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**FOR AND AGAINST "ROME":
THE CASE OF EDMUND BISHOP, 1846-1917**

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**THE FACULTY OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
MCGILL UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL
AUGUST 1994**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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ISBN 0-612-05693-7

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ABSTRACT

Previous studies of the life and thought of Edmund Bishop (1846-1917), an English liturgiologist and convert to Catholicism, have underplayed the change in his attitude from positive to negative with respect to the institutional Catholic Church. This crucial shift in thinking occurred during 1899-1901, and is clearly reflected in his own writings. From then on, he differentiated between the institution that was the Catholic Church and Catholicism as a religion. Although he remained faithful to the latter, his diaries and letters preserve an intentional record of his severe criticism of the Catholic hierarchy. Bishop's views represent those of a layman and of an informed observer at a time when the Catholic Church was confronting the Modernist challenge.

RÉSUMÉ

Les études antérieures sur la vie et la pensée d'Edmund Bishop (1846-1917), liturgiste anglais converti au catholicisme, n'ont pas bien fait ressortir le changement d'attitude de cet auteur envers l'institution de l'Église catholique-romaine. De positive qu'elle était, son attitude est devenue très négative au cours des années 1899-1901, et ce revirement est bien visible dans ses propres oeuvres. À partir de ce moment, il a établi une distinction nette entre l'Église catholique en tant qu'institution et le catholicisme. Bien qu'il soit resté fidèle à cette religion, il a pris soin de noter dans son journal intime et ses lettres ses critiques sévères de la hiérarchie catholique. Le point de vue exprimé par Bishop est celui d'un laïc et d'un observateur éclairé à une époque où l'Église catholique devait faire face à la montée du modernisme.

PREFACE

Edmund Bishop (1846-1917) first attracted my attention while I was researching a paper on early twentieth century "Modernism" in the Roman Catholic Church. Many of the books and articles that concerned the developments in the Church, from the first Vatican Council (1869-70) to the papal Encyclical Pascendi dominici gregis (1907), mentioned the name of the erudite English liturgiologist, Edmund Bishop. Some authors claimed him as a Catholic liberal, others as a Catholic modernist, often citing the same passages from Nigel Abercrombie's 1959 biography. An article in 1983 by Dom Andrew Moore in the Downside Review piqued my interest. Moore mentioned the "self-imposed limits" of Bishop's biographer and his own opinion that Bishop's observations of the institutional element of the Roman Church were worth studying. These comments convinced me that it was time for a fresh look at Bishop's records. I had already been fascinated by John Henry Newman's triadic structure of the offices of the Church (prophet, priest and king) and Friedrich von Hügel's subsequent theological construct of triads. I wondered how Bishop, in turn, had accommodated himself to what he called the institutional Church. I found the answer in Bishop's papers, almost all of which exist in manuscript form only. These sources require some explanation and are discussed in the introduction to the bibliography.

The completion of this project has been assisted by many people. I thank my supervisor, Professor E.J. Furcha; Dean Donna Runnalls; Professor Gregory Baum; Professor Hereward Senior of the History Department; and Dr. John Coulson and Professor John Kent of Bristol University, England. For the use of Edmund Bishop's papers, I thank the Abbot, as well as Dom Prior Daniel Rees and Bridgit de Salis of Downside Abbey, England. I am grateful to Madeline Jeffrey of the library of Heythrop College, London, and for the assistance given by the staff of our Faculty's library: Norma Johnston, Jennifer Wheeler, Tapas Majumdar and Mary Margaret Klempa. I am indebted to Lawrence Nyveen and Dr. Robert MacKenzie for reading the manuscript; to Moya Drummond for editorial assistance; to Dr. John Wickham and the Loyola Jesuit Community for financial assistance; to Christopher Hawkins for conceding to me with generosity and grace, his own proposed project for doctoral studies based on Edmund Bishop's papers.

Finally, I express my deep appreciation to friends and family who provided encouragement and support: Dr. Donald Stoesz, Gretchen Brabander, Heidi Epstein, Michel Guimont, Marjory Dalgaard, John Dalgaard, and especially my son, John Wilson and my mother, Ida Jensen Dalgaard, to whom this dissertation is dedicated.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- BB "Black Books," notebooks of Edmund Bishop
- BP Edmund Bishop's papers, kept in the The Edmund Bishop Library, in the Library of Downside Abbey, England
- C1 "Book C1" of the "Cc Diaries." Edmund Bishop's "Catholic diary"
- DNB Dictionary of National Biography, 1912-21
- DSR Downside Review
- DTC Dictionnaire de théologie catholique
- DubR Dublin Review
- MS Edmund Bishop's manuscript
- NSA "Newman-Simpson-Acton Black Book" of Edmund Bishop
- O&C "Oxford and Cambridge Black Books" of Edmund Bishop
- OED Oxford English Dictionary, 1979
- RCQ The Roman Catholic Question: A Copious Series of Important Documents, of Permanent Historical Interest on the Re-Establishment of the Catholic Hierarchy in England, 1850-1851. London: James Gilbert, 1850-51
- SA "Secret Archives Diaries" of Edmund Bishop

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INTRODUCTION

Edmund Bishop (1846-1917) was born in southeast England and was raised as an evangelical Anglican. Other than two years he spent at school in Belgium in 1859 and 1860, he lived in England all his life.¹

Even as a young scholar, Edmund Bishop had unusual ability, persistence, discipline and a remarkable memory. His facility in acquiring languages demonstrated both his natural ability and his thoroughness.² He spared no effort to acquire the skills and the materials he needed to master subjects of interest. In this manner he became a specialist in liturgical studies and palaeography, and subsequently, a consultant and advisor to colleagues in the field of ecclesiastical history.

Bishop's piety was born of his early evangelical training and nurtured on the Bible verses he had committed to memory in his youth. His spiritual life was marked by three major events: his conversion to Catholicism in 1867; his decision to

¹In appearance, Edmund Bishop was a tall man, thin, angular and bearded. His friend and student, the Benedictine scholar Cuthbert Butler, described Bishop as "a man of singular charm, striking appearance, and old-world courtesy. His piety was simple and sincere." DNB, 1912-21, s.v. "Bishop, Edmund," by E.C. Butler.

²In Belgium, Bishop studied French, Latin and Greek. At nineteen he taught himself German, and as the years went by, using a grammar and a dictionary, he learned to read languages as he needed them – Danish, Dutch, Anglo-Saxon, Hungarian, and various Slavonic languages.

become a monk at Downside in 1886; and his departure from the monastery in 1889.

Bishop's professional life as a historian of Christian worship (liturgiology) was affected by two series of papal documents. The first series culminated in the Vatican Council (1869-70); the second, in the papal Encyclical, Pascendi dominici gregis (1907).

The Vatican Council had been preceded by the Munich Brief of 1863, which defined the limits of scientific intellectual inquiry for Roman Catholic scholars and formally stigmatized all academic work outside the scholastic tradition. The Brief particularly affected lay scholars since they were not seminary-educated and therefore not trained in the approved scholastic method. The Vatican Council, with its decree of papal infallibility, secured the integralist position of the ultramontanes and virtually ended the Roman Catholic liberal movement.³

As a consequence of the Munich Brief and the decrees of the Vatican Council, Bishop, in agreement with John Acton, concluded that the intellectual contribution of the laity was not wanted in the Church. In 1871, Bishop burnt his publications and wrote nothing but personal letters until 1876. This "disuse of the pen" ("Opuscula" I) had a lasting influence on his published writings. For the rest of his life he retained a sense of "walking over suppositi cineres" ("Opuscula" I), a fear of offending the

³As historian John P. Dolan writes: "Within Catholicism there has always been a constant conflict between integralism or closed catholicism and true catholicity which is open to all possibilities and to the fullest expansion and expression of its basic mission. The conflict has not been between conservative and progressive, but between closed and open mentalities." Catholicism: An Historical Survey (Woodbury, NY: Barrow, 1968). 215.

Roman hierarchy by venturing into theological speculation in his liturgical studies. The field of theology, which held such fascination for him, had been reserved for qualified clergy.

In 1883, when Bishop first visited Downside Monastery, his reputation as a scholar was already established. His determination to encourage the English Benedictines to pursue liturgical studies matched the desire of some monks to engage in intellectual work.

In 1885, Bishop decided to become a monk. From 1886-1889, he was a postulant at Downside. The restrictions on the contribution of the laity to scientific historical criticism may have led him to this decision. In the end, Bishop left Downside. Although he chose not to become a monk, he continued his association with the monastery for the rest of his life, and dedicated himself as a servus servorum Dei,⁴ by educating priests in liturgical studies. He hoped an educated clergy would understand the intellectual problems of the Catholic laity in the face of Biblical criticism.

Between 1899-1901, events in the Roman Catholic Church which would lead to the 1907 Encyclical, Pascendi dominici gregis, pushed Bishop to change his focus. A lifetime of observation and experience as Englishman, convert, layman and historian of liturgy in the English Roman Catholic Church led him to change his attitude towards the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church from positive to negative. Bishop began to differentiate between the Roman Catholic "religion" and the Roman

⁴"Secret Archives Diaries" V 865, 12 February 1889: Edmund Bishop's Papers.

Catholic "Church." His allegiance to the "Catholic religion" remained unswerving, and he never regretted his conversion at the age of twenty-one. However, his opinions of the institutional Catholic "Church," which had initially been mostly positive, underwent a marked shift. Bishop became critical of the actions and decisions of "Rome," i.e. the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England and the Vatican. He thought he could no longer accept what he perceived to be the subordination of history to orthodoxy and so resolved to practice his profession, liturgiology, not as a Catholic historian but as a historian who happened to be Catholic. He withdrew from the field of apologetics which included Christian origins, New Testament Studies and the history of dogma.

During this three-year period, Bishop came to believe that the Church would not change, that Rome was "irreformable." Since he could not publish his opinions without incurring censure, he began to record his thoughts and opinions in diaries, notebooks, marginalia and letters to trusted friends. Bishop's records on developments in the Roman Catholic Church are both interesting and important since they reflect his times and are witness to the thought of an intelligent observer. Being English, choosing to become a Roman Catholic and remaining a layman equipped him well to comment on the religious trends of his day.

The 1907 Encyclical, Pascendi, definitively ended what Rome called "Modernism" and declared it to be "the heresy of heresies." For Bishop, the response of the Church to "modernism" was not out of character. Rather, he felt it was the culmination of a programme that had begun with Pope Pius IX: a programme of papal

control, the crowning achievement of what Bishop called the "dominant party" in the Church. He concluded that the real heresy was "laicism," named in Pascendi, but "created long ago by the system" – the laity thinking they had a right to give their opinions, even on matters of Church doctrine.⁵

Though Bishop often spoke of resorting to silence, a bibliography of his printed works lists 189 items.⁶ Bishop revised a selection of previously published articles for his Liturgica Historica, published posthumously in 1918 and reprinted in 1962. These publications avoided theological discussion, despite his own opinion that theology was necessarily part of the study of liturgiology. He accepted the official position of his Church that publishing in the area of theology was forbidden to him, a layman. His determined silence in forbidden areas exacted a cost, as his records clearly demonstrate; he had to forego any possibility of publishing scholarly research in those areas which intrigued him most. His only hope was for another time, a time when the Church would be more responsive to its context.

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to examine the development of Edmund Bishop's critique of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. To accomplish this, Bishop's early development, his conversion and his relationship to Downside monastery have been considered. The events which precipitated the shift in Bishop's thinking occurred between 1899-1901. Bishop recorded his opinions of these

⁵Scrapbook, 139: Edmund Bishop's Papers.

⁶Nigel Abercrombie, The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop (London, Longmans, 1959), 492-508. In 1905 at the request of his readers, Bishop published a Bibliographical list of his main works in Downside Review (hereafter DSR) which was subsequently published in Italian. Ibid., 506.

events and of the institutional Roman Catholic Church in private papers and letters. These manuscripts provided most of the material for the dissertation.

Notwithstanding his reticence to publish, Bishop's achievement as a liturgical scholar was important enough to have merited a full length biography by Nigel Abercrombie, himself a liturgist. For details of Bishop's life and professional career, the 1959 biography can hardly be surpassed.

Reviewers of Abercrombie's book, for the most part, praised him for accumulating and mastering the facts, and presenting such specialized material in a readable form.⁷ However, R.J. Schoeck, E.E.Y. Hales and Stephen J. Tonsor pointed out the failings of Abercrombie's study.

Schoeck objected to Abercrombie's use of imprecise and very general footnotes.⁸ Efforts to discover specific sources will be frustrated unless one is quite familiar with Bishop's papers. This may be a deliberate procedure which Abercrombie followed in order to protect Bishop from the suspicion of heresy even as late as the 1950s. The aggiornamento of the 1960s at the Second Vatican Council had not begun and Roman Catholic teachers and professors were still required to take the oath against modernism that had been in effect since 1910. Had his unpublished works been fully known, Bishop could easily have been condemned as a "modernist."

Hales referred specifically to the gaps in Abercrombie's account: while

⁷See Bibliography for details of reviews of Abercrombie's The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop.

⁸R.J. Schoeck, Review of The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop, by Nigel Abercrombie. Victorian Studies 4 (1, 1960-61): 80.

Abercrombie offered "a hint or two" about the reactions of educated English Catholics in general, and Edmund Bishop specifically, to the events of the times, the reader may have wished for more.

In particular he may be rather tantalized by the allusive and unsatisfying references to papal discouragement of independent scholarship from the time of the Munich brief of 1864 [sic] to the condemnation of modernism in 1907. That Bishop, like Acton, was disturbed by this discouragement is made evident; but the issues at stake are not analyzed.⁹

Abercrombie refrained from examining Bishop's opinions when they were critical of Rome.

Tonsor argued that in Abercrombie's portrayal of Bishop, "there seems to be no movement of mind but rather a formless and gangling still life."¹⁰ Abercrombie focused on Bishop as a liturgical scholar, which enabled him to avoid dealing with controversial issues. As a result, his subject was diminished as a person and his character not fully drawn. By way of excuse, Abercrombie suggested that Bishop's temperament and extreme sensitivity led him to conclusions about the Church which were biased and extreme.

As well, while Abercrombie noted Bishop's change of attitude between 1899-

⁹E.E.Y. Hales, Review of The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop, by Nigel Abercrombie. Catholic Historical Review 47 (April 1961): 37. Hales dates the Munich Brief from 1864. The brief was promulgated in December 1863 and published in March 1864. This accounts for the variation in dating — some historians choose 1863, others 1864.

¹⁰Stephen J. Tonsor, Review of The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop, by Nigel Abercrombie. American Historical Review 65 (July 1960): 957.

1901,¹¹ he did not accord this period sufficient weight and significance in the development of Bishop's thought. It is virtually impossible to read Bishop's papers from 1899 on, without coming to the conclusion that these years were a turning point for Bishop. It is imperative that this change be examined if one is to assess the time that passed before and the years afterwards. Abercrombie avoids exploring the reasons for the shift in Bishop's attitude towards the Roman hierarchy. Nor does Abercrombie do justice to the records Bishop kept which reflect his change of attitude towards "Rome," once he decided that "Rome" was irreformable. Furthermore, Abercrombie consistently supports the Roman Catholic hierarchy against the opinions of Bishop. Bishop's negative opinion of the Roman Catholic hierarchy has been side-stepped by his biographer or put down to temperament. This study attempts to redress Abercrombie's portrait of Bishop, by focusing on Bishop as a convert Catholic Englishman who came to believe that his layman's contribution to the Catholic Church was neither appreciated nor wanted.

The Liberal-Modernist Debate.

The importance of Edmund Bishop's opinions in today's liberal-modernist debate has been demonstrated by numerous scholars. They have used material from Bishop's life and letters to prove or to disprove continuity between liberal Catholicism of the 1800s and Catholic modernism of the early 1900s. To situate Bishop in terms

¹¹See Abercrombie, *Bishop*, 283, and "Note by Nigel Abercrombie," postscript to "The Beggarly Elements of Bookworm Fare," DSR 78 (Winter 1959-60): 24.

of the history of English Catholicism, modern scholars have referred to him as either a liberal Catholic or a modernist. Liberal Catholicism is usually considered to have ended, as a movement, with the dogma of papal infallibility at the first Vatican Council in 1869-70. Bishop argued that liberal Catholicism was "crushed" in 1864, and Gallicanism, which he equated with "some sort of consideration for the non-clerical person" died in 1870.¹² Bishop's belief in the right to freedom of intellectual inquiry was a liberal Catholic position. In a notebook, Bishop referred to himself as one of the "cismontanes of whatever race."¹³ The equivalent in England were the Cisalpines, who came to an end in 1851 with the death of the English historian and Roman Catholic priest, John Lingard.¹⁴ In 1908, Bishop referred to himself several times as a "modernist before Modernism."¹⁵

While Bishop used these terms in passing, several scholars since have used his self-descriptions of liberal and modernist in a much more serious manner, either to sustain an argument, prove a point or reinforce a thesis.

¹²Bishop to Friedrich von Hügel, 2 February 1913, in Thomas Loome, Liberal Catholicism: Reform Catholicism: Modernism (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1979), 432-433. Bishop emphasized words in many ways, all of which I have substituted with bold characters. See the Introduction to the Bibliography for details on conventions of transcription.

¹³"Black Books" (hereafter BB), 2, 241a: Bishop's papers (hereafter BP). See the introduction to the Bibliography for a description of Bishop's Black Books.

¹⁴Joseph P. Chinnici, The English Catholic Enlightenment (Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos, 1980).

¹⁵See below, Chapter V and VI for details of three references to Bishop as a "modernist." Bishop to Baron von Hügel, 18 February 1908, copy in BP; Bishop to Professor H.B. Swete, 25 February 1908, second draft: BP; Bishop to Rev. W.C. Bishop, 6 September 1908: BP.

In 1970, Alec Vidler concluded that although Bishop was "an unrecognized modernist,"¹⁶ he differed from other modernists in that "he did not believe, or even hope, that any such reform in the Church as the modernists advocated could come about."¹⁷

In 1981, Thomas Loome used Edmund Bishop's opinions to support his own thesis that there was continuity between liberal Catholicism and modernism.¹⁸ Despite Loome's work, most scholars continued to hold that liberal Catholicism and modernism were discontinuous.¹⁹

More recently, Andrew Moore referred to Edmund Bishop as a "commentator on modernism."²⁰ Moore held that "self-imposed limits" of Abercrombie's book account for the biographer's failure to make a full assessment of Bishop's views on modernism. Moore's article is a succinct survey of material in Bishop's papers that addresses various aspects of modernism, and he rightly stated that any assessment

¹⁶Alec R. Vidler, A Variety of Catholic Modernists (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970): 134-152.

¹⁷Vidler, Variety, 141. Vidler's definition of modernism was "that movement in the Roman Catholic Church which originated about 1890, was condemned by Pius X in 1907 and was snuffed out to all intents and purposes in 1910." Ibid., 1.

¹⁸See Loome, Liberal Catholicism.

¹⁹For a thorough and often severe critique of the strengths and weaknesses of Loome's thesis, see Nicholas Lash, "The Modernist Minefield," The Month Second n.s. 13 (January 1980): 16-19, and "Liberal Catholicism-Reform Catholicism-Modernism. A Critical Discussion of Thomas Michael Loome's Agenda for a New Orientation in Modernist Research," DSR 100 (July 1982): 157-202.

²⁰"Edmund Bishop as a Commentator on Modernism," DSR 101 (April 83):90-107.

hinges on one's definition of modernism. Moore supported Loome's perception of Bishop's modernism, as a "wider and more general sense" of modernism which supported reform, against Vidler's perception which was more narrow, referring to the modernism specifically condemned by the 1907 Encyclical, Pascendi.²¹

Moore concluded that Bishop was a liberal Catholic who made important observations concerning the Catholic Church of his time. "The most interesting feature of Bishop's witness to contemporary events is, it seems to me, his analysis, very frank and personal, of the institutional element of the Roman Church."²²

In his study in Catholic modernism and integralism, Gabriel Daly described modernism as "any Roman Catholic challenge to the received neo-scholasticism of the period."²³ Daly's broad definition of modernism allows for a fresh approach to the liberal-modernist debate.

The understanding of modernism to be found in the Roman documents should be taken as symbolic of an attitude rather than as an accurate assessment of a factual situation. . . . One can quite reasonably argue that the Roman condemnation of modernism did far more harm to Catholic theology than did the writings of any modernist. 'Modernism', then, may best be regarded as a term of convenience employed by one school of thought in the Catholic Church to describe certain ideas, tendencies, and attitudes which that school saw as incompatible with its own tenets. . . . If one does not take one's definition and understanding of modernism from Pascendi, it is my contention that there remains no convincing reason for distinguishing between 'modernism'

²¹Moore, Bishop, 104.

²²Ibid., 105. This statement by Dom Andrew Moore concerning Bishop's witness, was the inspiration for this dissertation.

²³Gabriel Daly, Transcendence and Immanence (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980): 5-6.

and "liberal Catholicism"²⁴

The above passage supports Bishop's own claim to be a Cismontane, a liberal and a modernist, and eliminates the need to place him in any one camp. The notion of "symbol" or "attitude" coincides with the argument of the 1860s over the "tone" of the liberal Catholics, to which Rome objected. If, as Edmund Bishop claimed, he was "a modernist before modernism," then he was not using the definition propagated by Pascendi: modernism as the "heresies of all heresies." Bishop's modernism extolled "a reform akin to the Liberal Catholic ideals of the free and independent use of secular principles of intellectual inquiry and a recognition of an authentic role for the laity."²⁵ In maintaining hope for reform of the Church, as he did before 1899, and for recognition as a lay-scholar, Edmund Bishop was guilty of what he came to call the real heresy: that the laity thought it had a right to be heard in the Roman Catholic Church.

Outline of the Dissertation.

The dissertation is divided into three parts. Part One provides the setting for the reshaping of nineteenth century Roman Catholicism in England by Nicholas Wiseman. The first chapter briefly follows English Catholicism as it changed from sect to denomination, and describes the part played by Wiseman in bringing about the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850. The second chapter focuses on the attempts of

²⁴Ibid., 3-4.

²⁵Moore, Bishop, 104.

Sir John Acton and colleagues to provide English Catholics with modern scholarship through the medium of journalism. Acton's work was infused with the spirit of liberal Catholicism. In England, liberalism grew out of Catholic Emancipation or, more precisely, out of a generation of men produced by Emancipation who then attempted to form a Catholic intelligentsia. Few readers could have been as influenced as was Edmund Bishop. The influence of Acton's book reviews on Bishop's thinking can hardly be underestimated. This chapter outlines the objections of the English hierarchy to what they perceived as liberal Catholicism in England. The second chapter ends with a brief examination of the role of the laity in an ultramontane Church.

The objective of Part Two is twofold. First, Bishop's conversion to Roman Catholicism is examined in light of his early influences and his personality. Second, evidence is adduced to show that until the turn of the century, Edmund Bishop's attitude to "Rome" was cautiously positive. Until the 1900s, Bishop served the Church by employing his talents as a liturgical historian in the training of clergy in liturgiology using the critical historical method. This activity was bound up with his ongoing relationship with the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation, and in particular the monks of Downside Monastery.

Part Three provides evidence for the thesis that between 1899-1901, a series of events resulted in Bishop's having a change of heart concerning the focus of his work. This shift in thinking caused him to reject the possibility of writing as an apologist for the Church, which he now distinguished sharply from the Catholic religion.

Chapter V outlines the events that provoked this radical change and their effects on Bishop. Chapter VI focuses on Bishop's opinions (from the turn of the century until his death in 1917) on various aspects of the life of the Church. Three documents by Bishop serve to illustrate his opinions. They encapsulate many of his ideas concerning the Church of Rome and, in particular, the role of the laity. They are printed in full in the Appendices. A final chapter assesses Bishop as a person, a convert, a Roman Catholic layman, a colleague and a friend, as seen by those acquainted with him. It is followed by intimations of how Bishop assessed himself and by my own assessment of Bishop's critique of the Church. A brief concluding chapter summarizes the research that preceded the dissertation.

PART ONE

THE ENGLISH CATHOLIC MILIEU

CHAPTER I

THE GROWTH OF ENGLISH CATHOLICISM

1. English Catholicism and the "Restoration"

In the nineteenth century Roman Catholicism became a religious denomination in the United Kingdom. In England, since the Reformation of the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church had been a sect with the status of a mission church and its members subject to civil disabilities. With the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, English Catholics were granted all the privileges of British citizens. With the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in 1850, the Catholic religion in Britain lost its mission status and became a denomination.

The shape of post-restoration English Catholicism is credited to Nicholas Wiseman, but even before 1850, the Cardinal-to-be had already begun to remake the English Church according to his own vision. Before Wiseman's arrival, the English Catholic Church was more English than Roman in its traditions and devotions, more "catholic" in its status as a missionary church since the Reformation, and more growth-oriented than hitherto perceived.

Reference to 1850 as the "restoration" or "re-establishment" of the Roman hierarchy in England suggests the pre-Reformation Church returned, but this was not

the case. The Roman Catholic Church in England after 1850 took a new direction. One inevitable by-product was the struggle for power and authority among clergy and laity. New goals were set. Old Catholics as well as new converts had to be instructed in the faith, educated and disciplined when the need arose. The renewed Church also now aimed ultimately to convert England.

The manner in which these goals were perceived and their implementation created conflict—conflict that arose from the individual visions dependent on individual personalities, reputations in Rome and hopes for England and positions therein.

The Nature of English Catholicism: 1770-1850

From 1770 to 1850, the number of Roman Catholics in England increased ten-fold, from 80,000 to about three-quarters of a million.²⁶ In his "remarkable book,"²⁷ The English Catholic Community, 1570-1850, John Bossy draws this conclusion:

We may speak of an age of transformation of the English Catholic community, beginning about 1750; of an age of the Irish deluge, beginning about 1790; we are equally entitled to speak of a golden age of the English mission, lasting from perhaps 1800 to its formal closure in 1850.²⁸

In 1820 the English Catholic clergy numbered little more than four hundred.

²⁶John Bossy, The English Catholic Community 1570-1850 (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975), 298.

²⁷See Laurence Stone's comments on Bossy's book, in Chapter 9, "Catholicism," in Past and Present (Boston: Routledge and K. Paul, 1981.), 175-181.

²⁸Bossy, English Catholic Community, 322.

With new opportunities in the secular world, the gentry no longer had to rely on the Church for employment, and the consequent shortage of priests increased their importance and position.²⁹ Bossy suggests Bernard Ward³⁰ might be right in thinking that after the Emancipation Act of 1829, the clergy's demand for a place in the community became more defined, echoing, perhaps, the new status of the laity.

The clergy wanted an emancipation of their own and wished that "ordinary" ecclesiastical government would replace the missionary church system. They hoped that establishment of the parish system would ensure more stability and improve relationships with bishops who would then be under canon law. By 1840, the pressing need of more clergy forced the English secular priests to accept that they would have to increase their numbers by drawing on the religious orders and the Irish clergy.³¹

With the restoration of the hierarchy, the clerical revival came to an end. The imposition of canon law did not have the expected results. Clergy and laity alike were now subject to monarchical authority; for both, restoration meant a call to obedience. Rome was preparing to change the old English Church to an ultramontane Church.

²⁹Ibid., 356.

³⁰Cited by Bossy, English Catholic Community, 296.

³¹Bossy, English Catholic Community, 358-59.

From Enlightenment to Romanticism

The English Cisalpines.³² Before 1900, the Catholic Church in England was largely under control of the aristocracy and the gentry, as it had been since 1688. Priests were chosen and supported by the laity they served as private chaplains. These powerful laymen worked to dismantle penal laws which prohibited Roman Catholics full participation as British citizens.

The Cisapline Club, formed in 1792, was an attempt by a group of laymen and a few priests (also from the gentry) to bring to England the principles of the European Catholic Enlightenment.³³

Joseph C. Chinnici postulates that the English Cisalpines "synthesized their Catholic faith and the thought of the Enlightenment in five areas: Church-state

³²From the Latin, "cis" meaning "this side," the name represented a type of home rule as opposed to Roman authority or ultramontanism ("beyond the alps"). Thus, "The name referred to the members' rejection of transalpine and ultramontane doctrines on the authority of the Pope to depose princes and to dispense subjects from allegiance It also implied a much more profound view of the relationship between the church and the world. From [1792] members of the progressive party were referred to as Cisalpines." Joseph C. Chinnici, The English Catholic Enlightenment: John Lingard and the Cisalpine Movement, 1780-1850 (Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos, 1980), 13. The brief history of the Cisaplines which follows depends on Chinnici's study of the historian, John Lingard (1771-1851) and his role in the Cisalpine movement.

³³Chinnici defines the Enlightenment as referring to "that movement in European thought which after 1660 sought to establish both a project of intelligibility and a social and political anthropology corresponding to the age's view of "reason and right". In England the Emancipation was most readily incarnated in the thought of John Locke." Ibid., 135. For Locke, religious tolerance was based on the natural right of freedom of conscience with which government did not have a right to interfere. See Owen Chadwick, The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge: University Press, 1975), 25.

relations, theology, ecclesiology, history and religious practice."³⁴ The Cisalpines sought greater control over who would govern them, but how they expected this to be accepted in Rome remains a mystery.

Like the clergy who wished for a second emancipation, the Cisalpines wanted the vicars apostolic replaced with regular bishops, under canon law and appointed by the inferior clergy and laity. One of the chief proponents was the historian and priest, John Lingard, who came to epitomize the Cisalpines. Lingard wrote the eight-volume A History of England. This work, writes Chinnici, along with "a full emergence of the romantic critique marked the end of an influential period of Cisalpinism."

By the 1820s the social and intellectual forces that had nurtured the outlook had passed away. At that time, the impact of the Irish immigration became increasingly manifest, the emerging life of the Catholic "third estate" began to retreat before the needs of the urban poor [There was the beginning] of a Catholic revival in the Universities. In 1828 Nicholas Wiseman replaced Robert Gradwell as the rector of the English College, Rome; the change symbolized the influx of religious romanticism into the capital of the Catholic world. In 1829 political emancipation was achieved, and a year later the Cisalpine Club formally dissolved itself.³⁵

Chinnici holds that from the dissolution of the club until his death in 1851, Lingard was the sole survivor of the movement. By that time, the changes he had espoused had developed into a new ultramontanist with any other party or movement in the Church being on the losing side.³⁶

³⁴Chinnici, English Catholic Enlightenment, Preface X. Chinnici develops this thesis.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 135.

³⁶As Derek Holmes puts it, "The Ultramontanes moved into prominent positions within the English Church; Liberal Catholics came under increasing criticism and any

From Liberalism to Ultramontanism.

Nineteenth century European religious liberalism was an attempt to reconcile Christianity with modern ways of knowing. As such, it was bound to clash with the Roman Catholic Church. As a movement within the Church, liberalism ended with the triumph of ultramontanism at the first Vatican Council in 1870.

The various national movements that tried to liberalize the Church took many forms and had different goals. In France it was a political movement, born of the Revolution and centred on education and politics. In Germany, it was a philosophical movement and in England, the movement was religious. At the beginning of the century, the liberals and the ultramontanists had espoused the same cause in their mutual desire to bring religion in general, and the Catholic Church in particular, into the modern, critical age. In 1870, those Catholics who supported centralized authority in the Roman See won out. Theological studies became the province of the clergy alone, unity and uniformity prevailed, and the Pope was declared to be infallible in matters concerning faith and morals.

resistance to the Pope was condemned as sinful." J. Derek Holmes, "English Catholicism from Wiseman to Bourne I." Clergy Review 61 (February 1976): 58-59.

2. Nicholas Wiseman (1802-65) and the Reshaping of English Catholicism

The Rationale for the Restoration of the English Hierarchy

In the 1840s English Catholics were a group divided but not yet in opposition. There were the "old Catholics," descendants of those who had kept the faith through times of persecution and many of whom gave generous financial support. There were the Irish immigrants whose numbers swelled the Catholic population, straining the resources. Finally, there was the small but influential group of educated converts.³⁷ The one person who had both the vision of what English Catholicism could be with an established hierarchy, and all the Roman customs that could be called upon to support it, was Nicholas Wiseman.³⁸ The influence of Wiseman's leading role in the establishment of the restoration and in determining the new form of English Catholicism cannot be overestimated.

Wiseman was ordained to the priesthood in 1825 in Rome and was rector of the English College there. His objective was "to bring to England the intellectual enthusiasm and loyalty to the Holy See which he found among his German friends, as

³⁷J. Derek Holmes, More Roman Than Rome: English Catholicism in the Nineteenth Century (London: Burns & Oates, 1978), 46.

³⁸For a recent assessment of the life of Wiseman, see Richard J. Schiefen's comprehensive biography, Nicholas Wiseman and the Transformation of English Catholicism. Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos, 1984.

well as the piety of his French neighbours,"³⁹ and to endow the Church "with modern culture and devotions which would sanctify the varied aspirations of the nineteenth century."⁴⁰ This was an ultramontanist born of the effort of religious intellectuals in France and Germany.

Wiseman found allies for his project in some of the Oxford converts. It was a meeting of minds and of shared hopes for the future of English Catholicism. While the converts knew little of Roman Catholicism or even English Catholicism, Wiseman knew nothing of the English mentality, having spent most of his life in Rome. While Lingard wanted English Catholics to gain a place in the community through education, "he blamed Wiseman for introducing to England a type of spirituality foreign to English tastes. . . ."⁴¹ For those who opposed what they saw as "an alien form of spirituality," the battle was already lost.⁴² The romanticism of the nineteenth century had taken hold in the English Catholic Church.

Wiseman's labour for the ultramontane cause soon brought results and a year later he returned to Rome to continue his programme, convinced that England needed a new order of priests of "intellectual culture and very warm piety,"⁴³ more like Roman priests, perhaps like Spaniards, but less like Englishmen whom he found cold.

³⁹Wilfrid Ward, The Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1897), I:209.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Schiefel, Wiseman, 25.

⁴²Ibid., 136.

⁴³Cited by Schiefel, Wiseman, 90.

Wiseman Prepares the Way

In 1840, Wiseman returned to England as a bishop, one of four newly appointed vicars apostolic, and as president of Oscott College. His ambition was to unite all English Catholics, including those with Gallican sentiments, and to provide encouragement for those who might be converted.

Wiseman brought with him his devotion to the Pope and all things Roman and he was prepared to bring the English Church under Roman authority. Under his guidance, the traditional Catholicism of England began to be replaced by the new ultramontaniam of the Continent. Nicholas Wiseman would bring the English Catholic Church from the Enlightenment to Romanticism.

In 1847 Wiseman was appointed to the London District as temporary Vicar Apostolic. The next year, the British government suggested to Rome that they might establish diplomatic relations. Without Wiseman's knowledge, a group representing the laity and lower clergy (with supporting signatures) prepared a "memorial" to send to the Pope, advising him to refuse the offer. Their objection to a nuncio, if permitted, was that later popes might betray the interests of religion to a Protestant government. They did not want the mix of temporal and spiritual power.

Wiseman responded with his own pamphlet, Words of Peace and Justice Addressed to the Catholic Clergy and Laity of London District.⁴⁴ As their bishop, Wiseman strongly objected to the "memorial" on the grounds it interfered with the

⁴⁴Words of Peace and Justice Addressed to the Catholic Clergy and Laity of the London District on the Subject of Diplomatic Relations with the Holy See (London: Charles Dolman, 1848) McGill University, Redpath Tracts 3. 1848, 87-014.

Pope's "sacred prerogatives" by giving "popular advice," that the authors did not have Wiseman's consent and that such action was beyond the province of the laity and lower clergy.⁴⁵ He warned "the Laity of London," against "influx into ecclesiastical and spiritual affairs of principles belonging to temporal and social interests" and suggested that they keep "a well-drawn boundary line between our respective spheres of action. . . . One only thing we reserve for ourselves, one only one thing we make a jealous claim – THE CHURCH OF GOD. Leave this, I entreat you, to us alone."⁴⁶ In simple terms, Wiseman stated that all authority belonged to the bishops, and the laity ought to be, indeed must be, satisfied with that. The laity could devote themselves to scholarship and co-operation, but not rule.

Richard Schiefen suggests that since the issue of a nuncio was a temporal matter, reaction by the laity could have been expected. But Wiseman's views of the role of the laity were "shared by the majority of nineteenth-century ecclesiastics."⁴⁷ Control of the Church had passed from the hands of the aristocracy and the gentry to the hierarchy. The duty of the laity now was to respect the clergy, refrain from giving the Pope advice, be obedient and docile and like it. This document set the tone for English Catholicism as a denomination. In the spirit of Continental neo-ultramontanism, it would indeed bring unity into the English Catholic body – a unity of imposed conformity.

⁴⁵Wiseman, "Words of Peace," 4-15.

⁴⁶Ibid., 15-16.

⁴⁷Schiefen, Wiseman, 154-55.

During the French uprising in 1848, the proletariat was attacked by the government, the Archbishop of Paris was killed on the barricades and the spirit of freedom and democracy became suspect. In Italy in 1849, Pius IX, still supporting democratic ideals, fled to from the advancing Sardinian army, seeking refuge in Gaeta. In 1850 he returned to Rome, no longer a liberal.⁴⁸ Rome adopted neo-ultramontanism as its own and rejected any form of liberalism in favour of an authoritarian and centralized power. Perhaps this was the only way the Church could have survived as it confronted the age of modern critical thinking.

Cardinal Wiseman's Return to England

On 29 September 1850, Pope Pius IX sent an apostolic letter to England announcing the restoration of the English Roman Catholic hierarchy and the division of all England and Wales into thirteen dioceses under control of an archbishop and twelve bishops.⁴⁹ The same day, Pius IX appointed Nicholas Wiseman archbishop to the See of Westminster and the day after, elevated him to the College of Cardinals.

On 12 October, Cardinal Wiseman began his return journey to England. When he reached Vienna he learned that the Papal Brief had not found favour in England. Within the week, his own pastoral arrived in that country and the discontent of the

⁴⁸E. E. Y. Hales, Pio Nono (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1954), 77, 105.

⁴⁹ "Letters Apostolical--Pius P. P. IX," in The Roman Catholic Question: A Copious Series of Important Documents, of Permanent Historical Interest on the Re-Establishment of the Catholic Hierarchy in England, 1850-1851 (London: James Gilbert, 1850-51), First Series, 3. (hereafter, RCQ and the Series number). This collections of documents is a good source of the opinions of various writers.

English increased.⁵⁰ The pastoral assumed "the absolute spiritual authority of the Pope over the Catholic Church in England, and ignored all spiritual authority outside the Church." Although directed to English Catholics, it soon gained a wider audience of non-Catholics who were in sharp disagreement with Wiseman's sentiments and his approach.⁵¹ Objections by "press, Anglican clergy, and leading statesmen" resulted in demonstrations against what was perceived as "papal aggression."⁵²

In response, W.B. Ullathorne, the bishop of Birmingham addressed the editor of the Times, assuring readers that the Pope had merely given power to the English Bishops, power which had been his during missionary rule; that this was not a political event but dealt only with spiritual concerns; and that it was unfair to confuse this act with aggression towards the British government and people.⁵³ There were several causes for resentment: the division of England into dioceses; what was deemed to be an infringement of Anglican prerogatives; the demand for obedience to papal authority which demonstrators feared could be extended beyond spiritual matters; and finally, the flamboyant display of Wiseman himself.

⁵⁰"Your beloved country", wrote Wiseman, "has received a place among the fair churches, which, normally constituted, form the splendid aggregate of Catholic communion; Catholic England has been restored to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament, from which its light had long vanished." Cited by Owen Chadwick, The Victorian Church, 2 vols. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1966), 1:293. See also Nicholas Wiseman, "Pastoral" RCQ, Third Series.

⁵¹Ward, Wiseman, 1:541.

⁵²Ibid., 1:543.

⁵³W.B. Ullathorne, Letter to the Times, 22 October 1850, RCQ, First Series, 6-7.

The "papal aggression," did not have the same effect on Queen Victoria, despite the attempts of the press and Prime Minister Russell to convince her otherwise.⁵⁴ The government responded with "The Ecclesiastical Titles Act" of 1851 which forbade Catholics the use of territorial titles and forbade the acceptance of any endowments to sees, persons, or subordinates.⁵⁵

Wiseman's attempts at explanation, published in a pamphlet, were still aggressive in tone, insisting on the legality of the act of restoration and the prerogatives of the papacy which, he made clear, should be defended at all costs. Wiseman ended with thanks: first to the people of England who did not respond to "the hollow cry of 'No Popery,' and on the pretence of a fabled aggression": then to English Catholics:

Thanks to you, docile and obedient children of the Catholic faith. . . . Let your loyalty be unimpeachable, and your faithfulness to social duties above reproach. Shut thus the mouths of adversaries, and gain the higher good-will of your fellow-countrymen, who will defend in you, as for themselves, your constitutional rights, including full religious liberty.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Chadwick, Victorian Church 1:296.

⁵⁵Ibid., 1:303. Commenting on the role of the prime minister, John Russell, Chadwick writes, "First, he made it impossible for himself not to legislate against the Roman Catholics. The Whig leader, devoted all his life to the principle of toleration, and politically relying on votes from Irish Roman Catholics, committed himself inadvertently to some kind of penal law. Secondly, he partially diverted the force of anti-papal feeling against alleged traitors within the gates." Ibid., 1:298. These "alleged traitors" were high churchmen of the Oxford Movement who had not left the Church of England for Rome. This suggests that the Queen's opinion had influenced him.

⁵⁶Nicholas Wiseman, An Appeal to the Reason and Good Feeling of the English People on the Subject of the Catholic Hierarchy, (London: Thomas Richardson and Son, 1850), 32.

The meaning of "full religious liberty" within the Church itself would remain in question for the rest of the decade and beyond.

One editorial published the opinions of educated Englishmen in the Weekly News of 23 November 1850. The writer agreed with Wiseman that the events were within the letter of the law and that there was no reason for the English nation to take offence.⁵⁷ But he pointed out that the Pope had not granted the English Catholics their wish to nominate their own English bishops.

Under that system we should at least have had the more moderate and enlightened party among the Catholics represented in their prelates. But now we are to have them appointed direct from Rome: from Rome, where the most narrow-minded and intolerant party is predominant. . . . it cannot be doubted that ultra-montane Catholics will soon be in possession of all, or nearly all, the Papal English Sees.⁵⁸

Other objections followed. "A cardinal represents both a foreign temporal sovereign and the church." Did this mean that his first loyalty would be to the Pope? The writer considered it ill-timed "to parade the advancement of Catholicism most arrogantly, and to excite the anxiety of sincere Protestants most widely." The "papalism" of the Tractarians and the converts and the talk of the "coming conversion of England" would not change the fact that "England is protestant at heart." Having raised these objections, the editor ended with a defense of Wiseman, whom he called the "illustrious stranger," and his suffragans, and advice to "Let them alone."⁵⁹

Dr. Travers Twiss, Fellow of University College, Oxford, wrote that it was

⁵⁷RCQ, Seventh Series, 10.

⁵⁸Ibid., 11.

⁵⁹Ibid.

difficult to see how Roman Catholics would derive spiritual benefit, as Wiseman stated in his "Appeal," by abandoning the ancient English system in favour of the Council of Trent.

It is clear that all the spiritual wants of the members of the Roman Catholic communion in England were satisfied under the existing organization of the Mission. The Roman Catholic laity in England had complete religious liberty; but the Roman Catholic clergy, it must be admitted, had not complete ecclesiastical power.⁶⁰

This shift in power was in keeping with the times. But Wiseman's role in bringing about the change caused unnecessary pain and confusion. In the end it was not the "illustrious stranger" who brought peace but the English public, which chose not to support the complaints of "papal aggression."⁶¹ By the time of the first provincial synod, 6 July 1852 at Oscott College, the Church had become what Wiseman had envisioned. The hierarchy had been restored, the laity and lower clergy had been informed of their respective roles, the liturgy had been standardized, and the poor had access to education. "Most significant of all, however, was the fact that the synod provided a demonstration of unity. Much had been accomplished with very little friction. The popular press would find little upon which it might gloat."⁶²

But the problems persisted. The laity continued to feel besieged by non-

⁶⁰Travers Twiss, The Letters Apostolic of Pope Pius IX Considered with Reference to the Law of England and the Law of Europe (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans (sic), 1851), 17.

⁶¹See Chadwick, Victorian Church, I:298-9.

⁶²Schiefen, Wiseman, 214.

Catholics and the parochial clergy still awaited the benefits they had expected.⁶³ "The ecclesiastical constitution of the English Catholics, and particularly the rights of the parochial clergy, remained undefined and unsatisfactory."⁶⁴ In short, all power now rested in the bishops and they were under the control of the College of Propaganda. Wiseman's goal had almost been achieved. His goal would be completed with the establishment of diocesan seminaries, in keeping with the Council of Trent, separating education of the clergy and laity.⁶⁵ The separation would also serve to make a distinction between the religious life of the clergy and the secular life of the laity, in keeping with the Roman programme.

⁶³J. Derek Holmes, "Church Government in England: Past, Present and Future," Clergy Review 60 (1975), 462.

⁶⁴Holmes, "Church Government," 427.

⁶⁵As Archbishop Ullathorne wrote: "Placed under chosen men, whose one object and exclusive duty is to form these young plants of the Sanctuary in character as well as in learning for the care of souls, this episcopal family of youthful levites are secured from all those influences that are apt to impede the growth of their vocation, and to check that spirit of exclusive devotion to God, to the Sanctuary and to souls, which is the noblest attribute of a holy priesthood." W. B. Ullathorne, History of the Restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in England (London: Burns, Oates, 1871), 112.

CHAPTER II

ENGLISH CATHOLIC DISSENT

1. The English Catholic Liberals

Although Wiseman counted on the converts to stir up intellectual fervour, he discounted the fact that before conversion they had practised dialogue and discussion. While the converts had championed authority in the Church over the Erastianism of the Established Church of England, concepts of the role of authority differed. As for obedience to "full authority," many of them simply didn't know what to be obedient to, even when they showed willingness. During the 1850s, it became more and more apparent that within the group there were divisions of opinion. While initially they had been concerned with the question of authority, gradually the extent and implementation of this authority became an issue. For some converts this led to a wholehearted embrace of ultramontaniam; for others, it led to an attempt to lead their fellow Catholics into critical thinking about modern issues which had not yet been pronounced on by the Church. This group would be given the title "the English Catholic liberals."

English Catholic liberalism was the attempt by a small group of educated Englishmen to bring to English Catholics the fruits of nineteenth century critical

scholarship. The centre of this activity was the magazine, the Rambler and its successor, the Home and Foreign Review. Under the influence of these publications and the correspondents who wrote in them, like Sir John Acton and Richard Simpson, Edmund Bishop became a Roman Catholic and formed many of his religious and intellectual opinions, with the result that he remained a liberal Catholic for the rest of his life, and long after the "movement" had ceased.

The Rambler

The Rambler was founded as a weekly Catholic magazine in January 1848, and by September had become a monthly magazine of eighty pages.¹ Its aim was to educate and provide a forum for English Catholicism, a task which suited the talents of the founders, as graduates from the great universities who had recently been converted to Catholicism. Traditionally, old Catholics had been limited in their ability to participate in the intellectual and public life of England because of the lack of educational facilities for Catholics² of all classes.

As early as July 1848, there were complaints from the hierarchy and these were met by a statement of position in the Rambler that:

every person, be he who may, ecclesiastic or layman, has an unquestionable right to publish on those theological subjects which are not already ruled by the Church herself, and that the attempt to stifle such

¹Josef L. Altholz, The Liberal Catholic Movement in England (London: Burns & Oates, 1962), 13. For Chapter II, I have relied on Altholz's careful study for continuity of events and his insightful commentary.

²Ibid., 9.

discussion is pregnant with mischief to the well-being of the Catholic Church.³

The two points of policy on which the Rambler rested were freedom of debate where the Church had not ruled and logical arguments so as to convince even Protestants: in short, the two doctrines of "bold inquiry and breadth of view."⁴

In 1854, Richard Simpson (1820-1876), a contributor since 1850, became associate editor. Simpson was one of the most brilliant of the converts—a gifted writer and an intellectual with broad interests. Under his charge, first as associate editor, then as editor until the crisis of 1859 and after that as working editor, the Rambler became a vehicle for current opinion and a thorn in the flesh of the English hierarchy. Despite steadfast faithfulness to his religious convictions, Simpson's bold and aggressive pen set the tone of the Rambler to which the hierarchy would frequently object as too liberal. In 1857, the founder, J.M. Capes, resigned for personal reasons and Sir John Acton (Lord Acton in 1869) joined the magazine. Acton (1834-1902), Catholic by birth, had been through Oscott College under Wiseman's presidency and later, having been refused at Cambridge on religious grounds, studied in Germany under Ignaz von Döllinger, the eminent German Catholic historian and theologian. This training gave him a unique perspective among the old Catholics. Acton had become an historian, having learned the critical method from Ranke's works and from Döllinger. At twenty-three, he was back in England, hoping to raise

³Cited by Altholz, Liberal Catholic, 14.

⁴Altholz, Liberal Catholic, 24.

the level of intellectual life of English Catholics. To this end, Acton bought shares in the Rambler, and began to contribute articles and reviews.

Acton and Simpson became friends. Although Acton was fourteen years his junior, Simpson recognized the younger man's intellectual gifts and learning in the fields of history and politics, and Acton soon became the "chief formulator of policy."⁵ Simpson's journalistic skills, ability to write on schedule and copious output impressed Acton. Articles on philosophy, history and politics soon began to touch on theology, specifically on the issue of science and theology.

Acton felt that theology had to undergo a reconstruction; the theologian now had to be an historian. Dogmas already defined by the Church could not change, but their expressions and explanations must, were they to "meet modern needs."⁶

From the beginning, the Rambler had espoused various causes of the continental liberal Catholics and had been a vehicle for the opinions of educated Catholic converts, but now this changed. As Altholz writes:

now it found itself the organ only of a section of them, that smaller, more liberal section which held that Catholicism should keep pace with the progress of reason and science in an atmosphere of freedom. It stood now in direct collision with Wiseman and his Dublin Review. By the end of 1857, the Rambler had ceased to be the convert organ and had become the organ of a Liberal Catholic movement.⁷

In February 1858, Simpson became editor and Acton his associate. Under Acton's influence the magazine became more overtly political and continued to cause

⁵Holmes, More Roman, 28.

⁶Altholz, Liberal Catholic, 70.

⁷Ibid., 43

dissension and division. By early 1859, Wiseman began to fear that English Catholicism would be split into three parties of old Catholics, the hierarchy, and educated converts.⁸ When the magazine carried an article on the subject of the Royal Commission on education, the bishops objected, despite the fact that it was the laity who were directly concerned. The English ecclesiastics decided to act: unless Simpson resigned as editor, the Rambler would be censured.

To save the magazine, Simpson convinced Newman to take up the editorship, which he did reluctantly.

Richard Simpson's Objections

In February 1859, Richard Simpson, at the request of Acton, wrote to Montalembert in France, explaining their dilemma.⁹ Simpson ended the letter with this frank confession:

The principles of the Rambler will be absolutely the same as heretofore; the elements that Newman will add are prudence and solidity. It cannot be denied that we have sometimes written about things we knew nothing of, in the tone of men who knew all, and without considering the prejudices of those who were perhaps still more ignorant and much more powerful than the editorial we.¹⁰

Although he admitted that the editors had not considered the opposition, Simpson refused to compromise principle.

⁸Altholz, Liberal Catholic, 83.

⁹Simpson to Montalembert, February 1859, in Damian McElrath, "Richard Simpson and Count de Montalembert, the Rambler and the Correspondant," DSR 84 (April 1966): 156-8.

¹⁰Ibid., 158.

At Montalembert's suggestion, Simpson wrote an article for Correspondant on English Catholic affairs.¹¹ It was not printed, for obvious reasons; not just the tone (the usual objection) but also the subject matter surely would have given offence. In what Simpson described as the "**political** position of Catholics in England," he outlined what he called "two successful **coups** of episcopal power, one against the inferior clergy, the other against the laity."¹²

The first supposed coup was that, without consulting the clergy, the bishops made appointments that seemed to show a certain favouritism, what Simpson called a "tendency to Episcopal despotism."¹³ The second "coup" was "almost more successful than the first, and the bishops have humbled the pretensions of the laity with less "ménagement" than they thought it necessary to employ towards the clergy." These "pretensions" refer to the opinions of the laity in matters of education, specifically the inspection of schools by government officials. Wiseman considered that education was a spiritual matter and therefore the preserve of the hierarchy.

Simpson made his point:

In both these **coups** the English Hierarchy has been victorious; – not over its enemies but over its friends; no new converts have been made, no enthusiasm excited, no burst of charity or zeal called forth by their artillery and their blows. They have triumphed over their own army, and have excited not the enthusiasm of Christian conquest, but the passions of civil war.¹⁴

¹¹Simpson's article in McElrath, "Richard Simpson," 159.

¹²Ibid., 171.

¹³Ibid., 173.

¹⁴Ibid., 184.

This control over the laity is the result, Simpson wrote, of the clergy's "jealousy of the laity." As a consequence, "the laity are to be kept in ignorance of all religious questions except those in the catechism, in order to ensure their obedience to a body of directors professionally educated to manage their religion for them."¹⁵

Simpson's article serves to outline the objections against the English hierarchy with its increasing claims of authority and demands for obedience without discussion.

While Simpson was trying to find a way to satisfy the hierarchy without sacrificing the principles for which the Rambler stood, Acton left the country.

Some fifty years later, Edmund Bishop recorded his own opinion concerning what he referred to as Acton's "flight."

And so Acton within a few days "disappeared" from England, leaving Simpson, alone, to meet the storm which Acton, contrary to Simpson's views had raised. Simpson, poor wretch, was only a convert. By the end of February Simpson had been already **smashed**.¹⁶

In 1858, Wiseman had requested that W.G. Ward write for the New Dublin, a review owned by the Cardinal. Bishop offered "Ward's views on this subject": a memorandum written by Simpson, quoting a conversation with Ward, after what was perhaps a social encounter at the home of a mutual friend from Oxford, Canon R.G. Macmullen.

¹⁵Ibid., 185.

¹⁶Marginal note by Edmund Bishop in his copy of F. A. Gasquet's Lord Acton and his Circle (New York: Longmans, Green, 1906), 59. Acton to Simpson, 1 February 1859, Bishop's papers, at The Edmund Bishop Library, Downside Abbey, Somerset, England (hereafter BP).

Memorandum by R. Simpson:

Met W.G. Ward at Macmullen's Feb. 11.

'The first mistake of the Rambler is to treat the Cardinal as a rational being — He is not a reasonable man but a creature of impulse. I think that at the present time it is our duty to take his side against all the world; therefore I have persuaded my colleagues to undertake the New Dublin expressly on flunkey-principles. It will be a wretched review —but I think that all periodical literature is a mistake. We don't want yet to teach the laity to think and reason; if so we only teach them to despise their priests who can neither think nor reason. We must begin with the seminaries. Raise the tone of spirituality first, and then go on to cultivate the intellect; cultivation of the intellect without spirituality is an unmixed harm. . . .' Ward proposes an ultimate object and thinks it is wicked to have any side objects — The thing to be done is to raise up the spirit of prayer, etc. He who does not aim entirely at this not only does nothing, but does harm. He treats as infidels and atheists all who do not agree with him. — I suggested that he provided badly for the future of the Church by suppressing thought within it. He retorted that the Rambler does not do what it aims at — it not only does not make Catholics think, but it makes them swear. — Burns told Ward that the only literature that had any sale among Catholics is devotional literature. It appears that Catholics only look to their own body for devotion; for everything else they hang on the great body of Protestants; they read the Edinburgh and Quarterly for literature and Catholic prayer books for devotion; they keep the two spheres perfectly distinct in their own minds and never seem to let one interfere with the other; yet I question whether they are not much tormented with doubts —and the only safe way ultimately to lay these doubts is to probe them scientifically and thus to resolve them. (so Simpson in 1859) [sic].¹⁷

Bishop has provided a precise overview of Simpson's dilemma and W. G. Ward's response.¹⁸ In the 1900s, when Bishop recorded these thoughts, the situation had not

¹⁷Bishop, NSA-BB, 174m. Simpson used part of this memorandum in a letter to Acton, 20 February 1859. See Josef L. Altholz and Damian McElrath, ed., The Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson, 3 vols. (Cambridge: University Press, 1971), 1:152.

¹⁸Wilfrid Ward writes that both Wiseman and W.G. Ward were "alarmed" over the influence of the Rambler. "They saw the renewed vigour of intellectual life after the stagnation of penal times, and feared lest under such influences it might take a

changed; 1859 or 1900, the attitude of the ultramontanes towards the Catholic press was the same: it must be controlled.

John Henry Newman and the Rambler¹⁹

John Henry Newman (later Cardinal) acquiesced in Richard Simpson's request to edit the Rambler out of personal regard for Simpson and concern for the fate of the magazine itself. The Rambler was supported by the educated laity, many of whom were fellow converts. Newman had declared a deep interest in education in 1851 with a wish for "an intelligent, well-instructed laity."²⁰

Newman's editorship lasted two issues: May and July 1859. Defending the role of the laity in the Church, he suggested that the faithful could be consulted by the episcopate on practical matters that concerned them, "even in the preparation of a dogmatic definition."²¹ This idea drew criticism that reached his bishop, Ullathorne, to whom ideas about the "sentiments" of the laity were confusing. He suggested that Newman resign his position on the magazine and Newman agreed, effective after the next issue.

Afterwards, Newman wrote: "He said something like, 'Who are the laity?' I

wholly wrong direction." Ward, William George Ward, 141.

¹⁹For a detailed analysis of this incident, the reader may consult John Coulson's introductory essay to the reprint of Newman's article. "On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine." (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1961), 1-49.

²⁰Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England (London: Longmans, Green, 1899), 390.

²¹Cited by Altholz, Liberal Catholic, 101.

answered (not in these words) that the Church would look foolish without them."²² In this famous comment is epitomized the shift of power in the English Church which no longer required the protection of the laity, and considered their interest as interference.

The Hierarchy Takes Action

Newman's brief involvement with the Rambler saved it from the immediate threat of censure by the hierarchy. A new series was begun with the emphasis shifted from theology to politics. By 1861, political events in Italy had put the temporal power of the Pope in jeopardy and Catholics everywhere were called to support it. When Acton took on the subject for the Rambler, he wrote as a believer, not of neo-ultramontanism, but of "true ultramontanism" which "signifies the conscious harmony of all our opinions with our belief, the habit of viewing profane things through the medium of religion, and of judging them by the standard which it supplies."²³

This and subsequent articles caused Ullathorne and Wiseman to set about to force the Rambler to cease publication. In a letter dated 8 July 1861, addressed to Cardinal Barnabo of Propaganda in Rome, Ullathorne faulted the Rambler:

For there is a general tendency in that publication to exalt the rights of the laity to discuss and propound doctrine, to lower the intellectual competency of the clergy, to raise abstruse questions and discuss them

²²Wilfrid Ward, The Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman, 2 vols. (London: Longmans Green, 1913.), I:497.

²³Cited by Altholz, Liberal Catholic, 125.

by the light of reason, even when they are intimately linked with the truths of revelation.²⁴

Ullathorne cited examples from recent issues to substantiate his criticism, recommend censure of the Review, and to illustrate its "tone and spirit."

But the general spirit of the publication is to raise questions among the laity, to push into narrow limits the functions of the teaching Church, to lift up science and politics into a sphere apart from faith, and to vindicate religion in a tone that is not always devoid of the sarcastic spirit which strikes as much by insinuation against its teachers as it strikes openly against its adversaries. . . . No doubt there are often able and useful things written in this periodical, but it is this reputation for bold and daring sallies of intellect and originality, that makes it all the more dangerous for ignorant, youthful and presuming minds.²⁵

In the words of Vincent Blehl, "This judgement was excessive"²⁶ and not everyone agreed with Ullathorne. But Wiseman certainly did, if for different reasons.

After Barnabo received Ullathorne's letter, he wrote to Wiseman for his recommendations. Wiseman's reply of November 1861 recorded four objections: a tendency towards rationalism which included discussion of theological matters; errors in matters of dogma; the claim that there should be no difference between clerical and lay education; and the fourth, that the review dealt with contemporary politics, especially those of Italy and the temporal power of the Pope.²⁷

As a result of this correspondence, Wiseman advised each bishop to issue a

²⁴W.B. Ullathorne to Cardinal Barnabo, 8 July 1861, in Vincent F. Blehl, "Newman, the Bishops and the Rambler," DSR 90 (1972): 24.

²⁵Ibid., 28.

²⁶Blehl, "Newman," 40.

²⁷Wiseman to Barnabo, 25 November 1861, in Blehl, "Newman," 30-35.

pastoral letter to his diocese, censuring the Rambler; by October 1862, all but one bishop had done so. This action "isolated [the Rambler] from the sympathy of many, if not all of the majority of English Catholics."²⁸ Under threat of censure in May 1862, the Rambler was transformed into what would become one of the most respected English quarterlies of the century, Home and Foreign Review.

2. John Acton and the End of English Catholic Liberalism

The Home and Foreign Review: 1862-64

In May 1862, the bi-monthly Rambler became a quarterly review with a new name, Home and Foreign Review. It retained the old staff with Acton as editor, assisted by Thomas Wetherell, a convert with ability. The change of format had been favoured by Acton for some time because of financial problems.²⁹ The intention was to improve the Review by "enabling it to pursue its natural development and to allow of more adequate treatment of great questions and a wider comprehension of views,"³⁰ but the spirit and the policy remained the same. Acton continued his endeavour to educate the English Catholic community.

According to Schiefen, the Rambler (and its successor) "represented the liberal

²⁸Blehl, "Newman," 39.

²⁹Ward, Newman, I:523, 37.

³⁰Altholz, Liberal Catholic, 182.

Catholic interest in England."³¹ Bernard Reardon shares Altholz's opinion that Acton was the leader of the liberal Catholic movement in England, and the organ of this movement was the Rambler and the Home and Foreign Review. "Indeed," writes Reardon, "the story of English Liberal Catholicism is virtually that of the Rambler and its encounters, increasingly serious, with ecclesiastical authority."³²

If it was a "movement" in England, it was small indeed.³³ Coulson notes that the May 1859 issue "sold just over 800 copies, and the editors considered 1,000 to be a very healthy figure."³⁴ For the hierarchy, the problem was that "its influence was out of all proportion to its circulation."³⁵ Compare this with a statement by Manning to Ullathorne in October 1862: "I believe the Rambler school to be small, but it is highly mischievous."³⁶ But the liberal Catholics did not hold meetings or award memberships. Whether English Catholic liberalism was an "interest," a "movement" or a "school," it would seem that as far as politics and German scholarship were

³¹Schiefen, Wiseman, 270.

³²Reardon, Bernard M.G. Roman Catholic Modernism (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1970), Appendix II: 478.

³³In 1850 the circulation of the Rambler was "rather less than one thousand copies." Altholz, Liberal Catholic, 22. At its height, the Rambler had only 100 paid subscriptions, and some of the readers were Protestant.

³⁴John Coulson, Newman and the Common Tradition (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), 102.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶Manning to Ullathorne, 24 October 1862. Footnote 2, p.325, in The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman, ed. C.S. Dessain, 31 vols. (London: Thomas Nelson, 1961-1967), XX:325.

concerned, Acton's leadership gave it life.

The English hierarchy decided to counteract its influence by reviving the Dublin Review.³⁷ To this end, Wiseman ceded his rights to the defunct Review to Manning's control and W.G. Ward was appointed editor. In the words of Altholz, "the spirit of the new Dublin was that of Ward, brilliant, logical, predominantly theological and devotional, always aggressively Ultramontane" (Altholz 1962, 190).

In defence of his own position, and in response to Wiseman's address to the clergy, Acton wrote an article for his October issue, entitled "Cardinal Wiseman and the Home and Foreign Review." Acton pointed out the problems of a Review serving a Catholic minority that did not have the support of the hierarchy. "The most devoted efforts of the conductors are liable to be misconstrued, and perversely turned either against the Church or against the Review itself" ³⁸

Acton explained that given the situations in Rome and in England, his Review, concerned as it was with political and scientific problems, could not be expected to find favour initially but he confidently suggested the hierarchy would soon see the pressing need for a Catholic review that could serve the Church in this way. Acton was still optimistic, and began to seek support elsewhere. Offering guidelines, he proposed that Simpson write an anonymous article for the Edinburgh Review, a

³⁷Ward's son, Wilfrid, commented: "The Dublin Review was, during the years 1857-60, at a very low ebb; and the influence of the Rambler was in consequence the more unchecked." Ward, William George Ward, 141.

³⁸"Cardinal Wiseman and the Home and Foreign Review," Home and Foreign Review I (October 1862): 505.

Protestant review, on "the present state of Catholic parties in England," that would serve to enlighten both Catholics and Protestants and draw attention to the hierarchy's opposition to the Home and Foreign Review.³⁹

Acton described for Simpson three parties. The first, "the old school, not warmed up by the Cardinal into devotion to Rome, and not intellectual or progressive — descendants of Milner, Lingard, and even Butler, so far as they all refuse, like chaos, to be converted."

Acton's second party, he simply called, "ourselves." His third party comprised "zealous converts and those of the old set who are under [the Cardinal's] influence, the Romanists, lovers of authority, fearing knowledge much, progress more, freedom most, and essentially unhistoric and unscientific."⁴⁰ This group formed what is now referred to as the ultramontane party.

As to the place of converts in this party system, Acton elaborated:

Converts are an element, a leaven, not a party. Puseyism sickly, onesided, maker out of a case, set its stamp permanently on many, making them advocates, workers out of a view, a priorist — also devoted to authority, anxious for mental repose and no questions asked. Coming in they met the Roman current of the [Cardinal] and the **Dublin** [Review], the plausible defenders of everything, so called ultramontanes, nursed by the spirit of Roman advocacy, and by the strong current setting in that way from France, in the **Correspondant** first, then in the **Univers** — and so there was the fusion we wot well of.⁴¹

³⁹Acton to Simpson, 29 September 1862, in A. Watkin and H. Butterfield, "Gasquet and the Acton-Simpson Correspondence," Cambridge Historical Journal 10 (I, 1950): 92-3.

⁴⁰Acton to Simpson, 6 October 1862, in Watkin and Butterfield, "Gasquet", 95.

⁴¹Ibid. "Wot" is an archaic form of the verb to know: OED.

Converts who embraced the cause of Wiseman and Rome, included Manning, Faber, and W.G. Ward. Converts not affected by "Puseyism" (Anglo-Catholicism) were the educated Catholics of the "English spirit."⁴² The second group had joined with old Catholics who were faithful to traditional English Catholicism, and shared the sure hope that scholarship could convince Protestants that their position was untenable and that Catholicism was the only alternative. They knew from their own intellectual inquiries that the appeal of a medieval Church would be limited and they were willing to "accept the risks of free scientific inquiry. They held that Catholic theology, founded on the living Church rather than the letter of the Bible, was invulnerable to scholarly criticism."⁴³ These were the men on whom Acton counted to support his programme. They would soon discover that their authority, founded on intellectual truth, could not withstand the authority of the Roman Church.⁴⁴

The Munich Brief.

On 21 December 1863, Pope Pius IX addressed a letter, Tuas libenter, to the Archbishop of Munich. Published 5 March 1864, it became known as the Munich Brief.⁴⁵

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Altholz, Liberal Catholic, 142.

⁴⁴In the event, Simpson's article appeared not in the Edinburgh Review but in their own journal, suitably modified, under the title, "Milner and his Times," Home and Foreign Review 2 (April 1863): 531-57.

⁴⁵The Munich Brief was a response to the events of the Munich Congress of September 1863, a meeting of some eighty-four Catholic scholars, led by the erudite historian, Ignaz Döllinger. The hierarchy took objection to the attacks on scholas-

Acton summed up the message of the Brief thus:

the Brief affirms that the common opinions and explanations of Catholic divines ought not to yield to the progress of secular science, and that the course of theological knowledge ought to be controlled by the decrees of the Index.⁴⁶

Acton understood the Munich Brief to be the death knell for lay participation in the Church. The April 1864 issue of the Home and Foreign Review was the last, and in a signed article entitled "Conflicts with Rome," Acton explained why. He wrote that if a censured writer finds the authority that has condemned him does not speak the mind of the Church but is only the voice of authority, he owes it to his

ticism and because the theologians had not first sought permission from those whose "task" it was "to guide and supervise theology." [Quoted in H. Jedin and John Dolan, eds., History of the Church (New York: Crossroads, 1981), vol. VIII: 246.] Furthermore, Catholic scholars were not only bound by solemn definitions, "but actually were obligated to take into consideration the magisterial office, the decisions of the Roman congregations, and the common doctrines of theologians." [Ibid.]

Acton followed these events with articles in the Home and Foreign Review, which Edmund Bishop read so often that he had them memorized. (Bishop to Gasquet, 15 January 1906) Both the Brief and Acton's opinion of it, influenced Bishop for the rest of his life. For this reason, I quote Acton's outline of the Brief as it affected his Review: "In the present condition of society the supreme authority in the Church is more than ever necessary, and must not surrender in the smallest degree the exclusive direction of ecclesiastical knowledge. An entire obedience to the decrees of the Holy See and the Roman congregations cannot be inconsistent with the freedom and progress of science. The disposition to find fault with the scholastic theology, and to dispute the conclusions and the method of its teachers, threatens the authority of the Church, because the Church has not only allowed theology to remain for centuries faithful to their system but has urgently recommended it as the safest bulwark of the faith, and an efficient weapon against her enemies. Catholic writers are not bound only by those decisions of the infallible Church which regard articles of faith. They must also submit to the theological decisions of the Roman Congregations, and to the opinions which are commonly received in the schools. And it is wrong though not heretical, to reject those decisions or opinions." ["Conflicts with Rome," Home and Foreign Review 4 (April 1864): 683.]

⁴⁶Acton, "Conflicts," 683.

conscience, and to truth, to be faithful to his belief. "Nothing is more usual than to confound religious truth with the voice of ecclesiastical authority."⁴⁷ For Acton, truth was its own authority.

The remainder of the article was devoted to the Munich Brief and its effect on his publication. The primary concern of the Review was the "clear recognition" of the difference between dogma and opinion and the second, the difference between the acts of infallible authority and canonical legality. With publication of the Brief, the situation changed.

It is the design of the Holy See not, of course, to deny the distinction between dogma and opinion, upon which this duty is founded, but to reduce the practical recognition of it among Catholics to the smallest possible limits. A grave question therefore arises as to the position of a Review founded in great part for the purpose of exemplifying this distinction.⁴⁸

The Review had not been censured by Rome, but its areas of interest were now closed to the laity. Tolerance, in the form of silence and forbearance had now been withdrawn. To continue existing, the Review had to make an impossible choice: either abandon its principles by the submission of intellect and conscience, or reject authority – to sin against morals or against faith. Acton chose neither:

But I will sacrifice the existence of the Review to the defence of its principles, in order that I may combine the obedience which is due to legitimate ecclesiastical authority with an equally conscientious maintenance of the rightful and necessary liberty of thought.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Ibid., 679, 681.

⁴⁸Ibid., 685.

⁴⁹Ibid., 688.

In consoling those who would miss the Review, Acton wrote that "it was but a partial and temporary embodiment of an imperishable idea – the faint reflection of a light which still lives and burns in the hearts of the silent thinkers of the Church."⁵⁰

With these poignant yet hopeful words, the era of the Rambler and the Home and Foreign Review was brought to a close.

The End of English Catholic Liberalism

With the demise of the Home and Foreign Review, "the moderate English Catholics were left without a means of stating their case and of defending themselves against the extreme ultramontanes,"⁵¹ both in England and in Rome. In a famous letter to William Monsell on 13 January 1863 concerning the Review, Newman aired his "real grievance." The problem, wrote Newman, was that English-speaking Catholics everywhere were now under Propaganda, "an arbitrary military power" and the people's only court of appeal, to which the bishops went first to "secure and commit it."⁵²

And how is Propaganda to know anything about an English controversy, since it talks Italian? by *extempore* translation, (I do not speak at random) or by *exparte* assertion of some narrowminded Bishop, – narrowminded, though he may be saintly too. And who *is* Propaganda? one sharp man of business, who works day and night, and dispatches his work quick off, to the East and West, a high dignitary,

⁵⁰Ibid., 690.

⁵¹C.S. Dessain, John Henry Newman (London: Nelson, 1966), 120.

⁵²John Henry Newman to William Monsell, 13 January 1863 in The Letters, Dessain, XX:391.

perhaps an Archbishop, but after all little more than a clerk, or according to his name) a Secretary, with two or three clerks under him."⁵³

Newman added that were this being said of any institution other than the Church, he would be "indignant," but since he considered the Church to be divine, the only response could be obedience until reform came about.

Acton and Newman were essentially in agreement after the publication of the Munich Brief, holding that dialogue must give way to silence unless one agreed completely with the position of Propaganda. When Acton informed Newman of his decision (a month before the termination of the Review), Newman expressed his regret, commending the Review and remarking on its well-deserved reputation among the periodicals. He mentioned again the consequences of being under the "military régime of Propaganda," and closed with the hope that good might yet come from Acton's decision. "I don't think that active and honest minds can remain content under a dull tyranny. It seems impossible to conceive that they can remain quiet under the supremacy of Manning and Ward."⁵⁴

In fact the majority of Catholics, as Acton knew, shared the views of Manning and Ward. When directed by their bishops to refrain from reading first the Rambler and then the Home and Foreign Review, they did just that. Deprived of its Catholic readership, the Review, like its predecessor, was in debt; its Protestant readership was not large enough to carry it.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Newman to Acton, 18 March 1863, in Ward, Newman, I:566.

The cessation of the Home and Foreign Review has been marked as the end of liberal Catholicism in England.⁵⁵ Although Schiefen called English liberal Catholicism an "interest," most historians refer to it as a movement. As late as 1861, it was not recognized as a school of thought. English Catholic liberalism did not become a "movement" until 1863, when Manning and Ward gathered forces to fight against it, and baptized it. Manning and Ward could not confront an "interest," but could assemble its proponents into a defined group, and condemn it. "The English Catholic liberal movement" began in 1863 and ended in 1864, after the publication of the Munich Brief.

3. The Role of the Laity

The Lay Awakening

For many Catholics of the nineteenth century, the passive nature of the role of the laity was quite satisfactory, but for others it was not. During the pontificate of Pius IX, the Catholic laity "began to awaken."⁵⁶ The congresses of the Catholic laity at Malines and Munich in 1863 signalled this new life.

⁵⁵See Schiefen, Wiseman, 329.

Jean-Guy Vaillancourt, Papal Power: A Study of Vatican Control Over Lay Elites (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 36) explains: "The failure of monarchical restoration movements in the nineteenth century, the gradual extension of popular suffrage, and the increasing laicization of political life gave rank-and-file laymen in many countries an importance which they had not enjoyed previously Now the laity's higher level of education and their increasing political power in the secular sphere forced the hierarchy to take them into account"

But by the last quarter of the century, most lay movements had come under Vatican control, and were used to defend what were considered to be the rights of the Holy See.⁵⁷ As an institution of religion, the Church is unlike any other organization since it can threaten excommunication and eternal damnation, extending its authority beyond the grave. The Church could use this power to guide the laity. But as an institution with political power, the Church has the strengths and faults of other institutions, and also used its power for manipulation, secrecy, delation, demotion and expulsion.

What then was the attraction of the Roman Catholic Church for those many educated university graduates and others of the nineteenth century who chose to be converted? They must have expected to find a dimension to their faith which they did not have before; having found something new, those who were academics were bound to examine and attempt to explain. Their Catholic audience, for the most part, was not interested. In their search for an active role in the Catholic Church, the endeavours of these lay elites reflected the general thrust of the lay awakening taking place on the Continent. When their efforts failed and the will of the Roman officials prevailed, nearly all bowed to the authority of the Church. Something else mattered more than being right. Like contemporaries who sought to bring the Church into modern times, they thought they had the truth but few responded. Eventually they had no choice but to submit, which satisfied both conscience and Rome, and to shift their attention to other matters.

⁵⁷Vaillancourt, Papal Power, 38-40.

The Reform of Ultramontanism

Wilfrid Ward called 1850 the beginning of "neo-ultramontanism," this "remarkable school of thought" which developed into "a great movement."⁵⁸

Generally speaking, "ultramontanism," as used in the nineteenth century, refers to that trend of thought which held that authority in the Church should be centralized in Rome. What was new was that it had become a movement. The goals of the early nineteenth century reformers were dictated by what they saw as the need of the Church to rule its own house. They wanted the dogma of papal infallibility to be defined and power centralized in Rome so that neither individual bishops nor local governments could interfere with Church policy. Some wanted control of Catholic education, particularly that of priests, and some wanted a common liturgy. Particular combinations of interests meant that individual reformers could be labelled both ultramontane and liberal. By 1850, it was obvious that the ultramontanes and the liberals no longer shared the same vision of Church and authority. The process of control and centralized power had begun in the 1830s with the papal Encyclicals of Gregory XVI, which prepared the way for the triumph of ultramontanism. In the main, the force which ultramontanism overcame was liberal Catholicism in all its

⁵⁸The Catholic revival at its inception in France and Germany embraced the ultramontane doctrine – "the infallibility and prerogatives of the Roman See" – in the hands of these "new exponents," the doctrine became a symbol of "that principle of unity and effective authority which had enabled the Church to stand immovable amid a society whose structure had been shaken to its foundations." Ward, William George Ward, 84. See also 101.

forms.⁵⁹ In France, liberalism was a political issue, concerned with the principles of the Revolution – liberty, fraternity and equality. The issues were religious tolerance and the freedoms of conscience, the press, and education. In Germany, liberalism was centred in the intellectual community, which wanted to pursue theological science based on modern philosophy and history, not medieval scholasticism. In Italy, liberalism was also a political issue, concerned with the rising nationalism which sought the unification of Italy under a liberal monarchy and the end of the temporal power of the pontiff-king. Catholic liberalism in England was promoted by a small number of intellectuals. Led by Acton, a cradle-Catholic influenced by continental scholarship, most of the colleagues were converts to Catholicism who wanted freedom to discuss theological issues as they had done in the Church of England.

These desires – that the Church should be "brought up to date" and that the papacy should "reconcile itself with the modern world" – were decisively rejected by the papacy, beginning with Gregory XVI and continually with increasing vigour until the Vatican Council, after which it was only necessary to maintain the controls already in place.

Because of the nineteenth century developments in Church history in Germany, intellectual foment became a major issue, creating dissension and division between

⁵⁹The Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique divides the history of liberal Catholicism into four periods. The first, 1830-1834 (the "Mennaisan" period, after Lamennais); the second, 1834-1850; the third, 1850-1878, the fourth, from 1878 on. DTC s.v. Liberal Catholic. Tables Générales, vol. 2, cols. 1986-2989, 1967. No name which is descriptive of the whole period can be given to the second to fourth periods since in each country, "liberalism" meant something different. [Ibid.]

those who wanted to bring the Church into the modern age of critical thinking, and those who wanted to use as model the medieval period where all powers of authority were held by the Curia. The papal documents of the age show the process and progress by which the Roman Catholic Church, and in particular, Pius IX, fearing the end of Christendom, addressed the issues of the day not with dialogue but with power. The Pope effected the rapid advance of neo-ultramontanism both with his personality, which encouraged intense veneration for his person, and by the power he exercised.⁶⁰ To be a "true Catholic" came to mean agreement with Rome, no matter what one thought.⁶¹

Under Pius IX's successors, Leo XIII and Pius X, these policies were continued and strengthened. It was Edmund Bishop's opinion that the measures progressively imposed by the Church as an institution attracted converts of a different type, and the Church became less rich because of it.

⁶⁰Pius IX's desire for the the declaration of papal infallibility was not expressly stated and was not generally recognized. Friedrich Heyer states that "the political theorists of the Restoration [in France] were the first to bring to light the particular motive which was to lead to the declaration of infallibility—the nineteenth century's hunger for authority." The Catholic Church from 1648-1870 (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1969), 183.

⁶¹The following shows one result of such a policy: "All observers, including those most devoted to the Holy See, were unanimous in deploring the extraordinary nadir of scholarship in Rome under Pius IX, the absence of organized libraries, and lack of interest of the papal leadership in teaching and research. . . . In the field of Church history, the inferiority of Catholics during the pontificate of Pius IX, with the exception of Germany, was most clearly visible." Jedin and Dolan, History, VIII: 228-31.

4. The English Catholic Hierarchy

Wiseman's successor at Westminster was H.E. Manning, named Archbishop and Cardinal in 1865. Unlike Wiseman, Manning's sympathies were never with the Catholic intellectuals but lay mainly with the Irish. He had not been influenced by earlier continental ultramontanism and his neo-ultramontanism was more intense. In 1863, Manning wanted the English Catholic community to be pious, obedient and "more Roman than Rome": even more ultramontane than the Pope himself.⁶² Unlike Wiseman, he wanted Catholics to conform to a narrow uniformity, protected from any uncatholic influence in education as long as possible and from social intercourse with non-catholics whenever possible – in short, a ghetto Church. Nor did he want a laity better educated than his priests. These policies were strongly endorsed by Herbert Vaughan, Cardinal Manning's confidant and, in 1892, his successor at Westminster.

One policy that Vaughan did not support was Manning's commitment to social and economic reform in the Catholic community. Manning's endeavours toward this goal usually found little support, and Vaughan felt that the Cardinal's concern was a symptom of senile decay.⁶³ An ultramontane to the end, under Manning's rule, Catholics were never permitted to attend the great universities where between 1875 and 1890 there was a growing concern for "social obligations in the light of the economic and religious destitution of the masses"⁶⁴ Despite Manning's influence on

⁶²H.E. Manning, "The Work and the Wants of the Catholic Church in England," Dublin Review n.s. 1 (July 1863): 162.

⁶³Holmes, More Roman, 182.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 183.

Leo XIII's Encyclicals, he protected English Catholicism even from the reforms of Leo XIII himself. Manning had indeed followed his own dictum from 1863: he had become more ultramontane than the Pope.⁶⁵

With the declaration of infallibility at the Vatican Council of 1870, Roman Catholic liberalism came to an end and Acton changed his course. In a letter to the great liberal leader, W. E. Gladstone (circa 1880), Acton, the undeclared leader of the English Catholic liberals, wrote that he had never met a religious and educated Catholic who was an "esoteric Ultramontane," by which he meant someone "who really believes that the See of Rome is a safe guide to salvation."⁶⁶

When Roman Catholics were prohibited from attending Oxford, Oxford men came to Catholicism. The Oxford converts were devout, they were brilliant, they were faithful, but they didn't agree on what the Church should be. While Wiseman and Acton were exposed to both English and continental influences, the Oxford converts were English to the core, even as they worked for the ultramontane cause. Without them, the English Catholic Church would not have evolved the way it did since Rome would have had little opposition to the denationalization of Catholicism in England.

If this has been Catholicism from above, the life of Edmund Bishop, to whom we must now give our attention, is Catholicism from the middle. Bishop represents a

⁶⁵See Manning, "The Work," 162.

⁶⁶Hugh A. MacDougall, The Acton-Newman Relations (New York: Fordham University Press, 1962), 227-228.

second generation of Catholic converts. In 1867, he joined the Church, finally convinced by the scholarship and faith of the Catholic élite. After his conversion, Edmund Bishop chose to make this history his own, and gave to it his particular and valuable contribution.

PART TWO

EDMUND BISHOP FOR "ROME"

CHAPTER III

THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL FORMATION OF EDMUND BISHOP

1. Early Influences and Conversion¹

Family History

Edmund Bishop was born on 17 May 1846 in Devon, England, the ninth of ten children. In a document dated 14 February 1913, he wrote:

From a quite early date it was clear – to any penetrating eye – most clear to the eye of a mother – that I was, never could be, fit, to **battle with life**. It is of no use lamenting, grizzling, over fate: things are what they are . . . ah! the tragedy. The 9th child, the 3rd of the last 4;

¹Details of Bishop's early life are contained in three autobiographical accounts, his introduction to "Opuscula," in a letter to F.A. Gasquet (later Cardinal) and a note by Robert Brown. Bishop's accounts, left among his papers, were published posthumously in the Downside Review in 1930, 1933, 1960. References made to manuscript versions in Bishop's hand indicate where the edited Downside Review version differs. Brackets < > are used where Bishop has drawn a line through a sentence. When he did not want a sentence preserved, he obliterated it with black ink. Brackets { } indicate passages in the text which were not used in the final draft. The letter to Gasquet from 1906, recounts the influence that the Home and Foreign Review had on Bishop's intellectual development. Brown's "Edmund Bishop: A Biological Note," [sic] September 1976, is deposited in Downside Library. Brown is the great grandson of one of Bishop's elder brothers. Only the information concerning the history of the family background has been cited, since the material concerning Bishop's professional life is not reliable, according to Bishop's own record.

the 7th, the 8th had "died young", the 10th, the only one of "my set" that I can remember at all, died the youngest dead of all (sic). How often has not the word been within me—*ego*. . . *ego*. . . *remaneo solus*—*why, why* this? . . . There is but one answer that can make itself heard in the desert. . . . "*Numquid dicet lutum figulo suo, Quid facis*". . . Bref.²

Just why and when did he decide he was unfit to battle with life? Was this hindsight—the thoughts of a man in his sixties? Or was this an idea that he had acquired earlier? As the sole survivor of the last four offspring, he questioned his own right to survival. He tried to find the answer in being useful to others, throughout his life searching for meaning in what he called his "vocation."

The Bishop Family.

The Bishop family lived in the Seymour Hotel in the town of Totnes in Southeast England. Edmund's mother, Susan Quick Bishop, had lived there as a child, having been adopted by an aunt and uncle who ran the hotel. When her uncle died, Susan married Michael Bishop, an employee of the eleventh Duke of Somerset. The Duke owned the recently enlarged hotel and the Bishops took over as innkeepers of the hotel. Brown describes their situation:

[Susan and Michael Bishop] lived in some style as host and hostess and were well known in the town and apparently well liked . . . They presided at dinner over a distinguished company including the Duke, Disraeli (the Prime Minister), and Brunel, the famous bridge builder and railway engineer . . . The place was conducted in great style. The table was furnished with ample silver, great dishes and bowls, urns and tea services, punch bowls, spoons and forks all engraved with the

²Edmund Bishop, "Thomas Carlyle and Edmund Bishop," DSR 51 (January 1933): 107-8.

Bishops' initials . . . Michael Bishop took an active part in the running of the town of Totnes, being listed as a Councillor in June 1850.³

The Bishop family was one of some substance and acknowledged as such by the community. In his later years, Edmund said that he had never been afraid to approach those in high positions, perhaps as a result of his mother's training. Susan Bishop was both a conscientious employer and a concerned and loving mother, who knew Shakespeare and displayed an interest in national politics.⁴

In 1851, when Edmund was five years old, the Bishops lost most of their savings when a railway stock they had invested in collapsed. The shock hastened the death of the already-ill Michael Bishop at the age of 49. His widow could not manage the hotel alone and so took over a small inn in the neighbouring town.⁵ Two of her children moved with her: Ada, her only daughter, and Edmund, her youngest son, six years junior to Ada.

There is no doubt Edmund was deeply attached to his mother and that she in turn wished the very best for him. His love of learning and nature were direct results of her influence. It was she who instilled in him integrity, loyalty towards friends and high moral standards. When she died in 1863, his grief was such that he cried out in his sleep for a year. His most treasured possession was a letter written by his mother on her deathbed and never sent: a letter concerning the prospects of the one son who was not yet settled in life, Edmund.

³Brown, "Edmund Bishop," 2.

⁴Ibid., 3.

⁵Ibid., 2-3.

Bishop's Youth

Edmund attended a local grammar school until 1859. Just before his thirteenth birthday he was sent to Vilvorde, near Brussels, to attend a school where all the Bishops' children had gone before him to be "finished."⁶

He stayed in Belgium for two years, learning to speak and write French and to read Latin and Greek. He returned to England in May 1862, the month of his fifteenth birthday, and attended school at Exeter for a year preparing for examinations: the Oxford Junior "Locals" in the winter of 1861 and the Cambridge "Senior" in June 1862. He then joined his mother who had recently moved to London.

The Duke of Somerset had promised Susan Bishop he would find Edmund a position in the Civil Service (as it was later called), but he never did. Instead young Edmund was offered a nomination to a position in the dockyard. His brothers declined on his behalf and for this he was forever grateful. Recommended by a mutual acquaintance, he became the amanuensis of Thomas Carlyle; an unenviable position since Carlyle's drafts arrived with extremely complex revisions and insertions. Although Edmund held little regard for his own work, Carlyle approved of it and appreciated the young man for himself, as well, allowing the seventeen-year-old to air his opinions at length.⁷

⁶Edmund Bishop, "Notes on my Conversion," DSR 36 (May 1930): 91 (hereafter DSR Notes). Ada, his sister, was also sent to Belgium, to the girls' school.

⁷The high regard in which Edmund held Carlyle, and his inestimable regard for his mother are recorded in his "Opuscula" I. This is also evident in two letters pasted into his "Opuscula": one by his mother, the other by Carlyle, each addressed to someone else, each given to Bishop and carefully preserved by him as "the only

After eight months in Carlyle's employ, Bishop obtained a nomination for a position in the government's Education office. He wrote the required examination and was hired three days before his eighteenth birthday.

The work in the office as a third class clerk required no particular ability or responsibility, but the hours (11:00am to 5:00pm) permitted him to pursue his own interests. He soon spent two hours every morning at the British Museum. The starting salary of £100 per annum enabled him to satisfy, to some extent, his "passion" for books.⁸

The Process of Conversion

Edmund Bishop's decision to submit to Rome was the end result of a lengthy process. His early account of his conversion is one of the few documents remaining from this period of his life. Because it was written at the request of a nun, it has a particular emphasis.⁹ While most of his comments concerning his conversion date

documents left of adolescence." The introduction to Bishop's "Opuscula" is dated 1913, and was written after he had reread for the third or fourth time, George Tyrrell's autobiography. It must have occurred to Bishop that no one else would know the significance of these two long-cherished documents unless he indicated it himself, as Tyrrell had said of his own record. Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell, arranged, with supplements, by M.D. Petre. 2 vols. (London: E. Arnold, 1912), II:82.

⁸Edmund Bishop, "The Beggarly Elements of Bookworm Fare," DSR 78 (Winter 1959-60): 24 (hereafter DSR Bookworm). The untitled manuscript in Bishop's hand is dated Apr' 1900 and 26 May 1900.

⁹Bishop has noted that the account was "drawn up" at the request of D.M., referring to Dame Mary English, a nun of Teignmouth Abbey. DSR Notes: 86. The account is dated "in 1873 or 4" and Bishop later added marginalia.

from after 1900, after he was fifty-four, he wrote this document when he was about twenty-eight. In a marginal note on the manuscript, Bishop wrote, "You ask me when first the thought of becoming a Catholic occurred to me? How was it was that my conversion came about? These questions are more easily put than answered."¹⁰ Nevertheless, he attempted to answer them.

He began with his youth and recorded perhaps his first religious experience. A friend of his mother's lent him a book entitled Dermot the Unbaptized, to his mother's great regret. Susan Bishop told her friend it was "just an inculcation" of "Baptismal Regeneration."¹¹ This statement interested Edmund, even more than the story itself.

He described the consequences:

This set my childish brain thinking; like a revelation the story made clear to me what was the meaning of these terrible words of party warfare: so I went away quietly to see by this new light what it was the Bible had to say and read and re-read the classical texts respecting baptism: and there it was—this doctrine—in the Bible in words as plain as English could make them, and yet I had never seen it before: but now how could I help embracing it at once, this clear teaching of the Holy Writ which I had always been taught to revere. Then I did not see the consequences, but by this means the idea of sacramental grace became familiar to me: not of course that, child as I was, I had any perception of this: but without my knowing it the new idea of baptism acted thus: sacraments hitherto I had understood rather as a sort of rite, but here was the idea of an active divine virtue attached to it. Of course I knew my "Church Catechism", but now it seemed that for the first time I could take in the idea of the "inward part or thing signified" of a Sacrament. The Protestantism with which I was surrounded

¹⁰Bishop's original draft, "Notes of my conversion: drawn up at the request of D.M. (in 1873 or 4.)" (hereafter MS Notes). The manuscript version of twenty-one pages is finely written and often corrected. "MS Notes" is the manuscript version of the printed "DSR Notes."

¹¹DSR Notes: 90.

accepted the Supernatural of the Bible so far as the Apostolic age is concerned; but it shrank back from the idea of the supernatural as existing and exhibited every day, and at this hour: but I see now that it was just this that was driven home to me by the little book "Dermot".¹²

This account was written some eighteen years after the event and is, of course, an adult view of a ten-year-old's experience, as Bishop himself conceded. Yet something significant had happened, the result of which seems to have been a new belief on his part that the sacraments were both available and efficacious.

As a youth, Bishop was fascinated with Catholic practice. When he was sent to school in Belgium, he took full advantage of the situation and familiarized himself with the Mass and with Catholic prayer books. The consequences of this exposure were predictable. He recorded that after the first year, his "Protestantism was utterly shaken: it seemed slowly and I knew not how to have been undermined, but of the result I was most painfully conscious."¹³ By the time he left Belgium, his peers called him a Catholic.

Bishop's account points to his early love of ceremony. It is not surprising then that he developed an antipathy for low Anglicanism at a young age. It was not the sermon, but the service and ritual to which he paid attention. The atmosphere at the Belgian school had encouraged and nurtured this attraction, but once back in England he was not sure he wanted to become a Catholic.

¹²DSR Notes: 90-1.

¹³Ibid., 93.

On his return to England in the spring of 1862, with his mother's full support Bishop considered conversion. He decided against it. Instead, he began to attend the nearest High Church congregation and it was not until the summer of 1863 (six months after the death of his mother) that he again entertained the idea of becoming a Catholic. This was the result of the first of a series of religious experiences during which he felt drawn to Catholicism. He resisted its pull, but suffered something akin to depression for about a month, and old doubts reappeared.

In August, the impulse to submit returned "in a flood." He described it thus:

This state came on like a sort of fit, on what cause or how I could not tell, simply that [it] was there; this something seemed to urge me on; become a Catholic, become a Catholic it said: this continued for about a month or five weeks, causing an indescribable sense of mental discomfort and uneasiness, the more trying that reason could not deal with its cause, for there was no assignable cause for this revival of old troubles and doubts of which during the last year I had been quite free: there was nothing that I could as it were take hold of and deal with: it could be borne not dealt with, and after a time it passed, thoroughly.¹⁴

What remained was "an uneasy sense" that led him to begin reading ecclesiastical history. By summer, 1864, this had led him to a "new question":

How is it, if the Council of Nicaea for instance had power and authority to, and did in effect, decide and pronounce and define the true and saving doctrine of the Faith that this no longer holds good today?¹⁵

He concluded that, with his Anglican "principles and ideas," he would have sided with the Arians, and would have said that the bishops seemed to be "usurping an

¹⁴Ibid., 100.

¹⁵MS Notes, 11: BP. This passage is omitted in DSR Notes.

authority" that was not theirs.¹⁶ Bishop's reading convinced him that history (in this case, the idea of papal supremacy) could not be judged on the exception (Arius, Cyprian) but must rest on the testimony of all the Fathers and saints.¹⁷ He remarked, however, that while he was predisposed to learn what he could from the tradition of the early Church, he did not anticipate the effect it would have on him: he was incapable of resisting the "force" of what he read. "I felt more and more that to put an Anglican interpretation on that glorious history would be its utter distortion, the very destruction of so much of it which could not be frankly faced."¹⁸

There were several repetitions of the intense experience he had had in 1863, each episode leaving him "utterly miserable" and more determined to act. His sister counselled him to wait because he was so young.¹⁹ He sought advice from a learned Anglican clergyman, but remained just as confused and even more despondent.

In 1864, when he had just turned eighteen, the young scholar had purchased a set of the Home and Foreign Review, a Catholic magazine of high repute, the publication of which had just been suspended by the owner/editor, Sir John Acton.

¹⁶Later he wrote in the margin: "I wonder now where I fished out this: **It was before Hagemann**: it must have been in connection with Bishop Bull — and then **of course I had absorbed Gibbon** 'utterly'; used to make abridgements of chapter after chapter **from memory** and I was particularly impressed by his ecclesiastical and religious chapters." MS Notes, 12: BP. Also, DSR Notes, 101, with slight variation.

¹⁷It seems that Bishop had not yet read Newman's article on "Consulting the Laity."

¹⁸DSR Notes, 102.

¹⁹DSR Notes, 102.

Bishop would always be grateful to this periodical, he wrote, "for it brought home to my mind the idea of an active present ecclesiastical authority," an idea which, as an Anglican, he found "unpalatable." He concluded: "This is perhaps the most unpleasant lesson a convert has to learn: the exercise of practical obedience to ecclesiastical authority is something strange and new."²⁰

In 1865 he decided at last that he would have to find the answer to his religious problem himself. On the basis of a review article, he ordered a book by Hagemann (a German theology professor) described as "one of the most important of modern theological works."²¹ Bishop taught himself German in order to read the book, which explored the history of the Roman Church during the first three centuries of the common era. Hagemann convinced him that even before the Nicene Council, Rome's position was predominant.²²

Meanwhile, in his private devotions, he had gone back to the religious practices that he had adopted in Belgium. His reading included Newman's Apologia and Pusey's Eirenicon, neither of which affected him. But one thing Newman wrote did strike a cord; Newman's joy in claiming the Fathers as his own after his conversion. ("Ah! Now I am yours and you are mine!")²³ Bishop wrote:

This came home to me in my little way, for when I read of the Fathers and Saints and Popes what they said and did, I felt there was a great

²⁰MS Notes, 14-15, BP.

²¹DSR Notes, 103.

²²Ibid.

²³MS Notes, 15: BP.

gulf between us: I did not dare say aloud to myself in words, they were Catholics, I am not, but I **knew** it. I felt I was trying to piece together as it were things which were not of a piece and the interior jar was intolerable.²⁴

Pusey's Eirenicon was given to him by a brother who was "high church" in the hope that Edmund would be disgusted with Rome. It had no affect for two reasons. First, he had seen Catholicism in Belgium and thus Pusey's "Mariolatry scarecrows didn't frighten me a bit."²⁵ Second, he had never cared for Pusey.²⁶ What did effect him was Newman's letter to Pusey:

This solid and luminous exposition of Catholic doctrine: here in a single item [concerning Mary] was just the same difference I had long felt to exist between the whole systems of Rome and the Anglican Church: the one resting broadly and firmly on the great basis of tradition, the other hesitating, diffident in assertion but loud and determined where objection and negation was [sic] concerned, the real moral of whose special teaching was comprised in the single word 'don't'.²⁷

Why then didn't he submit? He had hoped to write, and since his ideas of the Roman Church and the Pope were now grounded in Antiquity, he thought that he could be more "useful" as an Anglican. Here, perhaps, is the beginning of this hope which was to be his *raison d'être* in the years to come. Writing to the nun in 1873/4, Bishop took the precaution of deleting the negative reference to the Vatican Council, referring first to Lord Acton and then to himself in an elaboration of this wish,

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵DSR Notes, 105.

²⁶Bishop wrote: "He had always seemed to me such a wooden person: learned, without intelligence, treating the ancient church much as an anatomist would treat a dead body he had to dissect." DSR, 105.

²⁷Ibid., 106.

partially crossed out:

You will laugh at this vanity but there it was: <and since then I have seen an example of what this might have led me to in a person of real capacity talent and learning. [?] or rather even much more Roman ground than I could have taken and he published his views. Then came the Vatican Council, to which he must, if he [were] to carry into practice his published "views" either have submitted or> and it acted powerfully upon me.²⁸

But in 1866, besides his desire to write as an Anglican, two other problems persisted: Westminster Abbey would no longer be "his," and "the idea of going to a Catholic priest was utterly repulsive to me."²⁹

Bishop began to consider the "practical question" of going to confession. He had accepted Catholic ideas and ritual that pleased him. Now he decided he must "take the thing all round and not pick and choose, taking the pleasant and leaving out the disagreeable." But if he felt "repulsion" for Catholic priests, he harboured an "utter distrust" of Anglican clergymen.³⁰

He read Richard Simpson's biography of the English martyr, Edmund Campion, and was struck by the story of Campion's conversion. It mentioned "calls" to conversion and suggested that when repeated calls have been without effect, "God leaves the soul in quiet contentment with heresy."³¹ Bishop felt the "impulses" he had had were truly "calls" to which he had been unable to respond. As a result, for a

²⁸MS Notes, 16-17: BP. The person of ability referred to here was probably John Acton.

²⁹DSR Notes, 107.

³⁰MS Notes, 17: BP.

³¹DSR Notes, 108.

winter (1866-67), the fear of contentment plagued him. During Lent 1867, he decided one day to go to confession immediately. He went to see the Anglican clergyman he had talked with in 1864, but circumstances prevented their meeting. Bishop took this as a sign that he should forget about it, which he did.

Bishop's interest in liturgical studies commenced in 1867. While on a holiday trip to France with his brother, quite by chance he met the Abbé Malais, a country curate and scholar with a love for liturgy and history, as was evident by his extensive library of ecclesiastical history, liturgical works, and breviaries. While Malais was "profoundly versed in all ecclesiastical science,"³² he was also a kindred spirit, and the first Roman Catholic priest Bishop had met. Malais' letters to Bishop tell the story of a friendship which would last until the curé's death in 1882. Their relationship had a decided effect on the young man. The immediate result would be his conversion and in the long term, Malais's devotion to liturgical studies would influence Bishop to make that field his own life's work.

Bishop recalled "those happy, happy days" which were for him, "the turning point."³³ Unlike the Anglican clergyman, Malais did not defend a position. "He did not say one word of **controversy** to me: had he done so I should have probably become suspicious, reserved and perhaps shunned him altogether."³⁴ Instead, Malais offered an erudition tempered with piety that Bishop could not resist. He quoted

³²Ibid., 110.

³³MS Notes, 20: BP.

³⁴Ibid.

Malais's advice: "N'oubliez jamais de joindre quelque élévation vers Dieu au milieu de vos lectures; de peur que le coeur ne devienne sec et froid, ce qui ferait . . . un savant **seulement**"³⁵

Perhaps the priest's kindness affected him, but Bishop found in his company a new kind of confidence. Before he had left, he had confided all. Malais offered fatherly counsel but did not urge him to submit. But Bishop admitted that it was during those few days that his conversion was effected.³⁶

Back in England, near the end of July, Bishop had "a still more violent fit of that impulse to Rome which I had had before: I felt things were coming to a crisis and that I could not much longer continue thus."³⁷ On the 8th of August he again went to seek out first one, then another Anglican clergyman. Both were away. He decided that the next day he would go to a Catholic priest known to have been sympathetic to high churchmen. Bishop was convinced this priest would not persuade him to become a Catholic against his "judgment."

The following evening he went to see the priest, later to become known to him as "dear old Father Lockhart."³⁸ The priest was at home.

And now when actually brought to book I found that I had not difficulties and doubts to expose about Catholic doctrines and practice

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶DSR Notes, 112.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸DSR Notes, 113. Father William Lockhart (1820-92) had been to Oxford and was the first intimate friend of Newman's to leave Littlemore in 1843 and join the Catholic Church.

(except indulgences which I did not understand); my difficulties and doubts all regarded Anglicanism: my sole trouble was as to my **duty**, to see my way clear what to do; and then I explained or tried to explain all those bonds which kept me back. To all which he had but one reply: "**Fiat justitia, ruat coelum.**" What a light those four words threw upon everything! The way seemed cleared all at once: my duty plain: and now I could only wonder how it was I had remained blind so long. After talking with me for over an hour, Fr. [Lockhart] began at once to prepare me for my general confession: seven days later on 16 August I reached the haven: a Catholic at last; those murky clouds of doubt, which, young as I was, had yet encompassed me, were dissipated in an instant! In Thy light, O my God, I have seen light . . . So be it! So be it God for ever.³⁹

It had taken five years to come to a decision. Now after much travail and questioning, in 1867, Bishop finally made his submission to Rome: "a Catholic at last." But to the end of his life, Bishop was a particular kind of Catholic in that he was a convert, he was English and he was a layman.

The Reasons for Bishop's Conversion.

Bishop's devotional life had long conformed to Catholic practice which appealed to his heart and his senses. It was his mind that balked. He gave many reasons for his hesitancy, but primary among them was a dislike for the practice of confession and the act of obedience that it signified. Since he had never spoken to a priest, his encounters with Malais and Lockhart, both Catholic priests, were bound to be influential. Here were two older men who befriended him, wished him well, and wished him Catholic. He finally said yes.

He was already conditioned to assent as a result of his reading of ecclesiastical

³⁹Ibid.

history and his attraction to ancient tradition. Bishop named various influences, one being Simpson's Edmund Campion, which left him with the fear of the consequences of refusal.⁴⁰ But most often, he attributed his conversion to the influence of the Home and Foreign Review. He was impressed that learned scholars like Acton, Simpson, and Renouf could remain faithful Catholics despite the advance in biblical criticism.

Bishop had been introduced to biblical criticism at school in Belgium. After purchasing the Home and Foreign Review, he subscribed to German periodicals and read the books reviewed and recommended by Acton. All this input stimulated and excited him. He came to the realization that, for him, the literal interpretation of the Scriptures was no longer tenable and his early evangelical training, alone, could no longer support his faith. Peter le Page Renouf's contribution on biblical criticism, in the Home and Foreign Review, made Bishop aware of the difficulties that lay ahead for an evangelical faith, such as his own upbringing had given him.⁴¹ He was left with "the notion of an abyss and salvation therefrom."⁴² For an evangelical, what could have been worse? The abyss represented the loss of biblical religion as he knew it because of the science of biblical criticism. "Salvation therefrom," was belief in a faith based on what he considered a continuous tradition, the Catholicism of the scholars who had become his heroes. Eventually, the attraction of this religion was too powerful to resist.

⁴⁰Ibid., 108.

⁴¹Bishop to Gasquet, 15 January 1906: BP.

⁴²Ibid.

Even obedience to authority did not pose a problem. Bishop arranged his library to conform to Catholic standards by selling his collection of classical literature.⁴³ While he came to regret the loss of the books, he never regretted the conversion which had prompted the conformity to obedience.

2. The Autodidact

Without benefit of a university education or personal tutors, Bishop, as a young scholar, developed a programme of study on his own. He read his way to expertise in his profession, winning the highest respect from established scholars in his field. A voracious reader, he was influenced by his predecessors and contemporaries, as the autobiographical accounts of his intellectual formation record.

Bishop was in his early thirties when he first made his mark as a scholar of high repute. In the British Museum he discovered some 300 Papal letters dated from the fifth to the eleventh centuries that he subsequently "transcribed, analyzed, and annotated."⁴⁴ Because of his contact with the German scholar, Felix Liebermann, whom he met at the British Museum while the latter was in England in 1877, Bishop offered the letters to the editors of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica. At the time,

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴DNB, "Bishop, Edmund." For a recent reference, see Robert Somerville, "Edmund Bishop and his Transcription of the Collectio Britannica," 535-548, in Studia in Honorem Eminentissimi Cardinalis Alphonsi M. Stickler, Rome: Pontifica Studiorum Universitas Salesiana, 1992. The author kindly sent me this interesting article that utilizes the resources of Bishop's papers for new information concerning Bishop's on-going contributions to the Monumenta Germaniae Historica.

he knew of no one in England who might have been interested in publishing them. The first of the "Collectio Britannica" appeared in 1880, and earned him appropriate praise from the scholar, Paul Ewald, for his "infinite pains," his "thorough palaeographical knowledge," his "brilliant conjectures" and the "surety of the restitutions of passages unintelligibly corrupt."⁴⁵ While Bishop's reputation among a small group of continental scholars was now ensured, few of his countrymen were aware of him. In England, even in later years, his reputation was limited mainly to specialists in his field who had reason to consult him professionally.

A Passion for Books: Bishop and his Library

Bishop's library collection has been preserved "for eternity"⁴⁶ at Downside Abbey, England. In a notebook listing his acquisitions,⁴⁷ Bishop recorded his search for a motto for this "catalogue." What he chose instead were words from the late Dr. Sweeney:

The slow sweet growth of years. Monks get an attachment to their library until they almost view the books as fellow-conventuals, who are doing their share towards the common welfare and happiness.

⁴⁵Cited by Butler, DNB, "Bishop, Edmund."

⁴⁶This, according to a framed notice signed by the late Abbot Cuthbert Butler, which hangs in the Edmund Bishop Library on the top floor of the monastic library.

⁴⁷Bishop named this notebook, "Book C 1" of the "Cc Diaries" [Catholic Diaries], (hereafter Notebook C 1). A marginal note dates the entry September 1883.

Bishop added:

The books in the library of the monastery are not for today only, or for this generation, or even only the next, but for a long line which will cherish, and watch and foster, this "sweet slow growth of years." As friends, old yet ever new, they will be held in frequent, intimate, refreshing converse, and will be therefore used; but in the using they will be **handled with care**, as men deal tenderly and gently with those dearest benefactors whom we call friends.⁴⁸

Bishop was fully aware that the value of his collection would endure and intended to create a legacy which would serve the needs of later scholars as it had served his own.

The Beginning of the Library.

In April-May 1900, Bishop prepared an untitled document, recording the preparations he made before the age of nineteen to fulfil his dream of forming a personal library.⁴⁹ Bishop summed up this early activity:

And it was thus, so far as books are concerned, that things went with me up to the completion of my 18th year—I had so to speak none; but knew about many, and what is more, had an insatiable passion for knowing about more, about all that came, or that I could get, within my ken. 'A passion'; yes, nothing less than that.⁵⁰

Bishop's passion for books began at an early age. By 1860, at age fourteen, he had already "formed, and thought much over, a project of getting together a good library." His Belgian schoolmaster friend "particularly commended and kindly

⁴⁸Notebook C 1: BP.

⁴⁹DSR Bookworm, 14-24.

⁵⁰DSR Bookworm, 24.

procured for me the 'Génie du Christianisme' as a sample."⁵¹

The effect of Chateaubriand's Génie du Christianisme on the youth was immense and lasting. The book became his constant companion: he copied passages, constantly reread them, translated them, and sent them home.

My imagination was captivated and subdued by this marvellous exposition of the beauties of Catholicism: it seemed to throw open wide the gates of an enchanted world to the astonished gaze of an outer heathen. And now in a Chateaubriand fit I procured one after another all his works (except the 'Mémoires d'outre tombe'), even down to some horribly dry political works which I poured thro' for the sake of the 'Génie du Chris-me' [sic] as I would not miss a bit of him.⁵²

An account which Bishop wrote in April-May 1900 is somewhat more sombre. It was at this time, he recalled, that he first desired to have "Complete Works." To this end he began to collect Hachette's series of cheap French classics, month by month. He listed all of Chateaubriand's books which fascinated him, and "opened up whole regions of unknown literature, mostly of the dry and learned kind."⁵³

From Chateaubriand's introduction to Voyage came Bishop's interest in the Crusades, the Holy Land, and the Latin principalities in Greece, and books in his library reflected this early fascination. But it was the introduction to the Leçons which most affected him:

It introduced me to the Maurists, the Bollandists, Tillemont and Fleury, Adrien, de Valois, Pagi, etc. As I look back I am astonished myself

⁵¹DSR Notes, 96-97.

⁵²MS Notes, 7: BP. This paragraph is omitted in DSR Notes. Perhaps in 1930, such passion had not to be stirred up by one such as Chateaubriand, whose works signalled the beginning of Catholic liberalism in France.

⁵³DSR Bookworm, 14.

to find in what a region I was living between 14 and 15. It seems to me now looking back simply ridiculous that a boy of that age could have his head busy with these things. Yet from that day to this now certain expressions have never left me.⁵⁴

In addition to the books he bought, he read the books of the other English boys at the school and in this way became familiar with historians of Spanish America.

While in Belgium, he decided to concentrate on history, with the particular purpose of producing historical texts himself. Upon his return to England, he studied natural history. This complemented the strong influence of Chateaubriand and Sir James Mackintosh, a liberal Whig historian.⁵⁵

In 1862, an older friend of his mother's, Lady Malcolm, gave Bishop an "unforgettable" gift:⁵⁶ Hallam's Middle Ages, Gibbon's Decline and Fall and later, Hallam's Constitutional History. Bishop recorded their effect on him:

First I fell under the spell of Hallam; and the respect I then imbibed for the great school of 'Liberal' historians of the first half of the present century has influenced me ever since.

Hallam opened up to my curiosity a world of historical literature. I say 'to my curiosity'; and use this expression emphatically rather than 'to me'. The chapters I cared most about were the first on France, the one on Spain and the last (the State of Society in the Middle Ages). Here too I got some ideas of the foreign representatives of what I have called the modern "liberal" school of historical writers. In a desultory sort of way I began listing up authorities, and storing away in my memory Hallam's criticisms and characteristics of them.⁵⁷

Reading Hallam prepared him for Gibbon. "If Hallam opened up a 'world',

⁵⁴Ibid., 14-15.

⁵⁵Ibid., 17.

⁵⁶DSR, Carlyle and Bishop, 100.

⁵⁷Ibid., 17-18.

Gibbon opened a universe!"⁵⁸ He read, reread, and analyzed chapter after chapter, and made a systematic study of the bibliography. The result of this labour of love, he wrote:

has crowded my life since with such a host of interesting people that have been living to me even when I have not since made actual acquaintance with them by handling or using or reading their books. Yes! that was the value: I seemed to know these people all – they have peopled my life ever since. . . . I shall reach my death and not exhaust the indications for guidance among books gathered from Gibbon.⁵⁹

Bishop added that although Gibbon's scepticism led others to berate Gibbon for his "infidelity," it never bothered Bishop. He considered Gibbon to be the "avenger" of Christianity.⁶⁰

In the Saturday Review of 1862 or 1863,⁶¹ a notice appeared that led Bishop to Potthast's Bibliotheca Historica Medii Aevi. His siblings, Ada and Michael, gave him Potthast's book and it was still in his possession in 1900. He quotes an entry from 1878: to "this book I owe almost all I know, for it gave me, dry bone as it is, the impulse to read and enjoy history at its sources."⁶²

⁵⁸Ibid., 18.

Ibid., 18-19. Edward Gibbon had the reputation of being the best ecclesiastical scholar of the period, despite the two famous chapters (XV and XVI) in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire which offer a severe attack on the Church. My assessment of Bishop's life and work (Chapter VII) suggests that Gibbon's influence on Bishop was more pervasive than Bishop admitted to.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Exact dates of his own history sometimes elude Bishop.

⁶²DSR Bookworm, 19-20.

In 1900 he added:

The impulse to read and enjoy history at its sources came from an earlier date and from other masters; help how to do so freely, firmly, with knowledge, what one may call knowledge, real knowledge in the full extent and minutest detail – from a Froissart and a Matthew Paris down to the barest or most locally obscure annalistic memoranda – this is a knowledge, a help due to Potthast.⁶³

His treatment of Potthast shows a remarkable natural ability. Since Bishop did not have the books, he formulated a supposed list of chapters of the books in the bibliography. "Thus I came to acquire a thorough knowledge of what was in the books long before I ever saw them. Pertz, say – Why I knew every volume of it!"⁶⁴ He followed this procedure with many great collections.

Another project he set for himself was to prepare a list of books that would be required for a library of historical sources. This included finding out which books had not yet been reprinted, and the value of good editions – a help later when searching through old bookstalls for his own collection:

In this way, what with Hallam, Gibbon, Potthast, before I was eighteen I knew more of the details of later Roman and medieval historiography than I am sure I do now. Also I paid careful attention to the whole literature cited by Potthast under the heading *Erläuterungsschriften*. At that date I did not know German, but at that time I learned the absolute necessity of learning to read it on pain of future nullity even in the pursuit of history as an amusement. Though it would be a mistake to suppose I had no other idea than this.⁶⁵

⁶³Ibid., 20.

⁶⁴Ibid. Pertz was editor of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica

⁶⁵Ibid.

As a result of his collections, two areas of interest emerged:

The Carolingian revival, the passage from the darkness of the 8th century to the darkness of the 10th but each containing in them the promise and the germs of a great and bright future; and the struggle of the Papacy and the Empire — the great drama only from the earlier Henrys of the 11th century to the fall of the Hohenstauffen. How my mind used to work over these things as ideas shaped themselves in those days.⁶⁶

Reading Hallam led him to buy de Marca's De Concordia Sacerdotii et Imperii (on Gallicanism) and this too had a lasting influence.

If the Carolingian period did not fire me in those times of my alternatives like the titanic struggle between Pope and Emperor, the fascinating history of that revival has preserved for me a more enduring charm: a charm which increases as the years go on.⁶⁷

Apart from these resources, the young man was constrained by the lack of materials.

Let me revert then to the beggarly elements of bookworm fare once more. After all (apart from the inspiration of Gibbon — of Hallam — each of its own kind) the substance was no more than bibliographical and biographical, **plus** curiosity for further knowledge. But this was unattainable for me.⁶⁸

Nearly thirty years later, Bishop reviewed the efforts of his youth to obtain the information he wanted. In his late teens, Bishop's love of books had all the qualities of a grand passion. He had not had access to libraries. (Few libraries would have had the books he wanted.) He was too young to gain admission to the British Museum, but he could walk through the King's Library at the British Museum (open to the public), and read the spines of the books through the glass cases. "And to this

⁶⁶Ibid., 21.

⁶⁷Ibid., 21-22.

⁶⁸Ibid., 22.

method of acquaintance with them, their backs and bindings, I had recourse, say I? — rather I rejoiced in the chance of even so slight an acquaintance with them."⁶⁹

He was eighteen and determined to satisfy his curiosity. Moving the library ladder when necessary, he made a list of all the books on the shelves. He purchased an early copy of Chandon and Delandine's Dictionnaire Historique and with this as a guide, he learned "a great deal" about most of the authors on his list.

For fortunately I early acquired the habit, induced thereto finally by the charm of Gibbon's notes, of trying to learn all I could of the authors of books as well as about the character of the books they wrote.⁷⁰

In this enterprising and imaginative way he was able to satisfy his passion for books until his nineteenth birthday, when he acquired an entrance card to the British Museum.

Until his early retirement in 1885, he would spend the morning of each working day until 11:00am at the British Museum. The passion remained with him for the rest of his life. Until his fifties he kept his money in a leather pouch under his bed and spent the greater part of his income on books. For years he made careful inventories of the books he bought and the prices he paid. He bought the books because he loved them, making constant use of them, supplementing them with material from the British Museum and elsewhere, and always making them available to others.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid., 24.

Bishop as Author⁷¹

While Bishop was building his library, he was planning a future as a historian.

The project that already, little more than a child as I was, simmered in my mind was—a collection of the Acts of the English Saints in four volumes large quarto. It excites a smile even to write it; and it may be asked whether I write it expecting to be believed? I expect nothing; but it is the fact—and the fact may serve to illustrate at once the imaginativeness and ideal-practical character of the boy's mind as well as the impression made upon it by [the] Bollandist institute. It had captured my imagination, there is no doubt about it.⁷²

In this account from 1900, Bishop still shows respect and support for his youthful dream of forty years earlier. When he envisioned himself as a historian of the Saints, he was still an Anglican. Later, the Benedictines would be the focus of his dream, and the Maurists, du Cange and Mabillon in particular, would be his exemplars.

The introduction to his "Opuscula," 3 January 1913, details the development of his style, and includes comments on his early writings. By diligent application to those things he considered important, young Edmund taught himself to be a liturgiologist and a palaeographer and eventually he rose to the top of his profession.

He recorded that very early on, he had developed two study habits that he termed "collecting and abstracting." At age eleven or twelve he became a collector,

⁷¹While the material for this section is taken partly from Bishop's account in 1900 of his early love of books, the main source of information is the five-page manuscript written in 1913 to serve as an introduction to Bishop's bound four-volume collection of minor works and memorabilia, which he called his "Opuscula." These volumes form numbers 186, 187, 188, and 189 of his bound collection, "E.B. Tracts." Number 79, "Varia," also includes some of Bishop's own articles.

⁷²DRS Bookworm, 16.

recording in notebooks those passages that appealed to him. Between fifteen and sixteen he learned what he called "abstracting," which was to record from memory and in his own style, the salient parts of the books he had read.

Reading Gibbon at age sixteen had such a lasting effect on him that for the rest of his life his writing had a "strong flavour of Gibbonese."⁷³ He began to write, for himself alone, at seventeen. It was not until he joined the Roman Church in 1867 that anything came to print. Bishop reminisced about his youthful enthusiasm:

Within a couple of years of my becoming a Catholic — with that 'something' characteristic of the convert of those ante-diluvian days, the days before the flood of 1870, end of 1870 — I had come to have no scruple of making my voice heard in print and in joining in the fray.⁷⁴

He was encouraged by William Lockhart, who had received him into the Church and had become one of his mentors. Bishop voiced his opinions in four areas. He first contributed to Lockhart's book, Old Religion, about the Irish and the British Church and what Bishop called "patristic lore." Bishop commented that Lockhart had printed Bishop's material, "just as I wrote it for him."⁷⁵ This comment suggests the young man's ability. His next contribution was as a controversialist, against E.S. Ffoulkes on the issue of the Council of Chalcedon, on the "creeds question."⁷⁶ Bishop was

⁷³"Opuscula" I, E.B. Tracts p.186, January 1 1913: BP.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ffoulkes was a leader of the Union movement, a convert to Rome who later rejoined the Anglican communion after a public debate carried on through the press.

clearly well-informed and confident enough to respond publicly to Ffoulkes.⁷⁷

In addition, Bishop commented on various articles in French and German periodicals, subscribing to some and borrowing others, thus "following the war of the pamphlets" on the coming Vatican Council. In the summer of 1870, he wrote at length to a French friend (probably the Abbé Malais) concerning the "Vatican Council motions." The friend sent the letter to Bishop Dupanloup who was in Rome, who in turn sent it to Le Français, a newspaper Dupanloup and his friends had founded in Paris.⁷⁸

After the Vatican Decree in 1870 on Papal infallibility, Bishop's debut as an author ended. He stopped writing and in 1871 he burned his copies of the off-prints of what he had already written, a decision taken only after much thought. He decided that should he write again, he would not keep his off-prints. He resolved rather:

to try, as it were, to cut such vanities at the roots, for among the 'results' of '1870' in my mind was this one: the need, the necessity, for the modern, Vaticanist, Roman Catholic convert of 'my' sort, of not merely that 'detachment' which 'ours' are so fond of talking about, but 'detachment' of real **personal indifference**.⁷⁹

⁷⁷It is not surprising that Bishop was well-informed on the issues that Ffoulkes addressed, since Lockhart had been a supporter of the Union movement. For a critique of Lockhart's review of Edmund S. Ffoulkes' Christendom's Divisions, see Dublin Review, n.s. vol. 3 (1866): 528-33, where Lockhart is ridiculed for failing to condemn Pusey.

⁷⁸It seems likely that the letter would appear in the paper as correspondence and is therefore unsigned. Although Thomas Annand M.M., kindly searched the possible issues of Le Français in the Bibliothèque Nationale, he was unable to distinguish Bishop's letter from the many others on the subject. Abercrombie suggests that Bishop was wrong in supposing that it had been printed, but I don't see any reason to justify this conclusion, since Bishop's memory was legendary.

⁷⁹Introduction to "Opuscula": BP.

Having chosen to remain silent, Bishop did not write for five years. At the time, it was not unusual for dissenters from the official Roman position to refrain from expressing their views publicly. The silent response met with favour both among members of the Roman Curia and among those English Catholics known as ultramontanes. But young Edmund, having just begun writing for the public, was as yet unknown and his silence passed without comment.

In 1876, at the request of a friend, he wrote an article on the letters of St. Boniface. Bishop began to write again. The five-year hiatus had a deleterious effect: writing was now an effort. "Disuse of the pen" had robbed him of his old facility and the prospect of publication created a very self-conscious style that remained with him for the rest of his life. In 1913, he could still say that when writing articles for print: "I never lose, really lose, the sense of walking over suppositi cineres."⁸⁰ (This phrase suggests the fear of walking over "sacred graves" and thus an act of desecration or of causing offence.)

From 1876 until the 1890s, Bishop wrote under self-imposed strictures. After the Decree of Papal Infallibility of the Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic laity could no longer engage in historical studies as they related to theology: at any rate, they could not publish in this area of scholarship. Bishop among others felt that silence was the only possible response to this ruling.

Later in life, Bishop adopted Acton's position, maintaining that the Munich Brief of 1863 had ruled out the possibility of any contribution from the Catholic laity.

⁸⁰Introduction to "Opuscula": BP.

He retained his admiration of Acton and he wished he had known Acton personally, as is evident in a letter to Baron von Hügel:

I have always regretted that I never even once met the late Lord Acton. Though perhaps had such a thing come about he might not have been disposed to speak on the things I should have cared to talk of with him. I do not **know**: but I fancy that after the experiences of c. 1870, he must have wrapped himself up rather, flashing out now and then. But still he **must have** been volcanic.⁸¹

The Influence of the Home and Foreign Review

Two letters describe the influence of the Home and Foreign Review on Bishop's thinking, both, letters to friends. On 3 January 1905, in a letter to Everard Green, Bishop reminisced about the Home and Foreign Review:

Heigh-ho! hé-mi! Without the H & F —anathematized by the orthodox, crushed by the full weight of Vaticanism, acting in the actual person of Antonelli with Pius IX as dead weight a-top —without the H & F—should I ever have become a Catholic? I think, & feel pretty **certain, NOT**. . . . The H & F first opened my mind to the **livingness** of the history of our religion, and of the 'Jewish Church' before ours. It was all new to me then; a revelation. Not so many here in England at all had woke[n] up to that livingness: only a few 'Catholics' & 'infidels': so many of the rest of us (I too) under the glamour of the sorceries of 'the Adorable Queen of Romance', personated by New-man, exercised through the medium of 'Tract 90'. Yes: the H & F circle was 'advanced' indeed. It was instinct with livingness.⁸²

The combination of scholarship and religion in the "Acton-Simpson circle," as Bishop called it, won him over to the liberal Catholic position as opposed to ultramontaniam.

⁸¹Bishop to F. von Hügel, 8 October 1905: BP.

⁸²Bishop to Everard Green, 3 January 1905: BP.

By 1905, Bishop had been cured of his romanticism; the Catholic Church and its positions had turned him into a thorough-going realist:

I recoil from it all. The wicked Queen, the deceptive sorceress ruled us all or nearly all when I was young. She was false then: is she truer now? I'll have none of it.⁸³

From 1864-67 when he was undecided about converting to Rome, the effect of the "Acton-Simpson circle" was as powerful on his faith as on his thinking. In 1864 he was still an Anglican, although he had moved from "low" to "high" since his Belgian school days. In particular, Peter le Page Renouf's influence "did bring in strongly upon my mind the difficulties ahead for 'faith' — and especially Protestant 'faith' in the matter of Biblicism."⁸⁴ For Edmund Bishop, "the H & F opened the mind to ideas really new in England and not to be come by anywhere else."⁸⁵ Biblical criticism was sure to engender difficulties. What amazed the young man was that the scholars facing the problems were Roman Catholics.⁸⁶ It is not surprising that Bishop felt increasingly drawn to Roman Catholicism as it was exemplified by brilliant Catholic scholars of that day, whose works were made known to him through the "gospel" of the Home and Foreign Review.

Bishop's second account of the influence of the Home and Foreign Review on his development was written in 1906. When F.A. Gasquet (later Cardinal) wanted

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Peter le Page Renouf was "the most learned Catholic in the country." Altholz, Liberal Catholicism, 202. He joined the Review in 1863.

⁸⁵Bishop to Gasquet, 15 January 1906.

⁸⁶Ibid. See also Chadwick, Victorian Church II:25.

background for his book, Lord Acton and His Circle,⁸⁷ he asked Bishop to furnish his own impressions of Acton's Home and Foreign Review. The draft of Bishop's reply filled six long pages and left no doubt as to the great influence that the Review had extended on his religious and intellectual formation.⁸⁸ Bishop cautioned that it had been more than twenty years since he read anything in the Review, so that what he wrote was drawn from memory. As a young man, Bishop had read, reread and virtually memorized important articles such as Acton's "Ultramontaniam" and "The Munich Congress." Bishop's remarkable memory enabled him to recall his impressions many years later:

It certainly had a decisive result in my life and permanently on my whole conception of things. I am in danger therefore (in speaking of the 'H & F') to speak not according to the thing as it was itself but according to the effect it had on me: and here even thus not by its effect at the time but to see it through what I have seen, heard, known, since. Though as regards this it is true that all this has only deepened in, burnt into my mind the ideas I gathered young.⁸⁹

In this important letter of 1906, Bishop describes the two "leading practical ideas" that he had garnered from the "H & F" thus: "They are trite and obvious ideas; but they are the bottom and root notions of which our present great antagonist Catholic schools—the scholastic and the modern really differ."⁹⁰ They were "practical" ideas

⁸⁷Bishop provided information for the Introduction. The book was to be a rehabilitation of Acton as a loyal Catholic, after the posthumous publication (1904) of his letters to Mary Gladstone, daughter of W. E. Gladstone, when his loyalty to the Church began to be questioned.

⁸⁸Bishop to Gasquet, 15 January 1906: BP.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Ibid.

because he used them to judge the issues of the day. The first idea was that "in intellectual encounters, the Church and the world must always use the same weapons."⁹¹ Before the Munich Brief of 1863, both the scholastic and modern schools would have agreed with this principle, but that had changed. Now the scholastic school asserted that history must be subject to dogma. The second idea was that "a good clergyman is not necessarily a competent authority of physical science."⁹² Were the clergy to act as authorities in fields outside their expertise, they would lose credibility with the faithful, although finding favour with the ecclesiastical authorities. This was particularly true in the area of biblical criticism.

Bishop argued that the conflict between critical scholarship and the authority of the hierarchy that had become urgent since 1900, had already been "recognized and faced" by Acton and his colleagues in the 1860s but they had not been free to publish. In 1906, the problems stemmed from the suppression of intellectual freedom in the areas of history and biblical criticism. On the one hand the scholastic school claimed the right to control and dictate intellectual questions. On the other hand the modern school claimed the right to speak where the church had not ruled. For Bishop, this was the root of the antagonism between them.

Bishop wrote to Gasquet that there were two reasons for the development of this antagonism: the Oxford Movement and the group of converts to Catholicism that

⁹¹This quotation came from Bishop's notes, copied from the Rambler 1861, which he read in 1896.

⁹²Ibid.

resulted from it. "The revolution in thought & feeling involved in passage from the Anglicanism to the Catholicism of some fifty or sixty years ago could not but in some minds have unexpected effects."⁹³ The converts were not expected to give up private judgement "on the threshold," and so continued to exhibit a certain scepticism. When this group came into contact with Lord Acton and his German training, "both recognized that it was in the field of history that the battle would be fought!"⁹⁴

From old memories, Bishop recalled articles and authors which had appeared in the Home and Foreign Review, giving particular attention to its book reviews,⁹⁵ and crediting the Review for its seminal influence on his thinking. He recalled the impact of German scholarship on his intellectual development, mentioning great contemporary scholars who, through their writings, taught him the "mediaeval-historical-critical method": Ranke, Jaffé, Wattenbach, and others.

He knew that if he had the copies of the Review in hand:

a crowd of memories would come back, how this opened my mind to a line, a style of research, that gave me an aperçu into the Christianity of my times . . . But it was this reflection that was the ultimate lesson for me (I don't say it would have been for anybody else—I dare say, it is quite possible nobody else was, perhaps would or "could" have been so affected) was this: these people who see all these things, who face all these things, these menacing problems, who see ahead & see the difficulties that threaten and neither obscure & pooh pooh them with soft words or turn inside from and funk them are—Roman Catholics. I am not I say going to dwell on that which is "nowt" & merely

⁹³Bishop to Gasquet, 15 January 1906: BP.

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Bishop added a note of regret, repeated elsewhere, concerning the sale of his "non-religious" books on classical studies, after his conversion. This policy was formulated and promoted by Abbé Gaume, a staunch ultramontane.

personal; but I do want for a moment to dwell on this that I have said: viz. that these ideas the 'H & F' generated in me in so many directions were **not to be come by anywhere else in England**. For it is **this** that is & was I believe the characteristic & phenomenal aspect in which the 'H & F' historically appears.⁹⁶

Gasquet reworked Bishop's memoirs for the Introduction to his book on Acton, inserting some of Bishop's phrases to provide proof of the salutary influence Acton and his colleagues had exercised on Catholic scholars through the medium of the Review.

3. Summary

Edmund Bishop's biographer, Abercrombie, credited his subject's temperament for many of his decisions and actions. While this can be justified to some extent, temperament cannot be used to explain Bishop's studied indifference to and changing opinions on the "romanization" of the Catholic Church in England.

Like many men of genius, Bishop did not suffer fools gladly. By nature, he was extremely sensitive, nervous, and high-strung. When his mother had deemed him unfit "to battle with life" early in his youth, she must have taken these characteristics into account. Edmund agreed with her. At seventeen, he was "so horribly nervous, shy and all that you will, in that kind 'up to the power of' whatever you like." Even so, from early childhood he was never nervous or shy with "real big folks."⁹⁷ He adds, "It's the **middle** or indifferent lot that unnerve me — it's a venture — it's a **bore**

⁹⁶Ibid. See Chadwick, Victorian Church II:94-5.

⁹⁷DSR Notes, 102.

with such as these."⁹⁸ His account of his talks with Carlyle shows that even as a youth, he could impress with his enthusiasm and learning. As a specialist in a narrow field, most of his early work was done in isolation. When he did meet a kindred spirit his loyalty and friendship were enduring. To those whom he respected he extended every help and encouragement. To those he loved he was loyal and forgiving, generously overlooking their faults. But those he disliked or who had lost his favour and respect, he castigated and treated with disdain. Nevertheless, his fundamental goodwill inspired his generosity and impressed and enlightened the many scholars who called on him for assistance. He was always eager to make available to others the knowledge of history of the liturgy he had gained, to those he respected and liked.

Bishop probably did not immediately understand the full implications of the Munich Brief and Acton's reasons for terminating the Review. It was only many years later that he stated categorically that the Munich Brief of 1863 signalled the end of lay participation in the Church.⁹⁹ For Bishop, the Brief became a milestone, defining the relationship of the laity in the Roman Catholic Church. It was certainly his intention at the time of his conversion to write in support of the Church. He recorded later that, at the age of seventeen, "in those foolish days – and for some years after – I had ambitions, actual, real **ambitions**."¹⁰⁰ At seventeen, he did not

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Bishop to von Hügel, 2 February 1913, in Loome, Liberal, 432-33.

¹⁰⁰DSR C-B, 103.

understand the ramifications of "full obedience" to "full authority." He was not alone. Many converts simply did not know what to be obedient to, even when they demonstrated willingness to obey. The influence of biblical criticism on the faith of nineteenth century Christians often produced "honest doubt."¹⁰¹ Asa Briggs has written that there were "three ways open" for a Victorian Christian undergoing a crisis of faith due to the influence of the new biblical criticism. The most common was to ignore the doubt altogether. Others could choose the difficult task of trying to work out a reasonable faith. Or, they could opt to convert to Catholicism with its ongoing tradition.¹⁰² In a changing world, the Roman Church, represented by the Pope and Curia, itself simply refused to change. Some, like Bishop, found this reassuring at the time of conversion, if not afterwards.

By the time of the Vatican decrees of 1870, Bishop fully understood the implications of obedience. Just three years after his conversion, in order to avoid possible censure, he was prepared to sacrifice his dream to support the Church by his writings. Was he being overly cautious? Considering that Acton and Newman also chose silence rather than public response, one can draw the conclusion that the danger of censure was real enough.

By 1871, Bishop's life was thoroughly Catholic. Both Malais and Lockhart had become close friends and counsellors and relationships with these kindly and

¹⁰¹Asa Briggs, The Age of Improvement: 1783-1867 (London: Longmans, Green, 1967), 486.

¹⁰²Ibid.

caring priests (and perhaps others) must have helped to fill a void for the young man who had scarcely known his father, whose mother was dead, and whose formation had come from books alone.

The Church offered him both refuge and confinement. There he found comfort in devotions, security in tradition, satisfaction in ceremonies, and companionship with fellow members. He also thought he could not risk drawing attention to himself through any publication lest he overstep the bounds of what was acceptable and so find himself disciplined or even expelled. Being a Catholic had become his summum bonum. The Catholic Church was extensive and solid, offering safety in the midst of turmoil; and if he could not make the "sacrifice of the intellect," he could at least keep his thoughts private.

He was not, of course, immune from the effects of biblical criticism.¹⁰³ Moreover, after 1870, the Catholic liberals who had worked for intellectual freedom in scientific research, and had won his affection and deep regard, were silenced by the Roman hierarchy.

Bishop needed a period of silent reflection to decide what to do next.

Chadwick writes that the Anglicans in the 1860s, "were afraid of losing the Bible, and with it the evidence for the future life, the motive for right conduct, the ethical standards of civilised society." This led to "the conservatism of the sixties" which seems to have applied to Catholics just as much as Anglicans. Chadwick, Victorian Church, II:25.

CHAPTER IV

BISHOP AND THE BENEDICTINES

1. Bishop and Downside (1881-1889)

Bishop's love of history, England, and the English Benedictines converged in one great dream: that an institute be established in London where English Benedictine monks could work together for a common cause — the cause of history. This dream was modeled on the great Maurist tradition of seventeenth century France, especially on the life and work of Mabillion (1632-1707).¹ During the 1880s, Bishop expanded the concept to include a return to what Bishop and others considered a pre-Reformation Benedictinism.²

¹Jean Mabillion entered the Benedictine Order in 1653, and became the most famous of the French Maurists for his contribution to scientific historical research. Mabillion's original work on Gallican and Roman liturgy according to H. Leclercq, was considered to be without peer. But Knowles suggests that Edmund Bishop deserves close attention as Mabillion's equal. David Knowles, Great Historical Enterprises (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1963), footnote 1, 49.

²David Knowles, one of the more renowned scholars to have come from Downside Abbey, makes this comment on the evolution of the Benedictine rule. "The traditional Benedictine monastery has always been a fully autonomous abbey, ruled by an abbot elected for life. This system in the later Middle Ages had proved resistant to reform and matters had been rendered still worse by the prevalent abuse of commendatory abbots, by which the monks were deprived at once of most of their revenues and of their rightful head. Many of the reforming congregations had endeavoured to avoid these ills by giving supreme power to a general chapter or a

Bishop's deep attraction to Maurist scholarship, coupled with his attraction to the spirit of St. Benedict, secured his interest in and dedication to the Benedictines in general and Downside Monastic Community in particular. From 1870-1888, the Downside community was divided between those who sought reform and those who wished to maintain the status quo. Under three priors, a small group of monks from Downside began a campaign to change its form of government, which had been in place in the two English missionary provinces since the seventeenth century. They wanted a return to autonomous rule in each monastery, a return to the ancient system of Benedictine rule,³ and a revival of their own indigenous traditions: not French, Italian, nor German, but English. By the early 1880s, the community was divided in mind. Several of the monks questioned their fate as English Benedictines, which involved either a life in teaching or in a parish. Rather than teach in the school at Downside or serve in the missions as priests, some of the monks wished to remain in the monastery as conventuals and pursue higher ecclesiastical studies as had the

superior-general, and even (as in the case of St.-Maur) by making the congregation, not the individual monastery, the unit to which a monk belonged by profession, and within which he could be moved about at will by his superiors." David Knowles, The Historian and Character and Other Essays (Cambridge University Press, 1963): 39. In this respect Bishop was against the ancient system. However, in all other ways, he supported it.

³For details concerning the beginning of the English Benedictine Congregation see David Lunn's "The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century," Tjurunga (1974-78):25-34. Lunn offers this brief chronicle of events: "In 1888 [Edmund] Ford was replaced by a conservative, Clement Fowler, but ironically it was in this period that the big change in the Congregation took place. The President from 1888 to 1896, Austin O'Neill, was determined to restore normal government to the congregation, and a body of opinion from all the houses rallied round him, though he was opposed by the majority of the monks, especially the older parish priests." *Ibid.*, 29-30.

ancient Benedictines. They saw this as being not only consistent with Benedictine monasticism, but also as being true to its history and spirit. These monks formed the nucleus of what would be called the Reform Party.⁴

As Lunn notes, there is "a good deal of evidence to show that the majority of English Benedictines were not ready for the changes wished on them by the few."⁵ In fact, even the reformers did not agree completely among themselves. These disagreements caused conflict. Nevertheless, by 1900, the reformers' platform had been affirmed by Rome and imposed on the whole Anglo-Benedictine Congregation. The English Benedictine monasteries were formed into an association or congregation under one president with a common novitiate.

From 1886-1889, Edmund Bishop lived at Downside Monastery as an unprofessed member or postulant of the community.⁶ During these years, true to his calling as a historian, he kept records of the developments of the reform movement and the opposition to it. This material, along with his correspondence, presents

⁴Knowles, Great Historical Enterprises, and Lunn each gives details of the issues addressed by both parties.

⁵Lunn, "English Benedictines," 30.

⁶"Postulant (Latin, postulare, to ask for). One preparing to be clothed as a novice in a religious house by means of a preliminary experience of the life." The Catholic Encyclopedic Dictionary ed. Donald Attwater, 2nd ed. revised (London: Cassell, 1949), s.v. "Postulant."

Bishop's view of the events of the time.⁷ It is clear that the records had been had been carefully edited.

Bishop offered two apologies, the first on 22 November 1888 and the second in his 1905 "Memoranda." In the first, he apologized for the "necessarily personal cast" of his memoirs, which, while they might need correction, were valuable precisely because they were a personal witness.⁸ He made it quite clear that these "secret archives," as he called them, were written not only for himself, but for other readers as well. In his second apology, he stated his original intention:

I wanted . . . to make possible for those who come after to know what had been done for them by the men of these days, . . . and at which cost the work of rendering their future plain and straight, the work of 'redeeming' the English Benedictine 'body' had been achieved.⁹

The entry ends with this comment:

I would only put in this one plea on behalf of myself as the reporter — that if I have been hard on others and have written hard things of them, at times I dare say things undue or unjust, by giving as I endeavoured to do a purely veridic reflection of all I thought and felt in the midst of the pressures, the sometimes awful pressures & distresses of those times, I have too thereby begun by never sparing myself. I wrote out myself as I thought & felt, & never stopped to consider in what light I might appear in so writing. I am bound I think

⁷The variety and structure of Bishop's records of this period are described in my introduction to the bibliography. These notebooks, (the "secret archives diaries," hereafter SA) are a record of the activities and documents which resulted from the interaction between the monks of Downside, the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation, and occasionally, the action or inaction of Rome. During the 1890s when the Downside reformers were preparing reports for Rome, Bishop's "secret archives" were a valuable source of information.

⁸Something of a manifesto, this document was found by Bishop among his papers in 1905 and pasted into (SA) Volume II on page 3.

⁹SA II, 4: BP.

at this date & now that time has passed, when explaining my ideas & objects in penning these records, to put in this plea before the reader of them: if he does not understand it, or understanding it puts it aside as invalid – So be it. E.B. 20 March 1905.¹⁰

The reader was addressed and the entry initialled and dated. In this entry Bishop claimed full responsibility for the tone of his records, which, written under duress, occasionally put both himself and others in a bad light. The diaries to which Bishop referred, and his letters of the same period, reveal his thoughts and opinions, which in turn reflect his nature and temperament. This window on his personality reveals facets of thinking behind his actions and reactions when he first made his acquaintance with the monks of Downside, and the decisions he made as a consequence.

Vocation

By 1880, Edmund Bishop's scholarship had earned him a fine reputation on the Continent, as a result of his discovery of the Collectio Britannica (canonical papal letters) at the British Museum in 1877. Following a chance meeting with Felix Liebermann at the Museum, the beginning of a lifelong friendship, he assisted several German scholars by providing answers to their research questions. This in turn led Bishop to offer the letters to the editors of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica and their subsequent publication therein.¹¹

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹See Knowles, Enterprises, 86.

Bishop's reputation among English Catholics was also growing. In the winter of 1879-80, he and some friends founded the Guild of Saint Gregory and Saint Luke, the purpose of which was to revive liturgical and ecclesiastical studies in the Catholic milieu.¹²

In 1881 Bishop began corresponding with Dom Gilbert Dolan of Downside concerning their mutual interest—the history of liturgy. In 1883, at Dolan's invitation, Bishop made his first visit to Downside Monastery. There he met Dom Francis Aidan Gasquet, the prior, as well as some of the monks of the reform group. These men shared Bishop's desire for renewed Benedictine studies. The meeting was an auspicious event with far-reaching consequences, both for Bishop and the monastery. From this group of men would come friends, colleagues, and a new generation of scholars.

Bishop's relationship with Dolan would grow into a life-long friendship, providing each of them with comfort and support. Letters from Bishop to Dolan record Bishop's growing interest in the monastery. The first letter, dating from 1882, set the pattern for most subsequent letters: discussion of issues and events at Downside and of problems or questions concerning liturgy.

Concerning liturgical studies, several things were already evident: Bishop generously shared his work; he preferred anonymity with regard to credit for his

¹²Over the years, Bishop would give sixteen academic papers on various aspects of liturgical studies until his withdrawal in 1900.

work; and, he insisted on taking every precaution against error by reserving the right to correct the proofs.¹³

In June, with regard to a notice in the Downside Review, he remarked on his marginalia:

as sometimes happens, I have annotated the notice: to jot down one's ideas in the margin of a book is at least a relief when one cannot say them out!¹⁴

Why couldn't he "say them out?" Either because there was no one near who was interested, or because he was afraid to voice his opinions. Either way, keeping his opinions to his private papers and close friends was a habit he continued for the rest of his life.

A year later, in 1883, after an "all too short" visit to Downside, he wrote that it had given him much pleasure.¹⁵ He commented that since his return home, "it is singular to find how frequently Downside has come uppermost in my thoughts." He voiced the dream that he had for the Benedictines, which would eventually become a reality: "What a pity it is that you have not a 'pied à terre' here in London, not far from the Museum say: there is such a deal to be done in the way of illustrating the recent annals of your congregation."¹⁶ By 1884, the friendship between

¹³Bishop to Dom Gilbert Dolan, 2 April 1882: BP.

¹⁴Bishop to Dolan, 4 June 1882: BP.

¹⁵Bishop to Dolan, 27 June 1883: BP.

¹⁶Ibid.

Bishop and Dolan had deepened into mutual trust. Bishop commented once again on his marginalia, some of which he had allowed Dolan to read:

Indeed I don't know if I am not myself indebted to you for forbearance of a similar kind: it is not to everybody who writes that I should venture to shew my marginal comments on books or papers. By and by when I am gone people will find some about & about in many volumes: but then it will matter little.¹⁷

Bishop had already begun to think of the future. People would use his library and would find his notes; but he would be gone.

His relationship to the monastic community had also deepened. In the summer of 1884, Bishop considered becoming a monk at Downside. A letter from a Benedictine nun, Mechtildis Pynsent, assured him of all the prayers she could get for his intention, "which even we can see is very important."¹⁸ She added that while Dame Mary, for whom Bishop wrote down his conversion experience, regretted that Bishop was not a priest, she herself did not agree:

for there must be good earnest Catholics in the world especially as you say, among the educated classes and altho' the distance between a Priest and a layman is immense yet the vocation and mission of the latter is very great and his influence for good almost wider¹⁹

It would appear that Pynsent was not convinced Bishop should exchange his role as a layman and scholar for that of a priest, although she hardly dared say so.

Bishop had already decided on a "single vocation." But two problems had to

¹⁷Bishop to Dolan, 29 May 1884: BP.

¹⁸Mary Mechtildis to Bishop, 14 August 1884: BP. A nun of St. Scholastica's Abbey, Mechtildis Pynsent later became Abbess.

¹⁹Ibid.

be solved: where to house his ever-growing library, and where he should be buried.

A possible solution had been proposed. Gasquet, the prior, had prepared a place for both his books and for Bishop himself: Downside. The monks would have the use of his books, and a gravesite would be made available. Bishop expressed his gratitude to Dolan, adding that with his "good health and good constitution" along with "congenial work (a great preservative)," he would probably live to old age.

It is not to be expected that others [his Protestant family] could even with good intentions think and act as a Catholic would or would have. It has been a wish long cherished, but a wish I have not dared to hope in, the realisation of which I have not thought could be possible, that I might rest near the sons of St. Benedict and under the shadow of his roof tree. Your letter has given me a sense of comfort, happiness, I can hardly express.²⁰

In addition, Gasquet had asked Dolan to suggest that Bishop might revive an old institution and become a confrater of Downside, which would make official a fraternal relationship between Bishop and the monastery. Bishop was not ready to accept this and wanted more time to consider.²¹ This raises the question whether Gasquet and others knew that Bishop was considering the more radical decision of becoming a monk. To the Anglo-Benedictines, the latter would of mean, of course, that he should be ordained priest and sent to a mission. Joining as a confrater was another thing altogether, leaving his life much as it was, except for the addition of some measure of intimacy with those monks who were already friends.

By April 1886, Bishop had changed his greeting from "Dear Rev.'d Father" to

²⁰Bishop to Dolan, 12 October 1884: BP.

²¹Ibid.

"My Dear Father Gilbert" and the letters portray a move to a closer and more personal relationship. As to Dolan's proper service as a monk, Bishop had no doubts. He stated his mind clearly:

Your place is at Downside with change & variation in a stay of weeks, months, years or what not in a hospitium, with a few religious detached for special literary purposes, here in London. All merely visionary it may be said: true it is a thing not to be spoken, but who can say that it is so wholly visionary that it should not be kept before the mind's eye in coming to a decision where one has to make a choice?²²

Considering that this letter was written the month before Bishop's entry into Downside, it was probably his own "vision" that he harboured for his own future. His enthusiasm is evident in this exclamation: "Once you get Benedictines **started**, friends and helpers will turn up on all sides, among Protestants as well as Catholics. There's (in England) magic in the name yet: ah! only to be worthy of it!"²³

As far as the Benedictines were concerned, his vision was prophetic: not for Dolan, not for himself, but for others. In large measure it would be made concrete by Bishop's inspiration and expertise.

As his plans progressed, Bishop wrote to Dolan that he would like to discuss his thoughts.

Certainly I feel as entering a quite new world where everything is to be learnt, and of which I really know nothing. Though, rightly or wrongly, I don't trouble myself about the matter at all in itself, — if I did reflect on the great things I should simply turn around upon myself with a **quis ego?** & collapse into a helpless mass like a jelly fish on the sea shore; in other words run away and hide myself in some garret & wait

²²Bishop to Dolan, 19 April 1886: BP.

²³Ibid.

for the end. In most great conjunctures of life, the resolution once made, one walks forward automatically, & by a happy dispensation of Providence occupies oneself on the passage with some triviality Though to say the 'truth' I have had, some little time since, my quakings and quaverings, which (as being past falling back on the one or two lines of reflection which are the old familiar support) I now don't mind mentioning. Twice I have written a letter to you and burnt it: — The occasion of these twitterings was I suppose two letters from prior Vaughan, which, though not through what he said, brought upon me the reality, — I should call it the dreadful reality — of the "mission" vow.²⁴

With these thoughts in mind, Edmund Bishop prepared to join the community of St. Gregory's at Downside.

When St. George Mivart, the eminent Catholic biologist who had become his friend²⁵ heard that Bishop had decided to try his vocation as a monk, he wrote to him. Having given Bishop his own and his wife's wishes for blessings and happiness, Mivart continued:

These steps, however, must be experiments. If it turns out you have found your true vocation I shall say well! If, however, it should not turn out, you will, I am sure, be certain I shall also say "well!" and I shall be delighted to welcome you back again as I am convinced you will ever retain that one abiding and sufficient consolation of which we spoke when last time we met.²⁶

This kind letter and the letter written by the Benedictine nun, Mechtildis Pynsent, indicate that both writers were interested in Bishop's welfare. Bishop appreciated their concern and saved only these two letters from this period of his life.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵See below, Part III.

²⁶St. George Mivart to Bishop, 19 May 1886, in SA V, 846: BP.

**Brother Edmund: Bishop at
Downside (1886-1889)**

In 1885, Bishop resigned his post at the Education office, choosing to accept a small pension rather than to work under the new conditions that were offered him. This was followed by a period of reflection about his plans to enter the monastery.

In August 1885 (that fatal day, he later called it),²⁷ Edmund Bishop "resolved to go to Downside." On 20 May 1886, he entered St. Gregory's Monastery as a postulant: Frater Edmundus. He was responding to a call which to him was "to leave the world and abandon all things for Christ."²⁸

When Bishop joined the monks at St. Gregory's, the original name of Downside, he had already reached the height of his profession as liturgist and was an experienced and mature forty-year-old. Although he never suggests a reason why he wanted to become a monk, beyond the call, it could be that he already perceived his status as a layman as a hindrance to working for the Church. As a priest, since this was his intention, he would have had authority to publish on theological subjects. For Bishop, the adjustment to being a beginner in religious life was a trial and test of patience.²⁹ Most of the novices were younger than he was. Many had moved from the school to the monastery and had had little experience in life outside a religious

²⁷Notebook, 1892: BP.

²⁸SA 867, 19 May 1886: BP.

²⁹His opinions and his feelings are recorded in these letters to Gilbert Dolan throughout this period except for the year 1887, and in his diaries, which begin with Volume IV, January 1887 since he burnt the first three in 1902.

community. Bishop poured out his small grievances and his discomforts to Dolan, touched with a sense of humour.³⁰

As a postulant, Bishop was on the periphery of monastic life, although residing in the monastery. His hope was to remain a postulant as long as possible, trusting that the case presented to Rome by the "reforming party" would be decided in their favour, and that he would then be free to remain in the monastery to do intellectual work.³¹ Aidan Gasquet had resigned his position as prior and had gone to recuperate at his mother's house in London, where he wrote. As early as 4 September 1887, a note records the assistance Bishop gave to Gasquet:

I received from Fr. Gasquet the draft of the Introduction to his book; it is but a very elementary draft. . . . But detail apart, the defect that runs through the whole is weakness, nervelessness, want of grip. . . . this introduction is a weak appeal for sentimental regret at the sweeping away of 'the monks of old' & all their works. This will never do.³²

Gasquet's work was important, since it was the first to draw attention to the possible fruits of scholarly pursuits from the Downside community. But it was

³⁰In 1885 Gilbert Dolan was sent to a mission in Liverpool. The two men continued their correspondence. Dolan must have been delighted to receive these letters which are still entertaining and informative. Later Bishop said that only one monk, Ethelbert Horne, helped him to make the adjustment to his new life. Horne was to remain a friend to the end of his life. A letter to Horne, dated 25 April 1912, shows Bishop's deep trust and his affection for the monk.

³¹He recorded a chance meeting with the Father Provincial who promised that they would make the novitiate easy for him, [Bishop to Dolan, 9 Nov 86:BP.] but this did not satisfy Bishop.

³²SA IV, 586: BP.

Bishop's usual careful consideration that made Gasquet's work academically acceptable.³³

Bishop had already decided that his contribution to the Downside project would be as a catalyst:

It is not in me to write books I believe: but I do think I can help yet a way to forming the 'Downside school', in the way of its **spirit**. There's a model in the concrete already before the next comers: but it is really a very difficult thing to be a true sincere & candid historian whilst still having the heart warm in the good cause. All will come in time I believe. But the work is of many & a **common** work, — in one soul & one mind. . . . It does me more good than I can say to find the name of Downside getting known in the proper way; & in such a quiet modest, & properly monastic fashion.³⁴

With regard to his own work, this was prophetic. His vast knowledge would be made available to others, often hidden under their names, which served to protect him from possible censure. On 22 November 1888, Bishop decided to record what he called his "secret archives diaries" after Voltaire's "mémoires secrets."³⁵

Bishop's letters to Dolan at this time refer to his diary as "the record of my living perceptions."³⁶ He was both scribe and historian, and considered himself the

³³Later, the consequences of the withdrawal of Bishop's assistance to Gasquet resulted in the situation described by David Knowles in "Cardinal Gasquet as an Historian," in The Historian and Character and Other Essays (Cambridge University Press, 1963): 240-263.

³⁴Bishop to Dolan, 8 March 1888: BP.

³⁵The "secret archives" begin on page 590, 20 December 1888, Volume IV, and continue for some months after Bishop left Downside in February 1889. Much of volume V is missing.

³⁶Bishop to Dolan, 22 Nov 1899: BP.

most fit to accomplish this task because he was still an "outsider," as he called himself.

In 1888 Rome appointed Clement Fowler as prior of the community. This appointment superseded the usual process of election and so was unacceptable to the group of reformers. To avoid contention in the house, those who were "anti-mission" were sent away to the missions by the new prior — "that cruel sentence" Bishop called it.³⁷

In a letter written to his friend the Abbot of Maredsous, Bishop described his plight:

if I leave here I shall have seen too much of the backstairs of religious orders and of the methods of ecclesiastical management at headquarters even (if I know myself at all) to be able to trust myself to the one or the other again. . . . But I am certainly not in any way disposed to despair: I hope and believe until accomplished facts show that hope or belief is folly.³⁸

Such remarks were usually reserved for Dolan.

In January 1889, Bishop decided he needed a change from Downside and planned to leave for a few months of research in London.³⁹ In his diary he noted the possible consequences of being obliged to leave the monastery:

I must own, looking round, I feel grave, very grave forebodings that the path of the future will be as little settled, my state as little fixed, as in the past. . . . and to be "unstated" is to be maimed & a cripple for life. It is the same old story, the possibility, the prospect of 'usefulness'. I got over the snare, broke it, two and twenty years ago &

³⁷SA IV, 629: BP.

³⁸Bishop to the Abbot of Maredsous, 1 August 1888, not sent: BP.

³⁹SA IV, 683-4: BP.

became a Catholic, thus as it seemed condemning myself to isolation & sterility; 'seemed'? It **was** isolation, & the sterility might have been the same either where. Here is the same strait now, — the same snare seems to be about to present itself. . . . Of course this is a possibility: to shut one's eyes wholly, resolutely, to political surroundings and bury oneself wholly in literary or erudition work, — and I sometimes feel that with the free field, placed in the circumstances the other would spring up, the "work for souls" as they call it.⁴⁰

Bishop he felt he had a problem. While he wanted to become a monk, he did not want to become a parish priest, which meant that under the present system, he had to delay his novitiate until a settlement had been reached that would permit the alternative of scholarly work. To best employ the time while he waited, he sought to begin a new project. But once undertaken, this would mean he would be unavailable to the novitiate for some time, further delaying his full entry into monastic life. He began to worry that if he waited too long, he would be too old.⁴¹

The solution he hit upon was a collaboration with Gasquet, which would involve a shorter time commitment than a personal project.⁴² The publication of Gasquet's Henry VIII and the English Monasteries had brought glory to Downside. Gasquet continued to reside in London where he could use the resources of the British Museum to write a second volume. That was just where Bishop wanted to be.

Meanwhile, Bishop was unwilling to leave his library to the monastery under unsettled conditions, even at the cost of giving up a long cherished wish, "the object I

⁴⁰SA IV, 700, 14 January 89: BP.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid., 704.

have always had in mind in amassing books."⁴³ He had willed them to his brother George. "With my work it is otherwise; that I am willing to throw in thoroughly in faith, because, I suppose, the control over it is complete; so that it is less faith than hope which determines me."⁴⁴

In a touching passage, he sums up the issue:

All I have seen and heard has absolutely deadened in me the least desire to become a monk; I don't say, I don't know in the least, whether that desire will come up again. . . . On the other hand I am as clear as ever I was at any time, that God called me to Downside when I came; of that I feel as convinced as of my own existence, & now I don't think I can ever doubt. As to what He meant me to do—whether to become a monk or not I don't know at all & trust entirely to His Providence about being content to know this—that my heart is as set on serving Downside in any way I am fit for or that comes to me to serve it as ever it was at any time. . . . For after all I do think this that I came to Downside not with the determination to be this or to do that, but just simply in the simple mind to do God's will just as it might come to me. That I really believe was the one thing, the one thought then & has been the one unvarying thought ever since.⁴⁵

Bishop insisted that he was called to the monastery, although he freely admitted that he did not know what he was called to do. This would become more clear to him in the years to come. A diary entry for 12 February shows that Bishop knew the time was near for his departure from Downside.

Until then, I go on, God knows, in suffering, for I do not that which I would. . . . In a few days I hope to be out of it. Meantime as in the past, having recognized as I did years ago when I first came to Downside, the 'populus Dei qui repertus est', I will, though I may not be myself 'servus Dei' I will be the 'servus' of those who would bring

⁴³Ibid., 706.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., 707-8.

back into the venerable English Congregation the life of the 'servus Dei', & so be as long as I can at least 'servus servorum Dei'. . . . 'Deus, conserva hanc voluntatem'.⁴⁶

This was Bishop's testament.

On 17 February, he wrote that his irritation was beginning to get out of control, "shewn by my inability even to copy documents without indignant parentheses."⁴⁷ The historian was observing the postulant with some objectivity. Bishop's dedication to history never took second place to his comfort, whether psychological or physical.

A council had been arranged for 20 February, by which date two more monks who were part of the movement for reform, had been sent out to the missions. By the time the council met, Bishop had already left Downside. That afternoon, he reached London and wrote to Dolan: "I left the house this morning. . . I feel I must put a check on myself for I am in the mood so readily to run into exaggeration." The prior had informed Bishop of the meeting the day before, "with the intimation my case was to come before it. It won't; for there isn't any & ex nihilo nihil fit."⁴⁸ He added that he had not "finally & formally left Downside, — but am like all else connected with the place, pendant."⁴⁹

This condition was temporary. Circumstances changed so that for the rest of

⁴⁶SA V, 865. Feb 12 1889: BP. This is an unconscious pun: the servant of the servants of God is a bishop.

⁴⁷Ibid., 901.

⁴⁸Bishop to Dolan, 20 February 1889: BP.

⁴⁹Ibid.

his life he would remain not pendant, but attached to Downside. He returned on occasion, but never with the intention of becoming a monk.⁵⁰ He was a layman again.

2. Reorientation: 1889-93

The Aftermath

In London, Bishop stayed with his widowed brother, George, and by March he had begun to work with Gasquet at the British Museum. To Butler he wrote: "It is as dry as dust can be; but I feel that steady & regular work of eight hours a day is the greatest help to keep one right & leads one through the dark hours."⁵¹

Meanwhile, Downside had not forgotten Bishop, and a month after his departure the prior wrote to him, asking his intentions and reminding him that should he wish to remain a postulant, "it follows that you must come under some rules here, because the very condition of postulant implies that."⁵²

While Bishop was a man of extreme sensitivity he was also a responsible person; failure to meet the expectations of himself or others "disgusted him," by his

⁵⁰As for Downside itself, in 1934, Knowles would write: "All who lived through that period of stress, or who have studied it from afar, will readily admit that had the struggle not been waged—or had it proved unsuccessful—the Downside that we have known in the last thirty years could never have been. David Knowles, "Abbot Butler: A Memoir," Downside Review 52 (1934): 383-4. The final settlement did not come about until 1900, ending twenty years of controversy. Details of Congregational politics of the time can be found in Knowles' memoir of Butler, pages 347-440.

⁵¹Bishop to Cuthbert Butler, 15 March 1889: BP.

⁵²Clement Fowler to Bishop, 18 March 1889: BP.

own admission.⁵³ His reply assured the prior that he had made up his mind and had other plans:

I think it undesirable (for reasons I have already explained to you) that I should remain as a postulant. As regards the position of *commensalis* it may suffice to say that after looking around I find there is abundant occupation for some time to come in conjunction with Fr. Gasquet. I embrace the opportunity which thus comes to hand the more readily since whilst it gives me regular & congenial work, it is work which keeps me in connection with Downside, from which I trust I may not be ultimately severed.

In these circumstances I should be glad if you would allow my books to remain where they are until it can be seen whether their present place is to be their ultimate resting place.⁵⁴

Once again, he shows concern for his library. Yet his use of "resting place" evokes more the image of a grave than the bestowal of a gift. But this was not a threat. Rather, his books were simply an extension of himself: the material aspect of his hopes and dreams for the future. He wrote to Butler that he missed his books:

I look round the walls, all bare, though I mark the place where this and this and this used to stand. It sounds very ridiculous, does it not, with all the museum library at command to sigh after old friends, I mean old books, and to think that—though indeed I used to envy the possession of this or that which I had not & perhaps never could hope to have, yet that—the little collection around my room, was one of the neatest, richest in its way, in its own particular line, for its own particular work a day purpose that I have come across.⁵⁵

⁵³Bishop to Dolan, 11 March 1889: BP.

⁵⁴Bishop to Fowler, 19 March 1889: BP.

⁵⁵Bishop to Butler, 24 March 1889: BP.

Getting back to work in his profession, proved to be more difficult than he had expected:

There comes upon me the sense of "three lost years"; of course it isn't, but the effect is the same as if it were. And the feeling that there is not so much time left now in which "to work". But worse than all is the sense that I've lost the old threads, and I am appalled at the naked ignorance in which I stand, — the patiently accumulated stores of years seem gone, and I stand as though I knew nothing about anything, and in talking to Fr. Gasquet for instance about these things I seemed once to know, there is not nothing coherent, mere stammering & stuttering.⁵⁶

Bishop was clearly under stress. While the readjustment was difficult, he knew that he would regain what he had lost. "But there is such a lot to do to get one's mere apparatus — the mere bagman's learning — about one again."⁵⁷ By 7 April 1889, he had become much more hopeful, writing that work was his salvation and he did not know what he would do without it. "And do you know really I am beginning to feel some of the old rapidity, sleight of hand and quickness of head coming back again: — not all at once or regularly at call but something for assurance it is not all dead."⁵⁸ He was "getting to feel something of a resurrection."⁵⁹

However he was soon depressed again:

The past & the future throw me into such pain and sorrow that I do not know what to do. As time goes on instead of "getting 'the better" of the past, it gets worse and worse. The old self, or rather anything there was that made it useful, or tolerable or acceptable to others, the liveableness, has been ruined, killed, murdered, — and I feel inclined

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Bishop to Dolan, 7 April 1889: BP.

⁵⁹Bishop to Dolan, 7 April 1889: BP.

only to run away into the corner like some wounded animal & hide myself. To get lost in work is the only soother.⁶⁰

These are the words of a despairing man. His work with Gasquet in the daytime made life endurable, but despite the company of family members, his evenings were unhappy. Feelings of isolation made him relive again and again the events that had led to his leaving the monastery. He confessed to Dolan, that he was getting the "blacks, not the blues."⁶¹

In a grim letter in June, addressed to Dolan but never sent, he admitted that he should have listened to friends who had told him not to go to Downside. He had acted "like a fool," and had no intention of returning there. He refused to live there as a boarder, since that was not the reason he had left his place and work. What he had wanted was to become a monk. But he no longer had that intention, hope or desire.⁶² It is significant that although he refrained from sending this letter, he preserved it.

Despite his disappointment, he continued adding to the "archives," wondering "whether others will ever see all the interest in these Annales that I do? But certainly they ought to give encouragement not to despair even in the most desperate straits."⁶³ Meanwhile, the "archives" offered him, "an inestimable safety valve. Not that I have

⁶⁰Bishop to Dolan, 17 April 1889: BP.

⁶¹Bishop to Dolan, 26 April 1889: BP.

⁶²Bishop to Dolan, June 1889, not sent: BP.

⁶³Bishop to Dolan, 10 July 1889: BP. Even after a hundred years, this reader finds them fascinating.

let them degenerate into a personal diary"⁶⁴ By October 1889, he was still suffering from his departure from Downside. He complained of the physical effects of "suppressed indignation,"⁶⁵ and in December admitted that he was still not rid of the root of bitterness.⁶⁶

Bishop found solace in his work and he and Gasquet were making progress on their book. Bishop told Dolan the advantages of working together, "common labour" as he called it. The mutual encouragement and "the great advantage of mutual suggestion, comparison of ideas, the possibility of discussing & sifting out questions between ourselves, the help of mutual criticism;" and above all, "the advantage of combined knowledge, which gives us available at once a range which would be extremely difficult to find in one man," eased the burden of the project.⁶⁷ As usual, Bishop drew the parallel between this work and "the power of united labour as the great power of a monastic community."⁶⁸ Bishop and Gasquet had begun their rough draft and he outlined his hopes to Dolan: "I work, work, work, ever in the hope of the little house in London and the little band of loyal workers on the old Benedictine lines—the truth, the truth, the truth, only & ever the truth."⁶⁹

⁶⁴Bishop to Dolan, 22 July 1889: BP.

⁶⁵Bishop to Dolan, 29 October 1889: BP.

⁶⁶Bishop to Dolan, 22 December 1889: BP.

⁶⁷Bishop to Dolan, 4 December 1889: BP.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Bishop to Dolan, 15 December 1889: BP.

In the midst of his pain and isolation, Bishop clung to his original vision of a Benedictine Institute. A life filled with work kept the dream alive, and kept him from being consumed with despair. In the next decade his work would bear fruit and his dreams would become reality.

Catharsis

Edmund Bishop's depression persisted for several years.⁷⁰ He added new constraints to the silence he had imposed on himself in the 1870s. Prior Fowler had reprimanded him for his role as "go-between" among the Downside reformers, leaving him with a deep sense of shame. Bishop felt he had compromised himself and felt guilty. This judgement was almost unbearable; he thought his reputation would be damaged as a result. He wrote that he needed a change of scene or he would break down, and that he had to have work to do.⁷¹ He decided to continue working with Gasquet, and confessed to having "rather overstrung nerves" and consequently wanting to "get into a monastery again for a time."⁷² In April, Bishop wrote that, left to himself, he would probably have returned to Downside. The problem was that the prior seemed to have only "positive contentment" when Bishop was away from the

⁷⁰Between 1890-93 Bishop wrote more than eighty letters to Gilbert Dolan. They provided solace, an outlet for his feelings, and a place to voice his enduring hope which was still "to see arise a new school adopting Benedictine (not Guérangerian) methods of controversy." Bishop to Dolan, 15 February 1890: BP.

⁷¹Bishop to Dolan, 27 March 1890: BP.

⁷²Ibid.

monastery.⁷³

The monastery he chose instead of Downside was Maredsous in Belgium where he was already known. There he stayed from 15 May 1890 until October. From Maredsous, Bishop encouraged Dolan to be patient concerning the future of Downside. At times like this, he wrote, one falls back on the plain simple things. "Faith in God, trust in His Fatherly care, come what will." As for himself, any work Bishop was doing now:

must be in connection with a community or nothing at all. I don't think there is the least chance of my ever being a monk now; if for no other reason, my head would not bear it. It would still have stood it I think four years ago; but these last four years have made all the difference. But perhaps no community or superior will suffer an unclassed and defrocked person. If so, — very well, then I must, & will, "Shift for myself"; and, being reduced, shall feel clear to do so.⁷⁴

He used harsh words indeed to describe himself. No longer employed in the Education Office and disappointed by Downside, he counted himself "unclassed and defrocked." This, and the recent breakup of the family home, had left him without a clear role in society and thus lacking in self-worth. He referred to himself as "an odd three cornered piece of furniture."⁷⁵

⁷³Bishop to Dolan, 2 April 1890: BP.

⁷⁴Bishop to Dolan, 1 July 90: BP.

⁷⁵Bishop to Dolan, 18 September 90: BP.

Back in England

On 14 October 1890, Bishop returned to England and his "London garret" home on Egbert Street.⁷⁶ He had planned a visit to Downside at the end of the month. He wanted to bring his "secret archives" up to date, and advised Dolan to "get all the documents you can."⁷⁷ As an archivist, he was as tenacious, opportunistic and as bold as always. His self-imposed exile had come to an end.

The visit to Downside was an unqualified success. Bishop found it to be "as it was of old, and no place like it," despite its shortcomings in comparison with Maredsous. "One feels somehow Downside is **something**, and one gets carried away, and one sings aloud, and one feels, 'This is worth working for' – and may our Lord make the future we desire."⁷⁸ He recalled that it was "very pleasant" to be able to help some of the monks – "in the way of talking only, words, words, and lighten (as it did for one or two or so) the momentary trouble of feeling." It is only these encounters, and "not the books and MSS. and grubbery that really keep me alive; it is the **other** thing I really prize and care for, and live in."⁷⁹ Bishop found that books and scholarship were no substitute for companionship.

In the last week of November, the Tablet published the papal Bull on religious orders: Religiosus ordo. Edmund Bishop's reaction was immediate and strong. On

⁷⁶Bishop was living in the home of an old family servant who knew his "ways." Bishop to Dolan, 18 May 90: BP.

⁷⁷Bishop to Dolan, 12 October 90: BP.

⁷⁸Bishop to Dolan, first week of November, undated: BP.

⁷⁹Bishop to Dolan, [2 November 1890]: BP.

27 November, he wrote to Dolan concerning the Bull and what he saw would be its consequences. Noting that the Bull was written by Leo XIII himself, he perceived it to constitute "the most utter pulverization and smashing of the ancient system," the condemnation of anyone who should protest, and the establishment of a new system.⁸⁰ Two days later Bishop wrote once again, ending with this encouragement: "Don't make a mistake over the absence of things from the Bull. See what is in it! — tremendous weapons. Words emphatic enough to close the mouths of any numbers of enemies."⁸¹ The papal Bull was a victory for the Downside reformers. Leo XIII ordered the English Benedictine Congregation to reform their order on the lines of the programme of the Downside reformers.

Bishop's enthusiasm would soon pass. In spite of the Bull, the new year brought no settlement to Downside, and no agreement in Anglo-Benedictine affairs. Bishop, in the Swiss countryside with his sister Ada, wrote that his resentment was growing deeper as time passed. He was filled with "impotent rage" at the thought that it was too late to save Downside from the rift. "How my gorge rises at these things and people. . . . There: I can't write more now — Bile."⁸² Away from like-minded friends, he was full of anger and could only write letters. A January letter in part explains his feeling of impotence: he couldn't continue the "secret archives" because he had no new information. Continuity was always important to Bishop; his archives

⁸⁰Bishop to Dolan, 27 November 1890: BP.

⁸¹Bishop to Dolan, 29 November 1890: BP.

⁸²Bishop to Dolan, 6 January 1891: BP.

were threatened and he wanted Dolan to help him.⁸³

On 11 February 1891, he clearly defined his position. "I never get over the personal catastrophe of my own life." His work was valuable, and kept him busy.

But through it all he had to face the "plain fact" that he could:

never be incorporated into the body of St. Gregory's so to speak, form a recognized member of it so to speak, with rights and privileges as well as onera and duties—it is quite impossible. . . . The best promise for any future utility is to look facts straight in the face and recognize frankly the conditions and limitations of such possible future utility.⁸⁴

He was not obsessed with Downside, but without a fixed address or official employment, he belonged nowhere. Even Downside could not offer him "incorporation." But despite his disappointment and depression, Bishop maintained his generosity of spirit. He gave a friend in "much tribulation" hours of his time over two days so the friend could talk about his troubles. He went to visit his sister Ada and had:

a week of bothers, not mine but as good as mine. When these things turn up I can do one of two things: either (1) not trouble myself at all about them but shut the door or (2) live in them quite until they are fought through. The second is the only line for some; I take it and then get worn out for the time.⁸⁵

An interval of searching at the British Museum for information for a friend had helped, he wrote: "to get back on 'my own centre' again."⁸⁶

⁸³Bishop to Dolan, 23 January 1891: BP.

⁸⁴Bishop to Dolan, 11 February 1891: BP.

⁸⁵Bishop to Dolan, 16 August 1891: BP.

⁸⁶Ibid.

A letter from late August contains what might be called a statement of principle. Monks in the reform party were becoming impatient for a settlement. Bishop affirmed that should they have to leave Downside, he would follow.

Work with Father Gasquet. Oh yes! very useful. But I have never allowed in my mind that idea to dominate the primitive one, — or "literary work's utility" to overshadow the more important one of the revival of English Benedictine life. To be a mere testimony of sympathy for this latter seems to me a work higher and better, or dearer, than any possible sort of "success" in the other line.⁸⁷

Again, he insisted that above all else, hope for "revival" was paramount: the hope born even before he went to Downside that first time in 1883.

In December 1891, Bishop reported that he had been to Beuron where, as at Maredsous, "there is a kindness for me which makes me almost ashamed."⁸⁸

Apparently he had difficulty in accepting the kindness so freely given him as a mark of love and respect, both as a person and as a scholar. Upon his return to work at the Museum Bishop found "a sort of support" in the routine of work. But in the evenings, he had no such support, and was "under the necessity of supplying out of my own interior stores, without the help of exterior — what shall I say? — gratulation?, the fuel to keep my own little fire alive."⁸⁹ This letter ended as so many did with hope deferred, but on an optimistic note nonetheless.

⁸⁷Bishop to Dolan, 26 August 1891: BP.

⁸⁸Bishop to Dolan, 21 December 1891: BP.

⁸⁹Ibid.

Outside the Benedictine "body" there is a deepening, growing conviction on all sides, among clergy, laity, learned and unlearned, that there is a great work to be done in England and that the **Benedictines** are the people to do it. This surely is a call to the faith, the generosity, of all of you. And this thought may give you hope that if you should fail in the work you have so persistently laboured in, the end you have so patiently pursued, it is only because there is another, a more real, a better work, for you to do. . . . The condition, though, seems to be that first the Downside drama must be played out to the end.⁹⁰

Recovery

In January 1892, Edmund Bishop fell ill with influenza and was expected to die. He recovered, however, although weakened and with a heart condition that was to affect him for the rest of his life. On 29 February Bishop recorded in his diary that while ill, he ordered two of his diaries to be burned – the first covering his life from age twenty-one to thirty-eight and the second spanning the years between his first visit to Downside and his decision to enter the monastery.

They were intimate diaries. A tremendous wrench it seemed, to part with them, – filled as they were with so much of hope, pain, sorrow, common-place, triviality, small calculations, projects and the record of how little was actually realized. It was my past life that I caused to be burnt. The extremity, the uncertainty, of a bed of sickness gave the will to have it done.⁹¹

His feeling of loss was quite understandable, and certainly not out of the ordinary under the circumstances.

The affection in which Bishop was held by his friends evoked solicitous letters

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹The source of this comment is a worn notebook with cut pages, beginning 10 May 1890: BP.

as to his health and in rejoicing at his recovery. Cuthbert Butler, addressing him as "Dear Brother Edmund," wrote: "I cannot attempt to describe nor is there any need, the manifold feelings of that time, or the joy and thankfulness with which I welcomed the good news about you."⁹²

In March, Bishop made plans to live with his widowed sister Ada and her daughter in Lewes, this despite his worrying about "sinking into provincialism" and his being restricted to his own library. This decision was for Ada's sake and for the sake of his own health.⁹³

Yes, the shadow of regret does come over me that the medicine did not come in time to prevent the breakdown. As it was, it wasn't illness, it wasn't overwork, but the A-B.C. broke my heart: (old juggernaut hasn't crunched it yet). — cracked it you know, but we'll tie it up and we'll still work it for something. . . . Meanwhile we have not seen Downside set on its legs; but I do feel very hopeful.⁹⁴

He was torn between duty and hope for a dream realized: if Downside established a London house for study at the museum, his participation would be limited to visits since he could not leave Ada. If he did leave her, he would deserve retribution.⁹⁵ This feeling of duty would be overruled by the next month. In a letter rewritten four times, Bishop told Dolan, with increasing vigour in each draft: "My present condition is frankly, to me, **single mission, exile**; my heart, my mind, my intention has not changed one jot. In my present condition I am perfectly unhappy."

⁹²Butler to Bishop, 4 February 1892: BP.

⁹³Bishop to Dolan, 7 March 1892: BP.

⁹⁴Bishop to Dolan, 29 March 1892: BP.

⁹⁵Ibid.

He advised Dolan that while he could no longer be a monk, until the election of a new prior, he would continue to hope that it would be possible for him to be part of Downside. Perhaps he could be confrater, but only if he were asked to do so: "I feel I cannot move unless thus **called**: but called, I come gladly and leave things gladly too." Above all, he wished to "serve the cause I love." If the results of the election of the new prior at Downside made this impossible, then he and the others, whom he called "the monastics," would have to accept their assignment as mission priests and find some contentment in mission work⁹⁶

Bishop's hope was renewed when he heard that Gasquet and Dolan had been sent to the mission church of Dulwich, where there was a new foundation for a small house of study. Bishop wrote: "there is cause for rejoicing. . . . This is the thing I have been waiting for." Still, he decided to await a change of superior at Downside:

If I am not fit to be admitted to help in this work under the present régime, if I am not a proper person to enter into such intimate relation with your familia, as it is, there is something in me that tells me I must decline to come in by personal sufferance and favour at some possible future. Either what I have to bring (such as it is) should be worth the having, even to the perceptions and appreciations of Fr. Fr. Snow, Fowler etc. [sic], or else my position admitted later by favour must be a false one, to say nothing of an intolerable one.⁹⁷

These were brave words for a proud man to commit to paper. Four days later, he decided to leave Lewes, no matter what.

But I am pretty well resolved in my mind that, come what may, I intend to get into a religious house again; I need the quiet, regularity,

⁹⁶Bishop to Dolan, 18 May 1892: BP.

⁹⁷Bishop to Dolan, 26 June 1892: BP.

the concentrated life, the fixed times for religious duties, the atmosphere: with that, and some reasonable condescension to my weakness, I shall I believe, do well, live long, and do some work, or help others do some. And Downside I turn to for many reasons, among the rest that it is the plough to which I put my hand, and the English tenacity makes me want to keep my hand **there**, not let go unless I must.⁹⁸

By September, he would be back at the monastery.

The Return to Downside

In an undated diary entry, probably written in 1892, Bishop wrote that he had not been two weeks in Lewes before he realized the "utter untenableness of the situation."⁹⁹ The death of his sister's husband, Robert Crosskey, had left her in financial difficulties which "Ned," as she called Edmund, took on as his own. In late summer, Cuthbert Butler visited him. Because of the unsettled situation at Downside, the monk was on the point of leaving Downside for another monastery. Bishop wrote: "I arranged if he would wait a year I would go back to Downside and begin some work with him."¹⁰⁰

Bishop was already thinking of returning to Downside and Butler's need for help with his work provided a good reason to do so. Bishop's return was preceded by a series of events at Downside and letters from and to friends.

⁹⁸Bishop to Dolan, 30 June 1892: BP.

⁹⁹BB, worn, with pages falling out, unpaginated: BP.

¹⁰⁰Ibid. This work was the beginning of Butler's study of Paliadius which appeared in two parts in 1898 and 1902 under the title, Historica Lausiaca of Paliadius. It was published by Cambridge University Press, and the first part served as Butler's dissertation for his Bachelor's degree.

John Morrall, a monk at Downside, wrote to Bishop proposing his return there.

I wanted to ascertain what were your sentiments as to retiring here to live quietly among your books removed from all worry and anxiety, doing what you liked, observing regularity as far as you could and please, within immediate reach of all spiritual help, as far as please God, if and when the end should come. As to ourselves we want you, and sadly (as it seems to me) as guardian and director of the library.¹⁰¹

This kind letter, while welcoming and showing concern, suggests also that Downside would be a good place to wait quietly for death. Bishop took nearly a month to reply, then answered that he would to return to Downside as commensalis if it could be "properly arranged."¹⁰² The next day, on 16 August 1892, he wrote to Gilbert Dolan, with the news: he had "made up his mind to wish to go back to Downside as it is." But he was concerned that idea would not find favour with the "authorities."¹⁰³

Soon after, Bishop received a letter from Prior Clement Fowler, approving of Morrall's initiative, yet speaking plainly about the situation.

I am aware that several persons have made you a confidant upon our Congregational affairs, and have desired that you should take part. I am sure you will not be offended at my commenting upon this. I do not blame you, but I think it hardly the right thing for the subjects of any corporation, much less for those of a religious body to deal with externs in the way our affairs have been dealt with.

I have no occasion to object to your living here, and I should be very pleased to welcome you among us; but I think you will see how delicate a matter it is to have anything to do with debateable points in a

¹⁰¹John Morrall to Bishop, 19 July 1892: BP.

¹⁰²Bishop to Morrall, 15 Aug 1892: BP.

¹⁰³Bishop to Dolan, 16 August 1892: BP.

body of which you are not a member, and which points seem still subjudice.¹⁰⁴

The letter contains a sharp reprimand. Yet it is, under the circumstances, a gracious invitation, considering that Fowler knew full well that the reformers had one great desire—that he should voluntarily resign his position. Bishop's reply assured Fowler that he appreciated the prior's forthright admonition.

To speak plainly: I should not have answered Fr. Morrall's present letter as I have done unless I had felt some confidence that I should be able to hold my tongue on matters still remaining under debate in your body. I am not good at resolutions; but that is my state of mind; and it is backed up by a very personal experience.¹⁰⁵

Bishop ended with words of affection for Downside and his desire to be of service as circumstances might permit.¹⁰⁶

Bishop's friends had their own opinions of his plans to return to Downside. He had sworn Dolan to secrecy while he was working things out for himself. Butler approved of his decision.¹⁰⁷ Edmund Ford, from his mission at Beccles, took it as a "sign of a new dawn—and certainly an indication" of his improved health.¹⁰⁸ Only Everard Green tried dissuade: "I `dread' your living at Downside again. The place is too large, too cold, and there are too many people and **please please** do not try it, as

¹⁰⁴John Clement Fowler to Bishop, 26 August 1892: BP.

¹⁰⁵Bishop to Fowler, 27 August 1892, draft copy: BP.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

¹⁰⁷Butler to Bishop, 29 August 1892: BP.

¹⁰⁸Edmund Ford to Bishop, 17 September 1892: BP.

it must end in failure it seems to me."¹⁰⁹ Green's concern for Bishop's welfare led him to offer Bishop help for: "a few comforts in life, as your present life makes me sad, **very sad**. It appears that he knew Bishop was short of money."¹¹⁰

Cuthbert Butler wrote to Bishop on 8 September, describing changes at Downside. He proposed that they work together so that Butler could gain "invaluable training in historical method, knowledge of books and of facts," all leading towards the preparation of a history of the Order.¹¹¹ Bishop couldn't resist the offer. Here was the beginning of hopes fulfilled.

On 16 October 1892 Edmund Bishop returned Downside monastery, no longer a postulant, but a commensalis.¹¹² After Everard Green had visited Downside in early November 1892, he wrote that he had seen Bishop happy and at home. "Laus Deo for this."¹¹³ Bishop stayed at Downside fifteen months, until January 1894, at which time he moved to London to live with Francis Aidan Gasquet and others.

¹⁰⁹Everard Green to Bishop, 20 Sept 1892: BP.

¹¹⁰Green to Bishop, 4 July 1891: BP.

¹¹¹Butler to Bishop, 8 September 1892: BP.

¹¹²On 2 October 1892, Prior Fowler wrote to inform Bishop that all the formalities had been completed for Bishop's return to the monastery as commensalis. His monthly payments of £4.10.0 would include board, lodging, fire, light, attendance and washing. Carriage and postage would be his own responsibility. [BP.]

¹¹³Bishop to Green, All Soul's [2 November] 1892: BP.

3. Opus and "Opuscula"

The Fruit of Joint Labour

Although Bishop poured out his despondency and desolation to Gilbert Dolan, he also led a productive life as a scholar, and as a friend to fellow scholars. His closest collaborator was Francis Aidan Gasquet, with whom Bishop would co-author articles, write sermons and share his prodigious scholarship.

Bishop was writing Edward the Sixth and the Book of Common Prayer (1890)¹¹⁴ with Gasquet, when he wrote Dolan:

And this I know the more, since though quite aware I am half author, the credit of the work will be, and I desire it should be Fr. Gasquet's own. I desire it to be, as I have often said, but one of the stones thrown in at the foundation of the edifice; covered and out of sight it still has its use and does its work.¹¹⁵

But when reviews ignoring or questioning Bishop's contribution to the work were published, Bishop became uncharacteristically indignant. Once his name was printed on the title page, his outlook changed. As long as his work had been incorporated under someone else's name, he made no claim for credit. When he was listed as author, however, he resented being ignored.

He recorded his feelings in the draft of a letter which he wrote to Gasquet on 9

¹¹⁴Credit for authorship was written as follows: "by the Rev. F. A. Gasquet, O.S.B., and Mr. Edmund Bishop." (London: Hodges, 1890.) A second edition appeared in 1891 and it was partially reprinted in 1928 by Gasquet. For an account of the argument of the book, see Leslie Shane, Cardinal Gasquet: A Memoir (London: Burns Oates, 1953): 40

¹¹⁵Bishop to Dolan, 27 March 1890: BP.

January 1891.¹¹⁶ The letter clearly shows that Bishop changed his mind detailing how the two men had collaborated together. Bishop wrote the letter to preserve both the friendship and the working partnership; he knew tension would have arisen between them were the issue not addressed. Abercrombie writes that Gasquet had already written to the Spectator, "with all the conspicuous candour of his nature. By 14 January, Bishop was fain to apologize for the length, and especially for the needlessness, of his letter of 9 January."¹¹⁷ Bishop's concern illustrates the strength of his friendship with Gasquet.

J. Wickham Legg, an eminent Anglican liturgist who held Bishop in great respect, wrote to Everard Green that his review of their book had been changed by the editor, adding: "The only thing in my review that I look back upon with pleasure is my bringing out of Bishop's name, whom everybody else seems to have determined to pass by in a conspiracy of silence."¹¹⁸

Bishop's public response came in an article in the Downside Review.¹¹⁹ The reviews had mainly stated that the book avoided doctrinal differences and so was "purely historical." Reading the critiques, one feels Bishop's wrath at being ignored as co-author, was justified. Of the nineteen reviews Bishop mentioned, only four

¹¹⁶The text is partially reprinted in Abercrombie, Life, 166.

¹¹⁷Abercrombie, Life, 166.

¹¹⁸J. Wickham Legg to Green, 26 January 1891: BP.

¹¹⁹"A Review of Reviews," DSR X: 56-63, in E.B. Tracts 187, "Opuscula" II: BP. A marginal note by Bishop states that while the article was introduced by the editor, Leo Almond, Bishop himself wrote the rest, beginning with the end of the first paragraph: "and what we purpose to do is this—to review the reviews."

spoke of "the authors." Fifteen cited Gasquet as sole author, ignoring Bishop completely and attributing to Gasquet those very gifts of insight and erudition that rightly belonged to Bishop. The impact of this incident had a lasting effect on Bishop.¹²⁰ Reviewers had ignored Bishop because Gasquet, at the time, was a celebrated author, having two volumes on Henry VIII and the English Monasteries (1888 and 1889) in print. Both works became best-sellers, their popularity lasting for more than a decade.¹²¹ Gasquet was riding the crest of popularity, and few people in England had heard of Edmund Bishop.¹²²

¹²⁰E.B. Tracts 189, "Opuscula" IV: BP. Entry in February 1900, "From a catalogue of Thomas Baker, the ecclesiastical bookstore of Soho Square." An advertisement for the book included six brief statements about the value of the book, and beside it, Bishop wrote, "These reviews are all Protestant--not one Catholic!" Again, a slip of paper from the Guardian 3 March 1909: "Dom Gasquet and Mr. Edmund Bishop, in their invaluable 'Edward VI and the Book of Common Prayer,' give a . . ." [sic]: just that, nearly twenty years later.

¹²¹Knowles, "Cardinal Gasquet as Historian": 246. Knowles suggests that Bishop probably helped Gasquet with this project.

¹²²A draft copy of Bishop's letter to Gasquet describes their collaboration: "Our method of working—viz. by constant conferences day by day on the materials the special working over of which we divided between us, the consequent continual mutual criticism & thus slow maturing of view and opinion over the whole ground and all its details, the check we constantly exercised over one another by the particular method adopted in the composition of the work, gives the book a value of its own. We have been neither of us the shadow of the other: but have brought to bear on every sentence, every statement, an independent judgement; so that the work is really the consentient outcome of the labour of two distinct investigators. Bishop to Gasquet, 9 January 1891, draft copy: BP.

Colleagues

Bishop's colleagues in liturgical studies were located in both in England and on the Continent, and his correspondence attests to the extent of his professional influence. Letters to Gilbert Dolan, Francis Aidan Gasquet, and Everard Green were the special conduits through which Bishop shared his professional life and much of himself. He loved both Dolan and Gasquet. Over the years, his increasing affection for Green developed into deep fondness.

Gilbert Dolan and F.A. Gasquet

When Gilbert Dolan's spirit seemed to flag, in the course of his research at the British Museum, Bishop wrote to him, intending to give him the inspiration Dolan needed to continue. He conceded the drudgery of the work and the weariness that resulted, but reminded him that they worked, not for personal advancement, but for a common cause: "I **know** what use, what powerful influence, sound, solid, steady studies will be, must be, for the spirit and future of our 'family.' Whatever be the future, this is the sacrifice I **now** make for that future."¹²³ These words came from Bishop's heart, reflecting the régime that he himself followed faithfully.

Three letters from Bishop to Gasquet¹²⁴ show that Bishop consistently supplied Gasquet information and outlined articles that he could finish writing on his own. Bishop appreciated Gasquet's use of the material that Bishop supplied. He also knew

¹²³Bishop to Dolan, 18 October 1892: BP.

¹²⁴10 April 1892, 4 October 1892, 10 November 1892.

that the fulfilment of his long-cherished hope for a Benedictine house of study in London depended on Gasquet.

In January 1893 Gasquet wrote to Bishop outlining a plan for financing a new house of study in London.¹²⁵ This project became a reality in September 1893 when a small group of Benedictines moved into 4 Great Ormond Street. The house was within walking distance of the British Museum and was altogether suitable. Bishop left Downside to join Gasquet and Dolan there in January 1894. He no longer had to write to Dolan to air his feelings: they lived in the same house.

Swithbert Bäumer

Beginning in 1889, Bishop corresponded and worked with Swithbert Bäumer, a German Benedictine at Beuron monastery. This continued until Bäumer's death in August 1894. The last planned collaboration — "the early history of the Roman or rather Western, liturgy,"¹²⁶ — had received the blessing of the Pope,¹²⁷ but was never completed. Bäumer's work required much revision and Bishop was happy to help. To Bishop, Bäumer wrote:

I eat and gather together like a hamster and then suffer from 'indigestion of mind.' You then with your English good sense and with your clearness of mind and logical consequence and keenness have mercy on

¹²⁵Francis Aiden Gasquet to Bishop, 2 January 1893: BP.

¹²⁶Bishop in "EB Tracts 71 Varia."

¹²⁷Swithbert Bäumer to Bishop, 18 June 1894: BP.

me, and help me to get out of the difficulty.¹²⁸

Bäumer's letters show his great respect for Bishop's erudition and are full of his limitless thanks. He also explained that the arch-abbot had modified Bäumer's ebullient and deep expression of gratitude in his publications, with the excuse that Germans would not understand it.¹²⁹

One of Bäumer's publications was an article on the Gelasian Sacramentary, for which Bishop had provided assistance. Bishop wrote a review of the article and used the occasion to criticize further Duchesne's Origins of Christian Worship, which he summed up as "a book which, though professing to be a work of popularisation, can only be used as it should be by those best able to form an opinion for themselves"¹³⁰ This statement encapsulates Bishop's negative opinion of Duchesne's work that he would continue to air in more explicit terms.

Cuthbert Butler

Bishop's fifteen-month hiatus at Downside meant he played a great part in Butler's formation as a skilled and informed scholar. When Edmund Ford became Prior of Downside in July 1894, he sent Cuthbert Butler to Great Ormond Street to join Gasquet, Dolan and Bishop. Butler represented progeny for the Downside house

¹²⁸Bäumer to Bishop, 6 May 1894: BP.

¹²⁹Bäumer to Bishop, 4 December 1892. See also EB Tracts 189 vol. IV, for Bishop's record of the incident.

¹³⁰Edmund Bishop, "The Earliest Roman Mass-Book." Dublin Review 4th series, 12 (October 1894): 245-278, 276-277.

of studies – the first of the younger generation of scholars and the hope of continuity. Bishop's satisfaction with his student is evident in comments made to Butler that reaffirmed that the work they were doing was a "real apostolate: as real in its way as working in the slums." He recalled the hardships of the years past, adding: "but when we are all together in regular order, I think you'll find Gt. Ormond Street not at all too intolerable; and we'll not be too grizzly a community!"¹³¹ Bishop had high hopes for the future, and a camaraderie had developed between the two men.

In 1895, Bishop wrote to Butler from Rome, this prophetic observation:

Rome is the Pope. . . . and it seems likely as time goes on that the fact will accentuate itself more and more. One appreciates so much Newman's words as to the malaria mists at the foot of Peter's rock and the clear serene air at the summit – as to the way in which people give themselves out as the interpreters of the "mind" of the Holy See, whilst really foisting their own personal will, their own spurious inventions, on the ignoscent crowd. As usual, in my solitary silent corner, verities have pierced; it is very marvellous: but then it's all in that story of Elijah or Elisha (in Biblical matters I've not got over my childish Protestant bible reading – Catholics have the names differently) with the rushing wind and the turmoil and various things and then – the real voice of Eternal Truth – the still small voice – the rest all human. One's heart grows very sick in the midst of it all; but I thank God too for that experience; one gets to feel deeper and deeper, maybe, confirmed in a few old, familiar, simple, so simple notions.¹³²

Away from England, Bishop seemed to have a more objective outlook, and once again expressed his longing for Downside. A few weeks later, Bishop received a letter from Butler announcing his "retirement" from the London house of study. Bishop replied to the news that must have shaken him a great deal:

¹³¹EB:CB 30 [? September] 1894.

¹³²Bishop to Butler, 9 March 1895: BP.

It did not require much consideration on my part — only the speedy application of certain very fixed ideas in my mind, some, or indeed all, of which I have repeated over and over again to you; though as they are for my own help and said for myself I don't suppose you noticed them much. They were all ready to hand however I am happy to say; and in time of need, happier still, I found the application of what I had endeavoured to school myself in, easy. So I came to an end of thinking soon: and having other things requiring all the attention I could give, and such wits and strength as I still have I dismissed the matter from my mind. Now that the business is over I suppose it is a duty to write you and say a few words on the subject.¹³³

Bishop wrote that he could, "in certain circumstances, fall into indifference that is nothing less than stony," and the corresponding "altogether undue sensitivity"¹³⁴ Despite his stoic demeanour, Bishop did allow some disappointment to creep into his letter. Butler's absence would hurt, but Bishop believed that the project would still succeed. Should it fail, he could "find much of comfort and consolation in the past (that is, present justification of the past), that — not merely I decline to allow my serenity and contentment to be disturbed by failure — they simply are not."¹³⁵ In closing, Bishop wrote that he could not pretend that Butler's withdrawal would not affect his own future. But he chose not to think about it, "being content to be content **with the past**: the future must shape itself."¹³⁶

If Bishop felt abandoned by his star pupil, he tried his best to accept the news calmly. The shape of the future was soon evident in any case — and completely

¹³³Bishop to Butler, from Rome, Easter Sunday, 24 April 1895: BP.

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Ibid.

unexpected. Rome lifted the restriction against English Catholics attending Oxford and Cambridge in April 1895, providing that precautions were taken, with a view to "removing the danger of perversion."¹³⁷ Ford, Prior of Downside, had decided to open a house of studies at Cambridge, establishing Benet House in 1896, with Cuthbert Butler as head.¹³⁸ In 1898, Bishop wrote an article for the Downside Review entitled "Our Work at Cambridge."¹³⁹ Two Benedictines, Cuthbert Butler and Arthur Kuypers, had earned their BA degrees, "the first occasion and the second since the final schism on which a Catholic ecclesiastic—a Catholic born—has gained a degree at one of the ancient Universities."¹⁴⁰ Bishop explained how Kuypers' use of the collections at Great Ormond Street had prepared him for his studies at Cambridge, and noted that Butler's dissertation had already been printed in the Cambridge series and would soon be available.¹⁴¹

In 1898 Bishop added a marginal note to one of his black books, in which, in 11 January 1888, he had complained about the disparity between present Benedictines

¹³⁷"The English Hierarchy, 'Instruction to the Parents, Superiors, and Directors: Catholic Laymen who desire to study in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.'" 1 August 1896: 4. Catholic students were to be instructed by Catholics in Philosophy, History and religion.

¹³⁸Knowles, "Cardinal Gasquet": 299.

¹³⁹Downside Review 18 (July 1898): 160-65.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., 160.

¹⁴¹Butler's dissertation was the Lausiac History, which he had worked on at Downside with Bishop. The second part, the translation, was finished in 1904, after which he left Cambridge, where, he said, he had spent the happiest years of his life. See David Knowles, "Edward Cuthbert Butler: 1858-1934," in The Historian and Character: 264-341.

and "the monks of old." In 1898 he wrote: "Delightful to read this in 1898 with Great Ormond Street established five years, Benet House two years and Oxford dons for Lawrence (another English Benedictine monastery)."¹⁴² He was justifiably proud of the part he had played in the success of these developments.

Everard Green

In 1896, Bishop saluted his friendship with Green with these words:

And what remains my dear Green? . . . There remains the recollection of those pleasant hours, dear friend, passed *chez toi*; hours that bind links forged first long years ago, hours that leave firm fixed memories behind them — *que dis-je?* — 'behind them' — nay! in front of them — our face is forward yet! — such hours are never lost.¹⁴³

Everard Green would have cherished this kind appreciation of companionship. Most of their correspondence before 1900 concerned proposed visits and proposed papers for the Guild. One such discussion offers a view of Bishop's particular spirituality.

I don't think I can agree with you that 'The Holy Ghost in the Mass' is a subject for [the Guild]. And I am quite content to go no further than 'sentiment' for a reason; but the 'sentiment' is a strong personal one; merely this, a shrinking from bringing, and speaking on, before a body of laymen (very few of whom can have the particular mind to make proper reservations, or ever, isn't it so? necessary elementary knowledge of the history of the mass) a subject so sacrosanct; the utmost I feel I could do in such matters (and what indeed I should like) would be to discuss the matter by way of enquiry and reflection with just two or three priests and laymen — men really drawn by character to enquiries and considerations of the this kind. I feel there would be (in me) a

¹⁴²BB, lxvi: BP.

¹⁴³Bishop to Green, 25 January 1896: BP.

certain **profanity** in talking of this before a mixed assembly. I **could** not do. You see it goes to the very depths of everything, — and the heights too.¹⁴⁴

The above comments by Bishop suggest that his early evangelical training in the Scriptures was transferred to the Mass. He was ready to protect the history of the Mass from those who might not hold its sanctity in the high esteem that he did. Only those who were approved could be admitted to these sacred precincts. It is to his credit that he recognized that his bias was based on feeling, not on reason.

Green's salutations were extravagant and generous, and during the 1890s one finds: "Thine more and more;" "Yours exceedingly;" "Great Bishop!" "Your beatitude;" "Oh living library and walking study." They were a mark of Green's ebullient personality, his appreciation of their friendship, and his respect for Bishop's scholarship. His positive support did not preclude his correcting Bishop when he thought the situation warranted it. On the occasions that Green and Bishop may have annoyed one another, both were quick to complain and quick to forgive. Green was one of Bishop's chief correspondents and an intimate friend, despite the Victorian formality which characterizes their correspondence. Bishop felt free to air his opinions with Green, his fellow convert bachelor, who shared his interest in liturgy, in Downside and in things English.

¹⁴⁴Bishop to Green, 6 Oct 1892: BP.

4. Relations with Rome

With the election of Leo XIII in 1878, a new period of liberal Catholicism commenced.¹⁴⁵ A new generation of politicians and scholars began to hope that some entente would be possible between the Church and the modern world.¹⁴⁶

Edmund Bishop greatly respected Leo XIII, thinking, as did others, that his seeming liberalism would foment change in Rome. On several occasions the attention of the Pope was drawn to Bishop's work, the first being the proposed joint work with

¹⁴⁵The last period, according to C. Constantin, DTC. 9:610

¹⁴⁶The following quotations from two great scholars, R. Aubert and A. Vidler, provide a contrast between the pontificates of Pius IX and Leo XIII with respect to the intellectual development of the day. Aubert writes: "Under Leo XIII care was at last taken to give Catholics positive guidance in these matters, proof of a keen awareness by the pope of the importance of the 'intellectual front' in view of the threat that had been hanging over Catholicism since the middle of the eighteenth century." Roger Aubert, et al, The Christian Centuries, trans. Janet Sondheimer (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1979), 171.

Vidler writes: "If the policy of Pius IX had been continued under his successor, it is unlikely that there would have been any modernist movement, not because there would have been no Roman Catholics who recognized the need of a revision of traditional orthodoxy in the light of new knowledge, but because they would have recognized simultaneously the futility of working for any such revision under the conditions that prevailed in the Church. Leo XIII, by modifying the intransigent policy of Pius IX, fostered the illusion that the modernist enterprise was worth attempting. . . . [If Leo XIII seemed to some (then and since) to be a liberal pope], he was not by conviction a liberal in any accepted sense of the term. He did not regard freedom as a political or intellectual ideal or end. . . . As much as Pius IX he desired political privilege rather than political freedom for the Church, and he had as little real sympathy with the intellectual movements of the age. If he maintained that the Church had nothing to fear from the full truth of history, he maintained also that history 'covers an aggregate of dogmatic facts which claim the assent of faith and may not be called in question.' [Quotation from 1899 encyclical to the bishops and clergy of France.] Alec R. Vidler, The Modernist Movement in the Roman Church (Cambridge University Press, 1934), 60-61.

While Aubert examines the seemingly new "tone" of the papacy, Vidler argues that by 1899, nothing had changed.

Swithbert Bäumer.

In 1892, Herbert Vaughan succeeded Manning as archbishop of Westminster and a year later was named a cardinal.¹⁴⁷ In 1894, discussion of a reunion between English Anglicans and Catholics began in England. This necessarily focused on the validity of Anglican Orders in the eyes of Rome.¹⁴⁸ Cardinal Vaughan rallied Gasquet and Bishop to support his position, a view which eventually triumphed in Rome.

In January 1895, Vaughan, Gasquet and Bishop went to Rome. Gasquet and Bishop were commissioned to search the Vatican archives for proof to be used to invalidate Anglican Orders, in accordance with the position strongly held by all three. Initially, Leo XIII was inclined to dismiss any new discussion of the issue. His close confidant, Mgr. Raphael Merry del Val, saw the issue as just another threat from liberal Catholics, specifically, a desire for church union between Anglicans and Catholics. Merry del Val used his influence to manipulate papal opinion. Over a two year period, Merry del Val and Vaughan, with the help of Gasquet, convinced the Pope to take up the issue of Anglican Orders.

In February 1895, while Bishop and Gasquet were in Rome, the Pope asked

¹⁴⁷On behalf of the Guild, Bishop wrote a well-received address of welcome to Vaughan: BP.

¹⁴⁸The idea of reunion had originated in 1890 between Lord Halifax and his friend, Fernand Portal, a French priest. A full account of the events between 1894 and 1897 can be reconstructed from the Bishop Papers, using correspondence, articles from newspapers, journals and Gasquet's book on the subject. John Jay Hughes has used the Bishop Papers in his definitive study of the issue of reunion and the validity of Anglican Orders according to Rome, and there is no need to repeat that story here. See Absolutely Null and Void (Washington: Corpus Books, 1968). I will limit myself to a few comments on Bishop's role.

Gasquet to draft a papal letter to the English Catholic bishops. Gasquet, as usual, turned to Bishop for assistance. The result was the papal document known as Ad Anglos, which, in the end, was addressed to Vaughan alone.¹⁴⁹ The letter appeared in the Times on 20 April. The English people were invited to return to Christian unity, but no mention was made of the Anglican Church. The last paragraph called for Roman Catholics to return to pious practices.

Gasquet wrote to Bishop, who was back in England, praising the letter in the Times as "uncommonly good." He quoted a letter from Vaughan: "Everybody seems much pleased with the translation, which reads uncommonly well. You and Mr. Bishop have rendered a great service. In the clubs I hear people are speaking highly of the letter but saying that prayer isn't in their line!" This remark referred to the concluding paragraph that Merry del Val had added to Bishop's letter. Beside Gasquet's comment, Bishop wrote: "It was Merry del Val's; and against the wish of ... [sic, referring to Bishop and Gasquet.]¹⁵⁰ No doubt this was one time Bishop was glad his work was anonymous this time since he objected to any addition that was pious rather than scholarly. The publication of the papal letter, Ad Anglos, marked the end of Bishop's contribution to the debate.¹⁵¹ For his part in the writing of the

¹⁴⁹For details, see Hughes, Absolutely, 90.

¹⁵⁰Gasquet to Bishop, 26 April 1895: BP.

¹⁵¹On 18 September 1896, the papal bull, Apostolicae curae was issued, declaring Anglican Orders to be "absolutely null and utterly void." See Hughes, 198 ff. The condemnation of Anglican Orders was a pyrrhic victory: the effect of the Bull was far-reaching and made Catholics more proud and boastful than good. See Holmes, More Roman for the opinions of prominent English Catholics.

papal letter, Leo XIII presented Bishop with a gold medal in 1897.¹⁵² But the negative result was the end of the proposed project of Bishop's and Gasquet's revision of Daniel Rock's The Church of Our Fathers. Gasquet stayed on in Rome and was no longer available for collaboration. Bishop very much regretted the cancellation of the project. He also regretted the fact that the issue of Anglican Orders had been raised at all.¹⁵³

Everard Green having heard the news of Bishop's having received the medal, wrote to congratulate his friend: "As perhaps you know I wanted [the Pope] to have created a doctorate of History, and to have given you the first doctor's cap."¹⁵⁴ This suggests, rightly, that Bishop's friends had had a hand in bringing him to the attention of Leo XIII.

Bishop's reply, in view of his later thoughts on the attitude of Rome towards the laity, is provocative.

Thank you for your kind congratulations: I am not sure (though I value the medal much) whether the most agreeable thing was not the discovery that kind friends had been working for me, I knowing nought thereof until quite recently. The sense of this has indeed been most grateful to me. I believe it's very wonderful as it is: it's said that the

¹⁵²The medal hangs on the wall in the Edmund Bishop Library at Downside Abbey.

¹⁵³Bishop to Green, 8 April 1912: BP. Bishop wrote: "What a foolish business it was from the beginning. . . . The business any way 'did for' the book Gasquet and I had planned: and that I still think a 'pity'. But it's no use crying over spilt milk. As regards the 'polemical' or 'controversial' side or sides of the matter, I cannot find to get up a shred of interest."

¹⁵⁴Green to Bishop, 24 July 1897: BP.

Roman authorities are singularly scrubby towards laymen – a mistake surely.¹⁵⁵

Bishop's gratitude for the support of his friends is honest and moving, but his comment on Rome's attitude seems puzzling. He did, after all, destroy his papers and suffer through a self-imposed silence after the Vatican Council. But if one remembers the high esteem in which Bishop held Leo XIII, this comment is easily understood. When Bishop loved, he did not condemn; and sometimes he went as far as to withhold ordinary judgement, as in the cases of Leo XIII, Dolan, and Gasquet. On the other hand, he could be harsh and judgmental if he thought he was being ill-used or if he was in disagreement on liturgical matters.

This sharp contrast in attitude surfaced in the early years of the twentieth century in Bishop's assessment of the decisions and deeds of the hierarchical Church in general, and of the laity in particular.

¹⁵⁵Bishop to Green, 25 July 1897: BP.

PART THREE

EDMUND BISHOP AGAINST "ROME"

CHAPTER V

A CHANGE OF FOCUS

At the turn of the century, Edmund Bishop's professional life was flourishing and he was busy writing papers—but his private life was causing him mostly pain and uncertainty. Between 1899 and 1901, a series of events in the Church led him to have a change of heart which, in turn, led to a change of intention concerning the focus of his work.

1. Signs of Discontent

Edmund Bishop's opinions about the "integralist"¹ or conservative element in the Roman Church were conditioned by his nationality, his position in the Church as a layman, and his chosen vocation as professional historian and liturgist. As an Englishman, he deeply resented what he called the Romanization of the Catholic religion. He considered himself to be a Cisalpine, that is, he believed that neither

¹"The conception of theological orthodoxy which triumphed over modernism by force majeure rather than by free and open debate was described appositely by some of its defenders as "integralism". In their minds it stood or fell as a whole, and a divinely guaranteed whole at that." Daly, Transcendence, 7.

the Pope nor the Roman Curia had the right to intrude on English affairs, particularly politics. As a liberal Catholic and modernist (see below for Daly's definition of modernism), he claimed the right to pursue historical studies for the sake of truth, not moral effect. As a convert, he wanted all the rights and privileges of his evangelical Anglican upbringing, such as freedom to voice his opinions, as well as the same respect accorded to "born Catholics." As a layman, he wanted to use his intellectual gifts to serve the Church.

In all these, Edmund Bishop's desires were frustrated. This was partly due to the times in which he lived, but partly also to the nature of the institution he joined when he converted to Roman Catholicism.

He was most frustrated by the ruling from Rome which forbade the discipline of theology to the laity. This meant many areas of history were closed to him: the history of dogma, the history of the popes, the history of Catholicism — all impossible to scholars of the laity, even his field of liturgy demanded prudence.

Events in the Church at the turn of the century drove Bishop to his notebooks where he could freely record his thoughts and feelings. His disillusionment and criticism of the Church began in 1899. Based on a series of events and fed by subsequent experiences, by 1901 it would take the form it retained until the end of his life.

Bishop and the Catholic Press

On 20 May 1899, Bishop wrote a letter to the editor of The Catholic Times. The topic of concern was the state of the Catholic press and two articles criticizing the Church that had appeared in non-Catholic reviews. Bishop wrote that since the demise of the Rambler, the Home and Foreign Review, and the Chronicle (all Acton's concerns), the Catholic layman had been effaced from Catholic periodicals. He asked, "What became of this talent? What did it pass into?" Certainly, he continued, it had not passed into any current reviews since none displayed the quality of the past. Bishop politely pointed out that for some thirty years, the only Catholic "literary organs" were the Dublin Review and Tablet, both under Vaughan's control, the Month, the official organ of the Jesuits, and the Weekly Register, which had never been inviting despite the efforts of the late editor. Bishop concluded that for the past thirty years "the educated Catholic laity have been not gagged but, for the purposes we are considering, effectually set on one side, said otherwise, that they have learned their place." But, Bishop continued, he was not writing to complain.

The younger lay generation naturally pulsate in sympathy with this new world which we seem to look at askance and of which, I repeat, in some ways we know and recognize so little. Here lies a real danger for the future. I am content to signalize it. It may well be that the surest way of ultimate safety lies in the freedom to speak, so that those whose duty it is to deal with the highest interests may know what men are really thinking about and recognize that there are minds as well as echoes to consider.²

²Bishop to the Editor of the Catholic Times, 20 May 1899: BP.

The editor returned the letter to Bishop with "sincere thanks," saying he could not insert it in The Catholic Times for fear of unpleasant controversy. He added that he felt "the great difficulty in producing a virile Catholic press is the attitude of the priests. Many of them who are incapable of doing good literary work themselves bring with them from the seminaries a narrow and intolerant spirit so far as their own press is concerned."³

Bishop agreed with the editorial decision. He explained to the editor that he had referred to the past because "it is perfectly evident that the same problem which presented itself in those days will very soon present itself for treatment now."⁴ He foresaw a rebirth of the iconoclasm of his youth, out of the clash of tradition and scientific history.

I quite agree with you that an informed and wary Catholic writer can say most things; but I doubt if, often, he can in these conditions of wariness say them effectively. . . . It is this seething mass of discontent that is alarming: which must issue, unless care be taken in time, in a "revolt of the laity" indeed. Mere phrases will not hold out forever in the steady accumulation of facts.⁵

Thus ends Bishop's prophetic warning of trouble in the days to come. His ready agreement with the editor to refrain from publication was yet another sign of his reticence to engage in controversial matters.

³P.L. Beazley to Bishop, "Private" undated: BP.

⁴Bishop to Beazley, 12 June 1899: BP.

⁵Ibid.

The "Rigs" Begin⁶

Bishop marked 1899 as the year in which changes began to appear in the English Church. He kept an unsent letter as a record of his "frame of mind when the 'rigs' began"⁷ — that conditions in the Church were such that he should avoid issues where he would have to support history against dogma. The letter responded to a request from the Dublin Review to review two books on the "Creeds question." Bishop declined, saying, "I have come to the conclusion that people amongst us who recognize truth of fact had better hold their tongues, and leave our ready and self-confident, if incompetent, guides to have all their own way and lead us to the inevitable end." The first draft of the letter was more pointed: "I do not see why by saying the truth in general, I should incur <in our present state of> the odium of marring our self contentedness; nor, whilst silence remains as an alternative can I allow myself to say false things softly." The letter concluded with a promise of a "short notice of Braun's book on vestments, a subject of infinitely small account."⁸ In the end, Bishop, refrained from sending it and wrote in the margin, "[I] simply held my tongue." Had Bishop reviewed the books, he would have had to explore what he believed to be "the truth," — the historical development of the dogma of the "deposit of faith." Although Moyes and others sought his expertise after he took up residence at Great Ormond Street, Bishop was not prepared to comply if this meant compromising

⁶OED, s.v. "rig," 1894: "the rig is worked" -a trick.

⁷Bishop to Canon J. Moyes, about 4 November 1899: BP. Moyes was editor of the Dublin Review.

⁸Ibid.

his principles. Before two months had passed after the unsent letter, unwittingly, Bishop would be used by Cardinal Vaughan, against St. George Mivart, who was Bishop's old friend.⁹

Facts and "Modern" Ideas

These experiences left deep and indelible impressions on Bishop, and moved him to anger and regret. His attitude toward the Church became clearly defined, sometime in 1899. He had come across an article on liberal Catholicism published in 1869, in the Month.¹⁰ He copied passages from the article in a black notebook and added his own comments and observations.¹¹

"Liberal Catholicism" had been written in the spirit of its time, between the "Syllabus of Errors" and the Vatican Council in 1870. From it, Bishop copied an excerpt concerning "the doctrine of the supernatural order" through which could certain questions only be "safely or reasonably solved." The natural order alone could not solve questions of: a) unrestrained license of the press; b) the absolute exemption of teachers who hold and propagate false and pernicious doctrines from civil coercion; c) the alleged advantage of the loss of temporal power of the Pope.

When these issues were set aside, went the article, scholars lacking "in depth or in balance" could find and use "a number of facts or supposed facts" to agree with

⁹The details of this incident are discussed in Chapters 2 and VI.5

¹⁰"Liberal Catholicism" was unsigned but Bishop attributed it to the editor, F. Coleridge, s.j.

¹¹BB 131a-173a: BP.

"modern ideas rather than with the mind of Catholicism."¹² In the following lengthy passage Bishop listed, litany-like, his criticisms of the Roman Church. They were succinct, pointed, and numerous.

e.g. Such facts as the ignorance and violence of the French Clergy, the virulence and arrogance of the ultramontane leaders and spokesmen. The utter rottenness of the Roman administration, the apathy of the Italian clergy, the evil effects of clerical supremacy wherever in modern times it has been complete; the fanaticism of the clergy. Their indifference to truth and justice as in the Dreyfus "affair," their propaganda of political absolutism and slavery, their hatred of free institutions, their incapacity to deal with the intellectual problems of the day involved in their own professional studies, their ignorance of human nature as shown in their way of dealing with men, their vanity and ostentation; their servility before the autocrat, or indeed before any form of Power; finally the treatment meted out to such of the clergy as hold an attitude of reserve before the movements in which the great bulk of the clergy have allowed themselves to be carried away. — All these are "facts" which tend to make many persons — be their minds without "depth" enough or not, — look very suspiciously at glib and not very intelligible phrases as to that "supernatural order" which is put forward as containing the solution of the whole matter.¹³

Bishop used strong words: ignorance, violence, virulence, arrogance, utter rottenness, apathy, evil effects, fanaticism, indifference to truth, hatred, incapacity, vanity, ostentation. The list conveys the feelings of an angry man, a disillusioned idealist.

He aimed his criticism at the clergy in general, the ultramontanes in positions of power and the Roman administration. The critique stemmed from Bishop's opinions as an historian, an Englishman, a Roman Catholic and a convert concerning

¹²Month 11 (August 1869):122

¹³Bishop, BB 156a, 157a: BP.

the role of the Church and the Roman hierarchy. His own list of "facts" that would lead to agreement with "modern ideas rather than with the mind of Catholicism", illustrates that he had reservations about "thinking with Rome," despite his faithfulness as a practising Catholic.

Bishop had formed and nurtured objections to the government of the Church even before his conversion in 1867: under the influence of that small group of liberal Catholics who became his English mentors, Acton, Simpson and Renouf. Before the Vatican Council in 1870, Bishop had been engaged with E.S. Ffoulkes in a battle of wits in the newspapers over the Council of Chalcedon (see Chapter III). Bishop's recollection of this exchange, some forty years later, still registered his excitement. After the Council he avoided theological discussion since he was a layman. Later in life, following Acton, he marked the Munich Brief of 1863 as the beginning of Rome's exclusion of the contribution of the laity to theology, when the Vatican Council decrees brought to an end the liberal Catholic movement of the German historians. Bishop took time to redefine his own role in the English Catholic Church. By the time he re-emerged in print in 1876, he had become a purveyor of facts. His innate sense of history enabled him to glean more from facts than most thought possible. At the same time, he averted the danger of censure by avoiding writing on theology, which was reserved for seminary-educated scholastics. His work for Rome in the 1890s on behalf of the Church, was eloquent testimony to his success in accommodating himself in the system. But the Church was changing, and so was Bishop.

2. Rome in England

Cardinal Vaughan and the Catholic Press

In January 1900, Cardinal Vaughan refused the sacraments to the excommunicated eminent biologist, St. George Mivart, because he refused to sign a statement of faith Vaughan had prepared for him.¹⁴ Mivart disagreed with Church teaching and Vaughan's action was prompted by Mivart's articles in the daily press. Mivart was Bishop's friend and the whole affair caused Bishop grief. (See Chapter VII for Bishop's role.) While Bishop complained that the Catholic press was "a mere pocket pistol of Cardinal Vaughan and the Jesuits," leaving Catholics a "set of gagged — fools,"¹⁵ Vaughan prepared to take even more stringent measures to prevent others from using the press as Mivart had.

In his "Lenten Pastorals," Vaughan addressed the Catholic press. He wrote that the journals were "perfectly free to take any line" they wanted on subjects not decided by the Church. But questions concerning religion, such as Church policy, the "character and conduct" of the Pope, the Roman Congregations, the Curia, the Bishops, and the clergy, were "holy ground." Should they fail in their duty to

¹⁴Mivart's biographer writes that Vaughan's "denial to Mivart of the sacraments was tantamount to excommunication, prohibiting, as it did, burial in hallowed ground." J.W. Gruber, A Conscience in Conflict, the Life of G.M. Mivart (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 210.

¹⁵Bishop to Green, 30 January 1900: BP.

Vaughan ordered priests and laity to cease supporting them, thus allowing him to avoid a "formal denunciation."¹⁶

Bishop compared Vaughan's instructions with those given Newman by his bishop, Ullathorne concerning the Rambler, in 1859.

How like Vaughan this! in 1899 "out they go, out of the Catholic press; if they want to write let them write in the Protestant Magazines." Out they went and there was writing in the Protestant magazines and press. Then: "Thunder and turf," His Eminence said: He wasn't pleased either, and out comes by and bye [sic] a "Joint Pastoral." Anything to get rid of the present inconvenience: "be not solicitous for the morrow."¹⁷

The Cardinal's Lenten Pastoral focused much discussion both inside and outside the Catholic communion, as seen in press cuttings collected by Bishop concerning what he calls "the subjugation of the Catholic press."¹⁸ His comments expressed anger, a sense of injustice and frustration.

The great difficulty of the situation is that the Cardinal really has nobbled and mastered the 'Catholic Press,' and it seems almost impossible, to even state clearly in a Catholic newspaper the principles involved, much less discuss them. Thus the habit of dealing dishonestly with questions that arise is fostered and dishonesty of character in such circumstances is never far off.

Now then for the way in which our great Cardinal Coward deals with the 'Catholic Press': 'Coward' I say—because he has run away like a cur where it is a question of defending us, the Catholic body, openly in the public press—witness his conduct in regard to the Times since

¹⁶Tablet 63 (March 1900): 349-51.

¹⁷BB NSA, unpaginated: BP.

¹⁸Scrapbook, 26-32: BP.

August last, and reserve all his barks and bites – shepherd that he is! – for the ‘sheep of his flock’!¹⁹

A letter from Catholicus shows that Bishop was not alone in his criticism. The correspondent called the words of Vaughan

an absolute disintegration of lay Catholic opinion, and annihilation of its freedom of expression, resulting in an apathy among educated lay Catholics ten thousand times more prejudicial to the higher interests of the Church than the fiercest opposition of its members.²⁰

Bishop agreed with this wholeheartedly and underlined it in two colours, adding his own comments in the margin:

The Cardinal says nothing about **history**: how about ecclesiastical history, to say nothing of history of dogma, etc. The Cardinal says nothing about **philosophy**. By his strictly limiting ‘freedom’ to ‘matters political and national’ I take it Church history is not a field ‘free’ to the Catholic layman. And, GOD OF TRUTH! What ‘history’ do not our clerical masters deal out to us as the ‘history of the Church’!²¹

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Times, 26 Feb 1900, pasted into Scrapbook, 30: BP.

²¹Scrapbook, 30: BP.

Bishop and the Roman Clergy

Meanwhile, Bishop's dedication towards the education of the lower clergy was also undergoing a change of attitude. In a notebook, he copied a letter from W.G. Ward to Simpson which, said Bishop, "gives [Ward's] deliberate opinion as to the English Roman Catholic body."²² Ward told Simpson that he had come to the conclusion that there was only one hope for religion in England, and that was through "sanctification."

It is difficult enough to know the best way for a layman to urge upon priests that they are shamefully unspiritual: but certainly a **review** is about the **worst** way. And to my mind this unspirituality of our priests is so simply our **one** pressing evil that I have no heart to move a finger to the redress of any other. If we are to remain the **godless** body which we are, I hope we may also remain the **ignorant** uncivilized, disunited, intellectually contemptible body that we are.²³

This opposed Bishop's long-held view that education and appeal to fact would convert both laity and clergy. After the turn of the century, Bishop increasingly respected Ward's position, and changed his own focus to purely historical matters, as far as publication was concerned.

When Ward's son, Wilfrid Ward defended the papacy in the Times against criticism of the Church's involvement in the Dreyfus case in France, Bishop copied passages from the article and made comments. He wrote that this was the fruit of the Vatican Definition, the Pope as the "infallible mouthpiece of God":

²²Ward to Simpson, 15 Feb 1858, in "BB Acton etc. 2", unpaginated: BP

²³Ibid.

What they have brought things to is this — that the Pope is the incarnate rule of truth and justice. He is also the supreme law of his agents; . . . Then the inevitable question is, What does he, what do they say and above all things do? Let us know; that we may be true and just and conforming ourselves to the pattern, the express image of them in this world.²⁴

In this complaint, Bishop and the senior Ward had more in common. Bishop demanded both truth and moral effect from the targets of his sarcasm while they, represented here by Wilfrid Ward, were concerned with defending Rome.

Bishop also took exception to the very idea of Roman interference in English politics. In response to "The Holy See and English Catholics," which suggested that not "the least command had been laid on English Catholics with regard to their political conduct,"²⁵ Bishop replied:

That is nice! The assumption that these beggarly Roman officials from top to bottom, the Pope downwards, have the right to lay "commands" on English Catholics with regard to their political conduct! Even let the Pope himself try it, and he too will find out, whether he assumes a "right" in the matter or not, that "English Catholics" will act according to their own views and consciences in political matters, and leave the Pope to square up accounts with himself as best he may."²⁶

Although Leo XIII was the culpable pontiff in question, Bishop did not name him. As shown earlier, it was his habit to protect those he cared for even when he found fault. Perhaps leaving the Pope nameless was the best Bishop could do under the circumstances.

²⁴BB 1260a "September 1899 or was it 1900": BP.

²⁵March 1900, cited in BB, 550a: BP.

²⁶Ibid.

3. A Change of Heart

In July 1900, the twenty-year campaign of the Downside reformers for the renewal of the English Benedictine Congregation was successfully completed, and Francis Aiden Gasquet was made first Abbot President of the Congregation. For Bishop, this long-awaited victory was anticlimactic; he called it "the collapse of Downside interests." Gasquet's new position meant the end of their working partnership at the museum and their mutual residence at Great Ormond Street. The year had begun with "the Mivart smash," as Bishop called it, and the second half of 1900 "was a time full of trouble and anxiety." That entire year was memorable. His brother Ernest died in September and he had to help a monk, Wilfrid New, who left Downside. Edmund Ford's election as first abbot of Downside was also a memorable event for positive reasons, since it marked the creation of Downside as an Abbey.

While Bishop was still adjusting to these events, on 17 November 1900 he read a rectorial speech by Lord Rosebery at Glasgow University who advocated the study of modern languages, modern history, and applied science.²⁷ Bishop agreed with Rosebery's advice and congratulated himself on his own use of historical method:

I have put it in a simple and single formula thus: **'This is a scientific age; let us be scientific.'** This gathers in its sense the whole moral. **'Be scientific'** — it is the moral of all I have tried to do, to be, at Downside, or rather with my Downside friends. **'Thoroughness. Age quod agis.** Let us know what we profess to know; or, if we cannot know, **discover and recognize to ourselves our ignorance.'** . . .
Yes: in my own lines, young still, no more than twenty one or twenty

²⁷Scrapbook, 35-37: BP. Lord Rosebery urged his audience to take practical steps to save the Empire, which included the study of modern languages, modern history of foreign nations, applied science and in general, "effort, effort, effort."

two, alone, solitary, isolated and in days when men thought of none of these things I resolutely set myself to put myself at the feet of those who 'cultivated' the 'scientific method' in historical investigation. And from that day to this I have never swerved in this discipline of scientific method, applying it, sometimes by conscious endeavour, sometimes instinctively, to all I have set my hand, my head to. It rejoices me, gives me new life, to hear this note struck There is, then, hope, — real ground for hope²⁸

Rosebery's advice confirmed the value of what Bishop had worked for since his early years. A few years later, Bishop commented that he had erased the "strong words" that preceded this passage and which described his feelings before he wrote it. He left these words as "sufficient testimony of the exuberance of my spirit at coming across the first note, the very first, heralding the incoming of the **new spirit**, and explaining how and why it was so wholly sympathetic to me."²⁹

This experience lifted Bishop from depression to elation. What he couldn't find in the Church, he found in the secular life of academia — a meeting of minds and intention. Around this time, he began to differentiate between the Catholic religion in which the "old spirit" continued to satisfy the faithful, and "the Church," (as he now wrote it) which seemed to embody a spirit for Bishop's tastes, too Roman. He prepared "History or Apologetics," advising that history written as truth, not moral effect, cannot be "Catholic history" but must be "history by Catholics." For Edmund Bishop, this finalized the separation of the religious from the secular and heralded a new focus: a scientific age which the Church had rejected once again.

²⁸Scrapbook, 35: BP.

²⁹Scrapbook, 34, March 1906: BP.

The Rota Dining Club

It was at the "Rota" that Bishop chose to make public his recent ideas on history and apologetics. The "Rota" was originally conceived by Bishop and Robert Dell in the summer of 1900. Following a communal dinner, one club member was to read a paper, which then would be opened to discussion. Only current topics were to be debated. Membership was limited to Catholics only, but Catholics of "different schools and sets of ideas, in other words the very *raison d'être* of the 'dinner' was to be **anti-cliqueism**." The club was "specifically conceived as a meeting place of clergy **and** laity." These conditions were made with the hope that there would be "perfect freedom of speech on the one hand and on the other, the mutual correction no less than (it might be hoped) **communicatio in bonis**."³⁰

At the first organizational dinner, eight men were present. All but two were converts, and those two were sons of converts. This imbalance was soon corrected by specifically inviting priests and old Catholics. It would not be long before the hierarchy intervened.

³⁰"Opuscula" IV

"History or Apologetics": A Sign of Change

In December 1900 Bishop presented the paper, History or Apologetics³¹ at the first meeting of the Rota Dining Club.³² He began with a description of the climate of opinion among English Catholics of the day. Some Catholics felt a need for a "modern Lingard" (the Cisalpine historian) or a history of the papacy written by Catholics. The problem was that the Catholic body lacked exegetes and historians. Bishop approached the problem with an explanation of the "lack of Catholic workers in the field of history in England."³³

Careful to avoid judgement, he traced the fate of the Home and Foreign Review, but added, "its disappearance has meant the end of a hope for a school of historical writers amongst English Catholics."³⁴ Bishop then explained the situations in Germany and France. He concluded that the experiences of the previous thirty years pointed to the need for "common folk," and especially for "heroic souls and violent

³¹Fifty copies were printed, three of which Bishop preserved. The full eight page text can be found in Looime, Liberal Catholicism, 373-381. Looime uses the essay as his "lode star," or basis for his thesis, that "the root of almost all the major theological controversies of the past three centuries" lies in the difference between historical and theological education (372-73).

³²Bishop's account of the event in his "Opuscula" IV enabled me to identify the supplement to the paper which appears in the Appendix. Bishop notes that he did not read these "additional examples" of the relationship between the theologian and the historian to his colleagues.

³³Looime, Liberal, 374.

³⁴Ibid., 375.

spirits," to closely examine the situation before becoming historians themselves, or urging others to do so. He explained:

the historical and the theological methods of mental training are in fact, here and now, different, and so different as to be, at this time of day, almost – I fancy I may say quite – antagonistic. And the antagonism has, in some minds, become a perfectly conscious, or indeed, a formulated one."³⁵

For Bishop, the two different approaches were irreconcilable: "Is it 'Catholic history' that we want, or is it 'history written by Catholics?'"³⁶ No measure of discussion would have resolved the dilemma.

In conclusion, Bishop admonished that it was not the time for inclusive histories – of the papacy or of English Catholicism – but for treatises on single subjects.³⁷

In what Bishop called "a supplement" to "History or Apologetics," he provided additional examples to prove his case.³⁸ He compared theological conclusions and historical considerations. Theological "ideas, beliefs, dogmas, speculation, all these are found not merely susceptible of strict historical treatment but the most important, as well as the most fascinating, subject of historical enquiry."³⁹ As Bishop saw it, a Catholic who was to write a history of the papacy must employ both theology and

³⁵Ibid., 377.

³⁶Ibid., 378.

³⁷Ibid., 380.

³⁸This document can be found in Appendix C. Bishop gave it the title, "Samples: Examples a) of direct theological bearing; b) pure public history."

³⁹Ibid.

historical evidence. The result would be a severe critique against Roman policy because, in Bishop's opinion, the Roman Church had a history of practical decatholicization and concomitant romanization – the imprinting of the actual Roman character and frame of mind on the Church. Bishop challenged historians of the papacy to explain why this was so.⁴⁰

Bishop didn't read his "Supplement" at the meeting. His list of subjects, which he called "the most important as well as the most fascinating" for historians, pointed to the source of his frustration: Vaughan had made it clear that publication in these areas was forbidden to laymen unschooled in scholasticism.

Bishop's decision to withhold his supplement soon proved to be a wise one. His paper was sought after by the press and reprinted. Later, in a review of a publication, he found the following quotation – taken almost verbatim from his Rota paper:⁴¹ "The distinction between absolute truth and truth of moral effect was, **HOWEVER**, clearly apparent to the Roman Mind, observed Mr. R.H. Hutton; and **before him** Kingsley . . ." (Bishop's emphasis).

Bishop wrote in one of his Black Books:

This, of course, is suggested to the writer by my paper 'History or Apologetics': but the significant thing is the change, – by the editor, sub-editor, or what not – of the shocking and genuine 'never' into the nonsense of 'however'; in happy R.C. unconsciousness of the absurdity, – and the fact!"⁴²

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹BB 762a-63a: BP.

⁴²BB 762a: BP. Bishop had written, "'The distinction between absolute truth and truth of moral effect ... was never clearly apparent to the Roman character,' wrote

A second note concerned "before him Kingsley."

The journalist, ill-informed, did not know that Hutton's essay had appeared first in the fifties, and Kingsley's in the sixties.⁴³ Bishop's tolerance for mistakes of this sort was low.

This incident is instructive on several counts. The reviewer felt free to use Bishop's quotation to suit his own purpose. The unconscious irony is that his action showed the accuracy of the original quotation; given "the absolute truth," which was a critique of the "Roman mind," he chose instead "the truth of moral effect" in his support of Rome. The paper, "History or Apologetics" and its Supplement, recorded Bishop's perception of the lot of the Catholic historian in December 1900. He took his own advice and became, henceforth, a historian who happened to be a Catholic. It marked the end of some twenty-five years of educating Catholic clergy. Provoked by various incidents, Bishop had a "change of heart." He disciplined his anger and disappointment and became indifferent, in the classical spiritual sense of acknowledgement and acceptance.

As for the Rota Dining Club, although it evolved as planned, it was not long before the very reason for its founding — "anti-cliqueism" and a meeting place for clergy and laity — became "the rock" on which they "split."

First of all, and very soon, Cardinal Vaughan scenting (or his friends, S.J. etc. etc. scenting for him) 'danger' forbade his clergy to have anything to do with, or be present at, these 'dinners.' . . . Next

the late Mr. R.H. Hutton." "History and Apologetics," in Loome, Liberal, 379.

⁴³BB 762a: BP.

Wilfrid Ward soon found out that he could not have all his own way, could not be the admired centre whose brilliance was to shed light on a surrounding darkness, but that there were a half a dozen, or more, who could 'shine' as 'brilliantly' as he. Hence he after the first 3 or 4 dinners fell away, and reserved himself for surroundings more pleasing, appealing, comforting, to his peculiar sort of mentality – and morale.⁴⁴ Bishop failed to report that his own paper, "Liberalism as a Temper of Mind,"

sent Ward away. Given 16 July 1901, in reply to Ward's paper of the same name, Bishop's paper stated bluntly that the characteristics which Ward had reserved for "liberals" were common to many Catholics, and that Ward had not described a liberal Catholic but a bad liberal Catholic. Ward, always trying earnestly to walk a narrow path between the liberals and the integrist, must have found this analysis too forthright. He left the Rota and Vaughan's removal of his clergy effectively prevented the club from fulfilling the purpose for which it had been founded. It was a further sign of the tightening control over priests and of the attitude towards the intellectual laity. The efforts of the laity towards dialogue and discussion were dismissed by the Tablet as "Catholic Intellectualism."⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the Rota continued and was the model for dining clubs formed under the auspices and control of Westminster.

⁴⁴"Opuscula IV" 7 October 1909: BP. Wilfrid Ward was the biographer of his father, W.G. Ward, Wiseman, and Newman.

⁴⁵Cited by Bishop, *ibid.*

4. The Fate of Bishop's Books

In July 1901, Bishop made a momentous decision -- to sell his books. As a preliminary he asked his bookseller to stop his regular subscriptions. Before the year was over, Bishop changed his mind for reasons even he found hard to explain. By the time he moved back to his sister's house in Lewes on 14 December 1901, he had reversed his decision and was wondering where to house his collection which was split between Downside and Great Ormond Street. Bishop had equipped the London residence with working materials: books, journals, pamphlets, manuscripts and various documents, all made available to scholars who worked there. On his own, he could not afford many additional purchases and it grieved him not to be able to continue to purchase current publications. In his diary he wrote that he felt that "a considerable part" of his life's work had been "wrecked" and what remained was "only salvage from the wreck."⁴⁶ Later, he wrote that since the autumn of 1900,

I really have never quite known at any time whether in this matter of my books (or indeed, for the matter of fact, myself also) I have been standing on my head or my heels. . . though the loss of time, money, and -- the rest -- has for the past 2 or 3 years been simply grievous.⁴⁷

Once Bishop had overcome his disappointment concerning the London project, he was able to devote himself again to his library despite difficult conditions. He complained to close friends about his lack of money only because he could not afford the books he wanted to fill the gaps in his collection. The sacrifice of small comforts

⁴⁶Black notebook with lists of acquisitions: BP.

⁴⁷Ibid., 28 February 1903.

never seemed too big a price to pay. Since the turn of the century, his hopes for the Church and for liturgical scholarship were with the young. His stewardship and loving care of his library stemmed from that hope.

5. The Final Victory of Ultramontanism

From Liberalism to Modernism

Monsignor Raphael Merry del Val,⁴⁸ the Pope's close confidant, kept Leo XIII in touch with English affairs. He encouraged Vaughan to write a pastoral letter to prevent further controversy such as that caused by Mivart's publications.⁴⁹ Vaughan complied. The letter, entitled, The Church and Liberal Catholicism. Joint Pastoral Letter, appeared the next week on 29 December 1900, signed by all the bishops of the English Catholic Church.⁵⁰ The pastoral sought to address "the various forms of rationalism and human pride." It stated that "a small number of men suffice to infect and unsettle the minds of many . . . without the least reference to the mind of the Church or to her ministers." This "excess of liberty" is "what is known as 'the liberal

⁴⁸Merry del Val was the Pope's close confidant. He was the Pope's junior by some fifty-five years and in their daily visits, gave him advice and in particular, kept Leo XIII in touch with English affairs. He played much the same role as George Talbot had with Pius IX, acting as a go-between for the Pope and the English hierarchy.

⁴⁹See Mary Jo Weaver, "George Tyrrell and the Joint Pastoral Letter," Downside Review 99 (January 1981): 18-19.

⁵⁰For the full text of the Joint Pastoral Letter, see Letters from a "Modernist." introduced and annotated by Mary Jo Weaver (London: Sheed and Ward, 1981), 131-157.

Catholic'. . . . There is but one fitting attitude for a Catholic towards the Church, namely, unswerving loyalty."⁵¹

The directives of the pastoral were strengthened by a letter to the English bishops from the Pope. It contained recognition of intellectual difficulties, but blamed liberal Catholicism on character defects⁵² and enjoined a return to unconditional obedience. The "Joint," as some called it, became the subject of discussion for months to come.

In the Weekly Register of 3 May 1901, an anonymous article⁵³ commented on the previously published criticism of the pastoral by Lord Halifax, an Anglican. The author wrote that Lord Halifax's most valuable contribution was a discussion of papal infallibility. The incompatibility of a monarchic conception and an ecumenical

⁵¹Weekly Register "The Church and Liberal Catholicism" 4 January 1901. Scrapbook, 42-55: BP. The pastoral appeared in the Tablet 97, in two parts, 5 January and 12 January 1901. For a discussion of the pastoral and its effect, see Mary Jo Weaver, "George Tyrrell and the Joint Pastoral Letter," Downside Review 99 (January 1981): 18-39.

⁵²The root of these character defects was described thus: "The evils which you deplore, and which you warn right-minded Catholics to shun, have generally their origin in an excessive spirit of worldliness, in a reluctance to any kind of Christian self-sacrifice, and in an inclination to a soft and easy life." Tablet 65 (23 March 1901): 441.

This was an echo of Leo XIII's earlier encyclical letter of 1 November 1900, Tametsi, on the subject of "Jesus Christ our Redeemer," and addressed to all Catholics. This encyclical was a call to obedience. "It must therefore be clearly admitted that, in the life of a Christian, the intellect must be entirely subject to God's authority. And if, in this submission of reason to authority, our self-love, which is so strong, is restrained and made to suffer, this only proves the necessity to a Christian of long-suffering not only in will but also in intellect." Tablet 64 (1 December 1900): 870-72.

⁵³"Lord Halifax Demurs." In a note dated 1905, Bishop correctly identified the writer as George Tyrrell: BB, unpaginated:BP.

consensus with the Pope as mouthpiece had been spotlighted as a "dangerous fallacy of confusion" by Halifax, who had "done good service to the cause of truth."

Bishop considered the pastoral letter as the culmination of the "Vaughan crusade." Enraged and disappointed, he agreed with the anonymous writer and expounded on the paradox in his notes, but again refused to mention the Pope by name.⁵⁴ There was, then, an impersonal element in his critique.

When the new Pope, Pius X (1903-14) began to take action against Loisy and Tyrrell, first as liberal Catholics, and then as "modernists," Bishop reminded his friends that Leo XIII had not been duly appreciated in his time.⁵⁵

Bishop felt the nineteenth century ultramontanes, in every country, were characterized by an increasingly "unreasonable, overwrought, idealistic tone of mind" that had "penetrated into every department of religious and even civil life. It was extravagant in its "expectations, its demands, its admiration, its denunciations, its aims."

Now 'Liberal Catholicism', so far as I can make out in the past embodied the saner, more sober, practical spirit; it was an effort to realize the world as it is, and its present opportunities, as they are. And herein lies the deadliness of its sin in the eyes of those who denounce it.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Bishop summed up his own opinions on points raised in the article. He considered these important enough to be entered into the table of contents of his Black Books as "My remarks thereon." BB 1203a-1207a: BP.

⁵⁵In 1911 Bishop extolled the virtues of Leo XIII, his "lion of Judah," saying, "they knew you not." Marginal note on a clipping pasted in Bishop's copy of Gasquet's Leaves From my Diary: BP.

⁵⁶BB 999a: BP.

This is Bishop's self-definition as a liberal Catholic. He took pains to understand the world, reading about and analyzing the events of the day and trying to understand them in the light of history. He saw that opportunities for scientific and critical studies were limited by the strictures placed on Catholics by Rome. This did not lead him to despair but rather to outward conformity. He felt it was his duty to avoid condemnation and censure since he would unable to contribute to historical studies. Silence on forbidden subjects was the only option unless one was driven by vocation or will to sacrifice oneself, as did Loisy and Tyrrell. But, echoing one of his favourite literary heroes, John Inglesant, he predicted that the sun would rise again.

From Modernism to "Modernism"

In 1907, the efforts of exegetes and historians to reconcile Church teaching with modern critical thinking were halted by Rome, under the new Pope, Pius X, elected in 1903. On 3 July, the decree of the Inquisition, Lamentabili sane exitu with the English title, "Syllabus Condemning the Errors of the Modernists," condemned and proscribed statements of various authors, Alfred Loisy and George Tyrrell among them. Excerpts had been culled from their writings, taken out of context, chosen for their immoderation, and gathered together to give the impression of a comprehensive program. This was followed on 8 September by the Encyclical, Pascendi dominici gregis that condemned modernists and their doctrine, which Pius X called the synthesis of all heresies. According to the Encyclical, every modernist had many personalities: philosopher, believer, theologian, historian, critic, apologist, and

reformer.⁵⁷ The modernists adopted two basic tenets: "agnosticism," which confined science and history to human reason with the result that God and revelation were excluded; and "vital immanence" which held that revelation was to be found in faith.⁵⁸ The "three chief difficulties" of the modernists were said to be "scholastic philosophy, the authority of the fathers and tradition, and the magisterium of the Church."⁵⁹

The Church's response to these false teachings and "difficulties" was to silence those who held them in any form whatsoever. It was decreed that every diocese must set up a "Council of Vigilance" whose function was to find and root out every trace of "modernism" in publications and teaching. When these measures failed to quell all resistance, in September 1910 an oath against modernism was imposed by the Pius X. A network of spies and informers reported on the use of the oath. Pius X had stamped out what he had baptized: "the modernist movement."

⁵⁷The Papal Encyclicals, compiled by Claudia Carlen (Wilmington: McGrath, 1981), 72.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 73.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 91.

In Search of a Definition

What was modernism?⁶⁰ In the past two decades, many scholars have been interested in modernism and its relationship to liberal Catholicism.⁶¹ The definition offered by Gabriel Daly is most representative of Edmund Bishop's own position, examined below.

Daly's definition is as follows: "'Modernism', then, may best be regarded as a term of convenience employed by one school of thought in the Catholic Church to describe certain ideas, tendencies, and attitudes which that school saw as incompatible with its own tenets."⁶²

Daly writes that since the "anti-modernist documents have been rendered obsolete as canons of orthodoxy by the Roman magisterium itself," it is no longer appropriate to decide who was or was not a modernist.⁶³ Assumptions made by the

⁶⁰The definition of modernism has undergone development. In the Catholic Encyclopedia, 1910, A. Vermeerch defines modernism as "the critique of our supernatural knowledge according to the false postulates of contemporary philosophy." In the New Catholic Encyclopedia 1967, J.J. Heaney defines modernism as an ideology which "sought a revolutionary transmutation of Catholic doctrine through the application of naturalistic evolutionary philosophy and arbitrary historical criticism." In the 1974 Supplement, Heaney is more careful. "The variety of positions among Modernist writers has been so clearly demonstrated that one hesitates to attempt a definition of Modernism. One constant element was the effort to bring theological teaching abreast of what was considered the results of contemporary research; a second element was the conviction that the Church's magisterium had unduly usurped the rights of theological research." Presumably, it was the influence of the Second Vatican Council which made Heaney less sure.

⁶¹See Loome, Weaver, Lash, and the Downside Review of the 1970s and 80s.

⁶²Daly, Transcendence, 3.

⁶³Ibid.

authorities concerning modernism in general and modernists in particular "should be taken as symbolic of an attitude rather than as an accurate assessment of a factual situation."⁶⁴ Daly argues that the Roman reaction "did far more harm to theology than did the writings of any modernist."⁶⁵ This leads to a distinction between modernism as understood before Pascendi and after. Here, Daly's opinion differs from the views of those scholars committed to demonstrating either the continuity or discontinuity between liberal Catholicism and Catholic modernism. He writes:

If one does not take one's definition and understanding from Pascendi, it is my contention that there remains no convincing reason for distinguishing between 'modernism' and 'liberal Catholicism' or between the 'modernism' of Tyrrell, Blondel, or von Hügel **in respect of neo-scholastic orthodoxy as it was then understood and practised**. Any distinctions we make between the leading modernists will need to be made on the basis of what each wrote . . . and not on the basis of their alleged conformity or lack of conformity with a concept of orthodoxy which has been substantially changed by the official magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church itself.⁶⁶ [Daly's emphasis]

The modernists were those Roman Catholic writers who were convinced the Church had both an obligation and a right to speak on modern problems in philosophy and theology in a new and modern way. It was a challenge to renew a medieval Church. The Church responded not pastorally, but with power—medieval style.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid., 4-5.

Edmund Bishop's Modernism

Bishop called himself a modernist on several occasions, each time to a trusted correspondent. The first time was in a letter to Professor H.B. Swete of Cambridge, who had written a paper on modernism for the Guardian. In a postscript, Bishop reported that he had read Swete's paper with the "greatest interest," and could discuss it at length.

But as a **'Modernist'** -- you will let me say this -- beyond hope of all recall and dating from long, long before the days of 'Modernism' -- this: how right I feel you to be in viewing that whole matter is one that concerns 'all who believe and call themselves Christians'; and so **deeply** concerns some that they may not put the [? matter] aside. And so there is a sense (and this perhaps the only right view) in which all are in 'the same boat'.⁶⁷

Another occasion was a to an Anglican parson, W.C. Bishop (no relation), with whom Bishop carried on a correspondence over liturgical matters. He explained a previous letter, revealing some "private reasons" for some objections. The first was that he was a **"hopelessly perverted convert to 'Popery'"** and his forty-two years of experience made it impossible for him to say that their churches are one. "Next (but **tell it not in Gath -- or anywhere else: I seriously mean this caution**), of course I am an irredeemable modernist from long before the days when modernism was thought of."⁶⁸ [Bishop's emphasis]

This second letter in particular has been quoted by all those who would prove

⁶⁷Bishop to H.B. Swete, 25 February 1908, second draft: BP.

⁶⁸Bishop to W.C. Bishop, 6 September 1908: BP. The words "modernist" and "modernism" have been obligingly inked out by his correspondent.

Bishop a modernist. Given Daly's definition, and Bishop's own confessions, he was indeed a modernist before "modernism," and that made him a liberal Catholic.

He was a liberal Catholic in the sense that he was a "scientific historian," he chose Acton and his supporters as mentors, and he wanted freedom to publish in his field, which included theological concerns, without incurring the danger of censure.

In Derek Holmes' description of the role of English liberal Catholics of the mid 1800s, one can see that the liberal Catholics provided a model for Bishop's vocation.

Liberal Catholics in England attempted to improve the social and intellectual position of their fellow Catholics. They therefore emphasized the necessity of providing higher education for Catholics and were closely involved in the controversies over the Rambler, the most significant English Catholic review produced during the nineteenth century. But English liberal Catholics were also concerned about political as well as social or intellectual issues, which in any case must be seen in the context of the growing divisions between liberal and ultramontane Catholics.⁶⁹

These were the ideas which Bishop worked for until the turn of the century. As the ultramontane policy came to dominate the Church completely, Bishop decided that he would, henceforth, work as an independent scholar who happened to be a Catholic. This decision would serve to broaden his reputation among fellow British scholars. He would retain his liberal Catholic values until the end of his life, but so far as the Church was concerned, he was out of step with the times. Bishop recognized his powerlessness, accepted it, and advised others of like mind to do the same.

⁶⁹Derek J. Holmes, "Liberal Catholicism and Newman's 'Letter to the Duke of Norfolk'," Clergy Review 60 (August 1975): 498.

CHAPTER VI
EDMUND BISHOP'S OPINIONS: THE PRIVATE
AND PUBLIC RECORDS

1. The Return to Family Life: 1901-1917

On 14 December 1901, Edmund Bishop moved to Lewes, Sussex, to live with his widowed sister Ada and her daughter, Dorothy. In 1899, he had suffered another bout of flu after which his doctor advised him to live in the country for the sake of his health.

On arrival in Lewes, one of the first things he did was to arrange his library books, and "little black Books" (his various diaries). He recorded how he spent his time, which included "reading and noting," correspondence, the editing of proofs for Cuthbert Butler, and as usual, research for some liturgical articles he was preparing. He went for walks with his niece, taught her Latin, played cards, "ping pong," read to Ada and Dorothy, and "chattered," as he called it.¹

The settling of Ada's late husband's estate had left her with financial problems. Castlegate, the large house in Lewes needed repairs. The solution was to rent the house and look for something smaller.

¹BB unpaginated: BP.

These records suggest Bishop was trying to adjust to his new life; writing the details gave him some sense of control of the situation, but on 9 August 1902, Bishop recorded his dissatisfaction:

Oh for my ideal! a quiet place in simple retirement, such as my own personal means impose upon me to occupy, where with the "instruments de travail" around me I can spend myself or be spent in burying myself with the things I care about: but my fate seems to be all to be swallowed up in the machinery of life, and the machinery not of my own life but of other peoples'.²

For most of his adult life, Bishop had been relatively free to pursue scholarly work as he wished. This adjustment, at the age of fifty-six was difficult for him.

In the end Castlegate was sold and Bishop, Ada and Dorothy moved from Sussex to Devon. Bishop's letters show successive addresses: 1903 – Sunnyside, Newport, Barnstaple; 1905 – 5 Rock Park, Barnstaple; and finally in 1906 – Caburn, South Lane, Barnstaple, where the family remained. This shifting of his person and books did not serve Bishop's primary purpose, his "vocation" to liturgical studies. But the Bishop household was hospitable and he often had the pleasure of hosting old friends as well as scholars who needed his assistance.

If he complained during the first year that family life impinged on his scholarly pursuits, he came to see that it had a virtue of its own. In 1904, he told Green, "My niece is a great pleasure to me."³ In 1912, he wrote Armitage Robinson (former Cambridge Professor and then Dean of Wells Cathedral) on the occasion of

²Ibid.

³Bishop to Green, 18 September 1904: BP.

Robinson's marriage. After offering his best wishes "for a long and truly happy married life," he added:

True. I am [an] old bachelor myself; but in the course of a life now prolonged beyond what I could have expected, I have come to feel and 'know' that domestic life, the life of the family and the home, is, if it be fairly treated, the God-given, God prescribed school not merely of happiness, but also of 'sanity.'⁴

This shows amazing accommodation to his situation. When one considers his old yearning for Downside and the monastic atmosphere, it is astonishing to see that he was still so resilient as to be able to make that shift. After his collapse at Downside in October 1916, he looked forward to going home and getting settled in his "niche" he wrote (again to Armitage Robinson), "Oh! how good it is to have a niche—and kind hearts near!"⁵ Ada and Dorothy had made a happy home for "dear Ned," and he was able to receive their love and to reciprocate in kind.

2. The Diaries

The Form and Content

Parallel to Bishop's increasing satisfaction with domestic life, and perhaps the cause of it, was Bishop's increasing dissatisfaction with Rome's response to current events in the Church. His move away from London meant a certain amount of

⁴Bishop to Armitage Robinson, 29 November 1912; corrected by another hand: 1914: BP.

⁵Bishop to Robinson, 16 October 1916: BP.

isolation from the Catholic intelligentsia; he was no longer in the thick of things as he had been at Great Ormond Street. He had no one (except the hedgerows, he said) with whom to discuss his ongoing analysis of the activities and pronouncements of the Roman Curia, and later of the new Pope or "the Church," as he now wrote it, to separate it from the Catholic religion of old. Once again, he turned to his Black Books to record his opinions. He must have felt this same isolation to some extent even before his move to the country since the entries in the Black Books begin with the year 1899 and continue into 1900 and 1901, before he left London in December.

The articles and excerpts in these notebooks are drawn from a wide variety of sources, but the notations show that they are chosen with particular themes or subjects in mind. While it is impossible to do justice to some 1700 pages of annotated texts, some themes are more frequent. Moreover, to say these themes are "frequent" is to understate the case. Again and again, Bishop pointed out the false hopes of the laity, the political manoeuvres of the government of the Church, the disingenuous attitude of the English hierarchy, the plight of converts who were seldom accepted either by the old Catholics or by the hierarchy, and the weaknesses of the clerics. Some of the notes are extensive and read like a lecture or book review.

He analyzed a novel by Mrs. Wilfrid Ward and showed how her characters were drawn from the English Catholic "clique." (He would not say circle.) Bishop drew an impressive "family tree" where he identified each character. He dissected the novel to show that its purpose was to elevate the author's husband and to remove from him any taint of Catholic liberalism. An attached review states that as a novel, it is

not successful. Bishop's notes go well beyond that. They are pointed, full of irony, and probably all too true.

In one of his "O & C Education" Black Books (Oxford and Cambridge), he accused Archbishop Lang of Keble College of plagiarizing one of Bishop's favourite novels, John Inglesant, which he reread every year. Beside his notes on the sermon, Bishop wrote down the ending of the novel and underlined the parallel passages for the convenience of the reader. Judging from the care he took to point out Lang's use of Shorthouse's novel, the incident greatly annoyed him.⁶ Lang took what Bishop called "the wonderful last pages" and claimed them as his own. The hero affirms that the future will be brighter, which was Bishop's own hope.

For the most part, these themes reflect Bishop's state of mind until 1907, and the publication of the Encyclical, Pascendi, on modernism. After this, Bishop felt it was better to know the worst and live with it rather than rely on the improbable hope that Rome was reformable. He accepted the situation and turned his mind to other things.

⁶BB, Oxford and Cambridge (hereafter O & C), 958-63; BP. This very popular novel by J.H. Shorthouse, subtitled first appeared in 1881. By 1824 it had been reprinted fifty times. Acton read the novel in March 1882 and considered it to be "thoughtful and suggestive." His scattered remarks can be found from pages 100-120 in the collected letters to Mary Gladstone, Letters of Lord Acton, ed., with an Introduction by Herbert Paul (London: Macmillan, 1913). Alec Vidler writes that its popularity "was evidence that thoughtful High Anglicans were looking for a way of combining Catholic faith and practice with an open and liberal theology." The Church in an Age of Revolution (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1981), 190.

Two Themes: "Rome" and the Laity⁷

"Rome" as "the Church"

Bishop thought the Church's primary problem had changed over the years. Forty years before, the fear was that a French or Austrian pope would favour his own nation. In 1899, Bishop noted that the Church was "becoming more and more an Italian than a Catholic institution"⁸ so that now the problem was "how to denationalize the present exclusive Italian Supreme Government of the Church."⁹ He continued: "the insistence on the necessity of the temporal power" of the past twenty years "for the free action of the Pope, is due much more to a desire to keep up the Italian monopoly of the supreme government of the Church" than to necessity.¹⁰ Whereas before, the Church had strenuously objected to the idea of nationalism, now, the Sacred College and the Curia itself gives to the world the most patent and thorough example of the influence of this spirit of Nationalism. Practically the whole responsible government of the Church at its centre, and much of, almost all of, the subordinate and irresponsible agents of that government, are Italian.¹¹

As far as Bishop was concerned, the problem was not something new.

Of course the real difficulty lies in the naturally unspiritual tendency of the Roman character, and its natural attraction for the political, the

⁷Bishop had an on-going preoccupation with John Henry Newman's life and works. Although I have developed this interest as a third theme, I have excluded it here in the interest of brevity.

⁸BB 229a: BP.

⁹BB 231a: BP.

¹⁰BB 239a: BP.

¹¹BB 241a: BP.

secular, the things of this world. And the history of the Roman Church, till now, shows that even Christianity cannot overcome the weakness of its own Romanism. The Church is itself the most eminent type of essential nationalism and so is practically antagonistic to the spirit of Catholicism. Of course this would not be felt, at least so strongly were it not that the Roman Church has absorbed all ecclesiastical authority without Catholicizing the central authority in Rome.¹²

Since the Vatican decree on infallibility the Pope was no longer dependent on the Church, but the Church was dependent on the Pope. Outside the Latin countries, [presumably Catholic Italy and Spain] the only authority the Pope had was through the appeal to conscience, Christian or other.¹³ In former times, the Church was a witness to the truth,

that is, the bishops, the episcopate, were not merely judges but also were a body of **witnesses** and the Pope, Infallible as he maybe is, had to be, also a witness. . . . Now we, layman or bishop, are as witnesses and can only be witnesses at most to what the Pope says and the only witness to the truth in the new theory is the Pope himself; and he alone can witness that his testimony is true.¹⁴

This situation was the result of the Vatican definition of papal infallibility.

In 1909, Bishop added a note to an article on clericalism:

1909: in the light of the events and experiences of the last six years and a half . . . it is possible to see what a Pope of Rome – Infallible and filled with himself – can do to restore to health a sick Church! Weak minds may be inclined to acquiesce in the 'prévision of the prophet – **'Religio depopulata'** – 'religion laid waste'; and by who but the Guardian of the Faith (by the grace of Kaiser Wilhelm II)?¹⁵

¹²BB 846a: BP.

¹³BB 287a: BP.

¹⁴BB 716a-717a: BP.

¹⁵BB 884a: BP.

It was Bishop's opinion that the election of Pius X as Pope had everything to do with the influence of the German Kaiser and nothing to do with the Holy Spirit.

Bishop perceived that the Church opted for politics over religion:

Whenever the Church or rather the ecclesiastical body divests itself of its corporate political character, its religious influence revives; when it gathers its forces to become a political influence and power it is only to go forward to a disaster that involves religion itself and purely religious interests in the catastrophe. But the history of the [nineteenth] century also shows that the attraction of the dominant ecclesiastical school during this century has always been to the political side of religion.¹⁶

If some thought this political concern was in the interest of peace, Bishop disagreed heartily. The Duke of Norfolk wrote,¹⁷ and Bishop copied, the following:

"It must be a matter of deep concern that the Papacy, which is so great a force for order and stability throughout the world should be made a cause for strife in questions round which are centred the deepest interests of mankind." Bishop commented:

But it is now as it has always been unless kept under by some dominant state, or states, its pretensions are, of its and their nature the source of strife, discord, disunion, dissension. . . . Rome is of the world worldly and cannot help being so—: and its first pretension is the representation of Him who said: [sic].

["A force for order and stability throughout the world"] is indeed what it should be according to the theory; this is what the recent Popes are never tired of declaring it to be. History shews it in fact to have been a continual firebrand a source of discord and disorder, wars and dissensions; and its recent history, during this century from the accession of Gregory XVI, shews that it is now what it was in the Middle Ages—a perpetual menace to the public peace. "Peace" the

¹⁶BB 195a-197a: BP.

¹⁷This is a reprint of a letter by the Duke of Norfolk to the Times, which appeared in Weekly Register, 25 January 1901: BP.

Popes honour with their lips but their heart is and has for centuries been far from it.¹⁸

Bishop's complaints were founded on current events but conditioned by history. They also explain why Bishop warned Catholic historians to avoid certain areas of Church history, such as the history of the papacy. He was convinced that the history of Rome, the popes, and the Roman Congregations would not stand up to scrutiny when political motives were set beside spiritual aspirations.

The Clergy and the Laity

To Bishop, "clericalism" was a danger to the Church and to the faith.¹⁹ He cited an anonymous French writer who said that the two most serious faults of the clergy were "idleness and a spirit of domination." In a later entry, Bishop noted that this had been his own experience. Dated "31 x 09," the entry was written the first day he had to drive to another town, Bideford, to hear Mass because the priest of his local parish had talked about him in the homily.

He commented:

Is not, among these others, the 'spirit of domination' at least immediately a result of this completely idle life which allows the priest full scope to reflect on the contrast between the 'angelic' nature of his office and his hyperangelic powers and the actual neglect – or contempt even – with which he finds himself actually treated by the people, the 'world' around him?²⁰

¹⁸BB 764a-765a: BP.

¹⁹BB 181a: BP.

²⁰BB 379a: BP.

In another passage he described the situation of destitute, overworked English priests who served the poor. He remarked that the Church, with all its talk of the Supernatural, was "just as powerless as mere natural folk." Without the State and without the laity, the Church was a failure.²¹ (This theme of the role of the laity loomed large in Bishop's mind and will be explored later.) When Bishop read²² that since the Reformation, naturalism (as opposed to supernaturalism) had "become the principle of Governments though the Catholic reaction has gained upon it in other fields . . . ," he called the phrase "Catholic reaction,"

a term derived from 1550-1630 history: — Here we get, I fancy, the real division of sense and feeling between the two sets of Catholics: to one the course of the world is an evolution, a new condition springing and working out of the present as the present has developed out of the past: the theoretical mind of the other section has a fixed level or height which is the (theoretically) norm, from which 'the world' is continually falling and to which 'the Church' (=themselves) has to pull and is pulling 'the world' up again.²³

The two sets of Catholics were, in this case, the liberal Catholics and the dominant party (the ultramontanes). The author assumed that liberal Catholicism was a variety of "naturalism;" Bishop asserted that no evidence was given to prove this. "We have jumped, as I say, and jumped plump: as usual these writers write for 'Catholic' readers and treat their readers accordingly as 'empty-headed' persons: and without

²¹BB 979a: BP.

²²Quoted in BB 139a: BP.

²³BB 138a: BP.

powers of 'reflection,' – 'philosophical' or other – for such is the type of 'most Catholics.'"²⁴

According to Bishop, not only the clergy were at fault, the laity also had their limitations, as in the following: "Are we to assume then that in 'practice,' Catholics are in the bulk 'candid and sensible reasoners'?" My experience of them, and observation leads me to conclude that, whether the educated or uneducated that is precisely what they are not."²⁵

3. Correspondence

After his move to the country, Bishop continued to correspond with scholars and scholarly friends who requested his assistance. For almost ten years he had lived in London available to the hierarchy and in the company of friends. Physical isolation resulted in a rich corpus of letters dating from 1902 until his death in 1917. The opinions that Bishop espoused in his diaries found their way into letters to close friends and trusted acquaintances. A comparison of letters to different correspondents shows he was careful to temper the opinion to suit the recipient. It was important for Bishop to have these contacts. As he wrote: "Letters are my only medium of communication with the outer world and the channels of communication are not many."²⁶ With respect to standard Victorian practice, Bishop did not have many correspondents. Nevertheless, there are many letters, some of which illustrate the

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵BB 850a: BP.

²⁶Bishop to Green, 19 July 1906: BP.

relationship between Bishop and his correspondents as well as the parallels with the Black Books. Those to whom Bishop wrote most frequently during these later years were F.A. Gasquet, Everard Green, and Friedrich von Hügel.

Edmund Bishop to F.A. Gasquet

When Bishop moved from Great Ormond Street, he left Gasquet ("F.A.G.," as he called him in his personal papers), with whom he had lived for almost ten years. Bishop missed Gasquet's company and the opportunity to consult with him. In 1905 when Gasquet dedicated his Henry III and the Church to his old friend "to whom I owe more than mere words can express," Bishop was deeply moved and told him so.

I feel very much your kind, and beyond all kindness kind, dedication of it to me. Nor can you be under any doubt that it is more than agreeable to me —and a subject of the keenest pleasure, and an abiding one, that there should be a lasting witness to a friendship 'old and tried' indeed as you say, which has been and always will be to me one of the greatest happinesses and most prized 'possessions' of my life. Beyond my part in the Prayer Book there's nothing that I know of that I can put hand on and say I've actually done: no 'collaboration'. But I will say I have endeavoured (couldn't help myself but endeavour!) to be a friend to a friend. . . . I thank you with all my heart. You could have done nothing I think to please me more.²⁷

Such an outpouring of affection and thanks shows Edmund Bishop's generous nature and his gift for friendship despite a certain natural reserve. Gasquet's letters were always addressed. "My dear friend." Bishop's letters began first with "My dear Fr. Gasquet," then, "My dear Fr. President," and finally "My dear Cardinal Gasquet." Despite this seeming formality, Bishop loved Gasquet, and as was his wont, his love

²⁷Bishop to Gasquet, 23 June 1905: BP.

always forgave a multitude of sins. In Gasquet's case, it was the sin against facts.

It is now well-known²⁸ that the books Gasquet wrote without the help of Bishop (either acknowledged or unacknowledged), were unusually inaccurate, full of technical errors and at times, deliberately falsified.²⁹ The last project on which Bishop and Gasquet worked together was the editorship of the manuscript of the Bosworth Psalter which had been lent to Gasquet by its owners prior to its sale. Bishop worked on it to the exclusion of all his own work. While his letters to Gasquet only go as far as calling it the "wretched Bosworth Psalter," in his diary he recorded that "the scooping out, and appropriating some sixteen months of my life over that wretched MS. which is of no interest or profit to me, has left me as it has left me. And there is nothing for it I suppose but to say: Amen. And that, years and years too late. Amen."³⁰ Bishop's initial enthusiasm had given way to frustration over the length of time the job took.

The final product stands apart from Gasquet's increasingly faulty productions. It is ironic that Bishop should have made the following remark concerning contemporary scholarly work at Downside: "I always feel I would just as soon rather, see Benedictines busy in missions than see 'em given up to producing current hack work

²⁸See David Knowles, Cardinal Gasquet as an Historian (London: Athlone, 1957).

²⁹Knowles, Gasquet, 254-56. Knowles also discusses the positive aspects of Gasquet's work as an historian.

³⁰BB, unpaginated, 23 March 1908: BP.

of a derived and second hand scholarship."³¹

Bishop's relationship with Gasquet precluded direct criticism, as in the case of Gasquet's book on Acton.³² When Bishop first read Gasquet's book, he was "as a whole, greatly 'impressed' by it." In the same letter to Gasquet, he wrote: "I've only just begun to note misprints," and listed several, pointing out "the funniest" which made him laugh.³³ Although he called them "misprints," laying no blame on Gasquet himself, Bishop knew otherwise. Having read and marked Gasquet's book, Bishop turned to the sources Gasquet had used. Bishop filled some forty-five pages of extracts from the original letters, noting what Gasquet had added, subtracted, or changed—all without comment. The most he allowed himself were two sets of double exclamation points.³⁴

What can explain such reticence? Bishop knew Gasquet's weaknesses as a scholar and excused him because of their friendship. But for the sake of history and the "facts," he made up for it himself by preserving a careful record of the discrepancies.

Bishop's letters to Gasquet usually concerned Downside, his family members,

³¹Bishop to Gasquet, 3 March 1908: BP.

³²Lord Acton and his Circle, London, 1906.

³³Bishop to Gasquet, 7 October 1906: BP.

³⁴A correction of Gasquet's material was made later by A. Watkin and H. Butterfield, "Gasquet and the Acton-Simpson Correspondence," The Cambridge Historical Journal 10 (1 1950): 75-105. Readers of The Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson, ed. by Josef L. Altholz, Damian McElrath and James C. Holland, 3 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 1971) will also find Bishop's selections very familiar.

proposed visits between the two men, advice when requested, assistance with various projects, and their common interests in liturgical studies. Commenting on Gasquet's "jaunts," he wrote:

But it would never do for me, running about. For although here 'inconceivably' hampered by loss of books, I think I may be able to do 'my' proper sort of work, and perhaps the absence of books may be a very condition of it so.³⁵

In 1914, Gasquet was created a cardinal of the Church. For Bishop, this honour was

a 'justification' of all the Downside efforts these last five and thirty years and more: and much more than that, a **consecration** of it all, public and in the eyes of the world. I have 'wanted' it for long, for a sort of own personal interior satisfaction. It has come. And now I am **content**.³⁶

Bishop did not attend the celebration at Downside which was reported to have been a "triumph." Green wrote to him, "Everyone at Downside wanted you, and over and over again I was asked 'Where is he?' and I quite thought you would have done holy violence to your hatred of a crowd and come."³⁷ Bishop spent the morning of the celebration on a hill near his home, reading the sermon that his friends at Downside had provided for him. He wrote that he no longer had "the physical strength to keep down the effects of strong emotion" and was glad therefore to be absent. "I should have for sure broken down and made a fool of myself by

³⁵Bishop to Gasquet, 9 December 1906: BP.

³⁶Bishop to Gasquet, 19 July 1914: BP.

³⁷Bishop to Gasquet, 14 July 1914: BP.

uncontrollable blubbering."³⁸ Whether Gasquet missed Bishop's presence, we do not know. Gasquet owed Bishop a great debt and the Cardinal acknowledged it both in print and in letters. "It was, however, felt, even at the time, that this acknowledgement was less explicit and less generous than might have been expected. Gasquet was not a humble man, nor was he in personal relationship a notably generous man."³⁹ But towards Gasquet, Bishop showed both these characteristics in full measure.

Others appreciated Bishop's contribution, as this letter, written by a monk of Downside on the day of the great celebration, shows.

The writer wondered how many people would credit Gasquet's success to Bishop, how many

would congratulate you, as the one who set and guided him on the road which has ended in today's glory. Let me at least do so: or if others too have done so, let me join with them.

So today I have missed you, though I think you did well in keeping away, and in all we have been hearing the last two days of the glory of modern Downside, I constantly find myself thinking of you, as one who has done so much to help Downside—dear spot—to her present position: so again I congratulate you, and thank you. . . .⁴⁰

The letter must have given Bishop both joy and satisfaction. So did the new Cardinal's invitation to visit him in Rome the next year. But the pleasure ended with anticipation, since Bishop's ill health delayed the visit indefinitely.

In 1915, Bishop revisited his old dream of Benedictine liturgical studies saying

³⁸Bishop to Dom Ethelbert Horne, 11 July 1914: BP.

³⁹Knowles, Gasquet, 232.

⁴⁰Dom W. Campbell to Bishop, 10 July 1914: BP.

that in the previous autumn, he had said "goodbye in myself to the hope of seeing in my time the realization hoped for." But, he added:

It all doesn't 'trouble' me now a scrap. Much, very much has been indeed **done** in 'our time': and that's enough (I hope I've learnt) for me. And one has no **right** to expect to see this and this one **hoped** for just accomplished, realized, as fancy and hope painted and figured . . . Amen. It's all past now: and I trust one is herein thankful for what is. Here is a lot.⁴¹

It had taken him some six months to come to that conclusion and even so, he still tried to convince himself that he had expected too much; that he ought to be satisfied with what was. But he was not, and the most he could do was to set aside his long-held high hopes, which he did with this graceful epitaph.

Edmund Bishop to Everard Green

Bishop's letters to Green after the turn of the century are distinctly different from those to Gasquet. With Green, Bishop talked about himself more openly, where -as he seemed almost afraid of boring Gasquet with such trivial details of his own affairs and feelings. His friendship with Green, also a convert and a layman, allowed him to vent his wrath over developments in the Church.⁴² He candidly aired his dissent; they shared the same concerns. With Gasquet he avoided such discussion. The letters to Green reveal much more of Bishop's personality: cantankerous, resigned

⁴¹Bishop to Gasquet, 24 April 1915: BP.

⁴²Christopher Hawkins has kindly made available to me his very interesting paper, "Edmund Bishop and Maude Petre: A Study in Lay Ecclesiology" (paper submitted in partial requirement for Ph.D in theology, Berkeley, California, 1988). The author has used Bishop's letters to Green as a source of Bishop's ecclesiology.

and patient. He aired his likes and dislikes and remarked on his continued enjoyment of past shared pleasures, unlike his letters to Gasquet which are tempered with a respectful gratitude for the love and friendship Gasquet had bestowed on him.

Among other topics, Bishop's letters to Green concern himself and his religion, the Church and current affairs and John Henry Newman. Those on the Church and on Newman trace their origins in his Black Books.

"The Catholic Religion"

To Green, Bishop admitted to having been a Romantic from the early days of Romanticism. Emancipation had signalled "the end of that Romanticism which has carried so many of us to 'Rome' and a good many to 'Romanism.'"⁴³ All the same, Bishop had never forgotten the "enthusiasms of days long since departed, and the hopes along with them."⁴⁴

Living in the country had removed him from the centre of Catholic life in London where the celebration of Mass was more elaborate, and he missed it. At the same time, occasionally he felt pangs for a purer Catholicism than English Catholicism could offer.

Though I gravely miss so much of traditional Catholic apparatus and paraphernalia (to call it by the meanest and even opprobrious names) which my temperament and the romanticist influences of my early days not only make dear to me, but which I find to be so sympathetic, and where I find myself "at home" — though I suppose as 'John Bull' as can

⁴³Bishop to Gasquet, 14 June 1902: BP.

⁴⁴Bishop to Gasquet, 5 December 1903: BP.

be and as ardent a desire as any of the preeminence of our race in the world for the good also of 'the world' itself, I often long . . . to be, for a time, months, in some Catholic country, — a country where Catholicity in its modern form is indigenous, **natural** (and therefore Italy, Spain, or one or two select districts of Germany): here on our shores it is exotic, ought to. It is so largely romantic — nonsense.⁴⁵

Bishop's longings for an indigenous Catholicism may have been founded on memories from his Belgian schooldays and visits to France. In 1909, he wrote that:

the older I grow the more I seem to care for the simplest mass possible — (not hurried or gabbled); and for the love of ritual service I am content to go backward and think of the time that has been, when I have cared for them; this retrospective thought makes me 'comfortable' and 'happy', — but it is a past time. . . . If I may discover yet further my inmost mind in these things — I would if I could bury myself away (for religion) in some north Italian country town or village.⁴⁶

His recurring desire to be elsewhere may have been fostered by Bishop's dislike of an uncaring priest of the local chapel from 1902-1914. When he was replaced in 1914, Bishop remarked that for himself, it was too late. As he grew weaker, he was content to stay home.

This gradual preference for the simplest of religious services suggests that Bishop continued to be sustained by what he called "the Catholic religion" as opposed to "the Church," and that to the end he was a man of deep piety. Bishop always insisted that he had not become a Catholic to solve intellectual difficulties and after the 1907 papal encyclical, Pascendi, he re-emphasised this claim:

Catholicity is a great **religion**; it is the **only one** (sad as such a case may be) to which I own and can feel allegiance. But the Catholic

⁴⁵Bishop to Green, 18 September 1904: BP.

⁴⁶Bishop to Green, 24 March 1909: BP.

'Intellectual System of the Universe' —the great intellectual system elaborated by the theologians: —that is a different matter. All I can say is that (although such considerations were not absent, especially on the side of Holy Scripture) I never became a Catholic, 'embraced Catholicism' as a **solution of intellectual difficulties**: and the older I grow, and more I know, the less does it appear to me to be so. But just therein lies what I call 'the venture of faith.'⁴⁷

He repeated the same claim later with new emphasis:

Of course I accept and keep my childhood's beliefs: 'intellectualism' in 'religion' I grow more and more averse to, impatient of: whilst knowing also (I am apt to say: alas! for me!) that I have learned by hard labour and prolonged attention how little founded (in 'antiquity') that is, or anywhere but out of their own 'authority') is so much they preach and teach. Still all that does not seem to awake in me recalcitrance or objection: 'you suffer if a man be lifted up, if a man strike you in the face' It all reduces itself in these matters to suffering in **simple patience**; That is enough, quite; and we need not **wish** to go on to the further stage, the state of perilous perfection, and 'suffer gladly'. . . . One's whole aspiration seems at times to sum itself up in the desire, the simple desire, to 'take one's death' —the death these people put one through —'very patiently,' like Abbat Whiting [sic] at the hands of the servants of Harry VIII. Don't think me profane; don't think I laugh. Everything has gone out beyond all that. . . . Patience, patience, that is enough.⁴⁸

This important passage clearly shows that Bishop's belief was still rooted in the Bible and that for him, dogma had not passed the test of history. Despite his findings, he maturely accepted the situation. Perhaps his diaries allowed him to dissipate his anger.

⁴⁷Bishop to Green, 31 December 1907: BP.

⁴⁸Bishop to Green, 26 February 1909: BP.

"The Church"

In 1903, Bishop wrote to Green that he was no longer concerned with reform in the Church, but had:

a keen sense of the importance a) of throwing on Authority the whole responsibility for its own acts, b) of accepting entirely and without reserve its decisions on its own personal concerns however little they may be consonant with my own personal ideas and sympathies.⁴⁹

Bishop did not necessarily agree with the decisions, but merely accepted them as given. He repeated this in 1906, and revealed the root of his acceptance. He discussed his first encounter with Pugin – his "Letter on the Establishment of the Hierarchy" – before his conversion.⁵⁰ Pugin's "Letter" was a call to Catholics in England to support the new hierarchy financially so it could flourish, separate from the state, with "real, spiritual success." To make his point, Pugin recalled the English Reformation which was "not the work of Protestants, but a "fearful and terrible example of a Catholic nation betrayed by a corrupted Catholic hierarchy."⁵¹ He called it "a pure question of ecclesiastical power, ceded to the king by the hierarchy, and all subsequent events hang on this act."⁵² Bishop explained to Green that Pugin's tract had given him the ideas that all his reading and experience had since justified:⁵³ that in

⁴⁹Bishop to Green, 15 January 1903: BP.

⁵⁰A. Welby Pugin, "An Earnest Address on the Establishment of the Hierarchy," (London: Charles Dolman, 1851), 1-32.

⁵¹Ibid., 2.

⁵²Ibid., 5.

⁵³Bishop to Green, 19 July 06: BP.

their time, as in the Reformation, the laity could not rely on the clergy; that the laity had no place in the ecclesia docens; that the laity must therefore throw the whole responsibility for Church affairs onto the clergy. He concluded: "Our present Holy Father has put the laity – the 'multitude' in [its] place. Let us not merely take it ungrudgingly but **resolutely keep it**."⁵⁴

Pugin's pamphlet had had a great influence on young Bishop. He well remembered its effect forty-one years later, and still agreed with Pugin's thesis. It is quite understandable that once Bishop had decided to become a Catholic he should dedicate himself, not to the education of the laity, but of the clergy.

'Modern' Issues

Green wrote to Bishop concerning Loisy in France.⁵⁵ Bishop replied, paraphrasing a Biblical passage to sum up Loisy's situation.

And it has happened now as in an interesting case described by St. Luke in a very graphic manner in The 'Acts': 'And then they took Sosthenes . . . and then they took Loisy the chief of these new critical apologists and they beat him before all the world; and the world cared for none of these things – except to snigger . . . '⁵⁶

Bishop explained the criticisms in more detail.

One of the main difficulties of understanding the case is that in fact people have been much more intent on the question what Loisy is, or thinks, than on the position he takes up, the task he sets himself, and what he says. The danger for some Catholics (There are not many I

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Green to Bishop, 10 June 1903: BP.

⁵⁶Bishop to Green, 5 July 1904: BP.

think who are given to thinking) is that they have been so accustomed to think 'the enemy' are not merely knaves but fools that even a glimpse of the possibility they are not such 'fools' as we've thought them is disquieting enough—to make 'em shriek, or lose hold of 'the faith'. . . . In their intense interest in him and what he thinks, people both inside and outside the Church seem to have lost sight of his professed object—to meet the enemy on the enemy's own ground, using and using only, for historical questions, those methods of historical criticism which alone the historical schools recognize as valid.⁵⁷

Despite his strong opinions, Bishop wrote Green it was best to stand aside.

But then I hold that people like you and me are not concerned, are not bound in any way, to get out of our puzzlement or to have any opinion on the subject. If one chooses to be interested and to be mixed up, then 'à nos risques et péril.' You see we laity belong to the class of 'cracked on the crown'—by episcopal staves and other bludgeons. Good. Let us range ourselves accordingly. Only when I hear shrieks, I don't consider myself bound to join in, nor to believe much in the shrieks.⁵⁸

Bishop's disgust is apparent.

In 1908, Bishop returned to Loisy and addressed Tyrrell as well. He trusted they could defend themselves, and would not join in condemning them. The two men set themselves the task of finding answers to questions the priests had ignored,⁵⁹ and for this contribution, they earned Bishop's respect.

Bishop made his final pronouncement on 'modernism' a few months after the beginning of the Great War and four months after the accession of Pope Benedict XV. He was saddened that the churches were so impotent in the face of war and that the new pope's main concern was, once again, the Roman spirit. "As to his (or anybody

⁵⁷Bishop to Green, 5 July 1904: BP.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Bishop to Green, 1 August 1908: BP.

else's) attitude towards 'Modernism' or 'Modernists' it seems to me that it doesn't matter a rush. 'Modernism' in our Church never had a ghost of a 'raison d'être': or, rather I should say a ghost of a chance of 'success.'"⁶⁰ This was not a new insight. Bishop had long held that the nineteenth century Church, in choosing the ultramontane position, had become 'irreformable, irrevocable,' and the result was 'the Church' as represented by Pascendi.⁶¹

Edmund Bishop and Friedrich von Hügel

The correspondence between Edmund Bishop and Baron Friedrich von Hügel is familiar to scholars of "modernism." Alec Vidler was the first to make thorough use of Bishop's letters to prove that Bishop was indeed a modernist, though a "singular and detached one."⁶² Subsequently, Thomas Loome called Bishop "the shrewdest of all observers of modernism"⁶³ in his study of Bishop and von Hügel. In 1983, Andrew Moore used Bishop's correspondence, augmented with other letters, to show that Bishop, as a "commentator on modernism," was "worthy of attention."⁶⁴

The letters between Bishop and Baron von Hügel have been so thoroughly discussed by various historians that it is not necessary to cover this ground again.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Bishop to Green, 29 June 1909: BP.

⁶²A Variety of Catholic Modernists, (Cambridge University Press, 1970), 136.

⁶³Loome, Liberal, 9.

⁶⁴Moore, "Edmund Bishop," 93.

Rather, the correspondence between Bishop and von Hügel which was omitted by Bishop's biographer can be studied to suggest reasons for these lacunae.

In 1953, while working on the biography of Bishop, Nigel Abercrombie published Friedrich von Hügel's letters to Edmund Bishop.⁶⁵ Abercrombie quotes a letter which illustrates "in a special way the observations of Dom Hugh Connolly, writing in 1927 to Dom André Wilmart, that 'E.B. definitely did not like the Baron, nor his modernism,' and spoke of him as 'a dangerous man.'"⁶⁶ The witness of Connolly would be particularly convincing since he and Bishop were close friends and colleagues. Abercrombie uses this letter to explain Bishop's refusal in 1909 to edit the correspondence of Tyrrell and von Hügel, at the latter's request. Bishop's reply of 17 August was, in fact, not at all in this spirit and two weeks later Bishop arranged for the Baron to visit him at Downside. This arrangement, which suited both men, was a compromise: the Baron had suggested a visit to Bishop in Barnstaple, planning to stay at a hotel, and Bishop had invited him to be his guest in his home. The phrase "a dangerous man" is taken out of context, as shall be illustrated below.

It is true that the Baron tried constantly to engage Bishop in various enter-

⁶⁵Nigel Abercrombie, "Friedrich von Hügel's Letters to Bishop," *Dublin Review*, 227 (1953): 68-78, 179-189, 285-298, 419-438. There are twenty-three letters in all. Abercrombie has divided them into five groups. The number of letters in each group is indicated in bold type: "I:Introduction," 1897, 1; "II: Founding the London Society for the Study of Religion," 1904, 5; 1905, 2; "III:Loisy," 1906, 4; "IV:'Pascendi' and After," 1907, 1; 1908, 2; V:Tyrrell, 1909, 5; 1912, 1; 1913, 2. The correspondence was not continual. It focused on particular issues of the day and many of Bishop's replies include thanks for books by Loisy, Houtin, Turmel, etc., which were gifts of the Baron.

⁶⁶Quoted in Abercrombie, "von Hügel": 433.

prises. While Bishop refused most of his suggestions, some pleased him very much. Over the years, the Baron tried to arrange meetings between Bishop and Archbishop Mignot, Padre Semeria and Jacques Chevalier (an authority on English Non-Conformity). Bishop expressed his eagerness to meet each of these men but living so far from London made it impossible. He did not object when von Hügel passed his letters to Tyrrell, and he carefully read the books and papers which were supplied for his critique. In a letter to von Hügel, Bishop again called himself "a modernist before modernism."⁶⁷ As with his Anglican friends, he knew it was safe.

Between transcripts of the Baron's letters, Abercrombie commented on Bishop's replies. It is instructive to compare these comments to Bishop's actual correspondence.⁶⁸ Abercrombie did his best to protect Bishop's reputation as a Catholic by omitting what he thought was unacceptable. In some cases Abercrombie refrained from mentioning Bishop's reply at all.⁶⁹ At one point he combined two of Bishop's letters, giving no dates. This editorial practice concealed that much had been omitted.⁷⁰ The topics Abercrombie excludes which are of interest here are Bishop's frequent comments on the changing relationship between clergy and laity and its effect on his relationships.

⁶⁷Bishop to von Hügel, 18 February 1908: BP.

⁶⁸Downside Abbey has photocopies of the originals which are at St. Andrews University, Scotland.

⁶⁹Those letters entirely omitted are 18 February 1908, 2 July 1909, and 20 December 1909.

⁷⁰The letter of 3 March 1908 is combined with that of 26 April 1908. Abercrombie, *ibid.*: 421-22.

'The Clergy and the Laity

As early as 1905, Bishop had begun to realize that in the light of the sanctions against critical scholarship on such topics as Christian origins, New Testament criticism and the history of dogma, it was becoming impossible to speak candidly with priests about the problems of the day. To von Hügel, he wrote that it was his duty to avoid engaging Butler, for instance, in certain conversations:

You know that personally I feel that it is incumbent on one to remember the difficulties of an enlightened and 'literal' minded ecclesiastic in the presentation of things and I believe often he is best 'helped' by his 'best' friends by not being forced or pressed to sound the depths of his own mind in the time of transition such as is our present age.⁷¹

This was a sacrifice for Bishop on two counts: first, because it signalled the end of his vocation to educate the clergy and second, because it meant excluding an important part of the dynamic between the two old friends.

In 1908, Bishop had reason to feel isolated and upset because of the developments since Pascendi:

Hitherto I have not so much as dared to speak (=write) to any of my priest-friends. And I feel an instinctive indisposition to do so. I can hardly wish **them** to see or feel as I a layman do not scruple to see and feel. That is a part of the horror of the situation. It is the triumph of anti-sociality: to the profit of — what? It is to me the denial of **Catholicity**.⁷²

Bishop had been reading Loisy's two books on the Synoptic Gospels, another gift from the Baron, and he suggested that Loisy's ecclesiastical seminary training was

⁷¹Bishop to von Hügel, 8 October 1905: BP.

⁷²Bishop to von Hügel, 26 April 1908: BP.

a disadvantage. Bishop recalled "a shrewd old convert long since dead" who said that such training

"had turned out necessarily . . . a body that must be described as 'the **most unaffectionate** of men'. Whether the individual turns chiefly to intellectualism or to devoutness this seems a bad preparation for dealing with a phase in which men's whole being is in question as **individuals**."⁷³

Bishop was used to having close relationships with men: he had five brothers. Only the eldest, Charles, shared his interest in religion, but Edmund's remarks on the death of his brother George in 1906⁷⁴ are witness to the mutual love and respect between them.⁷⁵ But with the situation in the Church, Bishop could never talk about his interests with the two men to whom he had been closest, Gasquet and Butler. He reacted with withdrawal and took the position that the laity must use the clergy for its religious needs but fend for itself in intellectual matters. These words tell something of his feelings at the time:

Loisy never said anything truer and better than when (in 'Autour', I think) he pointed out the spirit of selfishness as animating the Roman Church: 'it has, as the past shews, lived for itself and now, now that it has everything in its own hands, let it become Catholic, live for the Church'. Vain and futile hope! Empty dream! The future we have to calculate on is rather this—with the spread of the Roman spirit among a now abject clergy, the intensifying of that spirit of selfishness and self-

⁷³Bishop to von Hügel, 26 April 1908: BP.

⁷⁴Bishop to Green, 20 December 1906: BP.

⁷⁵George was the second son in the family. When he died, Bishop wrote to Gasquet, "He was always a good and most kind brother to me: I ought to know, living in the same house with him and always on the most intimate terms for two and twenty years." 20 December 1906: BP.

love that is characteristic of a `dominant sacerdotalism.'⁷⁶

Bishop began to regret that he had spent most of his working life educating the clergy.

Indeed as I look back it seems to me I have been wrong in my `views' on the Catholic situation. It early seemed to me as a convert that in our Church the clergy are everything, the laity nothing; in these circumstances the great need seemed to be of a clergy, some members of which should be highly educated, and perfectly trained in the method and in sympathetic touch with the thinking, of the day and [? that], expressly with a view to the defence and protection of a laity which the Church system itself condemned largely to be a nullity. **I was wrong. The need is for a laity**, that for its own (spiritual) purpose will use the clergy and for the rest leave them alone to their own devices, given up to the desire of their own hearts; but on the other hand a laity themselves brought together by their own needs, helping each other and helping themselves to find their own way out of the intellectual difficulties of the present situation as best they may and can. In fact (as you may say) a gospel of self help as a pendant to a gospel of selfish sacerdotalism!⁷⁷

Bishop adopted his usual remedy, not to leave the Church, but to remain faithful: not to complain, not to submit, but to be silent on these issues. He felt "solicitude" for "the multitude," and the young men and women so unprepared for the times, caught in the conflict between the knowledge available in the modern world and that offered by the Church. He himself took refuge in the scriptures.⁷⁸

Von Hügel suggested that Bishop's dismal regret was brought on by his dashed hope for Church reform. Bishop denied this and wrote that all he felt about the Church's direction was "attentive indifference." Bishop felt that the laity needed his

⁷⁶Bishop to von Hügel, 28 June 1908: BP.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid.

efforts, and that the dedication of his life towards the education of priests had "marred" his life, "stultified it."⁷⁹

This comment likely stemmed from Bishop's sense of failure and loneliness. Still, he would always welcome a visit from von Hügel, even if they did not always agree. He made this clear:

I shall look forward to some long chats; the more welcome in as much as, since Pascendi, I have refrained from entering on 'questions' with priests (laymen I never see) even old and intimate friends. Up to now, it has seemed to me best so.⁸⁰

This passage serves as a further justification for his sense of isolation: priests could not and would not talk about current issues and he never saw any informed layperson. To Bishop, the Baron must have been something of a godsend. He used their correspondence to air his views and since he focused on few issues, Bishop could approach topics from different angles over the years.

In December 1909 Bishop abandoned the position that he had been wrong to focus on educating the clergy, but held firm to his dedication to the laity.

You know how much I have been interested in the Higher (I will try to explain, work up to this consideration) Studies of the Clergy – indeed I might even say that to promote these, even in the remote ways, the indefinitely indirect ways, that were within the compass of my poor individuality and its 'impotence' – to promote these (I might almost say) I gave up, have given up, the best years of my life; and as it were effaced, wiped out myself therein. But this was, in my mind, **not for the sake of the clergy**. . . . It seemed to me that the only hope **for the laity**, the only hope of defence for the laity (eliminated as a

⁷⁹Bishop to von Hügel, 28 June 1908: BP.

⁸⁰Bishop to von Hügel, 2 July 1909: BP. Since von Hügel was extremely hard of hearing, Bishop must have been a patient listener.

practical 'factor of progress') was to bring this clergy, securely entrenched in their seminaries presbyteries, 'religious houses' face to face with those difficulties, those problems, mainly arising from historical considerations that the laity, thrown out in the rough and tumble of the world, found themselves, willy-nilly, amongst

Why am I saying all this to you? Not so much that I was 'mistaken', but that the whole idea now seems to me a mistaken one; and that I think that, whatever be done in the future, the line I have indicated and that I in act and in practice followed, was a mistaken one; and is (should it suggest itself to others) really but an *ignis factuus*, proper to lead if not to actual disaster, then only to certain and assured 'disappointment'.⁸¹

Von Hügel initiated the last exchange of letters with a request that Bishop accept a copy of Maude Petre's two-volume work on George Tyrrell. He asked Bishop to forward his remarks the author. Bishop complained that von Hügel underestimated him for he had already read the second volume, presumably borrowed from a library. But he assented to the task. It would prove to be a highly emotional experience.

The Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell

On 12 November 1912, Bishop noted in his newly bound four-volume "Opusula" that he had just read the second volume of the life of George Tyrrell, as arranged by Maude Petre. Such was the effect of this book on him that he copied a passage on the first page of his "Opuscula." The passage⁸² is a statement of Tyrrell's position regarding the Church which Bishop changed appropriately to make his own.

⁸¹Bishop to von Hügel, 20 December 1909: BP.

George Tyrrell, Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell, arranged, with supplements, by M.D. Petre. 2 vols. (London: Edward Arnold 1912), II:74.

'What then is my position? As long as I know that I am in sympathy with' (Catholicity as a religion) 'I consider my position as' (a Catholic in communion with Rome) 'in no way dishonourable' (Indeed it is the only position that I can take up and stand in.)⁸³

In early 1913, Bishop received his own copy of the two-volume work from Maude Petre and filled it with marginalia.⁸⁴ Reading through these notes, one is struck by the many thoughts of Tyrrell that would have found resonance in Bishop's thinking. Tyrrell wrote of the need to educate the clergy; Bishop noted, "This has been my point for years."⁸⁵ Tyrrell wrote, "Then I came to see that there were two Newmans, the former primarily ecclesiastic, subordinately liberal; the latter 'e converso.'" Finally, a conviction that the former is the true Newman." Bishop's note says: "Now you have it."⁸⁶ On the definition of infallibility, Tyrrell wrote: "The root error was in 1870. Condense all power into the hands of one man, who may be a fool or a knave, and what can you expect?" Bishop commented: "Of course!"⁸⁷ Tyrrell wrote "The more I care about religion, the less I seem to care about Rome." Bishop again agreed: "Of course."⁸⁸

The greatest difference between the men was that while Bishop was long

⁸³Quoted in "Opuscula" I, E.B. Tracts 186: BP.

⁸⁴I am indebted to Dom Andrew Moore of Downside Abbey for the use of his work, "A Transcription of the Marginalia of Edmund Bishop in Bishop's own copy of the Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell by M.D. Petre Vol. II."

⁸⁵Bishop's note in Tyrrell, Life, I:122.

⁸⁶Ibid., I:220.

⁸⁷Ibid., I:134.

⁸⁸Ibid., I:406.

convinced that Rome was "irreformable," Tyrrell believed that those who were concerned could effect a change in the Church. To this end, Tyrrell spent himself, and was excommunicated.

Reading these volumes brought Bishop great sadness. Often he wrote that he couldn't go on reading. He blamed Tyrrell's sad fate on the Jesuit order, von Hügel and Tyrrell's other friends, and Tyrrell himself. Bishop's long-standing hostility towards the Jesuits began with the writers of the Civiltà Cattolica who, in the 1860s, supported papal infallibility. Tyrrell's treatment by his fellow Jesuits made Bishop even more critical of the order, adding to his general critique of developments in clergy-laity relations.

When these childless inhumans, whose discipline throughout life has been to kill the man within them, not merely to master it, whose aim has been to murder all human affection within them — When I hear these adopting the paternal manner, I instinctively shudder — as if, in the 'sense' that, some inhuman devil is at the door.⁸⁹

Bishop was convinced Tyrrell was a "victim" of his friends, his "fatal friends," as he wrote, over and over. The most influential of these friends was Friedrich von Hügel. Bishop's comments have often been cited as proof of his strong reservations concerning the Baron's influence on Tyrrell. Some of these comments show an appreciation for the positive qualities that he had come to know: "I cannot but think that with all his excellences, Fr. von H is **fatal** — to his "**friends**."⁹⁰ "F.v.H is as

⁸⁹Tyrrell had written to the General of the Jesuits, addressing him as "Your Paternity." Bishop wrote his comments beside the General's reply of 7 January 1906. The transcription of the marginal note is mine, since Moore has not transcribed this note, calling it "fairly illegible." Moore, "Transcription," 32 and Tyrrell, Life II:249.

'hopeless' as he is 'dangerous' and 'good.'"⁹¹

Most of the comments are more critical: "Of course! It is painful to v.H. to be made to face the truth."⁹² "But when has v. H. ever cared for 'the sheep' — except for one, himself."⁹³

Above all, Bishop laid the responsibility for Tyrrell's fate on the man himself. George Tyrrell's fate, like that of everyone, was the result of his "own words and actions."⁹⁴ Bishop thought Tyrrell should have kept silent and taken the advice he gave others, which was to avoid confrontation with "the system."⁹⁵

There is no record of any correspondence between Bishop and von Hügel after 1913.⁹⁶ Moore writes it was "doubtless no coincidence" that the correspondence came to an end⁹⁷ once Bishop realized the extent of the Baron's influence on Tyrrell. There were probably other reasons as well. The basis of the correspondence was their

⁹⁰Bishop's note in Tyrrell, Life, II:241.

⁹¹Ibid., II:294.

⁹²Ibid., II:295.

⁹³Ibid., II:296. Perhaps von Hügel came to recognize some of his own faults in this regard. In his old age he wrote to his niece, "The golden rule is, to help those we love to escape from us." In Letters From Baron von Hügel to a Niece, ed. with an Introduction by Gwendolen Greene. (London, J.M. Dent, 1929), xxix.

⁹⁴Bishop's note in Tyrrell, Life, II:225.

⁹⁵Ibid., II:330.

⁹⁶Bishop's last three letters, dated 31 May 1912, 27 January 1913, and 2 February 1913, are printed in full, with notes, in Looze, Liberal, Appendix, 419-436.

⁹⁷Moore, "Transcription," 96.

mutual interest in modern ideas and the men behind them. The Baron wanted Bishop to take an active part in the reform of the Church and, to this end, supplied him with the latest books and papers on the subject. Furthermore, the correspondence provided Bishop with an opportunity to communicate his ideas to a safe and willing recipient.

With the "anti-modernist" oath in place, there was no point in further discussions; the "modernist movement" in the Church was over. In 1910 and 1911 there were no letters. The last three letters from von Hügel are concerned with Maude Petre's work on Tyrrell's autobiography and life. Bishop answered each of these in his characteristic fashion, adding his thoughts on Ward's Newman and regrets concerning the fate of the educated laity in the English Catholic Church, but his attention was turning to more personal matters.

Bishop had always been able to ward off von Hugel's influence: he was no "dupe" of the Baron, as he called Tyrrell.⁹⁸ The Baron's ability to win Tyrrell's, Loisy's and others' misplaced confidence Bishop labelled "dangerous" in 1913. He recognized it for what it was: "v H has been at 'tactics' — wirepulling and making his puppets work — Loisy, Tyrrell and Co — for years."⁹⁹ Bishop's advice to von Hügel at Downside in 1909, to avoid condemnation by Rome, suited the Baron admirably.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Bishop's note in Tyrrell, Life, II:296.

⁹⁹See Eamon Duffy, "Will the Real von Hügel Please Stand Up?" Heythrop Journal 22 (January 1981): 52. Duffy writes, "Certainly, von Hügel was hopelessly maladroit at this sort of scheming, but his indulgence in it was incessant. There was as much of the fox about his nature as of the lamb."

¹⁰⁰As von Hügel wrote to Maude Petre afterwards, "One thing that E. Bishop made more plain to me at Downside than I had perhaps ever seen it, is the great duty we have, not because of our comforts or even of our individual spiritual safety, but

While Tyrrell waited for the Vatican to pronounce judgement on his writing, he received affirmation from his many supporters, but, he wrote, "the tons of congratulation, enquiries, etc. are very worrying." Bishop noted, "What a TERROR is life among our people – (even sometimes if one be but 'inter mortuos &c')." ¹⁰¹ He knew well enough what would happen. "Inter mortuos liber" was a phrase he used frequently to describe his own position in the Church.

Friendship

In 1909, Bishop had written to Green, counselling patience about the situation in the Church:

History tells us well enough what is to be thought of the Vicars and how they take and have taken His Name in vain. — Let us be patient then. Things are not worse than they have been before. I admit the breaking up of intimacies and setting up of walls of separation between chief friends, and the misunderstandings and cowardices therefrom resulting are hard to bear. But let us strive to fail not. ¹⁰²

By 1913, Bishop had turned the page. He began to concern himself with his own affairs and with the legacy that he so desired to leave after his death: a collection of his liturgical and historical essays. In this endeavour he received the generous help of friends and colleagues who supported, encouraged and befriended him. He no

because of the truths and the future we stand for, to avoid expulsion or even condemnation, as far as ever elementary honesty and loyalty permit." Von Hügel to M. Petre, 14 Sept 1909, in George Tyrrell's Letters, selected and ed. by M.D. Petre. (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1920), 168-9.

¹⁰¹Bishop's note in Tyrrell, Life, II:328.

¹⁰²Bishop to Green, 6 May 1909: BP.

longer had cause to complain of isolation and the unfeeling behaviour of friends.

From this time on, more and more often, he wrote that life was good, God was kind, and he was thankful. In a 1914 letter, Green congratulated Bishop on his four pupils: the new Cardinal Gasquet, Abbot Butler, Dom Hugh Connolly and Dom Brit.

"Where would they have been, but for you?"¹⁰³ Bishop's marginal note adds the name of Dom Kuypers, and the comment: "This is Everard Green all over, delightful in its whiff of the old atmosphere — how it brings back to me the 'dear' delightful interests of other days."¹⁰⁴ In this respect, Bishop knew how to enjoy his old age and he often spoke of treasured memories which kept him entertained on his walks.

It is noteworthy that in the Abbey of Downside, memorials carved in stone are dedicated to each of these old friends.

4. Liturgy and History

Liturgica Historica

Towards the end of his life, Bishop began to think seriously about his lasting contribution to history. In 1909, Bishop told Green that he wanted to prepare a collection of reprints of his work, adding, "that I think would be the finest, handsomest eulogy that could be passed."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³Green to Bishop, 14 May 1914: BP.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵Bishop to Green, [17?] March 1909: BP.

In 1912, he prepared the four-volume "Opuscula" of his own writings—a collection of off-prints of his articles, and memorabilia which included originals of important letters received, copies of letters sent, notes and observations and personal information. "Opuscula" formed volumes 186 to 189 of the "E.B. Tracts," a bound collection of important articles by various authors, gathered by Bishop over the years. By January 1917, the collection would number three hundred volumes.

Since 1903, Bishop had been contributing papers to the Journal of Theological Studies, founded in 1900. From the start his work was appreciated. After his first article in that journal, H.B. Swete of Cambridge sent him this note: "I am sure that if any time you are so good as to read or send a paper for our Cambridge Theological Society it will be very welcome. Did you see the Guardian's comment on your contribution to the Journal—`a monument of learning which few men in England are competent to review, which many scholars will be glad to profit by.'"¹⁰⁶

In 1908, he offered the editor of the Journal an article which developed into the series "Liturgical Comments and Memoranda." Bethune-Baker's reply to Bishop's suggestion confirms his high reputation at Oxford. The editor wrote, "The Journal will be proud to have such a series of Liturgical Comments as you offer—the more the better."¹⁰⁷

When Bishop decided to work on the publication of a collection of his articles, he chose the Oxford University Press. Armitage Robinson regretted that he had not

¹⁰⁶H.B. Swete to Bishop, 3 May 1903: BP.

¹⁰⁷J.F. Bethune-Baker to Bishop: 29 January 1909: BP.

chosen Cambridge, which would also have welcomed the project. Bishop's last years were spent preparing the volume of his essays on liturgical and antiquarian subjects which was published the year after his death as Liturgica Historica. The project was brought to completion with the help and dedication of Dom Hugh Connolly of Downside and Kenneth Sisam of Oxford.¹⁰⁸ Their continued support gave Bishop the courage to do his part, to choose the material and to edit and rewrite of much of it. By the time of his death all that remained to be done was a final revision of the proofs. The end result resembled Legg's Sarum Missal, which had given Bishop so much pleasure.¹⁰⁹

During the years, Bishop was fortunate to have as friends Hugh Connolly and Armitage Robinson. On the Continent, Dom André Wilmart had become his ardent disciple. These close friendships and others made Bishop's final years rewarding.¹¹⁰

Historical Method

Bishop offered an introduction to "historical methodology," as he called it, in an 1899 review article of the three-volume Introduction to Historical Studies by

¹⁰⁸For an endearing account of Bishop's introduction to Sisam and the contribution of these men to Bishop's project, see Bishop's letter to Gasquet, 22 September 1915: BP.

¹⁰⁹Bishop to Everard Green, 22 April 1916: BP. "I think Legg's volume of the Sarum Missal just lovely; I take it up sometimes just for the pleasure of looking at it!"

¹¹⁰For the details of Bishop's publications and of his relationships, see Nigel Abercrombie's biography of Bishop.

Ch. V. Langlois and Ch. Seignobos.¹¹¹ His reason for offering this article to the "common public" was to give guidelines to enable readers of history to recognize which books were written by truthful conscientious people of sense, and which were not.¹¹² Langlois and Seignobos' first volume deals with "preliminary knowledge" concerning information and how to find it. The second deals with "analysis," or what must be done to the information before it can be used. The third deals with "synthesis" or how to use the information which has been gained.¹¹³

Bishop cited this "truth:" "that it is utterly impossible for us ever to know more than the extant documents tell us. . . . Any past, or any part of the past, not witnessed to by documents is for us as though it had never existed" —and any past even witnessed to by documents or eyewitnesses is coloured with the hue of the recorder. . . "in as much as knowledge is full, a document insignificant at first sight, that tells nothing to most men, may yield up to the practised and informed mind the key to some hitherto insolvable problem or enigma."¹¹⁴ So much for "historical facts."

Bishop moved on to historical criticism. "'External criticism' [is the art] of turning a 'document' inside out and making it tell the truth in spite of any mind or

¹¹¹"Historical Critics on the Critical Art, DSR 18 (July 1899): 190-199. Reprinted in Bishop's Liturgica Historica, 475-484. Abercrombie refers to this article as "Bishop's professional statement as a historian" Life, 279.

¹¹²Bishop, "Historical Critics": 191.

¹¹³*Ibid.*

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 192.

intention of its first deviser." At this stage, much depends on the historian.¹¹⁵

Certain natural aptitudes are the necessary conditions of success in the pursuit of modern technical erudition. There are two divisions of this particular labour: one may be described as the work of strictly accurate and reliable cataloguing; the other, minute and conscientious examination of the individual 'document,' which often enough does not tell all its story, or even its true story, on the face of it. The first condition of success is a natural liking for the work that has to be done.¹¹⁶

The faults of the historian are the "disease of inexactitude" and the wish to hurry. Thus ends Bishop's "theory" of "historical methodology." Bishop ended his review where the discussion of "internal criticism" — "a sort of moral work — the basis of which seems to lie in a discreet knowledge of human nature" — begins. In Liturgical Historica, he added the following: "But 'synthesis' is a work yet more moral. To enter on these matters would be to exercise myself in things too high for me; and so I leave them, my business being concerned only with the art of 'cinder-sifting,' as an old friend used aptly to call it." ¹¹⁷ "Things too high" was a phrase he often used with regard to philosophy or speculative thought.

Two "consultations" serve to illustrate how Bishop put his theoretical methods at the disposal of his inquirers. In a letter to Dr. J.H. Srawley¹¹⁸ of Oxford, Bishop proposed an exercise for a historical seminar which would teach how a thesis gives force and meaning to documentary evidence, rather than the converse ideal. For this

¹¹⁵Ibid., 195.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 195.

¹¹⁷Bishop, Liturgical Historica, 484.

¹¹⁸Bishop to J.H. Srawley, 13 June 1914: BP.

he would choose a "proper scholastic theologian," preferably a modern one, and select one of his theses. "I take a particular one in imagination, for I have 'done' some of this examining, decomposing, just as a mere exercise for myself." Bishop would write the thesis in brief. "Now having got into oneself the four or five lines of the 'thesis' as a living idea (I do like a real good first rate scholastic theologian 'novo & novissime' style, he is careful about the value of words) one sits down before the two Migne's and hunts up the crowd of patristic proofs quoted."¹¹⁹ The seminar would discover that "out of the crowd of witnesses," one or two may support the thesis. Bishop was convinced that every theologian saw his own proofs as valid, simply because each came to them convinced that the thesis was absolute truth.¹²⁰ He said the way to overcome this was to read the passages as if the traditional idea had never existed. He admitted that this was an operation which few people could perform "high presto," as if by nature, because,

preconceived ideas that have become 'domestic' in us do continue to exercise an influence over us even after we recognize, know, they ought not to. Few of us indeed really make a 'psychological' examination of ourselves in a case of this kind: but those who will take the trouble to do so will, almost all at least, find that this is so. This makes part of the difficulty of the 'historical discipline'.¹²¹

Bishop was keenly aware of the problems of historical proof and trained himself to overcome them.

¹¹⁹Bishop was very familiar with both of Migne's texts of the Early Church, Greek and Latin.

¹²⁰Bishop to J.H. Srawley, 13 June 1914: BP.

¹²¹Ibid.

The second consultation was a reply to a request for information from an Anglican parson, Archdeacon Stead.¹²² Bishop's answer, "Memorandum on Adoration at the Mass to Archdeacon Stead," covers ten pages. It is a fascinating account of what he had learned about the subject in which Bishop again recognized the difficulties of historical scholarship:

But, as so often happens so too in this case: when we want to get 'post factum' the explanation of a 'thing', in order that the explanation may be given in accordance with the fact relative to the origin and progress of the 'thing,' the question itself has to be clarified by elimination of those elements of the question which obscure its real point. Now this is what you want to know. The answer will come only when all your questions have been gone through and in dealing with the last the answer.¹²³

After winnowing fact from the mass of scholarship, Bishop asked, "What conclusion are we to draw from it?" This question led to an amplification.

We are all of us disposed (I suppose it must be in nature, so frequently, instinctively are we doing so), having hold of a 'fact' to bring it into a relation with our own tacit presuppositions; and not with other relative facts that may put the original fact in its own true light and give it its true value. Most times, I think, because we are not aware of those 'other relative facts.' What are these in the present case. — I will give some, which, however, will be wholly sufficient for our present purposes.¹²⁴

Having answered the parson's request, Bishop wondered if he could "sum up and communicate in a few words what is the further, the ultimate, 'moral' of the

¹²²S.Stead to Bishop, 23 December 1910: BP.

¹²³Bishop, "Memorandum on Adoration": BP.

¹²⁴Ibid.

whole subject? Let me try, however bungling be my effort."¹²⁵ The end of his summary reads thus:

In fact and reality, Rome left to itself (and if I may use the word – Rome uncatholicized) was always – consistently ‘Low Church’ in this article of the Eucharistic Is-ness – and was the last traditional witness in Christendom to this earlier conception.

I do not even ask you to believe me – to trust me. But I have no doubt on that head: and this conviction may I say this knowledge? is the resultant [sic] of studies begun just after I became a Roman Catholic in 1867.

Some day it will be drawn out clear – by someone. In the little tract printed years ago entitled "The Genius of the Roman Rite," I dealt with the **husk** of this matter; perhaps I may be spared to, at all events begin to open up a view of the kernel.¹²⁶

One year later, on 26 December 1911, Bishop wrote to Stead again, thanking him for his letter of 15 January 1911. Bishop's reply covered twenty pages on the history of the early Christian Eucharist, the result of explorations of documents concerning the terms 'substantia' and transubstantiation. He decided after all to keep the document 'pro memoria' and sent Stead only a simple New Year's greeting.¹²⁷ It is not difficult to see why he made this decision.

The results of such investigations will give (as I believe: surprise and) [crossed out] displeasure, and indeed pain, to many excellent and also authoritative persons – persons authoritative in their inculcation and exposition of what the **profanum vulgus**, the mere layman, 'ought' to 'think' in regard to questions which touch historical 'opinion' and 'belief' in particular.¹²⁸

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶Ibid.

¹²⁷Bishop to Stead, 26 December 1911, not sent: BP.

¹²⁸Ibid.

Bishop had slipped into theology, and this was forbidden territory. Even the study of "words" and "facts" led to "ideas." His ill-humour, which he contained by not sending the letter, was born of frustration. As he said to H.B. Swete, having written about "the layman's province" with regard to theology, these subjects, had a "great and overmastering attraction" for him."¹²⁹

History and Theology

After 1907, the neo-thomist system promoted by Rome "repudiated any experiential, affective, or intuitive mode of thought. It was positivist in that it approached its sources . . . as simple data whose givenness and transcendent meaning were there for all to see."¹³⁰ The historian's role was reduced to "simple communicator. Whatever interpretation was needed would be provide by a divinely guided magisterium."¹³¹

This description of the historian's role after Pascendi accords well with Bishop's thesis of the two antagonistic methods—the theological and the historical—referred to in his paper, "History or Apologetics." Bishop was not a "positivist" in this sense; he considered both the gathering of facts and their interpretation dependent on an "operator" under certain constraints of "historical methodology."¹³²

¹²⁹Bishop to H.B. Swete, 21 September 1905: BP.

¹³⁰Daly, Transcendence, 19.

¹³¹*Ibid.*

¹³²Elliot-Binns contrasts the work of the historian with that of the scientist. The similarity is that each has a thesis and a goal. The difference is that although "the

As he wrote, "The 'discipline' of history is such that no one, Pope or other, can get above the text and condition the meaning by other terms than those actually used or in defiance of them."¹³³ Such an attempt could no longer be called "history"; it had become apologetics.

In a letter, over which he wrote "Never sent! I should think not" and then, "Boiled down – and above all made a little reasonable," he commented on the relationship between history and dogma:

The solution of our 'difficulties' is to be found in the radical separation of dogmatics from the history of dogma; the former to become more exclusively speculative and expository; but the emphasis in regard to 'dogma' becoming increasingly thrown on the 'moral' aspect, or value, and less and less on the intellectual side, of dogmatic propositions. Hence, what is meant under 'mysticism' (one dreads to employ the word, so terribly have both word and thing been abused!) will have a much larger share than hitherto in theological tractation. And 'theology' (if it be to maintain itself as the 'Queen of the Sciences') in a way not hitherto thought of (much less realized) with the natural history of religious sentiment.¹³⁴

A year-and-a-half after this was written, the promulgation of Pascendi assured there would be no separation of dogmatics from the history of same, and no solution to intellectual difficulties, other than willing assent. In 1908, von Hügel published

historian may take up a purely scientific attitude towards facts and seek to explain and interpret them through their causal relations, personal judgment must come in. Ideally the historian may be unswayed by 'passion and prejudice,' but no one is without prejudices, although these may be unconscious." By reserving the interpretation of history to the magisterium, Rome was safeguarding dogma. L.E. Elliot-Binns, English Thought 1860-1900 (London: Longmans, Green, 1956), 98.

¹³³Bishop to John Cuthbert Hedley, Bishop of Newport, 4 April 1898: BP.

¹³⁴Bishop to W.C. Bishop, 9 March 1906, not sent: BP.

The Mystical Element of Religion, confirming Bishop's prediction of a new emphasis on religious sentiment.

Bishop's dilemma was that theology was an integral part of liturgical science, the study of the history, practice and development of liturgy.¹³⁵ He revealed his state of mind to Mgr. Giovanni Mercanti (later Cardinal), with reference to the history of the Eucharist:

I have used my utmost care to exclude all indication (so far as I know how) of any theological propensities of my own. If only for this reason: that I have taken all the care I can, not to lay myself open to the reproach, **attack, condemnation**: 'See. This layman is going out of his sphere. See! he is talking 'theology'. He forgets himself, he must be made to know it! **Smack, smack, smack**'.

To you all this may seem undue solicitude. I know the ground: I am a convert of 43 years' experience. More: I have assisted at the **elimination of the layman**¹³⁶

The "elimination of the layman" must refer to that old wound, which he called "the Mivart affair." Mercanti was a trusted friend with whom Bishop could air his frustration. He was also an able critic and Bishop graciously thanked him for that: "Your observation is to me witness how carefully you have read what I wrote, how

¹³⁵The New Catholic Encyclopedia describes it thus: "Contrary to what some authors have thought and continue to hold, liturgiology is not a branch of Church History. It has a much better claim to be a branch of theology. Liturgiology is not a part of any ecclesiastical science, but, like dogma, Biblical theology, and the rest, is itself a distinct branch of theology. While it uses the same methods and seeks the same end as other theological sciences, it nonetheless limits its own specific object. . . while liturgical science is not altogether independent of them. The liturgy itself as the public worship of the Mystical Body is a living theology, theology in action. Consequently the science that studies the liturgy is above all a theological science." 1967 ed., s.v. "Liturgiology," by W.J. O'Shea.

¹³⁶Bishop to Giovanni Mercanti, 25 January 1910, draft: BP.

carefully you independently consider the subject matter. This is the criticism that I love."¹³⁷

Had Bishop been free to write what he wished, what would he have chosen? He mentioned several projects in letters to friends all of which concern the Early Church.

To Green, he wrote the following:

To me, by the way, 'the resurrection' of the 'flesh' of the Apostles' Creed is an extraordinary thing I don't let myself dwell on: but it is a kind of thing that, if I had the capacity, I should like to write a Dissertation on, in the way of getting at the actual milieu of thought and ideas in which the item originated, in which such sort of resurrection was viewed as an actual 'gift' of Divine mercy. — Such an enquiry properly conducted would be enlightening in an extraordinary way. The clause seems surely utterly un-Pauline. But these are depths I am glad, glad, not to have the powers or capacity for sounding in the region of enquiry.¹³⁸

Bishop was "glad" to have an excuse to avoid subjects in which he had not been trained, despite his deep interest. Robinson, in 1912, sent Bishop a paper he had written on Eucharistic history. Bishop responded with enthusiasm, saying, "I do not think (to speak candidly) it could easily have fallen into the hands of a more interested and (in desire at least) attentive reader, or one more heartily desirous to learn."¹³⁹ Bishop sent his "observations."

In surveying the early Christian literature up to what I may call the great systematizing, scholastic movement of the fourth century when specific 'Theology' — the doctrine of God — was 'fixed', — we find a

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸Bishop to Green, 29 October 1909: BP.

¹³⁹Bishop to Robinson, 25 February 1912: BP.

number of religious ideas, — quite unfamiliar, unsympathetic, to our minds of today, as not fitting in conveniently to our inherited and traditional 'Theology'. To take a point which is most pressing — the relations between Spirit and 'Logos'. . . . I am convinced that until this question of 'the Spirit' in the first three centuries and in the fourth is elucidated it is impossible duly and justly to appreciate and 'understand' the early history of ideas concerning the Christian Eucharist. I hardly like to phrase what I consider the general 'character' of that history to have been, so liable to misconstruction (owing to dispute, polemics and controversies) is any 'descriptive' term one may use. But what that 'general character' is, seems to me indubitable. I am sometimes thinking whether as a finish or appending to what I have now in hand, I ought not to put down on paper and print as sketch of the 'enquiry' as to the early eucharist as I conceive it: my 'starting point,' the 'guiding idea,' and the special ramifications which the enquiry involves. There are many reasons why I am seized with tremor at even the thought of such an attempt — 'simple' as the matter seems to be.¹⁴⁰

Bishop mentioned again the impossibility of discussing these issues with priests, even intimates, since Pascendi, and affirmed his rejection of the situation, adding:

Everything 'in nature' then conspires to make me prefer to keep silence and write no more, say no more, about a subject so difficult, so obscure, so reasonably above my natural 'captus' as Early Eucharistic history. On the other hand there is something within which seems to urge me, if life be spared, not to shrink from, shirk the task; but to try and do what I can, however imperfect be the effort.¹⁴¹

Bishop would overcome his reluctance to write on these topics only if moved by "vocation or duty," as he had said about Tyrrell and Loisy.

Some four months later, Bishop concluded that despite circumstances one could still say anything one wished; it was the way one said it that mattered. In a letter to Robinson, Bishop reported that as requested, he had written a paper for the "Congress

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹⁴¹Ibid.

of Historical Studies" which he called "On the Religious Meaning and Value of the Carolingian Liturgical Reforms." In requesting that Robinson edit the paper for him, he admitted that as a solitary he was not always aware of the best way to say things, given that religion was "a ticklish subject" in which everything depended on how things were presented. But he added that he had a theory,

that it is possible to say **anything** and **everything** (that requires to be said) even in regard to the most burning religious questions: it is only a matter of the **how**: and with care, patience, and (I add) a sympathetic mind, when susceptibilities are pointed out to one, even distasteful things can be given their full force, not merely without raising 'susceptibilities' but even with acceptance.¹⁴²

At the same time, he wanted to take the usual precautions to protect himself against unconscious error. He did not want to provoke a reprimand, or worse, only to get across his point. These precautions are better understood in the light of his perception of "two planes" of history — upper and lower.

Long, long before that [Pascendi in 1907] I had come to the **conviction** of the two planes: — and if by any possible chance I ever be able (my life being spared) to make even the least contribution of utility for the elucidation of early and earliest Liturgy, it will be (and I think can be) only by resolutely taking my stand on and never budging from the lower plane.¹⁴³

The "two planes" of history were the preparation of the documents and the subsequent use of them. Bishop must have chosen the "lower plane" during his period of silence after the first Vatican Council, when he decided that as a layman, this was where he could contribute without strictures. On the negative side, this deliberately narrow

¹⁴²Bishop to Robinson, 9 June 1912: BP.

¹⁴³Bishop to Robinson, 18 Feb 1912: BP.

choice caused his friends and critics to remark that he had no philosophy of history, and that he avoided speculative thought.

First among them was von Hügel. While Bishop said himself that his natural inclinations did not lie in these subjects, it was not because he was not interested in philosophy. When Bishop received a copy of Eternal Life from the author, von Hügel, he thanked him for it, saying that he thought he would enjoy it very much, adding, "and though, as I have said before, no 'thinker' and without a 'metaphysical mind,' I find that even philosophical, or historico-philosophical, books engross my interest much." Bishop wrote that to him, the most notable feature of current books on metaphysics, was the jargon that rendered the subject obscure. He contrasted this with the disputes between W.G. Ward and J.S. Mill which in his youth he had followed with "keen delight." When Ward had trouble expressing his ideas clearly, he worked at them until he could do so.¹⁴⁴ Bishop implied that this made the ideas available to non-specialists, such as himself. Despite his gift to Bishop, von Hügel had some firm views on what he considered to be Bishop's lack of a philosophy of history.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴Bishop to von Hügel, 2 Feb 1913, in Loome, Liberal, 431-435.

¹⁴⁵To Maude Petre in 1902, von Hügel wrote, "It is quite curious to note how [Edmund Bishop] can never have enough flings at **all** philosophy as so much 'a priori' pretentiousness; and yet (of course) the good man is talking a philosophy of his own all the time. Cited by Heaney, Modernist Crisis, 27.

Von Hügel's negative feeling towards Döllinger and his followers [Bishop's mentors] are explained thus: "There was Döllinger, who had this precise feeling toward all philosophy; he handed on this feeling to Lord Acton, and Lord Acton handed it on to spiritual sons of his, well known to myself, and they again to their disciples. All these men had and have, nothing but an impatient, amused, superior

David Knowles comments that for Bishop, "theology and philosophy had little appeal."¹⁴⁶ Describing Butler's formation, Knowles writes that Butler "had as a young man no thorough-going philosophic formation, either in ancient, scholastic, or modern philosophy. Indeed, he had something of that distaste for abstract thought which Edmund Bishop, who himself was perhaps influenced by Acton, seems to have impressed on all his friends" ¹⁴⁷

In Bishop's defense, it can be said that the very model of the ecclesiastical historian according to Bishop, was F. von Funk whom he called "one of my `Scholar-heroes.'" The foreword of Funk's A Manual of Church History, states his aim, which was to make available to theology students the "main facts of Church History."

[I have] allowed the facts to speak for themselves, and have, so far as possible, refrained from comment. A philosophy of history presupposes a full knowledge of the facts, and where brevity is needed, it is best to confine oneself to facts.¹⁴⁸

Bishop could rarely declare to have all the facts of a case. His choice of history on the "lower plane" suited the times and his temperament. He did not feel free to exploit facts beyond any value they offered to history as bearers of truth, or to

smile for that frothy, shifting, arrogant, over self-confident, overweening thing men will call philosophy." The Reality of God and Religion and Agnosticism, being the literary remains of Baron Friedrich von Hügel, ed. by Edmund G. Gardner (London 1931), 32.

¹⁴⁶Knowles, "Abbot Butler": 387-88.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., 423.

¹⁴⁸F.X. von Funk, A Manual of Church History, first ed. pub. 1886 (New York: AMS, 1973), Foreword, V.

sociology as bearers of context. What any fact meant or could mean, he left to the theologians. It was safer that way.

5. Three Documents

In the early years of the new century, Bishop was very much concerned with what he perceived as a further tightening of the restrictions relating to the contribution of the laity to the Church. Three documents clearly show Bishop's change of attitude after the 1890s. The documents are available in toto in the Appendices. Appendix A includes several letters by Bishop, concerning his relationship to St. George Mivart. Appendix B is an article concerning events in the Church at the turn of the century. Both these documents support my thesis that these circumstances contributed to Bishop's change of attitude towards the Roman Catholic Church as an institution. The documents provide first-hand evidence of Bishop's analysis, disappointment, resignation, and accommodation to the circumstances. The third document, Appendix E, is a letter by Bishop to his friend, James Hope. Here Bishop encapsulated his opinions of Church government in Rome concerning the status of the laity, according to the Munich Brief (1863) and the papal encyclical, Pascendi (1907). In addition, the letter is an example of Bishop's style of writing to correspondents with mutual interests, using facts to support his arguments.

These articles and letters reflect the opinions Bishop held in his later years, and reveal the basis for his objections to the policies and decisions of the Roman Catholic Church.

**Edmund Bishop on "the Mivart Affair"
(1900, 1904: Appendix A)**

The friendship of Edmund Bishop and St. George Mivart began in 1873 at the meetings of the Guild and continued until Mivart's death in April 1900. The controversy between Cardinal Vaughan and Mivart, and the correspondence of Bishop and Mivart until Vaughan denied Mivart the sacraments which was "tantamount to excommunication, prohibiting, as it did, burial in hallowed ground," have been well-documented elsewhere.¹⁴⁹

Very little has been written about a letter Bishop sent to Cardinal Herbert Vaughan after Vaughan asked Bishop to visit Mivart on his behalf. Abercrombie quotes only the first three lines of this letter, and Gruber and Schoenl quote only Abercrombie. These lines, separate from the context of the letter, fail to convey Bishop's thoughts on the matter. For clarity, the entire letter is supplied in Appendix A. With it are two letters on the same subject by Bishop to Everard Green.

St. George Mivart became a Catholic in 1844 at the age of sixteen and later earned a reputation as the foremost Catholic scientist of his day. Among his many honours he was made a fellow of the Royal Society and in recognition of his accomplishments, Pius IX awarded him an honorary doctorate of philosophy.

¹⁴⁹J.W. Gruber, A Conscience in Conflict, the Life of St. George Mivart (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 210. See also Nigel Abercrombie, "Edmund Bishop and St. George Mivart, Month n.s. 16 (1917):2-11; J.D. Holmes, "Newman and Mivart—Two Attitudes to a Nineteenth Century Problem," Clergy Review 50 (1965):852-867; William J. Schoenl, The Intellectual Crisis in English Catholicism (New York: Garland, 1982).

By the 1890s Mivart had spent some thirty-five years trying to reconcile science and new discoveries with Christianity. He had supported the Rambler and the Home and Foreign Review and their attempts to educate English Catholics. This, as well as the Guild, he shared with Bishop. Mivart was a liberal Catholic as well as a scientist, and his efforts at mediation between faith and reason succeeded in alienating both the Church and his fellow scientists.

In 1893, Mivart's articles appeared on the Index of Forbidden Books issued from Rome. He wrote to Bishop for advice: "I am just 'indexed' and I want to know what you think I should do?"¹⁵⁰ Mivart had written an article, "Happiness in Hell."¹⁵¹ He stated that current dogma on hell was no longer tenable to the modern mind, and that the idea of eternal damnation ought to be replaced with the concept of a hell that was "redemptive and reformatory."¹⁵²

The English hierarchy severely criticized Mivart, telling him that as a layman, he had no right to discuss dogma. They believed the fear of hell had always been a strong deterrent to sin; without it, there would be no control.

Bishop's reply to Mivart suggests three possible courses of action: defiance, silence or acceptance.

One thing only would suit them better than your silence, an attitude of defiance. Your laudable submission (on the terms we know and that submission being what it is, not retraction) would take the wind out of their sails and would produce in certain quarters just the impression

¹⁵⁰St.G. Mivart to Bishop, 6 August 1893: BP.

¹⁵¹Nineteenth Century 32 (December 1892, February 1893, April 1893)

¹⁵²Gruber Life of Mivart, 179

most undesired by them, — make it more difficult in future to represent you as a rampaging disobedient Catholic. As nothing would serve their purpose better than that you should do what would give colour or representation of you in that sense.¹⁵³

Mivart did indeed submit without retracting anything he had written. Soon after, Leo XIII promulgated Providentissimus Deus on the inerrancy of Scripture. Mivart's biographer writes that "the weight of the newly crystallized Catholic position so positively enunciated in the Encyclical of 1893 the whole system of conciliation which Mivart had so patiently constructed crumbled into heresy."¹⁵⁴ The Catholic evolutionist scientists who had adopted his position were forced to recant.¹⁵⁵

In 1899, the Index was reissued and again Mivart's articles were listed. He requested that he be informed of the objections and threatened to withdraw his submission. When no answer was forthcoming, he withdrew it. By this time he was angry. The role of the French clergy in the Dreyfus affair had left him completely disgusted with Church authorities and he said so in the press. Thus was his silence broken. He followed with two articles on the state of Catholicism which Bishop told him were "outrageous." As a consequence Mivart was attacked in the Catholic press. When he registered his protest with Cardinal Vaughan, the prelate sent him a profession of faith, demanding that he resubmit to the authority of the Church. In January, Cardinal Vaughan came to Bishop to ask him to visit Mivart on his behalf.

¹⁵³Bishop to Mivart, draft copy, undated: BP.

¹⁵⁴Gruber, Life of Mivart, 188

¹⁵⁵Ibid., 191.

Bishop, not fully informed of the point of his mission, went. (Bishop's reply to Cardinal Vaughan appears in Appendix A.¹⁵⁶) Bishop did not agree with Mivart's words or actions. A note on Mivart's letter of 7 January suggests that Mivart had fallen into "excessive egoism."¹⁵⁷ But neither did he agree with Vaughan's lack of courtesy and concern for Mivart's intellectual problems. Mivart's subsequent excommunication came soon after, four months before he died. For Bishop, Mivart's case was, he said, instructive. He saw where he himself stood. Because of the dominant Jesuit theories (which helped bring about the condemnation) and "Cardinal Vaughan's slap-dash and crack-the-crown methods of shepherding. men will be careful to keep their modes of **accommodation** to themselves — **secretum meum mihi**."¹⁵⁸

In a later reflection,¹⁵⁹ Bishop wrote that Vaughan's motivation in the Mivart affair had to be viewed in the light of the events of September and October 1899 when Vaughan wrote to the Times concerning the attacks of the French Catholic press on England.

His tactics, policy and "morals" (if I may use this word in such a connexion) are to be best understood by his steady silence in spite of the repeated appeals of 'Verax' [a correspondent] and the Times itself to speak after it had been shewn that his representations were false and

¹⁵⁶Abercrombie has written "probably not sent" on this draft of the letter, but certainly Bishop wrote something to Vaughan since he said so to Green on 30 January 1900. See Appendix A after the letter to Vaughan, which I have dated as 10 January 1900, the date of Bishop's visit to Mivart.

¹⁵⁷Abercrombie, "Bishop and Mivart": 178

¹⁵⁸Scrapbook, 16, 19 Feb 1900: BP.

¹⁵⁹Scrapbook, 17, undated: BP.

merely calculated to mislead the Public.¹⁶⁰

A second window into Vaughan's state of mind was an attack on Mivart in the first issue of the Tablet of 1900. This attack was "penned by Moyes in the Archbishop's house" and published in the Tablet, which was wholly controlled by Vaughan. (Canon Moyes was editor of the Dublin.) Other correspondence in the Times concerning Mivart had been touched off by an anonymous letter in November 1899. Bishop wrote:

All this intense irritation and vulgar rage prevailing in [the] Archbishop's house of course tended to embitter the controversy on Mivart's most unhappy (and as I told him outrageous) articles in the Nineteenth Century and the Fortnightly Review.¹⁶¹

Bishop called Vaughan's silence "cowardly and mendacious:"

"cowardly" because the Cardinal by what he said as well as by what he failed to say dragged every English Catholic through the mud and mire, whilst they as individuals were ever absolutely powerless to mend the miserable mess he made."¹⁶²

These are hard words, but Bishop was defending the reputations of his old friend and the English Catholics.

The letters Bishop wrote to Green show how distressed he was over the Mivart affair—in particular, by the part he played in it. His letter of 30 January 1900 made quite plain his feelings towards Vaughan. As he often said in his diaries about others, he felt himself to have been "duped" by Vaughan. His letter of 5 January 1904

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

¹⁶¹Bishop's scrapbook, 17: BP.

¹⁶²Ibid.

contained the sorrow and regret that were then still with him. Of Mivart's opinions themselves, he made this observation:

I, for my part, rest in and can only rest in "that sweet story of old" as it was taught me and as I learnt it as a child. I can let go **none** of it. But as regards the fundamental ideas that lie **below** and at the **back** of M.'s articles, I am not at all clear whether time may not shew he anticipated the future trend of things, be theologians or non theologians of today ever so noisy in saying No, No, No: and what is more that this may coexist with the same sense that we feel today in regard to that "sweet story."¹⁶³

The memory of Mivart haunted Bishop for the rest of his life.

By 1913, Bishop's critique of Vaughan had all but disappeared. Referring to a comment by Tyrrell that "meaning had escaped the Cardinal," Bishop noted, "Here you get the real good simple man the Cardinal was as God made him and perhaps as his mother kept him — the [?] more that the clerical system has not been able wholly to suppress, crush, kill."¹⁶⁴ Bishop was less willing to condemn Vaughan simply because — as he had come to believe — an issue was simply beyond Vaughan's comprehension. If Vaughan had been unable to set an example, he was not wholly to blame given the models to which he had been exposed.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³Bishop to Green, 5 January 1904: BP.

¹⁶⁴Marginal note by Bishop, in Moore, "Transcript," 24.

¹⁶⁵Perhaps Vaughan benefited from comparison with Francis Bourne, his successor, of whom Bishop said, "What a poor creature 'tis, this Bourne." Ibid., 25.

The "Collapse" in English Catholicism (c. June 1900: Appendix B)

Sometime in 1900 (dated by him), Bishop wrote an untitled three-page document. There is no evidence to suggest the reason it was written, which may have been solely for his personal satisfaction. All the same, the style is one that he began to adapt more and more: the suppression of his objections as a liturgical historian to hierarchical decisions. In this draft he was not able to sustain his covert style to the end of the document: his feelings ran away with him and his edited remarks show that he was angry.

Bishop's subject was the end of another "periodic eruption of the laity," resulting in a "collapse" in English Catholicism – the collapse of the laity's confidence in the Church – and the reasons why this had occurred.

Bishop began his essay with the atmosphere that surrounded the English Catholic community. Despite anticipation of the "universal jubilee of the holy year," proclaimed by the Pope,¹⁶⁶ and the "half Jubilee" of the restoration of the English Hierarchy, the general feeling was "a sense of disquiet, a sense that something had happened." That something Bishop identified as "collapse." After the successive and unhappy foldings of the Home and Foreign Review, The Chronicle and The North British Review (all of which counted on Acton's involvement prior to the Vatican Council), a long period of peace ensued in the English Catholic community. There were a few disruptions, "but breeding asserted itself on the whole on these occasions,

¹⁶⁶Properante ad exitum, May 11 1899.

over will."¹⁶⁷ Elsewhere, Bishop regarded this crushing of the Catholic press as a tragedy and a waste of great talent which left England the poorer for it, but in this essay, he wrote: "The removal of the obnoxious periodicals was most effectually a victory won; and peace meant silence." "Obnoxious"? Bishop's true feeling was quite the opposite: the Catholic critics were obnoxious. This description of the periodicals and calling the "victory" won conform to the strictures of Vaughan's Joint Pastoral concerning the Catholic press of the previous March. The hidden irony of his comments points to the conflict between his desire to make his opinions known and his need to protect himself from censure.

The publication of E.S. Purcell's two-volume biography of Cardinal Manning (named Cardinal in 1875) brought the long peace to an end. Purcell, an Anglican champion of Newman who wished to fault Manning, exposed Manning's private critique of the Church after the Vatican Council. Manning wrote:

Six years have passed over the Holy See since 1870, and its organization has been dying out year after year. . . . All this darkness, confusion, depression, with inactivity and illness, made me understand the *Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem*.¹⁶⁸

Purcell's disclosure led to what Bishop regarded as:

one of the periodic eruptions of the laity which have marked the history of English Catholicism in the [nineteenth] century: eruptions which can be regarded as either a sign of pride against the weight of religious authority or as a protest against the domination of the clergy.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷Bishop, "Collapse."

¹⁶⁸Quoted in J. Derek Holmes, The Triumph of the Holy See (London: Burns and Oates, 1978): 160.

¹⁶⁹Bishop, "Collapse."

Manning's reputation as an ardent ultramontane came from his efforts to save the temporal power of Rome and his participation in the Vatican Council. It was astounding that he would criticize the Church. An article in the Tablet "simply implied [that] the late Cardinal was mad during the later years of his life."¹⁷⁰ As they would with Mivart, the English hierarchy dismissed Manning's severe critique of Rome as mental illness, but not everyone was convinced.

As Bishop saw it, the "collapse" was the laity's loss of confidence in the Church when Manning's disappointment with Rome came to light. The resultant discussion in the press led to two Vaughan pastorals that specified those subjects that were not open to discussion by the laity; Rome, the Curia and the Pope were on the Cardinal's list.

If this "collapse" referred to a general malaise among English Catholics, Bishop was part of it. Reading Purcell's life of Manning may have been the beginning of his own "change of heart." By the following month, Bishop had begun the "History or Apologetics" paper that he would rewrite for the Rota's first meeting in December. In the same year, he commented in a Black Book that Cardinal Manning's observations of the workings of Rome, "moved him to disgust, scorn and almost despair, — in a word threw him back on God and His mighty arm."¹⁷¹

In the same year, 1900, Bishop began to be critical of Newman's writings. The end result was that he shifted all his favour from Newman to Manning. By the

¹⁷⁰Ibid.

¹⁷¹BB 165a-67a: BP.

time he had read Tyrrell's Life in 1912, he agreed completely with Tyrrell's opinion of Manning.

I think Manning was the '**enfant terrible**' of the ultra-Vaticanist in that he did not shrink from the extremest conclusions of his principles; but I think he represents the position more truly than the muddlers, and in no way exaggerated its essential implications.¹⁷²

Bishop's marginal note concurs. "Yes Manning was through and through a true and honest man; as **Newman** has been the **undoing** of thousands."¹⁷³ Bishop's complaint against Newman was, that in trying to explain the position of Rome, he had minimized its power and created an impression which was false and therefore misleading. Manning, on the other hand, never shrank from the truth both when he agreed with Rome and at the end of his life when he didn't.

Thus was Bishop led, some thirty years after the events, to throw his full weight of support behind Cardinal Manning's position, which in the 1860s and 1870s had stood for all he disliked in the "dominant party" of the Church. In a volte-face, he admired Manning for his honesty.

¹⁷²Tyrrell, Life, II:156.

¹⁷³Ibid., Bishop's copy: BP.

**Edmund Bishop to James Hope:
Bishop's Views on the "Infallibility Decree"
and "the Claim on (or of) the Laity"
(1908: Appendix D)**

James Hope was a fellow member of the Rota Dining Club and brother-in-law of Wilfrid Ward. On 5 January 1908, Bishop replied to a letter from Hope. Bishop could not resist the opportunity to comment at length on Hope's letter even at the risk of being "a bore."¹⁷⁴ The topics were two of his favourites: the infallibility decree and its claim on (or of) the laity.

Bishop had told Hope he placed less value on the infallibility decree than most Catholics. He wrote it existed only as "a formal renunciation by the whole Catholic episcopate . . . that the bishop of the Church, inherently and by virtue of his character was judge, source, of doctrine." This charism had passed to the Pope alone, unlike the position of the ancient Church.

Secondly, Bishop called the decree a reflection of "the traditional theory of the Church of Rome" as to its own place in the Catholic religion: on top. He suggested an historical study of Matthew XVI:17-19 would be more enlightening.¹⁷⁵

The significant and most interesting question that emerged concerned the status of the laity in the Church as conceived by the hierarchy. It was Bishop's opinion that

¹⁷⁴Bishop to James Hope, 5 January 1908: BP.

¹⁷⁵The Biblical text reads: "And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

this had become quite clear. If the layman could keep within the given guidelines, and avoid areas reserved for theologians and canonists, he could work, but only if trained in exactness, by which Bishop meant able to support his opinions with facts.

Here the draft copy ends. Bishop indicated that he had not saved it all: "x I don't keep the rest-me mihi."[sic]¹⁷⁶ William Schoenl has found the missing paragraph among the Wilfrid Ward papers in the letter sent to Hope.¹⁷⁷ Schoenl suggests that the passage "somewhat qualifies Bishop's modernism,"¹⁷⁸ but since Bishop didn't save it, he did not think it was important.

The missing paragraph¹⁷⁹ merely summed up Bishop's opinions for the benefit of Hope. He was careful to shroud his opinions in good will and good faith, very respectful and polite as the occasion demanded. He had said that he didn't want to be a "bore."

As for qualifying his modernism, Bishop did just that each time he called himself "a modernist before Modernism."

¹⁷⁶Bishop to James Hope, 5 January 1908: BP.

¹⁷⁷Schoenl, Intellectual Crisis, 206-07.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., 206.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., 207.

CHAPTER VII

ASSESSMENT

1. Friends and Critics

Memorial Tributes

Edmund Bishop died at home on 19 February 1917. On the 22nd, he was buried at Downside in the monks' cemetery, a privilege granted him by Prior Gasquet, in 1884.

Since his illness in 1890, Bishop had suffered several heart attacks and as he grew older he became frail and subject to weakness. Hopeful even to the last that the warmth of spring would give him new strength, he died reading the newspaper with pen in hand as usual.

Many friends, who had visited Bishop's home, sent personal condolences to his sister, Ada Crosskey and her daughter, Dorothy. Cardinal Gasquet's comment encapsulated their particular relationship: "For many years Edmund has been a faithful and devoted friend, ever ready to lay aside his own work to give his help in anything I wanted him to do for me."¹

¹Gasquet to Dorothy Crosskey, 21 February 1917: BP.

Bishop's reputation in England was mainly confined to liturgical specialists. Public notices in the press were so few that a friend, the Anglican liturgical scholar, J. Wickham Legg, complained that "the journalists have not served us well on this occasion. Here is the death of the most eminent liturgical scholar of his day quite unnoticed in any paper that I have seen."²

In 1907, Legg had drawn attention to Bishop's work in a letter to the press, which Bishop had preserved. "It has been our grave misfortune that the works of the greatest liturgical scholar of our time have been hidden away in the learned obscurity of the Downside Review, the Journal of Theological Studies, and elsewhere – publications which those who need instruction the most are not very likely to consult."³ By Bishop's death this had not changed. Only his friends and colleagues paid tribute to his memory.⁴

Greater attention was focused on Bishop's work with the publication of his Liturgica Historica and again with Abercrombie's biography. These three events, his death, the publication of his book, and later, of his biography, each brought forth remembrances of the man and his work.

Armitage Robinson, a former Cambridge professor who became Dean of

²J. Wickham Legg to Gasquet, 25 February 1917: BP.

³Guardian, 15 May 1907 in "Opuscula" IV, E.B. Tracts, 189: BP.

⁴Bishop contributed to the Downside Review from 1884-1911. A memorial number has articles by Gasquet, André Wilmart and a reprint from the Tablet by D. Hugh Connolly. Three other tributes are condensed: the first by J. Armitage Robinson from the Journal of Theological Studies, to which Bishop contributed from 1903-1916, another by Edward Stephens from Ushaw Magazine and the last from the "parish news" magazine of St. Patrick's in Soho. DSR 36 (1917): 1-60.

Wells, called Bishop "one of the acutest and most learned of the scholars of our time."⁵ He recalled their seventeen years of "frequent correspondence," which had developed into friendship. Robinson compared Bishop's public and private writings. In public, he offered his favourite ideas as "hints" to be taken up by the knowledgable, "but in his letters, as well as in his eager conversations, he would let himself go, with delightful apologies and cautions, it is true, but with a freedom and a raciness which displayed the highest qualities of the historical imagination." Robinson paid tribute to Bishop's generosity: "Many scholars have precious bundles of these letters and of memoranda ("Consultations," as he would call them) dealing with the most diverse topics and containing information known only to himself."⁶

Of Bishop's joint authorship, Robinson wrote: "No one can tell how much of his work, generously given away to a host of enquirers, lies hidden in the writings of scholars who were only permitted to make a general acknowledgement of his assistance."⁷ Robinson offered as consolation that Bishop left behind students he had inspired to further the study of liturgical science.

Dom André Wilmart⁸ offered tribute as a self-confessed disciple and friend. He reiterated that although Bishop wrote little, what he did write was of quality, and it was the privilege of his friends to benefit from his labours. Wilmart remembered

⁵"Edmund Bishop," Journal of Theological Studies 18 (April 1917): 97.

⁶*Ibid.*, 99.

⁷*Ibid.*, 101.

⁸"Edmund Bishop: Hommage d'un disciple et d'un ami," DSR, 36 (1917): 12-28.

that Bishop was a man who liked the word "discipline,"⁹ that "Edmund Bishop a ouvert, en liturgie, une voie où il sera suivi; lui-même, à certaines heures, se rendait compte qu'il n'avait pas écrit ni travaillé en vain."¹⁰ This would have offered some comfort to those who wished for more and took Bishop's word as gospel.

Dom Hugh Connolly suggested several reasons why Bishop's death was overlooked in England. Connolly pointed out that Bishop did not begin to publish until mid-life, and that his best work came after that. Another reason was his "selfeffacement" when he helped others, when he was generous to a fault. Connolly remarked, "There was probably no man of the last century who, for similar reasons, and in the same proportion to his knowledge, produced less under his own name, than Edmund Bishop."¹¹

This did not mean that Bishop laboured in vain, as he said himself, only that what he contributed was often hidden. Yet more praise explained the nature and the extent of these contributions:

He would place at the disposal of all who shared his interests his whole stock of information. He would revise what they wrote, suggest improvements, point out faults, and all this with lavish expenditure of time and pains. Neither recompense nor recognition were of the least value in his eyes if only sound learning were advanced. Thus to enrich

⁹"'Disciplinons-nous,' disait-il souvent; par quoi il entendait: la recherche patiente, l'examen loyal et l'exposé sincère des faits; le bon sens, c'est-à-dire, au bout du compte, l'esprit de finesse, le véritable esprit critique (critical power); enfin l'honnêteté, l'humilité, l'abnégation, la modestie, la retenue du savant. Tel était son programme, son 'credo' scientifique, en dehors duquel il était convaincu que mieux valait ne pas se livrer à l'étude." Wilmart, "Edmund Bishop": 20.

¹⁰Ibid., 25-26.

¹¹Offprint, Tablet 3 March 1917, 1-4: BP.

the world and be oneself unknown is in the truest spirit of the monastic tradition. Edmund Bishop shared this spirit and typified it.¹²

Bishop's epitaph retains this spirit: "ipse animo monarchus." In this spirit, he instructed his niece, to whom he left his books and manuscripts, to offer them to Downside, under certain conditions.¹³

Cuthbert Butler, abbot at this time, wrote that Bishop "allowed us to inherit [the library] on conditions which made it practically a donation, thus enriching the community to a degree which is difficult to estimate." This, in addition to his great contribution to learning, made Bishop "one of the great benefactors of our monastery."¹⁴

Less than a month after he died, Ethelred Horne, an old friend of Bishop's and a monk of Downside, wrote to some of Bishop's correspondents asking that his letters to them be given to Downside. Horne had befriended him when Bishop first entered Downside as a postulant in 1886. His interest in Bishop and appreciation of his work

¹²Father Edward Stephens, "Edmund Bishop," Ushaw Magazine July (1917): 131-134: BP.

¹³Bishop's conditions were that the collection was to be kept together and known as "The Edmund Bishop Library"; that Downside should pay funeral expenses and death duties incurred from evaluation of the books; that bookbinding fees already incurred were to be deducted from the settlement to Miss Crosskey, leaving the amount due her at £250. A notice in Downside Review memorial number suggests that since Dorothy Crosskey had inherited the collection outright and then, following her uncle's instructions, offered them to Downside, "Miss Crosskey should be remembered among the signal benefactors of our house. We wish to thank her heartily for this noble gift." DSR 36 (1917): 105.

¹⁴This extract from the Liber Benefactorum at Downside was written by Butler. Quoted in Knowles, "The Works and Thought of Abbot Butler," DSR 52 (July 1934): 460.

had remained constant over the years. Green happily complied with this request, saying that he had destroyed a few that might have been misunderstood.¹⁵ Robinson said that he would consider the matter carefully, after he had gone through the correspondence, in view of the literary value of many of them.¹⁶ J. Wickham Legg's reply was more explicit: "Edmund Bishop's letters are among the most valued of my possessions and I can hardly give them up without a pang." He agreed they should be housed with the collection at Downside, but stipulated that they be made available to students of liturgy, with due consideration for the fact that persons mentioned might still have been living.¹⁷

With the publication of the Liturgica Historica in 1918, Bishop's work was once more brought to the attention of the public.¹⁸ The reviewers were highly complimentary and pointed out the characteristics shared by the work and the author: independent scholarship; reluctance to go beyond the evidence; and the subtle yet devastating correction of negligent authors in the field. Butler, who knew Bishop well, tried to answer why "this great volume, itself only a collection of stray essays,"

¹⁵Green to Ethelred Horne, 6 March 1917: BP.

¹⁶Robinson to Horne, 10 March 1917: BP.

¹⁷J. Wickham Legg to Horne, 31 March 1917: BP.

¹⁸W.H. Frere, "Edmund Bishop, Liturgist," in Church Quarterly Review 87 (1918): 145-150; Mr. Dean, editor, "Mr. Edmund Bishop" in Universe, 8 August 1918, 11; Adhémar d'Alès, "Edmund Bishop," 68-76: French, source unknown: off-print among BP.; Herbert Thurston, "Mr. Edmund Bishop's 'Liturgica Historica,'" off-print from Month, 1919: 185-196: BP.; Cuthbert Butler, "Edmund Bishop's 'Liturgica Historica,'" DSR 37-8 (October 1918): 4-12.

was all that Bishop left. Bishop's recurrent heart attacks after 1890 meant that often he was unable to write, and his temperament, which was "highly strung, nervous, sensitive, sympathetic, subject to phases of exhilaration in which all his brilliancy shone forth," was overcome "by bouts of deep depression."¹⁹ In his depressed state, Bishop's work displeased him and he was inclined to leave whatever project was at hand unless persuaded to do otherwise.

Still another reason was that, since so many areas of scholarship held fascination for him, he extended himself, turning to a new topic before finishing the last. Much of the material he amassed he gave to others who used it in their own work. If he was interested in another scholar's work, he gave himself to it unstintingly. Butler wrote that "it was not that he was crushed by the weight of his learning; far from it, he carried it easily and lightly, and when he was well it would flow forth freely and copiously in response to the most chance questions."²⁰

Later Criticism

A review of Shane Leslie's Cardinal Gasquet (1953) mentions Bishop's attempt to correct Gasquet's errors. The reviewer, while otherwise careful and astute, was obviously ignorant of Bishop's reputation and influence when he/she wrote: "Edmund Bishop, a hack of painstaking accuracy and equal obscurity and an occasional ghost

¹⁹Butler, "Liturgica Historica," 10.

²⁰Ibid., 9-12.

writer for Gasquet, held these faults in check to some extent."²¹

More surprising is a review of Abercrombie's biography in Downside Review, which contains several inaccuracies, and focuses on Bishop's "prejudices."²² Some of these inaccuracies are easily corrected.

The writer stated that Bishop "abandoned the Board of Education at the earliest opportunity."²³ In fact, it was a reorganization of the department which led to Bishop's decision. The office had opened at 11:00 which gave him several hours in the morning to do his liturgical research at the British Museum. This would no longer be possible.

The writer argued that "the most formative influences on Bishop were in the monastery, and especially Ford, Gasquet and Cuthbert Butler."²⁴ But Bishop was already forty years old when he entered Downside, a scholar of repute, enjoying connections with others in his field: his ideas had been formed and tested. Gasquet had left the monastery when Bishop arrived to stay. Furthermore, Butler was more

²¹Francis West, review of Cardinal Gasquet, by Shane Leslie, in Cambridge Review, 24 April 1954, 400.

²²Dom Wilfrid Passmore, review of The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop, by Nigel Abercrombie, in DSR 78 (Summer 1960): 247-51.

²³Ibid., 247.

²⁴Ibid., 249. Edmund Ford became the first abbot of Downside; Gasquet, prior of Downside in the early 1880s, became abbot of the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation and cardinal in 1914. Butler was a reputable scholar, and second abbot of Downside from 1907-17.

influenced by Bishop than Bishop by Butler.²⁵

"His diaries show the childish side of his character when confronted with the inevitable demands of community life."²⁶ This can be compared with Knowles' description of Bishop in the 1880's as "mature but still comparatively youthful."²⁷

"Gasquet was Bishop's greatest friend, Ford, . . . was never a friend at all."²⁸ Ford visited Bishop at his home, and in Bishop's last letter to Gasquet, he asked him to give Ford his (Bishop's) love.²⁹

"In 1889 he wrote of him [Ford] in his diary: 'the Prior's character is perfectly cold or rather his nature.'"³⁰ The Prior at the time was not Ford but Clement Fowler, who ruled from 1888-1894.

"Bishop's feelings for Ford are expressed very clearly and are much more indicative of Bishop's character than as an objective judgement of Ford."³¹ This last remark can be applied to its author, whose seeming animus against Bishop might have been more acceptable if the information he provided had been correct.

²⁵See Chapter IV. Bishop returned to Downside in the early 1890s to prevent Butler's leaving Downside. Bishop was his mentor as Butler developed his skills as a critical historian.

²⁶Passmore, Review, 249.

²⁷Knowles, "Abbot Butler: A Memoir," DSR 52 (1934): 372.

²⁸Passmore, Review, 249.

²⁹Bishop to Gasquet, 13 February 1917. Written by his niece at his direction, not dictated: BP.

³⁰Passmore, Review, 249.

³¹Ibid.

Bishop actually inspired several generations of Downside scholars. His influence passed through the work of Cuthbert Butler (later Abbot of Downside) to David Knowles, who in turn, in his various appointments at Cambridge (the last as Regius Professor of Modern History), influenced many students and scholars. Knowles had met Bishop at Downside and later wrote that Bishop had "elements of true greatness, in mind and personality as well as in pure scholarship."³²

Owen Chadwick rightly called Abercrombie's biography "a truly remarkable achievement."³³ Chadwick wrote that "nothing else, except Downside and the Catholic Church, was important" to Bishop. This may be the impression that Abercrombie wished to convey, but to exclude Bishop's own work, his family (his niece, Dorothy, in particular), and his friends, would seem to stop short at 1900 and to ignore the last years of his life.

Bishop earned his place in history, wrote Chadwick, "because without him we should know far less about the Gregorianum and Gelasianum [early Roman "Sacramentaries" or Mass Books], and therefore about the whole history of the primitive Mass, than we do at present."³⁴ Chadwick, like von Hügel and others, remarked that Bishop failed to even attempt a synthesis, "however tentative."³⁵ Bishop needed evidence before he could take a position. Perhaps if he had had formal

³²Knowles, Foreword to Abercrombie, Edmund Bishop, XIV.

³³Owen Chadwick, JTS n.s. 11 (1960): 430-432.

³⁴Ibid., 432.

³⁵Ibid.

training he would have been more inclined to attempt a synthesis. But everything he knew had been garnered through his own programme of study. He left evidence that suggests that he felt this to be a handicap.

Was Bishop a Positivist?

Edmund Bishop was a man of his times in the sense that he set great store in facts.³⁶ His respect for "facts" is demonstrated in an article from 1899.³⁷ He recalled that as a very small boy, a story-book called Facts to Correct Fancies had a decided effect on him, which experience and knowledge confirmed:

The value, the wholesomeness, the moral worth and power, of Facts to Correct Fancies. What power have not facts, hard facts, to explode vanities, to correct rash and premature and, it may be, unduly self-appreciative and self-flattering judgements. What encouragement, again, is not the view of facts, in their succession and their enchainment, as a record and explanation of events, to those whose aim is the performance of duty . . .³⁸

"Facts" served Bishop both as defense and protection, and while he dedicated his life to collecting facts, he was more than a "historical positivist."³⁹ In a letter to Everard Green (1905) Bishop recommended a book, and having quoted a passage, commented,: "There; I think I'll stop here: the rest is too figurative, stylistic, for

³⁶In 1854, Charles Dickens had written Hard Times in which he castigated the misuse of the utilitarian philosophy which insisted that facts not fancies must be the stuff of education.

³⁷"Facts to Correct Fancies," DSR 18 (March 1899): 48-60.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 49.

³⁹A. Vidler, A Variety, 136.

positive me."⁴⁰

David Knowles commented that Bishop "had a genius for finding and noting the significant manuscript or out-of-the way text."⁴¹ Bishop recognized the material because he had provided himself with the background and learning to do so. But he also tried to glean more than facts from the words he read. He discussed the author of a manuscript with a fellow scholar.

I want to see the living man and come in touch with — don't laugh — his soul. I say 'don't laugh', because being Devonshire born, and what is more deeply felt, I have a sense of superstitious realism as to Ghosts . . . You see I feel — that is to say in the days when I actually 'handled' (and conversed with) certain MSS that scrutinizing them one came into contact with the living writer — or the originator — or them!

Of course one couldn't put such things in cold print: nor would one care to write them except **most** exceptionally. But I am in the deep sense that there is something 'true and just' in these reveries after all.⁴²

The above passage may be difficult to reconcile with Bishop's insistence on "facts," but it shows that other side of his character, of which he made good use even while excusing his "non-metaphysical me."⁴³

⁴⁰Bishop to Green, 3 January 1905: PP.

⁴¹Knowles, "Gasquet," 243.

⁴²Cited by Robinson in "Edmund Bishop," JTS 18 (January and April): 100-01.

⁴³Bishop to von Hügel, 6 May 1906: BP.

Bishop's Opinion of Himself

In the summer of 1909, Bishop read a passage William Wilberforce wrote about himself⁴⁴ which so impressed Bishop that he later transcribed it into the beginning of his "Index to Notebooks," with this comment: "This below I copied, as it describes **my very self**. Ita testor. EB. 28 Sept. 1910."

Wilberforce confessed that when he looked into his own mind he found "a perfect chaos." What he knew was "confusedly and darkly visible," wanting in "classification and recapitulation." Although he had acquired much knowledge, he had been satisfied with a "superficial acquaintance" of many subjects: superficial, because he had only gone as far as to acquire it, without processing it further. This state was due both to his natural abilities, such as "a quick perception and lively imagination," and to his understanding, "(either naturally or from bad habits) defective in the power of steadily contemplating many objects without confusion." Early attention to disciplines such as mathematics and method would have corrected "a habit of half attention." As a result of this neglect, bad habits were strengthened in his youth. Since then, Wilberforce wrote, continual efforts to correct them had been ineffectual and had kept him back in life.⁴⁵

All this Bishop underlined and claimed as his own, even down to the "stylistic inexactness" with which it was written. He added that he had long known his failings

⁴⁴This was a quotation by Wilberforce from the biography written by his sons.

⁴⁵Cited by Bishop from The Life of William Wilberforce, vol. I or II: 57-8.

had become resigned to the situation: it was too late since change at this time would bring other effects which he did not want.

This self-analysis implies that Bishop knew well enough that his intellectual efforts should have resulted in some effort at a synthesis, as his critics have suggested. But contrary to his own opinion, the failure was not through "weakness of intellect," (as Wilberforce called it) or he would not have discerned the problem. It was more that his early habits were formed in isolation and in the exhilaration of the quest for knowledge. Discipline and method, self-applied, could not control his hunger for the quest. This ongoing search for more information suited his "positivistic" mind. His "bad habits" caused him to neglect and even denigrate what he called "speculation." The passage characterized Bishop as he knew himself, he wrote, with "an almost ludicrous similarity."⁴⁶

If this was an analysis of his mind, Bishop left another document which reveals much of his heart. A young novice whom he had met at Downside requested Bishop to give him a character analysis. Bishop's reply shows himself in all his goodness.⁴⁷ A generous gesture of love and concern, Bishop's response demonstrates that those who feel inadequate to respond to such requests, sometimes make the best helpers.

⁴⁶His friend and co-editor, R.H. Connolly found this puzzling, and commented: "It is very remarkable that E.B. should really have thought the things W.W. says of himself as, in any but the faintest way, reflecting himself." Notebook, BP.

⁴⁷Bishop preserved the draft of this letter which is printed in full in Appendix D. I have no hesitation in printing it here since the letter is a personal reflection, not of the addressee, but of Bishop himself and was preserved by him.

Out of "fellow feeling" Bishop agreed to respond; what he offered was his own experience.

Bishop admitted to having suffered from self-consciousness all his life, but was surprised that his correspondent had this problem too. This led him to say how important it was not to judge others since one can so often be wrong.

He suggested that when one is accused of being "difficult," it may be only a difference of nature and temperament in the accuser and the accused. In personal relationships, there were two ways of dealing with such a situation: with avoidance and cover-up, or by facing the situation within oneself, and acting out of the knowledge thus gained. In using the second method, one must have the courage to examine the negative within oneself.⁴⁸

Bishop's sympathy with the young man's unhappiness is obvious in his gentle approach. He explained to the fellow convert that "born Catholics" usually have no understanding of the convert's double sacrifice: to become a Catholic and then to choose religious life [a "double-somersault," one Catholic has called it]. Much of a born Catholic's sacrifice is theory. The convert's exacts a cost, and the result will often be "a sort of earnestness" which, if one is true to true to oneself, will not be avoided. Should this result in unwanted attention, then one must deal with that by self-discipline. Bishop suggested two sources of comfort. One was work and the

⁴⁸Ibid.

fostering of one's sense of vocation. The other was "the beauty of external nature, the lovely world that is about us."⁴⁹

In this kind response, Bishop, delicately and with psychological acumen, approached several problems that commonly occur in relationships. It is obvious that he had come to terms with them himself. His life at Downside, at Great Ormond Street and with his family all required particular adjustments. On 6 December 1902, after living with Ada and Dorothy for a year and still not settled into a permanent residence, Bishop wrote Green about his "ill-conditioned mind," saying:

For here too I have straits to pass thro'; good women are most excellent persons—but then they are women. I have my own notions in the present case of what should be—and must be—I have had them nearly 11 months now. But all demands patience and so forth to see brought about. And I am, you know, by nature an impulsive, explosive, body.

Ada and Ned did not always agree. Bishop wanted to move the family to Italy, but his sister had other plans.

In time, Bishop ceased to be "mere flotsom and jetsam in this world and nothing more."⁵⁰ He had found a "niche" by the time of his death, and had won the love and respect of Ada and Dorothy, beyond family obligations. His prescriptions for adjusting to community life came not from theory, but from practice.

If Bishop was given to weighty and serious consultations both professionally and as a friend, he also had a lighter side, as seen in his last letter to Gasquet, written

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Bishop to Dom Benedict Finch, 22 January 1898: BP.

for him by his niece.⁵¹ Dorothy wrote: "He also bids me ask you to give Abbot Ford 'his love'. He says that you have had it so long that he isn't going to send it any more, and that he is getting dead set on one thing and one thing only — war economy —!" This supposed "war economy" of rationing his love shows that despite his weakened condition, Bishop had not lost his sense of humour.

Another light moment is captured in a letter concerning politics, he wrote to a friend, Leslie Toke:

How I should like to have a talk with you. How we would swear — or whatsoever it be that comes uppermost in such cases. But there, that is (as Mrs. Toke would say) the very reason why any such meeting would be very bad for you and is to be vetoed in every circumstance.⁵²

This playful aspect of Bishop was all but hidden in his papers, although he did occasionally lapse into the dialect of Devon. His sense of humour must have contributed to the making of his many and lasting friendships.

Near the end of this life, Edmund Bishop wrote another friend concerning his books and notes: "I have already written there the summary epitaph that will be conceived in some minds that may, after my time, read them: 'What an old curmudgeon he must have been.'"⁵³

Whether this was false modesty or full belief, there is a more appropriate

⁵¹The letter is in Dorothy Crosskey's hand, who added that her uncle had told her "roughly" what he wanted to say. 13 February 1917: BP. This letter is often quoted in part to show the extent of Bishop's devotion to Gasquet, but that skews the message.

⁵²Bishop to Leslie Toke, 26 January 1910: BP.

⁵³Bishop to Robinson, 6 December 1916: BP. OED s.v. "Curmudgeon." "An avaricious churlish fellow."

epitaph. An old friend, priest of St. Patrick's in Soho, whom Bishop had known since the days of his conversion, wrote that he enjoyed rereading Bishop's "beautiful, kind and affectionate letters. . . . What a sweet character he was — so true, so deeply true — so real! May he rest in peace."⁵⁴ As Bishop so often said, "Amen."

2. Summary

In 1913, in the introduction to his four-volume "Opuscula," Bishop wrote about the great influence that Edward Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire had had on his life. Bishop's essay owes something of its format and tone to Gibbon's own Autobiography⁵⁵ Earlier, Bishop had acknowledged that through Gibbon's "bibliographical harvest" he had become acquainted with authors who had "peopled" his life since he was sixteen, and the value of the "indications for guidance" given him by Gibbon would continue to the end of his life.⁵⁶ In 1913 he confessed that he had "absorbed Gibbon utterly," and was "particularly impressed by his ecclesiastic and religious chapters."⁵⁷ Even his writing, he said, retained, "a strong flavour of gibbonese," which he described as a "subdued irony," and "a certain style

⁵⁴Canon L.G Vere to Gasquet, 18 December 1918: BP.

⁵⁵See Hugh Trevor-Roper's Introduction to Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire edited and abridged with an Introduction by Hugh R. Trevor-Roper (New York: Twayne, 1963), 19-20.

⁵⁶Bishop, "Beggarly Elements": 18-19.

⁵⁷Note dated 1913 in "Notes on my Conversion," DSR: 101. Gibbon's chapters on the rise of Christianity and especially Chapters XV and XVI, volume I, are notoriously anti-Rome and very critical of the history of primitive Christianity.

of locution."⁵⁸

Both men shared a love of facts.⁵⁹ But unlike Gibbon, Bishop found his facts in manuscripts.⁶⁰ While Gibbon's scepticism led others to castigate him, Bishop said he considered Gibbon to be the "avenger" of Christianity.⁶¹ Bishop was all for having the "truth," and taking the consequences.

The historians Bishop read to form his opinions match Gibbon's own list, and the two men shared a great respect for the scholarship and influence of the seventeenth century Maurists. But Bishop also absorbed Gibbon's personal opinions. The many parallels between Bishop's and Gibbon's thinking suggest that Gibbon's influence was even more pervasive than Bishop realized.⁶² To some extent, Bishop had also inherited Gibbon's bias against "Rome." Like Gibbon, Bishop came to consider the Church as an institution like any secular institution and therefore to be judged on the

⁵⁸Introduction to "Opuscula": BP.

⁵⁹"All facts deserve respect. . . . All sciences are founded on reasoning and facts. Without the latter, our studies would be chimerical; deprived of the former, they are blind." Quoted in Trevor-Roper, "Introduction," XV.

⁶⁰Gibbon studied all his subjects through the books of other scholars. "Gibbon didn't study manuscripts. 'I studied the theory without attaining the practice of the art. . . .'" Trevor-Roper, "Introduction," XXII.

⁶¹Ibid. Bishop did not fear intellectual scepticism. As he wrote during a troubled time at Downside, "The terror of living in these places is that they are a school of scepticism, not the scepticism that comes by the intellect, but one more fatal [to] a moral, a religious life, the life Godwards." Bishop to Dolan, 23 December 1988: BP.

⁶²See Hugh Trevor-Roper, "Introduction," VII-XXXIV, for a succinct analysis of Gibbon's thinking.

same basis.⁶³ For Bishop, "the liberal Catholic movement in the intellectual sphere, no less than in the political, was a descent into the common arena."⁶⁴ He argued that the Church must use the same tools to defend dogma as the critical historians did. The Church rejected scientific historical criticism and chose to rule by decree. Like Gibbon, Bishop insisted that the role of the clergy must be a religious one, not one which interfered in politics or society for personal gain or at the cost of "industrious freedom."⁶⁵ As Trevor-Roper puts it, "Even Catholicism, [Gibbon] thought, could be civilised more easily than replaced, and it was better to laicise and liberalise an established religion than to mobilise a new fanaticism against it."⁶⁶ This statement reflects two of the causes to which Bishop devoted his life: his interest in educating priests was directly concerned with the fate of the educated laity, especially those interested in pursuing scientific historical studies, in a Church which refused to be reformed.

Bishop recognized Gibbon's influence in his research and his writing, and as long as he believed that the Church could accept a reformed Catholicism, he warded off Gibbon's prejudices against the Rome. Although the first Vatican Council claimed the Church to be unreformable, before the turn of the century Bishop still believed that as a lay scholar he could play a leading role. He worked to educate priests so

⁶³Ibid., XXVI.

⁶⁴"Liberalism as a Temper of Mind" Bishop's reply to W. Ward's paper at the Rota. 16 July 1907: BP.

⁶⁵Trevor-Roper, "Introduction," XXVI.

⁶⁶Ibid., VII.

that they could appreciate the intellectual difficulties of the day. After Vaughan had "gagged the laity"⁶⁷ by controlling the Catholic press, Bishop declared that Rome was "irreformable."⁶⁸ He began to separate "the Church" from the "Catholic religion." His notebooks attest to a change of attitude. Complaints, angry comments, sarcastic remarks, and dry wit all show that he had become a severe critic of the Church. Gibbon's latent scepticism which he had caught as a youth, came to the fore. He was not as immune as he had thought. Loss of hope had brought it to the surface. For the remainder of his life he focused on liturgical problems which were strictly verifiable by fact.

In a letter to Albert Ehrhard in 1903, Bishop wrote his summation:

In sum, I conclude the layman can be regarded in the domain of Theology only as an intruder and be allowed – if at all – only on sufferance; but **per contra** the whole domain of **verifiable** (whether it be in sacred or profane science – and therefore the history of dogma) comes within the layman's purview not by grace or concession but as of right. Still, I feel or fear that such speculations are hardly practical: the layman, unless he has a turn for apologetics, here in England at all events has been frightened off the ground.⁶⁹

Bishop found evidence that this attitude towards the laity had been formulated long ago. He came across a letter dated 1859 from the Oratorian priest, F.W. Faber to W.G. Ward in which he stated, "I have no sympathy at all with the anti-laity spirit." The issue was the "episcopal crushing of the Rambler."⁷⁰ When the Catholic

⁶⁷Bishop, Scrapbook, 26: BP.

⁶⁸Bishop to von Hügel, 2 July 1909, in Loome, Liberal, 423.

⁶⁹Bishop to Albert Ehrhard, 30 April 1903 in Loome, Liberal, 387.

⁷⁰BB, NSA 211m: BP.

press had to submit to Vaughan in 1900, it was a continuation of the same policy. In 1910 Bishop still felt some anger about the position he had as a layman in the Church and copied the following from an earlier diary, as a "record of a mood of mind": "A layman is one whose call is only to believe the mysteries and he may therefore stand cool before the efforts of literary art to make out a weak historical case."⁷¹ To flaunt the Roman authorities was to risk "incurring censure and perhaps being ruined."⁷² Soon after, Bishop wrote to Green, "I have come to think more and more that the Church is a horseleech. Still, the reflection does not make me unhappy: one cannot **know** some things without experience; and experience I think always has some good side"⁷³ But if Rome was unreformable, Bishop's influence still managed to make a difference. In 1913, Bishop wrote to Maude Petre that the layman was not wanted in the Catholic Church. "I neither resist nor rebel...but one word has seemed to me to describe the situation for the individual — **inter mortuos liber**. And if **liber** then only because the very nature planted in one's very existence was so."⁷⁴

In Petre's opinion, this was "a tragic utterance."

I always feel that Bishop was one of the great hidden forces and values in the Church. Had he ever spoken, his words would have been true, through and through. If he did not speak it was because he made up

⁷¹Unpaginated, 7 January 1910, copied from February 1909: BP.

⁷²Bishop to Butler, 29 December 1903: BP.

⁷³Bishop to Green, 22 February 1910: BP.

⁷⁴Bishop to Maude Petre, 12 March 1913, in M.D. Petre, My Way of Faith (London: J.M. Dent, 1937), 213).

his mind it was better not to do so.⁷⁵

Bishop chose to avoid publication on forbidden topics, but he continued to think about these issues and in carefully kept records, preserved his opinions for another time. He recorded what he thought of the publications he read, and the events of his times as they related to himself. Much of what he wrote as a scholar was inspired by the work of other scholars. The genesis of most of his ideas is difficult to trace since he first recorded them in his middle and old age. His Black Books are filled with excerpts and commentary, pro and con. Bishop was often delighted to find that others shared his interests.

Why this careful and intentional record? Bishop valued his own opinions as a window to the truth in the midst of what he perceived as deception.⁷⁶ He also commented that his diaries functioned as a "safety valve" through which he could vent his anger. He revised his notes for friends and correspondents, taking into consideration the nature of each relationship.

In his severe critique of the institutional Church, Bishop turned against "Rome," but not the Catholic religion. His opinions were influenced by his being an English convert to Catholicism, a liberal Catholic, a layman, and a theologian "manqué." Bishop never regretted his conversion, and said often that the Catholic

⁷⁵Petre, My Way, 213.

⁷⁶In a comment concerning the action of the English hierarchy towards the Rambler in 1848, Bishop noted: "It is not that these people are 'untruthful' but the Spirit of untruth has made its home, abode, within them, and their practical infidelity to the truth as such is the evidence of their personal 'untruthfulness.'" BB NSA, unpaginated: BP.

Church was the only one for him. His regrets were of another order: that the Church was not meeting the needs of modern times.⁷⁷

Bishop was strongly nationalist and becoming a Roman Catholic had placed him outside the pale. In his old age, he wrote to a friend: "I never concealed from myself—nor had any temptation to do so—that in doing what I did, fifty years ago almost, now (with open eyes as I believe) I felt and realized I was making myself a stranger among my own people and nation."⁷⁸ Others converts had felt the same.⁷⁹

Bishop wished his fellow Catholics would work for "the Common Good" but only Manning, "an unmitigated and unbending Papist," did so. Bishop believed "the religious salvation" of the English people, whom he considered deeply religious, was

⁷⁷There was a problem with "leakage," as it was called, when people left the Catholic Church for another or for none. Bishop and Mivart, both converts themselves, thought something more constructive ought to be done than counting converts. For a list of influential English men and women who had become Roman Catholics since the Tractarian Movement, see W. Gordon Gorman, Converts to Rome (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1899).

⁷⁸Bishop to Robinson, 14 October 1914: BP.

⁷⁹David Newsome's description of life in England after conversion, shows that Bishop was not exaggerating: "The lot of a convert could be very wretched. He became, as it were, an exile in his own land. And in addition to social ostracism, and the pain of severed friendships and the torment of past memories, there was the inescapable problem of beginning life again within an alien community which could offer few openings outside the field of active, though materially unremunerative proselytism. Even in this field there was the humbling experience, which all must undergo, of recognising that all one's past distinctions and achievements counted for nothing; the most eminent preacher and the most learned scholar must be reduced to the ranks of recruit or novice. He must go again to school to learn the rudiments of his faith—often enough from instructors far less well equipped than himself in theological learning and breadth of scholarship." The Parting of Friends: A Study of the Wilberforces and Henry Manning (London: John Murray, 1966), 403.

"bound up with that religious quality in them which has been called 'Puritan.'"⁸⁰ He came to regret that he had never studied English Non-Conformity and that this part of English History was completely strange to him.⁸¹

Bishop's nationalism also caused him to resent any interference from "Rome" in English affairs, whether political or religious. He laid the blame for much of the Church's refusal to accommodate itself to modernity on the Italian temperament, and compared the papacy to the emperors of old. Though "Rome" condemned secular nationalism, the hierarchy supported a supra-nationalism in its imposition of Roman rule that overpowered any disagreement. "Unity by tyranny," Bishop called it.⁸²

Bishop's liberal Catholicism made him part of a Catholic intellectual elite, which was, almost from the beginning of the reign of Pius IX, on the losing side. In England, the circle of liberal Catholics was small, but their influence was beyond their numbers because they had the means to promote their ideas and concerns first through the Rambler, then the Home and Foreign Review, particularly through the influence of Simpson and Acton.⁸³ After the demise of these Reviews, Bishop felt that the education of the Catholic clergy would help them understand the intellectual problems

⁸⁰Bishop to Robinson, 14 October 1914: BP.

⁸¹"English Non-Conformity grows more and more interesting to me of late years and I now regret not having worked at the subject of English Puritanism when I was younger." Bishop to von Hügel, 1 December 1907: BP.

⁸²BB 971a: BP.

⁸³As Altholz writes, "By 1857 the Rambler was not simply the convert organ but the organ of a liberal Catholic movement; indeed it was the movement." Joseph L. Altholz, The Religious Press in Britain, 1760-1900 (New York: Greenwood, 1989.), 101.

of the laity, which the hierarchy refused to acknowledge. By his part in this project, he hoped to contribute to the larger project of the hierarchy, "the conversion of England," by making the Church attractive to non-Catholics.

Bishop's liberalism focused on the denial of the rights of the Catholic intelligentsia to publish even on topics on which the Church had not ruled. This was a central issue until the climax, reached with the condemnation of "modernism."

Bishop had already decided that "Rome" was "irreformable;" what he called "the dominant party in the Church" had succeeded in fully implementing the programme that had its roots in the policies of Pius IX. Bishop came to resent any effort since the Munich Brief of 1863 to soften aspects of the programme, since the underlying goal of the dominant party in Rome had always been to place all power in the hands of the infallible Pope and to render the bishops and laity powerless.

On what did Edmund Bishop model his reformed Catholicism? He maintained an interest in the German school of criticism and the generation of scholars that followed the Vatican Council. But there was no programme for dissent since, while historical precedence for legitimate disagreement with the papacy did exist, it was not recognized. Those who were educated, be they former Protestants or born Catholics, could not reconcile faith and reason without discussion and encounter, yet criticism of the Church was looked on with disfavour and regarded as disloyalty. To be a critic of the Church at this time was to invite danger, in the form of discipline. It was the ruthlessness of the opposition that Bishop feared, and fear it was. Was it irrational? Perhaps not. He was justly afraid of being silenced, forbidden to publish, or worse.

He would then be of no use—and in his younger years, he did want to be "useful." But voluntary silence was a legitimate protest. In the 1870s, his five-year silence resulted in a new emphasis which avoided theological argument and added new constraints in his writing style. As he said, he never lost the feeling of caution, as of walking over sacred graves.⁸⁴ He accepted the situation, learned to live with it, adjusted to it and advised others to do the same unless driven by inner demons to do otherwise.

Once committed, Bishop had begun his life in the Church with the zeal of a reformer. After 1870, he shifted his crusade to the renewal of English Benedictine studies, which coincided with the reform movement already begun at Downside. Gasquet, as the young and dynamic prior, led a group of highly gifted men, anxious to pursue intellectual life in the ancient Benedictine tradition. Bishop was already a reputable scholar and welcomed the opportunity to sink his talents into a communal labour pool that aimed to build an "institute." When the dream of an institute finally became impossible, Bishop was able to look back not with regret, or even longing, but with thankfulness for the work done at Great Ormond Street.⁸⁵ This acceptance of fate, after all his efforts, was a mark of Bishop's maturity and integrity. Perhaps the "dream" of an institute was too fanciful, considering the small group of men who had accepted the challenge. Liturgical studies, of the kind that Bishop was fostering, was a specialized field. To expect so many specialists from a small community of men

⁸⁴"Opuscula" I, 3 January 1913: BP.

⁸⁵Bishop to Gasquet, 13 February 1917: BP.

was a mark of zeal, though misdirected. If the hope for a Benedictine institute had not collapsed, Bishop would not have had to record his thoughts in diaries and he would not have had the experience of family life from 1901 to his death, which amazingly enough, he came to treasure as the ideal situation for spiritual growth.

Bishop's contribution to Downside had another positive aspect. He made it known as a centre of learning. Since his small pension went to support his passion for books, he had little money left for travel. Scholars who wished to meet Bishop thus had to visit him at the monastery — men who otherwise would hardly have known that Downside existed.

In the final two decades of his life, Bishop's work was recognized by Cambridge and Oxford. Correspondence between Bishop and various Anglican liturgical historians shows that he had much in common with these men who greatly respected his knowledge and valued his friendship and consultations. Whereas Bishop's old Catholic friends had been interested in liturgical studies, most could not appreciate the subtleties of his scholarship. Not until the second generation of Benedictine scholars matured did Bishop find equals among fellow Catholics.

This leads to speculation concerning the effect of conversion on Bishop's life. As a liturgical scholar, he rejoiced in the rituals of Christian worship and their history. This was the side of Catholicism that first appealed to him as a boy. From the beginning, Bishop was prepared to obey authority, even to the extent of selling his books of classical studies. He called himself a convert of "the first generation," a convert before 1870. Full of good will and hope for the Church, these converts were

zealous for the faith. While willing to submit to authority, they were often confused by what such obedience meant in practice. Did it mean following the dictates of an ignorant clergyman? Did it mean leaving individual judgement on the doorstep? After 1870, these questions were answered in the affirmative. English Catholicism before the restoration of the hierarchy had been influenced by Protestant culture. The Catholic culture promoted by the new hierarchy was Italian, specifically Roman, and so was the centralization of authority.

Bishop's experience led him to suggest that there were three types of converts: those who joined before 1870; those after; and those who joined after the condemnation of "modernism."⁸⁶ As the Church evolved into what had been envisioned since the reign of Pius IX, the people attracted to it were necessarily those who would conform to the ever-tightening restrictions. "Converts of Leo XIII's time must learn to curb themselves and accommodate themselves to Pius [Pius X] times: others have had to do so before now; they must learn."⁸⁷ Bishop agreed with Tyrrell, who, trying to help those who came to him with problems of faith, wrote these words to Cardinal Merry del Val. "Tell us plainly what we are to say. We have a right to look to Your Holiness for positive as well as negative guidance; for construction of truth as well as destruction of error."⁸⁸ "Now he has touched the spot," noted Bishop. The practice of Church officials was to keep silent until an opportune moment to show the strength

⁸⁶"Theology": BB 1671a: BP.

⁸⁷Bishop to von Hügel, 14 June 1906: BP.

⁸⁸Bishop's note in Tyrrell, Life, Appendix XI, II:505. Tyrrell's letter is dated 20 July 1906.

of their hand by decree or denunciation. If the Church was mother and the priest was father, the example which they set was more disturbing than helpful to those who sought guidance.

Bishop considered converts of the first generation to be a gift of God to the Church. Certainly, without them the English Catholic Church of the nineteenth century would not have been the same. His summation is surprisingly general: "The most important point in the history of Catholicity in England in the second half of the last century, [was] the essential ineradicable difference between the old Catholics and the convert mind."⁸⁹ The question is, which old Catholics and which converts? If one compares Acton, the old Catholic aristocrat with Simpson, the convert Anglican clergyman; Ullathorne, Newman's bishop with Newman himself; Wiseman with the convert Manning, both cardinals; or W.G. Ward, converted layman, with any of the other converts mentioned, then no generalizations can be made. But Bishop, speaking from his own experience, could easily justify the remark. (Bishop described his experience in his letter to a friend which appears in full in Appendix D.)

Nevertheless, the intelligent Catholic's problems remained, as he explained at great length in this informative passage, written between 1904 and 1908.

As one of the last incomers of the old convert generation, that came in before the Flood of 1870 and that came in on the vague infallibilism of the diffusive Church with the practical organ of final decisions in current affairs in the person of the Pope, — as one who has seen, out-lived, the experience the old leaders of convert Catholic opinion had made of the baselessness and worthlessness of their explanatory and apologetic efforts in view of the concrete reality that is the existing

⁸⁹BB NSA undated, unpaginated: BP.

Church Authority—as this. I have now long come to the conclusion, inevitable I think in the case of any fairly well informed, intelligent, and reflecting man, that the concrete thing that is "Catholicism" is no solution of intellectual difficulties. That the claims it has on the adherence of the informed, educated man must be if any (and, I add, are) of a different kind. But I think these claims are the same in kind in the case of either (=both) an old Catholic, or (=and) a convert (=a person intending to become a Catholic): viz. "religious" as distinct from intellectual, and that the least amount of intellectualism concerned in the matter the better. . . . The modern convert if he thinks at all—and I take it among the "modern" converts very few do—quietly gives up the whole intellectual position, uses Catholicism for a religion, and makes provisional terms in his own mind and argues at once with intellectualism and authority, —the one not being able to help him to a religion, nor the other to any rational conception of itself or anything else.⁹⁰

These harsh words reflected Bishop's mood at the time: the period just before or after the condemnation of "modernism," when Loisy and Tyrrell had his sympathy, if not his support, for their respective views.

In 1910 he wrote to a friend that "the fate of dozens, scores, of converts, of the 'intelligent' converts in the last 60, 70, years," had been to lapse "into an effaced nothingness, the life of an estimable, and indeed quite pious—cabbage:—vegetable life."⁹¹

Bishop was a layman, which gave him a particular place in the Church, particularly since he was neither an aristocrat nor a rich man. He complained that the Church was not interested in individuals and that each had to work out his/her own salvation. This conviction led to bitter feeling, perhaps from isolation and the

⁹⁰BB Capes etc., 114: BP. A note written in 1912 dates the passage.

⁹¹Bishop to Leslie Toke, 26 January 1910 (rough draft): BP.

strictures of his position. By 1913 he was convinced that the real heresy was not "modernism" but laicism;⁹² the idea that the laity had the right to discuss theology. This anti-laity policy had been clearly formulated as early as 1848 by Wiseman in Words of Peace and Justice.

Towards the end of his life, Bishop's ire towards the Church as an institution was superseded by his need to conserve his energy for his memorial: his collected works. The fulfilment at the end of his life of his dearest wish, his Liturgica Historica, was part of the legacy of a great scholar. The second printing of Liturgica Historica in 1962 by the Oxford University Press attests to its enduring value. Another part of his legacy is the Edmund Bishop Library, now part of the Downside Monastic Library, England. A framed notice in the Library attests that it will be kept intact "in perpetuity." The notice is signed by E. Cuthbert Butler, Abbot, and dated 25 March 1917. The scriptural quotation with which it ends is particularly apt:

Videte quoniam non soli mihi laboravi
sed omnibus equirentibus veritatem. Ecclus. XXIV:34.⁹³

If to Bishop's book and library collection are added his letters and consultations, a portrait emerges of a man passionately dedicated to liturgical studies in all its aspects. But because he could not extend his dedication to its limits, he could have been a frustrated scholar. The necessity of having to submit his writing to a theologian so as to avoid official censorship was time-consuming and an imposition on his

⁹²Scrapbook 138: BP.

⁹³"Observe that I have not laboured for myself alone, but for all who seek instruction" RSV.

friends. As he wrote in 1908,

Of course if we set our minds and our wills—I mean of course, we laymen—to labouring in such attractive fields as the interpretation of the Church to the modern world; or reconciling the modern world, its thought, its methods, with her and hers; and the like of this;—then, however specious the plea to ourselves of serving the Church, or doing our own bit of work for the Church, we must not be surprised at being some day, and unexpectedly, "set down" (as the saying is), or put in our place.⁹⁴

He recognized the strictures, railed against them, accommodated himself, and finally accepted them as inevitable.

Bishop's contact with Protestant scholars, particularly through Cambridge and Oxford, may have been partly responsible for his late interest in English Non-Conformity. An indication of his broadening interests is shown in his concern for the faithful:

When I speak of the 'needs' of the layman, believe me that for such a one as I have in mind, . . . the barriers of 'Churches' in this matter, for this man in need, **do not exist**: he is thankful for the help—from any quarter that can help him keep the faith. . keep alive, burning bright in his heart and in the soul . . . and to keep hold, a grasp, to the end, of the Cross whereon died the Holy One.⁹⁵

Bishop's deep piety, beyond denominational divisions, continued to save him. The real danger, he knew, was to fall into hatred, anger and despair. He knew that in the Church the individual didn't count; the Church as entity was more important. Bishop survived by enduring and nurturing his personal faith. In his last years, his personal piety overcame his "gibbonese." Unlike Gibbon, Bishop was a man of faith.

⁹⁴"A Paper without a Title," 1908: BP.

⁹⁵Bishop to Robinson, 20 June 1915: BP.

Bishop said that after the Vatican Council (1869-1870) his writing had changed. He was always afraid of walking over "sacred graves." Bishop himself had been forced to bury his desire to engage in historical theology, for fear of causing offence. If Bishop had been free to pursue his interests in theology what would he have written? As a new Catholic, he had contributed to the public debate concerning the Creeds. Towards the end of his life, he pursued his interest in early Eucharistic history and had he lived longer, he likely would have published on that subject.

As he grew older, Bishop came to think that the layman had a particular charism that could be exercised in the history of ideas. Whereas the Catholic theologian, trained in scholasticism, was obliged to come to accepted conclusions in writing about dogmatic issues, the layman could, with care, explore the historical development without compromising himself.

In 1910 he wrote to an Anglican clergyman:

By all means adopt or impose an **Epiklesis** of the Holy Ghost (and in its most emphatic and developed form) as a **matter of ecclesiastical policy**; but do not let your action in this matter rest on a thoroughly unsound and unhistorical basis; such action will surely find a Nemesis. If no one else does, I am bold to say that I know the value, the trustworthiness, of the word of warning that I utter.⁹⁶

Bishop had contended that if one were moved by duty or vocation to publish on subjects which might result in being disciplined by Rome, one must obey conscience and take the risk. Since he himself felt no such conviction, he refrained from publishing on theological issues but his silence exacted a cost. His diaries attest to

⁹⁶Bishop to W.C. Bishop, 3 February 1910: BP.

this. During his last years, Bishop he changed his mind, saying that he had come to the conclusion that it was possible to say anything that needed to be said, using careful language. It was not "what" but "how" it was said that could incur disfavour. The impetus for the sustained interest in this particular area came from his total disagreement with the idea of the development of doctrine based on a deposit of faith. For Bishop, there simply was no "deposit of faith." In a note in Tyrrell's Life, Bishop wrote,

Newman never realized when he put forth his theory how much fell to be replaced by theory—he could not know (and to the end of his days probably never knew) how very little there was (of real beliefs and doctrines) in "the deposit" and how much (how almost all of them) is mere later history accretion. In a word he was (really) very ignorant of the history of beliefs and doctrines other than the [? great] theological doctrines—God, the Persons, and the Trinity (and perhaps, but less accurately) the Christological. He had no accurate or even approximate idea of the ecclesiastical creation.⁹⁷

To Robinson, he wrote concerning the eucharist, "to me it seems that the whole conception of what today might be called 'consecratory force' as **attaching** to a **particular formula**, or even **kind of formula**, is a matter of gradual growth, or development, among Christians"⁹⁸

Bishop spent much time tracing the Spirit in the writings of the Early Church Fathers, and in 1912 he wrote, "I am convinced that until this question of 'the Spirit' in the first three centuries and in the fourth is elucidated it is impossible duly and justly to appreciate and 'understand' the early history of ideas

⁹⁷Moore, "Transcription," 24-25.

⁹⁸Bishop to Robinson, 18 February 1912: BP.

concerning the Christian Eucharist."⁹⁹

Three years later, his interest was still keen: "The idea of the 'deposit' of 'absolute truth': yes, it is worth all the best care to come into the clear as to what it is that we hold, that we **think**, here, as to this one and individual idea — theory."¹⁰⁰

He had come to believe that the Church was in error to teach that dogma was based on a deposit of truth. "Truth" had evolved from traditional practice, or the practice of tradition. But this, he knew, was heresy:

I for one **cannot**, in view of what "work" has taught me, admit, allow, assent to, the theory of 'the deposit' in any shape or form. I don't blink the 'fact' that such state of mind avowed and **brought before the "face of the Church"** must entail (I don't see how escape or palliative is possible) censure, as **heresy** for a 'Churchman' of 'my' colour.¹⁰¹

Bishop focused his energies on his own work in his last years, but he maintained a keen interest in the role of the Church in society. Current affairs disturbed him deeply: the immorality of Catholic Austria and the Pope's support of the situation there; the Irish workers' strike; the Great War which he felt was a battle between two ideals of civilization. All these issues were grist for his mill and they became subjects for articles written, presumably, for himself.

If Bishop's life seems arid to some, focused as it was on the minutiae of ancient manuscripts and the history of words and ideas, Bishop himself considered it to be a vocation. For a "mid-Victorian" as he called himself, vocation, in whatever

⁹⁹Bishop to Robinson, 25 February 1912: BP.

¹⁰⁰Bishop to Robinson, 20 June 1915: BP.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

form it took, had demands that had to be met.¹⁰² In this sense, Bishop was a man of his time. The sinking of the Titanic, the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina,¹⁰³ and the plight of the poor, caused him grief. But he found the world interesting and at the end of his life, said that it was getting more so all the time.¹⁰⁴

Bishop came to accept life as he found it. In 1910, he wrote that "The weight and pressure of one's past life, the sorrows and disappointments and disillusion which one deliberately and consciously by habit and for a purpose keeps out of mind, are, in their effects really present upon us."¹⁰⁵ This was a modern observation.

Bishop loved nature, the novels of Jane Austen, good food, good friends, conversation, and books. He was a writer by nature and what he liked best was to write about was Catholicism, both as "the Catholic religion" and as "the Church of Rome." He was a gifted and independent thinker. Despite his inner revolt against "Rome" and all he thought it stood for, he withheld outward dissent. He pragmatically accepted the situation, lived in the present, and hoped for the future, but refused to speculate on it. He came to the English Catholic Church as a convert with certain assumptions which he nurtured for the rest of his life, sometimes in great indignation. He stood as an example of lay integrity, refusing to compromise himself

¹⁰²For a general description of Victorian religion, see Owen Chadwick, Victorian Church, II:466-472.

¹⁰³BB 1691a; Scrapbook, 1914, 115: BP.

¹⁰⁴"Eheu! life is so short: the interest of the world is so ever increasing." Bishop to Robinson, 24 January 1914: BP.

¹⁰⁵Bishop to Green, 28 August 1910: BP.

but faithful to his religion and to his call. He had the faults and idiosyncrasies of a self-taught bookish perfectionist. His animus towards "Rome" and the institutional Catholic Church was at times extravagant but he did his best to justify it, using the tools of historical research that he knew. Those he loved, he supported to a fault. He was patient, long-suffering and truthful.

His enduring reputation is based on his contribution to liturgiology and heortology, and on Abercrombie's biography, but there is more. Bishop's great love for Leo XIII, despite his recognition that this pope's programme was a continuation of previous policy,¹⁰⁶ was a search for a hero, a leader in the Church worthy of devotion and support. When Leo failed to measure up, Bishop glossed over his own criticism. Until 1901, Bishop allowed himself to be used by the Church. He was all "for 'Rome.'" But the events of that period, leading to the condemnation of "modernism" overthrew the ideal. He felt used and powerless after the "Mivart affair" and was left with a sense of deception. The result was a change in his attitude towards Rome from positive and hopeful to negative and resigned. In private, he recorded his criticism. In public, he wrote not as a Catholic scholar, but as a liturgiologist who was a Catholic.¹⁰⁷ He hoped that his reputation as a scholar would earn respect for

¹⁰⁶See Daly, Transcendence, 18; Bishop, BB, scattered entries for 1901: BP.

¹⁰⁷Abercrombie, in his article, "Edmund Bishop and the Roman Breviary," suggests that since Bishop was bound to silence concerning his contribution to the revision of the Roman Breviary, he was "prevented any chance of rectifying the injustice done to 'Rome' and its attitude towards the laity." [Clergy Review n.s. 38 (February 1953):79.] In 1903 Dr. (later Cardinal) Mercanti, his friend, who had been appointed to the commission for the revision, requested Bishop's assistance. Under these circumstances, and in the light of his later comments on the role of the laity, it

Catholicism as a religion.

Bishop's assessment of the English as historians was that they used common sense. He used his own common sense when he refused to battle with the Roman hierarchy. He knew the resulting censorship might be permanent and would render him useless. His Anglican habit of mind wanted theological discussion but had to be disciplined to silence. He preferred to do it himself. Could Bishop have found a place in society outside the Catholic Church? Without university connections, which came late, he would have been hard-pressed to find a community of scholars with like interests outside the Church. Had he stayed on at the Education Office, he would have had more income but less time for research and training. He refused to take money for his writings but even if he had, it would not have been enough to live on. Had he married, he certainly would have had to stay at the Education Office and would have lost even more study time. Roman Catholicism offered connections that made possible the life he had chosen.

By the end of his life, Bishop had mellowed. He returned to habits of his childhood spiritual formation. "Oh golden words," he wrote to Robinson in early 1917, "Oh! what the Bible is as one grows older; and I am so ignorant and know so little, little, little of it."¹⁰⁸ (He no doubt knew more of the Bible than most of his old Catholic "coreligionists," as he was wont to call them.) By then he was too weak to

is difficult to agree with Abercrombie on this point. Once again, he is defending Bishop's reputation, his loyalty to "Rome."

¹⁰⁸Bishop to Robinson, 21 January 1917: BP.

go to Mass. In religious practice, he had returned to the simplicity of his youthful religion. Mass had been replaced with Scripture. He had come full circle.

Pius IX might have called Bishop a "half-Catholic" for his liberal ideas, as he had described Acton¹⁰⁹ and Montalembert.¹¹⁰ The label suggested that disagreement with Roman policy was a sign of disloyalty to Rome. As an historian, Bishop knew there was a place for dissent in the Church that the times did not permit. He disagreed with Rome's support for "moral effect" over "truth," but he never railed against his conversion to Roman Catholicism. Like Acton and Montalembert, Bishop was devoted to the Catholic religion but saw the need for reform of the institutional Church. In Bishop's case, to be "half-Catholic" was to be a modern man.

¹⁰⁹W. Ward, Newman, II:167.

¹¹⁰At Montalembert's funeral, Pius IX declared, "A Catholic is dead, who has done service to the Church. He was a liberal Catholic, that means half a Catholic. Verily, the liberal Catholics are only half-Catholics." Cited by Bishop, BB 1317a: BP.

CONCLUSION

Before the twentieth century began, Edmund Bishop was for "Rome," and worked for a "reformable" Church, educating the clergy in his field of liturgiology to enable them to appreciate the intellectual difficulties of the laity. Between 1899 and 1901, Bishop's experience of the Church changed his attitude. He concluded that the Church was "irreformable" and decided to separate his professional life as a historian from his life as a Catholic apologete. He began to distinguish between "the Catholic religion" and "the [institutional] Church." He concluded that the power of the Roman emperors had been transferred to the Roman popes. In his personal letters to trusted friends Bishop expressed his increasingly negative attitude towards the Roman hierarchy, and, either because of or in spite of Bishop's critique, his friends treasured the letters.

In his 1959 biography of Bishop, Nigel Abercrombie, consistently chose "Rome" over Bishop. Moreover, Abercrombie understated Bishop's animus against the institutional Church. Bishop's antipathy to the Roman hierarchy was clearly recorded and substantiated and it greatly affected his intellectual, religious and personal life. Abercrombie consistently avoided specific references to the relevant sources and scholars have largely had to rely on Abercrombie's selectively edited

versions of Bishop's letters. Abercrombie's collection of von Hügel's letters, for instance, do not include Bishop's replies in their entirety. The omissions have been noted and restored, and reasons suggested for Abercrombie's decisions.

Abercrombie glossed over the influence of Gibbon on Bishop's thinking, although Bishop's diaries show that influence to have been both pervasive and lasting. Pugin's reflections on the unseemly role of the hierarchy during the Reformation also helped to shape Bishop's opinion of the higher clergy.

Abercrombie focused on Bishop as a historian of liturgy, but supported the position of Rome against Bishop's critique. He had reason to protect Bishop's reputation as a loyal Catholic and chose to avoid those aspects of Bishop's life and career which might have suggested that Bishop was a "half-Catholic." As a result of the Second Vatican Council such prudence is no longer necessary and Catholic scholars are free to explore all Bishop's records and to catalogue his opinions.¹

While Abercrombie carefully edited Bishop's papers later, there is evidence that Bishop had already edited his own papers in order to leave an intentional record of the genesis and development of his ideas. The record opens a window onto events in the Church from the beginning of the "modernist" crisis. It constitutes a personal history of contemporary opinion leading up to the Pascendi and after, and the feelings these writings evoked in Bishop as he read them, pen in hand. Bishop grieved

¹Bishop's Black Books are a record of his reading and his reflections. Those in the "a" series are carefully indexed and offer an overview of his interests and the sources a man in Bishop's position could access. The detailed record of his interaction with Newman's thought, and his final choice to champion Manning instead, is a fascinating study in itself and could provide a fruitful topic for further study.

because he was obliged to avoid the theological aspect of liturgiology; I have called him a "theologian manqué."

Bishop considered the Catholic liberal movement in Europe to have ended with the Munich Brief of 1863. He recognized that the force of liberalism had been spent. Many scholars have looked for a continuous liberal Catholic movement in England. In fact there was no organized liberal Catholic movement until Manning and Ward, in the Dublin Review in 1863, proclaimed one to exist so that they could denounce it and its adherents; just as Pius X in his Pascendi of 1907 later condemned the "modernist" movement. What was continuous in England was an ultramontane attitude. Against the Romanization of the ultramontanes, the English Catholic liberals attempted through their writings to develop an English Catholic intelligensia. They were articulate but failed to influence their Church and were ultimately silenced by the Church hierarchy. Despite their failure, the opinions of the English Catholic liberals have aroused much interest and scholarship following the Second Vatican Council.

Bishop was converted to Catholicism by the scholars he discovered in Acton's Reviews. He was impressed by their faith in the light of modern biblical criticism. He too became a liberal Catholic remaining faithful to the vision: the right to pursue scientific historical criticism as it related to Christian origins, biblical studies and the history of the Roman Catholic Church. By 1900, still a liberal, he had become a relic of the past. He claimed that the program of Pius X furthered the controls instituted by Pius IX. Moreover, he contended that as the Church exercised increasing control of the faithful, new converts were less and less willing to think for themselves. In

spite of his harsh criticism of "Rome," Bishop nonetheless retained his allegiance to the Catholic religion.

Edmund Bishop's disarming piety, sense of humour, consideration and loyalty to friends shine throughout his unprinted works. His scholarship was brilliant, impeccable and patient, and he was generous to a fault. He was a genius in his field and his historical imagination was anchored in painstaking research. Despite his reputation for being highly strung, overly sensitive and subject to depression, he had amazing resilience, stability, inner strength and discipline. These characteristics coupled with a prodigious memory, a passion for the truth and a sense of integrity and vision, set him apart. His personality continued to develop as he matured enabling him to adapt and eventually to embrace new challenges as they arose.

Bishop was a man of strong opinions which were not always positive. He permitted himself, and on occasion nourished, strong likes and dislikes. He was a passionate man, defending those he approved even when they were wrong, and castigating those he considered foolish, rude, or worst of all deceitful. He applied his standards to friends, would-be colleagues and to authorities in the Roman Church. He read widely, took copious notes, and when passages annoyed or pleased him, he aired his feelings in notebooks, letters and marginalia.²

Today, these papers provide rich insight into Bishop's thoughts as was his

²As an example of scholarly underestimation of Bishop's marginalia, one may point to John J. Heaney's judgement on one example. Abercrombie, in his biography of Bishop, quoted a margin note which Heaney dismissed with the comment: "The citation is merely a marginal note to [Bishop's] copy of Petre's life of Tyrrell." The Modernist Crisis: von Hügel (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1969), 173.

desire. When records were too personal or too "grizzly" (his term), he destroyed them. The remainder were carefully preserved as an intentional record – the record of a hidden life. Now, nearly one hundred years later, his notes are still interesting, provocative, and at times wickedly amusing.

Bishop hoped that the future readers he sought to address would publicize the material he was obliged to suppress. In referring extensively to published and unpublished sources, this dissertation highlights the meticulously recorded thoughts and opinions of a man well qualified to assess the climate of opinion of his time. A gentleman and scholar, Edmund Bishop exemplified the layman of the highest integrity. He stood firm in his convictions, learned to accept the irony of fate and placed his hopes in the young and in the future.

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INTRODUCTION

Editorial Practice

Conventions of transcription:

and for &
Cardinal for Cd
could for cd
should for sd
would for wd

< > Encloses words crossed out by Bishop but still legible.

{ } Encloses words crossed out by Bishop, not meant to be legible.
[?] An illegible word

A note on punctuation:

I have followed the North American usage of placing punctuation marks within quotation marks, but have allowed British authors their style, outside quotation marks. This may lead to some confusion but the alternative of imposing one style was unsatisfactory.

Bishop himself used lots of punctuation marks for emphasis including dashes, dots, brackets, underlinings, in some cases in multiples, and more. While I have tried to render these faithfully, sometimes it has been either impossible in print or unnecessary, the point being taken. I have used bold type to show Bishop's own emphasis.

Edmund Bishop's Papers

The Bishop Papers are housed in the monastic library of Downside Abbey in the Edmund Bishop Library. The collection includes a variety of manuscript and printed material. The items I have used include Bishop's letters, diaries, notebooks, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, draft copies of articles (published and unpublished), his bound "Opuscula," and books with marginalia.

The letters:

In 1876, Bishop wrote an article, "St. Boniface and his Correspondence." He told of the great interest that collections of letters hold as historical memorials. "Written amidst the circumstances of the time whilst the course of events is not fully developed, they convey the liveliest impression of the hopes and fears, aspirations and regrets, of the writers. [Bishop, "St. Boniface and his Correspondence." Offprint preserved in "Opuscula" III, EB Tracts 188] Bishop's own letters convey as much, and his marginalia on the letters of his friends are also informative. Most of the letters sent and received are filed alphabetically in boxes. The remainder are kept in boxes along with odd notebooks.

The diaries and notebooks:

Bishop was not an ordinary day-to-day diarist. Most of his notes are records of change or troubled times, and usually less personal than his letters to close friends.

He kept several kinds of diaries: "scrap diaries" which kept track of his movements and acquisitions for his library; more personal diaries which recorded feelings and reflections; and a third kind in which he recorded his thoughts on events around him. When the diaries became too intimate, he inked out sentences, tore out pages, or burnt the whole notebook. What he left was carefully edited and meant to be read, since, from time to time, he addressed a reader. Their contents are best described as Ruskin described his own Praeterita (the same word Bishop used to

introduce his "Opuscula"): "very little of the deeper calamities of all that chanced and unchanced to us, will be shown in Praeterita. It will not in the least be 'Confessions' – not even, in pleasant things – far analysed: – it will be what the public may be modestly told to their benefit – no more."¹

The "SA" Diaries. The spines of this set of five books display only Roman numerals, but since Bishop referred to them as "the secret archives," I have also, to avoid confusion. Bishop kept these records while at Downside as a postulant and after he had left. The five notebooks are numbered consecutively from 1 to 937. Volumes I, II and III (1-568) were written in the 1890s, after IV and V. The original first three volumes were burnt in 1892 during a serious illness. Bishop was near death and felt the volumes were too personal to leave behind. Volume IV (568-751) he wrote at Downside while a postulant; pages 590-752 date from 20 December 1888 to 2 February 1889 and mark the actual beginning of the "secret archives diaries."

Begun as a "scrap diary," in August 1887 (IV), the diaries developed into the second type, also kept intermittently, and "of a more **personal** kind still, – thoughts, feelings, reflections, leading soon to the third type of diary. And this in turn soon became reflections on what was about me, and the interests by which I was surrounded, – in which I had involved myself and indeed **become involved**." By the next month, Bishop had stopped writing altogether. This break lasted from 15 September 1887 to 20 December 1888. Volume V was written during February 1889 and includes pages 752-937. These concern his last days at Downside until his departure on 20 February 1889; much of V is missing.

The diaries were a day-to-day record of events and documents concerning the group called the Downside "reformers." When they were asked to present their case to Rome during the 1890s, Bishop's history of the case, preserved in his "secret archives diaries," proved invaluable.

The "BB" or "Black Books". These are nine small notebooks, with pages numbered consecutively from 1a to 1639a. Pieces of another volume marked "Theology," numbered to 1693a, suggest a tenth. This set contains hundreds of excerpts copied from a wide selection of reading material, along with Bishop's observations. With every second page blank, there was room for later notes. Bishop reread these notebooks over the years and added commentary, initialling and dating the new entries. The entries are not sequential and organization is not obvious. Some sections have stated themes but the overall theme is the Roman Catholic Church. Many authors, writing for the Church and against it, contemporary and previous, can be found within the Black Books. Bishop's comments reflect the state of his mind during a time of change and form a history of his opinions.

Most of the excerpts in the Black Books were collected in the early 1900s (the

The Brantwood Diary of John Ruskin, ed. and annotated by Helen Gill Viljoen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).

earliest note is dated 1899) and as the years progressed, Bishop made fewer and fewer entries until 1907 when he turned his attention to another series, which he called "O & C" for Oxford and Cambridge Education.

Two other notebooks contain collections of letters: "Newman-Simpson-Acton Notebook," and "J.M. Capes to Simpson" [etc.].

Scrapbooks: I have used one scrapbook which contains mounted newspaper clippings accompanied by Bishop's comments. Bishop has also written several articles on various subjects such as the Great War.

"Opuscula". The "E.B. Tracts" comprise 300 bound volumes of articles and excerpts which Bishop collected over the years. In 1912, Bishop gathered all his own "things" as he called them – his minor works (pamphlets and articles) and memorabilia consisting of important letters and documents – and had them bound into four volumes: his "Opuscula," and volumes 186-89 of his E.B. Tracts.

In 1912 and 1913, Bishop read and reread George Tyrrell's autobiography life, edited by Maude Petre. Tyrrell wrote that if his life was to be written, it might as well be correct, and to this end decided to assist Petre as much as possible. Given this inspiration, Edmund Bishop might have thought the same and recorded details of his own early life to add to the accounts of his conversion, written in 1874, and the building of his library, in 1900. Nigel Abercrombie, Bishop's biographer, suggests that these essays, published posthumously in Downside Review, were written for an unfinished autobiography, but I do not agree. Bishop's periodic rereading of them, as shown by his initialled and dated marginalia, suggest that following Tyrrell, he wanted to leave an accurate version of events.

All the evidence points to one conclusion: Bishop's careful records of his life and opinions show that he respected his own judgement and his ideas and expected that future readers would find them interesting and worthy of being made known to a wider audience.

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- "secret archives diaries"

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Edmund Bishop on "the Mivart Affair" (1900, 1904)

[Edmund Bishop to Herbert Vaughan, Cardinal and Archbishop of Westminster,
[10 January 1900] draft copy.

Edmund Bishop to Everard Green, 30 January 1900

Edmund Bishop to Everard Green, 5 January 1904]

My Lord Cardinal

This morning I paid a visit to Dr. Mivart. A short conversation sufficed to shew that it was too late; that things just now must take their course, whatever that be. I deeply regret it; and the more, inasmuch as such short conversation brought home to my mind that the affair might have had another issue.

Your Eminence will excuse me for speaking plainly and simply, and taking up your time at some length. I am encouraged to do so by the kind way in which you have always so patiently listened to anything I have had to say. Moreover I certainly should not trouble you unless I thought that what follows may not perhaps be without some practical use in the future.

<The general results on my mind of this interview with Dr. Mivart {who, I fancy, would be as unreserved, and as true, in a conjuncture of this kind, with me as with almost anyone} is, in a word, that the present imbroglio and the trouble that must I fear inevitably ensue, might have been avoided; simply by some patience. I will explain. >

Yesterday I tried to put to your Eminence as strongly as I could the sort of difficulty I thought a man might feel if suddenly called on to subscribe to a formula such as that printed in the Times; to convey what a dazing and deadening effect such a demand might for a time have on a thoughtful mind; and how important in such a case would be breathing time, time to pull the mind together, so to speak.

To my extreme astonishment the signature to this long series of propositions, even in regard to the "Adam" question which I touched on with a purpose yesterday, does not (except one point) present difficulty to Dr. Mivart, so far as I can penetrate his mind and thought; indeed he plainly told me so; I do not mean any sort of "patching up", or "smoothing over", — a method or system in matters like these

equally wrong pernicious and ineffectual, — and a method which I am sure he would detest and, to which [he] would not think of lending himself.

This one item is that which I dismissed with a single unceremonious word yesterday: the Scriptural question. It is really the point around which his mind turns and burns. The difficulty that troubles him in the "Formula" can be brought definitely to a point with a question which I put in my own words thus: is it a necessary condition of Catholic communion to believe as an actual fact which really took place (like say the beheading of Mary Queen of Scots, or Charles I) that Adam got about him all living creatures and all the beasts of the earth and named them, or that men set to work to build a tower that would reach heaven, and that the upshot was the origin of various languages, and so on and so on; or may we use of these things the words of St. Paul — "quae sunt per allegoriam dicta"?

To this question it is no answer to say that a man is only required to believe what the Church believes; for the question is — does the Church require a man to believe **this**, and **this**? Does the acceptance of the Scriptures as "sacred and canonical", — does the affirmation that there is "no error" in them mean that these narratives are to be received as authentic narratives of **pure historical fact**, — of what actually took place; and is such profession of acceptance and such belief a condition of Catholic communion?

In seeing what has taken place within the last generation, it was inevitable that this question would be raised somehow and at sometime. Its gravity and urgency lie in the fact that it is directly concerned with no mystery of the faith, no theological arcanum, no metaphysical subtlety, but that it is a plain and practical question which can come home to plain and practical folk. And it is no wonder in this age that it is the scientific man who makes straight for it, whilst other minds might naturally gravitate to the problems surrounding "holiness and justice" and "wrath and indignation".

I cannot but fancy that had it been possible to parley or confer a way might perhaps have been found through the matter. Of course what is done is done and the past cannot be recalled. And yet as regards Dr. Mivart I cannot <under the impression of my conversation with him today> quite relinquish altogether all future hope, foolish though this may seem. Your Eminence must forgive me if I say the theologians have done their large part in this business, and the journalist has (alas! only too sadly) his. And still all justice may not yet be fulfilled. In any case the first condition is time; and surely the parable of the lost sheep was uttered for nothing [surely a "Freudian slip?"]. Somehow I yet feel that the question may still, though I know not how, be perhaps solved at your hands!

4 Great Ormond Street,
London WC
30 January, 1900.

My Dear Green

. . . .

There is no need to say to you anything more as to the Mivart affair in general. On one point I should like to be explicit, — being commonly willing to be a fool, until I know. Cardinal Vaughan, in coming here the other day, as now appears to me clearly from later experience, had no other, no better object than such as his self love and desire to escape the consequences of his own words and acts naturally suggested. [sic] He knew Mivart was "angry" with him: he wanted Mivart placated in some way or measure, and smoothed down. That is all: nothing more.

You used the word "go-between" in my regard. I said little; but was pained. That is not a position I would ever knowingly take up. It was only with difficulty that Cardinal Vaughan could be induced to state the actual condition of things; then he only did so (as I subsequently found) with economy. Even so, I told him I could, in the circumstances do **nothing**. Reflection showed me something might still be possible even in the situation the Ordinary described. I went to Mivart next morning; a very few words from him told me the real situation which had been economized the day before. I said with no delay — There is no room for me to say or do anything. I left. Even yet I was not fully enlightened as to the Cardinal's real object in coming here. A letter to him and his reply left me no doubt. I don't complain. Why should I? I have tried always to "hope all things" until I mustn't. The words that broke from my mouth when I was told the Cardinal wanted to see me were "It is damnable". They expressed my feeling. Why should I be troubled at such a stage? Now I repeat, as the sum of the incident: "It is damnable" — **not** now from feeling however, but as a judgment of the mind, simply.

Truly the "ordinary" and the class is a wonderful person; but I forgot — Westminster is Arch-ordinary. And so Amen. . . .

Sunnyside, Newport,
Barnstaple
5. i. 04

My Dear Green,

So many thanks for your kind New Year's greeting. I heartily reciprocate it. These however are the times, the anniversary times, that I most dread. I cannot but think, and more than at other times, of friends absent, that have gone and that are here; but am singularly indisposed to write or speak.

I am very glad to hear, for the sake of his family, and especially of Mrs. Mivart that our old friend's remains are to be transferred to consecrated ground with Christian rites, 'tels quels'. It will be an enormous consolation even at this late hour

to wounded spirits and heal lacerated hearts; and it is more than good of you to have secured this at last. I often think of our **De profundis** at the vault, you, Willson, I and surrounding unbelievers joining in spirit. There, for me, in regard to him, I stop: except for what I have felt due from that day to this: a Hail Mary and **De profundis** for him, night and morning. And I do it with still the more conviction for personal ideas of mine own. What I thought of his articles I told him: few I suppose would have done so in harder terms. But then, what I did not tell him, was something else. I, for my part, rest in and can only rest in "that sweet story of old" as it was taught me and as I learnt it as a child. I can let go **none** of it. But as regards the fundamental ideas that lie **below** and at the **back** of M.'s articles, I am not at all clear whether time may not shew he anticipated the future trend of things, be theologians or non theologians of today ever so noisy in saying No, No, No: and what is more that this may coexist with the same sense that we feel today in regard to that "sweet story". Of course I know it is (and to me) almost repugnant to see these **possibilities** hidden in the future, through the form in which they are clothed in those articles. But it is, among other things, that anticipatory sense of possibilities to come in later times that made me tell the late Cardinal that I would never sign his profession of faith if he put it to me 'coûte que coûte'. Though, for other reasons which seemed to me, sufficient and seem so still, I endeavoured to get M. to do so, with certain accompanying explanations I had in mind.

But how foolish to talk of these things. It is all past and gone. But I can truly say few events have made so deep an impression on me, few things of which the memory is so persistently and articulately present to me — "melancholy but instructive" were the words used of the Times not long ago. I don't think the memory of it can always haunt me as it does if it were not for some instruction, even to me.

Well! I cannot talk about anything else now. I have never seen Mrs. Mivart since, or spoken, or written. Nor can I now. But when you do see her, tell her, if you will, how I rejoice that she has this comfort and consolation which you have obtained for her.

I am afraid there is no chance of my meeting you soon: I don't go to London, or indeed anywhere but remain as ever yours

EB

APPENDIX B: Edmund Bishop and the
Collapse of English Catholicism
(c. June 1900: Untitled)

[Preserved in draft form, the purpose of this paper is unknown.]

This year is the Holy Year, Jubilee; it is the half jubilee of the Restoration of the Hierarchy. Its approach was heralded with some pomp; it was to be a manifestation of the "undivided allegiance" of English Catholics, who were at the same time warned from a very high quarter that the advent of the new century was to mark [that] its race of [? with] the Anglican Church was nearly run: that the end of it was not very far distant and its end was collapse. Hardly six months of this great year have passed and there is abroad among us, only a sense of disquiet, a sense that something has happened; there is promise and prospect that the solemnities of the entry into the new century that are promised will find us, or many of us, in a more chastened not to say sadder mood than we could possibly have anticipated twelve months before. What is it that has happened? Different persons might describe the event in different ways; and as ever ready to deny the undeniable if this be not pleasant to our sense, some there will be who will deny that anything has happened at all. If I were [asked] the question and had to answer it briefly, the answer I should be disposed to give is in one word — collapse.

Of course "collapse" like "undivided allegiance" of which we heard something, indeed too much, a few months ago, is ambiguous. "Undivided allegiance" to what? This must be explained before we can say anything of the value of this profession of ours. There are happily in the columns of the public press, in the semi official if not official, report of the proceedings of the Catholic Union, and in a very interesting and very late print of the Tablet of the speech of Lord Herries material explaining the case, or rather demanding explanation. But the subject may be passed over here; and instead I will endeavour to give the explanation required to make clear what I mean by saying a "collapse" is what has really happened to us. But to compass the desired end it will be necessary to make a review of the circumstances that have led up to our present position. Those whose memory can go back far enough to recall the successive collapse of the Home and Foreign Review, The Chronicle, and The North British Review, with the circumstances attendant on and immediately subsequent to will recognize in the [?] of tumult and the . . . [sic] that they inaugurated a long period of peace; <varied> now and then it is true, by an ominous snap <or snarl>; but to use the expression of an experienced person, "nothing rageous", on the occasion of such events as the publication of Newman's "Grammar of Assent" or articles on Holy Scripture. [marginal note: an occasional letter in the Times on some peaceful historical question] But breeding asserted itself on the whole on these occasions, over will. The removal of the obnoxious periodicals was most effectually a victory won; and peace meant silence. But most men remained of the same opinion still, but the

vanquished for the most part contented themselves with growing old or simply dying off. A few turned their energies into other channels seeking no longer combat nor laurels in the old field. To the late Mr. Purcell is due the credit or otherwise of inaugurating the renewed era of trouble or activity. And it is interesting to recall how whilst there was a deal of trouble to secure the mutilation of one of the omission [sic] of the section relating to the Jesuits of one of the late Cardinal's most interesting papers, a mere triviality designed to spare the personal susceptibilities of tactless persons, the rest, what was most important, was passed with ease. I mean the second half of the second volume which revealed to the world in the boldest simplest plainest way the matured opinion Rome and the Curia and its practical relation to real religion maturely formed on full knowledge and experience by one who had been among the most ardent advocates theoretically of its claims and one whose loyalty to the Catholic Church and the Pope was beyond suspicion.

The Tablet at least seems to have felt the danger and dealt with it with the particular sort of boldness characteristic of (what I presume may be called) the semi official organ of high ecclesiastical authority in England. In a notable article it simply implied < said > {verify} the late Cardinal was mad during the later years of his life: but like most of the specifics of this venerable periodical, this suggestion was a very ineffectual antidote to the poison. Some there were perhaps < mindful of and > who believing in the teachings of history smiled as they saw how this great Cardinal of affairs had lived into the recognition < learning > of the great and perennial lesson which history has to teach regarding changeless Rome. These perhaps remembered the browbeatings and hard words of other days and smiled. But the seed was sown broadcast; to some who came fresh and new and young to the consideration of the question the case presented inevitably in another form; as a renewal of the old distinction between **question de droit** and **question de fait** – and that in a form, in a manner, that no . . . could . . . , no **Unigenitus** could complicate. [sic]

This shock might have passed over without leaving a trace behind and we might have recovered easily our complacent contentedness, had it not been for the unfortunately illness of his present Holiness – years ago. < In the demoralization induced by the apparent certainty of a change of ruler there was revealed > The influence really dominant in the Curia unadvisedly revealed themselves < and have gone on their own course ever since. > It may be said that then and ever since it is not so much what has been done as the revelation of the possibilities of what could easily be done that has been effectual to move men's minds to a disquiet that none of the usual anodynes have been able to . . . [sic] Two somewhat hairbrained and rather wild articles in the < Month > . . . for . . . [sic] marked the beginning of our present troubles. But in the midst of the clamour and . . . [sic] one at least of these writers wrote words which should have attracted immediate attention.

x

x

x

[These x's presumably indicate a quotation inserted in the final draft]

These words point to a real danger but were readily overlooked by the leaders of opinion among us in favour of those rhetorical exaggerations in which the writer lays himself easily open to cheap . . . [sic] <It was the word of warning: "The Philistines be upon thee", and Samson didn't know that his locks were shorn.> It was the word of warning; and no one would deny the substantial truth of the description (in name at least) no one outside the ranks of the common apologists to whom <laugh off> things that are not are as though they were and things (that is to say unpleasant things) that are, are treated as though they were not. The time of grace had been almost the space of a generation; meantime our borders were kept in peace by accessions from Protestantism who were, it might be said providentially raised up, for the purpose. It was the precious breathing time thus secured us, utilized in regard to education of the clergy, especially the higher education of the select few men capable. Subsequent events shewed that these . . . [sic] were merely a premonitory symptom; and no one who observed what was being said and written could have any doubt that this was one of the periodical eruptions among the laity which have marked the history of English Catholicism in the present century. It matters little how we may describe these recurring movements whether as an ebullition of the pride of the sensual man against the salutary curb of religious authority or as a protest against the autocratic pretensions of the clergy or at least the most active and representative among them.

APPENDIX C: "Supplement to 'History
or Apologetics'" (1900)

[Edmund Bishop wrote this "Supplement" in October 1900, which he omitted after reading "History or Apologetics" at the Rota meeting of 4 December 1900.]

Samples: Examples: (a) of direct theological bearing;
pure public history

The theologian, on the methods with which he had become familiar may contend that according to the essential constitution of the Church, the Pope must have called them together, the Emperor's part being merely subsidiary and enabling. (not a hypothetical case: c/f v. Funk in Hist.es Jahrb. &) [sic]

The historian may point out that the positive evidence of such convocation by the Popes found at a later period is wanting in early times; that the existing evidence shows rather that the determining forces lay with the civil power; moreover that the recognition or consciousness of any such essential constitution of the Church bearing on this point as is postulated, is also wanting in the centuries in question, the idea being the product of a later age.

Here is the deadlock. It is easy to see and understand how the man trained in the theological school can come to view the present day whilst he feels himself in the irritating position of being unable to confute it by way of appeal to convincingly verifiable evidence. The upshot is insinuations or accusations of unorthodoxy whereby the Catholic writer is simply put out of court. (v. Funk's own method of defence.)

Moreover: there have been brought into the domain of history whole ranges of subjects hitherto regarded as outside the historians ken: ideas, beliefs, dogmas, speculation, all these are found not merely susceptible of strict historical treatment but the most important, as well as the most fascinating, subject of historical enquiry. Much therefore that has been regarded as the peculiar of the theological expert is now common property, with results only too obvious to the initiated. To take, for example, the teaching of St. Augustine on Grace and Predestination. Various persons, and sets of persons, have come, it is but too well known, with equal confidence and affirmativeness, to widely different conclusions on the subject; and the party of the "juste milieu" is, for itself, quite sure that it at any event is heir and representative of the real teaching of St. Augustine; and it proceeds, as it would appear to the mere observer, by way of taking two extreme statements, lax and rigid and then striking the mean between them.

The historian comes along, investigates after his own fashion by taking the writings of

the great Doctor in the chronological order of their composition, and finds that here is the case of a writer advancing as the years go on from a milder to a harder, more rigid, view. Here with this knowledge, is something more acquired than an explanation of the differences of opinion or exposition entertained or cherished by different schools which had proceeded by way of pressing or conciliating select classical texts. How can these — "parties" I will call them — like the historian in such circumstances! Such incidents would make profane folk "wild".

Or to take another example that comes closer home still. That the consecration of the mass takes place in the "recitat" of the words of institution and is consummated so soon as they are said is, I believe, a theological verity that cannot be attacked, much less denied. The historian again comes along, not to concern himself with verities of that nature, of which he by his discipline can know nothing. But he points out how those **who elaborated** this truth, had within their cognizance and purview only the Roman Canon; how one-sided was the patristic evidence relied upon; how the general opinion could not fail to be influenced and strengthened by the inclusion of the very definite extracts from the [sic] in such text books as Gratian's; how the actual terms of the current Greek liturgy as they stand bear on the face of them, if the words are not to be wrested from their evident and natural meaning, that the consecration occurs or is consummated only later; that those who traditionally have used these words give them, generally, their obvious sense; that the construction of the two liturgies, Roman and Greek, at the critical point, is, in fact, different; and so on. Facts, mere facts, within easy cognizance. It is not the historian's business to go further, or to question the doctrinal dictum of the theological experts, which is to him, in the range of his cognizance, as unverifiable as it is beyond his competence. But the bearing of the mere historical view of the question on its treatment by such great authorities as Franzelin, and it may be said all the schools, is evident; even if open comments do not go beyond the remark the "This mode of explaining away the difficulty **will not do**".

(early history of the sacrament of Penance: Catholics last five years. Is it not humiliating?)

A Catholic who is to write a history of the Papacy has a problem before him as to which he must make up his own mind before he begins to write. I will try to indicate it.

Whilst we know from our faith that the Church is indefectible, we know also that there is no promise whatever that she may not dwindle or decrease in such form that she may appear in the eyes of those not of the household of faith to be a one-sided sect. If there be one fact written more broadly and plainly than another on the face of history in regard to the Church which we call One, Holy, Apostolic and Roman, and which we at least believe to be the Catholic Church, it is this: that the greater and more direct the influence of the local Roman Church, the greater its power over the whole body, the more that government and authority, dogmatic, disciplinary and

political, has been centralized and absorbed in the local Church of Rome, in such measures, has there been going on a process of shedding, so to speak, those elements and races in the Christian world that are less congenial to the Roman character and tone of mind. The tendency observable throughout the nineteen centuries has been one of practical decatholicization and actual Romanization. But, whilst the permanence of the Roman character is manifest in spite of the change of religion and the heirship of the Pope to the Emperor, the effect of Romanization in the Christian religious sphere has been the opposition of its effect in the ancient world.

Why is this? It is the business of the historian of the Papacy to explain.

(I should like to get out of this broad statement of the case if I could, and to believe it was a false one. But the facts are altogether too strong for me.)

APPENDIX D: Edmund Bishop to a Friend
(1904)

Sunnyside, Newport,
Barnstable.
23 June 1904

My dear Brother Roger,

I cannot find it in me not to answer your letter: though to do so might seem to many (if any knew) not merely "impertinent" in me, but also at the same time presumptuous and foolish. But then I cannot forget the old days and those whom I have known; and though I may be silent, as time goes on with me more and more my hopes and interests are with the young: and impotent as one may be one's desire is that they may avoid blunders & errors into which one has fallen oneself, and be fruitful in act and deed where one has been barren and useless. To say the truth too, though answering I am almost afraid to write; the written word is a thing so gross, so harsh, so full of peril in cases like this, and so cold. Where & when one hesitates or fears to **speak**, one almost trembles to write. My only excuse to myself for doing so is that, as you write me I cannot find in my heart not to respond to your call: and for the rest I can only trust. The older I grow the more a certain **readiness** to keep silence grows upon me I think, from a sense of the mischief even "well-meaning" words may do. You tell me that some things I have said at various times "have opened your eyes to points in yourself". Such "things" if I could have conceived this thought, know it—such "things" never would have been said by me: for I cannot "go about for to" say things of this kind: and I am sure that in writing you now, I cannot attempt or think of any "analysis": and the very idea of "direction" is alien to me: I can only write as I could speak, "in insipientia mea", and out of fellow feeling. For at bottom we are all more like each other probably and our experiences are more in common than we imagine. Besides: in so much I am dull. What you tell me of your "self consciousness" is what I should not have divined. Though I know "self-consciousness" too well, have too much suffered from it in an extreme form from boyhood onwards, not to be able to enter up to the last limit into the feeling you give expression to when you say it has made your "life at times almost a nuisance"—I should say "burden". Now that you tell me the real state of the case I recognize the signs in you, signs which I should have been ready to set down to another cause—the very opposite to the fact, rather self complacency. And here is an example of the terrible sort of blunders we may so easily make with our neighbours in the utmost good faith, and in entire ignoring of that which may really be making for another the almost unendurable torment of life. But I hasten to add—and this perhaps is easier written than said, for it can & must be passed over never to be recurred [sic; ? referred] to again—that I have been too deeply interested in you, wished you **ex corde** too well, for "self complacency" (even if it existed) to make any difference in my affectionate regard for you. I revert however to the point of the case with which we can misinterpret—misapprehend where such blunder seems for, definite reasons

that can be assigned, most unlikely. Fortunately you have found yourself a cure for self-consciousness which in favourable circumstances may be likely to be more & more effectual for this trouble. I am sure too that a sense of good honest work endeavoured, and some moderately fair measure of success in it, is best likely to exorcise that tormenting demon you have suffered from. You tell me that you have "little doubt that for some reason or other your brethren here, or at any rate the elder members of the community find you a little difficult", and you give an illustration. Of course it may be that you are rather more "difficult" than x or y among your neighbours: but it also has to be remembered that anybody & everybody who **means** life, has **living** wishes, desires, aspirations, ideas, ideals, can hardly fail to appear "difficult" to other persons whose (for various causes) habit may have been rather to float on the surface of life's tides. It is **no question** of "virtue" here, be it observed, but difference of **nature** & temperament intensified by circumstances, also, perhaps. Accordingly it is necessary to distinguish between being personally "difficult", and actual difficulty of relations; and, in regard to difficulty of relations, between difficulties that are inherent in the circumstances, the situation, and difficulties over which one has a personal & individual grip & control. — Different people have different ways of viewing & meeting cases of this kind. To some (and in ecclesiastical circles this method seems, I fancy, rather regarded as the path of "virtue") it appears better to gloss over the situation or circumstances, cover them up and have them out of sight, and spread over the still uneasy surface a plaster of good will, &c. &c. To others it seems better to examine, analyze, the situation itself & render to oneself a simple, rational account of that situation with all the truth & candour one can command; and then in possession of the realities of the case & in full knowledge, endeavour with such good will and "virtue" as may be at command to meet it, deal with it; — and (especially where a religious community is concerned) deal with it with the **heart moved** and ready (principles reserved, and one's very nature with all its ideals held intact **within** one — for to endeavour to force them is to endeavour to falsify God's own direct word & teaching to the individual self that is I.) and ready, I say, to cast as kindly an eye as is possible to oneself on **that** which has not one's personal sympathy; because **that** too may be God's own word, in **some measure or other**, to our neighbour — and that gift of his so alien to all our own feelings & intimate sense and aspiration, may be **necessary, even necessary**, for the accomplishment & realization of the work, **all alien** from it as our neighbour's conception of **life** & its obligations, may seem, to us, — made as we are, and **must be, (so long as we are faithful to the light)**. It is what I have called the difficulties inherent in the circumstances & the situation that I wish to talk to you about especially and if (as I know it will be) I must speak & seem perhaps to bear hardly on those who are not "**my**" way (& that is, I fancy, the same as **your** way) you must soften my words & make them less harsh in consideration of the all-dominant, and as it were Divine fact in the background which I have tried to emphasize on the page opposite — Tennyson has it all in a line "For God fulfils **Himself** in **many** (i.e. seemingly different) ways".

I feel inclined to break off short and simply say — "if I were at Downside with your letter before me & you with me I'd say for an answer — let's read aloud The Passing of Arthur together: the description of the last battle of Arthur — it is all there — . . . "and friend slew friend not knowing whom he slew, and some had visions out of golden youth, and some beheld the faces of old ghosts . . . " . . . Bear with me.

There is one point on which you have rightly touched in rendering to yourself an account of your difficulty which I think underlines the whole situation — your being a convert. Now I have been a convert, 7 & 30 years, & my converse with Catholics in that time has been almost wholly with the "old Catholics", the so called "born Catholics". I have had every reason to be satisfied & grateful that this has been so. Looking back I am glad it has been so; altogether happier for me. So many have been kind to me, — dear friends; — of these so many dead & passed away. So that I might say — speaking generally — my heart goes out to the old Catholics (dear informed men) with affection & regard. But my intelligence, my "mind", my will, with all that part of me that God gave me — ah! how entirely otherwise! And, with results, what pain of conflict! & yet as the sum of all I thank God & believe from my heart it has been good for me, — even best — that my life should have thus drifted off into what has been practically isolation among those who have tried <I think> most highly, most painfully, a whole side of myself which (in a certain sense) I think is the only "reason" of my life. <But not merely tried me, that is little though painful to bear, but I say, their attitude — the attitude of the "born Catholics" at large toward all these things is, has been in my time with a few exceptions, to my mind high treason against God's interest in the world.>

Now you say you feel your position as a "convert": & I dare say may say to yourself "others have felt it too". But there is a thing, I think, not sufficiently realized — for there is no one to tell the story, & nobody (for one reason or another wants to) — viz. That from the beginning, from the early forties forward till now, the converts, as a body, as a whole, but especially the capable, more able, more "zealous" for the Church or desirous that she may be seen for what she is, have, even thereby, incurred (excuse the form) coolness, if not odium. — It has been the same everywhere, & in all the varied "situations" Catholic life in England has afforded, — and for these last 60 years. Let us try & realize this in a concrete individual case — yours — Downside: and the same observations apply practically elsewhere throughout. Take a "vocation" from the school: it is a gentle slow & gradual progression; originated generally in circumstance (= surroundings), it shews a smooth, forward, & even in orderly advance — it is like the adoption of a "profession" (The navy I think on the whole the nearest analogy in view of the mode of entry into that service); to go to Belmont is to go, different of course as is the type, only to another, bigger boys' school; & thence once more, a school boy's return after 4 years, to "Alma Mater" — & so onwards, — whatever else changes, so far from dying, the school boy & certain school boy instincts survive; & so many circumstances conduce to their survival with a vivid life. Theological theory has been wrapped

around it all, — yes, wrapped around it. The convert who becomes a religious or a priest has (if there be any stuff in him at all, and this is the kind alone we are thinking of) twice had to face himself, & when already of age for free independent judgement & with conscious & deliberate act has taken hold of himself as it were & disposed of himself as it were in the full knowledge of what he was about & — of the cost — the "cost" first of his conversion, often, in becoming bereft (alas! so often) of all that had made life most sweet; home, home affections. . . In the one case of our born Catholic, things have come *tout doucement*, no shock, no wrench, no sudden attestation of self; and the "sacrifice" of the "world" so often, commonly, more a matter of theory, theological theory, than of actual & realized experience and knowledge.

What must be, what cannot help being, the different effect of the two forms & minds of the same "renunciation" on men who have gone through each. It is natural to expect that in the convert the result should be (unless discouraged, he loses hold of himself) a sort of earnestness in regard to the common things of his daily life i.e. its ultimate aspirations also: he feels that what he has with eyes open & with knowledge chosen is all that he has to live for, so long as he remains true to himself; for that, he has consciously, deliberately, of set act, given up with a man's mind & and a man's intelligence all the rest. And then what effect must have on him, in the natural course of things & in the nature of himself, what cannot but seem the triviality, superficiality, levity, irreflectiveness, of the prevailing schoolboys dorm (the "childishness" to use the word of the sage old Athanasius in vol. II of [...]) that survives around him. . And all the same his neighbours whose past has been other & has run on in the smooth recognized course of the usual modern Catholic vocation cannot but instinctively feel that the convert's abiding "something" which is but the outcome of his past & unconsciously betrays itself somehow, is as it were a reflection (and in the sense of the theological teaching on "the state of perfection" with which he has been enveloped as with a cloak) a justified reflection on his own want of actual realization of the "state" of his own person. Hence comes that refraining from "doing or saying certain things" when so or so is "present" which "occur" in so or so's "absence".

I think the first thing is not to trouble about that in any sense whatever. It is an element, an inevitable element, of the situation, so long as there are any adult converts at all. It is a part of the price to be paid for being a Catholic at all, being a religious at all. It must be looked at, & the first duty is to discipline the mind to regard it as one of those "things" which being "without remedy" should be "without regard". Yes! There is one "remedy": to go & do likewise, to force yourself to be **not** yourself, **not** what the past & God's leading hand in the past have made you to be: — you can do that, or try to do that, & so "remedy", but at your peril — the peril of losing yourself, of not being what God made you & meant you to be. No: the remedy, the true remedy is patience with God's dispensation in the realization that (for His purpose) things are (for one reason or another) meant to be so.

But then too having reached that clear sense that there is a "difficulty" in the situation which is not over and beyond & above the fact that you may be "difficult"; but a difficulty that you ought not to dare to try to remove, — then comes the question of the existence also of a difficulty that is personal, in yourself or your action or demeanour as the outcome of your interior thoughts & feelings, — natural difficulty of the kind that is in the power [of] the individual to remove or at any rate lessen or modify. It is the personal difficulty of your own relation towards the permanent difficulty, that outside of you and in the situation itself. Here where the need is most, helplessness falls on me: what can one say to help, for believe me the battle must be fought out each one for himself: "direction" can help really so little — & I dread it. But the struggle is in so many ways the same for all — fellow feeling may make those whom the same pressure burdens come nearer. I feel almost inclined to say, don't trouble, distress yourself at being thought, felt, "difficult" but (whilst keeping full, fresh entire, intact, all your ideas, ideals, aspirations, aims, strivings, within — to loosen the grip of those is ruin) endeavour as a daily travail of soul to enter into the sense of the words I have quoted above (poetry and scripture are to me both inspired) from Tennyson as to multiplicity of God's ways & the instruments He uses to bring about I will not say His end but the ends we wish, — instruments the most unlikely, which he combines with others to bring about the result.

And remember too how hard it is in the fight that is life often to distinguish our real friend — or our real foe. — What a hash we make of it in our judgements, judgements that reflect themselves unconsciously in our demeanour; — see what I said about your self-consciousness at the very beginning.

As to the absence of "communion" with those one is living with every day, & with whom one wishes so much to be on just even term throughout, — well, it is a great cross, it is the great cross in community, & especially Benedictine life, — but it is so also in family life too. And perhaps (at least I believe it to be so) the very "best" of crosses that can be laid upon us.

26 June

I have been thinking over since: and am quite sure that though having lived under the same roof for weeks, I fancy it may be almost months, together, I can't "analyse" you (or anybody else for the matter of fact) a bit: am pretty sure I should blunder at the offset; & go steadily wrong onwards. Through common experience alone can I say anything. I must start from the materials you give me, & only do so & work on them. I seemed to feel & recognize in your words such common experience which creates fellow feeling: have I misread you? I can't tell but must go on, if at all, on my presumption. I have just read over what is already written & should feel half indisposed to repeat much otherwise, — better I imagine! You see I want to explain to you that it is in a **historical** way that I now look at the question of "convert and O. C." [Old Catholics], — for 5 & 20 years I did not much if at all think of it. Now I have seen and learnt a lot historically. It is a "story" — which deserves to be told, of

"convert" & "O. C." [old Catholic] in England the last 60 years, -- so illustrative it is, -- its full or real instruction can only be perceived on realization that the phenomenon is constant, manifesting itself none the less in those quarters where from circumstances of system &c. it could hardly be anticipated it would or could find access. -- But then the virtue for the individual lies in his or her particular mode of practically accepting the "fact" -- what is realized as a "constant" fact which has its cause & reason in the very nature of things & so is not to be reasoned about or with but just accepted, and dealt with, -- or not dealt with, as the individual subject may choose. Yes: everything depends on the mode in which the fact is accepted, in the relation we as individuals choose to stand in regard to it. The impression the fact makes must vary indefinitely according to the character & idiosyncrasies of the individual: each one must know for himself what takes place within; another in conjecturing as to his neighbour may do no more than misjudge. Does the phenomenon excite impatience in the mind, or anger, or contempt, or cause wound & pain, or sense of being "misunderstood", or regret, or simply indifference, the indifference then tends to hardness, -- or, how can I enumerate the sensations that may arise, or in what combinations, or in what succession at various times? One thing however one may be sure of: that whatever be the interior feelings excited, they will unconsciously betray themselves in eternal manner in words that unexpectedly kiss on the lips: are out before one knows it, that affect intercourse in some way or other & finally determine permanent personal attitude. Here each one must recognize for himself what is in himself & after the recognition apply the detailed and continual curb or correction which good sense, & good feeling, & the sense that one has oneself to be "borne with" by one's neighbour & is often jolly glad to come off easily at their hands, may suggest. You see I keep, & purposely, my words on the surface of things: your own reflections & thoughts will supply the deeper & really curative considerations that carry a man into the Divine Light & Presence.

There are two things (I think) of a very common & ordinary kind that on the whole will be found very commonly helpful in getting through more or less successfully the difficulties of such a situation i.e. a "convert's" situation (& of course the **same kind** of situation arises out of other circumstances). Work & sustained interest in your work with the sense it is God who has given you this that is in hand to do: you have already as you tell me, very sensibly felt the good & easing effects of this in your present circumstances. Secondly, -- I do think it is of real importance if one happens to have it by nature (& I think you have it) a keen love & appreciation of I might almost say sympathy with -- the beauty of external nature, the lovely world that is about us -- not the distant scene, but in hills & woods & streams and all the rest near home, really about & around us & not merely the remote world in which imagination & memory play. Don't laugh at this: at any rate I feel very strongly on this matter in regard to the particular point of our relations with our neighbours. Am I "insipiens" herein? But I really have a notion that this, this helps us by and by as even to sympathize with & in some measure almost understand people whom we have necessarily to do with, in regard to whom we are not naturally sympathetic. .

But the key of everything is all within & the external relations will surely settle themselves at length according to the way in which we look out from thence. As to what I have called "the situation" itself, the small incidents which characterize the situation, are to be accepted as in the nature of things & therefore absolutely to be disregarded, the others to trouble about as little as ever we can — bearing the momentary pain they may inflict with the patience we can. Now I must end. Maybe, I may have misunderstood quite what you are driving at in your letter? I can't tell. You alone can tell whether **anything** in what is said has **any** application to what you were thinking of in writing. If anything at all, even incidentally, then (I repeat) of course I have not touched more than on the surface.

Now: **good bye.**

Totus tuus

E. B.

P. S. I have thought you might like your letter back again — so I enclose it.

APPENDIX E: Edmund Bishop to James Hope
(1908)

[Edmund Bishop preserved this draft copy of a letter to James Hope, a fellow member of the Rota Dining Club.]

Barnstable
5/1/ '08

Dear Mr. Hope,

Your letter to the Rota ought to have been returned before this. Please excuse the delay. I have been busy, and also not very well. If I comment on it, and first of all on your letter to me, of the 22nd [?] do not think me either 'contentious' or as if desirous to add to your correspondence by so much as even a single item; besides, I do not want to be a bore. Only, I am interested. That is all.

Your letter to me touches on two points: (1) as to the 'Infallibility' Decree; (2) as to the claim on (or, of) the layman.

As to (1): I am not sure as to the real import or drift of the utterance of the Aachen Canon that "this Infallibility business will blow over". My own way of putting what I think is rather this: that I do not at all attribute to the Vatican Decree on **ex Cathedra** Infallibility the 'value' which (to judge by the way in which it is continually turning up among, or dwelt on, by Catholics) seems to be commonly attributed to it by my co-religionists. And the reason for such minimism (if this it be) on this point is twofold.

(a). It was, even early in the 'seventies, easily to be foreseen (as events have indeed since proved) that little, if any, use would in practice be made of that Decree. Its real (=practical) value lay in this, that it was a formal renunciation by the whole Catholic episcopate of the position (which was that of the ancient Church, and in modern times of the "Gallicans") that the bishop of the Church, inherently and by virtue of his character was judge, source, of doctrine. The force of the Vatican Decree was that this **charisma** is possessed by the Roman Pontiff **alone**. As a practical result the weight of any **serious** or any **doctrinal**, (or some doctrinal) pronouncement of the Pope must be greatly enhanced.

For practical use, however, an instrument just as effective as an **ex cathedra** pronouncement, but more maniable, had some years before been forged, in the exercise of the "ordinary magisterium". The Munich Brief of 1863 (a document of singular prevision) explains in the clearest terms of what nature this instrument is, its use, force, conditions, effect! It is (sic) the lines laid down in this Brief (and not of the "Vatican Decree") that have since 1870 been followed; it is this Brief which to Catholics — "educated" or "intelligent", or "active", or even only "interested", — is of practical moment. The **ex cathedra** provision of the Vatican Council is — and is likely long to be — laid up in lavender. That Brief is however, defective in one point. It

speaks of the "speculative sciences" only. "Historicism" in those days was as yet only a suspect; Since then it has been recognized as and in simplest terms declared to be "the enemy". No one who has followed with even only moderate attention what has happened since 1870 but will recognize that the 'positive' "sciences" have been brought (so far as theologians or canonists can effect this — Pope Leo XIII though versed in both disciplines, was above all these. To me he is the greatest Pope since Sixtus V. I have been more than half inclined to (=vilify and quarrel with) my co-religionists as not half or nearly half, esteeming him whilst they **had** him!!) within the scope of the Brief and subjected to the policy it embodies. So much for my first "reason".

(b). The second is this: that (in itself) the Vatican Infallibility Decree is but an item in the **traditional theory** of the Church of Rome as to itself, — as its own position in the Church, and the relations in which the rest of the Church stands to it. The sense of that decree is already and not merely involved but expressed in a statement by Pope Gelasius I as early as before the close of the 5th century. Logically, I suppose, the Infallibility idea should precede that of the Primacy; historically and in fact it has been an outcome of the idea of the "Primacy" as this later was conceived and interpreted by Rome itself: indeed it was and is an inevitable outcome of that conception and interpretation. The subject that **does** deserve and best deserves, the consideration and thought of the Catholic is **that traditional Roman theory**; the important question, the **thing** that is 'worth while', is the value, the basis, the evidence of that theory: a simple (**candid and full**) history of the text Matthew XVI:17-19 in the Church would be more profitable, illuminative, in regard to this than anything else. But this is a counsel of perfection; and be it said by the way. I only wish to point to the relative value of different subjects and explain why I think much too much among Catholics is made of this Vatican decree. The worst of it is that one can hardly touch on even a 'point' involved which does not demand a 'process' that is almost a 'paper'! But I have at least tried to be clear, even brief.

As to (2): The question of the layman, the laity: the one I really care about.

In sum: the Infallibility Decree though its indirect effects are great in its direct object, in itself need trouble no one and is but little worth discussing; what is of first rate importance is the magisterium with its practical efficacy; and the ease, security (and in view of **Pascendi** and Pius X, I should add: tends of irresponsibility) with which it could be exercised.

The question that is raised is not whether "the laity have ever claimed" to be a **factorum** in (still less to "secure") the "progress" etc. etc. (I should think any claim on their part in that sense at least, foolish) but: what is the layman's **status** in the Church, what are the **limitations** of his activity as **conceived**, understood, or laid down by the Pope, bishops, clergy? Here Pius X speaks in the document I have quoted in terms that are definite; and (I conceive) quite in accordance with the ideas prevailing among the clergy **at large**. In England Cardinal Wiseman, and Cardinal Vaughan (in conjunction with all his bishops), have both said the same thing as the

Pope, though with the common "Anglo-Saxon" want of clarity. Personally I greet the way in which this Pope puts the case; and his pronouncement that any such claim as that mentioned above would be an *exitialis* error. It depends (and perhaps entirely) on laymen themselves who engage in what is called "intellectual work" whether this pronouncement will be or not a veritable Charter of Freedom. My contention (if I "contended" at all,) as is my entire desire, would be that the layman should (as you put it) "influence the destinies" even of the Church at all events as effectually as "the man without the franchise may influence the destinies of his country". For instance, that History of Matthew XVI: 17-19 is quite a layman's piece of work; perhaps only a layman's. But everything depends on the way, mind, spirit, in which he sets to work and on his full recognition of the limitations (as concerned by the Church authorities) under which he works. The intention of Pius X, his backers, sympathizers, followers is doubtless to cut off, exclude, the layman from working on or [?thinking] on this whole subject-matter that falls within the scope of the theologian or the canonist. I hold that all these do come within the layman's purview and may be [the] object of his activities although to be dealt with from a standpoint and in a mind and spirit entirely different from that of the professional Catholic ecclesiastic. The way, the spirit, in which speculative matters should be treated by the layman has been pointed to by that acute "mathematician" Ed. Le Roy; as regards more positive subjects of history (tradition) by the late Lord Acton. Their texts are interesting, but I do not trouble you with them; it is enough to say that they are concerned with excluding that capital article of poor Richard Simpson's literary creed that 'things' must be 'brought to bear.' The difference between the two kinds of mind and their effect is I suppose pretty much the difference between the working of a leaven and the working of a spoon, or other more offensive instrument.

In sum: I think the position of the layman as recognized in *Pascendi* is tolerable, almost a good one. But he must know **how** to avail himself of it. I shall not live to see but I should augur for the future, best from the small class [of] young men who at once recognize, know the value and power of religion, and have gone through the sort of exact, strong and exact training supplied by the 'Ecole Normale', the 'Polytechnique', or the 'Hautes Etudes'. In a word I look now to France rather than Germany where (even in my time) the 'educated layman' has been demoralized by politics. Not many 'workers' are wanted; a few who are thorough and 'understand' are quite enough to do the work in the Church of 'influencing' etc. as you point out in regards to "the man without the franchise" in civil life.

x I don't keep rest - me mihi -.