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SERIOUS RELIGION AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC MANNERS:
THE SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF EVANGELICALISM IN HULL
1770-1914

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Peter Derek Stubley, M.A.

Supervisor: Dr Sheridan Gilley

Department of Theology



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The central theme of this thesis is the development of Evangelical religion in nineteenth-century Hull and its hopes for a godly society. How did Evangelicals pursue their vision in the setting of an expanding seaport and industrial town?

Some historical background to religion and society in Hull is sketched in, followed by an exposition of the beginnings of the Evangelical dynasty in the Church of England. Account is taken of Evangelicalism's relations with the early stages of Hull's modern commercial development.

The first part of the study proceeds to examine the fortunes of Dissent, Methodism and Catholicism, up to the second half of the nineteenth century, in the light of its main concern with Evangelicalism in the Established Church.

A series of important issues for Evangelical aspirations are discussed in the second part of the thesis in order to assess the effectiveness of Hull's Evangelicals in achieving their aims. They urged the populace to be regular in attendance at public worship in the name of religion, morality, and social stability. Elementary education, however, was the essential preliminary to serious religion.

Finally, three topics are examined, three campaigns pursued over many years which aimed at a marked improvement of public manners: Sunday observance, temperance, and an attempt to suppress prostitution.

P.D.Stubley

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PREFACE

In less than a hundred years, if the worst predictions of global warming come true, Kingston-upon-Hull, like Lyonesse, will be lost beneath the sea, and the east coast will begin at Doncaster. But Hull has metaphorically suffered the fate of Lyonesse at least twice already. Its outward appearance in the early nineteenth century was that of a new commercial town, and little remained of its medieval past, except the parish churches of Holy Trinity and St Mary which are still there today. Hull was heavily and constantly bombed from the air in the Second World War between 1940-43, so not much is left from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. There are a few rows of Georgian houses in the city centre, but the inner suburbs are late Victorian and Edwardian.

Two features retain the feeling of old Hull. Though many of the present buildings are barely a century old, the Old Town has generally kept the original pattern of its narrow medieval streets, and High Street, as it winds its way beside the river Hull to the Humber Estuary, is most reminiscent of the long past merchant era and its people; here one or two fine houses of the period have survived the ravages of time and commercial development. The most unchanging and noble feature of all, however, is the estuary itself. Almost two miles wide where its tidal waters whirl and eddy menacingly past the Hull Pier, it dominates the flat surrounding countryside and drains 20 per cent of England's land surface.

The people of Hull, especially the older generation, are captivated by the history of their town to an extent not often realized elsewhere. University extra-mural lectures and WEA classes on local history are fully subscribed and sometimes attended by the same audiences year after year. The well-stocked reference libraries and the local record offices are full all day long with researchers seeking information about their forbears. Not every citizen of Hull was born here, but incomers often fall in love with the place after a short time, and University undergraduates from the south of England are usually gratified by the appearance of the city and by what it has to offer.

Among those not native born and bred are Hull's clergy and ministers. One thing they all remark upon is that Hull, even by modern standards, is a very irreligious town. The propagation of religion provokes but an indifferent response and produces meagre results for Anglican, Protestant and Catholic. A variety of explanations are voiced: Hull's isolation, its class structure and types of occupation, the deep divisions in the past between rich and poor, or the one-time strength of Nonconformity and its subsequent downfall. Some of the explanations of this degree of secularity are difficult to understand, and the following study explores its causes.

I am indebted to many people in Hull who have shown an interest in my research, and have taken time to point out source materials, especially Mr Edward Gillett and Dr Joyce Bellamy, retired University history teachers and authors of works on Hull, Miss J. Crowther and the staff at the Hull Local Studies Library, Mrs C.A. Boddington of the Humberside County

Record Office, Mr G. Oxley, Hull City Archivist, and his staff at the Hull City Record Office, and Miss Carolyn Aldridge, Research Assistant (Museums) Hull City Museums. Particular thanks are due to the late Mr John Meadley, a gifted amateur local historian, for the unique knowledge he carried in his head as the result of thirty years spent indexing Hull's local newspapers. He was always ready to share his knowledge with anyone who asked. His Meadley Index to the Hull Advertiser 1826-57 was published by the Humberside Polytechnic in 1987, two years before his death. The bulk of his work in rough note form remains unpublished and awaits an editor. I am also grateful for permission to reproduce maps and illustrations from Hull Central Library and the Wilberforce House Museum.

My principal debt, of course, is to my supervisor, Dr Sheridan Gilley. I am grateful for his support, advice, inspiration and tenacity over many years.

Kingston upon Hull
February 1991

P.D.Stubley

Chapter One

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL: AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BACKGROUND

'Hull? A place I have never been to,' is the usual response to those who admit to living there. Situated twenty miles from the sea on the north bank of the Humber estuary and isolated from the rest of industrial Britain, the place was, until recently, more easily approached by water than by land. The roads out of Hull pass through miles of unbroken countryside (Leeds is over sixty miles away); its entrances are broad tree-lined avenues (1).

At the height of its commercial prosperity, in 1899, the town was described by a sightseer as a bleak and ugly seaport which turned to gold the sludge once churned up by Danish pirate ships (2). Its 'mean and ugly streets' gave a new meaning to the vagabonds' litany,

From Hull, Hell, and Halifax,
Good Lord, deliver us. (3).

Today's visitors find a city centre with newly-cleaned public buildings, attractive gardens, traffic-free areas, expensive yachts in the Marina (once Humber Dock and Railway Dock), and the inevitable shopping malls and 'leisure facilities.'

Geography is also important for religious history. Liverpool faced Catholic Ireland; Hull faced Protestant northern Europe whence its seamen, in and out of Hamburg and the Baltic ports, were the first to bring back the ideas and practices of the new religion.

The confluence of the river Hull and the estuary



was a trading place as early as the Norman Conquest. There was, perhaps, a small settlement supported by capital from Beverley and York; the point where the Hull enters the Humber was an ideal anchorage for transferring goods into larger vessels capable of crossing the North Sea. The town of Hull dates from 1293 when the Abbott of Meux sold the convent's property in Wyke and the Grange of Myton to Edward I. The King's charter in 1299 changed Wyke into the free borough of Kingston-upon-Hull, surrounded by the villages of Ferriby, Swanland, Anlaby, Hessle, West Ella, Kirkella, Willerby, and Wolfreton, later to be included in the fifteenth-century County of Hull, and constituting today's suburbia (4).

For many years Hull was a great east-coast port for the medieval wool trade, but overreliance on this one commodity resulted in three centuries of decline. The town was walled, ditched and garrisoned from the fourteenth century until after the Napoleonic wars, but its character changed more in the eighteenth century than in the nineteenth. In 1700 it was just beginning to grow beyond its walls, increasing in population from 6,000 to a mere 7,000 in the first half of the century; but at the time of the first local census in 1792 Hull had 22,286 inhabitants (5). In 1700 the town was closer to its past than its future; by 1800 the features of its modern economy could be clearly discerned (6). The past belonged to the wool trade; the future to the Baltic imports of rye, tallow, potash, and linseed (7) which created Hull's first new industries, seed-crushing and the manufacture of paint.

The beginning of the modern port

From 1700, Hull expanded with the demand for more and more new materials from its hinterland and the

opening up of markets in the Baltic. Ships unloaded in the haven of the lower tidal waters in the river Hull, sheltered from the broad and sometimes stormy Humber. Parallel with the Hull was High Street (formerly Hull Street) where the merchants built their houses, each with its quay at the bottom of the garden. At the end of each short street connecting High Street to the river was a public quay.

Modern Hull began with the passing of the Dock Act in 1774 which created the Hull Dock Company. The old haven had become intolerably congested, but a number of merchants who had grown used to their own private quays, away from the scrutiny of the customs and excise officers, were against change. The Dock Act put an end to the argument. A new dock was excavated, known successively as New Dock, Old Dock, and Queen's Dock, on the site of the old town wall between Beverley Gate and the Hull, which was entered through a lock. Completed in 1778, at ten acres it was then the largest dock in England, and the first of many more to be built in the port of Hull over the next 200 years (Appendix 1).

Humber Dock in 1809 and Prince's Dock, as it was later known, in 1829 completed the enclosure of the Old Town on the lines of its original walls. To the east was the Hull, to the south the Humber. The later docks gradually extended along the bank of the estuary, and manufacturing industries such as seed-crushing and corn-milling spread northwards up the banks of the Hull; but the expanding docks remained the best indicator of Hull's rising wealth, owned by a small number of great merchant houses (8), two dozen at the beginning of the eighteenth century and around three dozen at the start of the nineteenth. Below these families were a larger number of small firms fighting for a place at the top. Some great merchants, like the

Maisters, might make their name from specific products, iron or timber, but specialization was rare; Hull's merchants mostly imported and exported a wide range of goods from the restricted trading region they had made their own (9).

Town and people

At the end of the eighteenth century the world of the merchant was changing and the manufacturer increased in importance. The merchant's decline was reflected in the revulsion against trade by the well-bred in many Victorian novels. Hull merchants had once lived close to their fellow townspeople when they occupied High Street, but social distinctions became more obvious when new streets were built on the north side of New Dock (10). George Street and Charlotte Street sounded more fashionable than Blanket Row and Dagger Lane.

Hull's upper class consisted of about a hundred families out of a total population of over 20,000. They merged almost imperceptibly with the less rich, the middle class with the poorer merchants, the poorer merchants with the better off shopkeepers, and so on down the social scale. Little is known of the poor, the largest social class. They achieved a certain notoriety when their activities came to the notice of the police, when they fell below subsistence level, or died in a newsworthy manner, but as Hull grew larger and richer, permanent insecurity meant hardship and poverty for most of its people.

Increased wealth continued to change the outward appearance of Hull; old buildings were allowed to fall into disrepair, demolished or adapted as warehouses or counting houses. An observer in the 1830s complained that Hull appeared 'altogether new' and that nothing

remained of the Augustinian, Carmelite and Carthusian houses, nor of Suffolk Palace where Henry VIII was reputed to have lodged (11).

Politics and public order

Politics, national and local, were largely in the hands of the big merchants. As Members of Parliament they represented Hull's commercial interests by urging the government to check the influence of the London merchants who were nearer to the seat of power (12), but they represented what they saw as the interests of the town rather than those of a particular party. Wilberforce as late as 1780 declared himself to be an independent, voting for North or Pitt as his conscience dictated.

Social prestige and influence went with political leadership. A degree of corruption was acceptable on all sides, at two guineas a vote, and there were other ways of exercising persuasion, the threat of losing one's job or the cancelling of an account, the possession of minor patronage, say a post in the Customs, or the recommendation of a smaller merchant to a business contact in the port's hinterland. It was fortunate that Wilberforce was elected to Parliament before his Evangelical conversion made such practices abhorrent to him. It may be argued that the merchants kept the interests of all Hull's people to the fore in so far as their overriding concern was what was good for the business of the port.

Local government was efficient by eighteenth-century standards, again because political and economic power was in the hands of the merchant oligarchy. It was a matter of duty, and the merchants carried it out generally with competence. There was a degree of corruption here as well; aldermen more or less

nominated their successors, thus ensuring that the interests of the commercial community came first. That was what mattered most in Hull.

The merchants did not begin to leave the Old Town for the new Georgian streets, or a mansion in the country, until the last quarter of the eighteenth century, so it was in their own interests to maintain a reasonable standard of lighting, cleaning, disposal of rubbish and sewage, the provision of clean water, and a fire service. Seaports are traditionally noted for civil disturbances, though Hull seems not to have been so bad as some. There was little disturbance over food prices until the end of the century when the price of flour rose by 50 per cent, but the mob attacked Methodists in the '50s, Quakers in the '70s, Catholics in the '80s, and seamen whenever the mood took it. The local constabulary usually managed to restore order even though it might take them a long time. Only on one occasion were troops needed, when the Suffolk Militia and the Hull garrison were called in to suppress the anti-Catholic Gordon Riots in 1780.

A contemporary historian was proud of the relative quietness of the port of Hull.

...during the evenings of the winter months the streets were crowded with boys intended for the sea service, who spend their time in the open violation of decency, good order and morality - That there are often fifteen hundred seamen and boys, who arrive from the whale fishery, and that often the number of unemployed sailors are left at leisure to exercise their dissolute manners on the inoffensive passenger in the public streets - we cannot sufficiently applaud the effort to prevent the increase of such dissoluteness...

Though to the honour of this Town, it may be said, that there are fewer disturbances than in any other seaport where such a number of seamen are constantly resorting; yet it is impossible to assimilate such a number of spirits, as must annually be collected here when unemployed by their avocations, uncivilized by education, or

unrestrained by discipline (13).

Such faint praise for the seamen who thronged Hull's narrow streets illustrated the fear of Hull's citizens towards them, the influence they were likely to have on those who worked ashore and the pastoral problems which awaited churchmen. The underlying problem was the great poverty of the lower orders, the result of trade recessions, old age and vagrancy, low wages, and the freezing of the Baltic for three or four months each winter.

Charity Hall, Hull's answer to indigence, reported about a thousand on outdoor relief in 1792. In the hard winter of 1795-6 there were 345 inmates and 2,600 on outdoor relief. Trinity House was a private charity which looked after 'decayed seamen,' their widows and orphans. Other benefactors had provided for about a hundred residents. The Bench controlled these and Charity Hall, but lack of a general rate prevented better provision. Supplementary rates were levied for particular objects, or income was raised from property and the imposition of fines.

Religion and society

Hull was Protestant and Puritan from an early date. Among the seafarers who brought back their experiences of the Reformation was Robert Robynson who, with a group of seamen or merchants, attended Lutheran services at Bremen in 1527. Robynson was forced to do penance as a suspected Lollard in Hull market place and Holy Trinity Church, clad only in a shirt. Roger Daynell, another member of the party brought back a copy of Tyndale's New Testament which fell into the hands of the Dean of York, Brian Hugden, vicar-general of the diocese (14). John Rough, a clergyman about

whom little is known, believed to have been a Scotsman and one-time Dominican, was influential in the growing Protestant tradition in Hull in Edward VI's reign (15).

Hull was Parliamentary in the Civil War, and the refusal of John Hotham, governor of the town, to admit Charles I at the Beverley Gate is part of Hull's folk memory. The troubles of the seventeenth century culminated in the occupation of Hull by the Catholic Lord Langdale, on James II's orders, confirming the suspicions of Hull's citizens that Catholicism was synonymous with oppression.

The origin of Evangelicalism in Hull can be attributed to the ministry of the Rev. Joseph Milner, headmaster of Hull Grammar School (1767-97), and author of History of the Church of Christ. In his early days in Hull he experienced an Evangelical conversion, the result some alleged of listening to a group of visiting students from Lady Huntingdon's college at Trevecca in Fish Street Independent Chapel (20). This made Milner unpopular with the leading citizens of Hull who did their best to avoid him for ten years.

There were two other clergymen of Evangelical sympathies in Milner's time, but neither belonged to his own Evangelical 'dynasty.' Milner asked one of them, Edmund Garwood, curate of St Mary (1779-99) and later vicar of Hessle, to prepare Thomas Dikes for university entrance and ordination in the Evangelical cause. Garwood's puritanism showed itself in his attitude towards the theatre. No player, he declared, nor any of his children ought to be entitled to Christian burial or even to lie in a churchyard, and anyone who entered a playhouse was equally certain of eternal damnation (21).

The Rev. George Lambert (1769-1816), first minister of Fish Street Chapel, joined in denouncing the theatre, not merely as a place unfit for Christians but

as the cause of divine retribution in the form of plagues and famine. Tate Wilkinson, the actor-manager to whom these denunciations were directed, observed sarcastically that Lambert had never talked in this extraordinary manner until the day 'when the holy ministers seemed to have all caught the wrathful influenza'(22). Lambert went so far as to attribute the dissipation in Charles II's reign to an attachment to the playhouse, while Thomas Dikes' at St John's Church, according to Wilkinson, announced the 'banishment from his chapel of all who went to plays in 1794-5' (23).

Wilkinson, who claimed that his own father was 'a preacher of the first reputation in London' (24), was much concerned by the increasingly vulgar, drunken behaviour of the younger playgoer, fearing that it might ruin his business, but he was greatly offended by Garwood's assertion that no player could be an honest man (25), blaming Methodists, as Evangelicals were still called, for these attacks on his integrity.

A common attitude to the playhouse is only one illustration of the similarity of outlook in morals and religion among Evangelicals and Dissenters. In Hull they visited each other; their members moved happily from one congregation to another; they attended each other's special occasions, confirmations and ordinations, and preached at each other's funerals. The death of John King, vicar of St Mary's from 1777-82, the other Evangelical in Milner's time, drew from Lambert the remark, 'I have lost another beloved friend today' (26). Milner organized monthly meetings for clergy and dissenting ministers. (27).

This friendship and co-operation survived in part until the death of Lambert in 1816 when several Church of England clergy attended his funeral. The wife of his successor Joseph Gilbert said that coming to Hull

was like joining an informal Evangelical Alliance (28). Individual friendships might survive, but long before Gilbert's arrival a wedge was driven between Church and Dissent, not by religious opinions, but by politics. Evangelicals were Tory, but many Dissenters were impressed by the radicalism of the French Revolution. They objected strongly to the establishment of the Church, but Evangelicals were convinced of the importance of the connection between Church and State and, believing in the ordered, hierarchical society of which they felt themselves to be the guardians, looked fearfully at the political ferment across the English Channel. The 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 and the settlement of 1689 were the bedrock of social order; the fear that they might be overthrown was the main reason for Evangelical opposition to Catholic Emancipation. Suspicions of non-Tory politics and the fear of French radicalism were prolonged until the mid-nineteenth century by the longevity of Hull's Evangelical clergy.

Methodists were reluctant to count themselves as Dissenters, continuing to regard themselves as members of the Established Church, at least until the rise of the New Connexion and Primitive Methodism. 'Methodist' might mean a follower of John Wesley or an Evangelical within the Established Church. Isaac Milner wrote of his brother Joseph, 'The name Methodist, when applied to such persons as Mr Milner, ceased in great measure to be disgraceful with thinking people' (29). Hull Methodists led the resistance to secession from the Church of England after Wesley's death, and a congregation calling itself 'Church Methodist' was enumerated as late as the 1851 Census. Many Methodists attended St John's Church from its opening in 1792 until after the Napoleonic Wars (30). Methodists were also listed among the trustees of Christ Church, opened

in 1822 (31), but as the century progressed, religious and political rivalry frustrated the possibility of a united approach to moral and social problems by the denominations, despite their common evangelicalism.

Joseph Milner's thirty year ministry spanned the early period of Hull's modern economic growth. He consistently deplored it as the main cause of the progressive neglect of God and the spiritual life. He preached constantly about the brevity of this life and the awful certainty of Hell, in an attempt to win his hearers from their single-minded pursuit of wealth. His Evangelical disciples, however, found the growing prosperity and expansion of Hull an exciting challenge. This was certainly true of Dikes, his first protege, although even he found the 'railway mania' of the the 1840s distasteful. The fears of Dikes and the others were more easily aroused by Chartist demands, seeing them as yet another threat to the established order which they cherished. Tractarianism was an even more pernicious menace. It was a late arrival in Hull, but Dikes met it on his frequent visits to his native Ipswich. The Rev. John King, vicar of Christ Church, was a leading protagonist in the bitter Evangelical opposition to the Tractarianism of their own Archdeacon, Robert Wilberforce. That Tractarians were covert papists was confirmed when many became Roman Catholics. To Evangelical, Tory, Established Churchmen, Tractarianism was a double harbinger of betrayal, the enemy of both true religion and the political settlement.

Religious controversy was a major distraction for Hull's nineteenth-century churchmen, hence they were able to tackle little more than the irreligious symptoms of a burgeoning commercial and industrial society, rather than the causes of its many ills. Joseph Milner's approach may have been unpopular, even

inept and inappropriate, but at least he addressed himself to some of the central issues. After his death the requirements of industrial capitalism bestrode the world in ways he could not have imagined.

Hull quickly became a Nonconformist town with Methodism its largest religious group; by the end of the century, many of Hull's most influential citizens were Methodist in religion and Liberal in politics. In the middle years, organized religion was largely supported by the families of small merchants and respectable tradesmen. An account of Evangelicalism in the Established Church, however, begins with the life of the Rev. Joseph Milner.

Chapter Two

JOSEPH MILNER AND THE RISE OF EVANGELICALISM IN HULL

The Rev. Henry Therond resigned his Fellowship at Trinity College Cambridge in 1762 to become headmaster of Hull Grammar School. His intention was to build up the school with boarders, teach Latin and Greek and prepare his pupils for university. He was unsuccessful, so resigned after four years to return to academic life as junior bursar at Trinity at the age of thirty.

Two candidates responded to the Mayor and Corporation's advertisement in the York Courant for a new master and the position was given to Joseph Milner, twenty-three years old, curate of Thorpe Arch and still in deacon's orders. At the interview Milner won the favour of the Mayor, Alderman Francis Pryme, and of Alderman William Wilberforce, grandfather of the young William Wilberforce (1). Alderman Wilberforce had reason to regret the favour he showed to the young schoolmaster when Milner turned 'methodistical' a year or two later.

Milner had been assistant master at the Rev. Christopher Atkinson's school at Thorpe Arch for four years, taking deacon's orders in October 1766 to become Atkinson's curate. He and his younger brother Isaac, born and brought up in Leeds, were sons of a poor weaver. Both were exceptionally intelligent and attended Leeds Grammar School until their father's death in 1762. The twelve-year-old Isaac was obliged to leave school and become a weaver's apprentice.

Joseph, being eighteen, was able to enter St Catherine's College, Cambridge, as chapel clerk with the help of some businessmen in Leeds who offered to pay for his education (2).

When he took priest's orders in 1768, in addition to his duties as schoolmaster, Milner was appointed afternoon lecturer at Holy Trinity Church and curate of North Ferriby, seven miles to the west of Hull. Now he was in a position to look after his younger brother's education. Isaac had continued to study Latin and Greek while working at his weaver's loom. Joseph was able to release him from his indentures, bring him to live at the school-house in Hull and coach him for the next three years. At twenty years old, Isaac entered Queen's College, Cambridge, as a sizar (3).

At first Joseph lived up to the expectations of his employers. He was appointed chaplain to Lister's hospital, an almshouse built in 1642 in Holy Trinity churchyard for six poor men and six poor women on the instructions of the will of Sir John Lister, a merchant whose descendants became country squires. Milner's school-house was repaired and painted, his stipend at Holy Trinity was increased from £30 to £40 in February 1770 (4), but he was about to experience the turning point of his life, a 'methodistical' conversion which not only changed his life, but was to shape and influence the life of the Church in Hull in the nineteenth century and beyond. His conversion in 1770 was the first step towards Hull becoming an important centre of Evangelicalism, and the later the co-operation between Joseph Milner at the Grammar School and Isaac at Queen's College supplied Evangelical candidates for Holy Orders in many other parts of the country.

Exactly how Milner first adopted Evangelicalism is not entirely clear. He attributed his conversion to

reading Hooker's On Justification (5). Others cited the influence of Lady Huntingdon's student-evangelists, invited to Hull by a Dissenter named Edward Riddell. Riddell wrote in a letter to Lady Huntingdon that among those affected was a Mr Milner, master at the Grammar School and lecturer at the principal church (6). It is likely that Milner's interest had been partly aroused before this occasion, perhaps by his vicar at Thorpe Arch, Christopher Atkinson, a one-time a member of the Holy Club at Oxford. His son, Miles Atkinson, became a leading Evangelical in Leeds and a life-long friend of Milner.

Men came from many places to consult Milner about religious matters and on the possibility of ordination, like Thomas Dikes, builder and incumbent of the first church outside the town walls, and John Scott, Dikes' curate and later vicar of St Mary Lowgate. In these ways the foundations for the future were laid.

Milner's adoption of methodistical views lost him the support of the leaders of Hull society. When he preached they stayed away, only attending his annual sermon as Mayor's Chaplain. They no longer invited him to their houses, and some removed their sons from the Grammar School. 'Few persons who wore a tolerably good coat would take notice of him when they met him in the street' (7). Alderman Wilberforce took his grandson William away from the school, threatening that 'if Billy turns Methodist he shall not have a sixpence of mine' (8). William was sent to London to live with an aunt, but that did not last long because she too developed Methodist leanings, so Wilberforce was brought back north and sent to Pocklington School between Hull and York. In the holidays his family did their best to erase any vestiges of Methodism from the young William by exposing him to the social round of Hull society, cards, dinners and theatres. Milner

gave up playing cards and no longer went to the theatre or the assembly rooms, where he was always looking for an opportunity to say 'a word in season.' His admonitions made men of the world feel ill at ease and 'the man who had grown insupportable in the pulpit ceased to become a desirable guest at the table' (9). People of that class did not want to be censured by Milner, so he confined his social visits to those who could promote the cause of religion as he now saw it.

The vicar of Holy Trinity, Arthur Robinson, was socially well connected and more acceptable to the well-bred. He did not, like Milner, remind them in the pulpit and in private conversation of their depravity and the likelihood of their final destination. Milner, on the other hand, felt that the clergy in their preaching substituted pagan ethics for the 'great and peculiar truths of the Gospel, such as the doctrines of Original Sin, of Justification by Faith, and of Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, as stated in the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England' (10).

The despised Milner gradually came back into favour partly as the result of his own integrity. The people of Ferriby noted that he came to see them in fair weather and in foul when he was not obliged to do so. It was also partly because his pupils at the Grammar School became leaders of Hull society and partly because Evangelicalism was becoming more generally acceptable. One straw in the wind was the Corporation's decision to replace the three-centuries old schoolmaster's house in 1779, but they did not yet consider Milner for the vicarage of Holy Trinity in 1783; it went, nevertheless, to the Evangelical Thomas Clarke, a former pupil of Milner's, who later married Wilberforce's sister (11). In 1785 Milner at least had the satisfaction of being thanked officially for his sermon on Mayor-making day and of being invited to

publish it (12).

If Milner was unpopular with the merchants, he was more successful with their daughters; Evangelical clergymen came from far and wide to court them as wives with suitable theological opinions. John Venn married William King's daughter Kitty in 1789; Henry Thorton married Marianne, daughter of Joseph Sykes, in 1796, and the same year Edward Edwards, a friend of John Venn, married Anne Pead.

Milner's effect on the poor is open to question. Canon Overton says 'the poor flocked to hear him' (13). Elliott-Binns says that when the rich ceased to attend Milner's sermons, their places were soon taken by 'the poor and ignorant' (14). Their common source is Isaac Milner's Account, 'the poor heard him gladly,' but this scriptural quotation was more of an aphorism than a statement of fact. Isaac Milner, who was not given to understatement, wrote of a religious revival in Hull embracing the whole of society, in which people were mainly concerned for the care of their souls, in which drunkards and debauchees were reformed, and great numbers enquired, 'What shall we do to be saved?' (15). More plausible is Isaac's account of how the farmers at Ferriby observed Joseph's diligence in coming in bad weather when he was not obliged (16), of how the sick especially asked to see him (17) and how, in later years, he was accused of no more than mistaken zeal (18). Equally significant was the fact that Evangelical ideas were becoming fashionable and that 'no clergymen was well received at Hull who opposed or did not support them' (19).

Preaching was the main vehicle of Milner's ministry, but there was also the sustained impact of his example on his pupils at the Grammar School over thirty years. Most of his pupils who went to Cambridge became clergymen, but not all became Evangelicals.

Among the prominent Evangelicals nurtured in their youth by Milner were George King, later brother-in-law of John Venn, Daniel Cresswell who became vicar of the University Church, and William Daltry, Venn's successor at Clapham. The majority of those who attended the Grammar School went into Hull businesses. Those who made their mark locally or went to university came from the same well-to-do middle class, rich merchants, tradesmen, and shopkeepers.

Avison Terry, another pupil greatly influenced by Milner, was a member of an old-established Baltic merchant family, twice mayor of Hull, and an Evangelical philanthropist whose interests lay in church extension. He promoted and contributed generously to building new churches for Evangelical incumbents. Among other ex-Grammar School boys, Thomas Brown became editor of the Advertiser, Hull's first newspaper, and Peter Watson, a shipowner, founded a literary and scientific group, the forerunner of the Literary and Philosophical Society (20).

Milner left a different impression on men like these than on those who only knew his harsh and rigorous pulpit style. Seventy years later one of them wrote,

...he expounded his religious views, which were Evangelical but avoided the vexed questions of Predestination, and required no answer as to doctrinal points. On these occasions, while he enforced his own opinions, he spoke often with kindness, always with forbearance and charity, of those who differed from him... He was in fact the Simeonite of that part of the country, but yet he was a most unaffected man (21).

The younger sons of merchants went into the professions, the army or navy, a few into the diplomatic service, one or two into academic careers. From those who went to Cambridge came 'a host of

Clapham-bound clergy' (22). A number of merchant houses, like the Crowles and the senior branch of the Sykes, ceased to trade when the firm devolved on a son in Holy Orders.

Milner led a busy life outside the school. He was presented to the living of North Ferriby by Wilberforce in 1786, where he had been curate for an absentee vicar since 1768. He preached at Ferriby on Sunday mornings, in Holy Trinity in the afternoon, and again in Holy Trinity on alternate Wednesdays. He inaugurated regular Friday meetings for clergy and laity in Hull, and until relations cooled about the time of the French Revolution, there were monthly meetings of clergy and Nonconformists.

Evangelicals were known for their interest in humanitarian reform; Milner gave attention to the Infirmary and the subscription schools, but he made few friends, apart from his brother who continued to regard the schoolhouse as his home. Neither Joseph nor Isaac married; his closest and most like-minded friends were James Stillingfleet, rector of Hotham and founder of the Clerical Society, and William Richardson of St Michael-le-Belfrey in York. The three men visited one another for the rest of their lives.

John Wesley, who preached for Clarke at Holy Trinity in 1786 and 1788 found Milner 'a friendly, sensible man, and I believe, truly God fearing' (23). Henry Venn, who sent his son to Milner's school but withdrew him after six months because of slow progress, said 'I was transported by hearing Mr Milner. In my judgement, he is the ablest minister I have ever heard open his mouth for Christ' (24). In 1796 Wilberforce declared Milner to be 'very practical and good' (25).

Someone else who observed him at close quarters, a fellow Evangelical clergyman in Hull, emphasised Milner's single-mindedness,

...endued with a sternness and inflexibility of character greatly needed by the times in which he lived, by the persons with whom he had to deal, by the new ground he had to break up, and by the unexpected difficulties he had to cope with, in stemming a host of prejudices, and contending against an almost inveterate corruption of public manners. Hence his sermons were full of awful warnings, not unmixed with bold invective against the vices of the age. Justification by faith against self-righteousness - the religion of the times (26).

The same observer said that Milner was 'a Boanerges in the pulpit' (27), 'with massy form, a grave countenance, a weighty manner, and a strong but unmusical voice' (28). Those who saw him as severe and morose in the pulpit were often surprised to find him personally so easy, mild and affable (29), but he was always serious. His memorial plaque in Holy Trinity Church depicts a heavy, full-lipped, be-wigged eighteenth-century profile, with the beginnings of a jowl, redeemed by an aquiline but well-proportioned nose.

Arthur Clarke, vicar of Holy Trinity, died in July 1797 while the Milner brothers were staying in Carlisle where Isaac was Dean. Wilberforce came to Hull to stay with his sister, Clarke's widow, and used the opportunity to canvass among the aldermen for Joseph Milner's appointment to the vacant living. Wilberforce's diary for the 22nd of August records, 'Milner appointed vicar by the Corporation. My being here probably got him elected' (30). On his way to York to be instituted Milner, never of a robust constitution, caught a chill and died on the 15th of November at the age of fifty-two. His obituary in the local newspaper, probably written by Isaac, described him as a loyal subject of the King, a true patriot, and

a zealous, learned and sound Divine (31).

Out of four applicants for the post of headmaster at the Grammar School, Joseph Rodwell the newly arrived curate of St Mary's, with no teaching experience, was appointed (32). Milner's successor at Holy Trinity was John Healey Bromby, a former pupil and the son of a local woollen draper (33). Aged twenty-seven at the time, Bromby was to remain vicar for seventy years. It was a strange appointment. Bromby was not an Evangelical nor a religious partisan of any sort. He later appointed a number of curates with Puseyite sympathies without realizing what he had done. Wilberforce seems to have played no further part in the affair and Isaac Milner hoped that Thomas Thomason, a Fellow of Queen's College and Simeon's curate, would succeed his brother at Holy Trinity and at the Grammar School. The popular explanation for Bromby's succession, still current in Hull today, is that the Corporation were under some kind of financial obligation to his father, the woollen draper. Milner's influence, nevertheless, continued and thrived through the work of his disciples Thomas Dikes at St John's and John Scott at St Mary's, ensuring a permanent ascendancy of Evangelicalism in the Church of England in Hull.

Milner left over 800 sermons, published in several volumes by his brother and prefaced by a valuable account his life. Isaac also completed volumes four and five of Milner's History of the Church of Christ, an Evangelical history concerned with 'real not merely nominal Christians,' concentrating on the life of true evangelical piety which Milner found in a number of unlikely individuals, including one pope. He attested that individual saints existed in every age, but real Christians were always a scattered minority, a few bright lights in a dark world. The History, in spite

of Milner's pessimism, was of value to early Evangelicals who generally thought history to be of little importance, but the rise of modern historical scholarship condemned Milner's five volumes to a dusty oblivion on the most inaccessible of library shelves (34).

Milner had a great and lasting influence on the individuals who came into contact with him. He was regarded with affection by his fellow clergy, by his pupils and by many lay people. But, according to his brother, he was extremely ignorant of the ways and manners of people in their ordinary everyday life; this explained what others saw as his peculiarities (35). It also helps to explain his lack of sympathy with Hull's mercantile aspirations.

Chapter Three

A PROSPECT OF HULL FROM THE PULPIT

Joseph Milner's religion was based on an understanding and conviction of sin as the first doctrine of the scriptures, and sin was found in the individual human heart (1). Evangelical philanthropic campaigns, like Wilberforce's against the slave trade, Shaftesbury's Ragged Schools and his attempts to improve working conditions, were conceived in paternalistic terms. Society could not be regenerated by structural change, but only through the conversion of individuals. Individualism and pessimism concerning the capacity of unregenerate human beings helped to confirm a conservative political outlook among Evangelicals. They accepted uncritically the emerging industrial society, seeing in its developing class system a continuation of the old traditional hierarchy. They soon found an aristocracy of wealth as acceptable as one based on birth, and an established hierarchy was seen by the Established Church as an expression of God's will (2).

The development of industrial society in the eighteenth century produced not only a new hierarchy based on commerce, but a wider dissemination than ever before of luxuries, especially among the enriched bourgeoisie. A modern historian goes so far as to characterise the history of the eighteenth century in terms of the history of luxury and attitudes to it. Religion attempted to control luxury, and social policy

was designed to confine it to those who did not produce it (3).

Concern over the dangers of increased economic wealth, however, was not confined to Evangelicals. Some early Whig political philosophers, notably Walter Moyle (1672-1721), Robert Molesworth (1656-1725), and the Scottish patriot and republican, Andrew Fletcher (1655-1716) regarded the growth of luxury, commerce and credit as a threat which would subordinate the public good to the private accumulation of wealth (4), but Evangelicals like Milner saw its growth as the main cause of an increasing neglect of God and the spiritual life on the part of individuals, immersed in a life of commercial gain. Throughout his life Milner remained uncompromisingly hostile to the insidious damage which the rising commercialism of Hull inflicted upon the religious spirit of those whose first concern was to grow rich. Milner's thirty years in Hull saw the doubling of its population and a transition from its medieval past to a modern economy. A comparable dynamism and accumulation of capital today would be declared an 'economic miracle,' but Milner looked on with horror, not liking what he saw. The new world growing up around him was a deadly threat to serious religion. New wealth made possible a glittering social life for the town's elite. Wilberforce described Hull in the 1770s as one of the gayest places out of London (5). Those unable to emulate the rich relaxed at the cock-pit or the billiard hall or the public house and the dram shop. Money bought freedom from the cares of life, at least for a time, and removed the need to seek charity from the Church or from some other organisation likely to demand a moral penalty in return.

The editor's preface in Milner's second volume of sermons, by his friend the Rev. William Richardson of St Michael-le-Belfrey, York, describes the preacher's

reaction to the new Hull, and how in his latter years he deplored 'the religious declensions and divisions' he observed. He perceived 'a proud worldly spirit and the excessive love of gain eating out the love of Christ,' even in those who had once been faithful Christians. He saw 'the awful progress of gross wickedness and vice, of lewdness and impiety' which he ascribed to the 'rapid increase in commerce, in wealth, in population, in buildings and in luxury,' in short, in all the most obvious aspects of a growing sea-port (6). Richardson comments that if Milner had lived to see how the mischief had spread even more widely in the twelve years since his death 'he would have cried aloud and not spared to tell the people their sins.' Commercial life and serious religion were opposed for the clergy.

Milner, encouraged by his mother, had from an early age been 'serious' about religion, but the ridicule of his father took him away from what he afterwards called vital, practical, experimental (sic) religion, so he became content with 'mere morality' (7). Some years after his conversion in Hull he took his first sermon, well received at the time, into the pulpit again to draw attention to its errors. Such universal applause, he said, would never happen among a large and mixed congregation when the 'truth as it is in Jesus is set forth with distinctiveness and with energy' (8).

The conviction of sin, Milner's primary doctrine of the scriptures, applied to those inside the Church as well as to unbelievers and nominal Christians. True believers knew well 'the uncleanness which defiled their best actions' (9). Mortifying knowledge was the only route to true humility (10), which meant a willingness to abstain from many other objects of knowledge. Public life, for example, was of little

importance to the Christian. One could, according to Milner, without spending much time, know enough of public affairs to enable one to see one's duty, which was, 'to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and to seek its good... to be subject to the principalities and powers, to obey the magistrates, and to be ready for every good work' (11). No matter how lightly the Christian might sit towards the things of this world, respect for the established hierarchical order was always a Christian duty for Evangelicals. One might quickly know enough of the common news of the town to be turned to good account, Milner went on to observe; the trouble was that many knew too much, with no profit to themselves or others.

The trouble, said Milner, widening his attack to include all who were influenced by the Enlightenment, was the modern attitude towards knowledge, associated with the Age of Reason, which caused the decline of religion. Scripture was disregarded in 'these days of refinement.' Men's minds were prejudiced because they supposed a great improvement had been made in the art and power of reasoning. Persons of breeding and education (12) regarded scripture with enmity and disgust. Milner lamented that, 'in these profane days ... the use of almost the whole Bible is quite taken away' (13). The types and figures of the Old Testament were set aside as useless or obscure. St Paul was 'too difficult and doctrinal,' and only a madman would meddle with Revelation. This only left the Gospels and Acts, but most of the instruction in these was thought to be confined to apostolic days. The Acts of the Apostles demonstrated the power of the Holy Spirit, but 'in our days we have little or nothing to do with the Holy Spirit' except as an occasional assistance to well-disposed persons by suggesting good thoughts and by strengthening their pious resolutions. Nobody

expected 'to be endowed with the supernatural power of working miracles.' Even the Gospels, though 'respected by the higher and more polite orders of men,' were neglected through fear that the miracles might lead one into 'strained and whimsical' conclusions (14). Thus were the vital doctrines of Christianity, New Birth and Union with Christ explained away, all life and energy lost, and 'everything that is spiritual and peculiarly Christian evaporates and disappears' (15).

Milner had a characteristically Evangelical view of scripture and its relevance to modern life. No part could be dispensed with, but one part was more useful for one purpose, others for other purposes. Even those who rejected Christianity were in Milner's day pretty well versed in the life and death of Jesus Christ, but he believed that other parts of the New Testament were more applicable to the state of affairs in his own time. Acts gave an account of genuine Christianity, but still stronger light was offered by the Epistles. Nominal Christians scarcely accepted a single doctrine that was peculiarly Christian, he said; they were little further on in religion than a moral heathen. St Paul's Epistles were calculated to correct and instruct them, particularly his Epistle to the Romans (which included the doctrine of justification by faith alone). Nominal Christians did not like what they heard because it made Christianity a different thing from what they would have it be; it thwarted their pride and their lusts (16).

This robust otherworldly religion was at odds with the vanities of this world which Milner saw seducing so many. He acknowledged the world, performed his duty as he saw it as a citizen and a subject of the King, but never offered a religious apologetic for worldly success. The leaders of Hull society might have put up with his denunciations of their sins if he had at least

allowed them this. Men, said Milner, are anxious and eager about the world, 'full of expectation about trifles, family affairs, about success in business' (17). Their excuse was that their own comfort in life and the support of their families depended upon success in business, but this notion of family was to Milner a mere cloak for a worldly spirit. Anyone whose head and heart were full of this world would be empty of God and the things of a future world, and so could not be a true believer. Milner differentiates between 'the portion of the men of this world and the hope of the godly.'

You may look back with a sort of triumph on your own management and industry; you may describe with satisfaction your artifices and address, your usefulness to the community and your knowledge in business. You may take notice with pleasure from what low beginnings in life you have been raised thus high. You may talk of your money, your estates, your connexions, your rank and appearance in the world, the credit you are in, the awe in which you hold mankind on account of your riches and consequence. But, the soul cannot feed on such trash as this. Conscience itself is your accuser, and death is before you, and judgement draws nearer and nearer; and you have not the least relish, the least preparation for the state which is to come. What is it to you that you will leave a great fortune behind you, and your children in possession of it? What is it to you that numbers once your equals are now far your inferiors? Alas! What is all this to the happiness of the soul ... that is starving among all this opulence and during all this success? (18).

To the end of his life, Milner's mind was occupied with the contrast between this life and the next. Preaching at the funeral of the Rev. Thomas Clarke in Holy Trinity in 1797 he returned once more to the temptations of the former and the necessity to prepare for the latter. Though many infirmities attend the

most genuine Christian, 'worldlimindedness' must never be the ruling principle of his character. 'A covetous Christian is as great a contradiction in terms as a sensual or intemperate Christian' (19); 'under present disagreeable pressures' all Christians were apt 'to be swallowed up with present cares and anxieties, and to forget that the end will be speedy' (20).

Not that Milner undervalued this life, at least from his own point of view; it was a training ground for eternity, and a harsh training ground at that. Milner was after all an eighteenth-century bachelor schoolmaster, with no illusions about the disposition of the young towards backsliding. Strict instruction and firm discipline were required in the home and at school.

Nothing could be done without industry, but with industry it was surprising what difficulties could be surmounted. Milner deplored the 'melancholy prospect' of the rising generation whose parents were afraid of hurting their offspring by labour of body and mind. Milner believed a man should be a man, with none of the attributes which he unthinkingly ascribed to the weaker sex. 'Effeminacy and luxury leading to sluggishness of disposition' were on the increase. 'Youth must be inured to labour from an early age in order to be free from the evils of sloth in manhood' (21).

Milner the schoolmaster was clear on the kind of family instruction he required. Masters of families had a duty to command their children and household to keep the way of the Lord, and to conduct family prayers (22). Christian parents should instruct the younger members of their household, and as the children grew up, if a good foundation had been laid in their consciences by storing their minds with a knowledge of God's law, then they may go further and lead their children more distinctly into the way of salvation.

Children would give proof of their fallen nature by the time they were thirteen or fourteen, so parents could expound this great truth from their child's own experience. It must be impressed on their minds, he said, that they were sinners by nature as well as by practice. Proof of this was to be found in every page of scripture (23). Confirmation might, Milner's pessimism could put it no higher, be of great benefit to the rising generation, and parents ought to remind their children about it from time to time, both before and after they were confirmed (24).

As for the parents themselves, they should be aware of their own wickedness and repent, thus becoming better able to discharge the duties of religious education to their children. But Milner was not over confident about the results of his recommended home curriculum. He dare not say that the religious labours of parents would be attended by success in the conversion of their children, but at least they would have good reason to hope for it (25).

The benefit of early instruction would still be apparent even if some children were so thoughtless, stubborn and perverse that every advantage seemed lost on them. It was difficult to believe that they could have been worse if no pains had been taken on them. Milner's pains were all stick and no carrot, for children of 'indulgent parents' were inevitably proud, idle, worthless, impudent, extravagant and headstrong, despising their parents and treating them with contempt. They could not be controlled in any part of their conduct, especially in spending money (26).

These were all the children of the well-to-do, likely to have some connection with the clergy and the Church. The children belonging to 'the dregs of the poor' were even less easy to reach or influence, said Milner; they were abandoned by unprincipled parents and

naturally learned and followed every evil. Humanly speaking there was no hope for them 'except by the friendly aid of charity schools or of similar institutions' (27). Paternal, Evangelical Milner was convinced of the value of these institutions and very impatient with those whom he regarded as too mean to encourage and assist them, though it was well within their power. May they 'tremble at thoughts of death and judgement; and learn and feel at length they they are accountable to God for the use they make of riches' (28). His constant refrain was of the transience of life, the certainty of judgement and the reality of hell. He chided the well-off for their 'excessive attachment to the things of time' (29), which was proof of man's fallen nature. There was 'an impudent profaness in the times which (would) not allow men to think that hell has any existence' (30). Men of this type were miserable without knowing why. They used the recurring rounds of pleasure and business to kill both time and thought. They indulged their vices because, Milner admitted, this world had many refreshments, notwithstanding its many miseries (31).

Error was not, however, confined to the established man of wealth and business; the young faced the same temptations and fell into the same sins. Milner assured those whose hearts were 'easily smitten with the gay appearance of pleasure' that the world had nothing but emptiness, nothing to fill the soul. Ask anybody, he said, who has lived fifty or sixty years if they have ever found any substantial happiness in the world, even the most prosperous and comfortable (32). Riches only made men more greedy of them, and carnal pleasures 'never satisfy the soul' (33). Others sought not so much riches, but honour and praise as more 'noble objects of pursuit.' To these Milner pointed to the fate of Alexander, Julius Caesar and Oliver

Cromwell (34). He even feared the possibility of civil war in England, God's wrath on the sins of his own time, so as a 'minister of the Prince of Peace' he 'put them in mind to obey the magistrates' and 'to follow what makes for peace and legal subjection' (35).

Politically Milner supported the status quo, but the obsession with commercial development he saw on every side was destroying real religion and was in danger of subverting the state. The radical political views of the young alarmed Milner more than anything; he meant the rich and educated young, seldom seen at public worship - leaving religion to their womenfolk - spending their time reading 'inflammatory publications that teach sedition and self-conceit.' This suited their tastes better than the word of God. They set themselves up to correct both King and Government, but their conduct was unfit to govern a private family, with their reading of 'seditious pamphlets, novels or plays, or whatever tends to inflame (their) passions' (36).

These rebukes are in Milner's sermon on 'Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?' (37), which seemed to him to apply directly to the conduct of a 'thoughtless rake, or drunkard, or whoremonger' (38). The older and more prudent friends of such young men tried to tell them that they could easily have friends, earn a living, and enjoy the good things of life with a fair character, temperance and sobriety, but the young saw the old as always 'immoderately saving,' and felt they were always being lectured to 'get money and save money.' They were tempted to feel that their parents had done this sufficiently already, thus giving them licence for 'extravagance and idleness' (39).

These young men were in danger of proving again the truth in the old Lancashire saying, 'Clogs to clogs is

only three generations'(40), but those who reformed and grew prudent did not do so in the way Milner wanted. The avarice of their elders was the stronger influence. The examples they saw every day of the art of making money, as if this were all that mattered, were not lost on them; they saw it was foolish only to spend money, so set about gaining some for themselves. Now they grew cautious and it was not uncommon, observed Milner, for a spendthrift at eighteen to become a miser at thirty, 'eager and keen after every opportunity of enriching himself' (41).

Milner's awful warnings were by no means directed exclusively at the rich. He castigated every section of the community for its irreligious worldliness and its indifference to the coming judgement, the poor as well as the rich, labourers and seamen as well as merchants. The lower orders were additionally offensive to him through the coarseness of their language; wherever his eye alighted, it was clear that Hull was part of the city of this world, travelling ever further from the city of God.

One Christmas-time the congregation at Holy Trinity contained a wider cross-section of the population than usual. Some were told that they could 'scarcely speak a word without cursing and swearing;' others placed 'all (their) delight in drunkenness and swearing' Some came to church once or twice at this season but lived all year round without attending public worship. There was not a spark of the love of Christ in them; they did not care for God, nor thank him for sending a Saviour into the world, rather they taunted those who did (42). Turning to those in 'genteel and decent circumstances,' Milner reminded them that God had given them success in this world, but the more they prospered the prouder they grew. They set their hearts on more and more, on pomps and vanities, were greedy of gain, eager for more

money but had 'no gratitude and thankfulness to God.'

As for the poor who had perhaps suffered many afflictions in their time, they still never thought seriously about their souls, did not thank God for 'the narrow escapes which he has favoured you with.' Perhaps they had been in great danger at sea, 'prayed for mercy and formed resolutions,' but soon forgot them, drank and swore and were as profane as ever (43). The preacher lamented to those 'who labour at the public works about this town, if there be any such here,' that many of them lived carelessly, swore and cursed. Providence had brought them to this place, perhaps from far away; what a blessing it would be if the word of life reached their ears and hearts while they were in Hull. He feared that some young grew old in wickedness and had not learned to read the Bible (44). All in the congregation who remained unconverted, 'rich and poor, labourers and mariners, young and old, learned and unlearned' were reminded of the 'promises made by God in the name of the Saviour Jesus, who came to save sinners as at this season ... whereby you may be converted and live.' But there must be amendment of life. They could not be saved by God's mercy as they were (45). 'Ye swearers, drunkards, whoremongers, sabbath breakers, scoffers at religion, have ye yet thought what hell is?' (46).

On another occasion there were large numbers of seamen in the congregation to hear Milner's address entitled, 'An Affectionate Admonition to Seamen.' He commended the desirability of 'a certain peace with God in this life' (47), because in their trade they might soon be brought into imminent danger of their lives. Milner's only direct experience of Hull's seamen was confined to his observation of them when on land; their vessels moored in the lower reaches of the river Hull,

a short walk from Holy Trinity and the Grammar School; so he was obliged to confine himself to 'a few instances of wickedness, which I wish I could say were not too commonly practised among you ... One cannot come within the sound of your voices in the haven of this town, but one's ear is struck with the constant repetition of oaths and curses ... especially when in a hurry or angry.' He would not accept force of habit as an excuse. They should pray and strive against it (48). Not only seamen were guilty of these faults, but they raised the suspicion in Milner's mind that those who committed them were guilty of more heinous sins ... 'not only among mariners, but others also in this profane, libidinous age, who have no idea of any great guilt, or perhaps of any guilt at all, in fornication and whoredom ... live in sin without remorse or fear' (49). Mariners, said Milner wearily, were not given to 'either private or public worship' (50).

The parable of Dives and Lazarus satisfied Milner that if happiness of any kind was thought to be found in this world's goods, we should experience in the world to come 'unspeakable disappointment and confusion.' On the other hand those who, obedient to God's word, received the gospel of Jesus Christ and cleaved to God with determined faith 'however poor and miserable ... in the present life, will in the life to come find unspeakable, everlasting joy and satisfaction' (51). Milner was untroubled by any modern feelings of guilt towards the poor, and assured them that they would not be happy hereafter 'merely because they are miserable in this life' (52). Equally, 'others of the richer sort' would not be excused because they behaved now with 'humanity and kindness to the needy' and practised temperance and sobriety. It was possible to do all this and yet have their treasure in this world, and not be rich towards

God (53). It was not that 'riches ruin the soul' (54), but they gave occasion for pride and encumbered the possessor with so many cares.

As Hull continued to grow in population and in commercial prosperity so, in Milner's view, its people grew in love of this world, succumbed to its temptations and fell away from religion. A sermon on the text 'Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward' (55), took him once more to the heart of the problem he perceived. Love of this world caused an increasing degeneracy. A burgeoning seaport was among the most difficult environments in which to combat an immoderate love of commerce; so did Milner himself lose hope? He was sure, referring to his text, that some were indeed losing those things which they had received. It was plain that some had completely lost the little religion they once professed 'by a lewd or drunken or worldly conduct.' With others the decline was not so visible, 'yet anyone may see it who considers what they once were' (56).

The refractory behaviour of Milner's Grammar School pupils no doubt prompted some of his observations, coupled with his declared views on the recalcitrance of the younger generation generally. A main cause of decline in virtue was 'the love of ease and a slothful temper.' Pride and self-conceit led others away. They grew too wise for their teachers. They argued and disputed, oblivious of their own ignorance. Others (unnamed) indulged a 'rugged, bitter or impatient temper' which exposed them to 'suggestions of Satan' who prejudiced them against the best of men and narrowed their minds. But the most common cause was always 'love of this present world' (57), eating out the love of God. Milner addressed himself to the

various 'cases' in his congregation, so far as he could, but he advised each of them to 'watch.'

He used an illustration, either in unconscious irony, given his views on riches, or perhaps as a teacher drawing on the shared experience of his hearers, concerning a merchant who made a lot of money. The merchant considered how he might not only improve it and transmit it to his children, but also might not lose what he had gained by 'foolish extravagance and imprudent thoughtlessness.' In similar manner should the Christian zealously preserve and augment the heavenly treasure already acquired. 'Shall peace and communion with God, the fruit of so much self-denial and diligence, be lost?' (58).

The days of the great Evangelical societies which aimed to control and improve the poor, belonged to those who came after Milner in Hull. The cultivation of the rich, 'those who count,' played no part in his approach to social problems, but he shared the common fear of radical politics among England's ruling class, inspired by the excesses of the French Revolution. On the other hand, his trenchant views on the love of this world might have disturbed the rich, cultivated Evangelicals of the succeeding generation.

Few merchants in Hull could qualify as Milner's model man of God, concerned only with what was essential or unavoidable as far as this world was concerned (59). Yet this world had its purpose for the 'vital Christian;' what Milner called 'the temporal advantages of godliness.' Godliness produced 'the peace of God which passeth all understanding' (60), and thus one was able 'to bear temporal evils with cheerfulness and joy' (61). Milner's godly man resembled Kingsley's ideal Christian, clean living, not given to coarse language, temperate in diet and sleep, and above all

'laborious.' The result of 'labour and temperance united' was health, hence the godly man was able to redeem much time, do the work God had set him to do, and 'be useful to his fellow-creatures' (62).

True, but labour and temperance combined, as many have discovered, usually end by accumulating the very riches of this life which Milner condemned. Thus the process which beguiled so many from the narrow path of real religion began all over again in the next generation.

Evangelicals were generally aware of this moral dilemma. The Puritan ethic of success in business as a sign of God's approval was of little avail in a society increasingly absorbed by Evangelical values. Christ's warnings against the perils of riches, and his precepts on the superiority of poverty, set the huge money-making enterprises of the age in opposition to its intense religious feelings. The rich might feel it their duty to keep the poor in order, but they could be equally severe on themselves over the accumulation of wealth. If the well-to-do saw the poor as little better than animals and given to sexual excess, they regarded themselves to be in even greater spiritual danger from their increasing investments (63).



Tate Wilkinson



Beneath this stone are deposited the remains
of the Rev. Joseph Milner, M.A. He died in
the year 1791. An adjacent Monument records
his praises and attests the gratitude of those
who were instructed by him, but pursued Religion
eminently revived, and still flourishing
amongst us through his labours, from his last

Αὐτῷ τὸ ἔν, Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ ἀποδαν.

χρῆδος

Phil. II. 21

1816

(Inscription on the Tomb Stone)

The Rev. Joseph Milner



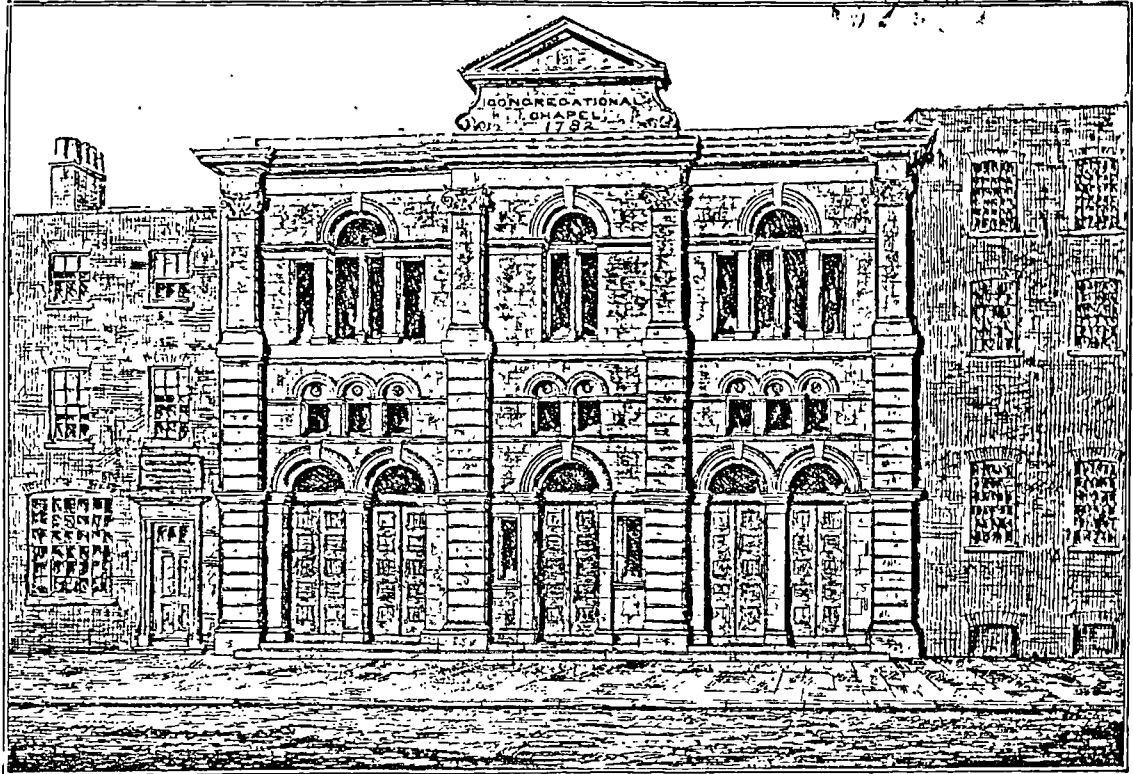
*Brother, dear Leto,
your affectionate friend
John Dikes*



THE REV. JOHN HEALEY BROMBY, M.A., VICAR OF HULL 1797 TO 1867.

Born 1770.

Died 1868.



FISH STREET CHAPEL.



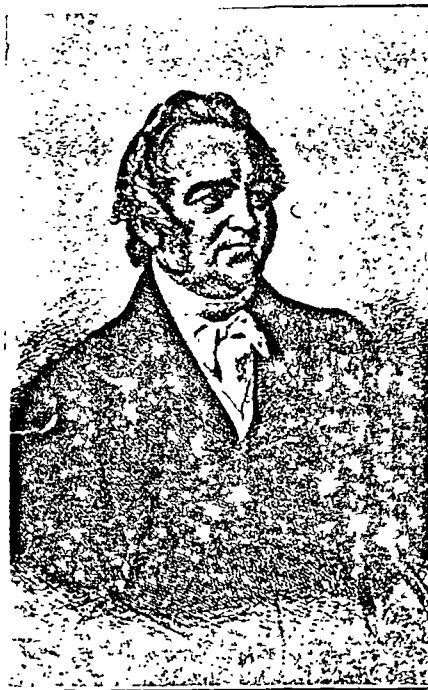
REV. GEO. LAMBERT.



MRS. GILBERT.



REV. JOS GILBERT.



REV. THOS. STRATTEN.



W. F. Hook



Robert Isaac Wilberforce





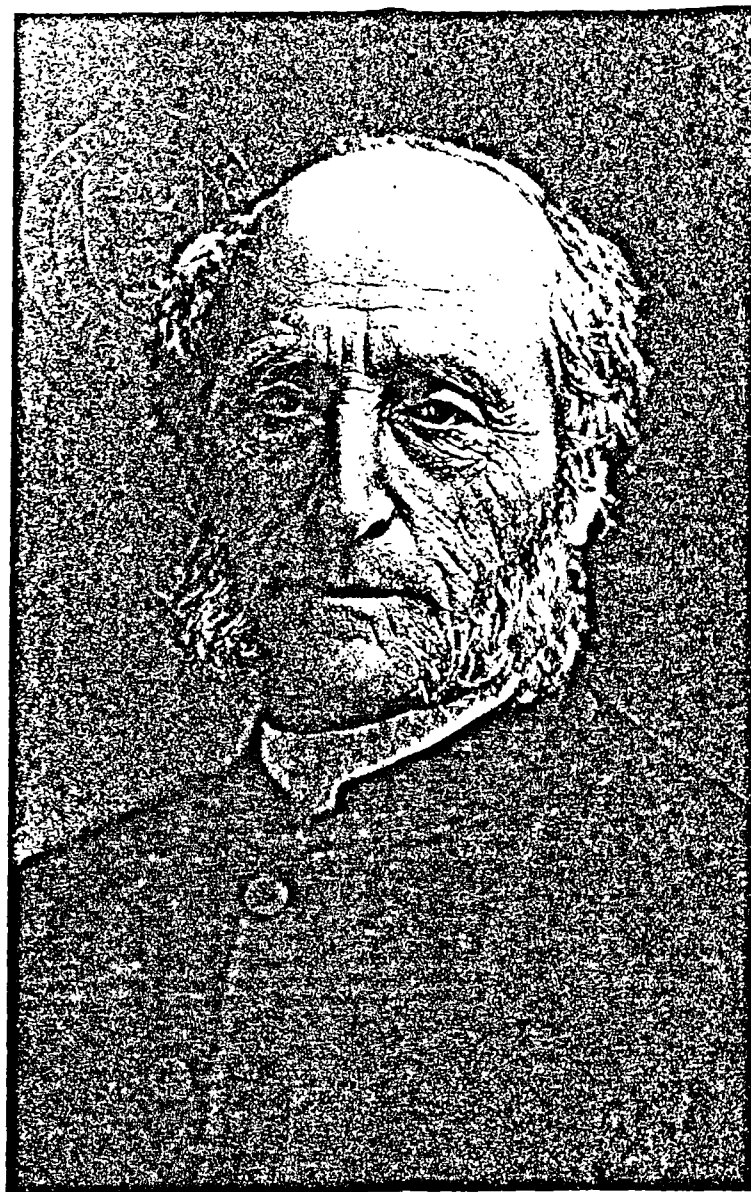
THE REV. CANON BROOKE, M.A., VICAR OF HULL 1867 TO 1875.



Thomas Ferens



Alfred
Gelder



For Mr. Jones
Lewman Ball

(Photo: Pyne & Co., Richmond.)



Mrs L. K. Phillips

Chapter Four

THOMAS DIKES: CONSOLIDATOR OF EVANGELICALISM

Thomas Dikes, Milner's disciple and successor to the Evangelical leadership in Hull, was a quite different character, less stern, more graceful, never repellent to his hearers like Milner in his early years, no 'Boanerges' of the pulpit, but a preacher set in a much gentler mould (1). His appearance and manner contrasted sharply with those of Milner, who was large, formidable, inflexible and, to those who did not know him, unapproachable. Dikes was short of stature, quick, lively and active, rather than stately and dignified, with a benevolent countenance (2). A parish minister, not a schoolmaster, he was sociable and companionable. After working in his study during the morning, he would take a walk to exercise himself and call not only on the sick, but on his friends; his evenings too were often spent socially with his friends and with his flock, unless he was engaged in some public duty (3).

Dikes' preaching was far less doctrinal than Milner's, much more persuasive and addressed to the kindly feelings of human nature, expressed with agile movement in a well-modulated voice. Milner's voice was strong, but unmusical, his manner weighty (4). Dikes' religious views were, nevertheless, decidedly Evangelical, but he was a moderate Calvinist and believed that the doctrines of divine grace and human responsibility were reconcilable.

A decided Churchman who loved the episcopal form of government, but never regarded it as indispensable to the Church, Dikes was clear about the importance of the connection between Church and State; the Church was the great moral bulwark of the nation (5). This made him conservative in politics and radical in morals, abhorring any suggestion of expediency which, to him, destroyed the very foundations of morality (6). One moral bulwark which Dikes' manned for a large part of his ministry was that set against the cheerful and frequent copulations of the poor 'without benefit of clergy.' Chartism, Puseyism and Romanism he regarded, as even more serious. Like most Evangelicals he saw them as attempts to subvert the constitution, and when concessions were made to the Roman Catholic claims he was apprehensive that divine judgement might follow such an act of treachery to 'the King of kings' (7).

He also shared Milner's alarm at the revolutionary events across the English Channel, which were to return in 1830. He differed significantly from Milner, however, in his attitude to the modern world, its economic expansion and the rising population all around him. He was more friendly and on better terms with its leaders in Hull, and as a younger man found the new world more to his own taste than his mentor's. The pace of growth was even faster in Dikes' time than in Milner's. Milner saw the building of Hull's first new dock; Dikes witnessed three more, one threatening the demolition of his own newly-built church; the population increased four-fold, and Hull was linked to Selby by the railroad. Rather than fearing or hating these events, Dikes found them exciting. At the laying of the foundation stone of a new church he expressed his joy at the erection of a church 'where a population has increased, is increasing, and may increase to an infinite extent' (8).

Dikes was incumbent of St John's, the first church outside the town walls, built on his own initiative and at his own expense. As the town grew, more churches were built and his curates became their first incumbents. His first curate, John Scott, became vicar of the ancient church of St Mary Lowgate, then William Knight was appointed to the new church of St James' and John Deck to St Stephen's. Finally, John King, his biographer and a member of the Scott family, came from a curacy in the south of England to be the first vicar of Christ Church, which Milner also played a part in building.

Early Life

Dikes' long life - he died in 1847 at the age of eighty-five - began at Ipswich in 1761, where he attended a boarding school in a neighbouring village before joining his father's business. The experience of a severe illness convinced him of his call to serious religion. As a result he visited Hull to seek the advice of Joseph Milner, by then well known as an earnest minister of Evangelical persuasion (9). Dikes took lodgings in the town and began to prepare for university under Edward Garwood, curate of St Mary's. He went to Magdalene College Cambridge as a fellow-commoner in 1786, 'the resort of young men seriously impressed with a sense of religion' (10). At Cambridge he was influenced not only by Isaac Milner and Charles Simeon, but by a fellow undergraduate, John Venn, later vicar of Clapham. He became a life-long friend of Robert Jarratt, another undergraduate from Hull who served a curacy near his home town before leaving for a parish in Somerset.

Dikes was ordained deacon for the parish of Cottingham, near Milner in Hull; Jarratt went to Hotham

as curate to James Stillingfleet, a close friend of Milner and the founder of the Clerical Society. Dikes' father tried to tempt him back the following summer with the advowson of the village of Hepworth, set between two market towns in the Suffolk countryside. This would have been a great contrast to Hull, and at first the young man could not make up his mind, but he decided it should be Hull on account of his many friends and for the opportunity of learning more from Milner. In the event, on being ordained priest he went to serve a two-year curacy at Barwick in Elmet, a small town between Leeds and York where he met and married Mary Hay, the daughter of a Leeds surgeon (11). Mary died in Hull forty-two years later.

To Hull

The death of Dikes' maiden aunt, Rosa, decided his life's work. With his aunt's legacy Dikes determined to build a new church in Hull. The trade of the port had grown greatly in the ten years since its first new dock was opened, and the churches of Holy Trinity and St Mary's were proving inadequate to seat the increasing population. Here was Dikes' opportunity to work alongside Milner. At first, Dikes' approach was rebuffed by the Mayor and Corporation. They said they would build a church themselves as soon as the money was available. After two years it looked as if this time would never come, so seven prominent citizens wrote to the Mayor urging that an immediate start be made on plans for a new church, otherwise they would withdraw their own subscriptions and support any other plans which looked like being successful.

It is not possible to identify positively all seven signatories, but they indicate the type of person who supported Dikes from the start, unlike Milner's

experience twenty-five years before. Two were leaders of Methodism in Hull (12), Thomas Thompson, banker, local preacher and the first Methodist Member of Parliament. He was joined by Richard Terry of Newland, an early friend of both Milner and Dikes, in whose house parts of Milner's Church History were written (13). These two also signed a letter sent from Hull in 1791 to Methodists all over the country, prophesying that if Methodism separated from the Church of England it would 'dwindle away into a dry, dull, separate party' (14).

One cannot be so sure, after two hundred years, of the identity of the other five who signed the letter in support of Dikes' plan. John Rennard may have belonged to Rennard & Co., Sugar Refiners (15). John Wray and John Bromby may have been Wray & Bromby, merchants, with a counting house in Bishop Lane (16). But John Wray Esq. was also Postmaster residing in Bishop Lane (17); did he do both jobs, or was he the John Wray of John Wray & Andrew Hollingsworth, timber merchants in the 1790s? (18). John N. Crosse does not appear in the local directory (all those with businesses in Hull did not necessarily live in the town itself), but Crosse, Escreet & Co. was a firm of soap manufacturers in Lime Street near North Bridge (19). There is no means of knowing if the final signatory, John Boyes, was a partner in the firm 'John Bassano, John Carlill, John Boyes and John Levett of Hull Sugar Bakers' who bought the Sugar House in Wincolmlee in 1785 (20). It seems, however, that the two most notable figures, politically and commercially, were among Hull's leading Methodists.

Dikes put the money he had inherited from his aunt into the project in the hope of recouping it by the sale of pews; thus Hull's first new church for four hundred years was consecrated in August 1791, completed the following year and opened for services in May 1792

at a total cost of £4,600. The plain redbrick building had a tower added to the west end in 1803, and at the same time the church was enlarged by a couple of hundred sittings. The interior had a gallery round three sides under a flat ceiling in the style of a nineteenth-century Nonconformist chapel. Dikes sold the pews for an average of about seventeen pounds each, thereby raising a sum of £4,100. Well-wishers made up the £500, so he got his money back (21).

A year after Milner's death Dikes was laid up with a severe attack of rheumatic gout, and there were fears for his life. Temporary assistance was provided by the Rev. Thomas Sowerby, a curate of Simeon in Cambridge who had at first been strongly prejudiced against Evangelical religion. It was clear that more permanent help was required for Dikes, which was provided when John Venn of Clapham recommended John Scott, son of Thomas Scott the Bible commentator, to become Dikes' curate. John Scott too was to spend the rest of his life in Hull. He later became vicar of St Mary's where he was followed by his son and grandson successively. It was also at this time that Dikes, whose name was put forward by friends of Milner, failed to be appointed vicar of Holy Trinity by a vote of seven to four by the Aldermen. He had not yet quite made up his mind to give his whole ministry to St John's Church because he later allowed his name to go forward as a candidate to be vicar of Leeds, but he was again unsuccessful. Thereafter he was known to have declined other preferments (22); late in life he turned down the offer of a large living in Norfolk (23).

St John's status was that of a proprietary chapel in the parish of Holy Trinity, and the Church of England in Hull long continued to be dilatory in seeking parish status for its new churches and in defining their boundaries until it proved detrimental

to its effectiveness. As a proprietary chapel, St John's was licenced only for the divine office, prayers and the Lord's Supper and was obliged to suffer the indignity of the attendance of the vicar of Holy Trinity at burials, for which the churchwardens of Holy Trinity were paid one guinea (24).

The real purpose of St John's Church, however, was to extend the influence of serious religion and to improve public manners. It soon became clear to Dikes and his curates, among a population growing largely by immigration, that evangelism was not so effective as it sometimes seemed. John Scott wrote to his father, 'We have several Meetings, but they only seem to catch people on whom religion has got some former hold' (25). Dikes was also concerned about the depth and sincerity of their faith. Soon after the opening of the new church, there were about a thousand in his congregation, but in a letter to Robert Jarratt he wrote, 'I wish they were more spiritual; but we have many that are of the higher class.' At an average of seventeen pounds for a pew he was likely to attract mostly from the class of 'those who count' hoping no doubt, like Wilberforce, to improve the standards of the populace at large through their example. Some of those who purchased pews in Dikes' church, however, locked them up to ensure they remained empty when they were away in the country (26).

More Churches

Dikes was undeterred. If Milner found his main outlet in preaching, Dikes deserves to be remembered for his enthusiastic church-building projects in a drive to accommodate Hull's growing population. Something needed to be done in the adjacent parish of

Sculcoates where Dikes attended a meeting in 1814 at which twenty-four citizens promised to pay £100 each towards a new church. He dismissed the fears of friends who felt a new church so near would detract from St John's. When the foundation stone of Christ Church, Sculcoates, was finally laid seven years later, Dikes who unlike Milner had no apprehensions about growing populations, made a long speech in which he stressed the importance of building churches for worship and instruction, without which 'our poor must literally live without hope and without God.' But in a manner very like Milner's he continued, that even the most enlightened 'need to be reminded that time is short, that life is uncertain, and that we stand every moment on the verge of an awful eternity' (27). On this occasion, as at future events, Dikes was supported personally and financially by the Evangelical Baltic merchant, Avison Terry of Newland (28). The following year when Christ Church was consecrated, the Rev. John King, Dikes' biographer, became its first incumbent. It was another plain building, this time in white brick, with a west tower housing a single bell and a four-sided clock. Inside was the usual three-sided gallery, another bastion for Evangelical religion and a fitting amphitheatre for the much-reported philippics of its anti-Catholic, anti-Jacobin, French-despising, and later anti-Tractarian new minister. The money for the project had been difficult to raise, in spite of Hull's growing wealth, so King himself paid for an extra bay to be added to the original design; like Dikes at St John's, he planned to recover his outlay from pew rents. Evangelical religion in the Established Church continued to make a bid for the well-to-do.

The poor, meanwhile, were increasing rapidly in St John's parish at a time when Dikes was giving 'care and attention' to rebuilding Drypool Church on the east

bank of the Hull (29). He was already holding services in a school-room in the district of his own parish known as the Pottery, in 1822, when William Knight was ordained as his curate. Pottery was one of the poorest parts of Hull, an overflow from the Old Town whose inhabitants never attended public worship of any kind. The foundation stone of a new church, St James, to replace the school-room was laid in December 1829 (30), and when completed William Knight was appointed its first incumbent. St James' was another plain building of white stock brick, like Christ Church, with a tower at the west end and a characteristic gallery round three sides of the interior (31). Dikes, in his address, expressed once again his enthusiasm for life in a commercial town, coupled with thankfulness for the blessings rendered to the community by the middle classes. Commerce was the glory of the nation, he said, Nature gave scope to industry and exertion and called into existence that middle class of society in which was found more of the comfort which blessed, and more of the virtue which embellished civil society (32).

Three more churches were built in Hull during Dikes' life time, larger and much more impressive than the first three. The mid 1840s was a time of astonishing activity. St Stephen's was the most spectacular of all, built in 1842 in the Early English style entirely of cut stone with a completely vaulted interior, it had a spire rising to a height of two hundred feet. The other two were also in the Early English style, St Mark's, a red brick building with cut stone dressings, was opened in 1843 among the cotton and jute-mill workers in the Groves area. St Paul Sculcoates, the largest church building in Hull after Holy Trinity, opened in 1844, was built in stone. Dikes was present at each stone-laying or opening, made

speeches and donated money. Five churches in just over twenty years, three in successive years, in addition to his labours at St John's was a unique achievement.

In spite of the increasingly elaborate architecture of Dikes's church buildings, Evangelicals left the interiors plain and unadorned. The atmosphere can still be captured today in Holy Trinity Church. The medieval architecture is very fine, but the place has an unlived-in feel about it, with not even a candle on the altar and barely any other ornament, apart from plaques and tombs, to be seen. Holy Communion was celebrated at rare intervals during the first half of the nineteenth century, and even the offices of Morning and Evening prayer were marred by Tate and Brady's New Version of the Psalms. Other services were held for the purpose of a special sermon to mark some notable local or national event.

The Mariners' Church on Prince's Dockside should be added to the six churches mentioned, for the sake of Dikes' association with it. A building, dating from 1771, was taken over from a congregation of Baptists who moved to Sykes Street in 1828. It was demolished and replaced on the same site by a red brick church with an Early English-style front in 1834. Dikes was the natural choice to preach the first sermon (33).

Attitudes to Dissent

Dikes, like most Evangelicals, was on good terms with Methodists and Dissenters. He attended the death bed of George Lambert, the Independent minister of Fish Street Chapel, and after his death expressed his deep regard and high admiration before a large congregation in St John's Church (34). His affection for individual Dissenters, however, did not allow him to co-operate in joint efforts with them. He was a keen supporter and

advocate of the British and Foreign Bible Society, but would not associate with similar bodies set up by Hull Dissenters, believing that they would find it hard to agree with each others' plans. 'Harmony and cordiality may best be preserved by acting separately' (35). Dissenting disregard, indeed hostility towards the Establishment would always be a stumbling block. Dikes did not wish to interfere with the rights of private judgement, but he never missed an opportunity to give a spirited defence and justification for the Establishment as the guardian of civil society. The services of the Church of England, he said when the foundation stone for Christ Church was laid, were calculated to maintain peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety amongst all generations of men (36). The National Church was a 'national sanctuary,' he said on another occasion (37). One form of Dissent which Dikes could not tolerate was the Plymouth Brethren; they were as obnoxious to him as the Puseyites. He was an anti-premillennialist who expected a steady growth of Christian truth, and was disturbed by the increase of premillennial ideas from the 1820s onwards (38). In Ipswich in the early 1840s he found Puseyites and Plymouth Brethren both 'too prevalent,' so he was thankful that 'Hull was troubled by neither.' Plymouth Brethren, he said, were 'at variance with all sects and parties whatever: they are the men, and wisdom shall die with them!' (39).

Catholicism and Politics

Roman Catholicism was a more serious threat in Dikes' estimation, and he opposed the attempt to remove Catholic disabilities in 1807 (40). His fears, religious and political, were of surrendering the Protestant principle on which the constitution was

based at the accession of William III. A letter of 1828 makes clear that in Dikes' opinion emancipation would not satisfy Catholic aspirations. 'Those who know anything of Popery must know that they would never be content till they had a Catholic King, Catholic Bishops, and a Catholic Government' (41). Dikes was a speaker at the open-air meeting at William III's statue in Hull market place in 1829 to protest against Catholic Emancipation. Once more he extolled earnestly the value of throne and government for the well-being of his country. His aversion towards Catholicism was confirmed in old age by reading Dryden's biography of Francis Xavier. It described 'with the most unblushing effrontery, such lying miracles as must cause us to wonder at the attempt to impose upon the credulity of mankind' (42).

These opinions explain why Dikes regarded Puseyism as in some ways worse than Catholicism. It was the enemy within which would bring Catholicism in by the back door. 'The more I read the Oxford Tracts, the less I like them,' he wrote to a friend in 1838 (43). Reading 'ancient divinity' while on holiday, he found Basil, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and the like quite foreign to his tastes; their praise of virginity, fasting and asceticism were the antithesis of his own esteem for 'the kindly virtues of domestic life' (44).

Tractarianism was, to Dikes, a schism in the Church which, if it prevailed, would annihilate the blessings of the Reformation and make Romanism dominant again. At first he predicted the early downfall of 'a system incapable of bearing the light which an age of thought and intelligence must throw upon it.' Dikes was more a child of the Enlightenment than he knew; the subsequent success of Puseyism he attributed to a changing current of popular opinion towards 'Romanism' (45). Around Ipswich it already seemed to him 'like smoke from a

bottomless pit, which threatened to shed darkness over the whole land' (46). Tractarianism, unlike the current railroad mania, would not cure itself; it would prevail, wrote Dikes in 1846 (47).

Religion, politics and morality

Dikes' chief concern was with serious religion. He was not in the modern sense a 'political priest,' but he saw religion, politics, morality and the ordering of society as a seamless robe; without religion, serious religion at that, disaster awaited both the individual and the nation in this world and the next. Hence Dikes' views were conservative. On a day of public thanksgiving, following the suppression of the Irish revolt in 1798, he preached on 'The Effects of Irreligion.' It seemed to him that 'the ungodly triumph' they had seen bear down all opposition in France had for a time come dreadfully near to home. He urged his listeners, in view of the effects of infidelity and irreligion on the moral character and happiness of a nation, to have a firm attachment to the government of their country (48).

When Habeas Corpus was suspended in 1817, Dikes was firmly on the side of order and the British Constitution. He preached on the social and political efficacy of serious religion in a sermon, 'The Doctrines of the Church of England considered in reference to their Moral Influence,' maintaining that justification by faith resulted in holiness of heart and life - the moral influence of this doctrine. He drew two inferences: 'the advantages of our National Establishment,' and the duty of ministers of the Church to enforce her holy doctrines (49).

It seemed, with the defeat of Napoleon, that England had escaped the worst effects of revolution,

but there was, Dikes said in a sermon in 1820 'On the Present Times,' deploring the developments in the growing manufacturing towns, a 'revolutionary spirit ... in the populous districts of the nation' which led to blasphemous assaults on religion (50). Ten years later, however, when revolution was rife again in Europe, when concessions had been granted to Catholics, and farm labourers were burning ricks and smashing machinery in all parts of the country, Dikes remained cheerful, recalling that even the worst terrors of the French Revolution had 'yielded to the influence of time, and the voice of despair was exchanged for notes of praise and thanksgiving to God' (51).

Dikes lived to see the Chartist agitation in Hull and several rallies addressed by Feargus O'Connor, but in his opinion Socialism was more insidious. 'Open violence alarms the whole community, and meets with immediate resistance; but when error is covertly insinuated, its effects are more pernicious' (52). Even so, in contrast with the gloomy and pessimistic Milner forty years before, Dikes refused to be needlessly disquieted, for after all, 'all things work together for good to them that love Him,' but he remained a pre-Revolutionary man in outlook to the end of his days. Although all human beings were ultimately equal before God, in this world hierarchy and inequality were necessary for social order, and the Established Church had its part to play in maintaining that order.

In Dikes' opinion, the French Revolution was a major influence in the increased moral laxity of the age, not least in respect to sexual morality. Encouraged by Wilberforce's founding of the Society for the Suppression of Vice in 1802 (53) he preached a sermon in 1804 in the hope that a similar society might be formed in Hull. A Sermon on 'the Abounding of Open

Profligacy and Immorality' laid great emphasis on the demoralizing effects of the French Revolution. As in the case of Puseyism, Dikes turned to the Apocalypse to find a suitable metaphor for such fearsome horrors, responsible for the sudden and total revolution in the sentiments of the human mind. The Revolution was a smoking 'bottomless pit' (54), spreading 'its noxious vapours over the face of the earth' (55). The 'pit' in Revelation is a reservoir of evil out of which the beast ascends (56). These were matters which created the deepest emotion and a desire for reform on Dikes' part, but his appeals had no effect upon his congregation. Even three years later when a sermon preached before the magistrates by his curate, John Scott, led to the establishment of a society in Hull, it failed after only a few years of moderate success. The prosperous commercial classes were well able to bear the endemic vice associated in their minds with the lower orders, if the alternative was to give money and time.

Dikes returned to the attack in 1811 with proposals for a female penitentiary in Hull in a sermon forbiddingly entitled, 'The fatal tendency of Lewdness to corrupt the Morals and destroy the Happiness of Society exposed; and the establishment of a Female Penitentiary recommended.' The word 'prostitution' was never used, but Dikes target was the widespread vice which he believed was disfiguring life in the growing sea-port. His aim was not so fearsome as the word 'penitentiary' sounds, with its overtones of life in prison. It was to be a place of refuge as well as of reform for those who were trapped in prostitution. Dikes dwelt on the evils and miseries which were the result and which, he felt, had not been sufficiently considered by or exposed to the respectable (57). This time his appeal was more successful, and a house was

taken near the bank of the Hull in Wincomlee 'for the reception of the objects of charity.'

No town in the kingdom, Dikes asserted the following year, was so thoroughly infected by this vice as Hull, but no doubt the clergy with experience of dockside life in London, Liverpool, and Bristol said much the same. Dikes' utterances, however, were notably compassionate, appealing for mercy and help for those who were 'abandoned as outcasts from society' (58). A sermon in 1823 in support of the work of the penitentiary used moving anecdotes of the plight of a fourteen-year-old girl, but Dikes' appeals to his congregation and to other well-to-do townspeople still produced only meagre results, and the house closed in 1826 when funds ran out. The work was revived at a house in Anlaby Road in 1837 (59), known as the Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire, and North Lincolnshire Female Penitentiary; a wider catchment area might result in greater financial support, but the bulk of the trade would inevitably come from Hull. The Penitentiary was supported partly by subscriptions and partly by earnings of the inmates who were obliged to wash, iron and sew. The new house accommodated thirty-six 'penitents' who were required to remain for two years, when 'respectable situations' would be found for them.

An account of life in the Penitentiary in 1843 comes from another Dikes sermon in support of the venture. There were at the time twenty-seven inmates. Several from the previous year had gone into service with a good character reference from the matron to their employers. Almost enough to pay for the women's food and clothing had been earned by washing and other work, but a large debt of £1,500 remained to be paid off, for which Dikes appealed for more subscriptions. He painted a picture of the wretched hopelessness of those engaged in this vice, whom many regarded as

beyond help, pleading that they would not 'shut the door of mercy.' He admitted that this evil could not be totally rooted out, but it would be a great blessing for anything to be done which might check its progress; it was the source of almost every other vice, 'lying, swearing, stealing, drunkenness, and murder are all in its train.' It was human nature at its lowest state of degradation. Young men robbed their masters 'to supply the demands of infamous women;' many dated their ruin from the time they began to associate with 'abandoned females' (60). In spite of this there was a widespread reluctance to support such work in Hull; many felt the evil best ignored.

The only other religious body involved in this kind of work in Dikes' time was the Society of Friends. A committee of Quakers was formed to 'visit the receptacles of vice in this town,' which uncovered misery 'in all her hideous and varied shapes,' - disease, want, wretchedness - unknown, abandoned by parents and friends, brutally treated by the men with whom they associated. But Dikes was not prepared to say that there was no remedy; in the penitentiary he founded he claimed that half of those who remained for any considerable time were 'reclaimed', in spite of many disappointments (61). Large numbers left after only a short time, preferring to take their chance outside rather than submit to an irksome discipline and endure the ignominious status of a 'penitent.' In 1843, unfortunately, the Penitentiary had no money with which to begin the new year, and once again was indebted to 'a few benevolent individuals' who enabled it to continue (62).

Dikes was just as prepared as Milner to denounce evil wherever he found it, but it is not easy to imagine Milner having the time or patience to establish and run a penitentiary, and to beg endlessly for money

in support. Dikes was more gentle and may have appeared more at ease in the world, but both men were equally unworldly at heart. When writing to a mother who asked for his advice on training her children, Dikes emphasised chiefly that 'the great end of life is to prepare for death,' that the comforts which God provides must be enjoyed with 'great moderation and great caution' (63). The world was so full of snares that young people had to be guarded from love of the world and the vanities which all too easily attracted them. It could have been Milner speaking.

Last Days

Towards the end of his life Dikes wondered whether he had himself 'indulged too high expectation from the things of this world ... an undue love of present objects' (64). Milner denounced the distractions of mercantile life; Dikes contrasted the avid busyness of people in this world with their unreadiness for another world (65).

He was always sure, however, of the relevance of faith for this world, for personal and family life, and for philanthropy. For him, the Bible contained every duty which was owed to God and man (66). Children in observing it would obey parents, parents bring up children in the fear of the Lord, husbands would love their wives, wives obey their husbands, the thief would steal no more, the glutton become temperate, the drunkard sober, and the lewd man chaste. Others, perhaps Dikes himself, might have added that the rich would remember the poor, and the poor would remember their place, but he never saw the Bible as a mere 'dry code of laws.' Its doctrines to him were the 'genial rays of heaven, enlightening the understanding, warming the heart, and bringing us nearer to God.'

Where ever the stream of divine revelation has flowed, it has gladdened the region through which it has passed; and on its banks have arisen the Sacred Temple, the Sunday and Daily School, the Infirmary, the Almshouse, and the Philanthropic Institution which opens its hospitable door to the blind and the poor, to the old and the wretched (67).

This is an attractive picture of Evangelicalism in its strength, and Dikes' vision of Hull as a godly city, churches for worship and instruction in the faith, schools to teach the children faith and useful knowledge suitable to their station in life, and institutions to alleviate the condition of those who through poverty, sickness or old age could no longer keep up. If this idyll ever existed outside dreams of a golden past, it was beyond recall as the result of two revolutions whose effects are still with us. The French Revolution had unleashed new thoughts and aspirations which would not be gainsaid. The industrial and commercial revolution which Milner hated and which Dikes benignly attempted to enlist in his fight against degrading vice, had created populations, cities, and problems beyond the scope of the Established Church or an unreformed government and parliament.

Dikes' ministry in Hull lasted fifty-six years and he saw the deaths of a number of life-long Evangelical friends. Wilberforce died in 1833, John Scott in 1834, his first curate who became successively lecturer at Holy Trinity from 1801 and vicar of St Mary's combined with the vicarage of North Ferriby in 1816, and Charles Simeon in 1836. Dikes also became vicar of North Ferriby on Scott's death, installing his own grandson, Charles Wawn, as curate (68). Dikes moved into a

comfortable house in 1833 when he combined the Mastership of the Charterhouse with his other duties. The stipend of £200 a year was more than he received from St John's. Scott's premature death robbed Hull Evangelicals of their natural leader who would have succeeded Dikes. On Dikes' death another curate, H.W.Kemp, succeeded him at St John's and John King, Dikes' friend and biographer, vicar of Christ Church since 1822, became leader of the movement.

Dikes died in 1847 at the house of his old friend Avison Terry, merchant, Evangelical philanthropist, a collaborator in building new churches, and sometime Mayor of Hull. The funeral was attended by clergy, Dissenting ministers, the Mayor and Corporation, twelve magistrates, the Town Clerk, bankers and merchants. Dikes' civilized brand of Evangelicalism had become the religion which Hull's well-to-do respected.

Chapter Five

RELIGIOUS DISSENT AND POLITICAL CONFORMITY

Old Dissent was more socially acceptable to the Established Church than other Dissenting bodies. Its members were to be found among Hull's rising commercial class, merchants and manufacturers, and in the professions. Some were members of the Town Council and owned or were partners in business. Among those known to be Dissenters were J. Wilkinson, J.S. Westerdale, and William Priest, merchants, and Jesse Malcolm, a shipbuilder; other councillors were in businesses not connected with the port (1). Of the new Town Council, elected after the Municipal Corporations Act of September 1835, almost half the Aldermen, Councillors, and Magistrates were Dissenters, mostly Independents, including William Sissons and John Blundell, members of two local paint-manufacturing families, and James Alderson, the physician at the Royal Infirmary (2). Throughout the country until the middle of the nineteenth century there were Independents, known as Congregationalists by then, who believed it might be God's will that they ministered to the middle classes, leaving poorer people to others (3). James Alderson and his elder brother Christopher, both succeeded their father, John, as physicians at the Hull Royal Infirmary. John Alderson who came to Hull from Lowestoft in 1780, was elected physician in 1792 and played a prominent part in public life. He was one-time President of the Subscription Library, and helped to found the Hull Philosophical and Literary Society, the Mechanics Institute and the Botanic Gardens. James

Alderson, born in 1795, became a FRS and was knighted in 1869. The family worshipped at the Bowlalley Lane Unitarian Chapel (4).

Since men of business and the professions were largely responsible for 'calling' ministers to Hull, they were not likely to subject themselves to the kind of anti-commercial onslaughts that Milner regularly delivered from the pulpit of Holy Trinity Church. Politically they were conservative, but religious dissenters against what they saw as the unfair privileges of the Establishment. Their brief enthusiasm for the reforms which the revolutionary movement in Europe seemed to presage, however, raised the suspicions of Churchmen. The French Revolution created more fear and apprehension of Dissent than its modest and fair demands warranted. Revolution, or even major reforms, were not in Dissenters' best interests nor commensurate with their own social and commercial aspirations. They believed in the ideal of a balanced constitution as the condition of political respectability (5). Caution and moderate reform were their maxims, but they were not reactionary, being aware of the need for political and social reform to relieve poverty in the industrial towns (6). Dissent, nevertheless, became tantamount to republicanism for many in the Establishment, and its revival and expansion in the early years of the nineteenth century provoked a number of attempts, notably Sidmouth's Bill of 1811, to curb its spread. The good relations between Dissenters and the Anglican clergy in Hull suggest that they were not at first seen in this light locally.

George Lambert and the Revival of Dissent in Hull

The Evangelical Revival was a world-wide

phenomenon, affecting religious life from Silesia to New England (7). At home it was not confined to the Established Church, though it may claim to have begun in the Church of England with the Methodist movement. If Evangelicals in the Established Church were at war with Latitudinarianism, the religious enemy of Dissent was Unitarianism.

The oldest Dissenting congregations in Hull were two bodies of Puritans, one in Dagger Lane, the other in Bowlalley Lane. The latter became Unitarian in mid-eighteenth century; Dagger Lane began to move in the same direction a few years later, and eleven members of the chapel seceded on the grounds that their new minister was neither Calvinist in faith nor Independent in order. They built a new chapel for themselves in Blanket Row in 1769 and called George Lambert, a recently trained student from Heckmondwike Academy, to be their minister.

Lambert was born in Chelsea in 1741 of parents who were members of the Established Church. He left home to learn the business of a chemist, but some years later desired to enter the Independent ministry (8), and was advised by a friend, whom he had met while on a visit to Yorkshire, to consult the Rev. James Scott, tutor at Heckmondwike Academy. He preached to several congregations in Gloucester, Nottingham and Cleckheaton, but declined invitations to become their pastor. He decided to come to Hull following a visit to the Academy by Edward Riddell, the architect and builder (9), one of the seceders from Dagger Lane, and afterwards a deacon at Blanket Row (10). Lambert's portrait shows a man not unlike Milner in outward appearance, heavy jowl, bewigged, in preaching gown and bands. Although not of a strong constitution, he was described in his first days in Hull as over medium height, a broad, full-set man with ruddy cheeks and

shrewd, bright grey eyes. A lady who knew him in old age remembered his white wig and three-corner hat, his dark blue cloak, his silver buckles, black silk stockings and black small clothes (11).

Joseph Milner had only recently arrived in Hull when Lambert came to Blanket Row in 1769 where, according to one tradition, Milner listened to the Countess of Huntingdon's student evangelists from Trevecca, and was converted to Evangelicalism. Both men faced similar situations of contented apathy in their respective congregations. Dissent in all parts of the country was very inward looking, confined to its own conventicles, showing little interest in the world outside, respectable and self-contained (12), but Lambert would see encouraging signs in Hull. Evangelicalism, though still small in numbers, was making progress in the Church of England, and the Methodist revival was in its early stages. Lambert and Milner, who had much in common, were to spend the rest of their lives in Hull. Milner died in 1797 and Lambert in 1816.

Religious life was a simple affair before the multiplication of activities and societies in the next century, leaving time for religious people to play a full part in the life of the town and port. At Blanket Row, apart from Sunday services, there was a prayer meeting on Mondays and a church meeting or lecture on alternate Fridays, in contrast with the virtually 'alternative' Christian life which took place on most church premises by the end of the nineteenth century. There was, of course, the maintenance of the building, the purchase of oil and candles for lighting, coals and turf for heating, not to mention the provision of a little 'comfort' for the minister in the vestry cupboard in the shape of a bottle of raisin wine or port (13). Lambert visited his flock regularly; there

were only about twenty when he first came to Hull, and some wits at Holy Trinity scoffed at 'that poor devil Lambert who had to preach twice a week to the same people' (14); but he liked to spend as much time in study and the preparation of his sermons as he could, and found it a trial when his deacons spent all Friday and Saturday morning with him, leaving him no time for 'reading, meditation, or other delightful employments.' He found much company, 'even of good people, not always the most profitable.' Reading and retirement were necessary to keep the edge of the mind towards God, he confided to his diary in 1786 (15). In spite of the superior and scornful attitude of some at Holy Trinity towards Lambert and his people, it does not follow that they were drawn from the poor; there was little real contact between the lowest classes and the adherents of any religious body. The seating arrangements in practically all churches saw to that (16). Pew renting was the norm, leaving very few seats free. Lambert, who drew up to £70 a year from pew rents, even at the modest chapel in Blanket Row, dismissed the complaint that there were no free seats as 'unreasonable', although there were 180 still unlet at the time (17). Humble folk might feel more welcome and needed out in the remote rural areas once a village conventicle was established.

Lambert received an invitation to Kidderminster in 1791, but was persuaded by the Hull congregation to stay with them. A new and larger chapel was opened in Fish Street the following year, and enlarged after ten years; it remained the centre of Congregationalism in Hull for over a century. Over a thousand people attended its re-opening in 1802.

Lambert, like Milner, engaged in the fight against irreligion, but unlike Milner he was also fighting for

religious liberty (18). Although 'pure religion' was a common bond between Churchmen and the new outward-looking Dissenters, as time passed a barrier grew between them; one side stood for Establishment, the other became increasingly attached to political democracy. When Lambert became minister at Blanket Row he was obliged to sign thirty-seven of the Thirty-Nine Articles; not until 1779 was this subscription replaced by a declaration of faith in Protestantism and Scripture as the rule of faith for Dissenting ministers. The delay, allegedly, was because Dissenting sympathies were believed by High Church Tories, the Government, and the mob, to side with the American colonists in the War of Independence (19). Lambert recorded in his diary on 30th August 1781 his advice to Independents in Barrow-on-Humber to stand firm when their chapel was attacked by the mob.

The French Revolution made matters worse for Dissent. The turn of the century was a period of religious success, but perilous for politics and church life. In those years the London Missionary Society, the Tract Society, and the Bible Society were founded, but the French Revolution set back the cause of religious liberty in England for thirty years. Dissenters, whether they had supported the early stages of the Revolution or not, lived under a cloud of suspicion, at the risk of Government disfavour or mob violence. Lambert showed no sign of being other than a conservative constitutionalist, but recorded in his diary his sorrow at the inauspicious events taking place in many parts of the land, the riots and destruction of Dissenters' property in Birmingham and elsewhere in 1791, the howls of 'Church and King' or 'Church and Constitution,' with the implication that Dissent was inimicable to both. In 1794 he noted the bad spirit that was abroad, and the idea that to be a

Dissenter was for some as bad as being a Republican (20). The outbreak of war with France only excacerbated matters. Lambert noted the food price riots in Hull in 1795 and 1796, and when, in 1797, the Navy mutinied at the Nore he feared the country was on the brink of a precipice. Dissent was severely threatened by the introduction of a Parliamentary Bill in 1800 which if passed into law would 'totally set aside itinerancy and village preaching' and lay open Dissenting places of worship to suppression by the magistrate on the slightest information or suspicion of subversion. Fish Street Chapel, like other centres of Independency, was engaged in active evangelism by itinerant preachers, in this case in Holderness, a remote rural area thirty miles square, east of Hull, bounded on three sides by the North Sea and the Humber (21). The friendship between men of Lambert's outlook and the Evangelical clergy in the Established Church outlasted these alarms, concerned as they were for the extension of serious religion. Lambert had spoken warmly of John King, vicar of St Mary Lowgate, after his death in 1782. On Milner's death in 1797 he wrote that 'he was a man of learning and piety, a sound and faithful Gospel minister, and much owned of God in the conversion of souls' (22). This kind of friendship survived Lambert and Milner. Mrs Gilbert, the wife of Lambert's successor could say as late as 1816, when they came to Hull, 'It was like joining an informal Evangelical Alliance.'

Friendships like these help to explain why Dissenters in Hull were not more openly critical of the Church of England, even when they felt there was cause. Lambert confided many thoughts to his diary which he would not express in public. On one occasion he attended a Confirmation in Holy Trinity, early in Bromby's incumbency, and did not find the experience

edifying.

Many were asked no questions; others have been confirmed twice the same day; some have offered their tickets to another; many young men come from the country, I saw with common prostitutes; some were drunk. I have read over the prayer-book service, and if I had not been a Dissenter, I should have been one that night. Yet the bishop tells me they have been regenerated, and assures them of God's favour (23).

These and other abuses, non-residence, pluralism, and nepotism were not mentioned publicly by Dissenters, partly through fear of persecution, but partly out of regard for their Evangelical friends.

The Church and the Establishment, however, had no reason to remain silent about their own suspicions and alarms when they saw the continued success of Dissent, especially in the first decade of the nineteenth century. There were 1,118 Dissenting chapels in England in 1776; by 1808 there were 2,000, and Government returns of 1811 showed that in towns of over 1,000 inhabitants there were 3,457 Dissenting chapels to 2,655 Established churches (24).

Yet Dissent and patriotism were not incompatible at Fish Street, Hull's leading centre of Evangelical Dissent. A day of 'fasting and humiliation' was held in 1803 when the whole country was in fear of invasion by Napoleon (25). In 1805 a service of thanksgiving was held for Nelson's victory at Trafalgar, and a collection of £20 taken up for the wounded. Another collection, this time of £23, was taken to celebrate the King's Jubilee in 1809. Between 1807 and 1815 an annual collection of between £20 and £25 was donated for the relief of English prisoners in France, and when Princess Charlotte died in 1817 the chapel was crowded on the Sunday and the pulpit hung in black (26).

Hull's Response to Sidmouth's Bill

Relations between Dissent and the Establishment deteriorated further as the result of the actions of the Home Secretary, Lord Sidmouth, alarmed at Dissent's success. Dissenting resentment was understandable when, in 1809, Lord Sidmouth required returns of all chapels and preachers licenced during the previous fifty years. The startling figures of 12,000 chapels and 4,000 preachers (27) only increased the ruling class's dislike and mistrust of Dissent. Dissenters on their part were still further incensed by Sidmouth's proposed Bill of 1811 in which he patronisingly promised to save them from the erstwhile 'pig drovers, chimney sweeps, and tailors' who preached in the rural areas. The Bill proposed that no minister could be appointed to a congregation unless he were already well-known to six of their number, and no student could go to college unless six ministers who knew him well testified as to his suitability. If the Bill had passed into law, the scattered nature of Dissent would have spelled its demise.

A mass meeting of Dissenters was called in Fish Street Chapel to consider the Bill, and Lambert took the chair. Fourteen Dissenting ministers from various denominations met a few days before in order to plan the event, under the banner of 'Religious Liberty.' It was reported in the Hull Rockingham, a weekly newspaper edited first by George Lee, a Unitarian minister, then by his son of the same name, from 1811 until his death in 1842. At least 1,000 persons attended, 'and a more unanimous and respectable assembly never before had come together on such an occasion' (28). The report of the meeting was also published by the Rockingham as a 6d pamphlet, entitled, 'Proceedings of the Dissenters in Hull on the Introduction into Parliament by Lord Sidmouth of a Bill

Purporting to Amend and Explain the Toleration Act.'

The cause was notable in bringing together a wide variety of Dissenters not normally seen in one another's company. George Lee, the Unitarian, spoke first, outlining the contents of the Bill and proposing a series of opposing resolutions in the cause of religious liberty. Next came William Severn, an ex-Wesleyan, but now an uncompromising Unitarian minister at Bowlalley Lane Chapel. He was pleased so many different denominations were represented, seeing nothing discreditable in diversity of opinion. Only in parts of the world 'under the influence of the Arabian imposter Mahomet, or the anti-christian dominion of the Bishop of Rome' did people think and speak exactly alike on all matters of religion (29). He explained how the Act of Uniformity had deprived 2,000 ministers of their livings, separating them from their flocks in 1662 (30), citing the example of Samuel Charles, first minister at Bowlalley Lane, ejected from the village of Mickleover near Derby.

Almost every speaker protested his own political loyalty, and that of those for whom he spoke. Severn claimed that Dissenters had always been warm supporters of the Hanoverian dynasty. Sidmouth's Bill was motivated not by occasional abuse of the Toleration Act, but by 'the amazing increase of Dissenters within the last thirty or forty years,' not least among Methodists who now, he asserted, counted themselves as Dissenters (31).

The Rev. George Payne, Lambert's assistant, said it could never be proved that a Dissenter was a worse subject of the Government than his episcopalian brother (32). Laws should not require uniformity of belief, yet this Bill would exact punishment on those whose creed differed from the majority. It was contrary to natural rights as well as to the spirit of

Christianity. Dissenters, he concluded, were firm supporters of the government and claimed equal civil privileges (33). Hull's Dissenters were at pains to make it clear that they were all conservatives, and that Religious Dissent was perfectly compatible with political conformity. The doctrine of divine right had been deposed with the Stuarts, and when the Church of England had looked for support at the 'glorious revolution' and at the accession of William III, Dissenters had given it gladly. They were also among the first to welcome George I, and had been patient for twenty years since they applied for the Test and Corporation Acts to be lifted, but this Bill would make matters worse. They remarked on the very small number of Dissenters to be found among the criminal population; their co-religionists were sent to prison on matters of conscience rather than on any other account (34).

The Rev. Edward Hare spoke on behalf of the Methodists present, emphasising that Methodists, like Dissenters, were loyal and peaceable subjects. They taught their members to fear God and honour the King, so their piety was false if their loyalty was not sincere. Their chief cause for loyalty under the present king, George III, was the blessing of religious liberty, and they gladly and voluntarily prayed for King and Regent, unlike the Established Church which was obliged to do so. Contrary to the opinion of William Severn, however, Hare was not prepared to have all Methodists counted as Dissenters, even though this raised peculiar difficulties for Methodist preachers and officials under the terms of the Bill. They were not Dissenters, but Churchmen, however irregular, so not able to certify that they were each a minister of some separate congregation. If the Bill became law it would mean a general persecution for Methodists (35).

Sidmouth's Bill was in fact defeated in the House of Lords a few days after the Dissenters' meeting in Hull, so no further action was taken, except to call a another meeting on 30 May to express their thanks to the leading members of the House of Lords and others who had helped to defeat the Bill. Dissenters did not feel, however, that all would now be well for them. One result of Sidmouth's attempt to limit their freedom was the formation of the 'Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty.' Fish Street, the Society's Hull headquarters, sent an annual subscription of £2.

In Hull only a year later, George Payne remarked in a sermon that the spirit of intolerance which had recently displayed itself was reviving (36). This precarious tenure of religious liberty was one reason why Fish Street Chapel continued to confine its evangelistic work to the remote rural area of Holderness rather than build another church in Hull. Extra religious accommodation was arguably required in a town of 27,502 people (37), but Dissenters in Hull, as elsewhere, were still wary of the mob.

Mrs Gilbert, the wife of Lambert's successor, described her bizarre experience of the continued suspicions still surrounding Dissenters in 1817. She had attended a large party where the discussion got deep into 'Manchester politics,' so the Dissenters were obliged to conclude with a chorus of 'God save the King' at the behest of their 'dear Low Church friends' (ie. from St Mary Lowgate), who had grown suspicious of their loyalty as the evening progressed. If they had declined, their 'friends' would have reported them to the magistrates (38). Mrs Gilbert had misjudged, at least in part, the nature of the 'unofficial Evangelical Alliance' in Hull on her arrival the year

before. It could not withstand the corrosion of political incongruity.

The Necessity of Reform

A generation later, however, the political climate of thought had begun to work in favour of Dissent. There was talk of the necessity of reform in Church and State (39), and a number of public events confirmed the growing need.

One result of the 'Peterloo Massacre' in 1819 was to increase the uneasiness towards the dual role of clerical magistrates; the secular and anti-working class implications contrasted with the clergy's pastoral role. Two of the magistrates at 'Peterloo' were Church of England clergymen, and one of them even read the riot act (40). On that occasion there was a greater contrast than ever before between such a provocative use of force by the ruling class and the non-revolutionary nature of the working-class gathering. The experience helped to push middle and working-class Reformers into each others arms. The Whig newspaper, Hull Rockingham, on the other hand, was circumspect in its comments. Peterloo was 'distressing in every point of view,' but the paper saw 'nothing to approve in the conduct of any of the parties.' It would rather have had such a large gathering of working people forbidden in the first place; but once started the meeting should have been allowed to continue (41). The Unitarian editor of the Rockingham, the Rev. George Lee, acutely conscious of the double handicap of being both a Unitarian and a Reformer, struggled to express his opinions in a balanced, non-sectarian manner (42).

Dissenters generally identified themselves with the Whig policy of defending Queen Caroline at the time of the Queen's Trial in 1820, but Dissenters in Hull took

no part in the meetings organized by leading Whigs to celebrate her acquittal. The Royal Divorce Bill, however, was seen by some Tory and Whig aristocrats as helping to bring the various classes of the discontented closer together (43).

The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, and Catholic Emancipation in 1829, raised fears among some in the Establishment that the Church of England would no longer be able to find protection in the alliance between Church and State (44). But disquieted by references to the 'faith of a Christian' with its obvious exclusion of Unitarians and Jews, the Rockingham confined itself to measured congratulations on the liberality of the Lords in repealing the Acts. The editor took the occasion to deliver some further balanced comment by going on to deplore an anti-Catholic petition which was currently going around Hull touting for signatures. Lee was sad that Hull was a place 'where distrust is felt of the honour and integrity of any of our fellow subjects on account of their religious sentiments' (45).

The Rev. George Lee, like other middle-class Dissenters, supported the moderate Reform Associations rather than the extreme Reform Unions. The latter were the sphere of those who were radical rather than Dissenting. The Union in Hull was created by the agitator James Acland, an out-and-out radical and self-selected champion of popular liberty, who arrived in Hull from Bristol in 1830 (46). Well-to-do Dissenters, like those in Hull described at the beginning of this chapter, did not claim eligibility for public office simply on the grounds that they were citizens; they believed that the privileges open to men of their class, wealth and station should not be denied them purely because of their faith (47).

Emancipation was more important than Reform to the

Dissenting merchant class. It was Emancipation which first broke up the old order and made Reform inevitable (48). The fall of the Tory administration in 1830 and the Reform Act of 1832 marked the end of the old order with the enfranchising of the entrepreneurial middle class. The long decline of the Church of England in Hull, in relation to Dissent, began in the early 1830s, and a memorable dispute between the two in 1834 shows how matters stood. The Independents, then moving from a loose federation towards a religious denomination (49), took the lead.

Hull Ecclesiastical Controversy

Dissenters in Hull joined together briefly in 1834 to defend their common interests on the occasion of the so-called, 'Hull Ecclesiastical Controversy'. At the centre of things was the newly arrived minister at Fish Street Chapel, the Rev. Thomas Stratten, a florid, heavily-built man with an impish look and a quick, inventive mind in debate which he soon put to good use. The intention of the 'controversy' was, in part, to show that Dissenters in Hull exerted a greater influence on the town than the Church of England.

The arrival of Stratten at Fish Street marked a watershed in its religious activity. Under Lambert and his successors the emphasis of the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival had been to save the lost outside the church, manifesting itself chiefly among local Independents in the Holderness mission. Attention began to be given, under Stratten, to work within the church, to the young, and to evangelism within the immediate neighbourhood of the chapel. From this time a philanthropic spirit began to grow which took account of people's physical and temporal welfare, and about thirty kinds of religious agencies were created for

this purpose. George Lambert and Thomas Stratten were themselves examples illustrating the change which had taken place within Dissent generally. Lambert was in the mould of the quiet, diligent pastor, with little interest in the world outside; Stratten, no less diligent, was at the same time more concerned in the affairs of mankind at large, and with the rightful place of Dissent in the modern world (50).

Under Stratten's leadership Hull Dissenters prepared a petition asking for five grievances to be redressed, the granting of legal and civil registration of births, marriages and deaths, freedom to celebrate marriages without interference from the episcopal clergy or payment of fees to them, complete exemption from church rates, liberty for Dissenting ministers to inter in the national burial grounds, and the revision of the charters of Oxford and Cambridge Universities in order to abolish the Established Church's monopoly of academic honours, and the establishing of the Universities of London and Durham on liberal and comprehensive principles.

William Lowthrop, a self-confessed friend of civil and religious liberty, chaired a public meeting of Dissenters at Fish Street Church on 18th March 1834 to gather support for a petition to Parliament. Lowthrop was the only Dissenting landowner active in Hull politics (51), later Mayor of Hull and knighted in 1840 after presenting addresses of congratulation from the town to Queen Victoria on her escape from an attempt on her life (52). He declared his own 'cordial attachment to those whom we know as the evangelical clergy in the church' (53), but his objections centred on the union of Church and State.

Over 1,100 attended the meeting, some standing in the aisles, said to be 'highly respectable, a considerable proportion being ladies' (54). They were

against a premature or immediate disunion, as this could only result in the overthrowing of the social order, no more desired by Dissent than by the Establishment, and of religion itself. They wanted, however, fair play and free discussion now. Truth was on their side; it was the will of the people, so the separation of Church and State could be achieved with 'no harm either to social order or to religion itself.'

The minister of George Street Baptist Church, the Rev. Charles Daniell, moved the first resolution objecting to the payment of church rates and the obligation to join in church services on occasion, but hedged his objections with expressions of loyalty 'towards the reigning family' and described the local clergy as 'a body of exceedingly enlightened, pious and active men ... whom he highly esteemed for their works' sake.' One of whom had said, perhaps John Scott of St Mary's, that he was prepared to concede every grievance of the Dissenters (55).

Significantly there were no Wesleyan ministers present; the Wesleyans by now were the largest single Dissenting body in Hull, approaching the combined numbers of all other Nonconformists. They were, perhaps, confident about their own future and continued growth, neither asking for concessions nor wishing to offend their Anglican brethren. The Rev. William M'Conkey, the Independent Methodist was there; his congregation had continued to call themselves Church Methodists long after the Methodist secession, but had now hardened into a separate denomination in sympathy with the general aspirations of Dissent. He regretted that there were 'no pious Evangelical clergy on the platform to combine with them in their great object;' the Established Church was opposed to Dissenting claims, he believed, on the grounds that they were now better off than formerly; but that was exactly why

Dissenters sought complete freedom (56). Dissent had become more confident after the Reform Act of 1832, and the Rev. Edward Morley, the Independent minister did not fear a 'second Sidmouth's Bill,' and was sure their requests would be well received by the Reformed House of Commons (57).

One of the new Members of Parliament, Matthew Hill, a barrister, later Recorder of Birmingham and Commissioner in Bankruptcy for Bristol (58), also acknowledged the piety of the Hull clergy, but went on to draw attention to the greater success of Dissent compared with the Established Church in Hull. In the last thirty years they had spent twice as much money on places of worship, they had nearly twice the amount of seating, and certainly twice as many attended chapel as church. The number of Sunday School children was double that in Church Schools, and the numbers for communicants were six times as many as those in the churches (59).

The Rev. Thomas Stratten summed up with a long and uncompromising speech seeking to expose the nature of the local opposition to their case, although even he felt obliged to express respect and regard for Hull's Evangelical clergy. It was ironical, however, he said, to see how the late George Lambert was revered in the Established Church now, more than when he was alive. He was held up as an example to show how Dissenters had deteriorated, but he had never been asked to preach in St Mary's, nor had any eulogy been pronounced on his life and labours (60). Although relations with the Church of England had deteriorated with Dissent's success and the rise of new political thinking in America and France, Stratten looked back to a time when, in large London chapels, Established and Dissenting ministers preached in succession from the same pulpits. Now, however, he saw no possibility of

co-operation among all Christians while the principle of Establishment existed, and while Dissenters were regarded as 'degenerate sons' (61).

No clergyman in the town uttered a word of disapproval when the resolutions debated that night were drawn up, but the publication of a memorial based on the resolutions stung the clergy into response. They took great offence at being offered 'forgiveness' by Dissenters, at being called 'religious functionaries,' and claimed not to comprehend why Dissenters felt themselves inferior and proscribed; but they would soon understand, said Stratten, if they had rates levied on them for repairs to Dissenting buildings, or if they had to go to Dissenting chapels to celebrate marriages, or employ the Dissenting minister at burials (62).

The liberty which Dissenters desired applied, of course, chiefly to men. Stratten explained very clearly his own feelings of inferiority in the face of Establishment incomprehension, but experienced no sense of incongruity in informing the large numbers of women present at the meeting that they were not eligible to sign the petition. Their task, just as in the campaign for the emancipation of slaves, was simply to influence their husbands (63).

Stratten's Review of the Controversy

The 'Controversy' is evidence of the strong feelings of both Church and Dissent, and of their inability to appreciate each other's point of view. The three leading Evangelical clergy at the time were John Scott of St Mary's, who died on 18 October 1834, Thomas Dikes of St John's, and John King of Christ Church. They combined to write some 'Clerical Tracts' in reply to the Dissenting claims, but did not use

their own names. One writer signed himself 'Vindicator,' possibly Scott, from the title of his book in 'vindication' of the late Joseph Milner. The other two writers were called 'Lecturers.'

The clergy were piqued at the way their Tracts were 'held up so irreverently at the Dissenters' public meeting' (64) but, wrote Stratten, the Dissenters had not complained when the clergy had done the same with their Memorial, on the contrary they were grateful for the publicity afforded to their complaints. The first Clerical Tract, said Stratten, commended as the 'authorized production of the party' only showed how the clergy had rushed into controversy without understanding the questions in dispute. The style reads like that of the Rev. John King.

Have the jealousies and heart-burnings of Dissenters diminished in proportion as their civil and religious liberties have increased? Do they now speak more temperately than they did before the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts? If their jealousies arose only from real grievances, then, as those grievances were abated, there would be a constant and corresponding approximation to contentment. Instead of this, the vehemence of Dissenters (or those who put themselves forward in their name - perhaps a reference to Matthew Hill, the Whig M.P), is in inverse proportion to the magnitude of their wrongs. They became more clamorous the less they have to clamour for; the more impatient the less they have to bear. Now, without in any degree prejudging the question ... we refer to this fact as proving that the Memorialists do not go to the root of the evil. It is an internal malady which no external application can heal. It is a deeply seated disease, and not a mere sabre-wound inflicted either by a tyrannical Government or an intolerant Church (65).

Such a tone of detached superiority was difficult to bear, and revealed the underlying fears of the Establishment clergy as the writer went on to discern

in the Dissenting Memorialist 'the ebullitions of a mind frenzied by the Revolutionary principles of France'. The Tract writers seemed not to have learned at least one lesson from the Revolutionary times: that when an oppressed people have tasted a little freedom, they want to be completely free. The clergy should not have expected the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts to be the end of the matter.

The Tracts claimed that the church rate was merely for the repair of churches, not in itself a comforting thought for Dissenters with their own buildings to maintain, but Stratten quoted a Parliamentary Report showing that while repairs to churches came to £248,125, expenses connected with worship were an additional £397,757 (66). The label of 'functionary' rankled with the clergy, but their dismissive treatment of Dissenting claims did not judge the merits of the claims but rather the 'demerits of the claimants' (67). Stratten hoped that if the Hull clergy convinced themselves that the religious rights of Dissent were vastly different from their own, they would at least allow that in civil, social, and human matters 'we are all equals' (68). The clergy, Stratten observed sarcastically, really made the Dissenting case without realizing it, but their presentation of the Establishment case was ill-thought, over hasty, and without consistency, apart from being unjust.

He poked fun at the writer's plea, that Dissenters had been well-trained to use argument and sophistry, but Churchmen had been left, to a great degree, ignorant of the ground on which their case was vindicated. What, asked Stratten, was this the result of all those privileges which had worked so long to the exclusive benefit of the State Church, the monopoly of the Universities, the public endowments, the labours of the Christian Knowledge Society? Had all this

failed to inform Churchmen of the true grounds of their much vaunted system, while Dissenters, excluded and proscribed, had been well trained? (69).

The Tracts likened Dissenters to the rabble which seized Christ and led him away to be crucified, successful for a time because this was their hour and the power of darkness. Far from realizing the depth of this affront to their fellow believers, the clerical authors imagined they had struck a rich seam of invective, and likened Dissenting principles to the 'base born principles' of the French Revolution. 'Vindicator' traced back their pedigree further, to Milton's 'extravagant notions,' and it seemed to him that this line of descent even connected them through the Fifth-Monarchy Men to the Anabaptists of Munster (70). So the battle rolled on, jibes at 'religious functionaries' on one side, and minds 'frenzied' by the French Revolution on the other, neither side giving quarter nor recognising themselves as seen through the eyes of their adversary.

At the end of his Review, Stratten turned to the alleged increased piety in the Established Church, resulting from the Evangelical Revival. He was prepared to admit the claim, but he expected an increase in piety to result in increased justice towards men, especially one's Christian brethren. Even so, he reminded his opponents, the clergy in Hull were the exception rather than the rule in the Church of England; yet even here 'the fertilizing influences of Heaven do not all descend within the closure of their communion' (71).

The facts of the case were settled by two practical tests, already suggested by Matthew Hill at the Fish Street meeting, numbers of communicants and the sum of contributions. These tests would be more favourable to the Episcopalian side, said Stratten, because the

Established Church laid greater stress on receiving Communion than did the Dissenters, and because its members were richer. He included the results in his Review (72) (Appendix II). Some smaller Nonconformist meeting houses were not included, and the Anglicans said afterwards that their number of communicants should have been 1,200, not 768. Stratten was prepared to accept the correction; the higher figure was the clergy's, the lower was from the church clerks. Nevertheless, the results proved his contention that Dissenters exerted a greater influence on Hull than did the Established Church.

Independents were the clear leaders of Old Dissent in Hull in 1834, and even rivalled Wesleyans. Within Independency, Fish Street was the dominant church. Wesleyans provided a few more sittings than the Independents, but their larger numbers of communicants may have been the result of Wesleyans receiving communion in their parish church. It is possible that this may account partly for the uncertainty of numbers communicating in the Established Church. Methodists in Hull remained closer to the Church of England longer than almost anywhere else in Britain. They showed their sensitivity on this matter in the contributions to the debates of 1811 and 1834, and by the non-attendance of Wesleyan ministers at Fish Street in 1834. Baptists and Presbyterians were much smaller bodies, both afflicted by Unitarianism at the time, and concerned largely with their own internal congregational affairs. Stratten does not mention Presbyterians on his table of Hull churches, just Unitarians.

Dissent and the Poor

Thomas Stratten put much of his time and energy

into defending the cause of Dissenters and fighting for their freedom from the oppression of the Establishment. George Lee, the Unitarian, kept the condition of the poor in the public eye through his editorship of the Hull Rockingham. His was, however, the moderate and cautious advocacy of the middle classes from which Dissent was drawn, the voice of a 'balanced constitutionalist.' Lee expressed himself entirely sympathetic to the working classes but always urged them to realise that their sufferings could not be removed within a few months, or even years. Their lot would be improved, he was sure, but they must be patient; riot or revolt would be fatal to reform (73). Lee was quite aware that working people required emancipation from the squalor of their lives. Two things were needed, money and education; 'without one they were trampled on with impunity - without the other they were imposed on, misled and made to believe that right is wrong and that black is white' (74). But Lee looked for improvement only by gradual, almost imperceptible changes in the structure of society as it was.

He certainly rejected Socialism. When a series of lectures on the subject was given in Hull, he commented in Rockingham, on behalf of the middle classes, that a man who devoted his nights to study and his days to labour should not be expected to share his gains equally with those who did nothing, or sometimes worse than nothing. Every man, he said, should reap the rewards of his own deserts. It was not reasonable that the clever and the virtuous should have the same reward as the ignorant, the stupid, and the idle (75). A strange conclusion for a Protestant, this was the doctrine of reward for works.

Evangelicals and Dissenters

Old Dissent, especially Independency, offered Hull Evangelicalism its best and, as it turned out, its last opportunity for a real Evangelical alliance to tackle the religious and social needs of the town. Dissenters were, for the most part, members of the same commercial middle and upper classes as those who belonged to the Church of England, conservative in politics, committed to the preservation of the existing constitution, and both quickened by the Evangelical revival. The Anglicans however, more clerically dominated than Dissenters, saw Established Religion as the bulwark of the old hierarchical society and a guarantee against the collapse of the social order by democratic notions imported from abroad. In the eighteenth century, the Anglican clergy had never faced a challenge to their privileged position.

In spite of the cordial personal relations between Evangelical and Dissenting ministers in Hull at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there was never a real possibility of a pan-evangelical partnership as characterised by the public co-operation between Evangelicals and Dissenters in many other parts of England up to 1830 (76). From this stage forward it took all the time of Hull's denominations to keep their own heads above the water as the population continued to rise through inward migration. They were obliged to remain respectful, sometimes grudging opponents.

Chapter Six

METHODISM: LOYAL CHURCH TO RADICAL DISSENT

Social Class

Methodism's social spectrum was the mirror image of Dissent's. Dissent spanned middle and upper classes; Methodism linked middle and lower classes while concentrating its energies on the poor. It might have become a national force capable of uniting the disparate political and social elements thrown up by the first industrial revolution, bridging the widening gap between manufacturing and rural areas, and between rich and poor in both. Methodists themselves believed that their role was frustrated by a combination of squire and parson (1). Methodist congregations certainly made better progress where such influences were weakest, in the mining, manufacturing and rural areas where landlords were more distant and the Established Church's parochial system most attenuated (2).

Whatever Methodism's character as a symbol of unity in the new industrial age might have become, a claim has been made that its greatest success lay in its 'serving simultaneously as the religion of the industrial bourgeoisie and of wide sections of the proletariat' (3). If true, at least some other Nonconformist bodies deserve part of the credit for this triumph, but the notion that Methodism provided an ideological self-justification for the eighteenth-century entrepreneur and at the same time the resignation of the poor to their lot, coupled with an acceptance of the work ethic, is open to challenge.

Nothing like a majority of factory owners were Methodist, nor were so many workers Methodist as is sometimes supposed (4).

Joseph Massie's enumeration of 1760 divides the social classes of England into six broad groups (Appendix III). The fifth, called 'manufacturers,' corresponding generally to 'artisan,' accounted for 20.9 per cent of the population. Methodist membership between 1740 and 1790, although a small proportion of the total population, was 47.7 per cent manufacturers, a figure twice as numerous as in the country as a whole. If few workers were in fact Methodist, they constituted almost half of Methodism's membership. Its initial converts were usually among manual workers and the destitute, but by the time of Wesley's death in 1791 the tendency towards respectability, which was to accelerate throughout the nineteenth century, was already apparent. Methodism's early influence over the lowest class of manual workers, however, was not entirely lost, mainly through the work of Primitive Methodism (5).

A local membership list for Bristol in 1783, although considered reasonably representative of Methodism elsewhere, shows a smaller proportion of artisans than the average among Methodists in England as a whole. From a list of 790 names (90 unidentified), 110 were servants, about 80 were shoemakers or related trades, with their wives, but only 13 were labourers; apart from 29 'gentlemen and gentlewomen,' 25 old, poor or almswomen, the remaining groups each contained no more than 20 names (6).

'Artisan' covers a wide number of occupations, including skilled manual workers, self-employed craftsmen and small employers. It was the largest single occupation group, 59.4 per cent, in English Evangelical Nonconformity between 1800 and 1837.

Wesleyan Methodists included 62.7 per cent, Primitive Methodists 47.7 per cent, and Congregationalists and Baptists combined, 63 per cent. Labourers, the next largest group, was much smaller, Wesleyans 9.5 per cent, Primitive Methodists 16.1 per cent, Congregationalists and Baptists 3.9 per cent (7).

Methodist membership expanded more rapidly than the total adult population up to about 1840, when its relative strength reached its highest point (8). The expansion of English Nonconformity generally between 1780 and 1840 was chiefly the result of recruitment from the working class, but Methodism became increasingly middle-class in the late nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century (9). The austerity of Evangelical religion was frequently accompanied by material rewards which turned it into a religion of the successful, but even in earlier years all churches and chapels attracted the moderately well-off, who tended to fall away in times of hardship or industrial depression (10). A total Methodist membership of 435,591 in 1840, the peak of its relative strength, still only accounted for 4.5 per cent of the adult English population, but if the number is trebled to allow for adherents, Methodism was the largest and most influential factor in Evangelicalism, with a bias towards the artisan (11).

A survey of the social structures of Methodism from the eighteenth century to the twentieth century, confirms this bias (12). Three-quarters of early members were manual workers, but the unskilled were heavily outnumbered by artisans. Nor was Victorian Wesleyanism so bourgeois as popularly thought. Before 1850 the majority were in the middle band of the Registrar General's scheme for broadly artisan occupations (Appendix III), and more were below than

above. Even when the artisan class lost its overall supremacy within Methodism, it remained ahead of the lower middle-class group. Primitive Methodists, too, became more respectable over the years, but throughout the nineteenth century 80 per cent of Primitive Methodists were manual workers, although by no means all in the poorest grades. They were more likely to be semi-skilled workers or craftsmen than labourers. After the First World War the social differences between the various branches of Methodism became much less significant.

a) Hull Lay Leadership

The upward social mobility of nineteenth-century Methodists into the respectable middle-class, contrasts with the working-class movement of Wesley's time (13), but the social status of eighteenth-century Methodist leaders in Hull shows a discontinuity less marked than might be expected. The founding members were very respectable working-class, artisans and shopkeepers. Joseph Gee, a hosier from Nottingham who moved to Hull to continue his business in High Street in 1787, once rebuked two ladies in his shop for their complaint that 'Methodism was so much identified with the poor' (14). Already some Methodists regarded themselves as members of a middle-class congregation doing good amongst the poor. Joseph Good, 'now of Hessle,' (15) had done well for himself. Hessle, on the higher ground west of Hull, was a favourite location for the new houses of successful merchants who moved out of High Street. Joseph Spence, the ironmonger, present at the opening of George Yard Chapel in 1787, and Thomas Thompson, the banker and first Methodist MP, were both Hull local preachers. Thompson preached in the rural fastness of Holderness where he was often 'pelted by mobs and

treated to every kind of opposition' (16). Sarah Snowden moved up in the world when she became superintendent at her son Benjamin's Mercantile Academy in Blanket Row in 1789, the longest-lived private school in Hull. Richard Terry, the Baltic merchant, with Thomas Thompson was among those who gave their support to Thomas Dikes in building St John's Church in 1792 (17). At the end of the eighteenth century, Methodism was said to be 'very different from what it was fifty years ago ... a numerous and respectable body ... many are persons of fortune, respectable tradesmen and men of good repute'(18). Many Hull Methodists were well placed on the social ladder from the start, and became middle-class before the end of the century. The new chapel in George Yard cost four or five thousand pounds, not a sum to be raised by casual dock labourers and the like. The majority of the Trustees in 1794 were among the comfortably well-off, William Kelsey, broker, John Harrop, dock surveyor, Thomas Good, flax-dresser. There were three boot and shoe makers, Samuel Holdsworth, William Sission and John Dawson, a tailor and staymaker, William Hedley, George Wilson, fishmonger or master mariner, George Wells, wharfinger, Joseph Cockerill, shipowner, Richard Wade, shipowner or raff merchant, and William Ramsden, stationer and tea-dealer (19). It needed the arrival of Primitive Methodism before a leadership lower down the social scale could be created in Hull.

b) Members

Dozens of Hull membership lists between 1851 and 1909 have survived (20). The names are in groups of ten to twelve, but unfortunately there are no addresses or occupations. If, as it seems, they are Methodist class lists, the class leader would know the details of

each member without needing to write them down. In the case of 30 classes in the Hull Primitive Methodist Second Circuit in 1851, the meeting places of classes are recorded. Several met in the chapel vestry, the remainder at addresses in poor areas of the town, Dryden's Entry, Paradise Row, Bethel Place, and the like. Even Primitive Methodism found it difficult to thrive in such areas by then; by 1856 there were no more than 25 classes still meeting.

The Methodist New Connexion, the smallest of Hull's main strands of Methodism, recorded both names and addresses in its membership lists for April 1903 (21). At its main chapel, Bethel in Charlotte Street (formerly North Street), built in 1799, were 184 members and 16 members on trial. Their occupations were generally of the artisan class, clerk, hairdresser, patternmaker, insurance agent, watchmaker, shopkeeper, foreman. At the lower end was a caretaker, possibly the chapel caretaker, and at the other end, a dentist (22).

c) Adherents

Marriage and Baptism Registers record adherents as well as members, thus providing evidence for the class structure of at least the previous generation. The much greater number of baptisms than marriages in Hull suggests that the former was the last nominal link to be broken with organised Methodism; it also contains a larger proportion of labourers, the group most likely to lapse because of hardship or economic depression. Of 22 marriages at Kingston Wesleyan Chapel in 1846-48, there was one labourer and one 'gentleman,' but the gentleman's father was a labourer. Apart from a Wesleyan Minister whose father was a publisher, the remainder were overwhelmingly in the artisan class,

joiners, plumbers, drapers, grocers, etc. On the rare occasion when the woman's occupation was recorded, she was always a milliner, dressmaker, staymaker, or occasionally a domestic servant (23).

Almost forty years later, in 1881, there were over 135 baptisms in one year at Hessle Road Primitive Methodist Chapel. It was an area which had expanded rapidly in the previous ten years, where most of the inhabitants were connected with the fishing industry in one way or another. 25 labourers, or more likely their wives, still looked to the Primitive Methodist Chapel as the natural place to have their baby baptised. The parents of the other 90 infants were mostly in the lower levels of the artisan class, if they were not fishermen they were barmen, joiners, fitters, clerks, platelayers or bricklayers. At the top of the social ladder in the register that year was a smack owner (24).

By the turn of the century the Marriage Registers of Wesleyan Methodists and Primitive Methodists are remarkably similar, with many members from the upper levels of the artisan class in both. The names of small businessmen may be found in Wesleyan and Primitive registers alike, similarly everything between farm labourer and school teacher, but the occasional solicitor, draughtsman, or the daughter of a silk mercer, always married in the Wesleyan Chapel (25).

Political Conservatism

Evangelical Nonconformity in England developed alongside the unprecedented social and economic changes of early industrialisation. It never thought of itself as a threat to the established order, and had no political ambitions except to free itself from what it saw as its unjust disabilities, a consequence of the

exclusive religious privileges enjoyed by the Established Church. Methodism, in spite of open-air preaching and a disregard for the rights of the clergy within their own parish boundaries, should have been even less of a threat. Until after Wesley's death, disciplined under his autocratic leadership, it regarded itself as part of the Church of England. Its role was more likely to civilize the industrial workers rather than to inflame them. Chapel communities, however, though they might be relatively small in membership, were associated with up to twenty per cent of the most politicized section of the lower orders (26).

Consequently, Methodism as well as Dissent, was suspect to the Established Church. Wesley's personal Toryism, and that of later leaders like Jabez Bunting, did nothing to reassure the Establishment, and Halévy's thesis, with the hindsight of more than a century, did not occur to the parsons, squires, and statesmen of early nineteenth-century England. Methodism's status may have been more ambivalent and open to subversive interpretation than other Nonconformists because of its secession from the Established Church. Such suspicions, however, loomed larger in the mind of the Establishment, alarmed by the French Revolution, than the situation warranted. Methodist conversion and the self-esteem generated by an accepted part to play in the movement, the latter an experience apparently to be for ever denied in the Established Church or State, had more to offer to artisans than violent revolution (27).

Beginnings in Hull

Methodism, the youngest offspring of English religion within the scope of this study, brought Evangelical religion to Hull before either Church or

Dissent. There were several Methodist Societies in Lincolnshire in the early 1740s, and William Blow, a small-boat owner who ran a packet service between Grimsby and Hull, first heard Wesley at Epworth in 1742. William Blow, his kinsman Robert, a shoemaker, and Robert's wife Elizabeth, were among the very first Methodists in Grimsby (28). Elizabeth Blow was frequently in Hull, crossing the Humber on the market boat from Grimsby or the ferry from Barton. On these trips she called at the house of her friends, Mr and Mrs Midforth (their Christian names are not recorded) in the Ropery, later called Humber Street. As a result of her visits a tiny Methodist Society was founded at the Midforth's house in 1746, seven years after the first Society was formed in London, and four years after Wesley's first visit to the West Riding 'in consequence of the successful labours of John Nelson' (29), a Yorkshire stonemason converted in London by Wesley and sent back north to evangelise among his own people. Thus, Methodism began in Hull through the efforts of a typical group of artisans and Elizabeth Blow returned to Grimsby 'to sow the seed in other fields' (30).

The churches and chapels in Hull at that time, from an Evangelical perspective, were no more effective than 'the fitful gleams which flickered from the oil lamps on the walls at night' (31). There was plenty of scope here for the vital religion which Elizabeth Blow brought across the water to the old town, with its private quay and crumbling fortifications. The merchants might live in their fine houses in High Street, but most of Hull's citizen's were poor and ignorant.

A few of the Midforths' neighbours became enquirers in the newly-formed Society, meeting at their home for reading and prayer, using the Bible and the Homilies of

the Church. Their meetings soon excited 'the scorn and hostility of the ungodly multitude' (32) until one evening, the house was attacked by a large mob which so put the Methodists in fear of their lives that they were obliged to remain indoors until morning. Among those at the meeting that night were Mrs Mary Thompson, a Mr Norman, a Mrs Hurd and some others not named. By morning the mob had mostly dispersed, tired of the sport; the remainder fled when Sergeant Hurd appeared on the scene armed with a halberd, anxious for his wife's safety. Hurd may have been a constable (33), or more likely a soldier from the garrison, its married quarters often a fruitful source of converts. Members of the constabulary were not noted for their valour or their piety at that time. The mob excused its outrage on grounds that the Methodists were plotting on behalf of the rebels who supported the Pretender to the throne; there was always a convenient, subversive cause at hand to discredit any religious group outside the loyal bounds of the Established Church. The Bench dismissed the case when the Bible and Homilies, the supposed sources of the insubordination, were brought in evidence (34).

The attendance of the mob at such an early stage, and at an indoor meeting, was ominous but understandable. The absence of an effective police force left the field open to the mob with its dual role of social protest and control. Methodism, though very new in Hull, was known for its successes in Lincolnshire and the West Riding. Consequently it was feared by the clergy and gentry as a challenge to public order and to the authority of their class (35). It was not always necessary to hire the mob; it could act as it pleased; to be on the side of the clergy and gentry, to defend Church and Establishment were good enough excuse to indulge in both high-spirited

hooliganism and religious xenophobia. A Methodist gathering might be considered a cover for clandestine subversion at one extreme or another. It could be a meeting of either Levellers or Jacobites (36). If the assembly at the Midforths' house in the mid-1740s had been plotting on the Pretender's behalf, that was reason enough for the mob to gather. In a drab life, such activity was in itself a diversion just as attractive as the cause it claimed to support. The members of the mob, from a Methodist point of view, were simply limbs of Satan, proof of the Evangelical doctrine of human depravity (37).

Living in Mary Thompson's house was her niece, Sarah Teal, born at Holme on the Yorkshire Wolds in 1736. Sarah was almost one hundred years old at her death; she left no journal, but W.L.Thornton's memoir in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine for 1837 captures an oral tradition of the beginnings of Methodism in Hull (38). She was its earliest recorded Evangelical convert, aged fifteen at the time.

A dramatic conversion, often accompanied by exaggerated notions of past sins, was quite usual in Evangelicalism. It was not at all surprising in Sarah Teal's case. Her aunt's household could not but make a lasting impression on the mind of the young girl. Mrs Thompson gave lodging to Hull's first itinerant preachers; Sarah always remembered 'Mr Johnson of York and Mr Hampson,' and had particular cause to remember Mr Hetherington, Hull's first local preacher and a cabinet-maker, at whose evening service she was converted. Hetherington prayed aloud that God would 'in that hour bring some poor sinner to himself' and Sarah responded, 'O let it be me!' Her life was doubtless innocent before her conversion, but she scrupulously insisted that she was captivated by ordinary youthful follies, and that her 'awakening' was

the result of an alarming visitation which she and a companion experienced. She never said what it was, but she and her friend were convinced it was supernatural. She was, she said, 'admonished of the sinfulness of her beloved amusements' (39).

John's Wesley's First Visit

Sarah Snowden, as Sarah Teal became on her marriage, carried far into the next century a first-hand recollection of Wesley's first appearance in Hull on Friday, 24 April 1752. She was sixteen and 'well remembered the scene of uproar and violence.' Wesley's reception resembled, on a much larger scale, the experience of the little group in the Midforths' house six years before.

The quay was swarming with people who stared and laughed, enquiring which was Wesley, but he walked 'unmolested to Mr A ____'s house.' At three o'clock he attended prayers in Holy Trinity where the vicar was the Rev. William Mason, father of the clergyman poet of the same name. Between five and six a coach came to take him to Myton Carr, an open piece of land called Pottery, outside the town wall near the gallows.

Wesley's own account of his first experience of Hull, longer than that of subsequent visits, illuminates several aspects of Methodism's place in eighteenth-century society (40). Those waiting to identify him on the quay may have been the mob sizing up its quarry for the night. The large number suggests that the Baltic trade was still slack after the winter, and that many in Hull were still idle. Wesley, however, walked through them to the home of his host in the Market Place without coming to any harm. The obscure and unimportant group who met in the Midforths' house might indeed be subversives, but Wesley had

impeccable qualifications; he was, after all, a clergyman of the Established Church and an Oxford don.

It was a different scene at six o'clock in the evening on the barren stretch of land outside the town wall. The 'huge multitude' which gathered to hear him was drawn from every level of society, 'rich and poor, horse and foot, with several coaches.' Hull and Sculcoates population was then about 12,000 (41). The hooligan element who pelted him with clods and stones behaved, wrote Wesley, 'as if possessed by Moloch.' The early Methodist preachers saw the mob as sons of Belial, Satan's children or beasts of the people, living examples of the Evangelical doctrine of human depravity (42). Wesley's more classical learning may have suggested the brazen deity of Carthage, but others would recognise in his words King Molech in the Old Testament (43) whose worshippers compelled their children to pass through the fiery furnace, Milton's Moloch 'besmeared with blood of human sacrifice and parents' tears' (44). At any rate the mindless attentions of the mob were a terrifying and sometimes fatal experience.

It might have been fatal to Wesley and his wife, who accompanied him on that occasion; their coachman had retired to safety, leaving them stranded. Fortunately, a gentlewoman gave them refuge in her coach, and as Wesley was slightly built and the gentlewoman of generous proportions, shielded by her he escaped unharmed, later pursued to his lodging by the mob.

Wesley's unnamed host lived in a large house in the Market Place opposite the Cross Keys Inn (45), a well-to-do shopkeeper or merchant occupying the two upper stories, with servants quarters above. Wesley says the mob broke the windows four stories high. It was fortunate for him that his friend was so well housed;

the Midforths' cottage could not have withstood the attacks of a mob, estimated to be several thousands strong at its height. Hull Market Place is a wide imposing thoroughfare, reputed at the end of the eighteenth century to be the finest shopping street outside London. Mr A ___, from a ms. of the Poor Rate assessment in 1752 was probably Stafford Atkinson (46), a merchant. It took many hours for the constabulary to arrive, even when summoned by a prominent citizen like Atkinson. Maybe the authorities were hesitant to take risks on behalf of Methodists, even for an establishment figure, albeit a maverick one like Wesley; more likely, lack of means to control a large riot without bringing in the soldiery was the main reason.

Calm descended about midnight after a final charge on the house and Wesley slept until almost four in the morning. He and his party left Hull an hour later bound for Pocklington. He was to need strong persuasion to visit Hull for a second time.

John Wesley and Hull

Seven years elapsed before Wesley returned to Hull. As the young Sarah Snowden remarked, 'Mr Wesley appears to have considered the soil very unpromising' (47). Methodism continued as a small, insignificant society, unnoticed by the majority of the citizens. When John Pawson (1737-1806) came from Leeds to learn the building business from his brother-in-law he attended church regularly, meeting on Sunday evenings with a 'society of well-disposed people' in Holy Trinity vestry' (48). He first heard of the Methodists by chance from a group of people who talked about them constantly. Pawson, from his own imperfect knowledge, deemed Methodists to be ignorant, foolish and wicked

people whom he had no wish to know. One of the group, however, told him that he knew Methodists to be very pious people; his wife was one of them. They went to church twice on Sundays, received the sacrament every week and never cooked anything for dinner 'on that sacred day.' This impressed the eighteen-year old Pawson; church attendance and sacrament were the whole of religion as he then understood it, so he decided to attend a Methodist preaching. When he arrived outside the obscure place where they met, his nerve failed him and after walking round the house he returned home. He thought no more of Methodism for several years, but later he became one of Wesley's preachers.

John Wesley was resting for a few days in July 1759 after some hard travelling over the North Yorkshire moors and hills; he called them 'mountains' (49), but his friends persuaded him on this occasion to go on to Hull, 'lest the little flock should be discouraged.' He lodged in the house of Thomas and Sarah Snowden where he was encouraged by a visit from Charles Delamotte who had worked with him in Georgia. Delamotte, whom Wesley found 'the same loving simple man,' owned the New Sugar House in Wincolmlee on the Hull river bank which his father, a London sugar refiner, had sent him to build. Eventually, after thirty years, Delamotte made or inherited enough money to retire to Barton-on-Humber for the remaining thirty years of his life (50).

Methodist expansion in Hull began with the opening of the first preaching house in the tower of the ruined Suffolk Palace in 1760, opposite St Mary's Church. On Wesley's two visits in the 1760s, congregations were 'tolerable' or moderate. Hull became a Circuit town in 1771 and a new chapel was opened in Manor Alley to replace the old meeting house in the Suffolk tower in

1772. Wesley, who visited the town four times in the 1770s, remarked that the house could not contain the congregation by 1774. 'How is this town changed since I preached on the Carr' (51). From this date Hull began to expand rapidly as a result of the cutting of the new 10-acre dock, attracting a crowd of labourers and artisans to the town. Some of the latter group, at least, must have found their way to the nearby Methodist meeting house.

On the second of five visits to Hull in the 1780s, Wesley preached in Holy Trinity Church at the invitation of its first Evangelical incumbent, Thomas Clarke, Wilberforce's brother-in-law. Who, wrote Wesley, would have expected to see me preaching in the High Church at Hull? (52). By now, Evangelicalism was becoming more acceptable after Milner's years of ostracism.

Methodism took another step forward in 1786 with the arrival of Joseph Benson as the new superintendent minister. Before Benson came there were rarely more than 200 in the congregation, but within a short time the chapel in Manor Alley was full to overflowing. Members and congregation both increased (53) and plans were launched to build a second chapel. There was already a second minister resident in Hull; Benson had a different colleague for each of his first three years; on Sundays they alternated between Hull, Beverley and the village of Hull Bridge.

Wesley preached in Beverley in 1788 in an enlarged building 'well filled with high and low, rich and poor; and many clergy were there' (54); the Archdeacon's visitation was in Beverley that day. The same evening Wesley was at the new George Yard Chapel which he said was 'nearly as large as the new chapel in London.' Next morning at 5 o'clock the congregation was larger even than that at Birmingham, which up to then was the

largest morning congregation Wesley had ever seen (55). The following day, Sunday, he was again invited by Clarke to preach in Holy Trinity and afterwards dine at the vicarage. 'Mr Wesley had lived to see even his enemies at peace with him' (56). He was, although nearing the end of his life, at the height of his powers and entirely acceptable to the Established Church in Hull; secession was unthinkable during his life time. In spite of his irregular practices, he was the major figure in England's Evangelical revival, and the departure of his followers from the Established Church so soon after his death was a tragedy for Evangelicalism.

The same afternoon he preached again in Holy Trinity to an even larger congregation. In the evening he preached 'in our house, to as many as could get in, but abundance of people went away' (57). Such was his energy that by eight o'clock next morning he was at Hotham with the Rev. James Stillingfleet, founder of the Clerical Society, read prayers and preached at nine o'clock, preached in the new chapel at Market Weighton at eleven, at half past one at Pocklington, and between six and seven in York (58). Stillingfleet recorded this astonishing feat in the Register Book at Hotham and signed it with his Churchwardens (59). The following day Wesley was in Thirsk.

The pace never slackened. Joseph Gee and forty others met Wesley on his way to what was to be his last Hull visit, and dined with him at an inn in Beverley. Wesley, anxious to be off when the time came, pulled out his watch in the middle of a conversation, got into his carriage and was gone. The rest of the party caught up just in time to welcome him to Hull (60). Next day, Saturday, he preached at seven in the morning and six in the evening to a packed chapel (61).

Although Wesley himself was by now a popular and

acceptable figure, Methodists in general were not. While in Hull for the last time he wrote a letter to Bishop Pretyman of Lincoln complaining of the persecution of Methodists. Wesley's preachers and people were still members of the Established Church, but as a precaution many chapels and preachers had obtained licences under the Toleration Act, thus being obliged to declare themselves Dissenters against their will (62).

Interlude: the afflictions of a travelling preacher

Thomas Taylor was a Methodist preacher in Hull in the 1790s (63). Travel could be slow and painful for local and itinerant preachers in those days, but because Methodism revolved around Wesley's own autocratic rule, long journeys had to be made to Conferences. In 1790 Conference was in Bristol and Taylor, accompanied by his youngest daughter, set off home for Hull by way of Sheffield, Rotherham and Doncaster. When they reached Thorne, Taylor thought it would save time and expense if they took a boat to sail down to Hull on one tide.

Unfortunately the elderly boatman was so dilatory in setting off that the tide was spent when they reached Brough, still twelve miles short of Hull. The expanse of mud and slime surrounding the boat made it difficult to get to dry land. It would be six or seven hours before the tide turned, the boatman was old and Taylor was afraid to carry his daughter lest he fell and threw her into the mud. Eventually he persuaded a bare-footed man who was catching eels nearby to carry his daughter ashore for sixpence, while he struggled along behind as best he could.

There was nothing for it but to pass the hours in the one small alehouse in the place, crowded with



drinking men, not the surroundings Taylor would have chosen either for his daughter or himself. At eight in the evening they were able to resume their passage, but by now it was dark and raining heavily. As the wind met the tide the small boat was nearly overturned, to the great alarm of the passengers.

It took four hours to reach Hull. At midnight Taylor and his daughter were obliged to climb over the ships moored in the port in order to get safely to land. When, in the darkness, Taylor nearly fell into the hold of a large empty ship, he admitted for the first time to feeling 'a touch of impatience' at their boatman who had brought them into such a disagreeable situation.

Loss and gain: division and growth

a) Division

Between Wesley's death in 1791 and the end of the century, two important events took place, the first major split in Methodism and a remarkable growth of membership in the Hull Circuit. Wesley had anticipated the possibility of division as far back as the 1760s (64). All preachers had to submit to Wesley's control, but were unlikely to afford the same allegiance to another leader; there could never be another 'King in Israel.' Within a month of his death a meeting of nine preachers in Halifax sent out a circular letter which seemed to find acceptance. Methodists in future should be governed by the Conference Plan and form themselves into committees (65). Methodist government was to be conciliar rather than monarchic (66). The Conference in 1791 agreed to follow the plan left by Wesley, but an ambiguity remained over the Connexion's relationship to the Established Church. Church Methodists did not want to separate; others not wanting a formal break,

recognised that Methodism was inevitably developing a life of its own, not least because of Wesley's own actions and pragmatic approach to evangelism.

Alexander Kilham, born at Epworth and accepted by Wesley as a preacher in 1785, felt a growing antipathy toward's the Connexion's relationship with the Church of England. He was himself licensed under the Toleration Act as a Dissenting Minister and objected on principle to the baptism of his second child by a clergyman. To be connected with the Church was for him, 'a species of trimming between God and the world' (67).

Methodists' relations in Hull were cordial with Churchmen like Milner, Clarke and Dikes, so the Hull Trustees sent a letter to the Connexion's stewards urging all Methodists not to profess themselves Dissenters, nor to meet for worship in church hours. If Methodism seceded from the Church of England, they prophesied, it would 'dwindle away into a dry, dull, separate party' (68). As a result, a number of worshippers at George Yard Chapel signed a resolution agreeing not to open the chapel during Church services 'in accord with Mr Wesley's wishes.'

They were not supported by Thomas Taylor, Hull's Methodist Superintendent, the same who nearly lost his life on that hazardous journey home from Bristol with his daughter the year before. He supposed, loftily, that the printed circular originated 'from some who professed to be warm advocates for the Church, and persuaded others to sign it.' The echo from many circuits, he said, led the signatories to expect a division at the Conference (69).

Methodist itinerent preachers never spent more than a few years in one post, which allowed them little time to absorb local feelings for themselves. Many by now came directly into Methodism with no experience of the

Established Church, so they could not be expected to exhibit any great loyalty to it. Taylor was a loyal Methodist who did not see why he should feel a similar loyalty towards the Church; he believed it was perfectly in order for him to administer Holy Communion to his people who had lived so long without it (70).

Alexander Kilham had an even greater antipathy towards the Church, but he took the 'signal gun' from Hull more seriously than Taylor. In reply he sent an anonymous circular to his friends in Newcastle, posted in York to conceal its authorship, and a modified version of the letter was widely circulated. He expressed affection for Wesley, but pointed out that many Methodists never received Holy Communion because they could not in conscience take it from ungodly ministers in the company of unworthy communicants in their parish church. Some Methodists received the sacrament in Dissenting Chapels for the same reason. It was time, said Kilham, for Methodists to accept that they were Dissenters, and recognise that their own preachers were able to administer the sacrament (71). Thus the possibilities of co-operation in the Evangelical cause receded still further.

When the 'Plan of Pacification' was accepted by a majority at the 1795 Conference, Kilham and an influential minority remained dissatisfied with its ambiguities. They approved of it as only a first step (72). In his The Progress of Liberty, Kilham traced the course of Methodism since Wesley's death, and brought the crisis to a head by outlining his own ideas for a constitution. He was tried first before the Newcastle District Meeting, then at the 1796 Conference in London where he was expelled for refusing to recant and accept the Plan (73).

John Pawson, the preacher who first experienced Methodism as a young man of eighteen in Hull, was also

increasingly critical of Wesley's one-man leadership, and advocated separation from the Church. He was aware of the widening gulf between ministers and trustees and the aspirations of ordinary people. Trustees, he said, were usually the richest and most powerful men in the Connexion, but not the most pious, lively or zealous, so it might be best for powers of decision to be shared among the majority (74).

Kilham was in no doubt that majorities should rule; decisions should be taken within societies by direct vote. It was a form of tyranny and oppression, he said, for Conference to decide questions about hours of service and the administration of the sacrament. Here, in the ears of Church and State, was an echo of the language heard in revolutionary France. Was the virus in Methodism too?

Mainstream Methodism continued to protest its loyalty and denounce radicalism. Thomas Taylor, no longer in Hull, published An Answer to the First Part of the Age of Reason in 1796 (75) and Conference passed a resolution in 1798 condemning France for spreading destruction and desolation, in order to establish 'a lawless freedom and a chimerical equality.' Methodist influence, it was argued, was entirely given to bringing peace and order (76). Taylor was expressing the opinion of other Connexional leaders when he said that the poor were generally very profligate, were increasing in numbers and discontent, and often combined against their masters or employers. Taylor's language was indistinguishable from that of the commercial and landed classes when they discussed the lower orders. By contrast, he wrote, Methodists were, 'a remnant who are squaring their useful lives by reason and by grace' (77). Joseph Sutcliffe, a Yorkshire itinerant preacher since 1788, summed up the spirit of Methodism at the turn of the century,

anticipating Halévy's thesis, in a tract which attributed Britain's commercial success and the reduction of rioting and mob violence to the spread of Evangelical religion (78).

Kilham, meanwhile, was outside the camp, just as suspect to Methodism as Methodism was to the Establishment. He seemed to his former friends no better than a Jacobin or a follower of Thomas Paine. They cast aspersions on his character and on his conduct as a preacher. At the time of the 1797 Conference he met with three other preachers to form what was later called the Methodist New Connexion (79).

Its followers met with scant success in Hull when they tried to tempt members of the Wesleyan body into their fellowship. Joseph Gee, the hosier, was approached by two seceding ministers and a group of former friends, but he rejected their overtures at the cost of both friendship and trade (80). A small number of Hull Methodists met for a time in Dagger Lane after Conference turned down what they saw as the improvements in Kilham's constitution and expelled its author. A minister was appointed in 1798 and a chapel built in North Street the following year, but the New Connexion always remained a small congregation in Hull (81). The Wesleyans were six times more numerous in 1834 and over ten times in 1851 (82).

For some other Methodists in Hull the Plan of Pacification in 1795 had taken Methodism too far from the Church of England. They also withdrew from the local Society and set up in a building in Osborne Street where they continued to hold services out of church time (83). They remained on friendly terms with the Church of England for many years (84), with one chapel in Hull, and later another in Beverley (85). At the time of the 1851 Census there were almost twice as many Church (or Independent) Methodists at worship as

in the New Connexion.

The shared bond of Evangelical religion was probably the chief reason for the Established Church's attraction to the Church Methodists, but there were no signs of animosity between the three local strands of Methodism once the secessions were over. The main Wesleyan body was too big and powerful to feel threatened, and all churches were heavily occupied with building, setting up organisations, and endeavouring to accommodate the continued influx of newcomers to the town. In spite of their differences, Methodists and other Dissenters learned to work together towards commonly held objectives, the British and Foreign Bible Society, Education, the Temperance movement, and so on. Anglicans were always inhibited by the responsibilities and privileges of Established religion, even over what must have been in every other respect something held in common. The Church of England in Hull, however, was soon expending the majority of its time and energy in resisting Catholic claims; a matter which threatened the Established Church more than Dissent.

b) Growth

Strife and division in the 1790s did not inhibit the expansion of Methodism; it was a period of unprecedented growth for the Hull Circuit. The reasons were complex and the evidence still remains confusing. Contemporary Methodists attributed it simply to energetic preaching and providential intervention.

The congregation at Manor Alley, as noted, rarely exceeding 200, increased within a few weeks of Benson's arrival in 1786, and plans were soon in hand to build another chapel in George Yard. Thomas Taylor who was in the Circuit from 1789-90 said, however, that although congregations were large in Hull and 'pretty well' in Beverley, in other parts of the Circuit they

were small and apathetic (86). Some dated 'the rising tide in Hull Methodism, the days of prosperity' from the ministry of Alexander Mather, 1791-93 (86). Scott Street Chapel was built in 1793. John Pawson supports this view and says that the tide was rising in many parts of the North. 'From the year 1791 to 1794 (Mather) was stationed in Hull, and the following three years in Manchester, and in the year 1797 in Leeds ... in all these places there was a considerable revival of the work of God' (88).

Hull's annus mirabilis, according to Richard Treffrey, was 1794 (89). Hull became a circuit town in 1771 and only increased by an aggregate of thirty-two members in twenty-two years, but shot up in 1774 from 640 to 1,280. Conference minutes recorded 640 in 1793, 1,200 in 1794, 1,280 in 1795, 1,290 in 1796, then dropped back to 1,200 in 1797 (90). Treffrey wrote, 'the Lord sent a gracious rain upon his inheritance; the work which had been nearly stationary for so long a time, was now gloriously revived' (91).

W.R.Ward's thesis is that the 'evangelical torrent' in the mid-1790s, with its independent judgement in matters of religion, although owing something to the French example, was not the result of urban Jacobinism, but of the subsistence crisis of 1795 (92). The Methodist Conference in Manchester that year was inhibited by food shortages and the government's concern over disruptive tendencies, obliging Conference to steer a middle course between satisfying moderate demands for equality and convincing the government of its orderliness and loyalty (93). There were food riots in Hull in 1795 and 1796, started by women and boys on the verge of starvation, when the price of flour rose (94). How far this affected the growth of Hull Methodism is difficult to judge; Hull was a commercial town where non-established religion

flourished and the Church of England had already begun its long recession in the face of industrial and political revolution (95).

References to the expansion of the Methodist cause are also found in memorials to Hull Methodists. 1794, 1797, 1804 and 1814 were, for Sarah Snowden, 'times of rejoicing, as they were distinguished by the unusual prosperity of Jerusalem which she loved' (96). Joseph Benson's eldest daughter, Ann, was eleven years old when her father began his second spell in Hull in 1797. She remembered it as a time of great movement 'among religious people.' There were many revival meetings which were for Ann 'incitement to a life of piety' (97). Sarah Witty, who used to attend George Lambert's Independent Chapel with her parents, was converted at the George Yard Chapel in 1791 at the age of fifteen. She persuaded her mother to receive the Methodist preachers at her bedside during her last illness in 1795 (98).

Other local statistical evidence, however, throws doubt on Treffrey's and the Minutes of Conference figures for late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century Hull. A Circuit Stewards' Book, October 13 1806 to September 30 1833, survived at least until the early years of the twentieth century (99), and records figures from the earlier period of the Hull Circuit, 414 in 1793, 712 in 1794, 782 in 1796, 750 in 1797, 810 in 1800, 844 in 1801, 809 in 1802, and 1,036 in 1804. The table shows similar proportional increases around the year 1795 to those in the Minutes of Conference, but the aggregates are only half. The Circuit Stewards' Book also records membership numbers for nineteen outlying societies in the Hull Circuit, ranging from six in Burton Pidsea to 81 in the village of Hull Bridge, totalling 484 in all.

The Circuit Stewards' Book records Hull numbers

separately from the rest of the circuit, perhaps because its boundaries, drawn in 1771, were constantly changing. Scarborough was removed in 1775, Pocklington in 1786, and Beverley in 1824, to become circuits in their own right (100). If 484 (outlying areas) is added to 782 (town of Hull in 1796), the total is 1,266, very close to 1,280, the figure given for 1794-5 in Treffrey and the Minutes of Conference. When Hull was first formed, says Treffrey, it included 'all that tract of country that now forms the Howden, Driffield, Patrington, and Beverley Circuits;' except for Hull and a few small country towns it was a sparsely populated area of about 800 square miles.

Whatever the precise number of Methodists in Hull and district may have been at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was a significant advance on the 'little flock' which Wesley returned to visit in 1759. If the peak figure in the Circuit Stewards' Book (785 in 1796) is trebled to allow for adherents (2,346) and the population of Hull was about 25,000 (101), Methodism had some influence on ten per cent of its people.

As Methodism became successful, so it became more comfortably middle class, particularly for the ministers. The Rev. Joseph Entwhistle came to Hull from York in 1800, where he had spent 'two years with great comfort, some success, and much spiritual profit among the pious, intelligent, and affectionate people' (102). In Hull, Entwhistle was agreeably situated in many respects. He felt much at home, had opportunities for improving himself by reading and study, and found the Hull congregations large and attentive. He wrote to Pawson to say that the work of God was going forward throughout the circuit, 'even in Holderness the fields are white for the harvest.' Preachers were becoming more respectable, and Entwhistle advocated extra

safeguards on entrance to the Methodist ministry so that 'improper persons may be prevented from creeping in among us' (103).

But life could still be rough for a preacher, especially in Holderness where Methodists were often set upon during public worship. A preacher from Hull, A.E.Farrar, constrained two labourers to publish a promise in a local newspaper not to molest him, if in return he would not prosecute them (104). In Waltham Street Chapel in Hull, a 'detonating ball' was exploded under a gallery during a meeting of the Missionary Society. Panic ensued and glass and window frames were smashed by those who could not reach the doors (105). Town life, nevertheless, was becoming more respectable and settled, as the facilities for burial at the same chapel denote. Inspection of its burial vaults was invited in a public notice, 'where the friends of a deceased person may witness an interment without danger of taking cold.' Most purchasers were seat-holders, but Methodism was now an accepted part of the town's life, and 'the facility was open to all' (106).

Primitive Methodism

Primitive Methodism, like the New Connexion, was the result of an expulsion from the main Wesleyan body. Its founders were two artisans, Hugh Bourne, a carpenter and William Clowes, a potter. The new movement, first brought to Hull by Clowes, was a resurgence resembling the first days of Methodism itself. The uninhibited enthusiasm of its field meetings, its preachings and long hours of vociferous prayer were not, however, to the taste of the more dignified, orderly ways of nineteenth-century Wesleyans.

William Clowes was born at Burslam in 1780 and

worked in Hull in his early unregenerate days, apparently unaffected by the rising influence of Methodism at the turn of the century. He left Hull suddenly to escape the clutches of the Press Gang, after a drunken brawl outside the Dog and Duck public house in High Street, and fled next day to his native Staffordshire (107). He arrived in the middle of a religious revival which led him to abandon his dissolute ways, settle his debts, adopt rules for holy living, and to become a tract distributor and class leader, appearing on the circuit plan as an 'exhorter' (108). He was twenty-five years old. He and Bourne were expelled in 1810 for joining in camp meetings which the Wesleyan Conference considered, as no doubt the Established Church concurred, 'highly improper and likely to be of considerable mischief' (109). Thus Primitive Methodism was born in 1811.

A Hull Methodist heard Clowes preach in Leicester in 1818, and the same year a small deputation at the Nottingham Quarterly Meeting asked for a preacher to be sent to Hull (110). Clowes arrived in 1819 and in contrast with the quiet, almost secret arrival of Methodism at the Midforths' house in 1746, preached twice in public on the day of his arrival, once in an old foundry and once in the open, before setting off on his first tour of the villages to the west of the town. Within nine months Mill Street (later West Street) Chapel was built in Hull at a cost of £2,000 (111). Membership increased from 402 to 856 by December, and the town became the centre of a fourth Primitive Methodist Circuit with three travelling preachers and 900 members. Such rapid growth needed organisation if it was to be sustained. A preparatory meeting was held in Nottingham to produce outlines of policy and to prepare for Primitive Methodism's first Conference, held in Hull in May 1820.

In contrast with Wesleyanism's ministerial domination, the Conference was to elect two laymen for each travelling preacher. The Connexion pushed north up the Yorkshire coast from Hull, west to Leeds and over the Pennines to Cumberland and Westmorland. By 1822, said Clowes, 'our circuit extends from Carlisle in Cumberland to Spurn Point in Holderness, an extent of more than 200 miles.' Seventeen circuits were created from Hull by 1824 with a total membership of 7,660. The Connexional membership grew from 7,842 to 33,507 in the same five years (112).

Hull was the base for missionary journeys from Newcastle to the south coast. There were twenty-one circuits in the north with 8,445 members and an additional 3,548 members in the Hull Circuit. The mission stations in London and from Kent to Cornwall were all under the jurisdiction of the Hull Quarterly Board until they were taken over by the General Missionary Council in 1843. For twenty-three years, Hull was the 'Metropolis of Primitive Methodism' (113).

Increases slowed down between 1825 and 1828. There were financial problems arising from the widespread social distress, and most of the societies had little experience of church affairs. Some unsuitable candidates gained admission to the ministry and greater discipline was called for. Thirty preachers were persuaded to leave the Connexion in response to Bourne's call for stern disciplinary measures (114). Primitive Methodism was experiencing the same problems noted by Joseph Entwistle a quarter of a century before in Wesleyanism, following a similar period of rapid expansion.

The revival of the Evangelical fervour associated with early Methodism was especially noticeable in the long hours devoted to worship by Primitive Methodists. Sunday, prepared for by a Saturday night fellowship

meeting, began with prayers in chapel at six o'clock, followed by intercession from half-past nine to half-past ten, class meetings in the afternoon and a prayer meeting at five o'clock. Prayer might then go on until nine-thirty (115). Primitive Methodists, unlike the retiring 'little flock' in Hull in the 1740s and 50s, were not obliged to meet in secret behind locked doors for fear of the mob. They met boldly out of doors, and Hull was agreeably surprised at their good order and respectability. A farmer might lend his field on a Sunday for a camp meeting at which several thousands would gather from nine o'clock in the morning until four in the afternoon, without any misbehaviour, listening to a series of sermons preached from a farm-waggon (116).

The upward trend began again, and there was talk in 1829 of Hull and another circuit combining to send missionaries to the United States. The 21st Conference in 1850 reported a membership of 104,762 with 519 travelling preachers, 8,542 local preachers, and 5,170 Connexional and rented chapels (117). Hull had four 'spacious' chapels at mid-century (118), capable of accommodating 4,000. Membership was something over 1,500. William Clowes died in Hull in 1851; his last public occasion was a meeting in the Mason Street Chapel to plan for a new chapel in Jarratt Street (119). It became known as the Clowes Memorial Chapel.

Methodism and Hull: a comparison in growth

In 1829 Wesleyans had thirteen places of worship in Hull, seven in the town and six in the suburbs. Primitive Methodists had only one chapel in town, but three in the nearby villages to the west which Clowes had evangelised, Hessle, North Ferriby, and Swanland. The 'Church Methodist' chapel made a total of eighteen

places of Methodist worship. There were no returns from the New Connexion in response to a request from the Town Clerk (120).

Wesleyans had a total of 2,407 members, 2,291 in Hull itself with an estimated congregation of 5,000. Primitive Methodists had 335 members in the town and an estimated congregation of 1,000. Membership in the villages was 22 at Hessle in a congregation of 150; Swanland also had a membership of 22 but a congregation of 100. North Ferriby had 11 members, but made no return for its congregation. The minister at the Church Methodist Chapel insisted that they were not a separate church, but a society. They had 50 members and a congregation which fluctuated between 150 and 700. Thus, in the thirty-five years up to 1829 the percentage growth of Methodism exceeded that of Hull's population. Adherents and members in the mid-1790s were 10 per cent; in 1829 they were 15 per cent.

At the time of the 1834 Hull Ecclesiastical Controversy, Methodism accounted for almost 20 per cent of the town's population. It was still of that order in 1851; the Church of England, the largest single denomination, claimed only 14 per cent. By that time Methodism had long been part of main-stream English religion, hardened into separate denominations from the Established Church and, attractive to many of Hull's leading citizens in its Wesleyan form, about to become a rival Establishment.

The large, and often striking, Wesleyan Chapels were chiefly responsible for giving Hull the outward appearance of a typical northern Nonconformist town, but George Yard Chapel (1787), of which Wesley was so proud, was a plain brick building with stone dressings, lying lengthways towards the street. The mahogany pulpit was in the middle of the chapel against the

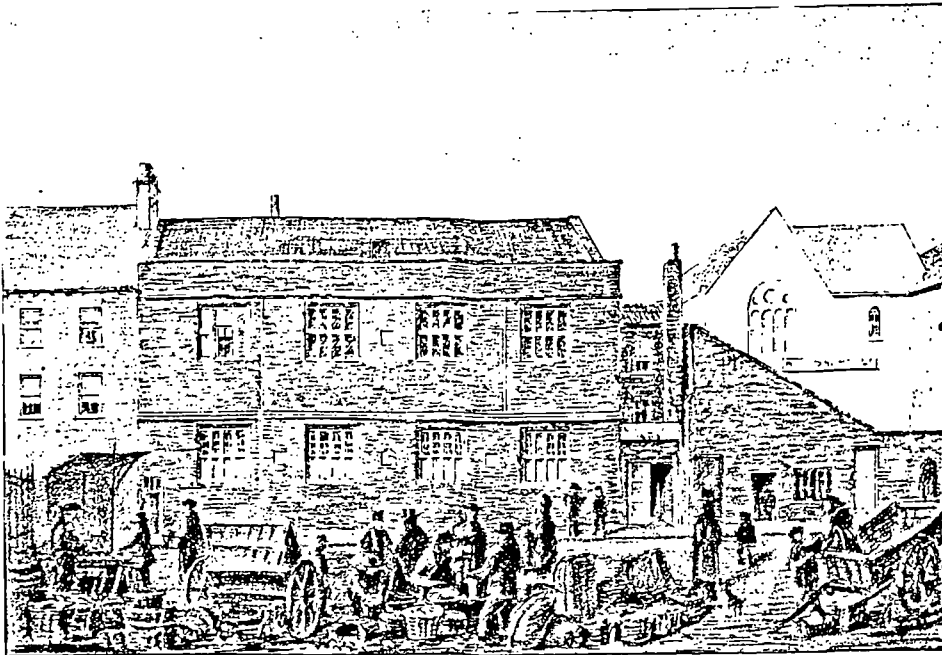
wall; behind it was a mahogany screen of Grecian design. The ceiling was ornamented with stucco work, and the galleries were supported by oak pillars.'


Scott Street Chapel, built in 1793, was also a plain brick building, but Waltham Street Chapel, opened in 1815, was a much larger building with a front portico supported by two Doric columns. Humber Street Chapel, in 1833, was another brick building, but it boasted a communion table and a 'baptismal vase' of white marble. Kingston Chapel, opened in Witham in 1841, was the largest chapel, able to seat 2,000 worshippers. Its front was of cut stone, with a bold pediment resting on four massive Doric pillars. Inside was a large gallery, a handsome organ, and a marble communion table and baptismal vase, under a fine panelled ceiling.

The most splendid chapel of all, designed by H.F.Lockwood, the architect responsible for St Stephen's Church, was erected in Great Thornton Street in 1842. Its front, built of Hare Hill stone, consisted of a magnificent portico supported by a line of eight fine fluted pillars, each 30 feet high and three feet in diameter, with Corinthian capitals. Enhancing this grandeur were two wings, some distance from the centre, connected by open arcades with two lines of pillars supporting their roofs. The frontage of the building, 160 feet in length with a portico 66 feet wide, was approached by a very wide flight of steps. A well-known print, still available in Hull shops today, shows a crinolined and top-hatted after-church parade in front of this tremendous reminder of the glories of Greece. It is a picture of Wesleyan Methodist merchants and their wives in their mid-nineteenth century pomp. Inside the chapel, the organ, built by Nicholson of Rochdale, was placed in a recess at the back of the pulpit, and enclosed in a massive

case representing a Grecian Temple. The prevailing colour of the interior, including the gallery, but excepting the pulpit and prayer desk, was white (121).

This chapel, one of Hull's outstanding buildings, was largely destroyed by fire in 1907 (122). One small wing survived until 1950 as a reminder of its past glories. Classical buildings, particularly one as magnificent as Great Thornton Street Wesleyan Chapel, set Nonconformity apart from the Church of England with its more traditional buildings. Beverley Road Chapel, opened in 1862, and designed by William Botterill, a local architect, was Hull's first Wesleyan Chapel in a Gothic style (123).

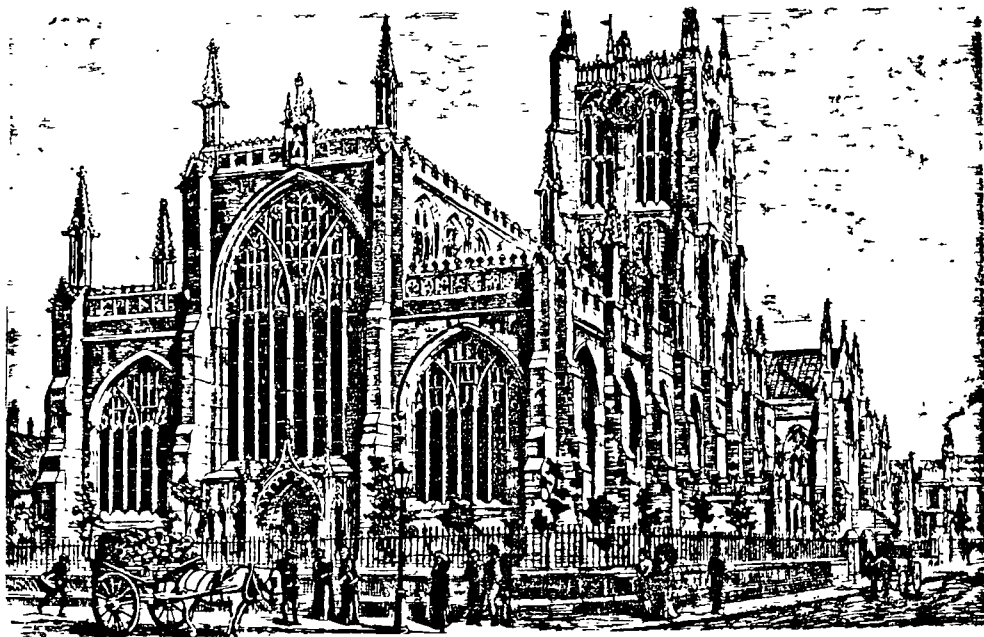


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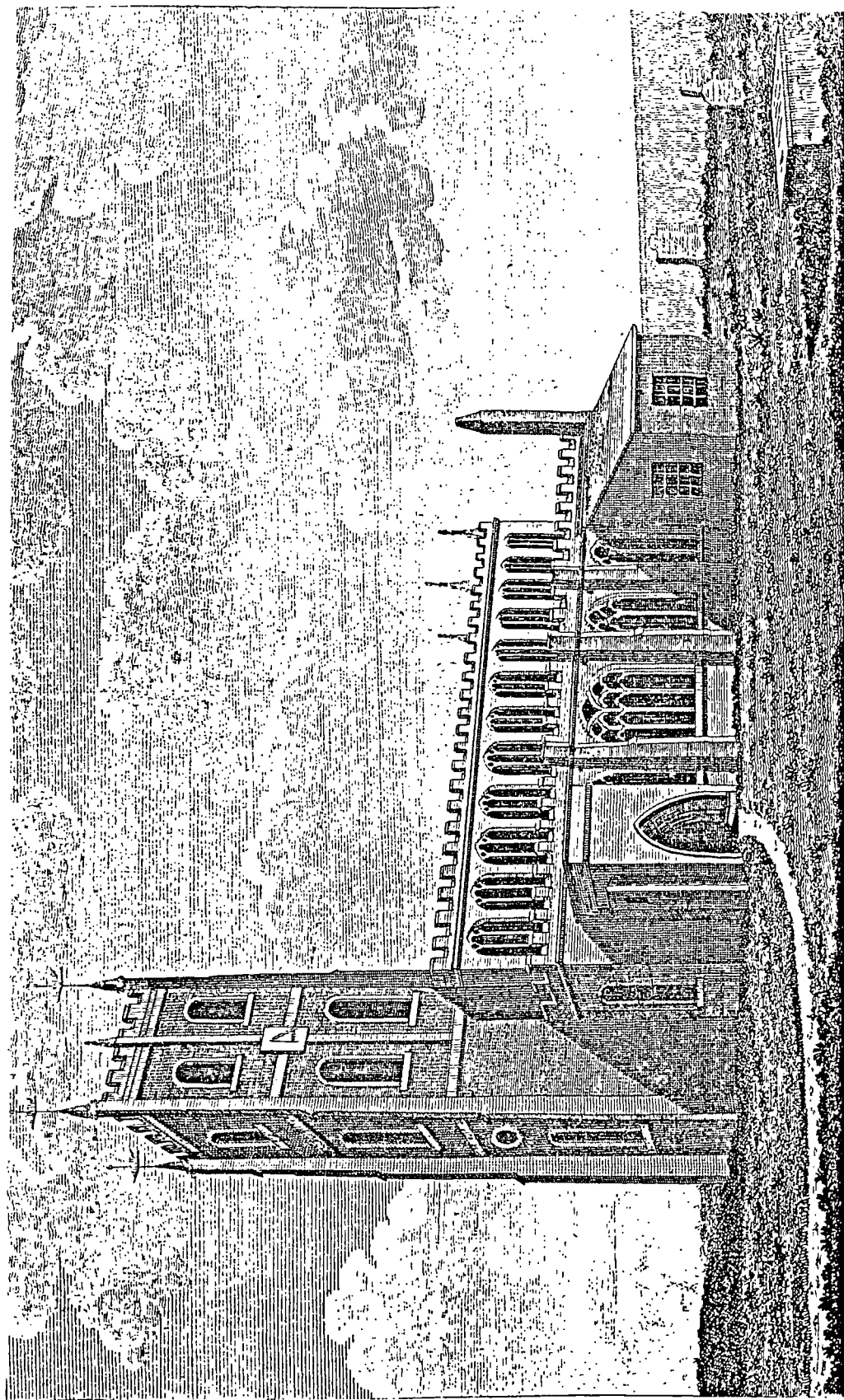
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Holy Trinity Church



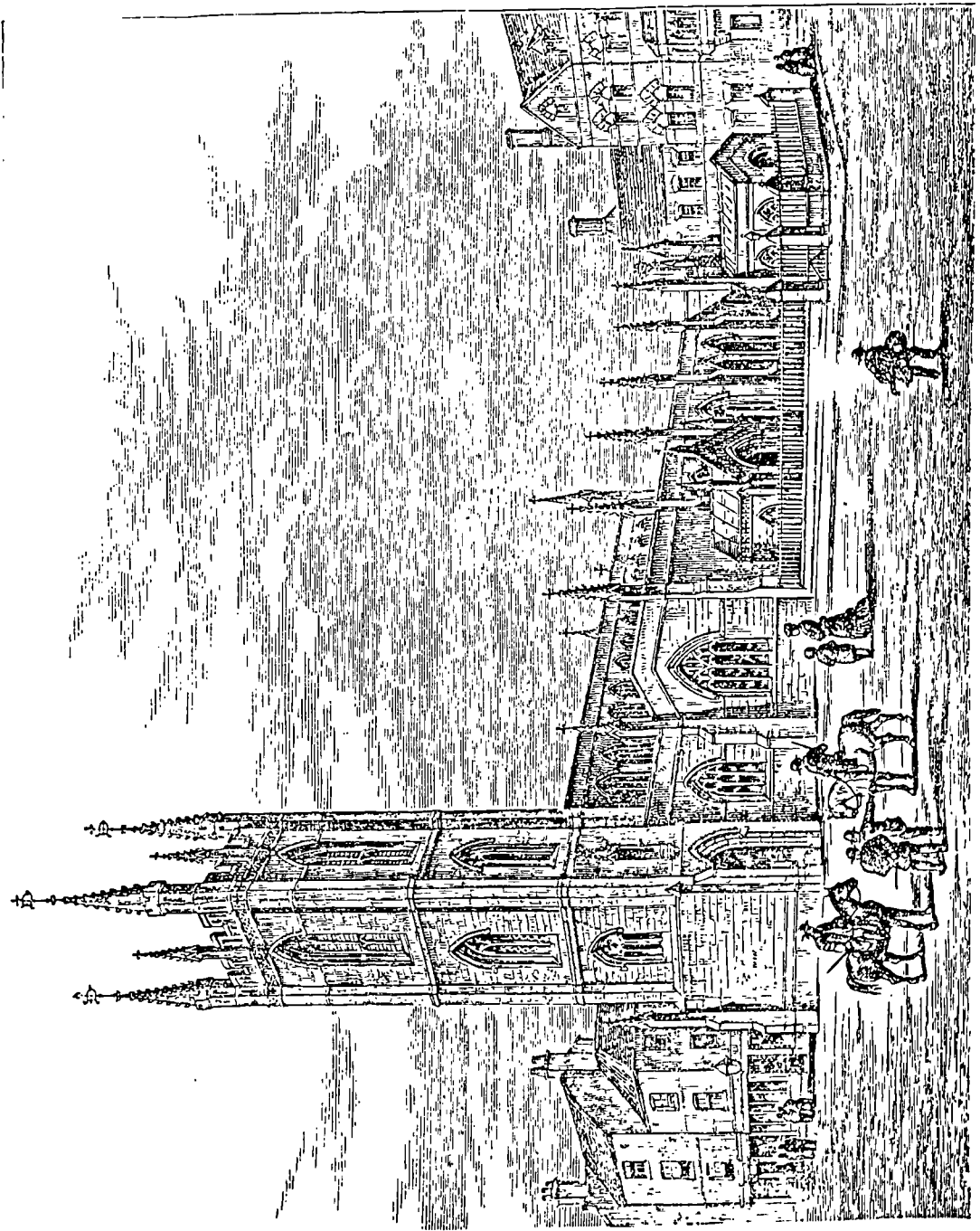
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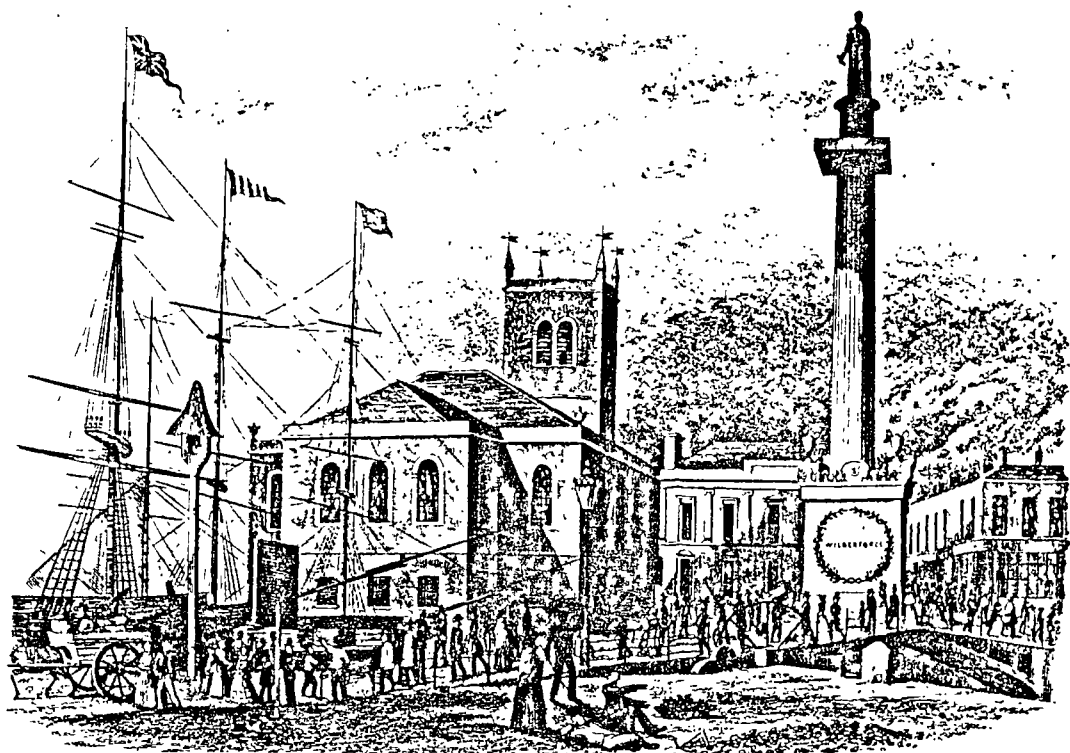


A South West View of **S^T. MARY'S CHURCH, KINGSTON upon HULL.**
Dedicated by Permission To the Rev. & M^r. John Barber, A.M.

St Mary's Church after Resoration by George Gilbert Scott

1861-63

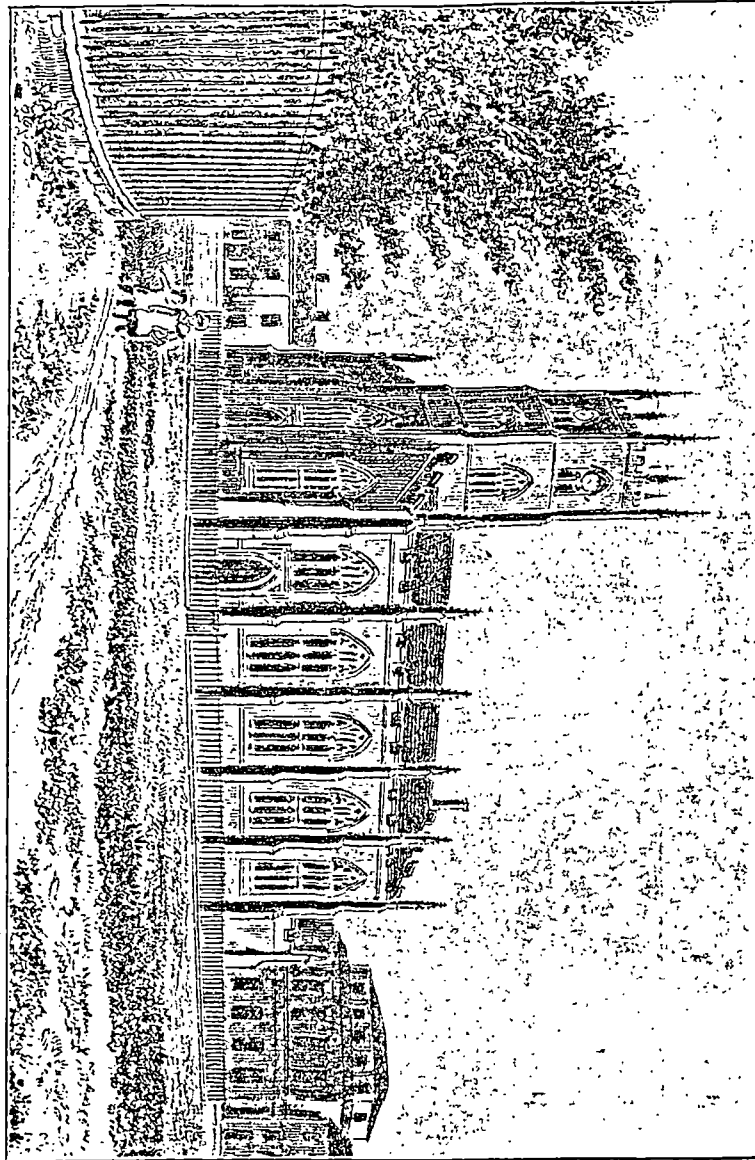




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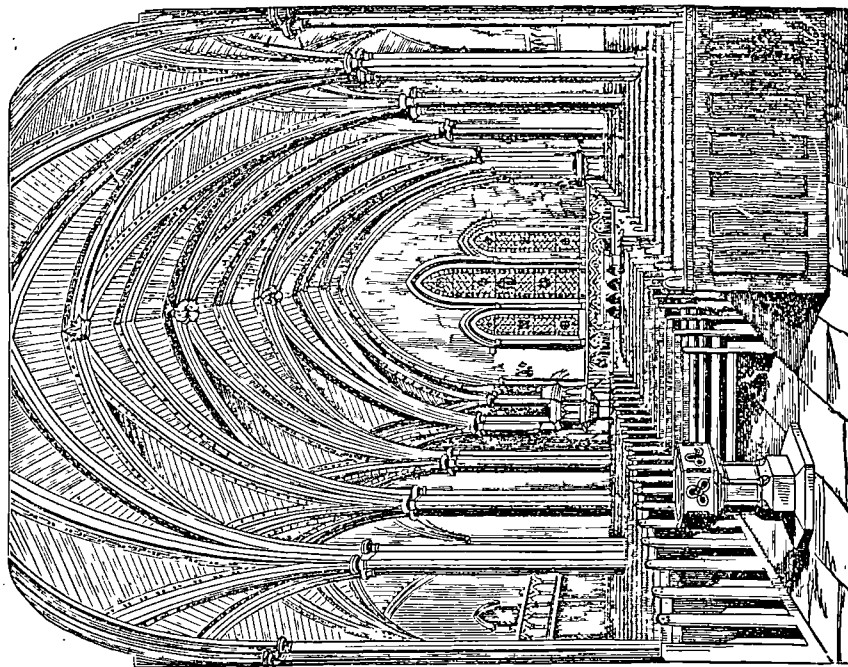
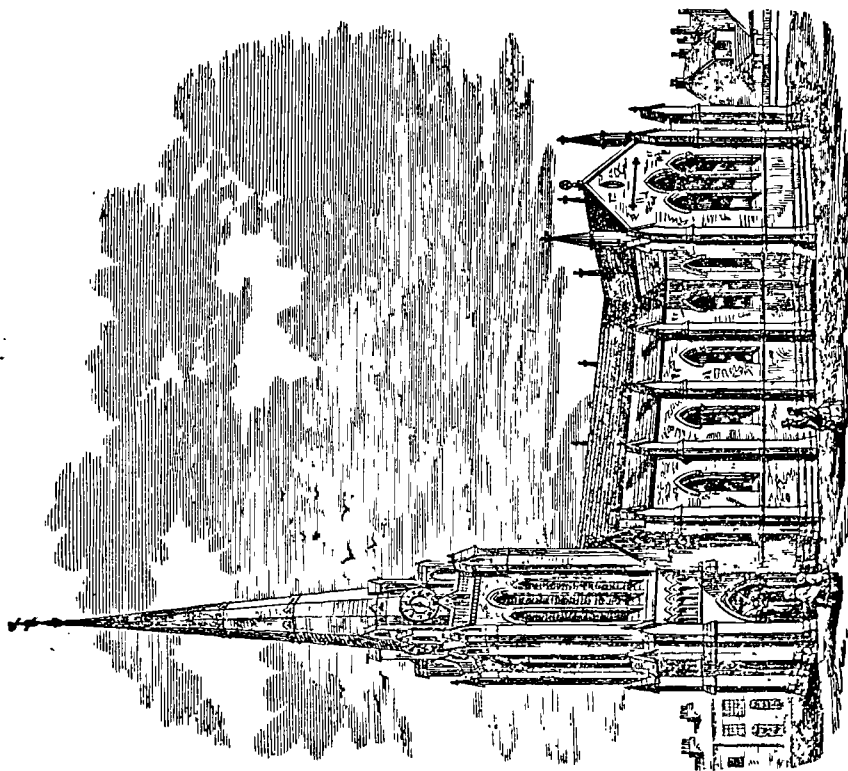
The Willerforce Monument and St. John's Church at Hull.

Christ Church

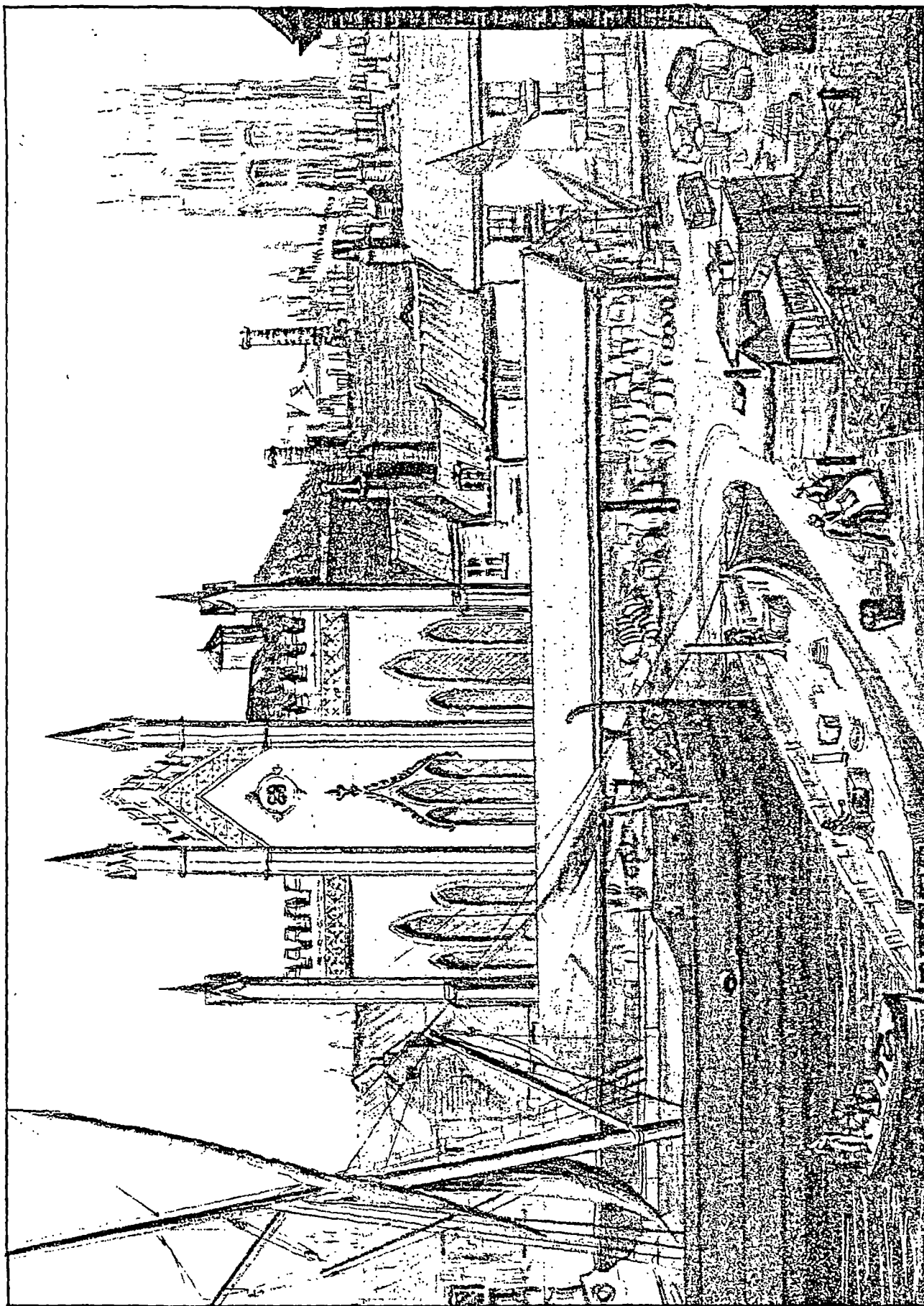


CHURCH EXTERIOR, ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

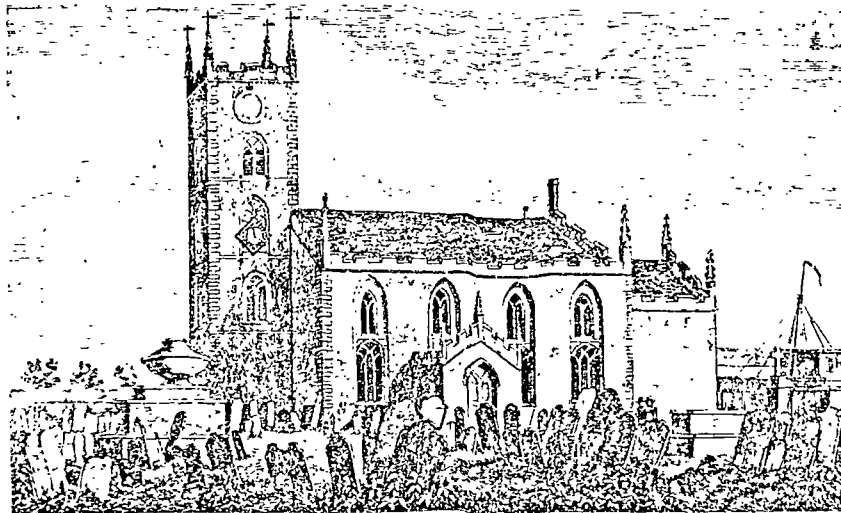
Drawn by F. S. SMITH, Del., after engraving by J. GREENWOOD, 1836.



EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR OF ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, HULL.



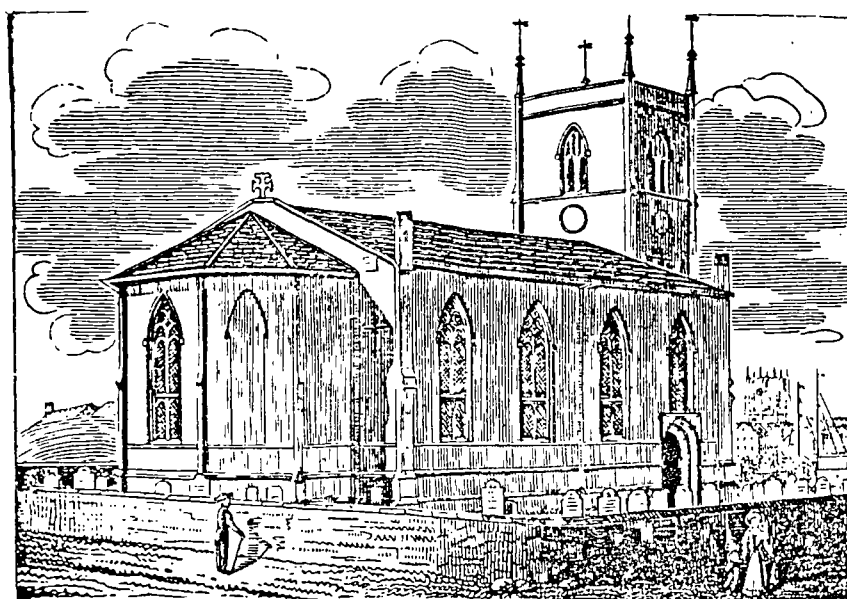
THE MARINERS' CHURCH.



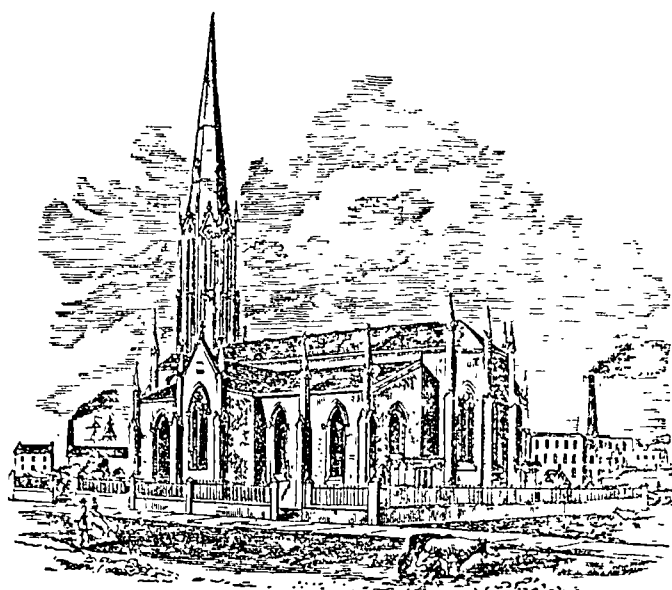
Drawn, Engraved, & Published

Sudeley Church.

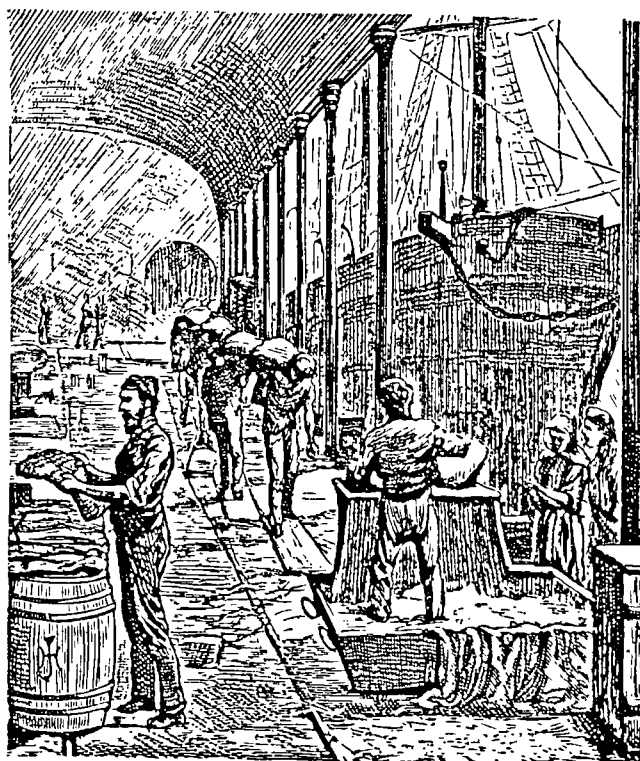
by J. Greenwood, Hali



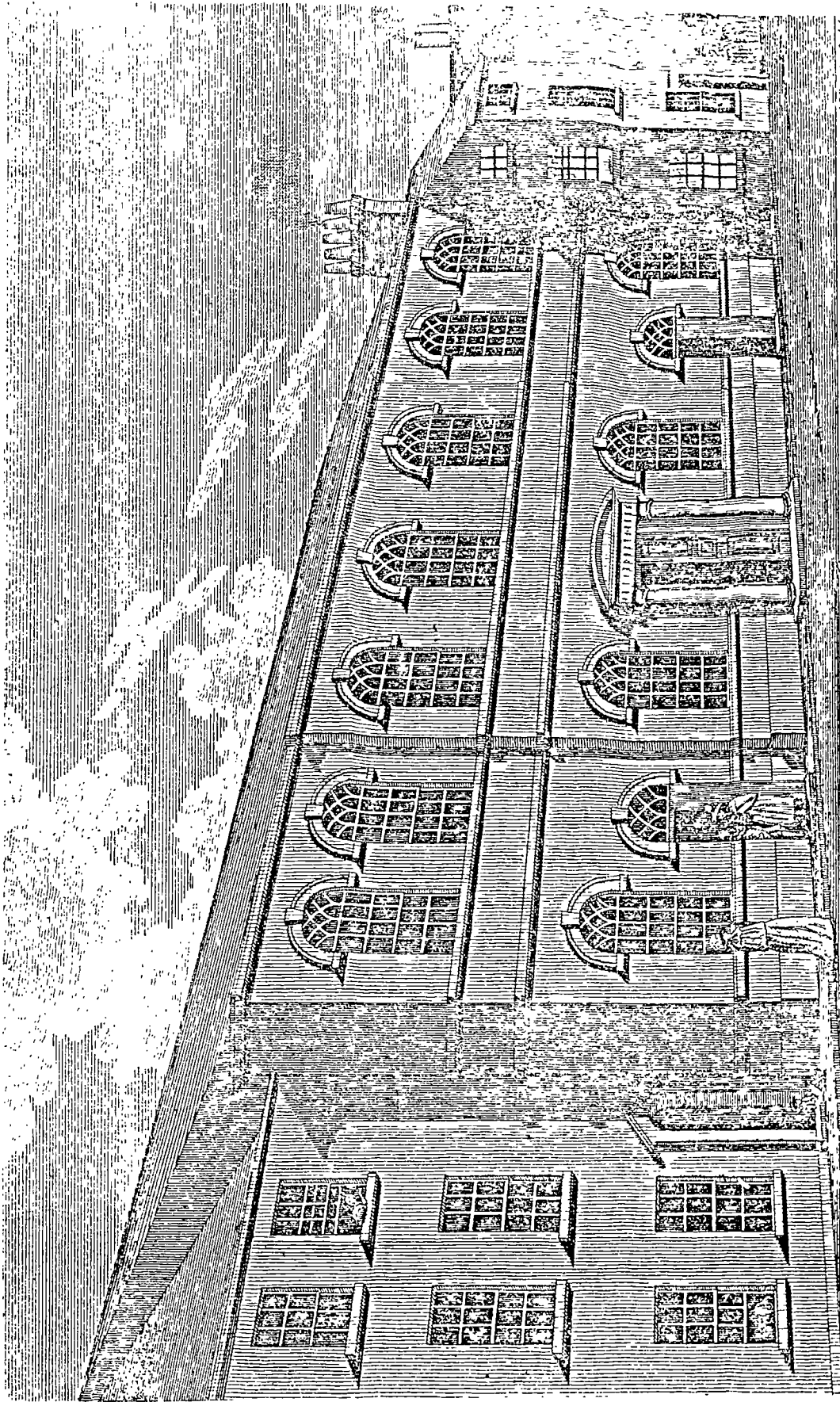
St Peter's Church, Frypool



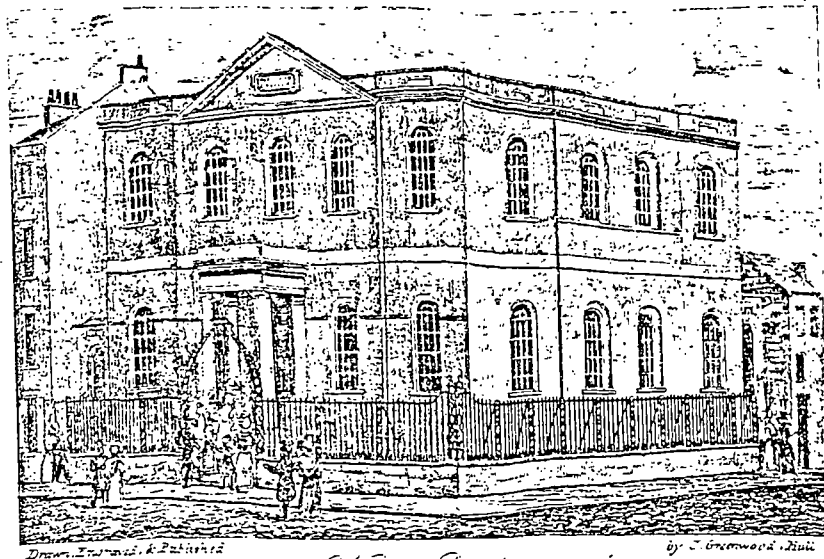
St Mark's Church, Groves



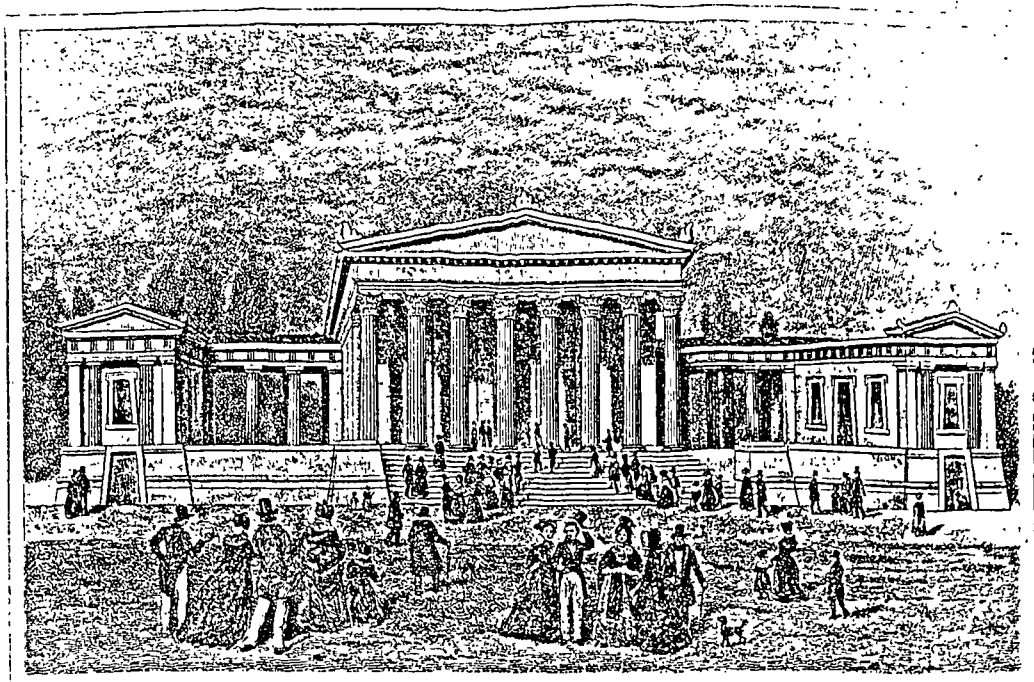
Grain Imports -
Humber Dock



GEORGE-YARD CHAPEL, founded A.D. 1786.

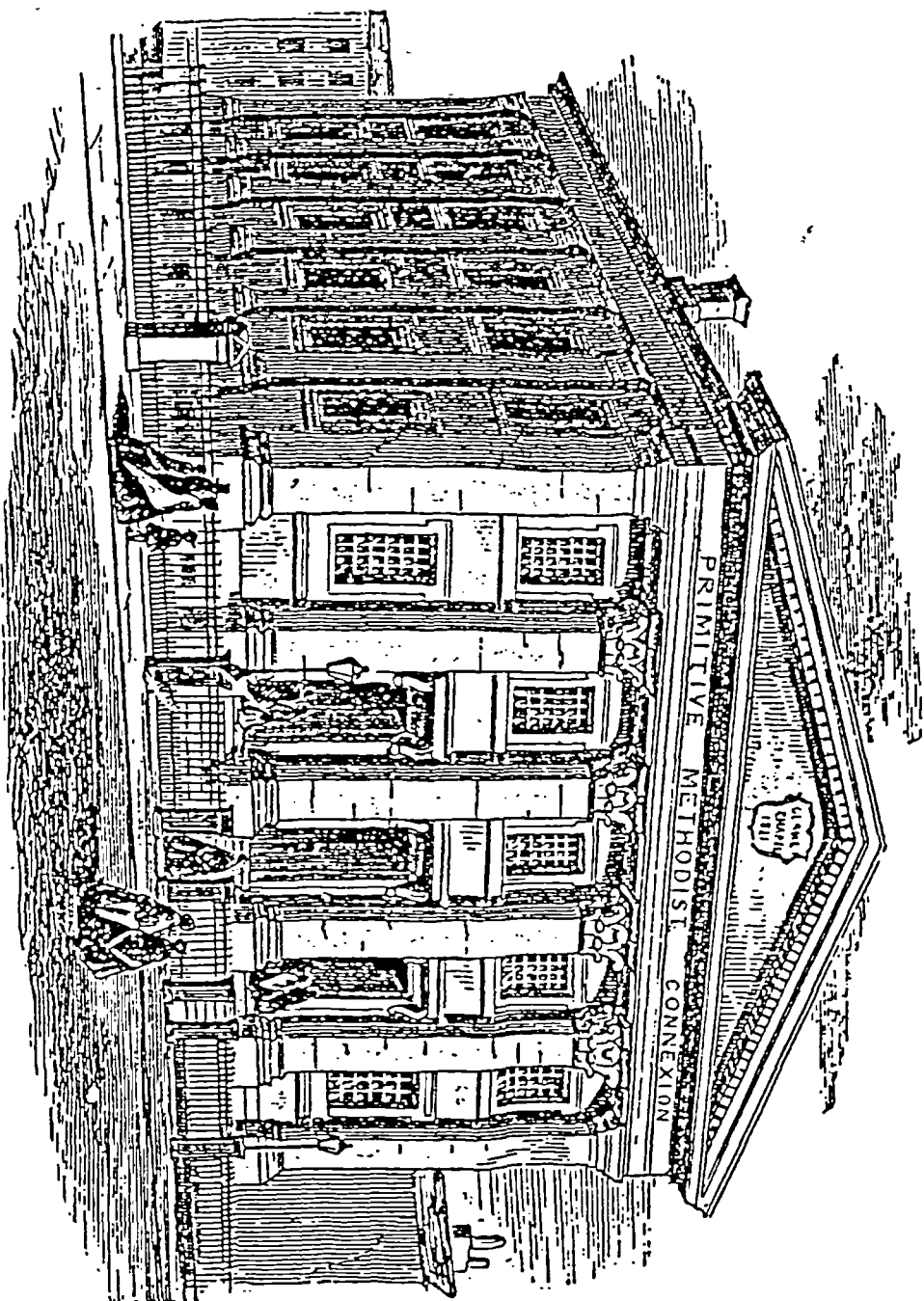


Wesley Chapel.
Humber Street



GREAT THORNTON ST CHAPEL, HULL.

F. R. YORKSHIRE.



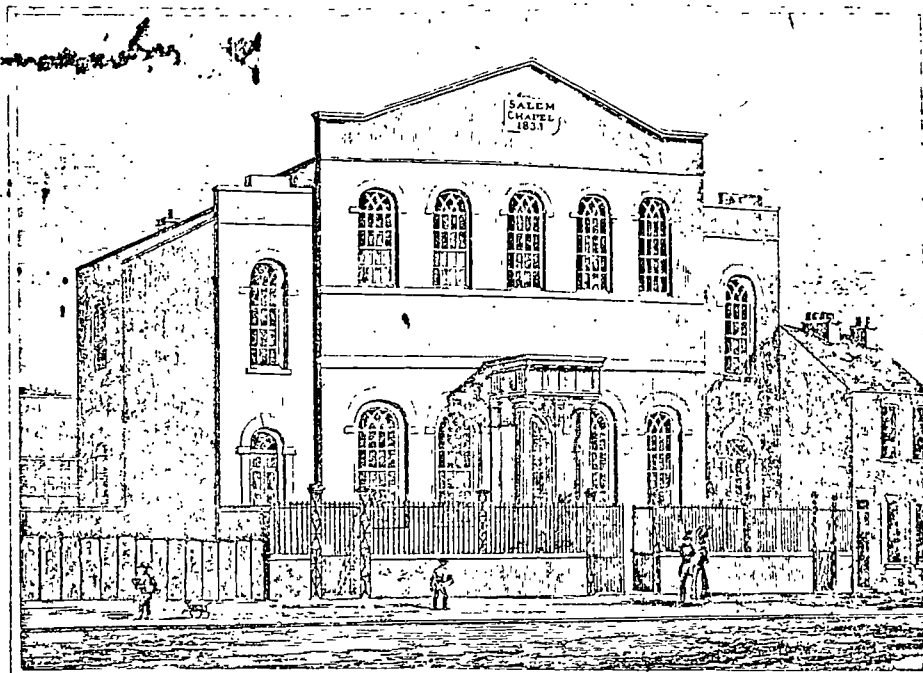
CLOWES CHAPEL, JARRATT STREET

Built for the Primitive Methodist Connexion in 1861.

Deregistered in 1932.

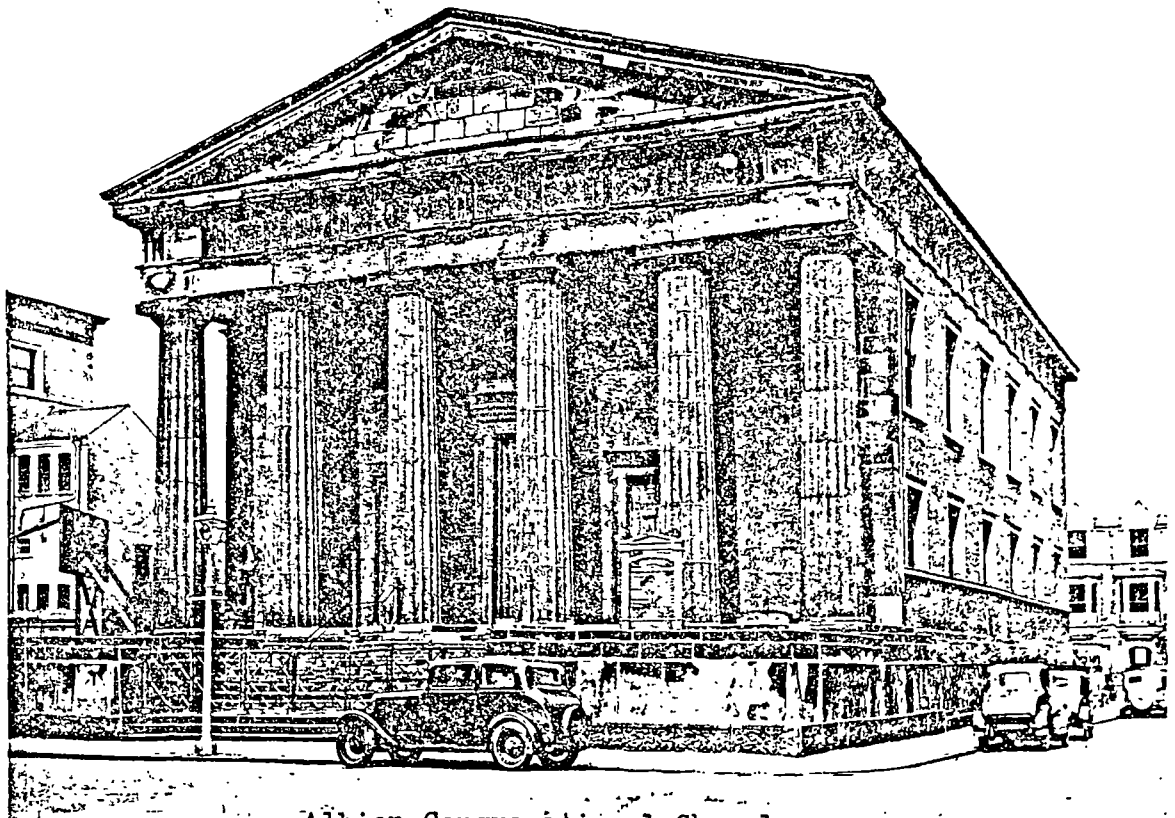
Used as a storehouse until demolished in 1965.

Site occupied by Hull Brewery/ North Country Breweries/
Mansfield Brewery on the south side of Kingston Square
near the New Theatre and currently for sale (May, 1987).

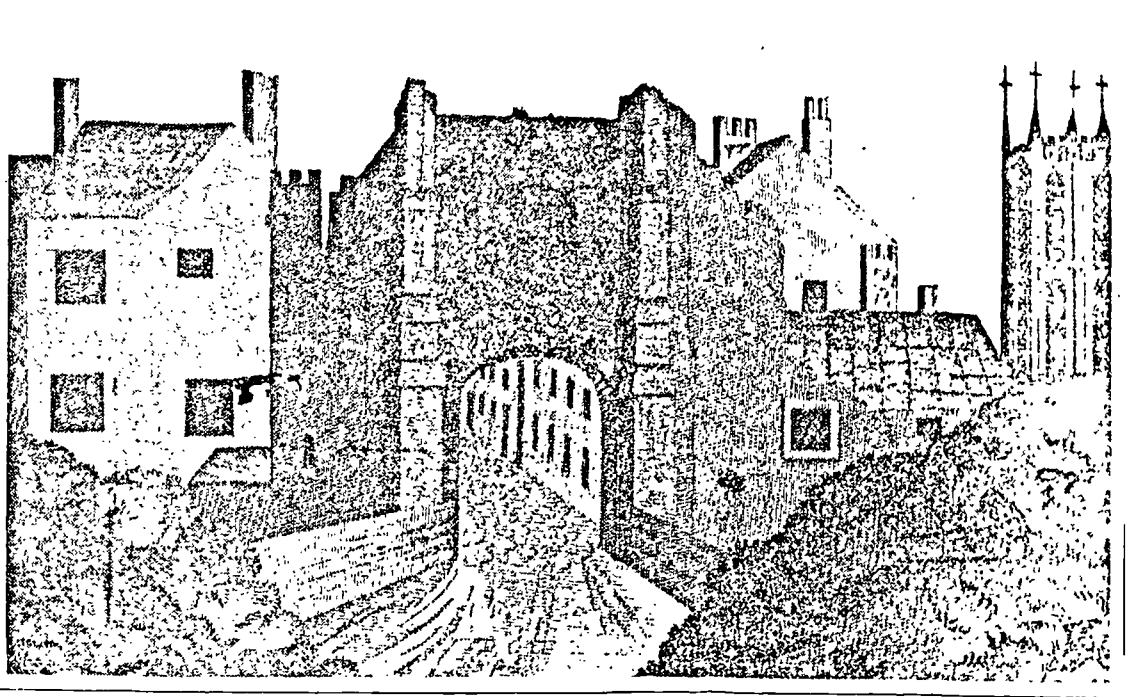


Drawn & Engraved by J. Greenwood, Boulton Lane, Hull.

SALEM CHAPEL, HULL,



Albion Congregational Chapel

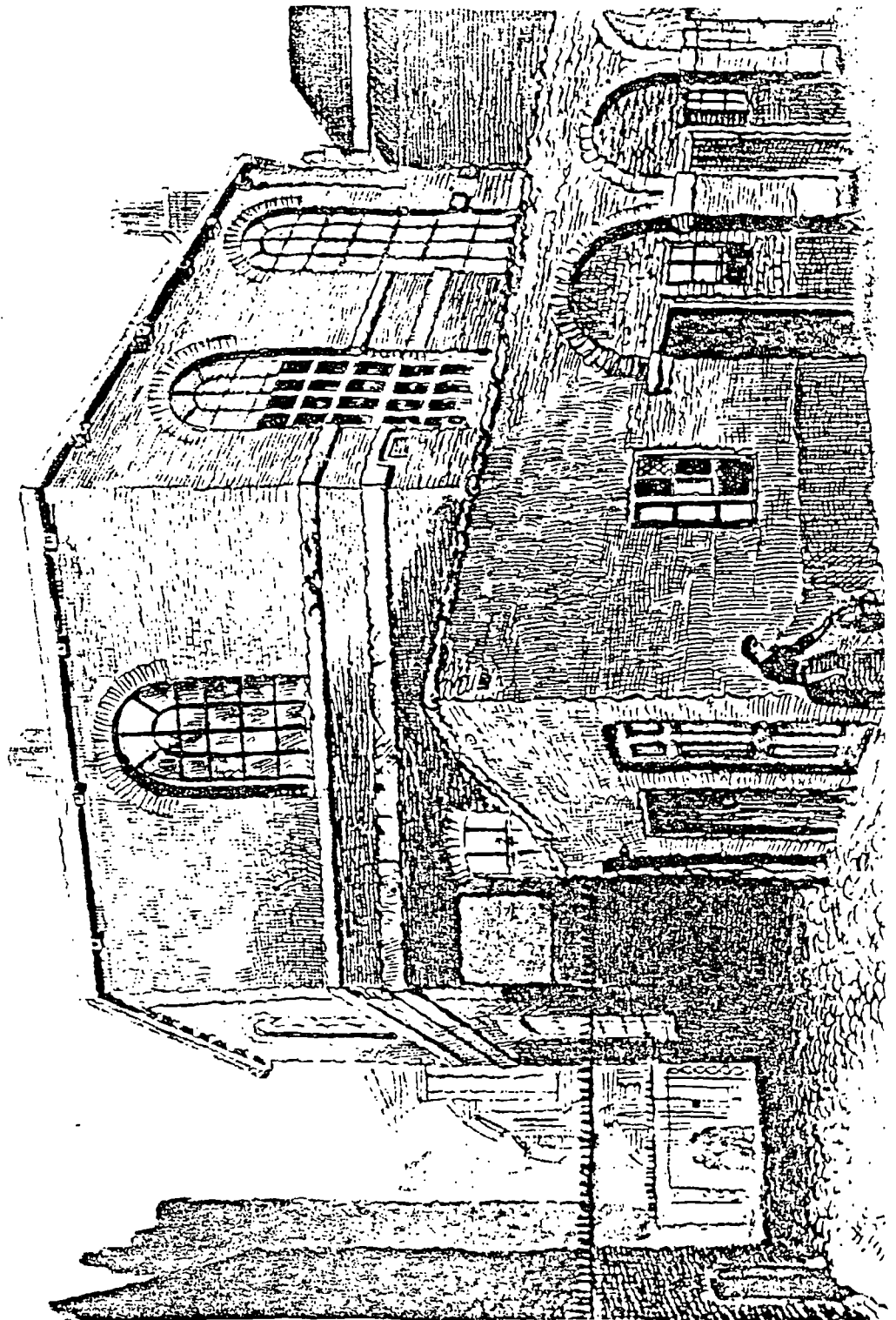


BEVERLEY GATE.

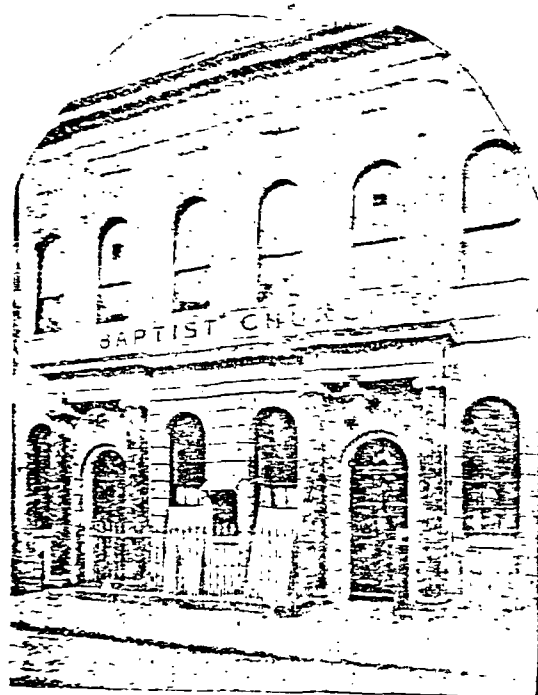
The gate through which Charles I. was refused admittance by Sir John Hotham, Mayor.



Catholic Chapel



Bowlalley Lane Unitarian Chapel



From a photograph

(by Rev. J. E. Threlkeld)

GEORGE STREET CHAPEL—EXTERIOR.

Chapter Seven

ANTI-CATHOLIC HULL

Most English people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whatever their religious affiliation, regarded themselves as Protestants. The history of England's relationship with Catholic Europe since the Reformation confirmed, for them, that Catholicism was not to be trusted, was foreign and un-English; but so long as the monarch's Coronation Oath upheld the Protestant Religion and the political settlement of 1689 remained firm, Catholicism could never be more than the minor aberration of a few landed gentry and their retainers.

When it became clear that these cherished bulwarks were not proof against Catholic infiltration, the bonds of Evangelical religion between Established Church and Nonconformity in Hull might have united them against a common enemy. Even this extreme threat, however, was not enough to overcome Nonconformity's sense of the Establishment's injustices, nor the Establishment's suspicions of political radicalism, often lacking in substance, on the part of Dissenters. Anglican-Dissenting differences were a decisive impediment to their conception of Hull as an Evangelical city; a common English distrust of Catholicism was not strong enough to reconcile their disagreements and engender joint action. Church of England and Nonconformity defended separately their own brands of Protestantism in the face of Catholicism's resurgence. It soon became apparent, ironically, that Dissenters and Catholics experienced similar disadvantages and

aspirations. An Established Church made both of them Nonconformist.

The rising challenge of Catholicism stemmed from the 1800 Act of Union which merged Ireland with Great Britain, abolished the Irish Parliament and made Westminster directly responsible for Irish affairs. Before the famine of 1840 and the consequent emigration, up to seven million people became the responsibility of the government in London; that five and a half million of them were Roman Catholic inevitably raised fears in the Church of England for the stability of the Establishment with its attendant Anglican privileges. The population of England and Wales in 1831 was just over fourteen million (1).

Dissenters wanted an equality of status with the Church of England which could only come through disestablishment, but a campaign to this end did not become practicable until the 1830s. Roman Catholics, however, posed a greater threat to the Established Church than to Dissent. Traditionally they represented an authoritarian, foreign, religio-political power which, given the chance, would supplant the Established Church and put a Catholic monarch on England's Protestant throne. Catholic religion was popularly associated in the Protestant mind with secrecy, superstition, and a generally un-English way of life. The threat was even more disturbing to the English because Catholics constituted the large and turbulent majority of the population of Ireland. Through political agitation and religious revival in Ireland and England, Catholics achieved an importance they had not possessed for centuries.

Irish immigrants congregated in London, Liverpool, Birmingham and other large towns, especially where major public works were in progress, railways, docks,

and ironstone mines, but their numbers were negligible in country districts. In Yorkshire they settled in large numbers in Leeds and Middlesbrough; the ironworks and docks of the latter began in the 1830s and 40s, but many of Hull's docks were built before the main Irish immigrations. Nor were there any large-scale industries in Hull, apart from the short-lived cotton mills in mid-century. In towns of over 50,000 inhabitants, the Irish-born population was about 3.3 per cent (2). Hull's population exceeded 50,000 sometime between 1831 and 1841, but its history, its place on the eastern seaboard, its links with Protestant Europe, its isolation and characteristic industrial economy, attracted a relatively small proportion of Irish Catholics.

As a major centre of Evangelicalism, the Established Church in Hull ought to have been better placed to join with Nonconformity against the popish threat than anywhere else in England. Evangelicals appeared to be as much Dissenters within the Church as Independents and Baptists were Dissenters from the Church, but their social and political differences prevented any such alliance. Evangelicals were Tory, but Dissenters were suspected of radicalism. It was during the 1790s that Joseph Milner discontinued his joint clerical meetings with Dissenting ministers. A reputation for radicalism dogged Dissenters, in Evangelical eyes, for many years after.

Nonconformists were, of course, anti-Catholic, but they were equally dismayed by the Romanist tendencies they observed in the Church of England after 1830. The Established Church was, to them, far from an ideal Protestant body, unconvinced of the Bible alone as the religion of Protestants. Dissenters and Roman Catholics, however, suffered almost equally from

discrimination and were put at a similar disadvantage by the exclusive privileges, civil, religious and educational to which the Established Church clung tenaciously. Hull's fiercely loyal, Tory Evangelicals had further reason to be disturbed by the sympathetic attitude of some of their fellow churchmen towards Catholic Emancipation; J.B.Sumner, Evangelical Bishop of Chester, was known to be 'moderate' on the Catholic question, and a few other church leaders saw the relief of Catholic disabilities as a matter of principle. Thomas Arnold of Rugby urged the Irish Catholic claims on the grounds of natural justice (3).

The Evangelical clergy in Hull, led by the Rev. John King, vicar of Christ Church, however, were vehemently anti-Catholic, publicly fighting their cause on every possible occasion, and the Hull Advertiser accused them of neglecting their pastoral duties for an obsession with religious rectitude and sectarian advantage. Joseph Milner had lamented the worldly distractions of an expanding port; his successors were distracted by sectarian controversy for almost half a century.

Post Reformation Catholicism

The majority of people in Hull during Henry VIII's reign were conservative in religion. Only a very small number, like Robert Robynson, the seaman, were influenced by Protestantism. This did not necessarily mean they were staunchly Catholic either; they bent with the wind. So acquiescent were they to the 'King's business' that the Archdeacon of the East Riding reported in 1535 that all men in Hull, the Corporation, and even the monks at the Charterhouse had no qualms. The town sided half-heartedly with the rebellious Pilgrimage of Grace, but as soon as the Corporation

sent Henry its assurances of loyalty he issued a pardon (4).

Catholicism virtually disappeared from East Yorkshire without resistance in Elizabeth's reign (5), and recusancy in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Hull was confined to a small group of merchant families (6). Hull was generally undecided about religion until the time of the military occupation of the town by the Catholic Lord Langdale, under James II, associated Catholicism with repression in the popular mind. After the 'Glorious Revolution' only two Aldermen and fifteen citizens were classed as disaffected persons (7). The Corporation's Humble Address in 1745 referred to the miseries 'when last under the Government of a Popish head, and the imminent danger to which our religion, laws, liberty and property were then exposed' (8).

Until the late eighteenth century there were never more than about a dozen recusants, often fewer. Archbishop Herring's Visitation Returns reported no Catholics in 1743 (9); in 1767 there were 33, by 1780 there were 78 (10), but this was still a very small proportion of a population approaching 19,000. In the same year the Catholic Chapel in Posterngate, said by neighbours in 1782 to have been built three or four years before (11), was destroyed as a result of popular feeling stirred up by the Gordon Riots. The ruined building was sold and restored as a synagogue (12). Catholics were obliged to use a series of temporary premises for a congregation said, in 1790, to number about 30 (13). A priest from Holderness, perhaps chaplain to a landed family, came to say mass every four or six weeks. In Hull, unlike the East Riding, there were no gentry to keep the old religion alive. A modern historian says there were 40 communicants in 1785 (14), but 30 or 40 was still negligible in a population of nearly 22,000. There was no threat here

to the foundations of Evangelical religion which Joseph Milner was laying at the Grammar School and in Holy Trinity Church.

A new Catholic Chapel was eventually built in North Street by Abbé Pierre François, a French refugee who remained the Catholic pastor in Hull from 1798 to 1820 (15). A piece of ground was finally purchased in Jarratt Street in 1826 on which to build a large and prominent church; Catholicism in Hull was by then confident enough to move out of the narrow streets of the old town onto a broad new Georgian thoroughfare. The Church of St Charles Borromeo was opened on 29 July 1829, the year of Catholic Emancipation, to accommodate 600 worshippers; five years later the congregation was said to average 450 on a Sunday (16).

Catholic Emancipation

The Relief Act of 1778 permitted Catholic worship; a further Act in 1791 removed restrictions on education and marriage and opened most professions to Catholics. The Emancipation Act of 1829, by allowing Catholics to sit in Parliament, brought them within reach of real political power and of influence over the Established Church. Evangelicals, the Corporation and others in Hull were much alarmed; protest meetings were held and petitions organised while the Bill was going through the House.

The clergy of the Archdeaconry held their own meeting, chaired by the Rev. John Gilbey, rector of Barmston, after the Archdeacon declined to convene it himself. They agreed to send a petition to both Houses of Parliament against further concessions of political power to Roman Catholics (17). The potential consequences of such legislation for the Established Church attracted many to the meeting, and the petition

was left in Turner's bookshop in Beverley for clergy to sign who were not able to be present.

Augustus O'Neil, one of Hull's MPs, presented two anti-Catholic petitions in the Commons, one from the Mayor and Aldermen, another purporting to be signed by 3,000 inhabitants, clergy, bankers, merchants and shipowners (18). Hull's other MP, Daniel Sykes of Raywell, who had been elected with O'Neil in 1826, did not share these views; he was in favour of Emancipation on the grounds of religious liberty, believing that concessions were necessary to prevent civil disorder and danger to the Established Church. A week later Sykes presented a pro-Catholic petition on behalf of Hull Unitarians and 'other friends of religious liberty.' (19). It was evident from an early stage that the Church of England's vehement hostility to Emancipation was tempered by sympathy for the Catholic predicament from a number of Dissenters. Unitarians were the natural leaders, a middle-class intelligentsia, marginalised by the Established Church and by main-stream Nonconformity. Other Nonconformists however, apart from Wesleyan Methodists, were also sympathetic. Wesley's private dealings with Roman Catholics were friendly, but his distrust and opposition to Catholic Relief bequeathed the same attitude to his successors (20). The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine was uncompromisingly against Emancipation, seeing it as a dangerous encroachment on Church and State by a people given to rebellion (21).

The editor and proprietor of the Hull Advertiser in 1829 was Isaac Wilson, a Tory who came to Hull from Durham in 1800 (22). A strong anti-Catholic, he proposed that a public meeting be held to make clear the real wishes of those he called 'the thinking inhabitants' of Hull.' Wilson was incensed by Sykes' claim that O'Neil's petition had only a few hundred

signatures, rather than 3,000 'in all ranks and professions.' The Rev. George Lee, Unitarian editor of the Hull Rockingham, backed Sykes, and bad feeling built up between the two journals, fed by rumours, assertions and denials (23). The meeting was held in Hull Market Place on 2 March 1829, under the shadows of Holy Trinity Church and Peter Scheemaker's equestrian statue of William III, erected by public subscription in 1734. Accommodation was prepared for 300 people, but when the Mayor and Town Clerk arrived to open the proceedings at 11 o'clock, 5,000 were already present; before the end the number had swollen, according to Isaac Wilson, to between 8,000 and 10,000 (24), almost a third of the town's total population.

The speeches were dominated by the Evangelical clergy, Dikes, Scott, Knight, and King; Nonconformists took little part in the proceedings except for a brief contribution from the Rev. Edward Oakes, minister of the recently opened Wesleyan Chapel in Mason Street. It was a Tory, Evangelical occasion, expressing their religious and political apprehensions towards an authoritarian theocracy which, they believed, would usurp the place of the Established Church and overthrow the British constitution.

Dikes and Scott declared themselves in favour of religious and civil liberty, Scott expressing some embarrassment at the exclusive privileges he enjoyed as a minister of the Established Church. They both said, however, that Roman Catholics could not be trusted with civil power; they were under foreign influence and had no liberty of their own. The Inquisition, the fires of Smithfield, and the massacre of St Bartholomew's Day were all cited in evidence of the Catholic religion's incompatibility with liberty. Civil and religious liberty for Roman Catholics, said Scott, would mean the loss of it for everybody else. He went on to compare

the consequences with the atrocities perpetrated in France after the Revolution, a 'refined and enlightened' Catholic country. William Knight of St James' Church also warned the gathering about the Church of Rome's intolerance of civil liberty.

John King of Christ Church, the leading anti-Catholic in the group, brought the argument nearer home by attacking Daniel Sykes whom, King asserted, would now find all Hull against him. This was manifestly not true, but King's oratory produced hisses from the crowd, like those of a pantomime audience, every time he mentioned Sykes' name. When, after long speeches by the clergy, the Rev. Edward Oakes, the Wesleyan minister, was at last allowed to say something, he took the opportunity to assert once more Methodism's loyal attachment to the British constitution. No greater theological or political question, he assured his hearers, had been brought forward since 1688.

Twenty-years' guerilla war

The 1830s were a time of relative calm in Hull, punctuated by sporadic reports of anti-Catholic feeling. Catholics complained of bigotry and intolerance from Tories, in contrast with the enlightend liberality of Hull's Reformers (25). After the Municipal Corporation Act, three Catholics were elected to the Town Council and Catholics were encouraged to vote for Reform. Petty officialdom, in attempting to obstruct freedom of worship for Catholic workhouse children was another needless irritant (26).

Two men arrived on the scene in 1841 who made a significant contribution to the Evangelical-Catholic debate, this time not on the side of Evangelicalism. One was Robert Wilberforce, Archdeacon of the East Riding; the other was E.F.Collins, the new editor of

the Hull Advertiser. Collins, born in the north of Ireland in 1807, was a Roman Catholic and a Philosophic Radical, sometime secretary and disciple of Joseph Hume. Before he came to Hull he was sub-editor of the Sun in London. His interests and influence were much wider than on strictly religious matters. He was a proponent of free trade, helped to bring Hull workhouse under the control of the poor-law board, supported the drainage scheme recommended by the General Board of Health, and campaigned for the poor, among them Hull's immigrant Irish cotton-workers. He also fought for the promotion of temperance, and against anti-Catholic and anti-Jewish prejudice (27). It is arguable that but for Collins' brilliant advocacy in print and in person, anti-Catholic prejudice in Hull might easily have turned into persecution.

He also admired Robert Wilberforce and, much to the annoyance of Evangelicals, defended him against the calumny which Wilberforce's Tractarianism tended to attract. When Samuel Wilberforce was made Bishop of Oxford, Collins said that it would be a credit to Hull if both brothers were made bishops at the same time, but Robert's promotion, he continued, would be hailed as a relief by the Low Church clergy of Hull. He was, said Collins, too sharp a disciplinarian for them and insisted too much on the duties of a working priesthood (28). Collins frequently complained that the Hull clergy neglected their pastoral responsibilities in favour of their own conception of doctrinal purity.

Tractarianism in Hull was twenty years away, but Evangelicals were anxious not to take the slightest risk of infiltration. There was a bitter debate before Walter Hook, vicar of Leeds, was allowed to preach in Holy Trinity at its re-opening after repairs, even though Hook himself was never a wholly convinced Tractarian. The Rev. John King, said Collins,

inveighed against Dr Hook's orthodoxy, and darkly hinted at repetitions of the late doings at Oxford, should he make his appearance as a preacher at Hull (29). The question was settled on a non-doctrinal issue by the churchwarden who pointed out that Hook would attract a large congregation who would subscribe liberally to the church repair fund. Collins urged the clergy to identify themselves with the needs of the poor; unless they amended their attitude of exclusiveness, which was destroying their influence for good, he continued, 'they may preach against Puseyism to the crack of doom to no purpose.'

The Advertiser also accused King of simony. As the principal purchaser of the advowson of Holy Trinity, he hoped to obtain the living for himself and ensure positions for his own Evangelical nominees at the new churches which still lacked parochial independence (30). It was not only Collins who charged the clergy with lack of social concern. At least one letter to the press claimed to speak for a large body of churchmen, frustrated by their local clergy who had had everything their own way for years. The correspondent urged wealthy merchants to emulate the Unitarian banker, J.R.Pease, who was involved in many church and school building projects, irrespective of party. The erection of a building was a sign that the Church was concerned for the people of an area, as Dikes often pointed out when laying a foundation stone or opening a new church, but St Paul's parish, with its thousands of poor had been waiting two years in 1846 for a start to be made on a church (31). Evangelicals' efforts to defend themselves against the advance of Dissent on one hand and the ambitions of papists on the other were more apparent to Hull citizens than any success in the reformation of public manners, in spite of the Rev. John Scott's largely unaided efforts on behalf of the

Female Penitentiary in Anlaby Road.

The clergy, however, were not the only ones given to sectarian controversy, especially at election times. J.R.Pease, so admired in the correspondence columns one year fell from grace the next, when he raised the no popery cry himself at the 1847 Parliamentary election. At a meeting called at the Cross Keys, he drew the attention of both Conservative and Liberal candidates to the danger of any endowment of the Catholic religion.

Collins pointed out that Catholics were not petitioning Parliament for grants towards chapel building and the endowment of bishops. He objected to Catholics being singled out for abuse at elections any more than Nonconformists; hatred of any religious sect could not be a bond for political union (32), but his appeals against sectarian strife were forlorn hopes where politics were involved. Conservatives throughout England were aware that Roman Catholics accounted for roughly one third of the combined populations of England, Wales and Ireland, and were still afraid of Catholic machinations to subvert the constitution. Liberals were much the same. An address 'to the Nonconformist Electors of Great Britain' signed by over 150 Dissenters from all over the country, included the signature of Sir William Lowthrop, Hull's former Mayor and a prominent Dissenter since the agitation against Lord Sidmouth's Bill in 1811. Catholic bishops and clergy attempted to off-set this by a 'Declaration of Loyalty to the Queen' (33).

When the Rev. Thomas Dikes died later that summer, his obituary commended him for his concern *for the poor* and his courtesy towards Dissenters, but regretted his strong opposition to the Catholic Emancipation Bill (34). Dissenters, although unsympathetic to Roman Catholics on religious and political grounds, still saw

the Established Church as their main adversary. They had always resented its political ascendancy; now they looked askance at it on religious grounds too. The Rev. Newman Hall, minister at Albion Congregational Church, refused to join in the cry of no popery, but nor, he said in an address at the Mechanics Institute, could he ignore the subject altogether. What alarmed him more, however, was Tractarianism in the Church of England, 'the stealthy growth of Papist principles under Protestant garb and in a Protestant camp' (35).

The 'Papal Aggression'

Plans to restore the Catholic hierarchy in England provoked a howl of protest from Hull's Evangelicals. The clergy demanded a meeting, which Robert Wilberforce convened at their request but, as an advocate of religious tolerance himself, declined to attend. Fourteen clergy went to the meeting in St Mary's National School at Beverley which concluded with a request for the Queen to consider the violation of her supremacy by the Papal Bull which created a new archiepiscopal see (36). If Wilberforce had resigned at this point, rather than four years later, he might have been spared much anguish.

Joseph Hume, Collins' mentor and now father of the House of Commons, wrote to say that 'Church in danger from the Pope' only served to cover the neglect and incompetence of the clergy; he saw them generally in the same light as Collins saw Hull's Evangelicals, lead by the Rev. John King. Collins' own defence of the Catholic Bishops, for once unconvincing, was that before the new dioceses were established, the Pope was the real Bishop of Great Britain; the English Bishops were merely his vassals. Thus their appointment to British sees marked their emancipation from direct

papal bondage (37).

Robert Wilberforce's lack of sympathy for the Evangelical anti-Catholic crusade was compensated for by Thomas Musgrove, Archbishop of York, who commended those who signed the address to the Queen (38). Dissenters, however, were unimpressed by Musgrove's talk of usurping the prerogative of the Sovereign; the link between the Established Church and the State did not guarantee freedom from Rome, so far as they were concerned (39). Newman Hall thought there was much misdirected zeal on the part of Evangelicals, and that the prevailing fears were greater than the occasion warranted. Although the Congregational Church was devoted to the great principles of the Reformation, he said at a meeting to consider the appointment of the Catholic hierarchy, his Church had no uncharitable feelings towards Roman Catholics. It was the Establishment which most offended Dissenters. They affirmed their loyalty to the Sovereign, but still believed it would be best for Church and State if the two were separated. A resolution to this effect was signed by Newman Hall and five deacons, Sir William Lowthrop among them (40), a significant outcome from a meeting called ostensibly to consider the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy.

The first meeting of the Hull Protestant Alliance, set up by a deputation from London, provided common ground for Established and Dissenting ministers. Circulars were distributed to congregations before the meeting, explaining that the Alliance aimed to unite all Protestants against papal aggression and in defence of the doctrines of the Reformation (41). The initiative failed to settle the doubts entertained by Dissenters about the authenticity of Anglican Protestantism in Hull, and at yet another lecture by the Rev. Newman Hall, attended by over 500 people in

Albion Chapel Schoolroom, he declared that only Nonconformists adhered fully and consistently to the Protestant doctrine of 'the Bible alone.' Genuine Protestantism was not safe in the hands of those who observed Ash Wednesday, the cross at Baptism, saints' days, and obliged one to kneel at Holy Communion. Hall, in spite of these extraordinary utterances, still managed to show more charity towards Catholics than the Evangelical party could muster. He believed it was possible to be very firm in opposition to popery, yet very courteous towards Catholics (42).

Political differences between Evangelicals and most Dissenters were as important as religious differences. Evangelicals were known for their Toryism, so it was rare to hear a critical voice inside the Church. One such, in Hull, was that of the Rev. Thomas Bonnin, long-time curate of Sculcoates for an absentee vicar. He wrote in support of the two Liberal parliamentary candidates in 1852, James Clay and Viscount Goderich, who saw the church crippled by the inefficient use of its resources. They believed that only a redistribution would advance the church's influence over the ignorant and ungodly masses in England's cities and populous towns. They were talking of England as a whole, but nothing they saw in Hull at mid-century led them to suppose that Hull was different. Bonnin's letter urged his readers to contend side by side with Roman Catholics in defence of their civil and religious liberty. They would not thereby, he said, compromise their Protestantism (43).

Archdeacon of the East Riding

A portrait of Robert Wilberforce shows a seated, slightly withdrawn, scholarly figure with a book in his hand, a heavy-suited, early-Victorian, side-whiskered

Dickensian character. In his relations with the lower orders he was a man of his times, a Tory paternalist with little sympathy for democracy or Dissenting religion. He would have been uneasy in the company of Mary Snowden or her successors in Hull, and George Eliot's Dinah Morris was a world away from the Wilberforce wives and sisters.

He found the rural clergy in Yorkshire an uncouth lot, even more difficult to handle than those in the south (44). He thought them loutish; some were drunkards and most were irreverent in church. At confirmations they gossiped through the service and on one occasion laughed during the laying on of hands (45). His experiences of the clergy in the Archdeaconry, combined with fears of his Catholic sympathies by the more earnest clergy in Hull, were a basis for unsympathetic relations and misunderstandings.

Despite his father's eminence in the Evangelical cause, the suspicions of Hull Evangelicals were not without foundation. The Emancipator was in part responsible for Robert Wilberforce's opinions, in sending him to Oxford rather than Cambridge. The latter was the breeding ground of Evangelical clergymen, but William remembered with life-long regret his own idle and dissipated life at St John's College in his pre-converted state, in which he was encouraged by the dons and undergraduates. Later visits to Cambridge and his eldest son William's disastrous career at Trinity had done nothing to improve his opinion of the place; his experiences doubtless influenced him in his decision to send his three younger sons to Oxford. His meeting, and subsequent friendship, with Edward Hawkins, Tutor (later Provost) of Oriel, a college with a rising academic reputation, was decisive (46). Thus, Robert met Keble at Oriel and was fellow tutor with Newman and

Froude (47).

It was already clear where his sympathies lay when he became Archdeacon of the East Riding and vicar of Burton Agnes. His own squire accused him of Tractarian leanings in 1842, and his charge to the clergy the following year, dealing with the Evangelical and Tractarian movements, made it obvious to the Hull clergy how matters stood. His brother Samuel asked him to avoid a Tractarian theme and not to raise controversial Catholic issues in his sermon at Samuel's consecration as Bishop of Oxford in 1845 (48).

Robert continued to correspond with Newman and Manning from Burton Agnes and was hard pressed in letters from his ex-curate William Henn, a sickly Irishman with a sharp mind who was forced to leave Yorkshire for his health's sake. Henn, who developed Tractarian sympathies while Wilberforce's curate, was received into the Roman Catholic Church in November 1850. Henn's letters challenged Robert for his delusion in trying to restore Catholic doctrine in the Church of England. Others, he said, had failed, Newman with the spiritual organisation of the Church as opposed to Erastianism, Manning in the case of infallibility as opposed to opinion. So also would Wilberforce fail, wrote Henn, with Church authority opposed to private judgement. None of these could work in the Anglican system (49).

Although Wilberforce was supported by Collins and by many others, a controversy which ended in tragedy began in 1854 when the subject of his charge to the clergy was the Eucharist and the Real Presence. He was about to publish a book on the subject. He claimed the authority of the Catechism and of ancient authors, but this did not deflect the wrath of the Hull clergy, fifteen of whom, including six curates, signed a protest based on Article 28 (Of the Lord's Supper).

Bonnin and the easy-going Bromby did not sign. The former went so far as to write a letter disassociating himself from the views of the protesters, hampered as they were 'by the shackles of Calvinism' (50). Other letters to the editor expressed surprise at the presumption of curates in protesting against the teaching of their superior, a presumption made much of as the controversy developed.

The clergy had no stomach to take the matter to the ecclesiastical courts, so they let things rest once their protest was signed. The controversy continued to rage in Hull's local newspapers week after week, however, and there was a surprising amount of support for Wilberforce in a town famous for its Evangelical ascendancy. Some, who did not support Wilberforce directly, wrote to attack the clergy for their constant backbiting (51). The whole business seemed a largely clerical controversy in the eyes of Collins and his correspondents. The impression of the typical church-goer in Hull at the time was female, middle-class, fashionably dressed and always ready to support her vicar's opinions, 'angels arrayed in Parisian bonnets and Polka jackets' An 'alarmed layman' recommended Sydney Smith's advice, in the case of the Dean of York's alleged simony, that Wilberforce should be preached to death by wild curates. The Archdeacon of Taunton, G.A.Denison, wrote to condemn the Rev. John King's 'bombast' and urged him and his 'Low Church Band of Hope' to apologise to Wilberforce (52). Local Evangelical hopes of expunging Puseyism from every part of the land were frustrated, at least in part, by one aspect of their success. They made sure that no Tractarian books were stocked in Hull's library, consequently their protest had no meaning for the great majority of Protestant lay people. The Evangelicals simply seemed to have some kind of clerical grudge

against their Archdeacon.

Wilberforce's position, however, had become untenable; on 30 August he sent his resignation to the Archbishop of York. He was about to publish a book on the Royal Supremacy and could not face another uproar from the clergy in Hull (53). Collins lamented that they might go on driving people out until no men of learning, piety and zeal were left. Some suggested that the clergy would be happier with Dissent; it was Bonnin who first observed that the Hull clergy were Dissenters inside the church. They needed a special prayer book, he said, which excluded all priestly and sacramental elements to which as a body they conscientiously objected (54). But the Establishment and an hierarchical society meant so much to them that no rapprochement with Dissent was likely. Wilberforce was received into the Roman Catholic Church soon after his resignation as Archdeacon, sold his extensive library at Burton Agnes and moved to Paris. At the time of his death from gastric fever in 1857 he was preparing for the Catholic priesthood in Rome (55).

Even in Hull, during Wilberforce's time, a few clergy seceded to Rome. Thomas Dikes (grandson of the late vicar of St John's Church) and Thomas Barff resigned their curacies at Holy Trinity in 1851 and became Roman Catholics. Three years later another curate, the Rev. F.J.Abbott, was 'removed' for 'urging frequent celebration of the Eucharist,' held to be a Romish doctrine. It was said that Bromby had been misled over this, and that representatives of the Low Churchmen had caused the 'calamity' (56).

Alessandro Gavazzi

In the Established Church in Hull the anti-Catholics had won the day. Bromby, never a party man,

was an enfeebled old man in his eighties. The Evangelicals were confident enough to invite Hook of Leeds to preach again in Holy Trinity, this time without fear of dissenting voices. (Collins suspected that the Evangelicals had emasculated Hook). On the occasion of the opening of the organ on 23 May 1855, Hook preached two unexceptionable sermons without a hint of contentious subjects (57). Hull Catholics, meanwhile, continued to establish themselves in the town with the laying of the foundation stone of the Catholic Schools in Dansom Lane 'for the multitude of the poor of their communion who reside in that locality' (58).

An uneasy feeling was growing that the Church of England was beginning to lose ground against the greater efficiency and zeal of the Church of Rome. This made a visit from Father Alessandro Gavazzi, the ex-Barnabite Friar, all the more welcome. He was a friend of Garibaldi, a prolific writer and public speaker in support of the Italian risorgimento, and although he always remained a passionately religious man, he had broken off his allegiance to the papacy (59). Driven into exile by the French occupation of Rome, he escaped the police in company with Garibaldi; they separated later and Gavazzi sailed to London (60). Wiseman would not allow him to operate as a priest, nor would Gavazzi embrace Protestantism. It would have destroyed any hope of evangelizing Italy, whose people were deeply prejudiced against every form of Protestantism (61). After reading widely in the British Museum on Protestant controversies with Rome, on church history and the Bible, Gavazzi stumped the country, always a welcome orator on the evils of the papal system. He lectured in Hull's Public Rooms in Jarratt Street in 1856, just opposite St Charles' Catholic Church. The title of his lecture, 'England on

the High Road to Popery,' appeared to be just what the Evangelicals wanted, but they were less pleased when he went on to criticise the proposal to create twelve new bishoprics in the Church of England. This would be a distraction from real work among the poor, he said, of which the Catholics already did more than the Church of England. Because Catholics worked among the poor, so more of the poor became Catholics. His emphasis on the Church of England's need for more working clergy, in order to compete with the greater efficiency of the Church of Rome in their work with the poor (62), confirmed the opinion of those in Hull who felt that the Church of England was losing ground through neglect of the poor, in favour of political controversy and a zeal for purity of doctrine.

The Hull Convent Case

In the 1850s and 60s a generation of old adversaries was removed from the scene by death. Robert Wilberforce died in 1857, King in 1858, Knight in 1862, and Scott in 1865. Anti-Catholic prejudice long survived them, but the continuous vituperation of their days was over. E.F.Collins, never a good businessman, let the ownership of the Hull Advertiser pass to a limited company in 1851, but continued as editor until 1865, when the paper was amalgamated with the Eastern Morning News. Collins' attention in the second half of his editorship was increasingly given to non-ecclesiastical local affairs, like the proceedings of the Dock Company, the cause of sanitary reform, the rebuilding of Hull's Workhouse and the establishment of the local board of health (63).

Protestant mistrust has always been aroused by the 'religious life' of monks and nuns. There had never been a convent in Hull, even in pre-Reformation times.

All the 'religious' in that period were monks. It was, therefore, a new experience for Hull when four female novices were received into the Irish Sisterhood of Mercy in St Charles' Church in 1857, to teach in the Catholic girls' schools in Dansom Lane and Canning Street (64). Hull's oldest newspaper, of Protestant conviction, took great exception to the arrival of these 'prurient brides of Christ,' and complained of all the pomp and ceremony put on to impress observers with Tractarian sympathies (65). It was the vow to remain unmarried which upset the Hull Packet; but Collins suggested that the female matrimonial market was already overstocked. Husbands should first be found for the hundreds of young women languishing in compulsory spinsterhood, secondly for the hundreds of young women who, he said, made no vows of remaining in the state of widowhood should their first husbands 'tire of long residence in this world' (66). It was a humorous response, lacking the venom which Collins reserved for 'King and his jackels,' as he once called the Evangelical clergy. The convent in Anlaby Road where the nuns resided was, however, to be the source of a widely reported legal case in 1869, four years after Collins had left Hull for retirement near London.

Susanna Mary Saurin, an Irish-born nun who had lived at the Anlaby Road convent for over ten years, sued the mother superior and her assistant for libel and slander and for conspiring to drive her from the order. Mary Saurin, Sister Mary Scholastica Joseph as she was known in the order, claimed she had been falsely accused of a whole series of negligences, before an investigating commission, chaired by the Rt Rev. Robert Cornthwaite, Roman Catholic Bishop of Beverley (67). The case was tried before the Court of the Queen's Bench in Westminster Hall; the presiding judge was Alexander Cockburn, the Lord Chief Justice;

counsel for the plaintiff was John Coleridge, Q.C., newly appointed solicitor general in Gladstone's government, but still able to handle the occasional private case.

Sister Mary Joseph, mother superior, described at the trial as Mrs Star, told how Mary Saurin had been occasionally difficult from the time she joined the convent, and how her promises to correct her faults had been in vain. By 1862 she was recognized by the sisters as the odd one out, whom no other order would accept. The details of Mary Saurin's offences were matters of little importance in themselves, like eating secretly between meals, borrowing small items from the other sisters without their permission, scissors, pens, notepaper and such like, lighting lamps without permission and setting the clock back to cover her lateness for a duty. Sometimes, it was alleged, she beat the schoolchildren without cause and stole their food. She repeatedly found excuses to talk with externs (people who were not members of the order), and she rose early in the morning, again 'without permission,' to go into the garden to look at birds' nests.

For these infringements she was eventually demoted from the convent school and set to work in the laundry. She was, said her counsel, obliged to scrub floors, clean the hearth, and do every kind of menial work. On one occasion, as a penance, she was forced to wear a dust cloth over her head (she annoyed everybody by wearing it longer than required), on another to apologise for lateness by kissing the floor. During her final seven months at Anlaby Road, after she had refused to leave the convent of her own accord, she was restricted to a single room, a bed with too few blankets, and condemned to complete silence. Letters were withheld from her and those she wrote were not

forwarded. Her food, in the end the leavings of others, was not fit to eat.

The trial, lasting twenty days, was packed with spectators throughout and fully reported in The Times and in Hull's local newspapers. Hundreds were unable to get into the court, and the majority of spectators, were plainly sympathetic to Mary Saurin on account of the treatment she had received, and cheered her on arrival. Spectators in the court cheered and applauded when she or her counsel made a particularly telling point. The Times also sided with the plaintiff, referring to her as the 'poor lady' (68).

Mary Saurin was suing the convent for £5,000 damages, but the jury, after two and a half hours deliberation, found in favour of the defendants on the counts of assault and imprisonment, and for the plaintiff on the counts of libel and conspiracy. The damages were reduced from £5,000 to £500, including the dowry of £300 which the convent had promised to return. Actual damages of £200 was virtually a victory for the defendants. The crowd outside Westminster Hall cheered loudly when the details were announced, prompting one London newspaper, the Express, to ask where were the convent sympathizers now? Saurin withdrew to a convent on the Continent as a parlour boarder, but the nuns in Hull flourished more after the case than they ever had done before. They numbered fourteen in 1869; they were forty a little over ten years later. The 400 school children under their charge increased to 2,500; there were fourteen certificated teachers, many non-certificated, and over 40 pupil teachers (69). A painful experience in the glare of publicity, which might have meant the end of the order in Hull, led on instead to a renaissance.

This extraordinary case was unique in that it was not the traditional story beloved of Protestants, in

which a young girl is walled up in a convent against her will. There were cases of that kind in Belgium and Ireland currently before the public. In the latter example a minor was being held against her will (70). In the Hull Convent Case, as the local newspapers called it, Mary Saurin wanted to remain a nun, did not leave the convent of her own free will but was, in her own words, 'expelled and driven disgraced and degraded upon the world' (71).

The case affords an opportunity to assess the state of anti-Catholic feeling in Hull at the time. Although the trial was reported in great detail, it was evident that anti-Catholic sentiment in 1869 had lost the virulence of the period of 1828-50. Public interest, according to one newspaper, was beginning to wane by the end of the second week (72), and the leader writer had already attempted to keep it going with a salacious revelation of 'a very serious charge of impropriety of conduct,' said to be contained in the written statements of the Bishop of Beverley's Commission of Enquiry into Mary Saurin's conduct. It was alleged that she had been in the habit of trying to attract the attention of a certain priest, Father John Motler, assistant at St Charles' Church, and that becoming greatly excited when he was in the house, she threw herself on her knees beside him and 'asked him to go with her' (73). Motler was not called to give evidence at the trial, and Saurin said that she had simply told him on one occasion that lunch was ready (74).

The comments back in Hull were anti-conventual rather than anti-Catholic, as they had been in earlier times. They veered between assertions of the 'unnaturalness' of convent life and expressions of satisfaction that the revelation of disorder and uncharitableness had proved what people had always

thought (75). A letter to the editor complained at the suppression of natural affections; the inmates, the writer continued, became tools and chattels of a foreign power. Fear of 'foreigners' could still be a disadvantage to Catholics, and the same writer hoped no more convents would be allowed to be built in England (76). There was, however, little or no discussion reported in Hull except what newspapers had with themselves. The Hull Times took up the one letter it printed and added in sneering tones that although the case had appeared to involve merely 'women's squabbles' which took the time of eminent and busy people for twenty days, its value lay in the glimpse into the interior of a convent, 'which we have long hoped for, but never before seen' (77). Not knowing what went on was at the root of much prejudice and misunderstanding. Convents, said another commentator, convinced of the virtues of the Victorian municipal approach, should be 'subject to the wholesome and purifying influence of Government inspection' (78).

Once the case was concluded it was soon forgotten; there was little capital to be made from it. The 'great political event of the week' seven days later was the introduction of Gladstone's Irish Church Bill (79). There was plenty in that to interest and gladden Nonconformist hearts, with its talk of disestablishment and disendowment.

On the eve of the First Vatican Council, a generation was growing up in Hull to whom the small Roman Catholic community, though strange, even foreign, was accepted. The settlement of 1689 and the potential dangers of 1789, the very stuff of life to the Rev. John King and his friends, meant little to the rising generation. The fears and alarms of 1829 and 1850 were also passing into history. Catholicism would never again appear to be so fearsome in Hull.

Another possible reason for the apparent acceptance of Catholicism was the town's growing reputation of indifference towards organized religion, including Catholics themselves. In a series of articles in 1872 in The Nation, an Irish nationalist weekly published in London, under the title 'The Irish in England,' by Hugh Heinrick, Hull was singled out as the town in England where the largest proportion of the Irish population were fallen and lost.

Hull is the only town I have known where whole families have separated themselves in idea and sentiment from their kindred, and, renegades to Faith and Fatherland, have ranged themselves on the side of England and infidelity. The general condition of the town is low, and the condition of the Irish population corresponds with its surroundings. (80).

Heinrick reckoned the Irish population in Hull to be between 5,000 and 6,000, between 4 and 5 per cent of the town's total population.

The Nation may have been right about the 'low' condition of the Irish in Hull, but for those who remained faithful, an astonishing reminder of the ultramontane triumphalism associated with Cardinal Vaughan's archiepiscopate at Westminster (1892-1903), can still be seen in the interior of St Charles' Church. When it was erected in 1829, many were displeased at the barnlike baldness of the building. In 1834-5, the architect J.J.Scholes added a Corinthian porch, side doorways, and various Italian Renaissance embellishments. At the same time, four Ionic half-columns at the sanctuary end carried a rich entablature and a spectacular sculptured group of the Trinity, in the style of Austrian Baroque. These, and a new priest's house, cost over £1,300 (81).

Today's striking and elaborate interior was the

work of the local architects Smith, Brodrick, and Lowther in 1894. They employed the German artist Heinrich Immenkamp, then living in Hull. His work is a highly dramatic version of the lavish late Rococo settings of central and southern Germany. The church was given a new ceiling and new aisles, and the sculptured Trinity is poised over the altar, with a dove looking down through dazzling rays of light on a globe set among billowing banks of cloud. There are numerous elaborate paintings and close on fifty statues, the largest concentration set around the sanctuary walls (82). The drama of High Mass with vestments, incense and candles in such overwhelming surroundings, even if one were poor in this world's goods and part of a minority religious group in Hull, was evidence enough that one belonged to the greatest Church in Christendom.



St Charles Catholic Church

Part II

TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC MANNERS

It was important to educate the poor for the sake of serious religion and to ensure an improvement in public manners. Dissenters might doubt whether Anglican Evangelicals really believed that 'the Bible alone' was the religion of Protestants, but both sides believed that the poor should be sufficiently educated to be able to read the sacred text for themselves. At the same time education would elevate public morality. Respectable people never ceased to be impressed, when it was drawn to their attention, that the inmates of Hull gaol were generally ignorant and uneducated and that it was an exception for an educated person to serve a prison sentence.

Education, it followed, would induce both morality and attendance at Church services. The point of building a church in a 'populous area,' as Thomas Dikes observed, was to plant a Christian, civilizing influence among its people. Once they were persuaded to accept the Church's ministrations and to attend its services, then Sunday would become a day of quiet contemplation and withdrawal from the hectic work-a-day world. Shops and public houses must be closed on Sundays. Travel and entertainment must be discouraged, lest they disturbed the sabbath calm.

Certain notorious evils, particularly drunkenness and sexual immorality, must be stamped out. Hence the temperance movement, also supported by many outside organized religion and the attempt, undertaken mostly by the clergy, to suppress prostitution.

Chapter Eight

EDUCATING THE POOR

The provision of elementary education disclosed many of the most serious tensions between religion and social order in nineteenth-century England. An expanding population, the growth of industrial towns and the spread of new ideas, produced deep uncertainties which, paradoxically, found expression in a bitter exchange of opposing certainties. The rising urban working class undermined an hitherto unquestioned acceptance of rural England's social structures, where the Established Church was the dominant expression of religion and a partner in the maintenance of the status quo. These factors, combined with the impact of French political radicalism on English society, made the 1790s an historic turning point (1).

Evangelicals saw themselves as the spiritual support of the old order. Dissenters, and later Primitive Methodists, on the other hand were sympathetic towards radical politics as a means of breaking the Established Church's monopoly of religious, political and educational privileges. Wesleyans, especially Hull Wesleyans, were long regarded by themselves and others as closely associated with the Established Church, but disputes over education resolved their ambivalent allegiance as the nineteenth century progressed. Eventually the battle lines over education were clearly drawn between the Church of England on one side and all Nonconformity on the other.

The gradual change from an agricultural to an

industrial economy introduced a wide range of new ideas into social thinking; Adam Smith's political economy and Jeremy Bentham's utilitarian philosophy were among the most notable in the first half of the nineteenth century. For some Evangelicals, like J.B. Sumner (1780-1862), Bishop of Chester, Archbishop of Canterbury, Smith's economic doctrines became synonymous with the will of God (2). Others, like the Tractarian Henry Phillpotts (1778-1869), Bishop of Exeter, had no faith in the lessons of political economy. Phillpotts was an extreme example of those who were increasingly fearful of the growing industrial lower class. The future looked grim, he said, for a nation of 'irreligious savages,' and he predicted a convulsive breakdown of social order (3). Evangelicalism was in some respects, however, the religious counterpart of Bentham's ideas, but with different aims and objectives. Far from seeking to adapt people to the conditions of modern commercial life, Evangelical preachers warned them against its social and moral dangers and strove to reinforce accepted religious beliefs and codes of behaviour. The Church was stirred to attempt the education of an illiterate population in the interests of serious religion and a threatened social order.

The common interests of religious and social stability were the points around which the denominations gathered. The widely accepted, cure-all character of education in the minds of the respectable, as a response to nineteenth-century social conditions, was common ground for religious people despite political and doctrinal differences. Education, it was believed, was the solution to widespread irreligion among the lower orders and an antidote to crime and disaffection, especially among the young in the streets and alleys of industrial towns, cut off from the traditional restraints of village life. The education

of the poor began as a private charity, pioneered by Evangelicals, and in spite of government grants from the 1830s onwards, did not become a public service until 1870. The traditional enmity between Established and Dissenting Churches had by then hardened into outright hostility, and their mutual aversion revolved round the task of educating the poor and dangerous classes. The Church looked to the Tory party; Chapel to the Liberals, an alliance which continued until the Liberals were eclipsed by the Labour party in the twentieth century.

Early years in Hull

Hull Grammar School, a century after its foundation, was endowed in 1479 by John Alcock, Bishop of Worcester and a native of Hull. This was the school where Joseph Milner became headmaster in 1767. A few other private schools offered elementary or vocational education but virtually no record remains. Charity Hall was a publicly-provided school in the Whitefriargate poorhouse, opened in 1690 to teach poor children a trade, and thereby reduce begging and vagrancy (4). About forty boys and girls, financed by voluntary subscriptions, were boarded and clothed, catechised and taught reading, writing and spinning. At the end of the eighteenth century adult paupers were accommodated in the same building, the result of indoor relief being substituted for outdoor, and the only teacher for about eighty children was a drunken pauper. Boys usually went to sea. Girls, more difficult to place in Hull, often ended up in the linen mills of the West Riding (5).

There were a number of clerical and lay initiatives to educate the poor in the eighteenth century. The Rev. William Mason, vicar of Holy Trinity, assisted by

a group of local tradesmen, founded the Vicar's School in 1730, rebuilt and enlarged by the Rev. Thomas Clarke, Wilberforce's brother-in-law in 1792, to take sixty boys for three years, nominated by himself. In 1753 Alderman William Cogan founded and endowed a Charity School in Salthouse Lane for twenty poor girls, the daughters of respectable people 'who would not sell ale or spiritous liquors or receive weekly allowances or ask alms, or let their children beg.' The school later provided marriage dowries for former pupils (6). Trinity House established a marine school in 1786 to train ship's officers for Hull's merchant fleet. . Thirty-six boys were taught writing, arithmentic and navigation. Tuition was free so long as boys were apprenticed to a master mariner (7). Practical religion was taught in a specially constructed loft in Holy Trinity Church.

Middle-Class Philanthropy

Education still affected only a small minority, a few hundreds in a population of over 20,000 by the mid-1780s, and lasted no more than three years, but a number of influences started to change the educational scene in Hull. Its population began to increase rapidly, trade was expanding and with it the numbers and wealth of the middle class; part of this wealth found its way into educational initiatives. Among the earliest pioneers in such ventures were a small group of professional people, John Alderson, the town's leading physician, the solicitors Charles Frost and John Broadly, the latter a member of a long-established banking and merchant family, Charles Lutwidge, the collector of customs, and George Lee, Unitarian minister and subsequently editor of the Hull Rockingham.

Middle-class charity provided the means to educate the poor. Four Sunday schools for boys and three spinning schools for girls were opened in 1786; there were 34 girls at each school in 1798 (8). A subscription charity school for boys and girls was opened in 1787 in Carr Street, Sculcoates (9). Children were taught the three Rs and tested in spelling every evening. They attended on Sundays to be taught the Church Catechism, and were appointed weekly tasks in the Psalms or New Testament once they could read; the younger children had to learn hymns. They assembled on Sunday evenings at half past five to be tested on their tasks, having already attended the school at nine o'clock on Sunday morning for instruction respecting Sabbath observance and public worship. Morals, cleanliness and regular attendance were stressed and parents undertook that their children, once admitted, would attend for not less than three years. School hours were nine o'clock until twelve and from half past one until half past four. The names of about 80 local notabilities who agreed to be annual subscribers were printed at the bottom of the list of Rules and Orders. John Alderson and the Rev. Thomas Dikes were among them and there were many well-known merchants' names.

A broadsheet of eight Rules for Hull Sunday Schools, 'begun (in 1800) by some persons who had long lamented the prevailing ignorance and immorality of the children of the poor,' not only describes the purpose of education from the point of view the benefactors, but also sheds light on the nature of the education deemed necessary for the poor and, in its preamble, equates ignorance with immorality, even among the very young (10). Children had to be over six years of age. The schools opened and concluded with singing and prayer. Pupils (men taught boys and women girls in

separate rooms), were taught to read the Bible and learned by heart the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments. Teachers were not paid, but had to be competent and of good moral character. Parents were required to send their children to school clean and in good time. Any child who was consistently absent would be dismissed. The children, at least those who were capable of farther (sic) instruction, went to school again on Sunday evening at six o'clock to hear the Bible read and explained.

Mrs Lutwidge, the wife of Charles Lutwidge, and grandmother of Lewis Carroll (the Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson), became a leading figure in the new movement, and on her initiative in 1806 the Hull spinning schools were replaced by day schools for boys and girls, based on Joseph Lancaster's system where larger numbers could be taught through the use of monitors (11). Mrs Lutwidge also founded a Servants' School for older girls who were boarded, clothed, and taught housework and reading. In 1818 the Trustees and Subscribers of the Sculcoates School decided to adopt the National System (12).

National Schools and British Schools

It became apparent, as England's industrial towns grew, that more teachers would be required than could be afforded. Two men, independently of each other, solved the problem by the use of 'pupil-teachers,' whereby the older scholars instructed the younger ones. Dr Andrew Bell, an army chaplain in India, thought of the idea in 1789; a few years later Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, started a school in London based on the same method. Each man claimed to be the inventor of the system and considerable rivalry grew up between them. The quarrel soon became involved with religion. Bell,

an Anglican clergyman, was for Church teaching and the Church Catechism; Lancaster, a Quaker, believed in the non-sectarian teaching of 'general Christian principles and them alone' (13).

The two rival systems of elementary education grew up side by side, guaranteed to increase the antagonism between Nonconformity and the Established Church. The Royal Lancastrian Society (later the British and Foreign School Society) was founded in 1808, and the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church in 1811. The two societies, supplemented by private enterprise, provided what education there was to be had in Hull up to 1870.

Hull's Evangelical clergy were at first slow to take note of an agency which was not of purely Evangelical origin so, the Sculcoates Schools were managed by two committees of 'gentlemen' for the boys and 'ladies' for the girls. A practice was begun which was to be a bone of contention for more than a century; Dissenters were allowed to attend their own place of worship so long as they brought a certificate from their parents, but it is not clear whether this excused them from learning the catechism as well.

Attendance was enforced by a fine of a halfpenny for each day's absence, double on Sunday. Hours were long and holidays were short, a week at Whitsun and a week at Christmas, a day for the King's birthday and 11 and 12 October at Hull Fair. The longest break was a fortnight at harvest time to allow the children to glean in the cornfields, still near at hand in a town which had only spilled beyond its medieval walls in the previous thirty years.

Other schools later affiliated to the National Society and received grants towards the reduction of their debt (14). Even the Corporation, although it

changed its mind by mid-century, subscribed £5 a year towards the National Schools (15). Evangelicals now came to make full use of the National Society and the first new building erected under its auspices dates from the short but vigorous ministry of Henry Venn at Drypool (1827-34) (16).

The increase in the number of pupils, especially boys, was continuous; the girls were more readily kept at home to help their mothers. Up to 1827, 271 boys and 111 girls were admitted, but there was a rapid turn-over. Of 429 boys admitted in January 1827, 301 had left by March, but the school still contained 409; more than could be conveniently accommodated. In the same period 134 girls were admitted and 124 left, but the school could have easily contained half as many again of the 121 who remained (17). The philanthropic Daniel Sykes M.P. launched a subscription fund which resulted in the opening of an infant school in Eastcheap and another in High Street which later became Church schools in St Stephen's and St Mary's parishes (18).

Before 1870 there were twelve National Schools in Hull, most of them in the the ever-growing new ecclesiastical districts. The annual examinations were a time for local notabilities to troop into the schools and take note of the progress made over the year. A deputation of ladies and gentlemen, clergy and members of the District Society expressed themselves highly gratified with the progress of the pupils of Salthouse Lane School in 1828 (19). On a similar occasion 353 children at Drypool were declared to have shown 'exemplary conduct' (20), the principle objective of this scheme of education, vital for social cohesion, for the maintenance of a hierarchical society and the practice of vital religion. The children were always shown to have made 'progress' to the visitors by

performing tasks which were tailored to their individual capabilities. Such results, however, were reassuring, and a stark contrast with life in the courts and alleys of the town where the only education available was in crime and vagrancy.

Identical events with similar expectations took place in British Schools. The annual examination at the school on Dock Green in 1838 was presided over by the Mayor, George Cookman, a magistrate. The instruction which the children received, he said, prepared them for filling respectable situations in life in a proper manner. He advised them to avoid the company of 'bad boys' and to behave well to their parents and other relations, and although he saw no harm in play and other amusements, the Mayor advised them to derive their chief amusement from works of history and other good books, above all from the scriptures which would give them wisdom and prepare them 'for removing from this world to a happier' (21).

The Mayor's recommendations were ambitious for the Dock Green area, an open piece of waste ground where Railway Dock was built in 1846, adjacent to the new burial ground and Hull's gaol, a very poor working-class area served by St James's Church. The ready availability of works of history and other good books, even the Bible, in such a place was doubtful. Cookman's address was an exposition of the Evangelical good life, as applied to the poor by the comfortably-off in the early years of the new Poor Law era. The condition of the poor in the rapidly expanding industrial areas raised new and worrying problems for those in authority in civil and religious life, especially if the laws of Political Economy were equated with the laws of God. Cookman's consoling reminder of a happier world to come, to those whose lives were likely to be shorter than most other

citizens, has echoes of Malthus's theories as interpreted by leading Evangelicals like J.B.Sumner (22).

The Civilizing Power of Education

A concern for the education of the poor stemmed from social and political motives, as well as from religious convictions. All Protestant Churches wanted children to have sufficient education to be able to read the Bible, but the Church of England saw education as a civilizing process to ensure the stability of society and an acceptance of the Establishment. Education was the antidote to religious and social radicalism; from a religious point of view it would, it was hoped, redirect those children into the Church whose parents were beyond its reach. Dissenters, naturally, had reservations about both religious and political establishments.

Merchants and manufacturers had an interest in educating the poor for the sake of social stability; the problem was that it sometimes gave the poor ideas above their station, and they no longer remained content with a life of drudgery while others benefited from their poorly paid labours. It was clear, nevertheless, that ignorance and poverty were inimical to a stable society and that they inculcated criminal habits. Thus, churchmen and employers agreed, education was the answer, so long as they remained alert to the danger of going too far and increasing discontent by educating people above their station. The case of St Mark's National Schools, opened in 1843, satisfied the middle class that they were on the right course. The schools were in a grim area called the Groves, where the cotton and flax mills were established. The schools, it was felt, served a

desirable social role. The sight of 200 well-behaved children on an outing to the Zoological Gardens, paid for by a 'gentleman connected with St Mark's Church,' was the answer to a question often asked by the respectable in Hull, 'Can anything good come out of the Groves?' (23).

Was Education Effective?

The Factory Commission conducted an enquiry in 1834 into the effectiveness of education to impart basic reading abilities in the two northern counties where the chief manufacturing and commercial districts were to be found (24). A random enquiry in Yorkshire factories indicated that 15 per cent could not read and 52 per cent could not write. The same investigation found matters slightly worse in Lancashire with 17 per cent unable to read and 62 per cent unable to write.

Ten years, later Archdeacon Robert Wilberforce chaired a meeting of the local board for education, appointed by the York Diocesan Board, to enquire into the state of education in Hull. There was a good representation of Evangelical clergy, Dikes, King and John Deck, vicar of St Stephen's, and a number of prominent laymen, including Joseph Robinson Pease the ex-Unitarian banker and industrialist whose father, like others, had migrated to the Established Church when he grew wealthy, and Avison Terry the Evangelical Baltic merchant, twice past Mayor of Hull and a close friend of Dikes.

The combined population of Hull, Sculcoates, Drypool and Cottingham at that time was 70,578, and the proportion of children who ought to be in day schools, reckoned by the meeting at one eighth of the total population, was 8,822. Those attending Sunday Schools, the meeting decided, should be one sixth of the

population, 11,163. In fact there were only 2,571 pupils in day schools open to the clergy's inspection and 3,813 in the Sunday Schools which they controlled, a deficiency of 6,251 day scholars and 7,949 Sunday School children. The Church of England, the meeting's calculations showed, had direct influence over only one third of Hull's children.

An astonishing 4,714 children attended private day schools, 355 British Schools, and 440 Wesleyan and Dissenting Schools. The number attending Nonconformist Sunday Schools was about the same as in the Church of England, 3,737. According to the board's formula of one eighth and one sixth, a large number of children in Hull were not touched by any Sunday School, 3,613; but only a small proportion, 742, were outside the day schools (25). The actual situation may have been worse than it seemed because the proportion of children of school age was most likely higher than the board allowed.

Other matters, however, were unarguably bad. Many teachers were 'lamentably deficient in almost every respect' and children were taken from school at an average age of nine years and 7 months, even earlier in the Groves area where the Flax and Cotton Mills employed younger children than any other business in Hull. Two weaknesses, both difficult to overcome, were retarding the progress of elementary education, a sad lack of competent teachers and the urgent necessity for children to contribute to the family income at the earliest possible age.

When part of the board's report was republished three years later, it drew attention to the number of children still being educated in dame schools. They equalled those of the Established Church, about a quarter of the child population in each case. Not only were many receiving no education at all, but for too

high a proportion of those who were it was of little or no value. Dame schools were no more than places where working parents took their children to be minded. The 'dames' were quite unfitted for their alleged duties, and many people felt there was a risk of disease in the 'close atmosphere' of the classrooms (26).

Doubts were expressed about the zeal of the local clergy for this cause, and it was noticed in the press that King, Knight and Scott did not give their support to government plans to extend education to all the poor (27). There was, however, progress in some National Schools in the town. New buildings and extensions to old ones were regularly undertaken, and their opening reported, accompanied by the familiar list of Evangelical duties which education sought to inculcate. Parents were urged to pay great attention to the companions with whom their children associated and what books they read. The poor were told to restrain their daughters' love of dress and to make sure their children were regular and punctual at school (28).

The Wesleyan Methodists were also active. The foundation stone of Great Thornton Street Wesleyan Day School was laid on land given by Thomas Holmes, the prosperous tanner with an elegant mansion in Anlaby Road. The address given on this occasion by the Wesleyan minister, the Rev. Charles Preston, made clear that a different kind of education from that at the National Schools would be offered in the Wesleyan School. It would not be sectarian, nor would children have to learn the Catechism, although the Wesleyan Catechism and the Bible would be taught. The school day would begin and end with an act of worship, but the children would not be obliged to attend either the Wesleyan Sunday School or the Wesleyan Chapel. The school, said Preston, was for the children of the poor in the neighbourhood, regardless of denomination (29).

Ragged Schools

Below the more or less respectable poor was a growing destitute, or near-destitute underclass, unreached by the National and British Schools. The problems of this class also, it was generally believed, would only be relieved by education. The observed connection between ignorance and crime was supported by the frequently published statistics which linked the two. 9,691 persons out of 30,349 committed for trial in England and Wales in 1848 could neither read nor write. 17,111 could only read and write imperfectly, 2,984 could read and write well, but only 81 had received 'a superiour education' (30). It seemed obvious that education was the answer to both poverty and crime, and that provision ought to be made to prevent pauper children from becoming tomorrow's criminal classes. This work was pioneered by the Ragged School movement, begun in the early 1840s and taken up by the prominent Evangelical philanthropist Lord Shaftsbury, who was influential in forming the Ragged School Union in 1844. A subscription list was opened in 1849 to provide a Ragged School for Hull.

Among its early supporters were John Lee Smith, a wholesale grocer, a leading reformer and immediate past Mayor of Hull, and Thomas Palmer, the current Mayor and a magistrate. Both men were members of the first reformed Corporation. Smith's religious affiliation is not known, but Thomas Palmer was decribed by E.F.Collins, editor of the Advertiser, as 'a Churchman who was wholly divested of national and religious prejudices' (31). Palmer chaired the first annual meeting of subscribers at which seventy small boys and girls, no longer ragged, sat in two rows on the platform to sing a hymn (32).

The Hull Ragged and Industrial School seemed to be the long-term answer to the problems of destitution and

crime, so at first it was widely supported. Many clergy and Nonconformist ministers attended its annual meetings and the Rev. John Deck, Evangelical vicar of St Stephen's, was its chaplain, his principal duty being a Sunday afternoon lecture. Industrial training and scriptural education for children of the destitute, often known as the dangerous classes, were seen as objectives of the first importance on social, political and religious grounds (33). Children of this class had never been to school and could not attend even a free school if no food was provided. They were for the most part 'vagrants and mendicants' who had never entered a church or chapel. To ensure that no child just above destitution took advantage of the limited resources (the destitute in Hull would soon have overwhelmed the Ragged School), a visiting agent and town missionary was appointed to make sure that only children of the destitute were admitted to the Ragged School.

In spite of these efforts, however, large numbers of street beggars, often on behalf of 'dissolute' parents continued to beg unabated. The Ragged School made little impact on this situation, nor on the general lack of education in the town. Only 90 boys and 44 girls attended. The school concentrated on the three Rs, and a few boys were trained in the rudiments of tailoring, shoe-making, mat-making, book-binding, gardening and simple domestic jobs. Girls made frocks and pinafores, learned a little knitting and sewing, while a few advanced girls were employed in domestic duties in the school's kitchen and scullery. In 1852 only five boys obtained work and 31 pupils left 'for various reasons,' leaving 54 at the time on the annual report (34).

The Hull Ragged School reached the peak of its usefulness and popularity in the mid 1850s. Not that it was universally popular, especially with the

Corporation, always parsimonious where education was concerned. An application for a grant of £100 was turned down on the grounds that other schools might make similar demands. The Corporation overlooked the fact that the Ragged School was saving the town money by taking destitute children off the streets (35), and with 90 boys and 76 girls on the books in 1855 needed larger premises. Plans were drawn up for a new building, to include dormitories for the most needy, and put before the Corporation's Council on Education. In support were local clergy and ministers with other prominent citizens, including Thomas Palmer, John Leng, the newspaper proprietor, and Bethel Jacobs, a wealthy goldsmith and jeweller with a business in Whitefriargate and a fine house in George Street. Lord Shaftesbury, who laid the foundation stone, remarked that this was a cause in which Church of England and Dissenting ministers could work together. King and Deck were present, and a prayer was said by the Rev. James Sibree, Independent minister of Salem Chapel in Cogan Street and first chaplain of the Hull municipal cemetery (36). In fact, clergy and ministers confined themselves largely to attending the annual meeting rather than serving on the committee.

Enthusiasm for Ragged Schools, however, was already beginning to wane in Hull. It was now possible to send boys to Reformatory School without previous imprisonment; consequently it was felt that pauperism would increase if the community saddled itself with the maintenance of a school which encouraged parents to neglect their children. The fear of helping the undeserving poor was a constant worry to the better-off. Charitable contributions to both causes, it was feared, would further weaken parental responsibility. Within a few months of Lord Shaftesbury laying the foundation stone, ideas were being canvassed for

converting the building into a hospital.

Hull's citizens, however, had underestimated the longevity of the consequences of destitution among them, which Ragged Schools aimed to combat; Hull's Ragged School had many years to run. The new building (in Marlborough Terrace), later known as the Truant School for boys, did not close until 1909. A similar school for girls in Park Avenue, a fashionable Victorian suburb, was closed at late as 1920 (37).

Secular Education

All classes in Hull in the 1850s were convinced of the need to educate the poor but some, including the poor themselves, began to look to the government rather than to the churches to provide it. About five hundred anonymous 'Working Men of Hull' sent a petition to the Mayor asking him to call a public meeting in support of William Fox's Bill for promoting secular and non-sectarian education (38). The Mayor, Thomas Palmer, acted on the petition, and on the night of the meeting was joined on the platform by two Dissenting ministers, the Rev. Thomas Stratten of Fish Street Independent Chapel and the Rev. John Pulsford of South Street Baptist Chapel, but no Anglican clergy. Among the leading citizens supporting the Mayor were Henry Blundell, the paint manufacturer, John Foster, president of Trinity House, E.F. Collins of the Advertiser, William Stephenson, owner of the liberal and Nonconformist Hull News, a barrister named Hunter and Theophilus Carrick, who was there in his capacity as a school teacher, but happened also to be vicar's warden at St James's Church.

Fox's Bill gave little comfort to the clergy of the Established Church; school inspectors were to report to the Privy Council on the state of education in every

parish, and if the present schools were unable to provide secular education for the whole population (everybody knew they could not), then the local inhabitants were to appoint an education committee which would make up the deficiency by establishing schools paid for by a school rate. The schools were to provide free, secular education, but time would be allowed for instruction in the form of religion approved by parents. A motion in support of the Bill was carried without a dissentient voice.

The churches were themselves to blame for education slipping out of religious control. The Mayor's public meeting dwelt on the fissiparous nature of education provided by religious bodies. The clergy offered a 'church' education, based on the Catechism, which emphasised the need for loyalty to the current religious and political establishments. Dissenters offered a broad religious and moral education based on the principle of religious freedom, leaving 'sectarian' matters to parental choice. Wesleyans were nearer to the Dissenting position, but Church and Dissent combined could not cope with the rising numbers of children. Questions were raised at the meeting about the paucity of education received by those who attended even the best schools. Children were equipped to fill nothing more than the most menial jobs.

There was abundant evidence that many children were missed out altogether while others spent an inadequate amount of time at school. A Church of England town missionary visited 11,981 families in the St James district and found 2,279 children between two and ten years old, 1,198 boys and 1,081 girls, but the number up to fourteen years old attending school was only 957 out of about 3,000 children. Out of 200 children at Salhouse Lane, Hull's oldest National School, 60 per cent attended for less than a year and only 25 per cent

attended for two years. Boys remained at school on average a year and four months. At St James's School the average age of the boys was less than nine years, but matters were even worse at the long-established Vicar's School where the average age at admission was seven and the boys left after about a year (39).

Such inadequate education resulted in a lack of preparedness for employment. Out of 194 boys leaving Salthouse Lane School in the course of the year, none went as an apprentices, 23 became errand boys, 38 were needed to help their parents at home, 66 left for no reason, and 14 stayed away because their parents were unable to pay the quarterly fees. There was a similar story at St James' School where within six months, 34 left for irregular attendance, 21 because their parents could not pay for them and 21 for unknown reasons.

Short periods of inadequate schooling were not a phenomenon peculiar to industrial towns. The valuable but neglected writing of Mary Simpson in the 1860s and 70s described her voluntary efforts to create Sunday and evening classes in the isolated Wolds country of the East Riding (40). For many years she laboured to bring the elements of education to the farm lads and ploughboys who, depending on the size of the farm, lived together in groups of five to fourteen. The youths worked long and tiring hours, moving each Martinmas to a new employer who would be just as unconcerned about their ignorance as the last. If they and their parents emmigrated to Hull in search of a better life, as many did, they were already conditioned to regard education as intermittent, short-term, and compounded by the necessity of contributing to the family income as early as possible.

Poverty, Ignorance and Crime

The national correlation of crime with the lack of education was also observed in Hull. Among those taken into custody in 1849 only two had received 'superior instruction;' 1,031 could neither read nor write and only 493 could read and write well; 1,347 could read only, or read and write imperfectly, and this 'wretchedly superficial education' seemed to be on the increase (41).

The majority of criminals were not only ill-educated; they were also very young. 53 per cent of the 30,349 criminals committed in England in 1848 were under the age of 25. Private efforts to educate the masses, coupled with large grants from the government, had failed to solve the problem. The number of poor children attending school in Hull would have doubled if education had been provided free of charge. Some thought this was too expensive, but the costs of crime, imprisonment and pauperism in Hull were approaching £40,000 at mid-century in a population of almost 80,000. The moral, and therefore better-off, classes in Hull were together taxed at £200 a week for the punishment of immorality, and £490 a week to maintain paupers.

Committing young people to prison did more harm than good. Prisons were 'schools where wickedness was practised and taught.' A correspondent, signing himself 'Statist,' suggested that gaols and workhouses should be run on a secular basis, supported by local rates and managed by local boards. E.F.Collins, clergy and ministers were still convinced of the importance of religious teaching, Collins underlining the need for non-sectarian education. Half the labouring poor could neither read nor write, he continued in an editorial, and criminal returns showed that 90 per cent had not received enough education to read the Lord's Prayer.

The voluntary principle, he said, had utterly failed (42). The initiative, nevertheless, remained with voluntary efforts for another twenty years, while the belief grew in all quarters that education was the solution to the nation's moral and social problems.

The cause of popular education was no longer a matter of dispute, declared James Harrison, the Town Clerk's assistant in 1852. He was addressing a meeting in aid of Sculcoates National and Sunday Schools and was of the opinion that things were improving all round in Hull, but his assertion that food was cheaper and the houses of the poor more spacious and healthy was in sharp contrast to the bitter criticism of appalling housing and rapacious landlords made by Sir Henry Cooper, Hull's leading physician (43). Harrison was on firmer ground when he deplored the increase in crime which attended the increase in national wealth, but he did not connect it with the relative worsening in the condition of the poor. He joined the chorus of those who looked to education alone to put things right, what he called 'training the minds of the rising generation' (44).

There were 293 pauper children, aged three to fifteen in Hull in 1852 who, attending no school of any kind, were surrounded by influences which could only confirm them in criminal habits. Here, said the Board of Guardians, were enough seeds of evil to fill half the prisons of Yorkshire (45). The complete returns show 85 pauper children in work between the ages of ten and fifteen, but it would be work of the most menial kind and short term (Appendix IV).

A quarterly report from the chaplain of Hull Gaol, the Rev. James Selkirk, confirmed that the largest proportion of crime was committed by those under 21 years of age. 137 males and 29 females were committed in the quarter ending 30 March 1853. 67 males and six

females were under twenty; 58 males and 22 females were between 20 and 40; only 12 males and one female were over 40. 37 males and one female were under seventeen. The youngest prisoner was ten and the oldest 71. Lack of education was again noted as the largest single factor, and thus the explanation of crime. Only one prisoner was a man of 'superior education.' 49 males and 17 females were totally uninstructed; 63 males and 11 females could read and write 'imperfectly.' A forlorn attempt was made to instil some basic education among prisoners, but it was an absolute minimum because many were in and out of gaol on short sentences of only a few days or weeks. Very few mastered even the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic. The prison matron taught females prisoners every afternoon except Saturday, but not all attended. When they first went to the prison school nearly all were ignorant even of the alphabet.

The religious affiliation of prisoners was revealing, in the light of Evangelical attempts to improve public manners. Anglicans and Catholics were more prone to crime than Nonconformists. At the time of the 1851 census the Church of England had only half the attendance of combined Nonconformity, and Catholics about an eighth the number of Anglicans, but of prisoners committed to Hull Gaol, members of the Church of England and the Catholic Church outnumbered others by about four to one. It was rare for a prisoner to declare no religious allegiance of any kind, yet Selkirk found many to be 'totally ignorant and utterly without religious principles.' Others had not attended a place of worship for several years, and during the whole of that time had been living a life of crime of some kind.

Selkirk gave examples of how early in life the habit of crime could be acquired. Charles F, 22, the

son of 'respectable' parents, with a good education, had attended Sunday School, generally went to chapel, had read the Bible all through, but began a life of crime at the age of fourteen in 1845. Since then he had been in and out of prison as a 'rogue and vagabond' for periods of one to several months, sometimes more than twice in a year. Clement F, only fourteen, had begun his career with three days at the age of nine for stealing apples. In February 1853 he was in prison for the fourth time, awaiting trial. Selkirk considered men under 21 to be the worst thieves, and women under 21 the worst prostitutes. Many disorderly drunkards of both sexes were equally young. Modern notions of 'teenage rebellion' were not a feature of mid-nineteenth century life, but the prison chaplain had observed that the age of 21 seemed to be a watershed after which, if safely negotiated, a young person's prospects of becoming respectable were greatly enhanced. It was then that Evangelical and other philanthropic organisations came into their own. Selkirk noticed that most regular attenders at the Mechanics' Institute, at school-room lectures, the Sailors' Institutes and other places where lectures were given, were over 21. Low public houses and inferior evening concerts, on the other hand, were usually frequented by shop apprentices, fisher boys and other youths mostly under 21 (46). Education was still the best hope for overcoming the lowest classes' propensity for crime and making them, even if poor, at least 'respectable.'

Sectarian vs Secular and more Controversy

Non-sectarian education, so-called, did not appeal at all to Hull's Evangelical clergy, and they could not understand why Anglican schools seemed sectarian to

Nonconformists. When a public meeting was held in support of unsectarian education, in the same month as the Ragged School meeting, no clergy from the Established Church were present, but there was wide support from Nonconformist representatives and others. The Rev Newman Hall and the Rev William M'Conkey, the Independent Methodist Minister, were on the platform with Thomas Palmer, Isaac Reckitt, the Quaker starch manufacturer, and E.F.Collins who spoke, as usual, in favour of compulsory education, paid for by a local rate. The feeling was that general education was the duty of Government while the Christian minister instructed the young in the Christian faith.

The Nonconformist distrust of sectarian education was strengthened by the contention that the churches could provide a complete education for only a small proportion of the nation (47). Even the Catholic schools could not cope with their own numbers after the Irish immigrations. In 1851 over 6,000 of Hull's inhabitants were Irish born (7 per cent of the population), and almost 1,400 of these were under twenty years of age (48). The H.M.I. report on the Canning Street schools regretted they were so small and urged Hull's Catholics to exert themselves to provide more and better accommodation for the children of their congregation (49).

The Churches were still the main providers of education but their differences hardened as time passed, making it impossible for them to act together. Inside the Established Church there was controversy between Evangelicals and Tractarians which came to a head when in 1853, between 200 and 300 Evangelical clergymen walked out of the National Society's annual meeting and formed a society of their own (50). The Church of England Education Society, as the new body was called, numbered the Earl of Shaftesbury and other

members of the nobility among its vice-presidents. Most Evangelical leaders and several MPs were appointed to the committee, chaired by the militantly anti-Catholic J.C.Colquhoun, lately a member of the National Society's General Committee. At least the new society did not compete with the National Society's school building programme. Through its grants towards teachers' training, salaries and books it was complementary to that work. It had begun, nevertheless, as a solemn protest against the National Society, said Lord Charles Russell at the annual meeting in 1855; the National Society was disdained for being chiefly concerned with bricks and mortar, whereas the Church of England Society boasted of 'finding living souls to work upon' (51).

The new society held its first meeting in Hull in the Jarratt Street public rooms on an evening in January 1854, when snow lay deep on the ground and the mails were late. The bad weather prevented the main speaker from arriving but there were about 200 present when the meeting began. The Mayor, Dr, now Sir Henry Cooper, an Anglican, took the chair and immediately stated his own preference for non-sectarian education. A Mr Baxter from Doncaster, a member of the deputation from the parent body, who had managed to arrive safely through the snow, then addressed the meeting at great length. He rehearsed the by now well known story of poverty and unsettled social habits which education was designed to eradicate. Nine-tenths of those in poverty and distress were in that state, said Baxter, because they lacked the 'settled social habits' which education would inculcate. Until twelve years ago, he continued, education relied on volutary effort. The National Society built schools but did not train teachers.

Evangelicals and all Churchmen became alarmed when the government decided not only to make building

grants, but to train teachers in its own training schools. It was feared that the religious element in education would be excluded. The perennial problem was that demand always outran supply. In spite of government grants and volutary efforts combined, money was always lacking. The Church of England had raised over £500,000, about five times as much as other churches, but an additional £2m was required to bring schools up to an effective standard. The National Society was itself to blame for the short-fall, asserted Baxter. It had never managed to raise more than £9,000 in any one year because 'it was not conducted according to the Protestant truth of the country;' accordingly it forfeited the public's full sympathy.

Tractarianism had not yet reached Hull itself, so it was especially tragic that the Protestant and Catholic rivalry which was to distract and weaken the Church for a century to come, should be ushered into Hull over the matter of education, an issue of concern to so many to whom theological disputes meant nothing. The long-term rivalry between Establishment and Dissent had already frustrated too much effort in a cause which attracted so much good will. Now the Church of England was about to import a new division of its own, which would further dissipate its energies.

The Church's training colleges were a bone of contention, especially St Mark's, Chelsea, which had come under Tractarian influence. To an Evangelical layman like Baxter, it was 'all singing and chanting,' and the Principal was suspected of Roman Catholic sympathies. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London when approached by fifty of the gentry were, he said, unable to take any action. The colleges seemed to be laws to themselves, so the Church of England Education Society was formed to resist the dire

influence of teachers trained in St Mark's College and similar places.

Hull's Evangelical clergy, with National Schools in their parishes, were alarmed at the danger to their own influence and authority if they employed teachers from such subversive institutions. John Scott of St Mary's proposed that a society be formed to promote national education on Protestant and Church of England principles, and John King seconded the motion. This seemed a little superfluous since a new society already existed. In the event, Theophilous Carrick, the school teacher and churchwarden of St James Church, seconded by the Rev John Deck of St Stephen's, proposed that a branch of the Church of England Education Society be formed in Hull (52). The suggestion was received with much enthusiasm, and gifts of money already contributed to the funds of the branch were announced. No recollection of what the society did remains, except for a passing reference in a local newspaper editorial two years later (53). This could be because its declared policy was not to provide buildings, and so no memorial was left behind; more likely it was another instance of the failure of pan-Evangelical union in Hull.

The 1870 Elementary Education Act

It was clear to everybody by the 1860s that the voluntary efforts of clergy, ministers and lay philanthropists, even when augmented by government grants, simply could not keep pace with the education of the poor. The population of Hull increased by 50,000 between 1831 and 1851. The population of the Municipal Borough grew from 84,690 in 1851 to 121,892 in 1871, that of the Parliamentary Borough (the same in 1851) to 123,408 by 1871 (54). The Newcastle report of 1861 revealed the shortcomings of popular education in

all parts of England and paved the way for Forster's Act of 1870.

The vicar of Holy Trinity at the time was Canon Richard England Brooke (1868-75). Few could remember any other vicar but Bromby, incumbent for seventy years from 1797 to 1867. Brooke was the first appointee of the Trustees who took over the patronage from the Corporation in 1835 and the first Evangelical vicar since Thomas Clarke (1783-1797), discounting Milner's few months before his death in 1797. He soon became the leading figure and an acknowledged authority on education from the point of view of the Established Church in Hull. Brooke believed in the denominational system, which made the greatest contribution to the education of the poor, and feared that Forster's Bill was an attempt to divorce religion from education (55). He expounded his views, reported with approval in the Hull Times, in a sermon in aid of the Vicar's School, preached before the Mayor and Corporation. Alderman Thomas Witty, the Mayor and a prominent Wesleyan builder, must have been heartened to read a different point of view in the Eastern Counties Herald (a Liberal paper and successor to the old Rockingham), expressing the feelings of Hull's large Nonconformist following. Brooke, said the Herald, seemed to think that no child should be taught to read, write and 'cipher' unaccompanied by a certain amount of sectarian theology. He made the mistake of confusing unsectarian with secular. The denominational schools, continued the Herald, had done much good in the past, but just as stage coaches had given way to the railways, so old methods of education had to make way for those more suitable to the times. Canon Brooke maintained that people did not value that which cost them nothing; in this instance schools supported by local rates (56).

The Rev.W.M. Statham of Wycliffe Congregational

Church, lately arrived in Hull, took the lead in support of unsectarian, free, compulsory education and was the first person in Hull to commend publicly the principles of the Birmingham Education League which proposed to replace voluntary denominational schools by rate-aided secular schools (57). In this way Nonconformity could rid itself of the disadvantages it had long suffered from the privileged position of the Established Church; but there was a strange lack of enthusiasm among Hull Nonconformists to join the battle for religious liberty being waged in other parts of England. The Herald was ashamed of them and asked, 'What are Liberals in Hull thinking about?' (58).

The initiative was still in Brooke's hands. He called a meeting to which he invited every clergyman and minister in the town, with representatives from their congregations, and put to them the compromise between sectarian and unsectarian outlooks, recently agreed at a meeting in Nottingham. This accepted Forster's proposals and added a conscience clause which would allow denominational religious instruction to be given at the request of parents. Future schools, Brooke's meeting proposed, should be seen as supplements to existing ones; religious teaching should consist of Bible reading and instruction, undenominational and unsectarian, and all schools should have a time-table conscience clause. Statham, realizing that Nonconformists were reluctant to act on their own, proposed a motion on these lines and it was agreed unanimously (59).

Not all Evangelicals shared Brooke's enthusiasm for denominational schools. The vicar of Christ Church, John King's curate and successor, the extraordinarily named Field Flowers Goe, was among them. Goe was an anti-Catholic and a convinced Evangelical but, unlike John King, never showed animosity towards those who

held different opinions. A man of some ability, he was successively Rector of Sunderland and of St George's Bloomsbury before becoming Bishop of Melbourne. Hull Nonconformists were pleased when he declined nomination to the School Board in order to save an election; he also refused to take part in the persecution of ritualists (60). Goe was convinced that secular education would come, despite the efforts of the Church party. Sunday Schools he saw as the way to 'inculcate religious truths into the minds of the juvenile poor'. Nonconformists had more sympathy with him than with Brooke; the latter was prepared to allow the denominations to teach their distinctive doctrines rather than to have no 'theological dogmas.' Brooke's suggestion that religious instruction should be given to the children by their own minister would have introduced sectarian strife into the National Schools; there was already more than enough of it in the churches (61).

Brooke, still the undisputed Anglican leader in educational matters, informed the Mayor that he would be ready with a scheme to secure the best advantage for Hull when the Education Commissioners visited the town (62). The Commissioners, unfortunately, seemed to be in no hurry to come, and local pride was affronted at W.E.Forster's reported remark that Bristol was the 'only important town' which had taken no steps to form a School Board (63). (Hull worthies regarded their own town to be at least as important as Bristol). Some in Hull suspected that the local denominationalists were using the time to increase sectarian school accommodation, in an effort to render a School Board unnecessary. They could not possibly have achieved such a result with their limited resources but the Corporation, notoriously lethargic in educational affairs, seemed in no hurry to make a move.

The Education Act attracted wide interest in the town and was a favourite topic of debate, especially among the young. The Young People's Christian and Literary Institute (the YPI), founded in 1860 for all denominations, debated 'Hull and the New Education Act.' The majority favoured the formation of a School Board to enforce the terms of the Act. Existing denominational schools, said the YPI, should be handed over to the Board and all religious teaching, by its nature sectarian, should be excluded from rate-supported schools (64). The Hull Church Institute young people took the opposite point of view; present Church schools should be maintained and extended and Churchmen and Nonconformists should unite to maintain sound religious instruction in the new schools (65). The Hull Reform Union, a politically radical group of artisans and small tradesmen, sent a Memorial to the Mayor and Town Council urging them to set up a School Board at once, undeterred by a borough rate or by sectarian bigotry. The Reform Union acknowledged that there would have been no education of the poor but for the voluntary system, but the full benefits of education could not be realized for everybody without the vital principle of compulsory attendance granted by the Act (66).

The School Board

The Mayor gave notice in December that he would raise the matter of the Education Act at the next meeting of the Town Council, turning his attention at last to the question which, said his critics, had been settled long ago by all other leading towns (67). Hull's Elementary Education Council estimated the town's population at 130,000 and the number of children, if one sixth of this, at 21,666. The

available school accommodation was 19,954, a deficiency of 1,712. There were still 1,283 children in 83 dame schools, but they could not be taken into account (Appendix V). The Education Committee, always cautious, estimated that about 2,000 extra school places would be required.

Now that Hull had made a start, radicals and Nonconformists made it clear that their demands were far from satisfied. The Act still embodied the interests of sectarianism and denominationalism, and Nonconformists feared that the Church of England would turn even rate-aided schools into centres of propaganda for its creed. The Nonconformists regretted that they had been afraid to insist on the principle that the State should not become a religious teacher in schools. They felt they had been deluded by the notion of 'unsectarian teaching,' which simply meant every sect teaching its own creed. The privilege of reading the Bible in schools had been preserved at the price of 'catechism and creed teaching' (68), but it was too late to rectify that mistake now; the next battle was for election to the Board.

Of twenty-one candidates nominated, seven were Church of England, including Brooke, John Scott III of St Mary's and F.F.Goe. The four from old Dissent were led by the Rev. Robert Redford, minister of Albion Street Congregational Church, and included James Reckitt, the Quaker manufacturer. There were four Wesleyans and two Primitive Methodists, revealing the strength of Methodism in Hull, one Roman Catholic layman, two from the Reform Union, and one from a similar body, the South Myton Reform Association (69). No candidate was willing to withdraw at this stage, and so avoid the expense and ill-feeling of an election. On the contrary, a subsequent meeting was joined by six more candidates who declared themselves independents,

the Mayor, Robert Jameson, a timber merchant, W.Balk, chemist and druggist, R. Glover, merchant and shipowner, J.Saner, merchant, G.H.Lovell, schoolmaster, and Christopher Kirby, bootmaker (71). To avoid further embarrassment, the candidates met privately and arranged who should be on the Board (71). At the conclave all the clergy and ministers withdrew, except Brooke, and the Mayor came in. The Church of England remained the strongest single group with five members; Nonconformists had eight between them and there was one Roman Catholic and a 'working man,' J.T.Upton, a tailor and book-keeper from the Reform Union. Paradoxically, it was a quiet victory for Nonconformity and anti-sectarianism.

When the Board met for the first time Sir Henry Cooper, the physician, was elected chairman. He lived in Charlotte Street, a few doors from Brooke and was the only person acceptable to all sides. Cooper was perhaps acceptable because of the position he held in the town and because, although Church of England, he was a layman. Brooke was certainly not acceptable to all. He stood for the position of vice-chairman and was beaten by nine votes to four by Thomas Stratten, a Nonconformist fruit merchant (72).

At its weekly meetings the Board discussed the question of new school buildings and found that it was far from clear exactly how many new places were required (73). The children who lived on the vessels belonging to the port, seldom in the same place for more than a few days at a time, were particularly difficult to reach. In the end it was decided that 4,550 school places were needed, more than twice the Board's first estimate the previous year. It would mean renting temporary premises in which to open Hull's first Board Schools (74).

The Act did not solve the religious and sectarian

problems. John Scott, who came from Hornsey near London to succeed his father at St Mary's in 1865, pointed out how meagre and limited was religious teaching in schools, even though the children's parents valued it. Religious teaching, in every kind of school under the new Act, was confined to twenty minutes at each end of the school day when many children had either not arrived or had left to take their fathers' dinners to work (75). It dawned on the Board that denominational difficulties could not simply be waved aside. The denominational schools wanted state aid, but at the same time to keep the religious element under their own control. It was almost as bad as paying the hated church rates against which Nonconformists had fought for so long. The Established Church still seemed to them to be unfairly privileged.

The School Board's record in erecting schools up to 1875 was not so good as that of the National Society at an earlier stage. Thomas Stratten, its vice-chairman, reported that five sites had been purchased, four permanent schools built and an existing school transferred to the Board. These five schools accommodated 3,469 children at a cost to the rate-payer of £8 per head (76), not a very impressive record for a deficiency estimated at 4,550. Over 1,000 children still had no school place, without allowing for the increase of over 11,000 in Hull's total population. In a similar space of time in the 1850s, the National Society alone built at least six schools without the advantage of a school rate. The Board's record, however, did improve with the passage of time. In the twenty years following 1870 it built 37 new schools, including three higher grade schools and a girls' industrial school. It also took over two voluntary schools and four schools from neighbouring boards when the Borough boundaries were extended (77).

The 1902 Education Act

If a Liberal Education Act failed to solve Nonconformist problems, the proposals of a Conservative Government could promise little improvement. The School Board, over the intervening thirty years, at least provided a way of working together and accommodating differences under state supervision, but Balfour's Act of 1902 exposed the real depths of religious divisions in Hull. This was not simply Established Church against Nonconformity; there was not even complete accord among the latter. Wesleyans were less committed in their opposition to Balfour's Bill than the Primitive Methodists.

The 1870 Act had not achieved the basic aim of ensuring universal elementary education. Not all children attended school regularly; not all adults paid, or could pay, the school rate. In April 1902 there were sixteen reported cases of School Board prosecutions, and that was a considerable decrease on previous months. One woman claimed she could not pay because her husband, a dock labourer, earned only fifteen shillings a week to keep her and seven children (78).

The new Bill seemed to Nonconformists to reverse the main principles of the 1870 settlement, by giving rate-aid for the teaching of 'denominational dogma' in elementary schools. Nonconformists in rural areas would find it even more difficult to obtain education for their children without subjecting them to religious opinions contrary to their own. The Bill would revive the bitterness of 1870 all over again, and if state-paid teachers were to be subject to sectarian tests, the large majority of appointments would be closed to Nonconformist teachers. A protest meeting was held in Hull against the requirement on Nonconformists to pay rates for schools whose teaching was repugnant to their

conscience. Its resolutions were sent to the leader of the House of Commons, the leader of the Opposition and the support of local MPs was sought (79).

Much of the opposition in Hull was led by members of the Reckitt family and by Thomas Ferens. The latter, a leading Wesleyan, was joint chairman of Reckitt's, later Liberal MP for Hull (1906-18), a Privy Counsellor in 1912, and the prime mover and benefactor in the founding of Hull University College after the First World War. The Wesleyans had a number of schools in Hull which would benefit from the Bill, but Ferens condemned it on the grounds that it was against all educational ideals as he saw them. He went on to remind Anglicans that their school premises, of which they were so proud, were also used for Sunday Schools and other purposes, largely paid for by the Government. Nonconformists, now near the height of their power and influence in Hull, spent more on Sunday Schools alone than the Church of England spent on day and Sunday Schools together (80).

In 1902 the Primitive Methodists held their Conference in Hull for the eighth time. The Rev. James Pickett, Superintendent of Hull's second circuit and minister of Clowes' Chapel, was appointed to represent all Primitive Methodists on a deputation of protest to Balfour. Harold Reckitt, a son of James Reckitt and a director of the firm, was MP for the neighbouring constituency of North Lindsey which he toured with the sole purpose of condemning the Bill. He warned his constituents that if the Bill became law their children would be taught the Catechism at public expense; Nonconformist children would be 'forced into Church Schools' where they would be subjected to proselytism, and education would pass more into clerical hands than it had been in the past (81). The Bill created four grievances for Nonconformists. It struck at the

principle that public expenditure should be accompanied by public control, it proposed to levy rates in support of schools where 'sectarian dogmas' were taught, it deprived men and women of their constitutional rights, enjoyed for thirty years, of electing School Boards or of serving on them, and it imposed religious tests on citizens who were otherwise qualified to be teachers (82).

Nonconformist protests were overridden, the Bill became an Act and protest turned into resistance. The Primitive Methodists were the chief protagonists, starting in rural areas where Anglican Evangelicals joined the High Church party in attacking Nonconformist rights. Evangelicals, they felt, had betrayed them (83). A Hull and District Passive Resisters League was formed, and others in the rural hinterland, to draw together those who refused to pay the school rate. Large numbers of resisters gathered in Beverley where it was expected that sixteen men and four women would be summoned before the courts (84).

A High Court ruling to accept part-payment did not prevent the distraintment and sale of household effects, to the entertainment of unfeeling bystanders in the outdoor markets. Primitive Methodists in Hull, ministers and lay people, were prepared to go to gaol rather than pay what they regarded as an unjust rate. The Rev. William Bowell, secretary of the Hull Passive Resisters League, who was imprisoned in Hull Gaol for five days, told how he spent his time sweeping the prison paths, raking gravel or reading in his cell where he was visited by the governor and the chaplain. On the morning of Bowell's release, ministers and friends gathered outside the goal in support of the resisters' cause. First Mrs Powell handed her husband some sandwiches and a cup of cocoa; it was a quarter past six and he had been sent out before the prison

breakfast was served; then there were speeches and hymn singing, including 'Dare to be a Daniel' sung with great heartiness (85).

The Rev. Nathan Jefferson, superintendent minister at Clowes Chapel and the Rev J.A.Alderson of Ebenezer Chapel were sent to prison in 1905. They were arrested during a Sunday evening missionary service in Clowes Chapel and were in Hull Gaol before the service was over. To be carried off to prison in such circumstances increased the sense of martyrdom and helped to ensure the alienation of Nonconformity from the Established Church for many years to come. Two laymen, one elderly, were imprisoned with Jefferson and Alderson for three or four days (86). In all, eleven Primitive Methodists had spent time in Hull Goal by March 1905. One Tuesday in that month, named 'Passive Resistance Day,' two meetings were held in the city, attended by the Rev.R. Harrison, vice-president of the League and president of the Primitive Methodist Conference, to listen to reports from similar resistance meetings in Manchester (87).

Wesleyan Methodists, more socially respectable than Primitive Methodists, stood aloof from such undignified behaviour, but they felt some sympathy. When the Brunswick Wesleyan Debating Society discussed the motion, 'Is Passive Resistance Justifiable?' it was decided only by a narrow majority of five that it was not (88).

The Church of England also had its troubles. In 1903 St James National School, built in 1844, was the first voluntary school in Hull to be threatened with having its grant withdrawn unless certain alterations were made. The Rev. Malet Lambert, vicar of St John Newland and a pioneer of Hull's Higher Grade Schools, sprang to the defence of Church schools, claiming that the public authorities had the use of them absolutely

free for the public education of the city, so they were not paying for Churchmen's education who thus got everything for nothing. Malet Lambert was also critical of Nonconformists for advocating undenominational religion in publicly-controlled schools without first seeking the agreement of the teachers. Nonconformists, he continued, were passive resisters against Church teaching, but they were quite prepared to force their own teaching on Jews, atheists and Roman Catholics, as well as on Church members (89). A hundred years before, Evangelicals and Dissenters shared a common religious outlook, in spite of Churchmen's suspicions about political radicalism, but the rival sects had now become virtually rival religions engaged in a dialogue of the deaf.

The Apotheosis of Established Religion

The Liberal landslide at the 1906 General Election marked the peak of Nonconformist power and influence in England. Augustine Birrell, president of the Board of Education, was the son of a Baptist minister and well aware of the feelings of Free Churchmen, especially over the Church of England's monopoly in village schools. A logical solution to the educational impasse was to start all over again from first principles. The choices lay between total secularization on the one hand, and the teaching of everyone's religion on equal terms on the other. The first was against the religious tradition of the nation, the second would be an administrative nightmare. The only real possibility was to build on the existing foundations. Consequently a new Education Bill was brought before the House of Commons in April 1906 to abolish the dual system and replace it with a single system under local authority control. Undenominational or 'moderate' denominational

education would be the norm and purely denominational schools would be allowed only if they provided places over and above the ordinary educational requirements of their area (90).

The Bill's proposals created uproar in the Church of England in Hull. The platform of a high-powered protest meeting in the Assembly Rooms was occupied by thirty-six persons including both High and Low Church clergy. In the chair was Richard Frederick Lefevre Blunt, the ageing Suffragan Bishop of Hull who had been Archdeacon of the East Riding from 1875-97. Next to him, specially brought in for the occasion, was William Joynson-Hicks, a leading Evangelical and president of the National Church League. He was a politician and lawyer who became M.P for North West Manchester in 1908, when he defeated Winston Churchill, and was later the Home Secretary who was prominent in the defeat of the Alternative Prayer Book measure in 1927. Among the others were the Rev. Malet Lambert, the Rev. Scott Ram of St Mary Lowgate, the Rev. A.B.G. Lillingstone, vicar of Holy Trinity, H.J. Toor from the Lincolnshire House of Laymen, John Nicholson, head of Thomas Stratten School and other Hull laymen.

The Bishop spoke in favour of religious teaching in school hours, according to parents wishes, by teachers who themselves believed in it. T.Hall-Sissons, the paint manufacturer, 'a Hull man and a life-long churchman,' supported the Bishop. He wanted to abolish the dual system and believed there should be equality for all forms of religious teaching, but this Bill in Hall-Sissons opinion, endowed only Nonconformity.

There was still a fear of Nonconformist political radicalism in Anglican circles. Colonel Arthur Knocker Dibb, a Militia officer and Managing Director of the Hull Brewery Company, expressed himself in favour of Christian unity and hoped for the time when all

Protestants would work together, but there were two classes of Nonconformist, the man they all respected and could be associated with, the God-fearing Nonconformist; the other type, said Dibb to loud applause, was the political dissenter. The Colonel, like the other speakers, denied that he spoke in any party political sense and H.J.Torr refuted the charge that opposition to the Bill was either political or clerical.

Nonconformists had not been invited to the meeting, and it is doubtful if many were there, but one unknown person, who gave his name as Armstrong, wished to speak from the floor. Blunt asked him if he was a Churchman and when he replied 'No,' quickly ruled him out of order with the reminder that this was a meeting of Churchmen. The Rev. A.B.G. Lillingstone produced figures which showed that Holy Trinity and Drypool parishioners wanted their children to have Church teaching in school. Sunday School teaching alone was not enough as Colonel John Travis-Cook, another Militia Officer, of the solicitors Thompson, Cook and Babington affirmed by quoting T.H.Ferens' admission that only 10 per cent of Sunday School children became chapel members. The meeting, which began with the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer, ended with a verse of the National Anthem (91), just like Mrs Gilbert's evening with the Evangelicals in 1817, except that in 1906 Dissenters were not even welcome.

The Government had a majority of two to one when the Bill received its third reading in the House of Commons in December 1906. It was emasculated, however, by the Tory back-benchers in the House of Lords who wanted to ensure the Church of England's dominance in the rural areas. As a consequence the Bill was withdrawn.

The education of the poor was arguably the most

important issue facing the churches in Hull in the nineteenth century. They all set great store by its civilizing properties, its ability to reduce vagrancy and crime and to prepare young men and women to do useful work in the world. Evangelicals in particular saw education as the prerequisite to serious religion and the improvement of public manners, yet education became deeply divisive. Political and social divisions, rather than doctrine, ensured that the Churches in Hull who claimed to be Protestant and Evangelical ended the century further apart than they were when it began. The 1902 Act was a victory for the Church of England, now approaching the heights of its power in the country as a whole; Passive Resistance proved to be Dissent's last great battle (92). The Anglican Church in Hull, though numerically weaker than Nonconformity, enjoyed the fruits of that victory; 1902 signified the emergence of a 'Church education,' in spite of the the Board Schools, which was to last for another half century.

RULES and ORDERS,

FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE

SCULCOATES

Subscription Charity School.

Opened the 1st of JANUARY, 1787.

- I. THAT the Children be taught methodically, and in Classes according to their respective Improvements, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic.
- II. That all the Classes, which are capable of it, be exercised in Spelling every Evening.
- III. That they be taught the Church Catechism every Saturday, and Dr. Watts's Children's Catechism on Thursdays, being more adapted to the capacities of Children.
- IV. That the Master appoint weekly Tasks, in the Psalms or New Testament, to the Readers, and in Dr. Watts's Children's Hymns, to the younger Children.
- V. That the School business be every day concluded by singing a Hymn and a short Prayer.
- VI. That the Children assemble on the Lord's Day, in the Morning at Nine o'clock, when, after singing and prayer, the Master shall instruct them respecting the Duties of the Sabbath, Public Worship, &c.
- VII. That the Children shall assemble on the Lord's Day in the Evening, at Half past Five o'clock, when, after singing and prayer, the Master shall hear them repeat their Tasks, making such remarks as he may deem necessary, after which, he shall appoint them their Tasks for the next Lord's Day Evening, and conclude the day by singing and prayer.
- VIII. That the Master be particularly attentive to their Morals, Cleanliness, and regular Attendance in School-hours; that he shall keep a regular Account of their Faults or Improvements in this respect, for the Inspection of the Subscribers; and that the Hours for the Children's Attendance at the School, be from Nine o'clock in the Morning until Twelve, and from Half past One to Half past Four in the Afternoon.
- IX. That the Parents of the Children who are admitted into this School, shall engage for their continuance at the School, for a period not less than Three Years.
- X. That the Children be employed, each in their respective turns, in cleaning the School-rooms every day.
- XI. That Parents who shall knowingly encourage their Children in a Violation of any of these Rules, shall be considered as unworthy to receive any of the Advantages to be derived from this Charity, and their Children shall be dismissed from the School.
- XII. That if any of the Children absent themselves from School, except in cases of Sickness, or commit any other Fault against the Rules, such Fault shall be represented to the Trustees, and the Subscribers be requested by them to dismiss the Child from the School, and to send another in its stead.
- XIII. That these Rules be printed, and a Copy of them given to the Parent or Parents of each of the Children, and that none be admitted under Seven Years of Age.
- XIV. That any Subscriber of One Guinea or upwards annually, be eligible to act as one of the Committee.
- XV. That the Committee meet at the School-room on the First Mondays in JANUARY, APRIL, JULY, and OCTOBER, to inspect the Accounts, and to superintend the Management of the School.

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HULL Sunday Schools.

INSTITUTED in October, 1800.

THE Sunday Schools in HULL. were begun by some Persons who had long lamented the prevailing Ignorance and Immorality of the Children of the Poor. The Schools are under the Direction of a Committee, some of whom, constantly attend, to see that the following Rules for the Management of the Institution, are carefully observed.

RULES.

I. No Children shall be admitted into the School, till they are Six Years Old.

II. The Schools to be opened and concluded with singing and prayer.

III. The Children shall be taught to read the Holy Scriptures, and to learn by heart, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, &c.

IV. The Boys and Girls shall be taught in separate School-Rooms; and Men shall be appointed to teach the Boys, and Women to teach the Girls.

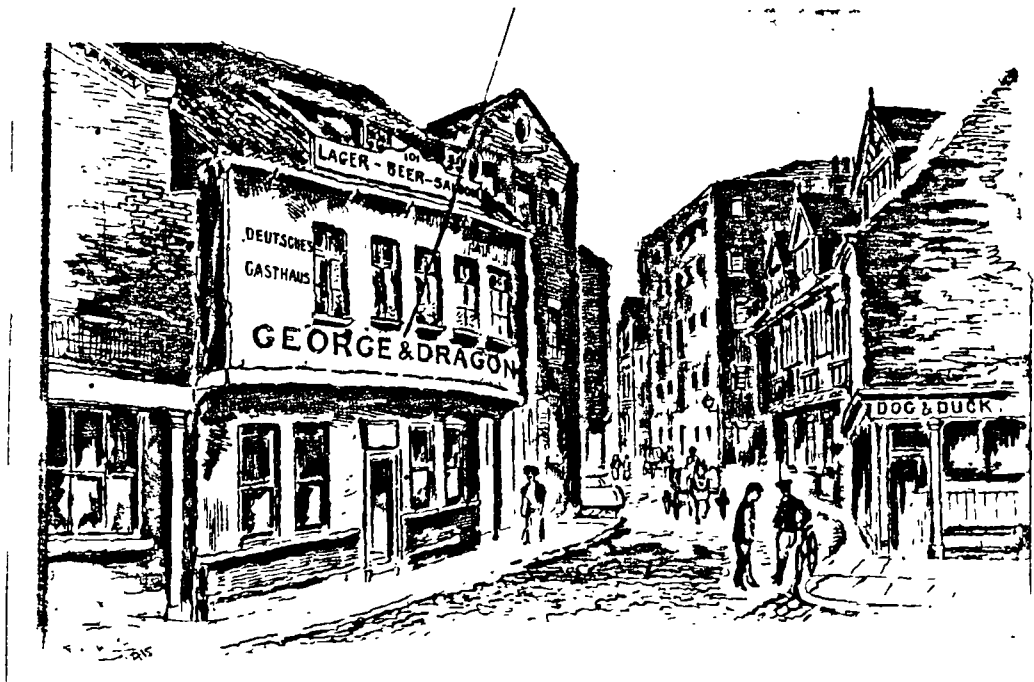
V. Any competent Person of good moral Character, may be admitted as a Teacher. But no teacher shall receive any pecuniary reward from the Institution.

VI. The Parents of the Children are required to send them to School clean, and in good time.

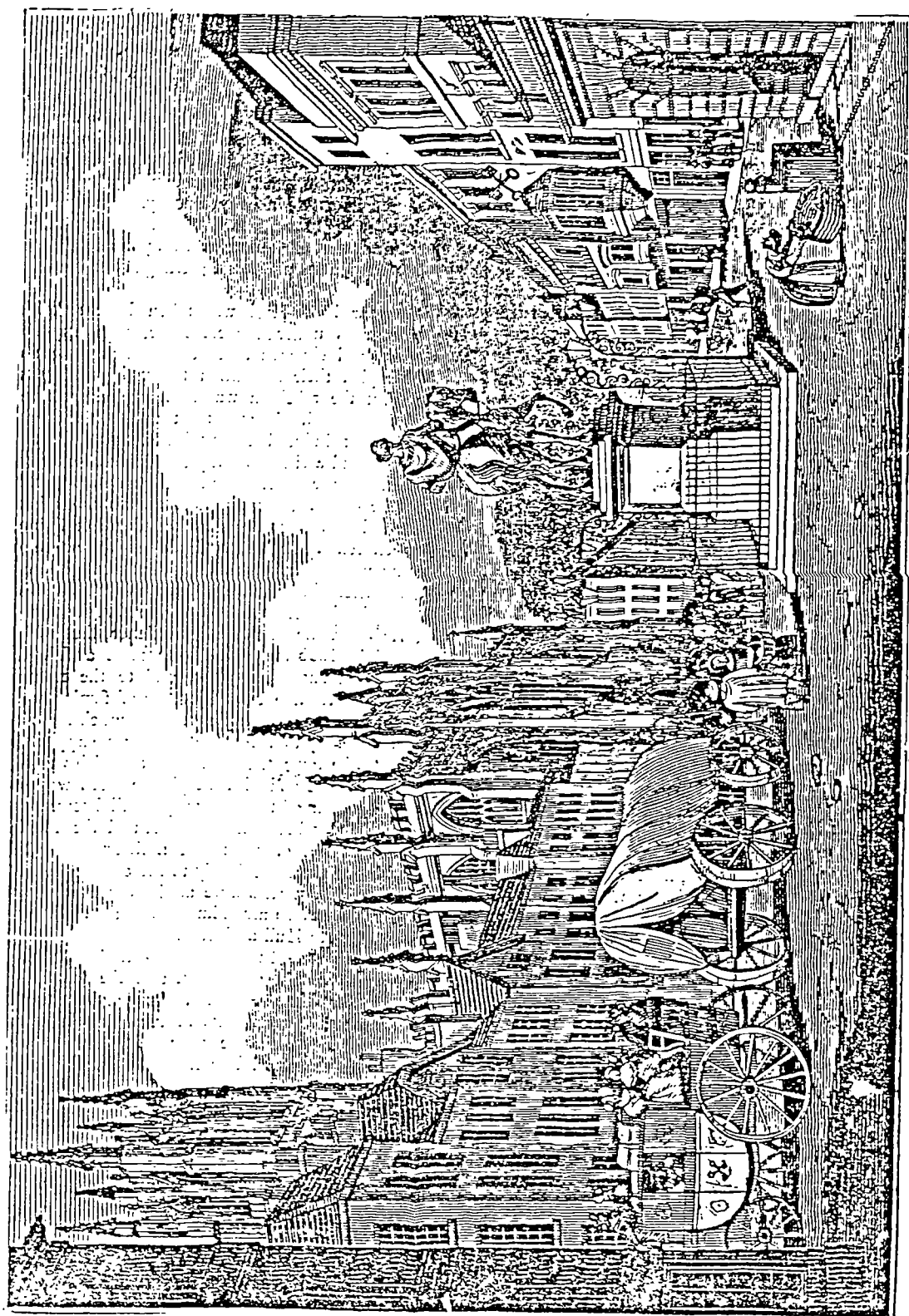
VII. Any Children absenting themselves, without sufficient Cause, shall be reprov'd by the Persons who superintend the Schools, and if they repeat the Offence, they shall be dismissed the School.

VIII. The Scriptures shall be read and explained to those Children who may be thought capable of farther Instruction, every Sunday Evening at Six o'Clock.

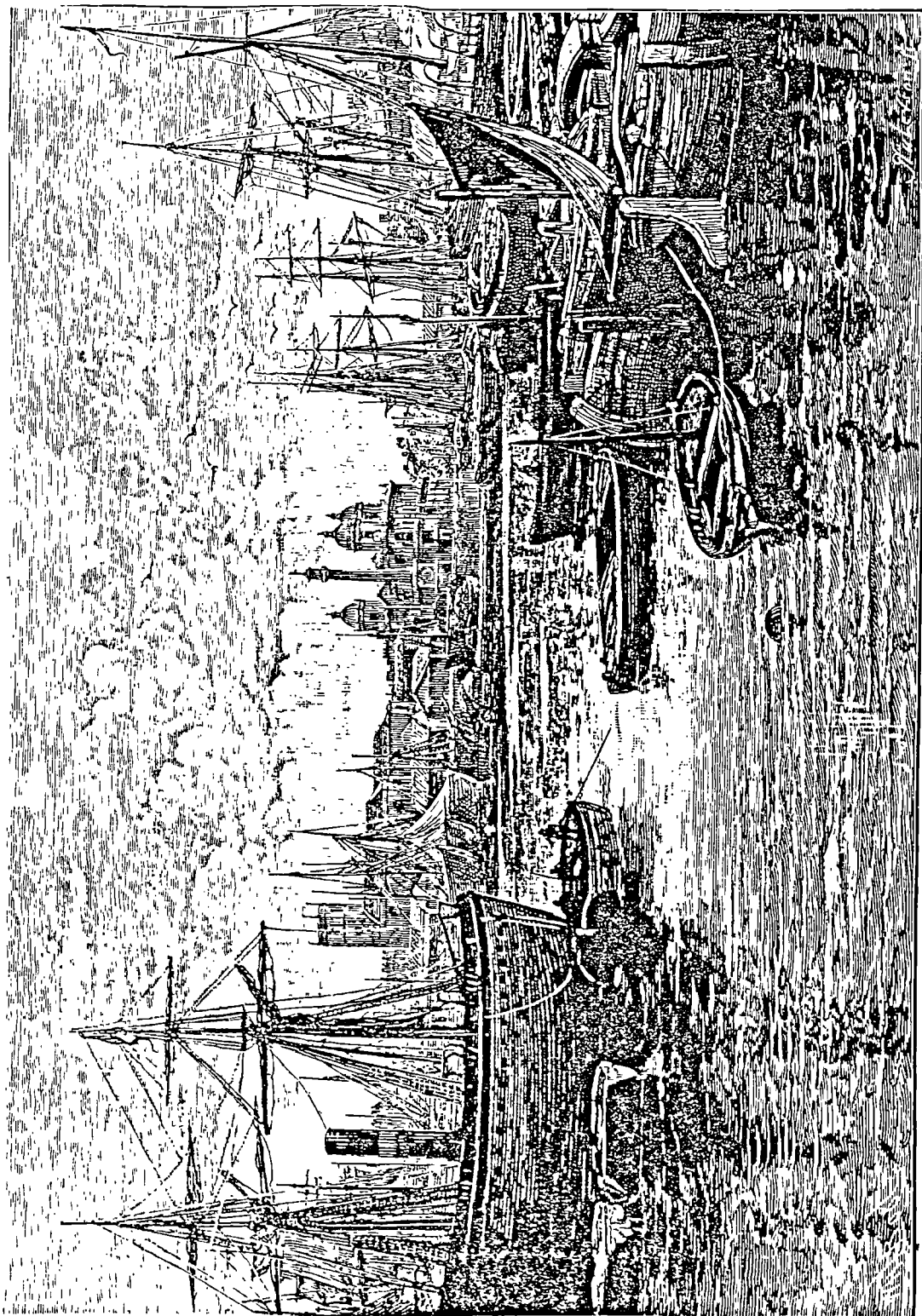
G. TURNER, PRINTER, HULL.



High Street



[Market Place, Hull.]



HULL, FROM THE DOCKS.



THE ALEXANDRA DOCK OF THE HULL & BARNSELY RAILWAY CO. AT HULL.

General view, showing entrance from the River Humber.

Chapter Nine

CHURCH EXTENSION AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

Hull's endeavours to provide elementary education for its nineteenth-century poor were pursued amid the conditions of an expanding port. Urbanization and a massive growth in population were accompanied by great disparities of wealth. Large numbers of workers were crowded together, hastily and inadequately housed, ignorant, ill-fed, irregularly employed and prone to disease and death through poverty, bad sanitation and lack of medicine.

These conditions were no new experience for the poor, but through their migration to the industrial towns in search of employment and an escape from rural indigence, large urban ghettos of poverty were created. The rich, on the whole, bore this state of affairs with fortitude, consoled by faith in the economic doctrines of Adam Smith and Thomas Malthus, but the Churches, and others of a philanthropic disposition, made great efforts to ameliorate the condition of the poor. The Churches, however, believed that their chief duty was to provide pews for the growing population and to persuade them to attend religious worship. All activities which took place in church were entirely under the control of the clergy and provided an unfettered opportunity to instruct young and old in the faith; but the poor were at a disadvantage from the start since most of the seating capacity in Hull's churches was pew-rented.

Hull's population grew only slowly in the first half of the eighteenth century, from 8,000 to about

12,000 (1), but by the time of the first local census in 1792 it was approaching 23,000. In 1831 the population in the municipal borough alone was 32,958 (2). Its growth up to this time was chiefly the result of an increase in the number of docks; the first three, built on the site of the medieval walls turned the Old Town into an island bounded on the south by the Humber and on the east by the river Hull. New, fashionable streets were built to the north by the merchants and professional classes when they moved out of High Street; the more affluent built their mansions further west on the higher ground at Hessle. The first large concentration of working-class housing outside the walls was in the district of St James's Church, built by Dikes in an attempt to accommodate the inhabitants.

Thomas Stratten's Statistical Table (1834)

Stratten published the results of his religious census (Appendix II) in support of his contention that Dissent was more successful in Hull than the Established Church. The area covered was the 1832 parliamentary borough, comprising Hull town part and the parishes of Sculcoates and Drypool. These three areas, Sculcoates on the west bank of the Hull and Drypool on the east, had grown into one continuous urban area. Their populations at the 1831 census were:-

Hull town part	32,958
Sculcoates parish	13,468
Drypool parish	2,935
Total population	49,361 (3)

In thirty years, Nonconformists combined had spent twice as much as the Church of England on the building

and repairing of churches. They had provided approximately twice the number of sittings, had twice as many attendances, communicants and Sunday School children, and almost three times the number of Sunday School teachers.

The four Anglican parish churches were Holy Trinity, St Mary Lowgate, St Mary Sculcoates and St Peter Drypool. The four 'chapels of ease' were the churches built largely as the result of the Rev. Thomas Dikes' efforts, St John (1792), Christ Church Sculcoates (1822), the Mariners' Church in Prince's Dock Road (1828), a former Independent chapel demolished and rebuilt in 1832, and St James (1831). Seven of these churches, if the long-lived Bromby at Holy Trinity is omitted, were the solid base of Evangelicalism in Hull. The Church of England once had had a solid numerical base too. Out of 1,000 families in Holy Trinity and St Mary's parishes at mid-eighteenth century, only about 100 were Nonconformist, but things were different in Stratten's time. An increased population and the expansion of the town had provided the conditions for the first great advance in the influence of Nonconformity.

The number of chapels built outside the Old Town shows how quickly the Nonconformists established themselves in the new areas compared with the Church of England. The Independents in Blanket Row had built a new and larger chapel in Fish Street in 1782, but other Independent Chapels were all built outside the town walls, Providence Chapel in Hope Street (1797), Tabernacle in Sykes Street (1826), Trinity Chapel in Nile Street (1827), a large chapel in Witham in Drypool Parish (1830) and Salem Chapel in Cogan Street (1832). The Particular Baptists who had been in Salthouse Lane since 1757 built a new chapel in fashionable George Street in 1796; not all Nonconformists felt the need to

remain off the main thoroughfares of the town.

Wesleyan Methodism's growth was the most impressive of all; by the time of Stratten's survey it was within challenging distance of the Established Church's position as the largest single denomination. After the George Yard Chapel was built in 1786 Wesleyans moved out into the newly populated areas and built chapels in Scott Street (1804), Raikes Street Drypool (1805), Waltham Street (1813), Lower Union Street (1820), Lime Street (1826), Alfred Street (1830), and returned to the Old Town in 1833 to build a chapel in Humber Street. The Wesleyans also had two large schools in English Street and Mason Street where services were held twice a week (4). Wesleyan Methodism's ten places of worship built within the space of fifty years compared to its advantage against the Established Church's eight, four of them ancient buildings inherited from the past. Primitive Methodists had two chapels, and New Connexion and Church Methodists one each. There was also a 'floating chapel,' known as the Sailors' Chapel, the hull of an old 400-ton ship moored in Prince's Dock. It was the Nonconformist equivalent of the Mariners' Chapel with seating for 500 and standing-room for 200 more. The services, reputedly well attended, were conducted by Methodist, Independent and Baptist ministers (5).

The total number of worshippers, even if much below the aspirations of the clergy and ministers at the time, is still a remarkable figure compared with the situation today. 28,430 sittings, although most were rented, provided for well over half the population; and if all seats were rarely filled, the average attendances amounted to over one third of Hull's inhabitants in 1834. It is, however, the contrast between Nonconformist and Establishment success which is most striking. Communicants in the Church of

England were barely one quarter of the number of Dissenting communicants. The actual number is likely to have been lower because some Methodists still received communion in the Church of England; but if all communicants are counted as committed members of one religious body or another, amounting to almost one ninth of Hull's population, the result is still remarkable. A similar proportion from today's population would result in almost 35,000 communicants.

The Church of England was relatively more successful with children than with adults, but it only managed to attract half the number of those who attended Dissenting chapels. Yet here again the total numbers are impressive. There were over 6,300 children of day-school age in Hull in 1834 and the religious bodies were in touch with between half and two thirds of them through their Sunday Schools. The bigger resources of the Nonconformists enabled them to provide one teacher for four pupils; the Church of England could only provide one for every six pupils.

Age and Occupation in Hull

More than half the people in Hull were under the age of 20. Only 10,907 males were 20 years or over (Appendix VI), so that the social and political climate of their formative years was quite different from that of Hull's ageing parish clergy with their fearful memories of the French Revolution. The preponderance of females over males suggests a settled, stable community, but this may have been partly the result of the men's absence at sea. There was already overcrowding and deprivation among the poor, with only 9,000 houses among 12,000 families.

Trade and manufactures, the occupations assigned to the majority, is a very broad category. Only 128

individuals were actually employed in manufacture or in making machinery for manufacture, but 5,653 were engaged in retail trade or handicrafts as masters or workmen; another 2,620 were labourers, mostly in the docks. Hull was a commercial centre rather than a manufacturing town in the first half of the nineteenth century, not just because it was first a port but also because it was remote from other large centres of population with markets for manufactured goods.

Hull's commercial development inevitably attracted entrepreneurs; its upper class at the end of the eighteenth century consisted of a hundred or so merchant families (6). About one in ten of the male population in 1831 (1,263) were 'capitalists, bankers, professional men and other men of education.' If these, like Joseph Pease the banker, were once Dissenters, increasing wealth and position led them to associate with the Established Church. Those who remained in retail trade created a Nonconformist constituency four times larger than that of the Church of England, but only the Primitive Methodists were likely to make inroads into Hull's 2,620 labouring families. There is, unfortunately, no information concerning the occupations or social status of the estimated 1,000 attenders at West Street Primitive Methodist Chapel. Its builders had looked forward with confidence and its 1,250 sittings (the 1851 Census gives 795) equalled over one fifth of those provided by the seven Wesleyan Chapels in the borough. The Wesleyans, however, had almost five times the number of attendances, over eight times as many communicants and over ten times the number of Sunday School children as the Primitives. These figures reflected Wesleyanism's appeal to the respectable lower middle-class families in retail trade.

The shortage of work for women in Hull is confirmed

by the large number of female domestic servants, almost 2,000, about 16 per cent of the female population over school age. Only 134 men were servants, 29 of them under 20 years of age. The servants' employers were most likely to be found in the Established Church where there was also a preponderance of women. The Hull Advertiser commented ironically on the attendance at a lecture on 'The Immortality of the Soul' delivered in the National School in 1843 and attended by an audience of about 700, 'consisting chiefly of ladies belonging to St John's and Christ Church congregations' (7). The Advertiser, edited by Collins, drew sardonic attention to the Eastern Counties Herald's comment on such a meeting of 'rank and fashion and beauty' where three fourths of the assembly 'belonged to the highest circles in the town' and 'indeed none of the lower orders were present - admission being by ticket.' The marked exclusion of the lower orders from a lecture on the immortality of the soul, continued Collins, was a sad commentary on the brotherly love pervading the breasts of the 'highest circles' in Hull. Half a century later Hull's leading citizens were likely to be Wesleyan Methodists.

The 1851 Religious Census

In the seventeen years after the publication of Stratten's Religious Statistical Table, Hull's population increased by more than 35,000 to a total of 84,690, and the number of church buildings doubled. Manufacturing industry developed, the railway arrived in 1840 and Railway Dock and Victoria Dock were built. Whale fishing had virtually ceased but trawling began when owners and crews from Brixham and Ramsgate migrated to Hull in 1845. By 1851 the port was in the early stages of its climb to prominence as a major

centre for trawlers, a trade synonymous with the name of Hull for more than a century. The town had grown further to the north and west, and Drypool where Victoria Dock was built, was increasingly developed. There were no boundary changes between 1834 and 1851, except that in 1836 the municipal borough became coextensive with the parliamentary borough (8), and the occupational pattern of the enlarged population, which suggests the character of Hull, also changed little between 1831 and 1851 (Appendix VII).

The largest single group of people was engaged in some way with the transport of goods by ship and barge. 2,060 persons were on board vessels in harbours, creeks and rivers on the night of 30 March 1851. Ships were built in Hull from early times, but it never became a major shipbuilding town. Only 623 men and boys were employed in the trade at the time of the census. Females still outnumbered males by over 4,000, and domestic service remained the most usual occupation for women and girls outside the home, totalling 3,649. There were 126 nurses, five midwives and 428 charwomen. 1,689 milliners and 343 seamstresses worked mostly from their own homes, and there were 206 school mistresses of varying ability. The arrival of the cotton and flax mills in mid-century gave Hull women their first taste of factory work.

Hull's immigrants came mostly from Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, but those from Ireland and Lancashire (and many from Lancashire were born in Ireland) were a potential source of strength for the Roman Catholic cause, a small outpost in a predominantly Evangelical town. The Groves area where the cotton mills were located was sometimes called 'little Ireland' because of its concentration of Irish immigrants. Hull and Sculcoates together had 1,615 inhabitants born in Lancashire and 6,044 born in

Ireland. Hull itself had the larger number of Irish-born citizens, attracted more by dock work than by the cotton mills.

In response to the development of Hull between 1834 and 1851 the Church of England had increased its number of churches from eight to seventeen. The Independents still had six (not always the same buildings as earlier) and the Baptists, Roman Catholics, Quakers and Unitarians one each. The biggest expansion had been among Methodists. Wesleyan chapels increased from seven to ten, Primitive Methodist from one to five and New Connexion from one to two. Independent Methodists were still in the same building in Osborne Street, but their adult attendances had increased from 350 to 1,300. In the intervening years the Wesleyan Reformers and the Wesleyan Methodist Association had appeared in Hull at the same time as a variety of other small Nonconformist bodies.

Between 1831 and 1851 Hull's population increased by about 70 per cent. Few churches could keep up with this and in only two cases was there a percentage increase in attendances greater than the population growth.

Primitive Methodist	80%
Roman Catholic	73%
Church of England	34%
Wesleyan Methodist	32%
Independent	17%
Baptist	- no change

The great advance of Primitive Methodism helped the increase of Methodism as a whole. Methodists combined increased their adult attendance by 57 per cent and, with twenty buildings, had more places of worship than any other denomination. All Nonconformists, taken

together, increased attendances by just over 50 per cent. Hull now had the outward appearance of a strong Nonconformist town with 39 chapels, compared with 17 Church of England centres and one Roman Catholic. Nonconformity also provided almost twice the number of sittings.

All Nonconformists	23,720
Church of England	13,808
Roman Catholic	648

Pew-renting was usual in all denominations. Only in three Church of England buildings were all seats free, St Peter Drypool, St James Sutton and Trinity House Chapel. The new churches, beginning with St John's in 1792, relied on pew-rents to pay the building costs and to provide an income. The number of free seats in Nonconformist chapels, even among Primitive Methodists, were normally much fewer than those which were rented. Pew-renting, a traditional disincentive to the poor, was not an issue for the churches in Hull. Even at St Charles' Roman Catholic Church, 200 seats were let and the remaining 448 were described as 'unlet' on the census return completed by the rector, the Rev. Michael Trappes; but all seats were free at Benediction in the evening.

Against a population increase of 70 per cent between 1831 and 1851, church attendances as a whole went up by barely 40 per cent from the base of 1834. It is not possible to compare accurately Stratten's Statistical Table (Appendix II) with the 1851 Religious Census (Appendix VIII), but if Stratten's Sunday School numbers are added to his average attendances and compared against the total attendances for adults and children combined in 1851, the result is as follows.

<u>1834</u> (1831 pop. 49,361)	<u>1851</u> (pop. 84,690)
C of E 7,600 (15%)	13,795 (16.4%)
Noncon 14,630 (29%)	27,575 (32.9%)
R.C. 560 (1.1%)	2,050 (2.3%)

Nonconformists in 1851 were still twice as numerous as members of the Established Church and were increasing their lead. The number of Roman Catholics had doubled as a percentage of the population but remained a small minority. Nonconformity had made the greatest provision for the future by adding 5,790 sittings; the Church of England had added 4,008 which at least represented a greater proportionate increase in terms of its existing size.

	Sittings		
	<u>1834</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>Increase</u>
C of E	9,800	13,808	41%
Noncon	17,930	23,720	32%
R.C.	600	648	8%

Hull's 1881 Religious Census

Thirty years after the 1851 national census, many towns in England conducted a religious census of their own, often at the instigation of a local newspaper. The Hull News, a paper of Nonconformist sympathies, held a census of church attendance in Hull on Sunday, 27 November 1881 (Appendix IX). The results showed that from a population by then increased to 154,240, churchgoing had decreased as a percentage of the total number of inhabitants (9).

C. of E.	from 16.4 to 8.6
Noncon.	from 32.9 to 30.8
R.C.	from 2.3 to 1.6

But the total of 41.0 per cent compared favourably with other northern towns of the 1880s: Darlington 35.4%, Barrow-in-Furness 33.8%, Stockton-on-Tees 31.8%, and Warrington 29.2%. Wesleyans and Primitive Methodists, in spite of their spectacular growth, had decreased slightly as a percentage of the population between 1851 and 1881.

Wesleyans	from 9.5 to 8.1
P. Meths	from 6.5 to 6.2

The Nonconformist overall percentage was still very high compared with the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church, helped by 11,394 Salvation Army attendances on census day. The Wesleyan chapels were virtually full, a little over three-fifths of Church of England pews were occupied, and the Catholics filled their relatively few places of worship three times over.

Church comments tended to portray their own figures in the best light possible. A celebratory booklet, marking thirty years work at Prospect Street Presbyterian Church (1868-1898), claimed that church attendances in Hull increased on average by 57 per cent between 1851 and 1881. In these terms, Methodists made the most substantial advances. Wesleyans increased attendances by almost 55 per cent, Primitive Methodists by 75 per cent. Presbyterianism had never done well in Hull; a prey to Unitarianism, it had disappeared completely between 1783 and 1841, and recorded only 206 attendances at the Dagger Lane Chapel in 1851. In the 1860s it began to benefit from the nation-wide revival

of the second half of the nineteenth century, and built its large new chapel in Prospect Street in 1866. The 900 per cent increase claimed by the Presbyterians was based on the growth in average attendances from 100 in 1851 to 1,000 in 1881 (10).

Hull's population increased by another 80 per cent in the thirty years between 1851 and 1881, from 84,690 to 154,240, so that a 57 per cent increase in attendances meant that some churches were in relative decline. The Methodist New Connexion and the United Methodist Free Church each decreased by 12 per cent, Baptists by 25 per cent and Independents by 32 per cent (11).

In the second half of the century the Church of England built more new churches as the town became densely packed with the gridiron pattern of Victorian working-class streets. St John's, St James' and St Stephen's were built before 1851 in Holy Trinity Parish. Then followed St Luke (1862), St Matthew on the corner of Anlaby Road and Boulevard (1872), St Barnabas at the junction of Hessle Road and Boulevard (1874) and St Jude in Spring Bank in the same year. St Thomas' Church, a temporary building erected in Campbell Street in 1873, was replaced by a permanent church in 1882 (12). St Andrew's in Holderness Road, the only new church to be built in Drypool (1878), became the parish church; St Peter's continued as a chapel of ease. Victoria Dock was built near St Peter's in 1850, but a greatly increased population in 1865 did not result in an increased congregation. The vicar, the Rev. John Ellam (1863-76), attributed the falling numbers to the large influx of artisans who, he claimed, brought with them 'the confirmed habits of heathenish indifference to religious duties' (13). The local Wesleyans, however, continued to make gains. In Sculcoates, where Christ Church and St Paul's were

built before 1851, All Saints was consecrated in Margaret Street in 1869 to become the parish church of Sculcoates in place of St Mary's. All Saints was the first church in Hull since the Reformation to be entirely without pew rents (14). A mission church, St Clements's was opened in St Paul's parish in 1879 (15). St Silas in Barmston Street was consecrated in 1871, St Philip's on the corner of Charlotte Street and Paradise Row in 1885, and St Augustine of Hippo on Queen's Road in 1896. For St Mark's district in Sutton Parish, St Saviour on Stoneferry Road, a consolidated chapelry, was consecrated in 1903.

The majority of the churches mentioned above, most of them built during Queen Victoria's reign, disappeared long ago, the victims of either war damage or departed congregations (Appendix X). Among the fallen are St John, Christ Church, St James, St Stephen, St Paul, St Jude, St Thomas, St Andrew, St Peter, All Saints, St Silas, St Mark, St Saviour and St Augustine. Some of them were outposts of the Anglo-Catholic movement, a late arrival in Hull. At least two of today's 'catholic' parishes were once bastions of Evangelicalism, but the Church of England since Joseph Milner's time has generally remained Evangelical.

Even greater numbers of Nonconformist chapels have disappeared, partly for the same reasons and partly because so many more were built in the first place. Methodists were the most prolific church builders of all. They erected buildings, hired, bought and sold others and used school rooms with such dispatch that nobody can be quite sure how many premises were in use at any given time, but something like 106 Methodist chapels, mission rooms and school rooms were centres of worship between the 1740s and the First World War (16).

No additional Roman Catholic Church was built until

late in the century. After St Charles' Church (1829), Catholics concentrated on building schools and used their school chapels for worship. St Mary's Church in Wilson Street was built in 1891 to replace a school chapel dating from 1856. St Patrick's, Spring Street, built in 1906, replaced the school chapel in Mill Street, registered in 1871. St Wilfred's Church in Boulevard was built in 1896 but nothing further was done until after the First World War (17).

Although Baptist numbers were never great and Congregationalism was overtaken by the rising tide of Victorian Methodism, Nonconformity as a whole, and Methodism in particular made the greatest religious appeal to the people of Hull. If the shopkeepers, artisans and small businessmen who came to Hull to seek their fortunes belonged to any church, they and their families were most likely to be Methodists.

The Onset of Serious Decline

Religious enumeration became a popular activity again around 1904, and the Hull News decided to launch yet another census in the winter of 1903-04. A notice, asking for volunteer enumerators, was sent from the editor to be read in all the churches. He was of the opinion that a census would be good for the religious life of Hull, and was confident that Nonconformity would again show itself in a good light in comparison with the Church of England. Nonconformist ministers were naturally enthusiastic, but the clergy were reluctant to join in, on the grounds that it would do no good, or that it would only tell them what they already knew.

Evangelicalism was in decline nationally, partly a result of the loss of the intelligentsia and the middle-classes; but Nonconformity was still able to

draw strength from its sectarian self-sufficiency and the voluntary religious commitment of its members (18). The Primitive Methodist World, a national paper, was pleased with its denomination's place in Hull's religious life. The passive resistance movement against the school rate was at its height, and a number of Primitive Methodist Ministers were sent to gaol for refusing to pay. The Primitive Methodist World regarded Hull as its greatest stronghold and looked forward to seeing the census prove 'our Church to rank among the strongest and most powerful in the city' and to promoting 'still greater activity and aggression' (19).

The census, in which the Church of England reluctantly joined, began on Sunday, 13 December 1903 and it was intended to be complete in six weeks, but it immediately ran into difficulties. Volunteers failed to turn up through illness or inclement weather and the project fell further and further behind schedule. The luke-warm attitude of the Church of England did not help, and the size and demands of the task proved too great for a group of volunteers to sustain through the winter months. The population of Hull was then about 240,000. Nothing was done after 13 December until work was resumed on 10 January and some enumerators were out every week until 17 February. Then the project ceased without further comment and was never finished.

The enumerators took statistics in areas covering the larger part of the city, but many individual churches and chapels were missed. The incomplete nature of the 1903-04 Hull census weakened its impact, but it has value in so far as certain comparisons can be made with 1851 and 1881 (Appendix XI).

Only twelve out of a possible thirty Anglican places of worship were enumerated, and one Catholic school chapel was overlooked. Among Nonconformists,

Salem Congregational Chapel in Cogan Street was missed and there was no record from the Wesleyan Methodists in George Yard, Scott Street, Great Thornton Street and St George's Road, nor from the Methodist New Connexion in Osborne Street. There were more omissions in the case of Primitive Methodism than might have been expected from the 'activity and aggression' attributed by the Primitive Methodist World. There were no returns from West Street, Great Thornton Street, Lincoln Street, Anlaby Road, Williamson Street or St George's Road, but as the idea was that a congregation should not enumerate its own attendances the Primitive Methodists may have been busy elsewhere. The German and Danish Lutheran Churches were not recorded, nor were the Baptist chapels in George Street and South Street. The Friends' Meeting House was missed and the Salvation Army was almost completely overlooked except for Naylor's Row; there were at least five other meeting places in the city in addition to the East Riding Headquarters in Queen Street.

Hull's population increased over three-fold to 277,991 between 1851 and 1911, and its inhabitants continued to work in the same or similar occupations. The city's main importance, until mid-twentieth century, was as a port, but it was also growing as a centre for manufacturing industry. Over 11,000 were in metals, engineering and shipbuilding, but the largest occupational group, 32,000, were in broadly commercial occupations, the conveyance of goods, people or messages by rail, road or water, including 8,000 dock workers. A smaller number were employed in making furniture and fittings, in timber, dressmaking, hotels and lodging houses, in small businesses and shops, in law, medicine and teaching. There were 2,526 retired persons listed as 'not Army and Navy;' 1,070 enjoyed private means and the largest single group among those

'without specific occupations' (83,491), included scholars and students from ten years upwards (20).

The 1903-04 Religious Census, albeit incomplete, shows Hull to have been a decidedly Nonconformist city. Even if the Church of England recorded attendances were doubled, they would have been only half the Nonconformist attendances, themselves also incomplete. All churches together accounted for 14 per cent of the County Borough, but even if twice as many had attended, an over generous estimate, 28 per cent would have been a result appreciably below that of 1881. Middlesbrough, a Victorian port and a centre of heavy industry on the Tees estuary, also held a religious census in 1904, and discovered that 23 per cent of its people were church or chapel goers. Both towns were predominantly Nonconformist, although Middlesbrough had the advantage of a much larger Roman Catholic minority, but both Anglo-Catholic Middlesbrough and Evangelical Hull had cause for concern.

The congregation at Holy Trinity Hull decreased from 1,537 to 1,185 between 1851 and 1904, in spite of a three-fold increase in population. This was partly due to the depopulation of the Old Town and the building of new churches within the original parish boundaries. Holy Trinity was, nevertheless, the only instance in the Church of England with over 1,000 attendances; it may be safely assumed that none of those not enumerated reached this total. Five Wesleyan chapels, however, each had over 1,000, including Kingston Chapel, not far from St Peter Drypool where only 119 attended. The congregations at St Stephen's and St Mary Sculcoates were only half those of 1851; their parishes were less fashionable areas than sixty years before. There was only a slight increase of about 350 at St Charles Borromeo over the same period, but the building of new Catholic centres of worship

doubled the total number of Catholic attendances.

The three-fold increase in population had been more than matched by an increase in clergy, ministers and other church-workers, from 76 in 1851 to 301 in 1911, but their efforts to attract people to church had not kept pace with the rising population. On the contrary, the percentage attending public worship in Hull in the first decade of the twentieth century had fallen to half that of 1851.

If children and afternoon services are omitted, and if allowances are made for congregations not enumerated in 1903-04, the pattern of decline in Church of England and Nonconformist attendances, as a percentage of the population, is clear (21).

	<u>C. of E.</u>	<u>Nonconf.</u>	<u>Overall</u>
1834	13.8%	25.8%	39.6%
1851	13.0%	26.6%	39.6%
1881	8.9%	30.2%	39.1%
1904	6.7%	13.1%	19.8%

The Church of England held its own against the rising tide of people between 1834 and 1851, then fell away sharply. Nonconformists increased steadily up to 1881, only to drop alarmingly in 1904. Their dramatic fall in 1904 reduced the overall Church of England and Nonconformist attendances by over 20 per cent in twenty-three years.

What had gone wrong?

The decrease in church-going had many contributory factors. It was unfortunate for the Evangelical cause that Holy Trinity, Hull's main church, had a non-Evangelical vicar from 1797 until 1867 when the Rev. J.H.Bromby retired at the age of 96. Evangelicals considered him to be 'only a moral and philosophical

preacher' (22), and the inevitable enfeeblement of old age was accompanied by the neglect of adequate church extension to cater for the expanding population. As late as 1865 three of the new churches still lacked parochial status and legal districts. Five more churches were planned but there were barely enough funds for one (23).

The distractions which beset Hull's Evangelicals, however, were more harmful than Bromby's dilatoriness. Endless time and effort were given to anti-Catholic activities and attempts to resist the infiltration of Puseyites, followed by long and bitter fights with Dissenters over education. These activities, common throughout England, are impossible to quantify. One cannot know what might have been the case if circumstances had been different.

Another common phenomenon in the second half of the nineteenth century was the spread of agnosticism. This has been attributed partly to the heavy demands which Evangelicalism made on the clergy in the discharge of their parochial duties, leaving little time for study and for keeping up to date with new social and intellectual trends (24). Evangelical otherworldliness did not encourage such habits, so that the revolution which was taking place in the textual criticism of the Bible, in science and in historical studies was not adequately faced. The threat of Hell, once an awesome weapon in the Evangelical preacher's armoury, was also losing its effect. Calls for moral revival lost their force in the light of a doctrine of everlasting punishment which raised questions about the morality of the Bible itself. How far these issues directly affected the churches cannot be measured, but the acres of newsprint and comment published in Hull ensured that its people did not remain ignorant of what was happening.

The Establishment, so beloved by Evangelicals, eventually proved a mixed blessing. Some difficulty was experienced in trying to maintain Evangelicalism and Established religion within the one church, and this became more apparent with the passage of time. Nonconformity, unburdened by such a dichotomy, became Hull's dominant religion over the larger part of the nineteenth century. Evangelicals and Dissenters held similar theological opinions; both preached 'serious' religion and a substitutionary doctrine of the Atonement. Their differences were political. Dissenters were more naturally radical in politics, irked by the privileges of the Established Church. The Church of England regarded itself as the bulwark of the nation, a constant theme in Thomas Dikes' sermons (25), against social chaos and for the spiritual support of the traditional order. Dissenters and Roman Catholics, to Evangelicals and to other members of the Church of England, were disturbers intent on importing alien and undesirable influences into England's social and religious culture.

There was, however, a conflict between devotion to the religious establishment and the demands of serious religion. Joseph Milner, that great Boanerges of the pulpit, had preached a Church which was a closed society, demanding total and exclusive allegiance to its doctrines and values. The world, to him, was at best a distraction from religion, a temptation and a snare for the easy-going or unwary. The leaders of Hull society had a point on their side when they shunned Milner for his uncomfortable dualism. When all allowance is made for human acquisitiveness and cupidity, it is questionable how far his sermons spoke to their condition or to their responsibilities.

Evangelical Nonconformity preached an equally all-embracing doctrine of the Church but, unencumbered by

any real or imagined responsibilities for State religion, it drew its strength from its own sectarian self-sufficiency (26). Nonconformity was a subculture with no interest in integrating the dominant culture on behalf of religion. The personal religious satisfactions it offered made possible a withdrawal from the world without the dualistic tensions suffered by the Established Church. It is a double irony, therefore, that the very freedom which Nonconformity eventually won for itself was a main factor in its downfall. The removal of disabilities and the rise in the social and economic status of its members made Nonconformity a less attractive haven for the underprivileged. The Free Churches in Hull were at their peak in the early years of the twentieth century, but their collapse was even more catastrophic than that of the Church of England.

A Modern Postscript

The population of East Hull in 1981 was 123,500. 68 per cent of heads of households were manual workers and 61 per cent of its people lived in council houses. The five Anglican parishes, with thirteen churches, were in effective contact with only one per cent of the population (27). No more than three of the 42 Methodist chapels dating from 1904 remain; today there are eight in East Hull and seventeen in West Hull, and several of these are under threat of closure.

In 1985 the County of Humberside as a whole was bottom of the league for both church membership and church attendance. 95 per cent of Humberside's people did not attend a church of any kind in 1984. This compared unfavourably with the 89 per cent non-attenders in Lincolnshire and the 90 per cent in North Yorkshire (28).

Chapter Ten

KEEPING THE SABBATH

Hull has the reputation of a greater indifference towards organized religion than any comparable place in England. But even if the churches had been more successful in persuading people to enter their doors, they could not have rested content simply with attendance at public worship. Serious religion aspired to regulate the way in which the whole of Sunday was spent, whether people went to church or not.

Controversy over the Christian observance of Sunday goes back at least as far as Constantine's decree that the Mithraic dies Solis was to be a day of Christian worship throughout the Roman Empire. The question was, how should Christians interpret the Fourth Commandment?

At various times in history all forms of work, sports and pastimes have been considered wrong. The Sunday Observance Act of 1677, however (later much invoked in Hull), only prohibited labour and retail trade. Exceptions were made for works of charity and the sale of milk and meat to inns and cookshops, but the insidious nature of the Act lay in its encouragement of citizens to inform on each other, a feature widely practised by Evangelical societies from the eighteenth century to the First World War (1), in Hull almost until the Second World War.

A Declaration for the Better Observance of the Sabbath was made at the accession of William and Mary in 1689, and the increasing influence of Evangelical opinion resulted in another Sunday Observance Act in

1780 which raised the five-shilling fine of 1677 to £200 on all who charged admission to organized Sunday amusements (2). Evangelical and Tory sabbatarians were further convinced that they were on the right lines when Sunday was abolished in the French Republican calendar; there seemed to be a direct connection between Jacobinism and anti-sabbatarianism.

Eighteenth-century clergy were uniquely active in the cause. William Grimshaw of Haworth proscribed the playing of football on Sunday and drove his parishioners to church with a whip. Henry Venn scoured the streets of Huddersfield in order to round up his congregation. The rising class of business and professional men were often influential in national life. William Wilberforce encouraged George III to issue his Proclamation for the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue in 1787 (3), and the Society for the Suppression of Vice listed the suppression of sabbath-breaking as its first objective in 1802 (4).

Early Nineteenth-Century Hull

Joseph Milner's deep-seated fears about the irreligious effects of commercialism lived on in the Rev. John Scott, Dikes' first curate and later vicar of St Mary Lowgate (1816-34). In Scott's opinion the worst consequence of commerce was the 'profanation' of the sabbath by both rich and poor. He urged the labouring classes and men of business to see the sabbath as a merciful institution. Without it the labourer's life was 'one unvaried scene of abject drudgery;' Sunday was at least a relief after six days of such unenviable activity. If men of business worked on Sunday then they became 'debased in mind, and wholly swallowed up in low-thoughted cares.' Even to think about business on Sunday, according to Scott, was a

violation of 'the sacred rest' (5), but for all his uneasiness about commercial life Scott, like most of those directly involved, felt obliged to accept things as he found them, wealth for some and drudgery for others; he just wished they would desist from such drudgery on the sabbath. The ideal Evangelical Sunday was a form of Protestant monasticism in which just one day of the week was given over to quietness and prayer.

Leading citizens of wealth and position were expected to set an example to the lower orders. Thus Sunday travel in Scott's mind, 'proclaimed one's disregard to every rustic in every village through which one's conveyance passed.' He hoped that if the better-off entertained their friends on Sunday, as they frequently did, it was more than mere entertainment. They should not prevent their servants from attending church and he hoped that their own discussion was given to what they had heard in church that morning before they returned again in the afternoon. Even going for a walk on Sunday could be dangerous, unless it were a retired and contemplative walk. Scott knew that it would more likely be a mingling with crowds of 'the gay, the thoughtless, and the giddy' (6). The majority in Hull were obliged to spend their meagre spare time in the tightly packed, crowded streets. Scott's impracticable demands required a large house in the suburbs with a private garden attached. Even the fields on the outskirts of the town, where crowds of youths gathered for petty gambling, afforded no escape from worldly things.

Sunday in Hull in the first decades of the nineteenth century was still a long way from the Victorian Sabbath remembered by some and imagined by many more today; and it certainly bore no resemblance to what was to come. Cattle were slaughtered for market, shops were open in defiance of the law so that

provisions could be bought on Sunday morning; small shops were open all day and public houses did their best business of the week. Some of the sports and games which were played during the hours of worship would have been illegal at any time of the day. The soldiers garrisoned in the Citadel were given to parading through the town on Sundays, accompanied by martial music, drawing crowds of people together to spend 'a considerable part of the sacred time in a very unbecoming manner' (7).

Scott, like churchmen before and since, attributed most deficiencies in virtue to a decline in the standards of family order and religion, while proffering advice to those responsible for the lower orders (8). Sunday evening was the time when servants, apprentices and other young people were allowed out for visiting and amusement, most of them, according to Scott, spending the evening in the streets. More young women were ruined on the streets of Hull than at any other time, he feared, where they met youths connected with seafaring who were boarded out with people who exercised no control over them (9). If only the higher classes would set an example to the lower orders in keeping the sabbath, he lamented, but not many among the higher classes were seen in church on a Sunday afternoon. As soon as the morning service was over they went out into the country and wasted the day in 'self-indulgence, unprofitable conversation and amusement' (10). This state of affairs prompted Scott to appeal to the magistrates and 'the respectable part of the community' to support the establishment of a society for the suppression of vice, on the lines of the one formed in London four years earlier.

Scott's Evangelical idealism had little hope of realization in the environment of the times. To practise the Sabbath pieties he extolled required the

space and quietude which only wealth could provide, but the rich were absorbed in the thriving business concerns which increased their riches, while the poor who lived in over-crowded tenements with no privacy, worked until late on Saturday and rose late on Sunday. For the majority of domestic servants, Sunday evening was their only free time, and the poor were unlikely to find their way into the pew-renting churches and the fashionable, predominantly female, congregations at Holy Trinity, St Mary's and St John's.

As the century progressed there were even more seductive distractions to make church-going less attractive to the poor as well as to the rich. The poor, however, with only the streets and the public houses for recreation, appeared to have no interest in organised religion or religious education; few even bothered to send their children to Sunday School (11). For the better-off there were the increasingly popular Sunday steam-packet trips; the times of sailing announced by the town crier on a Saturday evening. These recreations, unlike those of the poor, were not likely to be legislated against; out on the estuary the fresh air must have been a relief from the foetid stench of the tightly packed slums. Conditions in the new areas were even worse than in the Old Town, which at least had the advantage of standing raised on several centuries of its own waste. In most new working-class areas every ditch became an open sewer after heavy rain (12). The magistrates, drawn from among the better-off, concentrated on bringing the lower orders into line, like one George Munroe who was sentenced to three months on the treadmill for teaching boys the art of juggling on a Sunday (13).

In 1831 Scott was signatory to 'An Address to the Town and Neighbourhood of Hull on Keeping Holy the Lord's Day,' in which he was joined by Hull's other

Evangelical clergy, Thomas Dikes, John King, Henry Venn and William Knight (14). The writers made use of the well-worn stratagem based on the evidence of prison visitors, showing how thousands of 'ruined men and women' traced the fatal turning point in their lives to their first breaking of the sabbath. Twenty-five years after Scott's sermon before the magistrates, in spite of the founding of a Society for the Suppression of Vice in 1810, little had changed. The middle-class attenders of Hull's churches went once a day for 'decencies' sake, often visiting the News Rooms on the way; afterwards they paid visits, entertained, went on excursions and used the rest of the day for business or pleasure, as they felt inclined. The lower classes, observing that the great majority of their superiors did not take their religious duties very seriously, drew their own conclusions. The 'other classes,' as the clergy called them, kept their shops open, bought and sold, ran stage coaches, plied steam vessels and generally served the needs of the rich.

Once more the clergy were liberal with advice to all sections of the population. Their 'Address' urged magistrates to inspect regularly the public houses and other places where disorderly people met. The rich were exhorted to support religion, virtue and good manners by their example, to go to church more than once a day, to abstain from Sunday parties and excursions, from business and from visiting the News Rooms; newspaper reading was also a popular Sunday activity among the poor. The sabbath, the poor were informed by the clergy, was made in a special way for them so they ought not to waste it in idleness, much less in 'vicious indulgence.' They should hallow the whole day and not just the evening, which suggests that at least some of the poor attended the afternoon service when the rich were not present. The rest of

the advice offered to the poor was unlikely to be heeded. The clergy urged them to attend church 'repeatedly,' to read the Bible, to instruct their children and keep them off the streets. None of these were easy undertakings, even for those few who might have the inclination for them, in Hull's cramped, overcrowded, insanitary houses with rooms little more than ten feet square.

Could not employers, the 'Address' enquired, pay their men early on Saturday in order that shopping could be done before the sabbath? Those who kept the small shops where the poor made their purchases were told never to believe they would succeed better by breaking the commandments. Servants, with little time to call their own, were warned against spending their Sunday evenings 'in idle visiting or parading the street where they courted corruption and ruin.' Masters and mistresses should consider their duty to their servants as well as to their children. There was even a call to provide accommodation for servants in church and to see that they attended regularly and becomingly. Was there really room for them in Hull's pew-rented churches? In any case it was a forlorn hope so long as servants were obliged to prepare a main meal in the middle of the day, and were then left unsupervised while their masters and mistresses went on country excursions or entertained company.

Exhortation and calls for a more vigorous application of the law were ineffectual against sabbath breaking. The Hull Committee for the Suppression of Vice did not lack for informers, but their evidence was often inadequate and their enthusiasm outran good sense, as in the case against James Nelson, a butcher, accused of driving sheep in Blanket Row on a Sunday. The case was brought by Benjamin Snowden, the Methodist proprietor of Snowden's Academy, based on the hearsay

evidence of his son and Snowden's own assumption that Nelson's employers had a slaughter house in the vicinity.

Sunday Travel (i)

The development of a commercial town increased the opportunities for breaking the sabbath. There was a rumour in 1835 that Sunday trains were to be forbidden on the Hull to Selby railway. Many were against such a prohibition on the grounds that Sunday was the only day when 'mechanics and the middle-classes could travel' (15). When the railway opened in 1840 there were four trains in each direction on weekdays and two on Sundays (16), but the railway company's decision by no means settled the controversy which continued for many years.

The question of Sunday travel was a relatively simple matter when few people owned their own 'conveyance,' but new and more widely available means of travel introduced not a few contradictions into the sabbatarian's case. If there were no trains on Sunday then more coach and cab drivers would have to work, and not all cab drivers worked on Sundays by choice. Thirteen in Hull petitioned the Mayor and Council to suppress the standing of cabs in the streets on Sundays. The married men did not like to be away from their families for the whole day but the difficulty of obtaining employment compelled them to accept the situation; the alternatives, they claimed, were either to throw themselves on the parish or to leave the town (17). Many people who went to church on Sunday used their own carriages including, wrote a newspaper letter writer, 'a leading zealot who had just preached on the subject, who then drove back to Newland in a private carriage thus obliging his groom to work' (18).

The 'zealots' were undeterred by their anomalous

position, and no sooner was the Hull and Holderness Railway opened in 1854 than the clergy called a meeting to persuade the directors not to run trains to Withernsea on Sundays. They were derided in an E.F.Collins editorial which pointed out that anyone who employed a groom, coachman or cook on a Sunday was just as much a sabbath breaker as a stoker or guard on a railway train. Collins suggested that the clergy, susceptible to a clerical type of commercialism, were more concerned about the loss of income from pew rents and collections. They ought, he said, to be concerned about physical as well as spiritual happiness. Why not go on an excursion after service and see for themselves? If people were out of Hull on Sundays, Collins concluded, they were at least away from the temptations of the dram shops and beer shops (19). Sunday trains made an unplanned contribution to the improvement of public manners.

On the Streets

Sunday continued to be a day of noise and disturbance; excursions to the seaside accounted for only a small proportion of Hull's poor. The police attempted to prevent children making a nuisance of themselves, at least in the vicinity of places of worship (20); the parents of those who were caught were fined five shillings, a real hardship in many cases, like that of the two boys, employees at a foundry, who were caught playing under the dock sheds on a Sunday. The widow who had to pay their fines was the mother of one and an aunt of the other, whose parents were dead (21). Sometimes charges were not pressed, if parents promised to prevent their offspring from running wild again. The local newspapers, however, generally approved of offenders being brought to 'justice.' Many

other children, and adults, spent Sunday begging on the streets, a favourite day for that activity, when people on their way to church were likely to be in their most charitable frame of mind. Henry Blundell, the paint manufacturer and magistrate, reported seeing whole families begging on Beverley Road (22).

Charges of sabbath breaking brought before the Bench on the evidence of informers were usually reported tersely in the local papers. But occasionally there was what some regarded as a particularly amusing example which warranted longer treatment. One such case was brought by the recently formed Anti-Shaving Society, following a resolution of Hull's master hairdressers that shaving on Sundays was unnecessary. William Thistleton of High Street was charged by Thomas Hudson, also a hairdresser, of Waterworks Street, of contravening this ruling in 1839.

B.L. Johnson, attorney and clerk to the commissioners of assessed taxes, for the defendant, said that he addressed the Bench with considerable nervousness, for he considered himself a representative on behalf of the unshaven in the town. The Bench was probably not aware, he continued, that an association had been recently formed, called the Evangelical Anti-lather'em Association, which held its meetings at the Shut Razer (sic) in Church Street. The members were not numerous, but extremely ignorant bigots, and being themselves of little importance, they had attacked the unshaved. The magistrate, the Dissenting Mayor of Hull, William Lowthrop, was not amused; sabbath observance was of the greatest importance to the seriously religious in Hull, and Lowthrop was pained, he said, by several of Johnson's observations because they tended to bring religion into contempt. There was, Lowthrop went on, a much higher authority than even an Act of Parliament to enforce the observance of

the Sabbath. Thistleton, pleading in his own defence, said that when vessels came up the river on a Sunday high tide, the men needed a shave before they could go to church. No river man of exemplary religious zeal, as it turned out, was available to speak for him, and he was fined 5s. with costs (23).

The delivery of letters was another subject for sabbatarian disputation. A commercial town relied on regular deliveries, but attempts were made to stop the one on Sunday afternoon. It would have been a welcome respite for those involved in the work but commercial considerations prevailed. The mail left Hull at 7 o'clock on Monday morning, argued Hull's men of business, so it would not be possible to answer letters until Tuesday if there was no Sunday delivery (24). The Rev. John Scott's suspicions as to how Hull's commercial class spent its time after morning service were quite accurate.

Sunday Drinking (i)

A ban on the sale of intoxicating liquor on Sunday was one issue which came nearest to uniting all shades of opinion. Many working men were present at a meeting in the New Mechanics Hall to consider a petition to Parliament. No clergy from the Established Church were present, but the main speaker was the Rev. Newman Hall of Albion Street Congregational Chapel, supported by the Rev. T.J. Messer of the Christian Temperance Chapel in Paragon Street. Why should publicans be exempt from the one-day suspension of business enjoined by the government, asked Newman Hall, and went on to draw attention to the number of drunkards on the police charge-sheet on Monday mornings. The resolution was carried after several noisy interruptions from a well-known local 'character,' Matthew Tate, a boot and shoe

maker (25) who was eventually ejected by the police. They might just as well petition parliament to prevent every man from cutting his toe-nails on a Sunday, said Tate (26). The following month a petition against the sale of spirits on Sunday was sent to both Houses of Parliament with almost 1,000 signatures, including nearly all the clergy and ministers of the town (27), but it was only a start; the ultimate aim was to close public houses for the whole day.

At a meeting several years later in the Mechanics Institute, a petition was prepared to prohibit the sale of all intoxicating liquor on Sunday. The chaplain of Hull Gaol, the Rev. James Selkirk, confirmed Newman Hall's contention of the great amount of drunkenness on Sundays, based on the increased number of committals for that offence every Monday (28). E.F.Collins supported the total closure of public houses on Sunday. They were different, he said, from railways and steamboats, they were neither necessary for health, recreation and charity, nor for the performance of any moral or Christian obligation (29). Collins, a man of Catholic and liberal sympathies, was more perceptive in his assertion that many young people attributed their destruction to the availability of drink on Sundays, than those who simply condemned every infringement of the 'sabbath law.'

The Classes and the Masses

Sabbatarianism, in spite of widespread agreement against the sale of liquor, was a divisive issue which exacerbated class differences. It was much easier to observe Sunday according to the churches' precepts if one had the advantages of wealth and leisure. The chief advocates of the sabbath were often those from whom its observance demanded little real sacrifice. A

letter from 'Tradesman' who said that he had 'no spacious drawing room, no suburban house, no breezy garden and no leisure time,' declared that the rich were 'rigid sabbatarians' only because it was fashionable. At least they seemed rigid in their attempts to make 'Tradesman' and his like sabbatarians, but he detected an element of hypocrisy which hid an attempt to control the lower orders, pointing out that the rich did not provide seating for the poor in church and continued to deny a rest for the grooms, coachmen, cooks, maidservants and manservants whom they employed 'in their thousands' (30).

The clergy did not confine their attempts to Hull but looked further afield for opportunities to extend their mission of improving the morals of the lower orders. A petition was prepared in Hull and the East Riding urging the government to close the Crystal Palace at Sydenham on Sundays (31). It seemed, to those in Hull, to be just one more attempt at control on the part of the clergy, even more unwelcome because they were prepared to invoke the civil power for religious ends. They should, said one letter to the press, confine their attentions to those who came to them of their own free will (32). Others saw it as an indication that the clergy's hold on the working classes was loosening; it would have been pointless to shut the Crystal Palace when thousands of gin palaces remained open every Sunday (33).

A Hull Dissenting minister, who prudently chose to remain anonymous, called for a more liberal approach based on Jesus and the accusation of sabbath breaking and on the fact that there was no evidence to suggest that primitive Christians rested from ordinary labour on the sabbath (34), but the majority opinion in church circles was against him. J.E. Sampson, in a letter to the Advertiser, rehearsed the familiar arguments

beginning with Genesis 2 (35). Joseph Sampson was a merchant in Coltman Street (36) and as far as he was concerned, the 'Christian Sabbath' was a divine institution.

Sunday Trading

The main targets of sabbatarianism in Hull, Sunday trading, Sunday travel and the attempt to close public houses, remained unchanged throughout the nineteenth century. Among these efforts, there was by far the greatest success in the case of Sunday trading. In the second half of the century the Corporation's stake in this cause was as important as that of the churches, but for quite a different reason; the more the sabbath law was broken, the more income the Corporation drew from fines. The same people appeared before the bench time after time because a fine of five shillings under 1677 Act was no hardship to the better-off tradesmen; some regular offenders even offered to pay for a year in advance to save the inconvenience of constant appearances in court. The Chief Constable's report for breaches of the Act up to 30 April 1877 included 206 persons (37). Five years later two-thirds of all prosecutions in the United Kingdom occurred in Hull (38) and numbers were always increasing, 696 in 1880, 891 in 1881 and 1,151 in 1882.

The law, as usual, bore down more heavily on the poor than the rich. The Hull Radical Club enquired why small traders, tailors and the sellers of fish were prosecuted rather than shipowners and tram companies (39). When Hull Corporation took over the private tram companies it proposed to run no Sunday service until the afternoon; an inconsistency from which the Corporation benefited financially in two ways, from tram fares from its own trams and from fines from

private traders who broke the law (40). Prosecutions at the end of the century were running at around 3,700 a year (41); a five shillings fine was no deterrent at all and some felt it should have been five pounds (42). Hull Corporation had no complaint; it held the record for prosecutions of Sunday traders. The Chief Constable reported 4,072 convictions in 1902. The culprits did not even bother to turn up in court to answer the charges; the five shillings fine was accepted as a small tax on the profits they made (43), and the Corporation was happy to draw an annual income of over £1,000 from these mutually satisfactory transactions (44).

The Nonconformist Hull News called for Sunday trading to be made more expensive for the perpetrators, at the same time applauding Hull's success in deriving more revenue from fines than any other town or city in the United Kingdom (45). Fines were not increased, but the Bench instructed the Chief Constable to apply costs, usually amounting to 4s. 6d, in cases of Sunday trading (46). This extra imposition caused hardship for some small traders. Benno Pearlman, the solicitor, took up the case of a widow who could not afford to stay closed on Sundays and whose profits would be eliminated by the extra 4s. 6d. Shops were open on Sundays in other towns, argued Pearlman, because magistrates had accepted the popular demand (47).

The large shops, with much bigger profits than the widow in the back street, were generally in favour of Sunday closing. The Hull District Chamber of Trade and the Grocers' Retail Association wanted restrictions on, or even the prohibition of, all Sunday trading. Many who opened would have been glad to close if others did the same. Frederick Needler, the Methodist confectioner and Sunday School teacher, said that the opening of shops discounted the work of Sunday Schools

and he believed that the evil would be reduced if costs were added to the fines (48). It was common knowledge, said the editor of the Hull News in support, that most of Hull's traders supplied the youth of the city with sweets and tobacco (49) and the Rev. A.B.G. Lillingstone, vicar of Holy Trinity, did not like the Sunday opening of shops because it was bad for the young. It 'caused children and young people to congregate on a day when they had perfect leisure, and created an element of excitement which was offensive and resulted in unnecessary and unwise expenditure of small sums of money.' He was also in favour of costs in addition to a fine (50). The Bench, however, gave discretion to the magistrates so that no cases of undue hardship would occur (51).

The Corporation, nevertheless, drew a annual income in excess of £1,000, excluding costs, in the years before the First World War. The Chief Constable's statistics, published in 1911, show the number of persons proceeded against since 1901 (52).

1901	3,934
1902	4,072
1903	4,246
1904	4,235
1905	4,132
1906	4,421
1907	4,539
1908	4,726
1909	4,591
1910	4,766
1911	4,873

There were almost 5,000 shops in Hull in 1911 and its reputation for a rigorous Sunday closure policy was greatly admired by other towns and widely quoted in the

country. The Annual General Report of the Hull District Chamber of Trade for 1913 contained a league table with Hull the clear winner in its application of the 1677 Sunday Observance Act (53).

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Sunday opening</u>
Hull	278,000	100
Liverpool	746,000	4,000
Manchester	714,000	4,000
Glasgow	784,000	3,344
Bristol	357,000	3,000
Bradford	288,000	1,200
Oldham	147,000	800
Blackburn	133,000	705
Burnley	101,000	550

The one hundred shops which remained open every Sunday of the year in defiance of the law were enough to provide the Corporation with an annual income from fines of nearly £2,000, if costs were awarded against the defendant.

Sunday Travel (ii)

The earlier movement against Sunday travel had been directed against steam packets, cabs, carriages and the relatively infrequent train services. The introduction of horse-drawn trams on the Hull streets produced a fresh enthusiasm for the cause in some quarters, but the churches, in deploring the running of a Sunday tram service in 1877, were soon hoist by their own petard. The Mayor, Alderman Edward Bannister, a wealthy coal exporter, 'informed the objectors that at least 1,000 people had urged him to put on Sunday trams to get them to church or chapel from the outlying areas (54).

The clergy were in an ambivalent position,

exemplified in a sermon by the Rev. R.K. Preston, curate at St Mary's, on the value of the sabbath, in which he seemed unable to decide where he stood. He made so many exemptions and qualifications to allow for changed social conditions that he ended by sounding in favour of Sunday trams himself (55). A change was taking place among some of Hull's leading clergy. The incumbent at St Mary's, John Scott III (1865-83), grandson of the first John Scott, came under the influence of second-generation Tractarianism while a curate in Hornsey. St Mary's was moving slowly towards the Catholic Revival and was less concerned with maintaining its original Evangelical doctrine and behaviour. The Evangelical vicar of Holy Trinity, Canon Joseph McCormick, put humanitarian considerations before religious advantage at a Jubilee Breakfast for tramdrivers and conductors and their families when he remarked that, as the men worked a 14-16 hour day, seven days a week, they ought to have a rest on Sunday, even if it meant fewer in the congregation at Holy Trinity (56).

Sabbatarianism, however, was still strong in many quarters. When the Tram Company was taken over by the Corporation in 1899, the morning tram service was discontinued for a time, in deference to those clergy and ministers who objected, but the Eastern Morning News considered that to run trams after one o'clock was just as bad as running them all day. It was 'making friends with the mammon of unrighteousness' (57). When the full-day service was restored, 20,000 fares were collected on the first four Sundays and the most crowded times were immediately before and after the morning hours of worship (58).

Now that Nonconformists were at the height of their power and influence, both pro- and anti-sabbatarians attributed responsibility to them for the current state

of affairs. George Waddington, a Methodist fellmonger of Cottingham Road, warned of some dreadful calamity if religious people did not stand firm (59). An anonymous letter writer enquired if the city was to be governed by Brunswick Methodist Chapel, the Christian Endeavour Society and Hope Street Pleasant Sunday Afternoons. The Rev. W. Stephenson, who had left Hull for Colwyn Bay, complained of the inactivity of Nonconformists on the City Council. Alfred Gelder, Mayor, architect and town planner, was a Wesleyan. Joseph Skinner, the builder, was a Congregationalist, George Sipling, a tailor on Anlaby Road, was a Primitive Methodist, but, said Stephenson, there was no record of them ever raising objections with Alderman Larard, the man responsible for the Corporation tram service. If men like this were silent, he said, then indeed 'the golden calf had blinded their eyes to duty' (60). It was beginning to look as if the long drawn-out war over sabbath observance was coming to an end. Its attendant hypocrisy and illogicality had grown with the passage of time and with the increasing complexity and interdependence of life in a commercial town. Sunday trams proved an advantage to the churches as well as to the Corporation which, conversely, still raised revenue by prosecuting Sunday traders.

Sunday Drinking (ii)

The supporters of sabbatarianism may have been open to charges of inconsistency, but the closure of public houses was at least consistent with efforts to enforce the closure of shops. Charles Wilson, later Lord Nunburnholme, one of Hull's two Liberal MPs and its leading shipowner, proposed a Bill prohibiting the sale of liquor on Sunday, but Neils Billany, a one-time Methodist preacher turned atheist and founder of Hull's

Radical Club, saw an inconsistency in Wilson's case. He and his fellow shipowners, Billany said, were quite prepared to send their ships to sea on a Sunday morning without a qualm (61).

Hull was proud of its efforts to close public houses. 2,000 petitions were sent to the House of Commons in the twelve months up to June 1883 with 712,270 signatures in favour of Sunday closure; 44,679 (over 30 per cent of the total population) were from Hull (62). Wilson's Sunday Closing Bill for Yorkshire was dropped, so he moved a Sunday Closing Bill for England which was defeated by 206 votes to 149 (63). Some MPs who opposed the Bill saw it as yet another attempt at class legislation, but supporters said that Britain could not retain its commercial position unless it turned temperate. Shipowners like Wilson believed that one of the greatest problems in the shipping trade was contending with the way the working class 'gave way to drink' (64).

Although the cause seemed lost at the national level, the wives of certain leading local figures continued the fight in Hull as part of the temperance movement generally. Among them were Mrs Henry Lodge, wife of the wealthy Primitive Methodist seed-crushing merchant and president of the Women's Christian Temperance Association, Mrs Thomas Ferens, Mrs W.D.Priestman whose husband was the Quaker founder of the engineers, Priestman Brothers, and Mrs S.B.Whitby, wife of the Primitive Methodist hosiery manufacturer (65).

Music in the Parks

Public parks were traditional features of most northern towns by the end of the century. Hull had three, West Park, East Park and Pearson Park, its

oldest public park, given to the town in 1860 by Zachariah Pearson (1821-91), a shipowner and town councillor (66). The sound of a band playing in the park on a Sunday afternoon was typical of late Victorian England, but Nonconformists in Hull were not pleased to hear it. They placed great reliance on their Sunday Schools as training grounds for future god-fearing, upright citizens, and objected when the bands gave their concerts during Sunday School time. 500 signatures were sent to the Mayor and Council in 1888 from teachers and officers of the local Sunday School Unions, petitioning against concerts being held during Sunday School time (67). This petition was quickly followed by another from three Primitive Methodist Circuits with a total of almost 5,000 children in their Sunday Schools (68). The biggest petition of all was from the United Sunday School Committee. The signatures of 1,671 teachers and officials in Church of England and Nonconformist Sunday Schools covered 79 sheets of paper. The list also showed that Methodists had more Sunday Schools than all other churches combined, and twice as many as the Church of England.

Church of England	18
Congregational	6
Baptist	3
Presbyterian	5
Wesleyan	29
Primitive	14
New Connexion	3
Free Methodist	1

In spite of the predominance of Nonconformists, especially Wesleyans, it fell to the vicar of St Peter Drypool, the Rev. John Hetherington (1879-1904) to

present the petition. In his address he declared his support for fresh air and recreation and recognized that modern society was emancipating itself from long hours of toil. He hoped that 'the toiling multitudes' might have recreation and music to their hearts content, so long as it did not encroach upon 'those precious hours of Sunday School training' (69).

Petitions usually stopped Sunday afternoon concerts for a time, but once the fuss died down, bands were heard again in the parks. This led to further petitions which spelled out more clearly the fears which such seemingly harmless events raised in the minds of Sunday School officials. The responsibility for keeping some control over the working classes had always been seen by the Established Church as one of its prime civic duties. Nonconformists in Hull, now drawn from the higher ranks of society, were beginning to see it as part of their duty too. It was not simply that music in the parks on a Sunday led to the desecration of the sabbath; it was also 'subversive of the moral and spiritual welfare of the people' (70). Nor was it just a matter of the bands tempting children to play truant; the Nonconformist Church Council feared that the large increase in Sunday traffic would imperil the quiet and orderly observance of the sabbath, which was 'essential to the moral and physical well-being of the people' (71); Hull's recalcitrant populace, however, was becoming less and less biddable to its religious mentors. The Primitive Methodists made one more effort when bands were reintroduced in the parks after a break of a few weeks. A petition, signed by 1,464 persons over sixteen years of age, pleaded that young people would be tempted to neglect religious education and that this, in turn, would lead to an 'utter disregard of the sanctity of the Lord's Day' and subvert the 'the moral and spiritual welfare of the

community' (72).

The convulsions of the First World War and its aftermath greatly diminished enthusiasm for the sabbatarian cause. Some, however, soldiered on in Hull under the leadership of Canon Berry, vicar of St Andrew Drypool (1914-1947). It was largely through his efforts that prosecutions for Sunday opening continued. Up to the time of the 1937 Sunday Trading Act there were 26,000 prosecutions in England and Wales every year. All but 1,000 were from Hull and Grimsby (73).

Hull's reputation for sabbatarianism inspired the couplet,

Oh you who complain that Mentone is dull,
Come to England and try a wet Sunday in Hull. (74).

Chapter Eleven

TEMPERANCE

To close public houses, shops, railways, cab and tram services, in order that the sabbath could be observed in quietness and contemplation, was more important to Evangelicals than combating drunkenness (1). The demands of Evangelical religion always came first. Drunkenness might be denounced as a sin but, at least among Evangelicals of Wilberforce's generation, total abstinence was not advocated. Even spirits were not condemned, though perhaps they were not suitable for a gentleman. Wine was acceptable for both men and women, and rich Evangelicals kept good wine cellars and well-stocked larders. Once when Wilberforce took Stanstead Park for a few days, his host, the Rev. Lewis Way, remembered to leave him a case of port and an order for half a buck (2). Many leading brewers were Evangelicals and regarded beer, as opposed to spirits, as a temperance drink. The names of Evangelical brewers appeared regularly on CMS subscription lists in the 1830s, Guinness, Whitbread, Buxton, Hanbury, Hoare, and Perkins (3). Later in the century Evangelical association with the temperance movement was still chiefly motivated by religious objectives, the urge to make converts rather than to support abstinence for its own sake.

Wesleyans were among the last to take up the cause of total abstinence. When Hugh Price Hughes was a student at Richmond College in 1865, beer was served as a matter of course at supper, as it was in all educational establishments. Not until Hughes' third

year was a college temperance society formed, which he and one or two others declined to join (4). Quakers, who banned the manufacture of spirits in the eighteenth century, brewed beer instead and formed no abstinence societies until the 1830s. Primitive Methodists, the most active body among the working class, were the earliest religious advocates of total abstinence, and Baptist ministers, like some in Hull, helped to found Temperance Churches.

A major influence in the progress towards a more temperate population, owing nothing to the churches, was something that was happening in the world outside. Advances in technology and the consequent improvement in methods of travelling may have affected sabbatarianism for the worse, but they had the opposite effect on temperance. Public houses played a larger part in social life generally, before the coming of the railways. Travel by coach was slow, and numerous coaching inns were required for the convenience of travellers and for changing horses. The coaching inn became a public house for the local population, the focus of social life and entertainment, the place to seal a business deal or pay wages, the meeting place of friendly societies and trade unions. As the railways spread, many public houses were closed, to be replaced by more respectable accommodation for travellers, the railway hotels, which were not so closely associated with drink. Hull station and its Station Hotel, designed in 1846 by G.T.Andrews, George Hudson's architect, was a typical example. Sunday excursions on the railways, as well as the band concerts which so frustrated the determined sabbatarian, removed the lower orders from the temptations of the public houses and dram shops.

Public houses and organised religion were the only available entertainment on a Sunday, apart from the

life of the streets, in the average mid-nineteenth century town; and they were rivals. The churches, to their own great loss, failed to see other movements, like temperance, as potential allies, so they too became rivals and, like the warm 'fellowship' of the public house, provided an attractive substitute for what the churches claimed to offer.

Temperance is an important example, a cause unique in Victorian England, in which rival religious denominations were eventually able to work harmoniously together. By the end of the century, temperance had become 'the common ethical ground of all sects from General Booth to Cardinal Manning' (5), but the inherent inability of the churches to work with those outside their fellowship did them much harm. The crusade against alcohol began outside the denominations and continued on uneasy terms, even with Nonconformity, until after 1850. Religious people were suspicious of a movement which displayed so many quasi-religious characteristics. The pledge sounded like a religious vow. Co-operation was particularly difficult for Evangelicals because the secularity of the movement challenged the very roots of their faith. Evangelicalism began with the conviction of sin and the need for conversion through justification by faith alone. The temperance movement seemed to suggest that moral reform was possible before or even without religious conversion (6) and paternal, Tory, hierarchical Evangelicals were ill-equipped to sympathise or co-operate with the growing desire for working class self-improvement. Dissent, associated in the Established Church's mind with political radicalism, was not so inhibited, but the consequent loss proved irreparable to both religion and temperance, as a working-class initiative, in spite of much apparent success enjoyed by both. The temperance

movement developed an almost exclusively Christian flavour, but its casual and peripheral connection with organized religion played a significant role in precipitating the secularization of religion; temperance was a 'religious' issue which could be pursued just as effectively outside the churches as it could within. At the same time, the temperance cause increasingly developed those very aspects of Evangelical religious élitism, dividing the righteous from the unrighteous, which made them both unattractive to large numbers of the poor.

Hull beginnings

Temperance, a movement always more redolent of northern industrial towns than of London and the south, began in Hull after the circulation of an anonymous handbill in 1831. A small gathering in the Friends' Meeting House in Lowgate discussed the possibility of forming a society. The Rev. Charles Daniels of George Street Baptist Chapel, the Rev. Ebenezer Morley, Independent, the Rev. George Lee, the Unitarian editor of the Hull Rockingham, and a Methodist, the Rev. Edmund Grindrod were there. Others present were a physician, Dr William Bodley of Albion Street and James Henwood, a banker's clerk, who took the chair. A discussion on membership, should the society be based on a pledge of abstinence from spirits, soon provoked expressions of uneasiness over the giving of pledges which some felt were little different from vows (7).

In spite of the suspicions of many religious leaders, it was evident that a cross section of Dissenting ministers was closely involved with the start of temperance in Hull and that the movement automatically adopted the traditional style of chapel revival meetings with visiting speakers, often with a

testimony to give, under the chairmanship of a respected local citizen. The first meeting of the newly-formed Temperance Society was chaired by John Wade, a raff merchant (an importer of foreign timber, usually in the form of deals) of Albion Street, a fashionable Georgian street on the north side of the new dock. One of the two visiting speakers, a Wesleyan, the Rev. P. M'Owen, 'confessed' that up to six months before he had spent 26 shillings a year on spirits, which sum he now gave to the poor. He also revealed, according to his own calculations, that shopkeepers and tradesmen in Hull spent between £5 and £8 a year on spirits for hospitality among their friends. This, he said, added up to about £5,000 a year in Hull and £19m in the United Kingdom as a whole. The other speaker, an almost incomprehensible native of Dundee who apologised for his broad Scottish accent, was present as an expert on the origin and history of spirits (8).

Temperance Societies were springing up all over Britain and the United States which, like the British and Foreign Temperance Society, founded in 1831, employed missionaries to stump the country addressing public meetings. One missionary, the Rev. J. Jackson, held a meeting in Fish Street Independent Chapel at which a Hull spirit merchant announced that he was closing his business at the end of the month. Another result of Mr Jackson's visit was the formation of the Seaman's Temperance Society. The seamen sat in silence at the inaugural meeting, seeing it as yet one more attempt by the employers to control their lives. Others expressed their opinion that seamen were the worse offenders against temperance; but the Seamen's Friendly Society representative defended his 500 members, declaring the scheme to be nothing more than a move by shipowners to deprive seamen of their comforts

while sparing their own pockets. Perhaps seamen were among the worst offenders, but they were far from being on their own in Hull. A doctor said that if all Hull's inhabitants observed strict rules of temperance the town would need only four doctors instead of the present forty. Nine-tenths of deaths in the town, he went on, were the result of intemperance of one sort or another, eating, drinking and keeping late hours (9).

Total Abstinence

Teetotalism, or total abstinence from alcohol, was established in Hull in 1835 by Richard Firth, the proprietor of a classical and mathematical academy (10). Firth edited a local temperance periodical for several years and was secretary of the Hull Temperance Society until his death from cholera in the 1849 epidemic. He was seen frequently at the temperance society meetings, which multiplied in the 1830s and 40s, protesting strongly against the practice of opening public houses and the distribution of free drink at election campaigns (11).

A group of Nonconformist ministers, supported by a few respectable citizens like Wade and Firth, were at the head of Hull's early temperance movements, but there was still a place for working class people at this stage. Their chief value at public meetings, it has to be admitted, was to give their testimony as reformed drunkards; it was not to be expected that prominent merchants would announce in public that they had been in the habit of drinking too much at home or at the club. Drunkenness was more noticeable in the public houses or on the streets and the testimony of a reformed drunkard was a useful way of getting others to sign the pledge, as did four characters at the first meeting of the Hull Sailors' Teetotal Society,

established by the missionary to seamen, the Rev. John Spencer (12).

There was scope too for women. Four women from Leeds delivered addresses and sermons at the first anniversary of the Female Temperance Society, but it was still chaired by a man, the raff merchant, John Wade. The women were not allowed to preach on church premises, only in the Court House and in the Freemason's Lodge. The female branch, however, boasted 300 members who could enter 'places of misery and woe to which the male sex could not be admitted' (13). Opportunities for female and working-class leadership were typical of Nonconformity, but a world away from Anglicanism. Temperance reform revealed a difference between Anglicanism and Nonconformity as significant as that between Disraeli's two nations (14). No Evangelical clergy were members of the Hull Temperance Society, but the Rev. James Sibree of Salem Independent Chapel and the 'church' Methodist, the Rev. William M'Conkey joined in 1837 (15). The quasi-religious, Nonconformist nature of the movement was apparent when the Hull and East Riding Association for the Suppression of Intemperance held an open-air meeting on Good Friday, followed by a sit-down meal for 530 in the Music Hall, addressed by a succession of reformed drunkards imported from Leeds and London. A man named Parker, from nearby Grimsby, informed the assembly that he had been imprisoned 43 times for intoxication (16). The first mention of any involvement on the part of the Established Church was when the non-doctrinaire Bromby of Holy Trinity chaired a temperance meeting in the Court House. This meeting attracted a more fashionable following and the galleries were reported crowded with women; several more 'of the middle class' occupied the bench (17). The general character of the movement in its first twenty years was, however, Nonconformist and

lower class, but one in which non-chapelgoers were accepted. Its activities consisted chiefly of meetings, visiting speakers, personal testimonies from past drunkards and 'coming forward' to sign the pledge.

Temperance Literature

The next step was the production of suitable literature, of which the Hull Temperance Pioneer and Eastern Counties Chronicle was the earliest local example. A new series, a monthly 24-page magazine began in 1845 (18). It had a strong Christian leaning and attributed the low state of Christianity in Hull to the prevalence of strong drink; but at the same time it urged the temperance movement to disassociate itself from 'religious sectarianism' which led to 'intolerance, acrimony and bigotry.' Each sect, it said, believed the road to heaven was through its own peculiarities (19). The call to put the common good before religious dogma convinced at least one person of the error of his ways. The Rev. Thomas Messer, the Baptist pastor at the Christian Temperance Church and editor of a rival journal for the Promotion of Evangelical Religion and the Principles of True Temperance, started an Anti-Sectarian Society (20). Religious forms were not abandoned, and on Easter Sunday 1847 two sermons were preached by the wife of the Rev. W. Hardwick from Malton Baptist Chapel, at which the Rev. Thomas Messer and Robert Firth, the school proprietor, were present (21); but local opinion, if interested at all, was not entirely on the side of the Pioneer. Reaction was not long delayed, and in the following year another body was created calling itself the Christian Total Abstinence Church. A school room was opened for worship in Mason Street and the president of Spilsby (Lincs) Temperance Society

was invited to become minister of the Total Abstinence Church (22).

The original Hull Christian Temperance Church had some success during its short existence. Nonconformist ministers visiting Hull were glad to accept the offer to preach, and there is evidence that a number of local Wesleyan laymen were involved in its meetings. It took about 250 pledges a year and continued to deplore the apathy of clergy and ministers generally. The Temperance Church, while happy to recognise the work of other societies, claimed that its own foundation was upon 'the great principles of evangelical truth and piety.' This unequivocal declaration in favour of vital religion might have impressed Evangelicals if the Temperance Church had not been so ready to accept pledges without demanding church membership in return; naturally it was gratified when some who took the pledge also became members of the Temperance Church.

The Dissenting denominations pursued the cause within their own structures. The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine asserted that the sin of drunkenness was destroying more souls than all the ministers in Britain were saving. The Primitive Methodist Preachers' Friendly Society decided that every candidate on trial should be obliged to give a reason why he drank, and full members who drank would be asked to abstain forthwith (23). The Hull Wesleyan Total Abstinence Society held its first meeting in 1848 (24).

First Anglican Converts

Religious involvement in temperance was on the increase but it was, ironically, a non-religious body, the Sculcoates Temperance Society, which made the first dent in the aloof superiority of the Church of England. In its first annual report it announced that four

clergymen had taken the pledge; their names were not divulged, but this was seen as a distinct triumph. The Sculcoates society was also an example of a difference of approach to rich and poor, respectable and disreputable. On Christmas Day 1848 a public meeting of 500 'respectable' members and friends took tea in the Mechanics's Institute with a local worthy in the chair, Henry Levitt, seedcrusher and oil merchant. In an adjoining room, meanwhile, another meeting was addressed entirely by reformed drunkards. There was no mention of tea (25). The multiplication of societies in Hull made some kind of federation necessary so that temperance activities could be co-ordinated. To this end the Hull Temperance League was created and began its work by attempting to control the rougher element. Open-air meetings led increasingly to disorder, the expression of opposing opinions resulting in fights, so the League decided against holding such events.

This seemed a step backwards, since the average indoor meeting without refreshments attracted no more than 100 people. The setback was soon overcome, however, when Hull was included on the itinerary of nationally famous speakers, and temperance became an aspect of large-scale entertainment. Church, chapel and public house were the resident entertainers in mid-century provincial towns, where the welcome visit of a travelling show brought in the crowds. A famous temperance speaker encouraged the local enthusiasts, provided a memorable evening's entertainment, and perhaps produced a few more pledges in the hot-house evangelistic fervour of the occasion. It was essential that the speaker be known to be highly entertaining, so that the crowds would turn out. When he had gone, the local movement returned to its round of dull self-congratulatory meetings, drank tea, produced literature, and remained generally out of touch with

the homes of the poor.

The most famous of Hull's visitors was J.B.Gough who appeared in the town in 1854, 1855 and 1878. This reformed American drunkard toured Britain on behalf of the National Temperance League. He was an impressive figure who had mastered the art of playing on his audiences' emotions, like Charles Dickens at his public readings. His graphic descriptions and dramatic gestures captivated his largely female following. Lord Shaftesbury called him 'a marvel - a real marvel' (26). The Hull Theatre Royal was booked for two consecutive nights to accommodate the crowds who flocked to hear him, over 2,200 at each appearance; the great and the good were there. The first evening in 1854 was chaired by the Mayor, Dr Henry Cooper, supported by the Rev. Newman Hall from Albion Congregational Chapel and other prominent citizens, including E.F.Collins of the Advertiser and Frederick Hopwood, secretary to the Hull and East Riding Freehold Society and honorary secretary of the Hull Temperance League. On the second evening there was an unexpected drama. Alderman Blundell, the paint manufacturer, was in the chair and so eloquent was Gough's oratory that no sooner had he sat down than the Rev. William Kemp, Dikes' curate and his successor at St John's Church, was on his feet to announce his intention to take the pledge, and challenged Blundell to do the same. He was the first Evangelical clergyman to come out into the open. The Rev. James Sibree of Salem Independent Chapel also declared his intention to sign the pledge; Collins, in a leading article, congratulated both men for setting an example (27).

Some statistics announced at Gough's meeting revealed that of 2,119 people taken into police custody in Hull during the preceding year, 486 (356 men and 130 women) had been arrested for drunkenness. 117 of the

men were poor labourers. The audience was further informed that 522 of the males and 233 of the females could neither read nor write, 986 of the remainder only imperfectly. It was the kind of information always remarked on when the number committed to prison was mentioned, indicating the need for education among the masses in order to wean them from criminal habits. It was further confirmation of the widely accepted connection between ignorance and crime. Drunkenness too was the result of ignorance, and crime and poverty were closely associated in popular thinking. If, as was generally believed, only ten per cent of the drunk and disorderly were actually arrested, there must have been about 5,000 cases of drunkenness each year, out of a population of 85,000 in mid-century Hull.

The respectable and religious never begrudged giving advice to the unrighteous, but they were not so notable for their generosity in providing financial support for the redemption of sinners. A barrister, James Burke, only raised £6 from a collection to support the work of Father Theobald Mathew (1796-1856), an Irish priest known as 'The Apostle of Temperance,' at a meeting in Hull Town Hall in 1854 (28). It may have been too near Christmas or because public meetings were sparsely attended when no star attraction was billed. At an annual meeting of the Hull Temperance League in 1855, only 100 subscribing members attended (29).

Temperance at Mid-Century

The Rev. William Kemp's example had no noticeable effect on his fellow Evangelical clergy in the Established Church. Gough was back in Hull within a year of his first triumphant visit, for two more evenings in the Theatre Royal, and E.F.Collins charged

the Church of England's clergy with a lack of concern in failing to set an example to the poor by total abstinence. Peers and members of the House of Commons, he continued, had joined the temperance movement but the majority of the clergy showed little sympathy. Collins regretted he could not find even a paragraph about temperance in any bishop's charge to his clergy, while nine-tenths of Primitive Methodist preachers were pledged members of temperance societies (30). Collins, now president of the Hull Temperance League, was speaking of the national scene, but it must be remembered that his day-to-day experience of Anglican clergy was of the dominant Evangelical group in Hull.

Other peripatetic temperance lecturers, meanwhile, paid visits to Hull. There was Simon Smithard, the temperance singer, who came three times (31), Thomas Irving White of the London Temperance League (32) and Edward Grubb from Manchester (33). Grubb, whose two-night stand in the Mechanics' Institute was reported to have been 'crowded,' was an advocate of the United Kingdom Alliance for legislation to suppress the whole drink trade. Richard Vivian, a sail-maker and smack owner who was in the chair, was himself a declared supporter of prohibition as enacted by the state of Maine in the USA, but it was not a cause destined to make any headway in England.

Teetotalism was often the object of jibes from those who opposed it. An anti-teetotal meeting in the Odd Fellows Hall claimed that only 200 out of the 2,500 members of the League in Hull were genuine teetotalers. The meeting soon ended in tumult (34). A few local church leaders began to give lectures in support of temperance in the mid-1850s, the Rev. John Mann of Tabernacle Chapel in Sykes Street (35) and a Catholic priest, Father Mather, who lectured to a crowded Odd Fellows Hall on the 'Social and Domestic Advantages of

Temperance.' Father Mather experienced at first hand the misery, misfortune and crime resulting from habitual drunkenness in working-class homes (36). A glimpse of life in a well-off home came from a reported burglary at the house of James Ingham, a coal dealer in Anlaby Road. Among the items stolen were three bottles of brandy, five bottles of whiskey and two of porter (37).

The Evangelical clergy were still notable for their absence from this kind of activity. The fact that others had started it tended to make it something with which they could not afford to be associated. Dissent and Catholicism were still synonymous in their minds with radical politics and subversion, and the notion of self-improvement without religious conversion was not something they wanted to encourage, so the Church of England kept to its own world for the time being. Distressing events sometimes happened even in that world, like the death from drink of the Rev. John Farrand in 1863. Farrand lived in Tynemouth Street, was 46 years old and married. He had been turned out of his living for habitual drunkenness and had recently lived at Flamborough (38).

A Popular Movement

The large-scale growth in temperance activity in Hull coincided with the expansion of Nonconformity, reaching its peak in the years leading up to the First World War. By then the Church of England was fully involved and temperance had become almost exclusively associated with religious sentiment and religious organisation, but did not don the cloak of Evangelicalism even when many Evangelicals became teetotalers. Temperance sat lightly to organised religion and many secular bodies had their own

temperance societies, railway workers, friendly societies and the like. Some friendly societies in fact owed the revival of their fortunes to the temperance movement. To be teetotal, nevertheless, if not a religious position, was to take a particular moral stand bordering on the religious.

In the second half of the century the Band of Hope came into its own and was taken up enthusiastically by the churches. Formed in Leeds in 1847 as a society for juvenile abstainers, it quickly spread to all parts of the country where it was readily adapted to Sunday Schools and other work among the young. It chimed in with the resignation which organised religion often expressed in the face of intractable moral problems: that the only remedy was to make a fresh start with the rising generation.

Six sermons were preached in the Church of England and many in other denominations when a Band of Hope Sunday was held in Hull in 1875. All strands of Methodism, except the Wesleyans, joined in and from that day the Band of Hope became the most widely supported piece of temperance work among Hull's churches. The Band of Hope Advocate, a monthly magazine, was launched as the organ of the Hull and District Band of Hope League (39).

District visitors were more closely in touch with the poor than most, and witnessed the effects of drunkenness on family life. The clergy and their better-off parishioners often needed to be convinced, in spite of tragedies like that of the Rev. John Ferrand. A district visitor in Hull published a book of twelve short stories illustrating the evils of drink, Strong Drink - The Hull Juggernaut (1882). In one story a clergyman who was 'indirectly connected' with a large brewery in the town where he worked was in the end persuaded to take the pledge. There was a

resonance between this story and a report in a Hull newspaper a few years later when the Rev. George Alexander England of Trinity College Dublin was vicar of St Mark. In 1889 his vicarage was burgled and nine bottles of whiskey stolen from his study. The verger was later arrested and charged with the offence (40).

Outside the churches the main organisers of working-class temperance were the friendly societies. The Hull Temperance Pioneer was reborn in 1892, after a gap of 55 years, as the quarterly magazine of the Hull Grand Division of the Sons of Temperance. Friendly societies, like the early crusaders against alcohol, were looked on with suspicion by the churches as potential competitors. They were working-class movements which decided for themselves how far they wanted to associate with organised religion, and invented a neo-religious language of their own with their Grand Masters, Grand Sires, Worthy Patriarchs and Brothers. They combined the features of a secret religious society with those of a trade union, so that the churches, more familiar with the political and subversive elements of trade unions than with their pastoral concern for their members, were naturally cautious. The Sons of Temperance marched behind their banner at the annual church parade and, if it felt disposed, a branch might invite a local minister to be its chaplain (41).

Friendly societies had a struggle to survive. They felt the churches had closed their doors against them, so meetings were usually held in public houses. In this way organised religion lost another opportunity to influence the industrial masses. The societies themselves had noble aspirations to relieve hardship among the poor which inevitably accompanied sickness or death, but a quasi-religious ritual was no substitute for business acumen, and it is a wonder so many of them

survived.

The Sons of Temperance survived as the result of internal reforms in the 1880s which introduced graduated contributions in place of a flat rate for all comers; at the same time individual branches no longer retained the money they collected, thus guaranteeing a common fund for paying benefit. The Sons boasted a membership of 7,250 adults and 4,907 cadets in the Hull District in 1906 (42). An adult membership of 10,897 in 1913 rivalled the 13,145 in the state scheme created by the 1911 National Insurance Act.

Other friendly societies made little progress in these years and there were many lapses. The temperance issue, however, continued to motivate the Sons, providing an outlet for social action and individual moral improvement. A reliable type of contributor was attracted by their aims and the accepted methods of religious revivalism were still popular, big meetings (the largest attracted over 600 in Pearson Park in 1900), and door to door canvasses. The latter were increasingly neglected by religious abstainers in favour of public meetings and visiting speakers. The Sons had their own Prize Band which drew the crowds into the parks. Two Sunday afternoon concerts in East and West Park in 1910 marked the secularization of the movement; at that period, large numbers of Primitive Methodists were signing petitions to ban such events, lest Sunday School children should play truant. The concerts were held in support of the Hull and Sculcoates Dispensary Working Men's Committee, a cause unlikely to catch the eye of Church or Chapel.

The Licensing Bill of 1906 was a catalyst which made joint temperance work a reality. A Hull Citizen's Committee was formed under the secretaryship of Bertram Fox, district superintendent of the United Kingdom Alliance, to support the Bill's proposals. William

Owen, a barrister, was chairman and the Rev. Robert Harrison, superintendent of one of Hull's seven Primitive Methodist circuits, was treasurer. They were joined by a long list of representative citizens which included 50 ministers and clergy, but only five were Anglican. Hull was overwhelmingly a Nonconformist city and the leaders of local opinion were a triumvirate of Methodist laymen led by Thomas Ferens, the Wesleyan industrialist, philanthropist, and Liberal MP. The others were Joseph Rank, the wealthy New Connexion corn miller with a house in London (he and Ferens were vice-presidents of the United Kingdom Alliance), and Alfred Gelder, the architect and Hull's first town planner. Between them they designed, built and paid for most of the new chapels of this period.

The Rev. A.B.G. Lillingstone, vicar of Holy Trinity and a recent convert to the cause, also played a leading part in the campaign. Only a year before, when he was invited by Bertram Fox to address an open-air meeting, he sent a hastily scrawled note seeking reassurance that his appearance would not identify him with party politics; the Alliance was too political, which meant too Liberal, for Lillingstone's taste. The Established Church in Hull was still nervous of the risk of religious or political contamination. Lillingstone agreed on this occasion, however, to be one of three platform chairmen at two mass meetings in support of the Licensing Bill, addressed by distinguished visitors from other parts of the country, at which 18,000 names and addresses were collected in support. The largest single subscription, £50, was from Ferens.

The petition was the climax of the 'big meeting' in Hull; doubts were beginning to be expressed about the effectiveness of such events. When Bertram Fox wrote again to Rank in 1911 to seek his support for a

conference of temperance workers in Hull, Rank expressed his own doubts as to the value of such efforts. As he saw it, they only resulted in a lot of 'patting on the back.' Rank favoured a return to the methods of earlier days. Time would be better spent, he wrote, in direct temperance work, visiting people in their homes and persuading them to sign the pledge. He enclosed a donation of one guinea (43).

Measures of Success

Statistics from police records need to be approached with caution. Those arrested for drunkenness were in the street or in a public house where the police had been called to deal with a disorder. This would omit most people from the higher ranks of society. At the same time, a small number of convictions may indicate a lax police force; a large number might suggest the reverse. The actual number arrested in the 1870s is lower than that in the 1840s which, allowing for the increase in population, could denote an distinct improvement as the century progressed, aided by an increase in temperance activities.

The percentages for 1900-14, however, are only 0.1 per cent better than those of 1845, when allowance is made for the increase in population (Appendix XII).

Late 1830s	- 1.3 per cent
1845	- 0.8 per cent
1880s	- 0.2 per cent
1900s	- 0.7 per cent

The majority of arrests took place on Sunday, in spite of efforts to close public houses or restrict opening hours on that day. The peak age of offenders

in mid-century was around 30 years, and of a list of about 100 occupations in 1845 the chief offenders were 131 labourers, 121 sailors and 114 of no occupation. Only five 'gentlemen,' one attorney and one surgeon were arrested that year (44). The chief offenders against sobriety, like most other offenders, were from the poorest classes, labourers and the unemployed.

Temperance workers believed, with good cause, that the number of licensed premises was a key factor, especially the clubs which compounded the mischief begun in the public houses. Fox compared Hull with Cardiff, to Hull's detriment (45). In Cardiff there was one licenced premises per 440 people: in Hull one per 320. The police returns in Hull cited an average of 1,985 cases of drunkenness between 1900 and 1914; Fox's estimate was 2,697 a year, 10.95 per cent of the population. He recommended the Hull magistrates to suppress one-third of the city's 'off-licences,' still leaving one within a hundred yards of every licensed house but, he believed, it would minimise one of the chief causes of female intemperance (46). The number of licences in each ward ranged from one per 61 inhabitants in the Old Town to one per 1,075 at the opposite extreme. There were at least 890 public houses of one sort or another in Hull at the end of the century for a population of over 200,000, about one per 225 of the population (47).

Post War Temperance

After the First World War the number apprehended for drunkenness dropped to 702 by 1924 (Appendix XII), but the temperance business continued as it had done before. Big events were organised by the same pre-war notabilities who were, after all, Victorians who could not see the approaching collapse of Nonconformity. One

of the most spectacular events of the post war years, when it seemed to many that everything was returning to normal, was the United Kingdom Band of Hope 52nd Annual Autumn Conference held in Hull from 20th to 26th September, 1924. It was a lavish affair with rail travel concessions, an endless round of meetings, visits, tours, concerts, pageants and church services at which special sermons were preached in almost every church and chapel in the district. The Band of Hope was valued as much in the Church of England as in Nonconformity. Hull's president was the Rev. Edwin Dalton, D.D. of Hull Primitive Methodist First Circuit; the Primitive Methodists now had eight circuits. Thomas Ferens was vice-president and Joseph Rank ex-president (48).

It may be argued that habitual drunkenness is more damaging to persons, families and the community than opening shops or travelling on Sunday; yet it is clear that sabbatarianism was the bigger issue in Hull in terms of the number of people involved. It is also true that Hull, religious and secular, was more successful in dealing with the latter problem as it saw it. The temperance movement, however, is particularly significant as an example of how a divided religious community, which began by ignoring the matter or by trying to pursue it on separate denominational lines, was in the end driven into co-operation. But the problem of co-operation between the secular and the religious was never finally resolved. The century ended with the religious arm of the movement diluted by association with the secular arm, but in command of the field.

Chapter Twelve

AGAINST PROSTITUTION

Victorians called prostitution 'this great social evil,' yet it thrived chiefly on the deep divisions between wealth and poverty in nineteenth-century society. It could be a source of desperately needed income to the poor; some among the rich commercial class, in the language of the counting house, attributed it to the laws of supply and demand, while others discovered in its widespread practice an uncovenanted method of safeguarding their family and property against misappropriation. Those who benefited from these arrangements, representatives of their class, were rich men and poor women. The rich in Hull who frequented prostitutes were largely the men of business. In addition there were paid-off seamen, temporarily flush with money when on shore leave and starved of female company; there were even some of the very poor who seemed to be able to find money for solace with drink and prostitutes, to the detriment of their wives and children.

The Poor

In 1849, when the Rev. Newman Hall came to Hull to begin his pastorate at Albion Congregational Chapel, several thousand people died in a great cholera epidemic. His first impressions of the town remained with him to the end of his life, the funeral processions which passed his windows all day long and

far into the night, deaths increasing from 40 to 700 a week, the religious services held in the churches every night and sometimes in the streets. A week was set aside for fasting, prayer and repentance. The sins to which the plague was attributed included sabbath-breaking, infidelity, popery and drunkenness; no mention was made of prostitution. In his autobiography, Newman Hall suggested that a more likely cause of the pestilence which stalked the streets lay in the numberless small houses crowded together in order to produce as much rent as possible, without regard to sanitation. Each newly built street quickly became an open water course (1).

Hall's observations on poverty and exploitation were confirmed by a series of enquiries into the social conditions of the working classes in the winter of 1849-50. Written evidence, mostly supplied by the parish clergy, portrayed a vivid picture of poverty in Hull among those just above pauper level (2). The large majority of the houses for the 7,000 people in St Mark's district were mere tenements, old, low, sunk and damp with a step down on entering; there were mercifully few cellars in this part of the town because the ground was low-lying. The vicar of St Mark's, the Rev. H. Ward divided the poor into separate castes: the 'lowest, reckless and improvident characters' worked in the newly established cotton mills in his parish. Widows took in lodgers at 1s 6d a week, frequently young people between 16 and 18 who had quarrelled with their parents and left home. 50 or 60 cases of women deserted by their husbands were found in one small area and mobs of dirty children who attended no school roamed the streets. They were put to work at nine years old, the earliest age permitted by the Factory Acts. Marriage between minors was common and very often neither the couple nor the witnesses could sign

their names.

Conditions were much the same in other districts. St Paul's was peopled mainly by labourers, many of whom also worked in the cotton mills. Single women lodged two, four or six to a house. Even in the Christ Church district, boasting some of the most respectable streets in Hull, there were densely crowded areas with many unemployed who were glad to obtain work, if only for two or three days a week, to avoid the workhouse. Clothes, furniture and anything which raised money were regularly pawned in order to buy food, and in some cases drink. Matters were even worse in St Stephen's area where many inhabitants were temporary lodgers, occupying a room at so much a night and moving on after a day or two. Some made small domestic articles for sale; many were unemployed bricklayers hoping for a job in the public works on the docks. By the 1850s the large houses in Mill Street were let off in single rooms, some occupied by three families at the same time. Among the worst and most degraded, said the Rev. John Deck's lay assistant, were the Irish who accounted for nine or ten per cent of the district's population.

There were 5,068 paupers in Hull in November 1849, over 6 per cent of the population, but pauperism by itself did not reveal the full extent of poverty. Many others eked out a precarious existence on insufficient means, often unable to obtain work; at other times in work which barely provided subsistence (3). Illness or an accident was a disaster in such households. Work for the majority in Hull was intermittent or seasonal. Most of those who worked in the seed-crushing and oil mills were likely to be employed only six or eight months of the year. Hull's economy depended on the general state of trade and on imports from northern Europe where the Baltic froze every winter.

Worst-off were the 'lumpers' who unloaded the

ships; employed casually by master lumpers who contracted to unload a vessel, they might be employed between one and three days, rarely a whole week together even at the busiest times. Wages averaged between 3s and 4s a week and a large part of this meagre sum was often spent on drink. Bricklayers were better off, earning about £1 1s a week in winter and £1 4s in summer. There were, however, only about 250 bricklayers in the town during the winter of 1849-50, and a 100 of these were without work. As there was employment for no more than nine months of the year, the average wage for a bricklayer was reduced to about 17s a week. This was still far better than that of the poorest workers, but an irregular income was a recipe for trouble for all but the most provident household manager.

The slum conditions in Britain's industrial areas were, if anything, worse by the end of the nineteenth century; no action had resulted from the reports of Hull's clergy in 1849. Clergy and scripture readers investigated the housing of the poor again in 1883, this time under the leadership of the Rev. J. Malet Lambert, vicar of St John's Newland, one of Hull's leading campaigners for education and sanitary reform. A great deal of prostitution and other forms of vice were uncovered, but Malet Lambert firmly believed that only the eradication of squalor would lead to moral improvement, unlike his predecessors forty years before who, in the wisdom of their times, regarded poverty and squalor to be largely the fault of those who chose to endure them.

So long as these crowded dwellings exist the poorest classes must necessarily be forced into them often in close contact with the most repulsive forms of vice ... These influences must be so continuous and powerful as to render an improvement in their physical condition a necessary prelude to

any general moral or religious improvement (4).

The worst conditions were in the older parts of the dock area where houses, packed into tiny courts, were let in single rooms. Each court was approached by a dark begrimed-walled passage often ankle deep in sewer water. The first passage opened out into a court running left and right, bounded by filthy privies. In front was a second passage leading to a further court. The shock of seeing such squalid poverty explained to one investigator the life and character of those who were obliged to live in such conditions; life as he knew it simply could not be lived there (5). Some were labourers on 10s or 12s a week; other inhabitants were hawkers of vegetables, rabbits, fish and other perishable articles. The rest just lived from hand to mouth, 'begged, stole, held a horse or carried a box,' people who were better known than any others to the police and the local public house barmen.

In outlying districts like Newington, still semi-rural in character, the jerry-built houses were made worse by blocked drains, spouts and sink-wastes, stagnant water in the cellars, and rows of filthy cowsheds and piggeries interspersed with lakes of water in disused brick pits used as rubbish dumps (6). The Hull Sanitary Association was formed in 1884, largely as the result of Malet Lambert's efforts, but real progress in adapting houses for water sanitation had to wait until after the First World War.

In linking squalor with vice, Malet Lambert showed greater insight and sympathy than his predecessors of forty years before. They were disposed to regard the lower orders as an alien species, naturally given to depravity unless kept in check by those set over them. Lambert failed, however, to draw the conclusions of Rowntree's study of poverty in York, where it was clear

that no working-class housewife could hope to provide the basic necessities her family needed from her husband's wages alone. As a consequence she was left with three possibilities if she were not to prostitute herself. She could starve herself and her children so that her husband, the breadwinner, had enough to eat, she could take in a lodger or take in work. Those in the most desperate circumstances attempted all three at once (7). Taking in work entailed intolerable personal cost. Rowntree cites the example of a shirtmaker who had five hours to make a shirt. If she started at six o'clock in the morning she might have three completed by nine o'clock at night, for which she was paid 4s a week less the cost of cotton and candles, leaving 2s 6d for a week's work of fifteen hours a day (8).

Conditions in the sweated trades changed little between the 1840s and the 1890s; this was why the trades of milliner, needlewoman and other low-paid female occupations were associated in the public mind with prostitution. In these circumstances it is easy to understand the powerful attractions of prostitution for an unmarried girl with no prospects of permanent employment. Life on the streets seemed to offer an escape from poverty, and might even provide the odd luxury, impossible in a working-class home, a new dress or an item of jewellery. Not for nothing were young women warned by their betters against 'love of finery.'

The Rich

Middle-class Victorian attitudes towards sexuality were ambivalent. Aristocrats had a long tradition of keeping mistresses and frequenting high-class courtesans. The poor were easy going, often married early in life, and observed or experienced sexual intercourse at even more tender years in their

overcrowded slum tenements. The middle classes, on the other hand, pushed sex below the surface of respectable family and social life by expunging it from their literature and from all polite conversation, at home or outside. As a consequence their daughters grew up with little or no knowledge of the 'facts of life' and often unprepared for the shock of their wedding night.

Almost all recorded opinions on such matters, in a patriarchal, commercial society were expressed in terms of a male sexuality, which alleged that most respectable women were not troubled by any kind of sexual feelings. The modest woman, it was said, did not wish to be on the same footing as a mistress and seldom desired sexual satisfaction. She dutifully submitted to her husband merely to please him and for the sake of having children (9). Problems arose if an unmarried woman was aroused by the alleged overpowering sexuality which men attributed to themselves. This was why a 'fallen' woman was so severely condemned by respectable people; she had tasted forbidden fruit and so might be tempted to make a habit of it. If she belonged to the servant class, thrown out by her employer and shunned by her family, prostitution was her only means of survival.

Victorian sexuality is traditionally associated with repression and hypocrisy. The former is arguable, since it is impossible to know how many marriages were happy and fulfilled (10). Hypocrisy, however, was inevitable so long as the better-off were able to purchase sex from the lower orders and at the same time condemn them for their promiscuity (11). Attitudes towards prostitution in bourgeois, capitalist Hull could never be less than ambivalent and frequently hypocritical. Every married woman, even if independently rich before marriage, surrendered all her independence on her wedding day; her wealth and

property became her husband's. All the women in the household, wife, daughters, sisters were the property of the husband and father, protected from the outside world under his authority. Ambivalence towards prostitution was encouraged by the practice of late marriage among Victorian businessmen who wished first to accumulate enough wealth to set up the kind of matrimonial household expected of a successful man. Thus the prostitute, with astonishing irony, became a bulwark for the protection of property and an upholder of the sanctity of family life. William Lecky, the historian and philosopher, wrote in 1869,

Herself the supreme type of vice, she is ultimately the most efficient guarantee of virtue. But for her, the unchallenged purity of countless happy homes would be polluted ... On that one degraded and ignoble form are concentrated the passions that might have filled the world with shame. She remains, while creeds and civilizations rise and fall, the eternal priestess of humanity, blasted for the sins of the people (12).

Lecky deplored the existence of 'not less than forty thousand unhappy women' in England, sunk, he said 'in the very lowest depths of vice and misery.' It was these women, nevertheless, who protected the purity of the family, made certain the paternity of the children a man supported, and guaranteed the rightful inheritance of his property. Men who subscribed to Lecky's point of view, late-marrying men of property, put paternity and inheritance before the risks of contracting sexually transmitted diseases. Such frank admissions confirm the double standards expected of men and women, and account for the reluctance of Hull's property-owning classes to give material support for Evangelical efforts to combat prostitution. No one dared openly admit that prostitution was other than a foul and degrading vice, but the fact that it was

'unspeakable' made it a reliable form of security in a society dedicated to mercantile interests.

The Prostitutes

Prostitutes in York began their activities between the ages of 15 and 20 in the 1840s, and their life expectancy was short. The Chief Superintendent of Glasgow reckoned the average duration of a prostitute's career was five years, usually ending in death, the result of an extremely dissolute life (13). William Acton, a mid-Victorian doctor who has since been proved wrong over most matters connected with the subject, was of the opinion that prostitutes by no means always died miserable deaths, often rejoining respectable society after a few years and frequently getting married (14). It was an over-optimistic view, in the light of the poverty and degradation suffered by all but the most 'successful' few. Acton and other contemporary commentators did admit poverty to be among the chief causes for the continuance of prostitution but Acton, a great believer in the laws of supply and demand, put poverty at the bottom of the list of causes (15). Samuel Bracebridge, however, whose views generally differed little from Acton's, declared that low wages, inadequate for their sustenance were the first cause of prostitution and of lax morality 'among female operatives' (16). Out of 3,734 disorderly prostitutes taken into custody in 1860, he found that one third had no occupation and that half were launderesses, milliners, servants, shoe-makers and tailors. In other words, they came from the lowest paid trades. Bracebridge's findings suggest that two-thirds were part-time prostitutes, attempting to augment their inadequate wages (17), while Mayhew's enquiries among

slop-workers and needlewomen confirm that poverty was the chief cause of prostitution (18).

Police returns usually account only for disorderly prostitutes, so it is not easy to be sure how many there were. Acton cited the police returns for the London Metropolitan area in 1857 at 3,325 brothels and 8,600 prostitutes. Mayhew and Bracebridge in Prostitution in London (1861) estimated that there were 80,000 prostitutes in the capital, while Lord Gage, at a meeting of the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Prostitution 'exclusive of the city,' assumed there were 1,000 brothels in London and 100,000 prostitutes, but these were only informed guesses (19).

A deputation from the Institute for Improving and Enforcing Laws for the Protection of Women, visited Hull in 1850 and estimated the number of houses of ill repute at 5,000 in London, 355 in Dublin, 219 in Edinburgh, 200 in Glasgow and about 200 in Hull (20); so for its size, Hull was in the big league. Hull police returns for 1845, however, recorded charges against only one brothel keeper and 37 prostitutes (Appendix XIII). Police returns between 1879 and 1883 show an average of 221 houses where prostitutes were kept, or where they went for accommodation. The number of prostitutes known to the police in the same period averaged 519 a year. Between 1878 and 1888 an average of 245 prostitutes were proceeded against each year, but by the First World War the number arrested in Hull dropped to fewer than 30. A fall in the number of prostitutes in the early years of the twentieth century might be attributed to a general rise in the prosperity of the port, but statistics for arrests, as noted in the case of drunkenness, are an unreliable guide to what was actually happening. An increase in the number of ships passing through the port in the second half of

the nineteenth century would be likely to increase the demand for prostitution, and a rise in commercial prosperity rarely improved the lot of the unskilled poor in industrial cities.

The brothel keepers and low publicans who preyed on Hull's seafaring population were known as 'sharks,' but many of their victims were men from other ports who, having signed off in Hull, soon found no more than the rail fare to London or Liverpool left in their pockets (21). The number of persons charged with crime of any sort in Hull in 1849 was 3,700, 1,080 of them under the age of 25. Only one in five were women or girls, but 627 were prostitutes (22), no doubt charged more than once in that year.

Hull prostitutes, like some of their seamen clients, were not always local. The Society for the Relief of Really Deserving Distressed Foreigners reported the streets to be thronged with foreign pedlars and musicians, often attracted by the delusion that England was a land flowing with milk and honey. Parents in the German states were warned of the vast numbers of girls who were taken to England every year for prostitution (23), like the case of the Hull sailor who procured a 17 year old German girl to work in the brothel kept by him and his wife. He told her she would be a servant in his public house and assured her how well servants were treated in England compared with Germany (24). The prosecution of two German girls for assaulting their employer brought to light a thriving trade in girls who were brought to Hull for prostitution. One witness in the case, Johann Landherst, a frequent visitor to the port, regularly brought girls from Germany, and large numbers of them settled in Scale Lane and Bishop Lane, hard by St Mary's Church (25).

Prostitutes and brothels were not confined to the docks area; they could be found in almost any part of the town, even in a very respectable area like Linnaeus Street off Anlaby Road. Nor were prostitutes in Hull always as old as the 15 to 20 year-olds in York. One Hull brothel keeper who kept five houses in one street specialized in procuring very young girls. Five 'apprentice' prostitutes under 14 were found in another house (26), and the trade was even more blatant by the end of the century. Prostitutes from the brothels on the main thoroughfares near Paragon railway station openly paraded the streets from 11 o'clock in the morning until midnight. Their numbers increased as the day advanced, ending in drunken brawls after midnight (27). The Hull Critic, a scurrilous and conservative weekly, was notorious for seeking out scandal and corruption, and always ready to accuse the police of failing to take action. It hinted at the existence of a number of high-class prostitutes who were immune from police investigation. 'What about the gilded butterflies who openly traffic in champagne and are known to the police,' asked the Critic, 'Is there one law for a courtesan in silk and furs and another for one in rags?' (28).

Whatever the truth in these allegations, the majority of prostitutes were found in the areas most associated with poverty, and it is likely that many of their clients were from the labouring classes (29), augmented by paid-off seamen. Hull stipendiary magistrate, T.H.Travis, reported that there were 306 brothels known to the police in 1869 (30). The same year, Hull also had 309 gin shops and 287 beerhouses (31), but it is impossible to be accurate in regard to the number of prostitutes, or to know how many were part-time or how many gave false occupations when asked

by investigators.

A modern researcher, in a valuable study of women in Hull in the 1880s, has suggested a way of identifying prostitutes from census returns (32). On the night of the 1881 census young women in Hull were counted as living with parents, living with kin, in service, boarding, lodging, or visiting. Prostitutes were more likely to be boarders or lodgers; a boarder occupied a separate room, but a lodger lived with the family and shared family meals (33).

In a sample of 272 women taken from all districts of the town, between the ages of 15 and 19, two per cent were boarders and six per cent were lodgers. Among another group of 179 women, aged 20 to 24, six per cent were boarders and 8.5 per cent were lodgers (34). The female boarders were mostly found in respectable working-class areas, but the female lodgers were mainly in the overcrowded slum areas associated with prostitution (35).

The census returns for Cook's Buildings, a late eighteenth-century street, in conjunction with contemporary press reports, suggest that most of the female residents were prostitutes, had been in the past, or still benefited from it financially. In the street's twenty dwellings most households consisted of young single or unattached women. 109 persons made up 60 households on census night; 70 adult females, 18 adult men, and 21 children from three months to 13 years (36). If most of the 70 adult women were prostitutes or brothel keepers, then the average of 245 prostitutes per year proceeded against between 1878 and 1888 (Appendix XIII) represented only a fraction of the total.

The Church

In 1796 William Wilberforce encouraged Evangelicals to support the Society for Bettering the Condition and Increasing the Comforts of the Poor, in an effort to convince those who crusaded on behalf of negro slaves that they should also concern themselves with the moral and spiritual welfare of the suffering poor at home. He recognized the connection between vice and economic conditions, but placed his emphasis firmly on the side of a crusade to purify the morals of the age (37). The battle to suppress prostitution, however, came only third on the list of the Society for the Suppression of Vice's aims, linked with private theatricals, fairs, dram shops, gaming houses, illegal lotteries and fortune-tellers (38).

The Rev. Thomas Dikes, inspired by the launching of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, preached a sermon in St John's Church, Hull in 1804, 'On the Abounding of Open Profligacy and Immorality,' in the hope of encouraging the foundation of a similar society in the town. Sex and the French Revolution were the twin demons which distressed his mind. The root cause of the increase of sin, most of it sexual in nature, Dikes attributed to the demoralizing and unsettling effects of the Revolution, but it took another sermon three years later by his curate, John Scott, preached to the magistrates, before Hull's own Society was established (39). Hull's own Society for the Suppression of Vice made clear at its first meeting that its objective was to enforce the laws against vice and immorality 'when friendly admonition' failed (40). Its efforts were directed chiefly against profanation of the Lord's Day, disorderly houses of every description, lewdness, drunkenness and profane swearing. It soon began to make special efforts against 'the most ruinous vice of prostitution' and to

discover and prosecute brothel keepers. It proved impossible to make any real impact on reducing the numbers of prostitutes, but there was enough success in the early days to create the promise of greater triumphs to come. There were three indictments of prostitutes in the first year of the society's activities, and seven in the second, two of whom were sentenced to three months solitary confinement. Some landlords were encouraged to clear their houses of prostitutes, and it looked for a time as if the combination of informer and sympathetic magistrate would do for prostitution what it did for Sunday closing, but there was no comparison in the number of cases involved. The society's twenty-four man committee included Dikes and Scott, joined by the Rev. John Clarke, another of Dikes' curates, the Rev. George Lambert of Fish Street Chapel and Dikes' friend, Avison Terry, the Evangelical Baltic merchant.

Hull's clergy never shrank from attacking sexual sins from the pulpit, either to raise money for work among the sinners or to draw a moral lesson for the edification of their flock. Advance notice of a sermon on such matters guaranteed a packed church. A case of great notoriety in 1810 had all the ingredients to attract a modern tabloid reporter. Mary Lockham, a young woman of 19, was charged with the murder of her illegitimate child, and was to be tried for her life at York Assizes. Notice of a forthcoming sermon on the subject at the Sunday evening lecture in Holy Trinity (41) drew such a crowd that many were unable to get in to hear the Rev. John Scott's 'most impressive and pathetic discourse' (42), so it was repeated on the following Tuesday in St John's Church. Such 'discourses', like the lecture of a travelling temperance evangelist, afforded an opportunity for the entertainment of the populace, but with the added

attraction of prurience.

Scott's sermon, 'The Fatal Consequences of Licentiousness,' to judge from a fragment which remains (43), showed pity and sympathy for the young woman's predicament; Mary Lockham was the victim of seduction and betrayal, but the declared purpose of his discourse was to use her case as an example to instruct his hearers. Scott and Dikes visited the unhappy young woman many times in Hull gaol before she was removed to York to await her trial, at which she was acquitted. Dikes became acquainted with her parents, whom he described as very honest, industrious and sober people. It was the familiar story of an honest woman seduced and deserted by her lover. The fact that Mary was not a slut convinced Dikes of 'the awful consequences of debauchery;' no other sin in his mind produced so many evil consequences (44). The clergy, and others of their class, regarded seduction as the inevitable first step on the road to prostitution, but this is another example where evidence is unreliable (45).

Scott, however, was convinced of the connection, and preached a sermon the following year 'for the purpose of relieving some, at least, of those unhappy women who have been betrayed into the habitual practice of the most degrading of all vices' (46). Its long title, 'The fatal tendency of Lewdness to corrupt the Morals, and destroy the Happiness of Society, exposed; and the establishment of a Female Penitentiary recommended, etc.,' makes Scott's purpose clear, and his self-confessed partial remedy. Talk of a 'Female Penitentiary' makes equally clear where respectable society laid most of the blame.

Although the clergy did not hesitate to enlarge on these uncomfortable topics from the pulpit in the early years of the century, they were conscious of the indelicacy of speaking openly about such matters to a

mixed audience, the larger proportion women of the better class. Dikes' sermon had dwelt on the evil of the sin which he purposed to treat, on the enormous miseries which resulted and the wickedness to which it gave birth, but he hoped his discourse would not offend 'the nicest sense of decorum.' His biographer, writing at mid-century when these matters were no longer referred to in polite company, felt he was not entirely successful in his endeavour (47). By the end of the century even greater circumlocution was called for in dealing with sexual topics. The High Church vicar of St Augustine's, the Rev. W.H. Abraham, managed to deliver a sermon on marriage without mentioning sex at all (48).

Dikes' and Scott's efforts led to the formation of a female penitentiary in the Wincomlee district on the banks of the river Hull. At a meeting on its first anniversary on 11 April 1812, Dikes dwelt at length on the vice which, in his opinion, had long been Hull's disgrace. He doubted if any town in the kingdom was worse infected, and called for 'those unhappy women' to be reclaimed (49). In spite of such advocacy, the institution was always short of money, even though the inmates were obliged to work for their keep, and it was forced to close when funds ran out in 1826.

This type of activity, however, remained the main weapon in Evangelical Hull's fight against prostitution for the rest of the century. On Dikes' death in 1847, John Scott took over the leadership. The Penitentiary opened and closed several times, usually through shortage of money. It was one of those activities which the church undertook, unnoticed by the majority, while the ambivalent-minded, well-off middle classes, through embarrassment or indifference, disregarded the clergy's appeals for support. The passionate appeals ceased after Dikes' and Scott's generation; there no

longer seemed any point. The work was continued largely by the clergy, assisted by a few female disciples. Every time the penitentiary closed through shortage of funds, it eventually reopened to take in a larger catchment area. Hull became 'Hull and the East Riding,' then 'Hull, the East Riding and North Lincolnshire.' It may have been that the other areas were even less successful than Hull in persuading their leading citizens to support the work, or perhaps it was so difficult to get Hull's prostitutes into the penitentiary that there were always vacancies for those from the the East Riding and Lincolnshire.

Those who entered the penitentiary were expected to stay for up to two years, but numbers were very small compared with the number of known prostitutes. 27 entered in 1843 (50) and 81 in 1865 (51). 489 were admitted between 1837 and 1865 (52), an average of little over 17 a year. 145 were placed in service, 99 were restored to their friends, 86 were dismissed and 60 absconded. The success rate was barely 50 per cent, in spite of carefully screening those who were admitted, in order to increase the chances of success (53). The regime was too strict for most. Hard manual work was required to cover the cost of food and clothing and to instil habits of self-discipline. The penitential exercises, the atmosphere of guilt and gloom, were too high a price to pay for all but those with the greatest powers of endurance..

Another kind of house was opened in 1861 at 25 Nile Street, the Hull Temporary Home for Fallen Women, to accommodate 16 women (54). It was the only institution of its type to survive into the 1890s (55), a forerunner of the Church of England's 'moral welfare' work. Its chief originator was the Rev. Andrew Jukes, an ex-Church of England minister. Jukes was ordained deacon to St John's parish in 1842, but left before

ordination to the priesthood because of doubts about baptismal regeneration. Following his baptism at George Street Baptist Chapel, he built Baker Street Chapel at his own expense and set himself up as a minister of the Free Church of England, continuing his studies of the Bible, the Fathers, Boehme and William Law. The publication of Jukes' book in 1868, The Second Death and the Restitution of all things, marked him out as a leading exponent of the doctrine of universal salvation, but led to a controversy with his congregation. He left Hull for Highgate in 1868 where, on rejoining the Church of England, he was drawn into Anglo-Catholicism, but never ordained priest (56). Whether as the result of Jukes' universalist opinions or not, the aims of the Home for Fallen Women were more limited than those of the Penitentiary, and there was less emphasis on the need to be broken of an habitual vice. In Victorian England, however, a 'fallen woman' was regarded as little better than a prostitute.

In its determination to cure, or at least suppress vice, Evangelicalism gave less attention to preventive measures. Mrs L.K. Phillips, wife of the Evangelical vicar of St Philip's in Charlotte Street, discovered this for herself when, in about 1908, she disguised herself as a working woman and investigated at first hand the conditions of the poor and friendless in Hull. After obtaining employment in a jam factory, she and another employee searched for a '4d doss' for the night when work was over. They searched in vain; there were no cheap and respectable lodging houses in Hull for 'women only.' The Working Girls' Club was for those up to the age of 23, and the rescue homes were for those 'who wished to change their undesirable mode of life.' There were a number of places for men, including the Church Army home and the Dockers' Lodging House. A so-called, furnished apartment, was likely to be a bed,

separated from several others by a sheet slung over a piece of string hung across the room. Only the lowest of the low made their homes in such lodgings, and Mrs Phillips found the filthy conditions appalling. A respectable but homeless woman was obliged to go to a 'mixed doss' to obtain cheap lodgings. Cheap and respectable lodging-houses were urgently required for women only in Hull, and Mrs Phillips recommended that a capable woman should be appointed to inspect licensed lodging-houses of this sort (57). If Hull Evangelicals had campaigned for facilities like this for single, homeless women, many might have been saved from prostitution.

Hull's public manners

The Churches were more successful in enforcing Sunday observance than sobriety or purity; Sunday closure was in many people's interests. Shopkeepers in the main streets, unlike the widow in the back street, were not obliged to open seven days a week in order to make a living. Those who freely chose to trade on Sunday were content to pay a modest fine, and the Corporation glad to pocket it. The drink trade had vested interests which the churches were powerless to resist outside their own immediate circles, and any private excesses on the part of the well-off were not so noticeable as those of the poor on the streets. But more subtle and subversive forces were at work in the trade in human flesh, not least in the wretched poverty of the many and the indifference or ambivalent attitudes of the rich. Evangelicals in Hull could only tackle the symptoms; the causes were beyond their influence.

Chapter Thirteen

WHY HULL DID NOT BECOME A PAN-EVANGELICAL CITY

The churches in Hull were opposed by two counter-cultures. One was more impervious to religion, associated with crime and vice, and antichristian. The other counter-culture, often found among the poor, tried to order its life according to the Christianity imbibed at Sunday School and Day School, but chapel or church-going were rarely part of its Christianity, as the religious census figures show. The poor could not see the point of the antagonism between the denominations, and were largely indifferent towards organized religion.

The people of Hull were either well-off or very poor. The rich, whose wealth came mostly from commerce, gave a nominal allegiance to religion and to the values it fostered, and so ensured their own privileged positions and the continued prosperity of their businesses. They expected the poor to know their place, to be respectful, sober and industrious. Education, it was widely believed, was the best way of improving the morals of the poor, so long as it did not go too far and give them ideas above their station. If the children of the poor were educated in accordance with their social status, they would grow into god-fearing citizens without the undesirable criminal tendencies of a section of their class, and to the great satisfaction of churchmen and businessmen.

Such hopes were not without foundation, given the low standards in the most basic elements of education discovered among the inmates of Hull gaol. Ignorance was equated with criminality in the popular mind. But

Hull's poor were trapped in a nexus of disadvantage, and their poverty was made worse by the seasonal nature of employment in a port whose main trade was with the Baltic. Many of the poor lived in the slum conditions which so appalled the Rev. Malet Lambert in 1883, and convinced him that an improvement in their physical condition was a necessary prelude to any moral or religious improvement. Many parents could not afford to send their children to school, unless it were to a Ragged School, while others removed their children from school at the earliest possible age in order to supplement the family income. These children, as a result, were so ill-educated that they were unsuited for any but the most menial tasks, and were trapped in a cycle of poverty. Ignorance meant poverty, which sought relief either from charity or from crime. Vice and drunkenness were also endemic in Hull, as they were in all major seaports, but there was a great deal of prostitution in Hull for a town of its size, and it would continue, so long as the great disparities between wealth and poverty remained.

Much of Hull proved to be an intractable environment for the cultivation of religion in the nineteenth century. The minimum degree of respectability which would have made the poor feel welcome and at home in church was beyond the reach of most, and the demands of Sabbath observance expected by the clergy were all but impossible for the majority, who worked long hours and were paid on a Saturday night. The gap between the churches and the poor was greater at mid-century, when the churches which had once laboured among them moved up the social scale and became respectable themselves. The counter-culture triumphed in the long term, and the increasing ineffectiveness of organized religion in Hull was made

worse by rivalry among the churches over politics and the education of the poor.

Joseph Milner may have owed his Evangelical conversion to the Countess of Huntingdon's missionaries in Fish Street Chapel, but the French Revolution cooled his warmth towards Dissenters whom he suspected of radicalism. His successor as leader of Hull's Evangelicals, Thomas Dikes, believed that Dissenting hostility towards the Establishment was a permanent stumbling block to co-operation between the Church of England and Dissent, even over matters where they were of the same mind, such as the distribution of Bibles among the poor. The Established Church, for Dikes, was the guardian of civil society; its religious services were calculated to maintain peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety. And although Dikes was strongly anti-Catholic, he saw no purpose in an alliance with Dissent against Rome.

Hull's Dissenting businessmen, conservative in politics, resented the unfair privileges of the Establishment, which for long had denied them public office. The French Revolution made life for Dissenters more difficult because, whether they supported the Revolution in its early stages or not, they were suspect to the Establishment; at best they risked Government disfavour, at worst mob violence.

The successful expansion of Dissent in the first decade of the nineteenth century increased the Establishment's suspicions and dislike. The clear lead of Dissenters over the Church of England in Hull as early as 1834 would have made the latter a junior partner, at least numerically, in any rapprochement between Church and Dissent. But the failure of the two Evangelical bodies, so close to each other socially and politically, to act jointly in providing for the

religious and social needs of the growing town, was a tragedy from which neither recovered. The Dissenting desire for freedom of religion was confused in the minds of Churchmen with imported ideas of democracy, which they feared would result in the collapse of the social order.

Eighteenth-century Methodism ministered chiefly to artisans and the poor, and remained part of the Church of England during Wesley's life time. It continued a similar ministry during the first half of the nineteenth century, and many Methodists in Hull continued to see themselves as very close to the Church of England. But Methodism, like Old Dissent, was politically suspect from the Establishment's point of view, because it was closely associated with about one fifth of the most politicized section of the lower orders. Methodists also protested their political loyalty and denounced radicalism. At the same time, after the religious dynamism of Methodism burst out of the confines of the Established Church and fractured into separate pieces, combined Methodism became the largest religious body in Hull. There were almost 12,000 Wesleyans and 9,000 Primitive Methodists attending chapel each week by the end of the century, and Wesleyans were the Liberal Nonconformist Establishment of Hull in place of the once dominant Tory Evangelicalism.

Old Dissent began outside the Church, Methodism from within. Dissenters, although of similar social standing to Anglicans, remained outside. Methodists departed from the Established Church as a Society, and grew into separate Churches, but by the end of the nineteenth century, as noted, Nonconformity generally had become respectable, and the poor were outside the influence of most organized religion.

In spite of its obsessive fears of Catholic aspirations, the Church of England in Hull was unable to form a pan-Evangelical alliance with Nonconformity against Rome, and its isolation and its fears increased. It seemed to the Church of England that social and political differences still stood in the way of such an alliance, even in the face of the supposed Catholic threats to supplant the Established Church and to place a Catholic monarch on England's throne. Nonconformists like the Rev. Newman Hall of Albion Congregational Church, on the other hand, although anti-Catholic in outlook, were charitably disposed towards individual Catholics who, like themselves, seemed to be mainly seeking religious freedom.

Fear for the safety of the established order remained at the root of the Church's distrust of Dissenters until about 1850. In the second half of the century, education became the chief bone of contention between them, and arguably the main reason which drove Church and Dissent into mutually hostile camps for another century. The clergy believed it was their inalienable right, as ministers of the Church by Law Established, to educate the poor. Only so could they be kept in order, have a proper respect for those set over them, and be inculcated with the doctrines of true religion. When it became obvious that the demands of universal elementary education were too great for the resources of the churches, even when supplemented by government grants, the Church of England and Nonconformity fought each other bitterly, each attempting to gain the greatest advantage for itself. After the Education Acts of 1870 and 1902, the Church of England still saw itself as the rightful guardian of the nation's morals, beginning with its responsibility to educate the poor. The clergy believed that the so-

called privileges of the Establishment were vested in the Church for that high purpose. Nonconformists, on the other hand, wanted religious freedom and the right to educate their children in their own way. The resulting bitterness eventually spilled over into civil disobedience, when certain Primitive Methodists chose to go to prison rather than pay the compulsory education rate.

Throughout the period treated in this study, there were men and women on all sides who were prepared to commit themselves unreservedly to what they believed to be right. The tragedy was that the things which divided equally sincere people were more important to them than what they held in common. At the end, Church, and especially Chapel at the pinnacle of its power, could not foresee the approaching collapse of organized religion. Religious people in Hull in their divided and consequent vulnerable state were less prepared for the holocaust than they might otherwise have been, and were chiefly occupied with the internal affairs of their own denominations. Today, with the hindsight of almost a century, it makes a sad story.

APPENDIX I

HULL DOCKS

Queen's Dock (10 acres) 1778
Humber Dock (7 acres) 1809
Prince's Dock (6 acres) 1829
Railway Dock (3 acres) 1846
Victoria Dock (23 acres) 1850
Albert Dock (23 acres) 1869
William Wright Dock (5 acres) 1880
St Andrew's Dock (10 acres) 1883
Alexandra Dock (46 acres) 1883
Riverside Quay 1907
King George Dock (62 acres) 1914
Salt End Jetties 1914
Queen Elizabeth Dock (28 acres) 1969

APPENDIX II

CHURCH AND CHAPEL ATTENDANCES 1834 *

Denomination	Chs	Sits	Attend	Comm	S/S
Par. Chs.	4	4,300	2,400	248	1,200
C.of Ease	4	5,500	4,000	520	-
Total C of E	8	9,800	6,400	768	1,200
Independents	6	5,750	3,100	783	666
Baptists	3	1,700	1,000	320	199
Wes. Meth.	7	5,530	4,760	2,540	1,339
Prim. Meth.	1	1,250	1,000	300	126
Ind. Meth.	1	750	350	100	-
New Conn. Meth.	1	1,000	700	300	220
Quakers	1	300	150	-	-
Roman Cath.	1	600	450	350	90
Unitarians	1	500	300	60	120
Swedenborgians	1	500	250	?	-
Sailors' Chapel	1	600	350	-	-
Jews	1	100	40	-	-
Total Nonconf. and others	25	18,630	12,450	4,663	2,760

* T.Stratten, Review of the Hull Eccesliastical
Controversy, p.44

Chs - Number of churches and chapels
Sits - Number of sittings
Attend - Average Sunday attendance
Comm - Number of regular communicants
S/S - Number of Sunday School children

APPENDIX III

Social structure in the eighteenth century - Joseph Massie's enumeration of 1760.

- A. Spiritual and temporal lords, baronets, knights, esquires, gentlemen.
- B. Clergy, lawyers, those in liberal arts, civil, naval and military officers.
- C. Freeholders, farmers.
- D. Merchants, tradesmen, innkeepers.
- E. Manufacturers.
- F. Labourers, husbandmen, cottagers, seamen, fishermen, common soldiers.

All Methodism 1740-90

A	B	C	D	E	F
1.4	2.5	12.1	7.6	47.7	29.1

England 1760 (Massie)

1.2	4.4	24.8	12.6	20.9	36.6
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The percentage of 'manufacturers' among Methodists was twice as numerous as in the country as a whole.

P. Mathias, 'The Social Structure in the Eighteenth Century: a calculation by Joseph Massie,' *Economic History Review* (2nd series, vol.10, 1957-8), pp.30-45; C.D.Field, *op.cit*, p.218

APPENDIX III continued

Registrar General's schema 1951 - modified version for nineteenth and twentieth centuries (C.D.Field, p.202).

- I Major employers, merchants, bankers, property owners, professional people.
- II Intermediate non-manual workers including minor employers, retailers, local government officers, teachers, clerks, commercial travellers, and insurance agents.
- III Routine non-manual occupations, artisan crafts, skilled manual tasks chiefly in construction and manufacture.
- IV Semi-skilled employees mainly in transport, agriculture, mining, wood, textiles, domestic and municipal service.
- V Labourers and other unskilled persons.

Children not in a workhouse or pauper school - 1st July 1853

THE UNITED PARISHES *													
At 1st July 1853	Under 3-4	Under 4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	TOTAL
1. No. attending day sch. at cost to parents/guard.	12	25	15	31	25	19	15	14	7	13	4	4	170
2. At cost of other parties	5	8	8	12	27	24	29	21	11	8	5	5	158
3. Not attending any day school	22	13	10	11	10	8	10	21	34	24	10	10	183
4. No. of children in work	..							2	3	10	9	9	45
* SCULCOMBES UNION													
1. As 1. above	19	23	25	24	20	23	27	15	19	6	3	-	204
2. Attending charity or free sch. without payment	4	5	11	12	15	15	8	7	2	-	-	-	79
3. As 3. above	30	12	10	6	10	5	8	10	8	11	-	-	110
4. As 4. above							1	2	7	10	15	5	40

* The "United Parishes" = Holy Trinity + St Mary's

Tabulated ReturnsMull and Eastern Counties Herald 15 Dec. 1870

	Class of Schools	Number of Schools	Accomm- odation	No. on roll	Attendance on day of returns
	<u>I Public</u>				
1. Fees	Church of England	20	7529	5749	4340
	Wesleyan	3	1342	946	751
	Roman Catholic	3	1206	776	618
	British	3	1186	1035	814
	Independent	1	790	262	208
	Others (Deaf + Dumb)	1	56	9	8
		1			
2. Free	Trinity Ho. + Orphanages	4	956	398	373
	Ragged	5	746	348	317
	Certified Industrial	2	299	370	196
	Workhouses	2	662	254	250
	Others (Coggan's Charity)	1	107	57	57
		1			
3. Projected	Church of England	3	854	-	-
	Wesleyan	3	1221	-	-
	Roman Catholic	1	261	-	-
	<u>II Private</u>				
	Boys	2	34	68	55
	Girls	2	44	44	31
	Girls mixed	55	1188	1530	1327
	Infants	83	1233	1831	1654
		194	19,754	13,677	10,999
	12 Dame + 1 Hebrew declined returns	13			
		207	19,954	13677	10,999

1831 Census	Houses		Occupations				Persons			Males Twenty years and over	Agriculture	
	In- habited	Families	Families chiefly in Agriculture	Families in Trade and Manufactures	All other families	Males	Females	Total	Occupiers		Labourers	
Hull, town part	6,026	8,885	32	3,304	4,949	14,671	18,287	32,958	7,346	34	286	4
Drifpool parish	667	703	31	216	456	1276	1659	2935	591	19	19	
Saulcoates parish	2,760	3,252	17	1,172	2,063	6,068	7,460	13,468	2,970	19		12
<u>TOTAL</u>	9,393	12,240	80	4,692	7,468	22,015	27,346	49,361	10,907	72		35

Employed in Manufacture, or in making Mfg. Machinery	Retail Trade, Handicrafts Masters or Workmen	Capitalists, Bankers, Professional Men and other Educated men	Labourers <u>not</u> Agricultural	Other males over 20 years (except servants)	Male Servants		Female Servants	<u>1831 Census</u>
					20 years or over	Under 20 years		
76	4,002	627	1,824	725	54	24	1,176	Hull, town part
1	293	64	144	50	1	—	96	Drypool Parish
51	1,361	572	652	253	50	5	655	Seulcoates parish
128	5,653	1,263	2,620	1,028	105	29	1,937	<u>TOTAL</u>

APPENDIX VII

Hull Occupation Lists - 1851 Census (pop. 84,690)

Clergyman	31
Protestant Minister	34
Priests and other Religious Teachers	11
Barrister	1
Solicitor	65
Other Lawyers	20
Physician	8
Surgeon	57
Other Medical Men	42
Parish Clerk	3
Other Church Officers	8
Law Clerk	86
Law Court Officers and Law Stationers	15
Druggist	181
Others dealing with drugs and surgical instruments	6
House proprietor	87
Merchant	161
Banker	8
Ship Agent	81
Broker	22
Agent or Factor	12
Salesman	3
Auctioneer	33
Accountant	32
Commercial Clerk	412
Commercial Traveller	82
Pawnbroker	32
Shopkeeper	43
Hawker or Pedlar	129
Other General Merchants, Dealers and Agents	141
Railway Driver, Stoker and others	216
Coach or Cab Owner and all engaged in Road Conveyance	259
Canal Service and Inland Navigation	1358
Ship Owner	61
Seaman	2268
Others connected with sea navigation	804
Warehousing, messengers, porters, etc.	701
Building and fitting ships/barges	623
Labourer (branch unidentified)	2150
Independent means	132

APPENDIX VIII

1851 Census

<u>NAME OF CHURCH OR CHAPEL</u>	Sittings	<u>Attendance</u>			Evening	Total	Children	All ages total
		Morning	Afternoon					
<u>CHURCH of ENGLAND</u>								
Holy Trinity	980	511	217	461	1,189	m. 215 a. 133		1,537
St Mary, Hull	1,000	389	—	450		m. 120		959
St Peter, Drypool	722	800		400	839	m. 110		1,310
St John	1,500	656	300	406	1,362	m. 91		1,453
St James	1,201	610	—	800	1,410	m. 200		1,610
St Stephen	1,200	450	—	577		m. 209		1,236
St Mary, Sculcoates	910	200	—	150	972	m. 109 e. 50		509
Christ Church, Sculcoates	1,440	703	—	720	1,423	m. 170		1,593
St Paul, Sculcoates	1,200	c. 400	—	c. 500	900	m. 102		1,002

VIII

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1851 Census

<u>NAME OF CHURCH OR CHAPEL</u>	<u>Sittings</u>	<u>Attendance</u> <u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>All ages</u> <u>total</u>
St James, Sutton	353	160	142	—	302	m. 142 a. 88	532
St Mark	1,135	—	No returns made	—	—	—	—
Marfleet	125	—	91	—	91	—	91
St John, Newland	500	—	110	—	110	m. 30	140
Mariners' Church	930	c. 430	—	c. 650	1080	m. 120	1,200
Trinity House Chapel	400	c. 300	—	—	300	—	300
Within the Gaol	212	162	161	—	323	—	323
Charterhouse Chapel	For use of inmates of Hospital.	For use of inmates of Hospital.	For use of inmates of Hospital.	"No space available for public worship"	—	—	—
<u>TOTALS</u>	13,808	5771	1,021	5114	11,906	1,889	13,795

1851 Census

<u>NAME OF CHURCH OR CHAPEL</u>	<u>Sittings</u>	<u>Attendance</u> <u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>All ages</u> <u>Total</u>
<u>INDEPENDENT</u>							
Providence Chapel, Hope St.	1150	150		150	300	25	325
Holborn St, Suttler	630	90			90	80 90 150	410
Salem Chapel, Cogyan St	950	330		430	760	m. 150	910
Bethesda Chapel, Osborne St	500			200	200		200
Moxon Street Chapel	250		80		80		80
Albion Chapel	1486	947		1303	2250	m. 344	2594
<u>TOTALS</u>	4966	1517	80	2083	3680	839	4519

1851 Census

<u>NAME OF CHURCH OR CHAPEL</u>	<u>Sittings</u>	<u>Attendance</u> <u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>All ages</u> <u>total</u>
<u>BAPTIST</u>							
Salthouse Lane	550	260		250	450	m. 80 e. 20	550
George Street	590	175		191	366	m. 70 a. 101	537
Room in Weeks Institute		50		60	110		110
Reformed Bap, Charles St	52	(Just opened. No numbers reported)					
<u>TOTALS</u>	1,192	425		501	926	271	1,197
<u>R.C. St. Charles</u>	648	1050		600	1,650	m. 150 e. 250	2,050

1851 Census

<u>NAME OF CHURCH OR CHAPEL</u>	<u>Sittings</u>	<u>Attendance</u> <u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>All ages</u> <u>total</u>
<u>WESLEYAN</u> George Yard	1,064	382		481	863	m. 130	993
Scott Street	526	350		400	750	m. 45	795
Walkham Street	1,560	745		862	1607	m. 110	1717
Humber Street	860	360		580	860	m. 120	920
Kingston Chapel	1996	550		700	1,250	m. 264 e. 60	1574
At Thornton Street	1,360	760		750	1,450	m. 193	1643
Sutton	158		71	160	171	a. 55	226
Marfleet	30	18	20		38	-	38
Stoneferry	88	22		35	57	-	57
Newland	60			55	55		55
<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>7,522</u>	<u>3,067</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>3883</u>	<u>1041</u>	<u>977</u>	<u>8018</u>

1851 Census

<u>NAME OF CHURCH OR CHAPEL</u>	<u>Sittings</u>	<u>Attendance</u> <u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>All ages</u> <u>total</u>
<u>PRIMITIVE METH. West St</u>	795	1,500		600	1,600	included (av. 70)	1,600
Church St (St Paul's parish)	800	400		500	900	288	1,088
At Thornton Street	625	380		880	1,260	146	1,506
Sutton	88			52	52		52
Mason St (ex Wesleyan building)	530	400		750	1,150	100	1,250
<u>TOTALS</u>	2838	2,180		2,782	4,962	534	5,496
<u>INDEPENDENT METHODIST</u>	682	450	350	500	1,300	m. 67 a. 80	1,447

1851 Census

<u>NAME OF CHURCH OR CHAPEL</u>	<u>Sittings</u>	<u>Attendance</u> <u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>All ages</u> <u>total</u>
<u>METHODIST NEW CONNEXION</u> Bethel, North Street	925	350		300	650	m. 119	769
Stepney	155	60		80	140		140
<u>TOTALS</u>	1080	410		380	790	119	909
<u>WESLEYAN REFORMERS</u> (Mechs Institute)	1,000	650		1000	1650		1,650
<u>WESLEYAN METH. ASSOC.</u> (Sybas Street)	720	173		230	403	m. 61	464
<u>SAILORS' CHAPEL</u>	500	74	278	130	482	m. 45 a. 50	577

1851 Census

<u>NAME OF CHURCH OR CHAPEL</u>	<u>Sittings</u>	<u>Attendance</u> <u>Morning</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>All ages total</u>
LUTHERAN	500	200			200		200
UNITARIAN Bowalley Lane	490	155		130	285	m. 65	350
PRESBYTERIAN Princes Street	600	117		89	206		206
SOCIETY of FRIENDS	386	111	61		172		172
FREE CHURCH of ENGLAND (Baker Street)	330	150		300	450		450
LATTER DAY SAINTS (Paragon Street)	500	70	90	150	310		310
DISCIPLES of CHRIST (8 Vincent Street)	34	10	6	7	23	m. 9	32
UNDENOMINATIONAL (South Street)	710	300	400	800	1500	m. 80	1580
HULL SYNAGOGUE (Robinson Row)	85	74	17	21	112		112

APPENDIX IX

1881 RELIGIOUS CENSUS

	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Morning</u>	<u>Evening</u>	<u>Totals</u>
C of E	20,000	6194	7578	13,772
R.C.	1300	1356	1058	2414
Cong.	7175	1718	2295	4013
Wesleyan	13,911	5500	7004	12,504
P.Meth.	12,650	4048	5469	9553
M.New Con.	3000	514	920	1434
Presbyt.	2600	931	951	1882
Baptist	1300	365	454	819
M.Free Ch.	856	318	448	766
S.A.	6050	4094	7360	11,454
Misc.	5578	1061	3100	4161
	<u>74,400</u>	<u>26,165</u>	<u>36,577</u>	<u>62,742</u>

Population of Hull in 1881 - 154,240

NOTE

The Hull News published the church by church results on 3 December 1881, but the relevant pages appear to have suffered the fate of Livy's lost books. A complete set of the newspaper may be consulted at Hull Central Library and at the Colindale Newspaper Library. My own searches, followed by correspondence with Professor Robin Gill at Newcastle, confirm that these pages are missing.

APPENDIX X

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN 19th CENTURY HULL

Holy Trinity - ancient church, originally chapel-of-ease for Hessle.

St Mary Lowgate - ancient church, originally chapel of ease for North Ferriby.

Modern churches from Holy Trinity parish

1. St John 1792 (closed 1917)
2. St James 1831 (demolished 1957)
3. St Stephen 1845 (demolished 1955)
4. St Luke 1862 (demolished 1957)
5. St Matthew 1870
6. St Barnabas 1874
7. St Jude 1874 (demolished 1964)
8. St Thomas 1873 (demolished after World War II)

St Peter Drypool - ancient church (destroyed 1941)

1. St Andrew 1878 (demolished 1970)

St Mary Sculcoates - ancient church demolished and rebuilt twice, 1759 and 1917

Modern churches in Sculcoates

1. Christ Church 1822 (demolished 1962)
2. St Paul 1846 (demolished and replaced 1980)
3. All Saints 1869 (demolished 1970)
4. St Silas 1871 (demolished 1970)
5. St Clement 1879 (demolished 1937)
6. St Philip 1885 (damaged World War II, demolished)

St James Sutton - ancient church

Modern churches in Sutton

1. St Mark 1844 (demolished 1958)
2. St Saviour 1903 (demolished 1960s)

St Mary Cottingham - ancient church

Modern churches in Cottingham

1. St John Newland 1833
2. St Augustine of Hippo 1896 (demolished 1975)

St Andrew Kirk Ella - ancient church

Modern churches in Kirk Ella

1. St John Baptist 1878
2. St Mary and St Peter 1902 (demolished 1962)
3. Transfiguration 1904

Churches built after the First World War are not included.

APPENDIX XI

1903-04 RELIGIOUS CENSUSChurch of England

	Men	Women	Children	Total
St Jude	174	270	309	753
St Stephen	130	184	246	560
St Jude's Miss'n (pm)	18	46	54	118
St Augustine	188	303	164	655
All Saints	214	460	216	880
St Matthew	231	517	218	966
St Andrew	102	124	202	428
St Peter	29	35	55	119
St Mary, Sculcoates	63	88	68	219
St Clement	27	63	84	174
St Silas	77	164	130	371
Holy Trinity	397	470	318	1185
	<hr/> 1650	<hr/> 2724	<hr/> 2064	<hr/> 6438

Roman Catholic

Bourne Church.	213	242	211	666
West Street Mission	78	110	61	249
St Charles	697	976	749	2422
St Wilfred	226	327	368	921
	<hr/> 1214	<hr/> 1655	<hr/> 1389	<hr/> 4258

Wesleyan Methodist

Argyle Street	235	306	174	715
West P'ade Miss.(pm)	32	33	132	197
Beverley Road	254	305	157	716
Queen's Road	289	373	347	1009
Newland	164	208	350	722
Coltman Street	323	417	349	1089
Kingston Chapel	417	339	338	1094
Brunswick	389	478	485	1352
Groves	109	161	255	525
Raikes Street	48	58	160	266
Lee Smith St Miss.	88	76	138	302
Damsom Lane	43	37	74	154
Barnsley St Miss.	64	94	206	364
Waltham Street	255	254	116	625
Fountain Rd Miss.	77	90	129	296
Oxford St Miss.	142	129	221	492

	Men	Women	Children	Total
St George's Road	316	355	450	1121
Plane Street	153	147	243	543
	<hr/> 3398	<hr/> 3860	<hr/> 4324	<hr/> 11585

Primitive Methodist

Ebenezer, Sp'g Bank	234	254	358	846
Lambert Street	158	192	128	478
Jubilee, Sp'g Bank	199	195	109	503
Hessle Road	174	197	193	564
Clowes Chapel	167	212	135	514
Fountain Road	206	210	200	616
Hedon Road	104	82	120	306
Selby Street	81	89	288	458
Brighton Street	54	45	229	328
	<hr/> 1377	<hr/> 1476	<hr/> 1670	<hr/> 4613

Methodist New Connexion

Cholmley Street	34	23	122	179
Stepney	81	101	78	260
	<hr/> 115	<hr/> 124	<hr/> 200	<hr/> 439

United Free Methodist

Campbell Street	138	156	127	421
Wilde Street	28	54	56	138
	<hr/> 166	<hr/> 210	<hr/> 183	<hr/> 559

<u>All Methodists</u>	11592	Wesleyan
	4612	Primitive
	439	New Connexion
	559	United Free
	<hr/> 17202	

	Men	Women	Children	Total
<u>Congregational</u>				
Fish St Mem.	243	335	182	760
Albion Street	94	157	113	364
Wycliffe	257	342	92	691
Hessle Road	159	190	136	475
Latimer	88	105	72	265
Newland	96	110	38	244
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	927	1239	633	2799

Baptist

Trafalgar Street	119	154	126	399
Boulevard	151	174	149	474
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	270	328	275	873

Presbyterian

Spring Bank	87	91	38	216
Prospect Street	211	235	66	512
Holderness Road	132	155	98	385
Newington	50	83	56	189
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	480	464	258	1202

Unitarian

Park Street	58	81	32	171
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New Jerusalem Church

Spring Bank	33	40	18	91
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Salvation Army

Naylor's Row	155	70	156	381
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	Men	Women	Children	Total
<u>Other Services</u>				
Bank Street Miss.	31	55	15	101
Sp. Bank Orphanage (pm)			191	191
Work House	183	133	89	405
Royal Infirm.(am)	5	40	6	51
Alexandra St Miss.	21	39	87	147
Captain White's Miss.				
Hessle Rd (afternoon)	25	46	21	92
Liddell St Mission	5	16	68	89
Deaf and Dumb Instit.				
Spring Bank (pm)	33	26	5	64
	<u>303</u>	<u>355</u>	<u>482</u>	<u>1140</u>

Summary of Totals

6438 Church of England
 4258 Roman Catholic
 23859 Nonconformist

 34555

Population of County Borough in 1901 - 240,259

in 1911 - 277,991

(136,006 males)
 (141,985 females)

APPENDIX XII

Prisoners in custody

1837	2,794	
1838	2,555	
1839	2,611	(74 men and 57 women more than once)

Arrested for drunkenness	Male	Female	Total
1837	847	134	981
1838	647	106	753
1839	708	132	840
1845	501	101	602

Age profile of drunkenness

	1839	1845
Under 10	-	-
Under 15	7	7
Under 20	210	66
Under 30	442	258
Under 40	102	135
Over 40	79	126

Drunkards apprehended or proceeded against

	Male	Female	Total
1878	212	151	363
1879	177	127	304
1880	177	100	277
1881	173	105	278
1882	277	191	468
1883	257	206	463
1884	240	216	456
1885	229	205	434
1886	251	213	464
1887	257	201	458

Arrests for drunkenness on Sundays

1881	299
1882	90
1883	152
1884	115
1885	60
1886	67
1887	87
1888	105

Licenced Premises in 1888

Public Houses	320
Beer Houses - On	171
Beer Houses - Off	362
Wine Licences	6
Off licences other than beer	31
Total	890

Apprehended for drunkenness

	Male	Female	Total
1900	1,297	533	1,830
1910	1,751	318	2,069
1914	1,684	365	2,049
1924	622	80	702

HRO. Hull Police Criminal Returns

APPENDIX XIII

PROSTITUTION IN HULL

1845 One female brothel keeper charged.
37 prostitutes proceeded against.

	Number of brothels	Number of prostitutes
1879	272	653
1880	200	685
1881	204	428
1882	189	361
1883	241	469

	Number of prostitutes proceeded against
1878	177
1879	218
1880	180
1881	142
1882	234
1883	263
1884	306
1885	279
1886	321
1887	296
1888	283

1901 2 convicted for brothel keeping.
73 prostitutes arrested for soliciting or
behaving in a riotous manner.

1910 7 convicted for brothel keeping.
119 prostitutes arrested for soliciting, etc.

1914 11 charged with brothel keeping.
30 prostitutes arrested.

1924 6 charged with brothel keeping.
22 prostitutes convicted.

HRO. Hull police returns

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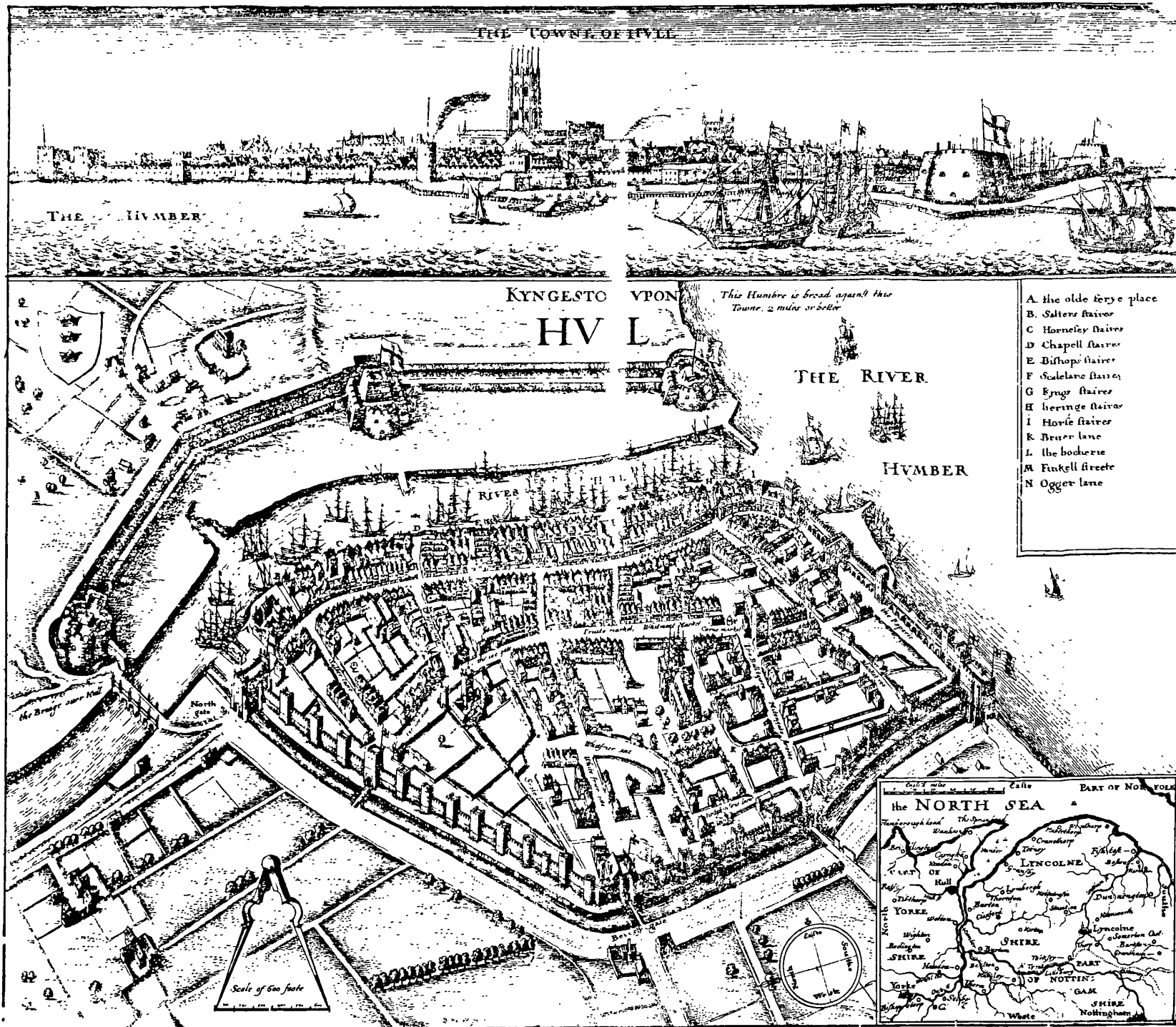
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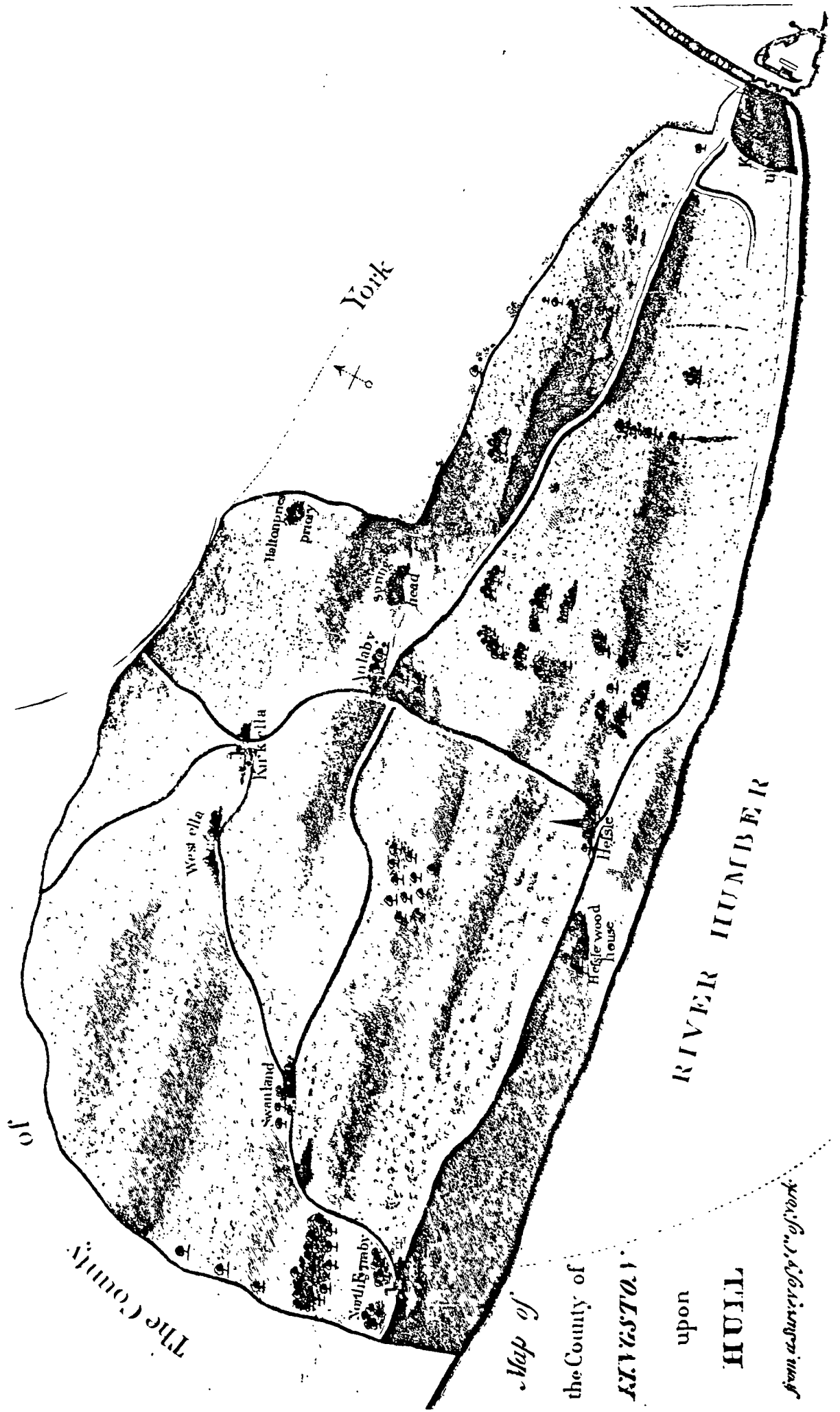
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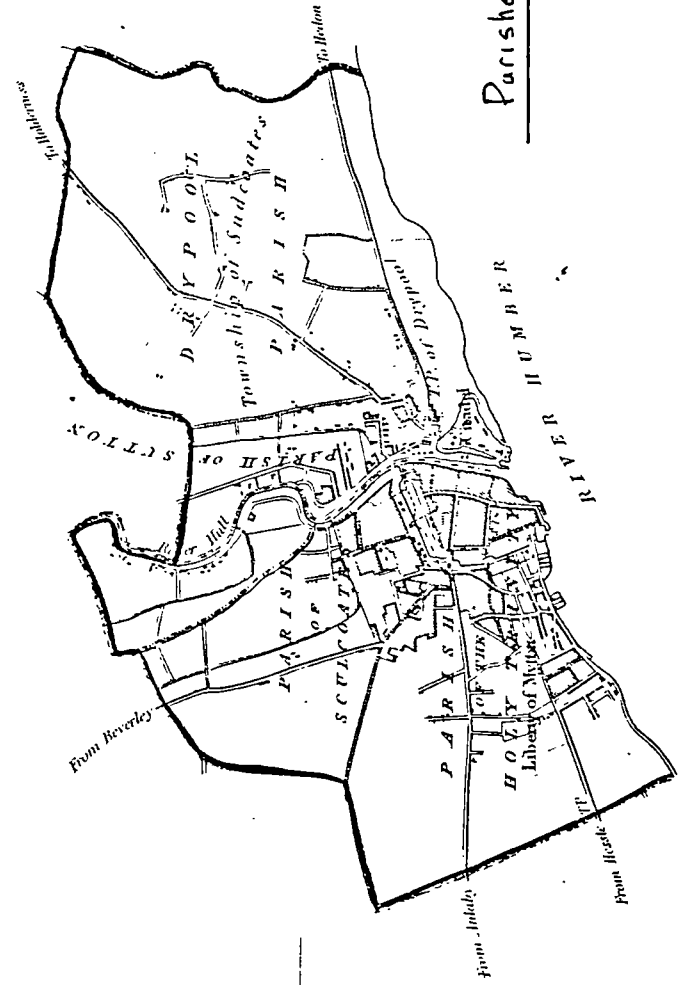
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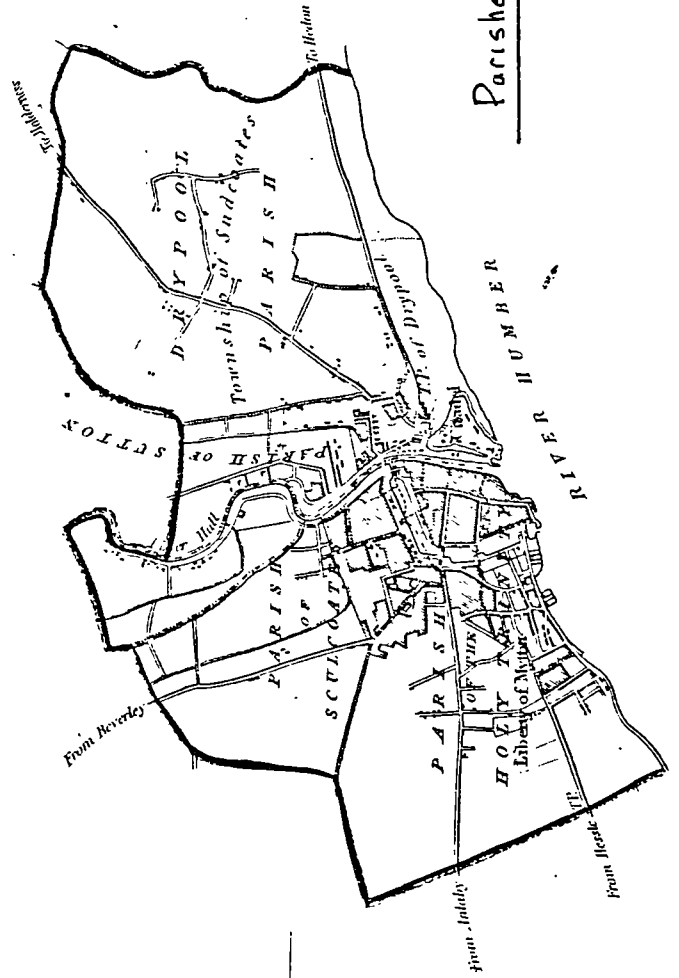


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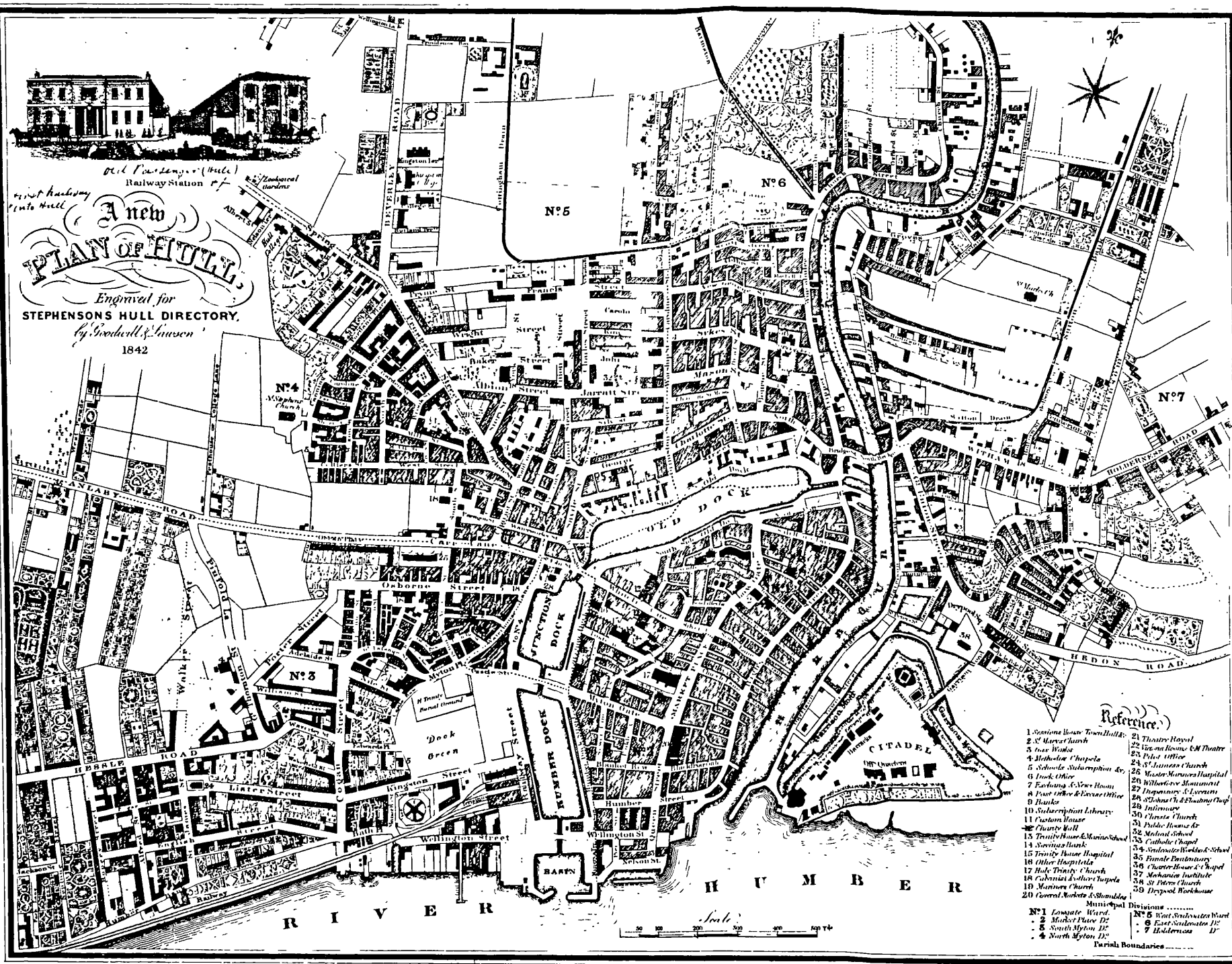
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