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From Sacred to Secular: English Thought in the Wake of the Vatican Decrees, 1864-1918

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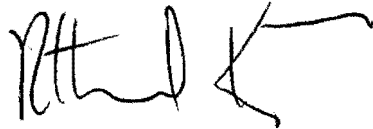
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Abstract

In 1864 Pius IX published the *Syllabus of Errors*. Five years later, the Vatican Council defined the dogma of Papal Infallibility. These two occurrences caused uneasiness throughout liberal Europe, particularly in England. In 1874/5, partly due to the conversion of Lord Ripon to Catholicism, William Gladstone issued two documents, *The Vatican Decrees* and *Vaticanism*, which condemned the earlier Roman documents. Still, Gladstone's writing, in questioning the ability of Catholics to remain faithful British citizens, made the case for a strong "Erastianism," the union of the Church and State. At the same time, Gladstone was committed to a "High Church" or "Anglo-Catholic" theology, deeply sacramental in nature. Those theologians, who followed in Gladstone's Anglo-Catholicism, broke from his commitment to Erastianism. They did this along two distinct lines. Charles Gore and Lord Halifax called for disestablishment in order to save the Church from the embarrassment of calling on the State to resolve Ecclesiastical disputes. Gore, again, with Henry Scott Holland also called for disestablishment in pursuit of the Social Gospel. Unforeseen by these theologians, by 1918, with the end of the Great War, their conversation of disestablishment had primed the country for secularization.

Acknowledgements

I have accrued many debts in the course of writing this thesis. First I would like to thank my fellow graduate students who have encouraged my studies and refined my ideas. Additionally, gratitude is due to the many professors, throughout my studies, who challenged me. Darren Sweeper provided invaluable help in locating difficult to find sources through the Seton Hall Library. My employers, at The Academy of the Holy Angels, have patiently endured the challenges of having an employee who is also a full time graduate student. They have also provided welcomed financial assistance. I thank my readers, Thomas Rzeznik and Nathaniel Knight, for their comments and criticisms. An immeasurable debt is owed to Dermot Quinn who read many drafts and corrected countless errors. All that is good in this paper is a credit to his patient and caring direction. All idiocies are my own. The greatest gratitude is due to my family. Thanks to my mother, Jane, for her willingness to care for my children as I worked, and to my father, Dennis, for his constant encouragement in times of despair. My sons, John Augustine and Charles Ignatius, provided unconditional love and inspiration. Finally, to my wife, Lauren, words cannot describe my gratitude. She has long and patiently suffered. If only the dedication of this thesis would provide a sufficient reward. Nonetheless, to her it is dedicated. *Quidquid eveniat te amem.*

4

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of British secularism is filled with paradox and irony. The Britain of 1864 was a country of religious revival and burgeoning faith, but by 1918, the churches of Britain struggled to attract, or even to sustain, the faith of Englishmen. This is no surprise in itself in that the twentieth century has seen widespread secularization across the west, and Christian denominations. However, it is surprising that secularization in Britain is the direct result of Anglo-Catholic Churchmen, who called for one type of secularism, but received one far more damaging to English faith than they could have dreamed.

1.1 Liberalism: Problem or Solution?

In August 1837, Samuel Wilberforce, Anglican bishop of Oxford, wrote to Charles Anderson, first Earl of Yarborough. His subject was liberalism and his views were emphatic:

> ...but for modern liberalism I abhor it. I think it is the Devil's creed: a heartless steam-engine, unchristian, low, sensual, utilitarian creed which would put down all that is really great and high and noble; all old remembrances and customs; merely to set up what is low, and multiply such miserable comforts as going very fast through the air on a rail-road – and for this purpose it would overturn the Church, that is Christianity; and worship the very Devil if his horns were gold and his tail were a steam engine. I hate the breaking down the character of the old English country gentleman. I think it one of the finest characters in the world ... doing more good than all the vile bushels of *Useful Knowledge* which have turned the heads of all the half-learned tinkers in the Universe.[1]

Anderson was not alone. For David Newsome, social historian of the Victorian era, "the sense of impending catastrophe may be felt in the writings and sermons of churchmen of

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[1] Bodleian. C. 191 21 August 1837, quoted in: David Newsome, *The Parting of Friends: The Wilberforces and Henry Manning* (Grand Rapids, Mich: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966), 7.

every party during this time."[2] For cultural critic Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) belief itself

was threatened by liberalism's ascendancy:

> The Sea of Faith
> Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's chore
> Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd
> But now I only hear
> Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
> Retreating, to the breath
> Of the night wind, dow the vast edges drear
> And the naked shingles of the world[3]

By the end of the Great War in 1918, the comments of Wilberforce and Arnold would prove

prophetic. Theology then had little place in the political life of England, which was

becoming increasingly secularized. Writing in 1928, and in a very different world, Beatrice

Webb noted in her diary:

> There's been an event lurking in the background of our life – intensely interesting
> but unimportant to us personally – the break-up of the Christian church in Britain.
> The Rejection of the Prayer Book by Parliament and the consequent unseemly
> controversy which has raged among the ecclesiastics – the revelation of an
> indifferent and almost scornful public opinion – has awakened the English public to
> the fact that the English are no longer Christians in any real sense of the word. No
> one troubles to assert this fact, and no one denies it. What is becoming something
> near a public scandal is the paucity of candidates alike for the Anglican priesthood
> and for the Free Church ministry. Meanwhile, Dean Inge[4] openly advises in the
> pages of a profane journal, that no candidate for order now believes in the
> supernatural element in the Christian faith ... How long this queer state of mind, the
> Church, with its creeds and its rites, its pomps and its ceremonies, can continue part
> of the British Constitution is difficult to foretell!"[5]

The Church, even Christianity, had lost its foothold in English political life by the mid-

twentieth century. Oddly, arguments of theologians once used to bolster its position in

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[2] Ibid.

[3] Matthew Arnold, *Dover Beach and Other Poems* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc, 1994), 87.

[4] William Ralph Inge (1860-1954) was professor of divinity at Cambridge and Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral.

[5] Beatrice Webb, 2 May 1928, quoted in Ruth Winstone ed., *Events, Dear Boy, Events: A Political Diary of Britain from Woolf to Campbell* (London: Profile Books, 2012), 29.

England also help explain its decline. To substantiate that paradoxical claim is the purpose of this paper.

1.2 Church and State in Victorian England

Conflict among Roman Catholics and Anglicans defined the Victorian era. Such tension was both the product of and exacerbated by the political and theological positions of historical actors during that period. The divergence of the sacred and secular was made all the more difficult by two key occurrences. The first was Catholic emancipation granted by the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829, which afforded to Catholics the right hold parliamentary office. The second was the papacy of Pius IX (reigned 1846-1878) and the Vatican Council (1869-1870).[6] Each of these events was to have a profound theological impact on English political actors. Catholicism was thrust into the center of the English political scene. The complex arguments used in favor of an established (Anglican) church also supported a Catholic, but not Roman, understanding of Anglican theology. Soon, however, Anglo-Catholics would view the state as more harmful than helpful, causing them to push for a break from former Erastian policy.

In *The Victorian Church*, Owen Chadwick presents an expression of liberalism gone wrong. In permitting Catholics religious freedom, he argues, England began to lose its identity as a Protestant (Anglican) state. This concern was most clearly expressed in the fear that Catholics, especially Irish Catholics, could have a great impact on legislation, a fear manifestly exaggerated but politically potent nonetheless. The fact that Britain was (and indeed remains) an explicitly confessional state lent some credence to these concerns. The

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[6] The First Vatican Council was not officially closed until 1960.

head of state was (and is) the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, who swears an oath (on his or her coronation) to uphold that Church. When George III refused to countenance Catholic Emancipation in 1804 and when George IV only very reluctantly accepted it in 1829, they had plausible (if unattractive) grounds for doing so.[7]

Catholic emancipation occurred in the context of religious revival in nineteenth century England. This revival took place in several distinct yet interrelated organized developments, the Oxford Movement, the best coordinated and most notable of them. However, there were other, less structured groups also centered on ritual and liturgy as a means of reinvigorating English religiosity. All of these impulses, despite their differences, can be thought of as "Anglo-Catholic." Such Anglo-Catholics attempted to walk the line between Catholicism and Protestantism, holding to the centrality of the sacraments in the life of the church, while rejecting the claims to universal ecclesial authority maintained by the pope.

This religious revival was multifaceted. James Bentley, a scholar and Anglican priest, in *Ritualism and Politics in Victorian Britain* notes similar unrest. Bentley focuses on "Ritualism" within the realm of Victorian politics. Ritualism is the inclusion of Catholic rituals in Anglican worship, including the use of candles, cassocks, chasubles, mixed water and wine, incense, reverence for the Virgin Mary, and the singing of the hours. Broad Churchmen, protestants, and evangelicals repudiated such practices as Roman corruptions of the Church. Ritualism was seen as an extension, and in some cases a corruption, of Tractarianism,[8] the theological school of Edward Pusey, John Henry Newman, and others

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[7] Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* 3rd ed. (SCM Press, 1966).
[8] "The Tractarians," in the words of G.I.T. Machin, "helped to breathe life into dry bones. They added spiritual depth, evangelical ardour, and poetic romanticism to the old high church tradition." G.I.T. Machin, *Politics and*

who sought to revive lost traditions of Anglican liturgy and theology. In essence, the goal of

Tractarians was to deepen and re-sacramentalize the life of the English Church as a visible

sign of the Anglican Church's claim of apostolicity. Speaking of the Oxford Movement,

Chadwick hints at the growing concern over Catholic influence in nineteenth-century

England, noting that Newman, Pusey, and other Tractarians presented a real worry to the

English by their embrace of Catholic practices and rituals, and their criticism of the

established Anglican Church.[9] Additionally, while some politicians, like William Gladstone,

held that the Church should be subordinated to the state, a position known as

"Erastianism", others, like liberals and nonconformists held that the Church should be

autonomous, a position in some ways similar to "Gallicanism."[10] These latter individuals

sought to disestablish the Church of England from state control. The Ritualists were willing

to go to prison rather than submit to a law imposed on their church, demonstrating the

continuing power of the Anglo-Catholic revival in the English Church.[11]

Perhaps the most famous English churchman of the nineteenth century was John

Henry Newman, who was also intimately wrapped up in the Oxford and Anglo-Catholic

Movements. As the greatest theologian of nineteenth-century England, indeed one of the

greatest theologians ever produced by that country, Newman sought to strike a balance

between the conviction and zeal of the Evangelicals and the sacramentality of the High

Church. A convert to Catholicism in 1845, Newman disappointed many English Protestants

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the *Churches in Great Britain, 1832-1868* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 75. Through their publication *Tracts for the Times*, the Tractarians inspired religious revival throughout England, but notably at Oxford, throughout the middle of the nineteenth century. Tractarianism was represented by some of the best theological minds of the day, notably Pusey and Newman.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Gallicanism is the historically French position whereby the state retains a greater autonomy in its relation to the papacy.

[11] James Bentley, *Ritualism and Politics in Victorian Britain: The Attempt to Legislate Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

as a direct result of his conversion. From this point, Sheridan Gilley, the scholar of the

history of religion in Britain, notes the decline of the Church in English life. Substantiating

the assertion of Gilley, David Hempton notes:

> On the day of the religious census in 1851 less than 5 per cent of Bradford's
> population showed up for Anglican morning service and Nonconformist attenders
> outnumbered Anglicans by a ratio of three to one. Not only did Nonconformist
> chapelbuilding reach its peak in the two decades it was most needed, but the
> Anglican population was not availing itself of the sittings already in place.
> According to Theodore Koditschek, 72 per cent of Bradford's population did not
> attend church on census Sunday and he thinks it unlikely that more than 20 per cent
> of the working-class population attended any service.[12]

The English church stood divided among High, Broad, and Low Churchmen. With issues of

state control and church autonomy coming to the forefront of political discussions the

church struggled to find balance, the *"via media"* Newman and the Oxford Movement had

hoped to achieve. Gilley doubts whether that would ever have been possible.[13]

1.3 The Paradoxes of Secularism

The central claim of this paper is predicated upon religiosity of England in the first

half of the nineteenth century and its growing secularization in the early decades of the

twentieth century. Were the people of the early nineteenth century really all that religious,

and was, as Arnold's poem suggests, this religiosity in decline by the early twentieth

century?

What is it that makes a society secular rather than religious? The question of

secular society is one that has been raised by numerous authors in the past quarter

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[12] David Hempton, "Religious Life in Industrial Britain, 1830-1914," in *A History of Religion on Britain: Practice & Belief from Pre-Roman Times to the Present*, ed. Sheridan Gilley and W.J. Sheils (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994), 308.
[13] Sheridan Gilley, "The Church of England in the Nineteenth Century," in *A History of Religion on Britain: Practice & Belief from Pre-Roman Times to the Present*, ed. Sheridan Gilley and W.J. Sheils (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994).

century.[14] Owen Chadwick has noted that secularism is notoriously difficult to define as "a subject infested by the doctrinaire" and a problem "of the many."[15] Chadwick himself defines secularism by not defining it, noting that secularism is not a change in custom, but a change in what is considered acceptable, and not a change in religious doctrine, but an increased attention to knowledge irrelevant to faith.[16] In *A Secular Age*, Charles Taylor offers three distinct, yet related, understandings of secularism. The first is public spaces that "have been allegedly emptied of God, or of any reference to ultimate reality."[17] Taylor notes that in "pre-modern societies" it was impossible to engage in the political action of the state without encountering God, implying that in modern society politics might be devoid of mentions of God and theology. Second, Taylor understands secularism as "the falling off of religious belief and practice, in people turning away from God, and no longer going to Church."[18] This seems to be the sort of secularism, which Gilley claims to be present in 1852. Finally, Taylor conceives of secularism as "a move from a society where belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest to embrace."[19] These two Gifford Lectures, by Chadwick and Taylor, presented a quarter century apart, make a similar point, that "secularism" is the trend of society to alter the socially acceptable, and to alter it in a way that mitigates, marginalizes, or eliminates its historically Christian, or

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[14] Cf. Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the 19th Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2007); Kathleen Davis, *Periodization & Sovereignty: How Ideas of Feudalism & Secularization Govern the Politics of Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Craig Calhoun, et al., ed. *Rethinking Secularism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Brad S. Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation: How A Religious Revolution Secularized Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2012)
[15] Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind*, 2 and 9.
[16] Cf. Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind*, 1-18.
[17] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 2.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., 3. It is this third definition of secularism, which Taylor sets out to defend.

simply religious, underpinnings. It is this hybrid understanding of secularism, which will inform the following discussion. Even so, this formulation is really the conjunction of each of Taylor's claims. Thus, it is important to note how each functions individually, as well as in concert.

While some revisionists have argued that Britain was not secularized in the second of Taylor's senses, this view has recently been called into question.[20] Accurate numbers for church attendance are available, but it would be impossible to quantify the mental state of religious belief in England, either for good or for ill.[21] Certainly, British politics and public and private life still were deeply religious. But, while it had been acceptable to engage in theological discourse within the political realm in 1864, it was no longer so acceptable in 1918.

Was there really theological discussion in Parliament and was religious life vibrant, in the nineteenth century? Owen Chadwick notes, "Victorian England was religious. Its churches thrived and multiplied, its best minds brooded over divine metaphysic and argued about moral principle. Its authors and painters and architects and poets seldom forgot that art and literature shadowed eternal truth and beauty, its legislators professed outward and often accepted inward allegiance to divine law, its men of empire ascribed national greatness to the providence of God and Protestant faith."[22] Such sentiment prompted M. E. Allsopp to write that the "Two features of the Victorian Age were its sense

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[20] Bethany Tanis has sought to argue against Hugh McLeod and Callum Brown in this regard in her recently defended dissertation. Bethany Tanis, "The 'Great Church Crisis,' Public Life, and National Identity in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Britain." PhD diss., Boston College, 2009, 21.

[21] David Hempton, "Religious Life in Industrial Britain, 1830-1914," in *A History of Religion in Britain.*

[22] Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church: An Ecclesiastical History of England*, 2 Vols (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), Vol. I., 1.

of vocation and its spirit of certitude."[23] Further, Bethany Tanis, citing Adrian Hastings,

notes that throughout the period from 1880 to 1913, "Parliamentarians were increasingly

affected by "Catholic" arguments about church independence and were simply opposed to

legislating on church matters."[24]

Thus the Victorian Age was religious and at the same time divided by theological

disagreement, particularly between Catholics and Protestants. It was precisely this

paradox, which began to shape British life towards a rejection of the theological. Merely

because there were religious attitudes in the air does not indicate that Britons as a whole

were individually devout, nor does it imply that they were not. It merely implies that

Britain had yet to be secularized in Taylor's first sense. Sharon L. George notes, "While

Victorian faith was most likely not in the midst of a full blown religious crisis, at the very

least, as the nineteenth century ran its course, various social and intellectual developments

reshaped Victorian faith, which indeed could have given the appearance of disintegrating

faith, particularly to Anglicans who held true to their national religion. The growing

availability of religious choice [reminiscent of Taylor's third secularism], both within and

outside of the Anglican Church, would certainly make it difficult if not impossible to

measure faith quantitatively."[25]

This discussion of notions of secularism and their relation to nineteenth-century

Britain refines the central claim of this paper. The paradox that Anglo-Catholic theologians

primed Britain for secularization must be understood and proven by the investigation of

three distinct yet related paradoxes, which will govern the remainder of this thesis. First,

23 M. E. Allsopp, "Gerard Manley Hopkins: The Oxford Years (1863-1867)" *Gregorianum* 70, no. 4 (1989), 663.
24 Tanis, *The 'Great Church Crisis'*. p. 25.
25 Sharon L. George, "The Pursuit of Divinity: Religious Faith and Fear in Late Victorian Women's Poetry." PhD diss., Duquesne University, 2011, p. xiii.

William Gladstone, a thoroughgoing Erastian, was directly responsible for the disestablishment of the Irish Church. Second, Charles Gore, using many of the same theological arguments, which Gladstone used to defend Erastianism, argued in favor of disestablishment. Gore's push for disestablishment was a call for the separation of Church and State, not to keep the Church out of the British politics, but rather because he viewed the Anglican Church in a position to be able to govern itself without state interference. Finally, the rise of Anglo-Catholicism coincided with a rise in social awareness among Christians. This call to "establish the Kingdom of God on Earth" through the service of one another, especially as promoted by Henry Scott Holland, primed Britain to accept the rise of socialism. By the end of the First World War, England accepted the social gospel, stripped of what many began to think of as all its theological mumbo-jumbo.

It is therefore fair to say that England underwent a process of secularization from 1864-1918. Still this secularism was the result of a threefold process, or rather the result of three distinct secularizations, Gladstone's, Gore's, and The Christian Socialists'. While it was certainly not the intention of any of these Anglo-Catholic Churchmen to effect secularization, in terms of the hybrid definition above, in England by the time of the Great War, their actions primed England for the removal of God from public spaces, the falling off of religious belief, and the presence of alternatives to and difficulty in belief in God; all three forms of secularism as defined by Taylor.

2. The Vatican Decrees and Gladstonian Politics

In the late nineteenth century, England remained oriented towards religion. Chadwick notes that with Newman's publication of Tract XC, growing concerns from theologians, some of whom, like Gladstone, were politically minded, over the Anglo-Catholic movement were given even greater weight. Newman's leaving Oxford and establishing a monastic community in all but name, represented a threat of an increasingly Roman presence in the church. Newman had been one of the greatest advocates for high Anglicanism. His defection to Catholicism was the cause of great scandal. In essence, the Anglican Church lost its best and brightest theological mind to its Catholic enemy.[26]

2.1 Pius IX

The reign of Pius XI began on 17 June 1846. The election of Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti was received with disappointment by Austria, due to his paucity of experience in European politics. However, Pius IX, would soon ingratiate himself to the people of Rome. Perceived at first as a moderate, Pius liberated political prisoners of the Papal States and built a railroad, an innovation refused to Rome by Pius' predecessor Gregory XVI. It was expected, in light of these and other reforms, that Pius would, "turn the Papal State into a constitutional monarchy. He was expected to commend the Catholics of Europe who longed to marry their Catholicism with liberalism; to open the heart of the Church to a friendly relationship with Protestant countries; and perhaps to put himself at the head of the movement to create out of the separated States a national, free, and federated Italy with

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[26] Chadwick, *The Victorian Church.*

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himself as its president or constitutional suzerain."[27] The popularity of Pius IX grew by

leaps and bounds, among liberal Europeans.

Despite this growing popularity, labeling Pius as a liberal does not do justice to his

political ideology. In 1848, Italian revolutions, called *Risorgimento*, beginning in northern

Italy quickly spread south. Although the revolutionaries hoped to unify the papacy and

liberal government in Italy, Pius sanctioned no such action, having no desire to take up the

neoguelf cause.[28] Tensions grew and forces drew nearer to Rome. As unrest grew in

Rome, democrats grew nervous and impatient. On 15 November 1848, one democrat went

so far as to have Pellegrino Rossi, the Minister of the Interior for the Papal States and the

best opportunity of reconciling the papacy and *Risorgimento*, assassinated. Historians have

seen the murder of Rossi as a moment that changed the political outlook of Pius IX, shifting

his political views from a welcomed liberalism to an oppressive and tyrannical

conservativism. Owen Chadwick notes, "The Pope's quest for a constitution compatible

with the papal office and the freedom of Italy from the foreigner had died, by the knife of an

assassin."[29] Fearing for his life – which was certainly a reasonable fear considering that

1848 revolution in France saw the murder of the Archbishop of Paris – and seeing no other

options, Pius, no longer able to negotiate with the forces of *Risorgimento*, fled Rome for

Gaeta, within the Kingdom of Naples, still under Bourbon control. While in exile, on 8

February 1849, the Constituent Assembly (i.e. the revolutionary Roman government)

stripped the pope of his temporal power.

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[27] Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes*, 1830-1914 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 64.
[28] Neoguelfism is the idea that Italian unification should proceed with the pontiff as the temporal leader of a unified Italy. Cf. Peter R. D'Agostino, *Rome in America: Transnational Catholic Ideology from the* Risorgimento *to Fascism* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004).
[29] Chadwick, *A History of the Popes*, p. 82.

The conditions were then right for political liberalism to move away from Pius.

Three pieces of evidence are typically cited as evidence for this apparent reversal in Pius'

thinking: the encyclical *Quanta cura* (1864), the appended *Syllabus of Errors* (1864), and

the doctrinal assertions of the Vatican Council (1870). In each of these documents, Pius

reasserted his authority, both temporal and spiritual, as pontiff. Simply put, such an

assertion was unacceptable to liberal Europe, because the pope denied the Enlightened and

liberal principle of religious freedom.[30]

The first, and most notorious claim, which alienated the pope from the political

liberals, was the eightieth and final proposition of the *Syllabus*, "The Roman Pontiff can and

ought to reconcile and harmonize himself with progress, with liberalism, and with modern

civilization."[31] Additionally, the *Syllabus* condemned the separation of church and state, the

freedom of religious practice, the free press, and the refusal to accept the authority of the

temporal power of the papacy.[32] Liberalism was a reaction against *ancien regime* Europe.

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[30] Peter R. D'Agostino, *Rome in America*, 19-52; Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes*, 61-94; Norman P. Tanner, *The Councils of the Church: A Short History* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company), 2001, 88.
[31] "Romanus Pontifex potest ac debet cum progressu, cum liberalismo et cum recenti civilitate sese reconciliare et componere." In Herbert Vaughan, *The Year of Preparation for the Vatican Council: Including the Original and English of the Encyclical and Syllabus, and of the Papal Documents Connected with its Convocation.* (London: Burns, Oates, and Co., 1869), xxxvii.
[32] It should be kept in mind that the format of the *Syllabus* is to assert an erroneous proposition. Thus to assert what the *Syllabus* asserts is to assert error. These notions are condemned in the *Syllabus* as follows: Separation of Church and state:
> XIX. The Church is not a true and perfect society fully free, nor does she enjoy her own proper and permanent rights given to her by her divine Founder but it is the civil power's business to define what are the Church's rights, and the limits within which she may be enabled to exercise them.
> XX. The ecclesiastical power should not exercise its authority without permission and assent of the civil government.
> XIX. Ecclesia non est vera perfectaque societas plane libera, nec pollet suis propriis et constantibus juribus sibi a divino suo Fundatore collatis, sed civilis potestatis est difinire quae sint Ecclesiae jura ac limites, intra quos eadem jura exercere queat.
> XX. Ecclesiastica potestas suam auctoritatem exercere non debet absque civilis gubernii venia et assensu.

Freedom of religious practice:
> XV. Every man is free to embrace and profess that religion which, led by the light of reason, he may have thought true.

It sought to establish electoral and representative government, civil rights, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, free enterprise, and the ownership of private property. In the wake of the *Syllabus*, the Church was clearly not in a position to embrace these principles, which were founded on the ideas of Enlightenment philosophers and expressed in the French Revolution of 1789. The *Syllabus* set Catholics as enemy to the modern world.[33]

In 1870, the Vatican Council would again condemn the philosophical underpinning of liberal society in its *Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith (Dei filius)*. While not explicitly condemning liberalism, *Dei filius* condemned the rationalistic and naturalistic philosophy that Enlightenment thinkers used to undergird their vision of liberal society. By rejecting the foundational elements of liberalism, the Council put greater distance between the Church and liberal Europe. *Dei filius* reads:

> So it was born and widely beyond measure strolled through the world, that doctrine of rationalism or naturalism, to which the Christian religion, in as much as it is a supernatural institution is opposed, turning through all things, toils with most

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XVI. Men may in the practice of any religion whatever find the path of eternal salvation, and attain eternal salvation.
XV Liberum cuique homini est eam amplecti ac profiteri religionem, quam rationis lumine quis ductus veram putaverit.
XVI. Homines in cujusvis religionis cultu viam aeternae salutis reperire aeternamquae salutem assequi possunt.
The free press:
LXXIX. For truly it is false that the civil liberty of all worships, and the full power granted to all openly and publicly declaring any opinions or thoughts whatever, conduces to more easily corrupting the morals and minds of peoples and propagating the plague of indifferentism
LXXIX. Enimvero falsum est, civilem cujusque cultus libertatem, itemque plenam potestatem omnibus attributam quaslibet opinions cogitationesque palam publiceque manifestandi, conducere ad populorum mores animosque facilius corrumpendos, ac indifferentismi pestem propagandam.
Temporal authority of the papacy:
XXIV. The church has no power of employing force, nor has she any temporal power direct or indirect.
XXVII. The Church's sacred ministers and the Roman Pontiff should be entirely excluded from all charge and dominion of temporal things.
XXIV. Ecclesia non habet nativum ac legitimum jus acquirendi ac possidendi.
XXVII. Sacri Ecclesiae ministry Romanusque Pontifex ab omni rerum temporalium cura ac dominio sunt omnio excludendi.
Syllabus reprinted in Herbert Vaughan, *The Year of Preparation for the Vatican Council*, xx-xxxvii.
[33] Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes*, 168-181; Peter D'Agostino, *Rome in America*, 42-43.

eagerness, that Christ, who alone is our Lord and Savior, be excluded from human minds, life, and customs, so that it would establish the unadulterated reign of reason and nature. Having abandoned and driven out the Christian religion, having denied the true God and his Christ, the mind of many has finally slipped into pantheism, materialism, the abyss of atheism, so that now they strive to demolish natural reason itself and denying any norm that is just and right, the underlying foundation of human society.[34]

The expanded text added conciliar weight, and stronger language, to the status of the encyclical.[35] In addition to the questioning of the tenets of liberal and modern society, the Council would also issue a decree on the papacy, *First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ (Pastor aeternus)*. Significantly, this document defined the doctrine of papal infallibility that would make the pope the supreme authority on matters of faith and morals. The decree reads:

> Just so we teach and declare the Roman Church, placed here by the Lord, to hold above all others a pre-eminence of ordinary power, this is the power of the jurisdiction of the Roman pontiff, which is truly episcopal and immediate; therefore shepherds and faithful of whatever rite and dignity, so singularly apart or all united, by the duty of subordination to the hierarchy, and they are truly bound by obedience, not only in things which are of faith and customs, but also in those, which are held as disciplines and practices of the Church dispersed throughout the whole world; so that the care of communion with the Roman pontiff, which is the same with the unity of profession of faith, the Church of Christ may be one flock under one supreme shepherd. This is the teaching of catholic truth, from which no one is able to deviate without doing harm to his faith and salvation ... we teach and define to be

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[34] "Tum nata est et late nimis per orbem vagata illa rationalismi seu naturalismi doctrina, quae religioni christianae, utpote supernaturali instituto, per omnia adversanas, summo studio molitur, ut Christo, qui solus dominus et salvator noster est, a mentibus humanis, a vita et moribus populorum exculso, merae quod vocant rationis vel naturae regnum stabiliatur. Relicta autem proiectaque Christiana religione, negato vero Deo et Christo eius, prolapsa tandem est multorum mens in pantheismi, materialismi, atheismi barathurum, ut iam ipsam rationalem naturam, omnemque iusti rectique normam negantes, ima humanae societatis fundamenta diruere connitantur." Norman Tanner et. al., ed. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 Vols. (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 804-805.

While I have been heavily reliant on Tanner's translation of Alberigo's edition of the original text, there is some reason to find Tanner's translation deficient. While it certainly carries the meaning of the documents of the First Vatican Council, it, on occasion and for the sake of greater readability, omits words or alters their meanings. While this does not substantively impact the reading of the text it does render them less forceful than they are in the Latin text. I have thus provided original translations for the decrees of the Council.

[35] The Conciliar text added clarity to the status of the *Syllabus*, which was appended to the *Quanta Cura*. This led to the questionable status of the *Syllabus* since it was unlikely penned by the hand of the pope, but rather by Cardinal Antonelli.

divinely revealed dogma: The Roman pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when engaging in the office of shepherd and teacher of all Christians, by his supreme, apostolic authority he defines the teaching of faith and customs which must be held by the universal Church, through divine assistance, promised to him by blessed Peter, that doctrine is held to be infallible, which the divine Redeemer wishes his Church to be provided in the doctrine to be defined concerning faith or customs. In the same way, the definitions of the Roman pontiff are in themselves, and not by Church consensus, irreformable.[36]

Many viewed the decree as inopportune. Newman had called it as much. All the American bishops disapproved. Only one American, the bishop of Little Rock, Arkansas, even attended the vote on *Pastor aeternus*, voting against it. The decree itself was indeed strongly worded and although there was much criticism, the critics were never able to unite in a push against the definition. Papal infallibility became a dogma of the Catholic Church. Debates continued, especially in England on what impact the decree would have on the every day life of Catholics.[37]

As a result, individuals and statesmen throughout Europe, now had new grounds on which to assert an unjust application of papal authority, however weak those grounds may have been. Damian McElrath's *The Syllabus of Pius IX: Some Reactions in England* is an indispensible contribution to the understanding of the *Syllabus*, and consequently the impact of the Council, and its reactions in England. He frames the central issue

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[36] "Docemus proinde et declaramus, ecclesiam Romanam, disponente Domino, super omnes alias ordinariae potestatis obtinere principatum hanc Romani pontificis iurisdictionis potestatem, quae vere episcopalism est, immediatam esse: erga quam cuiuscumque ritus et dignitatis pastores atque fideles, tam seorsum singuili quam simul omnes, officio hierachicae subordinationis, veraque obedientiae obstringuntur, non solum in rebus quae ad fidem et mores, sed etiam in iis, quae ad disciplinam et regimen ecclesiae per totum orbem diffusae pertinent; ita ut custodita cum Romano pontifice tam communionis, quam eiusdem fidei professionis unitate, ecclesia Christi sit unus grex sub uno summo pastore. Haec est catholicae veritatis doctrina, a qua deviare, salva fide atque salute, nemo potest ... docemus et divinitus revelatum dogma esse definimus: Romanum pontificem, cum ex cathedra loquitur, id est, cum omnium christianorum pastoris et doctoris munere fungens, pro suprema sua apostolica auctoritate docrinam de fide vel moribus ab universa ecclesia tenendam definit, per assistentiam divinam, ipsi in beato Petro promissam, ea infallibilitate pollere, qua divinus Redemptor ecclesiam suam in definienda doctrina de fide vel moribus instructam esse volui; ideoque eiusmodi Romani pontificis definitions ex sese, non autem ex consensus ecclesia irreformabiles esse. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 813-816. See previous note for an explanation on the translation of the quotation.
[37] Chadwick, *A History of the Popes*, 193-200.

surrounding the *Syllabus* as whether or not the document constitutes an infallible statement. McElrath sees this question as bearing on all subsequent discussions of the *Syllabus*, and the Council. He never answers this question for his reader, but he does do well to provide insight into the nineteenth-century debate. Ultimately, McElrath leaves the reader with Newman's sentiment that all papal, and conciliar, locutions should be taken seriously even if they are not held as infallible, suggesting that even if a Catholic were to deny the infallibility of the pontiff, those Catholics should still carefully consider the opinions of the pontiff in forming their consciences.[38]

Many reacted violently to the *Syllabus* and the decrees of the Vatican Council. Perhaps the most vocal critic, in the English-speaking world, of the doctrine of infallibility, the *Syllabus*, and the Vatican Council was William Gladstone. His comments would spark a new, though not the last, cry of anti-popery throughout England. While many English Catholics, not the least of which was John Newman, would meet his attack, Gladstone's writing would have an unintended consequence, namely that politics and theology began no longer to be viewed as bedfellows. The relationship between the two continued to decay, and by the armistice of 1918, the two had been divorced.

2.2 William Ewart Gladstone

Gladstone could hold his own with the pre-eminent theological minds of his day. Even in his later years, he would read and study the works of Döllinger – the liberal, German, Catholic commentator on the events of the Council– in the original German late

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[38] Damian McElrath, O.F.M., *The Syllabus of Pius IX: Some Reactions in England* (Louvain, 1964).

into the night.[39] Gladstone, a committed High Churchman, raised with an evangelical

background, held theological views which were the product of a confluence of forces. In

particular, he had a great interest in distinguishing between Romans and Anglicans, both of

whom he considered to be part of the one, true Catholic Church, but authoritatively

independent from one another. In this way, Gladstone can be considered a branch theorist.

He held that the High, or Anglo-Catholic, Church in England represented an extension of the

apostolic Church of Christ, because it with both Romans and Orthodox maintained apostolic

continuity. However, each of these communions would remain independent from one

another, in light of the historical particularities in which they developed. Gladstone, as well

as other High Anglicans, felt that the Romans had corrupted, through the means of an

overextended hierarchical authority, the apostolic and common faith professed in the

Creed. Thus the Anglican Church possessed the best of both worlds. It contained the zeal

and independence of Evangelicals and a common apostolicity with the Roman Catholic

Church.[40]

As a consequence of his rejection of Roman and Papal authority, Gladstone took

offense at the increasingly popular "ultramontane" movement among conservative Roman

Catholics in the nineteenth century. Ultramontanism appeared to liberals to advocate a

rejection of even moderate Enlightenment values in favor of a more "medieval" system

centered on the spiritual and temporal autonomy and sovereignty of the Roman pontiff.[41]

To Gladstone, the Vatican Decrees (including *Quanta Cura*, the *Syllabus*, and the

Decrees of the Vatican Council) seemed to be an authoritative and official proclamation of

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[39] James Bentley, *Ritualism and Politics in Victorian Britain*, 6.
[40] H. C. G. Matthew, "Gladstone, Vaticanism, and the east" in *Studies in Church History*, XV (1978).
[41] *For an interesting and lively assessment of ultramontanism in the nineteenth century Cf. Jeffrey von Arx,*
S.J., ed., *Varieties of Ultramontanism* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1998).

papal primacy over Catholics throughout the world. Gladstone was saddened by these pronouncements, as they seemed to suggest that the papacy and Roman Church tended towards unjust impositions of authority that might compromise the integrity and civil loyalty of the believer, thus making the reunion of Christendom impossible. Further, he viewed the *Syllabus* as a fundamental rejection of the modern world.

In 1874, ten years after the promulgation of the *Syllabus* and four after the untimely and abrupt end to the Council[42], Gladstone published the first of two tracts denouncing the views of ultramontane Catholics, Pius IX, and the Vatican Council.[43] The second, and considerably expanded, tract followed the following year.[44] Both of Gladstone's documents drew considerable attention. Scholars wonder why Gladstone waited ten and four years, after the encyclical and Council, respectively, to issue a response to an issue, which was clearly dear to him. Joseph Altholz, a leading historian on Catholicism in Victorian England, notes that Gladstone was likely hesitant to inflame issues against Catholics at the time of the Council due to the recent passage of the disestablishment of the Irish Church in 1869 and the Education Act of 1870, events contemporaneous to the Council, and seeking to "avoid agitating public feelings on Catholic issues, having much Irish legislation still to pass."[45] This Irish problem was significant because it spoke to the contrary, if not contradictory, implications between Irish disestablishment and Gladstone's Erastianism.

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[42] The First Vatican Council was not officially closed until 1960, in preparation for the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). In 1870 the First Vatican Council was brought to an abrupt end when Rome was sacked by the forces of *Risorgimento*. With the advent of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, French troops, who had been guarding the city left Rome to aid in the war effort. This left the city unprotected and confined the pope as a "prisoner of the Vatican."

[43] Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., *The Vatican Decrees and their Bearing on Civil Allegiance: A Political Expostulation* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1874).

[44] Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., *Vaticanism: An Answer to Reproofs and Replies* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1875).

[45] Josef L. Altholz, "The Vatican Decrees Controversy, 1874-1875" *The Catholic Historical Review* 57, no. 4 (1972), 594.

Altholz also notes, that when Gladstone published his first pamphlet in 1874 it, "burst like a bombshell upon a public which had almost forgotten the Vatican decrees."[46] Dermot Quinn posits another reason for the publication in 1874/5: Gladstone's tracts were likely written due to the recent conversion of Lord Ripon to Roman Catholicism. Noting the significance of the event Quinn writes:

> Ripon was received into the Church in September 1874. In the lists of Victorian sensations, this ranks honourably high: less melodramatic than Jack the Ripper, less beloved of the music-halls than the Tichborne claimant, less lewd than Sir Charles Dilke's commodious bed, but still a worthy portrait in the hall of scandalised Victorian smugness. Editorials were devoted to it, conversations on trains dominated by it, letters to friends full of it, entries in commonplace books shocked by it.[47]

The shock of Ripon's conversion was no less dramatic to Gladstone on a personal level. As Quinn notes, Gladstone's "anguish at Ripon's 'perversion' was genuine, though puffed up for political ends. His reaction exhibited not hypocrisy, but extreme sanctimony. Such is apparent from the welter of rationalisations, some of them contradictory, which accompanied his central justification for *The Vatican Decrees*, the belief that 'the effect on the Liberal Party ... [would] be good'."[48] For this reason, Quinn contends, Gladstone took up the project of attacking the Vatican Decrees, in 1874, years after their promulgation in the year of Ripon's conversion.[49]

The first tract, *The Vatican Decrees and their Bearing on Civil Allegiance: A Political Expostulation* (hereafter *Vatican Decrees*) was centered on four propositions, which

[46] Ibid.
[47] Dermot Quinn, *Patronage and Piety: The Politics of English Roman Catholicism, 1850-1900* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 88-89.
[48] Quinn, *Patronage and Piety*, 94.
[49] Ibid., 97.

Gladstone puts against the Roman Church in light of the Vatican Decrees of ten years prior.

He writes:

> My propositions, then, as they stood, are these:
> 1. That "Rome has substituted for the proud boast of *semper eadem*, a policy of violence and change in faith."
> 2. That she has refurbished and paraded anew every rusty tool she was fondly thought to have disused.
> 3. That no one can now become her convert without renouncing his moral and mental freedom, and placing his civil loyalty and duty at the mercy of another.
> 4. That she ("Rome") has equally repudiated modern thought and ancient history.[50]

Even from this brief citation, it should be clear that Gladstone has a deep emotional, personal, and theological stake in the Vatican Decrees. He does not hold back accusing the Church of using "rusty tools" and later asserting that the individual and even worse "the State must also be a slave" to the authority of the pontiff and Roman Church.[51]

Gladstone addressed the first and fourth propositions together because "they appear to belong to the theological domain."[52] The thrust of his argument is simple: The assertion of exaggerated papal authority, as represented in the Vatican Decrees, was not a historical conception of papal authority, and constituted an act of violence against the ancient creed. Further, he noted "violence" is used deliberately given that "the ancient definitions of the Church, which have endured the storms of 1,500 years, was to be found in this, that they were not arbitrary or willful, but that they wholly sprang from, and related to, theories rampant at the time, and regarded as menacing to Christian belief."[53] In other words, Gladstone pointed to the idea that previous councils had dealt with some problem of impending danger facing the Church. For example, the councils of the early Church all

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[50] Gladstone, *The Vatican Decrees*, 12-13.
[51] Ibid., 12 and 41.
[52] Ibid., 13.
[53] Ibid., 15.

deal with defining the faith against an array of Christological controversies. Even the Council of Trent can be situated in this vein, defending the Church from the problem(s) of Protestantism. However, it is difficult to see, following Gladstone, how the Vatican Council addresses some specific danger. Perhaps, *Dei Filius* addressed important problems of rationalism and consequently liberalism, but it is difficult to see how the definition of infallibility in *Pastor Aeternus* constituted a defense of the faith against some looming danger. In this way, Gladstone justified propositions one and four on the basis of poor history. Councils did not exist merely to define new teachings, but did so only to address conflicts in the Church.[54]

Gladstone's second proposition was disposed of with similar expediency. For two and a half pages Gladstone listed all of the condemnations issued by the Roman Church during his lifetime. Overwhelmingly, they constituted offenses to the Enlightened liberalism espoused by Gladstone, such as the freedom of the press, freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, dissent from papal judgments, the authority of the state, the right of the Church to use force, the supremacy of civil over ecclesiastical laws, education, secular philosophy, non-sacramental marriage, the temporal power of the papacy, and the primacy of the Roman Catholic religion. While admitting that each of these statements cannot properly be grouped into the same category, Gladstone argued that they all subverted the authority of the state and the individual, in the wake of the liberal trends exerting an increasingly strong influence over Europe.[55]

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[54] Cf. John W. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), 19-20; Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*; and Tanner, *The Councils of the Church*.
[55] Gladstone, *The Vatican Decrees*, 21.

The third proposition was given greatest weight of all, encompassing twenty-six pages of his tract. Within this section, Gladstone criticized many of the selections from the Vatican Council most offensive to the liberal ear. Referring to the above quotations from the Vatican Council, Gladstone wrote, "even, therefore, where the judgments of the Pope do not present the credentials of infallibility, they are unappealable and irreversible: no person may pass judgment upon them; and all men, clerical and lay, dispersedly or in the aggregate, are bound truly to obey them; and from this rule of Catholic truth no man can depart, save at the peril of his salvation."[56]

In short, he argued that the Vatican Decrees impaired the ability of a Catholic to be a faithful citizen under the British crown. Gladstone argued that Catholics could not accept the moral authority of the papacy because they must accept the moral authority of whatever state in which they happen to live. In this way, Gladstone even betrayed his own liberal commitments. Rather than hanging his argument on liberty of conscience, he questioned where Catholics rest their allegiance: in the royal crown or the papal tiara. Gladstone wrote:

> It has been shown that the Head of their Church, so supported as undoubtedly to speak with its highest authority, claims from Roman Catholics a plenary obedience to whatever he may desire in relation not to faith but to morals, and not only to these, but to all that concerns the government and discipline of the Church: that, of this, much lies within the domain of the State: that, to obviate all misapprehension, the Pope demands for himself the right to determine the province of his own rights, and has so defined it in formal documents, as to warrant any and every invasion of the civil sphere; and that this new version of the principles of the Papal Church inexorably binds its members to the admission of these exorbitant claims, without any refuge or reservation of behalf of their duty to the Crown.
> Under circumstances such as these, it seems not too much to ask of them to confirm the opinion which we, as fellow-countrymen, entertain of them, by sweeping away, in such manner and terms as they may think best, the presumptive imputations which their ecclesiastical rules at Rome, acting autocratically, appear to have

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[56] Ibid., 39.

brought upon their capacity to pay a solid and undivided allegiance; and to fulfil [sic] the engagement which their bishops, as political sponsors, promised and declared for them in 1825.[57]

It seems clear that Gladstone's chief concern was the potential for the pope, in light of the Vatican Decrees, to influence British Catholics, who may in turn influence British political life. In the wake of *The Vatican Decrees*, many English Catholics, like Manning and Acton, issued responses to Gladstone's tract. These responses prompted a second tract from Gladstone, *Vaticanism: An Answer to Reproofs and Replies* (hereafter *Vaticanism*).

Vaticanism was at once a more mature presentation of Gladstone's thought as well as an impassioned denunciation of Catholic Medievalism. Further, he was concerned to confront the institutionalization of the Ultramontane hypothesis, a "system, political rather than religious, which in Germany is well termed Vaticanism."[58]

That Gladstone saw Vaticanism as a political system, rather than religious system is significant. He accused, perhaps *tu quoque*, those who participated in Vaticanism as allowing the dictates of their religion, which presumably they were entitled to hold from a religious perspective should they wish to do so, to undermine their obedience as subjects of the queen. Thus, the political views of Catholics in England would pollute the politics of England itself. This was precisely because, according to Gladstone, Catholics were obliged, in light of the Vatican Decrees, to exercise the will of the pontiff. In just this way, then the Catholics, on Gladstone's view, continue to serve two masters, the pope and the queen.[59]

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[57] Ibid., 44-45.

[58] Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., *Vaticanism: An Answer to Reproofs and Replies* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1875), 7.

[59] It is worth noting that Gladstone has written himself into a corner. He has accused Catholics of following the pope over the queen. However as Newman noted, neither allegiance to the pope nor to the queen trumps the individual conscience. In this way, Gladstone has attempted a liberal argument in the favor of individual liberty, at the expense of individual liberty. Additionally, there is no place in the papal documents that indicates that individuals are required to follow the will of the pope at the expense of their own conscience.

That Catholicism and the papacy – more precisely Gladstone's presentation of

Ultramontane Catholicism – reach into foreign (i.e. English) politics in such a way was a

violation of personal liberty and Enlightenment principles and was consequently

unacceptable, to him.

Vaticanism was also significant because it represented Gladstone's response to

Newman, who himself had responded to Gladstone's original tract. Newman's work, *A*

Letter Addressed to His Grace the Duke of Norfolk on Occasion of Mr. Gladstone's Recent

Expostulation (hereafter *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*)[60] had argued, in light of Gladstone's

Vatican Decrees, that Catholics were bound to nothing beyond following their own

conscience, which he vividly described as "the aboriginal vicar of Christ."[61] Furthermore,

Newman argued that, in light of the Vatican Decrees and Gladstone's *Vatican Decrees*, there

was no such thing as "absolute obedience" either to the crown or to the Papacy, rejecting

Gladstone's claim that state jurisdiction and the spiritual and temporal authority of the

papacy were in conflict. [62]

Gladstone responded that Catholics have had their liberty handicapped by the

Vatican Decrees, also claiming that the Vatican Decrees, especially the *Syllabus*, constituted

a rupture with Church history. He also argued, citing the Council of Constance and the bull

Cum ex Apostolatus Officio, that heretical actions cause all of a given pope's acts to be void

ab initio.[63] In this way, he upheld four thrusts of his original argument: First, that the

assertions of the Romans in the Vatican Decrees were inconsistent with their own

Cf. John Henry Newman, *A Letter Addressed to His Grace the Duke of Norfolk on Occasion of Mr. Gladstone's Recent Expostulation* (London: S. and J. Brawn, Printers, 1875).

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid., 57.

[62] Ibid., 53.

[63] Gladstone, *Vaticanism*, 39. Pius' actions would have been deemed heretical, for Gladstone, since he viewed them as an act of violence against the creed.

traditions and therefore detrimental not only to Roman Catholics in general, but also to

their loyalty as British citizens; second, that the "rusty tools" of the Middle Ages that began

with Innocent III and continued to the Council of Trent had been unduly revived; third, that

Pius IX had inserted himself and the papacy into secular political life under the form of civil

allegiance; finally, that the United Kingdom and its people had been betrayed in that papal

infallibility has become "an article of faith in the Roman Church" when they were assured

that it would not.[64]

This remarkable episode represents the beginning of the end of the interaction

between political and theological ideals and individuals in Britain. Catholics generally

speaking did not take Gladstone's writings seriously. For some Protestants, the arguments

of the *Vatican Decrees* and *Vaticanism* provided an occasion for anti-Catholic sentiment in

England.[65] While immediately after the promulgation of *Pastor Aeternus*, "there was no

anti-Catholic outburst either from Gladstone or from the general public. The proceedings

at Rome were only of peripheral interest to Englishmen."[66] After the publication of

Gladstone's tracts, which sold well, the public began to take notice of the Vatican decrees.[67]

Josef Altholz concludes – in what is ultimately an overstatement of the case, since

anti-Catholic sentiment continues, even through legislation like the Act of Settlement, in

England even today – that the *Vatican Decrees* and *Vaticanism* prove to be the end of anti-

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[64] Ibid., 78-79. Gladstone seems to think that the doctrine of papal infallibility will be taken to an extreme and have great impact upon the daily life, whereas as Newman (rightly) notes it will not and cannot, due to the primitive authority of individual conscience. This is perhaps best (though perhaps unfairly) illustrated in that in retrospect papal infallibility was only invoked once after its definition by the Vatican Council, in 1950 by the apostolic constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*, which defined the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

[65] Josef L. Altholz, "The Vatican Decrees Controversy, 1874-1875," 593. Altholz calls this "the last occasion for a no-popery agitation in England." While this comment speaks to the anti-Catholic sentiment of the time, it is an unfair assessment of anti-Catholic sentiment in England, which continues to the present day, albeit in a very attenuated way.

[66] Ibid., 594.

[67] Ibid.

Catholic sentiment in English politics. He then suggests that this may be more than a mere victory for religious toleration within the English political system. He suggests that perhaps it is a sign of "growing indifference to all religious issues."[68] It seems fair to say that Altholz is correct in is questioning the religious conviction of English politics after Gladstone. There was residual anti-Catholicism in political life in 1918, but theology, of any serious sort, never had much purchase in the political realm. Politics and theological discussions would go on, but the once bedfellows would divorce.

Gladstone presented a case for a sort of Erastianism. He saw the future of the Church and English political life as inextricably linked. This was the main reason for his rejection of the Vatican Decrees, which seem to deny the Erastian union of the British crown and Church of England. In short, he worried that if the Roman Church were able to exert influence over Catholics in England, it in turn could influence English politics from within Parliament. Additionally, Gladstone's adoption of branch theory, that is the apostolicity and catholicity of the Anglican Church, is integral to the validity of his argument. In essence, Gladstone was saying that he, Gladstone, was more Catholic than the Pope, because he was true to the Catholic roots of Anglicanism, but that the pope was untrue – because of his aggressive ultramontanism – to the Catholic roots of Roman Catholicism.

As such, Gladstone's concerns over the issuances of the Vatican were manifold. First, he was concerned to maintain the distinction between the Anglo-Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church. If he failed to uphold this distinction, Gladstone ran the risk of having his entire politico-theology collapse. The two branches of the Church, must remain

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[68] Ibid., 605.

distinct for Gladstone's project to be effective. Furthermore, it must not be the case that

Anglo-Catholicism was itself a branch of Roman Catholicism. If Gladstone failed to make

this case then Roman Catholicism may still have a legitimate claim to authority over the

Anglo-Catholic Church. If this claim held, then Gladstone's Erastianism would fall into

Roman Catholicism. Secondly, if Gladstone is going to maintain the apostolic nature of the

Anglican Communion he must show that the Anglo-Catholic Church exhibited a primitive

nature independent of Roman theology. In other words, Anglicanism must not be a branch

of a Roman trunk. Both the Anglican and Roman Churches must be branches, along with

the Orthodox, of the one and only trunk, the Catholic trunk. Gladstone proceeded by

appealing to the Eastern Orthodox Churches. In doing so, he attempted to distill the notion

of apostolicity. In this sense a given church is apostolic if and only if it has a validly

ordained episcopal structure and celebrates the sacraments. If Gladstone is able to make

these claims, only then will his Erastian project be said to be effective.[69] Whatever one

might think of the theological validity of the case, Gladstone believed his argument to be

sound. In light of that he felt that the (Anglo-Catholic) Church and state ought to proceed

harmoniously.

For all of Gladstone's commitment to Erastian politics and theology, he was one of

the harbingers of British secularism. While he remained committed to the establishment of

the English Church – evident through his tracts on the Vatican Decrees and in his insistence

of the apostolicity of the Anglican Church, as well as its independence from Rome –

Gladstone was instrumental in the disestablishment of the Irish Church. This event, while

Gladstone judged it politically necessary, caused him great anguish, due to his theological

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[69] H. C. G. Matthew, "Gladstone, Vaticanism, and the east."

commitments. Furthermore, the disestablishment of the Irish Church, raised questions about the importance and even the legitimacy of the establishment of the English Church. Later Anglo-Catholics would take up Gladstone's arguments for Anglo-Catholicism, extending them not only to demonstrate the importance of the Church's autonomy from Rome, but also from Parliament.

3. Secularization as the Rejection of Erastianism in Political-theology

But do the Vatican Decrees and Disestablishment explain secularization? Hardly. As this paper continues it will demonstrate that Gladstone, in simultaneously arguing for Erastianism and Irish disestablishment, represented the first of a three-fold assault on religious life in British politics. The next section will continue by exploring Charles Gore, an Anglo-Catholic theologian who wished to disestablish the English Church, not because he hated theology, but because he loved it. He sought disestablishment to free the Anglican Church from the burden of Parliamentary control. Gore hoped that disestablishment would create a liberal theology, which could care for itself independent from both Rome and the State.

Theologians in Gladstone's tradition of High Church Anglicanism or Anglo-Catholicism would continue his arguments centered on the independence and apostolicity of the Anglican Church. However, such discussion was, and continued to be, increasingly apolitical. The waning influence of the theological in the political realm, while thrust into the public sphere beginning with Gladstone's publications, did not come to completion until the tragedy of the Great War occupied the minds of Englishmen, theological, political, and lay. Even so, it was not only that theological concern had diminished in politics, but rather that English concern for religiosity had diminished in general, by 1918. In this way, theological discussion in England became increasingly marginalized and esoteric.[70]

Gladstone's arguments were used in a new, and surprising context. Anglo-Catholic theologians and social activists took up the case of Anglo-Catholicism not to argue for Erastianism, but against it. This new generation of thinkers would move to drive a wedge

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[70] David Hempton, "Religious Life in Industrial Britain, 1830-1914."

between church and state, hoping to ensure the sovereignty of the first and the autonomy of the later. Even so, they are not Roman Catholics, but they thought of themselves as part of the one, true, Catholic, and Apostolic Church as members of its Anglican branch.

3.1 Gore's Theological Position and Anti-Erastianism

Charles Gore, the leading Anglo-Catholic churchman of his day, was born in London in 1853 and died in 1932. In many ways indebted to the work of Gladstone, his thinking also represents a serious rupture from it. Gore's writing also represented a prime example of an Anglo-Catholic churchman striving to reconcile the ideas of science and progress with those of faith and sacraments in the Catholic tradition, a faith that was ritualistic and sacramental, while at the same time, distinctively Anglican and not Roman. Thinkers like Pusey were formative in his intellectual development.

Gore was the "chief exponent" of Anglo-Catholicism in his day, as James Carpenter notes:

> It had been a long time since an ecclesiastic had made such an impact upon his age in so many vital areas as Gore. If he had done no more that [sic] found the Community of the Resurrection, assist in the establishment of the Christian Social Union and virtually create the See of Birmingham, he would have a high place in the history of his time. But these accomplishments, however important, are not the things for which he is principally to be acclaimed; they are simply practical expressions of certain aspects of his thought. He was pre-eminently a teacher, a counselor, a prophet. His real and abiding contribution was his teaching.[71]

"Gore held," Carpenter writes, "that the Church had too often lost sight of the social and ethical meaning of Catholicism, being inordinately preoccupied with doctrinal orthodoxy in the East, and with government in the West."[72] This outlook led Gore to claim that the

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[71] James Carpenter, *Gore: A Study in Liberal Catholic Thought* (London: The Faith Press, 1960), 7-10.
[72] Ibid., 54.

Church must be aware of social problems while remaining cautious about the association of the Church with politics. As such, Gore identified liberal Catholicism with Anglo-Catholicism.[73]

Gore's understanding of liberal Catholicism led him to disagreement with Gladstone. Gore considered the Anglican Church to be both scriptural and historical, and uncommitted to any of the doctrines of the reformation; Calvinism, Lutheranism, or Tridentine Catholicism. Just so, the Anglican Church could countenance a variety of schools and opinions, so long as it maintained Catholic principles. He was thoroughly committed to "the comprehensiveness of the Anglican Communion," noting this was simultaneously the Church's "glory and also its perpetual embarrassment." Equally important was its constitutionality. He maintained that the Church must be established in order to be authoritative. However it need not be absolute. This was a break from Gladstone's strong Erastianism. Carpenter summarizes this noting, "True authority does not issue edicts to suppress man's personal judgment or render its actions unnecessary: it is a parental, 'which invigorates and encourages, even while it restrains and guides the growth of our individuality."[74] "In this matter of Gore's Liberal Catholicism," Carpenter writes, "it is not easy to separate with any degree of precision his liberalism from his Catholicism."[75] He was attempting to synthesize a number of traditions, in light of the liberal thought of his day, while remaining true to the historical and scriptural traditions of a Church claiming to be apostolic. Just so, Gore is an important voice to consider in the divorce of politics and

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[73] Ibid., 54-55.
[74] Ibid., 56-58.
[75] Ibid., 61.

theology in the British public life, particularly since he used Gladstone's arguments against

Gladstone's strong Erastian position.

In *Roman Catholic Claims* (1889), Gore took up the task of defending Catholicism,

while clearly differentiating the Roman version from the Anglican version, in a way similar

to, but more sophisticated than, Gladstone. In Gore's argument, there are three main

trends. First, he attempted to refute the notion that Catholicism is by necessity Roman.

The second thrust of his argument focuses on the notion of "schism," the refusal to submit

to the authority of the Roman pontiff. The third focuses on "heresy," the denial of some, or

all, of that which is considered to be divine revelation.

Gore's first contention of differentiating Roman from Anglo-Catholicism occupies

the vast majority of *Roman Catholic Claims*, nearly 120 of 175 pages. His chapters on "The

Unity of the Church," "The Authority of the Church," "The Bible in the Church," "The

Promise to St. Peter," "The Growth of the Roman Church," and "The Development of the

Papacy in Latin Christianity" attempt to illustrate this differentiation. Overwhelmingly,

Gore argued in these chapters that Anglo-Catholicism represents a purer version of the

Catholic faith as defined by the creedal statements of the early Church. As such, Gore drew

an explicit and compelling case comparing the Anglicans to the Orthodox.[76] This

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[76] Gore recognized that the Orthodox Church constituted, and constitutes, an apostolic Christian Church. In this way, at the time Roman Catholics would have looked to the Orthodox as a schismatic, but nonetheless apostolic Church. Seeking unity with the Orthodox has been and remains an important point pursued by Roman Catholics. The Council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence-Rome (1431-1445) achieved this unity among Roman Catholics and the Orthodox, but was short lived as many of the viewed the compromise tainted by the political situation in Constantinople, where the Turks were poised to sack the city. In this way, the reconciliation is seen not to be genuine. Cf. Tanner, *The Councils of the Church*, 64-74 and *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 452-591 However, Roman Catholics have continued to seek unity, especially through conciliar statements, most recently in The Second Vatican Council's "Decree on the Eastern Churches" and "Decree on Ecumenism." In these documents, great reverence is given to the traditions and apostolicity of the Eastern Churches, Catholic and Orthodox, even to the point of noting, "Hence a matter of primary concern and care among the easterns has been, and still is, to preserve the family ties of common faith and charity which ought to exist between local churches, as between sisters" (*ut inter sorores, vigere debent:* literally "which

comparison was centered on the decrees of the early ecumenical councils (Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon) as well as *Quicumque vult* the Pseudo-Athanasian creed.[77] By following the example of the early Church councils and Eastern Church Fathers, Gore extended the argument offered by Gladstone for the apostolicity of the Anglo-Catholic Church.

Gore concluded that the Roman Church had developed past these statements, and in doing so, it had corrupted the statements made by the councils and fathers, placing an unnecessary burden on believers. "According to the older and really catholic view," Gore writes, "the later Church can never know what the early Church did not."[78] On Gore's view, to claim catholicity, and consequently apostolicity, it is a necessary condition that such a Church holds to the ancient creeds. The seeds of doctrinal developments must, for Gore, be present in the early creeds. If they are not, they are not dogmatic. Consequently, medieval developments of the Roman Church are then not necessary to claim apostolicity. Thus, it is not the Anglo-Catholics who are in error, but rather the Romans. Roman Catholic theology, on Gore's account, has overstepped its prerogative. The Church is not permitted to develop doctrine, as seems to be the Roman understanding as present in papal decrees and

ought to flourish, as between sisters.") (*Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 916 and 916*). All of this is to note the significance of the role the Orthodox play in the debate and discussion of unity and apostolicity between the Roman and Anglo-Catholics. In many ways the Orthodox seem to play the role of a linchpin whereby if the Anglicans are able to demonstrate a connection similar to the apostolicity of the Orthodox, they will be able to demonstrate their apostolicity independent of the Roman Church. If they are not, then it seems that the Anglo-Catholic movement reduces to a branch off of a Roman trunk, a difficulty noted earlier. However, identification with, or perhaps better similarity to, the Orthodox may yield a legitimate claim to Anglo-Catholic apostolic autonomy. See also H. C. G. Matthew, "Gladstone, Vaticanism, and the east"

[77] Complete texts in the original language and in English translation of the creeds can be found in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*. *Quicumque vult* can be found in Latin and English in Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum: Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals Latin-English* 43rd ed. Peter Hünermann ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 39-41.

[78] Charles Gore, *Roman Catholic Claims* (London: Rivingtons, 1889), 42.

conciliar statements after the fifth century, but merely witness to that doctrine.[79] Likewise,

the doctrine to which the Church must witness is rather thin, surely encompassing Trinity,

eternity and consubstantiality of God, Incarnation, humanity and divinity of Christ, the

Virgin Birth, Resurrection, the Church as one, holy, catholic and apostolic, and Mary as

"Theotokos."[80] Beyond these tenets of the faith, the Catholic Christian is not bound to

believe more theological statements, but only to witness to these original statements of

theology.

While the notion of apostolicity provides, on Gore's reading, a condition necessary

for catholicity, it is not in itself sufficient. It must be paired with valid episcopal ordination.

Gore notes this writing;

> The English Churchman is constantly liable to be told – and to be told from very
> opposite quarters – that if her were only 'logical' he would join the Roman Church:
> that belief in a visible Church and in its authority, in the Apostolic Succession, and
> the jurisdiction of the Episcopate, leads legitimately and logically to the conclusion
> of submitting to the see of Rome. Thus Anglicanism is represented as an impossible
> *via media* between pure Protestantism and Rationalism on the one hand and Roman
> Catholicism on the other.[81]

Fundamentally, Gore sought to reject the impossibility of the Anglo-Catholic *via media*. He

made a compelling case that Anglo-Catholicism retains its apostolic nature, by adherence to

the creeds. So too, he made a case for the validity of the Anglican Episcopacy. While

Anglicans, even today, would assert the validity of their episcopacy, Pope Leo XIII denied it

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[79] Ibid., 39.

[80] Cf. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* and Denzinger, *Enchiridion. Theotokos* picks out Mary as the "God-bearer." That is to say that Mary gave birth to God when giving birth to Christ. The title ended, at the Council of Ephesus, debate about the hypostatic union, the notion that Christ is fully human and fully divine.

[81] Gore, *Roman Catholic Claims*, 1.

in 1896 in the bull *Apostolicae Curae*, calling it "absolutely null and utterly void," placing a

further stumbling block in front of reunion.[82]

The second and third thrusts of Gore's arguments in *Roman Catholic Claims* are

centered on schism and heresy respectively. While the discussion of them is significant,

they are devoted considerably fewer pages compared to the question of Romanism and the

creeds. Gore went to great lengths to define both schism and heresy before defending

Anglo-Catholicism from both charges.

After his defense of the Anglican Church from the accusation of schism, Gore moved

to defending the Anglo-Catholic movement from the charge of heresy as leveled by Roman

Catholics. Gore understood heresy to be, "the self-willed repudiation by an individual or a

part of the Church of the authoritative rule of faith, especially as embodied in some

ecumenical dogmatic decree."[83] In defending Anglicanism from this charge, Gore noted

that, "The Reformation in England was not primarily a *doctrinal* movement at all." He went

on to note, "In its first intention it was a movement to repudiate papal usurpation, and good

care was taken to emphasize the stability of the Anglican position as regards doctrine."[84]

Even if there were dramatic social changes throughout and after the Reformation era,

doctrine was preserved.[85] Essentially, the shift from recognition of papal authority to a

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[82] For an account of the condemnation of Anglican orders see John Jay Hughes, *Absolutely Null and Utterly Void: An Account of the 1896 Papal Condemnation of Anglican Orders* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1968). The most relevant and substantive portions of the text of *Apostolicae Curae* are reprinted in the original Latin with an English translation in Denzinger, *Enchiridion.*
[83] Denzinger, *Enchiridion.* p. 160
[84] Ibid.
[85] Cf. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005). Duffy's scholarship represents a serious challenge to the traditional Whig historiography of the reformation in England. Duffy would agree with Gore that the Reformation drastically changed religious life in England noting, "By the end of the 1570s, whatever the instincts and nostalgia of their seniors, a generation was growing up which had known nothing else, which believed the Pope to be Antichrist, the Mass a mummery, which did not look back to the Catholic past as their own, but another country, another world." (Duffy, 593). However, Duffy would argue that to reduce the reformation to a mere

form of Erastianism, like Gladstone's, accounted for the differences between pre- and post-

reformation England. This shift from papism to Erastianism did not constitute heresy, in

that it did not deny the teaching of the early Church:

> But if heresy be, as it undoubtedly is, nothing short of the *rejection* of some part of
> the ancient heritage of truth, the English Church is not heretical. She has rejected no
> truth. Her divines have taught it all. It is being more and more completely taught
> within her pale today. And when we speak of defects in the teaching of the English
> Church, we must remember for our comfort that the English Church never made a
> claim to be the whole Church. She never claimed infallibility in her isolated
> utterances. She always appeals back behind herself to the Scriptures and the
> ancient Church. A part of a greater whole, she is to us only an authority, so far as,
> and because, she echoes the voice of what is greater than herself, the universal
> Church. ... In this defence [*sic*] of the English Church, I have frankly admitted all the
> faults of undiscipline, doctrinal compromise and reaction which we think can be
> fairly laid to our Church's charge. I believe that these are to be set over-against the
> arrogant claims, the exaggerations of truth, the falsifications of history, the
> accretions of error, which must be laid to the charge of Rome.[86]

So Gore insisted on the apostolicity of the Anglican Church, against Roman Catholics.

For all the similarity between *Roman Catholic Claims* and Gladstone's tracts, there is

a significant departure. Gore noted, "We make no sort of justification for the deplorable

subordination to the State into which the English Church allowed herself to be betrayed,

but Erastianism no more decatholicizes the doctrine of the English Church than it did that

of the Byzantine Church of old or of the Frankish Church in the Middle Ages."[87] With this

statement, Gore differentiated himself from Gladstone's earlier argument. Seeing the

subordination of the Church to the State as a scandal was nothing new. As early as 1850,

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change of authority (i.e. the rejection of papal authority in favor of an increasingly Erastian ideology) is to
understate the impact of the reformation in English life. Throughout *The Stripping of the Altars* Duffy
painstakingly categorizes the dramatic, perhaps even violent, disruption of what was a devout faith in
medieval England. The dramatic change in English religious devotion speaks to the great ideological,
historical, and emotional tensions between Romans and Anglicans. These tensions would undoubtedly be in
the minds of Gore and his adversaries. To undervalue the passion and history involved in sectarian debates
in England is to fail to understand the importance of sectarianism in English political and theological life.
[86] Gore, *Roman Catholic Claims*, p. 171.
[87] Ibid., 163.

the Gorham Judgment, had irritated Churchmen who saw the State's intervention into an

ecclesial matter as inappropriate.[88] Gladstone disagreed in principle. In this way, even by

1889, a mere fifteen years after Gladstone's first critique of the Vatican Decrees,

theologians had taken his traditional line in defense of Anglo-Catholicism, while departing

from his Erastian commitments. Consequently, Gore demonstrated the beginning of the

secularization of English politics as a good thing, in that it liberated the Church from the

looming danger of later judgments similar to Gorham's. Of course this would contribute, in

an unintended way, to secularization, in Taylor's third sense.

Three years later in 1892, Gore delivered *The Mission of the Church: Four Lectures

delivered in June, 1892, in the Cathedral Church of St. Asaph*, in which he reiterated his

presentation of the arguments present in *Roman Catholic Claims*. In *The Mission of the

Church*, Gore seemed to recognize that individuals have dual commitments as citizens and

Christians. Even more, he acknowledged that in some instances the law of the Church

stood at odds with the law of the state, perhaps most evident in debates centered on civil

marriage and divorce. In such instances Gore implied that Christians, "will be judged as

Christians by the Christian law."[89]

Such a position, directly impacted on the discussion of the Vatican Decrees and civil

allegiance. Gladstone's view was that a Catholic was unable to be a faithful citizen because

his allegiance is compromised by a "higher allegiance" to the papacy. In seeking the

disestablishment of the Anglo-Catholic Church, Gore recognized not the supreme authority

of the British government in ecclesial matters, but that the Church must be responsible for

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[88] George Gorham's views on baptismal regeneration were adjudicated not by the Church, but rather, by a
state court. Cf. Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* (New York: Continuum, 2002), 46-50.
[89] Charles Gore, *The Mission of the Church: Four Lectures Delivered in June, 1892, in the Cathedral Church of St.
Asaph* (London: John Murray, 1899), 130.

itself. Just so, Gladstone's criticism of the Vatican decrees, put pressure on the thought of Gore, who tended towards increased ecclesial liberty at the expense of establishment.

Gore made clear his intention in his preface to *The Mission of the Church*. He wrote, "I know that these lectures will be condemned by many as too ecclesiastical. 'By making some much of the Church organization,' it will be said, 'you only alienate the Non-conformists, and promote disunion.'"[90] This view, Gore noted, is not as political as it may seem. He made clear that his intention to promote (Anglo-)Catholicism, "what the primitive Church and the New Testament documents do, as it seems to me, come near to forcing us to believe – that our Lord founded a visible Church, and that this Church with her creed and scriptures, ministry and sacraments, is the instrument which He has given us to use."[91]

Gore then noted the importance of conscience, a theme that would occupy a primacy throughout the entirety of the lecture. "Thus our responsibility as Christians," Gore wrote, "is to keep our consciences enlightened; and our responsibility as teachers is to enlighten the consciences of others."[92] The first significance of this passage is that reveals the background of liberal catholic thought from which Gore was writing. The idea that individuals could legitimately follow the Church as moral teacher, as independent of the state, is one of the hallmarks of the liberal-Catholic school of thought in that it drives towards disestablishment. The second observation that one ought to note is that such

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[90] Ibid., vii.
[91] Ibid., vii.
[92] Ibid., 117-118.

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primacy of conscience in moral decision making was clearly indicative of the Oxford

Movement of which Gore was a part, himself a fellow of Pusey House, Oxford.[93]

Having asserted the primal importance of conscience in moral decision making and

in society, Gore then turned to, "How then and on what authority are we to seek to instruct

men's consciences on the Christian moral law?"[94] At the same time, citing scriptural

precedent, Gore asserted that Christ gave to the Church the authority to "bind and loose,"[95]

writing, "Our Lord then endowed the Church with this legislative and judicial power to bind

and loose; and though, no doubt, behind all mistakes of the Church there lies the corrective

justice of God, which he never can surrender out of His own hands, yet the Church was

intended to exercise this power, and that with a spiritual or supernatural sanction."[96] In this

way, Gore has furthered his notion that the Church is a distinctive entity by divine

authority, apart from the state. Further, he seems implicitly to have put both the authority

of the Church and of conscience about the state in moral matters. This, of course, was

precisely Gladstone's critique of the Vatican Decrees.

Gore then asked, "How is it that such obvious principles of the Christian society have

fallen into abeyance?"[97] In answering this question he pointed to two main causes, one

theological and one political. The first of these is centered on what Gore identified as the

medieval practice of compulsory and private penance. Gore argued, that in making

penance compulsory, "its moral level was necessarily lowered." The practice was further

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[93] It is perhaps of interest that Gore does not note his debt to Pusey, Newman, or any other Tractarian at this time. While he references Pusey later, in a different context, he does not reference Newman at all in Lecture IV. This might be considered strange given the relative similarity between Gore's view and Newman's. While it is far from clear that Gore's omission of Newman was politically motivated, it seems fair to say that Gore certainly would have read, and was indebted to Newman's *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk.*
[94] Gore, *The Mission of the Church*, 121.
[95] Cf. Matthew 16:19 and 28:18.
[96] Gore, *The Mission of the Church*, 122-123, emphasis mine.
[97] Ibid., 125.

lowered by the practice of "casuistry – which means the application of the general moral

law to particular cases – [which] came to be almost entirely what it ought not to have been

– a negative thing; not an enunciation of how Christ would have men act, or of what

Christians ought to do; but rather an attempt to minimize the moral requirement, to reduce

it to its lowest possible terms, to find the easiest possible basis on which the priest could

give absolution to the penitent."[98] This according to Gore, allowed people to slip away from

the practice of penance, "an evasion of the plain moral requirement of God in order to keep

slack consciences within the communion of the Church."[99] The second cause of "the decay

of moral discipline in our own Church," was the relation of the Church to the state.[100]

Here Gore began to argue strongly against the establishment of the Anglican Church,

noting that in the New Testament the Church and the state are identified as divine

institutions, existing on "different planes, and for different objects; the State to be the

minister of justice in the society of men generally; the Church to be the minister to the sons

of faith of the fuller and deeper blessings included in Christ's redemption."[101] They began

independent: the Roman Empire and the Christian Church. Later, the two were identified

in the medieval Papacy – even though in the long run the Church lost much of its control in

events like the investiture dispute, and with the practice of veto within papal elections. Still

later, the reformation in England attempted to define the Church and state as the "same

society in different aspects."[102] Gore noted that this was given its best expression that, "At

bottom it rests upon the assumption that, inasmuch as the State is committed to Christian

[98] Ibid., 126.
[99] Ibid., 127.
[100] Ibid., 127.
[101] Ibid., 127.
[102] Ibid., 128.

principles, the Church can go far towards merging herself in the State, and, in great

measure, allow her administrative independence to be taken from her in return for

national position."[103] This was the Erastian position, which Gladstone espoused. Gore

considered this position to be a "noble ideal," but poor practice. He found the democratic

influences of Victorian England too much for the Erastian ideal. "What likelihood is there,"

Gore noted, "that the will of the majority should submit itself to the law of Christ? And if it

be unlikely, what right had the Church to hamper her liberty to express and enforce by

moral discipline on her own member the unchanging law of Christ?"[104] In this way, while

Gore was a thoroughly liberal churchman, he found difficulty in establishing the Church

within the state in the wake of the liberal democratic atmosphere present in Victorian

England, even noting instances within British law of the time where the law of Christ had

been transgressed by Parliament such as the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857, which moved

divorce within the jurisdiction of civil rather than ecclesial courts.

For Gore, such disagreement between the law of Christ and the law of Parliament

caused great difficulty for Christians. He wrote, "They are citizens, and as citizens they are

bound to obey the State law in what belongs to State law; but they are Christians also, and

as Christians they are bound to obey another law, the law of the Church; and it is no excuse

for them, as Christians, that the law of the State does not enforce the law of Christ. They

will be judged as Christians by the Christian law."[105] Gore conceived of the authority of the

Church as "fundamentally independent of the functions and authority of the State."[106] Thus

in short order Gore rejected Erastianism, while maintaining many of the traditional

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[103] Ibid., 129.
[104] Ibid., 129.
[105] *Ibid., 130.*
[106] Ibid., 130.

arguments for the apostolicity of the Anglican Church. Gore, then, clearly called for the disestablishment of the Church.

From this point, Gore continued to build his case for "liberal" Anglo-Catholicism, based on a return to the scripture his reflection on the early Church practices, particularly the creed. This made for a *liberal* Catholicism precisely because Gore wished to reject many of the dogmatisms that developed in the medieval Roman Church, an argument he has made in numerous other places.[107] Thus the Anglo-Catholic branch was constituted by a "dogmatic minimalism." That is to say, that the Church was, in many respects, reduced to the early creedal statements, while rejecting what Gore classified as medieval additions of the Romans. As a result, individuals would have more latitude, or liberty, in their personal beliefs. This was most explicitly manifested in the rejection of claimed Roman authority and Erastianism.

3.2 Charles Lindley – Viscount Halifax

Charles Lindley Wood was born in London in 1839. He was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. In 1885, at forty-six years of age, he succeeded his father as Second Viscount Halifax. Halifax was a well-known ecumenist, who served as the president of the English Church Union from 1868 until 1919 and again from 1927 until 1934. The role of the English Church Union was to challenge the authority of the English government in determining questions of dogmatic theology. The English Church Union thus became instrumental in defending the Anglo-Catholic movement and its priests. Consequently, Halifax was a significant player in the secularization of British politics. In fighting for

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[107] See the above discussion of *Roman Catholic Claims* and *The Mission of the Church.*

disestablishment, Halifax became another player in the post-Gladstonian push to separate theology from politics.

While Halifax is a significant historical actor, there is a difficulty in exploring his impact upon Victorian politics. While Gore was prolific, Halifax wrote very little. Having said this there is a valuable, albeit small corpus from which a discussion might be developed, his a single volume *Leo XIII and Anglican Orders*,[108] overwhelmingly composed of letters written by and to Halifax centered on the question of the legitimacy of Anglican orders. Halifax's volume documented the debate up to and surrounding the publication of Leo XIII's *Apostolicae Curae*.[109] Since, Halifax and his contributors provide an inside account of the Anglo-Catholic movement and the continued call for disestablishment, these documents contribute to the thesis that it was the theologians themselves, using arguments in favor of Anglo-Catholicism, who pushed to relegate, or perhaps liberate, theology from politics. While this liberating is not a form of secularization in any of Taylor's three senses, it is trending towards all of them, the emptying of public space of God, the falling off of religious belief, and the presence of alternatives to and criticisms of Christianity, by 1918. In this way, Halifax primed Britain, inadvertently, for secularization.

Halifax greatly desired the reunification of Christendom. He was so committed to this cause that he even worried about publishing his account of the Anglican orders controversy, fearing it would add difficulty to it. He wrote, "Above all, I was afraid of saying anything which might embitter controversy, which might misrepresent my feelings as to

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[108] Charles Lindley Wood Halifax, *Leo XIII and Anglican Orders* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912).
[109] *Apostolicae Curae* was the document in which Leo XIII declared Anglican orders to be "Absolutely null and utterly void." See: John Jay Hughes, *Absolutely Null and Utterly Void.* The most relevant and substantive portions of the text of *Apostolicae Curae* are reprinted in the original Latin with an English translation in Denzinger, *Enchiridion*.

individuals, and which might incidentally prove a stumbling-block in the way of that reunion of Christendom and the healing of the breach between England and Rome which I so ardently desire."[110] It is seen in these sincere words, that the Church in England still hoped for Christian unity. The deliberate language chosen in speaking of unity furthers this point. Halifax wrote, "The desire for reunion with the Holy See is no new thing in England. How indeed is it possible for any intelligent and loyal member of the English Church not to desire the restoration of the ancient relations which once existed between Canterbury and Rome?"[111] This language is telling in that Halifax seemed clearly to be seeking theological not political union. He spoke of unity between the sees (i.e. jurisdictions) of bishops, not political union between the crown and papacy. Presumably, Halifax could have fought for diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Britain, but he does not. In this way, it seems that the theological concern for unity remained distinct from the political realm. Further, Halifax did not call for Canterbury to be subordinated to Rome. Rather, he calls for the "restoration of the ancient relations ... between Canterbury and Rome." Thus even in his introduction to the documentary history he continues, though shrewdly, the argument that England is a catholic, but not Roman country, theologically speaking.

Halifax, following Gladstone and Gore, noted the difficulty brought to the cause of reunion by the Vatican Council.[112] He recognized that it was not the Council itself that caused the problem, but Ultramontane politics, which seemingly dominated the council proceedings. This was most notable in the Council's decree of infallibility, a large stumbling block for reunion.

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[110] Halifax, *Leo XIII and Anglican Orders*, 2.
[111] Ibid., 3.
[112] Ibid., 5.

An additional difficulty, presented by Halifax in his writing was the influence of

Cardinal Herbert Vaughan throughout the discussion of Anglican Orders. Vaughan was a

conservative and an ultramontane, whom Halifax accused of misunderstanding the

Anglican position in relation to the Roman Church. Halifax said this in a letter to Wilfrid

Ward, the English essayist, in a letter dated 16 September 1894:

> It [Vaughan's letter to the *Tablet*] shows that he does not understand the position of those whom he is addressing, that in consequence, I feel sure without meaning it, he has contrived to say not only just the things which will irritate them most, but the very things (I refer to the paragraphs 'Prospects of Reunion") most likely to impede the progress and throw difficulties in the way of all to which he himself alludes as causes of hope – one might almost think some of that paragraph was written to stir up Protestant prejudice against us.[113]

Nearly two months later dated 2 November 1894, in a letter to Halifax, Vaughan

attempted to defend himself:

> I have all along felt the necessity of charity and sympathy in dealing with the high Church movement, whilst at the same time I guarded myself against being misunderstood, against hold out false hopes, against want of perfect fidelity to the truth as I see it and to my duty. As I see things, you are so near the Catholic Church, and yet so far away. You are so good and sincere, and yet in so singular a position, that I am drawn in two directions: it is difficult for one so little skilled in the use of language as I am to combine one's thoughts, and to present everything in due proportion and relation; but perhaps I have already said too much, and you will think I am making bad worse by going on.[114]

On the one hand he sympathized with Anglo-Catholics, but on the other he felt that they

were in error and in need of conversion. "Vaughan's attitude to the Reunion Movement,"

writes Derek Holmes, "which he crudely saw as a threat to the faith of Catholicism or a

means of saving Anglicanism from collapse, was similar to his Ultramontane approach at

the time of the Vatican Council when he confidently ignored or intolerantly discredited the

arguments of his opponents." Still even amid this difficulty both men seemed to maintain

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[113] Ibid., 106
[114] Ibid., 150-151.

respect for one another.[115] Ultimately, Holmes comments, "Vaughan's vision was simple and straightforward. He thought he was being sympathetic to Anglicans when he was injuring their deepest convictions and thought he was simply establishing the truth when he was becoming involved in the use of rather disreputable methods."[116]

While the letters contained in *Leo XIII and Anglican Orders* seldom return to the question of Erastianism, Halifax's final commentary did make some mention of the structure of Church government within the Anglican Communion, contrasting it with the structure of Roman government. Halifax noted, "In speaking of the Church, I think Roman Catholics have often in mind its exterior organisation and government, rather than the Church as the mystical Body of Christ. Members of the Church of England, on the other hand, when they speak of the Church, have almost always in view the Church, not as it is determined by its outward organisation, but as it is composed of those who are sacramentally united to Christ."[117] "This supernatural life of union with Himself Christ," Halifax continued, "communicates to man through the Sacraments, the validity of which is guaranteed to us by the Divine organization of the Apostolic ministry."[118] While all of this did not directly address the question of Erastian Church politics, it was clear that Halifax had in mind something very similar to that of Gore. Namely, the Church, on Halifax's understanding, was not something determined by its governmental structure. That is to say, the Pope, or the King, or Parliament did not have the opportunity or the prerogative to legislate what the Church was. Rather, the Church was constituted by Christ. In this way,

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[115] J. Derek Holmes, *More Roman than Rome: English Catholicism in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Burns & Oates, 1978), 218.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Halifax, *Leo XIII and Anglican Orders*, 399.
[118] Ibid.

Halifax lends his hand to the position he was known to embrace, disestablishment. The Church, in his mind, was an autonomous and necessarily spiritual entity.

While the dearth of resources, and even of biography, on Halifax makes him a difficult case to study, his involvement with the English Church Union speaks to his views on disestablishment. Continually, the English Church Union fought the Anglo-Catholic fight. It pursued disestablishment and defended Anglicanism as a Catholic, but not Roman faith. This brought it, and Halifax as its president, much controversy. Still the Church Union stands as another piece of puzzle in the theological account of British political secularization. The members of the Church Union and their distaste for parliamentary interference in matters of faith, particularly the Public Worship Act of 1874, demonstrate the continued push by Anglo-Catholics to remove theology from the political realm. In short, Lord Halifax had a profound influence on the shaping of the Anglo-Catholic movement, as Geoffrey Rowell argues, "Halifax himself lived by the vision of unity, took risks, was disappointed, but sowed the seeds of much that has happened since in a world and in a church which has changed far more than he would have believed possible."[119] While Halifax was, relatively speaking, a quiet voice in the Anglo-Catholic movement, he was indeed a powerful force.

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[119] Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious: Themes and Personalities of the Catholic Revival in Anglicanism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 211.

4. Christian Socialism

Christian socialism was an important facet of Anglo-Catholic liberalism. In the Anglo-Catholic view it as essential to "establish the Kingdom of God" on earth through caring for the poor and disenfranchised. Two men are, in large part, responsible for the reputation of Anglo-Catholic Christian Socialism, Charles Gore and Henry Scott Holland. Yet, while well intentioned, Christian Socialism presents the final of the three related paradoxes, which this paper has set out to explore, leading to the loss of faith. The success of Christian Socialism primed Britons, by 1918, to accept the Social Gospel of Christianity, while rejecting the metaphysics of Christian (specifically Anglo-Catholic) theology.

4.1 Gore's Socialism

Gore was committed to the gospel. In *The Mission of the Church*, he distinguished the state policy of socialism from the "profoundly Christian" moral ideal.[120] In *Orders and Unity* he devoted over sixty pages to the discussion. The Church's social action was an implicit recognition of its autonomy, supporting Gore's case for disestablishment. Gore lamented the practice, perhaps disgrace, of the alliance of the Church with the wealthy, writing:

> But our church has first of all to repent: it has to recall its unhappy surrender to the state of necessary functions of spiritual government: it has to reassert and revive the obligations of membership, after years during which it has suffered membership of the nation practically to stand in place of membership of the church: it has to suffer all the judgement [*sic*] it deserves, in whatever form it comes, for the long-continued alliance of the clergy with the rich or the 'upper classes' – for having approached the poor as from above, in the spirit of patronage: it has to restore the proportions of Christian faith and worship – not least in respect of the place and dignity of the holy eucharist. In all this process of repentance and recovery it will have constantly to look beyond its own border, and to learn not only from Roman and Greek catholics, but from reformed bodies – the Scotch Presbyterians and the

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[120] Gore, *The Mission of the Church*, 142.

English Nonconformists – and to recover portions of the broken body of truth in all quarters.[121]

This union of the rich and the clergy had the effect of alienating the poor by associating the Church with wealth. For this, it needed to atone. Gore called for the Church to approach the poor, particularly in regard to the sacraments. It follows from this concern for the poor, together with a call for Christian unity that the Church in England must reach out to those who have previously been marginalized (i.e. Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Nonconformists).

Gore's argument arose out of a concern for Catholicity (read as "universality") in the Church. While he defended Anglo-Catholicism from the critiques of Roman Catholics, he also looked to a spirit of ecumenism seeking to unify Christians. This vision of caring for the poor, looking to the disenfranchised, seeking unity rather than division, is a vision, which is quite similar to the vision of Gladstone, with the exception of Gore's commitment to disestablishment. While they begin with a defense of High Church attitudes and sacramental life, they diverge quickly with Gore's social gospel distancing him from his Gladstonian intellectual and theological heritage.

Gore went further, viewing unity not merely as desirable, but necessary:

> We may feel quite sure that by far the most important contribution we can make to the cause of unity among Christians in the future is by developing the strength and meaning of our own communion. The logic of events works slowly; but the decay of the distinctive forms and barriers of Protestantism, and the rise of national Christian churches in Africa and China and Japan and India may, nay must, produce a profound change in the religious situation. The world's need of a liberal Catholicism will surely become increasingly apparent. And doom should not we deserve if we of the Church of England had failed to make its possibility and its reality apparent? When we look beyond our borders, and ask ourselves what we ought to be doing towards the recovery of Christian communion, I do not think that we shall be encouraged to believe that any project of 'corporate reunion' is at all near to

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[121] Gore, Charles *Orders and Unity* (London: John Murray, 1909) 199-200.

realization at present. But if we repent each within his own communion, of our sins against unity and the shortcomings of our own part of the church, we shall lose our narrowness. We shall become conscious how far our own communion is from having or being all that is catholic. We shall see how much others have to teach us. We shall seek to know more about other communions, laying aside any remains or traces of pride or self-sufficiency or contempt. When we go abroad as visitors, we shall make it our religious interest and duty, as far as is compatible with 'making our communions', to associate ourselves with the religious worship of the country we are travelling in. So far as we are students, we shall do our best to avail ourselves of and to promote the communism in theological science which already exists.[122]

It is the *duty* of the Christian to seek unity across communions, towards the seeking of the greater catholicity of the Church. The Church and Christians engage in their own sort of foreign policy and alliance making. Of course this is a role, which Church and state usually played together. Here can and perhaps should be seen the further divorce between Church and state in early-twentieth-century Britain, that each would pursue this end individually; each would have its own sphere of activity.

On Easter 1914, on the eve of the Great War, Gore published the last work of his to be considered here, *The Basis of Anglican Fellowship: In Faith and Organization: An Open Letter to the Clergy of the Diocese of Oxford*.[123] In it he presented his most developed, and most concise, account of liberal, Anglo-Catholicism. He wrote:

> ... liberal or scriptural Catholicism: that is to say it has stood to maintain the ancient fundamental faith of the Catholic Church, as expressed in creeds and conciliar decisions of the undivided Church, and the ancient structure of the Church, as depending upon the successions of the bishops, and the requirement of Episcopal ordination for the ministry, and the ministration of the ancient sacraments and rites of the Church by the methods and on principles which it believed to be primitive. On such a basis [Anglo-Catholicism] has claimed to stand as a part of the Catholic Church; and at the same time it has associated itself with the Protestants in what it believed to be their legitimate protest and appeal – their protest against the exaggerated claim of the mediaeval papacy and the mediaeval accumulation of

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[122] Ibid., 204-206.
[123] Charles Gore, *The Basis of Anglican Fellowship: In Faith and Organization: An Open Letter to the Clergy of the Diocese of Oxford* (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., 1914).

dogma, and their appeal to the primitive Church and especially to Scripture, as the sole final testing ground of dogmatic requirement.[124]

Most impressive was his effort to situate the Anglican Church as a median between the extremes of Roman dogmatism and the Protestant reverence for scripture. He even went as far as to say that the *esse* of the Church is episcopal, precisely because it is anti-Erastian.[125] This is the point, of disestablishment, to which the entirety of Gore's thought has driven. In fact, Gore noted this vividly on the last pages of *The Basis of Anglican Fellowship* writing:

> I cannot resist the impression that the Church of England, in particular, has a bad time ahead of it. I think its perils are largely due to its refusal of recent years – a refusal manifested in all classes, movements, and grades of office amongst us – to think clearly about principles. As you know, I have grieved almost all of you by refusing to join the opposition to Disestablishment, whether in Wales or England. I think that Disestablishment, more than anything else, would throw us upon our principles. I doubt whether anything else will do so effectively. ... we should reflect upon and stand by and insist upon those fundamentals of faith and practice by which alone we can hope to hold together, and within those limits exercise the largest toleration of one another.[126]

Gore favored disestablishment because of his theological commitments. Thus he favored a limited secularism. Anglo-Catholics increasingly saw Parliamentary policies to hinder rather than help the growth of the Church amidst the loss of faith in the twentieth century. As a result, Anglo-Catholics in the generation after Gladstone fought for disestablishment in the hope of gaining an increasingly autonomous (i.e. liberal) church not hindered by the policies of politicians who were increasingly removed from the theological realm.

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[124] Ibid., 4.
[125] Ibid., 27-33. *Esse* should be read as being or nature. That is a thing's "*esse*" is its fundamental quality, its *sine qua non*.
[126] Ibid. 48.

4.2 Henry Scott Holland

The last voice of the Anglo-Catholic movement for consideration here is Henry Scott

Holland (1847-1918). Educated at Oxford he later became Regius Professor of Divinity and

canon of Christ Church, Oxford. Scott Holland continued the social dimension of the Anglo-

Catholicism. This social activism was then formed into the Christian Social Union in 1889.

"The Christian Social Union," wrote Bishop Winton of Winchester *in memoriam* of Scott

Holland, "was the herald of all the coming social moment and of its new challenges

[how[ever] slowly heard and acknowledged) to Christian life in the Church."[127]

Theologically, Henry Scott Holland was of like mind with the Tractarians. Eleanor C.

Gregory wrote, "Canon Holland always shared in the poignant pleasure of Cardinal

Newman's visits to the Deanery; making a further link between him and the older

Tractarians."[128] Still, his social gospel, transcended that of the Tractarians. "Coming in,"

Gregory added, "as he did, at a point where the outlines and limits of the movement could

be measured and appreciated, its great gap on the human side was extremely apparent to

him. The work of Christ's visible Church lay as much in the service of Maurice and Kingsley

as in the ministry of Pusey and Keble."[129] This passion for the social gospel would define

Scott Holland's influence in Victorian England, while at the same time, priming thinkers to

forsake the theological gospel for exclusively social reform.

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[127] Edwin Winton, "A Portrait" in *Henry Scott Holland, Some Appreciations*, Christopher Cheshire ed. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1919), 8.
[128] Eleanor C. Gregory, "At St. Paul's" in *Henry Scott Holland, Some Appreciations*, 10.
[129] Ibid.

Early in his career, Scott Holland was both revolutionary and erudite. The Bishop of

Oxford noted "his profound understanding of our Lord's method of founding a Church."[130]

Further the bishop noted that Scott Holland was "Firmly orthodox. There was, indeed, in

him no touch of obscurantism and blank submission to a mere dogma. ... He found, indeed,

something quite different – the joy of the intellect in the Light which shines to emancipate it

from the ignorance and bewilderment of sin."[131] He certainly would have resisted

secularism in the third of Taylor's three formulations, secularism as an alternative to faith.

He even seemed to resist the sort of secularism proposed by Gore, secularism as anti-

Erastianism. E.K. Talbot noted of Holland that, "he was one of the few in his generation

who resisted the 'mental deterioration' of those who on one side or the other have kept

religion and politics in particularist compartments – to the detriment of both."[132]

Scott Holland's Christian Socialism was undoubtedly his life's great work. F. Lewis

Donaldson wrote that Scott Holland:

> had an intimate touch with the inward realities of Labour's plans and projects,
> ideals and aspirations. More, he knew of its mistakes, blunders, and wrong-
> headedness, of its slips, falls, and recoveries. Needless to say, he knew all about its
> historic origins and developments, yet, all the while, he was outside, separated from
> it.[133]

Thus, he was poised to reform the labor movement in the light of the Social Gospel.

Working "towards a true socialization of industry, and while rejecting for himself the name

of Socialist and clinging to his old banner of 'Christian Socialism,' he manifested a true

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[130] C. Oxon, "As a Theologian," in *Henry Scott Holland, Some Appreciations*, 38.
[131] Ibid.
[132] E. K. Talbot, "H.S.H. and a Younger Generation," in *Henry Scott Holland, Some Appreciations*, 65.
[133] F. Lewis Donaldson, "H.S.H. and Labour," in *Henry Scott Holland, Some Appreciations*, 43.

appreciation of the great principles to which the socialist groups of the Labour movement adhered."[134]

Scott Holland recognized that the Labor movement was for nothing if not attached to the gospel, since true socialization "involves a new ideal of life, or rather, an ideal for which, for centuries, the early Church contended, but which modern materialism has outraged or ignored. ... Its essence is a turning from the despair and death of the last century, to life and hope; nay, it is itself a motion of life. It is for the renewal of mankind, for the restoration of the whole fabric of human life upon the foundations of justice, truth, and love."[135] Continually, Scott Holland was praised by theologians who were his contemporaries for his connection to the Tractarians and his, "sense of the great heritage in the Catholic Church which they had recovered."[136] It was precisely this dual connection to the social and the theological that ingratiated Scott Holland to his peers. As Talbot, Anglican priest and superior of the Community of the Resurrection, noted, "He was a great theologian because he was a great humanist. He was a prophet of the supernatural precisely because he gave such full value to the natural."[137] All of Scott Holland's writing points to the need for efforts of "social redemption."[138]

Writing of him G. W. E. Russell noted, "Holland had what Tertullian calls the *anima naturaliter Christiana*, and it had been trained on the lines of the Tractarian Movement." Again he comments, "I fancy that, theologically and politically, he owed as much [intellectual and moral debt] to Gladstone. The older and the younger man had a great deal

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[134] Ibid., 51.
[135] Ibid., 53.
[136] E. K. Talbot, "H.S.H. and a Younger Generation," 59.
[137] Ibid., 63.
[138] Wilfrid Richmond, "The Logic of Faith," in *Henry Scott Holland, Some Appreciations*, 75.

in common."[139] It this way, Scott Holland fits as yet another theological figure contributing to the paradox of birth of English secularism. This secularism became plausible in Scott Holland's effort to establish the Social Gospel. Still, Scott Holland's Christian Socialism is decidedly distinct from the (Marxist) Socialism, which was already in vogue among some advanced thinkers from the 1880s onwards.

"Belief is nothing it if is not practical," Scott Holland wrote, "it must of necessity penetrate the life and colour of our character; it must lay hold of heart and soul; it must touch home on the central core of our spiritual being."[140] In this way the Creed of the Church must be combined with the lives of individuals. Only when the two are so intermingled does an authentically Christian vision emerge.

Scott Holland pointed out that "belief in a Church affects our belief in Christ Jesus; it involves that is a particular reading of His Life-work, a particular conception of His purpose, of His mind, of His desires, of His plan while He was here with us on earth."[141] Thus for Scott Holland, belief in the Creed, the Church, and Christ cannot be an idle belief, it must inform the actions of the individual believer. Following this call to live out the mission of Christ on earth, Scott Holland developed his socialism. He noted the mission of Christ on earth was one of compassion, "His [Jesus'] mercy, His pity, were poured out freely upon all who could be persuaded to call for them. Everywhere they flowed out. He could not refuse the call of faith, even though it broke through the limitations under which He was at work. ... Far and wide, open and free, His love pours out its abundance."[142] In short, Scott Holland had hoped to establish the kingdom of God on earth. The passage vividly

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[139] G.W.E. Russell, "A Final Appreciation," in *Henry Scott Holland, Some Appreciations*, 81 and 83.
[140] Henry Scott Holland, *Creed and Character: Sermons* (London: Rivingtons, 1887), 37.
[141] Ibid., 38
[142] Ibid., 59.

urges his readers to do likewise. Not only to do likewise, but "to make possible, to make known, to make active, the work which Christ, by His Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection, achieved once for all. It was done, it was finished, the task given Him to do. But only through man could it be laid open to man."[143] It was then clear to Scott Holland's followers that the only way to establish God's earthly kingdom was to be "His instruments, His organ, by which His own activity, supreme and unique, may find channels of entry."[144]

In this way, the Christian vocation became, for Scott Holland and his followers, deeply personal. He wrote, "We are of the Church, called, elect, precious, not that we may receive more, but that we may give more. Blessed, indeed to receive! But more blessed still to give; and that is our blessing, the blessing of the Church."[145] Moreover, Scott Holland did not conceive of this mission as one merely for the clergy, but that, "each of us, lay and cleric alike, is constituted by Baptism a light-bearer to those who sit in darkness, a Christ-bearer to those who lie in the shadows of death.[146]

But still this buildup had not led Scott Holland to Christian Socialism. He needed to establish Christ's mission as that of service to the poor, an easy enough task to perform. Speaking of the importance of communal solidarity, Scott Holland wrote, " Consideration of his neighbours, of their works, and needs, this it was allowed, there must, indeed, be."[147] Using even stronger language, he called for passion, "that, indeed, moves mountains; and it is a social passion, a passionate sense of fellowship, of blood, of community, which, far from finding itself fettered by law, is only them made free when it has won its way to legal and

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143 Ibid., 64.
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid., 65.
146 Ibid., 68.
147 Ibid., 70.

social recognition."[148] He concludes his argument that the Christian faith is a faith with an

"inherent social character. [It] cannot be a solitary affair of the isolated individual man."[149]

What did this mean in practice? First, he recognized that it was the Church's duty to

feed the hungry.[150] This was "the motive with which the Church is built" and "the force by

which it is made alive."[151] To create a Christian civilization, "that is the Church, and each

soul within the Church must reflect and embody the spirit of the Bride. Each one of us is set

to display these three graces of the Church – compassion, thanksgiving, and order"[152]

creating, "a civilisation that can hope against hope. A civilisation [that] once Christianised

can face the utmost reality of the grimmest and direst facts, can face the lies that hold their

own, and win."[153]

Why should the Christian take seriously the Social Gospel? There was "another

motive, even more powerful, more universal, and more fruitful – the motive of love."[154]

That love, for Scott Holland was naturally expressed in expressions of unselfishness and the

cultivation of virtue. The man who experiences this has internalized the Social Gospel and

has helped to establish the kingdom of God, by responding to the call, "there are men, your

brothers, and women, your sisters; they have needs that you can aid. Listen for their

confidences; keep your heart wide open to their calls, and your hands alert for their service.

Learn to give, and not to take; to drown your own hungry wants in the happiness of lending

yourself to fulfil [sic] the interests of those nearest or dearest."[155]

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148 Ibid., 73.
149 Ibid., 77.
150 Ibid., 105.
151 Ibid., 116.
152 Ibid., 119.
153 Ibid., 155.
154 Ibid., 275.
155 Ibid., 294-295.

Service provided the Christian the opportunity to encounter Christ. Without social action theology lacked expression and without theology, social action lacked meaning. Thus he wrote, "Earth, with its hunger and sickness, is still a place where we may find Christ. For in all we do to help and brighten, to succour and relieve our fellow-men, we hear His voice of salutation."[156] The formation of social character remained integral to Scott Holland's view of the Christian life, even becoming the "ground of unity between the life here and the life hereafter." [157] Indeed, overwhelmingly, Scott Holland constructs this organized, universal, Christian society as one based upon "primal Christianity," which is apostolic and biblical.[158]

Again, a decade later, Scott Holland renewed his commitment not only to the social Gospel, but also to Anglo-Catholicism and "the Catholic Priesthood, its Liturgy its Sacraments, here they are, still ours – the pledges in our hands that we are not cut off from the blessed joy."[159] Of particular importance was the liturgy, "the Church's innermost secret, at its most persistent core of witness, at its deepest bond. ... In its Liturgy we are admitted into its heart of hearts; we touch the central springs of its Divine life."[160] In *God's City and the Coming of the Kingdom*, and throughout his writing, Scott Holland held that, "The kingdom of heaven, then in all its plastic freedom, in all its infinite variety, is always one thing – the manifestation of the Person of Jesus Christ on earth" through both theological and social action.[161]

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[156] Ibid., 325.
[157] Ibid., 333.
[158] Henry Scott Holland, *God's City and the Coming of the Kingdom* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1897), 39.
[159] Ibid., 60.
[160] Ibid., 62.
[161] Ibid.,165.

This demonstrated clear continuity with early Anglo-Catholic thinkers, such as Gladstone and Gore, an important point given that Scott Holland represented a crucial hinge in the secularization in England. Scott Holland's Christian Socialism was a kind of bridge between the Scientific Socialism of Marx *et al.* and the Ethical Socialism of the Labor Party, which "owed more to Methodism than to Marxism," allowing individuals to maintain a commitment to improving society without attachment to theology.[162] No longer would "Christ Jesus!" be "the only force which can overleap the barriers of our narrow conventions, our social prejudices, our personal dislikes."[163] That position would not be occupied by industry and ethical socialism.

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[162] Morgan Phillips quoted in Matthew Worley, *The Foundations of the British Labour Party* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), 131.
[163] Scott Holland, *God's City and the Coming of the Kingdom*, 341.

5. Everything Changes

By 1914, Britain had undergone a series of secularizations: the disestablishment of the Irish Church, a conscious call from certain theologians for ecclesial independence from the state, and the rise of interest in the Social Gospel. Christian Socialism provided a link between theologians and those secularists who wished for a secularism not in accord with Christianity but hostile to it. However, such a *volte-face* would not occur *ex nihilo*, but required an impetus. This occurred in the coming of the Great War, which would decide what was and what was not important.

5.1 Undeniable Horror

The Great War was devastating. It marked the advent of "total war" and brought unspeakable horror upon combatants. The war was not expected to last more than a few months, but British involvement dragged on for four years, resulting in the loss of one million British soldiers and over eight and one half million lives overall. Paul Fussell summarizes it this way: "The effect of the war in Britain was catastrophic: a whole generation was destroyed that might have furnished the country's jurists, scholars, administrators, and political leaders."[164] In his *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Fussell argues that the war had a direct, dramatic, and lasting effect on British society shattering pre-war innocence and leaving behind a culture hardened by loss of life and a new body of literature (particularly poetry) that was distinctly "modern."

Plagued day and night with horrendous conditions of the trenches, British soldiers were constantly exposed to enemy shelling, machine gun fire, tanks, and chlorine gas. "The

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[164] Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 337.

mud of Flanders," Fussell says, "gathered into the curd-crumped, mildly jellied textures of human shit, piled, duck-boarded, trenches and shell-pocked leagues of shit in all directions ... Compared with the actual sights and smells of the front, the word *shit* is practically genteel."[165]

The war called into question the British establishment – the aristocracy, government, Church, educational system, any group or institution which had led the nation to this pass. By 1918, fifty percent of the British infantry were under the age of nineteen.[166] Philip Larkin comments on this loss of innocence in his poem "MCMXIV," which begins by describing young men lining up to enlist in the army in service of king and country, and which concludes:

> Never such innocence,
> Never before or since,
> As changed itself to past
> Without a word – the men
> Leaving the gardens tidy,
> The thousands of marriages
> Lasing a little while longer:
> Never such innocence again.[167]

The forced maturation of the men who headed off to war also the forced maturation of the country as a whole, Fussell argues, is not only evident through anecdotes and poetry, but also through language. At one point, he lists a page worth of new vocabulary forced on soldiers and the British public, used to describe the war.[168] In another instance, he describes how once innocuous words, began to take on sexual connotations after the

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[165] Ibid., 330-331
[166] Ibid., 18.
[167] Philip Larkin, "MCMXIV" reprinted in Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, 19.
[168] Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, 21-22.

war.[169] Finally, he notes how words and phrases like, "no-man's land," "trench" and "fatigue" took on new meanings, often irrelevant to the original use of the term; applying "no-man's land" to the condition of unwed mother's.[170]

5.2 The Irony of the Great War

For Fussell, irony is the dominant motif of the Great War. In the context of the present study, perhaps its greatest irony is that it provided the motivation for Britain to move towards Taylor's third conception of secularism. Often an event like a war, rather than diminishing public faith, fosters it. Not so in Britain. This is driven home with the vivid image of a soldier not moved to prayer, but to recitation of "a school mnemonic for Latin adverbs, beginning: *'Ante, apud, ad, adversus'*" in order to find solace during a German bombardment.[171] During the war, Arthur Marwick notes, "those early volunteers who had a simple old-world religious faith were probably most immune to the numbing influence of trench life; but they and their faith were extinguished in the Battle of the Somme."[172] Noting one soldiers profound faith, and impression of the celebration of a liturgy, Marwick tells how he, "perished, as did thousands like him; for those who survived it was not difficult to doubt King, Country, or God." Again he writes of a solider who commented, "Any faith in religion I ever had is most frightfully shaken by the things I've seen."[173] That the faith of soldiers was shaken became even more apparent as the war neared an end. Marwick quotes the Minister of St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh to drive to the point that too

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[169] Ibid., 23.
[170] Ibid., 189.
[171] Ibid., 169.
[172] Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (London: MacMillan Education Ltd, 1965), 217.
[173] Ibid., 218.

many ministers had "embarked with enthusiasm upon the 'Holy War.'"[174] In other words,

as the Minister of St Giles points out, "The Church to an unfortunate degree, had become an

instrument of the State and in too many pulpits the preacher had assumed the role of a

recruiting sergeant."[175] It became easy to equate the Anglican Church, its preachers, and

even God with the force that drove them into the undeniable horror of the war. Marwick

remarks that "C.F.G. Masterman, formerly a staunch Anglican, complained to his wife that a

service at Westminster Abbey seemed like an activity at Wellington House, and remarked

that the only religious leader who emerged with credit was the Pope [Benedict XV],

because of his appeal to the warring nations, and that the body which came through the

best was the Quakers."[176]

The irony of this statement should not be lost. It was in reaction to the Pope and to

Irish Catholics that Britain had moved on the path to secularization. Now, it was the Pope,

along with the non-conformist Quakers, who alone stood as a credible religious figure. Still

even though some remained credible, the Christian faith itself was discredited. Masterman

later noted such discontent writing in his diary in February 1918, "God is a devil who

rejoices in human suffering. He may be. There's no evidence to show He isn't."[177] This

sentiment was clearly shared. Marwick notes the decline of Church: "The extent to which,

in the perspective of three decades of change, the Churches suffered, can be seen from

Rowntree's 1935 survey of York : the number of adults attending church has fallen from

17,060 in 1901 to 12,770 in 1935, notwithstanding the fact that during that period the

adult population of the city has increased from 48,000 to 72,248 ... In 1901 adult

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[174] Ibid., 297.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid., 298. Benedict XV even went so far as to develop a peace plan.
[177] Diary of C.F.G. Masterman in Marwick, The Deluge, 298.

attendances amounted to 35.5 per cent of the adult population; in 1935 it amounted to only 17.7 per cent."[178]

Some evidence contradicts Marwick's contention that the war killed faith. The conversion of C.S. Lewis is a famous example. However, Marwick's case is not merely that the war caused antipathy towards religion, but that loss of faith was embedded within the larger social phenomenon of a distrust of establishment. For that claim there is ample support.

Lytton Strachey makes the case for, while himself exemplifying, the lack of trust in the establishment in his *Eminent Victorians*.[179] Of particular note is his depiction of Cardinal Manning whom he portrays as a worldly schemer. After his conversion to Catholicism, Manning is depicted as having no concern for his dead wife, not even thinking back on her fondly. Strachey writes that when told of the disrepair of her grave, Manning responded coldly that: "It is best so, let it be. Time effaces all things."[180] Such a remark represents Manning, a man of deep faith, as heartless, furthering the sentiment of discontent towards faith.

Noel Annan also makes the case that the war led to skepticism about establishment writing, "Every generation turns on its fathers; but the Great War, which most of Our Age considered was a war that could have been avoided and should have been stopped, made us preternaturally critical of what one of our number, Alan Taylor called the Establishment – the network of people and institutions with power and influence who rule the

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[178] Marwick, *The Deluge*, 298-99.
[179] Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* (New York: Continuum, 2002).
[180] Ibid., 14.

country."[181] Clearly the Church militant was part of this establishment. Annan makes the case that such criticism developed into the acceptance of "double truth" similar to that put forth by the Islamic philosopher, Averroes. Annan argues that British society contradictorily accepted both "philosophical truth" and "religious truth." Religious truth, the theology to which the Anglo-Catholics and others were committed, was distinct from philosophical truth, which could encompass the ethical socialism popular after the Great War. In this way a paradox emerges in the simultaneous rise and fall of optimism. The British rejected the theological truth of idealism, while embracing its philosophical truth. This reduced the person of Jesus to a great moral teacher within the philosophical realm, allowing individuals to keep the social gospel, without the added theological mumbo-jumbo.[182]

A. J. P. Taylor reinforces the point. In *English History, 1914-1945*, he argues that there was an atmosphere of both hope and despair.[183] This sentiment resulted from disgust with the wanton loss of life in the war coupled with a hope that the world would have to improve after such atrocity. Religion was not associated with the hope, but rather with the despair. While church going declined, "the dogmas of revealed religion – the Incarnation and the Resurrection – were fully accepted by only a small minority. Our Lord Jesus Christ became, even for many avowed Christians, merely the supreme example of a good man."[184] This supports Annan's idea that truth had been partitioned between religion and philosophy, allowing for the pursuit of the good life and hope in the philosophical

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[181] Noel Annan, *Our Age: English Intellectuals Between the World Wars – A Group Portrait* (New York: Random House, 1990), 10.
[182] Ibid., 17.
[183] A. J. P. Taylor, *English History, 1914-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 20, 85,114, 120, 138.
[184] Ibid., 168.

realm while "the advance in material comforts made men less concerned with pie in the sky." The "sight of priests and bishops blessing guns or tanks during the Great War was not a good advertisement for the Prince of Peace" led to a rejection of religious truth.[185]

Robert Graves is another voice depicting the post-war years as a time for hope and despair coupled with distaste for establishment. His autobiography, *Good-bye to All That*, tells of his early life as one wrapped up in the establishment – struggling to find the right school, learning Latin and Greek, fitting into patriarchal society, and presenting intellectual defenses of the Christian faith.[186] However, after the War, Graves found himself an agnostic, disenchanted with the gentleman's life he had been groomed for as a boy. He credits the war as the catalyst, which spurred his turn from his past.

Stuart Mews, in his "Religious Life between the Wars, 1920-1940,"[187] agrees with this assessment of religious life in the wake of the Great War, writing, "Their experience had been horrific. The war had come as a tremendous shock to the churches, and especially to the clergy. Religious leaders had thrown themselves into support of the British cause with few if any reservations. ... The war not only revealed the extent to which the churches had been marginalized, but accelerated those long-term social trends which undermined religious institutions."[188] He even notes the irony that, "Roman Catholic priests seemed to have a greater hold over their men than Anglicans and Nonconformists."[189] Churches were forced to adapt or die, and many of them thus moved forward as "social and political witness[es]." [190]

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[185] Ibid., 168-169.
[186] Robert Graves, *Good-bye to All That: An Autobiography* (New York: Vintage, 1957).
[187] Stuart Mews, "Religious Life between the Wars, 1920-1940," in *A History of Religion in Britain*, 449-466.
[188] Ibid., 449.
[189] Ibid., 450.
[190] Ibid., 458.

It is clear that by the end of the Great War Britain was ready to reassess its values. The horrors of the war had shaken the faith of Britons to the core. Theologians like Scott Holland had provided a social framework that could (easily enough) be stripped of its religious association, realizing Christian socialism minus the Christianity. His friends had characterized Scott Holland as a Hegelian, looking towards the eschaton not in the liberal Prussian state, but in the city of God on earth.[191] Just as Marx had turned Hegel on his head, it was easy enough for British secularists to invert Scott Holland, shirking his commitment to theology while embracing and promoting his commitment to socialism. This paradox of the simultaneous rejection and adoption of idealism was the product of accepting a dual notion of truth. As Annan writes:

> Machiavelli showed that no statesman could rule and remain faithful to Christian virtues. Any ruler who did so would be defeated by other rulers or turned off his throne by his own subjects. ... He had shown that there was an irreconcilable conflict between two ways of life – the life of personal relations, the inner life in which we ask, 'How shall we live?'; and the life of politics, of getting and gaining, of using power to attain good ends, but ends that are public and not personal.[192]

In the wake of the Great War, Britons were prepared to make this distinction. Politics and theology needed a divorce. They got one. It was now all too easy for the Webbs and those who thought like them to actualize the withdrawing roar of the sea of faith in the now prophetic words of Matthew Arnold.

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[191] Russell, "A Final Appreciation," in *Henry Scott Holland, Some Appreciations*, 81
[192] Annan, *Our Age*, 17.

6. Conclusion

Overwhelmingly, the Great War was the capstone to the unintentional project of secularization by English theologians of the Anglo-Catholic tradition. Gladstone found the Vatican Decrees of 1864-1870 unpalatable. As a result, in 1874/5 he spoke out against Papal infallibility and called into question the civic allegiance of Catholic Britons. He did this by defending Anglo, as distinct from Roman, Catholicism. In spite of his commitment to Erastianism, he also disestablished the Church of Ireland. Of course, he did not do this in order to rid Ireland of faith, but as a political move to ensure peace in that troubled country.

Charles Gore, indebted to Gladstone for many of his arguments in favor of Anglo-Catholicism, broke with him in calling for the disestablishment of the Church of England. Gore, too, did this not in an effort to eradicate religion in Britain but to purify it. Gore saw it as a scandal that the Church of England was established. He felt that the Church was properly capable of self-governance, without the help of the state.

Henry Scott Holland was indebted to both Gore and Gladstone. However, he emphasized a distinct facet of Anglo-Catholic theology, Christian Socialism, which found its fullest expression in his call to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

In the wake of the Great War, Britons disillusioned with their faith found ammunition in theologians who had unwittingly supplied them with arguments for secularism. This was largely accomplished by the effacement of the "Christian" from Scott Holland's socialism. God may or may not have been dead – but he was clearly a member of the Labor Party.

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