

Church and State: The Manning-Gladstone correspondence, 1833–1891

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The Correspondence of Henry Edward Manning and William Ewart Gladstone: The Complete Correspondence, 1833–1891, edited by Peter C. Erb, 4 volumes, Volume 1 1833–1844; Volume 2 1844–1853; Volume 3 1861–1875; Volume 4 1882–1891 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011–2013), pp. 2, 213, £320, ISBN: 978-0-19-957731-6

The year 2015 is a significant one for ecclesiastical historians, marking the 150th anniversary of the appointment of Henry Edward Manning to the archbishopric of Westminster. For almost twenty-seven years he provided the chief impetus in the development of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales at a crucial period in the second half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, only one of his successors at Westminster, Francis Bourne, was to exceed the length of his occupancy of the see.

In bringing together both sides of the Manning-Gladstone correspondence between 1833 and 1891, Peter Erb has attained a remarkable achievement, given the diffused nature of the location of the Manning papers subsequent to the latter's death in 1892. In the outcome the process casts considerable light upon the interaction of politicians and churchmen in home and foreign issues where their interests coincided. Erb has not only emphasized the vicissitudes of the friendship between Gladstone and Manning but has provided evidence of how each acted as a 'sounding board' to the other on a wide range of political and religious ideas. The correspondence, allowing for its pauses between 1851 and 1861 and again from 1875 to 1882, locates the Oxford Movement, its immediate consequences and longer-term effects, within the wider ambience of political and international outreach. The two significant pauses in the correspondence were a consequence of hurt reaction to the result of Manning's conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1851 and Gladstone's irritation at the work of the First Vatican Council.

The material presented in the correspondence shows reflective insights into a wide variety of concerns on which can be discerned the growth and impact of early Tractarian thought, the development of

problems associated with the Oxford Movement, including the early crisis over Hampden's appointment as Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford in 1836 (and also his later nomination to the see of Hereford in 1847), the affairs of the Jerusalem Bishopric and election to the Oxford poetry chair in the 1840s, the effect of Newman's conversion to Rome in 1845, the ill-fated condemnation of W.G. Ward at Oxford, the matter of the Maynooth grant, the Gorham Judgement and its direct stimulus in the conversion of Manning to Rome, Irish politics, Italian unification attempts, the influence of Döllinger and the incipient 'liberal' theology associated with him, and Manning's involvement in the First Vatican Council. The letters cast important light upon the educational legislation of Gladstone's first ministry and upon the thrusting involvement of Manning's social conscience which was eventually to earn him among the people the sobriquet 'the People's Cardinal'.

The central theme in the collection of letters is the unfolding of the nature of the personal regard of Gladstone and Manning for each other, from the early Oxford period of their acquaintance to old age, in which the vicissitudes of religious conversion and ultramontane thought become imperceptibly entwined with concepts of public responsibility, morality and social concerns. From the correspondence, Manning emerges as a different personality from that portrayed by E.S. Purcell or Lytton Strachey who failed to see in him a man of intellectual standing, a churchman of faith, vision and perception.¹ It can be argued, however, that it was the 'world view' of both Gladstone and Manning that provided the main background for the interplay of ideas that infused their writing. *The Times* obituary of Gladstone in 1898 emphasized his keenness of intellectual curiosity and love of disputation and disquisition, qualities that found a rewarding stimulus in Manning's international views and theological perception.²

As editor, Professor Erb has produced an informative and lively introduction to the letters and his notes throughout evince a careful balance between scholarly explication and illustration. The structure of the four volumes is easily followed and Erb presents the letters without a temptation for obtrusive oversight. In his lengthy introduction to the volumes, he cautions the reader that the life of Gladstone and that of Manning cannot be viewed solely within the perception of their relationship to each other. Both men had a wide range of contacts and correspondents outwith what is presented here and, hence, the evaluation of the beliefs and labours of either man can only be enriched if the wider context of their association with others is not neglected. The friendship of Gladstone and Manning receives the

¹ E. S. Purcell, *Life of Cardinal Manning*, 2 vols (London, 1896); Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* (London, 1918).

² Andrew Sanders, ed. *Great Victorian Lives: An Era in Obituaries* (London: Times Books, 2007), 484.

endorsement of Erb that it was one 'in which each watched both the other and the concurrent events of his time with vigilance, challenged and put on trial as each was in his own right and by the other'.³

The first two volumes of the collection of letters relate to the years when Gladstone and Manning were close friends and empathic, prior to the trauma brought about by Manning's conversion to Rome. The remaining two volumes cover the years when Manning was much occupied by new sacerdotal obligations and, in due course, by episcopal responsibilities and church leadership, years when Gladstone was busily building his parliamentary career, eventually leading him to be prime minister on three occasions during Manning's lifetime. Gladstone's fourth period in prime ministerial office was not to take effect before Manning's death.

Gladstone and Manning had been acquainted with each other at Oxford. They had been present at the Oxford Union debate on 26 November 1829 and subsequently had met each other spasmodically. Manning, from Balliol, graduated with a double first in November 1830 and Gladstone achieved the same accolade a year later at Christ Church. Manning was elected to a Fellowship at Merton College in 1832, shortly before his ordination as a deacon in the Church of England and his appointment as curate to John Sargent at Lavington and Graffham early in January 1833. In June of the same year he was priested by Edward Maltby, bishop of Chichester, and became rector of Lavington on 10 June in succession to Sargent who, at the age of fifty-two, died the month before. In November, Manning married Caroline Sargent, a renowned but fragile beauty in her day. He had already been engaged to Caroline for some months, the couple intending to marry only when his future was clearly settled.

The scene is set for animated discussion with Gladstone in 1835 when the latter confessed 'politics would become an utter blank to me, were I to make the discovery that we were mistaken in maintaining their association with religion'.⁴ The view was expressed to Manning who had critically raised the issue with him of the necessity of the Establishment of the Church of England in the light of vocal desire for church reform. Even at this early stage in their correspondence, Gladstone shows his propensity to be a firm upholder of the formal connection between the English Church and the State. He considered the Establishment, as it then existed, 'affords for more efficient instrumental aids for entering thoroughly into the mind and spirit of the Redeemer than rival schools of more plausible pretension'. Gladstone's view unfolds as being that an established church acts as an

³ Peter C. Erb, *The Correspondence of Henry Edward Manning and William Ewart Gladstone, 1833–1891*, 4 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1: xvi–xvii (Quotations from the letters hereafter are given as Erb, *Letters* and volume and page references).

⁴ Erb, *Letters*, 1:6.

‘ever abiding centre of unity’, a body ‘ever testifying against the scandal and detriment of schism’. None of his argument was meant to ignore what he termed as ‘the present miserably relaxed condition’ in the contemporary Church of England. It was a view influenced, of course, by the granting of rights in 1829 to Roman Catholics and Dissenters, by the parliamentary changes of 1832, and by the initiative of Earl Grey in the reorganizing of (Anglican) bishoprics in Ireland with their endowments. John Keble in his Assize Sermon in Oxford of 1833 (often regarded as a major stimulus for *Tracts for the Times*) spoke of a state of ‘apostasy’, a summation by Geoffrey Rowell of Grey’s measure being ‘a sacrilegious interference with Church order by the secular power’.⁵ Gladstone could not accept that Church and State were separate or alien powers, incapable of co-ordination. As Perry Butler observed in his thoughtful study of Gladstone’s religious ideas and attitudes before 1859, he was directed ‘by a deep sense of God’s providence working within the Church’ and was convinced ‘the opposing elements within Anglicanism could co-exist, even to co-operate’.⁶ Manning’s reply to this early letter of Gladstone was not located by Peter Erb but he did respond, as is entered in a diary note of Gladstone of 11 April 1835 in which he refers to ‘a beautiful letter from Manning’.⁷

A religious challenge for both men presented itself by the nomination of Renn Dickson Hampden to the Regius Chair of Divinity at Oxford in 1836, a man who had not only been in favour of the abolition of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles for Nonconformists in 1832, but whose Bampton Lectures in the same year upset tractarians by his understanding of the nature of authority and tradition within the church and by his denigration of sacramental devotion and of reverence for the teaching of the early Fathers. The appointment aroused the antipathy of Newman who wrote *Elucidation of Dr. Hampden’s Theological Statements* in response.⁸ Gladstone and Manning concurred about the folly of the appointment and Gladstone referred to ‘its immediate evil consequences’, terming it ‘this nefarious appointment’.⁹ The appointment ran counter to Gladstone’s view of the importance of union, rather than division, in church matters. The attempt to effect the rescinding of Hampden’s appointment was a failure but feelings became agitated again in 1837 when he was suspended from the board that nominated Select Preachers for the university and were further inflamed a decade later when Lord John Russell recommended Hampden for appointment to the vacant see of Hereford. Some years later the Christian conscience

⁵ Geoffrey Rowell: *The Vision Glorious: Themes and Personalities of the Catholic Revival in Anglicanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 21.

⁶ Perry Butler, *Gladstone: Church, State and Tractarianism, A Study of the Religious Ideas and Attitudes, 1809–1859* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), 199.

⁷ Erb, *Letters*, 1:13.

⁸ John Henry Newman: *Elucidation of Dr. Hampden’s Theological Statements* (Oxford, 1836).

⁹ Erb, *Letters*, 1:13–14.

of Gladstone led him to express regret to Hampden for the strength of his early opposition to him.

In 1837 we see the manifestation of Manning's early social conscience in a lengthy correspondence with Gladstone, seeking support for the popular Poor Law petition and the proper use of certain ecclesiastical revenues that could ameliorate the condition of the poor. In his pastoral experience in Sussex, we appreciate the beginning of Manning's enhanced moral philosophy pertaining to what he was customarily to call 'practical Christianity' and how this should function in the modern State. Even in this area, however, the situation of Church establishment became a problem. A parliament, now containing Dissenting and Catholic voices, could no longer claim that unity of purpose and direction that, in theory, made the establishment of the Church of England both a feasible and effective *animus* for her life and government. Under the new conditions there would be a clear departure from a cultural and religious identity, leaving only personal approximation to truth and right behaviour as a focal principle. This situation had implications, as Manning was to emphasize in a sermon he delivered in Oxford in 1844 for the Feast of St Philip and St James, in which he stressed the importance for the welfare of the Church of 'the discernment of moral distinctions, of the qualities of evidence and the force of obligation'.¹⁰ In that simple phrase he encapsulated the guiding principle of Gladstone from the outset of his political career and engagement in which he saw himself as greatly committed to the sustentation of Christian teaching and practice, as was a churchman in his proper place.¹¹

When allied to social duty, Manning maintained, political economy was not a matter of values and exchanges made up of unfettered constructs 'but of human life in all its social needs and welfare'.¹² This extended view was not one that either man was likely or prone to forget. In dealing with this point the late David Newsome recalled that while Manning had always something of the evangelical about him in his pastoral ministry at Lavington, he never lost in later life, as an Anglican or a Roman Catholic some 'evangelical fervour and pietism'.¹³ It was this innate spiritual background that led Manning to raise with Gladstone the contemporary resonance of the Establishment and to put before him the fundamental question of the structure and nature of the teaching authority of the Church.¹⁴ It was not a point upon which the

¹⁰ H. E. Manning: *Sermons Preached Before The University of Oxford, 1842–1844* (Oxford, 1844), 146.

¹¹ Erb, *Letters*, 1: xxxix.

¹² J. Saward, J. Morrill & M. Tomko, eds., *Firmly I Believe and Truly*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 481.

¹³ David Newsome, *The Victorian World Picture* (London: Fontana, 1997), 218.

¹⁴ James Pereiro, 'Henry Edward Manning: From Lavington to Westminster', paper read to the Anglo-Catholic History Society at the Church of St Matthew, Westminster, 10 October 2011 (privately printed), 3–4.

two men were destined to see eye to eye. Certainly, Gladstone accepted the reasoning behind objections to parliament assuming an excessive role in the function of regulation for the Church and its structure. He feared, however, the pursuit of a journey that might lead to the separation of Church and State, one that ultimately would give rise to greater demands and, possibly, lead to a road marked by the expression of atheistic attitudes.

In *The State in its Relations with the Church*, which Gladstone first published in 1838, he argued that Government had to be aware of religious truth and was bound to support it against error. He averred 'the State is a person having a conscience, cognizant of matters of religion and bound by all constitutional and natural means to advance it'.¹⁵ Perhaps Gladstone's idea of the State in its relationship with the Church seemed less obvious to a pastoral priest working outside the political arena *per se*. In 1842, Manning's own important work, *The Unity of the Church*, with its main emphasis upon apostolicity, continuity and tradition in the search for true unity in the faith was published. It paid attention to such theological principles because 'the moral unity of the Church can be ascertained from the practice of holding synods and councils, diocesan or general, for common deliberation and definition'.¹⁶ Thus, for Manning, 'church' was different from, if not 'outside', an Establishment, the proper function of Parliament being fully occupied with secular matter. Indeed, at the initial stage of the exchange of views Manning desired a synod of bishops to assume overall management and direction of ecclesiastical affairs in the Church of England: this might form a substitution for Establishment. But, for Gladstone, over-exposure to such a concept could lead to fearful frisson. Gladstone could see, of course, that both evangelicalism and tractarianism had benefited the reform of the Anglican Church, the first in its spiritual dimension, the second in its renewal of the nature of episcopal leadership. James Pereiro has pointed out that 'the proof of their complementary nature could be found in the fact that evangelical ideas and Church principles had joined themselves harmoniously in many individuals'.¹⁷

There is, of course, little doubt that Gladstone's support of the Establishment ran counter to much tractarian thought as Simon Skinner showed in his study of John Keble's view of disestablishment. He argued that 'the conviction that the Church of England had been compromised by the Erastian pretensions of a liberal State sent up clouds of anti-establishment chaff'.¹⁸ Some tractarian thought accepted

¹⁵ W. E. Gladstone, *The State in its Relations with the Church* (London, 1841), 1, 11.

¹⁶ H. E. Manning, *The Unity of the Church* (London, 1842), 161.

¹⁷ James Pereiro *'Ethos' and the Oxford Movement: At the Heart of Tractarianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 67.

¹⁸ S. A. Skinner, 'The Duty of the State: Keble, the Tractarians and Establishment' in *John Keble in Context*, ed. Kirstie Blair (London: Anthem Press, 2004), 34.

that the influence of the Church was needed to guide the State in its temporal role, rather than the reverse process being the issue. Since 1823–29, a body of laymen ‘any number of whom may be heretics’, according to Keble, ought not to have a say in the polity and theological status of the Church’.¹⁹ In the political sphere itself turmoil was but a chimera. Gladstone, himself, in 1846 was to exchange his allegiance in politics and he feared, as he intimated to Manning, that tampering with the Establishment might ultimately lead to atheism.

For Manning, tractarianism had emerged as a response to the perceived need for greater understanding of faith based upon tradition within the Church, a process that would point to the enhancement of Christian commitment, teaching, and ecclesial stability. He was to sustain the centrality of this view towards the end of his long life as a Roman Catholic, still testifying that the essence of the episcopacy was ‘the *government* of the Church’ (Manning’s stress in *The Pastoral Office*).²⁰ He had realised earlier²¹ that the advent of forceful evangelical and Catholic views had both ‘weakened the credentials of the Church of England as a church and state establishment.’²² Erb has expanded on the view advanced by G.I.T. Machin. In his Aquinas Lecture of 1966, he encapsulates Manning’s understanding of individual Christians and the Christian corporate body as a whole to be ‘organic entities, growing and maturing over time under the direction of the divine Spirit’, rather than ‘mechanistic structures operated by instrumental and legislative norms’.²³

The divergence of view between Gladstone and Manning on the nature and exercise of authority in the Church, both in England and in Europe, was to have permanence. It explains, to a degree, Gladstone’s uneasiness when dealing with matters of ecclesiastical authority and his later expostulations and *caveats* about the work of the First Vatican Council. He clearly understood what Manning meant by that Council’s vindication of the necessity for freedom in developing and defining Christian teaching, *vis-a-vis* the interference of a secular and irreligious State²⁴ but, for England, he was wary that the cause of Church independence would provide new impetus for a resurgence of disestablishment rhetoric. Gladstone’s concerns after 1870 in this regard were affected somewhat by the opposition to the calling and

¹⁹ John Keble’s review, *The British Critic* (October 1839): 387.

²⁰ H.E. Manning, *The Pastoral Office*, Printed for private use (1883), 30–31.

²¹ For further discussion on this point, see Peter C. Erb, ‘Gladstone and German Liberal Catholicism’, *Recusant History* 23, 3 (1997): 450–469.

²² G. I. T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain, 1869 to 1921* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 14.

²³ Peter C. Erb, *A Question of Sovereignty: The Politics of Manning’s Conversion*, Thomas Aquinas Lecture, Atlanta, USA (Atlanta: Pitts Theology Library, 1996), 14.

²⁴ *Varieties of Ultramontaniam*, ed., Jeffrey P. von Arx, (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 7.

work of the Council from some vocal Roman Catholic prelates in England whose geographical insularity, in Manning's perception, gave them a diminished understanding of the threat from a growing continental liberalism.²⁵

In the first fourteen years of the Gladstone/Manning correspondence presented in the first two volumes of Erb's edition of the letters, the issue of ecclesiastical authority raised its prominence on a number of occasions and, not least, about the affair of the Jerusalem bishopric in 1841. By that date, Manning was concentrating all his energies on the polity of the Anglican Church and its service in the daily life of its adherents. It is sometimes asserted that man is a creature of his past and, in the introduction to the letters, Erb argues that in Gladstone and Manning early vocational decisions continued 'to frame theological and political formulations and their resulting decisions'.²⁶ This is particularly evident in attitudes to the governance of the Church and there was a period of conflict, albeit amicable, between the two men about the creation of the semi-ecumenical association in Jerusalem.

In November 1841, Prussia was able to establish a diocese in Jerusalem that would serve the needs of Lutherans and Anglicans living in the Middle East. The initial plan was that the two States would nominate to the see, consecutively as a vacancy arose, that the bishop appointed would be ordained to the Anglican rite but would himself be able to ordain Lutherans who accepted the Thirty-nine Articles as well as the Augsburg Confession. Supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Howley) and the Bishop of London (Blomfield) who approved the proposal, legislation was introduced to make it effective. The first bishop was a convert, as a young man, from the Jewish faith. Michael Solomon Alexander was consecrated at Lambeth on 7 November. Gladstone had not only supported the idea but had agreed to become a trustee of the new diocese. He considered that potential adverse reactions from tractarians would be assuaged if there was appropriate consultation among the episcopacy about the bishopric. He was himself present at Alexander's consecration and had been involved in early discussions.

Gladstone's *insouciance* in approaching the issue may have arisen from his early awareness, since 1839, of the views of the Roman Catholic priest and German theologian, Johann Adam Möhler with whom he was to become even more familiar in the ensuing decade. Möhler was to provide an abiding influence on Gladstone's concept of the nature of the Christian Church and its unity, as he did, indeed, on Manning's theology of the Holy Spirit. Möhler believed that the

²⁵ For an example of Roman Catholic episcopal opposition to the Council, see *The Correspondence of Alexander Goss, Bishop of Liverpool, 1856–1872*, ed. Peter Doyle (The Catholic Record Society: The Boydell Press, 2014).

²⁶ Erb, *Letters*, 1: xxxix

interior mystical unity of the Church was ‘communicated and maintained by the Holy Spirit present in each individual Christian and in the Christian community as a whole’.²⁷ Gladstone was particularly attracted to Mohler’s developed thesis when the latter referred to the Roman Catholic Church as the ‘branch’ of the community to which he belonged and he accepted that the Holy Spirit was unifying the Church in spite of existing differences. The ‘branch theory’ of unity became an intellectual position in which Gladstone was content to rest and in which he felt comfortable, whereas for Manning the idea was to develop into ‘the Arianism of indivisible unity’.²⁸ Gladstone was never drawn to Roman Catholicism, Erb referring to his sustained religious position as ‘doctrinal commitment within a Church of England polity and a view to political practicality’.²⁹

For tractarians, collaboration in the provision for Jerusalem between the Anglican and Lutheran churches with the partial involvement in the process of the Augsburg Confession was little less than an heretical development. It had been felt, however, that this would not likely to have been the case for those believing in the ‘branch’ theory of church unity. For Manning the branch that separates itself might be deprived of the sustenance of the living church, a key concept that was occupying his thoughts with the publication of *The Unity of the Church*. The conclusion of the book, while still paying obeisance to ‘the several churches of the one collective body’ ideal, maintained ‘the doctrine of Catholic unity is both definite in itself and direct in its bearing upon practice...’³⁰ ‘The Catholic Christian’, he argued ‘is not set to seek out the Church, forasmuch as by his baptism he is already incorporated in it. He sees its oneness and its holiness in the Catholic and Apostolic faith and discipline. They are the landmarks of the old way, in which his feet already stand.’³¹ Few among the tractarians at the time could have phrased it better.

Manning’s correspondence with Gladstone about the Jerusalem bishopric evinces a concern for the effect of the decision within its wider context, a distinct association in a relationship with an overtly Protestant church, and the possible infringement of the rights and situation of other churches in the Middle East, such as the Greek Orthodox, with its already legitimate jurisdiction in the Holy Land. Neither Gladstone nor Manning wished to see the Church of England become a proselytising body, encroaching upon the area of work of other established Christian communities, a concern that had been

²⁷ For a full account on the German influence see Erb, ‘Gladstone and German Liberal Catholicism’.

²⁸ *Ibid*: 464.

²⁹ Erb, *Letters* 1: xliv.

³⁰ Manning, *The Unity of the Church*, 371–373.

³¹ *Ibid*.

raised earlier in regard to episcopal jurisdiction in Malta. At the end of November 1841, belatedly, Manning wrote to Gladstone about the extent to which the English Church 'may be said to pronounce anything respecting the Lutheran system, and the Confession of Augsburg'.³² It was a cautious enquiry because it was known that Gladstone had been involved in the initiative from its early stages. Manning asked specifically 'what is the doctrine and discipline laid down for our alliance with the German system?'³³

At the outset, Gladstone was favourable to the motivation for the new diocese to address the spiritual needs of expatriate Englishmen and women, as well as that of Lutherans, but he emphasized there should be widespread consultation about it with the English episcopacy. He recommended also that a study of the project should be undertaken initially by a collective group of English theologians and Gladstone hoped Manning might be one of them. In the likelihood of this happening, Gladstone was to become a trustee of the new diocese. When it became apparent, however, that Bishop Blomfield did not envisage a gathering of bishops, if called together, would have any power to pronounce on fundamental aspects of the agreement and that the bishops would thus not have any formative role in the process, Gladstone, worried by concerns made known to him from some quarters and not least by the ill-at-ease reaction from Manning, withdrew from the project, objecting strongly to 'the unnatural ill-omened secrecy of the scheme'. In his withdrawal he considered Manning's sentiments on the issue 'absolutely my own'.³⁴

Manning's response from Lavington of 2 December 1841 was unequivocal, reporting to Gladstone that he was 'relieved of some of the anxiety I had so long as I was in ignorance of the turn things were taking'.³⁵ Furthermore, he added, 'I deeply lament the disposition manifested in the Archbishop and Bishop of London to act without previous deliberation with their colleagues'.³⁶ The latter seemed to him a most unwholesome symptom, despite his dreading the diversity of views that could emerge from a conference of bishops, because 'unhappily our Spiritual Rulers take no counsel together, and little of anyone'.³⁷ He went too far, perhaps, for Gladstone when the events for Manning seemed to point to the necessity 'of restoring the subjective Catholicity of the Church and of reconsecrating the Civil Powers'.³⁸ Despite the early opposition of tractarians, among whom Newman was particularly vocal, and the diverse religious consequences at stake, the

³² Erb, *Letters*, 1:250

³³ Erb, *Letters*, 1:251.

³⁴ Erb, *Letters*, 1:255.

³⁵ Erb, *Letters*, 1:256–7.

³⁶ Erb, *Letters*, 1:257.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Erb, *Letters*, 1:258.

settlement in Jerusalem lasted until Lutheran withdrawal from the scheme in 1886.³⁹

Rowan Strong argues that Manning's initial favourable reception of the Jerusalem proposal arose from his early support of the launch of the Colonial Bishops Fund in 1841 and emphasized in early correspondence with his fellow archdeacon, Augustus Hare. Strong does note, however, that Manning did not have complete information about the nature of the scheme, a point confirmed in the letters to Gladstone of 29 November and 2 December 1841. In fact, neither Manning nor Gladstone had thought out the full nature and implications of the scheme until late 1842.⁴⁰

To complicate matters further, in the same period of time, Gladstone became distracted by the contest for the Oxford University's professorship of poetry consequent upon Keble's end of his tenure in the winter of 1841. Soon Gladstone was corresponding with Manning about the warring factions let loose in Oxford in which tractarians were supporting Isaac Williams for the appointment against the anti-tractarian James Garbett. Indeed, Pusey was involved in publishing an open letter in which he maintained Garbett's candidature had been put together to offset Williams. Gladstone's attempt at mediation was not successful and eventually Williams withdrew his candidature towards the end of January in 1842. Gladstone saw the dispute as likely to spill over into wider concerns and engender dissent within the Church. He saw his own efforts as necessary 'to avert the indescribable calamity of Oxford divided against herself' on the religious issue.⁴¹

While Manning was willing to support what Gladstone wished to suggest (the withdrawal of both candidates and the selection of a third) and was willing to contact appropriate people about the issue, giving any help he could, he was at heart against the whole process as divisive for the Church. While he was bound to vote for Williams who had been Newman's curate at St. Mary's (should he vote at all) he informed Gladstone that 'there is no truth at stake: there is miserable exasperation of feeling, prejudice and the smart of grievances'.⁴² Williams had written *Tract 80* on 'Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge' which effectively would have lost him the appointment on account of its tractarian principles. Manning had some personal difficulties about appearing to be against Garbett because, as he told Pusey 'Garbett is one of our clergy, and we have been thrown by many events into a very kindly relation'.⁴³ To Manning, however, there were

³⁹ For the movement to revive the idea, see Rowell *The Vision Glorious*, 215–216, part of a widening interest in ecumenical relations under Archbishop Benson.

⁴⁰ See Rowan Strong in *The Oxford Movement: Europe and the Wider World 1830–1930*, eds. S.J. Brown and P.B. Nockles (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012), 78–98.

⁴¹ Erb, *Letters*, 1:259.

⁴² Erb, *Letters*, 1:273.

⁴³ Erb, *Letters*, 1, Addenda: 357.

greater issues at stake for the Church and an Oxford appointment seemed trivial by comparison. While the Oxford groups might be engaged in internecine strife, Manning saw signs of a more general combined onslaught on the Church in society 'of Radicals, Whigs and Orangemen in politics, and of every form of Protestant error with the so-called Evangelicals, the self-called orthodox, the modern Erastian and the shallow critical German school in religion', forces that filled him 'with deep anxiety'.⁴⁴ He knew 'nothing so hurtful to the recovery of truer principles out of Oxford as the complexion thus given to academical contests within the university'.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, Manning was not unconcerned at the struggles within the university, described by Gladstone in a letter to Viscount Sandon, as 'a deplorable and disastrous contest, exhibiting, and in great measure creating by exhibiting, a serious division in the Church'.⁴⁶ In the outcome Garbett was to be the new Oxford Professor of Poetry, a well-known evangelical who, somewhat ironically, was to become archdeacon of Chichester.⁴⁷

Indeed, 1842 was a difficult year for Gladstone who had not only to face the painful conversion to Roman Catholicism of his sister Helen but also had to endure the amputation of part of the forefinger on his left hand after a shooting accident. And there were troubles ahead for the Church of England.

On 13 May 1843, Gladstone was offered a cabinet post by Peel and the Presidency of the Board of Trade but he was not a little concerned as to how the new responsibility would relate to his interest in Church matters. Pusey's preaching on the Eucharist came under attack in Oxford and Manning, as a Select Preacher, was due to deliver his own sermon on 5 November 1843, a significant date for all with Catholic interests at heart.

Shortly before he was due in Oxford, however, Manning received a reply to a letter he had written to Newman about his resignation from St. Mary's. The reaction in the university to *Tract 90* made Newman feel he was 'a foreign material' who cannot 'assimilate with the Church of England'.⁴⁸ He pointed out that even his own bishop said 'that my mode of interpreting the Articles make them mean anything or nothing. When I heard this delivered, I did not believe my ears'.⁴⁹ More ominously, Newman told Manning 'I fear that I must confess that, in proportion as I think the English Church is showing herself intrinsically and radically alien from Catholic principles, so do I feel

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Erb, *Letters*, 1:267.

⁴⁷ James Pereiro, '*Ethos*' and the Oxford Movement, 210.

⁴⁸ Erb, *Letters*, 1:387.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

the difficulties of defending her claims to be a branch of the Catholic Church... Men of Catholic views are too truly but a party in our Church...'⁵⁰

Manning's startled response to Newman was to encourage him not to be despondent. 'Surely', he wrote 'you cannot feel that the Church of England regards you as a foreign ingredient. With whose writings has it so strongly and widely supported? For years, who has been more loved and revered?'⁵¹ He asked Newman '...could you expect the living generation to change the opinions, prejudices and habits of a whole life in a few years and at one bidding?'⁵²

Gladstone's reaction to Newman's letter was less temperate and was written to Manning 'with a heavy heart'. 'I had heard before of his difficulties and his failures in keeping some of his followers from lapse into Romanism. How can one wonder at either when his own foundations are apparently so undermined?'⁵³ He argued 'it is frightful too I confess for me to reflect upon the fact that such a man as Newman is—for is it not so? wavering in his allegiance, and upon any ground so impalpable as what he terms the general repudiation of the view contained in tract 90.'⁵⁴ He was astonished that Newman could not see the Church of England growing more Catholic in her members from year to year. What particularly stung Gladstone was Newman's willingness to abandon the branch theory of communion in the Christian Church, the key factor of Gladstone's own church polity. Manning was hurt in a different way, especially after a second letter from Newman in October 1843 in which he admitted 'I think the Church of Rome the Catholic Church, and ours not a part of the Catholic Church because not in communion with Rome,' to which he added he felt he could not 'honestly be a teacher in it any longer...'⁵⁵ It was a fundamental view that had occupied Newman for between four and five years.

Manning thought that Newman's position was seeming to tell him, he informed Gladstone, that his own 'only stay through six years of sorrow, weariness and solitude is a shadow'. 'All the world might say it,' reflected Manning 'and I should care less than to hear it from him. God be thanked it does not shake me, but it is like a chill or a wound under which one suffers to the very quick. God knows I see before me nothing between this and death, but to wear away powers and life in the work of the Church.'⁵⁶

In late October 1843, Gladstone still hoped there might be a change in Newman's attitude and urged Manning to write to him again.

⁵⁰ Erb, *Letters*, 1:387.

⁵¹ Erb, *Letters*, 1:388.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Erb, *Letters*, 1:390.

⁵⁴ Erb, *Letters*, 1:390–391.

⁵⁵ Erb, *Letters*, 1:395.

⁵⁶ Erb, *Letters*, 1:394.

While Manning promised to write he felt that to do so might precipitate conversion to Rome ‘and that at my motion’.⁵⁷ The letter would have to be ‘a breathless caution’.⁵⁸ Newman had himself given Manning leave to make use of his letters as Manning ‘thought fit’ in his letter of 25 October 1843. This fact alone did not augur well for the possibility of second thoughts or a change of mind. Gladstone was Manning’s only main confidante on the issue.

Manning’s sermon as Select Preacher at Oxford was an engagement of long standing, the venue and date not being of his own choice. The sermon has frequently been seen as an hypocritical performance, but only so when it has not been considered within the context of Newman’s correspondence with him of the previous month. The fifth of November sermon provided a public occasion in which Manning could steady nerves by presenting his credentials and beliefs in the Anglican Church. The theme was ‘Christ’s Kingdom not of This World,’⁵⁹ based upon a reference to the eighteenth chapter of St John’s gospel and the sermon itself, powerfully delivered, provided ample evidence of the suppressed strains of his recent reaction to Newman’s admission about the Church of England and the barely-controlled hurtful reaction of Gladstone manifested in his letter to Manning in the week before the sermon. In this, Gladstone referred to Newman as ‘a man whose intellectual stature is among the very first of his age, and who has indisputably headed the most powerful movement and the nearest to the seat of life that the Church has known at least for two centuries’.⁶⁰

The most contentious sections of Manning’s sermon, delivered from the pulpit of St Mary’s which Newman had occupied until recently, related to his abiding theme of the relationship of Church and State but this time he made use of old Protestant historical overtones. The bishop of Rome, he maintained, had taken to himself ‘a power of disposing of all things temporal on the plea of promoting spiritual ends’.⁶¹ Manning attacked ‘the power of spiritual censure, excommunication and interdict’ which ‘were wielded by hands that measured their strength with the princes of the world in fleets and armies’.⁶² He referred to the use of persecution to provide unity of faith, ‘the deposition of princes for heresy, the absolving their subjects from oaths of obedience, the instigation of their destruction’. He argued pointedly that ‘the inveterate and unnatural schism by which our Church is afflicted, is the perpetual memorial and ever present witness

⁵⁷ Erb, *Letters*, 1:400.

⁵⁸ Erb, *Letters*, 1:405.

⁵⁹ Sermon IV of *Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford by Henry Edward Manning*, MA (Oxford, 1844), 67–96.

⁶⁰ Erb, *Letters*, 1:403.

⁶¹ H.E. Manning, ‘Fifth of November Sermon’, *Sermons*, 4 vols (London, 1842–1850), 4:78.

⁶² *Ibid.*

of the attempt of Pius the Fifth to depose the Queen of England for heresy and usurpation'. These and other similar references were painful for tractarians to hear and Manning ended with the prayer that God grant 'we may be unspotted from the world...(and) ready to serve Him in the Church where He has blessed us with our spiritual birth, by all the power of life, and through His strength even unto death'.⁶³ They were powerful sentiments and aimed at avoiding the increase of conflict by keeping the Church united within a steady sense of activity and development.

Manning, of course, was aware he might lose some tractarian friends after the sermon but he saw it as a steadying operation against the crisis of Newman's possible conversion to Rome which, to him, seemed imminent. Pusey, among others, was upset at the overall critical tone of references to Rome but Peter Erb has shown that the story of Newman's snubbing of Manning following the sermon is apocryphal, a fact confirmed by Newman in November 1884.⁶⁴ To a certain extent, the sermon was preached to steady Manning's own nerve in his search for unity within the Church of England and, indeed, his sustained antipathy to an unduly close relationship between Church and State.

In November 1843, Gladstone had tried to secure Manning's appointment as preacher to Lincoln's Inn on the promotion of John Lonsdale to the see of Lichfield. Manning was not unduly phased by the outcome of the appointment in 1844, viewing it as a providential intervention to ensure he gave himself to current interests, parochial and diocesan affairs and teaching commitments. Consequent upon a lengthy correspondence with Pusey, he was able to sum up his position in regard to ecclesiastical affairs. 'Certainly', he told Gladstone, 'I do with the intensest desire long to avoid controversy' but 'to live and die in the work of building up the living Church of England by affirmative teaching and a more devoted life than I have ever lived as yet'. But, he questioned, 'is this possible without an antagonist side against error of all sorts, specially that which is instant?' The rhetorical question was to be answered fully in the events of 1844–1853 the dates covered by the second volume of the published letters.

Manning, whose health was always precarious, went to Normandy for ten days in October 1844, 'quietly enjoying myself in the churches'. He was soon confronted with problems related to the proposed condemnation at Oxford of William George Ward on account of his new book *The Ideal of A Christian Church* (London, 1844). Ward was a fellow of Balliol and the book was lavish in its praise of the Roman Catholic Church and by his breadth of interpretation of the

⁶³ Manning's 'Fifth of November Sermon', 96.

⁶⁴ Erb, *Letters*, 1:410, footnote g.

Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. To Manning, the book was ‘the most Luther-like protest I have ever read’ but yet ‘how sorely true is his exposure of our miserable defects in all branches of theological science, discipline and practice.’⁶⁵ Ward argued that in subscribing to the Thirty-nine Articles he renounced ‘no one Roman doctrine’ but he rejoiced at ‘the most joyful, most wonderful, most unexpected sight we find the whole cycle of Roman doctrine gradually possessing numbers of English churchmen’.

The meeting of Convocation at Oxford on 13 February 1845 was meant to be a rout of the tractarian party, for it was the intention not only to strip Ward of his degrees and condemn extracts from his book, but to impose a new religious test for the university and, as well, to censure *Tract 90*, the latter in effect an attack on Newman himself. On the occasion, Ward spoke well in his own defence and although the deprivation of his degrees was carried somewhat slightly, 569 to 511 votes, the condemnation of selected passages in *The Ideal* was carried by a margin of 386 to 777 votes. The outcome did represent a significant blow to tractarians and their followers. The Fellows of Balliol stood together in their unanimous support for Ward and Frederick Oakeley, in particular, remained near Ward on the rostrum.⁶⁶ The Proctors, R.W. Church of Balliol and H.P. Guillemand of Trinity, used their veto to offset any possible condemnation of *Tract 90*. Any suggestion of a change to the religious test at Oxford seemed to be so unpopular that it had already been withdrawn by the Hebdomadal Board.

Manning and Gladstone were in Oxford and along with Pusey, Keble and others of the High Church party voted against the condemnations. Newman was not present, probably for the reason he gave to Manning in his letter of 16 November 1844 in which he declared openly ‘my one paramount reason for contemplating a change is my deep, unvarying conviction that our Church is in schism and my salvation depends on my joining the Church of Rome’.⁶⁷ He added in that same letter ‘what keeps me yet is what has kept me long—a fear that I am under a delusion—but the conviction remains firm under all circumstances, in all frames of mind...’⁶⁸ Although Gladstone had been severe in his personal criticism of *The Ideal*, his vote in Ward’s favour was secure because he was fundamentally

⁶⁵ Erb, *Letters*, 2:4. Penelope Hunting gives a brief, perceptive account of Ward’s book on the Church of England in her study of Manning’s brother-in-law, George Dudley Ryder; see: Penelope Hunting, *The Saint and the Disciple: Cardinal John Henry Newman, the Reverend George Dudley Ryder and the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth Century England* (Palo Alto, USA: Academica Press, 2011), 92–97.

⁶⁶ P. Galloway, *A Passionate Humility. Frederick Oakeley and the Oxford Movement* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1999), 165.

⁶⁷ Erb, *Letters*, 2:17.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

concerned at the damage of discord that could otherwise be caused to the fragile peace and unity of the Church.

Manning viewed with concern the possible usurpation by the university of decisions rightly belonging to the Church herself. He disliked university orchestrations, interventions and political undertones. On subscription to the Articles he told Gladstone 'I know of no tribunal confident to add either new *criteria* or new and *living expositions* but the Church in Synod.'⁶⁹ Both he and Gladstone considered the Church of England 'repels no one holding Roman Doctrine inwardly from her communion'.⁷⁰ There was much in common in the attitude of both men to the handling of the Ward dispute. To some extent it represented the view expressed by Manning in his archdeaconal Charge of 1842 that 'men confuse themselves and perplex others by not distinguishing between matters of faith and matters of opinion: great diversity of opinion is consistent with perfect unity of faith'.⁷¹ It was a comforting distinction for Gladstone as he faced his own political crisis in 1844–45, arising from the renewal of the Maynooth Grant allocation and Peel's desire to increase it in value and provide a permanent obligation. Gladstone resigned from the government in February 1845 because of his conscientious views concerning the relation implied between the functions of Church and State.

That the events of 1844–45 brought the two men closer together in their comradeship is noticeable in the content and approach of the exchange of views recorded in the correspondence. It was an interesting transitional development when the trickle of converts to Rome, beginning with Charles Seager (1808–78), an Orientalist and Anglican priest, who was received into the Catholic Church in October 1843, started to gather momentum and presage the disintegration of the Littlemore establishment and final conversion of Newman. September 1845 saw the conversion to Rome of the theologian and philosopher W. G. Ward (1812–1882) and his wife and that of J. D. Dalgairns (1818–1876). October was to witness that of Frederick Oakeley (1802–1880)—after a lengthy correspondence with both Manning and Newman, Ambrose St John (1815–1875) and, on 9 October, of Newman himself. Others would follow.

It was a momentous step for Gladstone to take when he decided to speak in the House of Commons in support of the Maynooth Bill which aided directly the education and training of Roman Catholic priests in Ireland. No longer a member of the government where his philosophy had endured to uphold the role of the State in regard to supporting the relationship between Church and State, he now felt free in conscience to consider the secular interests involved in the Maynooth

⁶⁹ Erb, *Letters*, 2:31.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ H.E. Manning, *A Charge Delivered at the Ordinary Visitation of the Archdeaconry of Chichester in July 1842* (London, 1842), 41.

issue only and to do so with impartiality. Manning was present at Gladstone's speech in the House in which he considered more than the exigencies of the moment to be at stake. Manning felt the predicament which had confronted Gladstone could only be finally settled by a re-examination of the established Church in its relationship to the State. He had urged Gladstone some years earlier: 'let Parliament declare itself to be what indeed it is'—the 'mixed governing body for purposes purely secular'.⁷²

Manning considered Gladstone's speech in the House on 11 April 1845 was 'far the best I have heard from you and I thought it very real, and able'.⁷³ He did make some criticisms, however, mainly of style, organization and delivery—arguments were too elaborative, sentences too long and continuous, diction too latinistic—comments largely accepted by Gladstone with a good grace. The exchange of views is symptomatic of the greater friendly frankness that began to be evident in 1845. Manning offered some other personal advice. He hoped Gladstone would not return to public office too quickly and that he would, for a while, 'suffer *us* to bear the weight and brunt of our theological strife'.⁷⁴ His ultimate reflection on the Maynooth Bill can be said to be 'the British Empire has converted the principle of universal toleration into the principle of universal support of such religious bodies as either by number, organization, or political weight are definite and strong to force themselves upon the cognizance of the Civil Power. This is universal in the colonies. It is now being recognised in Ireland. And it will be at some time, however distant, admitted to England'.⁷⁵ Thus, as von Arx has pointed out, Manning emphasized in late 1860 that the Church of England had been 'morally disestablished' by the repeal of the Test and Corporation Act and by Catholic Emancipation. Hence, he believed the Church of England had begun 'to appeal to its own spiritual authority and to exert its own internal energies'.⁷⁶

The year 1845 was, hence, one of many problems and crises, both ecclesiastical and political, for Gladstone. He was in Germany on holiday when Newman converted to Rome on 9 October and he wrote to Manning from Baden-Baden on the event. Newman had informed Manning the day before his conversion of the impending action.

During his time in Germany, where he remained until mid-November, Gladstone had met Ignatz von Döllinger in Munich and had formed a high opinion of his ability. Döllinger's 'liberal' Catholicism as a Roman priest, made its appeal to Gladstone and it was to develop into

⁷² Erb, *Letters*, 1:47.

⁷³ Erb, *Letters*, 2:74.

⁷⁴ Erb, *Letters*, 2:80.

⁷⁵ Erb, *Letters*, 2:79–80.

⁷⁶ J. P. von Arx in *From Without the Flaminian Gate: 150 Years of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy in England and Wales*, ed. V. A. McClelland and M. Hodgetts (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1999), 253.

a long-standing regard, not only for Döllinger himself (which persisted after his future excommunication by Pius IX) but also for his pupil and disciple, Lord Acton. Gladstone's reaction to the conversion of Newman was somewhat 'matter-of-fact'. He harboured almost a feeling of disappointment 'at not seeing more (early) secessions with Newman', pointing out that 'now, as we are undergoing an amputation, we must desire it should be done at once'.⁷⁷ He did grieve over the loss of Faber, a month later, who was converted to Rome and Gladstone remarked to Manning: 'he was evidently a man who understood working the popular *side* of this religious movement, which has for the most part been left to shift for itself'.⁷⁸ A prolongation of the process of the leakage to Rome for Gladstone, however, would have the effect 'of destroying confidence within the Church and of disqualifying so many for the active and resolute performance of duty'.⁷⁹

Manning considered the event rather differently. He believed Newman's conversion would inevitably have its consequences 'ethical and intellectual in our relation to Rome: and decidedly for good,'⁸⁰ but he paid tribute to Newman and his influence. 'No living man,' he wrote 'has so powerfully affected me and there is no mind I have so revered. He was so unlike those round him—so discerning, masculine, real and self-controlled, such a perfect absence of formation, and artificial habits'.⁸¹

To a certain extent, Gladstone's mind was distracted by Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845), which both he and Manning were studying.⁸² Gladstone urged Manning to construct a response to it. For Gladstone, 'Newman's book interests me deeply; shakes me not at all'.⁸³ Manning viewed the book 'with an extraordinary interest,'⁸⁴ and he could remember no book 'that so held my interest fast from beginning to end. It seemed as if the doubts, difficulties, and problems of the last ten years were suddenly brought to a focus external to my own mind, with the strength and light of another mind to whose power I felt as nothing. It seemed to swallow me up with all the thoughts of years'.⁸⁵

The debate on Church principles between the two men continued, with Gladstone's perpetual emphasis on the work and needs of a

⁷⁷ Erb, *Letters*, 2:165.

⁷⁸ Erb, *Letters*, 2:173. Faber was received into the Roman Catholic Church on 16 November 1845.

⁷⁹ Erb, *Letters*, 2:165.

⁸⁰ Erb, *Letters*, 2:167.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (London, 1845).

⁸³ Erb, *Letters*, 2:174.

⁸⁴ Erb, *Letters*, 2:175.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

committed Christian in political life and Manning's efforts on the work of resolution for a proper, Church/State relationship and the search for independently authoritative teaching within the Church herself. By the beginning of the new year, the thoughts of the two men were converging once more, aided by Manning's attempts to reinforce Gladstone's perception of his role as a Christian statesman based upon the adoption of a rule of life influenced strongly by recollection and prayer.⁸⁶ The issue became of added urgency when, in December 1845, Gladstone accepted the office of Secretary for the Colonies, a post destined to endure for only a short time, until the following February, and the fall of Peel's government. Gladstone had accepted the colonial brief, however, with a troubled conscience, uncertain how he could continue to assist the Church in her hour of need. He told Manning: 'I believe I have obeyed the call of what is for the present at least my profession, and if so it is the call of God, whose aid I trust has been given me'.⁸⁷ Manning's remedy for Gladstone's scruples was a habit of frequent recollection and the adoption of mental prayer. In this context, he described prayer as, simply 'the concentrated expression of habitual aspirations'.⁸⁸

The unity of the Church had become Manning's chief occupation and its study led to the abandonment of the branch theory of church unity. In his main study on the subject, *The Unity of the Church* (1842) he had set unequivocal parameters. He stated 'the unity of the church is most necessary to be known and acted on as a rule of life by all Christians, because it is a principle of moral obligation'.⁸⁹ It was 'a guide in the whole complicated texture of a Christian man's life'.⁹⁰ For 'by a right knowledge of unity Catholic Christians know also the nature and forms of schism'.⁹¹ By the publication of his sermon on 'The Analogy of Nature', printed in the fourth volume of his *Sermons* in 1850, he had reached the point of rejection of Keble's theory of 'probability' in the making of judgements relating to faith and its concomitant of being able to rest in the three branch theory of church unity, in which the Anglican, Orthodox and Roman Churches constituted the element of over-all unity upon which troubled Anglicans could rest. The theory satisfied Keble's conscience for, as Pereiro has pointed out, 'probability' and the three branch theory 'were the two anchors that held Keble steady in the Anglican Church'.⁹² For Manning the idea of 'probability' could not be allowed to conflict with 'revelation'. The theory of 'probability', for instance, was seen to be

⁸⁶ Erb, *Letters*, 2:184.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Erb, *Letters*, 2:184.

⁸⁹ Manning, *The Unity of the Church*, (London, 1842), 3.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁹¹ Manning, *The Unity of the Church*, p. 3.

⁹² Pereiro, *'Ethos' and the Oxford Movement*, p. 225.

little more than a theory of persuasion in which men could be content to remain in the church of their baptism. In this situation we detect the intensification of Manning's disillusionment with the position of the Church of England. Gladstone, as a consequence, became increasingly sensitive to Manning's Romeward journey which was to reach its apotheosis with the Gorham Judgement of 1850, a crisis that was also to affect James Hope's challenge to Anglican orthodoxy as well as that by Manning and others.

In connection with a book review in which he was engaged in 1847, Gladstone had raised the issue of confession in a letter to Manning.⁹³ In the Roman Catholic dispensation he had questioned 'compulsory confession' by which he meant as a condition of admission to the sacraments and, also, the system of 'direction' which accompanied confession. This, he felt, was one of the many criticisms of the Church of Rome and was 'a most positive and pressing duty to keep alive'. Gladstone maintained there was a lack of freedom in a practice that militated against individual responsibility for following Christian law and teaching. Manning rejected this view: 'confession and direction seems to me to be means divinely ordained to restore liberty to the will, by freeing it from bondage to its own sin, and that the fruit of such discipline is "perfect freedom".'⁹⁴ Manning's Romeward journey seemed palpable. To a certain extent Gladstone believed it was aggravated by Manning's illness from maladies of the throat and lungs which had been troubling him. Add to this that Manning's mother had died in July 1847. He had decided to go to the continent with Dodsworth for recuperation. He was, however, taken ill in Lucerne and returned home. Three months later he resumed the journey with his sister, Caroline, and her husband. This meant, of course, he was out of the mainstream of church discussions, a situation that seemed to aid his recovery somewhat. He returned to Lavington in July 1848. Gladstone had retired from public life with the defeat of Peel's ministry in June 1846. He was to seek election to Parliament for Oxford and Manning wrote to him from Homburg to express his pleasure at his successful election in August 1847.

Manning was back in Rome on health grounds in 1848 from whence he wrote to Gladstone on the news of the appointment of Renn Dickson Hampden to the see of Hereford, which he designated 'this miserable, ever, and thrice miserable Hampden affair'. Hampden had been selected by the Prime Minister on 15 November 1847 and confirmed on 11 January 1848, much to the consternation of tractarians and high churchmen. Manning regarded Hampden's Bampton Lectures of 1832 to be heterodox in substance, commenting 'still more so

⁹³ Erb, *Letters*, 2:238.

⁹⁴ Erb, *Letters*, 2:244.

that they lay down the science of heterodoxy'. He argued that 'his Theological principle, if I can so call it, is an instrument for the proof of every heresy, as Catholic Tradition which he destroys is the sole external proof of the one Truth'.⁹⁵ Hampden had only been condemned by Oxford University's convocation in 1836, but his reputation for latitudinarianism persisted. Gladstone's own desire was that the choice of bishops should be in the hands of the church, not those of the Prime Minister. For Manning, despite his agreement with Gladstone on what should be, the appointment to Hereford was clearly the intrusion by the State of a man whose orthodoxy was suspect to many and into a see where he would be entrusted with ordinary doctrinal guidance. But if this was seen to be the hegemony of the State in religious matters, over the rights of the Church herself and the work of the Holy Spirit within it, it was as nothing compared to the much more serious infringement brought about by the Gorham case in 1850.

The Bishop of Exeter, Henry Phillpotts, had declined to institute George Cornelius Gorham (1787–1857) to the living of Bramford Speke in Devon, considering his views on baptismal regeneration to be doctrinally erroneous. Gorham appealed against this ruling in June 1848 to the Court of Arches which upheld the right of Phillpotts to decline to institute Gorham on the grounds given. A further appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council ruled against the church courts in legal terms. The issue as far as tractarians and high churchmen was concerned was not simply whether the crown would agree with the ecclesiastical processes or not, but the more serious fundamental issue as to whether the church would acknowledge and accept interference by the state in a doctrinal matter. To Gladstone it was 'a stupendous issue' and he wrote to Manning on 30 December 1849 from Fasque, before the crisis imploded in 1850, saying he wished 'to converse with you from sunrise to sunset' on the Gorham case.⁹⁶ He saw the issue of baptismal regeneration as a crucial one. An opposite decision to the mind of the church 'would be non-natural to the very last degree, and would even shake the credit of the judicial character among us'.⁹⁷ If George Gorham was vindicated, he mused, 'I say not only is there no doctrine of baptismal regeneration in the Church of England as State-interpreted, but there is no doctrine at all—and Arians or anybody else may abide in it with equal propriety ... there would stand forth clear as day to all who did not shut their eyes the absolute necessity of the living voice of the Church to guard her mute witness against profanation.'⁹⁸ Would the State support the

⁹⁵ Erb, *Letters*, 2:259–260.

⁹⁶ Erb, *Letters*, 2:325.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Erb, *Letters*, 2:325; See also *The Full Judgement of the Judicial Committee of Privy Council. Delivered March 8, 1850 etc.*, 3rd edition (1850).

bishop, or not? In either event there would be consequences. Manning could not envisage how the Church of England could permit two conflicting doctrines on baptism to be placed before the people without abdicating its own teaching authority.

The decision, when it came, rejecting the bishop's ruling and also that of the ecclesiastical court, required a good deal of Gladstone's strength and influence in dealing with Manning for, as the latter told him in June 1850, 'the dream of my life has been unity, unity among ourselves, and unity with the Church universal'.⁹⁹ That search was leading him inexorably to find unity only in the Roman Catholic Church. Gladstone had long seen the Roman tendency and, after Gorham, the time was fast approaching when Manning could no longer hold office in the Church of England. Gladstone, however, was conscious that the amplest time should be given for thought and reflection before irrevocable steps were taken. Precipitation should be avoided. Distressed by the Gorham verdict, Gladstone found some solace in energy and in his intent to work for future change in establishing positive truth within the Church, a groundwork exercise he envisaged that would lead eventually to the union of Christendom. He thought that the 'rain dropping', as he called it, of Anglican converts to Rome would be retrogressive to a continued search for any eventual reunion with Rome. Gladstone was hardly up to the role he envisaged for himself and for Manning 'the theology of the Church of England, which is the dynamic force of its organization is dissolved by contradictions, ambiguities, and abandonment of the principle of authority...'¹⁰⁰

The final steps of disengagement from existing duties had to be accelerated, Manning informed Gladstone, because of the *fracas* in the country effected by the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy for England and Wales on 7 October 1850 and the reaction of the government of Lord John Russell that would eventually lead to his Ecclesiastical Titles Bill of August, 1851. Peel, who would have provided a less frenzied leadership to the country, had died on 29 June 1850 from a fall from his horse. Russell lost little time by his action to regain the spirit of the Gordon Riots of 1780. Manning reported to Gladstone that the clergy of his archdeaconry wished to be convened to discuss the matter of the new Roman Catholic hierarchy and he had to arrange a meeting as his duty required. The meeting was convened but he decided not to participate himself. He offered his resignation to the Bishop of Chichester (further confirmed after the bishop's request for re-consideration) and subsequently Manning gave up the living of Lavington where he had spent all of his pastoral ministry. He did

⁹⁹ Erb, *Letters*, 2:378.

¹⁰⁰ Erb, *Letters*, 2:442

request Gladstone, however, not to participate in the anti-Roman hysteria, 'the worst of no Popery excitement: noise without agreement or consistent meaning'.¹⁰¹ Gladstone gave his assurance he would do nothing 'to fan those furious flames which Lord John Russell has thought fit to light'.¹⁰²

In regard to himself, Manning assured Gladstone he would take no irrevocable step until he had seen him again on Gladstone's return from Italy. He admitted to 'the sorrow which has all but broken my heart',¹⁰³ on his leaving Lavington where he had been based for eighteen years. Gladstone responded 'you can do nothing that does not reach me, considering how long you have been a large part, both of my actual life and of my hopes and reckonings...Should you do act which I pray God with my whole soul you may not, it will not break, however it may impair or strain the bonds between us'.¹⁰⁴

In a letter to James Hope, Manning admitted to having had 'jarring and useless conversations with Gladstone on his return from Italy, adding 'we seemed at last to ascertain our differences to lie in the very ideas of the Church and its functions'.¹⁰⁵ Manning and Hope were received into the Roman Catholic Church on the same day, Passion Sunday, 6 April 1851.

Apart from a few letters, there was a significant break in correspondence between Gladstone and Manning following the latter's reception. The old intimate discussions of Church of England topics could not be sustained in the light of events. New concerns required time to emerge. Manning, following his ordination to the Roman Catholic priesthood by Cardinal Wiseman on Trinity Sunday, 14 June 1851, was shortly to renew theological studies in Rome while living at the *Accademia dei Nobilè Ecclesiastici*, a place with which he was to connect until 1854, apart from short vacation visits with relatives in London. From 1856 he was busy with newly acquired parochial and diocesan duties in Westminster, including at Wiseman's urgency the foundation and management of the Oblates of St. Charles. Parochial duties at St. Mary of the Angels in the Bayswater area and diocesan affairs following his appointment as Provost of the Westminster Chapter of Canons in 1857, fully engaged his working days. He had little time to continue with an extensive correspondence with Gladstone while dealing with a new-style church organization and the degree of opposition he had to encounter from some clerics who worked against the development of the Oblates and Manning's loyalty to the governance of Cardinal Wiseman. There was an emerging sense of jealousy

¹⁰¹ Erb, *Letters*, 2:439.

¹⁰² Erb, *Letters*, 2:446.

¹⁰³ Erb, *Letters*, 2:448.

¹⁰⁴ Erb, *Letters*, 2:450–451.

¹⁰⁵ James Robert Hope-Scott (1812–1873); Erb, *Letters*, 2:440.

and resentment at the ordination of a widower who had recently held a high dignitary position as an Anglican churchman and whose Roman Catholic post-ordination training had been undertaken in Rome, where he had been awarded a D.D. at its completion. Gladstone, for his part, was also upset in 1854 by the conversion to Rome of Robert Wilberforce (1802–1857) and, two years later, Mary Stanley (1813–1879). Both he had tried hard to retain within the Church of England and the outcome troubled him at a time when he was shifting his political alliances and anxiously endeavouring to build up further his professional career.

The third volume of the Gladstone-Manning correspondence is, thus, of a different kind from the two earlier volumes. There is a more decided move into the realm of public events and legislation in which Manning was to take particular interest, more so after his appointment as Wiseman's successor in 1865, three years ahead of Gladstone forming his first ministry as Prime Minister. The nature of the correspondence from 1861 to 1875 is also more familiar to historians than that of earlier years and their attention to the record of the social enterprises in the fields of education, amelioration of poverty and working-class conditions, family life and relationships, capital and labour have attracted scholars and writers. The work for Irish Catholics at home and within the diaspora was to be one of Manning's main contributions in the exemplification of that 'practical Christianity' he always desiderated.

When Manning's casual meeting with Gladstone on 15 March 1861 led to a re-engagement in correspondence it was intended to avoid theological discussions. The separation of religious from secular and social issues, however, was soon unsustainable. This was inevitable for two men whose private lives, religious and social duties were intertwined and endemic to their constitutions. Views about the temporal power of the papacy (even before 1865) and the subsequent problems of Italian unification, disestablishment of the Irish (Anglican) Church and the Irish University Question, national education at home, and especially the work and outcome of the First Vatican Council, are indicative of the wide-ranging mix of the concerns of both men.

Manning had been in Rome in 1848 and had witnessed the early stages of Italian unification and it had convinced him that the papacy ought to possess an extra-national sovereignty because 'the head of the religion of many nations cannot be under the civil sovereignty of any nation'.¹⁰⁶ It was this view that convinced Gladstone that Manning's support of the temporal power would drive 'Italians' away from Christianity. On

¹⁰⁶ This quotation, taken from H.E. Manning's *The Independence of the Holy See* (London, 1879), 26, sums up his main reason. Curiously enough the modern Vatican City State encapsulates the reasoning behind the argument.

an even more personal level Manning saw Gladstone's sympathy for Italian 'resurgents' as out of kilter with his innate belief in the unity between Church and State in England which he had deemed as a stable ingredient for the welfare of the Church as whole. Manning considered the Roman Catholic Church and a large section of Christendom would be ill-equipped to preserve its integrity unaffected by continental liberal, anti-clerical, and atheistic domination if the territorial independence of the Holy See was jeopardised. Political subjugation would make more difficult an independence of teaching authority. In February 1865, he was asking Gladstone from Rome 'by what reasons you can justify the forcible maintenance of the British Government in Ireland without at the same time justifying the forcible maintenance of the Roman Government over the Roman State.'¹⁰⁷ Gladstone denied that Ireland could be placed in such juxtaposition. Manning suspected that Gladstone's attitude on European development put at risk his earlier beliefs on church and state issues.

In principle, however, Gladstone was not averse to a settlement of the Italian problem that would leave the Pope in Rome and his independence in teaching and spiritual direction untrammelled, although he argued 'it cannot be for the interests of religion to contravene the established principle of civil right by forcing a Government on the inhabitants of the Roman States through the employment, actual or impending and expected, of foreign arms'.¹⁰⁸ Gladstone foresaw that an outcome to the political turmoil might be 'to untie the hands of the Pope, and to leave him much more free to exercise his great and real power than he is now; or that he can be while he remains in the ordinary and secular meaning of the term, a Prince, and as a Prince subject to be dealt with as other Princes'.¹⁰⁹ If this was meant to assuage Manning's anxiety it failed so to do.

Difference of view on the temporal power between the two men was not easily overcome but Manning was careful that it did not work to the detriment of the welfare of the Roman Catholic body in England. The year of Manning's appointment to the See of Westminster saw Gladstone in an influential role as Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Russell's government and Manning was able to assure him in the following year that 'all that you do for the welfare of the people has my heartfelt good will'.¹¹⁰

The question of state-church relationship continued to occupy the attention of both men in regard to the disestablishment of the Irish Church, the repeal of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, and the work of the First Vatican Council at which Manning was to become an important

¹⁰⁷ Erb, *Letters*, 3:53.

¹⁰⁸ Erb, *Letters*, 3:87.

¹⁰⁹ Erb, *Letters*, 3:91.

¹¹⁰ Erb, *Letters*, 3:80.

figure. From 1865 onwards, Manning was urgent in pressing on Gladstone his views of the need for justice in Ireland and what he called 'a wiser legislation' for the country.¹¹¹ The collection of letters in the Erb volumes about Irish affairs is particularly rich. They show that Manning hardly needed Gladstone's assurance in 1867 that his first anxiety in reviewing religious controversies and other divisions of Christendom 'is for the maintenance of belief wherever it exists: and all other cares and wishes are subordinate to this...'¹¹² It brought the response from Manning that 'you know how heartily and largely my politics, if I have any, go for the people, but they go first and above all for the Christian Society of the world...'¹¹³ With regard to Ireland, Gladstone informed Manning in October 1867 that he was disposed 'from all you say now, and have said before, to think that our views must be very nearly the same.'¹¹⁴

In Gladstone's first ministry as Prime Minister, 1868, the Irish Disestablishment Bill of 1869 and the subsequent Irish University Bill featured prominently and occupied Manning's attention and his ability as an intermediary with the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy. During 1870, Manning was in Rome in the early stages of the First Vatican Council, and although he kept himself informed of the domestic legislation that affected English Catholics in the development of a universal system of education, he remained wholehearted in his concern with justice for Catholics and their schooling needs. In the aftermath of the Council he was to urge 'perfect religious equality', as in Canada and Australia 'is the way of peace and justice between England and Ireland'.¹¹⁵

While contact between Gladstone and Manning remained as normal on domestic issues during 1870 it was the concerns of the Council that seemed to Gladstone to be little more than the endorsement of Manning's views of the importance of the Church freeing herself from the shackles of political control or interference. It was a concern perhaps more relevant in terms of continental Europe than English policy. But Gladstone envisaged the direction being taken by the Council as threatening that element of equilibrium that he endeavoured to sustain at home between church and state. He feared, too, that the direction pursued by the Council might give voice to anti-Catholic legislation, referring as an example to Charles Newdegate's 'Select Committee' seeking to enquire into, and oversee, the establishment of convents and monastic institutions in England. Gladstone had concerns about ultramontanism and thought it might ultimately increase the

¹¹¹ Erb, *Letters*, 3:97.

¹¹² Erb, *Letters*, 3:99.

¹¹³ Erb, *Letters*, 3:101

¹¹⁴ Erb, *Letters*, 3:102.

¹¹⁵ H. E. Manning, 'Caesarism and Ultramontanism', *Miscellanies* 2 (1877), 238.

threat of secularism which he abhorred. He was fair, however, in his judgement of Manning, telling Lord Acton (his younger confidante and an enemy of the majority view in the Council) that Manning was ‘a man of honour’ who was aware of Gladstone’s attitudes and would not misrepresent them.

In a paper he read to the Academia of the Catholic Religion in 1873, Manning defined his view of the nature of ultramontaniam. He said it consisted in the separation of the powers of church and state, in claiming for the church the sole right to define doctrines of faith and morals and of fixing the limits of its own jurisdiction in those areas and ‘in the indissoluble union of the Church with, and submission to, the universal jurisdiction of the Holy See.’¹¹⁶ He argued, too, in *The Independence of the Holy See*, 1877, that ‘the Catholic Church refuses to be a national Church; it is the unity of all nations in the Kingdom of God...’¹¹⁷ By the Council ‘the national spirit has been exorcised and cast out of the Church’.¹¹⁸ He also emphasized the point in his *Religio Viatoris*: ‘The Vatican Council defined the two primary truths of the natural and supernatural order: the one that the existence of God can be certainly known by the things that are made: the other that the Roman Pontiff in defining the faith and law of God, by divine assistance is guarded from all error... The one is the infallibility of the light of reason in the natural order. The other is the infallibility of the Church in its Head by a perpetual divine assistance.’¹¹⁹

In April 1870, Manning had urged Gladstone not to allow himself ‘to be warped, or impelled into words or acts hostile to the Council’,¹²⁰ a view he followed up subsequently. Particular concerns were the influence upon him of ‘liberal Catholics’ like Acton and Döllinger.

Manning’s view on church polity was not a surprise to Gladstone because it had been a main element in their discussions throughout the period of their friendship. Two incidents, however, particularly affected Gladstone, one being the reception to Roman Catholicism in 1874 of the first Marquess of Ripon, son of Viscount Goderich who had been Prime Minister in 1827–28. Ripon resigned from Gladstone’s cabinet before his conversion. He was a statesman who was very much of Gladstone’s way of thinking about church and state. It was not, however, only Gladstone’s furious reaction to the decrees of the Vatican Council that set the seal of the second major break in the friendly correspondence with Manning, but the failure of Gladstone’s bill for the reform of Irish university education in 1873. Manning had given his full support to the measure but, in doing so had presented too

¹¹⁶ Manning, *Miscellanies* 2 (London 1877), 148.

¹¹⁷ H.E. Manning, *The Independence of the Holy See*, 95.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 95–96.

¹¹⁹ H.E. Manning, *Religio Viatoris*, 5th ed (London: Burns and Oates, 1901), 82.

¹²⁰ Erb, *Letters*, 3:200

roseate a view of the support of the Irish bishops. Always problematical to deal with, the latter had been less than clear in stating the nature of their own divisions with each other on the measure. Gladstone lost the bill by three votes which led to the government's collapse in 1874 and to a general election which eventually followed. Disraeli won the ensuing election. While he did not suspect double-dealing on Manning's part, Gladstone certainly felt he had been misled by the strength of Manning's continuous optimistic support. The outcome led to a seven year pause in their epistolary contacts which did not resume until February 1884 in a somewhat more sluggish fashion as Gladstone embarked upon his second ministry. Earlier attempts by Manning to repair the misunderstanding had not been well received.

Gladstone's tracts on 'Vaticanism' published in 1874 and 1875, had also been a major source of both bewilderment and antagonism. Gladstone received much criticism of them from a wide range of sources, some such as that from Lord Ripon who strongly objected to the tone of the first tract in which Gladstone insinuated that the teaching of the Vatican Council made it impossible for Catholics to be good citizens. Manning, himself, indignantly responded to the slur in *The Times* newspaper, pointing out that the loyalty of civil allegiance is not in spite of the teaching of the Catholic Church, but because of it.¹²¹ Furthermore, 'the civil allegiance of every Christian man in England is limited by conscience and the law of God and the civil allegiance of Catholics is limited neither less nor more'. His due 'as an Englishman, as a Catholic, and as a pastor is to claim for myself a civil allegiance as pure, as true, and as loyal as is rendered by the distinguished author of the pamphlet or by any subject of the British Empire'.¹²² Manning considered Gladstone's whole argument 'lays upon an erroneous assertion, into which I can only suppose he has been misled by his misplaced trust in Dr. Döllinger and some of his friends'.¹²³ The pamphlet he said had 'overcast a friendship of 45 years',¹²⁴ a phrase to which Gladstone took exception. The fourth volume of the Erb collection of letters, covering the final period of Manning's life (1882–1892) contains a full account of the Vaticanism tracts and subsequent controversy and it presents an important bibliography on the theme.

On 23 April 1880, Gladstone began his second ministry, planning a new and improved Irish Land Bill and, although contact with Manning was not resumed on this issue until sometime later, Manning kept in touch with the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy and began once more to act as an unofficial intermediary. Correspondence with

¹²¹ Erb, *Letters*, 3:391.

¹²² Erb, *Letters*, 3:392.

¹²³ Erb, *Letters*, 3:393.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

Gladstone resurrected somewhat in 1884 when fear among Catholics arose that the new Italian government would try to expropriate church property in Rome. After this issue, communication was intermittent except for educational issues (Manning was eventually to be a member of the Cross Commission on elementary education in 1888, a forerunner for the important 1902 legislation for education). Manning also followed closely Gladstone's debate with T.H. Huxley (1825–1895) on creation teaching and biblical criticism.

In 1885, Gladstone's proposals for a measure of Irish self-government (mainly of a local nature), which Manning enthusiastically supported, collapsed chiefly but not exclusively because Gladstone was again unsure of the measure of support given to them by the Irish bishops. One of the final involvements of Manning on Irish affairs was his lack of support for Parnell on the divorce issue. Finally, he and Gladstone began to put together and arrange their private correspondence, exchanging some letters as they agreed. Manning died from an acute attack of bronchitis on 15 February 1892.

Writing to Gladstone in old age about their correspondence, Cardinal Manning remarked if the letters between them were ever to be published 'they will not lower either of us; and they tell a continuous history'.¹²⁵ This reflection is made manifest in Peter Erb's collection. Both participants evinced a rich humanity, based upon religious concerns, honesty and frankness, virtues not inhibiting the growth of personal friendship in spite of evolving differences of view and attitudes. This collection of the Gladstone-Manning letters is an outstanding labour that will provide researchers with new thoughts and approaches.

¹²⁵ Erb, *Letters*, 4:42.