Convent, Stone, Ullathorne Papers, Box X, Paper on School Boards.

likely. What was possible, and proposed in the first draft Bill, was Rate Aid administered through the School Boards. For the bishops, and their experience of the anti-Catholic Boards of Guardians, this was not acceptable. They opted to receive no Rate Aid at all rather than lose any control over their schools to a potentially discriminatory body.

This was the final outcome of the Act. The bishops retained control of their schools, but sacrificed Rate Aid, and in the process also lost their own Catholic inspectors, and the option of the building grant for new schools. In the local example of Hexham and Newcastle, however, shown in Chapter Six, the building grant was not considered particularly beneficial. The real problem for Catholic education after the passing of the Act came in the form of the Board Schools themselves. They were unfair competition, having recourse to the rates for their funding. The bishops knew that their schools could not hope to compete with them. They employed higher salaried teachers, had access to better classroom facilities, their buildings were more modern and better maintained. A very large proportion of non-Catholic Voluntary Schools surrendered control to the School Boards to reap these benefits. The Catholic schools did not. In the fullness of time the Catholic schools began to suffer, and the bishops looked for ways to try and redress the balance in order to save the school system that they had fought so hard to protect.

²²⁵ Beales in Beck, p.378.

CHAPTER FIVE

WORKING WITH THE ACT: 1870 - 1902

Manning came in for strong criticism over his eventual support and call for co-operation with the Boards. His stance was denounced as ‘simply anti-Christian’ by one priest.²²⁶ Despite this, Manning was initially very pleased with Catholic success at the elections. Over time, however, the obvious disadvantages of the Voluntary Schools, where there was a Board School present, sought to harden his attitude towards the Act. Fear of a campaign by the radical Nonconformist Joseph Chamberlain to make Board Schools free, and thus almost certainly close Voluntary Schools which were compelled to charge fees, found Manning anxious to change the ‘dual system’ of education that had resulted from the Act and that Manning had feared would result in unfair competition between the two systems.

In 1876 Bishop Ullathorne wrote to Cardinal Manning expressing his concern over the School Boards and his change of opinion towards them. The Boards were ‘in their nature uncatholic’ and he urged the removal of Catholic representation from them:

Their constitution, object and aim is to establish and maintain schools and propagate a system of education in antagonism with Catholic education, and with all definite religious education...[Catholics would] hold a far stronger position in the face of these Boards and of the whole system, if we had nothing whatever to do with them.²²⁷

Ullathorne, previously placated in his views by Manning following the Education Act, had returned to his general suspicion of any official body, and his desire to ‘go alone’ and remove the Church from any external funding. For Manning, and indeed for the whole Church, this was simply not possible. 1,862 departments in 328 schools were in receipt of Grant Aid,²²⁸ and many clergy were in co-operation with the School Boards and the Privy Council

²²⁶ Quinn, p.275.

²²⁷ Norman, p.173, St Dominic’s Convent, Stone, Ullathorne Papers, Box X, Paper on School Boards.

²²⁸ Beales in Beck, p.380.

Committee for Education. To remove the Church wholesale from Government funding was no longer an option.

By about 1881 Manning began to speak strongly against the Act and to lobby for change. ‘An educational rate raised of the whole people, ought to be returned to the whole people in a form or forms of education of which all may partake,’²²⁹ he declared on the exclusion of Voluntary Schools from Rate Aid.

Despite the funding of, what were in effect, Nonconformist schools out of Rate Aid, the funding from Rate Aid was something that Nonconformists had previously always condemned, most recently as a form of religious persecution. During the debate on the Education Bill the radical Nonconformist member for Merthyr Tydfil said:

...that it was not right to take money received from the general taxation of the country, and apply it to purposes of religious instruction and worship...if they claimed the right to compel one man to pay for the support of another man’s religion, and to enforce that, as they must, by penalties of law, they passed at once into the region of religious persecution.²³⁰

In the face of such bitter defence of the rates being used for Voluntary Education, Manning, as a way of placating Nonconformist opposition, suggested increased funding for Voluntary Schools through taxation. Indeed, the Voluntary Schools had been funded through voted monies by Parliament since 1833, so it seemed unlikely, especially since the Voluntary Schools were to be continued to be funded in this way, that anyone could legitimately object to this use of public funds, unless they had previously logged their objection.

This argument of Manning’s made little headway, but he was at pains to point out that what he wanted was equality of all Voluntary Schools with the Board Schools: ‘I only claim what all may claim; I stand upon a common ground.’²³¹ This inequality of Rate Aid between the Voluntary Schools and Board Schools was to form part of a concerted strategy to redress the balance within the so called ‘dual system’ established through the Education Act.

²²⁹ Beales in Beck, p.378.

²³⁰ *Hansard*, vol. 202, pp.498-499.

Bishop Vaughan, The Four Inequalities and the Voluntary Schools Association

Over a short space of time, the main disparities between Voluntary schools and Board Schools became more and more obvious. From a Catholic point of view,²³² these main inequalities were summed up in four crucial points, which over the two decades following the enacting of the Act were to form the heart of Catholic action for an equal and fair education.

Firstly, the Government set a limit on the amount of Grant Aid given to any Voluntary School at 17s 6d per capita unless the total income of the school, from Voluntary sources, exceeded that amount. This made Voluntary subscriptions to the school compulsory if the annual grant was to be increased beyond the set limit.

Secondly, it was impossible for a Voluntary School to receive a grant if the local Board School of that area claimed it was able to accommodate the local denominational children for whom the Voluntary School would be built. In effect, the School Boards had the power to prevent any new Voluntary Schools from being built so long as they ensured that their own schools were large enough to accommodate all local children.

Thirdly, the parents of children attending a Voluntary School were compelled to apply to the Board of Guardians if they wished their school fees to be remitted and paid for by the School Board. Under the provisions of the 1870 Education Act parents who were in severe financial difficulty could apply to the School Board which would pay their fees for a certain period. The parents of children attending the Board School could apply to the Board of Guardians directly. However, those of children attending Voluntary Schools had to apply to the Board in person, during the daytime. On a practical note, this often involved loss of crucial wages and time,²³³ and was also seen as obvious discrimination against Voluntary Schools.

²³¹ Beales in Beck, p.378.

²³² These inequalities were common to all Voluntary Schools but were, in the main, defined and acted upon by the Catholic community.

²³³ Beales in Beck, p.379.

Fourthly, the Board Schools were funded exclusively from the public rates, while the Voluntary Schools were totally excluded from such funding.

An example of the second inequality was found in a striking case in Swansea. In 1833 the Catholics of Dan-y-craig wished to build a Voluntary School in the town. The Swansea School Board claimed that it had sufficient accommodation for all local children and refused to allow them to build the school. In defiance of the Board, the Catholics of the town built the school anyway, opened it and ran it for many years without the assistance of a grant. Eventually the disagreement between the two bodies came before Parliament in 1886 and the Royal Commissioners awarded the school a grant in 1888.²³⁴

In response to these four inequalities Herbert Vaughan, the Bishop of Salford, decided to consolidate these efforts.

By 1884 Vaughan noted that over one thousand Voluntary Schools had given themselves over to the authority of the local School Board. As already shown, the distinct financial advantages, combined with often few changes needed to the religious instruction, made surrendering to School Board authority very attractive to many of the Nonconformist and some Anglican Voluntary Schools, set up before 1870. Vaughan also noted, however, that none of those schools given over to the School Boards was Catholic.²³⁵ On top of this, Vaughan noted that, despite their financial hardship, the Catholic schools of 1883 had the highest percentage of free admissions offered to poor children. Galvanised by this, Vaughan felt moved to action:

[Vaughan arrived at] the conclusion that a new and drastic departure must be made.

Cardinal Manning had done an immense work for Catholic education in relation to Certified Poor Law, Industrial, and Reformatory schools, but he had no organisation to his hand fitted to make a direct appeal to the constituencies.²³⁶

²³⁴ Cruickshank, p.53.

²³⁵ R. O'Neil, *Cardinal Herbert Vaughan* (Burns and Oates: Cornwall, 1995), p.289. Hereafter referred to as O'Neil.

²³⁶ J. Snead-Cox, *The Life of Cardinal Vaughan*, 2 vols. (Herbert and Daniel: London, 1911), vol. 2, p.91. Hereafter referred to as Snead-Cox.

This statement has been described as ‘unhistorical’ by McClelland²³⁷ who claims the Voluntary Schools Association was founded by Manning. According to O’Neil’s recent biography of Vaughan, however, he is generally regarded as the founder, and main force behind the work, of the association.

Vaughan was encouraged by the Catholic schools and their resilient spirit. In 1884 he approached the hierarchy during their annual Low Week meeting to secure their blessing on the foundation of the Voluntary Schools Association. The Association was founded in February 1884 with the express purpose of supporting the cause of all Voluntary Schools and of petitioning their arguments to the Government. The Association was initially established within the Salford diocese, but was, from its inception, inter-denominational.²³⁸ ‘The Catholic schools may be the iron head to the spear, but the iron head will make but a poor weapon unless it have the weight of the wooden shaft behind it,’ he wrote at the time, describing the need for such an association to be genuinely inter-denominational.²³⁹

The first act of the Voluntary Schools Association was to demand that the Four Inequalities be addressed by the Government. Vaughan followed this up with a pastoral letter in 1885 entitled ‘Education Really Free: A Question for the General Election,’ in which he urged all Catholic voters to elect men who would ‘demand as an indefeasible right that their religion shall preside over the daily education of their children.’²⁴⁰

The Voluntary Schools Association was an important marker for the position of the Catholic Church in education at that time. The previous decade or so had been one of great hardship for the Catholic community, seen most clearly in what was, to the Catholic minds of the day, no less than out-and-out persecution of their hard-won education system. During the 1870’s, the Catholic community had more than doubled its schools, from 350 to 758, many of these new schools being built without the help of the Government grant. No grant could be made to a school which was in debt, and since it was almost impossible for the Church to come up

²³⁷ McClelland, p.83.

²³⁸ O’Neil, p.289.

²³⁹ Beales in Beck, p.379.

²⁴⁰ O’Neil, p.289.

with the necessary funds immediately when building new schools, the grant could not be made to them.

Finance was still an important issue. The Church was committed to keeping schools fees as low as they possibly could to allow for as many children as possible to attend. Those schools associated with the Catholic Poor School Committee charged the lowest fees of all schools of the day, including Board Schools. The difference was made up through the pennies of the poor. Weekly house to house collections for the benefit of the local school, often made by the priest in person to ensure contributions were forthcoming, allowed many Catholic schools to continue to operate. Due to this extreme hardship, standards of building, apparatus and teachers' salaries were substantially lower than in most other schools, especially Board Schools. In 1880, annual contributions to Catholic schools came to 7s 4½d per child compared to 18s 7d per child in a Board School.²⁴¹

Most probably because of, rather than in spite of, these great hardships, the Catholic community's stance on education was clear and precise, and its motives well defined. It was determined in its efforts to secure a better financial and legislative situation for Catholic schools. This is most clearly seen in the establishment, and the subsequent aims and efforts, of the Voluntary Schools Association. The fact that this association was, from the very outset, to be an ecumenical effort, shows too the confidence which the Catholic Church had in regard to its educational situation. In most spheres, the Church had been traditionally suspicious or fearful of any other religious organisations, especially the Established Church. In the realm of Voluntary education, however, she was confident in the knowledge that since she led the field in this area, the support of other religious denominations could only serve to assist her in her aims, rather than challenge or undermine them. This was also the attitude taken by Cardinal Manning in his attempts to galvanise support against the 1870 Education Act.

Cardinal Manning and the Cross Commission

In the run up to the General Election of November 1885, Cardinal Manning, with fourteen other bishops, published the *Resolutions of the Catholics Bishops of England on Education*. In this document the hierarchy made their position on education clear:

While we heartily unite in the universal desire that all children shall be suitably educated, we maintain that the State cannot, without violation of the natural and divine law, compel parents to educate their children in a system which is opposed to their conscience and religion; and we declare that the Catholics of this country cannot accept for themselves any system of Education which is divorced from their Religion.²⁴²

The campaign for the General Election began in earnest in 1885. Cardinal Manning at once took up the matter of education and the various injustices as perceived by the Catholic community against them, as a benchmark for the support of any given candidate. Cardinal Manning wrote in *The Tablet* of that year

(1) Will you do your utmost to place Voluntary Schools on an equal footing with Board Schools? (2) Will you do your utmost to obtain a Royal Commission to review the present state of education in England and Wales?...As they answer “Yes” or “No”, let us decide.²⁴³

His desire to see an equal system of education did not shy from advising his own flock of Catholic voters as to how their vote would best serve their own community, an unprecedented action. These demands on the candidates could only have led the Catholic electorate to vote Conservative, some bishops openly advocating the Conservative Party, under whom it was anticipated that a review of the educational system would take place.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ Cruickshank, pp.52-53.

²⁴² Archive of St Mary’s Cathedral, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, ‘Resolutions of the Catholic Bishops of England on Education’ (31 October 1885).

²⁴³ Cruickshank, p.56, *The Tablet* (24 October 1885).

²⁴⁴ C. H. D. Howard, ‘The Parnell Manifesto of 21 November, 1885, and the Schools Question’, *The English Historical Review*, vol. 62 (1947), pp.45-46.

Manning's desire to see a Royal Commission established to investigate the current situation of education in England and Wales was granted by the returned Conservative Government of 1885. The Royal Commission was set up in 1886 and is generally known as the Cross Commission after its chairman, Sir Richard Cross (later Lord Cross). Cardinal Manning was appointed to the Commission as also was the Duke of Norfolk. The Commission was set up with the explicit aim 'to inquire into the workings of the Elementary Education Acts, England and Wales.'²⁴⁵ It was not long before Cardinal Manning came to dominate the commission and its proceedings.

The Commission itself was made up of many men in favour of Voluntary Education, or at least sympathetic to its arguments of inequality. As well as Manning and Norfolk, the Commission comprised the Bishop of London and the Earl of Harrowby, both noted proponents of Voluntary Education. The Liberal Government elected the following year viewed it as a 'packed Commission.'²⁴⁶

The Commission delved into a variety of matters relating to elementary education, not least the training of teachers, the notion of 'payment by results' (as instituted by the Revised Code), and the proposal of funding all Elementary Schools through the rates. In 1888, the Commission published its findings in the form of two reports, a majority report and a minority report.

The Commission was united in several matters relating to elementary education. In its majority report, it declared that it was 'unanimously of the opinion that the present system of 'payment by results' is carried too far and is too rigidly applied, and that it ought to be modified and relaxed in the interests equally of the scholars, of the teachers, and of education itself.'²⁴⁷ The Commission went on to report that it was united in a desire to see an extension to all school provisions, incorporating better buildings and adequate playgrounds; the age limit of school attendees raised; much greater facilities generally for the training of teachers,

²⁴⁵ Murphy, J., *Church, State and Schools in Britain, 1800-1970* (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.: London, 1971), p.71.

²⁴⁶ Cruickshank, p.56.

establishing training departments within the universities; and allowing day students to attend the existing training colleges. The Commission also recommended that elementary school teachers be allowed to become Government inspectors, and that greater stress be placed on teaching science, and manual and technical instruction in schools.

In the Final Report of the Cross Commission, Cardinal Manning remarked:

The most sanguine friends of the Voluntary System cannot believe that it will ever recover the whole population of England and Wales; neither can the most devoted advocates of the Board School System believe that it can ever extinguish the Voluntary System which...gives freedom to the inextinguishable denominations of our country.²⁴⁸

In this Manning conceded that it was folly to think that the Board School System would ever be removed from English elementary education, and that to say so was a false hope, so that all future policy, from a Catholic point of view at least, would have to acknowledge this. However, he also made clear that the Voluntary School system was not going to go away either, and that its struggle for equal treatment would continue.

The Cross Commission was divided on the matter of religion. The majority of its members, however, were in favour of the Voluntary School system and those who supported that system and were members of it, most especially the Catholic community (which was, by this time, its main proponent), were treated favourably. The Commission was by no means vehemently 'anti' Board School and 'pro' Voluntary School,²⁴⁹ but it did acknowledge many of the grievances brought by Manning and others to the table of the Commission.²⁵⁰

In theory, the Cross Commission was an enormous success for the cause of Voluntary Education, and thus for the cause of Catholic Education in England and Wales. The greatest achievement of the Church is seen in paragraph 183 of the Commission's Final Report:

²⁴⁷ Barnard, pp.174-175, Royal Commission on Elementary Education in England and Wales, Final Report, p.162.

²⁴⁸ *Royal Commission on Elementary Education in England and Wales, Final Report*, paragraph 244.

²⁴⁹ The Commission voted by majority against a motion which condemned the Cowper-Temple clause as being 'a serious violation of religious liberty.' The Bishop of London was among the majority.

²⁵⁰ Six Catholics, including T. W. Allies, gave evidence before the Commission.

That there is no reason why the principle of Voluntary Schools receiving annual aid from the rates should not be extended, and Rate Aid, in respect of their secular efficiency, should not be given to Voluntary Schools (as it is now given in Industrial and Reformatory Schools), without the imposition of the Cowper-Temple clause, which, under the Act of 1870, affects those Schools only which are provided and supported entirely by the rates.²⁵¹

The cry of ‘Rome on the Rates,’ a traditional protest at the idea of any Rate Aid going to the Catholic community, was heard at the publishing on the Cross Commission’s Final Report in 1888. While the reality of ‘Rome on the Rates’ was not to happen until the Education Act of 1902, the Cross Commission was a major landmark for Catholic education. That Cardinal Manning, and later the Duke of Norfolk, had been invited to be on the Commission validated the Catholic cause in education, and formally acknowledged Catholics as having an important contribution to make in English education.

More importantly, however, the rights of Catholic schools to be funded by the rates were formally ceded, thus giving the Catholic campaigners a new impetus to pursue this specific cause, one which had been part of the Catholic manifesto since the 1870 Education Act. However, the Government did not immediately act on the recommendations of the Commission, and the reality of its success for Voluntary Schools was not fully realised until the Education Act of 1902.

The Education Act of 1891 and the Education Act of 1897

The 1890’s saw a sustained and concerted effort to place equality of funding for Voluntary Schools on the Government’s agenda. The Education Act of 1891, passed by the Conservative Government of Lord Salisbury, gave some relief to the Voluntary Schools. The Act, which was passed in order to ‘assist’ education, allowed an annual state grant of 10s. per child, so that fees could either be abolished, or at least reduced by that amount. Since most Catholic

²⁵¹ *Royal Commission on Elementary Education in England and Wales, Final Report*, paragraph 183.

schools charged 9s. 5d., this was to their obvious advantage.²⁵² However, this grant, which did make elementary education effectively free, was given to all funded schools, both Voluntary Schools and Board Schools, so the beneficial nature of the grant, that of allowing the Voluntary School to compete on a financially equal footing with the Board Schools, was soon lost.

In 1895 Herbert Vaughan, who was now the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and the Duke of Norfolk, now the Chairman of the Catholic Poor School Committee, formally petitioned the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, about whether ‘the day of discrimination and palliatives should not now give way to the day of justice.’²⁵³ Vaughan, as we have seen, was an ardent campaigner in favour of the Voluntary Schools system, and that system had a right, in the natural law, to be funded through Rate Aid. Vaughan was determined on the equality that had been sought for so long. He believed it was essential to

get rid of the reproach that our schools are charity schools, dependant upon casual alms; we want to have done with the whole sorry and degrading business which makes the salaries of the teachers in the Denominational schools hang upon the success of this or that grinning comedian, or upon the pious audacity of some fraudulent bazaar.²⁵⁴

Cardinal Vaughan’s attitude towards the Government in its relationship with the Voluntary Schools was that the schools themselves had waited too long for equality. The question was no longer ‘if,’ but ‘when’ that equality would come. Vaughan’s reaction to an Education Department circular in 1899 perfectly sums up his frustration, and indeed the frustration of the whole Catholic community. The circular stated that where a Voluntary School’s contributions were below what might be ‘reasonably expected,’ its income should be supplemented through ‘collections, bazaars, entertainments and the like.’ That schools should survive on bazaars was a *reductio ad absurdum*, said the Cardinal.²⁵⁵

²⁵² Arthur, p.21.

²⁵³ Beales in Beck, p.382.

²⁵⁴ Snead-Cox, vol. 2, pp.122-123.

²⁵⁵ Arthur, p.21 and Beales in Beck, p.383.

Vaughan's confidence that the Voluntary Schools were to receive some sort of equality, and soon, came in no small part from the final report of the Cross Commission. Their claim for Rate Aid was, in the Commission's opinion, totally valid; and it would be difficult to imagine the Catholic Church, and indeed Vaughan himself, having so much self-confidence as to take on the Prime Minister directly on the matter if he had not believed that a significant body of public opinion (including that of non-Catholics) was behind him. That is not to say that he would not have done so without the findings of the Cross Commission, but the Commission gave greater impetus, not only to the Catholic community to progress, but also to the Government, demonstrating that greater equality could only be a matter of time.

The Education Act of 1897, again passed under a Government led by Lord Salisbury, was another victory for Voluntary Schools. It redressed directly three objections lobbied against by the Voluntary Schools Association. It abolished the limit of Grant Aid to 17s. 6d., thus removing one of the four inequalities laid out by the Voluntary Schools Association in 1884. It also allowed for an extra grant of 5s per child in the Voluntary Schools only, thus helping those schools to meet the same high levels that the Board Schools already enjoyed.

The Act of 1897 was another vital step towards the full equality that the Catholic bishops sought. At the time, the Prime Minister commented that it was 'our duty, as far as we can, to see that every parent get the kind of denominational teaching that he desires.'²⁵⁶ Despite these almost subliminal assurances that, indeed, the question was one of 'when' rather than 'if'; the bishops did not let up on their campaign for equality. This came in the momentous Education Act of 1902, which not only brought the Voluntary School to full Rate Aid, but also abolished the local School Boards, bringing both Voluntary Schools and Board School under the administration of the Local Education Authority (LEA).

Nineteenth-century Catholic Education and Medievalism

Medievalism is a constant theme running throughout nineteenth-century Catholicism. Much had been written on the works of A. W. N. Pugin. He promoted not only Gothic architecture and decoration but also an almost Gothic lifestyle, especially regarding spirituality, religious worship and attitude to life:

He called out for Gothic shops and Gothic railway arches, as being the only lasting and suitable kind. . . In his own house, all the furniture was Gothic, and he even designed Gothic moulds for the cook to use in making his puddings and jellies. He was not insensible to the humour of his actions, and on one occasion he wrote to a friend that his wife was about to present him with a Gothic baby.²⁵⁷

Other main proponents of the Gothic revival, such as Phillipps de Lisle and Kenelm Digby, sought similar objectives. A belief that the revived Catholic Church in England should take on the persona of the mediaeval Church and this mediaeval ideal was in fact the purest form of worship and architecture and society as a whole, spurred these men to press forward and bring medievalism into every part of the Church.²⁵⁸

Did medievalism and the Gothic revival affect Catholic elementary education in the nineteenth-century? The simple answer to this question is, yes. To what extent, and whether this affect was significant, is more difficult to ascertain.

Much of the nature of the Gothic revival was about achieving a romantic ideal. The Church being responsible for social care was an important element of this Gothic ideal, although by no means confined to medievalism. One needs only look at Pugin's *Contrasts* to see his concern for prisoners, those in the workhouse, those in hospital, and his bias in favour of all

²⁵⁶ Beales in Beck, p.383.

²⁵⁷ B. Ward, *The Sequel to Catholic Emancipation*, 2 vols. (London, 1915), vol. I, pp.94-95.

²⁵⁸ For further reading on the Gothic Revival in nineteenth-century English Catholicism see B. F. L. Clarke, *Church Builders of the Nineteenth Century: A Study of the Gothic Revival in England* (David and Charles: London, 1969), R. J. Pickett, *The Churchmanship of A. W. N. Pugin* (University of Durham M. A. Thesis, 2001), C. J. Powell, *The Liturgical Vision of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin* (University of Durham Ph.D. Thesis, 2002), D. Gwynn, *Lord Shrewsbury, Pugin and the Catholic Revival* (Hollis and Carter: London, 1946), P. Attenbury, *Pugin: A Gothic Passion* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1994).

these provisions being offered through the Church. But how far was an attempt made to really bring medievalism into elementary schools?

Gothic architecture plays a part. The formation of priests, from the middle of the first part of the nineteenth-century, took place in Gothic surroundings. One need only visit Oscott College, almost exclusively Puginian in design and decoration, and Ushaw College which is similarly Gothic, to see that the mediaeval college of higher learning was consciously being recreated. Gothic, as the standard of church architecture, was passed down to the priest in this way, and the presence of hundreds of Gothic revival Catholic churches throughout England is evidence of this. The notion that the parish school was to be Gothic in architecture too was also carried on. *The Catholic School* offered advice on the best Gothic style design for a parish's new school in October 1850.²⁵⁹ The elementary school built in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1833²⁶⁰ was described as a Gothic building. Gothic architecture played its part in the construction of Catholic schools, but more probably because that was the style of architecture associated with Church buildings, rather than any particular ideology relating to what went on within their walls.

The teacher training college at Hammersmith, opened 1855, was another fine example of Gothic revival architecture. A detailed drawing and plan of the building, produced in the *Report of the Catholic Poor School Committee 1855*, shows this clearly. There was an overt desire to link Gothic with education in the same way that Gothic was linked with church buildings.

Hints at the mediaeval revival taking place in the classroom do exist. In 1849 the Vicars Apostolic wrote to the Catholic Poor School Committee to

...recommend to the attention of the Committee the importance of devoting some portion of their funds to the promoting of several objects of general importance. The

²⁵⁹ Marmion, p.72.

²⁶⁰ Described in Chapter Six.

cultivation of music, for example, is one which they especially recommend as of great importance.²⁶¹

The music the bishops were specifically referring to was liturgical singing and organ playing, both to enhance the liturgy. In the event, only one music teacher was employed, and he was engaged for Westminster diocese, but in his first annual report he remarked that ‘From these schools alone are taken about twenty boys for the choral service of the Church.’²⁶² Parallels with the Song schools of mediaeval England can easily be brought.

The classrooms also saw public devotion to Our Lady. The Catholic Poor School Committee encouraged, and made available, images of the Madonna to be placed in the classrooms of the schools they supported. They were ‘found eminently useful in exciting the devotional feelings of the children.’²⁶³ A similar reaction was inspired by the distribution of ‘religious prints’ to classrooms; at the instigation of the Vicars Apostolic, following the decrees of Trent ‘the Bishops shall carefully teach...by means of the histories of the mysteries of our redemption, portrayed by paintings, or other representations.’²⁶⁴ The Gothic revival in England can be given some credit, at least, for the promotion of this kind of outward devotion, traditionally shied away from in English Catholicism.

Medievalism and elementary education are certainly superficially linked, through architecture at least, and also through the education of the teachers themselves, especially the clergy who were educated at the direct Catholic successors of the English universities (e.g. Douay). The reality is different, and for good reason. The classrooms of nineteenth-century England were ‘dull, dark, dirty...densely crowded [with] no natural tendency to produce cheerful, courteous, intelligent, attentive scholars.’²⁶⁵ The Gothic ideal, of beautiful churches playing host to dramatic, dignified and heavenly liturgy did not sit well with a classroom of very poor, possibly illiterate, unruly children. This was not because the proponents necessarily shied

²⁶¹ *RCPSC, 1849*, p.14.

²⁶² *RCPSC, 1850*, p.30.

²⁶³ *RCPSC, 1849*, p.14.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.16.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.16.

away from these problems, but because there was little room for Gothic romanticism in the day to day life of the classroom, in spite of the often Gothic surroundings.

To be successful, an education has to be of the present, not the past. It was impossible to allow a modern curriculum to be overshadowed by a romantic ideal that could be more harmful than helpful. Similarly, the business of applying for funding, passing inspections and keeping attendance high did not allow for a higher ideology, other than that of a Christian Catholic education, to enter into the day to day life of the elementary school, where each day was a fight for survival.

Conclusion

The thirty-two years between the Education Acts of 1870 and 1902 saw the Catholic community suffer significant hardship in the efforts to save its schools. The Nonconformists, in the main, happily surrendered their schools to the School Boards in return for a better system of funding and a higher status. Many Anglican schools went the same way, being willing to give up a little in the way of religious instruction for the much greater benefit of funding from the rates. For the Catholic Hierarchy, however, such a solution was simply not an option. Many of the bishops, headed by Bishop Ullathorne, wanted to go it alone, without any assistance from the Government. Many Catholic schools did that, because they did not qualify for grants, or were too afraid of increased Government authority over their schools. Despite this, and the great inequality seen by all Voluntary Schools, the Voluntary School sector's population increased to two million by 1884, the Board Schools educating fewer than one million children.²⁶⁶ Catholic schools maintained the highest pass rate of all schools during the five years following the 1870 Act, and still retained excellent figures following that. A leading educational historian has described the efforts of the Catholic community following the 1870 Act as 'remarkable.'²⁶⁷ The Catholic schools charged the lowest fees of all schools,

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.378-379.

²⁶⁷ Cruickshank, p.52.



they had the greatest proportion of free admissions, and the salaries of teachers were significantly lower than in other schools. Despite all these disadvantages, the schools prevailed under strong and determined leadership, and due to the sacrifices of so many poor Catholics. 1902 gave the Church some of the equality that they had looked towards for many years and finally addressed the major issue of education through Rate Aid. 'The fight after 1902 was only to be for complete equality, not for survival.'²⁶⁸

²⁶⁸ McClelland, p.86.

CHAPTER SIX

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION IN NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE IN THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY

Irish Immigration in the early Nineteenth-century

Despite national trends to the contrary and the 1821-1822 potato crop famine, Irish immigration to the North East was not substantial in the 1820's. In 1827, St Augustine's church was opened in Darlington. At the time it was commented that there were no strangers living in the town. In 1839 the town was described as having very few Irish living there. The report of parliament *Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain*, of 1836 made no mention at all of the North East.²⁶⁹

The major Irish influx to the North East began in the 1830's, increasing with the further onset of famine, in Ireland, in the 1840's. The *Status Animarum* for 1840 estimates thirty-five thousand Catholics in the North East, of whom a quarter were estimated to be Irish. From November 1846 the North East regional press increasingly identified the Irish immigrants as a recognisable and growing minority group.²⁷⁰ By 1850 approximately thirty-one thousand people in the North East were Irish, making up two thirds of the regional Catholic population.²⁷¹ The Irish were primarily attracted to the industries located along both banks of the Tyne, and very large populations of Irish nationals could be found in Newcastle (7,152 in 1851) and Tynemouth (2,269 in 1851) as well as South Shields and Gateshead.²⁷² The North East was initially behind national trends in the size of its Irish immigrant population.

²⁶⁹ L. Gooch, *From Jacobite to Radical – The Catholics of North East England 1688-1850* (University of Durham Ph.D. Thesis, 1998), p.83. Hereafter referred to as Gooch.

²⁷⁰ F. Neal, 'Irish Settlement in the North-East and North-West of England in the mid-Nineteenth Century,' R. Swift and S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in Victorian Britain: The Local Dimension* (Four Courts Press: Dublin, 1999), p.77. Hereafter referred to as Neal.

²⁷¹ Gooch, p.83.

James Worswick and Newcastle-upon-Tyne

James Worswick was born of recusant stock, in Lancaster, in 1771. After a traditional English Catholic education at Douay he was ordained in 1795 and sent, in the same year, to Newcastle. On his appointment to Newcastle he was little more than a chaplain to the prominent Catholic families of the city, most notably the Dunn family, and while there were two Catholic chapels in Newcastle, these were administered under their patronage. By the time of his death in 1843 he had established four new missions on Tyneside, including the future cathedral of the diocese, all with large and handsome churches, many with schools associated with the mission.²⁷³ The character and shape of Catholicism in Newcastle changed dramatically over the forty-eight years he laboured there, becoming a large and visible community, one also noted for its poverty.

While Irish immigration did not take hold of the North East until the middle of the nineteenth-century, it seems there was a need for educational provision as early as 1800 in the city of Newcastle itself. A girls' school (set up in the room underneath the new church of St Andrew) and a boys' school were opened about this time. This is an example of many ad hoc schools set up to supply a local need, rather than part of any organised national effort, which was to come later.

In 1821 there were ninety pupils at the school, showing that the school was supplying a genuine need for Catholic education in the city.²⁷⁴ The *Catholic Directory 1826* gave this description of the schools:

²⁷² Neal, pp.78-79.

²⁷³ There are various accounts of the life and work of James Worswick, see W. V. Smith, *Catholic Tyneside* (Catholic Truth Society: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1930), pp.73-79, hereafter referred to as Smith, and T. Cooke Nicholson, *The Catholic Churches and Chapels of Newcastle-upon-Tyne* (Henry Savage, Bookseller: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1871), pp.20-27. Hereafter referred to as Cooke Nicholson.

²⁷⁴ E. Mackenzie, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Town and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne Including the Borough of Gateshead* (Mackenzie and Dent: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1827), p.459. Hereafter referred to as Mackenzie.

Attached to this Chapel are two charity schools, one for boys and one for girls, at which many hundreds of poor children have received gratuitously a moral and religious education under the immediate superintendence of the Rev. Chaplain.²⁷⁵

These poor children, as has been shown, were probably not Irish. Educating the poor was seen by the Church, and by the wealthier recusant Catholics, as a pastoral obligation. In 1822 Mrs Elizabeth Dunn, a member of the influential Dunn family, bequeathed 129 volumes to St Andrew's church with the intention of setting up a lending library.²⁷⁶ As early as 1800 there was a need for a school for the Catholic poor of Newcastle, even though this school was also noted for educating non-Catholics (see below). If there was a call for education for the poor in the 1820's before the major Irish immigration to the North East, we can perhaps say that many of the problems of poverty that the Irish brought with them already existed in Newcastle and that, in certain circumstances, they merely increased and exasperated already existing difficulties.

By the 1830's the need for educational provision in Newcastle had increased. On 15 June 1833, an advertisement appeared in the *Newcastle Chronicle* asking for applications for tenders for a building contract to construct a new school building for the Catholic population. The tenders were to be submitted to Mr Jas Worswick.²⁷⁷ Later that year a description was written of the new school building, erected behind the existing Chapel:

...a gothic building 78 feet long, 38 feet wide and 28 feet high...the structure cost upward of £1500. It was divided into two large rooms, one above and the other below, the latter being a school for the boys, the former for girls. Each school room is capable of holding 350 children with ease, and are both kept warm by a very ingenious apparatus of conduce to the comfort and convenience of the children has been attended to by the benevolent forethought of their pastors.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ Smith, p.76.

²⁷⁶ Cooke Nicholson, p.25.

²⁷⁷ *Newcastle Chronicle*, no. 3595 (15 June 1833), p.1.

²⁷⁸ Smith, p.77.

The Gothic design of the new building is a sign of the national trend for Gothic Revival architecture in the sphere of elementary school education. In 1835 Fr Worswick, following the 1833 vote in parliament to allow schools to apply to the Government for Grant Aid, made an application to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for such assistance. Unfortunately the outcome of this application is unknown, but a similar application made by a Catholic priest of Sheffield at the same time resulted in his being offered a grant, on the condition that he register as a Dissident school, and remove any signs that might indicate it as a Roman Catholic institution.²⁷⁹ Despite being barred from Grant Aid until 1848, even at this early stage school managers were keen to receive any extra funds available for their schools.

It is clear that, as the century progressed, there was a greater need for educational provision for Catholic poor children throughout the North East. On the 4 June 1836 Bishop John Briggs, the Vicar Apostolic of the North, wrote in a pastoral letter to the faithful:

The pressing wants of a poor and numerous flock were pleading loudly and earnestly, both for some place wherein they might meet to worship their Maker, and also for the means of giving a religious education to their children.²⁸⁰

If it is true that Irish immigrants did not outnumber native English Catholics in the North East until 1850/51,²⁸¹ it must also be true that this trend towards a large Irish population began earlier in the city of Newcastle itself. The inspection of St Andrew's school in 1849, quoted below, documents a large proportion of Irish children, and coupled with this a very large turnover of children, suggesting a high proportion of travelling families. Many of the immigrant Irish were unable to speak in English. One priest, Ralph Platt of Stella (1847-1857), learnt Gaelic so he could overcome this difficulty. Another, at St Andrew's in Newcastle in 1851, offered confessions in Gaelic.²⁸²

²⁷⁹ D. G. Paz, *The Politics of Working Class Education in Britain, 1830-50* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1980), pp.27-28.

²⁸⁰ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1823-1849', vol. 1 Slater Collection, RCD 6/26.

²⁸¹ Gooch, p.83.

²⁸² M. Morris and L. Gooch, *Down Your Aisles* (Northern Cross: Hartlepool, 2000), p.14. Hereafter referred to as Morris Gooch.

In 1845 there were estimated to be 35,100 Catholic children without a Catholic education in England, 1,418 of them in the northern district.²⁸³ This is almost certainly a gross underestimation when, at the census of 1841, 419,256 men and women of Irish birth were recorded as living in the British Isles.²⁸⁴ With these statistics in mind, and on the advent of Catholics being eligible to receive government grants from the Committee of Council for Education, Bishop Mostyn, the Vicar Apostolic, wrote to every mission in the Vicariate asking for details of its mission school: 'It is of great importance to have full information on these points, in order to secure our legitimate share of the Government Grant for the encouragement of education.'²⁸⁵ Following the foundation of the Catholic Poor School Committee in 1848, this was an example of the national effort to secure as much legitimate Grant Aid as possible.

St Andrew's school in Newcastle wasted no time in taking up the instruction of the bishop and was the first school in the Northern Vicariate to receive inspection, only a year after this letter was issued. The inspection report gives a detailed insight into the composition of the school, its success and its relationship with the larger Newcastle Catholic community.

St Andrew's School Inspection 1849

The two schools at St Andrew's church, the school for boys and the school for girls, made application for funding in 1848. As a result of this, St Andrew's Schools were inspected on the 26 February 1849.

T. W. M. Marshall inspected the schools and made a detailed report for the Committee of Council which was published in 1850. This report gives us quite a clear picture of how the school operated, how it saw its function and how much it was needed as a service to the Catholic children of Newcastle.

²⁸³ HNDA, 'Pastoral letters 1823-1849', vol. 1 Slater Collection, RCD 6/26, Pastoral Letter, Third Sunday of Advent 1845, Bp. Francis Mostyn.

²⁸⁴ McClelland, p.3.

It is enough to say that more than 1100 children have passed through these schools in the course of a single year, to indicate the nature of the difficulty which the teachers have to overcome. Such a torrent is apt to leave behind it unwelcome tokens of its passage.²⁸⁶

Several things become clear from this first observation by the inspector. Firstly, the school was a service well used. The number of children attending the schools was high. Parents were keen for their children to receive some kind of formal education. Such a large turnover of students might suggest that there was, even then, a pressing need for greater provisions for education, both of Catholics and of non-Catholics, within the city of Newcastle, and beyond. This observation also suggests that there was a high turn over of population, perhaps labourers and again not necessarily Catholics, coming in and out of Newcastle, who were keen for their children to attend some formal instruction. This is borne out by the next comment made in the inspector's report:

Success would appear, indeed, to be almost impossible where, from the constant migration of the parents, who are nearly all Irish labourers, the attendance is so irregular and the composition of the school so fluctuating.²⁸⁷

In the Table of General Observations, the inspector goes on to note that:

I have noticed elsewhere the extraordinary fact that, in the two schools, more than 1600 children have been admitted during the last 12 months, whilst about 1100 have left within the same period. It is difficult to contend successfully with such an element of disorder. Many of the children who thus pass through the school are Irish, quite unable to read, and of course disturb the order and management of the school.²⁸⁸

That the majority of children were of Irish nationality suggests they were mostly Catholic. The school did, however, accept non-Catholic children, as seen in *The Proceedings and*

²⁸⁵ HNDA, 'Pastoral letters 1823-1849', vol. 1 Slater Collection, RCD 6/26. Letter from Bp. Mostyn to all parishes, 4 April 1848.

²⁸⁶ Minutes of the Committee of Council for Education, 1848-49-50, p.525. Hereafter referred to as Minutes CCE 1848-49-50.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.525.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p.535.

Reports of the Town and Borough of Newcastle for 1836. They record a formal application made by the Revv. J. Worswick and Wm. Riddell on behalf of the school for The Corporation to continue to make its annual subscription of ten guineas to the school fund. The minutes of the meeting which discussed the application record that Alderman Bell wished to raise the subscription to twenty guineas a year and that Alderman Fife agreed with this proposal since the school was not confined to Catholic children,²⁸⁹ and was well used, valued and much needed in the city. The proposal was passed on to the finance committee whose proceedings are not preserved in the records. This indicates a degree of benevolence towards Catholics in Newcastle. The city is notable for its tolerant attitude towards Catholics in contrast to the other major British cities of Liverpool and Manchester, as has been argued recently by Caroline Scott.²⁹⁰

While this school openly accepted non-Catholic children there were other charitable schools in the town affiliated to the Church of England parishes, which would have been a more obvious location for the children of Church of England or Nonconformist parents.²⁹¹

This comment also gives us an indication of the nature of the population in Newcastle. Large sections of the population, particularly immigrant labourers, would have been travelling around the various towns and cities in search of work. This could make the worshipping Catholic population fluctuate considerably throughout the year, affecting Mass congregation numbers, the regular collections for the Church, as well as school attendance numbers as demonstrated above. Potentially this could lead to a school which was ineffective. Inspections such as these were designed to highlight such difficulties.

Yet there are many signs, especially in the girls' school, which is very carefully organized and subdivided, and conducted by a remarkable zealous and efficient teacher, of active and steady progress. The mistress employs "monitors of order,"

²⁸⁹ *The Proceedings and Reports of the Town Council of the Borough of Newcastle-upon-Tyne for 1836, first year after the passing of the Municipal Reform Act* (Emerson Charley: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1836), Thursday 11 February 1836.

²⁹⁰ C. L. Scott, *A Comparative Re-Examination of Anglo-Irish Relations in Nineteenth Century Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle-upon-Tyne* (University of Durham Ph.D. Thesis, 1998).

²⁹¹ A school had been established some years before at St Andrew's Anglican parish in Newcastle.

who are extremely diligent and well trained, with great advantage; the classes are formed with method and quickness, and the whole school, by means of vigilant and unceasing supervision, is kept constantly at work. Few schools exhibit a more striking proof of what may be accomplished by the energy and devotion of one person.²⁹²

This inspector appears genuinely impressed by the conditions and the level of teaching at the school, in particular the girls' school. The Monitorial System seems to be in action here, hinted at in 'monitors of order,' although this system was being replaced, by this time, by the use of pupil-teachers. The success of this school, specifically the girls' schools, is credited to the mistress of the girls. In the table of general observations accompanying this report, Mr Marshall commented that the Mistress was 'a person of great merit and unwearied zeal.'²⁹³ She is held up as a particular example of someone who is able to excel at her job under very difficult circumstances to the extent that the inspector was duly impressed. Praise of the mistress of the girl's school was picked up on by the school managers following this report:

We cannot pass by without noticing the unwearied exertions of Miss Hodgson, the zealous Mistress of the Girls' School; suffice to say, that she had, many years ago, entered her heart and soul into the good works; she recoils not from her laborious and herculean task, and is ever at her post.²⁹⁴

The level and quality of instruction, however, were impaired. Instruction is 'Rather limited in amount, mainly in consequence of the constant fluctuation of attendance, and the low age of the great majority of the children.'²⁹⁵

Despite the obvious problems associated with a very high turnover, the girls' school mistress succeeded in carrying out her duties well, and thus impressed the inspectors. Little is said of the boys' school, and it can be surmised from what is not said that this department was suffering due to the high turn over of boy pupils at the school. At the end of his report Mr

²⁹² Minutes CCE 1848-49-50, p.525.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.535.

²⁹⁴ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1857-1858', RCD 1/14, *Statement of the Receipts and Expenditure for the Catholic Schools, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, From October 1st, 1848, to January 1st, 1850.*

²⁹⁵ Minutes CCE, 1848-49-50, p.535.

Marshall comments that ‘since my visit, two trained masters have been provided for the boys’ school.’²⁹⁶

The limited resources available to the school and the resultant lowering of standards are also highlighted in the report: ‘The children find their own books, which does not tend to procure a very copious supply.’²⁹⁷ It was for reasons such as this that St Andrew’s Schools, and hundreds like it, were desperate to receive Government funding to assist them in such facilities as the purchase of text books to allow for a higher standard of education.

In spite of these criticisms, however, the school was ‘exceptional, and the results which have been obtained, in the face of many difficulties, are very honourable to the managers.’²⁹⁸

This report also gives a very interesting insight into the way in which this school was used to supply basic needs for the poor, in this case the poor children who attended the school:

60 of the girls are fed daily by subscriptions of members of the congregation, and a very large quantity of clothing is given. All the children receive their breakfast on Sunday; this is found necessary, as they would often be unable to obtain any from their parents, and so would be absent from school, or attending fasting, which is a very common case during the week. I will again express my admiration at the zeal, patience and ability with which the mistress struggles against all her difficulties and discouragements.²⁹⁹

This is a good example of a particular Catholic community using the institution of the parish school to provide a service to the poor children of the city, especially the poor Catholic children. The members of the congregation, most of whom would have been very poor, but some of whom would have been much better off, subscribed to feed the girls of the school daily, and also made provision for them to be properly clothed. All the children were also fed on a Sunday morning, again through the generosity of the congregation. These services, as is noted by the inspector, not only kept the children at the school but also made the school more

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.525.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.525.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.525.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.535.

attractive to their parents who would not have to feed and clothe their children at those times. This is a good example of a school being used for the wider purposes of attending to the basic needs of the poorest people, part of a national effort to use schools as a centre for the social work of the Church. This concern for the poor was reflected in the decrees of the first synod of Westminster in 1852 and in the tireless work of many Catholic priests and lay people, shown no less in Newcastle itself. In November 1847 the Vicar Apostolic of the Northern Vicariate, William Riddell, who was based in Newcastle, died of typhoid after tending to the sick of the city in their own homes during a fierce epidemic.

St Andrew's School Inspection 1850

T. W. M. Marshall visited St Andrew's Schools one year later. His report on this second inspection was not as thorough, but he made comments on important improvements in the school, especially in the boys' department, on which he remarked:

The change of teachers which was made last year in this important school has been attended to with the best results. The discipline, organisation and general tone of the school are strikingly improved, while the range of instruction is being gradually extended, and more effective methods introduced.³⁰⁰

It can be presumed that a change of staff was necessary for the improvement of the boys' school, and that was suggested during the inspection of the previous year. Certainly, the boys' school did not receive such a favourable report as the girls' school, possibly due to the teaching staff employed. The change of staff was approved of by the inspector. That a change of staff was necessary, and was acted on, shows a genuine concern for the quality of education given to the pupils of the school by its managers. According to a statement of receipts and expenditure relating to the schools published in 1850, the change of staff at the boys' school was due to the arrival of religious from the Institute of the Presentation at Cork.

³⁰⁰ Minutes CCE, 1851-52, p.645.

...in the following month, two Religious undertook the duties of our Boy's School; under their guidance and instructions the children rapidly improved, and increased in number, whilst a better class of boys entered the School, and amongst these children these excellent men toil and labour for seven hours in the day with unabated zeal and persevering energy.³⁰¹

£5 towards their travelling expenses and a further £30 to go to the Mother House in Cork was obviously regarded as well worth the use of valuable educational funds in return for the expertise of these teachers.³⁰²

The school, in discipline and organisation, had strikingly improved. This could also be attributed to a change of staffing. A dramatic improvement from the previous year, where the boys' school was described as needing 'new life infused into the institution.'³⁰³ It is described above as an 'important school,' reflecting its essential position in the Catholic life of the city. To remain important and effective it must continue to provide a good standard of education. Despite one year of funding from the Committee of Council, both schools were still in need of more and better quality apparatus, text books, etc:

Rather insufficient; grammar and historical books wanted...It is to be regretted also that the maps are not of the largest size, which renders it difficult for the children to comprehend the relative position of distant places; and generally a more ample supply of books, especially for the use of the pupil-teachers, and of apparatus is still to be desired... [in the girls' school books and apparatus were] Sufficient except such books as are wanted for the use of the pupil-teachers.³⁰⁴

The school was considered both good and important in spite of these deficiencies. It had also begun employing the use of pupil-teachers. These were older pupils being trained as teachers assisting the main school master or mistress and learning the basics of curriculum, method

³⁰¹ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1857-1858', RCD 1/14, *Statement of the Receipts and Expenditure for the Catholic Schools, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, From October 1st, 1848, to January 1st, 1850.*

³⁰² HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1857-1858', RCD 1/14, *Statement of the Receipts and Expenditure for the Catholic Schools, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, From October 1st, 1848, to January 1st, 1850.* Religious orders were used extensively throughout the country, as shown in Chapter Three.

³⁰³ Minutes CCE, 1848-49-50, p.525.

etc. The school received further funding for the number of pupil-teachers that it had on its staff, suggesting that this school was now considered to be of appropriate standing to be an instructing school for teachers.

In the space of one year, much had improved at the school. The inspector was satisfied that the school was taking his serious advice for improvement: ‘Suggestions were made which will be immediately acted upon’³⁰⁵ although there was still room for improvement in the method of teaching: ‘The use of the black-board, especially in spelling and geography, is too much neglected... [method is] Mixed and capable of improvement in most of the branches of instruction.’³⁰⁶ The inspector was happy to describe the ‘general tone of the school’ as ‘strikingly improved, while the range of instruction is being gradually extended, and more effective methods introduced.’³⁰⁷ As an example of a Catholic school in the middle of the nineteenth-century, this was very encouraging to the hierarchy, newly established. They were perhaps not so unrealistic in their desire for a network of Catholic schools across the country if Newcastle is a typical example of a Catholic school, one which showed a genuine desire to educate the faithful, and to be as beneficial a school as the circumstances allowed. Certainly, the funding received from the Government simply could not be done without such schools, and were compelled as best they could to carry out the instructions of their inspectors.

The improvement in Catholic education is confirmed in T. W. M. Marshall’s *General Report on the Roman Catholic Schools* inspected throughout Great Britain in 1850-1851. In it he states:

...that the past year has been, with partial exceptions, one of conspicuous and decisive progress in the extension and improvement of elementary education for the Roman Catholic poor of this empire... This opinion would be amply justified by the

³⁰⁴ Minutes CCE, 1851-52, p.645.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.645.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.645.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p.645. These comments refer variously to either the boys’ or girls’ department of the school, but for the purposes of measuring the progress and activities of the school as a whole it is acceptable to see these as general comments rather than specific to each department.

simplest comparison of the actual state of the great majority of those schools with their condition 3 years ago.³⁰⁸

He goes on to highlight examples of schools that have undergone great transformations due to funding directly from the Privy Council Committee for Education. Catholic schools in Edinburgh, Nottingham and Liverpool are identified for particular praise. That St Andrew's in Newcastle is not singled out in that way, despite the report's affirmation of significant improvement can perhaps allow us to assume that such improvements in the Catholic body of education were far from uncommon following the reception of Grant Aid, an assumption reinforced by this report. This inspector claims to have visited more than three hundred schools, and bases his conclusions on these inspections. From this it is clear that the improvement in standards at St Andrew's Schools in Newcastle were part of a much greater trend seen in Catholic schools receiving Grant Aid. This trend gave greater impetus to the intentions of the bishops of England and Wales about education, possibly influencing their statements on education made at the first Synod of Westminster, bringing the education of the poor to the forefront as a major issue for the coming years.

The attitude of the Catholic teacher is set out clearly by Mr Marshall in his report:

Everywhere...the real scope of *education*, as distinct from mere *instruction*, appears to be kept in view; and though it forms not part of my official duty to investigate the character of the *moral* and *religious* teaching in these schools, it would be necessary to pass through them with closed eyes and ears if I could overlook the admirable results which, in a great number of cases, have been already developed.³⁰⁹

The school at St Andrew's in Newcastle continued to grow and to receive grants in subsequent years. In 1857 there were five pupil-teachers in the Boys' school and eight pupil-teachers in the Girls' school.³¹⁰

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.613.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p.614.

³¹⁰ Minutes CCE, 1856-57, p.908.

In 1859 the school library at St Andrew's was advertised as being open regularly every Thursday and Sunday. This was the same library established in 1822 and was still serving the community in 1871.³¹¹

By 1860 a night school had been established at St Andrew's Schools, possibly for the education of adults, or perhaps more probably for the education of slightly older children who were compelled to work during the day, perhaps former day pupils of the schools. The school was claiming £90.0.0 a year from the Government for salaries to go towards teachers for the night schools.³¹²

In 1861 the inspector, Henry J Lynch, made a visit to Catholic schools in Northumberland. In his report he singled out the boys' department of St Andrew's for particular praise as 'first class' among 26 other such schools.³¹³ Changes in staff and the implementation of recommendations made by the inspectors about this department in the school had shown genuine improvement. This is an example of longer term progress achieved with the help of direct Government funding.

In 1868 the Infants' and Girls' schools were reported as having been 'considerably enlarged and improved' due to further Government funding and fund raising.³¹⁴ At the diocesan visitation of the parish in 1868, there were recorded 338 pupils in the boys' school, 535 pupils in the girls' school, 90 in the male night school and 320 in the female night school, making a total of 1,846 people receiving an education at St Andrew's Schools. The average attendance, however, was considerably lower: 200 in the boys' school, 228 in the girls' school, 63 in the male night school and 154 in the female night school making a total of 815. It is interesting to note that only five or six parents of children at the school were known to be regularly in the congregation.³¹⁵

³¹¹ *The Catholic Directory 1859* (Burns and Lambert, London, 1859), pp.263-264.

³¹² Minutes CCE, 1860-61, p.672.

³¹³ Minutes CCE, 1861-62, p.189.

³¹⁴ Minutes CCE, 1868-69, p.309.

Bishop Hogarth and the pastoral care of the Poor

At the 1851 Religious Worship Census, carried out nationally to register the number of regular worshippers in the country and to ascertain their denomination, Rev. Joseph Cullen of St Andrew's church remarked:

There are 10,000 Roman Catholics in Newcastle, 6,000 of whom are served by one Roman Catholic priest attached to this chapel. About 1,000 labourers having families in Ireland attend this chapel.³¹⁶

The large number of poor in the diocese, especially concentrated on cities such as Newcastle, were of particular concern to Bishop William Hogarth, the new Bishop of Hexham. On the announcement of Government grants for Catholic schools in 1848 he issued a Pastoral Letter to the Northern Vicariate in which he laid down his strong belief that it was not merely charitable to contribute to the education of the poor, but an intrinsic part of their pastoral and spiritual care; part of the social work of the Church:

It is then, the duty of all Catholics, who value the great blessings of Education...to make every effort to meet the benevolent intentions of Government, now, for the first time, offering to assist in the education of the Catholic Poor. Natural compassion for our Brethren urges us, a deep conviction of the necessity of Education loudly calls upon us, and Religion commands us to contribute liberally to the Christian Education of our Poor.³¹⁷

Firstly, Bishop Hogarth saw the education of the poor as a vital part of the salvation of a large Catholic flock open to the temptations and vices of sin:

³¹⁵ HNDA, Box 'St Andrew's, Newcastle', returns for 1868 visitation.

³¹⁶ Gooch, p.80.

³¹⁷ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1823-1849', vol. 1 Slater Collection, RCD 6/26, Pastoral Letter, 18 June 1848.

...we shudder when we think of it, that every year thousands of Catholic children are trained up in error, or sunk in the depths of vice and immorality, because their Parents or their pastors are unable to procure for them the blessing of a religious education.³¹⁸

Secondly he saw education of the poor, or rather the lack of it, as being coupled with many other evident problems of the day: the poor being deprived of the sacraments, exhausted and ill clergy, and the very present dangers of cholera.³¹⁹

Thirdly, he saw education of the poor as a responsibility peculiar to himself, as pastor of the flock. He was to have a personal say in the construction of all new poor schools.³²⁰ He himself had constructed a school for 142 pupils at Darlington in 1842, the mission over which he presided both before and after he was made a bishop.³²¹

Further, he saw education as part of a pastoral programme that included visiting the sick and those living in extreme poverty, evangelising to those who had lapsed from the faith and petitioning the authorities to improve the living conditions of the poorest in his care. A report in 1850 described how:

The priest visits [the Irish families] assiduously, keeps alive religious feeling, and inspires them with veneration and hope.³²²

Further, in 1860, a priest at St Andrew's in Newcastle commented that it was important to:

...visit, encourage, or reprimand...enquiring what is to become of the children, restoring peace in families and, as it were, intervening at every moment.³²³

In 1854 it was estimated that, out of a total Catholic population of 56,928 (adults and children), 3,250 children were being educated at Catholic schools. Lamenting the lack of generosity towards the Catholic Poor School Committee (a sum of £145 being collected from an adult population of 40,600 Catholics) Hogarth declared that the people should

³¹⁸ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1849-1850', RCD 1/11, Pastoral Letter, 7 February 1849.

³¹⁹ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1849-1850', RCD 1/11, Pastoral Letter, 24 September 1849.

³²⁰ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1849-1850', RCD 1/11, Pastoral Letter, Feast of St Edmund 1849.

³²¹ S. Gilley 'The Legacy of William Hogarth, 1786-1866', *Recusant History*, vol. 25 (2000), p.251. Hereafter referred to as Gilley, Hogarth.

³²² Morris Gooch, p.14.

³²³ *Ibid.*, p.14.

...ask ourselves if, when we shall stand in the presence of our future Judge, we can say in all sincerity, that we have aided this charity to the full extent of our means, for, by our own acts, and not by the acts of others, shall we be judged.³²⁴

Education was not merely a case of salvation for those being educated, but those who contributed towards that education, financially, would receive their reward in the hereafter. Bishop Hogarth's pleas for money, most often for the needs of the poor of his diocese, came with requests for self denial and abstinence, especially at Lent. Alms giving for the poor, such as that described above, was for him both an act of charity and one of penance, a genuinely spiritual act to bring one into a closer communion with The Lord. As he wrote in one Pastoral Letter:

...if instructing the ignorant be justly accounted one of the spiritual works of mercy to which the reward of eternal life is promised...on what ground do we rest our hopes of salvation.³²⁵

These sentiments expressed the desire under which all the bishops laboured, education being only a part of their efforts to secure their flock for heaven.

The Sisters of Mercy

In 1843 Bishop Mostyn invited the Sisters of Mercy to set up a religious house in Sunderland.³²⁶ They were brought there with the assistance of Fr P. Kearney, residing at Sunderland, who also played an important part in bringing the Institute of the Presentation to work at St Andrew's school in Newcastle. Both came from Cork diocese³²⁷. The use of the Sisters of Mercy became a theme of elementary education during William Hogarth's episcopate. By the time of Hogarth's death in 1866 there were seven schools run by them in

³²⁴ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1855-1856', RCD 1/13, Pastoral Letter 13 June 1854.

³²⁵ HNDA, 'Pastoral Letters 1855-1856', RCD 1/13, Pastoral Letter 13 June 1854.

³²⁶ Mother Austin Carroll, *Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy*, 4 vols. (Catholic Publication Society: New York, 1881-1882), vol. 2, p.454. Hereafter referred to as *Leaves*.

the diocese. Their spread throughout the North East has been described as ‘extraordinary.’³²⁸ The community established at Sunderland opened daughter houses in Hexham (1858), Durham (1860), Bishop Hogarth’s own mission at Darlington (1862), Tow Law (1870) and Bishop Auckland (1875).³²⁹ In May 1855 Bishop Hogarth invited Mercy Nuns from a convent in Liverpool to open a school at his cathedral in Newcastle, that would complement the schools based at St Andrew’s in the city. In 1859 he opened the school, run by the Mercy Nuns, which taught the girls of the parish, while a school run by laymen opened at the same time for the boys of the parish.³³⁰ In 1860 the Newcastle house opened a daughter house in North Shields.³³¹ Over forty years after founding their first school in the diocese, they were still beginning new educational efforts in another part of it when they opened a house in Newcastle in 1886 to train poor girls for domestic service.³³²

St Mary’s Cathedral Schools’ Inspection 1860-61

In 1860 the school was inspected for Government funding from the Privy Council Committee. The report of this inspection gives another interesting insight into the life of a Catholic school in an English city, and its relationship with the Catholic community that it served, some ten years after the first inspection of St Andrew’s Schools in 1849.

St Mary’s school first received Government grants in 1860/1861, following an inspection the previous year. The school received small grants initially: £6.8.3 for apparatus, books, maps,

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.455 and HNDA, ‘Pastoral Letters 1857-1858, RCD 1/14, *Statement of the Receipts and Expenditure for the Catholic Schools, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, From October 1st, 1848, to January 1st, 1850.*

³²⁸ Gilley, Hogarth, p.258.

³²⁹ Morris Gooch, p.24.

³³⁰ St Mary’s Cathedral Parish Notice Books, January 1854 and 1859. Parish notice books were used to record important announcements to be made to the congregation of that church, usually after or before the service began. These often hold valuable information regarding the details of day to day life in a parish. The notice books at St Mary’s Cathedral sometimes contain more than one year in a volume and the pages are not numbered. In reference to them I have given the years covered by the volume in which the information has been written and, where possible, the date on which the information was logged in the notice book. An excellent facsimile of important notices given in the St Mary’s Cathedral notice books can be found in Vincent Bartley’s ‘St Mary’s Cathedral, a History and Guide’.

³³¹ Morris Gooch, p.24.

etc; £76.1.8 for certified teachers and retiring pensions; £217.15.0 for pupil-teachers, and gratuities to Masters and Mistresses, £4.0.0 for grants of teachers for instruction in drawing; and £55.16.1 for capitation grants. Compared with the grants received by St Andrew's Schools that year³³³ they were quite modest, again suggesting that this was the result of their first grant application.

It was still common practice for parents to pay a weekly fee for their children to attend the parish school. This was a condition of funding through the Privy Council Committee. Parents were required to pay 2d per week for children in first year Infants, and 1d per week for other infant classes. Boys cost between 2d and 6d per week and girls 4d per week.³³⁴ This also shows that an infant as well as a junior school existed at this time at St Mary's.

In 1861 a report made by Henry J Lynch named all the departments, Infants, Girls' and Boys' of St Mary's School, as being among the twenty-seven first-class schools that he had visited (in Durham, Northumberland, Warwick and York).³³⁵

In 1867 a Night School was established at St Mary's for both men and women. This school did not initially receive funding from the Government.³³⁶

Other Catholic Schools Established in Newcastle

Throughout the middle and latter part of the nineteenth-century attempts were made, mostly successful, to establish further schools throughout the city and its surrounding area. These were often founded with the creation of a new mission which in turn had been carved out of one of the existing parishes, usually of St Andrew's church or St Mary's Cathedral.

³³² Morris Gooch, p.19. The role of the Mercy Nuns in Hexham and Newcastle is representative of their national efforts in education which were considerable. They are discussed in Chapter Three.

³³³ The figures for grants made to St Andrew's School 1860-61 are as follows: £17.9.2 ½ for apparatus, books, maps and diagrams; £335.16.8 for certified teachers and for retiring pensions; £2,107.5.0 for Pupil-teachers and gratuities to Masters and Mistresses; £90.0.0 for teachers of Night Schools; \$4.0.0 for teachers for instruction in Drawing (the same amount as St Mary's School); £187.2.0 in Capitation grants and £44.15.0 for Grants to Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Statistics taken from Minutes CCE, 1860-61, p.672.

³³⁴ St Mary's Cathedral Parish Notice Books, vol. 1863-1866.

³³⁵ Minutes CCE 1861-62, p.189.

³³⁶ St Mary's Cathedral Parish Notice Books, 18 August 1867.

In 1854 the Rev Joseph A. Browne petitioned the Newcastle Town Council to sell him a strip of land near Walker, in the east of the city, on which to build a Catholic chapel and school.³³⁷ He stated that over one thousand Catholics lived in and around Walker, mostly of the labouring classes; and that they were part of St Andrew's congregation, yet desperately in need of their own facilities. In 1868, however, it was reported: 'A boys' and girls' school, both under trained teachers, have been opened at Walker.'³³⁸ This school, some fourteen years after Browne's petition to the town council, was presumably the successor to this earlier school.

Land was purchased by St Mary's Cathedral in 1861 at Coxlodge, north of the city, for the purposes of establishing a chapel and school there. In 1865 a school-chapel, of the sort described in the Bishops' Letter of the First Synod of Westminster, was opened. It had three class rooms and an infants room and was capable of holding one hundred and eight pupils and one hundred infants.³³⁹ The building was 60ft long and 24ft wide. Each area of the interior of the school could be screened off to form a separate classroom, one area being reserved as the chapel for Mass, or for whole school assemblies.³⁴⁰

In H. J. Lynch's report of 1868, it was reported that 'a new building at Coxelodge is now occupied by a flourishing middle school.'³⁴¹ The school was able to secure Government funding sometime in the three years after its opening in 1865. The mission was separated from the cathedral parish in 1874.³⁴²

In 1867 a school was opened at 10 Armstrong Road, off Scotswood Road in the west of the city. The school catered for three hundred children and was in St Mary's Cathedral parish.³⁴³

In 1868, however, this part of the parish was created into a new mission dedicated to St Michael. This school may have been the fore runner to the parish school which was opened

³³⁷ *The Proceedings and Reports of the Town Council of the Borough of Newcastle-upon-Tyne for 1854* (Emerson Charley: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1854), 20 September 1854, p.224.

³³⁸ Minutes CCE 1868-69, p.309.

³³⁹ St Mary's Cathedral Parish Notice Books, vol. 1863-1866.

³⁴⁰ F. McCombie, M. Cullen, *A Parish in its Time, a History of St Charles Parish, Gosforth, 1896-1996* (St Charles Parish: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1996), p.106. Hereafter referred to as McCombie Cullen.

³⁴¹ Minutes CCE 1868-69, p.309.

³⁴² St Mary's Cathedral Parish Notice Books, 26 June 1874.

³⁴³ St Mary's Cathedral Parish Notice Books, 26 May 1867.

on the 13 January 1873.³⁴⁴ Newcastle is an example of the national picture and trends in Catholic education before 1870. New schools were opening throughout the country on the back of the Grant Aid and, as Newcastle demonstrates, they were often successful, using the funding to good effect.

Catholic Provision for Poor Law School Children

Leakage of Catholic children from the faith due to their Protestant education was a perennial problem for English Catholic education, and fear for their souls was a major force behind the Church's effort towards education in the faith.

In Newcastle, the welfare of Catholics at the Workhouse, especially Catholic orphans, was taken seriously. Instructions for any person responsible for a Catholic child at the Workhouse were issued by the diocese in the 1860's. The instruction, aimed primarily at lay people, assured that:

The clergy will feel grateful for every assistance they receive to further this important object; and they will cheerfully procure the necessary Registers without expense to anyone.³⁴⁵

As with the provision for elementary education seen particularly under the episcopate of Bishop Hogarth, the desire to help Catholic children in the Workhouse came from a genuine Pastoral and Spiritual concern. This desire was Pastoral in its desire to see the position in life of these Catholic children improved, and it was spiritual in its attempt to preserve their Catholicism through the religious instruction they received and through regular contact with a priest.

By 1867 there were an estimated 300 Catholic children in Workhouses across the diocese. In October of that year a meeting was called in Newcastle to address the problem and to begin a mechanism for establishing a certified Poor Law School for Catholics in the diocese:

³⁴⁴ St Mary's Cathedral Parish Notice Books, 12 January 1867.

...by means of it we may be enabled to take our Catholic poor children from the different Protestant Workhouses in which they are now placed, to the imminent risk of losing their faith, and to send them to a Poor Law School of our own where they will not only be well instructed in their holy religion, but also be afforded every opportunity of practising it.³⁴⁶

Previous attempts to help the Catholic orphans of Newcastle had been made in earlier years; a bequest of £1,100 was made to the orphans of St Mary's Cathedral parish in 1865 and that same year a three day bazaar was held in aid of the St Mary's Cathedral Orphan fund which raised over £1,200.³⁴⁷ The effort of 1867, however, was a serious attempt to establish a place where the poorest and most disadvantaged Catholic children could receive a worthy Catholic education. In October 1867 Mr Salvin of Burnhall, of the Durham recusant family, offered to sell a house and land at Tudhoe in County Durham for use as the new school. His offer was accepted at a cost of £1,000. A further £1,500 was needed to equip the building properly, so a fund raising effort began to raise £2,500.³⁴⁸ Over £240 had been collected by September 1868.³⁴⁹

To further the efforts of the committee, a strongly worded letter was issued. It is not clear if this letter was intended for a limited audience, such as the clergy and Catholic gentry of the diocese, or for general consumption, but it places the argument and need for a Catholic Poor Law School very clearly. The letter left no doubt that the motives of the committee are for a genuine and heartfelt concern for the Catholic children being educated at the Workhouse:

...whatever rights or concessions may be accorded by the Legislature, whatever amount of freedom may be extended by the most indulgent Board of Guardians to these little ones in the practice of their Religion, their Faith is, to use the mildest term, exposed to danger. In many cases, the Guardians profess it to be their duty to bring up

³⁴⁵ Archive of St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle, *Relatives, Sponsors, and Friends of Poor Catholic Children, and Catholics generally, are requested to take notice of the following Instructions.*

³⁴⁶ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, Circular Letter, 5 October 1867.

³⁴⁷ Archive of St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle, File of Miscellaneous Documents.

³⁴⁸ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, Circular Letter, 30 April 1868.

³⁴⁹ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, Circular Letter, September 1868.

the Catholic Children, more especially Orphans, placed by misfortune or poverty under their Guardianship, in the Established Religion...³⁵⁰

It seems obvious from this explanation of motives, that the sentiments expressed by Rev John Morris to Cardinal Wiseman in 1860 had exasperated in the following years, and were not confined to the south of England. There is obvious tension with the Poor Law Guardians and a belief, on the part of the Catholic community, that there was active discrimination taking place in the Workhouses.

This letter issued by the committee for the new school goes on to cite three testimonies of Catholic experience of the Workhouse from catechists or priests visiting Catholic children there. The first has no complaint about the local Workhouse, other than to say that the benevolent regime there could easily turn against the Church under different management. The second is gravely concerned about the state of Catholic children at the Workhouse, although the catechist has little experience of it. The third is very concerned, as a Catholic religious instructor, at the Workhouse, that children are being lost hand over fist to the Protestant Churches:

Every child who has entered that Workhouse has either lost its faith, or had it diminished to such an extent, that you can scarce longer call it Catholic. A girl, whose mother I attended on her death bed, and all of whose relations were Catholic, declared (and that only two months after her entrance) that she would not be a Romanist any longer. When asked the reason her answer was, that the Mistress had given her a white bonnet and blue ribbons to go to the Methodist Chapel.

He goes on to tell a similar story about the boys at the Workhouse, concluding:

If any Gentleman knew what has been the practical result of the Poor Law system, he would readily admit that it is a hopeless case... We shall one day find these very Children

³⁵⁰ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, *Catholic Certified Poor Law School for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle*, 23 December 1868.

amongst our bitterest enemies. For God's sake let something be done to remove them from these places or perdition, called Workhouses.³⁵¹

The Dickensian image of the impoverished Workhouse filled with vulnerable children and corrupt Guardians is easily visible here. Accurate or not, passions ran high in all aspects of religious education, but none more so when the very souls of the young were under threat. We have no reason to disbelieve that many in the Workhouses were anti-Catholic and were successful in turning children away from the faith of their baptism; certainly nationally the Catholic Church did not trust the Poor Law Schools and encouraged dioceses to set up their own. By December 1868 £527.1.0 had been received towards the fund and a further £236.11.0 had been promised.³⁵²

The institution was referred to as a 'Catholic Home' and, in a letter to the clergy on March 1870 from Bishop Chadwick, extolled the virtues of a Catholic upbringing. The sort of upbringing received in a loving Catholic home would be no different than that received at the new Catholic Poor Law School. It was the genuine desire of those promoting the school that this was to be a place in which orphaned and disadvantaged Catholic children would reap all the benefits of a Catholic upbringing.³⁵³ By 1870 £1,929.12.0 had been received for the Catholic Poor Law School and work was ready to begin, in a view to accepting their first children in August 1870.³⁵⁴

In 1878 the school was taken over by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary whose apostolic charism was similar to that of the Mercy Nuns.³⁵⁵

Cardinal Manning's bitter experience of the Poor Law Schools, or workhouses, described in chapter four are echoed here in Hexham and Newcastle. While there is no direct evidence to suggest that Manning directly influenced Chadwick's decision to establish a Poor Law School

³⁵¹ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, *Catholic Certified Poor Law School for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle*, 23 December 1868.

³⁵² HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, *Catholic Certified Poor Law School for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle*, 23 December 1868.

³⁵³ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, Circular Letter, 17 March 1870.

³⁵⁴ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, *The Catholic Home or Certified Poor-Law School at Tudhoe, Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle*, 4 March 1870.

³⁵⁵ Morris Gooch, p.19.

in 1867, the timing, and Chadwick's obvious use of the new Act of 1866 for the purpose of building a Catholic Poor Law School, would suggest that he was following his example and it seems unlikely that Manning would not have had some influence on it. Chadwick could not have failed to know that Manning was establishing many new such schools at the time and it would be unlikely that Chadwick did not, at the very least, seek Manning's advice on the subject.

Diocesan Reaction to the 1870 Education Act

The Education Act, as shown in chapter four, was of major importance to Catholic elementary education. The seriousness of the Act was regarded no less highly in Hexham and Newcastle. On the 1 March 1870 the Vicar General, in the absence of Bishop Chadwick who was attending the Vatican Council in Rome, wrote to the clergy of the diocese about the Education Bill coming before parliament. A national petition was organised on behalf of the Catholic Church and every priest was urged to sign it. The sense of urgency which existed among the Catholic community at home is conveyed in this letter to the Hexham and Newcastle clergy:

...it is deemed most essential, that a full and accurate Statistical return of every thing connected with the Education of our Poor children throughout the Diocese should be completed, and that, where any want of School accommodation exists, it should be, if possible, supplied without delay, so as to forestall the objectionable operation of the Bill, should it pass into Law in its present form.³⁵⁶

This letter also expresses the popular opposition to the Bill among English Catholics, a view which was not necessarily expressed by Cardinal Manning.

On the passing of the Act in August 1870, Hexham and Newcastle had no official body to regulate education in the diocese. It estimated that 7,000 Catholic children within the diocese were still without a Catholic education and that thirty to forty additional schools would have

³⁵⁶ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, Circular Letter, 1 March 1870.

to be erected to supply that need.³⁵⁷ Diocesan Poor School Committees had existed for many years in other dioceses, some since the foundation of the Catholic Poor School Committee in 1848, but it was only in September 1870 that Hexham and Newcastle established one, in the wake of the Act. The diocese resolved to utilise the six month 'period of grace' given by the Act to establish new Catholic schools before the School Boards were elected. It claimed a share of the Crisis Fund established by Lord Howard.

It is incorrect, however, to suggest that prior to this Act education in Hexham and Newcastle was being neglected, but more correct to describe its advancement to be at a more local level, or not centralised. In the three years before the Act new schools had been erected at South Shields, Jarrow, Monkwearmouth, Stockton on Tees, Bell's Close in Newcastle, Seaham Harbour, Tow Law, Barnard castle, and a school for five hundred children was being completed at Consett by 1870.³⁵⁸ While Hexham and Newcastle had picked up on the benefits of Grant Aid at an early stage, it had not thought it necessary to centralise educational provision as had been done in other dioceses.

On the 8 November 1870, a large meeting was called in Newcastle to discuss the problems for the diocese caused by the Education Act. The Duke of Norfolk and Lord Howard of Glossop both attended, as did Bishop Chadwick and various Catholic gentry. It is clear, on the part of the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Howard, that theirs was a national effort to raise awareness of the problems brought about for Catholics by the Act, and to ensure that each Catholic community was able to galvanise support and be in a position to protect their Catholic schools.

The meeting was followed up by a Pastoral Letter from Bishop Chadwick to all the faithful of the diocese. The letter is mainly a request for funds so that as many schools as possible could be erected during the six month 'period of grace.'

³⁵⁷ HNDA, RCD 1/17/2, Circular Letter, 12 September 1870.

³⁵⁸ HNDA, *Report of the Executive Board of the Diocesan Poor School Committee of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle 1872* (R. B. Henzell: North Shields, 1872), p.6, Drawer A5, Catholic Education Council Various.

For it is quite true that the time now left to us, in which to bestir ourselves, is very short. Our efforts, whatever they may prove to be, must be made before the end of the current year, for then it is that the new Elementary Act will be begun to be put into force.³⁵⁹

Cardinal Manning's suggestion that as much use be made of this period as possible was taken up by Bishop Chadwick and with success. By February 1871, applications for 38 schools to be set up, purchased or enlarged had been made, with twenty-nine of those being awarded permission and Grant Aid by the Diocesan Committee. By May 1872 nineteen of these schools had been completed, eight were in progress and at two of them work was about to begin. Of these, twenty-two new sites had been bought, fourteen freehold and eight on lease. These schools, in accordance with the provisions laid down by the Privy Council Committee, were capable of accommodating 8,325 children, at a total cost of £26,500. Over and above this, a school for infants at Darlington was completed, another for infants at Cornsay Colliery and, at the expense of the local Catholic squire, J. G. Riddell, a school at Felton Village. Further, existing schools at South Shields, Seaham Harbour and Monkwearmouth were enlarged. In all, by the end of 1872 thirty-five new schools had either been established or extended creating new accommodation for over 9,000 children, including infants.³⁶⁰ All this in the wake of the new Act.

The initial campaign for funds made in October 1870 raised £1,298.16.0 in personal donations, £634.17.4 from the church collections and a grant of £2,800.0.0 from the Central Crisis Fund, amounting to a total of £4,733.13.4. By May 1871 grants had been issued to schools amounting to £4,665.0.0.³⁶¹ The six month window of opportunity in which to establish new schools before the Act came into full force was firmly grasped, with success, in

³⁵⁹ HNDA, 1/17, 'A Pastoral Letter to the Clergy, Secular and Regular, and to All The Faithful Of The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle', 1870, p.118.

³⁶⁰ HNDA, *Report of the Executive Board of the Diocesan Poor School Committee of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle 1872* (R. B. Henzell: North Shields, 1872), pp.6-7, Drawer A5, Catholic Education Council Various.

³⁶¹ HNDA, *Report of the Executive Board of the Diocesan Poor School Committee of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle 1872* (R. B. Henzell: North Shields, 1872), p.4, Drawer A5, Catholic Education Council Various.

Hexham and Newcastle. Due to ‘...the difficulty of compliance with Government Regulations...and of the wearisome delay entailed upon applicants – to say nothing of the objectionable conditions imposed in consideration of such small help’³⁶² no applications for building grants were made for the new schools. By the time a report was published regarding the progress of the diocesan committee, it was in debt amounting to £13,000. The following year the diocese received a further £2015 from the Education Crisis Fund.³⁶³

The advice of Cardinal Manning, described in Chapters Four and Five, was taken in Hexham and Newcastle over the School Boards: that of co-operation rather than confrontation. The first School Board to be set up in the diocese was at Newcastle, with elections being held in January 1871. Two Catholic candidates were put forward for election: Canon Drysdale of St Mary’s Cathedral and R. O. Lamb, a layman. Neither was elected to the School Board, which later comprised five ‘un-sectarian’ candidates, four Church of England candidates, two Wesleyan candidates, two Presbyterian candidates, one Independent Churchman and one ‘primitive’ Methodist.³⁶⁴

Despite the stipulation in the Education Act that School Board elections were to take place every three years, the next Newcastle School Board election did not take place until 1877. At this election Canon Drysdale of St Mary’s Cathedral and B. McAnulty stood for election and received places on the board.³⁶⁵ The Catholic candidates received the highest number of votes coming at the top of the poll (Canon Drysdale 15,143 and B. McAnulty 14,272), while it is interesting to note that all those representing a religious denomination were elected, all those unelected were independent candidates.³⁶⁶ The ‘Church vote’ as it might be described, was better organised at this election, as was alluded to in the *St Mary’s Parochial Magazine* when discussing the election, albeit some years later: ‘When united we are a power. All the parishes

³⁶² HNDA, *Report of the Executive Board of the Diocesan Poor School Committee of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle 1872* (R. B. Henzell: North Shields, 1872), p.8, Drawer A5, Catholic Education Council Various.

³⁶³ HNDA, *Report of the Catholic Education Crisis Fund at the Expiration of the Second Year, June 13, 1872* (W. Davy and Son: London, 1873), p.9, Drawer A5, Catholic Education Council Various.

³⁶⁴ Archive of St Mary’s Cathedral, Newcastle, *St Mary’s Parochial Magazine*, 1889.

³⁶⁵ St Mary’s Cathedral Parish Notice Books, 21 January 1877.

³⁶⁶ Archive of St Mary’s Cathedral, Newcastle, *St Mary’s Parochial Magazine*, 1889.

of St Dominic's, St Andrew's, St Mary's and St Michael's worked well together. Had there been a greater need there would have been a greater effort.'³⁶⁷

In the wake of the Education Act the diocese was able to consolidate its position very quickly and, while it was unsuccessful in the School Board elections for Newcastle in 1871, it had organised support sufficiently well to gain significant successes in the elections of 1877 and the following elections of 1889 which also returned two Catholic candidates.

An example of the sort of anti-Catholic discrimination shown by the Boards of Guardians was demonstrated by the School Board at North Shields in the 1880's. A new Catholic school was proposed at Tyne Dock and, after the School Board had rejected it, a sympathetic member of the School Board spoke on its behalf:

...during the ten years he had been in the habit of going up the garden walks every morning he had regularly met there poor little Catholic children plodding their way to St. Bede's School, and had seen them when the frost was crising on their bare feet, and when they were drenched with rain...The Board was not losing anything...he asked them to reconsider their decision. Whether they did so or not, they would never get the Catholic children to go to the Board schools.³⁶⁸

This particular episode caught the attention of Bishop Vaughan during the time he was founding the Voluntary Schools Association and is a vindication of the bishops' fears over the powers given to the School Boards and how, had their powers over Catholic schools been more comprehensive, they could have been an even greater force against Catholic education than they potentially were.

Conclusion

Education in the faith is a fundamental part of the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church. There must have been a reasonably high number of Catholic children in Newcastle around

³⁶⁷ Archive of St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle, *St Mary's Parochial Magazine*, 1889.

³⁶⁸ Snead-Cox, vol. 2, p.97.

1800 to warrant the establishment of a school there. By the 1830's a new school building was being erected and funding applied for from the Government. The school, long before the mass immigration to the North East began, served the needs of a predominantly poor Catholic community, increasing in size and, with the expansion of missions and educational provision, increasing in ambition. The encouragement of bishops such as Mostyn, and particularly Hogarth, and the work on the ground by priests such as James Worswick, enabled the school at St Andrew's church to be one of the first Catholic schools to apply successfully for Government funding in 1849.

The period from the first Government grants issued to St Andrew's Schools in 1849 until 1870 was very fruitful and successful for Catholic elementary education in the city of Newcastle, which was, during these years, dominated by a large Irish immigrant population. The two schools at St Andrew's church grew and flourished from their reception of the Government grants, were able to adopt better practices due to the advice given by inspectors, and were eventually recognised as being important schools in the city. Two new schools were established at St Mary's Cathedral, one under the direction of the Sisters of Mercy. Similarly, these schools benefited greatly from the funding they received; and similarly, they were singled out for special praise in the report of 1861.

Three other schools were established during this twenty year period: St Michael's School on Armstrong Road in the west of the city in 1867; a school in Walker, to the east of the city, in 1854; and a school at Coxlodge, to the north of the city, in 1865. All these schools successfully applied for Government funding to assist in their foundation and their day-to-day running. All these schools were, however, more than complemented with the pennies of the poor. They all charged a weekly admission for each child, as they were compelled to, both under the terms of their funding, and by the simple reality that they would not survive without this extra income. All the churches, presbyteries, halls and other church building were, in the main, built with the pennies of the poor, sometimes added to by large one off donations. The schools were chief among Catholic institutions that received formal external funding. The Catholic community was the poorest in Britain at this time, and Newcastle is a good example

of such a community. Poverty was at extremely high levels in parts of the city, especially among Catholics.

Further, Newcastle can be taken as more or less typical of the Catholic communities based in the major cities of Great Britain, although with a greater toleration than some places for the immigrant population: poor, yet growing, and determined to establish themselves, and to provide the best and cheapest education possible for their children. This was an optimistic time for the English Catholic Church. The restoration of the hierarchy had given new courage and enthusiasm to the Catholic population, and now the establishment of missions, and the increase in the number of schools throughout the country, was further evidence of the creation of a real Catholic network and community, in an attempt to restore Catholic life into the fabric of Britain. In Newcastle the efforts of individual clergy were often the impetus and inspiration for greater success in the creation of new schools. Men like them throughout the country, with the backing and support of their congregations, were able to maintain their own schools, with their own integrity in regard to the instruction in those schools intact, and with a level of education that was equal to any other type of elementary school.

Poor Law School provision was made in the diocese following the 1866 Act, and the example and advice of Cardinal Manning sought to attempt to reduce the number of Catholic children whose faith was at risk through residence in the workhouse. Testimonies of people from Hexham and Newcastle as to the problems relating to Catholic children being taken away from their faith also show that this problem, of great concern to Manning, was not exclusive to London.

In the face of the 1870 Education Act the diocese, in the absence of its bishop, supported the efforts of Lord Howard of Glossop who openly opposed the Bill and mounted a very successful financial effort, from which it benefited significantly. The diocese followed the lead of Cardinal Manning in attempting to work with the Act, using the six month period of grace to establish or enlarge thirty-five schools in the diocese, and electing clergy and laity on the Newcastle School Board in 1877 and 1889 in order to try to safeguard the faith of any

Catholic children attending the Board Schools and to ensure that the Voluntary Schools were treated with fairness.

CONCLUSION

Education is a fundamental part of the active Christian faith. The commission of Christ, after his resurrection from the dead, was to go out and preach the gospel to the whole world, to teach people the faith that he had passed on to his friends. Historically, this belief that to teach people is to pass on a living and saving faith is very important. From Saxon times to the present day education has been used in the fight to preach Christianity in England in spite of hardships and difficulties.

After the Reformation, Christianity in England changed, and those who remained Catholic saw education even more closely as an aid to keep their faith alive in England. The schools and colleges set up on the continent in the late sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth centuries are testimony to the importance in which education was held by the Catholic Church. To educate people in the faith was to make them members of the faith, believers in the faith and people who would pass on and continue the faith in others. This stance was also held by the Church of England, which used similar methods to promote the ideas of the Reformation to their children. A battle began between the two faiths for the souls of the English people.

The end of the eighteenth century saw the beginning of the legal process that was completed in 1829 with the full emancipation of Roman Catholics. From this time, and for the following one hundred years, until the Education Act of 1902, the Church in England fought for the right to have its schools treated fairly, and yet be able to operate independently.

Education had always been seen as an act of charity, supplied mainly by the Church, but in the early nineteenth century also by independent organisations, such as the British and Foreign Schools Society, which were founded and often led by clergymen. In 1833 the first governmental move towards education came in the granting of discretionary awards to particular schools on the basis of merit. Catholic schools were excluded from this Grant Aid until 1848, when a test case allowed for funding for Catholic schools. That year also saw the foundation of the Catholic Poor School Committee as a body to lobby for government aid and

to raise funds to support schools and train teachers. Evidence from schools in Newcastle upon Tyne on the reception of the grant, shows that it was a major breakthrough for Catholic schools. The grants allowed new buildings to be constructed, new text books and apparatus to be built, funding for pupil teachers in order to increase the number of Catholic educators, and most importantly they placed Catholic schools, in theory at least, on an equal footing with other schools. While the Established Church school and those of the British and Foreign Schools Society received a greater amount in grant aid, that was mainly due to them having a greater number of schools. The grants did, however, allow the establishment of many more new Catholic schools.

1870 saw a dramatic change in the English educational system. Through the setting up of School Boards the Catholic schools, which came under the heading of Voluntary Schools, were faced with strong competition from the new Board Schools. These schools had access to aid through the rates but were extremely restricted in the scope of religious instruction that they could offer, so limited that they were not acceptable to the Catholic bishops.

The thirty-two years between the creation of the School Boards and their dissolution in 1902 were the most difficult, but at the same time, were the most prosperous years of English Catholic education. Government funding came only from the grants that had been issued to Catholic schools since 1848, but the building grant had been withdrawn at the 1870 Education Act. The Board Schools, however, could draw resources from the rates. Their funding was greater, their facilities were better, their teachers were paid a higher salary, and their buildings were more modern and improved. The list goes on. The Catholic community, however, mindful of the need for a true education in the faith, coupled with a belief that a Catholic education permeates all aspects of a school, no matter what is being taught, were resolved to keep their schools open. Through voluntary effort, from the poorest section of society, they did keep their schools open. On the whole, the Established Church surrendered a large proportion of its schools to the School Boards so as to reap the benefits of Rate Aid. The Catholic schools did not surrender a single school to the School Boards, who would have insisted on a greatly reduced religious instruction programme. Further, School Board funding

would have meant control by a non-Catholic body, experience of which through the often anti-Catholic Poor Law Boards had made such a situation for the church unacceptable.

It can be truthfully said that the Catholic education network, dreamed of by the nineteenth century bishops and a reality by the beginning of the twentieth century, was the work of the whole Catholic community. From the working man who contributed his portion of pay each week, to the priest who collected that money and organised the establishment of a school for his local Catholic children, and who applied for funding to aid it, to the bishops, particularly Cardinals Manning and Vaughan who petitioned unceasingly for a fair deal for the Catholic schools, a moral right was at stake: this was the achievement of the whole community. It is only in recent years that the Church of England, which lost her grip on much of education during the School Board period, has seen the value of Church education in the model that exists today in the Catholic education system. It was the determination of the nineteenth-century Catholics that secured an education system that has lasted to this day.

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