CHURCH AND STATE IN ENGLAND IN THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: THE NEWCASTLE YEARS 1742-1762

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Summary

This dissertation is a work of political and social, as well as ecclesiastical, history, a contribution, above all, to the reassessment of the nature and functioning of the English state in the eighteenth century. It takes issue with the assumption that the Church of England can be regarded as a discrete subject in the history of eighteenth-century England. During this period it was still a central part of the English state; its courts remained important, its parishes had many secular functions, it controlled most of the nation's education and organized much of its charity, and, preeminently, it was responsible for teaching men to be 'good' citizens and subjects.

It is the contention of this dissertation both that the Church was an integral part of politics in the eighteenth century, and that the interests of the Church were not wholly subordinated to those of a secular state. These themes are developed through the thesis, which is divided into five sections. Part I, the introduction, is itself divided into two chapters. The first emphasizes that eighteenth-century politics was concerned, above all, with the exercise of power. It is within the context of government and administration that the importance of the Church is most apparent. The second chapter provides an account of the physical and spiritual state of the Church. Each of the remaining four sections concentrates on one aspect of church-state relations. Section 2 examines contemporary ideas about the relationship of church and state, demonstrating the emphasis that was placed on their interdependence and the inseparability of secular and spiritual matters. Through an examination of the management of the crown's ecclesiastical patronage section 3 explores ministers' perceptions of the Church's role and the extent to which they were able to determine its character. The next section considers the clergy's perception of the role of the Church, both as part of the temporal government and as an institution concerned with the spiritual condition of men, and the ways in which they were able to resolve the apparent contradictions in this dual role. Finally, the place of the Church in parliamentary and high politics is discussed. This final section explores the tensions and conflicts that did arise between church and state in the years 1742-62, the extent to which the Church was able to preserve its independence against secular encroachments, and the willingness of churchmen and ministers to contemplate reforms to enable the Church to perform its duties, both secular and spiritual, more effectively.

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.

This dissertation does not exceed 80 000 words.

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Abbreviations

B.I.H.R.	*Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*
C.J.	*The journals of the house of commons*
D.N.B.	*Dictionary of National Biography*
E.H.R.	*English Historical Review*
H.J.	*Historical Journal*
H.M.P.E.C.	*Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*
H.M.C.	Historical Manuscripts Commission
J.B.S.	*Journal of British Studies*
J.E.H.	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
L.J.	*Journals of the house of lords*
Parl. Hist.	*The parliamentary history of England from the earliest period to the year 1803* (36 vols., London, 1806-20).
P.P.	*Past and Present*
S.C.H.	*Studies in Church History*
V.C.H.	*Victoria County History*

Note on dates

Before 1752 all dates are given in Old Style, eleven days behind the New Style or Gregorian calendar. The year is taken to begin on 1 January.

Contents

PART I

INTRODUCTION

1. The state and the church

The relationship between church and state in the eighteenth century has not been treated extensively by political historians, who have concentrated their attention on parliamentary and high political manoeuvrings.[1] The contrast with recent scholarship on the previous two centuries is striking. Political and constitutional historians of these periods have been unable to ignore the Church and religion: the Reformation has been depicted as a primarily political event; the English Civil War has been described as 'the last of the Wars of Religion'; and the politics of the years from the Restoration to the Hanoverian succession have been seen as dominated by debates about comprehension and toleration.[2] Students of eighteenth-century politics, however, have concluded that the great issues of earlier years were 'overtaken by events', pointing to the absence of parliamentary debate or popular controversy about religion.[3] Occasional agitations, such as those over the Quakers Tithe Bill of 1736 or the Jew Bill of 1753, have been dismissed as no more than 'isolated incidents'.[4]

In recent years political historians have accorded greater recognition to the role of religion in the formation and character of eighteenth-century political ideologies.[5] Even the absence of parliamentary debates about the Church during the whig supremacy does not demonstrate a decline in the strength of religious sensibilities. On the contrary, such differences stood in the way of co-operation between the whig and tory opposition groups. The staunchly anglican tories were alienated from even the most orthodox whigs by suspicion of their anti-clerical, dissenting and rationalist connections. Moreover, the Hanoverian Church is no longer automatically

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1 Despite its age the best account of the subject is still Norman Sykes, *Church and state in England in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1934). E.G. Rupp, *Religion in England 1688-1791* (Oxford, 1986), adds little to the account of Sykes. But G.F.A. Best, *Temporal pillars. Queen Anne's Bounty, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Church of England* (Cambridge, 1964), contains much valuable material. See also, R.W. Greaves, 'The working of the alliance. A comment on Warburton', in *Essays in modern English church history*, ed. G.V. Bennett and J.D. Walsh (London, 1966), pp. 163-80; and Norman Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker. Aspects of English church history 1660-1768* (Cambridge, 1959). C.J. Abbey and J.H. Overton, *The English church in the eighteenth century* (2 vols., London, 1878), is still useful.

2 Among other works, see, J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English people* (Oxford, 1984); J.S. Morrill, 'The religious context of the English civil war', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th series, XXXIV (1984), 155-78; R.A. Beddard, 'The Restoration Church', in *The restored monarchy 1660-88*, ed. J.R. Jones (London, 1979), pp. 155-75; Roger Thomas, 'Comprehension and indulgence', in *From uniformity to unity 1662-1962*, ed. G.F. Nuttall and O. Chadwick (London, 1962), pp. 189-253; G.S. Holmes, *British politics in the age of Anne* (London, 1967); G.V. Bennett, *The tory crisis in church and state 1688-1730. The career of Francis Atterbury bishop of Rochester* (Oxford, 1975).

3 J.B. Owen, *The eighteenth century 1714-1815* (London, 1974), p. 113. This opinion is shared by W.A. Speck, '"Whigs and tories dim their glories": English political parties under the first two Georges', in *The whig ascendancy. Colloquies on Hanoverian England*, ed John Cannon (London, 1981), pp. 51-75; and H.T. Dickinson, *Liberty and property. Political ideology in eighteenth-century Britain* (London, 1977).

4 Speck, 'Whigs and tories dim their glories', pp. 59-60.

5 This is especially true of toryism and radicalism. See Linda Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy. The tory party 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982), particularly cpt. 4; J.A.W. Gunn, *Beyond liberty and property. The process of self-recognition in eighteenth-century political thought* (Kingston and Montreal, 1983), cpt. 4; J.E. Cookson, *The friends of peace. Anti-war liberalism in England, 1793-1815* (Cambridge, 1982), cpt. 1; John Seed, 'Gentlemen dissenters: the social and political meanings of rational dissent in the 1770s and 1780s', *H.J.*, XXVIII (1985), 299-326; J.C.D. Clark, *English society 1688-1832. Ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancien regime* (Cambridge, 1985), cpt. 5; John Gascoigne, 'Anglican latitudinarianism and political radicalism in the late eighteenth century', *History*, LXXI (1986), 22-38.

dismissed as languid and ineffective. Building on the work of Norman Sykes, scholars such as R.W. Greaves, G.V. Bennett, J.D. Walsh and J.C.D. Clark have begun to emphasize its spiritual vitality and organizational strength.[6] But most of these writers have continued to view the Church, as an institution, in isolation.[7] It is argued here, on the contrary, that the relationship between church and state cannot be compartmentalized, separated from the rest of eighteenth-century politics and society, and called ecclesiastical history. On the one hand, both the Church and religion were central to the assumptions and perspectives of politicians. On the other hand, the Church was a political institution, an inseparable part of politics and of the governmental apparatus of the English state. This dissertation, therefore, is intended as a contribution, not simply to ecclesiastical history, but to political and social history, to the reappraisal of the nature and operation of the eighteenth-century state.[8] To exclude the Church from the history of politics and government in the eighteenth century is to exclude a whole dimension of the story.

The importance of the Church is most apparent not within the context of parliament and the court, but within that of government and administration. Politics is not just the struggle for power, although that is what has dominated the attention of historians of the eighteenth century. It is also the exercise of power, the business of government. The main functions of central government in the eighteenth-century state were to maintain order, to administer justice, to conduct foreign policy, to wage war when necessary, and to raise the money necessary to discharge these responsibilities. Ministers of the crown were concerned above all with the aims and policies of government. Peers and M.P.s believed they had a responsibility to oversee the conduct of it.[9] Parliamentary business was dominated by the passage of supply and local bills, not by the battle of parties. Most of the contentious parliamentary debates of the century concerned the ministry's management of financial and foreign affairs, especially during wartime. Walpole, Newcastle in 1756, North and the younger Pitt all fell from power largely because of disputes about their war policies.[10] Their ministries had failed in their first responsibility, that of carrying on the king's government effectively.

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6 See, e.g., R.W. Greaves, *On the religious climate of Hanoverian England* (Inaugural lecture, Bedford College, London, 1963); G.V. Bennett, *Tory crisis in church and state*; J.D. Walsh, 'Religious societies: methodist and evangelical 1738-1800', *S.C.H.*, xxiii (1986), 279-302; Clark, *English society*. See also, Richard Sharp, 'New perspectives on the high church tradition: historical background 1730-1780', in *Tradition renewed. The Oxford movement conference papers*, ed. Geoffrey Rowell (London, 1986), pp. 4-23. For references to much of the other work that has appeared in articles and theses, see the footnotes to chapter 2.

7 But see Ian Christie, *Stress and stability in late eighteenth-century Britain. Reflections on the British avoidance of revolution* (Oxford, 1984).

8 For recent interest in the eighteenth-century state, see John Brewer, 'John Bull s'en va t'en guerre', *London Review of Books*, 5-18 May 1983; Linda Colley, 'The politics of eighteenth-century British history', *J.B.S.*, xxv (1986), 359-79; Frank O'Gorman, 'The recent historiography of the Hanoverian regime', *H.J.*, xxix (1986), 1005-20.

9 Richard Pares, *King George III and the politicians* (Oxford, 1953), p. 4. The account of political motivation presented in chapter 1 of this book is probably the most balanced written by an eighteenth-century historian. It should be noted in particular for its emphasis on the interest of many politicians in the business of government and administration.

10 The case of the younger Pitt, the most controversial example of the four, is discussed by Piers Mackesy, *War without victory. The downfall of Pitt, 1799-1802* (Oxford, 1984).

The functions of central government were primarily external. Taxes were levied to maintain the army and navy, not to staff a bureaucratic domestic administration. Indeed, it is a commonplace to refer to the decentralization of English local government in the eighteenth century. The country was administered by a multitude of individuals and bodies, whose powers were defined by common law or by statute, ranging from parish vestries, through the justices of the peace and borough corporations, to ad hoc statutory authorities, such as turnpike trusts. Their activities were well described over fifty years ago by the Webbs.[11] Even India was administered in a similar way; governmental functions were discharged by the East India Company.

In the field of local government, however, the Webbs ignored arguably the most influential body of all, the Church of England. The functions of the Church were extensive. Its clergy were responsible for nearly all of the nation's education and administered many of its charities. Its ministers were charged with the teaching and enforcement of a code of morality; and also with the inculcation of loyalty to the Hanoverian regime. In an age when the national and provincial press was still in its infancy, and often exploited to greater effect by radicals than by the government, the Church's pulpits remained of considerable importance in the dissemination of information and official attitudes, particularly to those who were unable to read. The parish was the basic unit of local government, whose secular and religious activities are often hard to disentangle - vestries generally administered the poor rate and often distributed local charities, while churchwardens were responsible for the enforcement of morality through the presentation of offenders to the ecclesiastical courts.

Without doubt, the influence of the Church was diminishing during the eighteenth century. The increasing accessibility of the printed word tended to make the clergyman one source of information among many.[12] The Toleration Act of 1689 was not only a recognition that the dissenting congregations were beyond the control of the established Church; in practice it was also believed to have made church attendance voluntary. At the same time local government was becoming an ever more complex activity. The business dealt with by the justices of the peace, both individually and collectively, in petty and quarter sessions, multiplied, and they increasingly dominated the administration of the counties.[13] The parishes lost some of their duties to ad hoc statutory authorities and in parts of the country the emergence of poor law unions took over from them the management even of poor relief.[14] At the same time the presence of central government in the localities was growing. As central taxation increased, so did the number of collectors, especially in the customs and excise. Moreover, much of the Church's influence was dissipated, since it too was decentralized. The Church of England was not one corporation. Its wealth was vested in a myriad of corporations, ranging from the chapters of the wealthiest cathedrals to the

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11 Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *English local government from the Revolution to the Municipal Corporations Act* (9 vols., London, 1906-29), I-IV.

12 G.A. Cranfield, *The development of the provincial newspaper 1700-60* (Oxford, 1962).

13 Norma Landau, *The justices of the peace, 1679-1760* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984); Esther Moir, *The justice of the peace* (Harmondsworth, 1969), cpt. 4; Webb, *English local government*, I, 294-301, 387-479.

14 Webb, *English local government*, IV, passim, VII, 116-48, 272-6.

lowliest vicars, and arguably including also the incorporated charitable societies, such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The legal status of these corporations guaranteed clergymen considerable autonomy from their superiors,[15] and centralized control of the Church was further weakened by the suspension of convocation in the aftermath of the Bangorian controversy. After 1717, with one brief exception in 1741-2, it met only for formal business before being prorogued again.[16]

Nonetheless, as an institution of local government the Church was unrivalled in importance. Some 11000 parishes covered the whole of England and Wales, and contemporaries estimated that there were nearly 15000 clergymen, the surplus concentrated in London, the Universities, and the major provincial towns. By comparison the justices of the peace, the most important secular arm of local government, numbered just over 8000 in 1760, and many of these were not active. As late as 1832 there were only 5131 active county magistrates in England and Wales.[17] On the other hand, the revenue administration could not rival the Church as an agent of the state in the provinces. The commissioners of the land tax, who organized its collection, were drawn from the local gentry.[18] The employees of the other two major branches of the revenue, the customs and excise, were often not accepted as part of the local community. They were also thinly and unevenly spread throughout the country. In 1770 the excise administration was staffed by only 4075 men, including those in London, while customs officers were concentrated in London and at the outports.[19]

The duke of Newcastle and other mid-eighteenth-century politicians were still acutely aware of the fact that the Church mattered greatly to the well-being of the state. The ministry was necessarily concerned in the politics and administration of the localities. The administration of justice, the maintenance of public order, and the encouragement of trade and industry were, at least in part, its responsibilities. Above all it was the problem of order which impinged on the consciousness of the nation's governors both nationally and locally. The element of force used in suppressing disorder should not be understated. The standing army was regularly employed in actions against smugglers and in quelling riots, though only at the request of the local J.P.s.[20] But ultimately the means of control were fragile: social stability was dependent upon propaganda and

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15 For the definition of a vicar or rector as a 'corporation sole', see William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the laws of England* (4 vols., London, 1765-9), I, 457-8.

16 Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker*, pp. 54-5, 67.

17 Landau, *The justices of the peace*, pp. 368-72; Webb, *English local government*, I, 581n.

18 W.R. Ward, *The English land tax in the eighteenth century* (London, 1953), pp. 4-6.

19 John Brewer, '"Plague to mankind and endless slavery": excisemen, the labour process and the eighteenth-century English state', unpublished paper read at the Social History Seminar, King's College, Cambridge, 25 Jan. 1984. For the excise, see Edward Hughes, *Studies in administration and finance, 1558-1825* (Manchester, 1934); John Torrance, 'Social class and bureaucratic innovation: the commission for examining the public accounts 1780-87', *P.P.*, LXXVIII (1978), 56-81. For the customs, see E.E. Hoon, *The organization of the English customs system 1696-1786* (New York, 1938); Edward Carson, *The ancient and rightful customs. A history of the English customs service* (London, 1972), cpts. 4-6.

20 J.A. Houlding, *Fit for service. The training of the British army, 1715-1795* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 57-90.

persuasion.[21] The role of the Church in this process should not be neglected. The decline of the ecclesiastical courts, which, in any case, should not be exaggerated, weakened the Church's disciplinary machinery, but it still retained much formal and informal influence, especially through parochial ministers.

The social stability of the Hanoverian state, however, cannot be explained by concentration on the lower orders alone. The decentralization of local government and its reliance upon the active, yet voluntary and unpaid, assistance of the gentry and other members of local elites meant that in the last resort central government lacked effective means of coercion and was dependent upon consent. Against the background of rebellion and revolution in the seventeenth century the necessity of ensuring the consent of the nation's elite was recognized by the crown and its ministers. In this context the importance of the Church's role as an agent of the state is even more apparent. The vast majority of the social and political elite of Hanoverian England were still members of the established Church, and it was at them that the Church directed much of its teaching. It provided an explanation of the grounds of civil government and emphasized the duty of obedience to it, a duty enforced the more strongly in response to the jacobite threat. Likewise, many clergymen addressed their moral teaching most emphatically to those who should set an example.

The importance of the Church was magnified by the influence which ministers were able to exert over it. The control exercised by central government over all organs of local government was limited. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had witnessed repeated attempts to secure greater control over the localities through the use of lords lieutenant, the nomination of justices of the peace, and the remodelling of corporation charters. These encroachments on local independence were generally made for reasons of government policy or administrative efficiency rather than those of parliamentary management.[22] But this did not make them any more acceptable, and the Glorious Revolution, while securing greater financial independence for central government, was a check to such activities. Successive ministries maintained control over the composition of the commission of the peace, but little attempt was made in the eighteenth century to interfere in the boroughs.[23] Opposition to the encroachments of central government was still vociferously expressed; the willingness of many country gentlemen to endure the land tax, which fell disproportionatley on them, and their hostility to an extension of the excise, can be attributed, at least in part, to an unwillingness to see greater numbers of excise officers in the counties.[24]

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21 Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson (eds), *Order and disorder in early modern England* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 38-9.

22 E.g., R.G. Pickavance has shown that the extensive remodelling of boroughs in the period 1681-5 was intended as part of a repressive anglican policy rather than to secure a compliant parliament. 'The English boroughs and the king's government: a study of the tory reaction, 1681-5', D.Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1974.

23 L.K.J. Glassey, *Politics and the appointment of justices of the peace 1675-1725* (Oxford, 1979); Landau, *The justices of the peace*, cpts. 3-4. But for one attempt to interfere in corporations, see I.G. Doolittle, 'Walpole's City Elections Act (1725)', *E.H.R.*, xcvii (1982), 504-29; Nicholas Rogers, 'The City Elections Act (1725) revisited', *E.H.R.*, c (1985), 604-17.

24 E.R. Turner, 'The excise scheme of 1733', *E.H.R.*, xlii (1927), 34-57; J.V. Beckett, 'Land tax or excise: the levying of taxation in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England', *E.H.R.*, c (1985), 285-308.

Ministerial control over the Church was also severely limited. For reasons which will be explored later, the whigs in this period were unwilling to contemplate direct interference in church affairs by statute.[25] The ministry's other means of control was indirect; through patronage. Here too its influence was restricted. As it disposed of less than 10% of all livings and had little control over the training of the clergy, it could not actually determine the character of the Church. Nevertheless, through its nomination to all bishoprics, most deaneries, and a large proportion of the most important cathedral dignities it could do much to mould that character.

But the Church was not simply an agent of the state. It was the most powerful autonomous, or semi-autonomous, institution in English society. Despite Henry VIII's seizure of monastic lands and later depredations, its wealth was vast and a recurrent source of concern to many laymen. The leaders of the Church, the bishops, were members of the house of lords and it was capable of exerting considerable influence over elections to the lower house. Churchmen fiercely defended the independent status of the Church. Moreover, they did not simply assert its temporal and legal rights. They also claimed for it a divine commission. First and foremost the Church was concerned, not with temporal affairs, but with spiritual ones - it was charged with the salvation of the souls of men. Eighteenth-century clergymen never lost sight of this role. As will be seen, their emphasis on moral duties was not a manifestation of the subjection of the Church to the demands of an increasingly secular state. On the contrary, it was the expression of a particular form of christianity, a response to the perceived threat from the spread of vice and immorality, and a way to bring men to eternal salvation.[26]

This dissertation, therefore, will examine the duties of the Church, as an agent of the state discharging functions of temporal government, and as an independent society concerned with men's spiritual condition. Attention will be given to the tensions inherent in this dual role. But the Church's secular and spiritual roles were not incompatible, and emphasis will be placed upon the correspondence between the interests of church and state. Few believed that the link between church and state was dissoluble. On the contrary, England was a christian commonwealth. Church and state were seen as different integral parts of the same whole. Fewer still drew a clear distinction between temporal and spiritual. It was the duty and interest of church and state alike to punish vice and irreligion and to promote the practice of true religion and morality. Attitudes towards the Bible were unquestioningly fundamentalist, and belief in God's providential government of the world was almost unchallenged. But if God was seen as the protector and defender of the truly primitive Church of England, notably in 1588, 1605, 1660, 1688 and 1745, it was certain that his continued favour depended on the virtue and faith of the English people. The abuse of God's gifts, the practice of immorality and impiety, both by individuals and the nation, endangered continued prosperity and the maintenance of the constitution in church and state.

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[25] See cpt. 9 below.

[26] See cpt. 6 below.

These themes will be developed through the rest of this dissertation, which, after the introduction, is divided into four sections, each concentrating on one aspect of church-state relations. Section 2 examines contemporary ideas about the relationship of church and state, demonstrating the emphasis that was placed on their interdependence and the inseparability of secular and spiritual matters. Through an examination of the management of the crown's ecclesiastical patronage section 3 explores ministers' perceptions of the Church's role and the extent to which they were able to determine its character. The next section considers the clergy's perception of the role of the Church, both as part of the temporal government and as an institution concerned with the spiritual condition of men, and the ways in which they were able to resolve the apparent contradictions in this dual role. Finally, the place of the Church in parliamentary and high politics is discussed. This final section explores the tensions and conflicts that did arise between church and state in the years 1742-62, the extent to which the Church was able to preserve its independence against secular encroachments, and the willingness of churchmen and ministers to contemplate reforms to enable the Church to perform its duties, both secular and spiritual, more effectively.

The scope of this dissertation is necessarily limited. It is intended as a study of church and state from above. It concentrates on the attitudes and perceptions of the nation's elite in both church and state. It aims to explain the role such men believed that the Church ought to be playing in state and society. The extent to which clergymen in the parishes were indeed discharging the duties prescribed for them, and, more broadly, the impact of the Church in the localities throughout England and Wales are subjects beyond the scope of the present work. Indeed, regional variations were so great, as the next chapter will show, that answers to such questions are dependent upon the completion of a series of local studies looking at the relationship of church, state and society in the parishes.

The choice of period for discussion, 1742-62, is, to some extent, arbitrary. The passage of the Toleration Act in 1689, recognizing that, in some respects, the Church of England was now one of a number of sects; the beginning of the whig supremacy in 1715; or the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts in 1718, signalling the end of the fierce parliamentary struggles over religion which had dominated the reigns of William and Anne; might all mark more logical starting-points. Alternatives could also be suggested for terminal dates: the Feathers Tavern Petition of 1772, which put the Church back at the centre of parliamentary politics; the outbreak of the French Revolution; or Catholic Emancipation in 1829. But the years 1742-62 do constitute a discrete period. During this time, apart from the brief interlude of the Pitt-Devonshire administration, the duke of Newcastle was the 'ecclesiastical minister' of the whig government. For twenty years the ministry's ecclesiastical policy manifested a consistency unknown since the 1688 Revolution, making the period particularly suitable for an examination of the role of the Church as part of the state. Moreover, Newcastle and his closest colleagues, Henry Pelham and the earl of Hardwicke, were known to be devout anglicans, in striking contrast to the reputed

scepticism of their predecessor, Robert Walpole. Consequently, church-state relations suffered less from the tension and conflicts which had characterized the first half of the whig supremacy. Both politicians and churchmen were able to concentrate their attention on the secular and spiritual duties of the Church free from the distraction of repeated parliamentary controversies over religion.

2. The condition of the Church

The Church of England, as an institution, cannot be precisely defined. Its 26 dioceses (22 in the province of Canterbury and 4 in York) were divided into 61 archdeaconries, which were subdivided into 399 rural deaneries and finally into nearly 12000 parishes. This structure was not rational. Even the dioceses differed widely in size and extent. Lincoln, which encompassed over 1500 parishes, was divided into two parts and stretched from the River Humber in the north to the Thames in the south. The smallest diocese, Rochester, included only 147 parishes in an enclave to the east of London. Nonetheless, the authority of the bishops over parochial ministers, and over the 500 or so clergy holding dignities in the cathedral and collegiate churches, was well-established, if limited.[1] But the Church was more than this ordered hierarchy. There were some 15000 clergymen in England and Wales, and the widespread practice of holding parochial livings in plurality meant that a high proportion of these were unbeneficed.[2] Many acted as curates. But clergymen also held lectureships at churches in London and the provincial towns, fellowships at colleges in Oxford and Cambridge, and schoolmasterships throughout the country. Such men enjoyed greater freedom from episcopal oversight. Even more independent, but still arguably part of the Church, were the great charitable corporations: the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.[3]

In the final analysis the effectiveness of the Church, however it is defined and whatever its role, was dependent on the ability of the parochial clergy to perform their duties. This chapter, through a brief examination of the condition of the Church, thus provides the context for the discussion of the relationship between church and state which follows. A number of topics relating to this theme will be considered later: the role of the bishops and the ecclesiastical courts in chapter 6; some of the proposals for Church reform in chapter 9. Even excluding these, however, this chapter does not aim to be a comprehensive study. Rather it looks at three areas in which, it has been claimed, the eighteenth-century Church was particularly deficient: non-residence and pluralism, the provision of churches, and the frequency of public worship.

Under the impact of the evangelical and tractarian movements nineteenth-century churchmen saw the previous century as an era of decline, a period 'of lethargy instead of activity, of worldliness instead of spirituality, of self-seeking instead of self-denial, of grossness instead of

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1 These figures have been calculated from John Ecton, *Thesaurus rerum ecclesiasticarum. Being an account of the valuations of all the ecclesiastical benefices in the several dioceses in England and Wales* . . . (2nd edn., London, 1754).

2 F.G. James, 'Clerical incomes in eighteenth-century England', *H.M.P.E.C.*, XVIII (1949), 311-25.

3 The Church of England, as a society, also included the laity. But it should not be forgotten that laymen also played an important role in the functioning of the Church as an institution. Private individuals were the patrons of over 50% of all church livings, (D.R. Hirschberg, 'The government and church patronage in England, 1660-1760', *J.B.S.*, XX (1980-1), 112.) a legal right which also conveyed considerable informal influence, and the laity often exerted even greater control over lecturers and schoolmasters.

refinement'.[4] This view found its fullest expression in the work of Abbey and Overton.[5] It did not, however, command universal assent even from contemporaries. Mark Pattison and Wickham Legg both criticized those who omitted the eighteenth century from the history of the Church. Pattison saw it as an important chapter in the development of a rational theology, while Legg, in an unjustly neglected book, emphasized the persistence of many religious practices often assumed to have been absent.[6] Upon these foundations Norman Sykes developed his comprehensive reassessment of the eighteenth-century Church.[7] It would be difficult to overestimate Sykes's influence on the writing of the ecclesiastical history of the period, but paradoxically his revaluation has not been widely accepted, despite its wealth of detail.[8] General studies continue to use the language of Abbey and Overton and describe the distinguishing characteristics of religious life as an 'absence of religious fervour' and a 'mood of apathy'.[9]

This chapter is not, however, an apologia for the Georgian Church, unless the claim that it was no more somnolent or remiss in the discharge of its pastoral responsibilities than the Church in previous centuries amounts to an apologia. Rather the chapter is intended to outline the extent to which it was performing its basic duties, to assess its shortcomings and how far they were recognized, and to point to some of the problems which had to be overcome before it could remedy those shortcomings.

Before discussing the state of the Church, some comment must be made about the status of the clergy. In the absence of detailed modern research literary images still dominate our perception of the parochial clergy. Macaulay dismissed the great majority of the clergy of restoration England as, 'on the whole, a plebeian class'. He admitted, however, that the increase in the value of benefices during the next century brought about a marked rise in the social status of the clergy.[10] Thus figures like the foxhunting squarson, Bute Crawley, became commonplace in the literature of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. However, an equally common caricature was the absentee rector and his curate, who performed the duty of the living for a pittance,[11] and throughout the century portraits of impoverished parsons abound, perhaps the most

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4 J.H. Overton and F. Relton, *The English Church from the accession of George I to the end of the eighteenth century, 1714-1800* (London, 1906), p.1.

5 C.J. Abbey and J.H. Overton, *The English Church in the eighteenth century* (2 vols., London, 1878), II, 1-8; C.J. Abbey, *The English Church and its bishops, 1700-1800* (2 vols., London, 1887), I, 314-5.

6 Mark Pattison, 'Tendencies of religious thought in England, 1688-1750', in *Essays*, ed. H. Nettleship (2 vols., Oxford, 1889), II, 42-118; J. Wickham Legg, *English Church life from the Restoration to the tractarian movement* (London, 1914), pp. vii-viii.

7 Norman Sykes, *Church and state in England in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1934).

8 J.B. Owen, *The eighteenth century, 1714-1815* (London, 1974), p. 153.

9 Owen, *Eighteenth century*, p. 152; J.H. Plumb, *England in the eighteenth century* (Harmondsworth, 1950), pp.42-3; Horton Davies, *Worship and theology in England, From Watts and Wesley to Maurice, 1690-1850* (Princeton, 1961), pp. 60-1; Alan Gilbert, *Religion and society in industrial England, Church, chapel and social change, 1740-1914* (London, 1976), p. 70; Roy Porter, *English society in the eighteenth century* (Harmondsworth, 1982), pp. 188-90.

10 T.B. Macaulay, 'History of England', in *The works of Lord Macaulay* (8 vols., London, 1873), I, 256. Many later writers have concurred in this opinion, e.g., Abbey, *English Church and its bishops*, I, 320; James, 'Clerical incomes in England', p. 324

11 E.g., William Combe, *The tour of Doctor Syntax, in search of the picturesque. A poem* (5th end., London, 1817), canto 1.

worthy being Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*.[12]

The literary caricatures do at least emphasize the enormous differences in status to be found within the clergy. According to the calculations of the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty in 1708 there were 4098 parishes in England and Wales yielding £80 a year or more, an income on which a gentleman was just able to maintain his status in many counties.[13] Many livings were far richer. In the diocese of Durham, Houghton-le-Spring was worth 'at least' £550 p.a. to Thomas Secker in the mid-1720s, and two livings, Sedgefield and Stanhope, were still more lucrative.[14] Cathedral dignities, as might be expected, tended to exaggerate the inequalities of clerical incomes; 62.5% of the cathedral clergy at Lincoln had parochial incomes of over £100 p.a. in 1714, and nearly 50% of them more than £160.[15] Such dignities also varied greatly in value. The average return from a Lincoln prebend in the late Stuart period was probably only £50 or £60 a year, and some were virtually worthless.[16] On the other hand, by the 1760s canons of Gloucester were estimated to be receiving £180 p.a., rising to £220 at Worcester, £300 at Westminster, £400 at Christ Church, and £450 at Windsor.[17] Even these figures pale, however, beside the estimate made of the annual income of one of the Durham prebends in 1752: £700.[18] Diocesan officials could, therefore, become remarkably wealthy men. In 1762 Samuel Dickens was receiving £1100 a year from his two preferments, the archdeaconry of Durham and the eleventh prebend.[19] In contrast the deanery, the second richest in the country, held by Spencer Cowper, was worth only £400 more.[20]

If £80 a year was an adequate maintenance for a clergyman, benefices under £50 were regarded as poor. Returns to Queen Anne's Bounty for 1707 showed that 3826 fell into this category. But these figures were far from complete, and the first comprehensive list, drawn up in 1736, noted 5638 benefices of £50 or under.[21] As table 2.1 shows,[22] there was considerable regional diversity. Only 18% of livings in Winchester and 23% in the two London dioceses of London and Rochester were poor, compared with 79% in Llandaff and 75% in Chester. In

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12 An account of literary portraits of the clergy is given by Jacques Gury. 'The sufferings of the clergy 1730-60', *Church Quarterly Review*, CLXIV (1963), 44-57.

13 Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England. Professions, state and society, 1690-1730* (London, 1982), p. 95.

14 'The autobiography of Archbishop Secker', Lambeth Palace Library, MS 2598, fol. 17 [Transcript of Professor Norman Sykes]; J.C. Shuler, 'The pastoral and ecclesiastical administration of the diocese of Durham 1721-1771; with particular reference to the archdeaconry of Northumberland', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Durham, 1975, p. 101.

15 J.H. Pruett, 'Career patterns among the clergy of Lincoln cathedral, 1660-1750', *Church History*, XLIV (1975), 204-16.

16 Pruett, 'Lincoln cathedral clergy', pp. 209, 213.

17 *The correspondence of King George III from 1760 to December 1783*, ed. Sir John Fortescue (6 vols., London, 1927-8), I, 33-44. Ten years earlier one of the prebends at Windsor had been valued at £300. B.L. Add. MS 32729, fol. 373: Newcastle to Pelham, 28 Sept. 1752.

18 B.L. Add. 32729, fol. 373.

19 Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', p. 191.

20 *Correspondence of George III*, I, 33-44.

21 Ian Green, 'The first five years of Queen Anne's Bounty', in *Princes and paupers in the English Church, 1500-1800*, ed. Rosemary O'Day and Felicity Heal (Leicester, 1981), pp. 237, 241-6. This article also contains some useful comments on the accuracy of these returns.

22 See below, p. 39.

general, the north and west contained many more poor livings than the south and east, although Norwich and Durham were notable exceptions. Even these figures do not reveal the gravity of the situation. 1118 of the 5638 livings, that is, nearly 10% of all church places, were returned as worth £10 and below. The majority of these were perpetual curacies and chapelries.[23] Sixteen years later, in 1752, the bishop of Carlisle, not the poorest diocese in the north and west, compiled a list showing that 32% of livings in his diocese were worth under £20 per annum.[24] Moreover, the returns to the Bounty took no account of the plight of stipendiary curates.[25] An act of 1713 had empowered the bishops to set stipends for curates of £20 to £50 when the incumbent was non-resident.[26] In 1736 the average salary of curates in Durham was £28, but in the diocese of St Asaph in 1742 it was only £20 6s 0d.[27] As late as 1782, 162 of 212 curates' stipends recorded for the diocese of Worcester fell within the limits set by the 1713 act. The lowest, moreover, was a mere £5.[28] The diocesan returns of 1810 are equally revealing. 13.5% of curates received £20 or less and 74% £50 or less, at a time when benefices of under £150 p.a. had come to be regarded as poor.[29]

The situation undoubtedly improved during the course of the eighteenth century. By the early nineteenth century only one third of livings fell beneath the poverty line, now £150, compared with half in 1736. Nonetheless, nearly one in ten was still worth less than £50.[30] Much of the credit for narrowing the gap between rich and poor clergy must go to the work of Queen Anne's Bounty. Between its foundation and 1804 it made 7367 augmentations to 3055 livings producing, it has been calculated, an average increase of about £30 a year.[31] The number of poor livings in the early nineteenth century, however, is a caution against overestimating the impact of the Bounty.[32] Moreover, in certain circumstances the Bounty could actually increase the number of poor livings. By the 1715 act parochial chapels were eligible for augmentation. But if augmentation occurred the incumbent of the mother church was debarred from benefiting and the chapelries thereafter became perpetual curacies. In Llandaff this process created a new group of poor livings, formerly served as chapels by the incumbent of the mother church, who was now

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23 Green, 'The first years of Queen Anne's Bounty', p. 242.

24 *Fleming-Senhouse papers*, ed. Edward Hughes (Carlisle, 1961), pp. 113-4.

25 An eloquent lament about the poverty of curates was written by Thomas Stackhouse. *The miseries and great hardships of the inferiour clergy, in and about London. And a modest plea for their rights, and better usage; in a letter to the right reverend father in God, John lord bishop of London. By a clergyman of the Church of England* (London, 1722).

26 12 Anne, St.2, c. 12. Stackhouse claimed that this act was often evaded. *Miseries and hardships of the clergy*, pp. 67-73.

27 Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', p. 20; J.L. Salter, 'Isaac Maddox and the dioceses of St Asaph and Worcester', M.A. dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1962, p. 58.

28 *The state of the bishopric of Worcester 1782-1808*, ed. Mary Ransome (Worcestershire Historical Society, n.s., VI, 1969), p. 11.

29 *Parliamentary Papers*, 1812, X, 157. These figures must cast doubt on the claim of Norman Sykes that the average stipend of curates was between £30 and £35 p.a., rising to £70 in the later years of the century, even if salaries in wealthy London churches were as much as £60. The 1835 report of the ecclesiastical commissioners indicated, however, that by 1831 the average salary had risen to £81. Sykes, *Church and state*, pp. 206-9.

30 Green, 'The first years of Queen Anne's Bounty', p. 249.

31 James, 'Clerical incomes in England', p. 324.

32 See below, pp. 22-3, for contemporary awareness of its shortcomings.

obliged to appoint a curate, whose stipend was inevitably insufficient.[33]

Most of the clergy had no doubt themselves what their social status ought to be. Their education and the acquaintances formed at university made them gentlemen.[34] The richest clergy, such as Samuel Dickens, clearly formed part of the elite of county society, and many poorer than him were accepted by the local gentry as equals. But the position of the majority of the clergy who received under £80 a year is less clear. The practice of holding livings in plurality, whether other parochial livings, curacies, or schoolmasterships, made a total income of £50 more common than the basic statistics might suggest. The financial position of such clergy was better than that of a skilled craftsman, who was earning between £25 and £50 a year in London, and a maximum of about £25 in the country, provided he was fully employed. Moreover, most incumbents were supplied with accommodation and enjoyed security in their posts, benefits denied to both the labourer and craftsman.[35]

Thus, even in purely economic terms there was probably only a minority of the clergy who could not cling, albeit precariously, to some of the trappings of gentry status. Many clergymen may not have been accepted by the landed gentry as their equals, but their parishioners would certainly have seen them as social superiors. More intangibly the status of the clergy was raised by their education. Richard Newton claimed that a university education entitled them to a maintenance that would ensure respect.[36] Conversely, that education was itself a means of obtaining respect, especially in country areas. The majority of the clergy had attended Oxford or Cambridge: 96% in Worcester between 1782 and 1808, 84% having a degree; between 70% and 75% in Wiltshire in 1783; and 69% of ordinands in Durham between 1722 and 1759.[37] Many, however, especially in the north-west and Wales, did not. In the diocese of Carlisle only 28% of candidates ordained by Bishops Waugh and Fleming between 1723 and 1747 were graduates.[38] Thomas Herring faced a similar situation when bishop of Bangor, commenting that the Bishop of Norwich 'living nearer ye Sun & more among ye learned ought perhaps to be more nice at his Ordinations, than we can be here'.[39] The absence of a graduate clergy was directly linked to the poverty of livings, and many clergymen had received their education at the local grammar school. Looking for a curate for a living of £8 p.a., Herring prayed: 'God send me a Candidate of honest Life, that can say the Creed & ye Lds Prayer & the ten Commandments in his vulgar Tongue, &

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33 J.R. Guy, 'Perpetual curacies in eighteenth-century South Wales', *S.C.H.*, XVI (1979), 327-33.

34 Richard Newton, *Pluralities indefensible. A treatise humbly offered to the consideration of the parliament of Great-Britain. By a presbyter of the Church of England* (London, 1743), pp. 276-7.

35 James, 'Clerical incomes in England', pp. 318-19. The wages of a skilled craftsman were lower when board and lodging were provided.

36 Newton, *Pluralities indefensible*, pp. 275-9.

37 *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 8; *Wiltshire returns to the bishop's visitation queries 1783*, ed. Mary Ransome (Wiltshire Record Society, XXVII, Devizes, 1972), p. 8; Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', pp. 397-429.

38 Anthony Armstrong, 'Higher ecclesiastical administration in the diocese of Carlisle, 1702-68', M.A. dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1951, pp. 80-1.

39 Portland MSS, Nottingham University Library, PWV/120/20: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 23 July 1739.

all other things that a Xtian ought to know & believe to his Soul's Health'.[40] In such areas, the status of the clergy was probably lower, though their gentry neighbours were also farther from 'ye Sun'.

It is clear, therefore, that the improvement in the economic condition of the lower clergy during the eighteenth century made it easier for them to maintain the status of gentlemen, to which they believed their vocation and their education entitled them. But this is not evidence for a general rise in the social status of the clergy. That claim, made first by Macaulay, was premised on his description of the low status of the late seventeenth-century clergy. His character of the clergy was fiercely attacked by contemporaries like Gladstone.[41] They were, perhaps, more interested in vindicating men in whom they believed the true traditions of the Church of England were embodied,[42] but C.H. Mayo, reviewing the controversy early this century, concluded that Gladstone's account was the more accurate.[43] The information that has been presented here about the economic condition of the clergy in the first years of the eighteenth century supports this conclusion.

Gladstone developed his argument to claim that 'the social position [of the clergy] was in ordinary cases nearly the same as now'. The country clergy of the period were, he admitted, less refined than those of the mid-nineteenth century, but so too were the gentry. What the eighteenth century witnessed, therefore, was the growing cosmopolitanism of provincial society.[44] There is, indeed, no doubt that clerical incomes increased quite dramatically during the century, especially the latter half. But rising income is not evidence of rising social status.[45] Clerical incomes were rising, not because of special circumstances affecting the clergy alone, but because all incomes from land were increasing. Thus, the economic position of the clergy relative to the rest of landed society remained unchanged. There is some evidence that income from episcopal and capitular lands may have increased more rapidly in the second half of the century than the income of lay landlords.[46] But this comprised only part of the income of bishops and chapters, who were a fraction of the clergy. Nothing suggests that the parochial clergy were managing their glebes more effectively than laymen or that they were persuading their parishioners to hand over a greater

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40 Nottingham University Library, PWV/120/20.

41 Churchill Babington, *Mr. Macaulay's character of the clergy in the latter part of the seventeenth century, considered* (Cambridge, 1849); W.E. Gladstone, 'Macaulay', in *Gleanings of past years 1845-76* (7 vols., London, 1879), II, 320-33.

42 Gladstone, for example, claimed that 'that generation of clergy was . . . the most powerful and famous in the annals of the English Church since the Reformation'. *Gleanings*, II, 321.

43 C.H. Mayo, 'The social status of the clergy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', *E.H.R.*, XXXVII (1922), 258-66.

44 Gladstone, *Gleanings*, II, 327. This claim is supported by the tentative conclusions of P.A. Bezodis, 'The English parish clergy and their place in society, 1660-1800', fellowship dissertation, Trinity College, Cambridge, 1949.

45 Cf., G.F.A. Best, *Temporal pillars. Queen Anne's Bounty, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Church of England* (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 62-9.

46 Christopher Clay, '"The greed of whig bishops"?: church landlords and their lessees 1660-1760', *P.P.*, LXXXVII (1980), 128-57. The more rapid increase in church incomes was the result of the modernization of leases, bringing them more into line with contemporary lay practice. [See also Best, *Temporal pillars*, p. 63.] Throughout the century church lands were considered a particularly good investment, because of unrealistically low rents and fines.

proportion of their produce in tithes. Thus, such signs of increasing clerical wealth as the improvement and rebuilding of parsonage houses to create, in a few cases, large, dignified rectories, are not indicative of a rising clergy, for they were paralleled by the building, extension and renovation of the houses of the country gentry.[47]

Other evidence that has been adduced for the rising social status of the clergy is ultimately no more convincing. The number of clerical J.P.s rose rapidly from 51 in 1702 to over 900 by 1760, almost all the increase occurring after 1740. By 1832 about a quarter of the 1531 active justices in England and Wales were clergymen.[48] But rather than demonstrating the attainment by more and more clergy of equality with the county elites, historians of local government have portrayed this development as an enforced response to the demand for more local magistrates, necessitating the opening up of the bench to those 'whose status bordered on gentility'.[49] From another perspective it may be seen as part of the clergy's loss of a distinctive clericalism and their integration into secular society, exemplified during the mid-century period by a tendency to abandon clerical dress.[50]

Perhaps the most convincing evidence for the rising social status of the clergy comes from contemporaries. Warburton's statement, that 'Our *Grandees* have at last found their way back into the Church',[51] is the most frequently quoted of many comments in a similar vein. The composition of the episcopate, moreover, appears to support his observation. None of the bishops appointed by Queen Anne had close ties with the aristocracy. But throughout the century the proportion of men raised to the episcopate whose fathers were peers or sons of peers increased gradually, from 9% under George I, to 14% under George II and 21% under George III. On the other hand, if Anne's reign is excluded, when no one of 'plebeian' origins was appointed to the bench, the number falling into this category declined from 21% in George I's reign, to 9% under George II, and only 4% under George III. However, the proportion of bishops from the gentry remained more or less constant throughout the century.[52] Thus, the evidence must be stretched to demonstrate a general rise in the status of the clergy. It suggests that the episcopate was

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47 Alan Savidge, *The parsonage in England: its history and architecture* (London, 1964), cpt. 3; G.E. Mingay, *English landed society in the eighteenth cetury* (London, 1963), cpt. 9; Mark Girouard, *Life in the English country house. A social and architectural history* (New Haven, 1980), cpts. 7-8.

48 Norma Landau, *The justices of the peace, 1679-1760* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984), p. 143; Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *English local government from the Revolution to the Municipal Corporation Act* (9 vols., London, 1906-29), I, 581n.

49 Landau, *Justices of the peace*, p. 143; Webb, *English local government*, I, 350-1. Cf., Best, *Temporal pillars*, p. 71.

50 L.P.L., MS 1349, pp. 182-4: Catherine Talbot to Rev. Mr Poyntz, 22 Dec. 1757. The antiquary, William Cole, complained in 1765, 'that it is *no uncommon Sight* at *London, & elsewhere*, to see *one* of our *two Metropolitans* [Robert Drummond, archbishop of York] . . . walking about *without his Gown & Cassock*, but dressed in every Respect like a *Layman*.' B.L. Add. 5828, fol. 131.

51 *Letters from a late eminent prelate to one of his friends* (2nd edn., London, 1809), p. 118: Warburton to Hurd, 5 July 1752.

52 Norman Ravitch, *Sword and mitre. Government and episcopate in France and England in the age of aristocracy* (The Hague, 1966), p. 120. Ravitch adopted rigorous criteria for his classifications, thus creating a very large uncertain category. This remained fairly constant through the period 1702-1820, averaging 45% of the total. The largest single subdivision of this category were sons of clergymen. *Ibid.*, pp. 119-23.

becoming increasingly aristocratic, although even this trend should not be overemphasized.[53] Warburton's statement should be interpreted literally: more sons of peers were entering the Church, but the overall social composition of the clergy was changing little. These conclusions are supported by a study of the clergy of Lincoln cathedral, among whom the representatives of the gentry declined in the first half of the century. Among the prebendaries of Lincoln, as among ordinands at Durham, the sons of the clergy formed the largest single group.[54]

Non-residence and pluralism

Non-residence was not a problem peculiar to the Georgian Church. It was a complaint frequently made both against the Church of Rome in the later middle ages and against the Church of England under Elizabeth and James by puritan reformers. There is, however, evidence to suggest that there was a greater degree of non-residence in the eighteenth century than in earlier periods. Immediately before the Reformation about a quarter of all parishes were in the hands of non-resident incumbents.[55] In contrast, in the diocese of Worcester in 1782 only 38% of incumbents were resident. In Wiltshire in 1783 the figure was 39%, while in Norwich in 1784 it was only 22%.[56] It must be admitted that there was considerable regional variation in the incidence of non-residence and other dioceses showed a less disturbing pattern. In the diocese of York in 1743 74% of incumbents were resident, in Hereford between 1716 and 1722 55% were resident, while in St Asaph in 1742, of 75 incumbents who resided on their livings (69% of those for whom evidence exists), 20 also employed a curate.[57] The general situation, however, was not impressive. The diocesan returns of 1810 showed only two sees, Carlisle and Hereford, with more than 60% of resident incumbents.[58] Moreover, the eighteenth century had witnessed not improvement, but deterioration. In Devon the proportion of non-resident incumbents rose from 34% in 1744, to 39% in 1764 and 41% in 1779. In the diocese of Oxford 51% of incumbents had been resident at the time of Thomas Secker's primary visitation in 1738, but only 39% were forty years later. A comparable decline occurred in the diocese of Chichester.[59]

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53 The figures themselves must be treated with care. On the one hand, the samples are very small. On the other, the British nobility expanded considerably after 1784, possibly distorting the figure for George III's reign.

54 Pruett, 'Lincoln cathedral clergy', p. 208; Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', pp. 396-428. In Durham between 1722 and 1759 31% of the fathers of ordinands, whose occupation can be traced, were clergymen.

55 Peter Heath, *The English parish clergy on the eve of the Reformation* (London, 1969), p. 57.

56 *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 14; *Wiltshire visitation returns*, p. 9; W.M. Jacob, '"A practice of a very hurtful tendency"', *S.C.H.*, XVI (1979), 322.

57 *Archbishop Herring's visitation returns, 1743*, ed. S.L. Ollard and P.C. Walker (Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, vols. 71, 72, 75, 77, 79, 1927-31), I, xii; W.M. Marshall, 'The administration of the dioceses of Hereford and Oxford, 1660-1760', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Bristol, 1978, p. 104; Salter, 'Isaac Maddox', p. 56.

58 *Parliamentary Papers*, 1812, X, 152-3.

59 Arthur Warne, *Church and society in eighteenth-century Devon* (Newton Abbot, 1969), pp. 39-40; Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', p. 105; Diana McClatchey, *Oxfordshire clergy 1777-1869. A study of the established Church and of the role of the clergy in local society* (Oxford, 1960), p. 31; Bezodis, 'English parish clergy', p. 88.

At first sight these figures do much to support the claim that the parochial system broke down in the eighteenth century, undermining the monopolistic claims of the Church of England and its influence in the localities. Alan Gilbert has calculated, on the basis of the parliamentary returns of 1810, that over one thousand parishes were 'simply unattended by ministers of the established Church'. Gilbert assumed that the situation in 1740 was much the same, and argued that 'habits of indifference stretching back several generations had become embedded in the structures of many local communities'.[60] The 1810 returns are, however, a misleading basis for such a calculation. They suggest, for instance, that thirty-two parishes in Oxford were completely neglected by ministers of the established Church.[61] An analysis of the 1778 visitation returns for that diocese, however, shows a rather different picture. In 33 of the 100 cases of non-residence the incumbent lived nearby and performed the duty himself, a resident stipendiary curate was employed in 27 parishes, and the remaining 40 were served by neighbouring clergy.[62] In Devon in 1779 five cases of non-residence were sequestered parishes. Of the remaining 154, 22% were cared for by their own incumbent resident in an adjoining parish, 36% had a stipendiary curate and in 42% a neighbouring minister acted as curate.[63] Similar patterns of pastoral care can be found in other dioceses.[64]

The state of the rural deanery of Wirral in 1789 provides a clear picture of the operation of this system. Of the sixteen livings (fifteen parishes and one extra-parochial chapel), six were served by resident incumbents, and five of the remainder by a resident stipendiary curate. The parish of Bidston and chapel of Birkenhead were served by Bryan King, who lived at Tranmere, one mile from Birkenhead and four from Bidston. The combined population of the two livings was 400. Bramborough, which possessed no house or glebe, was served once a month from Eastham. This arrangement had persisted throughout the century. Eastham church, however, was within easy walking distance. The minister of Overchurch lived three miles away and was 'seldom absent', while the incumbent of Stoak lived some way away at Frodsham, but services were 'duly performed' in this parish of 200.[65] There is, therefore, little evidence of total neglect of parishes. On the contrary, the standard of pastoral care achieved in the eighteenth century did not compare unfavourably with earlier periods. As contemporaries pointed out, non-residents in

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60 Gilbert, *Religion and society*, pp. 6-7.

61 *Parliamentary Papers*, 1812, X, 153, 157. The figure thirty-two is reached by subtracting from the number of parishes (213), 72 resident incumbents, 23 non-residents who performed the duty of the parish, and 86 curates of non-resident incumbents. This appears to have been the basis on which Gilbert made his calculations.

62 McClatchey, *Oxfordshire clergy*, pp. 31-3.

63 Warne, *Church and society*, p. 42.

64 In Wiltshire in 1783 27% of the 142 parishes where the incumbent was non-resident were served by a resident curate, 56% by the incumbent or a curate living no more than five miles away, and none by clergy living more than ten miles away. *Wiltshire visitation returns*, p. 9. Cf., *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 14; Salter, 'Isaac Maddox', pp. 54-6; Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', p. 104.

65 R.J. Pope, 'The eighteenth-century Church in Wirral', M.A. dissertation, University of Wales (Lampeter), 1971, pp. 19-21.

the sixteenth-century Church often made no provision for the spiritual care of their parishes.[66] Despite a greater incidence of non-residence, there was less neglect.

Reasons for non-residence were varied. Ill-health and the absence of a parsonage or suitable alternative accommodation within the parish, are among the most obvious. But the single most important cause of non-residence was pluralism. Pluralism could take various forms. Of the 124 pluralists in Wiltshire in 1783, 68 were incumbents holding two livings, 25 incumbents serving a second living as curate, and 31 curates serving two or more churches.[67] A parson might also have been a schoolmaster, or, especially in the dioceses of Oxford and Ely, an university office-holder, while many curates in London and other towns eked out their living by holding lecturerships.[68] In some cases pluralism merely made wealthy clergymen more comfortable. This appears to have been true of the patronage dispensed by the bishops of Ely,[69] and many individual cases could be cited. On occasions this practice was justified - Bishop Hume gave many of the more valuable livings in his gift to diocesan and cathedral officers, who held them in plurality. Rather less defensible was his appointment of his nephew, Nathaniel Hume, not only to a canonry and the cathedral precentorship, but also to two of his most valuable livings.[70]

In general, however, the poverty of so many benefices necessitated pluralities. 43 of 64 cases of pluralism in the diocese of Worcester and 89 of 124 in Wiltshire produced only a competent maintenance.[71] The situation in Northumberland in 1721 is even more striking. Of fifteen pluralists, only four had a lucrative salary, and only two of these held parochial livings in plurality.[72] Moreover, a competent maintenance varied according to the circumstances of a living, and lucrative pluralities could sometimes be justified. Benefices in market towns were often poorly endowed, but the size of their congregations and their importance as the focal point of the Church's worship in the locality made it desirable that they be filled by some of the more able clergy. Thus Edmund Gibson, who was hardly unexacting in the standards he demanded of his clergy, believed it 'a great service to religion when worthy and able men officiating in cities and market towns were supported in the faithful and diligent discharge of their duty by the addition of a country living of better value and few inhabitants'.[73]

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66 R. Johnson, *An apology for the clergy. In which the reasoning and utility of the bishop of London's late charge, are impartially considered. To which is added, a proposal to make residence more general than by the enforcement of popish canons or statutes. In a letter to Lord* — (London, 1759), pp. 22-3; Ferdinando Warner, *The ecclesiastical history of England, to the eighteenth century* (2 vols., London, 1756-7), II, 659-60. This claim is supported by modern research. Heath, *English parish clergy*, pp. 49-69; Margaret Bowker, *The secular clergy in the diocese of Lincoln 1495-1520* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 85-109.

67 *Wiltshire visitation returns*, p. 11.

68 For a hostile account of the system of lectureships, see *A letter to a bishop, concerning lecturerships. By F.T. assistant curate at — and joint-lecturer of St —* (London, 1768).

69 Rosalind Mitchison, 'Pluralities and the poorer benefices in eighteenth-century England', *H.J.*, v (1962), 188-90.

70 *Wiltshire visitation returns*, pp. 11-12.

71 *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 14; *Wiltshire visitation returns*, pp. 10-11.

72 Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', p. 27.

73 Norman Sykes, *Edmund Gibson, bishop of London, 1669-1748. A study in politics and religion in the eighteenth century* (London, 1926), pp. 229-30.

Some churchmen elevated the defence of pluralities into a system. In 1692 a tract was published by Henry Wharton and George Stanhope. *A defence of pluralities* remained influential throughout the next century. It advanced three major reasons for allowing pluralities: the poverty of many livings and the need to raise the income of all clergymen to a competence; the necessity of increasing the income of enough clergymen above a 'bare subsistence' to encourage 'Young men of good parts and pregnant hopes' to enter the Church; and the desirability of providing opportunities of rewarding deserving clergy beyond those offered by cathedral dignities.[74] Wharton and Stanhope further claimed that the practice of pluralism enabled many young clergymen to be trained as curates under the direction of distinguished and experienced clergy.[75]

But not all contemporaries were so complacent. Dissenters and anti-clericals were especially outspoken in their attacks on pluralities. Caleb Fleming denounced them as the 'gratification of . . . a monopolizing Thirst', a phrase echoed by Thomas Chubb, who claimed that they were intended merely to satisfy the 'avaricious desires' of clergymen.[76] But churchmen could be equally vehement in their condemnations of the practice. Richard Newton claimed it was a 'fraud', while Zachary Pearce styled pluralists a 'pernicious Set of Men'.[77] The bishops were particularly concerned about the non-residence consequent upon pluralism because of its implications for the pastoral care of parishes. Lewis Bagot described it as 'a very hurtful tendency',[78] and episcopal charges repeatedly urged the clergy to do their duty. Thomas Sherlock thought the point of such importance that he made it the subject of the whole of the charge delivered at his visitation of London in 1759, informing the clergy that they were 'as much bound to reside among the people committed to your care, as the pilot is to abide in the ship which he has undertaken to manage and conduct'.[79] The 'private Labours of a Clergyman' were also an integral part of his duty, which made 'his careful RESIDENCE among his People more desireable and more necessary'.[80] For that reason Archbishop Secker reminded his clergy that a minister's duty extended beyond the Sunday services and could be performed only by residence, and he went further than many of his brethren, claiming that a resident curate was not a sufficient

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74 Henry Wharton and George Stanhope, *A defence of pluralities, or, holding two benefices with cure of souls, as now practised in the Church of England* (London, 1692), pp. 178-82, 188-9.

75 Wharton and Stanhope, *Defence of pluralities*, p. 191.

76 Caleb Fleming, *A letter to the Revd. Dr. Cobden, rector of St Austin's and St Faith's, and of Acton, and chaplain in ordinary to his majesty, containing an exact copy of a pastoral epistle to the protestant dissenters in his parishes, with remarks thereon . . . By a parishioner of the doctor's* (London, 1738), p. 4; Thomas Chubb, *True gospel of Jesus Christ asserted* (2nd edn., London, 1741), p. 13, quoted in Abbey and Overton, *English Church in the eighteenth century*, II, 14.

77 Newton, *Pluralities indefensible*, pp. 59-60; *The dean of Winchester. His character of the English clergy. Being a translation of a Latin sermon preached before the convocation on the 2d of December last, by Zachary Pearce, S.T.P. dean of Winchester. With a dedication to the author, containing some remarks on the unjust aspersions cast upon his brethren therein, and other notorious particulars. By a member of the lower house of convocation* (London, 1743), p. 39.

78 Lewis Bagot, *A charge delivered to the clergy at the primary visitation of Lewis lord bishop of Norwich* (Norwich, 1784), pp. 10-11, quoted in Jacob, '"A practice of a very hurtful tendency"', p. 319.

79 Thomas Sherlock, 'A charge delivered to the clergy at a visitation held for the diocese of London in the year 1759', in *The works of Bishop Sherlock* (5 vols., London, 1830), IV, 277-97, especially p. 278.

80 Isaac Maddox, *The charge of Isaac, bishop of Worcester; to the clergy of his diocese at his primary visitation, holden at several places in the month of July 1745* (London, n.d.), p. 25; Sherlock, *Works*, IV, 277-80.

substitute.[81]

The parochial ideal of pastoral care was, therefore, still alive in the eighteenth-century Church. It is worth pointing out, however, that it was an ideal realised only briefly by the Church of England in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Georgian churchmen did not share the freedom enjoyed by anti-clericals and dissenters of being able to ignore reality, and hence their attacks on pluralities and non-residence were surrounded with qualifications. Zachary Pearce admitted the validity of some of the reasons for non-residence - the poverty of many benefices; the convenience of one incumbent serving two small, thinly populated, adjacent parishes; the reward of worth and learning - and only felt justified in concluding, rather lamely, that the Church should 'take care lest [the] Excuse should prevail where the Reasons above-mentioned cannot be urged'.[82] Secker made few concessions in his charge to the clergy. But when it was proposed that the residence of one minister on every benefice ought to be enforced by law, he commented that the 'smallness of the Income of multitudes of Churches arising form lay Impropriations & other causes make this impossible'.[83] This ambivalence was reflected in the practice even of those who tried to restrain non-residence. A critic of Sherlock's charge pointed out that in the past he had failed to live up to his own rules. While rector of Therfield, he had also been chaplain to the king and dean of Chichester, which allowed dispensations from residence of one month and ninety days respectively. During the remaining eight months of the year, however, he had resided not at Therfield, but in London as master of the Temple, which gave no dispensation.[84] Similarly, on the publication of *Pluralities indefensible* the author, Richard Newton, principal of Hertford College, was taunted with the fact that he had not resided on his living of Sudborough in Northamptonshire for twenty years. In mitigation Newton claimed that he had not appropriated any of the revenues, the whole having been given either to his resident curate or to pious and charitable uses.[85]

During the eighteenth century, therefore, a debate was taking place within the Church over pluralities and non-residence. By the early nineteenth century, it has been claimed, they were defended not merely as necessary, but as the work of 'the hidden hand of divine wisdom'.[86] Such arguments were not found in the mid-eighteenth century, and a closer examination of the debate reveals much common ground even between Wharton and Stanhope and their critic, Newton. Most controversy was engendered, not by discussion of the necessity of pluralities, but by different interpretations of the nature of parochial endowments. *A defence of pluralities* claimed that all endowments could only be intended for the general good of the Church, and the foundation of a parish 'only required, that the service of it should be perpetually supplied, in all

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81 Thomas Secker, 'A charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Canterbury, in the year 1758', in *The works of Thomas Secker, LL.D. late lord archbishop of Canterbury* (new edn., 6 vols., London, 1811), v. 424-7.

82 *The dean of Winchester. His character of the English clergy*, pp. 38-9.

83 L.P.L., Secker Papers, VII, fol. 169r; Secker, *Works*, v. 428.

84 Johnson, *Apology for the clergy*, pp. 26-7.

85 *D.N.B.*, XL, 399.

86 Best, *Temporal pillars*, pp. 74-5.

the Offices of Religion, by Priests authorized by the Bishop'; whereas Newton insisted that endowment is 'a *Price* for *Residence*'.[87] All agreed, however, that pluralities did not represent the ideal of pastoral care - Wharton and Stanhope came no closer than to claim that they were necessary in the present state of the Church and that they were illegal in the eyes neither of man nor of God. Every commentator was concerned only with the holding in plurality of benefices with cure of souls - no one attacked the existence of cathedral dignities, which were necessary to reward outstanding ability.[88] Equally, while all agreed that an adequate maintenance was necessary to ensure respect, if not to attract suitable men into the Church, there was universal horror at the idea that parochial livings should be equal in value.[89] Not only were some parishes more demanding than others, but richer benefices, as much as prebends, provided opportunities for rewarding merit, and poorer benefices provided places where young clergy could prove themselves.[90]

In the final analysis non-residence and pluralism were facts with which the eighteenth-century Church had to live. The fundamental, though not the only, cause of both was the poverty of livings. Ferdinando Warner claimed that two areas were left unreformed at the Reformation: the system of canon law and the maintenance of the clergy.[91] The solution, at least of the latter, was beyond the capabilities of his contemporaries. The wholesale redistribution of the Church's wealth was inconceivable; it would have involved the overturning of too many property rights. In any case it did not provide a solution. In 1736 it was calculated that the equal division of the whole of the Church's income would not have provided an annual stipend of £60 for all its clergy, including bishops and dignitaries.[92] Churchmen never tired of making this point in response to those who contrasted the wealth of the Church with the poverty of many of its ministers.[93] Even Richard Watson, one of the most prominent advocates of Church reform, shared this opinion, arguing that 'The whole Provision for the Church is as low as it can be, unless the State will be contented with a beggarly and illiterate Clergy, too mean and contemptible to do any good by

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87 Wharton and Stanhope, *Defence of pluralities*, pp. 114-5; Newton, *Pluralities indefensible*, p. 59. Bishop Sherlock shared Newton's opinion.

88 Newton was explicit in directing his treatise at '*Plurality* of Benefices with Cure of Souls'. *Pluralities indefensible*, p. iii. Richard Watson, bishop of Llandaff, proposed appropriating some of the income of cathedral dignities to augment poorer livings. He disclaimed, however, any intention to abolish church dignities, arguing that 'though thus diminished, [they] would still be great objects to the Clergy, great enough, *if properly bestowed*, to procure the exertion of the most distinguished talents in the Service of Learning and Religion'. Richard Watson, 'A letter to his grace the archbishop of Canterbury', in *Sermons on public occasions, and tracts on religious subjects* (Cambridge, 1788), pp. 429-30.

89 Watson, for example, denied that he wished to create 'a *parity of preferments*'. *Sermons and tracts*, pp. 398-9, 423.

90 Newton, *Pluralities indefensible*, pp. 291-2, 309-10.

91 Warner, *Ecclesiastical history*, II, 664.

92 *H.M.C.*, Egmont Diary, II, 263; Watson, *Sermons and tracts*, pp. 425-8; *Anecdotes of the life of Richard Watson, bishop of Llandaff; written by himself at different intervals and revised in 1814*, ed. Richard Watson (London, 1817), p. 97.

93 Richard Bentley, *Remarks upon a late discourse of free-thinking: in a letter to F.H. D.D. by phileleutherus lipsiensis* (4th edn., 2 pts., London, 1714-15), pt. II, pp. 15-17.

precept or example'.[94] However radical Queen Anne's Bounty appeared when it was founded, it was no more than a palliative. It was soon recognized that it would be a work of ages before all livings were provided with a decent maintenance. Precise estimates varied: Warner believed that it would take 500 years to raise all parochial livings to £60 a year, while Richard Burn calculated that the Bounty would need 339 years from 1714 to augment all poor livings to the value of £50.[95]

A major factor in the poverty of many parochial livings, as Secker pointed out, was the impropriation of tithes. In the country as a whole just over 40% of tithes were owned by impropriators.[96] Some clergy made outspoken attacks on Henry VIII for his failure to return impropriations to the Church at the time of the Reformation, but they recognized that these were now the property of laymen and offered no solution to the Church's economic problems.[97] Laymen, admittedly, did not own all impropriations. Nearly 41% of impropriate tithes were in the hands of clerical appropriators, mainly bishops and cathedral chapters.[98] But this did not make reform easier. Clerical property was not freehold property, but was held in trust. Thus, even had the Church shown the collective will, clerical appropriators could not have returned impropriate tithes to vicars. This power was eventually given to them by Howley's Augmentations Act of 1831.[99] The problem of parochial endowments, however, continued to perplex churchmen well into the second half of the nineteenth century and beyond.[100]

Unless every incumbent could be provided with a sufficient maintenance, it was futile to attack non-residence and pluralism. This point, which dissenters and anti-clericals were able to ignore, was admitted even by those churchmen most hostile to the practice. Of all the clerical condemnations of pluralities, that of Richard Newton was perhaps the most unequivocal. Yet his only positive proposal was to ascertain the value of all benefices and then to pass an act, listing those which could be held together with least inconvenience 'till they *Both* be augmented to a specified Value by *Royal* or *Other* Bounty'.[101] Moreover, the bishops often found themselves frustrated in their attempts to improve the situation. Bishop Gibson believed that Henry VIII's

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94 Watson, *Sermons and tracts*, p. 420. Twenty years later Sydney Smith made a similar point. 'Thoughts on the residence of the clergy', in *The works of the rev. Sydney Smith* (new edn., 3 vols., London, 1854), I. 103.

95 Warner, *Ecclesiastical history*, II, 660; Richard Burn, *Ecclesiastical law* (2 vols., London, 1763), I. 582-3. The figures quoted by Burn can also be found in *An answer to a late pamphlet, entitled, An examination of the scheme of church power laid down in the Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani, &c. By the author of the parallel* (London, 1735), pp. 147-8. The author of this pamphlet refers the reader to George Lavington's *Sermon before the sons of the clergy* (1734).

96 P.W. Whitfield, 'Change and continuity in the rural church: Norfolk 1760-1840', Ph.D. dissertation, University of St Andrews, 1977, p. 99.

97 Newton, *Pluralities indefensible*, pp. 140-1; Louis A. Landa, *Swift and the Church of Ireland* (Oxford, 1954), pp. 161-5.

98 Whitfield, 'Change and continuity in the rural church', p. 99.

99 1 & 2 Wm. IV, c. 45.

100 J. Sanford, *The mission and extension of the Church at home* (London, 1862), p. 81, quoted in Esther de Waal, 'New churches in East London in the early eighteenth century', *Renaissance and Modern Studies*, IX (1965), 111. The situation had, however, been much improved in the 1830s by the abolition of most non-residentiary prebends, and the application of the income to parochial augmentation. W.L. Mathieson, *English church reform 1815-40* (London, 1923), pp. 131-2.

101 Newton, *Pluralities indefensible*, pp. 118-9.

statute against non-residence[102] was a secular reinforcement of existing ecclesiastical censures, and he was supported in this opinion by Bishop Sherlock.[103] But it was a fiercely controverted point. Sir Michael Foster, later lord chief justice, wrote a pamphlet in answer to Sherlock's charge, showing that the statute had taken away the jurisdiction of the ordinary in cases of non-residence.[104] Any attempt by a bishop to deprive in a case of non-residence would inevitably have led to a protracted legal dispute, which was precisely what Archbishop Secker anticipated when he instituted what he intended as a test-case against the rector of Wareham just before his death.[105] Foster was not alone in his hostility to episcopal jurisdiction in such matters. Many laymen opposed the extension of the powers of bishops, and their concern, voiced strongly as late as 1803 in the debates over Sir William Scott's Clergy Residence Bill, found echoes among the lower clergy.[106]

The provision of churches

Another criticism of the eighteenth-century Church is its failure to respond to the growth of population and of urban areas, even to the extent of providing church accommodation for those who wished to attend its worship. It has even been claimed that no church building took place throughout the century.[107] There is no doubt that at the beginning of the nineteenth century the problem of accommodation had not been solved - on the contrary, the situation was deteriorating - but assertions such as this are grossly misleading.

The first consideration was the maintenance of existing buildings. Even here the Church has been accused of unparalleled neglect,[108] a claim not unsupported by contemporary evidence. Thomas Secker complained at his visitation in 1750 that 'too frequently the floors are meanly paved, or the walls dirty or patched, or the windows ill glazed, and it may be stopt up, or the roof not ceiled'.[109] Joseph Butler was even more critical of the state of church fabrics. In 1751 he repeated the claim of Bishop Fleetwood forty years earlier, that within a hundred years neglect would have brought to the ground 'an huge number of our churches', and expressed his belief that little had altered in the interim.[110] Visitation returns, especially the comments of archdeacons

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[102] 21 Hen. VIII, c. 13.

[103] Edmund Gibson, *Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani: or, the statutes, constitutions, canons, rubricks and articles, of the Church of England, methodically digested under their proper heads. With a commentary, historical and juridical* (2 vols., London, 1713), II, 924; Sherlock, *Works*, IV, 280-1.

[104] Michael Foster, *Considerations on the statutes 21. & 28. Hen. VIII. concerning the residence of the clergy. In answer to the interpretation given of those statutes, in the bishop of London's late charge* (London, 1759), especially p. 16. The uncertain state of the law was summed up by Richard Burn, *Ecclesiastical law*, II, 308-9.

[105] L.P.L., Secker Papers, VII, fol. 172: Secker to George Wegg, 2 Mar. 1768.

[106] *Parl. Hist.*, XXXVI, 882-9, 1514-7, 1579-94; Smith, *Works*, I, 103-4.

[107] Davies, *Worship and theology*, p. 60.

[108] John Stoughton, *Religion in England under Queen Anne and the Georges, 1702-1800* (2 vols., London, 1878), I, 285-6.

[109] Secker, 'A charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Oxford, in the year 1750', in *Works*, V, 395.

[110] Joseph Butler, 'A charge delivered to the clergy at the primary visitation of the diocese of Durham, in the year 1750', in *The works of Joseph Butler D.C.L. sometime lord bishop of Durham*, ed. W.E. Gladstone (2 vols., Oxford, 1896), II, 408-9.

following a parochial visitation, provide more concrete evidence of neglect. Thomas Sharp made hundreds of orders following his tour of the archdeaconry of Northumberland in 1723. Many of these concerned the interior fittings and appointments, but structural problems of some importance were also revealed - holes in the walls, twigs growing out of walls, leaks in roofs, and so on. When his son, John Sharp, became archdeacon forty years later his parochial visitation revealed a similar story of neglect.[111]

There are suggestions, however, that Butler may have been too pessimistic. Church fabrics do not appear to have been neglected more in the eighteenth century than in earlier periods. A study of Yorkshire churches in the 1720s has revealed a picture of minor neglect very similar to the situation in Durham. But nowhere, it is claimed, was there 'such a black record as was produced in the chancels . . . 150 years earlier'.[112] Similarly, Sharp's orders of 1723 rarely mentioned problems as serious as those revealed in the diocese of Lincoln in the early sixteenth century. Nor was the neglect allowed to remain unremedied for so long. In 1489 rain came in on the high altar at Foston, and was still doing so twenty years later.[113] In contrast, the vast majority of Thomas Sharp's orders were carried out. That his son's visitation forty years later revealed a situation not much better is evidence, not of the failure of rectors and churchwardens to act, but of the continual struggle against age and weather necessary to keep old fabrics in decent repair. Between 1723 and 1770 there was scarcely a parish in the archdeaconry of Northumberland which did not undergo some form of repair, restoration, or reconstruction.[114]

However well fabrics were maintained, the old churches could not cope with the demands placed upon them during the eighteenth century by the growth of population. It would be wrong to suggest that the Church ignored this problem, for the century witnessed the most vigorous period of construction since the Reformation. Almost no church building took place during the Tudor period and very little during the seventeenth century, with the exception of the rebuilding in London following the Great Fire.[115] Basil Clarke, however, has listed 224 churches which were first built or completely rebuilt between 1700 and 1800, and a further 212 which were partially rebuilt, adorned or beautified.[116] J.S. Purvis has noted forty new churches built in Yorkshire alone in the same period.[117] Neither list claims to be comprehensive, and Clarke's is restricted to those financed by individual benefactions. The extent of the work may be seen more clearly in particular areas. In the deanery of Wirral, for example, four of the sixteen churches were rebuilt during the century, while in the diocese of Carlisle, which included 128 benefices, seventeen

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111 Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', pp. 14-15, 213.

112 J.S. Purvis, *The condition of Yorkshire church fabrics 1300-1800* (York, 1958), pp. 25-6.

113 Bowker, *Secular clergy in the diocese of Lincoln*, pp. 110-54.

114 Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', pp. 464-5. Cf., the diocese of Carlisle, where the want of altar rails was general in 1703. By 1750, however, only one church still lacked them. Armstrong, 'Ecclesiastical administration in the diocese of Carlisle', p. 27.

115 Population was not increasing fast enough in the seventeenth century to put strain on the existing accommodation in churches.

116 B.F.L. Clarke, *The building of the eighteenth-century church* (London, 1963), pp. 50-89.

117 Purvis, *Yorkshire church fabrics*, pp. 30-1.

churches were built or completely rebuilt.[118]

In general reconstruction was proposed to increase the accommodation available within the church, although occasionally it was adopted as an alternative to repair. But it was not the only way a parish could respond to the demands of a growing population. A popular expedient was the erection of galleries, not only at the west end, where they were often used for singers, but also on the north and south. Nineteenth-century ecclesiologists disapproved of galleries and many were removed, but in the previous century they were probably the most common method of increasing church accommodation.[119] If the extension of the existing church, either by rebuilding or internal alteration, was impossible or undesirable, the favoured solution was to build a parochial chapel. Services at parochial chapels might be performed by the minister of the mother church, a curate employed by him, or a minister separately endowed, but they differed from parish churches in that the congregation resorted to the mother church and the incumbent of the parish for communion services, as well as baptisms, marriages and burials.

Whatever solution was adopted, church building was not simple. The major problem was often financial. Money for rebuilding a parish church or erecting a new parochial chapel had to be gathered from various sources: private donations; subscriptions, which were often made for the purchase of pews; church rates; and briefs. Usually two or three of these methods were used together. Proprietary chapels, which remained outside the parochial system, were a different matter. While many owners established such chapels to appoint ministers of whom they approved, they were often intended as financial investments as well. The pew rents of chapels established in fashionable areas of towns not only paid the ministers' salaries, but also provided a return on the capital invested in their construction.[120]

Occasionally a parish sought an act of parliament to defray part of the expense by levying a special local tax, and legislation was essential for the creation of a new parish. But it was not a popular alternative: only 114 acts concerned with church building were passed in the eighteenth century, two-thirds of them in the reign of George III.[121] The passage of a private act was an expensive and time-consuming process, and success was never assured. Parliamentary procedure provided many opportunities for opponents to defeat a bill, if they could obtain influential support. In the first half of the century divisions between whigs and tories caused additional difficulties. In 1729 the Gosport Chapel Bill, proposing a small local duty on coals, not for building the chapel, but for the maintenance of its minister, was defeated. The bill had attracted

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[118] Pope, 'The eighteenth-century Church in Wirral', p. 85ff; Armstrong, 'Ecclesiastical administration of the diocese of Carlisle', p. 26. In the provincial towns of England 'some fifty new Anglican churches were built or substantially reconstructed between 1700 and 1750, and about eighty between 1750 and 1800', C.W. Chalkin, 'The financing of church building in the provincial towns of eighteenth-century England', in *The transformation of English provincial towns 1600-1800*, ed. Peter Clark (London, 1984), p. 285.

[119] Clarke, *Eighteenth-century church*, pp. 25-8, 203-4. For the use of west galleries, see G.W.O. Addleshaw and Frederick Etchells, *The architectural setting of anglican worship. An inquiry into the arrangements for public worship in the Church of England from the Reformation to the present day* (London, 1948), pp. 98-100.

[120] Chalkin, 'The financing of church building', pp. 284-310, provides the best account of this subject. See also Clarke, *Eighteenth-century church*, cpts. 5-8.

[121] Clarke, *Eighteenth-century church*, pp. 216-24.

the opposition of local dissenters, who objected to supporting a minister of the established Church, and they had succeeded in gaining the support of many whig M.P.s.[122] An even more striking illustration of the difficulties faced by church legislation was the rejection, on a wave of anti-clerical feeling, of the annual state grant of £4000 towards the restoration of Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey.[123]

These difficulties help to explain why the creation of new parishes was not a popular solution to the demand for increased church accommodation. Only four acts creating new parishes were passed in the eighteenth century, excluding those relating to the proposals 'for building fifty new Churches in and about the Cities of London and Westminster'.[124] In every case a myriad of vested interests had to be adjusted - those of the patron, of the incumbent, and of the vestry - and then an endowment for the new parish had to be provided. Only in the early nineteenth century was this procedure simplified. An act of 1818 provided not only for the building of new churches in populous parishes, but also for the creation of new parishes, and Sir Robert Peel's Act of 1843 made it possible to form a parish by an Order in Council on the recommendation of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.[125]

The problems caused by increasing population were most apparent in urban areas, especially in the rapidly growing industrial towns. But it was in these areas that the Church was least capable of acting, since its response to the demand for increased accommodation was dependent on local initiative. This was recognized by the acts of 1818 and 1843, which created a more centralized system. It is important, however, not to antedate the problem. In mid-century population was still growing slowly, and the rapid expansion of manufacturing towns was a phenomenon of the last two decades of the century. Modern economic historians not only date the beginning of the 'industrial revolution' from later in the century, but they also emphasize that it was characterized by a slow, even growth, based on outwork.[126] The population of Manchester, for example, increased from about 10000 in 1727 to 27000 in 1773. By 1790, however, it had reached 50000, and nearly doubled again to 95000 by 1801.[127] The trend in South Wales was similar, although the most rapid growth there did not occur until the first half of the nineteenth century.[128] Many, moreover, had little idea what was happening. As late as 1838, when the second report of the

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[122] Paul Langford, 'Property and representation in eighteenth-century England', unpublished paper delivered at the Cambridge Historical Society, 26 Feb. 1985; *C.J.*, xxi, 245, 266.

[123] *C.J.*, xxii, 567. A grant of £4000 was approved by parliament every other year between 1733 and 1744, except in 1739, when only £2000 was given. *C.J.*, xxii, 153, 273, 421, 812, xxiii, 82, 361, 446, 610, xxiv, 165, 396, 556.

[124] 14 Geo. II, c. 5; 16 Geo. II, c. 28; 24 Geo. II, c .37; and 27 Geo. III, c. 49. See Clarke, *Eighteenth-century church*, pp. 216-24.

[125] 58 Geo. III, c. 45 and 6 & 7 Vict. c. 37.

[126] A.E. Musson, *The growth of British industry* (London, 1978), pp. 62-77; Maxine Berg, *The age of manufactures. Industry, innovation and work in Britain 1700-1820* (London, 1985); Duncan Bythell, *The sweated trades. Outwork in nineteenth-century Britain* (London, 1978), pp. 12-19, 143-51; D.N. Cannadine, 'The past and the present in the English industrial revolution', *P.P.*, cm (1984), 162-7.

[127] Paul Mantoux, *The industrial revolution in the eighteenth century. An outline of the beginnings of the modern factory system in England* (new edn., London, 1961), pp. 356, 358.

[128] E.T. Davies, 'The Church in the industrial revolution', in *A history of the Church in Wales*, ed. David Walker (Penarth, 1976), p. 124.

Ecclesiastical Commissioners enlightened him, Bishop Kaye was unaware of the problems facing the Church in the manufacturing towns.[129]

Nonetheless, the growth of Manchester shows that the demand for church accommodation was increasing throughout the century, even if it did not become chronic until its end. The eighteenth-century Church may have lacked the machinery to deal with the problem effectively, but it cannot be accused of neglect. In Manchester a petition presented to the house of commons in 1753 by the warden and fellows of the collegiate church, claiming that the two existing fabrics were no longer adequate for the population, led to an act for building a new church. St Mary's, Deansgate, the result of this act, was followed in 1768-9 by St John's, Deansgate, built at the expense of Edward Byrom, by St Paul's, St James's and St Michael's in the 1780s, and three more churches in the 1790s.[130] A similar pattern of church building can be traced in Birmingham. At the beginning of the century it was served by two medieval buildings, the parish church, St Martin's, and the chapel of St John, Deritend. In 1735 St John's was reconstructed. Six years later they were joined by St Philip's and in 1749 by St Bartholomew's. The more rapid growth at the end of the century was paralleled, as in Manchester, by more building. Two new chapels, St Mary's and St Paul's, were begun in 1779; St James's was opened in 1789; and Christ Church in 1813. A further four churches were erected in the 1820s.[131]

London was a special case. Its population had increased rapidly through the seventeenth century against the national trend.[132] Moreover, the lack of church accommodation impinged on the consciousness of the nation's governors in both church and state in a way that the problems of other areas did not. However, only the collapse of the roof of St Alphege, Greenwich, prompted the newly elected tory parliament of the last years of Anne's reign to consider the problem. The result was the 1711 act for 'building fifty new Churches', the number, it was calculated, necessary to reduce the average parish to a population of 4750.[133] The act was not a great success.[134] Only ten new churches were erected. Five more were rebuilt, two chapels were purchased and consecrated as parish churches, and the tower of St Michael's, Cornhill, was completed. The coal tax, which was to finance these churches, would probably never have yielded enough to complete all fifty churches, but the economic problems of the commissioners were

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129 Best, *Temporal pillars*, pp. 171-2.

130 Clarke, *Eighteenth-century church*, pp. 45, 66, 218, 234; Mantoux, *Industrial revolution*, p. 357. Cf., David Edwards, *Christian England, II. From the Reformation to the eighteenth century* (pbk. edn., London, 1984), p. 491. This subject is a minefield of misinformation. Edwards claims, correctly, that Manchester possessed only one medieval parish church during the eighteenth century, but omits to mention the collegiate church and the chapels built from the 1750s onwards. It is not surprising, therefore, that he can conclude that the 'Church's pastoral work in the increasingly industrialized Midlands and North was crippled'.

131 Conrad Gill, *History of Birmingham. I. Manor and borough to 1865* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 75-6, 141-2. For this and other church building in the West Midlands, see also Joseph L. Altholz, 'Church extension in the eighteenth century: some cases and a comment', *H.M.P.E.C.*, XLIV (1975), 75-80.

132 E.A. Wrigley, 'A simple model of London's importance in changing English society and economy 1650-1750', *P.P.*, XXXVII (1967), 44-70.

133 De Waal, 'New churches in East London', p. 105.

134 Clarke, *Eighteenth-century church*, pp. 110-12; John Summerson, *Georgian London* (new edn., Harmondsworth, 1978), pp. 84-97.

exacerbated by their decision to create magnificent 'monuments to posterity of her [Queen Anne's] piety & grandure'.[135] Moreover, they were constantly hampered in their attempts to create new parishes by fierce opposition from vested interests. But the positive achievements of the commissioners should not be ignored. They carved three new parishes out of the large, densely populated, and predominantly lower-class parish of St Dunstan's, Stepney. In 1743 a fourth, St Matthew, Bethnal Green, was created by a separate act of parliament.[136] The poverty both of the inhabitants and of the living made Stepney precisely the sort of area where local initiatives were least likely to succeed.

Efforts to relieve the pressure on church accommodation in London did not stop with the commissioners for fifty new churches. Their work has attracted attention both because of its architectural qualities and because it at least addressed the problem of London's parochial structure.[137] However, throughout the century, as in Birmingham and Manchester, parochial and proprietary chapels proliferated - in 1778 St George's, Hanover Square, one of the parishes created under the 1711 act, was maintaining nine - a fact which has been ignored through preoccupation with the architectural history of London's churches.[138]

It must be admitted that much of the work undertaken by the eighteenth-century Church was misdirected. The fifty new churches provide some evidence of this, in the decision to build architectural glories, rather than to provide as many cheap, functional buildings as possible. Leeds, on the other hand, is not an untypical example of church building in a growing provincial town. The medieval parish church and a seventeenth-century chapel were joined by Trinity Church in 1721 and by St Paul's in 1791. Galleries were added to Holy Trinity in 1756 and to St John's, the older chapel, in 1765. In 1801 St James's was purchased from 'dissenters' of Lady Huntington's connection by a clergyman of the established Church and consecrated. However, as a contemporary pointed out, the value of this fifth church was limited. It was, he said, 'little wanted in its present situation, while one or two additional churches would be highly useful in other quarters of the town'.[139] This failure, not to provide churches, but to provide them where they were most needed, also occurred in the diocese of Durham. There augmentations by Queen Anne's Bounty turned forty-eight chapels into parishes, ensuring regular services in them. However, because these chapels were medieval foundations, this created many small rural

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135 The phrase was Vanburgh's. De Waal, 'New churches in East London', p. 107.

136 De Waal, 'New churches in East London', pp. 98-114. The statute was 16 Geo. II, c. 28.

137 Much attention has been devoted to the architectural histories of these churches. H.M. Colvin, 'Fifty new churches', *Architectural Review*, March 1950; Summerson, *Georgian London*, pp. 84-97; H.M. Colvin's introduction to E.G.W. Bill, *The Queen Anne churches: a catalogue of papers in Lambeth Palace Library of the Commission for building fifty new churches in London and Westminster 1711-1759* (London, 1979). But the work of the commissioners still awaits a study placing it in the context of the religious and political history of the period.

138 F.C. Mather, 'Georgian churchmanship reconsidered: some variations in anglican public worship 1714-1830', *J.E.H.*, xxxvi (1985), 267. Some brief comments are made in Clarke, *Eighteenth-century church*, pp. 187-99.

139 Thomas Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete; or, an attempt to illustrate the districts described in those words by Bede; and supposed to embrace the lower portions of Aredale and Wharfdale, together with the entire vale of Calder, in the county of York* (Leeds, 1816), pp. 61, 65-6, 69, 70; *St John's Church Leeds 1634-1934* (Leeds, 1934), p. 10.

parishes out of larger ones. New areas of population growth were still left without places of worship. The development of two coal mines in Washington parish, for example, had increased its population from 150 families in 1736 to 517 by 1801. But no medieval chapels existed within the parish, still less in the areas of population growth.[140]

Despite these shortcomings considerable effort was made to meet the demands of an increasing population. Whatever words can be used to describe Georgian attitudes to church building, somnolent cannot be one. Indeed, despite the ultimate failure of the machinery of the eighteenth-century Church to deal with the unprecedented problems of urbanization, its reliance on parochial chapels had much to recommend it. The nineteenth-century solution, the creation of a new parish wherever a new church was needed, has not only left to the twentieth century a legacy of redundant churches, but had also created, as early as 1861, a large number of 'destitute Peel districts', unable to build a church, or burdened with the debt of building one, and cared for by a poorly-paid priest.[141]

Public worship in the Church

The form of public worship in the eighteenth-century Church was more or less uniform throughout England and Wales. The morning service on Sundays consisted of mattins, ante-communion, that is, the communion service to the end of the prayer for the Church, and a sermon. Evening prayer was said in the afternoons, usually without a sermon if one had been preached in the morning, but sometimes the catechism was expounded. On Sundays and festivals when the communion service was celebrated, non-communicants generally left after the ante-communion and the ideal envisaged was that those receiving the sacrament should move into the chancel for the rest of the service. Some ministers omitted the Athanasian Creed and variations occurred in vestments and ritual, but the striking differences in liturgy and practice that have been a feature of anglican worship since the mid-nineteenth century were absent.

Generalization about the regularity of services is, however, far more difficult. Two Sunday services was the duty envisaged by the Prayer Book and the canons, but this standard was not reached in many parishes. Double duty was more common in the north and Wales, paradoxically, in view of the Church's alleged failure in those areas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1738 96% of churches in the diocese of St Asaph had two Sunday services, two-thirds of those in the diocese of Chester in 1778, 83% in the archdeaconry of Shropshire and 63% in the archdeaconry of Hereford in 1716-22, and 46% in the diocese of York in 1743.[142] In contrast only 28% in Lincolnshire in 1744, 39% in the diocese of Worcester between 1782 and 1808, and 38%

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[140] Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', pp. 469-71.

[141] A.J.B. Beresford Hope, *The English cathedral of the nineteenth century* (London, 1861), pp. 16-17, quoted in Clarke, *Eighteenth-century church*, p. 193.

[142] Salter, 'Isaac Maddox', pp. 44-5; John Addy, 'Bishop Porteus' visitation of the diocese of Chester, 1778', *Northern History*, XIII (1977), 185; Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', pp. 111-12; *Herring's visitation returns*, I, xv.

in Wiltshire in 1783 reached this standard.[143] In Chichester in 1722, where 33% of churches had double service, the most common Sunday duty, found in 54%, was a single service with sermon.[144] Those areas where Sunday service was performed most frequently were also, predictably, the areas where daily services were most common. 26% of churches in St Asaph and 30% in York regularly provided some form of week-day service, about 3% in each offering prayers daily.[145] In Worcester the figure was only 11%, while in Devon in 1779 the only week-day services occurred in the cathedral.[146]

A similar pattern emerges from an examination of the frequency with which communion was celebrated. The canons of 1603 stipulated that the service was to take place at least three times a year in parish churches, and Norman Sykes has claimed that the normal practice was four celebrations, at the three great festivals and around Michaelmas.[147] His statement is supported by the practice in the dioceses of Oxford and Worcester. In Oxford in 1738 39% of parishes had four celebrations while 22% performed only the canonical minimum of three. In Worcester during the episcopate of Bishop Hurd the figures were 56% and 16% respectively.[148] Failure to reach the canonical minimum, however, was rare.[149] In Wales, on the other hand, normal practice was monthly communion. In Bangor in 1749 most parishes reached this standard, as did 73% in St Asaph in 1738, where only 16% of churches had three or four services a year.[150] In the diocese of Chester in 1778, excluding those parochial chapels where the communion service never took place, monthly communions occurred in only 28% of churches, but 61% had services more frequently than four times a year.[151]

As well as regional differences in the frequency of the Church's public worship, variations also occurred between town and countryside. London, as might be expected, had frequent services. In 1741 63 churches were offering daily service compared with 45 in 1692 and 81 in 1714. In the 1780s the practice of daily worship appears to have been declining, but London still ranked well above average in the performance of Sunday duty. In the Middlesex archdeaconry, which included most of London apart from the City, 76% of parishes had two services and a further 13% had more. In comparison, in those parts of the diocese which lay in Essex and

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143 Mather, 'Georgian churchmanship reconsidered', p. 267; *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 9; *Wiltshire visitation returns*, p.5.

144 Bezodis, 'English parish clergy', p. 66.

145 Salter, 'Isaac Maddox', pp. 44-5; *Herring's visitation returns*, I, xv-xvi.

146 *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 9; Warne, *Church and society*, pp.43-4. The usual Sunday duty in Devon was one service.

147 Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 250; Canon XXI. The canons are printed in Edward Cardwell, *Synodalia. A collection of articles of religion, canons, and proceedings of convocations in the province of Canterbury, from the year 1547 to the year 1717* (2 vols., Oxford, 1842), I, 245-329.

148 Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', p. 119; *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 9.

149 Only two churches in Worcester and two in Wiltshire, where 73% had four or more services a year, fell below this level. *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 9; *Wiltshire visitation returns*, p. 6.

150 A.I. Pryce, *The diocese of Bangor through three centuries* (Cardiff, 1929), p. lxii; Salter, 'Isaac Maddox', p. 46.

151 Addy, 'Bishop Porteus' visitation', p. 186.

Hertfordshire only 26% of parishes had double duty in 1778.[152] Above average duty was found, however, not only in London, but also in most urban areas. Almost all churches in market towns and other parishes with more than a thousand inhabitants in Essex and Hertfordshire had two Sunday services at the time of the 1778 visitation. Nearly half of them also had monthly communions.[153] Among the provincial towns Newcastle presents a striking picture of church life. Newcastle was technically one parish, St Nicholas, but its three parochial chapels enjoyed considerable autonomy. During the first half of the century daily prayers, morning and evening, were said at two of the churches, on Wednesdays and Fridays at the third, and on Wednesday and Friday mornings only at the fourth. Prayers were also said on Wednesdays and Fridays at the hospital chapel. On Sundays sermons were preached at both services in all four churches, and holy communion was celebrated in one of them each week.[154] In addition, there were catechetical lectures, holy day lectures, advent and lent preaching, and a further set of lectures on rubric and liturgy was endowed in 1728 to be given during Trinity.[155]

Two conclusions are suggested by this evidence: that the public worship of the Church - Sunday services, daily prayers, and communion - was performed more frequently in the north and in Wales than in the south and east; and that within each region the towns and larger parishes were best served. However, as was pointed out at the beginning of this section, generalization is difficult, and these conclusions cannot be regarded as more than tentative. In the first place, considerable variations occurred between different areas within dioceses, which were often as great as those dividing the north from the south. In the West Riding of Yorkshire, for example, 91% of churches had two services each Sunday in 1764, compared with only 46% in the diocese as a whole twenty-one years earlier. Bishop Porteus' visitation of Chester in 1778 revealed that two-thirds of the churches had two Sunday services, but in south Lancashire the proportion was as high as 95%.[156] Secondly, any broad division drawn between north and south must admit of exceptions. In 1738 85% of parishes in Oxford had double duty on Sundays, a figure that compares favourably with the northern dioceses.[157] This example must also cast doubt on the otherwise plausible correlation between non-residence and the frequency of services.

If it is difficult to generalize about the frequency of services, it is even less clear whether the situation was improving or not. The available evidence points in contradictory directions. In the diocese of Oxford there was a perceptible decline in Sunday services through the century. From 85% of parishes with double duty in 1738, the figure dropped to 67% in 1783 and to 60% in

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[152] Legg, *English church life*, pp. 108-10; Mather, 'Georgian churchmanship reconsidered', p. 267. It seems probable that 1714 represented a high-point before the nineteenth century, but the evidence is not decisive. In 1708 another list printed by Legg recorded only 36 London churches with daily service. By 1824 the number had declined to ten.

[153] Mather, 'Georgian churchmanship reconsidered', pp. 266, 170-1.

[154] Weekly communion within the parish was also offered at St Marylebone, London, and at St Michael's, Liverpool, by the same practice of holding the service on different Sundays at different churches and chapels. Mather, 'Georgian churchmanship reconsidered', p. 270.

[155] Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', pp. 46-52.

[156] Mather, 'Georgian churchmanship reconsidered', p. 267.

[157] Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', p. 112.

1818-25.[158] In Devon a decline in the number of parishes offering week-day prayers was accompanied, paradoxically, by an increase in the frequency of the celebration of communion.[159] In the Wirral, on the other hand, the century saw an increase in the frequency of all forms of public worship. At the beginning of the century both morning and evening prayer were said on Sundays at all but two of the fifteen parishes, normally with a sermon at mattins. Daily prayers were common on holy days, but only Eastham offered a regular service on Wednesdays and Fridays. Communion was held three or four times a year, except at Neston, where it occurred monthly. By the end of the century two sermons was the normal practice on Sundays and all but three parishes offered daily prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent, as well as on feast and fast days. Likewise, three parishes now had monthly communions and two others had advanced beyond four celebrations.[160]

What perhaps emerges most clearly from these statistics is the diversity of English church life in the eighteenth century. This point is emphasized when some of the figures are examined more closely. In Oxford, for example, the high level of Sunday services was not paralleled, as it was in Chester or in Wales, by frequent communions. Moreover, a similar pattern, of 'northern' levels of Sunday duty but 'southern' practices in the celebration of communion, was also found in the dioceses of Hereford and York, where 62% and 72% of parishes respectively had only three or four communion services a year.[161] It is clear, therefore, that the 'normal practice' of a member of the established Church varied considerably from place to place. More precise delineation of variations in churchmanship must await detailed social studies of the Church in the localities, but this point should be borne in mind throughout the comments that follow.[162]

The situation was not as bad as the figures might suggest. Just as the more compact parishes of the south made it easier for a clergyman to serve two cures, so they made it possible for laymen to attend a second service at another parish. Even when an afternoon service of prayers only was provided, it was not uncommon for ministers to claim that their parishioners preferred to travel to a neighbouring parish, where a sermon was offered.[163] Indeed, lay unwillingness to attend church services contributed to their infrequency. Contemporaries complained about neglect

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158 McClatchey, *Oxfordshire clergy*, pp. 80-2.

159 Warne, *Church and society*, pp. 43-5.

160 Pope, 'The eighteenth-century Church in Wirral', pp. 49-56.

161 The Hereford figures are for the years 1716-22; the York figures for 1743. Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', pp. 120-1; *Herring's visitation returns*, I, xvii.

162 A considerable amount of work, much of which is used here, has been done analyzing eighteenth-century visitation returns. Very little attention has been paid, however, to the social history of the Church. In particular, surprisingly little is known about the religious life of an eighteenth-century layman. A notable exception is Jonathan Barry, 'Piety and the patient: medicine and religion in eighteenth century Bristol', in *Patients and practitioners. Lay perceptions of medicine in pre-industrial society*, ed. Roy Porter (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 145-75. See also Leonard W. Cowie, *Henry Newman. An American in London 1708-43* (London, 1956); Charles E. Pierce, *The religious life of Samuel Johnson* (London, 1983); Michael E. Moody, 'Religion in the life of Charles Middleton, first baron Barham', in *The dissenting tradition*, ed. C.R. Cole and M.E. Moody (Athens, Ohio, 1975), pp. 140-63. It should be noted, however, that Newman was secretary of the S.P.C.K. and is, therefore, a special case, while Middleton was an early evangelical, a group on whom biographies abound.

163 Secker, 'A charge to the clergy of the diocese of Canterbury in the year 1758', in *Works*, v, 429; Mather, 'Georgian churchmanship reconsidered', p. 268.

of religion,[164] but that was not the only reason for non-attendance. The weather was another. It was rare for a service to be cancelled because of bad weather, but a number of churches, which had two services in summer, had only one in winter.[165] The lack of a sermon was alleged as another excuse. Clergymen often claimed that many of their parishioners, although they made no effort to go elsewhere, were unwilling to attend a Sunday service without a sermon. Even among the better-educated laity few agreed with George Woodward 'that their main business at Church is to attend to the prayers rather than the sermon, which is the lowest part of the service'.[166] Week-day prayers were generally poorly attended.[167] In some cases a protestant antipathy to the celebration of saints' days should not be ignored.[168] But at Blecheley, where a morning service on holy days and on Wednesdays and Fridays during Lent was well established, William Cole occasionally abandoned the service because no one attended. In visitation returns the want of a congregation was often recorded as the reason for the absence of daily prayers.[169] It was not the custom in the eighteenth century for a minister to read daily prayers to an empty church or when the only congregation was his family.

Similar observations can be made about the frequency of the celebrations of communion. Archbishop Tillotson and Bishop Gibson, among others, urged the laity to make frequent communions.[170] It is not clear what they regarded as frequent, but Thomas Secker appears to have envisaged monthly reception as a realistic ideal; weekly communions 'at best must be a work of time'.[171] On the other hand, Bishop Peploe condemned the practice of weekly communion as 'popish'.[172] The Oxford methodists bound themselves to weekly communion, while the religious society of St Giles', Cripplegate, which was in being from 1722 to 1762, adopted the practice of

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[164] E.g., Anthony Ellys, *A sermon preached before the honourable house of commons, at St Margaret's, Westminster, on Monday, Jan. 30, 1748-9. Being the day appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London [1749]), p. 29.

[165] *Wiltshire visitation returns*, p. 5; *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 9; Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', pp. 111-12. On Epiphany 1767 William Cole abandoned the service at Blecheley because of 'Excessive cold, & great Snow'. However, on Sunday 11 January, the 'Greatest Snow, & severest Weather I ever remember', did not prevent Cole from reading the morning service despite the fact that only one woman attended. *The Blecheley diary of the Rev. William Cole 1765-7*, ed. F.G. Stokes (London, 1931), pp. 174, 175.

[166] *A parson in the Vale of the White Horse. George Woodward's letters from East Hendred, 1753-61*, ed. Donald Gibson (Gloucester, 1983), p. 82: Woodward to George London, 7 Feb. 1756. Cf., James Boswell, *The life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (Everyman edn., 2 vols., London, 1906), i, 426 (entry for 5 Apr. 1772).

[167] Butler, 'Charge to the clergy of Durham', in *Works*, ii, 409.

[168] B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 13: Herring to Hardwicke, 28 July 1750. John Johnson, vicar of Cranbrook, shared many of the theological principles of the non-jurors, especially on the eucharist. In a book that became a manual for eighteenth-century clergymen he claimed that 'false and superstitious Notions' were one reason for the 'backwardness' of the people to attend church on holy days. *The clergyman's vade-mecum; or, an account of the ancient and present Church of England; the duties and rights of the clergy; and of their priviledges and hardships* (6th edn., corrected, London, 1721), p. 195. Robert Holtby, *Daniel Waterland 1683-1740. A study in eighteenth-century orthodoxy* (Carlisle, 1966), pp. 162-4.

[169] *Blecheley diary of William Cole*, pp. 17, 57, 264; *Herring's visitation returns*, i, xvi; Salter, 'Isaac Maddox', p. 44; Warne, *Church and society*, p. 44.

[170] John Tillotson, *A persuasive to frequent communion in the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper* (London, 1683; 24th edn., London, 1771); Edmund Gibson, *The sacrament of the Lord's Supper explain'd: or things to be known and done, to make a worthy communicant* (9th edn., London, 1745).

[171] Secker, 'A charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Oxford, in the year 1741', in *Works*, v, 341-2. Queen Anne received monthly. Legg, *English church life*, p. 35.

[172] Legg, *English church life*, p. 34.

monthly communions.[173] It is clear, however, that outside Wales and the north-west it was not common practice to receive the sacrament frequently.[174] Samuel Johnson, often regarded as a devout high churchman, received the sacrament only once a year. Similarly, the lists of communicants kept by the incumbents of Lower Heyford in Oxfordshire in the 1730s and 1750s show that very few of their parishioners kept to the rubric of communicating three times a year.[175] Even the rubric stipulating reception at Easter was frequently ignored.[176] For this reason it is very dangerous to use the number of communicants recorded in visitation returns as evidence of the degree of adherence to the established Church.[177] George Woodward was horrified to learn that his brother had never received the sacrament, but there is no doubt that the brother would have regarded himself as more than a nominal member of the Church of England.[178] Nor did this practice indicate a low view of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. On the contrary, the opposite was true. Some felt an exaggerated amount of preparation, often entailing many hours of meditation, was necessary.[179] The duke of Newcastle, for instance, was tormented by fears of his own unworthiness to receive the sacrament.[180] On the other hand, among the lower orders this same attitude found expression in the belief that only the more educated members of society, those who could read, were worthy.[181]

If reception of communion is unreliable evidence of membership of the Church of England in the eighteenth century, care should also be taken using church attendance as a measure of religious commitment. Much eighteenth-century piety had a distinctive personal and lay character. Some contemporaries noted that the practice of keeping chaplains in the families of the nobility

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173 Legg, *English church life*, pp. 33, 312.

174 In St Asaph, where 63% of parishes had at least monthly celebrations, more than 10% of communicants usually received the sacrament in three-quarters of the parishes and all communicants received at Easter in 35% of parishes. These figures are not conclusive, but they do suggest that frequent communion was normal. Salter, 'Isaac Maddox', p. 49. It should be noted that it is difficult to portray the greater frequency of communion services, of daily prayers and of Sunday services in the north-west and in Wales as a form of religious conservatism. According to Legg the practice in the pre-reformation Church was for the laity to receive the sacrament once a year, at Easter, while Warne has argued that it had been usual to attend church only once on Sundays. Legg, *English church life*, p. 36; Warne, *Church and society*, p. 44.

175 Legg, *English church life*, p. 36; Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', pp. 123-4.

176 Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', pp. 123-4. In 1743 the visitation return from Leeds parish church indicated that about 400 people received the sacrament at each of the monthly celebrations. This figure, however, was no higher at Easter. The minister explained that many people preferred to make their communion at one of the other services around Easter. *Herring's visitation returns*, II, 141.

177 *Pace* Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert and Lee Horsley, *Churches and churchgoers. Patterns of church growth in the British Isles since 1700* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 22-3.

178 *A parson in the Vale of the White Horse*, p. 67; Woodward to London, 24 Dec. 1754.

179 A number of pamphlets were also written to counter this fear. W.K.L. Clarke, *Eighteenth-century piety* (London, 1944), pp. 11-12.

180 B.L. Add. 33068, fols. 265-6, 267-8, 275-6; Hume to Newcastle, 19 Dec., 20 Dec., 22 Dec., 1764; Add. 33069, fols. 357, 413, 469-70; Hume to Newcastle, 21 Dec. 1765, 28 Mar., 10 May 1766; Add. 33070, fol. 320; Hume to Newcastle, 22 Sept. 1766.

181 Clarke, *Eighteenth-century piety*, p. 12; Secker, 'A charge to the clergy of the diocese of Oxford, in the year 1741', in *Works*, v, 340.

was in decline.[182] However, it was far from extinct. Both the duke of Newcastle and the marquis of Rockingham maintained the custom, having divine service performed daily in their families.[183] Even where this practice had been abandoned, daily religious services were not. The earl of Hardwicke, Sir Roger Newdigate, and Thomas, later baron, Pelham, all employed the local clergyman to say daily prayers. In Pelham's case the clergyman was elderly and afflicted by gout. When he was unable to perform the service, Pelham himself read the office to his family.[184] On the other hand, William Pulteney 'constantly attended the public worship of God, and all the offices of it in his Parish Church . . . and when his great age and infirmities prevented him from so doing, he supplied that defect by daily reading over the Morning Service of the Church before he came out of his bedchamber'.[185] A more personal approach was adopted by the poet, Gilbert West, who not only read prayers to his family every morning, but on Sundays he also assembled the servants and read to them a sermon followed by prayers.[186] Moreover, although the evidence is difficult to uncover, this family worship appears to have been supplemented by more private devotions. Newcastle, for instance, asked Bishop Hume to prepare prayers for him, followed a course of basic theological reading, and 'constantly read . . . the Lesson of the Day or if I omit it one day, make it up afterwards'.[187]

Similar patterns of personal and family worship can also be discerned among the lower orders. This piety was more firmly rooted in the liturgy of the Church of England than evangelical family prayers.[188] Occasionally it was incorporated within the parochial structure. John Benson, vicar of Ledsham in Yorkshire, invited his parishioners to join him at the vicarage on Friday evenings, where he read a chapter out of the New Testament accompanied by the exposition of Burkitt, sung a psalm, and concluded with evening prayers.[189] Religious societies were not simply a phenomenon of the early years of the eighteenth century. James Hervey founded one at Bideford in the early 1740s and Samuel Walker another at Truro in 1754. The Truro society in particular was an influential example for the evangelical clergy within the Church of England later in the

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182 Jonas Hanway, *Reflections, essays and meditations on life and religion*, II, 31, quoted in Charles Smyth, *Simeon and church order. A study of the origins of the evangelical revival in Cambridge in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 30-1; William Best, *An essay on the service of the Church of England considered as a daily service, with a view of reviving a more general and constant attendance upon it*, quoted in Clarke, *Eighteenth-century piety*, p. 6.

183 Legg, *English church life*, p. 102; *The travels through England of Dr Richard Pococke, successively bishop of Meath and of Ossory during 1750, 1751, and later years*, ed. J.J. Cartwright (Camden Society, n.s., xlii, xliv, London, 1888-9), I, 66.

184 *The diary and letters of his excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, ed P.O. Hutchinson (2 vols., London, 1883-6), I, 516; Ralph Churton, 'Biographical memoirs of Sir Roger Newdigate', *Gentleman's Magazine*, LXXVII (1807), 634; B.L. Add. 35590, fols. 436-7; Bishop Benson to Hardwicke, 22 Nov. 1749; *A parson in the Vale of the White Horse*, pp. 90-1; Woodward to London, 4 Sept. 1756.

185 'The life of Zachary Pearce', in *The lives of Dr Edward Pocock . . . by Dr Twells; of Dr Zachary Pearce . . . and of Dr Thomas Newton . . . by themselves; and of the Rev. Philip Skelton, by Mr Bundy* (2 vols., London, 1816), I, 408. As Pulteney lived in the parish of St Martin's-in-the-Fields, where daily service was held, this statement must be taken to mean that he attended morning prayer daily.

186 Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the poets*, ed. Mrs Alexander Napier (3 vols., London, 1890), III, 264.

187 B.L. Add. 33069, fols. 157-65: Hume to Newcastle, 8 Aug. 1765; Add. 32071, fols. 71-2: Newcastle to Hume, 4 Dec. 1766. The prayers prepared by Hume are printed in Sykes, *Church and state*, pp. 437-9.

188 Smyth, *Simeon and church order*, pp. 11-40.

189 *Herring's visitation returns*, II, 144.

century.[190] Lay piety based on the family was more common, though it did not necessarily include prayers. A typical case was Thomas Turner, who kept a shop in the Sussex village of East Hoathly. Despite his apparent occasional failure to attend the Sunday service, he was a religious man, conscious of his own failings, and especially of his inability to stay sober. His diary is littered with entries about his reading to himself, to his wife, and even to a neighbour, Samuel Jenner, religious books such as Tillotson's *Sermons*, William Sherlock *On death*, or Edward Young's *Night thoughts*.[191] Judging from the number and range of cheap editions of popular books produced by the S.P.C.K, Turner was far more representative of the middle orders in Georgian England than has hitherto been recognized. Bishop Beveridge's *Sermon on the common prayer*, for instance, went through thirty-eight editions between 1681 and 1799.[192] Even more illuminating is Edmund Gibson's *Family devotion*, which was published in 1705, reached its 22nd edition in 1754, and was still being reprinted in 1858.[193] Moreover, the number of chap-books on religious subjects suggests that this family piety may have been prevalent even lower down the social scale.[194]

Until more research into the family and private religious lives of eighteenth-century laymen is completed, the implications of this evidence are unclear. As was hinted above, such research would doubtless reveal considerable regional variations. Tentatively, however, it can be suggested that the emphasis on public, especially sacramental, worship in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has encouraged a perception of the eighteenth-century Church which emphasizes its public worship. If that worship appears to have been lacking, perhaps it was because it formed only one part, in some cases possibly only a small part, of the religious life of men and women who had little time for clerical pretensions and who emphasized the lay character of the Church. At the very least, it can be said that the gap left in the nation's spiritual life by the infrequency of the Church's public worship did not go wholly unfilled.

Whatever may be said in mitigation of the Church's provision of opportunities for public worship, however, the bishops were not satisfied with the situation. Joseph Butler and Thomas Secker were particularly critical of contemporary standards. Butler's charge of 1751 was directed wholly towards the improvement of the Church's public worship, arguing that the '*form of godliness*' was necessary 'to promote the *power* of it'. With regard to church services he urged his clergy to perform them as often as they could get a congregation.[195] Secker was more specific. He told the clergy that only in very exceptional circumstances was one service acceptable on Sunday, and suggested that, if their parishioners would not attend when there was no sermon,

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190 J.D. Walsh, 'Religious societies: methodist and evangelical 1738-1800', *S.C.H.*, XXIII (1986), 297-302, esp. pp. 296-7. For religious societies see G.V. Portus, *Caritas anglicana* (London, 1912).

191 *The diary of Thomas Turner 1754-1765*, ed. David Vaisey (Oxford, 1984), passim.

192 Clarke, *Eighteenth-century piety*, pp. 1-29.

193 Edmund Gibson, *Family-devotion; or, a plain exhortation to morning and evening prayer in families* (London, 1705; 22nd edn., London, 1754; reprint of 18th edn., London, 1858).

194 Deborah M. Valenze, 'Prophecy and popular literature in eighteenth-century England', *J.E.H.*, XXIX (1978), 75-92. A selection of chap-books is published in John Ashton, *Chap-books of the eighteenth-century* (London, 1882).

195 Butler, 'Charge to the clergy of Durham', in *Works*, II, 409.

they should expound the catechism, which they 'may reduce . . . with ease into the form of a sermon'. Where only three communion services were held each year, he urged the minister to introduce a fourth around Michaelmas, and then, if possible, to advance to a monthly communion. Finally, he instructed them to use their 'endeavours to procure a congregation' 'on holidays, on Wednesdays and on Fridays'. As a beginning, he continued, 'your own houses will sometimes furnish a small congregation'. The ideal of regular parochial worship had not been lost.[196]

To conclude, therefore, it is clear that the Church did not abandon the ideals of the christian ministry during the eighteenth century, nor did it lack vigour in pursuing them. Compared with the centuries before there is little evidence of a decline in the standards of pastoral care or even of a falling away from the ideals of the parochial system. Indeed, measured by the standards of the early-modern period, rather than those of the nineteeth century, the Church coped well with the problems of a growing population until it was overtaken by the rapid expansion of the 1780s and after. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that churchmen were often their own fiercest critics, as contemporaries occasionally pointed out.[197] The strictures of a cleric like Zachary Pearce, in his sermon before convocation, only differed from the attacks of dissenters and anti-clericals, because he could see, and admitted, the problems which made many abuses so difficult to reform.[198]

[196] Secker, *Works*, v, 429, 341-2, 350-1.

[197] *The dean of Winchester. His character of the English clergy*, pp. 5-7

[198] *The dean of Winchester. His character of the English clergy*, pp. 25-54.

Table 2.1. Poor livings in England and Wales, c. 1736.

	No. of livings[a]	No. of poor livings[b]	%age of poor livings
All bishoprics	11866	5638	47.5%
Llandaff	232	183	79%
Chester	506	380	75%
St David's	475	356	75%
York	890	587	66%
Norwich	1219	792	65%
Hereford	371	220	59%
St Asaph	152	89	59%
Lichfield & C.	639	372	58%
Carlisle	128	74	58%
Bath & Wells	499	266	53%
Bangor	197	94	48%
Lincoln	1509	712	47%
Gloucester	323	146	45%
Chichester	319	132	41%
Durham	197	77	39%
Worcester	274	107	39%
Ely	169	65	38%
Canterbury	268	94	35%
Bristol	315	110	35%
Oxford	243	76	31%
Exeter	718	211	29%
Peterborough	366	102	28%
Salisbury	504	121	24%
London	689	163	24%
Rochester	147	31	21%
Winchester	445	78	18%

[a] The figures for the number of benefices in each diocese are taken from Hirschberg, 'The government and church patronage', pp. 112-13. Hirschberg compiled them from Browne Willis, *A survey of the cathedrals* (3 vols., London, 1742).

[b] The figures for the number of poor livings are taken from Green, 'The first years of Queen Anne's Bounty', pp. 242-3. Green's figures are calculated from *The returns made by the Governors of the Bounty of Queen Anne* (London, 1736).

PART II

THE IDEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

3. Church and state: alliance or union

One of the themes this dissertation seeks to emphasize is the inseparability in eighteenth-century society of church and state. Religion and politics were not regarded as discrete spheres of activity. The two were inextricably linked in both the theory and practice of government. On the one hand, the Church was an agent of the state, as well as a society charged with the salvation of souls. On the other hand, many politicians were conscious that they were the leaders of a christian polity, at the head of which stood the king, the godly magistrate. This concept of an inseparable union between church and state was evident in contemporary theory, although the subject was not one which attracted much explicit discussion. Political and ecclesiological debate during the whig supremacy was dominated by issues not indeed unconnected with, but tangential to, the precise nature of the relationship between church and state. The Bangorian controversy in the early years of George I's reign focussed on the 'supernatural' powers[1] of the Church and the importance of the visible church in the economy of salvation. None of the major protagonists - Benjamin Hoadly, John Jackson and Arthur Ashley Sykes - were primarily concerned with where, in the Church of England or any other visible church, the power to ordain priests and to order indifferent matters lay, or from where it derived. Similarly, the debate about the Test Act, so prominent in the 1730s, was not about the necessity or legality of a church establishment, but the need for such legislation to protect that establishment.

The absence of a vigorous debate about the nature of the relationship between church and state was a manifestation of the degree of consensus that existed. There were indeed, as the first part of this chapter will show, a number of critics of the church establishment. Some, especially among the protestant dissenters, emphasized the difference between civil and religious matters and attacked the principle of a national church establishment. Others asserted that the Church was no more than a creation of the civil power and wished to see it more clearly subjected to lay and state control. Within the Church itself a third group defended the concept of an establishment, but argued that it should be more tolerant and denied that the Test and Corporation Acts were necessary for its maintenance. The vast majority of members of the Church of England, both clerical and lay, believed, however, not only that a church establishment was necessary, but that church and state were linked in an indissoluble union. The status quo, an established church protected by a Test Act which excluded dissenters from civil office while guaranteeing their religious liberty by a Toleration Act, was justified in two ways: by an almost utilitarian notion of a 'politic alliance' adumbrated by William Warburton, and by a more organic conception of

[1] That is, the power of the Church to determine the salvation of an individual. The phrase is H.D. Rack's, '"Christ's kingdom not of this world": the case of Benjamin Hoadly versus William Law reconsidered', *S.C.H.*, XII (1975), 283.

church and state as 'different integral parts of the same whole'.[2] The widespread and unquestioned acceptance of the benefits, especially the social benefits, of an establishment has long been recognized by historians. But contemporary perceptions of that establishment have been obscured by the attention given to Warburton's *Alliance* and to the emphasis of both Warburton and many other eighteenth-century divines on what Richard Hooker described as the 'politic use of religion', the reinforcement given to the positive laws of society by the fear of God.[3] By concentrating on these strands of thought and stressing the civic utility of religion, historians have created the impression that eighteenth-century theory subordinated the church to the state to an extent that is not justified by a more detailed study of contemporary writings.[4]

The status quo criticized

The hostility of dissenters towards the Church of England arose from a practical grievance - their exclusion, at least in theory, from participation in civic life by the Test and Corporation Acts. The passage of 'annual' Indemnity Acts[5] from 1726 did little to conciliate them. These acts only allowed men further time to qualify for office, and thus did nothing to relieve dissenters who were not prepared in principle to receive the sacrament according to the rite of the Church of England.[6] Reasserting the protestant claim to freedom of conscience one group of dissenters argued in the *Old Whig* that it was their 'unalienable' right not only to worship God as they saw fit, but to do so 'without any interruption from the civil power, or being made subject to *positive* or *negative* penalties upon this account'.[7] The establishment by the civil magistrate of forms of worship and professions of faith was unjust. To subject men to civil penalties for refusing to observe forms of worship they could not 'in conscience' agree to use was persecution. It was to deprive them of their rights for opinions in matters of religion, which '*are not* indeed properly *cognizable* by the civil magistrate'. But such action by the civil magistrate was also 'absurd', because it was ineffective. It was possible to prescribe outward behaviour, but the observance of external rites was no evidence of belief in those inward principles.[8] Consequently religion

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2 William Warburton, 'The alliance between church and state', in *The works of the right reverend William Warburton, D.D. lord bishop of Gloucester* (new edn., 12 vols., London, 1811), VII. iii; Edmund Burke, 'Speech on a motion for leave to bring in a bill to repeal and alter certain acts respecting religious opinions, May 11, 1792', in *The works of Edmund Burke* (Bohn Library edn., 6 vols., London, 1854-69), VI, 115.

3 Richard Hooker, *Of the laws of ecclesiastical polity. An abridged edition*, ed. A.S. McGrade and Brian Vickers (London, 1975), p. 225.

4 Cf., Norman Sykes, *Church and state in England in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1934), cpt. 7.

5 Indemnity Acts were not passed in the years 1730, 1732, 1744, 1749, 1750, 1753 and 1756. K.R.M. Short, 'The English Indemnity Acts 1726-1867', *Church History*, XLII (1976), 367.

6 Short convincingly argues that the Indemnity Acts were primarily intended to give the '"careless churchman"' additional time to qualify for office. As occasional conformity appears to have been increasingly rare in dissenting congregations, the participation of dissenters in civic life was thus dependent on the unwillingness of their neighbours to prosecute them. Short, 'English Indemnity Acts', pp. 366-76.

7 *The old whig: or, the consistent protestant* (2 vols., London, 1739), I, 15. The leading figure behind the *Old Whig* was Benjamin Avery, chairman of the Dissenting Deputies from 1736. Also involved were Benjamin Grosvenor, Samuel Chandler, George Benson and James Foster. Jeremy Goring, 'The break-up of old dissent', in C.G. Bolam et al, *The English presbyterians from Elizabethan puritanism to modern unitarianism* (London, 1968), p. 177.

8 *The old whig*, I, 16.

contributed to the security of civil government only so far as 'the *internal habits* and dispositions of it are implanted and prevail in the mind'.[9]

Samuel Chandler, one of the most famous presbyterian preachers of the period and a contributor to the *Old whig*, developed this critique of the Church establishment. He admitted that the magistrate had the right to 'enjoin by Law the external Acts of Virtue', since such acts were necessary for the maintenance of civil society and could be regulated by human laws.[10] But to support any religion, whether true or false, by temporal penalties was 'absolutely unlawful'. Indeed, '*true Religion*', by which he meant '*Faith, Devotion, Reverence, the Love of, and Submission to God*', was 'incapable of being established'.[11] Thus, he concluded, there were only two reasons for the establishment of a church: that the clergy might become rich and powerful, or that they might be made the willing instruments of the civil magistrate. Chandler did not, however, condemn all church establishments. Instead, he suggested an alternative similar to what came to be known as concurrent endowment. If, as in eighteenth-century England, a society was composed of men professing several religions, he saw no reason why all should not be entitled to the magistrate's protection and favours.

> For by such an impartial Procedure Envy and ill Blood would be prevented between the several Members of the Society, every Man would be made easy in the Profession of his own Religion, and the whole Society would receive all the Advantages that Religion could derive on Society.[12]

Another prominent dissenter, Caleb Fleming, on the other hand, pushed these arguments to their logical conclusion. No profession of faith could be used as a guide to belief since, he claimed, the '*Majority*' would be found willing to make any declaration 'if the Arguments and Motives of *this World* be but on that Side of the Question'.[13] Like Chandler he drew a clear division between 'external behaviour' and the 'internal principles of the mind'.[14] In reiterating the right to freedom of conscience, he also argued that the division of christians into many sects was a source of happiness, since it was a manifestation of the exercise of christian liberty.[15] But Fleming did not follow Chandler in claiming the favour of the civil magistrate for all these sects. Instead he stressed the 'absolute *independancy*' of religion, the province of which was 'much too

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9 *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

10 Samuel Chandler, *The history of persecution, in four parts. Viz. I. Amongst the heathens. II. Under the christian emperors. III. Under the papacy and inquisition. IV. Amongst protestants. With a preface, containing remarks on Dr Rogers's Vindication of the civil establishment of religion* (London, 1736), pp. xxxi-xxxii.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. iii, v.

12 *Ibid.*, pp. xxxiii-iv.

13 Caleb Fleming, *A letter to the Revd. Dr. Cobden, rector of St Austin's and St Faith's, and of Acton, and chaplain in ordinary to his majesty, containing an exact copy of a pastoral epistle to the protestant dissenters in his parishes, with remarks thereon. Wherein the guilt of our separation is endeavoured to be removed from the door of the doctor; and some friendly advice tender'd to him. By a parishioner of the doctor's* (London, 1738), p. 38.

14 Caleb Fleming, *Civil establishments in religion, a ground of infidelity; or, the two extremes shewn to be united: from an essay on establishments in religion; thoughts on miracles in general, &c. and from some defences of subscriptions, written against the Confessional; particularly, the plea of Dr Ibbetson, a deacon of St Albans. By Philalethes Londiniensis* (London, 1767), p. 2.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

sacred for the purpose of the magistrate's interposing his authority . . . for the public good'. That authority, he contended, was confined to civil affairs, and his establishment of a sect did not aid the propagation, but directly undermined 'the foundations of the christian religion'.[16] Thus, Fleming proclaimed himself opposed to '*all establishments in religion whatsoever*'.[17]

The dissenters were attacking the Church establishment, at least in part, because they felt that the authority of the civil magistrate should be confined to civil affairs. Some radical whigs, on the other hand, developed strongly erastian, and often virulently anti-clerical, criticisms of the relationship between church and state. The anonymous author of the aptly-titled pamphlet, *The state preferable to the Church*, for example, asserted that by protestant principles the magistrate was placed 'above the Church'.[18] He argued that the property of the Church should be vested in the crown, 'as a Trustee for the People', and the clergy paid a competent maintenance by the state.[19] The purpose of this proposal was to relieve the laity of the burden of taxes made necessary by England's involvement in European wars, by the appropriation of the wealth of the Churches of England and Ireland, which was 'far more considerable than is consistent with the Purity of the Reformed Religion'.[20] This anti-clericalism, justified as hostility to '*Priest-Craft*', but not to '*Priesthood*', was developed through the pamphlet in attacks on the litigiousness, greed, laziness and ignorance of the clergy, who were held responsible for the prevailing spirit of infidelity.[21]

Radical whig erastianism found its strongest expression at times when its proponents believed they could detect the pernicious effects of clerical influence in civil affairs. Thus jacobite rioting at Oxford provoked George Coade to demand the further reformation of the Church and the universities.[22] The legislature had the authority to effect such a reformation because the Church was 'meer Creatures, and Productions [sic] of civil Power . . . from whom alone it derived all its Wealth, Power, Influence and Authority'.[23] The constitution of the Church of England, Coade argued, was entirely dependent on the authority of parliament, and by it the clergy were excluded from any power in matters ecclesiastical. The idea of two independent powers in the state was subversive of all order and government. Indeed, the claim that the Church or clergy derived any power by divine right or commission was 'ridiculous and absurd', 'no more nor less than a Rag

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16 *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3, 5.

17 *Ibid.*, 'Advertisment to the Reader'.

18 *The state preferable to the Church; or, reasons for making the sale of the whole present property of the Church, in England and Ireland, for the service of the state; and for rendering the clergy more equal among themselves, less vexatious and onerous to the laity, and more dependent on their head, by subjecting them to the exchequer for their stipends, as practised in Holland . . In a letter from a country gentleman to the representative of his county in parliament* (London, 1748), p. 9.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 13, 41.

20 *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 3-4.

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 11, 13, 42-4.

22 [George Coade], *A blow at the root: or, an attempt to prove, that no time ever was, or very probably ever will be, so proper and convenient as the present, for introducing a further reformation into our national church, universities and schools. Most humbly dedicated to His Royal Highness William duke of Cumberland. By an impartial hand* (London, 1749), pp. xiv-xx, 20-1. For the attribution of this pamphlet to Coade, see W.R. Ward, *Georgian Oxford. University politics in the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1958), p. 183, n. 36.

23 [Coade], *A blow at the root*, pp. 69-72.

of Popery'.[24]

Earlier in the century Bishop Edmund Gibson's ultimately successful opposition to the promotion of Thomas Rundle to the see of Gloucester had provoked a flood of similar criticisms from whig pamphleteers. Such interference in matters of ecclesiastical patronage was perceived to be a dangerous encroachment by the clergy on a temporal right.[25] The controversy, which rumbled on throughout 1734, produced a great number of pamphlets, but perhaps the most significant was a detailed refutation by Sir Michael Foster, a future judge of King's Bench, of Gibson's treatise on church law, the *Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani*. Foster, though of dissenting background, was presumably a conforming member of the Church of England, but he believed that the Church should be subordinated to the state.[26] Drawing on the history of the Reformation he argued that this would aid the promotion of religion, since laymen were often better judges than the clergy of the best means of so doing. More important, it was the only way of avoiding the establishment of a 'sacerdotal Empire', on the pattern of the Roman Catholic Church, which would make the civil magistrate 'its Minister and Dependent'.[27] The clergy, argued Foster, had no divine right to any jurisdiction, least of all to any dispensing authority. It was a fundamental principle of the Reformation that 'all Jurisdiction, as well ecclesiastical as civil, is vested in, and exercised by Delegation from, the Crown'. The civil and spiritual courts, however, were not two independent jurisdictions, each drawing its authority from the crown. The former were superior to the latter, issuing prohibitions to restrain and correct their 'Excesses'.[28]

Another group of radical whigs took the claim to individual liberty in religion as their starting point, but did not draw from it the same conclusions as a dissenter like Chandler, combining it instead with a pronounced erastianism. An early example is provided by Matthew Tindal in his *Rights of the christian church asserted*, first published in 1706. He argued that no man had any right to prescribe to another in matters of doctrine, worship or ceremony. But it was impossible for two independent powers to coexist within a society.[29] Thus, since religion was necessary for the support of civil society, the authority of the civil magistrate extended to it, for he was responsible for determining 'all those things, which the Good of the Society will not permit to

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24 *Ibid.*, pp. 72-3, 80-3.

25 [Thomas Gordon], *A letter to Dr. Codex, on the subject of his modest instruction to the crown, inserted in the Daily Journal of Feb 27th 1733. From the second volume of Burnet's History* (London, 1732), pp. 12-18; [Arthur Ashley Sykes], *An argument proving, that the method taken for obstructing Dr Rundle's advancement to the see of G—r is dangerous to his majesty's prerogative, our most excellent constitution, the liberty of lay-subjects, and the christian religion. Also a reply to The case of Dr Rundle's promotion to the see of G—r, &c. impartially consider'd; and to the Miscellany of Dec. 7. last* (London, 1735), pp. 3-6. For the Rundle affair, see Norman Sykes, *Edmund Gibson, bishop of London, 1669-1748. A study in politics and religion in the eighteenth century* (London, 1926), pp. 155-9.

26 Sir Michael Foster, *An examination of the scheme of church-power, laid down in the Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani, &c.* (London, 1735); Michael Dodson, *Life of Sir Michael Foster, Knt.* (London, 1811), pp. 1-2. For Gisbon's *Codex*, see below p. 54.

27 Foster, *Examination of the scheme of church-power*, pp. 108-9, 4.

28 *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 5, 38-9, 40-3.

29 Matthew Tindal, *The rights of the christian church asserted, against the Romish, and all other priests who claim an independent power over it. With a preface concerning the government of the Church of England, as by law established* (2nd edn., London, 1706), pp. 23-4, 33ff.

remain uncertain'.[30] This authority did not sanction persecution on account of private belief, but there was 'no Branch of Spiritual Jurisdiction which is not vested in him, and . . . all the Jurisdiction which the ArchBps, Bishops, or any other inferior Ecclesiastical Judges have, is deriv'd from him'. The magistrate was even competent to 'pardon all Excommunication, and restore People to the Communion of the Church'.[31]

The emphasis of Thomas Gordon in his *Sermon preached on January 30* was slightly different. Like Tindal he asserted the right to private judgment in matters of religion. To set up authority against conscience was both wicked and absurd - even the early fathers, he claimed, had differed over essentials.[32] Gordon was not concerned merely with the question of jurisdiction in church and state. He expressed a much deeper anti-clerical sentiment which was nonetheless deeply religious. In a manner characteristic of early eighteenth-century neo-Harringtonian thought he saw the priest, who claimed a divine commission and authority, as a usurper.[33] He denied that a clergyman could do anything that a layman could not do, 'if the Law appoint him'.[34] The notion of 'an indelible Character' was, therefore, 'errant Nonsense and true Priestcraft', for the clergy had no 'Power and Designation' which laymen could not take away. Indeed, it was within the competence of parliament to pass an act to reduce all the clergy 'to Laymen, and create as many Priests immediately out of the Laity'.[35]

These tendencies of thought were not confined to those outside the established Church. Not only was Sir Michael Foster probably a conforming member of the Church of England, but many other radical whigs also saw themselves not as assailants of the establishment but as its loyal members proposing a necessary reformation.[36] There were even some clergymen who held views similar to those of Chandler and other dissenters about liberty of conscience and the role of the magistrate in religious affairs. The most prominent exponent of such ideas within the Church was Benjamin Hoadly, bishop of Winchester. His views were expressed most clearly not in his famous sermon on the *Nature of the Kingdom of Christ*, which lacked clarity and could easily be interpreted as denying to visible churches any authority whatsoever,[37] but in his subsequent

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30 *Ibid.*, pp. 13-16.

31 *Ibid.*, pp. xxi-xxii, xliii.

32 [Thomas Gordon], *A sermon preached before the learned Society of Lincoln's-Inn, on January 30. 1732. From Job xxxiv. 30. That the hypocrite reign not, lest the People be ensnared. By a layman* (London, 1733), pp. 2-3.

33 J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian moment. Florentine political thought and the Atlantic republican tradition* (Princeton, 1975), pp. 475-6.

34 [Thomas Gordon], *A supplement to the sermon preached at Lincoln's-Inn, on January 30. 1732. By a layman. Addressed to a very important and most solemn churchman, solicitor-general for causes ecclesiastical* (London, 1733), pp. 5-6.

35 [Gordon], *Sermon preached on January 30. 1732*, pp. 37-8; [idem], *Supplement to the sermon*, p. 7.

36 See, e.g., [Coade], *A blow at the root*, p. 70.

37 Benjamin Hoadly, *The nature of the kingdom, or church, of Christ. A sermon preach'd before the king, at the royal chapel at St. James's, on Sunday March 31, 1717* (London, 1717); *A report of the committee of the lower house of convocation, appointed to draw up a representation to be laid before the arch-bishop and bishops of the province of Canterbury; concerning several dangerous positions and doctrines, contained in the bishop of Bangor's Preservative and his sermon preach'd March 31, 1717. Read in the lower-house, May 10, 1717 and voted, nemine contradicente, to be receiv'd and entred upon the books of the said house* (London, 1717), pp. 3-4; Andrew Snape, *A letter to the bishop of Bangor, occasion'd by his lordship's sermon preach'd before the king at St James's, March 31st, 1717* (London, 1717), pp. 4-5.

defences of that sermon and other writings. He too reasserted the protestant claim to freedom of conscience, since the right to judge men's consciences was the prerogative of Christ alone.[38] The fundamentals of Christianity were simple; the 'Practice of all the Duties we owe to our Selves, and to our Neighbour'.[39] In the words of Hoadly's brother, the archbishop of Dublin, sins in practice were much more serious than 'unwilful Errors in Faith, much less Mistakes in any outward Constitutions', since 'Practice is the end of all the Rest'.[40] But such practical Christianity was true religion only as long as it flowed from 'sincere Belief' in God, both 'Governor' and 'Judge', as revealed by Jesus Christ.[41] By emphasizing sincerity rather than externals such as creeds and forms of worship Hoadly was diminishing the role of visible churches in the economy of salvation. While lamenting the divisions of christians into different communions, he was ready to admit that salvation was possible within other denominations and to acknowledge their members as brethren, even those of the Church of Rome.[42]

Upon these premises Hoadly denied the efficacy not only of persecution, but also of legislation such as the Test and Corporation Acts which did nothing to promote the salvation of souls. Since Christ alone could lead men 'to the firm Assurance of Another World', it was impossible 'to create that Inward sincere Belief', which alone made actions truly religious, 'by Worldly Motives'. The annexation of 'worldly Sanctions' to the profession of a particular religion brought no benefit to the Church since profession and practice, in as far as they were enforced by 'the Considerations of *this* World, so far cease to be Religion'.[43] As John Jackson, one of Hoadly's most notable supporters during the Bangorian controversy, pointed out, it was '*unreasonable*' even to bring men to the profession of the '*True Religion*' by annexing to it temporal rewards and punishments. Such action was '*impious*', since it 'may make many *Hypocrites*, and ruin the *Souls* of many, who might otherwise be saved in the *sincere* Profession of even many Errors'.[44]

Hoadly developed the implications of this argument, limiting the role of the civil magistrate in religion. Commenting on Romans xiii, 1-6 he asserted that 'the Care of *True Religion*' was no part of the office of the civil magistrate. The magistrate was the vicegerent of God, in that he

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38 Benjamin Hoadly, *An answer to the representation drawn up by the committee of the lower-house of convocation concerning several dangerous positions and doctrines contain'd in the bishop of Bangor's Preservative and Sermon* (London, 1718), p. 50.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 151.

40 John Hoadly, *The nature and excellency of moderation. A sermon preach'd in the cathedral-church of Sarum, at the asizes held for the county of Wilts, March 9. 1706/7* (London, 1707), p. 12.

41 Hoadly, *Answer to the representation*, p. 151.

42 Benjamin Hoadly, 'An answer to the rev. Dr. Hare's sermon, intituled, Church authority vindicated: with a postscript, occasioned by the lord bishop of Oxford's late charge to his clergy', in *The works of Benjamin Hoadly, D.D.*, ed. John Hoadly (3 vols., London, 1773), II, 905-6.

43 Hoadly, *Answer to the representation*, pp. 152-63. Indeed, it was harmful to the interests of true religion to establish the principle that the magistrate had the right to add temporal sanctions to religion. True religion would be thereby established in '*One Corner* of the Earth', but its adherents would be persecuted in the '*Hundreds* of *Vast Countries*, in which, by this very Method, The most *Stupid Idolatry* will be . . . encouraged as the Worship of God'. *Ibid.*, pp. 167-9.

44 John Jackson, *The grounds of civil and eccelsiastical government briefly consider'd . . . To which is added, A defence of the bishop of Bangor, against the objections of Mr Law* (London, 1718), pp. 33-4.

held an '*Office*, agreeable to *God's* Will', but that office was confined to the well-being of civil society. Hoadly argued further that '*True Religion*' was best maintained and propagated when the magistrate involved himself in the matter no further than 'to restrain and punish All such *Outward Actions*, as are Violations of its practical Rules; and also injurious to the Members of *Civil Society*, consider'd as such, committed to his Care'. Beyond that he should concern himself to leave his subjects entirely free to follow the dictates of their own consciences, only restraining the religious zeal of some from infringing the civil rights of others.[45] Thus Jackson claimed that the '*natural* Right' to toleration had to be denied to atheists and papists, the one being 'Enemies to all Mankind' and the other '*Traitors* to all *Protestant* Governments'.[46] Hoadly indeed did not deny that the civil magistrate had reason, and the right, to choose as his servants those whom he believed to be 'truly, and sincerely *Religious*'. If, however, the magistrate sought to do this by annexing beforehand temporal advantages to the profession of religion, such privileges should not be confined to the members of one denomination but extended to '*All*, who give equal Proofs, or make equal Profession, of their Belief of a *Future Judgment*'.[47]

Hoadly, therefore, making use of arguments similar to those of Chandler and Fleming, joined with the dissenters in condemning the Test and Corporation Acts. Significantly, however, his main concern was not with the denial of natural rights, but with the efficacy of temporal rewards and punishments for the propagation of religion. He joined them also in drawing a sharp distinction between religion and politics. But again his emphasis was different and he stopped short of questioning the utility of the Church establishment. Despite the conviction of many churchmen that his doctrines reduced the Church to 'a State of *Anarchy* and *Confusion*', Hoadly made very clear his belief that visible churches ought to be '*orderly Societies*'.[48] In 1736 he restated his opinion that the Church of England was not 'all perfection, and uncapable of Amendment', yet he was convinced 'of its Excellency above any Other that I know of'. He reassured his clergy that he would do nothing to hurt its establishment or its legal revenues. There is, moreover, no evidence to suggest that he ever retracted the position he enunciated in the *Reasonableness of conformity*, that those who separated from the Church of England over inessentials of liturgy and worship, as, he argued, did many of the dissenters, were committing the sin of schism.[49]

On the one hand, therefore, Hoadly believed that the civil magistrate was not concerned with the support of true religion. On the other hand, he proclaimed his loyalty to the established Church of England, of which the king was supreme head. The key to this paradox may lie in a passage in his *Answer to the representation of the lower house of convocation*, where he implied

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[45] Hoadly, *Answer to the representation*, pp. 220-2, 174-5.

[46] Jackson, *Grounds of civil and ecclesiastical government*, p. 34.

[47] Hoadly, *Answer to the representation*, pp. 182-3.

[48] *A report of the committee of the lower house of convocation*, p. 3; Hoadly, 'Answer to Hare's sermon', in *Works*, ii. 898.

[49] Benjamin Hoadly, 'A charge delivered to the clergy, at the bishop's personal visitation of the diocese of Winchester, in the year 1736', in *Works*, iii. 491-2; idem, *The reasonableness of conformity to the Church of England, represented to the dissenting ministers. In answer to the tenth chapter of Mr Calamy's Abridgement of Mr Baxter's History of his life and times* (London, 1703).

that the establishment of a church by the civil magistrate was justified to enable him more effectually 'to punish the Outward Acts of Wickedness and Vice, and to encourage the Outward Acts of Righteousness and Virtue'. Hoadly never made his position explicit, contributing perhaps to the misrepresentations of which he complained.[50] But his views may be clarified by those of John Jackson, who shared Hoadly's opinions on so many issues. Jackson followed Hoadly in claiming that the civil magistrate was interested only in 'the Profession of Religion *in general*', by which he meant the worship of God and virtuous and moral behaviour. Beyond that he was obliged to ensure a '*free Toleration*' to all. Yet Jackson did not deny to the magistrate a more extensive jurisdiction in matters of religion, embracing even the ordering of inessentials. He simply asserted that such a jurisdiction was 'meerly *accidental*, and no way *essential* to the *Civil* Authority with which he is entrusted; and properly belongs to him, only with respect to those, with whom he professeth the *same* Religion'.[51]

The status quo justified

These groups of dissenters and radical whigs, whether or not they were members of the established Church, formed only a small minority of the English elite. They were significant and often vocal assailants of the establishment, but they had little impact on the most pervasive doctrine of church and state. This is not to say that some of the ideas they expressed were not held more widely. As will be seen, most churchmen were agreed about the importance of sincerity in matters of religion and the necessity of a toleration.[52] But the vast majority, both clerical and, as far as can be determined, lay, were prepared to accept neither an interpretation of the relationship between church and state which severely limited or abolished the role of the civil magistrate in religious matters, nor one which subordinated the church to the state. Instead they saw that relationship as some form of union or alliance. The purpose of the remainder of this chapter is to examine more closely this understanding of the establishment in church and state. First the 'classic' eighteenth-century doctrine, enunciated by Warburton in his *Alliance*, will be outlined. It will be argued, however, that Warburton's analysis was idiosyncratic, in many ways no more representative of the Church as a whole than Hoadly's, since most writers, in contrast to Warburton, emphasized the inseparability of church and state.

It is uncertain whether or not Warburton intended the *Alliance between church and state* to be a descriptive treatise. In the preface to the 1736 edition he claimed to treat the subject 'abstractly'; in 1748 that it was not 'speculative', but was written with the English constitution in

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50 Hoadly, *Answer to the representation*, p. 172; 'Charge delivered in 1736', in *Works*, III, 491.

51 Jackson, *Grounds of civil and ecclesiastical government*, pp. 29-31.

52 See below, pp. 58-9.

view.[53] The main outline of his theory, however, is clear. Warburton argued that the relationship between church and state was 'a *politic league and alliance for mutual support and defence*', formed upon the principle that 'THE CHURCH SHALL APPLY ITS UTMOST INFLUENCE IN THE SERVICE OF THE STATE; AND THE STATE SHALL SUPPORT AND PROTECT THE CHURCH'.[54] By this alliance the Church received a settled maintenance for its ministers, an ecclesiastical jurisdiction with coactive powers for the reformation of manners, and the right of churchmen to sit in the legislature. In return the state secured the dependence of the clergy and the recognition by the Church of the ecclesiastical supremacy of the civil magistrate. The Church thereby obtained protection against all external violence. The magistrate, on the other hand, ensured that the state would receive the aid of religion in enforcing those duties, so necessary to civil society, which human laws could neither reach nor enforce. Through the alliance he also prevented the 'mischiefs' which the Church, as an independent society, could do to the state.[55]

Warburton thus emphasized the mutual benefits of the alliance. He was, nonetheless, equally insistent that church and state were separate and independent societies. He confined the province of the civil magistrate to the 'bodies' of men, to the preservation of their 'TEMPORAL LIBERTIES AND PROPERTY' Morals were within his jurisdiction in so far as they affected civil society, but matters of doctrine and opinion, with one exception, lay outside it. The exception was what Warburton called 'the fundamental principles of Natural Religion' - the being of a God, his providence over human affairs, and the natural difference between good and evil. But the magistrate's jurisdiction only extended to those who denied these principles because they were 'the very foundation and bond of civil policy'.[56] The salvation of souls was, therefore, no concern of the magistrate, but was the province of the Church. 'CHRIST'S KINGDOM', argued Warburton, was formed into a society 'by divine appointment', and 'declared sovereign, and independent of civil government'. The Church had the power of excommunication, 'of expelling refractory members from its body', but it had no civil coercive power beyond that.[57]

In the only recent study of the *Alliance* R.W. Greaves has claimed that the work was 'one of the most . . . influential books of the century'. This view has been widely shared by historians, who have often assumed that Warburton enunciated the classic eighteenth-century doctrine of church and state.[58] Their readiness to portray the *Alliance* as representative of clerical opinion is

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53 Warburton, 'Alliance', in *Works*, VII, iii, viii. Cf. the passage defending the *Alliance* in the 'Dedication to the edition of Books IV. V. VI of the Divine legation of Moses; 1765', where Warburton claims it was 'formed upon a Model actually existing before our eyes'. *Works*, IV, 6. The 1811 edition of Warburton's *Works* reprints the 4th edition of the *Alliance* (London, 1766). The first edition was published in 1736, with the title *The alliance between church and state, or the necessity of an established religion, and a test law demonstrated, upon the fundamental principles of the laws of nature and nations*. The 2nd edition followed in 1741, and the 3rd in 1748. All editions underwent considerable revision by Warburton, much of it in the form of editorial notes.

54 Warburton, 'Alliance', in *Works*, VII, 88, 106.

55 *Ibid.*, pp. 100-7, 27-40, 90-100.

56 *Ibid.*, pp.42-3, 45.

57 *Ibid.*, pp. 174, 62, 65-9.

58 R.W. Greaves, 'The working of the alliance. A comment on Warburton', in *Essays in modern English church history*, ed. G.V. Bennett and J.D. Walsh (London, 1966), p. 163; E.R. Norman, *Church and society in England 1770-1970. A historical study* (Oxford, 1976), p. 16.

understandable. Written by a future bishop, it was the only treatise of the period to emerge from within the established Church which devoted itself to an examination of the relationship between church and state. Nonetheless, such an interpretation is misleading. Warburton, indeed, suggested as much himself, admitting in 1765 that, although his book was widely read, very few people agreed with him.[59]

The *Alliance* was a contribution to the controversy over the Test Act, and like so many of Warburton's works it was both perverse and polemical. It shared the perversity of his *magnum opus*, the *Divine legation of Moses*, by adopting the premises of the Church's assailants and attempting to prove that, when rightly interpreted, they led to orthodox conclusions. In the *Alliance* Warburton was attempting 'to shew the NECESSITY AND EQUITY OF AN ESTABLISHED RELIGION AND A TEST-LAW FROM THE ESSENCE AND END OF CIVIL SOCIETY, UPON THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE LAW OF NATURE AND NATIONS'.[60] Following Chandler and Hoadly Warburton claimed that sincerity, a man's personal spiritual relationship with God, was the most important factor in his salvation. The civil magistrate, therefore, had no concern in spiritual affairs and it was the 'natural right' of every man to worship God according to his conscience. Consequently, as has been shown, he rested his defence of the alliance of church and state, a 'FREE CONVENTION' between two independent societies, on the grounds of civil utility and the benefits it offered to both.[61] Moreover, Warburton claimed that the same arguments of civil utility justified the Test Act. In a society composed of many churches a Test Act was a necessary corollary of the terms of the alliance, to protect the established Church against the violence of its rivals. It was also necessary for the security of the state, to prevent religious controversies from disrupting the public administration. Such a law, however, did not overturn the principle of toleration since exclusion from government was not a punishment. Places of honour and profit were not a trust, a right which the subject could claim; they were part of the magistrate's prerogative, 'which he may dispose of at pleasure'.[62]

Warburton believed that his treatise justified the Church establishment on principles which confuted the views of both papists and erastians, by whom he meant those who made 'the state a creature of the church' and those who made 'the church a creature of the state'.[63] But to many his doctrine appeared to have pronounced erastian tendencies. Warburton's assertion that spiritual affairs were no concern of the civil magistrate, and hence that utility rather than truth was the basis of a religious establishment, was viewed with particular suspicion. This premise led him to argue that, where there was more than one religious society in the state, the magistrate should ally himself with the largest. Such action was again justified by the appeal to utility - 'the larger

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59 Warburton, 'Dedication to the Divine legation', in *Works*, IV, 6.

60 Warburton, 'Alliance', in *Works*, VII, 22. For a brief outline of the argument of the *Divine legation* see A.W. Evans, *Warburton and the Warburtonians. A study in some eighteenth-century controversies* (London, 1932), pp. 52-67.

61 Warburton, 'Alliance', in *Works*, VII, 42-3, 55, 101, 87-8.

62 *Ibid.*, pp. 246ff, 252.

63 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

the religious society is, where there is an equality in other parts, the better enabled it will be to answer the ends of an *alliance*'.[64] Warburton attempted to extricate himself from some of the implications of this argument by claiming that, of all religions, Christianity was best fitted to assist the civil magistrate and that '*public utility and truth do coincide*'. He developed the latter idea in his thanksgiving sermon for the defeat of the '45 rebellion. There he argued that by the 'natural influence of their respective powers' true religion produced civil liberty and civil liberty encouraged the profession of true religion.[65]

In the eyes of Warburton's critics, however, such reasoning could not disguise the fact that the Church gained little from the alliance. The state secured the influence of religion to strengthen the fabric of civil society. In return the Church gained protection from external violence. Yet the experience of the primitive church suggested that such protection was of little importance in the task of assisting men in the salvation of their souls. A number of opponents of the establishment seized on this point. They used Warburton's theory as a weapon in their attack on the established Church, alleging that the only reason the Church could have had for entering an alliance with the state and allowing religion to be made the tool of politicians was to secure 'all that is *valuable* to our Clergy', namely 'Power and Riches'.[66]

Warburton's treatise was written in defence of the status quo, an established Church supported by a Test Act. It is unsurprising, therefore, that his conception of the role of the Church in society differed little from that of other clergymen. Like them he emphasized the importance of religion to civil society in supplying the deficiencies of human laws and promoting virtue among the people. Like them he portrayed the Church as, in part, an agent of the state, responsible for the distribution of charity, the provision of education, and the inculcation of the duty of obedience to lawful authority.[67] But most churchmen differed from Warburton in their understanding of the basis of the relationship between church and state. They were distrustful of the erastian implications of Warburton's arguments and, more importantly, they did not believe that the two societies were linked merely by a voluntary, 'politic' alliance. They perceived church and state in terms more reminiscent of the organic, indissoluble union described by Burke at the end of the century. For Burke church and state were 'ideas inseparable', not the independent societies of Warburton's *Alliance*. A 'religious, national establishment' was 'essential' to the state, the foundation of the 'whole constitution'. From such an establishment the state did not merely acquire the influence of religion; it was 'consecrated' by the Church. The Church, likewise, received not only protection against its rivals and a maintenance for its ministers, but also the

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64 *Ibid.*, pp. 282-3, 242-3.

65 *Ibid.*, pp. 169-75, 273; Warburton, 'Sermon preached on the Thanksgiving Day for the suppression of the late unnatural rebellion in 1746', in *Works*, IX, 330.

66 *The old whig; or, the consistent protestant*, 62, 13 May 1736, 64, 27 May 1736; *A comment on the rev'd Mr Warburton's Alliance between church and state. Shewing that an ecclesiastical-establishment and a test-law are not supportable on his reasoning; either from the essence and end of society; or, from the fundamental principles of the law of nature and nations . . .* (London, 1748), p. 44.

67 See below, cpt. 6, for a fuller discussion of the role of the Church.

assistance of the state in propagating true religion.[68]

Burke's language was different from that employed in the first half of the century. Nonetheless, similar conceptions of the relationship between church and state were widely held at that time. As Warburton himself acknowledged in the *Alliance*, it was a 'common opinion' that the office of the civil magistrate extended to the care of souls.[69] Edward Bentham, for example, Oxford's regius professor of divinity from 1763 to 1776, claimed that magistrates were obliged both 'to execute justice' and 'to maintain truth'. The government was responsible not only for 'the safety, honour, and welfare of our Sovereign and his Kingdoms', but also for 'the advancement of God's glory' and 'the good of his church'. It was, moreover, the duty of the king himself to seek 'God's honour and glory' and to preserve the 'godliness' of his people, as well as their wealth and peace.[70] The implications of Bentham's assumption that the state had both secular and spiritual functions was drawn out by William Freind, who was appointed to the deanery of Canterbury in 1760. In a sermon before the house of commons he described the 'Union inseparable' which existed 'between a *Free State*, and a *Church*, mild in its Principles, pure in its Doctrines, simple in its Forms, decent in its Worship'.[71]

It is unsurprising that such opinions should have been expressed by men of tory backgrounds educated at Oxford, a university more self-consciously a bulwark of the Church than Cambridge. Freind's father, Robert, like his son a graduate of Christ Church, had been headmaster of Westminster School and an intimate of Francis Atterbury, while Bentham, though a ministerial supporter by the late 1740s, had voted tory in the university election of 1737.[72] But similar views were also prevalent among Cambridge educated clergymen with impeccable whig credentials, such as Samuel Squire, for many years chaplain to the duke of Newcastle and his Cambridge secretary before obtaining the bishopric of St David's through the earl of Bute in 1761. Squire asserted that both the civil and ecclesiastical powers were 'ordained for edification'.[73] A Cambridge contemporary, Philip Yonge, another of Newcastle's correspondents and future bishop, commented similarly on the natural and necessary union of church and state. Explaining that the two constitutions, civil and religious, 'have been formed and have grown up as it were together',

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68 Burke, 'Reflections on the revolution in France, and on the proceedings of certain societies in London relative to that event', in *Works*, II, 371, 364.

69 Warburton, 'Alliance', in *Works*, VII, 63.

70 Edward Bentham, *A sermon preached before the honourable house of commons, at St. Margaret's Westminster, on Tuesday, January 30, 1749-50. Being the anniversary of the martyrdom of K. Charles I* (Oxford, 1750), pp. 29-30.

71 William Freind, *A sermon preached before the honourable house of commons, at St. Margaret's Westminster, on Thursday, January 30, 1755. Being appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1755), p. 17.

72 G.V. Bennett, *The tory crisis in church and state 1688-1730. The career of Francis Atterbury bishop of Rochester* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 41, 120, 204; Edward Bentham, *A letter to a young gentleman of Oxford* (Oxford, 1748); idem, *A letter to a fellow of a college. Being the sequel of a letter to a young gentleman of Oxford* (London, 1749); R. Greaves, 'Religion in the University, 1715-1800', in *The history of Oxford University. V. The eighteenth century*, ed. L.S. Sutherland and L.G. Mitchell (Oxford, 1986), p. 407, n. 4.

73 Samuel Squire, *A sermon preached before the lords spiritual and temporal in the abbey church, Westminster, on Saturday, January 30, 1762. Being the anniversary of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1762), p. 16; D.A. Winstanley, *The University of Cambridge in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 146; *Notes and queries*, 1st series, I (1849), 66; G. Cruch to William Robinson, 12 Oct. 1761.

he warned that any attempt to separate them would inevitably be attended with 'confusion and disappointment'.[74]

As has been said, Warburton's was the only treatise devoted exclusively to the relationship between church and state. Statements such as those quoted above were commonplace in the sermon literature of the period, but only a few churchmen made more than passing references to the subject. One exception was Edmund Gibson, bishop of London between 1723 and 1748, who analyzed the constitutional relationship between church and state in the 'Introductory Discourse' to his *Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani*. The importance of this book should not be underestimated. First published in 1713 in two large folio volumes, it quickly established itself as the definitive work on English canon law and was reprinted in 1761. It was made more accessible by Richard Grey whose abridged edition, *A system of English ecclesiastical law*, first published in 1730, reached its fourth edition in 1743.[75] Gibson's main preoccupation was to demonstrate that the Church was an independent society. He asserted that the Church of England had a '*Divine Right* . . . to the Exercise of Spiritual Disciplin [sic]', which was embodied in the constitution, recognized by parliament's confirmation of the office of consecration in the Book of Common Prayer. The Tudor laws relating to the royal supremacy, he claimed, were intended only to exclude the usurped power of the pope, not to deny the authority belonging to every bishop by the word of God.[76] But it is clear from his account that church and state, though separate societies, were nonetheless indissolubly linked. Gibson neither made the Church 'a *meer Creature* of the State', nor did he assert her complete independence of it. The prince, or civil magistrate, was also supreme head of the Church. The administration of both temporal and spiritual matters flowed from him, in temporal 'as Supreme and Sovereign in the State', in spiritual 'as Supreme Head of the Church'.[77] Thus church and state, while distinct, could not be separated. The 'Supreme Legislative Powers' were not excluded from ecclesiastical affairs. On the contrary, they had 'a Right . . . to Establish and Encourage that Religion which they believe to be true'. A national church was only justified '*as the best Means of promoting Religion*, and preserving Peace and Order in the State'.[78]

A similar interpretation of the English constitution was put forward by Gloucester Ridley. Ridley was never advanced beyond a prebend of Salisbury, but he was a well-known writer who

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74 Philip Yonge, *A sermon preached before the honourable house of commons, at St Margaret's, Westminster, on Friday, January 30, 1756; being appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1756), pp. 17-18.

75 Edmund Gibson, *Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani: or, the statutes, constitutions, canons, rubricks and articles of the Church of England, methodically digested under their proper heads. With a commentary, historical and juridical* (2 vols., London, 1713; 2nd edn., London, 1761); Richard Grey, *A system of English ecclesiastical law. Extracted from the Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani of the right reverend the lord bishop of London. For the use of young students in the universities, who are designed for holy orders* (London, 1730; 4th edn., London, 1743).

76 Gibson, *Codex*, pp. xviii, xvii.

77 *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

78 'Positions touching the Rights of ye *Civil Power* in matters of Religion', Gibson Papers, Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 237, fols. 42-3; [Edmund Gibson], *The dispute adjusted, about the proper time of applying for a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts: by shewing, that no time is proper* (London, 1732), pp. 12-13 [my emphasis].

collaborated with Archbishop Secker on *Three letters to the author of The confessional*, a reply to Francis Blackburne's proposals for liberal reform of the Church's doctrine and liturgy.[79] He developed his ideas on church and state in three sermons preached during the '45 rebellion and published under the title *Constitution in church and state*. The purpose of these sermons was to vindicate the Church of England and its members from the charge of schism made against them by the Church of Rome. Part of Ridley's defence was to deny the claim of the pope 'to Supremacy in Temporals over Christian Princes and their Subjects', asserting instead the supremacy of the civil magistrate. Like Gibson he emphasized the separateness of the Church. The prince was not supreme over the '*Universal Church*' or 'the *Church Militant* on Earth', nor did his supremacy extend over the faith, christian duties or the means of grace. But Ridley too believed also that the prince was charged with the promotion of religion, and in defence of his argument he expounded the distinction, preserved at the Reformation, between the *ordo* and the *jurisdictio* of the Church. Both prince and priest were 'God's Ministers, appointed to preserve and continue his Church; yet with a Power not at all *divided* betwixt them, but totally *distinct* and independent'. To the priest were committed '*the Word and Sacraments*', with the power, 'from Christ by successive Delegation', to 'exhort, reprove, and reject from Communion, Prince as well as Subject'. But the priest was entrusted with no coercive power. That power, 'the Sword', was committed to the prince, 'from God by the Ordinance of Man'. To it both clergy and laity 'must be subject', and 'should it take Part with Error, They must patiently endure', as the Marian martyrs had done.[80]

A different approach to the question is illustrated by George Fothergill, the Principal of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, who expounded a defence of the establishment based, like Warburton's, on general principles rather than on an exposition of the constitution. Fothergill's intention was to prove the importance of religion to civil society, and in so doing he demonstrated that the two could not be separated. He condemned the view of human nature that suggested that man had 'a Love of Virtue from Virtue's Sake', insisting that although he may have a disposition to the practice of virtue and morality, such dispositions were commonly 'perverted' by his 'passions'. These passions were powerful enough to break through any purely human restraint, whether that of reason, or the power of the magistrate, or the principles of benevolence and honour. Therefore there was need of a higher sanction, which could only be provided by religion. '*Reveal'd* Religion', by which he meant Christianity, was even more fitted for this task. On the one hand, by manifesting 'the true Source . . . and the proper Cure, of our Degeneracy', it defined the nature and purpose of reason, honour and benevolence. On the other, it explained the source of civil government and secured obedience to it, by teaching that it was the ordinance of God

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[79] Gloucester Ridley, *Three letters to the author of The confessional* (London, 1768). Each letter had been previously published separately.

[80] Gloucester Ridley, *Constitution in church and state. Three sermons preached on occasion of the present rebellion, at St Ann's Limehouse, and the chapel of Poplar, in Sept. and Oct. 1745* (London, 1746), pp. 1-3, 54, 67-74, 78-9.

himself.[81] From these principles Fothergill drew two inferences to justify the civil establishment of religion in a manner very different from Warburton. The first was that the civil magistrate was concerned and obliged 'to support and encourage' both the internal principles and outward expressions of religion. Moreover, as the 'morals of a people may and must suffer from a *corrupt* Religion . . . or impure Worship of the Deity', it was also the magistrate's duty to support the true religion, namely that of the Church of England. Secondly, the magistrate clearly had a duty to suppress vice, immorality and irreligion, because 'all Attempts to remove the Influences of *Religion*' were also 'Attempts against Publick Order and Happiness'.[82]

Even William Paley, writing later in the century, shared many of these assumptions. He did not believe that religion or the Church were productions of the civil power. A church establishment, he argued moreover, was 'no part of Christianity', explaining in language reminiscent of Warburton that its justification and authority were therefore 'founded in its utility'.[83] His reasoning, however, was an implicit rejection of Warburton's *Alliance*. Paley recognized that the civil magistrate had a role in religious affairs, since an establishment was 'the means of inculcating' Christianity. Indeed, a properly ordered establishment united 'the several perfections which a religious constitution ought to aim at: - liberty of conscience, with means of instruction; the progress of truth, with the peace of society; the right of private judgment, with the care of public safety'.[84] For Gibson, Ridley, Fothergill and Paley, as for so many churchmen in this period, the church establishment was justified not merely on grounds of public utility, but as a means of propagating truth and helping men towards salvation. The church could exist, indeed it had existed, without the support of the state, but the union of church and state was a necessary part of a christian commonwealth.

Views such as these were not confined to the clergy, but were shared by many of the laity, including prominent lawyers, despite the vested interest of their profession in limiting the jurisdictional autonomy of the ecclesiastical courts. Two of the most influential legal treatises of the century - Wood's *Institute* and Blackstone's *Commentaries* - both advanced an interpretation of the constitutional relationship between church and state which emphasized that each was a separate society, but at the same time denied that the Church was completely independent and that the civil magistrate was excluded from spiritual affairs. Thomas Wood saw no incompatibility between the two ideas. On the contrary the constitutional recognition of the interdependence of church and state, in the reception and acceptance of 'the *Law* of *Nature*' and 'the *Revealed* Law

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81 George Fothergill, *The importance of religion to civil societies. A sermon preached at St Mary's in Oxford, at the assizes: before the honourable Mr. Justice Fortescue-Aland, and Mr. Justice Lee; and before the University; on Thursday, March 6th. 1734-5* (3rd edn., Oxford, 1745), pp. 7-10, 10-21, 23, 25-6.

82 *Ibid.*, pp. 28-30, 30-32.

83 William Paley, 'Principles of moral and political economy', in *The works of William Paley, D.D. With extracts from his correspondence: and a life of the author, by the rev. Robert Lynam, A.M.* (new edn., 5 vols., London, 1825), II, 23, 24-5.

84 *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 50. I do not, therefore, agree with Sykes that Paley's work was no more than a refinement of Warburton's. Paley, in contrast to Warburton, did not confine his definition of 'utility' to civil utility. Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 326.

of God' as part of the laws of England, assumed a separate 'Spiritual *Jurisdiction* and *Authority* in the Church'. He stressed, however, that that jurisdiction was exercised within England 'by the King's Authority as Supreme Governor of the Church'.[85]

In the late 1760s Wood's *Institute* was superseded by Blackstone's *Commentaries* as the standard text on English law. Blackstone was concerned to emphasize the civil utility of a national religion, the propagation of which 'is, abstracted from it's own intrinsic truth, of the utmost consequence to the civil state'. But he too believed that church and state were incorporated together, not merely linked in a politic alliance, for 'christianity is part of the laws of England'. In a christian commonwealth such as England the civil magistrate had a responsibility for the maintenance and propagation of religion. Thus, he was competent to punish sins against God, such as blasphemy and profane swearing and cursing. Such offences, argued Blackstone, were cognizable by both spiritual and temporal courts. The spiritual courts punished them, as they punished all offences, 'for the sake of reforming the private sinner'; the temporal courts, on the other hand, 'resent the public affront to religion and morality . . . and correct more for the sake of example than private amendment'. Apostasy likewise, corrected by the ecclesiastical courts '*pro salute animae*', was deserving of punishment by the civil magistrate when publicly avowed with the intention of subverting religion. The ecclesiastical courts also had the power to censure heretics, 'but not to exterminate or destroy them'. But Blackstone significantly excluded this crime from the purview of the civil magistrate. It was not a proper subject of his concern because it did not tend 'to overturn christianity itself, or to sap the foundations of morality', and Blackstone praised the statute of Charles II's reign abolishing the writ *de haeretico comburendo* as the demolition of the 'last badge of persecution in the English law'.[86]

These ideas, emphasizing the unity of church and state, owed much to Hooker and other Reformation writers, notably in their development of the concept of the godly prince. In his exposition of the royal supremacy in Book VIII of the *Ecclesiastical polity* Hooker denied that there was a 'perpetual separation and independency between the Church and the commonwealth'. There was indeed a distinction between church and state, temporal and spiritual, since certain powers - to administer the sacraments, to ordain, to judge as an ordinary, to excommunicate, and so on - were never granted to the civil magistrate. In pagan societies 'the Church of Christ' and the state were necessarily two separate societies. Thus 'Church and commonwealth import things really different; but', argued Hooker, 'those things are accidents, and such accidents as may and should always lovingly dwell together in one subject'.[87] He stressed the identity of church and

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85 Thomas Wood, *An institute of the laws of England; or, the laws of England in their natural order, according to common use. Published for the direction of young beginners, or students in the law; and of others that desire to have a general knowledge in our common and statute laws. In four books* (2 vols., London, 1720), I, 6, II, 859. Cf., Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, who stated that 'The external principles of natural religion are part of the common law: the essential principles of revealed religion are part of the common law; so that any person reviling, subverting, or ridiculing them, may be prosecuted at common law.' *Parl. Hist.*, XVI, 319.

86 William Blackstone, *Commentaries of the laws of England* (4 vols., Oxford, 1765-9), IV, 43, 58-9, 43-4, 45-9.

87 Hooker, *Ecclesiastical polity*, ed. McGrade and Vickers, pp. 343, 352, 342, 339.

state in a christian commonwealth, going further than any of the writers discussed above in his claim that 'within this realm of England . . . one society is both the Church and the commonwealth' and that a member of the one was necessarily a member of the other.[88]

Hooker was describing a society in which all the members professed, or were assumed to profess, the same faith. Contrary to what is often suggested, however, eighteenth-century writers had little difficulty in reconciling the Toleration Act of 1689 with this theory. The conclusions of Locke's *Letter concerning toleration* were widely accepted, although, as has been stressed, his premise, that the business of civil government and of religion were wholly separate, was not.[89] Thus Blackstone, for example, justified toleration within a church-state. He discussed the position of nonconformists in the context of the crime of schism, which was no concern of the civil magistrate, 'unless their tenets and practice are such as threaten ruin or disturbance to the state'. Severe laws against Roman Catholics were justified, since their principles were 'undoubtedly calculated for the introduction of all slavery, both civil and religious'. But nonconformity in itself was 'a matter of private conscience', and any persecution or oppression on grounds of conscience in religion was 'highly unjustifiable upon every principle of natural reason, civil liberty, or sound religion'.[90] Protestant dissenters, whose principles did not threaten the security of the state, were therefore relieved from the penalties of all penal laws relating to religion by the Toleration Act.[91] Blackstone was emphatic that this 'very just and christian indulgence' did not undermine the foundations of the national Church, and he stressed the difference between 'toleration' and 'establishment'. It was the magistrate's duty to protect the Church 'by admitting none but it's genuine members to offices of trust and emolument'.[92] When the *Commentaries* were first published Blackstone was accused by some dissenters of regarding nonconformity as still 'a crime', the penalties of which had merely been 'suspended', contrary to the opinion of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield.[93] He was undoubtedly unsympathetic towards protestant dissenters, believing that many of them had separated from the Church of England 'upon matters of indifference, or, in other words, upon no reason at all'.[94] But in later editions of the *Commentaries* he clarified his position, admitting that, 'though the crime of nonconformity is by no means universally abrogated, it is suspended and *ceases to exist* with regard to' protestant dissenters who conform to

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88 *Ibid.*, pp. 342, 336.

89 John Locke, *A letter concerning toleration*, ed. James H. Tully (Indianapolis, 1983).

90 Blackstone, *Commentaries*, IV, 52-3, 51.

91 *Ibid.*, pp. 53-4.

92 *Ibid.*, pp. 51-3.

93 Philip Furneaux, *Letters to the honourable Mr. Justice Blackstone, concerning his exposition of the act of toleration, and some positions relative to religious liberty, in his celebrated Commentaries on the laws of England* (2nd edn., London, 1771), pp. 11, v. Mansfield's opinion was delivered in the house of lords in the case of the Chamberlain of London v. Evans on 4 February 1767. Mansfield argued that the Toleration Act 'renders that which was illegal before, now legal'. Since its enactment 'it is now no crime for a man who is within the description of the act to say that he is a dissenter; nor is it any crime for him not to take the sacrament according to the rites of the church of England'. *Parl. Hist.*, XVI, 320, 319.

94 Blackstone, *Commentaries*, IV, 52.

the provisions of the Toleration Act.[95]

In general it was widely held to be beneficial and charitable - to be christian - to tolerate the adherents of other faiths, however misguided they might be. Even among tories hostility to the Toleration Act had all but disappeared by the 1730s.[96] It was recognized not only that consciences could not be coerced, but also that such action was undesirable. The importance of 'sincerity' in the economy of salvation was emphasized by clergymen throughout the eighteenth-century Church, not merely by Hoadly and his circle. John Rogers, the royal chaplain whose writings provoked Samuel Chandler's attack on the establishment in his *History of persecution*, was as emphatic as his critic about this point. He warned his readers that, however awful the sin of schism was, it was equally a sin for a person to comply with terms of communion, though lawful, if he 'is persuaded in his Mind that they are unlawful . . . for to him who thinks them Sin, to him they are Sin: and he who can do what he is persuaded is a Sin, his Will is equally criminal, and he would as certainly have done it if it had been really one'.[97] Thus, the clergy of the Church of England did not wish the resentment of the magistrate to be directed against 'the Case of a *Quiet Separation* (out of a *real* Principle of *Conscience*)'.[98] On the contrary, they exalted the virtues and advantages of 'Temper and Moderation towards such as differ from [us] in Point of religious Opinion', toleration bringing a security to the Church which it had never enjoyed during the previous century of '*Religious* Heats and Animosities'.[99] The Toleration Act became for many one of the glories of the Church of England, and the perfection of the English constitution was that it guaranteed '*Liberty of Conscience*, and the free Exercise of Religion, consistently with the *Authority* and *Establishment of a Christian Church*'.[100]

William Warburton's exposition of the theory of church-state relations as a 'politic alliance' was therefore a minority view in the mid-eighteenth century. His singularity can be explained, and the idiosyncracies of his position better understood, by his views on two other issues. In the first place, the *Alliance* was based upon his application of Lockean contractarianism to church-state relations. Warburton claimed that the 'treaty of convention' between the two societies was to

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95 William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the laws of England* (14th edn., 4 vols., Oxford, 1803), IV, 53 [my emphasis]. By the provisions of the Act protestant dissenters had to 'take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and subscribe to the declaration against popery, and repair to some congregation registered in the bishop's court or at the sessions, the doors whereof must be always open: and dissenting teachers are also to subscribe the thirty nine articles, except those relating to church government and infant baptism'. Blackstone, *Commentaries*, IV, 53.

96 See, e.g., Sir John St Aubyn's speech on the Quakers Tithe Bill of 1736. *The gentleman's magazine*, VI (1736), 365.

97 John Rogers, *Seventeen sermons on several occasions. . . To which are added Two tracts viz. I. Reasons against conversion to the Church of Rome. II. A persuasive to conformity, address'd to the dissenters. Never before printed* (2nd edn., London, 1740), pp. 443-4.

98 Fothergill, *The importance of religion to civil societies*, p. 31.

99 Richard Trevor, *A sermon preached before the house of lords, in the abbey-church of Westminster, on Friday, Jan. 30, 1746-7. Being the day appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1747), p. 17. By mid-century it had become common to use 30 January as an occasion to deprecate lack of charity and toleration, as manifested in the disputes of the previous century. See also Squire, *Sermon before the lords January 30, 1762*, p. 16.

100 George Harvest, *Protestant and Jewish blessings compared. A sermon preached at Ditton upon Thames, in Surrey: on Thursday, October the ninth, 1746: being the day of public thanksgiving for the success of his majesty's arms, under the command of his royal highness the duke of Cumberland; in suppressing the late unnatural rebellion* (London, 1746), pp. 17-18; Paley, *Works*, II, 50, quoted p. 56 above.

be found 'in the same *archive* with the famous ORIGINAL COMPACT between magistrate and people'. His Lockeanism went further: he adopted Locke's analysis of the origins of civil society and shared his belief in the essential distinctiveness of church and state.[101] A few clergymen shared Warburton's regard for Locke, notably Benjamin Hoadly and Edmund Law. On the whole, however, Locke's political theory was not widely accepted in eighteenth-century England, especially by clerical opinion.[102] Attitudes towards the *Essay on human understanding* were different - it was even quoted approvingly by Edmund Gibson on the subject of faith. But Daniel Waterland, possibly the most prominent of the Church's theologians in the early part of the century, saw this work as an exception. When recommending it to undergraduates in their second year as 'a book so much (and I add so justly) valued', he added the warning, 'however faulty the author may have been in other writings'.[103]

Secondly, and perhaps more significantly for the formulation of his theory, Warburton denied that the civil magistrate had any concern in the truth of a religion. He was able to argue in this way because he differed from most of his clerical contemporaries over the nature of God's providential government. He rejected the widely held notion that 'the ways of Providence are unalterable' and that therefore the history of the Jews as recorded in the Old Testament was directly applicable to modern England, arguing that 'the Christian oeconomy had revealed unto us a different way of punishing the sins of particulars'.[104] The Jewish state was a theocracy, in which God himself was the supreme magistrate. Government was administered by the exertion of an extraordinary providence. Religion and society were 'thoroughly *incorporated*', so the subject of religion was 'the State collectively' as well as individuals separately, the sanctions of both being temporal rewards and punishments. But now, Warburton asserted, mankind was only under a common providence, and, the christian religion having 'no public part', having 'individuals only, for its subject', impiety was only a private crime; punishment was under the gospel dispensation, the sanctions of which were '*future rewards and punishments*'. Warburton did not deny God's providential government. Temporal punishments, he admitted, did still occur, but only individuals were punished for their sins. God's 'visible interpositions in the revolutions of States and Empires' were reserved for the crimes of states, for the 'neglect of GOOD FAITH, justice, and equity

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101 Warburton, 'Alliance', in *Works*, VII, 164-5, 25-6.

102 J.P. Kenyon, 'The Revolution of 1688: resistance and contract', in *Historical perspectives. Studies in English thought and society*, ed. Neil McKendrick (London, 1974), pp. 43-69; John Dunn, 'The politics of Locke in England and America in the eighteenth century', in *John Locke: problems and perspectives*, ed. J.W. Yolton (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 45-80. For a more extreme restatement of this position see J.C.D. Clark, *English society 1688-1832. Ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancien regime* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 45-50.

103 Edmund Gibson, *The bishop of London's second pastoral letter to the people of his diocese; particularly, to those of the two great cities of London and Westminster. Occasion'd by some late writings, in which it is asserted, 'That reason is a sufficient guide in matters of religion, without the help of revelation'* (London, 1730), p. 5; Daniel Waterland, 'Advice to a young student. With a method of study for the first four years', in *The works of the rev. Daniel Waterland, D.D.*, ed. William van Mildert (2nd edn., 6 vols., Oxford, 1843), IV, 409.

104 Thomas Sherlock, *A sermon preached at the cathedral church of Salisbury, October 6, 1745. On occasion of the rebellion in Scotland* (London, 1745), p. 6; William Warburton, 'Three sermons preached and published on the occasion of the late rebellion in 1745', in *Works*, IX, 305.

in the transactions of one of these communities towards all others'.[105]

This argument, however, was highly controversial and Warburton was attacked by a number of clergymen for his advocacy of it.[106] John Egerton even made a veiled criticism of his episcopal colleague in a sermon before the house of lords. Egerton acknowledged that the Jewish state was a special case, since it was 'literally a Theocracy', the civil government being continued 'under the known and confessed direction of the Deity'. But the coming of Christ had not abrogated God's 'moral government of the world', as was demonstrated by the punishments that had been visited on peoples other than the Jews: 'Nineveh, Babylon, and other cities were destroyed on account of their sins; and it was for transgression, that the old world was overwhelmed by the deluge'. Consequently, it was evident that civil government 'requires the hand of the Almighty to maintain and support it'.[107] This dispute was of central importance in the debate about church-state relations: if God did indeed punish states for the private sins of their citizens, then the civil magistrate, whose care was the public good, was necessarily interested in his subjects' spiritual condition. Indeed, it was his duty to promote piety and virtue.[108] The case was neatly summed up by John Wilcox, the master of Clare College, Cambridge. He reiterated the assumption of many of his contemporaries when he claimed that the stability of government could only be guaranteed by religion, 'as it procures the Favour and Protection of GOD, who presides, with a peculiar Providence, over Societies and Communities of Men'. God's government, moreover, was administered 'with regard to Men's Actions', and he warned that 'it is not to be doubted, he dispenses his Favour to Nations and Kingdoms, or withdraws it from them, as Virtue or Vice, Religion or Impiety, respectively prevail among them'.[109]

Warburton's theory of church and state cannot therefore be regarded as representative of eighteenth-century opinion. What has been said of other writers may not convey the impression that they were advocating a coherent alternative to the *Alliance*. But it is not the intention of this chapter to suggest that Warburton should be replaced by, for example, Gibson as the exponent of the orthodox theory of church-state relations. The aim is rather to show that there was no single theory that commanded general assent. Warburton was atypical, not because he rejected the orthodox theory, but because he did not share a set of widely held assumptions about church and

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105 Warburton, 'Three sermons', in *Works*, IX, 293-4, 308, 298-300; idem, 'Sermon preached before the right honourable the house of lords, January 30, 1760', in *Works*, X, 19. Warburton did concede that peoples (as distinct from states) were punished for the sins of particulars 'by, what may be called, the *national judgments* of famine, pestilence, or any other way that hurts not the *Constitution*'. *Works*, IX, 309.

106 E.g., Henry Stebbing, *The history of Abraham, in the plain and obvious meaning of it, justified, against the objections of the author of The divine legation of Moses, &c. To which is added, A state of the argument concerning the knowledge of the doctrine of a future state among the ancient Jews, as it stands upon the foot of the latest concessions of that learned writer* (London, 1746), p. 100.

107 John Egerton, *A sermon preached before the right honourable the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, in the abbey-church, Westminster, on Friday, January 30, 1761. Being the day appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1761), pp. 6-7, 11-12.

108 Thomas Fothergill, *The reasonableness and uses of commemorating King Charles's martyrdom. A sermon preached before the University of Oxford, at St Mary's, on Tuesday, January 30. 1753* (London, 1753), p. 14.

109 John Wilcox, *A sermon preached before the house of commons, at St. Margaret's Westminster, on Monday, Jan. 30. 1737. Being the day appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1738), p. 13.

state: that the civil magistrate had a duty to support the propagation of the true religion; that religion was necessary for the security of the state, not only on grounds of civil utility, but also because of the nature of God's providential government; in short, that in a christian commonwealth church and state, though independent societies, were indissolubly united. Within these parameters there were many differences of emphasis, which were themselves sometimes the cause of great controversy. The different approaches to the subject of Gibson and Fothergill have already been discussed. More controversial was the dispute between Gibson and Hardwicke over the latter's judgment, as Lord Chief Justice, in the case of Middleton *v.* Crofts.[110]

This case, a prosecution for a clandestine marriage, came before Hardwicke on an application for a prohibition to remove it from the ecclesiastical court. Hardwicke's judgment was complex, but the dispute between the Lord Chief Justice and Gibson centred on his comments on the force of the canons of 1603. Hardwicke argued that these canons did not '*proprio vigore* bind the laity'. He accepted the judgment of Lord Chief Justice Holt that they bound the clergy, having been confirmed by the king, but he insisted that parliamentary confirmation was necessary before canons bound the laity. Hardwicke admitted, however, that many of the provisions of the 1603 canons did bind the laity because they were 'declaratory of the ancient usage of and law of the Church of England, received and allowed here'.[111] This judgment provoked Gibson to write a long memorandum proving that canons enacted according to the Submission of the Clergy Act were binding upon both laity and clergy without explicit parliamentary approval. This paper remained unpublished, but the basis of Gibson's argument was contained in the *Codex*. It was founded upon the claim that England had 'two Legislatures', one of 'persons Spiritual' to frame laws for the Church, the other of 'persons Temporal' to frame laws for the state. Such laws, when confirmed by the king 'as *Sovereign*, and *Supreme Head*', became 'obligatory to the People'.[112] At heart, therefore, this controversy was about the nature of the royal supremacy in ecclesiastical matters. Gibson believed it lay in the king himself, whereas Hardwicke was suggesting a more impersonal location, reminiscent of the king in parliament. It might be argued that this was a division between a clerical and a lay interpretation. But this suggestion, however plausible, is difficult to substantiate. Bishop Sherlock, a man no less vigorous in support of the rights of the Church than Gibson, 'approved' Hardwicke's reasoning and 'was entirely of opinion with the Judgment'.[113]

Some idea of the variety of emphases possible within the parameters outlined above can be gained by examining the clergy's discussion of one topic related to the subject of church-state relations; the obedience due to civil government. A few clergymen believed that sovereignty

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[110] For this dispute see Norman Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker. Aspects of English church history 1660-1768* (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 203-4. Hardwicke's judgment is discussed at some length by C.E. Croft, 'Philip Yorke, first earl of Hardwicke - an assessment of his legal career', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1983, pp. 92-105.

[111] 2 Atk. 650, 653, 665.

[112] Gibson, *Codex*, p. xxix; Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker*, pp. 203-4.

[113] Lambeth Palace Library, Secker Papers VII, fol. 119: Hardwicke to Secker, 23 Nov. 1759.

resided in the people and that government was contractual, but they were only a minority and, like Warburton, their views on church and state were usually idiosyncratic.[114] The majority believed government to be the ordinance of God. Nonetheless they differed in their accounts of the obedience due to it and consequently in their interpretations of 1640-2 and 1688.

James Beauclerk, the bishop of Hereford, was unqualified in his demands for submission to government: governments were instituted by the 'Wisdom and Goodness of the Almighty', their rulers were 'his *Vicegerents* upon Earth' and 'their Persons and Offices are reputed sacred and inviolate'. Disobedience and rebellion, he warned, destroyed 'the very *Being* of Civil Society' and he demanded obedience and submission 'of all *Christians* as a necessary Duty'.[115] The tone of George Fothergill was very similar:

> *Sedition* and *Rebellion* . . . can never be consider'd as indifferent or *harmless* Things, by any *real Friend* to the social Interests of Mankind, any *sincere Professor* of the Religion of the Blessed JESUS, or any *true Son* of That *Church*, whose Honour it has ever been constantly to inculcate the Duty of *Subjection to the higher Powers.*

In contrast to Beauclerk, however, Fothergill was careful to define his position on 1688. Writing in 1746 he was able to claim that the settlement of the crown in the Hanoverian line for so many years made it evident who the higher powers were, 'and has been over and over *recognized* (as it was at first *established*) by the *supreme Wisdom* of the Nation'. Even if anyone did still have scruples, these could hardly have justified rebellion, as the setting up and removing of kings was undoubtedly part of God's prerogative.[116]

Here Fothergill was advancing the providential argument, which had emerged as the dominant interpretation of the Revolution by the end of Anne's reign.[117] Many mid-century clergymen appear to have been equally reluctant to abandon a position that allowed the continued advocacy of the Church's traditional case for non-resistance and submission to the civil magistrate, and yet permitted its application to the house of Hanover. Thus, Bishop Trevor, although he admitted that James II had breached his coronation oath and subverted the constitution, insisted that 'a glorious *Deliverer*' had been raised up for the nation by 'a wonderful Providence'.[118]

Some of his colleagues on the other hand made greater concessions to the principle of resistance. Joseph Butler argued that government was of 'divine appointment', to which

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[114] E.g., James Ibbetson, *The heinous nature of rebellion. A sermon preached in the cathedral church of York, on Thursday, August 21, 1746. Before this grace the lord archbishop; the right hon. the lord viscount Irwin, lord lieutenant of the East-Riding; the right hon. the lord chief baron Parker; the honourable Mr baron Clarke; and others; appointed by his majesty's special commission to try the rebels* (London, 1746), pp. 12-13. Cf., Warburton, 'Three sermons', in *Works*, IX, 291.

[115] James Beauclerk, *A sermon preached before the right honourable the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, in the abbey-church, Westminster, on Thursday, January 30th, 1752. Being the anniversary of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1752), pp. 12, 10, 15.

[116] George Fothergill, *The duty of giving thanks for national deliverances. A sermon preach'd at St. Martin's in Oxford, before the mayor and corporation, on Thursday, October 9th. 1746. Being the day appointed to be kept as a general thanksgiving to almighty God, for the suppression of the late rebellion* (Oxford, 1747), p. 30.

[117] J.P. Kenyon, *Revolution principles. The politics of party 1689-1720* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 201-2; H.T. Dickinson, 'The eighteenth-century debate on the "Glorious Revolution"', *History*, LXI (1976), 36-7.

[118] Richard Trevor, *A sermon preach'd before the lords spiritual and temporal, in the abbey-church at Westminster, on the 5th of November, 1745. Being the anniversary of the powder plot* (London, 1745), p. 18.

submission was commanded by the laws of nature and of God. This rule of obedience was not, however, absolute, but men were 'apt enough of themselves to make the exceptions, and not to need being continually reminded of them'. A similar doctrine was enunciated by Thomas Hayter, created bishop of Norwich in 1749. He claimed that nothing 'but a case of extreme necessity, which will always explain itself when it comes', could free subjects from their duty of obedience, enforced by the 'strongest and most sacred ties of human and divine laws'.[119]

In common with the other writers discussed so far Hayter believed that all power was derived from God. He also argued that the obligation to do good arose with the power and was inseparable from it. Indeed, it was 'impious to assert, that any man can properly be a vicegerent and minister of God to us *for evil*'. Hayter went no further than to point out that princes, as well as subjects, were ultimately accountable to God and that 'Measures of Obedience' were determined by the particular laws of each community.[120] Other clergymen, however, developed this idea to limit resistance in another way. Philip Yonge demanded 'submission and obedience' to kings, who were 'fathers of their people', but he admitted that at the beginning of the Rebellion 'free, and legal, and parliamentary opposition to illegal acts' had been justified.[121] In a similar fashion Gloucester Ridley defended the events of 1688. Resistance 'on the Score of Religion' was never justified, even if the prince should support 'Error', but, he claimed, such unqualified obedience was due only in ecclesiastical matters. In civil affairs Ridley quoted Machiavelli and Bishop Bilson to prove that resistance was not only lawful, but 'laudable', if 'the Nobles and Commons join together to defend their ancient and accustomed Liberty, Regiment and Laws' against a prince who was attempting to subject the kingdom to foreign rule or to 'change the Form of the Commonwealth from Imperie (or just Government) to Tyranny'.[122]

This diversity of views on the nature of the obedience due to civil government may give some idea of the variety of emphases in contemporary attitudes to church and state. Nevertheless, on this particular question, as on the broader subject, it is important not to ignore the common ground that existed. Through the century in the teaching of the Church it is possible to identify the emergence of a concept of obedience due to the state, a more impersonal embodiment of lawful authority than the king. It was widely accepted that 'Government in general' was the ordinance of God, yet the particular form of government in any community was 'the Invention

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[119] Joseph Butler, 'Sermon preached before the house of lords, Jan. 30, 1740-41', in *The works of Joseph Butler, D.C.L. sometime lord bishop of Durham*, ed. W.E. Gladstone (2 vols., Oxford, 1896), ii, 334-5; Thomas Hayter, *A sermon preached before the honourable house of commons, at St Margaret's Westminster, on Wednesday, June 11, 1746. Being the anniversary of his majesty's happy accession to the throne* (London, 1746), pp. 11-12.

[120] Hayter, *Sermon preached June 11, 1746*, p. 10; idem, *A sermon preached before the right honourable the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, in the abbey-church Westminster, on Tuesday, January 30, 1749-50. Being the day appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1750), pp. 10-11.

[121] Yonge, *Sermon preached January 30, 1756*, pp. 7, 11; idem, *A sermon preached before the right honourable the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, in the abbey-church, Westminster, on Tuesday, January 30, 1759. Being the day appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1759), p. 16.

[122] Ridley, *Constitution in church and state*, pp. 79-81.

and Contrivance of Man'.[123] Repeatedly the clergy talked of the importance of submission to 'lawful authority', for, as bishops Keene and Hayter pointed out, Christianity taught duties to governors as well as to the governed.[124] The implication of these arguments was drawn out explicitly by Edward Bentham. Christianity demanded obedience to the civil magistrate, yet, he argued, it did not concern itself with 'the distribution of civil rights and privileges'. Thus, the constitution of each country prescribed what 'is Law, what are the boundaries and measures of the Magistrate's authority, and the Subject's obedience'.[125] It was not the prince in person who was entitled to absolute obedience, but the law, the state. Even Thomas Fothergill, the younger brother of George, declared, in a sermon before the University of Oxford denounced in the *Monthly review* as reviving jacobite principles and the 'doctrine of passive obedience', that submission was due 'to Government'. The use of the abstract is significant. As Fothergill explained, Christianity left men free 'from the Laws and Constitution of their Country, to determine, to whom, and in what Measure, that Obedience was due'.[126] Belief in divine right had not been destroyed by the Revolution, although perhaps a short-lived doctrine of the divine, indefeasible, hereditary right of kings had been. The divine right of government, which in England was a government in which sovereignty was vested in the impersonal trinity of king, lords and commons, bounded and defined by the laws, was still vigorously asserted.

The necessity of an established Church was widely accepted in eighteenth-century England. Only a small minority on the periphery of political life, though admittedly often a vocal minority, rejected the idea of the establishment. Another minority, including some members of the established Church itself, denied that the Test and Corporation Acts were essential for its maintenance. The majority of the political elite, however, believed that the establishment was necessary and beneficial, accepting the need for the Test and Corporation Acts to protect it from its assailants and for a toleration guaranteeing freedom of worship to those who could not in conscience conform. William Warburton's doctrine of a 'politic alliance' founded on considerations of civil utility was not, however, widely shared as an exposition of this relationship between church and state. Warburton's theory was too dependent on the assumptions and arguments of those who wished to change the Revolution settlement of the Church. The dichotomy suggested by the title of this chapter - union or alliance - is a little misleading; 'alliance' was used by many clergymen as a synonym for 'union'. Nonetheless it serves to emphasize that most members of the established Church, laity as well as clergy, believed that in a

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[123] Hayter, *Sermon preached January 30, 1749-50*, p. 10.

[124] Yonge, *Sermon preached January 30, 1756*, p. 7; Hayter, *Sermon preached January 30, 1749-50*, pp. 9-10; Edmund Keene, *A sermon preached before the right honourable the lords spiritual and temporal in parliament assembled, in the abbey-church Westminster, on Tuesday, January 30, 1753. Being the day appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London, 1753), pp. 21-2.

[125] Bentham, *Sermon preached January 30, 1749-50*, p. 11.

[126] Fothergill, *The reasonableness and uses of commemorating King Charles's martyrdom*, pp. 17-18; *The monthly review*, VII (1753), 471, 319.

christian commonwealth spiritual and temporal could not be clearly separated, so church and state were necessarily incorporated together. The rest of this dissertation will be concerned with the practical expressions of this relationship. The next section, through a study of the crown's ecclesiastical patronage, will explore the attitudes of the government towards the Church. Then the clergy's perception of their relationship to the secular state will be examined. Finally, consideration will be given to the Church in mid-century politics, a role made inescapable by its links with the state.

PART III:

PATRONAGE AND THE CHURCH

4. The control of ministerial patronage

The practical relationship between church and state reflected that embodied in political and constitutional thought. In theory church and state were linked in an organic union. In practice the Church performed many functions essential to the well-being of the state, while the civil magistrate was responsible for the protection and advancement of religion. In practice, as in theory, the Church was at the same time an independent corporation, or, rather, an agglomeration of separate corporations, over which the state had little direct influence. Even in a period when church-state relations were an infrequent subject of parliamentary debate, the Church was still an important political issue, demanding the constant attention of government. Ministers were required to formulate and implement an ecclesiastical policy, not simply because religion was constantly threatening to re-emerge as the central issue of party politics, but because the Church was of crucial importance in the administration of the state.

Parliamentary supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs provided an ultimate control. But statute could only create the framework for church-state relations; it was not a tool for the day-to-day government of the Church. Moreover, for reasons which will be discussed later, mid-eighteenth-century politicians were wary of parliamentary interference in church affairs. But if control over the Church was impossible, the appointment of its ministers offered opportunities for moulding its character. Patronage, therefore, was of central importance in the relationship between church and state; it was an integral part of the ecclesiastical policy of any ministry. Before discussing the relationship between patronage and policy during the period 1742-62, however, it is necessary to understand who controlled the disposal of ministerial patronage.

As in most European countries ecclesiastical patronage was not vested in the state. In 1742 the crown was patron of only 9.6% of all preferments.[1] Even this patronage was vested in several individuals. The lord chancellor nominated to all crown livings valued at £20 or under in the king's book without reference to the king, and he guarded his rights jealously.[2] He was patron of 783 out of 902 crown benefices. The chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster presented to a further 40. Thus, only 79 were in the gift of the king himself.[3] The Church (through individual bishops) decided whom to ordain, but after that it had little control over who was appointed to its livings among the group of ordained ministers. Only 26% of livings were in the hands of churchmen, mainly bishops and cathedral chapters, although this figure rose to 88.8% in the diocese of Bangor and 90.1% in St Asaph. In Norwich, on the other hand, it fell to 11.9%. In addition,

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1 D.R. Hirschberg, 'The government and church patronage in England, 1660-1760', *J.B.S.*, xx (1980-1), 112-13.

2 For the opposition of Lord Chancellor King to proposals to transfer the chancellor's patronage back to the king, see Norman Sykes, *Edmund Gibson, bishop of London, 1669-1748. A study in politics and religion in the eighteenth century* (London, 1926), pp. 109-15.

3 The figures have been calculated from John Ecton, *Thesaurus rerum ecclesiasticarum. Being an account of the valuations of all the ecclesiatical benefices in the several dioceses of England and Wales . . .* (2nd edn., London, 1754). There were a small number of other livings to which the crown had the right to present alternately with other patrons. In addition the Prince of Wales presented to 69 livings.

educational foundations, especially Oxbridge colleges, presented to 6.7% of livings, concentrated, as might be expected, in the dioceses of Ely and Oxford.[4]

The majority of church livings in England and Wales, 53.4%, were controlled by private individuals.[5] Advowsons, the right of presentation to a benefice, were bought and sold. They were regarded in law as property. Indeed, they were often an extremely valuable species of property, and patronage rights were fiercely defended by laymen. If a bishop refused to institute a nominated clergyman, the patron could force him to justify his action in the Court of Common Pleas by a writ of *quare impedit*.[6] One reason why the right of patronage was so valued, was that it was a means of providing for family members. During the eighteenth century about 20% of incumbents in the archdeaconry of Lewes were related to their patrons. Nepotism such as this was regarded as perfectly legitimate. Both William Webster and Richard Newton, neither of whom were slow to criticize the Church establishment, allowed that 'Affinity and Friendship' were 'reasonable Considerations' in the disposal of preferments.[7] Private patronage was also valued because it allowed laymen to prefer clergy of whose political or theological views they approved. In the later years of the century the evangelical revival within the Church was sustained, at least in part, by the provision made for godly clergy by sympathetic patrons. Similarly, in the first half of the century, professed tories were not forced to beg preferment from whig ministers and bishops, but could turn to tory politicians and many of the Oxford colleges.[8]

The influence of the ministry over the Church, however, was not as restricted as these figures might suggest. Although the crown was the patron of only a fraction of parochial livings, it appointed many of the Church's dignitaries. The king nominated to all bishoprics, to twenty-five deaneries,[9] to the canonries of Westminster, Windsor, Worcester and Christ Church, to nine of twelve at Canterbury, and to the four residentiaryships of St Paul's. In addition, the lord chancellor presented to six prebends of Bristol, to five each of Gloucester and Norwich, and to four of Rochester.[10] If it was visionary for ministers to attempt to control the Church through the appointment of its clergy, they could at least hope to mould its character through the choice of its governors.

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4 Hirschberg, 'The government and church patronage', pp. 112-13. In the diocese of Oxford educational foundations were the patrons of 35.8% of livings, and in Ely of 28.4%. In only three other dioceses did this figure rise above 10%: Winchester, Salisbury, and, surprisingly, Chester.

5 Hirschberg, 'The government and church patronage', pp. 112-13.

6 Richard Burn, *Ecclesiastical law* (2 vols., London, 1763), II, 115-16; G.F.A. Best, *Temporal pillars. Queen Anne's Bounty, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Church of England* (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 47-58.

7 William Webster, *A treatise on places and preferments, especially church-preferments* (London, 1757), p. 12; Richard Newton, *Pluralities indefensible. A treatise humbly offered to the consideration of the parliament of Great-Britain. By a presbyter of the Church of England* (London, 1743), pp. 310-11; P.A. Bezodis, 'The English parish clergy and their place in society, 1660-1800', fellowship dissertation, Trinity College, Cambridge, 1949, p. 184.

8 Linda Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy. The tory party 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 107-9.

9 Including those of Windsor, Westminster and Ripon. The deaneries of St Asaph, Bangor, and Llandaff were in the gift of the bishops of those dioceses. There was no dean of St David's.

10 Ecton, *Thesaurus*.

The duke of Newcastle as 'ecclesiastical minister'

Both contemporaries and historians have agreed that throughout the mid-eighteenth century ministerial ecclesiastical patronage was controlled by the duke of Newcastle. Edmund Pyle's oft-quoted account, though particularly caustic, is not untypical:

> The Archbishop of Canterbury[11] . . . sees he's a cypher who they will let have no influence, & will gladly lay any blame upon. The Minister himself is the Fac Totum in ecclesiastic affairs, & a sweet manager he is, for what with the last Election, & his pitiful passion for the Chancellorship of Cambridge he has involved himself in promises of church preferments to the greatest degree of perplexity. There are now two vacant stalls; one at Durham, & one at Canterbury; & he durst not dispose of either of them. He torments the poor Archbishop for everything that falls in his gift, so that if a thing drops, he is forced to give it away the moment he is informed of it, for fear of the Duke of Newcastle. He is as great a plague to the other Bishops, asking even for their small livings. Ely[12] gives him everything (they say, *by bargain*:) Chichester, Peterborough, Durham, Gloucester, Salisbury,[13] &c., &c., are slaves to him, in this respect. Only London & Winchester[14] give him flat denials, unless we are to add York,[15] which is a point problematical. As to the Lord Chancellor,[16] it is a kind of bargain made with everyone that enters upon that high office, 'that the Minister shall dispose of most of the church preferments in his gift'.[17]

Norman Sykes, in the most comprehensive modern assessment of Newcastle's role emphasizes his weakness, incompetence and vacillation. But, in common with most contemporaries he concurs in Pyle's claim not only that Newcastle's control of crown patronage was almost complete, but that he also encroached on that of the lord chancellor and the bishops.[18] Some recent historians of the whig supremacy have taken this argument a step further, rationalizing the complex process of ecclesiastical patronage and concentrating it all in the 'unofficial post' of 'ecclesiastical minister',

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11 Thomas Herring

12 Matthias Mawson

13 William Ashburnham; John Thomas; Richard Trevor; James Johnson; John Gilbert.

14 Thomas Sherlock and Benjamin Hoadly

15 Matthew Hutton

16 The earl of Hardwicke.

17 *Memoirs of a royal chaplain, 1729-63. The correspondence of Edmund Pyle, D.D. chaplain in ordinary to George II, with Samuel Kerrich, D.D., vicar of Dersingham, rector of Wolferton, and rector of West Newton*, ed. Albert Hartshorne (London, 1905), p. 218: Pyle to Kerrich, 8 Oct. 1754.

18 Norman Sykes, *Church and state in England in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1934), pp. 176-7; Sykes, *Gibson*, p. 112; Sykes, 'The duke of Newcastle as ecclesiastical minister', *E.H.R.*, LVII (1942), 59-84. Cf., 'The life of Dr Thomas Newton', in *The lives of Dr Edward Pocock, the celebrated orientalist, by Dr Twells; of Dr Zachary Pearce, bishop of Rochester, and of Dr Thomas Newton, bishop of Bristol, by themselves; and of the Rev. Philip Skelton, by Mr Burdy* (2 vols., London, 1816), II, 100; D.A. Winstanley, *The university of Cambridge in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1922), pp. 35-6; Reed Browning, *The duke of Newcastle* (New Haven, 1975), p. 188. D.R. Hirschberg has made some acute criticisms of the prevailing orthodoxy. 'The government and church patronage', pp. 127-39. However, his emphasis on Newcastle as the 'coordinator' of ecclesiastical preferment, 'the central clearing house for personnel appointments' diminishes too much Newcastle's influence. If his 'stewardship' was indeed 'something of a golden age', it was because he was allowed to pursue a consistent policy towards the Church for over a decade rather than because of his willingness to supervise the appointment process.

occupied from 1723 to 1736 by Edmund Gibson, bishop of London, and then by Newcastle.[19]

Newcastle did indeed describe himself as 'the Ecclesiastical Minister',[20] and there is little doubt that in the 1740s and 1750s he exercised more control over ecclesiastical appointments than any other politician or clergyman in the eighteenth century. However, as he himself knew, his influence was severely limited. These limitations have often been ignored, but awareness of them is essential for an understanding of the operation of the patronage system and hence of the part played by patronage in the ministry's ecclesiastical policy.

For Sykes, as for Pyle, one of the characteristics of Newcastle as ecclesiastical minister was his engrossment of the patronage of the lord chancellor and the bishops. As has already been noted, the lord chancellor presented to the great majority of crown livings. The bishops were also influential patrons. Some, such as those of Peterborough, Oxford and Gloucester, had only a meagre patronage. The archbishop of Canterbury, on the other hand, was the patron of 152 livings, and, according to the *Clergyman's Intelligencer*, the bishops together presented to over 1300 livings and 530 cathedral dignities.[21] Influence over such an extensive patronage would indeed have made Newcastle 'the Fac Totum in ecclesiastical affairs'. In fact, there is little evidence to substantiate this claim.

From the beginning of the period under discussion until Newcastle's resignation in November 1756 and the brief interlude of the Pitt-Devonshire administration, Hardwicke was lord chancellor. That recommendations and advice on ecclesiastical matters should have passed between Newcastle and the lord chancellor is not in the least surprising considering the personal and political friendship between them. Newcastle regularly consulted Hardwicke over the disposal of crown patronage,[22] and often recommended clergymen to him for livings in his gift.[23] But such recommendations were not guaranteed of success.[24] Hardwicke guarded jealously the patronage rights of the great seal. In 1752 a dispute arose over the rectory of St Mary Woolnoth. Newcastle believed that the presentation lay in the king, and nominated Mr Black. Hardwicke believed it to be in the chancellor and nominated Charles Plumptre. Hardwicke supported his right with a number of legal precedents and refused to depart from his nomination, believing it his 'duty, for

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19 Browning, *Newcastle*, pp. 78-9; W.A. Speck, *Stability and strife. England 1714-60* (London, 1977), p. 93. Between 1723 and 1736 control of crown patronage remained in the hands of Walpole and the secretaries of state. Although he was peculiarly influential, Gibson was one in a succession of ecclesiastical advisers, like Wake before him, and Potter, Sherlock, Herring and Secker after him. But this interpretation has encouraged the belief that 1736 marked a decisive advance in lay control of the Church and in its subservience to considerations of 'partisan politics'. T.F.J. Kendrick, 'Sir Robert Walpole, the old whigs and the bishops, 1733-6: a study in eighteenth-century parliamentary politics', *H.J.*, XI (1968), 421-45. Cf., D.G. Barnes, 'The duke of Newcastle, ecclesiastical minister, 1724-54', *Pacific Historical Review*, III (1934), 164-91. Barnes is a little more sophisticated, dividing Newcastle's tenure as secretary of state into three periods: 1724-36, 1736-42 and 1742-54. In the middle period he sees Walpole as an obstacle to his 'unrestricted control'.

20 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 472: Newcastle to Pelham, 27 Aug. 1750.

21 *The clergyman's intelligencer: or, a compleat alphabetical list of all the patrons in England and Wales, with the dignities, livings, and benefices in their gift* (London, 1745).

22 'I seldom, or never, mention any to His Majesty, without having, previously, inform'd your Lordship, and my Brother of it.' B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 479: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 27 July 1750.

23 B.L. Add. 32714, fols. 551-2: J. Plumptre to Newcastle, 30 Jan. 1748; Add. 32718, fols. 27-8: J. Sherwin to Newcastle, 18 Jan. 1749; Add. 32724, fols. 370-1: Richard Newton to Newcastle, 16 June 1751.

24 E.g., B.L. Add. 32704, fols. 89-90, 113-4: Lord Irwin to Newcastle, 24 Feb., 6 Mar. 1745.

His Majesty's Service, to make the utmost Stand against it'. However, as Black had 'a very good Character' and was recommended by the French ambassador, the duc de Mirepoix, and his preferment would lay a 'great Obligation' upon the ambassador, Hardwicke consented, once his right had been established, to present Black to the living of Hampton. However, he told Newcastle, that if Black declined Hampton, he considered himself 'discharged from any Engagemt'.[25] Sir Robert Henley, appointed lord keeper following Newcastle's return to power in 1757, was no more compliant. Newcastle was conscious of the danger of recommending candidates too frequently. He felt unable even to convey a recommendation of the duke of Grafton to Henley, advising the duke that he would be more certain of success if he wrote himself.[26]

Newcastle's relationship with the bishops was different from that with Hardwicke, but he came no nearer to controlling their patronage. He was sometimes very pressing in his applications, and provoked a plaintive cry from Archbishop Herring: 'I wish, I knew how to parry against his Grace, for my Friends are somewhat disposed to murmur, if not clamour'.[27] But it is significant that his complaint referred to Sussex livings in which Newcastle, as lord lieutenant, considered he had a particular interest.[28] Moreover, Herring was not as helpless as he liked to suggest, and twice refused to present a candidate recommended by Newcastle to Ringmer, appointing instead in 1748 his Oxford chaplain and in 1754 a man suggested by Lord De La Warr, another prominent local landowner.[29] In fact Newcastle was more inclined to complain about the unwillingness of the bishops to do favours for him. He was profuse in his thanks when Bishop Keene appointed his nominee, John Morgan, to the commissaryship of Richmond, commenting that it was 'A Favour, I have not yet found, from Any of Those, who may have had equal Obligation to Me with yourself; except the present ArchBishop of York'.[30]

In most cases Newcastle was simply forwarding the applications of others. In December 1750 he received letters from Job Charlton and John Thornhagh, two Nottinghamshire friends, asking him to recommend to the archbishop of York candidates for a vacant prebend of Southwell.[31] In 1755, at the application of the earl of Powis, he wrote to Bishop Pearce recommending Robert

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25 B.L. Add. 32726, fols. 306-7: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 20 Mar. 1752; ibid., fols. 308-9: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 20 Mar. 1752; ibid., fols. 310-13: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 21 Mar. 1752; ibid., fols. 395-6: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 10 Apr. 1752. The dispute arose because St Mary Woolnoth was a united living worth more than £20 p.a. in the king's books. But before it had been united, the crown living, which gave the crown the right of alternate presentations to the united living, had been worth £18 p.a., and hence in the gift of the chancellor.

26 B.L. Add. 32873, fol. 424: Newcastle to Grafton, 2 Sept. 1757; Add. 32871, fol. 456: Newcastle to Henley, 30 June 1757; Add. 32872, fol. 417: Newcastle to Henley, 2 Aug. 1757.

27 B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 205: Herring to Hardwicke, 27 July 1754.

28 B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 205; ibid., fols. 148-50: Herring to Hardwicke, 27 Jan. 1754.

29 B.L. Add. 32714, fols. 156-7: Herring to Newcastle, 29 Jan. 1748; Add. 35599, fol. 205.

30 B.L. Add. 32732, fol. 709: Newcastle to Keene, 22 Sept. 1753. The archbishop of York was Hutton. Cf., Edmund Pyle's comment quoted above, p. 70.

31 B.L. Add. 32723, fols. 385-6: Job Charlton to Newcastle, 15 Dec. 1750; ibid., fols. 407-8: John Thornhagh to Newcastle, 22 Dec. 1750. Charlton was M.P. for Newark, 1741-61. He was Newcastle's manager at Newark, and acted as intermediary between Newcastle and Lord Middleton, the leader of the Nottinghamshire tories. John Thornhagh was M.P. for Nottinghamshire, 1747-74.

Lewis for the chancellorship of Bangor. A few days later Pearce received a similar letter from Hardwicke communicating the wishes of Sir John Wynn for John Parry.[32] But with the bishops, as with Hardwicke, Newcastle's recommendation was no guarantee of success. In January 1749 Newcastle wrote to Archbishop Hutton, at the request of Leveson Gower, for a prebend of York. Hutton replied that he felt unable to promise 'one of the best Prebends in my Church to an entire Stranger, unconnected with me or my Diocese', who was son-in-law to Bishop Smalbroke and already prebendary of Chester. He added that 'It will be impossible for me to preserve the confidence of my own Dependents, or maintain the share of esteem and affection I have met with among my Countrymen & Clergy, if they find themselves slighted in the first Instances of favour I have in my power to dispense'.[33] Letters from clergymen like Jacques Sterne, precentor of York, informing Newcastle that he had made the vicarage of Aldborough his option, 'that I might secure a Clerk agreeable to Your Grace in your own Borough', were few and far between.[34]

Newcastle's direct influence over ecclesiastical patronage was limited, therefore, to those crown livings in the gift of the king. His frequent recommendations to the lord chancellor and the bishops undoubtedly carried great weight, but it cannot be said that he nominated to livings in the gift of others. In 1723 he had declared that he was 'an ecclesiastical politician'.[35] This early profession may help to explain Newcastle's interest in church affairs, but his influence over the disposal of crown patronage derived from his occupancy of the office of secretary of state. The secretaries of state were responsible for issuing warrants for crown livings, and this administrative function enabled the senior secretary of state to claim an interest in the disposal of ecclesiastical preferments. However, the right to advise the king on this subject was also claimed by the first lord of the treasury, at least when he was regarded as the first minister. Thus, when Herring was puzzled about where to make a recommendation for the vacant deanery of Ely during the Pitt-Devonshire administration, Bishop Keene could only report a division of opinion within the ministry. Keene 'said he had put the question to Lord Holdernesse, who answerd, where but to the senior Secretary? The morning after he put the same question to the D. of D[evonshire] . . . whose answer was, any commands from me [Herring] on that subject he would take care to attend to'.[36]

Consequently, Newcastle's position as secretary of state for the southern department from 1724 to 1730 gave him little influence over ecclesiastical appointments. Control of crown patronage was divided between Lord Townshend, the senior secretary of state, and Walpole, with

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[32] Westminster Abbey Library and Muniment Room, Pearce Papers, WAM 64535: Newcastle to Bishop Pearce, 12 Dec. 1755; WAM 64532: Hardwicke to Bishop Pearce, 23 Nov. 1755. Powis, lord lieutenant of Shropshire, was the leader of the county's whigs. Sir John Wynn was a Welsh M.P. between 1740 and 1768, representing Carnarvonshire 1754-61. See also, e.g., B.L. Add. 32698, fol. 349: earl of Malton to Newcastle, 19 Nov. 1741; Add. 32709, fol. 304: H. Rolle to Newcastle, 6 Dec. 1746.

[33] B.L. Add. 32718, fols. 35-6: Hutton to Newcastle, 23 Jan. 1749. I have not been able to identify which Leveson Gower was requesting the prebend.

[34] B.L. Add. 32720, fols. 319-20: Sterne to Newcastle, 13 May 1750.

[35] B.L. Add. 32686, fol. 316: Newcastle to Walpole, 25 Aug. 1723. Newcastle may have been referring to his position as lord chamberlain, whereby he appointed royal chaplains.

[36] B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 339: Herring to Hardwicke, 3 Dec. 1756.

Gibson acting as their ecclesiastical adviser.[37] After Townshend's resignation Harrington was appointed to the northern department and also succeeded Townshend as leader of the house of lords. Newcastle, however, though still at the southern department, effectively became senior secretary of state.[38] But he did not immediately assume Townshend's mantle in ecclesiastical affairs, and even the breach between Gibson and Walpole did not increase his influence. Only when the balance of power inside the ministry began to move away from Walpole in the late 1730s did Newcastle become more prominent.[39] Letters about the disposal of bishoprics and deaneries began to appear regularly in his correspondence in the early 1740s, though as late as 1741 a successful application for preferment was still believed to require a letter 'to Sr Robert himself'.[40]

Thus, only at the beginning of the period under discussion, with the resignation of Walpole, did Newcastle begin to become particularly influential in the disposal of ecclesiastical patronage. But it was another two and a half years before he emerged as the only channel for ministerial recommendations to the king. Until then other channels of application existed within the administration. Wilmington was only a titular appointment at the treasury, but Carteret, the new secretary of state for the northern department, was a favourite of the king and the rival of the Pelhams. J.B. Owen has shown that Carteret's main concern was foreign policy, and that he had little interest in patronage and domestic politics.[41] But he did not abandon his right to advise the king on ecclesiastical affairs. Edward Young, who was seeking preferment at this time, noted that he needed the support of either Newcastle of Carteret.[42] The latter's position was particularly strong when he accompanied George II to Hanover in 1743. Two bishoprics fell vacant during this period. Bath and Wells was disposed of without reference to Newcastle.[43] St Asaph, on the other hand, vacant by the promotion of Isaac Maddox to the see of Worcester, was given to John Thomas in accordance with the recommendation of the Pelhams. It is significant, however, that Thomas was Carteret's 'friend', and that the deanery of Peterborough vacated by him went not to John Newcome, Newcastle's nominee, but to Robert Lamb.[44] The two years between 1742 and 1744 when Carteret was secretary of state are an interesting interlude. It was the only period between 1721 and 1756 when those holding ministerial offices enabling them to advise the king

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37 Sykes, *Gibson*, p. 83. For Townshend's importance in church affairs, see *H.M.C.*, 10th Report, Appendix, Part I, p. 243: Gibson to Townshend, 8 July 1729.

38 J.C. Sainty, 'The origins of the leadership of the house of lords', *B.I.H.R.*, XLVII (1974), 53-73; Browning, *Newcastle*, pp. 56-9. The secretary of state for the northern department is generally regarded as being the 'senior' secretary; but it is difficult to regard either Harrington (secretary of state for the northern department, June 1730 to February 1742 and November 1744 to November 1746, except 10-14 February 1746) or Chesterfield (February 1746 to February 1748) as senior to Newcastle. On Chesterfield's resignation Newcastle moved to the northern department.

39 Panshanger MSS, Hertfordshire Record Office, D/EP/F249: John Atwell to earl Cowper, 21 Nov. 1741.

40 Hertfordshire R.O., D/EP/F257: Lady Sarah Cowper to earl Cowper, 30 Mar. 1741.

41 J.B. Owen, *The rise of the Pelhams* (London, 1957), p. 168.

42 *The correspondence of Edward Young 1683-1765*, ed. Henry Pettit (Oxford, 1971), p. 158: Young to Duchess of Portland, ?11 June 1743.

43 Pearce Papers, WAM 64666: Bath to Pearce, 14 Aug. 1743.

44 B.L. Add. 32700, fols. 122-3: Newcastle to Carteret, 13 May 1743; ibid., fols. 134-5: Carteret to Newcastle, 22 May 1743; ibid., fols. 278-9: Newcastle to Carteret, 22 July 1743.

on ecclesiastical affairs could not be regarded as political allies. Inevitably, the control of patronage, itself only a symbol of political power, became a significant issue in the struggle for power. Newcastle's reaction to the appointment of Thomas, despite his recommendation of him, is illuminating. He feared that it was a sign of Carteret's increasing dominance of the ministry following the apparent success of his foreign policy: 'Another Dettingen . . . might possibly make a First Commissioner of the Treasury, as the last probably did, a Bishop of St Asaph'.[45] But following Pelham's victory over Bath in the struggle to succeed Wilmington as first lord Newcastle consolidated his control over ecclesiastical patronage. By December 1743 Young was describing him as 'our Pope'.[46]

Newcastle encountered similar problems when he returned to power in 1757 with Pitt at the southern department. Pitt claimed that he 'would willingly relinquish' all power over the disposition of offices.[47] He did not, indeed, challenge Newcastle's position as 'ecclesiastical minister' by demanding the right to advise the king on appointments to church dignities. But, as Hardwicke had commented, he was unwilling to abandon all influence.[48] As early as March 1758 he was writing to Newcastle to ask to 'be indulged an humble Prebend in the name of the Commons of England'.[49] Soon after Reeve Ballard became a prebendary of Westminster. The importance of Pitt's intervention on this occasion should not be overemphasized. Ballard was chaplain to the speaker of the house of commons, who was also pressing for his preferment, and it was an established tradition that speakers' chaplains were rewarded with a prebend of Westminster on the petition of the house.[50] The following year, however, the vacancy of the bishopric of Gloucester, following the translation of Newcastle's friend, James Johnson, to Worcester, prompted Pitt to interfere more decisively in patronage affairs. Pitt pressed for the advancement of William Warburton, telling Newcastle that 'he wished one bishop, one time or other'.[51] Newcastle was not antipathetic to Warburton, who was a close friend of Charles Yorke, the solicitor-general and son of Lord Hardwicke. Two years earlier he had promoted him to the deanery of Bristol on the recommendation of Ralph Allen and Sir John Ligonier.[52] But there is no evidence to suggest that Newcastle had thought of bringing Warburton onto the bench, and he had already made plans for the disposition of the see of Gloucester. Hardwicke was pushing for the advancement of John Green, dean of Lincoln. More importantly, Newcastle had promised a bishopric to John Ewer, the earl of Granby's tutor. In the end Pitt won and Warburton was raised to the episcopate. The situation, however, was significantly different from that in 1743. Then

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45 B.L. Add. 32700, fol. 314: Newcastle to the earl of Orford, 22 July 1743.

46 *Correspondence of Young*, p. 171: Young to Duchess of Portland, 10 Dec. 1743.

47 Quoted in Basil Williams, *The life of William Pitt earl of Chatham* (2 vols., London, 1913), 1.320-1.

48 B.L. Add. 32870, fols. 31-2: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 4 Jan. 1757 [in fact, 1758].

49 B.L. Add. 32878, fol. 420: Pitt to Newcastle, 29 Mar. 1758.

50 See below, p. 83, n. 115.

51 B.L. Add. 32897, fol. 173: 'Heads of Mr Pitt's Conversation'.

52 B.L. Add. 32874, fol. 342: Ligonier to Newcastle, 27 Sept. 1757; Add. 32875, fol. 161: Charles Yorke to Newcastle, 17 Oct. 1757; ibid., fol. 163: Ralph Allen to Newcastle, 17 Oct. 1757.

Newcastle had feared that he did not have the confidence of the king. In 1759 Warburton's promotion was a concession to Pitt to keep him in good humour, to secure 'union and harmony amongst those who are to carry on the king's service'.[53]

Thus, between Carteret's resignation in 1744 and the accession of George III successive secretaries of state left the management of ecclesiastical patronage to Newcastle.[54] But the key to his control of ministerial recommendations before 1754 lay in the fact that his brother was first lord of the treasury. Henry Pelham renounced all influence over ecclesiastical patronage.[55] He forwarded any applications he received to Newcastle, returning to the applicants non-committal answers denying his involvement in the disposal of preferments. Any comments or recommendations by Pelham were made 'privately'.[56] Occasionally this private influence was considerable.[57] But publicly ecclesiastical affairs were Newcastle's 'department'; and in 1752 Pelham could write to him that 'it is notorious to all the World, that you are the only person in the Administration that has spoken to him [the king] upon these points of business for many years'.[58] When Newcastle became first lord of the treasury on his brother's death in 1754, his position as ecclesiastical minister was well-established and the precedent of Walpole was enough to preserve his influence.[59] However, unlike the lord chancellor Newcastle did not present to crown livings himself. He was merely the channel for ministerial recommendations to the king, 'the only person in the Administration' to *advise* the king on ecclesiastical affairs.[60] Newcastle had great influence over the disposal of preferments, but other channels existed and the king himself was no mere cypher.

The king and the court

The court, many of whose members enjoyed the right of personal attendance on the king, offered an alternative avenue for recommendations. During the early years of George II's reign Queen Caroline exercised considerable influence over the disposal of ecclesiastical preferments through

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53 B.L. Add. 32900, fol. 20: Newcastle to Granby, 13 Dec. 1759.

54 After the accession of George III Newcastle's control of patronage was challenged by Lord Bute. Even after Bute's appointment as secretary of state, however, that challenge depended on Bute's position at court, and is therefore dealt with below.

55 B.L. Add. 32716, fols. 379: Pelham to Newcastle, 27 Sept. 1748; Add. 32729, fol. 337: Pelham to Newcastle, 22 Sept. 1752.

56 Add. 32712, fols. 299-303: Pelham to Andrew Stone, 1 Aug. 1747; Add. 32721, fols. 500-2: Pelham to Newcastle, 3 July 1749; B.L. Add. 32726, fols. 489-90: Pelham to Newcastle, 24 Apr. 1752.

57 On the promotion of Jonathan Fountayne to the deanery of York, for example, Bishop Sherlock wrote: 'I write this post to Mr Pelham, and acknowledge his favour, as far as I dare: I know the Duke reckons all Ecclesiastical matters to belong to his department; and that Mr P— chuses not to interfere: however I cou'd not but own my obligation after the account you gave me. If you see him, you will make my Compliments to him, & supply my lame letter to him.' B.L. Add. 41843, fol. 113: Sherlock to Charles Longwith, 23 July 1747.

58 B.L. Add. 32730, fol. 144: Pelham to Newcastle, 19 Oct. 1752; Add. 41843, fol. 113.

59 But in 1758 Newcastle feared, with little cause, that the king was intending to receive ecclesiastical recommendations through Holdernesse, secretary of state for the northern department. Add. 32878, fol. 352: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 25 Mar. 1758. It is an interesting comment both on Newcastle's interest in the Church, and on the basis of his earlier control, that special directions were necessary when he returned to power with the Rockingham ministry in 1765 as lord privy seal, but with responsibility for ecclesiastical patronage. See Sykes, 'Newcastle as ecclesiastical minister', p. 77.

60 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 479: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 27 July 1750.

her vigorous patronage of an esoteric circle of clergymen. Sykes was dismissive of her influence.[61] But an impressive list of clergy claimed her as one of their patrons, including Francis Hare, Joseph Butler, Thomas Sherlock, John Potter, Thomas Secker, Zachary Pearce and Robert Clayton, all of whom were, or later became, bishops. Pressure from the Queen resulted in the promotion to the bench of the 'tory' Thomas Sherlock in 1728, despite the opposition of both Walpole and Bishop Gibson.[62] She was also responsible for Potter's elevation to the primacy in 1737,[63] but Joseph Butler was perhaps the clergyman whose career owed most to her intervention. Despite the talents he had revealed while preacher of the rolls, by the early 1730s he was 'buried' in the valuable Durham rectory of Stanhope. Queen Caroline brought him back to London in 1736 as her clerk of the closet, and, although she did not have time to provide for him while she was alive, recommended him 'particularly and by name' on her death-bed.[64] The following year he was made bishop of Bristol, retaining both Stanhope and a prebend of Rochester *in commendam.*

After the Queen's death in 1737 the court at St James's lost most of its attraction for aspiring clergymen. Apart from the lord chamberlain, who appointed royal chaplains, it had no formal voice in patronage affairs. But it remained another avenue for solicitations and court recommendations could carry great weight. In 1752 Lady Yarmouth wanted a canonry of Windsor for William Carmichael. Newcastle believed that it was useless to oppose him, and Hardwicke, who had suggested Barnard for the vacancy, concurred, denying that he could even 'think of contending with the powerful Interest, which You mention'.[65] Carmichael did not get the canonry, but it was the king himself who decided against him, because he had already been promised an Irish bishopric.[66] Similarly, earl Cowper sought the assistance of friends at court - the duke of Grafton, Lord De La Warr, and Stephen Poyntz - in obtaining preferment for his brother, Spencer.[67] But court recommendations never outranked ministerial ones. They were a useful means of seconding applications to Newcastle, or perhaps of making it impossible for him to ignore an application. Both Carmichael and earl Cowper applied to Newcastle, as well as to court connections, for support.[68]

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61 Norman Sykes, 'Queen Caroline and the Church', *History*, xii (1927), 333-9.

62 Gibson Papers, St Andrews University Library, MS 5200: Gibson to Newcastle, n.d.; MS 5201: Gibson to Walpole, n.d.; MS 5202: Gibson to Walpole, n.d.

63 Gibson Papers, St Andrews University Library, MS 5316: Hare to Gibson, 12 Aug. 1736; John, Lord Hervey, *Some materials towards memoirs of the reign of King George II*, ed. Romney Sedgwick (3 vols., London, 1931), ii, 543-4.

64 Beilby Porteus, 'A review of the life and character of Archbishop Secker', in *The works of Thomas Secker, LL.D.* (new edn., 6 vols., London, 1811), i, ix.

65 B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 217: Newcastle to Herring, 8 July 1752; ibid., fol. 283: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 17 July 1752.

66 B.L. Add. 32730, fol. 126: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 18 Oct. 1752.

67 *Letters of Spencer Cowper, dean of Durham 1746-74*, ed. Edward Hughes (Surtees Society, 165 (1950), London and Durham, 1956), pp. 18-19, 24, 31-2, 32-3; Hertfordshire R.O., D/EP/F249: De La Warr to Lord Cowper, 3 May 1742, 24 Dec. 1743; D/EP/F247: Lady Sarah Cowper to Lord Cowper, 10 Nov. 1741.

68 B.L. Add. 32727, fols. 389-90: Carmichael to Newcastle, 11 June 1752; Add. 32707, fol. 241: earl Cowper to Newcastle, 23 May 1746; *Letters of Spencer Cowper*, p. 34: Spencer Cowper to earl Cowper, 2 Feb. 1744.

Thus the influence of the court was limited, and there was no sense in which it was ever an alternative channel of ecclesiastical patronage. But its importance could be inflated. Just as the control of patronage became a political issue during the struggle between Carteret and the Pelhams, so the nexus of influences at court occasionally raised questions of the king's confidence in his ministry. Newcastle was disturbed when the earl of Orford used his personal credit with the king to obtain a preferment in opposition to Newcastle.[69] More importantly, in 1752 Newcastle believed that in the king's prejudice against Bishop Trevor he could see 'the terrible Effects of a certain Influence'.[70] Newcastle was not over-reacting. The long vacancy of Durham worried even the calmer Henry Pelham, who expressed concern about the situation in the closet and 'the present unsettled State of the Administration'.[71] Consequently, it is not altogether surprising that Newcastle proclaimed the success of Trevor as 'a great Stroke, against Some of Our Great Opposers'.[72]

To talk of the court as an alternative avenue of solicitations, or merely as a means of supporting applications made through ministers, suggests that the king was believed to have an active voice in the disposal of ecclesiastical preferments. Such an interpretation runs counter to the opinion of Norman Sykes, who claimed that George II presented no barrier to Newcastle's control of church patronage. Sykes did not deny that the king could be difficult and stubborn, but argued that he was 'moved less by concern for the reputation of the bench than by a delight in teasing his ecclesiastical minister'.[73] Here Sykes was merely reiterating the orthodox interpretation of George II.[74] But recently there has been some reassessment of the king's political activities, and J.B. Owen has suggested that he was far from ineffectual.[75] In ecclesiastical matters, Owen argued, 'George II had ideas of his own, and Newcastle . . . was far from undisputed master of episcopal appointments'. Although his account was short and impressionistic,[76] his conclusions are borne out by a detailed study of the disposal of the crown's patronage.

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69 *Letters of Spencer Cowper*, pp. 32-3: Spencer Cowper to earl Cowper, 14 Jan. 1744.

70 B.L. Add. 32728, fols. 86-7: Newcastle to Andrew Stone, 24 June 1752.

71 B.L. Add. 32730, fols. 42-3: Stone to Newcastle, 6 Oct. 1752; ibid., fol. 36: Pelham to Newcastle, 5 Oct. 1752.

72 B.L. Add. 32730, fol. 126: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 18 Oct. 1752.

73 Sykes, 'Newcastle as ecclesiastical minister', p. 61. Paradoxically, Sykes's earlier comments attribute a rather more influential role to George II, although he still denies that his intervention was either 'well-informed or intelligent'. Sykes, *Church and state*, pp. 39-40.

74 E.g., Richard Pares, *King George III and the politicians* (London, 1953), pp. 62-4, 183; L.B. Namier, *England in the age of the American revolution* (2nd edn., London, 1961), p. 45.

75 J.B. Owen, 'George II reconsidered', in *Statesman, scholars and merchants. Essays in eighteenth-century history presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland*, ed. Anne Whiteman, J.S. Bromley and P.G.M. Dickson (Oxford, 1973), pp. 113-34. Jeremy Black has reached similar conclusions about George II's influence over foreign policy in the 1730s. 'George II reconsidered: a consideration of George's influence in the conduct of foreign policy in the first years of his reign', *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs*, xxxv (1982), 35-56.

76 Owen, 'George II reconsidered', p. 122. In fact, of Owen's four examples, two have nothing to do with the king's influence. The translation of Butler to Durham was not 'insisted on' by the king, but had been agreed by the ministers in 1748 when Sherlock, contrary to expectation, accepted London. [B.L. Add. 32716, fols. 277-9: Newcastle to Pelham, 17 Sept. 1748; Add. 32717, fol. 25: Pelham to Newcastle, 4 Oct. 1748.] Secondly, it is hardly accurate to suggest that '*all* (my emphasis) that he was prepared to grant Dean Ashburnham, after many years of unsuccessful supplication by Newcastle, was the bishopric of Chichester'. Chichester was precisely what the duke had hoped to obtain for Ashburnham. [B.L. Add. 32729, fol. 373: Newcastle to Pelham, 28 Sept. 1752].

In the first place, there is no doubt that George II formed his own opinions about the merit of candidates for ecclesiastical preferment. This was revealed most clearly on the vacancy of the archbishopric of Canterbury in 1757. The king took advantage of the interlude of the Pitt-Devonshire administration to determine a series of appointments himself, paying little regard to his ministers. Hutton was translated from York to Canterbury, Gilbert from Salisbury to York, Thomas to Salisbury, and the bishopric of Peterborough, vacated by Thomas, was filled by Richard Terrick. The earl of Holdernesse, one of the secretaries of state, made it clear in a series of letters to Newcastle that this was the work of the king, not of his ministers. All four clergymen were personal favourites of the king.[77] Hutton's promotion was expected - there was no obvious alternative candidate, but the subsequent preferments appear to have surprised not only Newcastle, but also the king's ministers.[78] Secondly, the king's approval of ministerial recommendations was not given automatically, and he thereby constituted the most formidable check to Newcastle's power. Not that it should be supposed that Newcastle was striving for complete control over crown patronage and George II was resisting doggedly. Newcastle knew that he could merely advise the king, who was free to accept or reject that advice. He also knew that his influence derived from his ministerial position, and he made few personal recommendations.[79] Nonetheless, against the reports of George II's complaints about his lack of influence must be set a record of successful opposition to a series of ministerial recommendations.[80]

On most occasions, it is true, George II accepted the recommendations of his minister for bishoprics. Even when he raised objections, he was usually persuaded to acquiesce in time. In March 1743, on the translation of Herring to York, Matthew Hutton was proposed for the vacant bishopric of Bangor, largely through the influence of Lord Hardwicke. George II, however, opposed Hutton, believing his recommendation by Newcastle proceeded from some 'private View, personal Consideration, or ill-grounded Partiality'. Newcastle acknowledged that the king's reaction made it 'highly improper' for him to mention the affair again, and the assistance of Archbishop Potter and Lord Carteret was enlisted to second Newcastle's application. They eventually convinced the king that Hutton was the most 'reputable' choice.[81] Ironically, Hutton later became something of a favourite with George II, who personally nominated him lord

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77 For Hutton, Gilbert and Thomas see below, pp. 78-9, 82, 80 respectively. For Terrick, see B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 429-30: Herring to Hardwicke, 3 Oct. 1749; Add. 32728, fols. 105-6: Newcastle to Pelham, 26 June 1752.

78 B.L. Add. 32870, fols. 277, 337: Holdernesse to Newcastle, 14, 25 Mar. 1757; ibid., fol. 346: Newcastle to Philip Yonge, 29 Mar. 1757. Newcastle had hoped that Peterborough would have been given to Yonge. Add. 32878, fol. 330: Newcastle to Pitt, 24 Mar. 1758.

79 'I have, hitherto, had very few Recommendations of my own - one, that was personal to myself; and was a near Relation of mine, and next Heir to the Earl of Ashburnham; the King was pleas'd to refuse.' B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 479-80: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 27 July 1750.

80 E.g., 'Life of Newton', p. 83.

81 B.L. Add. 35589, fols. 346-7: Hardwicke to Somerset, 11 Nov. 1747; Add. 32700, fol. 87: Newcastle to Hutton, 30 Mar. 1743; Add. 32700, fol. 100: Potter to Newcastle, 7 Apr. 1743; Add. 32702, fol. 293: Carteret to Newcastle, 4 Apr. [1743]. Hutton was also supported by a number of Yorkshire whigs, notably Richard Arundell, M.P. for Knaresborough [Add. 32702, fol. 293; Add. 32713, fol. 311: Arundell to Newcastle, n.d.]. It is possible that the king's accusations of personal interest may have stemmed from here, as Arundell was Pelham's brother-in-law.

almoner in 1748.[82]

On the other hand, George II intervened decisively in the disposal of the bishopric of Peterborough in 1747. The previous year Archbishop Potter had recommended John Thomas for the see of Exeter. Potter was out of favour both with the ministry and at court because of his flirtations with Leicester House,[83] and George Lavington, who had long been promised a bishopric by Newcastle and Hardwicke, was appointed.[84] Thomas, however, had particularly recommended himself to the king by his conduct as his chaplain while Prince of Wales, and despite Newcastle's recommendation of Zachary Pearce, to whom he had given strong assurances of the next bishopric, on the death of Bishop Clavering George II decided to give Peterborough to Thomas.[85] Concern was expressed about Thomas's loyalty to the ministry, and Bishop Gibson was dispatched to sound him on the subject. Gibson reported that Thomas had assured him of 'his affection to the present Administration' and that 'during the strugle [sic] between Ld Granville and the Lords, he had openly and constantly declar'd his wishes for the *continuance* of the Ministry'.[86] However, this does not necessarily imply that political considerations might have enabled Newcastle to put a negative on the king's wishes. Although Thomas referred explicitly only to Granville, his recommendation the previous year by Potter and his connection with Sir George Lee[87] would suggest that he was also suspected of links with Leicester House. In the eyes of George II any political, or even social, connection with his son was an absolute bar to preferment, and it is at least plausible that he was as interested as Newcastle in Thomas's reply to Gibson's inquiry.

But the relationship between Newcastle and the king should not be oversimplified. It is misleading to see it as one of acquiescent harmony, punctuated by occasional conflict which was 'won' by either George or his minister. The reality was more complex. It was well illustrated when the see of Durham became vacant in 1752. This incident has been portrayed as one of the most striking examples of ministerial pressure overcoming royal resistance.[88] At first sight, indeed, it appears to have been precisely that. Nothing could have been stronger than the negative put by the king upon Richard Trevor when Newcastle suggested him for translation: '*No I beg his pardon, not the Bp of St Davids, He is a High Church Fellow, a stiff Formal Fellow, & nothing else. There are a great many better than He*'.[89] Newcastle doubted of success, but four months

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82 B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 225: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 30 Oct. 1748; ibid., fols. 233-4: Newcastle to Hutton, 30 Oct. 1748.

83 *Memoirs of a royal chaplain*, p. 127: Pyle to Kerrich, 17 Oct. 1747; B.L. Add. 32711, fols. 61, 139-41: Gooch to Newcastle, 16, 26 May 1747; Add. 35598, fols. 242-4: Herring to Hardwicke, 20 May 1747.

84 B.L. Add. 32708, fol. 228: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 4 Sept. 1746; Add. 32709, fol. 322: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 12 Oct. 1746.

85 B.L. Add. 32712, fol. 383: Newcastle to Bath, 14 Aug. 1747.

86 B.L. Add. 32712, fol. 243: Gibson to [Andrew Stone], 26 July 1747.

87 Before joining Leicester House at the beginning of 1747, Lee was an ally of Granville, and resigned with him in 1744. For his connection with Thomas see B.L. Add. 35592, fols. 14-15: Lee to Hardwicke, 13 Jan. 1753.

88 Sykes, 'Newcastle as ecclesiastical minister', p. 61; *Church and state*, p. 39.

89 B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 21: Newcastle to Pelham, 18 June 1752.

later Trevor was nominated to Durham.[90]

After Canterbury the bishopric of Durham was the wealthiest see in the country. It was also one of the most important, its occupant being ranked the fourth most senior bishop behind the archbishops and the bishop of London. It had therefore to be filled by a bishop who had already proved his ability in one of the less important dioceses. Contemporary practice, moreover, dictated that seniority was some claim to promotion.[91] Thus, the choice both of the king and of Newcastle was limited. The situation in 1752 was complicated by division within the ministry. Pelham and Hardwicke advocated Trevor strongly.[92] But Herring wrote to Newcastle in Hanover, arguing that Bishop Hayter of Norwich should be appointed, claiming that the 'vast importance of his station [preceptor to the Prince of Wales] . . . does naturally supersede the other accidental consideration of Seniority'. In the event of Hayter not being chosen, Herring recommended Trevor.[93] However, this recommendation did not provide the king with an alternative. As Newcastle commented, the archbishop's letter was 'very ignorant' in this respect.[94] Hayter was failing in his duties as preceptor, and on being shown the letter George II merely commented that 'He was not at all satisfied with the B. of Norwich'.[95]

But Herring's letter is also interesting for the list enclosed with it of the bishops who might be considered candidates for this translation in order of seniority: Hayter, Secker of Oxford, Maddox of Worcester, Gilbert of Salisbury, Thomas of Lincoln, and Trevor.[96] This list provides a useful summary of the choice before Newcastle and the king. Two names were missing: Benson of Gloucester, and Mawson of Chichester. Benson was in many respects an obvious choice. As prebendary at Durham he was familiar with the diocese. Between 1742 and 1749 he had performed all ordinations for the infirm Bishop Chandler during his period of residence, and had even carried out a visitation in 1746.[97] He had wiped out the stain of joining a 'formed opposition' to the court in the late 1730s and early 1740s and was much in favour with the king.[98] But Benson had decided as early as 1736 that he would not accept a translation, and in the event died before Durham was filled.[99] Mawson had already been chosen as the most proper person to succeed Gooch at Ely.[100] As to the rest of Herring's list, the king 'slighted Worcester

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90 B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 24: Newcastle to William Murray, 18 June 1752.

91 *H.M.C.*, 10th Report, Appendix, Part I, p. 302: Bishop Thomas to Edward Weston, 13 Sept. 1748; B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 348-51: Herring to Hardwicke, 20 Sept. 1748.

92 B.L. Add. 32727, fol. 400: Pelham to Newcastle, 12 June 1752.

93 B.L. Add. 32728, fols. 46-9: Herring to Newcastle, 19 June 1752.

94 B.L. Add. 32728, fols. 105-6: Newcastle to Pelham, 26 June 1752. Or, as he commented to Herring's patron, Lord Hardwicke, 'a little mistaken'. Add. 32728, fol. 138, Newcastle to Hardwicke, 1 July 1752.

95 B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 157: Newcastle to Pelham, 1 July 1752.

96 B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 50.

97 *Letters of Spencer Cowper*, pp. 66, 148: Spencer Cowper to earl Cowper, 14 Oct. 1746, 1 Sept. 1752; J.C. Shuler, 'The pastoral and ecclesiastical administration of the diocese of Durham 1721-1771; with particular reference to the archdeaconry of Northumberland', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Durham, 1975, p. 149.

98 B.L. Add. 32722, fol. 233: Newcastle to Pelham, 23 Aug. 1750; Add. 32728, fols. 23-4: Newcastle to William Murray, 18 June 1752. The letter to Murray implies that the thought of offering Durham to Benson may have been in the king's mind.

99 Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, Gibson Papers, bound volume, #23: Benson to Gibson, 23 July 1736.

100 B.L. Add. 32730, fol. 126: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 18 Oct. 1752.

extreamly, & said nothing in Favour of any Body'.[101] His prejudice against Maddox is explained by his opposition to the Regency Bill the previous year, in which the king regarded himself as being peculiarly concerned.[102] As for the others, in the eyes of the king Secker had not altogether expunged the sin of his connection with Leicester House in the late 1730s and early 1740s, and it had only been with great difficulty that the ministry had persuaded the king to give him the deanery of St Paul's in 1750.[103] Gilbert, although a favourite of George II's, had been told by both the king and Newcastle that he could expect no further translation when he accepted Salisbury in 1748.[104] This left only Thomas, who had been consecrated the same day as Trevor. But Trevor had certain advantages that could be urged against Thomas. As Herring pointed out, aside from his abilities, 'that of being of the Honourable Family he is and already possessed of an ample Fortune, he will . . . be the better enabled to fill up this great Post wth Dignity & Generosity'.[105] Moreover, as the objection against Trevor was primarily political - 'that He was a Tory' - the assurance that he had the support of the whigs at Durham doubtless helped to reconcile the king to his promotion.[106] When the king finally made the decision, he went over a list of all the bishops and 'seem'd to distinguish only' Mawson, Lavington and Thomas of Peterborough.[107] Both Lavington and Thomas were junior to Trevor. George II finally nominated the person he had opposed, but he had himself helped to discount all the other candidates.

Prebends were a source of greater contention. Newcastle was frequently teased by the number of candidates. In 1752, while in Hanover, he received twenty-three applications for three vacancies, and Herring once remarked that he could not 'help smiling to see wth how much more ease yr Grace fills up a Bishoprick than a Prebend'.[108] It was also difficulties in the disposal of prebends that provoked Newcastle's pathetic lament to Halifax: 'Your Lordship is mistaken, If you think, I can do what I please. The King has His own Way of thinking, & acting, in the Disposal of Preferments, and particularly Ecclesiastical ones. It was from this Cause, that a great Number of Ecclesiastical Preferments were undispos'd of, for near Two Years.'[109] The preferments

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101 B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 157: Newcastle to Pelham, 1 July 1752.

102 B.L. Add. 32724, fols. 280-1: Newcastle to George II, 10 May 1751; ibid., fols. 282-3: Newcastle to Bishop Barnard, 13 May 1751.

103 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 471: Newcastle to Pelham, 27 July 1750; Add. 32722, fols. 232-3: Newcastle to Pelham, 23 Aug. 1750.

104 B.L. Add. 32730, fol. 36: Pelham to Newcastle, 5 Oct. 1752.

105 B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 47: Herring to Newcastle, 19 June 1752.

106 B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 157: Newcastle to Pelham, 1 July 1752; Add. 32729, fol. 115: Pelham to Newcastle, 17 Aug. 1752; Newcastle of Clumber Papers, Nottingham University Library, Ne.C. 1389: Newcastle to Pelham, 18 Oct. 1752. For Trevor's links with the Vanes, one of the leading whig families in the north-east, see *Letters of Spencer Cowper*, p. 165: Spencer Cowper to earl Cowper, 15 Sept. 1753. It is not surprising, however, that he was suspected of toryism, as his family maintained links wth some members of that party. *The diary of Benjamin Rogers rector of Carlton, 1720-71*, ed. C.D. Linnell (Publications of Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, XXX, Streatley, nr. Luton, 1950), p. 1 and passim.

107 Nottingham University Library, Ne.C. 1389: Newcastle to Pelham, 18 Oct. 1752.

108 Nottingham University Library, Ne.C. 1468; B.L. Add. 32852, fol. 473: Herring to Newcastle, 15 Feb. 1755. The vacancies in 1752 were at Canterbury, Windsor, and Durham, Bishop Benson's prebend of Durham having fallen to the crown because he died *sede vacante*. At the time Newcastle mistakenly believed there were two vacancies at Durham.

109 B.L. Add. 32736, fols. 182-5: Newcastle to Halifax, 8 Aug. 1754.

to which Newcastle referred were the canonries vacant in 1752. But not only did the king refuse to dispose of them for two years; he finally gave them away in a manner which caused Newcastle great embarrassment. The king himself decided to refuse the request of Hardwicke and Herring, supported by Newcastle, for Francis Barnard to exchange his prebend of Norwich for one of Windsor.[110] The canonry of Canterbury went to William Tatton, at the solicitation of Lord Abergavenny, much to the anger of the duke of Dorset, who had a claim to Newcastle's interest by having obtained an Irish bishopric for John Garnett, one of Newcastle's Cambridge friends.[111] The king's personal influence was also apparent in 1749 in the disposal of a residentiaryship of St Paul's. There were four candidates - Francis Barnard, William Ashburnham, Richard Terrick, and Edward Townshend. The king was 'pleased absolutely to refuse' Newcastle's recommendation of Ashburnham. He likewise ignored the strong recommendations of Herring and Hardwicke for Barnard, and bestowed it instead upon Richard Terrick.[112]

Most in Terrick's favour was the fact that he was a royal chaplain. Newcastle remarked that 'The King is . . . strongly inclined to give the Preference to His own Chaplains upon all Occasions', so strongly in fact that there were 'Difficulties, and disagreeable Incidents' whenever he recommended anyone not a chaplain.[113] Consequently Newcastle often suggested to patrons that they apply to the lord chamberlain to make their candidates for preferment royal chaplains.[114] They were regarded as the king's personal servants, and had a claim to his patronage in the same way that the domestic chaplains of bishops or noblemen had a claim to their patronage.[115] Thus, when Newcastle recommended Richard Newton, the principal of Hertford College, for a canonry of Christ Church, the king complained, '*You* are always for your own people, I have no preferments to dispose of Myself'. George soon consented to Newton's promotion, but for some

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110 B.L. Add. 32736, fols. 182-5: Newcastle to Halifax, 8 Aug. 1754. The application by Hardwicke and Herring was 'an Act of Charity and humanity', since Barnard's lameness made it difficult for him to perform his duty at Norwich and in his City living. Hardwicke offered the prebend of Norwich, worth about the same as that of Windsor, for Richard Blacow, who had distinguished himself in the whig cause at Oxford. By 1754 two canonries were vacant at Windsor, and Blacow received one of them. Hardwicke managed to provide for Barnard, however, by obtaining a royal dispensation for non-residence at Norwich. B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 60: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 19 June 1752; Add. 35599, fol. 197: Herring to Hardwicke, 19 June 1754.

111 B.L. Add. 32736, fols. 183-4. Newcastle was guilty of some distortion here. While in Hanover he had urged the case of Tatton. But during the interval before the canonry was disposed of, Dorset had insisted strongly on Newcastle's obligation to him. Moreover, a contested election was taking place in Kent, and Dorset argued that the setting aside of his nomination for a preferment in his own county would weaken his interest there. The proposal wrecked by the king's preferment of Tatton was not the preferment of Curteis, Dorset's recommendation, but the simultaneous provision for them both by waiting until another vacancy occurred. B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 408: Newcastle to Pelham, 27-29 July 1752; Nottingham University Library, Ne.C. 1389: Newcastle to Pelham, 18 Oct. 1752; B.L. Add. 32732, fols. 501-2: Dorset to Newcastle, 19 Aug. 1753; ibid, fols. 522-3: Newcastle to Dorset, 24 Aug. 1753.

112 B.L. Add. 32719, fol. 105: Newcastle to Sherlock, 5 Sept. 1749; ibid., fol. 239: Newcastle to Lord Bateman, 13 Oct. 1749; ibid., fols. 50-1: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 13 Aug. 1749; ibid., fols. 176-7: Herring to Newcastle, 17 Sept. 1749; ibid., fols. 197-8: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 29 Sept. 1749.

113 B.L. Add. 32719, fol. 239: Newcastle to Bateman, 13 Oct. 1749; Add. 32721, fol. 480: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 27 July 1750.

114 E.g., B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 497-9: Newcastle to Bath, 30 July 1750; Add. 32866, fol. 349: Newcastle to Rockingham, 3 Aug. 1756.

115 By the same argument the chaplains to the house of commons had a claim to preferment as the servants of the nation. Arthur Onslow claimed that they 'have been always provided for, in the Churches of Westminster or Windsor'. [B.L. Add. 32699, fol. 130: Onslow to Newcastle, 31 Mar. 1742.] Newcastle could not ignore this precedent, and Onslow provided for five chaplains in this way: Richard Terrick in 1742, John Fulham in 1750, Richard Cope in 1754, Reeve Ballard in 1758, and Charles Bartlett in 1761.

time it appeared that he was going to bestow the vacant canonry of Windsor on Dr Medlycot, an old chaplain.[116] Similarly, in 1748 he would not give Jonathan Shipley, chaplain to the duke of Cumberland, either a residentiaryship of St Paul's or a canonry of Christ Church, peremptorily refusing to 'prefer His Son's Servants to His own'. In one sense, Newcastle was not too distressed at this, as it cleared the way for him to obtain the residentiaryship, the more valuable of the two, for his friend, James Johnson, then attending the king in Hanover. But it also caused him considerable embarrassment, as he had promised to obtain some preferment for Shipley.[117] Again the king relented. But only after it had been pointed out that Shipley was not 'only a private domestic Chaplain' to the Duke, but 'Chaplain Genl to the army', a commission granted him by the king.[118]

The royal chaplaincies, in the gift of the duke of Grafton, as lord chamberlain, were therefore an important step to preferment in the Church. Chaplains attending the king in Hanover had the first claim to any preferment that fell, a claim supported by both Newcastle and Hardwicke, and ultimately, 'by divine right', to a bishopric.[119] In this manner Richard Trevor was given a canonry of Christ Church in 1735;[120] John Thomas was appointed to the deanery of Peterborough in 1740; Johnson received the residentiaryship of St Paul's in 1748 and was doubtless helped to the see of Gloucester in 1752; while Drummond was made prebendary of Westminster just before his departure for Hanover in 1743. This view of royal chaplaincies, not as preferments in themselves, but as pledges of further royal patronage was echoed by some clergymen, who used their long service as chaplains as a claim to preferment.[121] But, as Bishop Gooch pointed out, 'the Advantages of Chaplainships . . . must arise from Merit, & Conduct & good Service'.[122] Nonetheless, the failure to promote the chaplains provoked criticism, and Archbishop Potter speculated whether they should be made posts of honour and given to those already possessed of church dignities.[123]

On the accession of George III the king's influence over ecclesiastical patronage became more manifest. The new king was determined to break the chains that had confined his grandfather, and it was soon apparent that recommendations would be received not only through Newcastle, but also through the court, and especially George III's favourite, Lord Bute. Even after his

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[116] Nottingham University Library, Ne.C. 1389: Newcastle to Pelham, 18 Oct. 1752; Ne.C. 1394c: Newcastle to Pelham, 11 Nov. 1752.

[117] B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 235: Newcastle to Stephen Poyntz, 30 Oct. 1748; ibid., fol. 224: Newcastle to Pelham, 29 Oct. 1748; ibid., fol. 157: Newcastle to Pelham, 19 Oct. 1748.

[118] B.L. Add. 32717, fols. 300-3: Poyntz to Newcastle, 8 Nov. 1748.

[119] B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 225: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 29 Oct. 1748; ibid., fol. 294: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 8 Nov. 1748; *The Harcourt papers*, ed. Edward William Harcourt (14 vols., Oxford, [1880-1905]), VII, 21: William Mason to Lord Nuneham, 15 Jan. 1762.

[120] Public Record Office, S.P. 36/36/33-4: Newcastle to Lord Talbot, 11 Sept. 1735.

[121] B.L. Add. 32700, fols. 1-2: Potter to Newcastle, 5 Jan. 1743; Add. 32704, fol. 504: Duchess of Portland to Newcastle, 15 July 1745; Add. 32709, fol. 248: John Whalley to Newcastle, 19 Nov. 1746; Add. 32714, fol. 478: B. Regis to Newcastle, 11 Apr. 1748.

[122] B.L. Add. 32703, fol. 59: Gooch to Newcastle, 21 May 1744.

[123] B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 102-3: Herring to Hardwicke, 25 Sept. 1753; Add. 32699, fols. 311-12: Potter to Newcastle, 19 July 1742.

appointment as secretary of state of the southern department in March 1761 his influence over patronage derived not from his position in the ministry, as had been the case with Carteret in 1742-4, but from his role at court. Almost immediately, hopeful clergymen began to present their compliments to Bute.[124] It was not until mid-1761, however, that the influence of George III and Bute over ecclesiastical preferments was clearly seen. The bishop of London and the archbishop of York died in quick succession. Newcastle was horrified to learn that Bute and the king were inclined to favour Thomas Hayter, bishop of Norwich, for London. Newcastle was bitterly opposed to Hayter's advancement. Not only did he believe that the bishop had forfeited all claim to promotion by his behaviour as preceptor to the Prince of Wales, but he had never forgiven him his support for the attack made in the aftermath of that affair on three of Newcastle's closest colleagues, Andrew Stone, William Murray and James Johnson.[125] Consequently he set up John Thomas, bishop of Lincoln, as his candidate for the vacant bishopric, in the hope that the support of Lord Granville, who was in favour at the new court and had been an early patron of Thomas, would tilt the scales against Hayter. But Newcastle was disappointed. Hayter was made bishop of London, George III complaining that Newcastle wished to recommend 'to *everything*'.[126]

During the crisis Newcastle had seriously considered resigning.[127] The contrast with George II's reign is, however, less clear than either Newcastle's reaction or the above account would suggest. Earlier in 1761 Samuel Squire, a former chaplain of the duke and his university secretary, had been raised to the episcopate as bishop of St David's.[128] On the death of Bishop Hoadly John Thomas, bishop of Salisbury, had been translated to Winchester, Robert Drummond from St Asaph to Salisbury, and Richard Newcome from Llandaff to St Asaph. The vacant bishopric had been filled by John Ewer. All these promotions were approved by Newcastle. Likewise, Hayter's translation was accompanied by that of Drummond to York, of Thomas (bishop of Lincoln) to Salisbury, and of Yonge, another of Newcastle's former chaplains, to Norwich. The bishoprics of Lincoln and Bristol were filled by John Green and Thomas Newton respectively. The former was a client of the earl of Hardwicke, the latter a friend of William Pulteney, to whom Newcastle had long promised a bishopric. Finally, the deanery of Lincoln, vacated by John Green, was given to James Yorke, Hardwicke's son. All these, likewise, were recommended by Newcastle.[129] Between the accession of George III in October 1760 and his

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[124] E.g., B.L. Add. 32918, fol. 263: Drummond to Newcastle, 4 Feb. 1761.

[125] Allegations of jacobitism made against these three were investigated by the privy council in 1753 and were then the subject of a parliamentary debate.

[126] B.L. Add. 32927, fol. 68: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 17 Aug. 1761; *Autobiography and political correspondence of Augustus Henry third duke of Grafton*, ed. W.R. Anson (London, 1898), p. 34: John Young to Grafton, 11 Sept. 1761; *The Devonshire diary. William Cavendish fourth duke of Devonshire. Memoranda on state of affairs 1759-62*, ed. Peter D. Brown and Karl W. Schweizer (London, 1982), pp. 102-3; B.L. Add. 32925, fol. 155: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 18 July 1761; Add. 32926, fol. 187: Newcastle to Devonshire, 5 Aug. 1761; *H.M.C.*, 10th Report, Appendix, Part I, p. 322: Bishop Thomas to Edward Weston, 23 July 1761.

[127] B.L. Add. 32926, fol. 302: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 8 Aug. 1761.

[128] Despite the close connection between Squire and Newcastle, however, some doubt can be cast on Newcastle's support for him on this occasion. See *Notes and Queries*, 1st series, I, 65-7: G. Cruch? to William Robinson, 12 Oct. 1761, which suggests that Squire had petitioned Bute for this preferment.

[129] B.L. Add. 32929, fol. 7: Newcastle to Scarborough, 1 Oct. 1761.

resignation in May 1762 the advancement of Hayter was Newcastle's only defeat in the field of ecclesiastical patronage.

The distribution of patronage was a complex process. Newcastle's control of it was far less absolute than many contemporaries and historians have believed. He had no control over the patronage of the lord chancellor or the bishops. He did not even monopolize recommendations to the king, who was himself a far more active participant in the disposal of preferments than is generally supposed. Such limitations on ministers were an intrinsic part of eighteenth-century government, and awareness of them is essential for a proper understanding of Newcastle's ecclesiastical patronage. But they should not be allowed to detract from the influence Newcastle did possess. His influence over the creation of bishops, deans and canons was probably greater than that of any other minister in the eighteenth century. The main reason for this was that, for much of the period, the ministry's patronage power was concentrated in the hands of a triumvirate, who were personal friends as well as political allies, and, in particular, that the first minister, the secretary of state's most powerful rival in patronage affairs, was Newcastle's own brother. Despite the limits to his power it is not inaccurate to see him as primarily responsible for the character of the church leadership between 1742 and 1762. It is with the aims and objectives underlying Newcastle's disposal of church preferments, with his ecclesiastical policy, that the next chapter will be concerned.

5. The disposal of ministerial patronage

Patronage, including church patronage, has been widely perceived as a managerial tool, as an instrument of politicians struggling to maintain themselves in power. Some contemporaries condemned Newcastle's disposal of church preferments on these grounds. In 1754 Edward Cobden resigned as royal chaplain because he believed less worthy men were being promoted ahead of him for their support of ministerial candidates in parliamentary elections.[1] Another royal chaplain, Edmund Pyle, echoed his complaint, claiming that the demands of politicking at Westminster and Cambridge determined Newcastle's clerical appointments.[2] Historians, preoccupied with the politics of parliamentary management and ministerial intrigue and encouraged perhaps by the duke's own reticence on the subject, have followed such commentators. They have dismissed his ecclesiastical patronage as an extension of the system of secular patronage, exploited by the ministry in order to maintain itself in power.[3] Even ecclesiastical historians have endorsed this view. Norman Sykes, for example, described Newcastle's patronage system as a 'promiscuous and complicated game of barter', in which the interests of the Church were repeatedly sacrificed to the needs of parliamentary management.[4]

But eighteenth-century politics consisted of more than the struggle for power. Men did not enter politics simply for what they could gain. Nor, for the most part, did they do so because they wished to change society, or to preserve it from change. Politicians were not primarily concerned with legislation and reform, but with the business of government. Newcastle and others of his class entered politics because they believed that they had a responsibility to assist in the government of the state, whether merely as justices of the peace in their own counties, as members of one of the houses of parliament, or as ministers of the crown.[5] Administration was inseparable from politics. Because of this, because posts in the civil administration were filled with the nominees of politicians, it was inevitable that the bureaucracy of the eighteenth-century state was politicised. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the demands of party politics and parliamentary management were an integral part of the patronage system. But, as the first part of this chapter points out, at least as far as Newcastle's ecclesiastical appointments were concerned,

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1 Edward Cobden, *An essay tending to promote religion* (London, 1755), p. 39.

2 *Memoirs of a royal chaplain, 1729-63. The correspondence of Edmund Pyle, D.D. chaplain in ordinary to George II, with Samuel Kerrich, D.D., vicar of Dersingham, rector of Wolferton, and rector of West Newton*, ed. Albert Hartshorne (London, 1905), p. 218: Pyle to Kerrich, 8 Oct. 1754. Quoted above, cpt. 4, p. 70.

3 In their debate over the nature and efficacy of patronage both J.H. Plumb and J.B. Owen shared this assumption. Whatever its importance as a condition for a ministry's survival, whether it is seen as 'private charity' or as 'public corruption', its purpose was managerial. See J.B. Owen, 'Political patronage in eighteenth-century England', in *The triumph of culture: eighteenth-century perspectives*, ed. P. Fritz and D. Williams (Toronto, 1972), pp. 369-87; J.H. Plumb, *The growth of political stability in England 1675-1725* (London, 1967), pp. 188-9.

4 Norman Sykes, *Church and state in England in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1934), p. 175; idem, 'The duke of Newcastle as ecclesiastical minister', *E.H.R.*, LVII (1942), 59-84.

5 E.g., Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, *Life of William earl of Shelburne* (2nd edn., 2 vols., London, 1918), I, 88: Fitzmaurice to Bute, 23 Apr. 1761.

management is at best a partial explanation of his disposal of patronage.

The rest of the chapter argues that it was not party politics, but politics understood as the business of government, that dominated Newcastle's ecclesiastical policy. The Church was not just a source of jobs. It was also an agent of the state, an integral part of the domestic administrative system. The peace, prosperity and security of the state were dependent on its activities.[6] Theological considerations were given little emphasis by Newcastle. He did not ignore the spiritual interests of the Church. On the contrary, he was acutely aware of its role as an independent society charged with the salvation of men's souls and he was anxious to show himself sensitive to the concerns and preoccupations of the Church's leaders. But his ecclesiastical policy was not directed at a fundamental change in the nature of the Church. Rather, his first objective was to ensure that the Church performed its secular functions as the provider and organizer of charity, as the educator of the nation's youth, and as the inculcator of doctrines of loyalty, obedience, and morality. He sought to implement this policy not by reform which, even if necessary, was undesirable. Church reform, the ministry believed, would provoke political controversy and thus be counter-productive.[7] Newcastle turned instead to patronage as an instrument of policy. He sought to promote men who were loyal to the Hanoverian succession, and thus would preach the duty of loyalty to the regime, and who would be diligent in performing the other duties of clergymen. In particular, he nominated as bishops men of pastoral and administrative ability, those most capable of governing the clergy and providing leadership for the Church both as a spiritual and, in particular, as a political institution.

Patronage and parliamentary management

No one would deny the time and attention devoted by Newcastle to ecclesiastical affairs. Ample testimony to this is provided by his papers; over 25% of the letters preserved in the domestic series of his correspondence for the years when he was secretary of state are concerned, at least in part, with the Church. The vast majority of these, moreover, discuss the distribution of patronage.[8] No political historian, however, has treated his ecclesiastical patronage as a separate subject. Church preferments are seen as just one more group of jobs distributed by Newcastle, as by all eighteenth-century politicians, to gain and maintain support. Like places and pensions they were exploited in two distinct ways. On the one hand parochial livings and canonries, like places in the customs service, were used for 'rewarding powerful lay politicians' by bestowing them upon their clients.[9] On the other hand they were the reward for loyal political service by the clergy, bishoprics being especially important as a source of 'dependable pro-ministerial voting

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6 The role of the Church as part of the state apparatus is discussed in chapter 6.

7 See chapter 9 below.

8 The domestic correspondence for 1724-54 is contained in B.L. Add. MSS 32687-32737.

9 Richard Pares, *King George III and the politicians* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 24-5; Roy Porter, *English society in the eighteenth century* (Harmondsworth, 1982), p. 184.

fodder in the House of Lords'.[10] To view ecclesiastical patronage simply as a tool of parliamentary management, however, is a fundamental misunderstanding of the role of the patronage system in eighteenth-century politics and government.

In the first place, the patronage of a church living was regarded as a property right. But that right carried with it an obligation, and contemporary discussions of the nature of patronage emphasized its character 'as a *Trust*'.[11] In 1734 the *Weekly Miscellany* wrote that patrons were trustees in three respects: 'They are Trustees for the *Clergy*, who *dedicate* themselves to the Office of the *Priesthood*; they are Trustees for the *People*, for whose Happiness *they* were dedicated, and the *Priesthood* appointed; they are Trustees for *Religion*, whose Interest and Honour ought to be promoted, as far as may be, by the Administrations of the Clergy'.[12] The practical implications of this view were set out by Bishop Pearce on his arrival in the diocese of Bangor. Promising his clergy to discharge faithfully the trust placed in him as patron of a large number of parochial livings, he assured them that the best recommendation to his favour would be 'Good Learning & a good Life, joynd to Diligence in the discharge of their Duty'.[13] The corollary of this concept of patronage was, as Edward Bentham pointed out, 'that Posts of Honour and Employment are Objects of a very laudable Ambition' - an interesting comment on place-seeking.[14]

Such discussions of the duties of patrons were rare. Pamphleteers took up the issue only when they believed that the trust was being disregarded. The article in the *Weekly Miscellany*, for instance, appeared in the context of the controversy over the appointment to the bishopric of Gloucester of Thomas Rundle, who was accused of socinian tendencies. Moreover, few politicians appear in their correspondence to be concerned about the faithful discharge of their trust, although in early 1743 Henry Liddell, later baron Ravensworth, spent weeks agonizing over the choice of a suitable clergyman to recommend for the living of Whittingham.[15] But it should not, therefore, be supposed that most patrons paid scant regard to the obligations incumbent on them. It is important to remember that the vast majority of the political nation were practising members of the Church of England, aware of the purpose for which the livings in their gift had been

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10 Porter, *English society*, pp. 77, 129; J.H. Plumb, *England in the eighteenth century* (Harmondsworth, 1950), pp. 42-4; J.B. Owen, *The eighteenth century. 1714-1815* (London, 1974), pp. 153-4; H.T. Dickinson, *Walpole and the whig supremacy* (London, 1973), pp. 79-80; Sykes, *Church and state*, pp. 63-5.

11 William Webster, *A treatise on places and preferments, especially church-preferments* (London, 1757), p. 15.

12 *The Weekly Miscllany*, LXXXII, 6 July 1734, p. 1.

13 Westminster Abbey Library and Muniment Room, Pearce Papers, WAM 64862, fols. 7-8: Charge delivered at the primary visitation at Bangor, 1749. Cf., WAM 64864, fol. 8: Charge delivered at the primary visitation at Rochester, 1757.

14 Edward Bentham, *A letter to a fellow of a college. Being the sequel of a letter to a young gentleman of Oxford* (London, 1749), p. 64. Cf. John Spry who claimed that the pursuit of 'Honours of Apostolical Institution' was 'Innocent at least'. *A sermon preached in Lambeth Chapel at the consecration of the right reverend fathers in God, John, lord bishop of Bristol, and John, lord bishop of Bangor, on Sunday, July 4. 1756* (Oxford, n.d.), p. 17.

15 Edward Hughes, *North country life in the eighteenth century. The north-east, 1700-50* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 337-40.

instituted.[16] That patronage was a trust was an unspoken assumption, which it was only necessary to articulate occasionally.

Because patronage was a trust, it was seen to be the duty of patrons to favour deserving men. Doing so, moreover, brought them credit. Newcastle and Hardwicke received numerous letters from clergymen expressing the hope that they would not 'discredit' their recommendations.[17] The disposal of crown patronage, therefore, was important to the standing of politicians, not only in the crude equation of political support in return for favours received, but also because its bestowal on worthy and deserving objects enhanced their reputation. The earl of Macclesfield made this point explicitly. When supporting the nomination of Thomas Hunt for the Hebrew professorship at Oxford, he referred to his recommendation of James Bradley to be astronomer royal in succession to Halley. This appointment, he claimed, had given general satisfaction at home and abroad and 'has done great credit to the Persons who appointed him, as well as to those who recommended him'.[18]

In the second place, the only way in which patrons could inform themselves of deserving clergymen was through personal knowledge or personal recommendation. It was for this reason that the post of tutor to a nobleman's son was so valued. If performed well it was a guarantee of future preferment.[19] Thus Newcastle and Hardwicke relied on the recommendations of others to inform them of proper candidates for livings in the gift of the crown. The smaller the livings and the further from London, the more ministers were dependent upon information from others. Conversely, the natural channnel for applications to be made and forwarded to ministers was through those who were acquainted with them, particularly lords lieutenant and members of parliament. When Newcastle commented on the number of recommendations he received from Thomas Townshend, the member of parliament for Cambridge University, Townshend defended himself on precisely these grounds, arguing that, as he 'served in parliament for a corporation consisting chiefly of Clergymen', his frequent solicitations for church preferments could not be regarded as improper.[20] In the opinion both of those ministers responsible for nominations to crown livings and of those who wished to be preferred to them, recommendations were best made through local politicians who were acquainted with both.

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16 See above, cpt. 2, pp. 35-7, for some comments on lay piety. In this context the statement of Edmund Burke, though dating from the 1790s, is significant. He claimed that 'we prefer the Protestant [system of religion]; not because we think it has less of the Christian religion in it, but because, in our judgment, it has more. We are Protestants, not from indifference but from zeal'. 'Reflections on the revolution in France, and on the proceedings of certain societies in London relative to that event', in *The works of Edmund Burke* (Bohn Library edn., 6 vols., London, 1854-69), II, 362-3.

17 E.g., B.L. Add. 32732, fol. 445: Bishop Johnson to Newcastle, 11 Aug. 1753; Add. 35598, fols. 5-6: Bishop Herring to Hardwicke, 22 Dec. 1737.

18 B.L. Add 32712, fols. 171-2: Macclesfield to Newcastle, 20 July 1747. Bradley was astronomer royal between 1742 and 1762. For an assessment of his work see Eric G. Forbes, *Greenwich Observatory. I. Origins and early history (1675-1835)* (London, 1975), especially pp. 97-8.

19 E.g., John Hume, tutor to Newcastle's nephew, Lord Lincoln, and John Ewer, tutor to the earl of Granby, both of whom became bishops.

20 B.L. Add. 32724, fol. 494: Townshend to Newcastle, 30 July 1751.

In many cases, a member of parliament can only be discovered to have made one application to Newcastle or Hardwicke, and then for a living either in or neighbouring his constituency or estate. Edward Thompson[21] applied in 1741 for the rectory of Welton; Sir William Wentworth[22] for Felkirk; William Levinz[23] for Epworth in 1746; Sir John Abdy[24] for Fobbing in 1750; Samuel Kent[25] for Hitcham in 1753; Charles Gore[26] for the mastership of the free school at Berkhamsted in 1753.[27] Similarly, in 1749 Robert Bristow, M.P. for New Shoreham, recommended Mr Morrison for the vicarage of Eastwood, which lay in the middle of his estate, and in 1750 John Campbell, although M.P. for Nairnshire, asked for the presentation to Narbeth, which lay near his estate in Pembrokeshire.[28] The application of Levinz is particularly interesting. He was persuaded to withdraw his pretensions when the duke of Leeds applied for the living for John Hay, but with a promise to his nominee, Hutton, of preferment when something suitable fell vacant. In 1753 Hutton solicited him for the living of Wadingham in Lincolnshire. Levinz, however, in acquainting Newcastle of this, assured him that he realized Newcastle would probably wish to dispose of it at the recommendation of the 'Lincolnshire gentlemen'.[29]

Noble and powerful gentry families could be more demanding. But their applications also display striking regional characteristics. The marquis of Rockingham and Lord Irwin, lords lieutenant of Yorkshire, applied only for livings in that county; as did earl Brooke, the lord lieutenant of Warwickshire, and the duke of Dorset, lord lieutenant of Kent.[30] The earl of Powis was one of the most frequent solicitors of crown livings, but he too restricted them to Shropshire, of which he was lord lieutenant, and north Wales, especially Montgomeryshire, where he possessed large estates.[31] Nor did he make any claim to monopolize government patronage in Shropshire, declining on one occasion to 'interfere' with the application of Sir Orlando

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21 M.P. for York.

22 M.P. for Malton.

23 M.P. for Nottinghamshire.

24 M.P. for Essex.

25 M.P. for Ipswich.

26 M.P. for Hertfordshire.

27 B.L. Add. 32697, fols. 29, 82: Edward Thompson to Newcastle 21, 26 May 1741; ibid., fol. 269: Sir William Wentworth to Newcastle, 2 July 1741; Add. 32706, fols. 57-8: William Levinz to Newcastle, 28 Jan. 1746; Add. 32720, fols. 65-6: Sir John Abdy to Newcastle, Jan. 1750; Add. 32733, fols. 158-9: Herring to Newcastle, 29 Oct. 1753; Add. 32732, fols. 61-2: Charles Gore to Newcastle, n.d.[1753].

28 B.L. Add. 35590, fols. 248-9: Robert Bristow to Hardwicke, 8 Feb. 1749; Add. 35598, fols. 398-400: Herring to Hardwicke, 7 Feb. 1749; Add. 32720, fols. 131-2: John Campbell to Newcastle, 9 Feb. 1750; Add. 32723, fols. 262-3: Campbell to Newcastle, 12 Nov. 1750.

29 B.L. Add. 32706, fol. 95: duke of Leeds to Newcastle, 3 Feb. 1746; Add. 32731, fols. 365-6: Levinz to Newcastle, 12 Apr. 1753.

30 B.L. Add. 32732, fols. 522-3, 609-10: Rockingham to Newcastle, 27 Aug., 5 Sept. 1753; Add. 35592, fols. 367-8: Rockingham to Hardwicke, 13 June 1754; Add. 32698, fols. 263-4, 325-6: Irwin to Newcastle, 4, 16 Nov. 1741; Add. 32699, fols. 103-4: Irwin to Newcastle, 10 Mar. 1742; Add. 32704, fols. 89-90, 113-4: Irwin to Newcastle, 24 Feb., 6 Mar. 1745; Add. 32719, fols. 212-13: Irwin to Newcastle, 21 Oct. 1749; Add. 32713, fol. 319: Brooke to Newcastle, 25 Oct. 1747; Add. 32721, fols. 173-4, 287-8, 495-6: Brooke to Newcastle, 26 June, 6 July, 28 July 1750; Add. 32725, fols. 408-10: Brooke to Newcastle, 15 Nov. 1751; B.L. Add. 32701, fol. 230: Dorset to Newcastle, 2 Nov. 1743; Add. 35591, fols. 328-9: Dorset to Hardwicke, 5 May 1752.

31 B.L. Add. 32704, fol. 445: Powis to Newcastle, 1 July 1745; Add. 32707, fol. 55: Powis to Newcastle, 14 Apr. 1746; Add. 32732, fols. 586-7, 657-8: Powis to Newcastle, Aug. 1753, 16 Sept. 1753; Pearce Papers, WAM 64535, Newcastle to Pearce, 12 Sept. 1755.

Bridgeman, another Shropshire landowner and son-in-law to the previous lord lieutenant, the last earl of Bradford, for the living of Kinnerly.[32] Recommendations like that of the Cheshire magnate, the earl of Cholmondeley, for the living of Great Marlow were few and far between.

In many cases these letters of recommendation from lords lieutenant and members of parliament were merely communicating the applications of others who had no acquaintance with the ministers. Indeed, sometimes they felt obliged to forward such applications even though they were unwilling to support them themselves. The earl of Coventry was quite candid about this practice. He sent Newcastle a letter from Dr Nash, asking for a recommendation for the deanery of Worcester. He did indeed give Nash an excellent character, claiming he was a good whig 'of uncommon Learning and Merit', but added that if Newcastle was engaged to anyone else 'I shou'd take it as a favour to receive such a Letter from your Grace, as may convince Dr Nash of the sincerity of my Recommendation'.[33] Few patrons were so ingenuous. In 1752 the earl of Winchilsea made a strong application for the prebend of Durham vacant by Bishop Benson's death for his brother-in-law, Marriott. Henry Pelham, however, made some inquiries into the matter, and was able to assure his brother that Winchilsea's letter was 'nothing', and that he was 'not much concern'd' about it, being far more anxious not to be disappointed in anything for himself.[34]

Many contemporaries were aware of the shortcomings of the patronage system. In the early 1720s, for example, Bishop Gibson drew up a scheme for the more equitable and effective management of crown livings, suggesting that they should be bestowed only upon clergymen officiating within the diocese where the vacancy occurred or who were members of one of the universities and natives of that diocese. To this end he also proposed that the patronage of the lord chancellor and the duchy of Lancaster should be transferred to the king himself. As a result Lord Chancellor King threw his considerable influence against Gibson and his scheme was defeated.[35] It is not clear, however, that the distribution of patronage by diocese was not the normal practice, at least in the period 1742-62. As has been shown, recommendations usually came only from those with local knowledge. Newcastle, moreover, made it a general rule that such recommendations should have priority, informing the marquess of Rockingham that he felt obliged to give preference to a clergyman suggested by the duke of Grafton for a living in Suffolk.[36] Gibson had also hoped that his scheme would have encouraged the ministry to rely on the bishops for advice about deserving clergy. This, it is true, did not happen, although the

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32 B.L. Add. 35592, fols. 335-6: Powis to Hardwicke, 29 Apr. 1754.

33 B.L. Add. 32725, fols. 225-6: Coventry to Newcastle, 9 Oct. 1751; ibid., fols. 257-8: Nash to Coventry, 8 Sept. 1751.

34 B.L. Add. 32730, fols. 1-2: Winchilsea to Newcastle, 1 Oct. 1752; ibid., fols. 144, 183: Pelham to Newcastle, 19, 27 October 1752. It is within this context that Newcastle's applications to the archbishop of York for a prebend of Southwell in 1750 are best understood [see above, cpt. 4, p. 72]. It was natural for Charlton and Thornhagh, who were probably unacquainted with Hutton, to make their applications to him through their lord lieutenant and political ally.

35 Sykes, *Gibson*, pp. 110-12.

36 B.L. Add. 32876, fol. 104: Newcastle to Rockingham, 24 Nov. 1757.

ecclesiastical hierarchy, and especially the archdeacons, could have been utilized to provide an effective intelligence network.[37] But the Church had its own patronage, and bishops certainly relied on their brethren and other clergy for recommendations in the disposal of their livings.[38] Many prominent laymen would have objected to the extension of episcopal influence. They did not believe that the bishops were better qualified than themselves to judge the merit of a clergyman, and they were suspicious of any hint of clericalism, which, they feared, would undermine the essentially lay character of the Church of England.[39]

The rationale of the patronage system was, therefore, primarily functional. In the absence of any system of competitive examinations it performed an indispensable role in the business of government, the filling of vacancies in both the Church and the civil administration. The vesting of patronage in the hands of ministers of the crown and the reliance on personal recommendations, however, politicised the system and ensured that considerations of party politics could never be entirely divorced from patronage.

Firstly, places tended to be bestowed upon ministerial whigs. Tories and dissident whigs were not excluded from consideration by Newcastle. On the contrary, numerous examples can be found of his promotion of men linked with his political opponents. On the one hand, he promoted Jonathan Fountayne, 'the first Whig of a very Tory Family', to the deanery of York. He secured a canonry of Christ Church for Richard Newton, the principal of Hertford and former tutor of Henry Pelham, who had been 'always wt they call a Tory, but never a Jacobite'.[40] He recommended William Richardson, the master of Emmanuel, for a royal chaplaincy, despite vocal protests from some of his parliamentary supporters. If Newcastle had hoped that he would be tempted away from the opposition in Cambridge as a result, he was to be disappointed. Soon afterwards Richardson became one of the managers of the Prince of Wales's campaign for the chancellorship.[41] On the other hand, in 1739 Zachary Pearce was promoted to the deanery of Winchester, and thence in 1748 to the bishopric of Bangor, although his patron, the earl of Bath, was on both occasions in opposition to the ministry. Finally, in 1757 he received the bishopric of Rochester and deanery of Westminster, which, Pearce claimed, he accepted only at Newcastle's personal and particular request.[42] Newcastle also, admittedly after many delays, secured first a prebend of Westminster and then the bishopric of Bristol for another of Bath's clients, Thomas Newton, in spite of the warning he had received from Pelham that he was 'not a man you will

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37 But Newcastle and Hardwicke often made inquiries through the bishops about the merit of clergymen recommended for preferment. See below, pp. 115-16.

38 E.g., Pearce Papers, WAM 64652: Bishop Sherlock to Pearce, 26 June 1737.

39 For an extreme statement of this opinion see [Thomas Gordon], *A letter to the reverend Dr Codex, on the subject of his modest instruction to the crown, inserted in the Daily Journal of Feb. 27th 1733* (London, 1734), pp. 16-19. See also Sir Michael Foster, *An examination of the scheme of church-power, laid down in the Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani, &c.* (London, 1735), pp. 67-9.

40 B.L. Add. 32730, fol. 182: Pelham to Newcastle, 27 Oct 1752.

41 B.L. Add. 32703, fol. 59: Gooch to Newcastle, 21 May 1744; Add. 35590, fol. 88: Dupplin to Hardwicke, n.d. [1748]; Add. 35598, fol. 228: Herring to Hardwicke, 16 Sept. 1746.

42 'The life of Dr Zachary Pearce', in *The lives of Dr Edward Pocock . . . by Dr Twells; of Dr Zachary Pearce . . . and of Dr Thomas Newton . . . by themselves; and of the Rev. Philip Skelton, by Mr Bundy* (2 vols., London, 1816), i, 401-2.

get credit, among the Whigs, by providing for'.[43] Similarly, in 1751, the posts of judge of the prerogative court of Canterbury and dean of the arches fell vacant. The most distinguished civil lawyer of the period was Sir George Lee, who, until the death of the Prince of Wales, had been one of the leaders of the Leicester House opposition. Nonetheless, with the approval of Newcastle and Hardwicke, Thomas Herring, the archbishop of Canterbury, appointed him to both, asking 'no return, but . . . a faithful discharge of the great Trust & the Advice . . . of an honest & able Friend'.[44]

The majority of church preferments were bestowed on ministerialists, therefore, not because Newcastle adopted a vigorous policy of exclusion, but because tory peers and members of parliament in particular neither were prepared to petition, nor had close social contacts with, whig ministers. Equally, clergymen with tory sympathies were averse to begging favours from local whigs. Even if the ministry did not demand unwavering support in return for preferment, clients were generally recognized to be under some obligation to their patrons. The complex operation of the patron-client relationship is partly revealed in Zachary Pearce's recollection of a conversation with his patron and friend, William Pulteney, on his promotion to the deanery of Winchester. Pulteney, he reports, said to him:

> 'Doctor Pearce, though you may think that others besides Sir Robert [Walpole] have contributed to get you this dignity, you may depend on it, that he is all in all, and that you owe it entirely to his good will towards you. And therefore as I am engaged in opposition to him, it may happen that some who are of our party, may, if there should be any opposition for Members of Parliament at Winchester, prevail upon me to desire you to act there in assistance of some friends of ours; and Sir Robert, at the same time, may ask your assistance in the election for a friend of his own against one whom we recommend. I tell you, therefore, before-hand, that if you comply with my request rather than with Sir Robert's, to whom you are so very much obliged, I shall have the worse opinion of you.'[45]

Secondly, it was easy for considerations of parliamentary management to be dragged into patronage affairs. For those politicians who were prepared to petition ministers for places, for those who linked themselves to the ministerial patronage network, it was important to be successful. The interest of such men was damaged by the repeated failure of their recommendations; their clients would turn to other patrons. For precisely the same reason that Newcastle was worried about the promotion of John Thomas on the nomination of Lord Carteret in 1743 or about the delay in Trevor's appointment to the bishopric of Durham in 1752, members of parliament were concerned if the candidate of a rival local interest was preferred to theirs. Just as, on occasions, Newcastle saw church appointments as an important symbol of his interest in the closet, so his supporters saw them as signs of their credit with the ministry.

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[43] 'The life of Dr Thomas Newton', in *The lives of Pocock, Pearce, Newton and Skelton*, II, 101-3; B.L. Add. 32730, fol. 183: Pelham to Newcastle, 27 Oct. 1752.

[44] B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 54: Herring to Lee, 18 Dec. 1751; Add. 32725, fols. 511-13: Herring to Lee, 18 Dec. 1751.

[45] 'Life of Pearce', p. 392. Winchester was not contested in 1741.

The problems caused for Newcastle in the disposal of patronage because of the emphasis placed by politicians on the fate of their recommendations as a demonstration of their credit with the ministry emerged clearly in the application of earl Gower and Lord Anson in 1750, while Newcastle was in Hanover, for a prebend of Worcester for Thomas Hinton. At the end of 1749 Newcastle had promised, 'as far, as it depended upon me', to obtain the next prebend of Worcester for Lewis Crusius, the master of Charterhouse. This promise was given to the duke of Marlborough and Lord Bateman, who were becoming uneasy at the delay in Crusius' preferment. Nonetheless Bateman was still concerned that the duke's warning about the difficulty of obtaining prebends for clergymen who were not king's chaplains implied that he was less than fully committed to Crusius' cause.[46] Consequently, Newcastle's situation was difficult when, soon after receiving a letter from Bateman reminding him of his promise, he received one from earl Gower, enclosing an application from Hinton for a prebend of Worcester, adding 'that this long neglect of a Man of so good an interest must be highly detrimental to the Whig interest' in Lichfield, where Gower and Anson were attempting to establish their influence against the tories.[47] His predicament was not improved by two other applications, from George Harrison, M.P. for Hertford, and from Lord Deerhurst, although both were of later date and less weight than Gower's.

In the first instance he replied to Gower suggesting the second vacancy at Worcester, or one of Canterbury with the concurrence of the archbishop.[48] But this did not satisfy Gower and Anson, and Newcastle received a series of letters from Pelham, Hardwicke and Herring relating their displeasure. Herring reported that Gower and Anson were united 'in considering & pressing it on yr Grace as of the last consequence, That Hinton be immediately taken care of'.[49] Hardwicke was more explicit about the implications of refusing them. He told Newcastle that Gower thought it a great blow 'to his Credit in Staffordshire', which exposed him to 'Reproach & Ridicule', and commented ominously 'I would the rather wish him in present good humour with you'.[50] Two letters from his brother, however, must have been particularly irritating to Newcastle. Pelham accepted Gower's statement, that his application predated that of Bateman, and, having disclaimed all interest in church preferments, added that 'Lord Gower deserves better of the King than all of them put together'.[51] As Newcastle commented with annoyance to Hardwicke, Pelham had approved the promise to Bateman. He concluded the same letter with the plea, 'Get me out of the

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[46] B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 476: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 27 July 1750; Add. 32719, fols. 229-30: Bateman to Newcastle, 8 Oct. 1749; ibid., fols. 239-40: Newcastle to Bateman, 13 Oct. 1749; ibid., fols. 253-4: Bateman to Newcastle, 15 Oct. 1749.

[47] B.L. Add. 32720, fols. 225-6: Bateman to Newcastle, 17 Apr. 1750; Add. 32721, fol. 135: Gower to Newcastle, 21 June 1750; ibid., fols. 137-8: Hinton to Gower, 13 June 1750.

[48] B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 221-2: Newcastle to Gower, 4 July 1750; Add. 32720, fols. 437-8: Deerhurst to Newcastle, 31 May 1750; Add. 32721, fols. 99-100: Newcastle to Deerhurst, 12 June 1750; ibid., fols. 202-5: Deerhurst to Newcastle, 30 June 1750.

[49] B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 347-8: Herring to Newcastle, 12 July 1750.

[50] B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 417: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 20 July 1750.

[51] B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 361-2: Pelham to Newcastle, 13 July 1750; Add. 32722, fol. 34: Pelham to Newcastle, 3 Aug. 1750.

Scrape with Gower & Anson; or, at least, let others share it with me'.[52] However, this should not be interpreted as a 'private and despairing' plea to others to extricate him from the consequences of his own machinations.[53] Rather it was a request to Hardwicke, as 'a common Friend' to both parties, to act as an intermediary. For accompanying the private letter with this plea, was a long second letter to Hardwicke, clearly written to be shown to Gower if necessary, containing the basis for an accommodation. After defending himself as to dates, which, as Pelham remarked, 'seem to have a good deal to do in this dispute', and explaining the strength of his engagement to Bateman, he offered to recommend Hinton either for the second vacancy at Worcester, or, as that was unlikely to be worth the wait, the first prebend of Windsor, Westminster or Canterbury, providing he had the concurrence of all the king's servants.[54] Gower and Anson accepted these proposals, and Hinton was made a canon of Windsor in 1751, nearly a year before a prebend of Worcester fell vacant to provide for Crusius.

The importance of managerial considerations in the disposal of patronage was also accentuated when recommendations from rival groups of local politicians conflicted. In October 1747 the earl of Orford applied to Newcastle for the living of Buckland Brewer in Devon, for one of his chaplains when it became vacant. The incumbent dying, his application was followed by others from Thomas Benson, M.P. for Barnstaple, and Lord Rolle, who was supported by Sir Bourchier Wrey, the other member for Barnstaple. Orford had little regard for Rolle and Wrey, former tories who had gone over to the ministry on Walpole's fall. Moreover, he doubted the genuineness of their conversion, 'Lord Rolles haveing given but one Vote since he was a Peer [in January 1748] and that against the Court'.[55] The dispute rapidly escalated from one about a presentation to a small Devon living, into one about Devon politics and the interest of Orford, Rolle and Wrey in the county.[56] Newcastle was caught in the middle as both staked their credit with the ministry on the outcome. For Wrey the issue was whether Orford should be allowed two successive presentations to the same living, 'each Time in Prejudice to my Self & . . . against The Interest & Inclination of a whole County'. He reminded Newcastle of his services to the government and argued that his electoral interest would be damaged if he were disappointed:

> How contemptible Then must I appear my Lord In the Face of all Those Gentlemen, who I ventured to oppose In Person at The Late Elections for Both Exeter & Barnstaple, & In Both Places, with some Honor perhaps & encrease of Interest to The Friends of The Gover'ment, & at no inconsiderable expence to my Self & my Relations, if I do not appear to merit from your Grace, some Little Preference to Those, who neither on Those, or occasions of much higher Importance Have given us The least Assistance in that Country.[57]

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52 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 483: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 27 July 1750.

53 Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 175.

54 B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 473-82: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 27 July 1750.

55 B.L. Add. 32715, fol. 154: Orford to Newcastle, 4 June 1748; Romney Sedgwick (ed), *The house of commons 1715-54* (2 vols., London, 1970), II, 391, 558.

56 B.L. Add. 32713, fol. 290: Orford to Newcastle, 20 Oct. 1747; Add. 32714, fol. 65: Rolle to Newcastle, 17 Jan. 1748; ibid., fol. 88: T. Benson to Newcastle, 17 Jan. 1748; ibid., fol. 307: Wrey to Newcastle, 5 Mar. 1748.

57 B.L. Add. 32715, fols. 146-7: Wrey to Newcastle, 2 June 1748.

Orford, on the other hand, was furious that 'two such insignificant Fellows as These', who had little influence in Devon, should be placed in competition with him. He reminded Newcastle that at the last election he had chosen eight members of parliament, 'without putting the Government to One shilling expence'. He argued that the point now in dispute was 'wither [sic] these two Gentlemen or myself, have the greatest Weight with Your Grace, and the rest of the Administration', and threatened to resign as lord lieutenant if their interest was preferred.[58] Newcastle succeeded in calming the troubled waters, and an agreement was reached to keep the living vacant until another became available and both candidates could be provided for together. But the affair was still simmering at the end of 1748.[59]

Considerations of party politics also impinged on patronage in another way. As both the ministry and members of parliament knew well, parsons could be important as electoral agents. Thus, when Henry Pelham forwarded to Newcastle a recommendation he had received from the earl of Cholmondeley, he added the comment that 'it is proper in a corporation town to consider who you place there'.[60] A committed clergyman was capable of swinging an election, and Pelham's especial concern in this case is not surprising. Marlow was a particularly volatile constituency which witnessed a contested election in 1754.

The importance of 'recommendations from persons you daily want for the conduct of affairs',[61] therefore, was not lost on Newcastle. The risk of offending ministerial supporters could not be taken lightly, but it is not obvious that the interests of the Church were subordinated to the demands of parliamentary management. Indeed, it would be surprising if they had been, since the widespread acceptance of patronage as a trust meant that it was worthy, not merely successful, recommendations which reflected credit on the patron. It is clear from Newcastle's correspondence with Gower and Anson that Hinton was destined to receive a crown prebend in the near future. Their veiled threats merely accelerated the preferment for which he was already a candidate. Where more detailed investigation into the standing of clergymen is possible, merit can be seen to have been a prerequisite for preferment, whatever the political claims of either the patron or his candidate. When the duke of Marlborough applied for a canonry of Windsor for Erasmus Saunders in 1751, his only concern appeared to be his own political interest at Windsor and in Oxfordshire. Newcastle, however, did not know Saunders and questioned his suitability for such a preferment. Marlborough replied that he had an excellent character, and assured Newcastle that 'if there is any Bishop on the bench that has heard of Mr Saunders & does not give him a good character both as a man & as a parson I beg he may not have this or any other

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58 B.L. Add. 32715, fol. 154: Orford to Newcastle, 4 June 1748.

59 B.L. Add. 32717, fols. 365, 538-9: Wrey to Newcastle, 29 Nov., 26 Dec. 1748. It is not altogether clear how this affair was accommodated. Ashburton and Peter's Tavy were the livings that fell vacant at the end of 1748 and provided the means of satisfying both patrons. But a letter from Edward Walpole six months later talked of Newcastle's promise to present his nominee to Ashburton. Add. 32718, fols. 324-5: Edward Walpole to Newcastle, 14 June 1749.

60 B.L. Add. 32730, fol. 198: Pelham to Newcastle, 3 Nov. 1752; ibid., fols. 169-70: Cholmondeley to Newcastle, 27 Oct. 1752; Add. 32731, fols. 123-5: Cholmondeley to Newcastle, Jan. 1753.

61 B.L. Add. 32853, fol. 336: Bentinck to Newcastle, 18 Mar. 1755.

preferment'.[62]

Even in those preferments which at first sight owed most to party politics merit was not ignored. In 1753 Henry Pelham told his brother that Sir Kenrick Clayton was staking all his interest on obtaining a prebend for Dr John Thomas. Pelham reminded Newcastle that Clayton 'has a borough absolutely of his own, and is of great use in choosing two Members att [sic] Marlow, besides his interest in other places', and expressed concern that if he was disappointed he might be tempted into opposition.[63] The prebend of Westminster that was bestowed upon Thomas in April 1754 could easily be seen as a political nomination. But Thomas was 'a thoroughly conscientious man, well worthy of respect', who later became dean of Westminster and bishop of Rochester.[64] Moreover, the rise in the Church of Josiah Tucker, first to a prebend of Bristol and then to the deanery of Gloucester, might appear as one of the most blatantly political advancements of the century. Tucker was a leading figure in the whig Union Club of Bristol, and was a prominent and active supporter of Robert Nugent and the whig interest there in the elections of 1754 and 1756. It was Tucker's political merit that Nugent stressed when applying for preferment for him to Newcastle and Hardwicke.[65] But Tucker was also one of the foremost political economists of the century and, more relevantly, contemporaries thought highly of him as a churchman. He was reckoned 'an excellent parish-priest, and an exemplary dean in keeping his residence and performing his duty', and it was a matter for praise that he wrote 'over 300 sermons and preached them all again and again'.[66]

Parliamentary management was, therefore, an integral and unavoidable part of the patronage system, but it was not its rationale. The problems of soothing ruffled pride and arranging accommodations between rival groups of ministerial supporters do not represent the bulk of Newcastle's ecclesiastical correspondence. That considerations of party politics were of only secondary importance is equally evident if episcopal appointments are examined.

The view that bishops were no more than ministerial voting fodder was common among contemporaries, as well as historians. Opposition politicians claimed that ministers used the promise of advancement to richer and more prestigious sees as a bribe with which to corrupt the bench. Consequently a bill to prevent the translation of bishops was brought into the house of commons in 1731 with the avowed intention of lessening their dependence on the ministry.[67] Half a century later the same belief informed the ideas of Richard Watson. His proposals to make the revenue and patronage of bishoprics more equal were intended to increase episcopal independence

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62 B.L. Add. 32724, fols. 79-80, 328: Marlborough to Newcastle, 19 Jan., 2 June 1751. Saunders was not given the canonry of Windsor, but became a prebendary of Worcester in December 1751.

63 B.L. Add. 32731, fol. 422: Pelham to Newcastle, 5 May 1753.

64 C.J. Abbey, *The English church and its bishops 1700-1800* (2 vols., London, 1887), II, 75.

65 Sir Lewis Namier and John Brooke (eds), *The house of commons 1754-90* (3 vols., London, 1964), I, 283-4; B.L. Add. 32736, fols. 133-4: Nugent to Newcastle, 1 Aug. 1754; Add. 35594, fols. 215-6: Nugent to Hardwicke, 27 Sept. 1756; Add. 32866, fol. 324: Newcastle to Nugent, 31 July 1756.

66 'Life of Newton', pp. 107-8; George Shelton, *Dean Tucker and eighteenth-century economic and political thought* (London, 1981), p. 165; B.L. Add. 35590, fols. 277-8: J. Foster to Hardwicke, 20 Apr. 1749.

67 Sykes, *Gibson*, pp. 149-50; Linda Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy. The tory party 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 106.

in the house of lords. They were framed not so much as a plan of ecclesiastical reform, but more as part of the political campaign for economical reform.[68] The basis of this opposition critique - the tendency of bishops to support the ministry of the day - cannot be denied. But it is not so clear that that support was gained by the deliberate exploitation of the patronage at ministers' disposal.[69]

Firstly, an examination of episcopal careers hardly suggests the systematic use of translation as a tool of parliamentary management. Multiple translations were rare. Of the fifty-six bishops who sat on the bench between 1742 and 1762, only one, Benjamin Hoadly, was translated three times. Appointed bishop of Bangor in 1715 he rose rapidly in the Church, passing through the sees of Hereford and Salisbury before his elevation to the bishopric of Winchester in 1734. A further twelve were translated twice. Eight were removed for a second time to one of the five major sees of Canterbury, York, London, Durham and Winchester.[70] One went to Salisbury, which Thomas Sherlock reckoned as valuable as London.[71] Two went to Ely, another rich see, considered especially important because of the relation it bore to Cambridge University, and translation to it was always regarded as the prerogative of the senior Cambridge-educated bishop on the bench not possessed of better preferment.[72] This leaves only John Hough, who ended his career at Worcester, another one of the wealthiest sees, to which he had been translated in 1717. Unless a bishop was distinguished or senior enough to merit a place among the half-dozen most eminent churchmen in the country, the most he could hope for was one translation. What was supposed to be the 'strongest weapon of discipline possessed by the political ministers'[73] cannot have had the influence attributed to it by both contemporaries and historians.

Secondly, in individual cases there is clear evidence that ministers paid scant regard to voting records when considering the claims of bishops to preferment. Although Hoadly's rise in the Church was exceptional, he has still been seen as 'the prime example of the place-seeking prelates of Hanoverian England'.[74] He did indeed perform valuable work as an apologist for the Walpole administration in the early 1720s, writing in the *London Journal* under the pseudonym 'Britannicus'.[75] But between 1742 and 1761 he attended parliament only twice, and did not even qualify himself for proxy voting in the parliaments of 1748-54 and 1754-61. If it is argued that Hoadly made use of the independence given him by the see of Winchester, his case should be

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68 Richard Watson, 'A letter to his grace the archbishop of Canterbury, printed in 1784', in *Sermons on public occasions, and tracts on religious subjects* (Cambridge, 1788), pp. 399-405; Timothy J. Brain, 'Some aspects of the life and work of Richard Watson, bishop of Llandaff, 1737-1816', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wales (Aberwystwyth), 1982, p. 160.

69 The conduct of the episcopate in the house of lords, including its support of the minstry, is examined in chapter 8.

70 Thomas Secker, Thomas Herring, Matthew Hutton, John Gilbert, Robert Drummond, Thomas Sherlock, John Egerton, and John Thomas.

71 John Hume. *H.M.C.*, 10th Report, Appendix, Part I, p. 302: Sherlock to Edward Weston, 13 Oct. 1748.

72 Thomas Gooch and Matthias Mawson. Being the senior Cambridge bishop was the basis of Gooch's claim to the see in 1748. B.L. Add. 32714, fol. 113: Sherlock to Newcastle, 26 Jan. 1748.

73 Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 63.

74 W.A. Speck, *Stability and strife. England 1714-60* (London, 1977), p. 76.

75 *The works of Benjamin Hoadly, D.D.*, ed. John Hoadly (3 vols., London, 1773), III. 1-395.

compared with that of Bishop Gibson. After his breach with Walpole over the Quakers Tithe Bill of 1736, Gibson attended the house of lords on eight occasions. Five of these were days of only formal business. On the other three he voted *against* the ministry over the Spirituous Liquors Bill of 1743 and on the clause relating to the orders of Scottish episcopalians in the Bill for disarming the Highlands in 1748.[76] Nonetheless, he was offered the archbishopric of Canterbury in 1747.[77]

The career of Thomas Secker deserves more detailed consideration because he is often portrayed as a bishop who was confined to the poor sees of Bristol and Oxford for sixteen years, with only the onerous parish of St James's, Westminster, as a commendam, as a 'deliberate punishment for an early display of episcopal independence'.[78] When his merit was finally rewarded with the deanery of St Paul's, however, the opposition to his promotion came not from the ministry, but from the king. George II believed that Secker had joined Leicester House in open opposition to him and his court. In a letter to the king upon his promotion Secker admitted that he had made 'great mistakes', which were unspecified, but in later life he denied ever having any connection with the Prince of Wales's party. Just before the fall of Walpole he had acted as intermediary between the ministry and the Prince, but in his autobiography claimed that, contrary to the belief of the king, he had no influence over him.[79] Secker had certainly joined the parliamentary opposition on several occasions between 1739 and 1743, supporting place and pension bills and criticizing elements of the ministry's foreign policy. He was also an active leader of the episcopal opposition to the ministry over the Spirituous Liquors Bill of 1743 and the clause relating to episcopal orders in the Bill for disarming the Scottish Highlands in 1748, addressing the house on both occasions.[80] But in the eyes of the ministry Secker had wiped off the stain of having joined a 'formed opposition', and 'has expressed his Resolution in the rightest manner on that Subject'.[81] Hardwicke, indeed, believed that his promotion was the more desirable 'as it shows that Desert will meet with Regard, notwithstanding some little Court-Objections'.[82] Moreover, Secker was offered St Paul's despite his somewhat irregular attendance in the house of lords. Between the sessions of 1741-2 and 1749-50 Secker was present in the house on only 16.3% of those days on which it was sitting. In fact his attendance record was even poorer than this figure might suggest, because he was in good health and residing in London for the majority of every one of the parliamentary sessions of this period.[83] Even when he had been relieved of his

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[76] *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1439, XIV, 272. The daily attendance of the bishops and peers is recorded in the *Journals of the house of lords*.

[77] B.L. Add. 32713, fol. 241: Gibson to Newcastle, 12 Oct. 1747.

[78] Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 63.

[79] B.L. Add. 32722, fols. 65-6: Secker to George II, 7 Aug. 1750; Add. 35587, fols. 2-5: Secker to Hardwicke, 7 Jan. 1742; 'The autobiography of Archbihsop Secker', L.P.L., MS 2598, fols. 28-30, 48-9 (Transcript of Professor Norman Sykes); Beilby Porteus, 'A review of the life and character of Archbishop Secker', in *The works of Thomas Secker, LL.D.* (new edn., 6 vols., London, 1811), I, xiii-xiv.

[80] 'Reports of debates in the house of lords from 1735 to 1745 by Dr Secker', B.L. Add. 6043, passim.

[81] B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 418: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 7 Aug. 1750; Add. 32720, fols. 217-8: Herring to Newcastle, 13 Apr. 1750; Add. 32721, fols. 171-2: Newcastle to Pelham, 27 July 1750. Secker appears to have been offered St Paul's in 1748. L.P.L., MS 2598, fol. 39 (Sykes transcript).

[82] B.L. Add. 32722, fol. 108: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 10 Aug. 1750.

[83] See, below, table 8.1 for further figures of bishops' parliamentary attendance.

parochial responsibilities he did not become more diligent in the discharge of his political duties. But he was still Newcastle's preferred candidate when the archbishopric of Canterbury became vacant in 1758.[84]

Patronage and the interests of the Church

Norman Sykes saw the primacy accorded by Newcastle to parliamentary management in the disposal of patronage as the cause of his neglect of the interests of the Church. The argument that party-political considerations were, at best, of secondary importance does not, however, entail as its corollary that these interests were taken into account. Indeed, lay, especially whig, hostility to clericalism and the infrequency with which Newcastle enquired into the theological opinions of clergymen might be regarded as *prima facie* evidence that he paid little attention to the spiritual interests of the Church, despite his obvious piety and the presumption that he accepted that patronage was a trust.[85]

But such arguments should not be given too much weight. The theology of clergymen was of less relevance to ecclesiastical patronage in the mid-eighteenth century than it had been before 1715 or was to become in the 1780s and 1790s. Within the Church a conscious reaction against the divisions of earlier decades took place. Controversy over disputed points of theology, or even about the nature of church-state relations, was avoided. The discussion of 'subtile questions tending to Strife & fruitless Disputation' was deprecated. Instead, irenicism, moderation and 'christian Charity' were urged as virtues.[86] Hoadly and Sherlock, it is true, were widely regarded as leaders of opposing parties in the Church.[87] But, although they both lived until 1761, they were men of an older generation who had no obvious successors among the clergy. Within Newcastle's episcopate were men of widely different theological views, who were able to work together harmoniously without the party divisions of the late seventeenth century. Thomas Herring, speaking of his sermon before the S.P.G., said he was believed to have gone 'as high as I could in ye Lower Region', adding that 'I am not got so far, as discarding Demoniaks, melting down Miracles, & turning Redemption wholly into Metaphor - but I have not lost my Charity for them that do'.[88] Herring, moreover, thought Hoadly's *Plain account of the sacrament of the Lord's*

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[84] B.L. Add. 32878, fol. 276: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 20 Mar. 1758. Between 1751 and 1756 Secker attended the house of lords on 19.25% of the days on which it was sitting.

[85] These observations can also be applied to Hardwicke. He rarely referred to the theological opinions of candidates for preferment. On the other hand, there is no doubting his piety. He employed a local clergyman to read prayers in his private chapel three times a week, and at Wimpole he built 'a very beautiful Church . . . wth all the plainness & Elegance wch suits a Protestant Congregation'. *The diary and letters of his excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, ed. P.O. Hutchinson (2 vols., London, 1883-6), i. 516; Portland MSS, Nottingham University Library, PWV/121/79: Archbishop Herring to William Herring, 12 June 1750.

[86] Ashridge MSS, Hertfordshire Record Office, A.H. 1996, fols. 12, 9: Charge to the clergy of the diocese of Bangor by Bishop John Egerton, 1758; R.W. Greaves, *On the religious climate of Hanoverian England* (Inaugural lecture, Bedford College, London, 1963). See also the Appendix, which questions the value of defining theological concerns in party-terms, such as high-church, low-church, and latitudinarian.

[87] *The works of the right reverend William Warburton, D.D. lord bishop of Gloucester* (new edn., 12 vols., London, 1811), iv. 6-7.

[88] Nottingham University Library, PWV/120/17: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 27 Feb. 1738.

Supper, which lowered the sacrament to a memorial service symbolizing christian unity, 'a good book, and as to the sacrament in particular, as orthodox as Archbishop Tillotson'.[89] Joseph Butler, on the other hand, put up a cross in the episcopal chapel at Bristol and was a reader of books of 'mystic piety', which later gave rise to rumours of his deathbed conversion to Roman Catholicism.[90] Both Herring and Butler looked on Thomas Secker as a friend as well as a colleague. Yet his theology was mildly evangelical in tone. He distrusted the 'Extravagancies' of the methodists, but was well aware of their virtues.[91] He believed that the Church had 'lost many of our people to sectaries by not preaching in a manner sufficiently evangelical', and exhorted his clergy 'to set before your people the lamentable condition of fallen man, the numerous actual sins, by which they have made it worse, the redemption wrought out for them by Jesus Christ, the nature and importance of true faith in him, their absolute need of the grace of the Divine Spirit in order to obey his precepts'.[92]

This emphasis on irenicism extended to relations with other denominations of christians. Clergymen did indeed define the *via media* of the Church of England by reference to the errors of dissent and popery. Many saw both as still dangerous threats to the security of the true religion.[93] But in practical relations the virtues of charity and toleration were stressed. The majority of churchmen looked upon the Toleration Act 'as part of our Establishment'.[94] Even Thomas Sherlock, the leader of the 'Tory Clergy',[95] was deeply involved in discussions with leading dissenters in the mid-1740s about the possibility of a comprehension.[96] Catholics, on the other hand, were viewed with greater distrust. The spread of catholicism was a constant fear. Archbishop Herring urged upon the ministry the necessity of taking 'proper measures . . . to stop or discourage the illegal & ungrateful practises of these Zealots' in their prosletizing. He fretted at its inactivity, reminding it that every convert became 'an irreconcilable Enemy to our King & Government'.[97] Herring's concern arose from a belief that the catholic community was abusing the advantages it enjoyed because of the tolerant attitude of the establishment towards

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89 *Letters from the late most reverend Dr Thomas Herring, lord archbishop of Canterbury, to William Duncombe, esq; deceased, from the year 1728 to 1757*, ed. John Duncombe (London, 1777), p. 28: Herring to Duncombe, 9 Nov. 1735. William Van Mildert claimed that Hoadly's book 'lowers the importance of that sacrament more perhaps than had ever been done before, except by *Socinian* writers'. *The works of the rev. Daniel Waterland, D.D . . . To which is prefixed a review of the author's life and writings, by William Van Mildert* (2nd edn., 6 vols., Oxford, 1843), i. 161.

90 *The works of Joseph Butler, D.C.L.*, ed. Samuel Halifax (new edn., 2 vols., London, 1844), i. xxxv - xxxviii.

91 L.P.L., MS 1719: Thomas Secker to his brother, 14 Sept. 1739.

92 Thomas Secker, 'Charge delivered to the clergy of Canterbury in 1766', in *Works*, v. 479-80. The best account of the evangelical tendencies in Secker's theology is given by James Downey, *The eighteenth-century pulpit. A study of the sermons of Butler, Berkeley, Secker, Sterne, Whitefield and Wesley* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 89-114.

93 E.g., Hertfordshire R.O., A.H. 1941B, p. 4: Charge to the clergy of the diocese of Hereford by Bishop Henry Egerton, 1737.

94 'Papers relating to the American colonies', L.P.L., MS 1123/II/4: Herring to Samuel Chandler, 7 Feb. 1754.

95 B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 38: Pelham to Newcastle, 7 Oct. 1748.

96 G.F. Nuttall, *Calendar of the correspondence of Philip Doddridge D.D. (1702-1751)* (London, 1979), pp. 266-7: John Barker to Philip Doddridge, 2 Feb. 1748.

97 B.L. Add. 32723, fol. 297: Herring to Newcastle, 26 Nov. 1750; Add. 35599, fol. 107: Herring to Hardwicke, 1 Oct. 1753.

them, but he acknowledged that measures against popery were 'a matter of delicacy'.[98] This tolerance, widely shared by the clergy, was summed up by Archbishop Blackburne:

> It is not my intention to break in upon yt tacit Connivance wch ye Roman Catholics by His Majesties great Lenity enjoy, at present, in the private exercise of their Religion. Nor is it my Principle, (as by my Conduct it has ever appear'd) to be grievous to any one, who behaves quietly & peaceably under ye Established Government, on the account of his Opinions merely Religious.[99]

Newcastle's ecclesiastical patronage reflected and encouraged this tendency in the Church. Few of his episcopal nominees engaged in controversy with other churchmen, at least until the movement for the abolition of clerical subscription became prominent in the late 1760s. George Lavington and John Green both published fierce anonymous attacks on the methodists.[100] If they are excluded only William Warburton, who, despite his claim to be defending orthodoxy, attracted more critics with every publication, falls into this category.[101] Warburton's promotion to the episcopate was due, however, to pressure from William Pitt.[102]

The encouragement of moderation within the Church not only mirrored the theological aims and preoccupations of contemporary churchmen, but also furthered the whig ministry's policy, pursued by both Walpole and Newcastle, of avoiding the recurrence of the bitter parliamentary disputes over religion which had characterized the reign of Anne.[103] If there is little direct evidence that Newcastle deliberately exploited his control of ministerial patronage in this way, it is clear that a number of eminent clergymen, who were noted controversialists, did not receive the preferments they felt they deserved. Edward Cobden, the royal chaplain who resigned because he claimed that less worthy men were being promoted ahead of him, was particularly critical of dissenters and was believed to favour a more restrictive interpretation of the Toleration Act.[104] Another royal chaplain, Henry Stebbing, advanced no higher in the Church than the archdeaconry of Wiltshire and the chancellorship of Salisbury despite the repeated recommendation of Bishop Sherlock. Stebbing, however, was best-known by contemporaries for his many controversial

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98 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 161-2: Herring to Hardwicke, 3 Mar. 1754.

99 'Archbishop Blackburn's visitation returns of the diocese of York, 1735', ed. R. Trappes-Lomax, *Publications of the Catholic Record Society*, xxxii (1932), p. 384: Blackburne to Viscount Irwin, 18 Oct. 1733.

100 George Lavington, *The enthusiasm of methodists and papists compared. In three parts* (2 vols., London, 1754); John Green, *The principles and practices of the methodists considered, in some letters to the leaders of the sect, the first addressed to the reverend Mr B—e* (London, 1760); idem, *The principles and practices of the methodists farther considered; in a letter to the reverend Mr George Whitefield* (Cambridge, 1761).

101 The best account of the controversies Warburton was involved in is A.W. Evans, *Warburton and the Warburtonians. A study in some eighteenth-century controversies* (London, 1932). See also, Leslie Stephen, *Essays on freethinking and plainspeaking* (London, 1873), pp. 279-325; Robert M. Ryley, *William Warburton* (Boston, Mass., 1984).

102 B.L. Add. 32897, fol. 173: 'Heads of Mr Pitt's Conversation'; Richard Hurd, 'Some account of the life, writings, and character of the author', in Warburton, *Works*, i. 70.

103 See chapter 9 below.

104 Caleb Fleming, *A letter to the Revd. Dr Cobden, rector of St Austin's and St Faith's, and of Acton, and chaplain in ordinary to his majesty, containing an exact copy of a pastoral epistle to the protestant dissenters in his parishes, with remarks thereon . . . By a parishioner of the doctors* (London, 1738).

writings, including a series of attacks on William Warburton.[105] Likewise, George Horne, one of a group of Oxford high-churchmen called Hutchinsonians, who was later to become dean of Canterbury and bishop of Norwich under George III, noted in the 1750s that he and his friends had no hope of preferment from either the civil or the Church establishment.[106] Hutchinsonianism, however, was stridently critical of contemporary theological opinions and, in his private writings at least, Horne went as far as to suggest that Archbishop Tillotson was guilty of heresy.[107]

One reason why theological controversy was deprecated was that churchmen of all shades of opinion agreed that the beliefs they shared were under threat from two tendencies in contemporary religious thought.[108] On the one hand the foundations of revealed religion were being challenged by the deists. On the other hand trinitarian christianity was increasingly questioned by socinians and arians. Much of the Church's energy in the first half of the eighteenth century was devoted to the refutation of these assaults.[109] Again Newcastle's patronage reflected the concerns of the Church. On two occasions during the Walpole era churchmen had been roused to protest against the preferment of heterodox clergy. In the late 1720s there was some talk of raising to the episcopate Samuel Clarke, who denied the doctrine of Christ's oneness with the father. A few years later the ministry proposed to fill the bishopric of Gloucester with Thomas Rundle, who was accused of, and did not deny, socinian tendencies. Clarke's promotion was quietly vetoed by Bishop Gibson.[110] But he was not so successful over Rundle, whose proposed advancement provoked a storm of controversy, before the ministry, bowing to clerical pressure, gave Gloucester to Martin Benson and compensated Rundle with the Irish see of Derry.[111] However, there was no recurrence of such episodes after Newcastle had gained control of ecclesiastical patronage in 1742, nor is there any hint that Newcastle even considered the promotion of those whose orthodoxy was in doubt. Indeed, when Robert Clayton, the bishop of

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105 Evans, *Warburton and the Warburtonians*, pp. 111-14, 135; Henry Stebbing, *Polemical tracts; or a collection of papers written in defence of the doctrines and disciplines of the Church of England* (Cambridge, 1727); idem, *An examination of Mr Warburton's second proposition, in his projected demonstration of the divine legation of Moses. In which the faith of the ancient Jewish Church, touching the doctrine of a future state, is asserted and cleared from the author's objection* (London, 1744); idem, *An enquiry into the force and operation of the annulling clauses in a late act for the preventing of clandestine marriages, with respect to conscience* (London, 1754); idem, *A dissertation on the power of states to deny civil protection to the marriage of minors made without the consent of their parents or guardians* (London, 1755); B.L. Add. 32718, fols. 339-40: Sherlock to Newcastle, 24 July 1749. For the ministry's opposition to Stebbing's preferment see Add. 32717, fols. 74-5: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 9 Oct. 1748; Add. 32719, fols. 97-8: Sherlock to Newcastle, 3 Sept. 1749.

106 Commonplace book, Horne papers, Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 8134/B/1, p. 2.

107 C.U.L., MS Add. 8134/B/1, p. 111; C.B. Wilde, 'Hutchinsonianism, natural philosophy and religious controversy in eighteenth-century Britain', *History of Science*, XVIII (1980), 1-24.

108 See, e.g., the correspondence between John Hough and Edmund Gibson, who held strikingly different opinions about the attitude the Church should have adopted towards protestant dissent, but were united in a belief that the greatest threat to the Church was from religious heterodoxy. Gibson papers, Bodleian Library, MS Dep. c. 237, fols. 58-9, 56-7, 54: Hough to Gibson, 14 June, 27 Aug., 25 Oct. 1735; ibid., fols. 54-9: Gibson to Hough, n.d. [1735].

109 It should be noted, however, that the Church was able to accommodate clergy who were opposed to the use of the Athanasian creed. It was possible to be a trinitarian, without believing the Athanasian version of the doctrine.

110 Gibson papers, St Andrews University Library, MS 5201: Gibson to Walpole, n.d.; J.P. Ferguson, *Dr Samuel Clarke. An eighteenth-century heretic* (Kineton, 1976), pp. 47-58. In the early years of the whig supremacy Archbishop Wake had prevented a similar offer to Clarke. John Chapman, 'Memoranda of Things which I have heard from Archbishop Potter's own Mouth, as certain Truths', *Christian Remembrancer*, III (1821), 337.

111 Sykes, *Gibson*, pp. 155-9, 264-75.

Clogher, published his unequivocally arian views on the Trinity in the 1750s, both the ministry and its episcopal nominees made clear their support for trinitarian christianity. First, Archbishop Herring accepted the dedication to an attack on Clayton, despite his claim that he had not lost his charity for those who pushed rational theology to its limits. Then the ministry passed over Clayton for the archbishopric of Tuam. Finally, George Stone, the archbishop of Armagh, who is generally seen as more of a politician than a governor of the Church, instituted his prosecution. Contemporaries believed that the bishop would have been deprived of his see had he not died before the ecclesiastical commission sat.[112]

The theological preoccupations of the eighteenth-century Church were, therefore, reflected in Newcastle's patronage. His sensitivity to the interests of the Church is demonstrated more positively, however, by his reliance on a series of bishops as his ecclesiastical advisers. He consulted such men, who were more attuned to the needs of the Church and the abilities of particular clergymen, in the disposal of preferments, especially bishoprics and deaneries.

In the first place Newcastle turned to successive archbishops of Canterbury, the most obvious choice as ministerial advisers. In the early 1740s Potter was a regular channel for recommendations to the king, and frequent discussions took place between him and Newcastle over the disposal of ecclesiastical patronage.[113] However, from mid-1743 their relationship became increasingly strained, largely through Potter's failure to obtain a bishopric for his son-in-law, George Sayer, the archdeacon of Durham.[114] Newcastle's opposition to Sayer's promotion was not unjustified - he was a negligent archdeacon.[115] But Potter was insistent, and in January 1744 he sent Newcastle what could only be described as as ultimatum, explaining that he was 'so much concern'd' in Sayer's success, that if he was disappointed, 'I must for the future despair of having it in my power to assist yr Grace & the rest of the Administration, or even be usefull to his Majesty's Government'.[116] Although there is no evidence of a breach between Potter and the ministry at this time, he became less involved in ecclesiastical affairs, and it was probably this disappointment which started him on the path leading to the Leicester House opposition.

In the opinion of Norman Sykes, the elevation of Thomas Herring to Canterbury in 1747 did nothing to increase the influence of the archbishop over ecclesiastical patronage. Sykes argued that Newcastle simply ignored Herring.[117] Certainly their relationship was not close. Only a year after Herring's promotion Henry Pelham was criticizing his brother for taking 'no notice' of the archbishop. Hardwicke was also disturbed at his neglect, wondering whether 'it will not have a

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[112] A.R. Winnett, 'An Irish heretic bishop: Robert Clayton of Clogher', *S.C.H.*, IX (1972), 311-21.

[113] B.L. Add. 32699, fols. 297, 311-12: Potter to Newcastle, 17 June, 19 July 1742; Add. 32700, fols. 1-2: Potter to Newcastle, 5 Jan. 1743.

[114] *H.M.C.*, 10th Report, Appendix, Part I, p. 278: Bishop Thomas to Edward Weston, 20 June 1743; B.L. Add. 32700, fol. 100: Potter to Newcastle, 7 Apr. 1743; Add. 32701, fols. 278-9, 314-15: Potter to Newcastle, 28 Nov., 15 Dec. 1743.

[115] J.C. Shuler, 'The pastoral and ecclesiastical administration of the diocese of Durham 1721-71; with particular reference to the archdeaconry of Northumberland', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Durham, 1975, p. 190.

[116] B.L. Add. 32702, fols. 3-4: Potter to Newcastle, 2 Jan. 1744.

[117] Sykes, 'Newcastle as ecclesiastical minister', p. 63.

wrong appearance not to shew some Regard to an Archbishop of Canterbury so lately made, & so entirely attached to you'.[118] Newcastle, moreover, was being disingenuous when he replied 'that I do not neglect the Archbishop'.[119] The issue was the vacancy on the bench caused by the death of Bishop Gibson. At first, it was thought that the bishopric of Bristol and the deanery of St Paul's would be vacated by Butler's translation to London. Sherlock's unexpected acceptance of London and Gilbert's translation to Salisbury, however, meant that Llandaff was the bishopric to be filled. The archbishop's candidate in both eventualities was Thomas Hayter.[120] But Newcastle's plans were rather different. Although he considered Hayter for Bristol and St Paul's, his preference was to move Conybeare from Christ Church to St Paul's and to give the bishopric of Bristol and deanery of Christ Church to John Fanshaw, the regius professor of divinity at Oxford. For Llandaff there were four candidates: Edward Cresset, Samuel Creswicke, Hayter and Fanshaw.[121] Newcastle admitted that Hayter '(except in any particular Case) . . . shd be first Bishop'.[122] But despite the strong recommendation of Hayter by both Herring and Hardwicke, Llandaff was given to Cresset.[123] Cresset had long been a candidate for a bishopric, and Llandaff became a special case because Newcastle decided that his personal connections and his recommendation by the earl of Powis made a Welsh bishopric the most appropriate.[124] Despite Newcastle's consultations with Herring, he had ultimately ignored his advice, a fact which could not be disguised by the bestowal of the deanery of Hereford upon his Cambridge friend, Edmund Castle.[125] Thus, it is not surprising to find Herring himself complaining that 'if I must be consulted, I have so much Pride of Heart, that I should like now & then to prevail'.[126]

But this case and these complaints do not present a full picture of the relationship between Newcastle and the archbishop. Newcastle himself expressed a desire 'to act in the most perfect Concert with your Grace',[127] and there are frequent examples of Newcastle seeking the advice of Herring. In 1749 he consulted him on the vacancy of Lichfield, and in 1755 they had a long

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118 B.L. Add. 32716, fol. 396: Pelham to Newcastle, 30 Sept. 1748; Add. 32717, fol. 294: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 8 Nov. 1748.

119 B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 72: Newcastle to Pelham, 9 Oct. 1748.

120 B.L. Add. 32716, fols. 379-80: Herring to Newcastle, 29 Sept. 1748; Add. 32717, fols. 298-9: Herring to Newcastle, 8 Nov. 1748.

121 B.L. Add. 32716, fols. 277-9: Newcastle to Pelham, 17 Sept. 1748; Add. 32717, fols. 233-4: Newcastle to Archbishop Hutton, 30 Oct. 1748.

122 B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 156: Newcastle to Pelham, 19 Oct. 1748.

123 B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 294: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 8 Nov. 1748; ibid., fols. 298-9: Herring to Newcastle, 8 Nov. 1748; Add. 35598, fols. 336-7: Herring to Hardwicke, 25 Nov. 1748; Add. 32717, fols. 528-9: Cresset to Newcastle, 23 Dec. 1748.

124 B.L. Add. 32707, fol. 15: Lord Herbert to Newcastle, 5 Apr. 1746; Add. 32717, fols. 369-70: Powis to Newcastle, Nov. 1748; ibid., fol. 572: Lord Herbert to Newcastle, n.d.[1748]; Add. 35598, fols. 336-7: Herring to Hardwicke, 25 Nov. 1748.

125 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 366: Herring to Hardwicke, 25 Nov. 1748; Add. 32714, fol. 141: Herring to Newcastle, 29 Jan. 1748. For the consultations between Newcastle and Herring on these vacancies, see Add. 32716, fols. 313-6, 393-4; Add. 32717, fols. 298-9; Add. 35598, fols. 366-8.

126 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 430: Herring to Hardwicke, 3 Oct. 1749.

127 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 54: Newcastle to Herring, 6 June [i.e. July] 1750.

discussion about the possible vacancies of London, Rochester and Bristol.[128] Newcastle paid serious attention to the advice he received. Hayter was elevated on the next vacancy to the wealthier, more important, and more convenient see of Norwich, and in 1750 Newcastle claimed that all the promotions following the death of the bishop of Durham 'were strongly recommended by the ArchBp'.[129] Nor was this claim unfounded. The promise of Durham to Butler was long-standing, and wholeheartedly approved by Herring. The appointment of Secker to the deanery of St Paul's, although made with Newcastle's consent and approbation, was 'a Negotiation of my Lord Chancellor, & the ArchBishop's'. Conybeare's elevation to the bishopric of Bristol, moreover, was the responsibility of Herring alone.[130]

Even when a dispute arose over a recommendation, the duke did not always get his own way. This is clear in the disposal of the bishoprics of Durham, St David's and Gloucester on the deaths of Butler and Benson in 1752. This episode has been presented as proof of Herring's lack of influence. Sykes made striking use of it in this way, but he did so only through a misleading conflation of the discussions about the disposal of the three bishoprics.[131] In reality, each raised different issues. Durham has already been discussed. Herring's recommendation of Hayter was opposed not only by Newcastle, but by the king. Herring felt he could not abandon Hayter for personal reasons, but made it clear that Trevor was his second choice.[132] Gloucester, which was given to James Johnson, raised rather different issues which will be discussed later; but the difficulties centred on Johnson's reputation as a jacobite, for which reason Herring refused to recommend him for any bishopric.[133] But it was the vacancy of St David's, by the promotion of Trevor, which caused greatest tensions between Newcastle and Herring. Herring recommended most strongly Anthony Ellys, a London clergyman whom he wished to see preferred as 'a sort of coadjutor, bishop'. Newcastle had promised Herring that he would support Ellys,[134] but as the vacancy occurred while he was in Hanover, he decided to take advantage of it to obtain a bishopric for Johnson, who was now attending the king for the third time.[135] Newcastle's intention, however, caused Herring 'a great deal of Uneasiness & Anxiety'. He had 'set his heart extreamly' upon Ellys, and believed Newcastle was breaking his word to him. Herring refused to recommend anyone other than Ellys, and Newcastle also received letters from Pelham and

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[128] B.L. Add,. 32719, fols. 326-7: Herring to Newcastle, 23 Dec. 1749; Add. 35599, fols. 260-3: Herring to Hardwicke, 15 May 1755.

[129] B.L. Add. 32719, fol. 241: Herring to Newcastle, 13 Oct. 1749; Add. 32722, fol. 232: Newcastle to Pelham, 23 Aug. 1750.

[130] B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 424-5: Herring to Newcastle, 22 July 1750; Add. 32722, fol. 232: Newcastle to Pelham, 23 Aug. 1750; Add. 32719, fols. 345-6: Herring to Newcastle, 30 Dec. 1749; Add. 32720, fols. 217-8: Herring to Newcastle, 13 Apr. 1750; Add. 32721, fol. 53: Newcastle to Herring, 6 June [i.e. July] 1750; ibid., fols. 424-5: Herring to Newcastle, 22 July 1750; ibid., fols. 471-2: Newcastle to Pelham, 27 July 1750; Add. 32722, fol. 188: Pelham to Newcastle, 17 Aug. 1750; ibid., fols. 232-3: Newcastle to Pelham, 23 Aug. 1750.

[131] Sykes, 'Newcastle as ecclesiastical minister', pp. 64-6.

[132] B.L. Add. 32729, fol. 372: Newcastle to Pelham, 28 Sept. 1752; and see above cpt. 4, pp. 80-2.

[133] See below, p. 114.

[134] B.L. Add. 32728, fols. 47-8, 279-80: Herring to Newcastle, 19 June, 16 July 1752; ibid., fol. 287: Pelham to Newcastle, 17 July 1752.

[135] B.L. Add. 32728, fols. 216-7: Newcastle to Herring, 8 July 1752.

Hardwicke suggesting that Johnson should wait for the next vacancy.[136] Newcastle was evidently irritated by the archbishop's manner, but he immediately agreed to keep his word, and wrote to the archbishop assuring him that he would 'never oppose' the promotion of any clergyman as distinguished as Ellys which Herring believed to be 'essential to your Ease, & Credit, upon the Bench'.[137] But, as Newcastle had warned Herring, he had some difficulty in obtaining a bishopric for a clergyman who held no major church dignities and was unknown to the king personally. Herring's apparent lack of gratitude certainly did nothing to improve his relations with Newcastle. 'It is a little hard,' he complained to Hardwicke, 'to be buffeted in the Closet for Dr Ellis; And to be suspected, at the same Time, by the Arch Bishop'.[138]

Although Herring was not ignored in the disposal of ecclesiastical patronage, Newcastle never found him easy to work with. He was self-deprecating about his inability to deal with such matters, yet could also be stubborn and determined. The two men had great difficulty understanding each other; Herring refused to recommend Johnson for a bishopric, but he would not write to Newcastle putting the case against his promotion. Their temperamental incompatibility emerged clearly when the receiver of the first fruits died in 1755. The nomination to the post was in the treasury, but it was of such importance to Queen Anne's Bounty that it was usually made on the advice of the bishops. Herring wrote in their name to Newcastle asking for the appointment of Stephen Comyn. Newcastle, however, had created difficulties for himself by promising his support to another person.[139] He referred the matter to Herring. But Herring, rather than recommend Comyn, referred it back to Newcastle, explaining that 'I have no reason to decline accepting the Offer, but an uneasiness it would give to act otherwise, than in perfect conformity to yr Grace's Desires'.[140] Newcastle can only have felt extreme irritation two weeks later, when Herring wrote again, reminding him of the bishops' desire to see 'Comyns by yr Grace's favour, in this important Office', and stressing the necessity of an immediate appointment. Eventually Herring got his own way, though Comyn was not made receiver until early the next year.[141]

But Newcastle did not seek advice solely from the archbishops. He had other ecclesiastical counsellors, notably Bishops Gibson, Sherlock, and, from the mid-1750s, Secker. Herein lay one of the causes of the reserve that existed between the archbishops and him. Potter was jealous of his influence over preferments, and, as Sherlock perceptively commented, 'he looks upon that, I

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[136] B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 283: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 17 July 1752; ibid., fols. 287-8: Pelham to Newcastle, 17 July 1752; ibid., fols. 279-81: Herring to Newcastle, 16 July 1752.

[137] B.L. Add. 32728, fols. 404-5: Newcastle to Pelham, 27-29 July 1752; ibid., fols. 416-20: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 29 July 1752; Add. 32729, fol. 188: Newcastle to Herring, 26 Aug. 1752.

[138] B.L. Add. 32730, fol. 126: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 18 Oct. 1752; Newcastle of Clumber papers, Nottingham University Library, Ne.C. 1389: Newcastle to Pelham, 18 Oct. 1752.

[139] B.L. Add. 32732, fols. 613-4, 659-60: Herring to Newcastle, 7, 18 Sept. 1753; Add. 32733, fols. 158-9: Herring to Newcastle, 29 Oct. 1753.

[140] B.L. Add. 32733, fols. 194-5: Herring to Newcastle, 5 Nov. 1753.

[141] B.L. Add. 32733, fols. 295-6: Herring to Newcastle, 22 Nov. 1753.

believe, to be so much his province that he will be hardly prevailed on to admit *socios Imperii*'.[142] Herring, on the other hand, knew well that the archbishopric had been offered to both Gibson and Sherlock before himself.[143] He was, therefore, especially concerned at Sherlock's acceptance of London, which had been used by Gibson as a base to supplant Archbishop Wake in ministerial counsels.[144] Sherlock's promotion was Newcastle's personal act, and it immediately created tension between the duke and Herring, who assured Hardwicke that 'I don't suspect his Friendship & think I may build upon his firmness, but I see his attachments plain enough, & I cannot love & trust him, as I do yr Lordship'.[145] Later in 1749, during the option dispute, he complained bitterly that Newcastle was not supporting him as strongly 'in my just & antient Rights, as I had reason to hope'.[146]

Herring's concern was exaggerated. But Newcastle turned naturally to the two bishops on the bench in whom he had the most confidence, and both were at least consulted on ecclesiastical affairs. In 1747 Newcastle hoped to be able to lay before Gibson his 'whole Thoughts upon the Subject of Ecclesiastical Preferments', and a few years earlier Sherlock had thought that Gibson's relationship with the Pelhams was so good that he would accept a translation to Canterbury.[147] There is, however, little evidence to suggest that Gibson was very influential in the disposal of patronage.

Sherlock, on the other hand, was far more active. It was on his recommendation that his nephew, Jonathan Fountayne, was promoted to the deanery of York in 1747, and that his brother-in-law, Thomas Gooch, was translated to the bishopric of Ely the following year.[148] In 1756, however, when illness prevented Sherlock from playing an active role in public affairs, Newcastle made a far more extensive acknowledgement of his influence, assuring him that he 'always esteem'd it, as My greatest Happiness to be honoured with your Lordship's Advice, And I have lamented, for the Sake of the King, and the publick, that your Ill State of Health, has deprived the King and His Servants for some Time of that Advice'.[149]

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142 B.L. Add. 32701, fol. 96: Sherlock to Newcastle, 4 Sept. 1743.

143 Huntington Library, Gibson Papers, bound volume, #30: Newcastle to Gibson, 11 Oct. 1747; B.L. Add. 35589, fols. 315, 317-8: Sherlock to Hardwicke, 13, 14 Oct. 1747.

144 B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 38: Pelham to Newcastle, 7 Oct. 1748. Herring expressed his fear to Hardwicke that, 'if a man should succeed there, with who I could not act in perfect Confidence, or one of uneasy domineering Spirit, who would break wth me, & make it his business to thwart & molest me (I have seen such times & read of more) the consequences would be extremely disagreeable'. Add. 35598, fol. 348: Herring to Hardwicke, 20 Sept. 1748. The case of Gibson and Wake was undoubtedly one of those to which Herring was referring. Another was probably that of Laud and Abbot in the 1620s.

145 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 378, 396: Herring to Hardwicke, 6 Jan., 21 Jan. 1749.

146 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 411: Herring to Hardwicke, 7 Apr. 1749. The option dispute was a controversy between Sherlock and Herring about the right of the archbishop to claim his 'option' of one of the livings of his suffragans on their consecration and translation. See Edward Carpenter, *Thomas Sherlock 1678-1761* (London, 1936), pp. 163-90; Thomas Sherlock, *The option: or, an enquiry into the grounds of the claim made by the archbishop, on all consecrated or translated bishops, of the disposal of any preferment belonging to their respective sees that he shall make choice of* (London, 1756).

147 Huntington Library, Gibson Papers, bound volume, #29: Newcastle to Gibson, 21 July 1747; *H.M.C.*, 10th Report, Appendix, Part I, p. 278: Sherlock to Weston, 8 Oct. 1743.

148 B.L. Add. 32712, fols. 93, 193: Sherlock to Newcastle, 11, 22 July 1747; Add. 32714, fols. 113, 115, 127: Sherlock to Newcastle, 26, 26, 27 Jan. 1748.

149 B.L. Add. 32869, fol. 183: Newcastle to Sherlock, 27 Nov. 1756.

Sherlock was not the only bishop whose health was declining in the mid-1750s. Herring also never recovered completely from a serious illness in May 1753, and for the rest of his life played an increasingly unimportant role in public affairs.[150] From that time Thomas Secker gradually became more prominent. In his last years Archbishop Herring relied increasingly upon him for advice on ecclesiastical matters. At the same time Newcastle was turning to him for consultation about patronage.[151] On the death of Archbishop Hutton in 1758 after only eleven months as primate, Newcastle persuaded George II to appoint Secker as his successor. Thus for the last four years he was in office the duke had as archbishop a man in whose advice he had entire confidence.

Patronage remained firmly in the minister's hands. As Secker said, 'upon the whole [he] took his own Way', relying for the most part on the 'Recommendations of great men and Members of Parliamt'.[152] But there was no sense in which he was pursuing an ecclesiastical policy in isolation from, or in opposition to, the Church leadership. Those who had the interests of the Church most at heart were consulted. Indeed, Newcastle's three closest ecclesiastical advisers, interestingly not his own proteges, were probably the three members of the bench most vocal in defence of the rights of the Church; Gibson, Sherlock and Secker all figured prominently in the attacks of anti-clerical whigs.[153] In Secker's opinion, the ministry was far more sensitive to the interests of the Church under Newcastle than in the early years of George III's reign, when he complained to Bishop Pearce: 'I do not in the least desire to be consulted in the Disposal of Bishopricks: but I do most earnestly wish, that one or more proper Clergymen were always consulted. The total and avowed Omission of this in the present Reign, I believe is new, and peculiarly unexpected. God forgive the Adviser.'[154]

Patronage and ecclesiastical policy

Although Newcastle did not ignore the interests of the Church or the views of its leaders, it is clear that his disposal of ecclesiastical preferments was no more determined by theological considerations than by parliamentary ones. The coherence of his policy cannot be seen, therefore, when it is viewed from within the narrow worlds of parliamentary and ecclesiastical politics. The Church had a secular role, as well as a spiritual one. It was an integral part of the civil administration, responsible for education, charity, the inculcation of the duties of loyalty and obedience. Good government, not only in the Church, but also in the state, was the subject of

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[150] The 2nd earl of Hardwicke later endorsed a letter from Herring to his father, dated 25 Oct. 1754: 'He was then in the Decline of his health; gave my Father a great deal of Trouble abt Trifles'. B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 221.

[151] B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 334: Herring to Hardwicke, 23 Oct. 1756. 'The Duke had often asked me about Persons, whilst I was Bp of Oxford, and still more after I was Abp, and paid some Regard to what I said.' L.P.L., MS 2598, fol. 62v (Sykes transcript).

[152] L.P.L., MS 2598, fol. 62v (Sykes transcript).

[153] E.g., Sir Michael Foster, *An examination of the scheme of church-power*; idem, *Considerations on the statutes 21. and 28. Hen. VIII. concerning the residence of the clergy. In answer to the interpretation given of those statutes, in the bishop of London's late charge* (London, 1759); Francis Blackburne, *Memoir of Thomas Hollis, Esq. F.R. and A.S.S.* (2 vols., London, 1780), 1, 354, 378, 406-7.

[154] Pearce Papers, WAM 64637: Secker to Pearce, 15 Oct. 1763.

Newcastle's ecclesiastical policy. Patronage, as William Webster pointed out, was the corner-stone of this policy. He recognized, moreover, that there was no conflict of interests between the Church and the state. The good government of both demanded the promotion of the same sort of men. Ministers of the crown, he argued, should

> have the strictest Regard to the Abilities of the Persons as *Scholars*, and their Qualifications as *Christians*, because such Persons will be best able to defend the *Truths*, to explain and enforce the *Doctrines* and *Duties* of Religion, which is the only sufficient Motive that can induce Men . . . to act with a proper Regard to the Welfare of the *Whole*.[155]

In defending his management of ecclesiastical patronage to Bishop Hoadly, Newcastle revealed his concern with the administration of the state. He explained that he applied two criteria in his selection of clergy worthy of crown patronage. In the first place, he recommended 'None, whom I did not think most sincerely well affected to His Majesty, and His Government, and, to the Principles upon which It is founded'. His second rule was 'To recommend none, whose Character as to Vertue, & Regularity of Life, would not justify it'.[156] Only through the advancement of such men, and in particular through the promotion to bishoprics of men who would be effective administrators of dioceses and governors of the clergy, could the ministry hope to promote the security and good government of the state.

The concern to confine crown patronage to those clergy whose loyalty to the Hanoverian succession was undoubted was a reflection of the continued importance of the dynastic issue in politics. The jacobite threat was still believed to be a reality, a belief which was confirmed by the outbreak of the '45 rebellion. The security of the state was, therefore, dependent on its high offices being filled with men who were loyal to the house of Hanover and to the Revolution settlement in Church and state. This consideration applied as much to churchmen as anyone else. Indeed their responsibility for enforcing the duties of loyalty and obedience made the dynastic loyalties of the clergy of particular importance, especially in those areas where the jacobite threat was believed to be concentrated.

One such area was the diocese of Chester, where there was a large Roman Catholic community. Samuel Peploe had been made bishop in 1725 because of his vigorous efforts to counter popery and jacobitism as vicar of Preston and warden of Manchester collegiate college.[157] However, it took a man of his energy fifteen years to create a whig majority in the chapter, and he was even less successful at Manchester, which showed signs of support for the Pretender during the '45.[158] Thus, when Herring reflected on the contingency of a vacancy at Chester in the aftermath of the rebellion, he argued that 'a good Scholar, a good Xtian, & a stout Protestant of

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155 Webster, *Treatise on places and preferments*, p. 19.

156 B.L. Add. 32906, fol. 387: Newcastle to Hoadly, 31 May 1760.

157 Papers and memorials 1715-29, S.P.C.K. Archives, Cp.1, pp. 139-42, 146-7: Samuel Peploe to Henry Newman, 29 Jan., 11 May 1714; S. Hibbert-Ware, *The history of the college and collegiate church of Manchester* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1830), II, 82-7; *D.N.B.*, XLIV, 352-3; Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 73.

158 B.L. Add. 32692, fols. 448-9: Peploe to Newcastle, 7 Nov. 1739; Hibbert-Ware, *Manchester collegiate church*, II, 92-6.

strong Spirits & Constitution, who knows how to fix his Post & how to maintain it . . . might do good & make an useful and lasting impression in that Jacobite & Popish Country'.[159] In 1750, when Peploe's death appeared imminent, Herring wrote to Newcastle repeating these considerations, and mentioning Richard Terrick and Edmund Keene as two men 'of undoubted Credit & Integrity, both staunch & uniform in their Principles of Love to the King & our Constitution'.[160] Newcastle fully approved the idea of Keene. His 'most judicious, and successful Conduct' as vice-chancellor of Cambridge was evidence of his fitness for the see of Chester, to which he was promoted on Peploe's death two years later.[161]

The midland dioceses of Lichfield and Worcester were also thought to be a special case. Staffordshire was a tory stronghold, at least until the defection of earl Gower, and at Lichfield itself there was an aggressive jacobite element. Thus, the choice of a new bishop in 1749 was judged to be of 'more than ordinary consequence'. Nothing, indeed, was of 'greater moment' than to place there a man who had 'as much Goodness, & Learning, & Prudence & Courage, as one would wish to find in the character of a Xtian Bishop, & at the same time, as good an Heart towards the King, as your Grace has, & a Loyalty established upon Principles as firm & as unvaried'.[162] The vacancy was filled by Frederick Cornwallis, the son of Lord Cornwallis, one of the leaders of the Suffolk whigs. Herring thought that his character could hardly be better, the only doubt about his promotion being a reputation for poor health.[163] The situation at Worcester was slightly different. There local whigs were concerned about the presence of a strong tory group in the chapter, whose allegiance they believed was untrustworthy. Consequently, on the death of James Stillingfleet, the dean of Worcester, in 1746, and during the illnesses of his successor, Edmund Martin, in 1749 and 1751, Newcastle was plagued with applications from prominent local whigs, such as Sandys, Coventry, Deerhurst, and Marlborough, recommending worthy clergymen.[164] But their main concern was expressed by Deerhurst in 1749, who was alarmed by rumours that Philip Smalridge, one of the prebendaries, was to be the next dean. He wrote to Hardwicke that Smalridge was absolutely unfit for the position, since 'his Connexions, & Intimacies are not with the best Friends to his Majesty's Government'.[165] Two years later Deerhurst, having succeeded his father as 6th earl of Coventry, had no one in particular to recommend on the death of Martin, but urged Newcastle to send them 'a firm & steady Whig'.[166]

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159 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 277-8: Herring to Hardwicke, 29 Aug. 1747.

160 B.L. Add. 32720, fol. 217: Herring to Newcastle, 13 Apr. 1750.

161 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 54: Newcastle to Herring, 6 June [i.e. July] 1750.

162 Sedgwick (ed), *House of commons*, i, 318-20; B.L. Add. 32719, fols. 326-7: Herring to Newcastle, 23 Dec. 1749.

163 B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 3: Herring to Hardwicke, 7 Jan. 1749; Add. 32720, fol. 30: Herring to Newcastle, 8 Jan. 1750.

164 B.L. Add. 32708, fol. 142: Deerhurst to Newcastle, 25 Aug. 1746; ibid., fol. 168: George Lyttelton to Newcastle, 27 Aug. 1746; ibid., fol. 172: Henry Fox to Newcastle, 28 Aug. 1746; ibid., fol. 174: Marlborough to Newcastle, 28 Aug. 1746; ibid., fol. 228: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 4 Sept. 1746; ibid., fol. 314: Sandys to Newcastle, 15 Sept. 1746; Add. 32718, fol. 279: Coventry to Newcastle, 6 July 1749; ibid., fol. 281: Marlborough to Newcastle, 4 July 1749; Add. 32725, fols. 255-6: Coventry to Newcastle, 9 Oct. 1751.

165 B.L. Add. 35590, fol. 418: Deerhurst to Hardwicke, 22 Oct. 1749.

166 B.L. Add. 32725, fol. 253: Coventry to Newcastle, 9 Oct. 1751.

His prayers were answered by the appointment of John Waugh, one of the clerical heroes of the '45.[167]

If loyalty to the Hanoverian succession was a quality demanded of clergymen, Waugh's promotion showed that distinguished service to the dynasty was regarded in itself as a title to preferment. As chancellor of Carlisle in 1745 he had shown great zeal in attempting to organize Cumberland and Westmorland to resist the jacobite advance, and he had then gathered intelligence for Newcastle about events in the north-west following the capture of Carlisle by the rebels. His 'zeal and steadiness' and 'sufferings and losses' at that time were repeatedly urged as reasons for his reward by Gibson, Sherlock, Herring and the earl of Carlisle.[168] Similarly, the activity of Jacques Sterne, the archdeacon of York, was used to forward his pretensions to a crown preferment. The 'Yorkshire hero for the Cause', however, was not provided for until 1755 when he was given the prebend of Durham vacated by Bishop Benson.[169]

In both cases their political merit overcame doubts raised about their preferment. Waugh's character was not all that it might have been, and Herring suggested a complicated juggling of preferments when the deanery fell vacant to give Waugh a prebend of Durham instead.[170] Sterne's character was also questioned. Herring described it as one which 'perhaps . . . stood in need of blanching', largely because of his over-zealous activities against the Yorkshire catholics as a justice of the peace.[171] But the rewards of both men were perhaps tempered by these considerations. Sterne, after all, had to wait for a decade for his canonry, while Waugh had initially entertained pretensions to a bishopric.[172]

The concern to advance only men whose loyalty to the Hanoverian succession was undoubted was not, however, synonymous with the promotion of partisan whigs. On the contrary, many of Newcastle's supporters believed that he did not apply this principle exclusively enough. They feared the consequences of his pursuit of broad-bottomed administrations and of the relaxation of the ministry's scrutiny over patronage affairs following the failure of the '45 to attract English support. The 'old Whig Gentlemen' were concerned about the promotion of Jonathan Fountayne, who came from a family of prominent tories, to the deanery of York.[173] Murmurings had occurred even on the appointment of William Richardson, the tory master of Emmanuel, as a royal

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167 B.L. Add. 32725, fols. 301-2: Newcastle to Carlisle, 17 Oct. 1751.

168 B.L. Add. 32718, fol. 339: Sherlock to Newcastle, 24 July 1749; Add. 32707, fol. 147: Gibson to Newcastle, 5 May 1746; Add. 32712, fol. 16: Gibson to Newcastle, 2 July 1747; Add. 35598, fols. 271-2: Herring to Hardwicke, 18 July 1747; Add. 32718, fols. 291-2: Carlisle to Newcastle, 9 July 1749.

169 B.L. Add. 32719, fols. 241-2: Herring to Newcastle, 13 Oct. 1749; Add. 32729, fol. 373: Newcastle to Pelham, 28 Sept. 1752.

170 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 271-2: Herring to Hardwicke, 18 July 1747; Add. 32721, fols. 347-8, 428-9: Herring to Newcastle, 12, 23 July 1750.

171 B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 185: Herring to Hardwicke, 26 Apr. 1754. In 1746 Herring, then archbishop of York, described Sterne as 'an honest man, but I often tell him; I must bridle him a little'. Add. 35598, fol. 228: Herring to Hardwicke, 16 Sept. 1746.

172 B.L. Add. 32712, fols. 28-9: Waugh to Herring, 4 July 1747.

173 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 269: Herring to Hardwicke, 11 July 1747. Cf., Add. 32712, fols. 213-4: Lord Irwin to Newcastle, 25 July 1747.

chaplain.[174]

One of Newcastle's most vociferous critics on this subject was Archbishop Herring. It was Newcastle's refusal to be rigid enough on the question of dynastic loyalty that caused relations between them to reach their nadir in 1752, when Newcastle wanted Herring to second his recommendation to the king of James Johnson for the bishopric of Gloucester. Newcastle became exasperated with the archbishop when he refused even to mention Johnson in his letters on the subject.[175] Herring's correspondence with Hardwicke, however, revealed the depth of his feelings. He told him that it was 'utterly agst my Stomach & my good Conscience' to recommend Johnson, whom, he claimed, 'all the Boys [at Westminster] traditionally remember to have been once a Jacobite, of the first Order'. He believed Newcastle's recommendation of him to be 'the strongest piece of Enthusiasm . . . that I can conceive'.[176] He did not doubt Newcastle's intentions, but added that he knew 'the Dr [Johnson] is encouraging an active & a dangerous Clan'.[177] On Newcastle's return to England, he assured Herring that the rumours of jacobitism were 'a Slander'. Herring accepted his word, and there was a formal reconciliation.[178] But the charges would not go away. Spencer Cowper was echoing the opinion of many whigs when he remarked on Johnson's promotion, that 'it is now a step to Ecclesiastical preferment to be a Jacobite, and deserve hanging'.[179] The following year accusations of jacobitism made against him, Andrew Stone and William Murray, were investigated by the privy council and were then the subject of a parliamentary debate.[180] Even when these had been proved false, considerable distrust of Johnson still prevailed among the 'old whigs'. Predictably their fears surfaced again when Newcastle recommended Johnson for translation to the see of Worcester in 1759. Only Newcastle's personal guarantee for his future conduct calmed the local whig interest.[181]

In 1755 Newcastle was more aware of the anxieties of the whigs over the vacancy of the deanery of Christ Church. Oxford had lain under a cloud of disaffection ever since the accession of George I, and Herring saw Conybeare's death as 'a great opportunity' to place in the deanery someone who 'will be lead by the Principle of true Whiggism to brave the King's Enemies & give countenance & help to his Friends'.[182] Unfortunately for Newcastle, all the obvious choices among those who had been educated at Christ Church - William Freind, the son of Robert Freind,

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174 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 228: Herring to Newcastle, 16 Sept. 1746. But compare Bishop Gooch's belief that Newcastle's Cambridge friends 'will rejoice, to see Us taking of the Heads of Colleges, at prest, the strongest in the Opposition.' Add. 32703, fol. 59: Gooch to Newcastle, 21 May 1744.

175 B.L. Add. 32729, fols. 332-3: Herring to Newcastle, 21 Sept. 1752; ibid., fols. 372-3: Newcastle to Pelham, 28 Sept. 1752.

176 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 57-8: Herring to Hardwicke, 15 July 1752.

177 B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 74: Herring to Hardwicke, 5 Oct. 1752; ibid., fol. 63: Herring to Hardwicke, 14 Sept. 1752.

178 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 83-4: Herring to Hardwicke, 21 Nov. 1752.

179 *Letters of Spencer Cowper*, p. 160: Spencer Cowper to earl Cowper, 26 Nov. 1752.

180 *Letters from George III to Lord Bute 1756-1766*, ed. Romney Sedgwick (London, 1939), pp. xxvii-xxxvii.

181 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 261-2: Herring to Hardwicke, 15 May 1755; Add. 32896, fol. 214: Newcastle to Johnson, 2 Oct. 1759; ibid., fol. 246: Newcastle to Coventry, 3 Oct 1759.

182 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 264-5: Herring to Hardwicke, 26 July 1755.

master of Westminster and friend of Bishop Atterbury, John Fanshaw, the regius professor of divinity, and David Gregory, the regius professor of history - might have created uneasiness among the whigs. Two other names were canvassed - John Hume and Jonathan Shipley. But the promotion of a man not educated at Westminster and Christ Church would have caused great uneasiness in the college.[183] Conybeare had found the difficulties of his tenure of the deanery greatly increased for this very reason.[184] In the end the need to ensure that the college was well-governed outweighed the problem of conciliating the whigs, and David Gregory was appointed, although not until May 1756.

The merit and character of clergymen were also prime considerations in assessing their suitability for preferment, particular emphasis being laid on their pastoral and administrative ability. It is clear that this was recognized by patrons. Testimonies to the merit of clergymen were at least as common in Newcastle's ecclesiastical correspondence as references to the political importance of the recommendation. Archbishop Herring's suggestion of John Tottie for a prebend of Worcester, for instance, was made 'absolutely & entirely from . . . regard to Merit', while in mentioning John Egerton for the deanery of Hereford, he assured Newcastle that 'The World speaks extreamly well' of him.[185] The earl of Cholmondeley claimed that William Smith, his candidate for the deanery of Chester, had a 'Great Character for Learning Ingenuity & Morality'.[186] John Newcome, master of St John's College, Cambridge, recommending Samuel Squire to Newcastle as his chaplain, described him as 'a man of Learning, & good Behaviour . . . a very good & graceful preacher; well esteem'd by Gentlemen in Town, & by the Top men in ye University; by our Bishops, & members of Parliament'.[187]

Such examples may be multiplied. Testimonies to the merit of candidates for bishoprics and other dignities, however, were often superfluous, since they were prominent figures in the Church, well-known to the ministers. Those recommended for parochial livings, on the other hand, might be obscure country clergymen. It was in such cases that the efforts of Newcastle and Hardwicke to ensure that only well-qualified clergy received preferment can be seen most clearly. Careful enquiries about a candidate were not uncommon. Sometimes a patron himself referred the ministers to a bishop for a character of his nominee,[188] but Newcastle and Hardwicke frequently turned to the bishops to inform themselves of the reputations of clergymen. When the French

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183 B.L. Add. 32858, fols. 67-9: Newcastle to Secker, 8 Aug. 1755; ibid., fol. 108: Secker to Newcastle, 11 Aug. 1755; ibid., fols. 429-30: Herring to Newcastle, 8 Oct. 1755; Add. 35599, fol. 292: Herring to Hardwicke, 14 Dec. 1755. The duke of Marlborough's recommendation of William Freind, however, demonstrates that the fears voiced by Herring were not shared by all the whigs. Add. 32863, fols. 138-9: Marlborough to Newcastle, 29 Feb. 1756.

184 Huntington Library, Gibson Papers, bound volume, #1: Bishop Hare to Gibson, 13 Sept. 1737.

185 B.L. Add. 32718, fol. 14: Herring to Newcastle, 5 Jan. 1749; B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 134: Herring to Newcastle, 20 June 1750.

186 B.L. Add. 32731, fol. 181: Cholmondeley to Newcastle, 15 Feb. 1753. The vacancy did not occur until 1758, when the deanery was bestowed upon Smith.

187 B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 558: Newcome to Newcastle, 29 Dec. 1748. For the earl of Hardwicke, cf., e.g., Sherlock's pleasure at his patronage of a clergyman from his diocese 'of distinguished worth & Abilities'. Add. 35587, fol. 56: Sherlock to Hardwicke, 31 Aug. 1742.

188 E.g., B.L. Add. 32712, fol. 423: earl of Coventry to Newcastle, 24 Aug. 1747.

ambassador recommended Mr Black to Newcastle for the living of St Mary Woolnoth, it was to Black's diocesan, the bishop of London, that Newcastle resorted to confirm the good character given him by the ambassador.[189] Similarly, Archbishop Herring made a general promise to Hardwicke, that 'Whenever your Lordship pleases to ask Characters of Persons from me, I will, to ye best of my Judgment, inform you truly'.[190] These requests for information were not merely a formality, and the bishops did not hesitate to advise the ministers of anything that made a preferment inadvisable. In 1753 Drummond informed Newcastle, in no uncertain terms, that a person recommended to him was not 'of that Character you wd wish to prefer'.[191] Often, however, the case was not so clear-cut, and then the bishops might presume to tender advice, as when Herring replied to Hardwicke's enquiry about Mr Bridges, recommended by the marquis of Rockingham for the vicarage of Hull. Herring knew nothing to the 'discredit' of Bridges. On the other hand, he knew 'nothing of him distinguishing', and suggested to Hardwicke that 'the principal Minister of Hull should be of some character a little raised above the common run'.[192] Occasionally this process was reversed. In 1753 Newcastle expressed some reservation about the suitability of Samuel Nicolls to succeed Bishop Sherlock as Master of the Temple. Sherlock, who was responsible for suggesting Nicolls, responded by securing from prominent members of the inns of court testimonials to the ability which Nicolls had displayed as his deputy.[193]

Moreover, Newcastle laid down standards for his disposal of patronage from which he rarely departed. It has already been pointed out that bishops, except in special circumstances, could expect only one translation. Newcastle also regarded the holding of two crown prebends at one time as 'very irregular', and something only to be considered 'upon extraordinary Occasions',[194] although there was nothing in canon law to prevent a clergyman holding two such preferments, providing they were not in the same church. His concern that crown patronage should be used to further the good government of Church and state, and should not be juggled with to its detriment, was further demonstrated in 1748. John Gilbert, bishop of Llandaff, had been promised translation to a wealthier and more important see. But, on the expectation of Butler's being translated to London, he applied to Newcastle for the deanery of St Paul's to hold *in commendam* with Llandaff while awaiting translation. In this application he was strongly supported by Pelham, but Newcastle refused categorically to think of it, arguing that St Paul's was 'too good' to be given 'en attendant'.[195] Hardwicke, who presented to the vast majority of the crown's parochial livings,

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189 B.L. Add. 32726, fol. 310: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 21 Mar. 1752.

190 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 215: Herring to Hardwicke, 12 July 1746.

191 B.L. Add. 32732, fol. 371: Drummond to Newcastle, 27 July 1753.

192 B.L. Add. 35599, fol. 104: Herring to Hardwicke, 26 Sept. 1753.

193 B.L. Add. 32731, fols. 47-8: Sherlock to Newcastle, 10 Jan. 1753; ibid., fols. 56-7: Lord Chief Baron Parker to Newcastle, 18 Jan. 1753; ibid., fols. 58-9: Mr Baron Finch to Newcastle, 19 Jan. 1753; ibid., fols. 96-7: Mr Justice Birch to Newcastle, 22 Jan. 1753.

194 B.L. Add. 32726, fol. 375: Newcastle to Lady Albemarle, 2 Apr. 1752.

195 B.L. Add. 32716, fol. 176: Newcastle to Pelham, 4 Sept. 1748; ibid., fols. 123, 184: Pelham to Newcastle, 26 Aug., 6 Sept. 1748; ibid., fol. 278: Newcastle to Pelham, 17 Sept. 1748; Add. 32717, fol. 109: Newcastle to Gilbert, 12 Oct. 1748.

was equally unbending in his efforts to promote clergy who would be dedicated and effective in the performance of their duties: he refused to promise livings before they were vacant;[196] he refused to promise preferment to men of other professions before they had taken orders;[197] he often made residence a condition of presentation to a living;[198] and he was most unwilling to allow dispensations for plurality for livings out of distance.[199]

As might be expected, particular time and attention were given to the consideration of episcopal vacancies. The disposal of the see of London on the death of Edmund Gibson in 1748 was a matter of the greatest consequence. London was the senior bishopric after the archbishoprics, and was of considerable importance in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs. The ministry felt greatly the death of Gibson. Newcastle remarked on it in a passage which is interesting for the light it casts on the qualities he valued in a bishop: 'His known and unshaken Loyalty to the King, and Zeal for the Protestant Interest, and his great Ability & Integrity, make his Loss very great both to the Church & Kingdom'.[200] Although the ministry had fixed on Butler as his successor, on the assumption that Sherlock would decline, such was the importance of the bishopric to 'Church and Kingdom', that Herring reminded Newcastle that the choice of a new bishop was of 'the greatest consequence to the Publick' and required 'more than ordinary attention'.[201] When it was rumoured in London that Butler would refuse, Herring wrote to Hardwicke reiterating these considerations, and urging the case of Bishop Mawson, 'whose Learning, & Esteem pd him in ye University & by the Clergy, & whose cool Temper, cautious acting, & Integrity of Attachment to ye King, should at least support his claim of Seniority'.[202] Nor was the character of Newcastle's choice, Sherlock, in any way lacking. Herring was displeased at the promotion for personal reasons, and consequently his patron, while admitting that Sherlock was 'very able', was cool. But Henry Pelham wrote to his brother informing him that 'every one sees the convenience of it, and the dignity that attends the Government in having such a man resident att [sic] Fulham'.[203]

The same considerations had applied the previous year on the death of Archbishop Potter. After both Gibson and Sherlock, Newcastle's first two choices, had declined for reasons of age and health, it was agreed that the archbishopric should be offered to Herring. Not only did Herring, as archbishop of York, have a strong claim by virtue of seniority, but he had shown himself an excellent pastor at Bangor and York, and by his behaviour during the '45 rebellion

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196 E.g., B.L. Add. 32690, fol. 348: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 1 Sept. 1737.

197 B.L. Add. 35590, fols. 166-7: Philip Doddridge to Hardwicke, 11 Oct. 1748; ibid., fol. 172: Hardwicke to Doddridge, 18 Oct. 1748; ibid., fol. 173: Doddridge to Hardwicke, 20 Oct. 1748.

198 B.L. Add. 35590, fol. 316: John Jortin to Hardwicke, 5 July 1749; ibid., fols. 332-3: Arthur Onslow to Hardwicke, 16 July 1749; Add. 35594, fols. 316-7: Samuel Salter to Hardwicke, 8 Nov. 1756.

199 B.L. Add. 35586, fol. 98: earl of Derby to Hardwicke, 22 Sept. 1738; ibid., fol. 117: Hardwicke to Derby, 8 Oct. 1738.

200 B.L. Add. 32716, fol. 281: Newcastle to Herring, 17 Sept. 1748.

201 B.L. Add. 32716, fol. 214: Herring to Newcastle, 12 Sept. 1748.

202 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 350: Herring to Hardwicke, 20 Sept. 1748.

203 B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 38: Pelham to Newcastle, 7 Oct. 1748; ibid., fol. 74: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 9 Oct. 1748. For Herring's reservations see above, p. 109.

had proved himself eminently capable of an important station in civil affairs. Herring tried to prevent the offer, arguing that he was unfit 'in every consideration to support the figure of that High Place & Dignity, to any purpose of the Publick Good'.[204] Hardwicke, however, thought Herring's qualifications for the archbishopric to be so apparent, that in a long letter persuading Herring to accept, he dismissed this objection with the statement that 'whoever is fit to be Archbp of York & has filled it with Reputation is fit to be Archbp of Canterbury'.[205] That church dignities, and bishoprics in particular, were often filled almost as soon as they became vacant was not, therefore, a sign of immature decisions. It was, on the contrary, indicative of the fact that for months, or even years previously, Newcastle had been considering the eventuality of a vacancy and discussing the possibilities with Pelham, Hardwicke and his episcopal advisers. As early as 1750 he was writing to Herring that 'As to the Bishoprick of Winchester, Whenever that comes to require Consideration, (which, I hope, and believe, is not, now, the case); *That* may deserve very *mature* Consideration'.[206] The vacancy did not in fact occur until 1761, although Hoadly was seriously ill for most of the decade.

It would be possible, if tedious, to examine one by one those bishops appointed or translated by Newcastle, assessing their abilities. Despite the opprobrium heaped upon these men by successive generations, however, it is not immediately apparent that the ministry failed to create a distinguished episcopate, well-qualified to act as the administrators of their dioceses and the governors of their clergy. One small sample, the bishops who came from noble families, illustrates this point clearly. This group may not be representative, but the powerful connections of such men suggest that it is among them that the undeserving or incapable were most likely to be found. Of the thirty bishops appointed between 1742 and 1762 five came from noble families,[207] whereas only one of the twenty-six bishops on the bench in 1742 did.[208] There is no evidence, however, to suggest that this was the result of a deliberate policy of Newcastle, or of ministers later in the century under whom the trend continued. Rather it was a reflection of the socio-economic conditions that were encouraging an increasing number of younger sons to take orders.[209] Newcastle, indeed, was anxious that lack of powerful connections should not be a bar to promotion, and when Archbishop Herring began to canvass Anthony Ellys for a bishopric, he expressed his delight 'that His Grace, at the Head of the Church, took under His Protection, a Man, of avowed Merit; - No Ways attach'd to, or dependent, then, upon Him'.[210] The powerful connections of these men ensured that they reached high stations in the Church much earlier than

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[204] B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 284: Herring to Hardwicke, 17 Oct. 1747.

[205] B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 288: Hardwicke to Herring, 20 Oct. 1747. This letter is printed, with minor omissions, in P.C. Yorke, *The life and correspondence of Philip Yorke, earl of Hardwicke* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1913), ii, 80-3.

[206] B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 53: Newcastle to Herring, 6 June [i.e. July] 1750.

[207] This total includes the sons and grandsons of peers: James Beauclerk, Frederick Cornwallis, Robert Drummond, John Egerton and Richard Trevor.

[208] Henry Egerton

[209] See cpt. 2, pp. 16-17.

[210] B.L. Add. 32728, fol. 418: Newcastle to Hardwicke, 29 July 1752.

usual. Their average age at consecration was only 36, compared with an average age of 49 for the thirty bishops created by Newcastle.[211] But there can be no suggestion that their connections gained for them preferments for which they were not qualified. Frederick Cornwallis was perhaps the least distinguished of the five. Yet he was considered suitable to be elevated to Canterbury on the death of Secker and was a competent, if not an outstanding, archbishop. Robert Drummond, Richard Trevor and John Egerton were all regarded by contemporaries as exemplary bishops, and all were particularly noted for their abilities as administrators of their dioceses. James Beauclerk is a little-known figure, but a recent historian, on the basis of a study of the official records of his episcopate, has declared him a 'remarkable' pastor of his diocese 'by any standards'.[212]

By way of conclusion one example of Newcastle's ecclesiastical patronage merits particular attention. The removes occasioned by the vacancy of the bishopric of Durham on the death of Edward Chandler can hardly be regarded as typical. Joseph Butler was translated from Bristol to Durham; Thomas Secker was given the deanery of St Paul's, also vacated by Butler, to hold *in commendam* with his bishopric of Oxford; and the bishopric of Bristol was filled by John Conybeare, the dean of Christ Church. As 'great, and as reputable, Promotions, as ever were made at one Time, in the Church', was Newcastle's description of them to the archbishop of Canterbury.[213] But even if they are more representative of his ideal than his normal practice, they are nonetheless indicative of his aims and concerns.

Newcastle was entitled to his satisfaction at these appointments. All three would have graced the episcopal bench in any age of the Church. Joseph Butler was one of the foremost theologians of the age. During the first half of the eighteenth century deism was commonly seen as a powerful intellectual movement, threatening not only the Church of England, but christianity in general. On its publication in 1736, however, Butler's *Analogy of religion* was acclaimed as the decisive rebuttal of the deist attack. He was also a respected preacher and an effective administrator while at Bristol.[214] Thomas Secker lacked the intellectual distinction of Butler, but he was a better communicator. One of the century's most popular preachers, he also produced a widely-used and often reprinted series of lectures for use with confirmation candidates. While at St James's, Westminster, he was an active and highly respected parish priest, despite the fact that he was also a bishop for fifteen years of his incumbency. As a bishop he was one of the

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211 The average age at consecration of the twenty-six bishops on the bench in 1742 was 48.

212 Robert Drummond, *Sermons on public occasions and a letter on theological study . . . To which are prefixed memoirs of his life, by George Hay Drummond* (Edinburgh, 1803), pp. xi - xxix; *A sketch of the life and character of the right honourable and reverend Richard Trevor lord bishop of Durham. With a particular account of his last illness* (Darlington, 1776); William Hutchinson, *The history and antiquities of the county palatine of Durham* (3 vols., Newcastle, 1785-94), III, iii-xiii; William Marshall, 'Episcopal activity in the Hereford and Oxford dioceses, 1660-1760', *Midland History*, VIII (1983), 118.

213 B.L. Add. 32722, fol. 5: Newcastle to Herring, 1 Aug. 1750.

214 Sykes, *Church and state*, pp. 346-7; Leslie Stephen, *History of English thought in the eighteenth century* (3rd edn., 2 vols., London, 1902), II, 278-308; Downey, *The eighteenth-century pulpit* , pp. 30-57; Norman Sykes, 'Bishop Butler and the Church of his age', *Durham University Journal*, XLII (1950-1), 1-14.

century's most diligent and effective administrators. At Bristol, Oxford and Canterbury he compiled diocesan books which were used by his successors throughout the century, and his visitation charges were still being recommended to the clergy well into the nineteenth century.[215] Conybeare is the least known of the three. But in addition to being an energetic dean of Christ Church, he too was a popular preacher and acquired a European reputation for his defences of revealed religion against the deists in the 1720s and 1730s, culminating in an attack upon Matthew Tindal's *Christianity as old as the creation* in 1732.[216]

If all were of great merit from a religious viewpoint, their politics left something to be desired. Conybeare, it is true, had first made himself known at Oxford in the years immediately after the Hanoverian succession. Later, as dean of Christ Church, he was a staunch and vocal leader of the whig interest there.[217] But, like both Secker and Butler, his attendance in the house of lords was worse than average.[218] Secker's political unreliability has already been discussed. Like him Butler joined the episcopal opposition to the ministry over the Spirituous Liquors Bill and the clause relating to episcopal orders in the Bill for disarming the Scottish Highlands. Both Secker and Butler, moreover, were strong, if not public, supporters of the proposals to establish an episcopate in America despite ministerial hostility.[219] Butler did not join Secker in opposition to the Walpole ministry. In later years Secker claimed that Butler had disapproved of his behaviour and their friendship had coolled.[220] However, even Butler was not an unequivocal ministerialist at that time - with Secker and Benson he abstained in 1743 on the vote to approve the sending of British troops to Flanders.[221]

Newcastle's description of these appointments was not just complacent self-congratulation. On this occasion at least the accepted interpretation of his ecclesiastical patronage can be shown to be false. The filling of the vacancy of Durham in 1750 may represent an ideal not always attained, but it was an ideal to which Newcastle paid more than lip-service. He was constantly striving to further the interests of the Church. The overriding concern of his ecclesiastical policy was to secure good government both in the Church and, especially, in the state. Theological criteria and party-political considerations could not be ignored, but neither dominated Newcastle's ecclesiastical policy. Those at the extremes of the spectrum of contemporary opinion, notably

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215 Beilby Porteus, 'Life of Secker', in Secker, *Works*, I, i-xliv; Downey, *Eighteenth-century pulpit*, pp. 89-114; Lambeth Palace Library, MS 2598, fol. 23 (Sykes transcript); *Christian Remembrancer*, XII (1830), 241, 435, 509, 571, 642; Thomas Secker, *Lectures on the catechism* (2 vols., London, 1769; 10th edn., London, 1804). Part of this work was still being reprinted as late as 1885. Secker, *Lectures on the creed. Selected from the lectures on the church catechism* (Dublin, 1885).

216 W.R. Ward, *Georgian Oxford: university politics in the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1958), pp. 137-8; John Conybeare, *A defence of reveal'd religion against the exceptions of a late writer, in his book, intituled, Christianity as old as the creation, &c.* (2nd edn., London, 1732).

217 Ward, *Georgian Oxford*, pp. 91, 138.

218 See table 8.1 below.

219 D.R. Gerlach, 'Champions of an American episcopate: Thomas Secker of Canterbury and Samuel Johnson of Connecticut', *H.M.P.E.C.*, XLI (1972), 381-414; A.L. Cross, *The anglican episcopate and the American colonies* (Cambridge, Mass., 1902), pp. 122-4; *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1192-1440, XIV, 269-315. See below, cpts. 8 and 9.

220 L.P.L., MS 2598, fols. 25-6, 30-1 (Sykes transcript).

221 B.L. Add. 6043, fol. 155.

those suspected of doctrinal heterodoxy, were excluded from crown patronage, but in contrast to politicians of earlier and later decades, such as Nottingham, Rochester, Godolphin, or the younger Pitt, Newcastle's correspondence is characterized by a marked lack of concern about theological beliefs. Problems of parliamentary management demanded Newcastle's attention more frequently. His attempts to satisfy the demands of influential patrons involved him in negotiations and arrangements of the greatest complexity. Moreover, because the patronage system relied on personal recommendations, which were often channelled to ministers through local members of parliament, or the lord lieutenant, a cleric did indeed find it difficult to rise in the Church without the patronage of someone who was a part of the network of connections surrounding the court and ministry. Consequently the majority of Newcastle's appointees were whig, but he did not exclude opposition whigs like Zachary Pearce, or reputed tories, such as Thomas Sherlock. But it is clear that merit was not forgotten. By his emphasis on the moral character and orthodoxy of clergymen, and by his reliance for advice on bishops such as Gibson, Sherlock and Secker, Newcastle demonstrated his recognition of the interests of the Church and his acceptance of the *trust* of patronage. But, above all, his restriction of crown patronage to those clergy of unquestioned loyalty to the Hanoverian succession, to the constitution in church and state, and of unblemished character, revealed his concern that the Church should perform its secular functions effectively. It was only through the management of the crown's ecclesiastical patronage, especially the advancement of men who would be effective administrators of dioceses and governors of the clergy, that the ministry could hope to promote the security and good government of the state.

In common with many whigs, however, Newcastle shared a fear that religion was only a latent issue in politics. Another aim of the ministry, therefore, was to prevent the resurgence of the cry 'the Church in danger', which, it believed, would endanger its own position in parliament and also undermine the security of the Hanoverian dynasty. As part of this policy they sought to convince the lower clergy that the Church was not threatened by a whig administration undermining it from within by its control of patronage. This aim was consonant with that of securing the good government of Church and state, since learned and diligent bishops were also likely to be men who were conscious of their duties as guardians of the Church and clergy. Under Walpole Gibson had advocated this policy explicitly, arguing that the 'great point was, to bring ye body of ye Clergy and ye two Universities, at least to be easy under a Whig administration'.[222] Churchmen felt more secure under the Pelhams, whose piety contrasted with Walpole's apparent lack of religious sensibilities,[223] and it became less necessary to remind

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[222] Gibson Papers, St Andrews University Library, MS 5219. Gibson's opposition to the promotion of Samuel Clarke, for example, was grounded upon the consideration of 'how universally and with what resent such a step would be condemn'd by the whole body of ye Clergy, Whig as well as Tory; a very few excepted'. Ibid., MS 5201: Gibson to Walpole, n.d. [c1727].

[223] E.g., *H.M.C.*, 10th Report, Appendix, Part I, p. 278: Bishop Sherlock to Edward Weston, 8 Oct. 1743. Cf., Bishop Secker's comment of 1737: 'The Ministry I believe mean us of the Clergy neither any harm nor much good. Many of those who would be thought their best friends are vehement against us and so are many also of their most determined enemies'. B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 37: Secker to Bishop Berkeley, 29 June 1737.

ministers of the importance of preferring orthodox and deserving clergymen. But the whigs were still aware of the propaganda value of their care for the established Church. Henry Brooke, for example, reminded the Oxford tories of the security of the Church under a whig administration when he called upon them to renounce opposition:

> . . . at what Period of Time, since the Reformation, was the National Established Church of England (to which I wish as well as you do) in a State more prosperous than in the Year 1750? when were All her just and legal Rights and Privileges more effectually ascertained, or fixed on a firmer Basis? At what Time was Ecclesiastical Authority placed in the Hands of Men of higher *Abilities*, more exemplary *Lives*, more distinguished *Learning*, more beneficient Minds and (to comprehend every amiable Endowment in one Christian Virtue) more Universal *Charity*?[22a]

[22a] [Henry Brooke], *A letter to the Oxford tories. By an Englishman* (London, 1750), p. 16.

PART IV:

THE CHURCH AS AN AGENT OF THE STATE

6. The role of the Church

The established Church was perhaps the most important institution of local government throughout ancien regime Europe. Historians of France and other European countries, and even of early modern Britain, have long emphasized the role of the Church as part of the domestic state apparatus.[1] But the nature of the British state is a neglected topic in eighteenth-century studies. Local government has remained the preserve of administrative historians, who have overlooked the pervasive, if often nebulous, influence of the Church, which was entrusted with many functions which in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries came increasingly to be seen as the responsibility of central government.[2] It was deeply involved in both the provision of charity and the education of the nation's youth. More importantly the Church was charged with instilling loyalty and obedience and with enforcing, as well as inculcating, a code of morality. In other words, it was responsible for teaching men to be good citizens.

All eighteenth-century churchmen thought that the Church not only had, but ought to have, an important temporal role in promoting 'order and society'.[3] But they were in no doubt that the Church's primary aim was spiritual, 'the salvation of the souls' of men.[4] This chapter, therefore, will not only analyze the place of the Church in the domestic apparatus of the state, concentrating in particular on its teaching of the duties of citizenship, but will also argue that its spiritual and secular functions were neither incompatible nor, for the most part, in conflict. The Church believed its secular duties to be firmly rooted in, and an extension of, its spiritual responsibilities.

It has been suggested that the monopolistic claims of the Church of England, and consequently its influence in the localities, were undermined in the eighteenth century by the failure of the parochial system.[5] There is, however, no prima facie case to suggest that the Church was not performing its duties, spiritual or secular. It was indeed unable to adjust adequately to the problems of population growth and urbanization, especially in the last two decades of the century. But the areas affected were geographically small, and the high incidence of non-residence that prevailed throughout the country should not be interpreted as evidence that parishes were being totally neglected.[6] This chapter cannot assess the impact of the Church in the parish - such an undertaking must await detailed local studies. But the presumption that it was abdicating its responsibilities can be challenged. By examining the practices, ideals and aims of the bishops,

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1 Pierre Goubert, *L'ancien régime. 2: les pouvoirs* (Paris, 1975), pp. 164-71; Michael Roberts, 'The Swedish church', in *Sweden's age of greatness 1632-1718*, ed. Michael Roberts (London, 1973), pp. 132-73; Perry Williams, *The Tudor regime* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 6-7.

2 See cpt. 1.

3 James Backhouse, *A sermon preached in Bow-Church, London, at the consecration of the right reverend father in God, Philip, lord bishop of Bristol. On Thursday, June 29, 1758* (Cambridge, 1758), p. 4.

4 Ashridge MSS, Hertfordshire Record Office, A.H. 1997, fol. 31: Charge to the clergy of the diocese of Lichfield by Bishop John Egerton, 1770.

5 A.D. Gilbert, *Religion and society in industrial England. Church, chapel and social change, 1740-1914* (London, 1976), pp. 6-7.

6 See cpt. 2 above.

men who, as has been shown, to some extent reflected the concerns of central government, it is possible to show, not perhaps what the Church was doing, but at least what it was attempting to do.

In the government of the Church the bishops were charged with three duties. Each bishop was expected to perform a judicial visitation of his diocese every three years. In addition he was responsible for the ordination of ministers and the confirmation of the laity. The canons of 1603 stipulated that ordinations should occur four times a year, on the Sundays following the ember weeks, and that the rite of confirmation should be administered during the bishop's triennial visitation tour.[7] The eighteenth-century episcopate, however, has not had a good press. Studies of the Hanoverian Church, underpinned by the nineteenth century's critique of its pastoral standards, have portrayed the episcopate at best as mediocre and neglectful of its duties, and, at worst, as corrupt, worldly and self-seeking.[8] Even Norman Sykes's attempted rehabilitation of its reputation has failed to command widespread assent. Some historians, indeed, have argued that his evidence supports less favourable interpretations, one dismissing his account as 'somewhat damning in the faintness of [its] praise'.[9] There is, however, considerable evidence to support a more positive assessment of episcopal activity.

Two arguments in particular are advanced to support the assertion that the bishops were neglecting their duties as leaders of the Church. In the first place it is claimed that they were self-interested place-seekers, who knew that the surest way to preferment was slavishly to support the ministry in parliament. Thus the bishops put personal interest before public, and attended the house of lords to the neglect of the pastoral care of their dioceses. Convention did indeed demand that the bishops attend parliament every year. But it has already been demonstrated that the ministry made no coherent or consistent attempt to exploit its control of church preferments to create a body of episcopal voting fodder. Moreover, as a later chapter will argue, the bishops were not slavish supporters of the ministry. They saw their attendance in the house, not as a political obligation, but as their duty as governors of the Church, to safeguard its interests.[10] Secondly, the character of the episcopate as a whole has been distorted by over-emphasis on two individuals, Lancelot Blackburne and Benjamin Hoadly. Even Sykes devoted considerable attention to these 'notorious examples' and their neglect of their clerical duties, which perhaps

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7 Canons XXXI and LX. Edward Cardwell, *Synodalia. A collection of the articles of religion, canons and proceedings of convocation in the province of Canterbury, for the year 1547 to the year 1717* (2 vols., Oxford, 1842), I, 264-5, 281.

8 See, e.g., the recent comments of Roy Porter, *English society in the eighteenth century* (Harmondsworth, 1982), pp. 188-90.

9 Norman Sykes, *Church and state in England in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1934), cpt. 3; Gilbert, *Religion and society*, p. 70. Cf., J.B. Owen, *The eighteenth century 1714-1815* (London, 1974), p. 153.

10 See chapter 5 above and chapter 8 below.

accounts for the readiness of later historians to discount his conclusions.[11]

Blackburne and Hoadly, however, were not representative of the bench. The vast majority of the bishops performed their duties conscientiously. In 1718 Archbishop Wake wrote that 'the confirmations had never been so regular throughout the kingdom as within the last thirty years, nor the episcopal visitations and that by the bishops in person, so constant'.[12] If anything this situation improved during the rest of the century. The usual pattern of a visitation was for the bishop to tour his diocese, stopping at selected centres where the ministers and churchwardens of one or two rural deaneries had been summoned to meet him. In the diocese of Oxford Potter and Secker strictly observed the canons and visited triennially.[13] Elsewhere visitations were more irregular, although in general they occurred every three or four years. Thus Fleming visited Carlisle in 1736, 1739 and 1744; Osbaldeston in 1749, 1752 and 1756.[14] In Lincoln the pattern was rather different. Visitations occurred approximately every three years between 1727 and 1745 and again after 1784. But between 1748 and 1781 bishops of Lincoln attempted to cope with the vast size of their diocese by visiting the archdeaconries of Bedford, Buckingham and Huntingdon in one year, and those of Leicester, Lincoln and Stow in another. Bishops Thomas, Green and Thurlow were therefore performing the duties of visitation two years in every three.[15]

Confirmation was customarily administered during the visitation tour. This did not always happen. In 1718 Gibson decided to separate the two because of ill-health.[16] Later in the century Secker, while bishop of Oxford, held annual confirmations.[17] But Richard Trevor's itinerary for his visitation of Durham in 1754 was probably not untypical. During the months of July, August and September he visited and confirmed at Newcastle, Berwick, Alnwick, Morpeth, Durham and Auckland. In addition he confirmed at Darlington, Sunderland, Stockton and Barnard Castle.[18] In the eighteenth century, moreover, bishops made considerable efforts to ensure that the ceremony was more orderly, and thus more spiritually edifying. A common measure was to instruct ministers to provide their candidates with tickets to avoid crowding and confusion in the church.

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11 Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 145. Sykes wrote three articles about individual bishops. Blackburne and Hoadly were the subject of two. 'Benjamin Hoadly, bishop of Bangor', in *The social and political ideas of some English thinkers of the Augustan age, 1650-1750*, ed. F. Hearnshaw (London, 1928), pp. 112-55; '"The buccaneer bishop": Lancelot Blackburne, 1658-1743', *Church Quarterly Review*, cxxx (1940), 81-100. Hoadly's career also merited half a chapter in *Church and state*. Cf., W.A. Speck, *Stability and strife. England 1714-60* (London, 1977), p. 96.

12 Bodleian Library, Ballard MSS, III, fol. 74: Wake to Charlett, 23 May 1718, quoted in Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 120.

13 *The theological works of the most reverend Dr John Potter late lord archbishop of Canterbury* (3 vols., Oxford, 1753), I, 261-473; 'The autobiography of Archbishop Secker', Lambeth Palace Library, MS 2598, fol. 29 (Transcript of Professor Norman Sykes).

14 Carlisle Diocesan Records, Cumbria Record Office, DRC/5/22-42.

15 Kathleen Major, *A handlist of the records of the bishop of Lincoln and of the archdeacons of Lincoln and Stow* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 68-70.

16 Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 123.

17 William Marshall, 'Episcopal activity in the Hereford and Oxford dioceses, 1660-1760', *Midland History*, VIII (1983), 115.

18 J.C. Shuler, 'The pastoral and ecclesiastical administration of the diocese of Durham 1721-1771; with particular reference to the archdeaconry of Northumberland', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Durham, 1975, p. 349. Cf., the itineraries of Hurd and Keppel later in the century, printed in Sykes, *Church and state*, pp. 431-6.

Trevor introduced this practice to Durham in 1754. But it can be found earlier elsewhere and became general during the second half of the century.[19]

Unlike visitation and confirmation, ordination did not necessarily have to take place in the diocese. It was not uncommon for some bishops to ordain at a London church. While at Lincoln both Wake and Gibson adopted this expedient, as did Nicholas Claggett who held 17 of his 24 ordinations while bishop of Exeter in London.[20] But the general practice was for the majority of ceremonies to be performed in the diocese, usually at the cathedral church in the summer months. Potter and Secker at Oxford, Egerton and Beauclerk at Hereford, Chandler and Trevor at Durham, and Lavington at Exeter all followed this pattern.[21] The bishops thus ignored the letter of the canons, but they observed them in spirit - those relating to ordination were intended primarily to ensure that deacons remained on trial for a sufficient period before they were priested.[22] It was rare for a candidate to be made deacon and priest within three months, and unknown for it to occur on the same day. Furthermore, eighteenth-century practice clearly satisfied the needs of the Church. In the diocese of Carlisle George Fleming generally held two ordinations a year in the cathedral. His successor, Richard Osbaldeston, preferred to perform one in the chapel at Rose Castle. Both, however, ordained enough candidates to supply the diocese with clergymen.[23]

Within the episcopate, moreover, can be found numerous men of outstanding pastoral zeal and energy. James Beauclerk held triennial visitations of the diocese of Hereford, but was especially diligent in the matter of ordination, performing more than four ceremonies a year, of which 98% took place in the cathedral.[24] Thomas Secker ordained three times a year at Christ Church while he was bishop of Oxford, 'excepting that, some few Years, Bishop Benson did it once a Year for me'.[25] While resident at Cuddesden he preached every Sunday morning and read lectures on the catechism in the afternoon. He confirmed every year, sending tracts for the ministers of each

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19 Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', p. 349; Sykes, *Church and state*, pp. 134-5. In another attempt to add to the solemnity of the ceremony 'instead of going round the rail of the Communion table, and laying his hands upon the heads of two or four persons held close together, and in a low voice repeating the form of prayer over them, [Archbishop Gilbert of York] went round the whole rail at once, laid his hand upon the head of every person severally, and when he had gone through the whole, then he drew back to the Communion table, and in as audible and solemn a manner as he could pronounced the prayer over them all'. This practice was subsequently adopted by some of his brethren. 'The life of Dr Thomas Newton', in *The lives of Dr Edward Pocock . . . by Dr Twells; of Dr Zachary Pearce . . . and of Dr Thomas Newton . . . by themselves; and of the Rev. Philip Skelton, by Mr Bundy* (2 vols., London, 1816), II, 105-6.

20 Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 97; Arthur Warne, *Church and society in eighteenth-century Devon* (Newton Abbot, 1969), p. 25.

21 Marshall, 'Episcopal activity 1660-1760', p. 114; Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', pp. 107, 130; Warne, *Church and society*, p. 26.

22 Canon XXXII, which prohibited any bishop from making a man both deacon and priest on the same day, concluded 'that there being now four times appointed in every year for the ordination of deacons and ministers, there may ever be some time of trial of their behaviour in the office of deacon, before they be admitted to the order of priesthood.' Cardwell, *Synodalia*, I, 265.

23 Between 1735 and 1747 Fleming ordained 82 deacons and 52 priests for the diocese of Carlisle. Between 1748 and 1761 Osbaldeston ordained 66 deacons and 52 priests. This was clearly adequate for a diocese of about 100 parishes. In addition Fleming ordained 2 deacons and 3 priests on letters dismissory, and Osbaldeston 8 deacons and 29 priests. *Fleming-Senhouse papers*, ed. Edward Hughes (Carlisle, 1961), pp. 115-9; Cumbria R.O., DRC/1/7, pp. 137-311.

24 Marshall, 'Episcopal activity, 1660-1760', pp. 107, 114, 116.

25 L.P.L., MS 2598, fol. 25 (Sykes transcript).

parish to distribute and confirmation tickets 'to keep the people orderly'.[26] He held a visitation of the diocese of Bristol in 1735; his primary visitation of Oxford in 1738, and thereafter one every three years; and visitations of Canterbury in 1758 and 1766.[27] Robert Drummond visited the diocese of St Asaph in 1749, 1753 and 1758, and York in 1764 and 1770.[28] He confirmed for Archbishop Gilbert in York in 1758, laying his hands on 15000 people, and when archbishop himself confirmed the remarkable number of 41600 people between 1768 and 1771.[29] Bishop Benson was another figure who assisted his brethren in the discharge of their duties. Each year between 1742 and 1749 he held a general ordination for Bishop Chandler in the Castle at Durham.[30] In addition to performing regular visitations of his own diocese, he visited York for Archbishop Blackburne in 1737 and Durham for Bishop Chandler in 1746.[31] Benson in fact died of an illness which was exacerbated by his performing a confirmation in the north of his diocese.[32] A similar fate befell Zachary Pearce, who at the age of eighty-three confirmed 700 people at Greenwich and 'found himself next day unable to speak, and never regained his former readiness of utterance', dying eight months later.[33]

Blackburne and Hoadly must, therefore, be regarded as exceptions. But if neither could be described as a zealous and active pastor, a closer examination of their careers suggests that they did not neglect their episcopal duties. At first sight both appear to resemble the caricature of an eighteenth-century bishop; Blackburne was tainted by moral scandal, Hoadly was a political hack. Blackburne's character, however, is stained by no more than the mud of unsubstantiated rumour. In 1702 charges of adultery forced him to resign the sub-deanery of Exeter, but they were proved false and he was reinstated two years later.[34] Horace Walpole's allegation that his chaplain,

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26 L.P.L., MS 2598, fols. 49-50 (Sykes transcript).

27 L.P.L., MS 2598, fols. 22-3, 29, 51, 65 (Sykes transcript). There was also a visitation of Canterbury in 1762, but Secker was prevented by illness from delivering his charge in person. Ibid., fol. 60; *The works of Thomas Secker, LL.D., late lord archbishop of Canterbury* (new edn., 6 vols., London, 1811), v, 447.

28 Borthwick Institute, Bp. V. Misc; V.1770.

29 S.L. Ollard, 'Confirmation in the anglican communion', in *Confirmation or the laying on of hands* (2 vols., London, 1926-7), I, 226-7, 229-30.

30 Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', p. 114.

31 B.L. Add. 39313; *Archbishop Herring's visitation returns, 1743*, ed. S.L. Ollard and P.C. Walker (Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, vols. 71, 72, 75, 77, 79, 1927-31), I, xxii; *Letters of Spencer Cowper, dean of Durham 1746-74*, ed. Edward Hughes (Surtees Society, 165 for 1950, London and Durham, 1956), p. 66: Spencer Cowper to earl Cowper, 14 Oct. 1746. It was common for one bishop to assist another, and not just in cases of old age or incapacity. Matthias Mawson assisted Herring in his confirmation and visitation of York in 1743. Bishop Keene confirmed for Archbishop Hutton in 1755. Philip Yonge assisted Secker in his primary visitation of Canterbury. John Thomas, bishop of Lincoln, accompanied Sherlock on his visitation of Salisbury in 1747. Zachary Pearce confirmed in the peculiars of the archbishop of Canterbury which lay within his diocese, and for the last seven years of Bishop Sherlock's life performed all the ordinations for the bishopric of London. *Memoirs of a royal chaplain, 1729-63. The correspondence of Edmund Pyle, D.D., chaplain in ordinary to George II, with Samuel Kerrich, D.D., vicar of Dersingham, rector of Wolferton, and rector of West Newton*, ed. Albert Hartshorne (London, 1905), pp. 87-8: Pyle to Kerrich, 17 July 1743; Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 124; L.P.L., MS 2598, fol. 51 (Sykes transcript); *H.M.C.*, 10th Report, Appendix, Part I, p.297: Sherlock to Edward Weston, 27 Aug. 1747; Pearce Papers, WAM 64640, 64649: Secker to Pearce, 28 Aug. 1764, 6 Aug. 1767; 'The life of Dr Zachary Pearce', in *The lives of Pocock, Pearce, Newton, and Skelton*, I, 403.

32 L.P.L., MS 2598, fols. 143-4 (Sykes transcript).

33 'Life of Pearce', p. 411.

34 For the background to the 1702 scandal and its roots in party disputes in Exeter, see M.G. Smith, 'The cathedral chapter of Exeter and the election of 1705: a reconsideration', *Rep. Trans. Devon. Ass. Advmt. Sci.*, CXVI (1984), 109-26.

Thomas Hayter, was his natural son has enjoyed a longer life. Indeed, it continues to be repeated by historians, despite the fact that, as the *Quarterly Review* pointed out as long ago as 1822, the parish records of Chagford prove it to be no more than malicious speculation.[35] Hoadly, on the other hand, undoubtedly owed his elevation to the episcopate to his defence of the doctrine of resistance to evil princes during the party warfare of Anne's reign. If such an appointment was only to be expected in the climate of the times, Hoadly's later rapid promotion also owed much to his journalistic defences of the whig ministry in the early 1720s.[36] Indeed, much even of his religious writing was explicitly political. *The sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, for example, was a contribution to the debate of the early 1730s over the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. By reducing the service to a mere commemorative rite he was denying the utility of a sacramental test.[37] But Hoadly did not entirely lack ecclesiastical merit. If he was not a theologian himself, he was a prominent advocate and popularizer of the extreme latitudinarianism of Samuel Clarke.[38] In addition, his *Reasonableness of conformity* was regarded as one of the most effective replies to dissenting attacks on the Church of England. Some contemporaries found it difficult to reconcile with his famous sermon on the text, 'Christ's kingdom is not of this world', but few denied its value. The Connecticut high churchman, Samuel Johnson, acknowledged it as an important influence in his conversion from congregationalism.[39]

The character of Hoadly and Blackburne as bishops must, however, rest primarily on the fidelity with which they performed their episcopal functions. Both were eighty-five when they died, and no provision was made for the resignation of bishops until 1869.[40] Thus it is hardly surprising that they found the performance of their episcopal functions increasingly difficult in the last ten or fifteen years of their life. Hoadly, moreover, was lame all his life, and could only travel with difficulty.[41] Before 1733 Blackburne was not inactive. At Exeter between 1714 and

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35 Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of King George II*, ed. John Brooke (3 vols., New Haven and London, 1985), I, 60; *Quarterly Review*, XXVII (1822), 186-7; Sykes, 'Lancelot Blackburne, 1658-1743', pp. 82-3. For the repetition of these rumours see, e.g., Porter, *English society*, p. 280.

36 E.g., *The works of Benjamin Hoadly, D.D.*, ed. John Hoadly (3 vols., London, 1773), III, 1-395.

37 Benjamin Hoadly, *A plain account of the nature and end of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper* (London, 1735).

38 Hoadly edited Clarke's works. *Sermons on the following subjects, viz. Of faith in God . . . By Samuel Clarke, D.D. late rector of St James's Westminster. Published from the author's manuscript, by John Clarke, D.D. dean of Sarum. With a preface, giving some account of the life, writings, and character of the author: by Benjamin, lord bishop of Salisbury* (10 vols., London, 1730-1; 6th edn., London, 1743).

39 Benjamin Hoadly, *The reasonableness of conformity to the Church of England, represented to the dissenting ministers. In answer to the tenth chapter of Mr Calamy's abridgement of Mr Baxter's History of his life and times* (London, 1703); idem, *The nature of the kingdom of Christ. A sermon preach'd before the king, at the chapel at St James's, on Sunday March 31, 1717* (London, [1717]); D.F.M. Geradi, 'Samuel Johnson and the Yale "apostasy" of 1722: the challenge of anglican sacramentalism to the New England way', *H.M.P.E.C.*, XLVII (1978), 153-75, especially pp. 172-3; Portland MSS, Nottingham University Library, PWV/121/117: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 27 Dec. 1754.

40 By 32 & 33 Victoria, c. 111. In 1763 Bishop Pearce attempted to resign both the bishopric of Rochester and the deanery of Westminster, but only found it possible to resign the deanery. Nor was Pearce the only eighteenth-century bishop who was aware of the problems of old age. Edmund Keene lamented that the precedent of Pearce's resignation had not taken place, 'for nothing can be more alarming than the idea of being left on this See, when age and infirmities may render me unfit for duty, & I may be unable to get assistance'. 'Life of Pearce', pp. 404-7; Pearce Papers, WAM 64595: Keene to Pearce, 20 Aug. 1768.

41 Sykes argued that Hoadly's infirmity should have disqualified him from nomination to any bishopric [*Church and state*, p. 136]. There is no doubt that he could only perform the duties of his office with great difficulty.

1724 he ordained 74 men, one more than his successor Stephen Weston over the same period of time. Moreover, only one of these services was performed outside the diocese. At York, between 1725 and 1733, he ordained a further 215 men in ten services, all of which were held during his summer residence at Bishopthorpe.[42] All candidates for orders were carefully examined either by Blackburne or by his domestic chaplain, and clerks presented to benefices were examined again before institution.[43] In 1726-7 he carried out a primary visitation, and presumably confirmed at the same time.[44] Nor do the remains of his episcopal correspondence suggest that he subsequently neglected his diocese.[45] Hoadly too was careful to ensure that those applying to him for orders were suitably qualified, although like Blackburne and many of his contemporaries he often delegated the examination to his domestic chaplain.[46] Contrary to popular belief he not only visited the diocese of Hereford while he was bishop, but carried out a personal visitation in 1722. He also performed one ordination ceremony in the cathedral, and four in other places.[47] Regular ordinations took place in Salisbury during his episcopate, and he made at least two visitations of that diocese, and another in 1736 following his translation to Winchester. In 1737, moreover, he was reported as being on a confirmation tour.[48]

After they became too infirm to perform their duties adequately themselves, both made efforts to obtain assistance from other, younger bishops. Hoadly's physical disabilities, indeed, meant that he was forced to seek assistance from his brethren throughout his career. As early as 1720 Bishop Wynne confirmed for him in parts of the diocese of Bangor.[49] Later both Matthias Mawson and Zachary Pearce made confimation tours of the diocese of Winchester.[50] Likewise, in 1737 Bishop Benson performed a visitation and confirmation at York for Blackburne.[51] But Blackburne himself continued to discharge the majority of routine diocesan business through his chaplain, the energetic and efficient Thomas Hayter, whom he appointed archdeacon of York in 1730 and who later became bishop of Norwich and then of London. He remained well enough informed of diocesan affairs to leave his successor, Archbishop Herring, a parochial book containing the characters of all the clergy.[52] Moreover, a number of bishops ordained candidates at the request of both Blackburne and Hoadly. The giving to candidates for orders letters dismissory 'to any Catholic Bishop' was the only satisfactory expedient when it became impossible for them to visit

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42 Warne, *Church and society*, p. 24; *Herring's visitation returns*, I, xxii.

43 Borthwick Institute, Bp. C & P III/Headon, 1726-7: Blackburne to Sir Hardolf Wastenays, 5 Oct. 1727.

44 Borthwick Institute, V.1726-7. Cf., Speck, *Stability and strife*, p. 96.

45 Borthwick Institute, Bp. C & P III.

46 Pearce Papers, WAM 64593: Hoadly to Pearce, 22 Sept. 1757.

47 Marshall, 'Episcopal activity, 1660-1760', p. 107.

48 Hoadly, *Works*, III, 473-98; Nottingham University Library, PWV/120/4: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 17 Apr. 1737; Anne Whiteman, 'The Church of England 1542-1837', in *V.C.H.*, Wiltshire, III, 49.

49 Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 136.

50 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 421-2: Herring to Hardwicke, 28 July 1749; Pearce Papers, WAM 64689: Bath to Pearce, 17 July 1753.

51 Nottingham University Library, PWV/120/45: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 10 June 1743; *Herring's visitation returns*, I, xxii; 'Archbishop Blackburn's visitation returns of the diocese of York, 1735', ed. R. Trappes-Lomax, *Publications of the Catholic Record Society*, XXXII (1932), pp. 204-88.

52 *Memoirs of a royal chaplain*, p. 88: Pyle to Kerrich, 17 July 1743.

the diocese themselves. But these bishops acted only by a delegated authority. Both Hoadly and Blackburne supervised the examinations themselves, and Hoadly was able to assure Pearce in 1757 that five candidates to whom he had granted letters dismissory had all 'answered to more than ordinary Satisfaction'.[53] Neither was a shining example of eighteenth-century churchmanship, but neither was guilty of the almost total neglect of his diocese.

Visitation was arguably the most important of all episcopal acts. As Philip Bearcroft pointed out, what distinguished bishops from other ministers of the Church was their duty to 'govern even Presbyters, as well as Deacons, and Laity in Things pertaining to God'.[54] The basis of episcopal government was the visitation, which was the occasion for the bishop to ensure that the clergy were discharging their responsibilities and to remind them of the role of the Church, both social and religious. The formal business of a visitation was primarily judicial. A citation was issued to the clergy and wardens of each church or chapel to attend the bishop on a certain day. A book of articles of the visitation was also issued, in which the wardens made their presentments to the bishop. These concerned non-attendance at church, offences against the moral law, and administrative matters, and were dealt with at a special court held later in the year. There was also an important non-judicial, or pastoral element in the business of visitation. The bishop's charge was used to advise and encourage the clergy, while the twenty or so clergy attending at each centre had 'opportunities of conferring with each other, and consulting their superiors, on matters relating to their profession' at a dinner after the day's formalities had been completed.[55] More generally the bishop's tour of the diocese was itself seen as an important opportunity for him to meet, and be met by, clergy and laity alike. Thus, the news of Gibson's decision to separate confirmation from visitation at Lincoln in 1718 was received with considerable dissatisfaction, as it was felt to detract from the ceremony of the occasion.[56]

In the eighteenth century the pastoral came to dominate the business of visitation. Thomas Secker saw the judicial role of the bishop as only a small part of visitations which were intended 'principally, to give bishops opportunities of exhorting and cautioning their clergy, either on such general subjects as are always useful, or on such particular occasions as the circumstances of things, or the inquiries, made at or against these times point out; and of interposing their authority, if there be need; which amongst you, I am persuaded, there will not'.[57] In part this development was a consequence of the decline of the ecclesiastical courts. But the episcopate saw their increasing reliance on pastoral methods, not as a response to necessity, but as the best way

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53 Pearce Papers, WAM 64593: Hoadly to Pearce, 22 Sept. 1757; WAM 64591-2: Hoadly to Pearce, 4, 20 Sept. 1756; Osbaldeston Papers, North Yorkshire Record Office, ZDS/XVII/3/1: Thomas Hayter to Richard Osbaldeston, 30 July [1734]; *Herring's visitation returns*, i, xxii.

54 Philip Bearcroft, *The perpetual presence of Christ with his church. A sermon preached before the most reverend father in God, John lord archbishop of Canterbury, at the consecration of the right reverend father in God, Edward lord bishop of St Davids, on Sunday January 2, 1742-3. In the chapel of Lambeth Palace* (London, 1743), p. 17.

55 Secker, 'Charge of 1758', in *Works*, v, 424.

56 Sykes, *Church and state*, pp. 129-30.

57 Secker, 'Charge of 1758', in *Works*, v, 424.

of governing the clergy, no authority being more effectual than 'calm Persuasion from the propriety and rectitude of things'.[58] Zachary Pearce thus stressed that he would use the courts only as a last resort to reform any 'Blemishes' among the clergy. He would 'take notice of them, in ye Spirit of Mildness', and only if that failed 'in that method (to which I shall always go wth Unwillingness), but wch the Laws point out to me'.[59]

Effective government of dioceses by primarily pastoral methods required of the bishops extensive knowledge of the state of parishes and characters of incumbents. In the eighteenth century, however, their residence in London for much of the year made such knowledge difficult to acquire. They did not have time to perform parochial visitations in person.[60] Consequently, the period witnessed a number of improvements in the structure of diocesan administration. One response to the need for more accurate and detailed information was suggested by William Wake and Edmund Gibson. At their primary visitations of Lincoln in 1706-7 and 1717-18 they sent separate articles of enquiry to the clergy together with the usual articles directed to churchwardens. These were intended to provide a variety of information about parishes and their incumbents: their size; the number of dissenters; schools and charity; residence; the regularity of services. Both bishops repeated the process during their subsequent visitations of the diocese.[61] Their example was widely imitated. Secker used similar articles at his primary visitation of Oxford in 1737; Herring at York in 1743; Nicholas Claggett at his primary visitation of Exeter in 1743; Zachary Pearce at his primary visitations of Bangor in 1749 and Rochester in 1757; and Robert Drummond in 1749, 1753 and 1758 at St Asaph, and in 1764 at York.[62] By the middle of the century the practice had become almost universal at primary visitations, and often the returns were used as the basis of a diocesan book which could be annotated by the bishop to provide an up-to-date account of the diocese for his own use and to leave to his successor.[63]

Bishop Benson of Gloucester, on the other hand, revived the institution of rural deans. Each archdeaconry in a diocese was anciently divided into rural deaneries. One of the duties of the rural deans, who were local clergymen appointed by the bishop, was to visit parochially, before

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58 Edmund Keene, *The charge of Edmund lord bishop of Ely to the clergy of his diocese, in his primary visitation 1771. Published at their request* (London, 1772), p. 5.

59 Pearce Papers, WAM 64864, fol. 9: Charge to the clergy of Rochester, 1757.

60 B.L. Add. 39313, fol. 139: Charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Gloucester by Bishop Benson, 1744. One exception was William Nicolson who carried out a parochial visitation of the small diocese of Carlisle in 1703-4. William Nicolson, *Miscellany accounts of the diocese of Carlisle*, ed. R.S. Ferguson (Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, Extra Series I, Carlisle, 1877).

61 *Speculum dioceseos Lincolniensis*, ed. R.E.G. Cole (Lincoln Record Society, IV, Lincoln, 1913), pp. ii-iv; Lincolnshire Archives Office, Bishop Gibson's visitation returns, 1717-18, 1720-1.

62 *Articles of enquiry addressed to the clergy of the diocese of Oxford at the primary visitation of Dr Thomas Secker*, ed. H.A. Lloyd-Jukes (Oxfordshire Record Society, XXXVIII, 1957); *Herring's visitation returns*, I, 2-3; Warne, *Church and society*, p. 25; Pearce Papers, WAM 64862, fol. 2: Charge to the clergy of Bangor, 1749; WAM 64864, fol. 2: Charge to the clergy of Rochester, 1757; Borthwick Institute, Bp. V. Misc; Bp. V.1764 (Ret).

63 E.g., by Chandler at Durham in 1732, by Secker at Bristol and by Benson at Gloucester in 1735, and by Hurd at Worcester in 1782. Shuler, 'Administration of the diocese of Durham', p. 361; 'Bishop Secker's diocese book', ed. Elizabeth Ralph in *A Bristol miscellany*, ed. Patrick McGrath (Bristol Record Society's Publications, XXXVII, 1985), pp. 21-70; Gloucester Diocesan Records, Gloucester City Library, GDR 285B(1); *The state of the bishopric of Worcester 1782-1808*, ed. Mary Ransome (Worcestershire Historical Society, N.S., VI, , Leeds, 1968).

the visitations of the archdeacon and bishop, all churches, chapels and houses of incumbents in his district. Their returns, therefore, provided detailed information about the state of every parish. In the diocese of Exeter, where the deans were elected by the clergy in chapter, they still performed their tasks and were extremely conscientious.[64] But in many other dioceses, although rural deans were nominally appointed, the institution had become a dead-letter. Prompted by the neglect of his archdeacon who was nearly ninety when he became bishop, Benson decided to reanimate 'ys . . . ancient & . . . regular form of Government' and appointed rural deans to perform the work of parochial visitation.[65] His example was followed by Bishop Drummond in the diocese of St Asaph in 1749. It 'being many years since the last Visitation of this kind', Drummond sent to his rural deans a long letter outlining the matters they were to take notice of, 'that I, who cannot visit parochially, may by your means be enabled the better to discharge my Duty'. He did not wish to know only of offences or defects, but also of those parishes worthy of commendation, 'as I wd not be meerly a Terrour to ye Evil & Scandalous ones, but wd praise, countenance, & . . . encourage those that do well & want something better than they now have'.[66] In the late 1770s the institution was also reintroduced into the diocese of Ely by Edmund Keene, while both Secker and Pearce considered the possibility of appointing rural deans in Oxford and Bangor.[67] Even George Berkeley, the bishop of Cloyne, was attracted by the possibilities of the idea, but was warned by Benson that 'in Ireland . . . it may be a thing quite new, & your beginning it may give offence both to the rest of ye Bishops & to ye Archdeacons & also to ye Inferior Clergy'.[68] In the administration of their dioceses, as elsewhere, the episcopate was restricted by the dictates of tradition.

While the importance of the bishops' judicial acts declined, the emphasis on pastoral government gave added weight to what they said. Especially significant were the visitation charges, formal addresses to the clergy which were sometimes published. In these charges above all the bishops defined their conception of the role of the Church and clergy. Occasionally they were used to examine specific problems, as when Bishop Pearce discussed calls for a further reform of the Church in liturgy and worship in 1767.[69] More often they set forth in general terms

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64 Warne, *Church and society*, pp. 13, 51-63. Bishop John Fisher, on his translation from Exeter to Salisbury in 1807, re-introduced rural deans in that diocese.

65 B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 50: Benson to Berkeley, 23 Apr. 1743. Benson made the first appointments almost immediately after his arrival in the diocese. B.L. Add. 39313, fol. 109: Charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Gloucester by Bishop Benson, 1735.

66 Pearce Papers, WAM 64828: Drummond to 'a rural dean', 17 Jan. 1749.

67 Ely Diocesan Records, Cambridge University Library, EDR/B/7/1: rural dean returns, 1779-80; Secker, 'Charge to the clergy, 1753', in *Works*, v, 413. Among Pearce's papers are copies of two of Bishop Drummond's papers relating to rural deans. Pearce Papers, WAM 64828, 64848.

68 B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 50: Benson to Berkeley, 23 Apr. 1743.

69 Pearce Papers, WAM 64866: 'Charge to the clergy of Rochester, 1767'.

the duties of the parochial clergy.[70] Episcopal charges cannot, however, be read as accounts of the state of the Church. They were prescriptive, laying down the standards expected of the clergy and the characteristics of the Church the bishops wished to create.

The first responsibilities of the clergy were spiritual. They were 'an Order of Men selected . . . & set apart for ye peculiar service of G[od] & salvat[io]n of ye Souls of men'. The clergy were not only 'the Ministers of Christ', but also '*Labourers together with Christ*', 'spiritual Watchmen', 'Pastors', '*Stewards of the Mysteries* of God', and '*Ambassadors of Christ*'.[71] Thus the bishops devoted considerable attention to the public worship of the Church: the frequency of services; the order and decency with which they were performed; and the importance of clear preaching suited to the capacities of the congregation. They also urged the clergy to be equally diligent in the performance of more private duties, such as visiting the sick and giving personal counsel to relieve the doubts and strengthen the faith of their parishioners. Above all, they stressed the necessity of an unblemished character, not merely as an ideal in itself, but as an essential prerequisite for a clergyman to discharge his duties effectively. On the one hand, 'the light of a good example' was the most effectual of all methods of instruction.[72] On the other hand, a minister's 'bad Life will do Ten times more Mischief than all his good Teaching can repair', since men would come to disbelieve the doctrine when they saw the teacher act in contradiction to it.[73] It was not sufficient to be guilty of no vice. The clergy had to be patterns of virtue, demonstrating 'a Sanctity of Manners suitable to our Situation, and expressive of the Perfection of that God whom we serve'.[74] As Bishop Keene reminded his clergy, 'the efficacy, and perhaps the very face of Religion amongst us, depends upon the conduct of the clergy'.[75]

The bishops' conception of clerical duties, however, extended beyond public worship and private counsel to areas which in the next century came increasingly to be seen as the preserve of the state: the provision of poor relief; the education of youth; and the inculcation of the duties of citizenship. But in the eighteenth century the role of the Church was not challenged, for few would have claimed that the spiritual could be separated from the secular in these areas of life.

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70 Thomas Secker's charges to the clergy of Oxford between 1738 and 1753 are a particularly notable example, forming a coherent whole, detailing clerical duties. *Works*, v, 305-422. Cf., the charges of archdeacon Thomas Sharp. *The rubric in the Book of Common Prayer and the canons of the Church of England, so far as they relate to the parochial clergy, considered. In a course of visitation charges* (London, 1753); *Discourses on preaching: or, directions towards attaining to the best manner of discharging the duties of the pulpit: delivered in three visitation charges* (London, 1757).

71 B.L. Add. 39313, fol. 124; Charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Gloucester by Bishop Benson, 1741; John Conybeare, 'Charge to the clergy of Bristol in 1755', in *Sermons by John Conybeare, D.D. late lord bishop of Bristol and dean of Christ Church, Oxon.* (2 vols., London, 1757), II, 504-14.

72 John Green, *A charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Lincoln, at the bishop's primary visitation, 1762* (London, 1765), p. 30.

73 Conybeare, *Sermons*, II, 515; Secker, 'Charge of 1737', in *Works*, v, 323-4; Robert Butts, *The charge of the right reverend father in God Robert lord bishop of Norwich, to the reverend the clergy of his diocese, in the primary visitation of the same in the year 1735. Publish'd at the unanimous request of the clergy who heard it* (London, 1736), p. 19.

74 Secker, 'Charge of 1737', in *Works*, v, 324; Conybeare, *Sermons*, II, 513-4.

75 Keene, *Charge to the clergy of Ely*, p. 6.

Charity, the relief of the poor, was still regarded as a christian obligation incumbent on all possessed of wealth. The relief of 'the Necessities of his poor and industrious neighbour' was, therefore, even more incumbent on the clergyman. Indeed, such behaviour was an inseparable part of the character of a parochial minister.[76] Although a few still clung to the medieval catholic concept of indiscriminate charity, a distinction was usually made between the deserving and the undeserving poor.[77] The former were more particularly the objects of charity, not merely to encourage a work-ethic, but to keep up a sense of religion among the poor by favouring virtue over vice.[78] Non-residence made it more difficult to distinguish the deserving, but it did not discharge the parson from his obligations. On the contrary, Secker argued that what 'they could not with decency avoid doing, according to their ability, if they lived amongst them, they ought to do more largely if they live elsewhere'.[79] In addition, they were urged to encourage and organize public schemes, especially in those cases where their poverty disabled them from performing their responsibilities to the community.[80]

But the duties of the clergy extended beyond the more liberal performance of a public duty incumbent on all christians. Their role as the providers and organizers of charity and their position in the community meant that they inevitably played a part, if only at an informal level, in the management of the parish poor rate. Moreover, the clergy were generally involved in institutional charities, either as trustees or as responsible, alone or with the churchwardens, for their management. The reports of the charity commissioners in the early nineteenth century reveal an impressive degree of clerical involvement. In Oxfordshire the minister was specifically mentioned in 54% of the parishes reviewed, and was probably involved in many other cases under the phrase 'parish officers'.[81] In Devon this figure rose to 65%.[82] The clergy were repeatedly reminded of their duty to oversee local charities by the bishops in visitation articles. A few cases of neglect did occur. But these were rare. A comparison of the Gilbert Returns of 1787 for the diocese of Norwich with the Brougham Returns thirty years later shows remarkably few losses over this period, and the Brougham Commissioners were able to find few faults with the trustees' administration in the great majority of cases.[83] Even the use of parochial charities to subsidise the poor rate, thereby reducing the money which had to be raised from the inhabitants, was not common, despite the fact that accounts were often combined when the trustees of the charity were also the overseers of the poor.[84]

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76 Keene, *Charge to the clergy of Ely*, p. 9.

77 J.D. Walsh, 'Wesley and the poor', unpublished paper read at Magdalene College, Cambridge, 22 Feb. 1984.

78 Richard Newton, *Pluralities indefensible. A treatise humbly offered to the consideration of the parliament of Great-Britain. By a presbyter of the Church of England* (London, 1743), pp. 342-5.

79 Secker, 'Charge to clergy, 1758', in *Works*, v, 431.

80 Keene, *Charge to the clergy of Ely*, p. 10.

81 Diana McClatchey, *Oxfordshire clergy 1777-1869. A study of the established Church and of the role of the clergy in local society* (Oxford, 1960), p. 126.

82 Warne, *Church and society*, p. 149.

83 P.W. Whitfield, 'Change and continuity in the rural church: Norfolk, 1760-1840', Ph.D. dissertation, University of St Andrews, 1977, pp. 123-4.

84 Ibid., pp. 110-11.

The Church's involvement in education, as in poor relief, was an extension of its specifically spiritual functions. All clergy were responsible for catechizing the young, teaching them an understanding of 'the true Grounds' of Christianity and training them up 'in the Ways of Religion and Virtue'.[85] The bishops attached great importance to this duty and visitation returns show it to have been performed regularly. Catechizing took place in about 70% of parishes, while in most of the remainder the parson alleged that there were not enough candidates to form a class or complained that parents and masters were negligent in sending their children and servants to him.[86] In the vast majority of parishes, however, catechizing was confined to Lent. In only 10% of those in Hereford, and 4.5% in Oxford, was the catechism taught throughout the year.[87] The bishops, notably Thomas Secker, felt that this standard, albeit adequate, was far from ideal. They exhorted their clergy to continue catechetical exposition at least into the summer, and, where no children were forthcoming, suggested that ministers should give a course of lectures to the whole congregation.[88]

At the same time the clergy were the backbone of the nation's education system. As Edmund Burke noted at the end of the century, 'education is in a manner wholly in the hands of ecclesiastics, and in all stages from infancy to manhood'.[89] The Church's monopoly of education had, however, been undermined by the religious settlement of 1662 and the Toleration Act, and the early years of the century witnessed an attempt by high churchmen to reassert its authority. But their efforts were defeated by the death of Queen Anne; the Schism Act, passed in 1714 and intended to prohibit nonconformists from teaching, remained a dead-letter until its repeal in 1719.[90] The high church programme also had a positive side; the promotion of charity schools to combat the threat from immorality and irreligion. Vigorously promoted during the first two decades of the century these schools were, in essence, catechetical schools, giving instruction in reading the Bible and the catechism, and occasionally in writing. By educating the children of the poor in the principles of the Church of England, by teaching them to be virtuous and hard-working citizens, the charity schools were intended to condition the poor for their station in life.[91] The schools were very sensitive to the charge that they were educating the poor to a life above their station, and by the 1720s writing had all but disappeared from their curriculum. The charity

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85 Isaac Maddox, *The charge of Isaac, bishop of Worcester, to the clergy of his diocese at his primary visitation, holden at several places in the month of July 1745* (London, n.d.), p. 23.

86 *Herring's visitation returns*, I, xvi; *Wiltshire returns to the bishop's visitation queries 1783*, ed. Mary Ransome (Wiltshire Record Society, XXVII, Devizes, 1972), p. 6; *State of the bishopric of Worcester*, p. 9; Secker, 'Charge to the clergy, 1741', in *Works*, V, 336.

87 W.M. Marshall, 'The administration of the dioceses of Hereford and Oxford, 1660-1760', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Bristol, 1978, pp. 128-9.

88 Secker, 'Charge to clergy, 1741', in *Works*, V, 333-4; B.L. Add. 39313, fol. 120: Charge to the clergy of the diocese of Gloucester by Bishop Benson, 1738.

89 Edmund Burke, 'Reflections on the revolution in France, and on the proceedings in certain societies in London relative to that event', in *The works of Edmund Burke* (Bohn Library edn., 6 vols., London, 1854-69), II, 371.

90 G.V. Bennett, *The tory crisis in church and state 1688-1730. The career of Francis Atterbury bishop of Rochester* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 177-9.

91 M.G. Jones, *The charity school movement. A study of eighteenth century puritanism in action* (Cambridge, 1938), pp. 4-5.

schools, however, were another casualty of the Hanoverian succession. Concerned by allegations that they were nurseries of jacobitism, the S.P.C.K., their main promoter, turned its attention to workhouses.[92] However, it is doubtful whether the 'charity school movement' should be accorded too much importance in the history of eighteenth-century education even before 1720. Outside London and Westminster, where they remained active throughout the century, it is doubtful that charity schools were numerous or influential.[93]

But the Church's influence over education was not limited to charity schools, nor did it abandon its interest after 1720. On the contrary, the Church still monopolized higher education. The universities remained, at least in part, clerical seminaries, nearly all university fellows were in orders, and subscription to the thirty-nine articles was demanded of all undergraduates, at Cambridge on taking a degree and on matriculation at Oxford. The masters at both the public schools and the endowed grammar schools were clergymen. Many other institutions styling themselves grammar schools were private schools run by the clergy, and it was not uncommon for a curate or poor vicar to supplement his income by acting as schoolmaster in his own or a neighbouring parish. Clerical involvement in education did not end here, as the parson was almost invariably one of the trustees of any parochial educational charity. If Devon was typical, the number of schools increased through the century. In 1724 twenty-five existed in the county. By the end of the century there were forty, and there is only evidence of one having failed.[94] But they did not exist everywhere. Only 27% of parishes in the diocese of Oxford, and 47% in St Asaph, had schools in 1738.[95] However, the importance of the Church in providing what education there was, from the endowed grammar school to the small village school whose master instructed his pupils 'according to his slender knowledge', cannot be ignored.[96]

The Church's role as teacher was not confined to the nation's youth. The primary duty of all clergy, through public and private worship, and especially through preaching, was to educate their flocks in the truths necessary for salvation.[97] To further this end bishops encouraged the distribution of S.P.C.K. tracts and the active promotion of domestic lay piety.[98] Being a good

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92 Edmund Gibson, *The peculiar excellence and reward of supporting schools of charity. A sermon preach'd in the parish-church of St Sepulchre, May the 24th, 1716. Being Thursday in Whitson-Week, at the anniversary meeting of the children educated in the charity-schools in and about the cities of London and Westminster* (London, 1716); Norman Sykes, *Edmund Gibson, bishop of London, 1669-1748. A study in politics and religion in the eighteenth century* (London, 1926), pp. 197-207; Timothy Hitchcock, 'Paupers and preachers: the S.P.C.K. and social policy, 1698-1734', unpublished paper delivered at the Institute of Historical Research, 23 Oct. 1985.

93 Joan Simon, 'Was there a charity school movement? The Leicestershire evidence', in *Education in Leicestershire 1540-1940*, ed. Brian Simon (Leicester, 1968), pp. 55-100; Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England. Professions, state and society, 1680-1730* (London, 1982), pp. 53-4.

94 Warne, *Church and society*, pp. 136, 149.

95 Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', p. 144; J.L. Salter, 'Isaac Maddox and the dioceses of St Asaph and Worcester', M.A. dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1962, p. 59.

96 Salter, 'Isaac Maddox', p. 61. The quotation is from the visitation return from the parish of Bodfari in 1738.

97 Secker, 'Charge of 1766', in *Works*, v, 472.

98 Secker, 'Charge of 1741', in *Works*, v, 333-7; Maddox, *Charge to clergy in July 1745*, pp. 22-3, 25-6; Keene, *Charge to clergy of Ely*, p. 5; Edmund Gibson, *The charge of Edmund lord bishop of Lincoln at his primary visitation, begun in the year 1717* [London, 1717], pp. 6-7; idem, *Directions given to the clergy of the diocese of London, in the year 1724. . . To which is added, his charge to the clergy, in his last visitation, began in the year 1741, and finish'd in the year 1742. With an appendix* (London, 1744), pp. 92-3.

christian, however, was still synonymous with being a good subject. Religion was the cement without which 'the bonds of community must lose their whole force, & all civil society must be utterly dissolved'.[99] Thus, the most basic of all clerical functions was also that of most importance to the state. The Church was the institution charged with making men good citizens.

Contemporary religious beliefs stressed that only a godly, and thus virtuous, people could hope for either temporal or eternal prosperity. The teaching of most churchmen was still premised upon a firm belief in God's moral government of the world. The practice of true religion and morality was, therefore, essential for a people's well-being, because nations which broke God's commandments, having no future state, were punished in this life.[100] This point was made most frequently during the fast sermons, preached every year during time of war, and on occasions of natural disasters, such as the earthquake of 1750.[101] The same arguments were repeated endlessly: that the blessings of God had been abused; that liberty had degenerated into licentiousness; that the profession of the true religion had been abandoned for infidelity and atheism. The English nation was particularly guilty in this respect. Even if other nations were more sinful, which Secker doubted, the English were the more inexcusable because 'the light of the gospel has shone clearer to us, than to any other nation under heaven'.[102] The terrors of war; the threat from popery and arbitrary power; the fear aroused by national disasters; were warnings and punishments. There was but one route to safety: to acknowledge man's dependence on God, and to turn to him 'with hearty repentance for our sins; and with a resolution to do, each of us in his proper station, what lies in our power to stem the torrent of iniquity which threatens our ruin'.[103]

Virtue and prosperity, moreover, were inextricably linked in the nature of things. Even if the temporal judgments of God could be ignored, the inculcation of morality and the extirpation of vice were essential to the prosperity of a society. Mandeville's arguments that vices such as luxury and pride actually strengthened a nation by stimulating its economy were unequivocally rejected by churchmen.[104] Samuel Lisle, bishop of St Asaph, for example, claimed that it was plain 'that Virtue is of some Use to the Public; that Religion is the Basis of Society; that Wicked

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99 Ashridge MSS, Hertfordshire Record Office, A.H. 1999, fol. 4: Charge to the clergy of the diocese of Durham by Bishop John Egerton, 1778.

100 George Harvest, *The grounds and reasons of temporal judgments, consider'd. A sermon preached at Ditton upon Thames, in Surrey: occasion'd by the present dangerous situation of our protestant religion and liberties* (London, 1746), pp. 6-7. See above, cpt. 3, pp. 60-1.

101 E.g., Thomas Secker, 'Sermon preached in the parish church of St James, Westminster, March 11, 1749-50, on occasion of the earthquake, March 8', in *Works*, v, 154-77; Thomas Sherlock, 'A letter from the lord bishop of London to the clergy and people of London and Westminster, on occasion of the earthquakes in 1750', in *The works of Thomas Sherlock. With some account of his life* (5 vols., London, 1830), IV, 302-11.

102 Secker, 'Sermon on the earthquake', in *Works*, v, 165; Thomas Rutherforth, *A sermon preached before the honourable house of commons at St Margaret's Westminster January 30. 1745-6* (London, 1746), p. 17.

103 Sherlock, 'Letter on the earthquakes', in *Works*, v, 307.

104 W.A. Speck, 'Mandeville and the eutopia seated in the brain', in *Mandeville studies. New explorations in the art and thought of Dr Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733)*, ed. I. Primer (The Hague, 1975), pp. 66-79; M.M. Goldsmith, 'Public virtues and private vices. Bernard Mandeville and English political ideologies in the early eighteenth century', *E.C.S.*, IX (1976), 477-510.

Men can never be Good Subjects; and that Impiety dissolves the whole Bond of Government'.[105] Equally mistaken was the view of human nature which suggested that men were naturally virtuous. On the contrary, the inclination to virtue, and even the restraints of the law, were often overcome by the passions, which could only be controlled by a higher sanction, religion.[106] Bishop Butts argued that the 'Civil Magistrate has in all Ages been so sensible of the Defect of human Laws, that he has always call'd in the Aid of Religion the better to obtain his End'.[107] The sanctions of religion, the system of future rewards and punishments, enforced the obligations of oaths and kept men 'within the bounds of duty' where the penal laws were insufficient.[108] But the influence of religion did not merely reinforce the civil laws, it extended to matters beyond their reach. Civil laws could not 'civilize and make Men social'.[109] Only the moral precepts of Christianity were capable of producing 'those various acts of benevolence, and that mutual intercourse of good offices, which are so essential to the peace and happiness of society'.[110]

The Church emphasized repeatedly the value of its teaching to the state as a demonstration of the importance of religion for civil society. Thus, the bishops urged their clergy to concentrate above all on moral principles in their exposition of the gospel. Secker warned them not to allow controversial issues to distract them 'from what is of all things the most needful, the study of practical religion, and of the common duties of life'. It was in these that men most wanted direction because it was in these that they most commonly failed.[111] Other bishops made the same point, reminding the clergy that it was their duty to inform, not to perplex 'common understandings', which was done most effectually by emphasizing 'practical Points of Faith and Duty'.[112]

The teaching of christian moral principles was important not only for the temporal happiness and prosperity of the nation, but also for the security of the state, by setting forth the duties of loyalty and obedience to those in authority. This point was stated succinctly by George Fothergill. Christianity, he argued, explains the origin of civil government and removes the causes of social disorder, by informing us that '*Civil Powers were the Ordinances of GOD* . . . and that the

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105 Samuel Lisle, *A sermon preached before the house of lords, in the abbey-church, Westminster, on Wednesday, December 18, 1745. Being the day appointed by his majesty's royal proclamation for a general fast* (London, 1745), p. 12.

106 George Fothergill, *The importance of religion to civil society. A sermon preached at St Mary's in Oxford, at the assizes . . . on Thursday, March 6th, 1734-5* (Oxford, 1735; 2nd edn., Oxford, 1735; 3rd edn., Oxford, 1745), pp. 7-23. All references are to the 3rd edition.

107 Robert Butts, *The charge of the right reverend father in God Robert lord bishop of Ely, deliver'd to the reverend the clergy of his diocese, at Cambridge, July 23, 24, 1740. At his primary visitation; and published at their request* (London, 1740), p. 8.

108 John Burton, 'A sermon preached at the assizes held before the honourable Sir Thomas Abney, and Mr Serjeant Willes, and before the University of Oxford, at St Mary's, Aug. 7. 1746', in *Occasional sermons* (2 vols., London and Oxford, 1764-6), II, 28, 32; Green, *Charge to the clergy of Lincoln*, p. 6.

109 Butts, *Charge to the clergy of Ely*, p. 7.

110 Green, *Charge to the clergy of Lincoln*, p. 6.

111 Secker, 'Charge of 1737', in *Works*, V, 315-6.

112 Green, *Charge to the clergy of Lincoln*, p. 20; Butts, *Charge to the clergy of Ely*, p. 20.

People *must needs be subject, not only for Wrath but also for Conscience Sake*'.[113] The bishops were concerned that the clergy should be well-affected to the Hanoverian succession. At the beginning of his primary visitation of the diocese of Salisbury John Gilbert assured Newcastle that he would not fail to recommend 'That Affectionate Duty to the King, to which His Majesty's Goodness gives Him the Justest Title'.[114] The duty of the clergy, however, extended beyond their own behaviour. Gilbert and his colleagues emphasized in particular their role in explaining the obligations of subjects to the laity.[115] Their exhortations were unnecessary. Loyalty and obedience were favoured topics for sermons, often as expositions of the texts of Romans xiii. 1-2[116] and 1 Peter ii. 13-14.[117] The arguments delivered from the pulpit were reinforced by the calendar of state holidays. Four dates were of particular significance: 30 January, the execution of Charles I; 29 May, the restoration of Charles II; 5 November, the Powder Plot; and the accession day of the current monarch (11 June for George II).[118] Special forms of prayer were prescribed for the church sevices which took place on each of these occasions and the clergy were given the opportunity to preach loyalty and obedience.[119] But these holidays were significant in other ways. The services on 30 January and 5 November gave churchmen the opportunity to expound the virtues of the Church of England as a via media between sectaries and papists respectively. Moreover, the anniversaries of the martyrdom of Charles I and the restoration of Charles II embodied in the liturgy and the calendar of the Church its condemnation of rebellion, while the service on 5 November provided a ritual commemmoration for England's deliverance from popery and arbitrary rule in both 1605 and 1688.[120] Assize sermons likewise fulfilled a dual role, allowing

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113 Pothergill, *Importance of religion*, pp. 25-6. See cpt. 3, pp. 63-5, for a discussion of clerical teaching on the duty of obedience.

114 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 109: Gilbert to Newcastle, 14 June 1750; Add. 39313, fols. 147-8: Charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Gloucester by Bishop Benson, 1744.

115 Secker, 'Instructions given to candidates for orders after their subscribing the articles', in *Works*, v. 497-8.

116 Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

117 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well.

118 The 'Hanoverian political calendar' was longer than this, including also the current monarch's birthday (30 October for George II); 1 August, the anniversary of the Hanoverian succession; and 4 November, the date of William III's landing at Torbay. But these three occasions were not commemmorated in the Church's calendar. Popular celebrations often took place on all these occasions, and as the century advanced they were less often marked by conflict between Jacobites and Hanoverians. John Brewer, 'Commercialization and politics', in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J.H. Plumb, *The birth of a consumer society. The commercialization of eighteenth-century England* (London, 1982), pp. 247-8.

119 For sermons on 30 January, see Helen Randall, 'The rise and fall of a martyrology: sermons on Charles I', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, x (1946-7), 135-67.

120 A prayer of thanksgiving, 'for the happy Arrival of His Majesty King William on this day, for the Deliverance of our Church and Nation', was inserted into the form of prayer for use on 5 November. Contemporaries were well aware that 5 November was a celebration of both 1605 and 1688, and often put the emphasis on the latter. See, e.g., Samuel Croxall, *A sermon preach'd before the honourable house of commons, at St Margaret's Westminster, on Friday, January XXX. 1729* (London, 1730), p. 5. Paradoxically this sermon, an attempt by Croxall to demonstrate that the celebrations of 30 January and 5 November were founded on the same principles, was objected to by John Plumptre, a whig M.P., on the grounds 'that it was an ambiguous, dubious discourse . . . no ways consonant to the dignity of the day'. In a thin house, in what was probably a party division, the motion to thank Croxall for his sermon was defeated. *The parliamentary diary of Sir Edward Knatchbull 1722-1730*, ed. A.N. Newman (Camden Society, 3rd series, xcv, London, 1963), p. 102.

men like George Fothergill to expound the duties of citizens and the importance of religion to civil society. At the same time they were part of the elaborate ritual of the assize circuits, which projected the majesty of the king as the judge and protector of his people and reminded all citizens of their obligation to return him their loyalty and obedience.[121]

The Church was not just charged with teaching doctrines of christian virtue; it was also partly responsible for the enforcement of a code of morality. A range of offences, from non-attendance at church to profane cursing and swearing, fornication and bastardy, were seen primarily as breaches of the christian moral code, as crimes against God, and were thus cognizable before the ecclesiastical courts. These courts had been in decline ever since the Reformation,[122] and their authority suffered another severe blow after 1689, when the state's abandonment of any attempt to impose religious uniformity further weakened the force of the Church's temporal sanctions. The Toleration Act was widely interpreted as having made church attendance voluntary, and it became impossible to enforce attendance judicially. In the diocese of Hereford presentments for this offence were almost unknown after 1687.[123] Elsewhere they were rare, although in Oxford they remained an important element in the courts' business until the end of the 1730s.[124] Similarly the Exeter and York courts both witnessed a sharp drop in the number of tithe cases following the act of 1696, which provided an effective and cheap method of recovering small tithes before two justices of the peace.[125] Their jurisdiction was also curtailed by increasing parliamentary interference in the sphere of canon law. The effectiveness of excommunication as a sentence, for example, was undermined by the enactment of a series of general pardons.[126]

The ecclesiastical courts, however, were not as inactive as is commonly supposed. In the middle of the eighteenth century they were still important institutions, not merely hearing marriage, testamentary and administrative cases, but also continuing in some areas to act as the guardians of the nation's conscience and its virtue. Offences against the moral law comprised a major part of the courts' business in both Durham and Oxford well into the second half of the century.[127] Nonetheless signs of decay were evident. In the early and middle years of the century one of the commonest reasons for presentment in the Devon courts was bastardy and fornication. However, the number of hearings directly concerned with morality gradually decreased as the century advanced.[128] A similar trend occurred in the Leicester archdeaconry courts. Public penances for adultery, ante-nuptial fornication and defamation of character were imposed throughout the century, but the number of cases heard by the courts declined markedly from mid-

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121 Barbara White, 'Assize sermons 1660-1720', Ph.D. dissertation, Newcastle Polytechnic, 1980.

122 Williams, *Tudor regime*, p. 261.

123 Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', p. 78.

124 Ibid., p. 79; Warne, *Church and society*, pp. 75-6.

125 M.G. Smith, *Pastoral discipline and the church courts: the Hexham court 1680-1730* (Borthwick Papers, 62, York, 1982), p. 2.

126 *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3; Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', p. 74.

127 Edward Hughes, *North country life in the eighteenth century. The North-East, 1700-1750* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 333-4; Marshall, 'Administration of Hereford and Oxford', pp. 79-83.

128 Warne, *Church and society*, pp. 76-7, 84-5.

century.[129] In Worcester this pattern became clear even earlier. During the episcopate of Isaac Maddox presentments were concerned primarily with dilapidations.[130] The effect of the 1689 settlement on the ability of the ecclesiastical courts to enforce the Church's moral code was decisive, albeit gradual.

In the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution two responses can be distinguished within the Church to the new situation created by the Toleration Act and the legitimation of organized dissent. On the one hand, the high church movement believed that firm political action could restore the monopoly of the old church establishment, as had nearly been done between 1681 and 1685. On the other hand, men like Thomas Tenison realized that the Church could expect little from the government and that 'any increase in spiritual effectiveness would have to come from voluntary action'.[131] After 1715 the high church programme, as represented by Francis Atterbury, became little more than a mirage. At the same time, however, church and state were faced by the rapid increase of vice and immorality. The greatest problem confronting the Church was the 'decay of religion'.[132] But one of its weapons, its judicial power exercised through the ecclesiastical courts, was increasingly ineffectual. As Thomas Sherlock remarked, the Church's discipline was 'so bad that no one knows how or where to Mend it'.[133] Churchmen responded to this situation in two ways: the first was to emphasize the importance of pastoral care of parishes; the second was to turn to the secular courts.

In 1754 Archbishop Herring commented that he thought his predecessors had gone 'too directly to the Penal Laws, in wch Bp Gibson was doubtless a great Master, but yet I believe his Pastoral Letters have done & will do more good, than the Corrections from Acts of Parliament'.[134] But the distinction Herring was making was one of degree, not of substance. Episcopal charges of this period are full of advice to the clergy to rely primarily upon pastoral methods for the reformation of the laity. Secker told his clergy that their 'chief dependence must be on private application' when dealing with those who did not attend church. With offenders against religion and morality likewise their 'first endeavour should be, by due instructions and exhortations, to hinder such offences; your next, by due reproofs, public or private, to amend them'. The law, he argued, should only be used as a last resort.[135] Isaac Maddox likewise emphasized the minister's 'private Intercourse with the People committed to his Charge', urging them to use 'public and private Monitions and Exhortations' when necessary to reform them.[136] Bishop Keene went

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129 W.A. Pemberton, 'The ecclesiastical courts of the archdeaconry of Leicester in the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century', *Trans. Leics. Arch. and Hist. Soc.*, LVII (1981-2), 37-56.

130 Salter, 'Isaac Maddox', p. 122.

131 Bennett, *Tory crisis in church and state*, pp. 20-1.

132 Secker, 'Charge of 1738', in *Works*, v. 307; Potter, 'Charge to clergy, 1716', in *Theological works*, I, 267-8.

133 G.F. Nuttall, *Calendar of the correspondence of Philip Doddridge, D.D. (1702-1751)* (London, 1979), p. 266: John Barker to Philip Doddridge, 2 Feb. 1748.

134 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 161-2: Herring to Hardwicke, 3 Mar. 1754.

135 Secker, *Works*, v. 347-9, 400-3; Richard Reynolds, *The bishop of Lincoln's charge to the clergy of the archdeaconries of Huntington, Buckingham, and Bedford, at his triennial visitation, begun at Huntington, June 6, 1727* (London, 1727), pp. 5-6.

136 Maddox, *Charge to clergy 1745*, pp. 24-5.

further, arguing that public reproof was often counter-productive. The most effectual method to reform a sinner was by personal and private discussion and counsel, because the 'modest diffidence of the humble Christian is then most encouraged, and the vicious inclinations that are forming in the heart are then best restrained, when the spiritual Guide adds the weight of private Friendship, to the force and authority of the sacred office'.[137]

The second response to the problems facing the Church was to turn to the secular courts. There were various statutes in existence which could be invoked to combat vice, immorality and profaneness, and at the beginning of his reign George II had issued a proclamation for the encouragement of piety and virtue. But the 1690s and 1700s had revealed that the Church was far from united about whether the best way to deal with moral crimes was through the ecclesiastical courts or by invoking the secular law.[138] Some were concerned about the Church's abandonment of its legitimate functions. Gibson argued in the *Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani*, published in 1713, that the correction of vice was a matter for the spiritual courts and should not be transferred into temporal hands, although the Church might legitimately seek assistance from the state in enforcing her censures by temporal penalties. Thirty years later Secker was urging his clergy to use the ecclesiastical courts. Although only as a last resort, he told them to present there members of the Church of England who refused to attend church and to exhort churchwardens to join in presentments of 'offences against religion and morals' or, if necessary, to present alone.[139]

Secker, however, admitted that he was 'perfectly sensible that immorality and irreligion are grown almost beyond the reach of ecclesiastical power, which, having in former times been very unwarrantably extended, hath since been very unjustly and imprudently cramped and weakened in many ways'.[140] Consequently the bishops turned towards the civil power as the agent of reform. Archbishop Herring urged upon Newcastle a royal proclamation against vice and profaneness, to encourage the magistrates to put the laws into effect.[141] This increasing reliance on the temporal power was exemplified most clearly by Edmund Gibson. In his *Pastoral letter* of 1745 he expounded the respective duties of ministers of the gospel and of justice in a manner that marked a retreat from the position enunciated in the *Codex*. The clergy, he argued, were obliged 'to labour against Vice and Wickedness, by Reason and Argument, by Doctrin [sic] and Example, by publick Exhortation and private Admonition', but it was the duty of the magistrate to restrain and punish by a vigorous execution of the law any men who 'let themselves loose into a Course of Impiety and Wickedness, and an open Indulgence in any notorious Sin'.[142] Nor is it obvious that

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137 Keene, *Charge to clergy of Ely*, pp. 10-11.

138 Tina Isaacs, 'The anglican hierarchy and the reformation of manners, 1688-1738', *J.E.H.*, xxxiii (1982), 396-9; D.W.R. Bahlman, *The moral revolution of 1688* (New Haven, 1957), pp. 25-7.

139 Edmund Gibson, *Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani* (2 vols., London, 1713), i, xxx; Secker, *Works*, v, 348-9, 400-1.

140 Secker, *Works*, v, 401.

141 B.L. Add. 32723, fols. 297-9: Herring to Newcastle, 26 Nov. 1750.

142 Edmund Gibson, *The bishop of London's pastoral letter to the people of his diocese; particularly, to those of the two great cities of London and Westminster. Occasion'd by our present dangers; and exciting to a serious reformation of life and manners. With a postscript setting forth the dangers and mischiefs of popery* (London, 1745), pp. 10-11.

politicians were unresponsive. In 1746 parliament passed a statute to make more effectual the laws against profane swearing and cursing, which, like the acts it repealed, was ordered to be read four times a year in all churches and chapels.[143] Four years later the duke of Newcastle, on reading Sherlock's *Letter on the earthquakes*, was quick to assure him that he had taken 'particular Notice' of his 'just Observations' about the negligence of magistrates and that he had been constant in the prosecution of irreligious books.[144]

But the temporal courts did not fill the gap left by the decline of the ecclesiastical courts. The bishops' complaints about their ineffectiveness were frequent and strident. Gibson condemned the failure to enforce the laws, lamenting the national guilt incurred by the fact that 'the Violation of the Laws, and the Neglect of Punishing it, are, in many Places, equally notorious'.[145] Samuel Lisle, bishop of St Asaph, complained that they were a 'dead Letter'. Lisle and Thomas Sherlock both reminded the magistrates that they were to blame for the prevalence of impiety and wickedness by their failure to give a good example. As they were charged with the enforcement of the laws, they could not 'be useless without being pernicious'. Thus, since 'God . . . will undoubtedly demand an account of the exercise' of their authority, if they 'wilfully or corruptly' failed in their duty, they were 'justly responsible for all the Mischiefs, consequent upon their Negligence'.[146] Because of the shortcomings of the temporal courts Herring was making virtue out of necessity when he criticized his predecessors for turning too readily to the penal laws in the campaign for the reformation of manners. In the government of the laity, as in the government of the clergy, the eighteenth century witnessed the increasing reliance of the Church on pastoral methods.

Church and clergy, therefore, made an essential contribution to the prosperity and stability of society. But the stress laid upon the importance of religion to society did not represent the prostitution of the Church to the demands of a secular state. In the first place, it is misleading to see the sanctions of Christianity as some form of social control, used to ensure obedience and deference to social superiors.[147] Contemporaries gave some credence to this opinion. One of William Warburton's arguments against the 'Enemies of Religion' was that 'though a *rule of right* may direct the Philosopher to a principle of action; and the *point of honour* may keep up the thing called Manners amongst Gentlemen; yet nothing but *Religion* can fix a sober standard of behaviour among the common People'.[148] But however close the alliance between the parson and the squire,[149] the bishops at least were acutely conscious that their teaching was directed as much

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143 19 Geo. II, c. 21. W.S. Holdsworth, *A history of English law* (14 vols., London, 1903-52), xi, 546-7.

144 B.L. Add. 32720, fols. 139-40: Newcastle to Sherlock, 17 Mar. 1750.

145 Gibson, *Pastoral letter of 1745*, pp. 11-12.

146 Lisle, *Sermon before the house of lords, 18 Dec. 1745*, pp. 15-16; Thomas Sherlock, 'A letter on occasion of the earthquakes in 1750', in *Works*, iv, 309.

147 This view is implicit in Porter, *English society*, p. 190; and in Gilbert, *Religion and society*, p. 71.

148 William Warburton, 'Dedication to the edition of Books IV. V. VI. of The divine legation of Moses; 1765', in *The works of the right reverend William Warburton, D.D. lord bishop of Gloucester* (new edn., 12 vols., London, 1811), iv, 4-5.

149 Cf., Gilbert, *Religion and society*, p. 76.

at the upper classes as the lower. Indeed, the rich and powerful were the more liable to fault, since their position in society gave them additional obligations. It was the duty of 'Persons of higher Ranks' to use their 'eminent Stations' to set 'Examples of Piety and Virtue'. Such examples were the most effectual method of curing vice and irreligion among the lower orders.[150] For this reason Bishop Sherlock felt justified in condemning the failure of the magistrates to do their duty. For this reason too Archbishop Herring was particularly concerned about the manner of publishing a proclamation against vice and irreligion, for fear that any constitutional impropriety would impair its force by provoking 'some reflections fro[m] those Orders of men, whose conduct they [the bishops] in some sort arraign, & call upon the K. to reform'.[151] The teaching of the duties of loyalty and obedience in particular was directed at the political nation. The jacobite threat was still regarded as a reality, and much of the preaching on this subject paid especial attention to denying the legitimacy of the claims made by the Stuart dynasty to the allegiance of Englishmen. Some churchmen believed that, if anything, they were directing a disproportionate amount of energy to attempts to reform the religion and morals of the upper classes.[152]

Secondly, the Church's increasing emphasis on the inculcation of moral duties was not an abdication of its spiritual responsibility for men's souls in response to the requirements of an increasingly secular state. On the contrary, it was a conscious reaction to the swelling tide of immorality and irreligion, which many feared was threatening to engulf the nation. In the opinion of Thomas Rutherforth there was no subject which demanded the attention of the Church so much 'as the unusual growth and encrease of infidelity'.[153] Reformation of men's manners was seen as a necessary first step to the reclamation of their souls. As Thomas Secker said, the regulation 'of our behaviour will of course by degrees contribute to mend our hearts'.[154] This argument was a commonplace in the eighteenth century, and it deeply influenced the character of foreign missions, especially among the Indians of North America, which were all premised upon the belief that the civilization of the natives was a necessary precondition of their conversion. This view was not universally held. It was challenged by Rutherforth, who condemned the idea that it was necessary for preachers 'to purify the manners of their hearers, before they attempt to inculcate the principles of christianity'. He denied that it was possible to instil faith by teaching 'lessons of pure morality . . . without explaining the fundamental doctrines of christianity, without having recourse to those principles of duty which are taught in the gospel, and without insisting upon the

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150 Anthony Ellys, *A sermon preached before the house of lords, in the abbey-church of Westminster, on Wednesday, January 30, 1754. Being the day appointed to be observed as the day of the martyrdom of King Charles I* (London [1754]), pp. 28-9; Secker, *Works*, II, 101.

151 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 158-9: Herring to Hardwicke, 23 Feb. 1754.

152 Secker, 'Charge to clergy, 1738', in *Works*, v, 322; Newton, *Pluralities indefensible*, p. 351.

153 Thomas Rutherforth, *A charge delivered to the clergy of the archdeaconry of Essex at a visitation Jul. X. XI. XII. MDCCLIII* (Cambridge, 1753), p. 4. See also, Edmund Gibson, *The bishop of London's pastoral letter to the people of his diocese; particularly, to those of the two great cities of London and Westminster. Occasion'd by some late writings in favour of infidelity* (London, 1728), esp. p. 2.

154 Secker, 'Sermon preached in the parish-church of St Mary, Lambeth, October 25, 1761', in *Works*, v, 288.

hopes of that salvation, which Christ has purchased for us, or upon those means of obtaining it, which he has appointed'.[155]

Notwithstanding the strictures of Rutherforth churchmen in general were aware of the danger of preaching, or appearing to preach, mere morality, and of degenerating into natural religion and pelagianism. Secker, who was in tone among the more evangelical inside the Church in the mid-eighteenth century, warned the clergy of Canterbury in 1757 that they had dwelt too little upon doctrinal matters, and should be 'assiduous in teaching the principles . . . of the Gospel, not as almost explained away by modern reformers, but *as the truth is in Jesus*'.[156] In private he made the same comments, and was especially concerned about the neglect of the doctrine of justification by faith. But he felt that the methodists were too critical, and that the 'Clergy in general have by no Means neglected or slighted these Doctrines, or left off preaching them'.[157] Secker's sensitivity was shared by others, who emphasized that they were '*Christian* Preachers, and not barely Preachers of Morality'.[158] Twenty years earlier Bishop Butts, in advising his clergy to avoid speculative and controversial points in country congregations, added that he was not recommending the preaching of 'mere Morality'. Rather he sought to teach the practice of moral virtues upon their true basis, 'The Fear of the Creator of the World, and Faith in the Redeemer of it'.[159] Francis Webber, the rector of Exeter College, likewise sought to distinguish himself from 'those libertin writers, who . . . will have morality, or what they call the religion of nature, to be the sole view and intent of the gospel'. Webber did not deny that it was true 'in a general sense' that practice was the 'sole end' of providence in the revelation of Christianity. But he insisted that the obligation to practical duties rested upon 'the supposition of certain truths . . . such as the *merits* and *mediatorship of Jesus Christ*, the *forgiveness of sins for his sake*, the *doctrine of the resurrection*, the *assistance of divine grace, &c*'. Faith was the 'indispensable terms of salvation', but only such a faith as is 'necessarily productive' of good works.[160] Religion and morality were 'too nearly allied to admit of a Separation'.[161] Moral duties were, in reality, christian moral duties, founded on faith in Christ.

Rejecting accusations of pelagianism, therefore, churchmen defended the preaching of morality not merely by reference to contemporary threats to the Church and christianity, but above all as an expression of true christian doctrine. Christ's sermons themselves, as Butts pointed out, were

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155 Rutherforth, *Charge*, pp. 11-12.

156 Secker, 'Charge to the clergy, 1757', in *Works*, v, 441-2; James Downey, *The eighteenth-century pulpit. A study of the sermons of Butler, Berkeley, Secker, Sterne, Whitefield and Wesley* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 89-114.

157 Lambeth Palace Library, Secker Papers VII, fol. 158: Archbishop Secker to Jacob Duché, 9 Dec. 1765; ibid., fol. 99: Memorandum of a conversation with the bishops, 17 Apr. 1759.

158 Gibson, *Charge at the primary visitation in 1717*, p. 10; idem, *Directions given by Edmund lord bishop of London to the clergy of his diocese, in the year 1724* (London, n.d.), p. 13.

159 Butts, *Charge to the clergy of Ely*, pp. 16-17.

160 Francis Webber, *A sermon preached in Lambeth-Chapel, at the consecration of the right reverend father in god John lord bishop of Bristol, on Sunday, Dec. 23. 1750* (Oxford, 1750), pp. 9-11.

161 Hertfordshire R.O., A.H. 1996, fol. 17: Charge to the clergy of the diocese of Bangor by Bishop John Egerton, 1758. Substantially the same charge was delivered to the clergy of Durham in 1774. A.H. 1998.

'all plain, and familiar, tending to enforce some moral duty'.[162] Thus, John Green revealed the premise that informed much of the Church's teaching in this period; that 'to obey what [Christ] enjoyn'd is as necessary a part of [faith], as to believe what he propos'd'.[163] This doctrine was expounded at greater length by John Heylyn, a chaplain to the king, when he preached the sermon at the consecration of Bishop Butler. He argued that 'the *End* of all Religion is *Charity*, i.e. the love of God, with its inseparable concomitant, the love of man for his sake. As Charity is the end of all Religion, the end of all preaching is to inculcate it'. Thus the clergyman was obliged to teach 'all the social Duties, as part of our Duty to God', since 'morality . . . becomes the most improving exercise of Piety' when practised with a 'devout regard to God'.[164]

Practical christianity, indeed, was of central importance in eighteenth-century piety. The abandonment of a rigid calvinism, and with it the potential for the individual to know that he was one of the elect, did not mean that men ceased to be preoccupied with the problem of assurance. How a man knows, not necessarily that he is saved, but that he is moving in the right direction, was central to christian thought in the eighteenth century as in all ages of the Church. For many churchmen in this period practical christianity provided the answer. Works were not themselves a claim to salvation. But, as has been shown, it was repeatedly stressed that true faith issued in works. Thus, the works of christian men and women, if performed out of a sincere love of God, were a source of assurance, that with the help of God's spirit it was possible to move forward to a state of christian perfection.[165] Even the early Oxford methodists shared this preoccupation, being notable not for their rejection of practical christianity, but for the zeal with which they performed charitable works and examined the sincerity of their actions.[166]

The Church, therefore, was an integral part of the domestic apparatus of the British state. In a state with a small bureaucracy which was dependent on the unpaid assistance of the gentry in local government, the Church performed functions which were believed to be essential to the well-being of the nation. Many other bodies and individuals joined with it in the education of youth and the relief of the necessities of the poor. But the Church alone was primarily responsible for making men good citizens. It was the only institution capable of instilling social virtues and providing the legitimation for the state throughout the nation. It would, however, be an oversimplification to portray the Church, undoubtedly an agent of the state, as merely its tool. The duties incumbent on each individual clergyman were the basis of its involvement in education and charity, while virtue and morality, loyalty and obedience, were taught not merely as the social obligations of citizens, but as divinely ordained duties incumbent on all men as

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[162] Butts, *Charge to the clergy of Ely*, p. 17.

[163] Green, *Charge to the clergy of Lincoln*, p. 26.

[164] John Heylyn, *A sermon preached in the chapel at Lambeth, December 3, 1738. At the consecration of the right reverend father in God Joseph, lord bishop of Bristol* (London, 1738), pp. 16, 12-13.

[165] See, e.g., Benjamin Hoadly, *Several discourses concerning the terms of acceptance with God. In which I. The terms themselves are distinctly laid down; as they are proposed to christians in the New Testament. And II. Several false notions of the conditions of salvation are considered* (London, 1711), esp. Preface and Sermon IX.

[166] *Diary of an Oxford methodist. Benjamin Ingham, 1733-1734*, ed. Richard P. Heitzenrater (Durham, N.C., 1985), pp. 28-38.

christians.

The Church and churchmen were, however, also directly involved in civil administration. After the Reformation bishops filled fewer and fewer posts in government. John Robinson was the last ecclesiastic to be promoted to high political office when he was made lord privy seal in 1711, and later one of the plenipotentiaries at the Utrecht peace negotiations. But some bishops were still expected to be active in civil politics. This was particularly true of the archbishops of Canterbury, who were privy councillors. In 1737 Archbishop Potter attended a cabinet meeting about the Prince of Wales's offer to be chief mourner at his mother's funeral, and minutes for August 1738 suggest that he was involved in discussions about policy towards Spain.[167] During George II's visits to Hanover the archbishops were always made members of the regency council, when their regular attendance was expected, and not merely for formal business.[168] Other bishops were also consulted about public affairs. Thomas Sherlock was asked by Newcastle for his opinion on numerous occasions. A number of replies have survived, most notably about the ministerial crises in 1742 and 1743 and about foreign affairs in 1749.[169] It is not clear whether Newcastle was genuinely seeking advice, or merely the opinion of a relatively detached friend. But it was rumoured that Sherlock was responsible for the suggestion to dissolve parliament a year early in 1747, a decision which destroyed the electoral preparations of Leicester House.[170] In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, moreover, the privy council had used the episcopate to collect and disseminate information in the localities. This role of the Church too became less common in the eighteenth century, although in 1767 a papist scare prompted parliament to order the bishops to prepare returns of Catholics for all the dioceses in England and Wales.[171]

Thus, in the eighteenth century it became more and more uncommon for bishops to be employed as officers of the civil government. In contrast, the clergy as a whole were increasingly involved in civil society, a trend exemplified most clearly in the growing number of clerical J.P.s. In 1702 there were only fifty-one clergy in the commissions of the peace in England and Wales. By 1761 there were 932, and almost all of the increase occurred after 1740, while Hardwicke was lord chancellor. In the second half of the century the proportion of clerical magistrates continued to rise, and by 1832 about one quarter of all active justices were parsons.[172] In part this trend was a response by local and central government to the need for more justices, but the clergy were also

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[167] B.L. Add. 35586, fol. 48: Notes on cabinet meeting, 9 Dec. 1737; Newcastle of Clumber MSS, Nottingham University Library, Ne.C. 100b: cabinet minutes for 7 & 8 Aug. 1738.

[168] B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 314, 358: Herring to Hardwicke, 12 Dec. 1747, 6 Oct. 1748; *Memoirs of a royal chaplain*, p. 236: Pyle to Kerrich, 29 May 1755.

[169] B.L. Add. 32699, fols. 191-2: Sherlock to Newcastle, 25 Apr. 1742; Add. 32701, fols. 95-6: Sherlock to Newcastle, 4 Sept. 1743; Add. 32719, fols. 203-4: Sherlock to Newcastle, 1 Oct. 1749. Cf., Add. 32869, fols. 183-4: Newcastle to Sherlock, 27 Nov. 1756.

[170] *Memoirs of a royal chaplain*, p. 127: Pyle to Kerrich, 17 Oct. 1747; Romney Sedgwick (ed), *The house of commons 1715-54* (2 vols., London, 1970), i, 57. Pyle claimed that the promotion of Sherlock's nephew, Jonathan Fountayne, to the deanery of York was his reward for this suggestion.

[171] *L.J.*, xxxi, 614, 615, xxxii, 32.

[172] Norma Landau, *The justices of the peace, 1679-1760* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984), p. 143; Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *English local government from the Revolution to the Municipal Corporations Act* (9 vols., London, 1906-29), i, 581n.

often that part of the local community best-versed in the law and most willing to act.[173] However, whig hostility to clerical involvement in civil affairs, which had found virulent expression on Robinson's appointment as a plenipotentiary at Utrecht, was deep-seated.[174] Thus, considerable regional variation could occur. In Norfolk the lord lieutenant, the earl of Buckingham, refused to put any clergy in the commission except the dean and the chancellor, while in Cardiganshire there were only two clerical justices as late as 1775.[175]

In the early years of the nineteenth century some bishops began to condemn the role of the clergy as justices, as an involvement in temporal affairs which diverted them from their spiritual responsibilities.[176] Much of the county administration undertaken by justices, although, as in the case of prison reform, sometimes of humanitarian importance, indeed bore little relation to the clerical character. However, a large part of their work was not incompatible with spiritual duties. In addition to settling disputes judicially, justices spent much time reconciling the quarrels of neighbours without resort to the law, a role not only enjoined on the clergy as part of the pastoral care of their parishes, but also one practised diligently by many of them.[177] The work of the clerical justice in the administration of the poor law was closely connected with his involvement in poor relief as a parish officer and also with his obligation to relieve those in need by personal charity. Moreover, as became increasingly clear in the 1790s, the clergy could use their position as justices to great effect in their campaign for the reformation of manners.[178] As J.P.s the clergy not merely performed the role the Church had been urging on magistrates throughout the century, by using the civil law to punish crimes against which the ecclesiastical courts were now powerless, but by doing so also to some extent regained for the Church control of the enforcement of the moral law.

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[173] Esther Moir, *The justice of the peace* (Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 85. It was a clergyman, Richard Burn, who wrote the eighteenth-century handbook for justices, *The justice of the peace, and parish officer* (2 vols., London, 1755).

[174] *H.M.C.*, Portland MSS, VII, 51-2, quoted in Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 43.

[175] *Memoirs of a royal chaplain*, pp. 130-1: Pyle to Kerrich, 31 Mar. 1747; Webb, *English local government*, I, 351n.

[176] E.g., Bishop Blomefield, quoted in Webb, *English local government*, I, 359-60.

[177] Among other examples, see Hertfordshire R.O., A.H. 1995, fols. 13-14: Charge to the clergy of Bangor by Bishop John Egerton, 1762; *The diary of Benjamin Rogers rector of Carlton, 1720-71*, ed. C.D. Linnell (Publications of Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, xxx, Streatley, nr. Luton, 1950), passim.

[178] Webb, *English local government*, I, 356-8.

7. In defence of the state: the Church and the '45

In 1745, while much of her military strength was concentrated on the European continent and the War of the Austrian Succession, England was threatened by a domestic rebellion aimed at the overthrow of the Hanoverian dynasty. Historians have long debated the gravity of the danger. On the one hand, F.J. McClynn has suggested that the '45 came very close to success.[1] On the other hand, W.A. Speck has argued that it demonstrated the stability, not the precariousness, of the dynasty.[2] Many contemporaries, however, were in no doubt. An initial period of scepticism, which prompted the earl of Hardwicke to lament the 'Indifference & Deadness amongst many', ended abruptly when the news of Prestonpans reached London.[3] Archbishop Herring articulated the pessimism of some when he commented that 'we are now, as to the Health of ye Body Politick, in ye condition of a man, who does not ask his Doctor, whether he may recover, but how long he thinks he can hold out'.[4] Nor should such sentiments appear surprising. The stability of the Hanoverian monarchy could not be taken for granted in 1745. Only thirty years earlier there had been another jacobite rebellion. The history of the previous two centuries, moreover, was a long catalogue of threats to the constitution and liberties of Englishmen. The reign of Mary had been followed by the Spanish Armada, the Gunpowder Plot, the civil wars, and the rule of Cromwell. Even 1688, though a glorious deliverance, was not an obvious comfort to a nation faced with a foreign-backed invasion.

The '45 was therefore seen as a time of extreme crisis, when the state itself was threatened with destruction. As such it can be used as a case-study to illustrate in more detail the role of the Church as part of the state. The Church's ability to act as the arm and support of the state was fully revealed only at this moment of crisis. Churchmen did not just express their support for the constitution established in church and state. In some parts of the country, notably the north, they also played a prominent role as the agents of central government, organizing local defences and providing information. But above all they used their pulpits to exhort the nation to join together in support of the government to defeat the rebels.

The first response of the clergy was to demonstrate their loyalty to the crown in the same manner as the laity - by addresses to the king. Between the middle of September and the beginning of January 1746 addresses of this kind were made by the bishops, deans and chapters, and clergy of eighteen dioceses. In addition, the bishops and clergy of the counties of Durham, York, Lincoln, Sussex, Cumberland and Westmorland, and of the city of Peterborough, joined with the laity in addressing. Addresses were also presented from the dean and chapter of Ely, the

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1 F.J. McClynn, *The jacobite army in England. 1745. The final campaign* (Edinburgh, 1983).

2 W.A. Speck, *The butcher. The duke of Cumberland and the suppression of the '45* (Oxford, 1981), p. 203.

3 B.L. Add. MS 35598, fol. 38: Hardwicke to Herring, 31 Aug. 1745; Speck, *The butcher*, p. 53ff.

4 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 43: Herring to Hardwicke, 7 Sept. 1745.

two universities, and the clergy assembled in convocation.[5]

These addresses cannot be regarded as the spontaneous action of the clergy. They were rather a testimony to the activity of the bishops. Complex constitutional conventions governed the propriety of addressing, and even the bishops could do nothing until the archbishop had given the lead. For this reason Edmund Gibson, who was anxious to start organizing the London address, was critical of Potter's apparent tardiness. As he explained to Andrew Stone, he could have no 'hand in *promoting* it, unless my Metropolitan shows me the way'.[6] But once Potter, in consultation with Newcastle and Hardwicke, had made the decision in favour of diocesan addresses,[7] the initiative lay with the bishops. It was they who drew them up and organized the collection of signatures.[8] Without an episcopal lead nothing was done. The Gloucester address was not presented until early January because Bishop Benson had been out of the diocese earlier in the year, keeping his residence as a canon of Durham.[9] In many dioceses the bishop decided to circulate the address only among the dean and chapter and clergy of the cathedral city in order to expedite its presentation. This was certainly true of Salisbury.[10] It would also have been true of London if it had not been necessary to send to Bristol for the approval of Bishop Butler, as dean of St Paul's. Gibson took advantage of the delay to collect the signatures of some of the country clergy as well.[11] Hoadly, on the other hand, chose not to present the Winchester address until late October in order to send it round the diocese.[12]

The addresses were, therefore, organized by the bishops with the approval, perhaps even at the instigation, of the ministry. Nonetheless, they should not be entirely disregarded as a guide to the support of the clergy for the Hanoverian regime. Hoadly reported to Newcastle that he had discovered a surprising degree of loyalty among the clergy. By sending the address around the diocese he had gained 'the Names of Many to it at which I am greatly surprized & which I never thought to See'.[13] Thomas Secker met with a similar response among even the notoriously tory clergy of Oxfordshire. After the rebellion he felt able to congratulate them on 'the unanimous zeal you expressed against it'. Secker then commented on the loyalty of all the clergy,[14] and it is

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5 *London Gazette*, 8468-8499. Bishop Butts of Ely and Bishop Gooch of Norwich were the only members of the bench whose names are not recorded in any of the addresses in the *Gazette*. Gooch's behaviour during the rebellion was confusing. Although he did not organize an address from his diocese, he appears to have been involved in the association and subscription of Cambridge University. He certainly promised £100 to the subscription of the University to raise troops, but does not appear in the list of those who paid. Public Record Office, S.P. 36/72/128: Gooch to Newcastle, 22 Oct. 1745; S.P. 36/72/129-30: Prescot to Gooch, 20 Oct. 1745; Cambridge University Library, University Archives, Gov. Ac. 1.

6 P.R.O., S.P. 36/67/260: Gibson to [Stone], 12 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/68/64: Gibson to [Stone], 14 Sept. 1745.

7 P.R.O., S.P. 36/68/64: Gibson to [Stone], 14 Sept. 1745.

8 P.R.O., S.P. 36/68/80: Gibson to [Stone], 16 Sept. 1745; 'The autobiography of Archbishop Secker', Lambeth Palace Library, MS 2598, fol. 36v (Transcript of Professor Norman Sykes).

9 *London Gazette*, 8499, 7 Jan. 1746.

10 P.R.O., S.P. 36/71/179: Sherlock to Newcastle, 13 Oct. 1745.

11 P.R.O., S.P. 36/68/138: Gibson to Newcastle, 19 Sept. 1745.

12 P.R.O., S.P. 36/72/190: Hoadly to Newcastle, 23 Oct. 1745.

13 P.R.O., S.P. 36/72/190: Hoadly to Newcastle, 23 Oct. 1745.

14 Thomas Secker, 'Charge to the clergy, 1747', *The works of Thomas Secker, LL.D., late lord archbishop of Canterbury* (6 vols., new edn., London, 1811), v, 355.

indeed hard to find a jacobite clergyman. Manchester collegiate church was ambivalent in its allegiance. One of its chaplains publicly offered up prayers for the Pretender, and was later obliged to seek safety in flight. Another Lancashire clergyman, Mr Cappock, joined the rebel army and was executed at Carlisle. Suspicion also fell on the rector of Hawarden.[15] Outside the north-west reports of clerical disaffection were even rarer. Allegations of jacobitism were made against the minister of Willian in Hertfordshire. But this was an exception in an anonymous letter to earl Cowper, the tone of which suggests that a personal grudge may have been the motive.[16] If nothing more can be said with certainty, it is clear that the overwhelming majority of clergy made no attempt to stir up their flocks to support the Pretender.[17]

But more was expected of the clergy than mere professions of loyalty. The Church was expected to inform men of their danger and then to use its moral authority to remind them of their duties to king and constitution, to exhort them to unity in the face of rebellion, and to rouse them to the defence of their country. Thus, on 31 August Lord Hardwicke added as a postscript to his letter to Archbishop Herring, 'Is it not time for the Pulpits to sound the Trumpet against Popery & the Pretender?'[18] Ministers made similar suggestions to those bishops present in London. But they needed little prompting. Gibson again quickly became frustrated at the apparent tardiness of Archbishop Potter. As over the addresses Gibson was conscious that he should avoid the appearance of 'taking the lead', but he found it irksome to have to wait on his metropolitan.[19] Potter finally acted on 7 September, after consultation with the ministry, and wrote to all the bishops of his province and the archbishop of York directing them to enjoin their clergy to 'exert a becoming Zeal for the preservation of our present happy Constitution in Church & State'.[20] The next fortnight saw a series of letters from the bishops to the clergy of their dioceses. These varied greatly in character. Potter's, which was reprinted by Herring for the diocese of York, concluded with the same exhortation as his letter to the bishops. Gibson's, on the other hand, was far more precise in pointing out the duties of the clergy. He instructed them to pray, and to urge the people to pray for God's 'Aid and Protection'; to raise in them 'a just Abhorrence of *Popery*'; and to warn them against the '*Delusion*' that no attempt would be made by the rebels to change the laws or religion of the country.[21] The same sentiments were expressed in the addresses, all of which concluded with assurances, like that of the Oxford clergy, of their exciting 'in all that

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15 S. Hibbert-Ware, *The history of the college and collegiate church of Manchester* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1830), II, 92-4; P.R.O., S.P. 36/73/427-8: Newcastle to the earl of Cholmondeley, 16 Nov. 1745.

16 Panshanger MSS, Hertfordshire Record Office, D/EP/F266: anon to earl Cowper, 15 May 1746. The basis of the charge of jacobite sympathies was that the parson was alleged to have refused to allow the church bells to be rung on the news of the victory at Culloden and that he had had the riot act read at the celebratory bonfire.

17 C.J. Abbey and J.H. Overton, *The English Church in the eighteenth century* (2 vols., London, 1878), I, 103.

18 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 39: Hardwicke to Herring, 31 Aug. 1745.

19 P.R.O., S.P. 36/67/126, 145: Gibson to Newcastle, 4, 6 Sept. 1745.

20 P.R.O., S.P. 36/67/162: Circular letter from Archbishop Potter to the bishops of his province, 7 Sept. 1745.

21 P.R.O., S.P. 36/67/191: Archbishop Potter's circular letter to the clergy of Canterbury, 9 Sept. 1745; B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 50: Herring to Hardwicke, 15 Sept. 1745; Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, Gibson Papers, bound volume, # 27: Bishop Gibson's circular letter to the clergy of London, 9 Sept. 1745. Copies of the circular letters of Bishops Sherlock and Wilcocks are preserved in S.P. 36/67/203 and S.P. 36/68/82-3; and of Bishop Mawson in Cambridge University Library.

belong to our Care, an unanimous and resolute Zeal for your Majesty's Service, for our happy Constitution in Church and State, and for the Independency of this Nation'.[22]

Archbishop Potter was severely criticized for his failure to give a proper lead to the Church. Gibson believed that he did not demonstrate enough urgency.[23] His strictures, however, were misplaced. Potter was among the first to express concern about the need to rouse 'the Spirit of the Nation', and the delays in organizing the circular letters and addresses were due primarily to the need to consult the ministry.[24] The other criticism of Potter had more validity. Gibson thought that his circular letter to the bishops did not 'come up to what was design'd'. In particular it failed to point out what was expected of them at a time when most of them were in their dioceses and so unable to consult with each other. Newcastle concurred in this opinion.[25] But Potter's circular letter to the clergy was even more vigorously condemned. Herring described it as 'the cold Phlegm of an Old man', while Hardwicke forbore to comment on it in comparison with the more spirited and urgent exhortations of Gibson and Sherlock.[26] Nonetheless, Potter's activity should not be underestimated. In comparison with the '15 he orchestrated an impressive demonstration of clerical loyalty to the regime. Then the bishops had only produced a declaration, which some did not sign, and a handful of addresses. Potter believed, not without justification, that their activity on the present occasion would be 'of far more weight and authority'.[27]

The first duty of the clergy, as pointed out in the bishops' circular letters, was to preach. Their response was impressive. As John Downes, the lecturer at St Mary-le-Bow, explained, 'the present Crisis of Affairs renders it as unnecessary for any Clergyman to Apologize for taking up his Pen, as any Layman his Arms'.[28] Edmund Pyle commented on the prevalence of anti-popery sermons 'everywhere' as early as 2 November. He himself planned to preach on the subject until the end of March. A similar statement was made by Richard Wainhouse, a Wiltshire clergyman, who claimed to have preached against popery and the rebellion '(one Sunday excepted) ever since ye 15th of Sept'.[29] After the rebellion the clergy's zeal during it became a matter of self-congratulation, William Warburton boasting that 'no order of men better approved themselves to

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22 *London Gazette*, 8475, 15 Oct 1745.

23 P.R.O., S.P. 36/67/145: Gibson to Newcastle, 6 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/67/260: Gibson to [Stone], 12 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/68/65: Gibson to [Stone], 14 Sept. 1745; Gibson Papers (Huntington Library), bound volume, # 14: Newcastle to Gibson, 6 Sept. 1745.

24 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 38: Hardwicke to Herring, 31 Aug. 1748; P.R.O., S.P. 36/67/164: Potter to Newcastle, 7 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/68/64: Gibson to [Stone], 14 Sept. 1745.

25 P.R.O., S.P. 36/67/166: Gibson to Newcastle, 7 Sept. 1745; Gibson Papers (Huntington Library), bound volume, # 26: Stone to Gibson, 9 Sept. 1745.

26 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 51: Herring to Hardwicke, 15 Sept. 1745; ibid., fol. 45: Hardwicke to Herring, 12 Sept. 1745.

27 P.R.O., S.P. 36/68/131, 87: Potter to Newcastle, 18, 16 Sept. 1745.

28 John Downes, *A popish prince the pest of a protestant people. A sermon preached in the parish-church of St Mary-le-Bow, on Sunday the 13th of October, 1745* (3rd edn., London, 1745), p. 2.

29 *Memoirs of a royal chaplain, 1729-63. The correspondence of Edmund Pyle, D.D., chaplain in ordinary to George II, with Samuel Kerrich, D.D., vicar of Dersingham, rector of Wolterton, and rector of West Newton*, ed. Albert Hartshorne (London, 1905), p. 109: Pyle to Kerrich, 2 Nov. 1745; P.R.O., S.P. 36/75/30: Richard Wainhouse to Newcastle, 25 Nov. 1745.

the State than the body of the Clergy'.[30] These impressions are reinforced by the lists of books published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Usually it noted between five and ten sermons each month, but between October 1745 and January 1746 ninety titles appeared, while the last three months of 1746, following the thanksgiving day for the suppression of the rebellion, saw a further sixty-seven.[31] This phenomenon undoubtedly owed something to self-interest. A large proportion of these sermons had been preached by relatively obscure country clergymen, who published nothing else throughout their lives, and were perhaps hoping to attract the attention of a powerful patron. But among most clergy a deep-rooted fear of popery and desire to serve the public interest cannot be ignored.

The sermons preached during the '45 revealed the many divisions which existed among churchmen about the nature of both church and state. On the one hand John Chapman saw the Church of England as the true, reformed catholic church, founded on the doctrines of scripture as they were expounded by the ancient fathers and the councils of the first four centuries.[32] On the other hand Thomas Wingfield claimed that it was based on liberty and freedom of conscience which 'is not only permitted, but the actual exercise of it enjoyn'd in the NEW TESTAMENT', submitting to no man's decision in doctrine without examination by 'the Rule of God's Word'.[33] Similarly, George Fothergill emphasized the 'Duty of *Subjection to the higher Powers*', since the setting up and removing of kings was undoubtedly part of God's prerogative,[34] whereas James Ibbetson claimed that government was contractual and that a prince who raised up his own arbitrary power forfeited that power by his breach of trust, 'and it devolves to the people; who have a right to resume their original Liberty, and to provide for their own Security, by establishing a new Government'.[35] Taken as a body, however, the sermons were most notable for their sameness. All were aimed at uniting the people in support of the Hanoverian succession and rousing them to an active defence of their country. Two themes recurred in almost every sermon: the duty of christian obedience to the king; and the threat from popery.

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30 *The works of the right reverend William Warburton, D.D. lord bishop of Gloucester* (12 vols., new edn., London, 1811), ix, 322; Philip Williams, *A sermon preached in the parish church of Starston in Norfolk, upon Thursday the 9th of October, 1746, being the day appointed for a general thanksgiving to almighty God, for the suppression of the late unnatural rebellion* (Cambridge, 1746), pp. 11-12; William Best, *The royal souldier. A sermon preached at the parish church of St Lawrence and St Mary Magdalen Milk-Street. Before the right honble the lord mayor, the aldermen, and sheriffs; there assembled for the reception of the holy sacrament. On Saturday, January 12. 1745-6* (London, 1746), pp. 24-5.

31 The *London Magazine* shows a similar trend, but its lists were less comprehensive. *The Gentleman's Magazine* lists were far from complete. For 1745-6 it lists a total of 174 sermons, including those of both anglicans and dissenters. A print-out from the *Eighteenth-century short title catalogue* lists 304 sermons for the same period in the British Library alone.

32 John Chapman, *Popery the bane of true letters: a charge delivered to the clergy of the archdeaconry of Sudbury, at a visitation on May 12, &c 1746* (London, 1746), p. 2.

33 Thomas Wingfield, *The reasonableness and necessity of standing fast in christian and English liberty. A sermon preach'd in the parish-churches of St George and St Thomas in Southwark, on Sunday, September 29, 1745* (London, 1745), pp. 15-16.

34 George Fothergill, *The duty of giving thanks for national deliverances. A sermon preach'd at St Martin's in Oxford, before the mayor and corporation, on Thursday, October 9th 1746. Being the day appointed to be kept as a general thanksgiving to almighty God, for the suppression of the late rebellion* (Oxford, 1747), p. 30.

35 James Ibbetson, *The heinous nature of rebellion. A sermon preached in the cathedral church of York, on Thursday, August 21, 1746 . . .* (London, 1746), pp. 12-13.

The duties of loyalty and obedience were a constant part of the Church's teaching, and the sermons during the '45 repeated the usual arguments.[36] But for the first time in a generation the question of obedience ceased to be speculative and the preaching of the clergy on this subject acquired an immediacy it did not usually possess. Thus, when Thomas Herring argued at York that obedience to the supreme magistrate was 'your indispensable Duty, *in regard to the Oath of God*', he emphasized his case by pointing out the 'Inconveniencies of Rebellion'.[37] Even those who believed that government was contractual did not deny that loyalty and obedience were christian duties. An evil king, who broke the terms of the original contract with his people, released them from their duties, but, claimed James Ibbetson, the sanctions of religion 'may certainly be insisted on . . . to enforce Obedience and Subjection to the best King, and the best Constitution under heaven'.[38] As one country parson pointed out, actively to engage in rebellion against a lawful prince 'must needs appear a crime of the *deepest* die'.[39]

The threat from popery was two-fold, religious and civil, to the constitution both in the Church and in the state. The religion which would replace the protestantism of the Church of England in the event of a jacobite restoration was examined by Richard Trevor in his sermon before the house of lords. He touched on all the traditional points of anglican apologetic - the usurpation of the rights of christian princes; the prohibition of vernacular translations of the Bible; the doctrine of transubstantiation; the worship of images; the infallibility of the pope - and portrayed a religion 'with every Corruption, both in Faith and Practice'.[40] The Church of Rome, moreover, lacked the charity of the Church of England, and practised the persecution of those who differed from it in religion.[41] Thus, England, seen by some preachers as the new Jerusalem, was threatened with 'the removal of our *Candlestick*', the loss of the true, primitive Christianity of its established Church.[42] At the same time it was claimed that a jacobite restoration would destroy the civil constitution as inevitably as the religious one. Popery and arbitrary power were

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36 For some comments on these sermons, see Françoise Deconinck-Brossard, 'The churches and the '45', *S.C.H.*, xx (1983), 253-62.

37 Herring, 'A sermon preached at the cathedral church of York, September 22d, 1745', in *Seven sermons on public occasions* (London, 1763), p. 166.

38 Ibbetson, *The heinous nature of rebellion*, p. 1.

39 Manison Warner, *A sermon on the present rebellion, peached in the parish church of St Ives in Huntingtonshire, on Sunday, October 13. 1745; and on the Sunday following, in the churches of Old and Wood Hurst. (Members of Saint Ives)* (Cambridge, 1745), p. 5.

40 Richard Trevor, *A sermon preach'd before the lords spiritual and temporal, in the abbey-church at Westminster, on the 5th of November, 1745. Being the anniversary of the powder plot* (London, 1745), pp. 9-18.

41 Samuel Peploe, *Popish ideology a strong reason why all protestants should zealously oppose the present rebellion. A sermon preached in the cathedral church of Chester, on Sunday, the 13th of October, 1745. The mayor and corporation being present* (London, 1745), pp. 13-14; William Holmes, *The frauds of popery, and the abettors of the present rebellion, set in a true light. A sermon preach'd at the church in Doncaster, on Sunday the 29th of December, 1745* (York, 1745), p. 13, quoted in Françoise Deconinck-Brossard, *Vie politique, sociale et religieuse en Grande-Bretagne d'après les sermons prêchés ou publiés dans le nord de l'Angleterre 1738-60* (2 vols., Paris, 1984), I, 233.

42 E.g., Philip Bennet, *The duty and efficacy of national prayer to avert God's judgments. A sermon preached before the University of Cambridge at St Mary's Church, September 29, 1745* (Cambridge, 1745), p. 18; Deconinck-Brossard, *Vie politique, sociale et religieuse*, I, 304-6.

inseparable concepts and phrases such as the '*Slavery*, and *Tyranny* of POPERY' abound.[43] The liberties and properties of Englishmen would all be destroyed, since the Pretender 'claims us not as his Subjects, but as his Slaves; not as People whose law he comes to vindicate, but as his Property, his hereditary Chattel, as Wretches who have no longer any Rights or Laws at all'. A victory for the rebels would mean exchanging 'our happy Constitution and legal Government' for a 'Tyrant's Will and Pleasure'. Moreover, he would not even be an English tyrant, but the tool of France, and England would be reduced to the status of a province.[44]

Civil and religious dangers, however, were rarely distinguished. Richard Trevor concluded his consideration of the nature of popery with the assertion that 'Papal Tyranny and Superstition' were aiming at 'the Subversion of our constitutional Laws, and the manifold Violation of our Civil and Religious Rights'.[45] His words were echoed in many other sermons, and clergymen developed the parallel between the English and the Jews of the Old Testament by asserting that the nation was in danger of entering an 'Egyptian Slavery'.[46] Images such as these were painted in almost every sermon, and they commonly culminated in exhortations such as that of John Downes: ''Tis our Religion, our Laws, our Liberties, our Lives, our Souls, our *All*, which now demand our Bravery and Resolution'.[47] The purpose of such addresses was not to instruct, but to inspire the people to join in the defence of the state in whatever way possible, to lay 'aside all private Resentment and invidious Distinctions, [to] endeavour with united Forces, with one Heart and Mind to repel the *common Enemy*, and to support His Majesty *King* GEORGE in all his just and lawful Rights'.[48]

But the duties of the people extended beyond unity in the face of the enemy. Without faith and an humble dependence on God that alone would be useless. In character the reaction to the '45 was part of the clerical response to the European war.[49] War was commonly seen as the punishment of God on sinful peoples; rebellion and civil war were more direct and severe forms of punishment.[50] This continuity is seen most clearly in Thomas Secker's collection of *Nine sermons . . . on occasion of war and rebellion in 1745*, in which the texts and messages vary little between the fast sermons preached during the war and the sermons occasioned by the

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43 E.g., Henry Stebbing, *A fast sermon on occasion of the rebellion in Scotland in the year 1745. Preached at Gray's Inn Chapel* (London, 1745), p. 6.

44 James Kilner, *A sermon preach'd at the parish-church of Lexden, in Essex, on the fifth of November, 1745* (London, 1745), p. 4-7; Bennet, *Duty and efficacy of national prayer*, pp. 19-20; Downes, *A popish prince the pest of a protestant people*, pp. 20-2.

45 Trevor, *Sermon before the lords on the 5th of November*, p. 18.

46 Holmes, *The frauds of popery*, p. 21, quoted in Deconinck-Brossard, *Vie politique, sociale et religieuse*, i. 307; Stebbing, *Fast sermon*, p. 6; John Spry, *The duty of christian confidence in times of danger to the Church of Christ. A sermon preached before the University of Oxford, at St Mary's, October 13. 1745. On occasion of the present rebellion* (Oxford, n.d.), p. 27.

47 Downes, *A popish prince the pest of a protestant people*, p. 33.

48 Robert Masters, *The mischiefs of faction and rebellion considered; in a sermon preached in the parish churches of Great and Little Wilbraham, in the county of Cambridge, on Sunday, October 13. 1745* (Cambridge, 1745), pp. 20-1.

49 See D. Napthine and W.A. Speck, 'Clergymen and conflict 1660-1763', *S.C.H.*, xx (1983), 231-51.

50 Thomas Hutchinson, *A sermon preached in the parish-church of Horsham in Sussex, on Wednesday, December 18. 1745. Being the day appointed for a general fast* (London, 1746), pp. 11-13.

rebellion.[51] The '45, however, was a special case. Implicitly or explicitly, almost every preacher saw England as a nation peculiarly favoured by God, and blessed with civil liberty and true religion. Some even went as far as to say that the English were now the chosen people of God, fulfilling the same role as the Jews in the Old Testament as the repository of true religion.[52] But the blessings of God had been abused: liberty had degenerated into licentiousness, and the profession of the true religion had been abandoned for infidelity and atheism. Not merely was the nation being warned and punished through the dangers and hardships of war, but it was now threatened with popery and arbitrary power, with the loss of those blessings of civil and religious liberty which God had bestowed. There was only one path to safety and the duty of the people was clear: to place their trust in God, to 'confess with sorrow and confusion' and repent of their sins, and to live henceforth in 'a spirit of piety and devotion, a spirit of justice and temperence, of humility and charity, and of all other graces, which adorn the Christian profession'.[53]

The first duty of the clergy, therefore, was to preach against the rebellion. But their activities did not stop there. The bishops in particular were expected to act as part of the civil administration, especially in the north, where the danger was most immediate. In Yorkshire Archbishop Herring quickly became involved in the organization of the county's defences.[54] On 11 September he attended a meeting at Byrom together with Lords Lonsdale, Malton, Irwin and Galway, Sir Rowland Wynne, Sir William Lowther and Sir James Ramsden. It was there agreed to call a general meeting at York on the 24th, to enter into an association and to engage in some measure of defence for the county.[55] On 23 September a conference of the principal noblemen and gentry took place at Bishopthorpe, the archbishop's residence, where the resolutions to be proposed to the general meeting were agreed. These were for a loyal association, a volunteer force in each riding, and a county subscription for the maintenance of the troops.[56] The following day, at the request of the three lords lieutenant, Herring made the speech to open the meeting.[57] The archbishop's conduct was universally applauded. John Hill, a commissioner of the customs and M.P. for Higham Ferrers, reported that he 'never saw a greater share of prudence, spirit, Courage and Dexterity collected in any one man on so great an occasion'.[58] The king personally ordered his speech to be printed in the *Gazette*, and he told Hardwicke that it was not enough

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51 Thomas Secker, 'Nine sermons preached in the parish of St James, Westminster, on occasion of the war and rebellion in 1745', in *Works*, IV, 281-438.

52 E.g., Thomas Rutherforth, *A sermon preached before the honourable house of commons at St Margaret's Westminster Jauary 30, 1745-6* (London, 1746), p. 19; Sherlock, 'A sermon preached October 6, 1745, on occasion of the rebellion in Scotland', in *The works of Bishop Sherlock. With some accoun of his life* (5 vols., London, 1830), III, 479.

53 *A form of prayer, to be used . . . upon Wednesday the eighteenth of December next, being the day appointed by proclamation for a general fast and humiliation before almighty God, to be observed in most devout and solemn manner, by sending up our prayers and supplications to the divine majesty . . .* (London, 1745), pp. 23, 28.

54 Herring's role during the '45 is discussed by Charles Smyth, 'Archbishop Herring and the '45', *Church Quarterly Review*, CXLII (1946), 30-47. A more useful article, which puts Herring's activities into a wider context, is Cedric Collyer, 'Yorkshire and the "forty-five"', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, XXXVIII (1952), 71-95.

55 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 47-8: Herring to Hardwicke, 13 Sept. 1745.

56 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 66-7: Herring to Hardwicke, 23 Sept. 1745.

57 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 346-7.

58 B.L. Add. 35588, fol. 108: John Hill to Hardwicke, 25 Sept. 1745.

merely to acquaint Herring with his approval of his behaviour, 'You must also tell the Archbishop that I heartily thank him for it'.[59]

The general meeting was reckoned 'the most numerous that was ever known'.[60] Party animosities were submerged, if not forgotten. Much of the credit for this lay with Herring. Despite a reputation for being a strident whig in politics, he believed that 'all Party considerations should be buried & nothing attended to but ye publick Safety'.[61] Accordingly he actively sought to make the meeting as general as possible, using his acquaintance with 'men of both parties . . . to recommend it to all, as a case of common Danger'.[62] The measure of his success was the presence at the Bishopthorpe meeting not only of ministerial supporters, but also of prominent opposition politicians, such as the earls of Strafford and Carlisle, George Fox and Godfrey Wentworth, the M.P.s for York, Lord Downe, Mr Dawnay, and Mr Aislabie.[63] As Herring recognized, that he was of any use was owing to his detachment from Yorkshire party politics. He was someone in whom all parties, and indeed the three lords lieutenant, were able to agree.[64] Certainly the proceedings in Yorkshire presented a striking contrast to the situation in other counties. Constitutional scruples, such as those voiced by the earl of Bath and the Oxfordshire tories about the legality and propriety of associations and subscriptions, were doubtless genuinely held. But they were frequently reinforced by political animosities, as in Shropshire, where the tories were alienated by the neglect of the lord lieutenant, Lord Herbert. It was Herring's political discernment that enabled Yorkshire to surmount these problems and demonstrate such marked unanimity.[65]

After the general meeting Herring continued to be consulted by the lords lieutenant.[66] He involved himself in county business, writing urgent letters to London about the supply of arms for the county forces.[67] He was also influential after the danger had passed in arranging for the disposal of the remainder of the subscriptions in a manner satisfactory to all parties.[68] But he was perhaps of greatest importance as a figurehead, inspiring loyalty. It was at the request of the City

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59 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 76: Hardwicke to Herring, 28 Sept. 1745; *London Gazette*, 8470, 28 Sept. 1745.

60 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 73: Herring to Hardwicke, 27 Sept. 1745.

61 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 58: Herring to Hardwicke, 17 Sept. 1745. Herring was reckoned an 'old whig' and disliked the promotion of converted tories by the Pelhams in the late 1740s and 1750s. See above, cpt. 5, p. 114.

62 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 50: Herring to Hardwicke, 15 Sept. 1745.

63 Collyer, 'Yorkshire and the '45', pp. 75-6.

64 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 84: Herring to Hardwicke, (recd) 4 Oct. 1745.

65 Linda Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy. The tory party 1714-60* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 39-40; Nicholas Rogers, 'The urban opposition to whig oligarchy, 1720-60', in *The origins of Anglo-American radicalism*, ed. M. and J. Jacob (London, 1984), p. 140; R.J. Robson, *The Oxfordshire election of 1754. A study in the interplay of city, county and university politics* (London, 1949), pp. 1-10; Speck, *The butcher*, pp. 56-60.

66 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 146: Herring to Hardwicke, 15 Dec. 1745.

67 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 97-8: Herring to Hardwicke, 19 Oct. 1745; *H.M.C.*, Various Collections, VIII, 113: Herring to Viscount Irwin, 19 Oct. 1745.

68 B.L. Add. 32705, fol. 460: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 25 Dec. 1745; B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 166-8, 171-2, 184-5, 192-3, 203: Herring to Hardwicke, 21, 23 Jan., 9 Feb., 1 Mar., 5 Apr. 1746. This affair, indeed, appeared to devolve on Herring by default. He wrote to Hardwicke on 23 January 1746, that he was 'quite sensible of the impropriety of meddling in these Military matters, but as one Ld Lieutenant is in London, Another laid up wth the Gout, and a third, to speak plainly, sick of the service, all differing in Opinion, & all referring to me, I will do my best wth my Ld Duke's & yr Lps Directions.'.

of York that he decided to remain in the county throughout the winter, rather than returning to London to perform his parliamentary duties.[69] He reviewed the county forces, and resolved to 'share in ye common Danger' if it was decided to attempt a defence of York against a rebel attack.[70] His importance as a symbol of the county's resistance is perhaps best demonstrated by the copper plates produced of him: one with 'a Saracen's Head surrounded wth the Chevalier in Chains, & all ye Instruments of War & ye Hydra of Rebellion at my Feet'; another 'in ye same martial Attitude wth all my Clergy with me'.[71]

The bishops of the other three northern dioceses were rather less able than Herring to play an active role in opposing the rebellion. Bishop Peploe at Chester was seventy-seven. But he still preached a sermon in the cathedral and remained in touch with Newcastle during the rebellion.[72] Fleming at Carlisle was almost eighty and very infirm, having only two years to live.[73] Nonetheless, he helped to organize the addresses from Cumberland and Westmorland and in the early days of the rebellion transmitted news from Scotland to London via the lord lieutenant, Lord Lonsdale.[74] Moreover, he possessed an active chancellor in John Waugh, whom he sent to represent him at the county meetings of Cumberland and Westmorland.[75] Waugh was himself noted for his activity during the '45, and was rewarded with the deanery of Worcester. He had arranged a correspondence with John Goldie, a magistrate at Dumfries, and relayed that and other information to the duke of Newcastle. His letters to Newcastle, however, suggest that he did little more.[76]

The responsibilities of Edward Chandler, bishop of Durham, were greater than those of the other bishops, since he was also lord lieutenant of the county. But he too was old and infirm and, unlike Fleming, resident in London. Criticism was inevitable. Henry Vane wrote bluntly that the bishop was 'unfit . . . for that Office'.[77] Chandler himself was aware of the difficulties of his position, and suggested to the ministry that they confer the lieutenancy on someone else. Despite his distance from the diocese, however, he made great efforts to discharge his duties conscientiously and efficiently. In this he was aided by Bishop Benson who was resident in Durham as a prebendary at the outbreak of the rebellion, and was active in helping to organize

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69 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 88: Herring to Hardwicke, 6 Oct. 1745.

70 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 129: Herring to Hardwicke, 22 Nov. 1745.

71 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 104: Herring to Hardwicke, 18 Oct. 1745.

72 Samuel Peploe, *Popish ideology a strong reason why all protestants should zealously oppose the present rebellion*; P.R.O., S.P. 36/71/107: Newcastle to General Wade, 11 Oct. 1745; S.P. 36/73/227: Peploe to Newcastle, 10 Nov. 1745; S.P. 36/74/87-8: Newcastle to Peploe, 19 Nov. 1745.

73 *Fleming-Senhouse papers*, ed. Edward Hughes (Carlisle, 1961), p. 87.

74 Senhouse Papers, Cumbria Record Office, D/Sen.Fleming/15/2: Lord Lonsdale to Fleming, 3 Oct. 1745; D/Sen.Fleming/15/3: same to same, 31 Oct. 1745; D/Sen.Fleming/16: Sir James Lowther to Fleming, 11 Jan. and 11 Feb. 1746.

75 P.R.O., S.P. 36/70/247: John Waugh to Newcastle, 7 Oct. 1745; S.P. 36/71/148: Waugh to Newcastle, 12 Oct. 1745.

76 B.L. Add. 32725, fols. 301-2: Newcastle to earl of Carlisle, 17 Oct. 1751. For Waugh's correspondence with Newcastle, see P.R.O., S.P. 36/68-78, passim. For his other correspondence during the '45, see *Carlisle in 1745*, ed. G.C. Mousney (London, 1846).

77 P.R.O., S.P. 36/69/142: Henry Vane to Andrew Stone, 27 Sept. 1745.

the city's defences.[78]

Herring was remarkable for his zeal during the rebellion, but the other northern bishops did as much as could have been expected given their disabilities. Further south such martial activity was unnecessary. There the bishops' task was to urge their clergy and the laity to perform their duties in defence of the Hanoverian regime. Yet even here considerable energy and commitment were demonstrated, as Secker's account shows:

> In September 1745 the Rebellion broke out. I sent a circular printed Letter to my Clergy upon it immediately, and went up to St James's the 4th of October, and preached the beforementioned Sermon at my Church and both my Chapels; and left it to be printed; and went down on the 14th to Oxford for a County Meeting on the occasion, and back to St James's the 17th, and presented my Sermon to the King . . . I also procured an Address from my Clergy, which I drew up, and presented to the King . . . In the End of the Month I gave 10 Guineas as first payment of my Subscription to the Association at St James's Vestry. Nov. 26 I went down to Cuddesden, and returned . . . Dec. 23 to St James's.[79]

There can be no doubt that the Church exerted itself to the full in defence of the state during the '45 rebellion. Churchmen were not expected to arm themselves and fight in defence of the state. But the pulpit provided the means to communicate information throughout the nation, to remind men of their duties, and to exhort them to action. In anachronistic and rather crude terms the Church might be regarded as the state's department of propaganda. It is worth remembering, however, that one of the causes the Church was defending was that of the true, reformed religion. A popish prince, it was universally assumed, could not rule over a protestant people. Thus, a jacobite restoration would inevitably have led to the overthrow of the Reformation settlement in the manner attempted by James II. The Church and churchmen were defending their own interests as well as those of the state.

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[78] P.R.O., S.P. 36/68/25, 184-5: Chandler to ?, 14, 20 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/68/249: Chandler to Stone, 22 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/68/267: Chandler to Newcastle, 23 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/68/269: Benson et al to Newcastle, 23 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/69/63-4, 210-11: Newcastle to Benson, 25, 28 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/69/231-2: Benson to Newcastle, 29 Sept. 1745; S.P. 36/70/86-7: Benson to Newcastle, 3 Oct. 1745.

[79] L.P.L., MS 2598, fols. 36-7 (Sykes transcript).

PART V

THE CHURCH IN POLITICS

8. The episcopate and the house of lords

Hitherto this dissertation has emphasized the idea that church and state were 'ideas inseparable' in practice, as well as theory.[1] The role of the Church as an agent of the state was compatible, rather than in conflict, with its responsibility for the salvation of men. On the one hand, the nature of the world and God's providential government of it meant that a moral, christian people was essential for the well-being, prosperity and preservation of the state. On the other, a man's path to salvation was easier within the framework of a christian commonwealth. The harmony of interests of church and state, bishops and politicians, should not, however, be overstated. The Church was more than a part of the domestic state apparatus and a society charged with the care of souls. In so far as it can be regarded as one body it was the largest, wealthiest and most powerful independent corporation in Britain. As such it was both a political issue and a pressure group. The Church was concerned to protect and advance its own interests, its position within society and the state. At the same time that position was being challenged by an inchoate group of religious radicals, embracing those who believed all church establishments threatened liberty, both religious and civil, many dissenters and a few anglicans who wished to change the nature of the Establishment, and lay anti-clericals who feared the Church because its power and influence appeared to threaten the re-imposition of a clerical tyranny.

As the Church was established, as 'Christianity was part of the laws of England', its rights, privileges and duties were defined by a complex mass of statute and common law.[2] In his *Codex* Edmund Gibson argued that the Church derived certain powers directly from God, but allowed that it 'is the *Laws*, by which it is to be administered', since 'the Division of Provinces, Dioceses, and Parishes . . . and the like ancient Rights' subsist by common law.[3] It was parliament, therefore, which provided the forum for debate both of the relationship between church and state and of the internal organization of the Church. The two, indeed, were almost invariably linked since some laymen could see the spectre of clericalism in any proposal of church reform. They feared that any attempt to make the Church more effective or active would only be at the expense of their own 'pocket or independence'.[4] Thus there were formidable barriers to the success of church reform. The subject was bound to provoke controversy inside parliament, yet little could be achieved outside - the creation of each new parish, often even the erection of a church

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1 Edmund Burke, 'Reflections on the revolution in France, and on the proceedings of certain societies in London relative to that event', in *The works of Edmund Burke* (Bohn Library edn., 6 vols., London, 1854-69), II, 371.

2 Lambeth Palace Library, Secker Papers, VII, fol. 335: '*Reasons*, why ye clause in ye Act of Toleration, which requires Dissenting Ministers to subscribe ye Doctrinal Articles of ye Church of England, should *not* be repealed', [1772?]. A modern pencil annotation attributes this paper to George Wegg.

3 Edmund Gibson, *Codex juris ecclesiastici anglicani* (2 vols., London, 1713), I, xxvii.

4 G.F.A. Best, *Temporal pillars. Queen Anne's Bounty, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Church of England* (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 59-60. Chapter 2 of this book, 'The Church, the law, and the laity in the eighteenth century', is a valuable discussion of the subject; see esp. pp. 37, 44. For two occasions on which minor church legislation caused fierce, and succesful, anti-clerical opposition, see cpt. 2 above, pp. 26-7.

building, required the passage of a separate act. To this, in part, can be attributed not only the absence of major institutional reform, especially of the ecclesiastical courts, until the 1830s, but also the inadequate response of the established Church to the problems of population growth and urbanization.[5] The law, however, also offered protection to the Church. Pointing out that, of 700 suits for tithes brought by clergy in the exchequer court between 1660 and 1713, 600 had been decided in their favour, Thomas Secker urged his clergy to use the law in support of their rights and privileges.[6] Moreover, the notion of a legal establishment could be turned to the Church's advantage when the terms of that establishment were attacked, most notably during the wave of anti-clerical bills of the early 1730s. The Church's main defence against the Quakers Tithe Bill of 1736, for instance, was its claim to tithes as property under common law. 'Nolumus leges Angliae mutari' proved a potent rallying-cry, especially to those who believed that one of the principles of 1688 was the defence of property rights.[7]

This chapter, and the next, will turn, therefore, to the arena of parliamentary and high politics to examine 'the Church' as a political issue. The interests of church and state were not necessarily thought to coincide and the relationship between the government and the episcopate was often marked by tension and disagreement. The question of church reform will be discussed in the next chapter, which will focus on the world outside parliament, since it was rare, for reasons which will be explored more fully, for such measures to be introduced into parliament during the mid-eighteenth century. The remainder of this chapter will concentrate on the role of the bishops in parliament, as the representatives of the Church and clergy.

Bishops of the early modern era were more than diocesan administrators and were not expected to be resident solely in their dioceses. The episcopal character also embraced the roles of spiritual adviser to the royal family, statesman, and lord of parliament. The archbishop of Canterbury, in particular, was active in civil government, being a member of the cabinet council and of the regency council while George II was in Hanover. Others were expected to be present at court. After the Hanoverian succession no bishop appears to have been the personal spiritual confidant of the sovereign, as were James Montagu for James I and John Sharp for Queen Anne; Queen Caroline's circle of theologians had more of the character of an esoteric discussion group. But bishops continued to hold important positions in the royal household, which required their

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5 See above, cpt. 2, pp. 24-30.

6 'A charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Oxford, in the year 1750', in *The works of Thomas Secker, LL.D.* (6 vols., new edn., London, 1811), v. 380.

7 The words are those of Dr Andrews, counsel for the clergy of Middlesex, on the hearing of their petition against the Bill before its second reading in the house of lords. B.L. Add. MS 35875, fol. 204v. Thomas Sherlock, 'The country parson's plea against the Quakers Tythe-Bill: humbly addressed to the commons of Great Britain assembled in parliament', in *Papers relating to the Quakers Tythe Bill* (London, 1736). See also, Humphrey Prideaux, *The original and right of tythes, for the maintenance of the ministry in a Christian church truly stated* (London, 1710).

attendance for at least part of the year, most notably those of dean of the chapel royal,[8] clerk of the closet,[9] and lord high almoner.[10] A more demanding office was that of preceptor to the prince of Wales, held by Thomas Hayter, bishop of Norwich, in 1751-2, and after his resignation by John Thomas, bishop of Peterborough. These posts could be onerous: Archbishop Herring once complained that his 'Court attendance is almost without intermission'.[11]

But if only a minority of the bishops had duties at court, attendance in parliament was incumbent on the whole bench. The burden of this episcopal duty had increased considerably since annual parliamentary sessions had become the rule in the reign of William III. Their length and the difficulties of travel meant that the bishop of a remote see, who was in London while parliament was sitting, found it difficult to spend more than three or four months in his diocese each year. But the presence of a lord in parliament was still regarded as an obligation, and contemporaries did not make any allowance for the increased demands placed on the bishops in the eighteenth century. Indeed particular weight was laid upon regular attendance. As the earl of Bath told the abbéSalier, Zachary Pearce was making little progress in his biblical studies, 'being obliged to attend all Winter, & every day in the House of Lords'.[12] Bad health and old age were excuses for non-attendance, otherwise special pleading was thought necessary to avoid creating a misleading impression.[13] Even at the height of the '45 rebellion, it required not only the entreaties of the local gentry but also the approval of the ministry to convince Archbishop Herring that he was of more use in Yorkshire than in the house of lords.[14] The privilege of proctorial representation mitigated the burden of personal attendance to some extent. The value of proxies, however, was limited. They could not be used in committees, and they transferred from the donor control over his vote. Thus, Bishop Fleming was greatly embarrassed when he discovered from 'the Publick Prints' that his vote had been cast against the ministry during the debate on the Convention on 1 March 1739.[15] Nonetheless, in common with temporal lords, bishops, especially

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8 Edmund Gibson, 1721-48; Thomas Sherlock, 1748-61; Thomas Hayter, 1761-2.

9 Henry Egerton, 1735-46; Joseph Butler, 1746-50; John Gilbert, 1750-7; John Thomas, 1757-81.

10 Lancelot Blackburne, 1723-43; Thomas Sherlock, 1743-8; Matthew Hutton, 1748-57; John Gilbert, 1757-8; Robert Drummond, 1758-76.

11 Nottingham University Library, PWV/121/99: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 30 Nov. 1752.

12 Westminster Abbey Library and Muniment Room, Pearce Papers, WAM 64684: Bath to Pearce, 11 Oct. 1749.

13 B.L. Add. 35587, fol. 14: Bishop Hough to Hardwicke, 16 Jan. 1742; Add. 32707, fols. 411-12: Bishop Peploe to Newcastle, 14 July 1746; Add. 32709, fol. 158: Bishop Gooch to Newcastle, 2 Nov. 1746; Add. 35590, fols. 196-7, 217-18: Bishop Lavington to Hardwicke, 4 Nov., 18 Dec. 1748.

14 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 84: Herring to Hardwicke, (recd.) 4 Oct. 1745; ibid., fol. 86: Hardwicke to Herring, 5 Oct. 1745; ibid., fols. 88, 91: Herring to Hardwicke, 6, 9 Oct. 1745.

15 Fleming was writing to Walpole to ask a favour, and he may merely have been trying to excuse himself. However, this is the only recorded occasion on which he opposed the ministry. Cambridge University Library, Cholmondeley (Houghton) Papers, correspondence, # 2867: Bishop Fleming to Walpole, 15 May 1739; *An authentick list of the house of peers; as they voted for and against the Convention* (London, 1739). It is not certain whether or not it was believed to be possible in mid-century for a member of the House to determine how his proxy was cast. On the third reading of the Schism Bill in 1714 Wake cast Nicolson's proxy for the bill in opposition to his own vote. On the other hand, in 1743 Gibson withdrew his proxy from Nicholas Claggett in the belief that Claggett was intending to vote for the Gin Bill, which Gibson opposed. The infrequency of cases of 'counter' voting would, however, suggest that it was customary for a proxy to be cast on the same side as the holder's vote. *The London diaries of William Nicolson, bishop of Carlisle, 1702-1718*, ed. Clyve Jones and Geoffrey Holmes (Oxford, 1985), pp. 606-7; *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1301.

those from more distant dioceses who often left London before the end of a session, made frequent use of proxies.[16]

Problems of age and health, and the demands of diocesan administration, all combined to reduce episcopal attendance in the house of lords. As Table One shows,[17] bishops were absent more frequently as they grew older. Individual bishops, moreover, missed complete sessions on ninety-one occasions between 1742 and 1762.[18] But in general there is little doubt that the episcopate took seriously its duty to attend parliament. During the twenty-two sessions in this period an average of eight bishops were present in the house of lords each day. Individual patterns varied greatly. Frederick Cornwallis, Richard Trevor and Matthew Hutton all discharged their responsibilities with exemplary diligence, whereas Thomas Secker and James Beauclerk were present only occasionally. At first sight the bishops may not appear to have been as diligent as contemporary theory expected. In fact their record was better than that of the peers. They represented just under 13.5% of the House, but provided nearly 18.5% of those who attended. The bishops were, however, a largely silent presence. It was rare for them to speak during debates on subjects not related to religion and the Church, a fact often commented on and attributed by Bishop Newton to their lack of training in oratory since the suppression of Convocation.[19] Moreover, during these two decades bishops were never tellers in divisions and rarely acted as chairmen of committees of the house.[20]

It has been suggested that such emphasis was placed upon the duty of episcopal attendance in the house of lords because the support of the bishops was essential to the maintenance of ministerial majorities.[21] In a House which numbered about 195 in mid-century the twenty-six bishops were indeed a significant group, and through the manipulation of their creation and translation the ministry apparently had the means to control 'a solid phalanx of votes'.[22] Many contemporaries were certainly of this opinion. It was reported that when, in 1743, ten bishops divided against the second reading of the Spirituous Liquors Bill, the earl of Chesterfield, 'seeing

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16 House of Lords Record Office, Proxy Books, 1742-62.

17 See below, pp. 179-80.

18 In this calculation the first session of the 1754-61 parliament, which sat for only five days between 31 May and 5 June 1754, has been ignored. This figure and those which follow have been calculated from the attendance lists printed in *The journals of the house of lords*, xxvi - xxx. Occasionally it is possible to prove an error in these lists and they should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that any member was or was not present on a certain day, but they provide a reliable guide to general patterns.

19 'The life of Dr Thomas Newton', in *The lives of Dr Edward Pocock, the celebrated orientalist, by Dr Twells; of Dr Zachary Pearce, bishop of Rochester, and of Dr Thomas Newton, bishop of Bristol, by themselves; and of the Rev. Philip Skelton, by Mr Burdy* (2 vols., London, 1816), II, 186; Francis Kilvert, *A selection from unpublished papers of the right reverend William Warburton, D.D. late lord bishop of Glocester* (London, 1841), pp. 341-2. Sherlock and Maddox were two bishops who occasionally intervened in debates on non-religious questions; see B.L. Add. 6043, fols. 83-4, 118, 137: 'Reports of the debates in the House of Lords from 1735 to 1745 by Dr Secker, whilst Bishop of Oxford'; Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of King George II*, ed. John Brooke (3 vols., New Haven, 1985), I, 80-1.

20 Only one bishop (Drummond of St Asaph) was chairman of a committee on three or more occasions in any one session. J.C. Sainty, *The origin of the office of chairman of committees in the house of lords* (H.L.R.O. Memorandum No. 52, 1974), pp. 23-6; J.C. Sainty and D. Dewar, *Divisions in the house of lords: an analytical list, 1685-1857* (H.L.R.O. Occasional Publications, II, 1976).

21 Norman Sykes, *Church and state in England in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1934), pp. 49-51; A.S. Turberville, *The house of lords in the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1927), pp. 422-3.

22 Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 50.

them come towards him, said, he doubted if he had not mistaken the side, not having had the honour of their company for many years'.[23] Later in the century the earl of Shelburne complained about their habit of 'waking . . . just before they vote', and their silence during debates merely contributed to the impression that they were ministerial lackeys.[24] Striking evidence for this view was provided by their behaviour during the debates on the South Sea Company in 1733. On 24 May the ministry lost one motion on a tied vote, but in the crucial division on 2 June they defeated a motion to censure the Company's directors by 75 against 70. On both occasions twenty-five episcopal votes were cast, twenty-four in person or by proxy for the ministry.[25] Critics of the political subservience of the episcopate were confirmed in their opinion by the bishops' involvement in electioneering. Many of them were careful to exercise what influence they possessed discreetly, perhaps more discreetly than most peers, but the 'disagreeable *Submissions*' that Isaac Maddox had to make before the house of commons following his intervention against Sir Watkin Williams Wynn in Denbighshire in 1741 reflected on the whole bench.[26]

However, just as it is simplistic to portray episcopal appointments primarily as a tool of parliamentary management,[27] so it is misleading to rely solely on the evidence of the 1733 session and the comments of the ministry's opponents for an account of the bishops' political behaviour. In a period when divisions were rare in the house of lords, only 74 occurred in the 22 sessions under consideration,[28] and fewer division lists survive, attendance provides some measure of political participation. Yet the figures hardly suggest that the bishops believed it to be peculiarly their duty to attend and support the administration. In general they were indeed more diligent than the peers, but on those days when ninety-five or more lords were present, presumably the days of greatest political importance, they provided just under 14% of the attendance of a House in which they formed about 13.5% of the membership. Moreover, it was not uncommon to find bishops voting against the ministry. Occasionally, and invariably on questions touching the Church and religion, the episcopate found itself united in opposition. This happened twice in the 1740s, on the Spirituous Liquors Bill of 1743 and the Bill for disarming the Highlands in 1748, occasions which will be discussed later in this chapter [pp. 174-7]; and three times in the 1730s: twice in 1734, on the Bill to prevent stockjobbing and a proposal that the House should sit on Easter eve,

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23 *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1368.

24 W.S. Taylor and J.H. Pringle (eds), *Correspondence of William Pitt, earl of Chatham* (4 vols., London, 1838-40), IV, 328: Shelburne to Chatham, 27 Feb. 1774.

25 Sykes, *Church and state*, pp. 50-1; Turberville, *House of lords*, pp. 204-5; J.H. Plumb, *Sir Robert Walpole* (2 vols., London, 1956-60), II, 276.

26 B.L. Add. 5831, fol. 165. Herring, in contrast, was active in supporting ministerial candidates during the 1747 elections in York and Nottinghamshire, but was rather more circumspect in his behaviour. Thus, he candidly explained to the opposition candidates, the sitting members, at York, 'that, speaking personally, I had nothing to do wth Elections, but whatever influence my Authority could be supposed to carry wth it, in a sort of secret operation, that would be directed to ye service of his Majesty & ye present Administration'. B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 238-9: Herring to Hardwicke, 15 Apr. 1747. See also ibid., fols. 242-4, 246-8, 250-1, 252-3, 254-7: same to same, 20 May, 17, 20, 22, 26 June 1747; Add. 32711, fols. 369-70: Herring to Newcastle, 15 June 1747.

27 See Chapter 5 above.

28 Sainty and Dewar, *Divisions in the house of lords*.

and over the Quakers Tithe Bill of 1736.[29] More frequently individual bishops found themselves opposed to the administration.

Even in the South Sea Company divisions of 1733 one bishop, Reynolds of Lincoln, voted against the majority of his brethren. In the later 1730s and early 1740s he became a persistent critic of the ministry's foreign and war policies.[30] At the same time Bishops Benson and Secker also began to vote against the court, mostly over the conduct of the war and on country issues, such as place and pension bills, which Secker believed were necessary to reduce 'the over great Dependency of the Commons on the Crown'.[31] Benson later referred to Carteret, Bath and Sandys as men 'of whom when out of place I had a good opinion', and he and Secker were for some years afterwards tainted by participation in a 'formed opposition'.[32] Richard Smalbroke, bishop of Lichfield, and Henry Egerton, bishop of Hereford, were also occasionally found among the ministry's opponents, and presumably these were the five bishops whom Secker mentioned as having voted for the Pension Bill on 26 March 1742.[33] They did not, however, form a coherent group. Benson and Secker, who were brothers-in-law, often acted together,[34] but their opposition to the ministry was no more than intermittent. They supported it 'much oftener than otherwise: and sometimes, when other Bishops as Litchfield, Hereford and Lincoln, voted against it'.[35] Thus, they opposed the motion of 13 February 1741 for the removal of Walpole, whereas Reynolds and Smalbroke not only supported it, but entered their protests against its rejection.[36] Reynolds was the most consistent opponent of the Walpole ministry on the bench, yet even he was still to be found advocating a compromise during the debates on the 1740 Pension Bill, a measure which Benson and Secker supported.[37] Moreover, the two latter remained consistent in their attitudes for some months after Walpole's fall. Secker voted for the Place Bill on 6 April 1742, Benson for the Indemnity Bill on 25 May, and both abstained on the motion approving the sending of British troops to Flanders on 1 February 1743, an occasion on which they were joined by their mutual

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29 Royal Archives, Stuart Papers, 169/186: Nathaniel Mist to James Edgar, 24 [Apr.] 1734; ibid., 170/26: same to same, 1 May 1734; S.J.C. Taylor, 'Sir Robert Walpole, the Church of England and the Quakers Tithe Bill of 1736', *H.J.*, xxviii (1985), 51-77.

30 *Parl. Hist.*, ix, 115-16. For his opposition in the 1730s and 1740s see B.L. Add. 33002, fols. 407-8: pre-sessional forecast, 1740-1; Add. 6043, fols. 31, 35, 42, and passim; *An authentick list for and against the Convention.*

31 B.L. Add. 6043, fol. 87 and passim; 'The autobiography of Archbishop Secker', Lambeth Palace Library, MS 2598, fols. 26, 28-9, 32 [Transcript of Professor Norman Sykes].

32 B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 149: Benson to Bishop Berkeley, 23 Apr. 1743; Add 32721, fol. 418: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 20 July 1750; Add. 32722, fol. 233: Newcastle to Pelham, 23 Aug. 1750.

33 L.P.L., MS 2598, fols. 31-2 (Sykes transcript). For Smalbroke and Egerton, see Add. 6043, fol. 42 and passim.

34 But not invariably. On 19 January 1741 Secker supported the ministry on a procedural motion, whereas Benson had joined Smalbroke, Egerton and Reynolds in opposition. On 10 February 1741 Secker opposed and Benson supported the ministry on another tactical motion for a call of the House. Add. 6043, fol. 69.

35 L.P.L., MS 2598, fol. 26 [Sykes transcript].

36 B.L. Add. 6043, fol. 85; *L.J.*, xxv, 597. Egerton also supported the ministry on this occasion; see *A true and exact list of the lords spiritual and temporal who voted for and against the address to remove a certain great man* (London, 1741). Thus also Secker and Benson consistently supported motions on the employment of Hanoverian troops, although not without reservations. Benson felt that 'if it was right in regard to our Foreign affairs, [it] was certainly very impolitic in regard to our Domestic ones'. B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 49: Benson to Berkeley, 23 Apr. 1743; Add. 6043, fols. 90, 155.

37 B.L. Add. 6043, fols. 138-9.

friend Joseph Butler.[38] But by this time they felt that their opposition lacked purpose. As Benson explained to George Berkeley, 'it was measures & not ministers I desired to see changed. As I have now little hope of seeing ye former, I have less concern about ye latter.'[39]

Secker and Benson may have returned to the ministerial fold, even if only *faute de mieux*, but sporadic opposition from the episcopal bench continued in the 1740s and 1750s, although the infrequency of divisions and the paucity of reports of debates make it difficult precisely to define its extent.[40] Two bishops at least occasionally voted against the ministry during these years, Isaac Maddox and Thomas Hayter. Maddox opposed the Buckingham Assizes Bill, on which Bishop Willes of Bath and Wells abstained, and led the attack on the Orphans of London Relief Bill in 1748; made an 'extraordinary Speech' against the proposed limitations on the power of the regent during the debate on the Regency Bill in 1751; and supported the attempts, generally regarded as a prelude to repeal, to postpone the operation of the 1753 Marriage Act.[41] Hayter voted against the Militia Bill of 1756 and was consistently listed as an opponent of the ministry in the management lists for the debates on the Habeas Corpus Bill of 1758.[42] Both, moreover, supported the duke of Bedford's motion to lay before the House papers relating to the cabinet council's investigations of allegations of jacobitism against Andrew Stone, sub-governor to the prince of Wales and Newcastle's onetime secretary, William Murray, the solicitor-general, and James Johnson, bishop of Gloucester.[43] Hayter's opposition can be traced to his resentment at the ministry following the row over the prince of Wales's education, which had resulted in his resignation as preceptor.[44] The reasons behind Maddox's dissatisfaction are less clear, especially as he had the reputation of a staunch ministerialist following his behaviour during the 1741 elections and his parliamentary interventions in the 1730s. It is possible, however, that his political connections were with Walpole and that he lost sympathy with the ministry after 1742; he was one of only nine lords in a full House to support the attempt inspired by Walpole, now earl of Orford, to overturn the judgment of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke in the case of Le Neve *v*

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38 Ibid., fols. 118, 130, 155; L.P.L., MS 2598, fols. 31-2 [Sykes transcript]. Butler had supported the ministry in the late 1730s and early 1740s, despite admitting to Secker that he thought 'the ministers were both wicked men and wicked ministers'. L.P.L., MS 2598, fol. 30.

39 B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 149: Benson to Berkeley, 23 Apr. 1743.

40 The evidence of contemporary management and division lists, drawn on in the following analysis, is tabulated below, pp. 181-6.

41 B.L. Add. 33002, fols. 411-12; *Parl. Hist.*, XIV, 268; Add. 32724, fols. 280-1: Newcastle to the king, 10 May 1751; ibid., fols. 282-3: Newcastle to Bishop Drummond, 13 May 1751; Walpole, *Memoirs of George II*, II, 81-2; B.L. Add. 35877, fol. 174; Pearce Papers, WAM 64581: Herring to Pearce, 1 Jan. 1755.

42 B.L. Add. 35877, fol. 308; Add. 33034, fols. 265-6, 259-60, 267-9, 314-6, 317. Both these bills, however, split all party groups.

43 This division is not recorded in the official records of the House as the motion's supporters, seeing they were so few, 'gave it up without telling the House'. Walpole, *Memoirs of George II*, I, 219, 222, 223.

44 For differing accounts of the events leading to the resignation of Hayter and lord Harcourt, governor to the prince, see *ibid.*, pp. 197-9; James, earl Waldegrave, *Memoirs from 1754 to 1758* (London, 1821), pp. 36-7. The best modern account, of the resignation, of the allegations against Stone, Murray and Johnson, and of the bias of Walpole's account, is provided by Romney Sedgwick in his edition of *Letters from George III to Lord Bute 1756-1766* (London, 1939), pp. xxi - xxxvii.

Norris in 1744.[45] Moreover, even the constant attendance at court demanded of an archbishop of Canterbury did not prevent John Potter from involving himself in the Leicester House opposition in the years immediately before his death. Although there is no evidence that he ever joined the parliamentary opposition to the ministry, he was prominent in supporting the candidature of the prince of Wales for the chancellorship of Cambridge University against the duke of Newcastle, in defiance of the king's express wishes.[46]

The evidence of attendance and voting records has thus produced a rather inconclusive picture. On the one hand, it is inadequate to explain episcopal behaviour by the power of patronage, a simplistic assertion of the primacy of material self-interest. The bishops cannot be regarded as mere ministerial voting fodder, even when religion and the Church were not the subject of debate. On the other hand, Table 8.2[47] makes it equally clear that they usually supported the administration - even Hayter and Maddox continued to be invited to the pre-sessional meetings of peers throughout Newcastle's tenure of the treasury, although it is not known whether or not they attended.[48] This picture can be clarified only by a more detailed examination of the bishops' own perception of their role in the house of lords in regard to both civil and religious affairs.

A general consensus existed that churchmen ought not to involve themselves in party politics. John Egerton reminded his clergy that it was their religious duty to preach obedience and 'to study to be quiet', but that it was 'improper . . . if not profane' to introduce politics into the pulpit, and destructive of the clerical character to 'interfere in political controversies, & busy themselves either in arraigning or defending the proceedings in the state'.[49] Even in parliament the bishops believed that they had little part to play in discussions of civil measures. Archbishop Herring was not atypical in resolving to leave the care of his 'Politicks' to the lord chancellor.[50] This attitude was reinforced by more widespread assumptions about party, government and public duty. Condemnation of formed opposition and dislike of opposition in general have often been portrayed as mere rhetoric in the mid-eighteenth century. But in court circles participation in a formed opposition was still regarded as a sign of disloyalty.[51] Even when the existence of parties was recognized as a reality, however undesirable, their sphere of operation was severely restricted. As late as 1784, at the height of the struggle between Pitt and Fox, Paul Kelly has

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45 This question was also given up without telling, its supporters numbering only nine in a House, which, according to the *Journals*, numbered seventy-one. Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 6851, II, fols. 79-80: the parliamentary journal of Edward Harley, third earl of Oxford; *L.J.*, XXVI, 367-8.

46 B.L. Add. 32711, fol. 61: Bishop Gooch to Newcastle, 16 May 1747; *Memoirs of a royal chaplain, 1729-63. The correspondence of Edmund Pyle, D.D., chaplain in ordinary to George II, with Samuel Kerrich, D.D., vicar of Dersingham, rector of Wolferton, and rector of West Newton*, ed. Albert Hartshorne (London, 1905), p. 127: Pyle to Kerrich, 17 Oct. 1747.

47 See pp. 181-6 below.

48 Hayter is known to have attended the meeting of 17 November 1760, the first of the new king's reign. B.L. Add. 32995, fols. 242-5, 344-7; Add. 32996, fols. 275-9; Add. 32997, fols. 300-4; Add. 32998, fols. 187-94, 327-34; Add. 32999, fols. 80-7, 90-1, 341-8.

49 Ashridge MSS, Hertfordshire Record Office, A.H. 1999, fols. 26-30: Charge to the clergy of Durham, 1778.

50 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 419: Herring to Hardwicke, 18 July 1749.

51 Archibald S. Foord, *His Majesty's Opposition 1714-1830* (Oxford, 1964), pp. 6-7; *Letters from George III to Lord Bute*, p. xvii.

pointed out that 'straight party issues were exceptional . . . The greater part of the House of Commons public business lay outside the sphere of party politics as it was understood at the time', including importantly the raising of supplies.[52] This was still more the case in the house of lords. The peerage's closer relation to the throne, reinforced by a feeling of community of interest with the crown forged in the trauma of the mid-seventeenth century, emphasized the duty it shared with the Commons, to assist in the carrying on of the king's business. This obligation weighed more heavily with the bishops who were appointed by the king himself. Thus, Thomas Secker denied that his opposition to the Spirituous Liquors Bill proceeded from a desire 'to distress the government', while Thomas Sherlock, speaking on the same occasion, protested that 'it was very unkind in the projectors of this Bill, to contrive such a scheme as should lay the members of both Houses under a necessity of opposing his majesty's supply, or of agreeing to a Bill which they could not but in their consciences condemn'.[53]

Several bishops recognized explicitly that their primary loyalty was to the king. After Herring had been persuaded that he would be of more use in opposing the '45 rebellion by remaining in Yorkshire, he still begged Hardwicke 'to excuse my attendance at the opening of Parliament to my Royal Master'.[54] Similarly, as Edmund Gibson explained to Newcastle, although he had 'discontinued a *personal* attendance upon his Majesty's affairs in Parliament' since his opposition to Walpole over the Quakers Tithe Bill in 1736, at the beginning of every session he made his proxy available to the ministry.[55] Because support of the king's government was normally synonymous with the support of his ministers, it is difficult to distinguish between loyalty to the king and to the administration. What was to one side dutiful attendance on public business, appeared to the other slavish dependence upon the ministry. But episcopal behaviour over Fox's India Bill demonstrates that as late as 1784 the distinction was, to some extent at least, still a reality. William Markham, the archbishop of York, was a court bishop who was inclined to follow any intimation of the king's personal opinion. But the archbishop of Canterbury, John Moore, had expressed his approval of the bill and was connected with the coalition through his brother-in-law, William Eden. Together with Markham and seven other bishops, however, Moore cast his vote, and that of the bishop of London, whose proxy he held, against the ministry following a private audience with the king.[56]

These attitudes should not be accorded too much weight. The bench had been polarized between whig and tory during the first two decades of the eighteenth century, although it must be admitted that the events of these years were often later lamented and may be attributed to the centrality of religion, and the Church of England, in party ideology. Moreover, one of the points

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52 Paul Kelly, 'British parliamentary politics, 1784-1786', *H.J.*, xvii. (1974), 739.

53 *Parl. Hist.*, xii, 1298, 1236.

54 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 89: Herring to Hardwicke, 6 Oct. 1745.

55 B.L. Add. 32702, fol. 25: Gibson to Newcastle, 24 Jan. 1744; H.L.R.O., Proxy Books.

56 John Cannon, *The Fox-North coalition. Crisis of the constitution, 1782-4* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 135, 137; *The political magazine*, v (1783), 404-5. Three episcopal proxies were also cast against the bill. Eight bishops (six in person and two by proxy) supported the ministry.

of this chapter has been to demonstrate that even from the 1730s, by which time the bench was more or less exclusively whig, bishops were not unquestioning supporters of government policy. Nonetheless, this account of their perception of their parliamentary role, of their belief that it was their duty to support the king's government, does at least suggest that it is more important to explain their opposition to, than their support of, the ministry. Thus, in the 1760s it is not the bishops' desertion of their maker, Newcastle,[57] which is surprising, but the fact that so many of them were prepared at least occasionally to oppose the government. Only six new bishops were appointed between Newcastle's fall and the end of the session of 1768-9. It was, again, more common to find the majority of the bench supporting the ministry, but of the thirty-one who sat in the house of lords during this time twenty-one can be shown to have voted against it on at least one occasion.[58]

During the 1760s, as during the 1740s and 1750s, the episcopate was uniformly whig, yet in the new reign loyalties to patrons and to whig principles did not reinforce the bishops' obligations to the crown as certainly as they had done in earlier decades. Some, like John Hume, were inclined to follow the judgment of their patrons in politics. Personal loyalty was the most important consideration for him and, as he explained to Lord Lincoln, his political allegiance was determined by the answer to the question, 'Who as a publick Minister has conferrd most upon me, & has the first Right to demand my following him in publick Affairs'.[59] Philip Yonge was another bishop who felt strong ties of personal gratitude to Newcastle, but he was unwilling to become an unquestioning supporter of the old whig opposition. Gratitude, he argued, could not be 'the only guide of publick conduct'. He was not prepared to support 'a random or ineffectual opposition', and thus refused to vote against the ministry over the Wilkes affair, preferring to abstain.[60] Others believed that constitutional issues were at stake during the decade. Archbishop Drummond claimed that he could 'never approve the system that seems to me to be established at present, and began by driving from the king's countenance the best persons that have supported his family upon Revolution principles'. He was as anxious as anyone among the old whigs to 'undeceive my sovereign', yet his behaviour demonstrates clearly episcopal awareness of their duty to the crown.[61] Even deeply held political principles did not enable the bishops to feel comfortable in opposition. If Drummond could not support men 'whose constitutional principles

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57 Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of the reign of King George the third*, ed. G.F. Russell Barker (4 vols., London, 1894), I, 134.

58 William C. Lowe, 'Bishops and Scottish representative peers, 1760-75', *J.B.S.*, XVIII (1978-9), 90.

59 Nottingham University Library, Ne.C. 2961: Bishop Hume to Lincoln, 9 June 1767. On the resignation of the Rockingham ministry, Lord Lincoln intervened with Pitt to secure the bishopric of Salisbury for Hume, his former tutor. Lincoln had ceased to support his uncle, and when Hume left his proxy with the duke of Newcastle, Lincoln regarded his behaviour as extreme ingratitude. But Hume went on in his letter to say, 'Surely when you did it, you could not do it by way of buying me off from my obligations to the Duke & Dutchess of Newcastle, or by way of purchasing my Vote in Parliament. Had this been ye case, your Ldp would have plainly told me the Conditions, & that I should for ever forfeit your Friendship, if I did not fulfil them. Had your Ldp hinted at this, I could not have accepted the Bishoprick.' See also, Ne.C. 2960: Lincoln to William Pitt, n.d.; Ne.C. 2962: Lincoln to Hume, 15 June 1767.

60 B.L. Add. 32954, fol. 152: Yonge to Newcastle, 22 Dec. 1763, quoted in Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 56.

61 B.L. Add. 32952, fol. 370: Drummond to Newcastle, 16 Nov. 1763, in Sykes, *Church and state*, p. 55.

were at best suspicious', he 'believed it ungrateful and indecent actively to oppose the administration of a Prince to whom he personally owed the highest obligation'. Therefore, he stayed away from parliament.[62] Archbishop Secker adopted a similar course of action. He supported the Rockingham ministry in 1765-6, and, although there is no evidence of his having voted with the opposition at other times between 1762 and 1768, he was often absent on days of divisions.[63]

The same problem of conflicting loyalties had in fact been made apparent in the 1750s, during the brief interlude of the Pitt-Devonshire administration. Probably at some point between December 1756 and April 1757 Newcastle drew up a management list dividing the house of lords into 'For' and 'Against', the former being those on whose support he believed he could depend if he attempted to bring down the government.[64] The situation was very different from that after his resignation in 1762, as it was clear in 1757 not only that he would return to power before long but also that he still had the confidence of George II. Thus it is not surprising to find fourteen of the twenty-three bishops on the list classified as Newcastle's supporters. Those noted as 'Against', however, included not only some, like Hayter, who had become alienated from the duke, and others, like Newcome, whose patron, the earl of Powis,[65] was a supporter of the new administration, but also figures like Keene and Pearce. The former was a Cambridge protege of Newcastle who had been raised to the bishopric of Chester following his services as vice-chancellor of the University in the troubled years of 1750 and 1751;[66] the latter was closely connected with the earl of Bath, listed as 'For', and was soon to be translated, on Newcastle's personal recommendation, to the bishopric of Rochester.[67] Both clearly believed that their first loyalty was to the king, and thus to the administration of the day - both deserted Newcastle for the Bute administration soon after his fall in 1762.[68]

The key, however, to understanding the behaviour of the bishops in parliament, and the most important caveat to their portrayal as ministerial voting fodder, is their role, and their perception of themselves, not merely as lords of parliament sharing the responsibilities of peers, but as representatives and guardians of the Church and clergy. Bishop Benson believed that this was the most important motive for their attendance. As he explained to Berkeley, 'it is so necessary for supporting the interest of the Church, that the Bishops should be present in Parliament, that it is our duty I think to appear there, & if we take care to shew that it is not our private interest which brings us thither & rules us there, we may be able to do some good or at least to hinder a

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62 Robert Drummond, *Sermons on public occasions and a letter on theological study . . . To which are prefixed memoirs of his life, by George Hay Drummond, A.M.* (Edinburgh, 1803), pp. xviii - xx.

63 Lowe, 'Bishops and Scottish representative peers', p. 93.

64 B.L. Add. 33034, fols. 214-15.

65 For the connection between Newcome and Powis, see Exeter College, Oxford, Bray MSS: Richard Blacow to Thomas Bray, 15 Feb. 1755.

66 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 54: Newcastle to Herring, 6 July 1750 [misdated June].

67 'The life of Dr Zachary Pearce', in *The lives of Pocock, Pearce, Newton and Skelton*, i. 390-1, 401-2.

68 B.L. Add. 33000, fols. 239-40.

good deal of mischief'.[69] Other bishops shared Benson's opinion that their first duty was to the Church. When Edmund Gibson retired from public affairs in 1736, he promised Walpole his support, but warned him

> that if, on any future occasion, I see an attack made upon the Rights of the Parochial Clergy in which the Court think fitt to take a part, I shall think my self obliged to concur with such of my Brethren as appear to be in the same sentiments wth me, in warning my clergy of their danger, and advising them to petition that they may be heard, before they are condemn'd.[70]

The same sentiment was expressed by Thomas Herring, although he was in general far more inclined to defer to the opinion of ministers in political matters. About the middle of the 1751 session it appeared likely that two bills would be brought into parliament, for the relief of the Quakers and to fix a value for the tithe of hops. While approving of neither bill Herring was not strident in his opposition. Nonetheless, he warned Newcastle that if 'the Clergy should take the alarm, as I cannot in that case separate myself fro [sic] the Bench, so neither can the Bench withdraw themselves from the Clergy'.[71] In the absence of a sitting convocation their responsibilities were all the greater. It is significant that debates concerning the Church and religion witnessed both an increase in episcopal attendance - during the session of 1753 the bishops represented 18.6% of those present; but for the three days of the second reading and committee stages of the Clandestine Marriage Bill, they formed 25.5% of the House - and a greater readiness to voice their opinions.[72]

One of the reasons behind the sporadic opposition of the late 1730s and early 1740s appears to have been discontent with the religious policy of the Walpole administration. Bishop Smalbroke announced himself no friend to the administration 'on many accounts . . . but particularly that the Ministry does not favour the clergy and that Papists have too much countenance'.[73] Secker was less violent in his objections to the ministry's policy, and recognized not only that many of its friends but also many of its enemies were 'vehement against' the clergy. This analysis was his justification for abandoning support of the ministry, and adopting instead a neutral position. He argued that the strength of the Church did not lie 'in adhering to either party; as indeed I think it never can: but in the honest policy of acting uprightly between both & joyning with neither to do wrong'.[74] But the most striking evidence of the episcopate's role as the guardians of the Church, the clergy and religion is provided by its united opposition to the ministry on two occasions: the Spirituous Liquors Bill of 1743 and the Bill for disarming the Scottish Highlands in 1748.

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[69] B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 39: Benson to Berkeley, 7 Feb. 1738.

[70] Gibson Papers, St Andrews University Library, MS 5299: Gibson to Walpole, n.d.

[71] B.L. Add. 32724, fols. 161-2: Herring to Newcastle, 5 Mar. 1751.

[72] *L.J.*, xxvm, 66-7, 77, 80; Kilvert, *Selections from unpublished papers of Warburton*, p. 342.

[73] *H.M.C.*, Egmont Diary, II, 342.

[74] B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 37: Secker to Berkeley, 29 June 1737.

The Spirituous Liquors Act of 1743[75] repealed Sir Joseph Jekyll's Act of 1736, which had attempted to prevent the consumption of gin by imposing prohibitive duties on retail sales. Retailers had, however, largely ignored the act and had been supported by popular opinion in so doing. During the 1743 debates both sides agreed that Jekyll's act had failed, primarily because it was unenforceable.[76] Carteret claimed that it was impossible to execute the existing law 'but by a military force'.[77] The ministry's bill, therefore, proposed to attack the problem in two ways. By a slightly increased tax on consumption, thus raising the price of gin, the bill would reduce its consumption and eradicate some of the worst evils of its abuse among the poor. At the same time, by reducing the retailer's licence fee from £50 to £1 there would be less incentive to evade the law, thus enabling the justices to exercise some control over outlets, and, it was hoped, encouraging licence-holders to enforce the law against illicit retailers. In addition, the new duties would raise a substantial revenue for the government.[78] These proposals, however, provoked fierce criticism from the bishops. For Thomas Sherlock the bill was simply incomprehensible; to 'prevent the excessive use of any thing, by allowing it to be sold without restraint, is an expedient which the wisdom of no former age ever discovered'.[79] Thomas Secker, however, explained in detail the grounds of episcopal opposition. His objections rested upon two points: that the liquors were pernicious; and that the bill was not a sufficient restraint on their consumption. The first, that the liquors were 'pernicious to the health, industry, and morals of the people', was common to both sides. The drinking of gin was corrupting the poor and thus, as Secker pointed out, endangering their chances of salvation, since 'what is prejudicial to morals extends its consequences to a world that shall never end'. It was the duty of a christian legislature to promote reformation. The main thrust of his argument, however, was whether the Bill was a sufficient remedy for a generally acknowledged evil. 'And', he added, 'the question is not whether it be some, but whether sufficient'. In his opinion it was not. The only remedy was to put it out of the reach of the poor - 'nothing can stop this mischief, but what will amount to a prohibition'. If present legislation was inadequate, what was proposed was worse, since it would encourage the corruption of the morals of the poor.[80] The bill was, therefore, immoral, and its immorality was compounded by the manner in which the state was taking advantage of 'vice' to 'increase ye revenue'.[81]

The episcopate united against the bill and the ministry. A substantial majority of the bench agreed with Sherlock that it was 'the most unchristian Bill that was ever thought of by any

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75 16 Geo. II, c. 8.

76 *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1197, 1251; Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *The history of liquor licensing in England principally from 1700 to 1830* (London, 1903), pp. 24-9.

77 *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1224.

78 *Ibid.*, 1214-6, 1225-7; Webb, *Liquor licensing*, pp. 29, 33.

79 *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1362.

80 *Ibid.*, 1296-8. This speech is taken from Secker's own manuscript journal of parliamentary proceedings. His notes of other speeches agree in broad outline with the versions printed in *Parl. Hist.*, which were taken from the *London Magazine* for October 1743.

81 B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 50: Benson to Berkeley, 23 Apr. 1743.

government; and therefore I think it incumbent on me as a christian bishop, to give my testimony against it in the most open and express manner I can'.[82] On the second reading ten bishops[83] were present to vote against the bill, and seven episcopal proxies[84] were also cast against it. At the third reading eleven bishops voted against it in person, and a further six by proxy.[85] Of these eleven, ten entered their protest against the passage of the bill, though without reasons.[86] In total nineteen bishops opposed the bill at some point, and not one supported it. Of the remaining seven, Secker mentions four who did not attend the debates despite being in London - Willes of St David's, Herring of Bangor, Hoadly of Winchester, and Gilbert of Llandaff.[87] Of the others, John Hough, bishop of Worcester, had ceased attendance in parliament some years before. Reynolds of Lincoln and Smalbroke of Lichfield, on the other hand, were both present in the house of lords earlier and later in the session, so it can only be assumed that they had temporarily left London without depositing proxies.

The Spirituous Liquors Bill demonstrated the bishops' concern for the religion and morality of the nation. Their opposition to the Bill for disarming the Highlands, on the other hand, was motivated by their concern for the effectiveness of the Church, and for its rights and privileges as an independent society. The offensive part of the bill was a clause which prohibited all episcopal ministers in Scotland who had not received their orders from English or Irish bishops from officiating in any meeting-house. This clause was an amendment to a statute of 1746[88] which enacted that the orders of all episcopal ministers had to be registered by 1 September 1746, and that after that date only orders received from English or Irish bishops could be registered.

When it became known that the bishops intended to oppose this clause, the ministry was anxious to avoid the question of the validity of orders being debated.[89] But, contrary to the impression created by the contemporary report of the debate in the *London Magazine*,[90] this was not the reason for episcopal opposition. Thomas Secker, opening the debate, made his position on this issue perfectly clear. He asserted that deprivation did not destroy the episcopal character, but he did not regard the bill as an attempt by the civil power to legislate about the 'spiritual validity

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82 *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1236.

83 Potter of Canterbury, Wilcocks of Rochester, Sherlock of Salisbury, Claggett of Exeter, Egerton of Hereford, Benson of Gloucester, Secker of Oxford, Maddox of Worcester, Gooch of Norwich, and Mawson of Chichester. *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1300-1.

84 Blackburne of York, Peploe of Chester, Clavering of Peterborough, Wynne of Bath and Wells, Chandler of Durham, Fleming of Carlisle, and Butts of Ely. H.L.R.O., Proxy Book, 1742. The bill was committed by 82 against 54, including proxies. *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1367.

85 Gibson of London and Butler of Bristol were present on this occasion, but Wilcocks, who held the proxy of Archbishop Blackburne, was absent. Butler had been present the previous day to vote against the bill in committee, but both Gibson and Wilcocks had been absent. Just before the second reading Gibson had withdrawn his proxy from Bishop Claggett, in the belief that he intended to vote for the bill. The bill was given a third reading by 59 against 38, including proxies. *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1426, 1373-4, 1301; H.L.R.O., Proxy Book, 1742.

86 *L.J.*, XXVI, 218. The bishop who did not enter his protest was Henry Egerton.

87 *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1426. Bishop Willes had been present on 22 February for the second reading, but had not stayed until the end of the debate. *Ibid.*, 1301.

88 19 Geo. II, c. 38.

89 B.L. Add. 35598, fol. 325: Herring to Hardwicke, 7 May 1748. Cf., *Parl. Hist.*, XIV, 279-80.

90 Reprinted in *Parl. Hist.*, XIV, 269-315.

of orders'. Instead, it

> appoints only, what shall or shall not be tolerated. Suppose the Orders given by Nonjuring Bishops ever so valid Theologically; the state may forbid mens officiating upon them, if the publick good requires it. And be they ever so much nullities, yet on the genuine principles of Toleration the state may & shd suffer men to officiate upon them, if it do the publick no harm: just as other Sects are suffered; some with no orders, & some with Orders from we know not whom.[91]

The bishops' opposition to the clause was founded upon three arguments: that it was unjust; that it was impolitic; and that it was an effective denial of toleration to the episcopal church in Scotland. The clause was unjust because it applied even to those ministers who had obeyed the act of 1746 and registered their orders. It disqualified all who had obtained orders from Swedish or Danish bishops, or from nonjuring bishops, but who had later taken the oaths. In doing so it ignored the peculiar problems of the Church in Scotland and the fact that earlier in the century English bishops had often refused to ordain Scottish candidates.[92] Sherlock regarded this as depriving those ministers who had registered their orders of their property, arguing that they had 'as good a right to their meeting-houses, and to exercise their function in those meeting-houses, as any man has to his estate'.[93] Because the bill was unjust, it was also impolitic. The episcopal clergy were distinguished 'by the purity of their religious doctrines, by their learning, by the decency of their behaviour, and chiefly by their sufferings'. They were precisely the sort of men whose support would strengthen the government in Scotland.[94] But they were being forced to become 'enemies to the Government for their Bread; and the bitterer enemies, because they were not sufferd to be friends, when they would have been so'.[95]

Moreover, the clause amounted to a virtual declaration that 'no episcopal Church shall be so much as tolerated in Scotland'.[96] In fact, as Secker acknowledged, this was as much a consequence of the 1746 act as of the new clause.[97] The episcopal Church in Scotland had been left as a body without a head. No one was legally entrusted with jurisdiction over those clergy who had been ordained by English and Irish bishops and who had taken the oaths to the government, nor was there anyone to perform the rite of confirmation.[98] Provision had indeed

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91 L.P.L., MS 1349, p. 166: Thomas Secker's speech during the committee on the Bill for disarming the Highlands, 10 May 1748. The Lambeth Palace Library catalogue claims that this was Secker's speech at the third reading on 11 May, but internal evidence demonstrates conclusively that it was made the previous day. Thomas Birch's report of Secker's speech is accurate in its claim that he 'insinuated, that deprivation did not destroy the episcopal character'. [*Parl. Hist.*, XIV, 270.] But the report of the speech in *Parl. Hist.*, XIV, 269-76, taken from the *London Magazine*, bears little resemblance to Secker's manuscript. There is certainly no trace in the manuscript of the passage in which Secker is reported as claiming that the clause was 'as encroachment upon the Christian religion, as professed by the Church of England'. [*Ibid.*, 275-6.] This discrepancy casts some doubt upon whether Sherlock is reported accurately later in the debate as describing it as an 'encroachment upon one of the most essential rights of the Church'. [*Ibid.*, 302.]

92 L.P.L., MS 1349, pp. 165-6, 161-2; *Parl. Hist.*, XIV, 300-1.

93 *Parl. Hist.*, XIV, 301, 295.

94 *Ibid.*, 296-7.

95 L.P.L., MS 1349, p. 158.

96 *Parl. Hist.*, XIV, 303.

97 L.P.L., MS 1349, pp. 158, 161. Secker said of the 1746 act that 'had I not been, as most of the Bps were, in my Diocese, while it was depending I shd probably have objected to it'.

98 L.P.L., MS 1349, p. 158.

been made for the ordination of episcopal ministers, but it was hardly adequate. On the one hand, prospective candidates would have to undertake a long and expensive journey. On the other hand, English bishops were under canonical and other restrictions with respect to the granting of orders - they were not allowed to ordain a man without a title to an ecclesiastical living, nor without some credible testimony of his good life and conversation.[99] Even Archbishop Herring recognized that the clause would create great difficulties for the bishops, leaving them with the choice of failing to provide for the Church in Scotland or of ordaining men about whom they knew nothing.[100]

These considerations combined to unite the bench against the clause. In the committee twenty bishops voted against it. These included Archbishop Herring, despite his distress at opposing the ministry; his attempt to reach a compromise, by instituting an inquiry into the number of clergymen who would be affected by the legislation before it was enacted, was not taken up.[101] The absent bishops were Chandler, Hoadly, Smalbroke, Peploe, Osbaldeston and Beauclerk. The first four were absent through age or illness, and the evidence suggests that Osbaldeston and Beauclerk had already returned to their dioceses. The former did not appear in the house of lords after 11 February, the latter not after 6 April, and proxies were not admissable when the house was in committee. On this occasion the clause was rejected by 32 against 28. But the following day, 11 May, it was restored upon the report of the bill by 37 against 32, although on this occasion Archbishop Hutton and Bishops Sherlock and Willes were also absent.[102]

Opposition of bishops to the ministry, though not unknown, was rare in the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Their often unquestioning support was, above all, the expression of two assumptions: that civil affairs were not primarily their concern; and that, in common with the rest of the nation's political classes, they had a duty to assist in the king's government. There is, indeed, no doubt that bonds of loyalty and gratitude to patrons influenced their political behaviour, as did sincerely held political principles. But in the 1740s and 1750s, in contrast to the 1760s, such feelings tended to reinforce, rather than weaken, the episcopate's ties to the king's ministers. Bishops, however, were churchmen, as well as members of the house of lords, and they thus had another, arguably stronger, duty, to protect and advance the cause of religion and the Church. If the ministry was generally able to rely on their support in civil affairs, in debates touching on religion they jealously maintained their independence; the episcopate was united in defending the interests of religion and the Church on both the occasions in this period on which it

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99 *Parl. Hist.*, xiv, 303-4.

100 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 325-8: Herring to Hardwicke, 7 May 1748.

101 Ibid.; Nottingham University Library, PWV/120/55: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 21 May 1748. Before the committee stage of the bill, Herring had discussed the matter with Butler, Secker and Benson, and had been empowered to ask it of the ministry 'as ye *common* & most *earnest* request of ye whole Bench, that the Clause may be dropt', adding that nothing 'would more oblige me or render me more happy than getting rid of the untoward Business in ye way the Bps desire'. B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 330-1: Herring to Hardwicke, 8 May 1748.

102 *Parl. Hist.*, xiv, 272; *L.J.*, xxvii.

believed those interests were being threatened by the action of the government. In the next chapter the tensions which could develop between bishops and politicians over the former's advocacy of the interests of the Church will be examined in more detail.

Table 8.1. Attendance of bishops in the house of lords, 1741-62

	1741-46[a]	1746-51[a]	1751-56[a]	1756-62[a]	1741-62[a]
F. Cornwallis		(77)	74	72	73
R. Trevor	(75)	75	66	43	62
S. Lisle	(71)	(50)			60
N. Claggett	57				57
J. Wilcocks	64	65	32		54
R. Terrick				(54)	54
M. Hutton	(79)	51	42	(34)	52
J. Ewer				(52)	52
C. Lyttelton				(51)	51
A. Ellys			(67)	(38)	51
M. Mawson	61	63	48	33	50
J. Green				(49)	49
P. Yonge				(48)	48
Z. Pearce		(60)	45	39	46
J. Johnson			(56)	38	45
R. Reynolds	(44)				44
S. Squire				(44)	44
E. Keene			(41)	41	41
W. Ashburnham			(57)	38	39
R. Osbaldeston		(46)	46	30	39
J. Gilbert	58	49	45	(22)	38
J. Thomas[b]	(31)	49	34	35	38
H. Egerton	(37)				37
E. Willes	(50)	33	29	30	37
R. Drummond		(49)	35	28	35
M. Benson	41	30	(23)		35
I. Maddox	61	29	24	(14)	34
J. Conybeare		(61)	(22)		31
R. Newcome			(93)	19	30
J. Egerton				30	30

Table 8.1 continued.

	1741-46[a]	1746-51[a]	1751-56[a]	1756-62[a]	1741-62[a]
J. Butler	33	28	(12)		29
T. Gooch	51	19	(0)		29
T. Newton				(29)	29
T. Herring	26	44	17	(0)	28
W. Warburton				(28)	28
J. Thomas [c]		(45)	15	26	27
E. Cresset		(38)	(19)		27
T. Hayter		(49)	28	(15)	25
J. Potter	23	(27)			23
R. Smalbroke	32	12			23
T. Secker	22	13	17	32	22
J. Wynne	(15)				15
T. Sherlock	39	16	.7	(0)	14
G. Lavington		(21)	14	(8)	14
J. Hume				13	13
G. Fleming	12	(0)			10
J. Beauclerk	(28)	14	8	6	9
R. Butts	5	0			4
E. Chandler	6	(.3)			4
R. Clavering	4	(0)			3
S. Peploe	4	0	(0)		2
E. Gibson	1	(2)			1
L. Blackburne	(.7)				.7
B. Hoadly	1	0	0	(0)	.1
J. Hough	(0)				0
S. Weston	(0)				0

(a) The number of days on which each bishop was present in the House is expressed as a percentage of the days on which it was possible for him to attend; that is, those days on which he was eligible to sit in the House. Figures in brackets indicate that the bishop was not a member of the house of lords for every session in that period. The figures have been calculated from the attendance lists printed in *Lords' journals*, XXVI - XXX.

(b) Bishop of Lincoln and Salisbury.

(c) Bishop of Peterborough, Salisbury and Winchester.

Table 8.2. Behaviour of bishops in the house of lords: the evidence of parliamentary lists[a]

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
W. Ashburnham																		P	P	(P)			P	P	P	P	P	P	(P)	(P)		P	P	(P)	P
J. Beauclerk										P								P	P	(P)			P	P	CQ	P	P		(P)	P		(P)		P	P
M. Benson	PD?/C	C	P	C						P	C																								
L. Blackburne	P																																		
J. Butler	P	P	P						A		C																								
R. Butts	P																																		
E. Chandler	P	P							Ap				P																						
N. Claggett	P	P	P	C	C																														
R. Clavering	PD?	P																																	
J. Conybeare																		P	P	P															
F. Cornwallis																		P	P	P			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P
E. Cresset																		P	(P)																
R. Drummond									A		C		P					P	(P)	P			P	(P)	P	P	P	P	P	(P)		P	P	P	P
H. Egerton	D?/C	C	P	C																			C	P	P	P	P		(P)	P		P	P	P	
J. Egerton																			P	P			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P		
A. Ellys																																		P	P
J. Ewer																																			
G. Fleming	P	P																																	
E. Gibson	P								Ap		C																								
J. Gilbert	P	P	P							P	C							P	P	P			P	P	P	P			P	P		P			
T. Gooch	P	P	P	C					A		C																								
J. Green																																		(P)	P
T. Hayter																C		P	P	(P)		C	C	P	A	C	C	C	(P)	(P)		P	P	P	
T. Herring	P	P	P							P	C							P	(P)	P			P												
B. Hoadly	P								A									P	P	P				P							(P)				
J. Hough																																			
J. Home																							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P
M. Hutton										P	C							P	P				C	P			P								
J. Johnson																		P	P	P			P	P	P	P	P	P	PQ			P		P	P
E. Keene																		P	P	P			QC	P	A	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P

Table 8.2 continued

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
G. Lavington									A?	P	C							P	(P)	(P)			P	(P)	A	P	P		(P)	(P)		(P)		(P)	
S. Lisle									A		C																								
C. Lyttelton																																			
I. Maddox	P	P	P	C	C					C	C					C	C	P	(P)	(P)			C	(P)	CQ	C	C		P	P					
M. Mawson	P	P	P	C						P	C							P	P	P			P	P	P			P	P	P		P		(P)	P
R. Newcome																				P			C	(P)	A	P	P		(P)	(P)		(P)		(P)	
T. Newton																																		P	P
R. Osbaldeston									A									P	(P)	(P)			P	P	A	P	P		(P)	(P)		(P)		(P)	P
Z. Pearce									A	P	C							P	P	P			QC	P	P	P	P	P	(P)	P		P	P	(P)	
S. Peploe	PD																																		
J. Potter	P	P		C																															
R. Reynolds	C	C	P																																
T. Secker	PD?	P	P	C					A		C		J[a]					P	P	P			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P
T. Sherlock	P	P	P	C					Ap		C							P	(P)	(P)				(P)					P	(P)		(P)			
R. Smalbroke	C	C							A																										
S. Squire																																		P	P
R. Terrick																								P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P
J. Thomas[b]										P	C							P	P	P[c]			C	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	
J. Thomas[c]										P	C							P	P	P			C	P	P	P	P		P	P		P	P	P	P
R. Trevor										P	C							P	P	P			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	(P)		P	P	P	
W. Warburton																																P	P	(P)	P
S. Weston	P																																		
J. Wilcocks		P	P	C						P	C							P	P	P															
E. Willes			P							A	C							P	P	(P)			C	(P)	A	A?P	P		(P)	(P)		P	P	(P)	P
J. Wynne	PD?																																		
P. Yonge																													P	P		P	P	P	P

(a) All known division and management lists for this period have been used in the compilation of this table. See David Hayton and Clyve Jones (eds), *A register of parliamentary lists 1660-1761* (Leicester, 1979). I am grateful to Clyve Jones for allowing me to use his annotated copy of the *Register*.

(b) Bishop of Lincoln and Salisbury.

(c) Bishop of Peterborough, Salisbury and Winchester.

Sources for Table 8.2

(1) *Mid-Jan. 1742.* Forecast of support and opposition. B.L. Add. 33002, fols. 400-1.

P = for.

C = against.

D = doubtful.

? = crossed off the list.

(2) *19 Jan. 1742.* Those voting for and against a motion to appoint a date for the committee of the whole house on the state of the nation. B.L. Add. 33034, fol. 71.

P = against (i.e., supporting the ministry).

C = for.

(3) *1 Feb. 1743.* Those voting for and against an address against the Hanoverian troops. *A list of the M.P.s who voted for and against taking the Hanoverian troops into British pay* (London, 1743).

P = against the address.

C = for the address (i.e., against the ministry).

(4) *22 Feb. 1743.* Bishops voting against the second reading of the Spirituous Liquors Bill. *Parl. Hist.*, XII, 1300-1.

C = against.

(5) *16 Apr. 1744.* Nine lords who voted against the reversal of judgment in the case of Le Neve *v.* Norris. Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 6851, II, fol. 79.

C = those in favour of reversal.

(6) *2 May 1746.* Twenty-six lords who voted for an address against carrying on the war in Flanders. C.U.L., Add. 6851, II, fols. 108-9.

(7) *24 May 1747.* Sixteen lords against the committal of the Heritable Jurisdictions Bill. C.U.L., Add. 6851, II, fols. 118-19.

(8) *1747.* List of lords and commons in opposition. Bodleian Library, MS D.D. Dashwood D1/3/13.

(9) *1748.* Fifty-five lords absent. (Management list for the Buckingham Assizes Bill?) B.L. Add. 33002, fol. 411.

A = absent.

Ap = absent with proxy.

? = crossed off the list.

(10) *23 Mar. 1748.* Those for and against committing the Buckingham Assizes Bill. B.L. Add. 33002, fols. 411-12.

P = for.

C = against.

A = absent.

(11) *10 May 1748.* Thirty-two lords who voted against the clause relating to episcopal orders during the committee of the whole house on the Bill for disarming the Scottish Highlands. *Parl. Hist.*, XIV, 272.

C = against.

(12) *15 Mar. 1749.* Sixteen lords who voted for the clause on the second reading of the Mutiny Bill, that no punishment shall be inflicted by a court martial relating to life or limb. C.U.L., Add. 6851, II, fols. 130-1.

(13) *20 Mar. 1750.* List of twenty-eight lords who met at Newcastle House. B.L. Add. 32994, fol. 272.

P = present.

(14) *10 May 1751.* Lists of minorities against the Regency Bill. Walpole, *Memoirs of George II*, I, 78-9, 82.

(15) *17 Mar. 1752.* Twelve lords voting against the committal of the Forfeitures (Scotland) Bill. B.L. Add. 32994, fol. 295.

(16) *22 Mar. 1753.* Lords in favour of the duke of Bedford's motion for papers relating to accusations of jacobitism against Murray, Stone and Johnson. Walpole, *Memoirs of George II*, I, 223.

C = for the motion (i.e., against the ministry).

(17) *3 Mar. 1754.* Lords in favour of the second reading of the Clandestine Marriages Bill. B.L. Add. 35877, fol. 174.

C = for (i.e., against the ministry).

(18) *30 May 1754.* Lords summoned to the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. B.L. Add. 32995, fols. 242-5.

P = those on the list.

(19) *13 Nov. 1754.* Lords summoned to the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. B. L. Add. 32995, fols. 344-7.

P = those on the list.

(P) = those on the list, but noted as being out of town.

(20) *12 Nov. 1755.* Lords summoned to the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. B.L. Add. 32996, fols. 275-9.

P = those on the list.

(P) = those on the list, but noted as being out of town.

P* = those on the list and noted as 'expected'.

(21) *10 Dec. 1755.* Those voting for (i.e., against the ministry) on a motion for a vote of censure, relative to the treaties with Russia and Hesse-Cassel. *H.M.C.*, Hastings, III, 113.

(22) *24 May 1756.* Those voting for the Militia Bill on its third reading and those who went away. B.L. Add. 35877, fol. 308.

C = for (i.e., against the ministry).

(23) *Dec. 1756/Jan. 1757.* Analysis of the house of lords. B.L. Add. 33034, fols. 214-5.

P = for (i.e., supporters of Newcastle).

C = against.

Q = query (marked 'Q').

(24) *29 Nov. 1757.* Lords summoned to the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. B.L. Add. 32997, fols. 300-1.

P = those on the list.

(P) = those on the list, but noted as being out of town.

(25) *9 May 1758.* Lists of lords present and absent. (Management list for the Habeas Corpus Bill). B.L. Add. 33034, fols. 259-60, 265-6.

P = for.

C = against.

Q = those with query by their names.

A = absent.

(26) *24 May 1758.* List of lords 'for', 'against', 'absent'. A management list for the Habeas Corpus Bill. B.L. Add. 33034, fols. 267-9.

P = for.

C = against.

A = absent.

? = crossed off the list.

(27) *31 May 1758.* List of lords 'for', 'against', 'doubtful', 'absent'. A management list for the Habeas Corpus Bill. B.L. Add. 33034, fols. 314-6.

P = for.

C = against.

(28) *2 June 1758.* List of lords for and against. A management list (?) for the Habeas Corpus Bill. B.L. Add. 33034, fol. 317.

P = for.

C = against.

(29) *22 Nov. 1758.* Lords summoned to the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. B.L. Add. 32998, fols. 187-94.

P = those on the list.

(P) = those on the list, but noted as being out of town.

Q = those with query by their names.

(30) *12 Nov. 1759.* Lords summoned to the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. B.L. Add. 32998, fols. 327-34.

P = those on the list.

(P) = those on the list, but noted as being out of town.

(31) *15 May 1760.* Lords voting against the committal of the Commons Qualification Bill. B.L. Add. 33034, fol. 373.

(32) *17 Nov. 1760.* Lords summoned to the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. B.L. Add. 32999, fols. 80-7.

P = those on the list.

(P) = those on the list, but noted as being out of town.

(33) *17 Nov. 1760.* List of eighty-one lords who attended the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. B.L. Add. 32999, fols. 90-1.

P = present.

(34) *5 Nov. 1761.* Lords summoned to the ministry's pre-sessional meeting. B.L. Add. 32999, fols. 341-8.

P = those on the list.

(P) = those on the list, but noted as being out of town.

(35) *5 Feb. 1762.* Those voting for and against a resolution against carrying on the war in Germany. B.L. Add. 33035, fols. 69-70.

P = against (i.e., for the ministry).

9. The politics of church reform

Although opponents were rarely prepared to concede the point, the purpose of reform was to enable the Church to perform its duties, both secular and spiritual, more effectively. Even the string of anti-clerical proposals in the parliaments of the early 1730s, which aroused fierce opposition from the clergy in defence of their rights and property, were founded on this premise. For some of the proponents of measures such as the Ecclesiastical Courts Bills of 1733 and 1734, reform was the continuation of the reformation of the Church from the excrescences of popery and clericalism; for others, such as the small group of radical whig neo-Harringtonians,[1] it was the means of freeing the individual from the corrupt mediation of the priest to find his own personal communion with God. Desire for church reform in the mid-eighteenth century, however, was not confined to anti-clericals. Churchmen did indeed assert the primitive purity of the established Church: it represented 'Christianity in its native simplicity, in a rational, a pure and manly worship'. Purity of worship was matched by purity of doctrine, since 'whatever other churches adhere firmly to the Vincentian rule, the Church of England is pre-eminent among them; nor will ever repudiate anything which has been believed everywhere, always and by every one'.[2] Some divines even went so far as to claim that the English were performing the role of the Jews in the Old Testament, as the people chosen by God and 'set up by Providence to be the bulwark of the protestant religion'.[3] But if the leaders of the Church were prepared to extol its virtues as a *via media* between superstition and infidelity, between the thraldom of popery and the extravagancies of dissent, when they considered its administrative structure they found it badly wanting. They recognized a pressing need for reform, particularly of clerical stipends and of church discipline.[4]

Edmund Gibson, bishop of London from 1723 to 1748, was a particularly notable champion of reform. During the latter years of Queen Anne's reign he had been involved in discussions about

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1 For the religious opinions of neo-Harringtonians, see J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian moment. Florentine political thought and the Atlantic republican tradition* (Princeton, 1975), pp. 475-6.

2 Richard Terrick, *A sermon preached before the Incorporated society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts; at their anniversary meeting in the parish church of St Mary-le-Bow, on Friday February 17, 1764* (London, 1764), p. 33; Christ Church, Oxford, Arch. W. Epist. 25, fol. 100: William Wake to Du Pin, 23 June 1719, quoted in Norman Sykes, *William Wake, archbishop of Canterbury, 1657-1737* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1957), I, 282. See also, e.g., Robert Drummond, *A sermon preached before the Incorporated society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts; at their anniversary meeting in the parish church of St Mary-le-Bow, on Friday February 15, 1754* (London, 1754), p. 9; *The works of the right reverend Thomas Newton D.D., late lord bishop of Bristol, and dean of St Paul's, London* (3 vols., London, 1782), III, 563; *The works of Thomas Secker LL.D. late lord archbishop of Caterbury* (6 vols., London, 1811), IV, 334; George Pothergill, *The duty of giving thanks for national deliverances. A sermon preach'd at St Martin's in Oxford, before the mayor and corporation, on Thursday, October 9th 1746* (Oxford, 1747), p. 20.

3 *The works of Bishop Sherlock. With some account of his life* (5 vols., London, 1830), III, 479. See also Anthony Ellys, *A sermon preached before the incorporated society fot the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts; at their anniversary meeting in the parish church of St Mary-le-Bow, on Friday February 23, 1759* (London, 1759), p. 15.

4 G.F. Nuttall, *Calendar of the correspondence of Philip Doddridge D.D. (1702-1751)* (London, 1979), p. 266: John Barker to Philip Doddridge, 2 Feb 1748 (reporting the words of Thomas Sherlock); Ferdinando Warner, *The ecclesiastical history of England, to the eighteenth century* (2 vols., London, 1756-7), II, 664. For contemporary perceptions of the problem of clerical stipends, see cpt. 2, pp. 22-4.

possible reform of the church courts and in the decade following the Hanoverian succession he advocated a number of schemes, including, as early as 1717, the revival of suffragan bishops.[5] But he was at his most active in the mid-1720s, after he had become the unofficial ecclesiastical adviser of the Walpole-Townshend ministry. Some of his proposals - such as the institution of Whitehall preachers, selected from among the fellows of colleges at the two universities, and of the regius professorships of history and modern languages - received the support of the ministry. Another, to regulate the distribution of crown patronage by confining it to clergymen born or serving in the diocese in which the preferment lay, foundered on the vested interest of Lord Chancellor King.[6] Others for more wide-ranging reforms, however, never advanced beyond the stage of plans, but they indicate Gibson's awareness of the problem of ensuring effective pastoral and judicial oversight of the Church.

Gibson's early interest in suffragans was supplemented by suggestions that more effective diocesan administration might be achieved through the regulation of translations and the equalization of episcopal revenues by attaching wealthy commendams to the poorer bishoprics. Eventually, however, he came to advocate more radical changes, which included the complete re-drawing of diocesan boundaries, the disappearance of Rochester, Bristol and Gloucester, and the creation in their place of three new dioceses of Brecknock, Eton and Southwell.[7] This proposal was accompanied by a plan for the overhaul of the machinery of the ecclesiastical courts. Gibson perhaps regarded this as the most important reform, since he believed that the failings of the Church's judicial system were undermining its authority, lamenting to Bishop Chandler the difficulties of proceeding against immoral clergymen: 'Good God! what will these things come to, and where will they end, if we do not get a better Disciplin'.[8] Again, the proposal of the mid-1720s was a restatement and codification of ideas which he had begun to develop in the *Codex* and the discussions of Anne's reign. In addition to advocating the passage of an act to ensure that judicial officers were properly qualified, the regulation of the practices of absolution and commutation, and other procedural reforms, Gibson argued that the offices of official principal and vicar-general, normally united in the person of the chancellor, should be separated, the 'first to enforce his orders by the writ *De contumaci capiendo*, the other by excommunication'.[9] The official principal would then be responsible for matters such as matrimonial and testamentary causes, 'which, not being matters of a Spiritual Nature, fall no otherwise under the Cognisance

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5 *The London diaries of William Nicolson, bishop of Carlisle, 1702-1718*, ed. Clyve Jones and Geoffrey Holmes (Oxford, 1985), p. 567; Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 8/213, 222, 227: Gibson to Strype, 24 Aug., 23 Oct., 20 Nov. 1717.

6 Gibson Papers, St Andrews University Library, MSS 5221, 5230; Norman Sykes, *Edmund Gibson, bishop of London, 1669-1748. A study in politics and religion in the eighteenth century* (London, 1926), pp. 91-116.

7 Norman Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker. Aspects of English church history 1660-1768* (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 192-6. For Gibson's earlier ideas, see Gibson Papers, Bodleian Library, MS Dep. c. 236, fols. 98-102: 'The Case of Translation of Bishops'.

8 B.L. Add. 6468, fol. 30: Gibson to Chandler, 19 Aug. 1725.

9 Quoted in Sykes, *Sheldon to Secker*, p. 199. For his earlier proposals, see Gibson Papers, Bodleian Library, MS Dep. c. 236, fols. 102-5: 'The Case of Ecclesiastical Judges'; Gibson, *Of visitations parochial and general: being, the charges, deliver'd to the clergy of the archdeaconry of Surrey . . . To which are added, some other tracts, relating to the government and discipline of the Church of England* (London, 1717), pp. vii-xi.

and Determination of the Church, than by the voluntary Concessions of Princes'. The writ *de contumaci capiendo* would carry all the civil, but none of the spiritual, penalties of excommunication, and the Church would thus be freed from the stigma of prostituting spiritual sanctions for secular ends. The vicar-general, who would always be a clergyman, would be confined to 'the exercise of Jurisdiction purely Spiritual', that is, to matters such as the reformation of manners, visitations, institutions, licences and the repair of churches. As these were spiritual affairs, concerning the duties and conduct of men as christians, the spiritual penalties of excommunication, principally of exclusion from the sacrament, were still appropriate.[10]

Gibson was not alone in urging reform in the early years of George I's reign. In 1715-16, for example, Humphrey Prideaux, dean of Norwich, was pressing on ministers and bishops a wide-ranging scheme of university reform.[11] Despite Gibson's later claim that his 'great point was, to bring ye body of ye Clergy and ye two Universities, at least to be easy under a Whig Administation',[12] it is plausible that he, and others like Pridcaux, had a more positive view of the church-whig alliance and hoped to use it as the instrument of reform after the sterility of the high tory years. Despite high hopes and a multitude of proposals during Queen Anne's reign, convocation had been so distracted by other business and divided within itself that the only concrete achievement had been the foundation of Queen Anne's Bounty. In the years after the accession of George II a handful of reforms were proposed from within the Church: Richard Newton pleaded for stricter controls over pluralities and the prohibition of episcopal translations; Ferdinando Warner put forward a scheme, intended to alleviate the problem of clerical poverty, to provide a maintenance for the widows and children of the clergy.[13] But no plans as comprehensive as that of Gibson for the reform of the structure of the Church emerged again until 1782, when Richard Watson, bishop of Llandaff, sent a letter to the archbishop and bishops, outlining a series of measures for the redistribution of episcopal revenues, in a way very similar to Gibson's earlier ideas, and also for the augmentation of poor livings from the revenues of deaneries and canonries.[14]

The mid-eighteenth century therefore appears a period of quietude between two great church reform movements; one, albeit unfruitful, dominating the four decades after the Revolution, the

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10 Gibson, 'Reasons for separating the commissions of official principal and vicar general', in *Of visitations parochial and general*, pp. 107-8; 'De excommunicatione: concio ad synodum, ab archiepiscopi commissariis, episcopis, & clero, provinciae Cantuarensis, celebratam, habita in ecclesia cathedrali S. Pauli, London. xxi die Martii, A.D. 1714/5', in *ibid.*, pp. 117-35.

11 *The life of the reverend Humphrey Prideaux D.D. dean of Norwich. With several tracts and letters of his, upon various subjects. Never before published* (London, 1748), pp. 188-237; W.R. Ward, *Georgian Oxford. University politics in the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1958), p. 84.

12 Gibson Papers, St Andrews, MS 5219.

13 Richard Newton, *Pluralities indefensible. A treatise humbly offered to the consideration of the parliament of Great-Britain. By a presbyter of the Church of England* (London, 1743), pp. 307-11; Ferdinando Warner, *A scheme of a fund for the better maintenance of the widows and children of the clergy* (London, 1752).

14 Richard Watson, *Sermons on public occasions, and tracts on religious subjects* (London, 1788), pp. 393-445.

other beginning in the 1780s and reaching a crescendo in the 1830s.[15] In the intervening years successive ministries were indifferent, if not hostile, to the idea of church reform, and the episcopate appeared unwilling to press the issue. It is the purpose of this chapter to explain these attitudes. It should be emphasized at the outset, however, that reform was not ignored. Considerable improvements were made in the administration of dioceses, an area in which the bishops could act without fear of political repercussions. The increasing use of articles of enquiry directed to the clergy at visitations and the reintroduction of rural deans into some dioceses made possible improvements in pastoral oversight despite the time the bishops had to spend in London.[16] Moreover, they played an important role in some minor reforms of the universities, which were still regarded primarily as clerical seminaries. On the one hand, a number of bishops, most notably Sherlock, were active in the discussions which led to the regulations passed in Cambridge in 1750, to reform manners and discipline in the University.[17] On the other hand, Thomas Secker made some attempt to remedy the universities' neglect of 'instructing their Pupils in Theological Knowledge', by obtaining the regius professorship of divinity at Oxford for Edward Bentham, who had undertaken to deliver a series of lectures on the study of divinity.[18] But perhaps the most important question of church reform to be debated during the middle decades of the century was the sending of bishops to the American colonies. It is through an examination of this debate that this chapter will examine attitudes to reform. Throughout the period under discussion, the episcopal bench was united in support of the creation of an American episcopate; the government was opposed. Considerable tensions developed between ministers and bishops at times, but the question never developed into a public controversy between, or about, church and state. It is, therefore, an issue peculiarly appropriate for delineating the attitudes to reform of government and episcopate, the assumptions which they shared and the points on which they differed.

Throughout the eighteenth century until the time of American independence the hierarchy of the Church of England was acutely aware of the need for a resident episcopate in America to

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15 For the earlier period, see Sykes, *Sheldon to Secker*, esp. cpts. 2 and 6; Edward Carpenter, *Thomas Tenison, archbishop of Canterbury. His life and times* (London, 1948), esp. cpt. 7; G.V. Bennett, 'Conflict in the Church', in *Britain after the Glorious Revolution*, ed. Geoffrey Holmes (London, 1969), pp. 155-75; Thomas Lathbury, *A history of the convocation of the Church of England from the earliest period to the year 1742* (2nd edn., London, 1853), cpts. 11-14. For the 'third church reform movement', see Best, *Temporal pillars*, cpts. 5 and 6; W.L. Mathieson, *English church reform 1815-1840* (London, 1923). Neither of these works, however, devotes sufficient attention to proposals before 1830.

16 See above, cpt. 6, pp. 132-3.

17 B.L. Add. 32718, fols. 29-30, 31-2: Sherlock to Newcastle, 20 Jan. 1749, Newcastle to Sherlock, 21 Jan. 1749; D.A. Winstanley, *The University of Cambridge in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1922), pp. 199-210.

18 'Papers relating the the American colonies', Lambeth Palace Library, MS 1123/II/207: Secker to William Smith, 12 Dec. 1760; Edward Bentham, *Reflexions on the study of divinity. To which are subjoined heads of a course of lectures* (2nd edn., Oxford, 1774), advertisment.

confirm, to ordain, and to exercise authority over the clergy.[19] Only bishops could perform 'that primitive and useful Rite, Confirmation', and their absence meant that the colonial Church was deprived of a means for the spiritual edification of the laity. Moreover, the prayer book rubrics enjoining confirmation caused some embarassment to the colonial clergy, and occasionally the suggestion was put forward that priests should be allowed to confirm.[20] The inability to ordain in America was a problem of greater seriousness. Either the colonial church had to be supplied by ministers sent from England - and it was difficult to persuade the best of the English clergy to abandon hopes of preferment at home - or colonial candidates had to face the trouble and expense of a journey to England, where diligent inquiry into their testimonials was impossible. But not merely was the journey from America expensive, it was also dangerous. A number of candidates for the ministry died - more than a few of smallpox - and there were frequent complaints from America that the church was losing many more prospective clergy because of the dangers.[21]

The question of jurisdiction over the clergy was more complex, because of the changing basis of the bishop of London's exercise of it. Until Gibson successive bishops had acted as diocesans of the plantations by custom, appointing commissaries to supervise and inspect the clergy. Gibson instituted a thorough inquiry into his authority and an examination by the crown's legal officers concluded that ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the colonies rested solely in the king, whereupon Gibson took out a patent under the great seal which gave him or his commissaries jurisdiction over the clergy. Gibson continued the practice of appointing commmissaries, but the patent expired at his death in 1748. None of his successors renewed it, and after 1748 no commissaries were appointed and no legal jurisdiction existed in the colonies.[22]

But even before 1748 episcopal oversight of the clergy had been very imperfect. Robert Jenney, Gibson's commissary in Pennsylvania, complained to Bishop Sherlock that the patent 'did not seem to justify [him] in any judicial proceeding: The Laity laughed at it, & ye Clergy seemed to despise it'. Jenney was afraid above all that 'his Commission will not bear him out if he shou'd proceed against' immoral or heretical clergy.[23] Concern about the inadequacy of the commission was so great, that Henry Caner, a prominent New England missionary, who had

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19 L.P.L., Potter Papers, I, fols. 1-35: 'A Memorial concerning the sending of Bishops to the English Plantations abroad' by Bishop Gibson; fols. 36-7: Archbishop Potter's proposals, 10 Apr. 1745; L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XXXVI, fols. 136-49: 'Some Considerations . . . relating to Ecclesiastical Government . . . in America' by Bishop Sherlock, 1750; L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fols. 239-41: 'The Case of His Majesty's Subjects of the Church of England in America', attributed to Archbishop Herring; X, fols. 174-9: 'Thoughts upon the present State of the Church of England in America', by Archbishop Drummond, June 1764.

20 L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fols. 239-41; L.P.L., Fulham Papers, I, fols. 245-6: Samuel Johnson to Bishop Gibson, 4 June 1731; fols. 92-5: Peter de la Rouche to Bishop Terrick, 22 Nov. 1771. Occasionally during the eighteenth century the Roman Catholic church allowed parish priests to confirm. Owen Chadwick, *The popes and European revolution* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 183-4.

21 M.K.D. Babcock, 'Difficulties and dangers of pre-revolutionary ordinations', *H.M.P.E.C.*, XII (1943), 225-41; L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XXXVI, fol. 141; Thomas Secker, 'A letter to . . . Horatio Walpole, Esq. Written Jan. 9, 1750-1. Concerning bishops in America', in *Works*, VI, 493; L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fol. 175; L.P.L., MS 1123/1/35: Samuel Johnson to Bishop Secker, 25 July 1745.

22 Sherlock refused to renew the patent, and there is no evidence to suggest that any of his successors did so. L.P.L., Fulham Papers, VI, fols. 273-4: Sherlock to the lords commissioners of trade and plantations, 19 Feb. 1759.

23 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, VII, fols. 314-15: Jenney to Sherlock, 23 May 1751.

never seen a copy, believed that it gave to the commissaries no power to admonish or suspend clergy who were found guilty of immoralities.[24] On the other hand, Alexander Garden, Gibson's commissary in South Carolina, knew the extent of his authority and occasionally made effective use of it against 'irregular' clergymen. But his attempt to prosecute George Whitefield for transgressing the 38th canon demonstrated as clearly as the complaints of Jenney or Caner the shortcomings of the commissarial system. Whitefield responded to his citation by a refusal to accept Garden's jurisdiction, and on its rejection he appealed to England.[25] Whether by accident or design he failed to pursue his appeal during the time allowed and Garden proceeded to suspend him from his office. When this sentence proved ineffectual, however, he could not proceed to that of excommunication because the statute on which it was grounded did not extend to America.[26] Garden's experience in this case convinced him that 'a Commissary's Office or Authority will be of little avail against any Irregularities of the Clergy', because any clergyman could enter an exception against the commissary for his judge, alleging enmity, and thereby effectively put a stop to the prosecution as Whitefield had done.[27] His experience also indicates another failing of the commissarial system of episcopal oversight. The commissary was of necessity chosen from the clergy of the colony, and continued in the same parish or mission after his appointment that he had occupied before, without any additional rank or dignity. He was therefore not sufficiently independent to exercise his authority effectively, being often involved himself in disputes among the clergy.[28]

The difficulties in the way of confirmation, ordination and the exercise of jurisdiction over the clergy were only parts of a more fundamental problem - effective episcopal and pastoral oversight over the clergy was impossible from across the Atlantic. Sherlock complained that he was 'bishop of a vast country, without power, or influence, or any means of promoting true religion: sequestered from the people over whom I have the care, and must never hope to see'.[29] Twelve years later Archbishop Drummond claimed more pointedly that 'no one . . . can ever say, that the Bishop of London could at any time take any competent [sic] Care of the Plantations, as a Bishop'.[30] The anglican episcopate recognized its responsibility for the spiritual well-being of the

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24 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, VI, fols. 7-8: Caner to Sherlock, 6 May 1751.

25 It is not clear to whom this appeal was directed. See A.L. Cross, *The anglican episcopate and the American colonies* (New York, 1902), p. 83, n. 1.

26 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, X, fols. 134-5: Garden to Sherlock, 1 Feb. 1750 [i.e., 1751]. This letter contains a summary of his proceedings against Whitefield. The case is more fully discussed in L. Tyerman, *The life of the rev. George Whitefield, B.A., of Pembroke College, Oxford* (2 vols., London, 1877), I, 396-402, 405-6, 477, 539; A.L. Cross, *Anglican episcopate*, pp. 80-6. For an account of Garden, see Q.B. Keen, 'The problems of a commissary: the reverend Alexander Garden of South Carolina', *H.M.P.E.C.*, xx (1951), 136-55.

27 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, X, fols. 134-5.

28 A good example is the dispute which arose between Commissary Cummings, rector of Christ Church, Philadelphia, and his assistant, Richard Peters, who was supported by a large part of the vestry. For Cummings' awareness of the delicacy of his position, see L.P.L., Fulham Papers, VII, fols. 200-1: Cummings to Gibson, 1 Aug. 1737. For the dispute in general, see ibid., fols. 170-243, passim; Hubertis Cummings, *Richard Peters: provincial secretary and cleric 1704-76* (Philadelphia, 1944), pp. 13-23.

29 T.B. Chandler, *The life of Samuel Johnson, D.D.* (New York and London, 1824), p. 171: Sherlock to Johnson, 12 Apr. 1752.

30 L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fol. 175.

Church of England in America, but knew it was failing to discharge it.

The argument that the Church should be enabled to perform its spiritual functions more effectively was not the only argument for an American episcopate. Confirmation and ordination were portrayed not only as necessary for the spiritual life of an episcopal church, but also as the rights of its members. It was therefore argued that because of the difficulty of obtaining confirmation and ordination in the colonies, and indeed because of the denial of episcopacy, the Church there did not enjoy a state of full toleration despite being the established Church in England. The bishops, who had come to pride themselves on their support for toleration, used this argument repeatedly,[31] and it was developed into a powerful ad hominem argument against dissenters who opposed the creation of an American episcopate.[32]

However, the clergy seldom advanced political considerations. Herring did indeed claim that 'it concerns the State as much as the Church, That the Clergy of the Establishment in . . . America, be subject to some sort of controul or inspection'. But in so arguing, he was merely rehearsing the commonplace assumption that a christian people, and therefore an effective church, was essential to the well-being of the state.[33] Sherlock, on the other hand, had a particular, albeit idiosyncratic, fear: that the failure to settle bishops of the Church of England would encourage colonial anglicans to turn to the Moravians, who had bishops resident in America and were recognized by parliament as a protestant episcopal church, but whose allegiance to the government and the protestant succession, Sherlock suspected, was rather more doubtful.[34] But at no time did the English bishops adopt the case which was continually pressed upon them by colonial anglicans, especially in New England, for the establishment of episcopacy for political reasons. As early as 1725 Joseph Browne was writing to Gibson from New Haven about the need for a bishop to secure the loyalty of the people to the king.[35] The message that an episcopate would make the colonies more dependent on England by assisting the Church of England in inculcating principles of loyalty and obedience was repeated increasingly from the 1740s, with Samuel Johnson[36] and Henry Caner among the most vocal.[37] Johnson's insistence on the identity of antiepiscopal and antimonarchical principles was more than rhetoric - he was also interested in

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31 L.P.L., Potter Papers, I, fols. 36-8; L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fol. 239; Secker, *Works*, VI, 505.

32 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XIII, fols. 41-2: Sherlock to Philip Doddridge, 11 May 1751; John Green, *A sermon preached before the Incorporated society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts; at their anniversary meeting in the parish church of St Mary-le-Bow, on Friday February 19, 1768* (London, 1768), pp. 22-3.

33 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 407-8: Herring to Hardwicke, 27 Mar. 1749.

34 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XXXVI, fols. 141-2.

35 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, I, fols. 210-11: J. Browne to Gibson, 15 Mar. 1725.

36 Samuel Johnson was one of the Connecticut congregationalists who announced his conversion to anglicanism at the Yale commencement of 1724. He later became a prominent New England missionary and the first president of King's College, New York. See Joseph J. Ellis, *The New England mind in transition. Samuel Johnson of Connecticut, 1696-1772* (New Haven, 1973), and, for some important revisions of Ellis's account of Johnson's religious opinions, D.F.M. Geradi, 'Samuel Johnson and the Yale "apostacy" of 1722: the challenge of anglican sacramentalism to the New England way', *H.M.P.E.C.*, XLVII (1978), 153-75.

37 E.g., L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XXXVI, fols. 132-3: Johnson to Gibson, 25 Nov. 1745; ibid., I, fols. 289-90: Johnson to Sherlock, 17 Sept. 1750; ibid., VI, fols. 60-1: Caner to Terrick, 15 May 1766; E.B. O'Callaghan (ed), *Documents relative to the colonial history of New York* (11 vols., Albany, 1853-61), VII, 441-3.

proposals for a union of the colonies and a resumption of colonial charters by the crown.[38] His first concern was always the welfare of the Church, but he and other New England anglicans aimed far beyond the settlement of bishops - they wanted to curb the power of the dissenters in those colonies. When the war of independence broke out, clergymen like Seabury and Inglis, who had been raised in the tradition of Johnson and Caner, were not slow to point out that events had proved them right - members of the Church of England tended to be loyalists, whereas the dissenters were 'the active Promoters of the Rebellion'.[39] Despite the unresponsiveness of the Church hierarchy, such arguments gave credence to the fears expressed by dissenters like Jonathan Mayhew of a 'design of *episcopizing* . . . all New-England, as well as the other colonies'.[40]

In the opinion of the bishops, therefore, pastoral and administrative reasons made necessary the settlement of episcopacy in America, and in the period under discussion they made two attempts to persuade the ministry to implement their proposals. The first was initiated by Potter in 1745-6; the second by Sherlock in 1748-50. In retrospect these appear as two incidents in an intermittent, but consistent effort to convince successive administrations of the necessity of an American episcopate dating back to the reign of Queen Anne and beyond.[41] In the late 1720s, after his jurisdiction had been settled, Bishop Gibson attempted to obtain permission to consecrate suffragans attached to the see of London to serve in America, having decided as early as 1723 that resident bishops were the best way of governing the colonial Church.[42] Later, in both 1763-4 and 1767, Secker, Drummond and Trevor applied to the ministry that the matter be taken into

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38 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XXXVI, fols. 132-3; L.P.L., MS 1123/I/40; 1123/II/190-1: Johnson to Secker, 13 July 1760; O'Callaghan (ed), *New York colonial documents*, VII, 441-3.

39 L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fols. 189-92: Samuel Seabury, Samuel Cooke and Charles Inglis, on behalf of the clergy of New York, to Chandler, Cooper, Vardill, and Boucher, 28 Oct. 1780. But under the impact of the war, it was not merely the American clergy who made this point. Cf., William Jones, 'An address to the British government on a subject of present concern, 1776', in *The theological and miscellaneous works of the late rev. William Jones, M.A. minister of Nayland, Suffolk* (new edn., 6 vols., London, 1826), VI, 268-74; Chandler, *Life of Johnson*, p. 209: Bishop Lowth to T.B. Chandler, 29 May 1775.

40 Jonathan Mayhew, *Observations on the charter and conduct of the society for the propagation of the gospel* (London, 1763), p. 89, quoted in Carl Bridenbaugh, *Mitre and sceptre. Transatlantic faiths, ideas, personalities, and politics 1689-1775* (New York, 1962), p. 226. Bridenbaugh's study is a vivid and illuminating account of the fears of colonial dissenters at the prospect of an anglican episcopate, but it is deeply flawed by the assumption that these fears were an accurate portrayal of reality on both sides of the Atlantic. Phrases like 'ecclesiastical imperialism' and 'lust for dominion' might be applicable to *some* American episcopalians, although even then not without qualification, but to apply them to the English bishops reveals, not only a predisposition to rely on rhetoric and propaganda for evidence, but also a fundamental incomprehension of the nature of religious thought in eighteenth-century England. The portrayal of Secker (pp. 30-1) is a particular misrepresentation. His alleged intolerance towards dissent, upon which the account of his motives for supporting an American episcopate is based, is not borne out by the evidence of his friendly relations with Doddridge, Avery and Chandler. B.L. Add. 32879, fol. 5: Newcastle to J. White, 1 Apr. 1758; Nichols, *Literary illustrations*, III, 484-5; Secker's autobiography, L.P.L., MS 2598, fol. 74v (Sykes transcript).

41 For attempts before 1715, see Cross, *Anglican episcopate*, pp. 89-101.

42 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XXXVI, fols. 50-3: Thomas Bray to Gibson, 28 Oct. 1723; Potter Papers, I, fols. 1-35: 'A Memorial concerning the sending of Bishops to the English Plantations abroad'.

consideration.[43] In this context it is difficult to accept suggestions that Secker's call for 'more diligence' in efforts to obtain an American episcopate during his sermon before the S.P.G. in 1741, reawakened interest in the question or inspired the initiatives of the 1740s.[44] Even if this were the case, credit would also be due to Secker's brother-in-law, Bishop Benson of Gloucester, who made similar statements on the same occasion the previous year. But, as Secker later admitted, public agitation was unlikely to persuade the ministry, and these sermons are better portrayed as the outspoken comments of two men critical of the political and religious policies of the Walpole administration.[45]

The immediate cause of renewed activity in 1745 was an offer to the S.P.G. by Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire of tracts of land for the support of a bishop.[46] This provided the advocates of an episcopate with a further argument against one objection always made to the scheme, that it would be difficult to provide a sufficient maintenance without encroaching on the rights of the civil government or levying new colonial taxes. When Isaac Maddox and Zachary Pearce, bishops of Worcester and Bangor respectively, discussed this offer with Newcastle, he showed an unexpected willingness to consider their proposal. At his request Archbishop Potter drew up a plan for one or more bishops to be sent to the colonies, which was presented to Newcastle by Potter and other bishops in the name of the S.P.G.[47] Despite a reminder from Potter in March 1746, however, the ministry allowed the affair to drop.[48]

An echo of this initiative was heard in 1749, when the S.P.G. was asked by the Board of Trade for its assistance in establishing a civilian colony in Nova Scotia.[49] The Board of Trade was particularly concerned at the 'great Danger' of the settlement being 'perverted to Popery' by the French under the bishop of Quebec. This fear gave rise to a suggestion from Herring, incorporated in the Society's reply, that tracts of land should be set aside to provide for the maintenance of a bishop when the government thought it necessary to send one. Secker was responsible for drafting a further paragraph asking the Board to support the application 'that the

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43 Borthwick Institute, Bp. C & P VIII: Secker to Drummond, 13 Aug. 1763; L.P.L., MS 1123/III/319: Secker to Henry Caner, 15 Sept. 1763; Chandler, *Life of Johnson*, pp. 196-9: Secker to Johnson, 22 May 1764; L.P.L., MS 2598, fol. 73v (Sykes transcript); William L. Clements Library, Shelburne Papers, 59/31-8, 63-78: Drummond to Shelburne, 10 Apr. 1767. For accounts of the proposals of the 1760s, see, in addition to the general studies of Cross and Bridenbaugh, J.M. Sosin, 'The proposal in the pre-revolutionary decade for establishing anglican bishops in the colonies', *J.E.H.*, XIII (1962), 76-84.

44 Thomas Secker, 'Sermon before the S.P.G. on 20 February 1741', in *Works*, V, 108-9. Cf., Cross, *Anglican episcopate*, pp. 108-9; Bridenbaugh, *Mitre and sceptre*, pp. 29-30.

45 Martin Benson, *A sermon preached before the Incorporated society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts; at their anniversary meeting in the parish-church of St Mary-le-Bow, on Friday, February 15, 1739-40* (London, 1740), p. 24; L.P.L., MS 1123/II/121: Secker to Johnson, 27 Sept. 1758; MS 2598, fols. 26, 28-9 (Sykes transcript).

46 B.L. Add. 32704, fols. 135-6: Governor Wentworth to the secretary of the S.P.G., n.d. (copy).

47 Ibid.; L.P.L., Potter Papers, I, fol. i: Gibson to Potter, 24 Apr. 1745; fols. 36-8: 'Paper compos'd on the Duke of Newcastle's request . . . sent to him April 10th 1745 to be communicated to the ministry'.

48 B.L. Add. 32706, fols. 282-3: Potter to Newcastle, 10 Mar. 1746. Another copy is at L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, VIII, fol. 179.

49 For the background to the Nova Scotia settlement, see A.H. Basye, *The lords commissioners of trade and plantations, commonly known as the Board of Trade 1748-82* (New Haven, 1925), pp. 40-4.

Society made some Time since for the appointing of Bishops . . . in our Colonies in America'.[50] This letter was written at the same time as Sherlock was beginning to agitate for an episcopate, and it cannot therefore be entirely divorced from the context of his activities. But it is better seen as a postscript to Potter's initiative - Sherlock was not even present at the meeting which considered the Society's reply,[51] although he did attend on 14 April to approve the letter, along with ten other bishops and seventeen ordinary members.[52]

Although the details are sometimes obscure, the main outline of Sherlock's attempts between 1748 and 1750 to obtain an American episcopate is clear. Almost immediately upon becoming bishop of London, he showed concern about the additional burden that colonial business placed on that see and drew up a proposal for its division among several bishops.[53] The response was unenthusiastic.[54] But Sherlock did not advocate resident bishops simply as another expedient to rid himself of 'increased business and expense'.[55] He saw the division of responsibility for the colonial Church and the appointment of resident bishops not as alternatives, but as complimentary parts of the same programme for more effective episcopal oversight. In September 1749, while in the midst of attempts to erect an episcopate, Sherlock wrote to Newcastle urging that one of the residentiaries of St Paul's be appointed specifically to help the bishop of London discharge his colonial responsibilities. If the task was not to be divided among the English bishops, he argued, some assistance was necessary, whether he was to govern the American Church by himself or with the aid of suffragans.[56] This account, however, leaves unexplained Sherlock's sudden and vocal adoption of the issue. It is plausible that the explanation may lie in his unexpected acceptance of the diocese of London, having declined both York and Canterbury, and a belief that he could use that station and his interest with the king and Newcastle to push through the reform of the colonial Church. That he took up the subject almost immediately adds credence to this suggestion, but it is not supported merely by circumstantial evidence. Sherlock claimed that he would regard it as 'the glory of my life, if I c'd be the instrument . . . of putting the Ch abroad upon a true and primitive foot', and on another occasion complained to Newcastle, in the context of America, that he had 'great reason to repent that I ever was induced to leave the . . . See of Sarum'.[57]

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50 L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, V, fol. 229; Minutes of a special meeting of the society, 14 Apr. 1749; B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 409-12: Herring to Hardwicke, 7 Apr. 1749.

51 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 409-12.

52 The ten were Herring of Canterbury, Hutton of York, Maddox of Worcester, Wilcocks of Rochester, Benson of Gloucester, Trevor of St David's, Thomas of Lincoln, Mawson of Chichester, Gilbert of Salisbury, and Gooch of Ely. L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, V, fol. 229.

53 *H.M.C.*, 10th Report, Appendix, Part I, p. 302: Sherlock to Edward Weston, 9 Sept. 1748; B.L. Add. 35590, fols. 206-8: Sherlock to Hardwicke, 21 Nov. 1748, enclosing a paper entitled 'For the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction in the Plantations'.

54 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 366-8: Herring to Hardwicke, 25 Nov. 1748.

55 Cf., Edward Carpenter, *Thomas Sherlock 1678-1761* (London, 1936), pp. 228-30.

56 B.L. Add. 32719, fols. 52-3: Sherlock to Newcastle, 13 Aug. 1749.

57 B.L. Add. 32719, fols. 97-8, 113-14: Sherlock to Newcastle, 3, 7 Sept. 1749.

Sherlock himself described his efforts in these years to obtain resident American bishops in a letter of 1759 to the Board of Trade.[58] First, in February 1749 he waited on the king and laid before him the 'state of Religion in the Plantations and the Necessity there was of having a Bishop' and then obtained the king's permission to apply to his ministers.[59] After frequent delays and postponments, he waited on the king again 'and had his leave to acquaint the Ministers that it was his Majesty's Pleasure they should take the affair into their Consideration'.[60] This resulted in a barren meeting at Newcastle House, following which Sherlock drew up his 'Considerations . . . relating to Ecclesiastical Government in America'. In this paper he put forward the case for settling bishops in America not with '*Coercive* Powers', but 'to inspect the Conduct & Behaviour of the Clergy & to perform the Dutys of their Office in Examining & Ordaining Ministers for the service of the Church', with a maintenance from benefactions and from the annexation to the bishoprics of some preferments abroad.[61] Sherlock laid his 'Considerations' before the privy council on 11 April 1750, but discussion of it was postponed until the king returned from Hanover.[62]

Until this time Sherlock had acted in his own name, but in an attempt to demonstrate to the ministry that there was widespread colonial support for resident bishops, he proposed to the S.P.G. on 18 May 1750 that 2000 copies of an explanation of the episcopal plan be printed and sent to the governors of the American colonies and to the Society's correspondents there. The paper was intended to answer objections against bishops, insisting that no coercive power was desired over the laity; that no share was desired in temporal government; that their maintenance was not to be at the charge of the colonies; and that there was no intention to settle bishops in those colonies, as in New England, 'where the Government is in the hands of Dissenters'.[63] Sherlock's proposal was agreed to, but on hearing of it the ministry, in the form of the regency

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58 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, VI, fols. 270-5: Sherlock to the lords commissioners of trade and plantations, 19 Feb. 1759.

59 Ibid.; B.L. Add. 35909, fol. 111: Sherlock to Hardwicke, 19 Feb. 1749. The paper referred to is probably 'The State of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction in the Plantations in America', B.L. Add. 33029, fols. 62-4. It suggests the settlement of two bishops, one for the continental colonies and one for the islands, who would be provided for by annexing to them two considerable livings in the plantations and the headships of the colleges of Barbados and Virginia. To ensure that there was no danger of their assuming too much authority and power once established, they could be made suffragans to some English bishops, and would thus have no more jurisdiction than was specifically granted to them.

60 The implication in Sherlock's account that the king was personally sympathetic to the idea of an American episcopate is supported by Newcastle's comment to Pelham: 'I think the King is for Bishops in ye West Indies'. Newcastle of Clumber MSS, Nottingham University Library, Ne.C. 963a: Newcastle to Henry Pelham, 11 July 1750.

61 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, VI, fol. 273; ibid., XXXVI, fols. 136-49.

62 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XXXVI, fol. 149v.

63 L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, V, fol. 279: incomplete minute of S.P.G. meeting, 18 May 1750. On the basis of a copy in Bishop Butler's handwriting, these proposals were described by Cross as 'Butler's plan' [*Anglican episcopate*, pp. 122-4], an attribution that has been almost universally followed, including, most recently, by Bridenbaugh [*Mitre and septre*, pp. 97-8]. The existence of a copy in Butler's handwriting demonstrates two points: first, that members of the S.P.G. communicated it on their own initiative to the colonies; and, second, that Butler himself supported the proposals. Further evidence of the first point can be gained from letters of Johnson [L.P.L., Fulham Papers, I, fol. 292], Timothy Cutler and others [Chandler, *Life of Johnson*, pp. 164-6], and James McSparran [L.P.L., Fulham Papers, VIII, fols. 319-22], all of which appear to be replies to this or a similar document.

council, decided that such action was improper while the matter was before the king in council.[64] On 25 May Sherlock informed the next meeting of the Society of this decision, and told them that though they were at liberty to act as they thought best, he was 'of opinion that the whole Affair ought to be suspended', which was 'unanimously' agreed to.[65] The ministry, moreover, was as successful in stifling discussion of Sherlock's proposals as it had been in frustrating his initiative in the S.P.G. The privy council never considered the matter. Eighteen months later Herring reported that Sherlock 'had twice waited upon the D. of N. for a Categorical answer, but had not obtained it'.[66] In 1759 he had still 'heard nothing'.[67]

But for one momentary lapse in 1745, when Newcastle expressed a desire to see a plan for an American episcopate, the attitude of the ministry was one of consistent opposition, not overtly, but by refusing to consider any proposals. The bishops, on the other hand, were united in support of the scheme.[68] Inevitably tension and frustration resulted. In 1746, Secker saw the failure of efforts to obtain a bishop for America as part of the prevailing corruption of manners, and commented despondently that he saw 'no prospect of Amendment in that or any thing'.[69] Sherlock, however, gave vent to his frustration, first when a bill to encourage the Moravians to settle in America was passed in 1749, by which they were to be tolerated as an episcopal church in the colonies.[70] Later in the same year he reacted angrily to what he understood to be a suggestion by Newcastle that he had revived the episcopal scheme for personal reasons. He replied that 'whatever handle' he had given to such suspicions, yet he believed he 'was proposing a scheme for the *publick service*', complaining 'That there is not, and I think, there never was, a Xtian Ch: in the world, in the condition the Ch: of England is now, in the Plantations'.[71] The complaints of the English bishops, however, pale in comparison with those sent from America, especially by Samuel Johnson, who denounced 'the unaccountable politics of this apostasizing Age, which seems to have lost all notion of the necessity of a due regard to the Interest of Religion' in its failure to provide bishops for the colonies.[72] Johnson's frustration became so great that he eventually contemplated a step which would have breached the establishment in a way the English bishops never countenanced - that they should consecrate two or three bishops

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64 B.L. Add. 32720, fols. 405-7: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 25 May 1750. The decision was taken by Hardwicke, Dorset, Bedford, Pelham and Herring.

65 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 11-12: Herring to Hardwicke, 16 May 1750; Add. 32721, fol.49: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 6 June 1750.

66 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 50-1: Herring to Hardwicke, 21 Oct. 1751.

67 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, VI, fol. 273.

68 B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 30-1: Herring to Hardwicke, 6 Nov. 1750. In addition to the eleven bishops who attended the S.P.G. meeting of 14 April 1749 [see note 52], the following can also be identified as supporters of an American episcopate: Gibson, Potter, Secker, Butler [see note 63], Drummond, Hayter [B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 11-12; L.P.L., MS 1123/III/238], Pearce [B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 11-12; L.P.L., Potter Papers, I, fol. i], and Osbaldeston [L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fols. 185-6]. Among the bishops only Benjamin Hoadly of Winchester was not a member of the S.P.G.

69 L.P.L., MS 1123/I/36: Secker to Johnson, 8 Mar. 1746.

70 22 Geo. II, c. 30; B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 467-8: Herring to Hardwicke, 27 Mar. 1749.

71 B.L. Add. 32719, fols. 113-14: Sherlock to Newcastle, 7 Sept. 1749.

72 L.P.L., MS 1123/II/111: Johnson to Secker, 5 Dec. 1757.

notwithstanding the disapproval of the ministry.[73]

Despite these tensions, the episcopate was never forced to examine its relationship with the ministry, let alone the nature of that between church and state. Sherlock remained on good terms with Newcastle, while Secker, perhaps the most vocal and consistent proponent of an American episcopate after the bishop of London, felt able to accept the archbishopric of Canterbury on that minister's recommendation. If the bishops believed that their scheme was as essential as they claimed, it must therefore be explained why they did not make more effort to persuade, or force, the ministry to take action. The key to this paradox, which will be more fully explored later, lies not in the alleged subservience of the episcopate to the ministry, but in the extent to which both shared the same perceptions of the nature of eighteenth-century politics. First, however, it is necessary to understand the reasons behind the ministry's opposition to the Church's proposals.

The ideological disposition of some whigs not to interfere with colonial forms of government should not be overlooked as one reason for opposition to the introduction of episcopacy. There is evidence that both Hardwicke and Newcastle shared this attitude,[74] although some caution must be expressed about this evidence as it dates from the 1760s when the situation was different. But even if their later opinions faithfully reflected those held in the late 1740s, this is hardly a complete explanation as such ideas were not shared by other whigs, including Bedford, Granville and Halifax,[75] and there is nothing to suggest that at this time these were any more favourable to the bishops' schemes than the Pelhamite whigs.

A second reason has been suggested by Norman Sykes, who argued that the ministry's main objection was 'the danger of provoking rebellion among the colonists'.[76] There were, in fact, two sides to this argument. On the one hand it was claimed that a resident episcopate would be opposed in the colonies, especially by the dissenters in New England. In 1764 Archbishop Drummond reported that in George II's reign 'the fears of disturbing his Majesty's Government, particularly in New England influenced the Ministers' against the proposals of Potter and Sherlock.[77] This claim is supported by some contemporary evidence. In a long letter to Sherlock commenting on his 'Considerations' Horace Walpole argued that his conclusion that the colonists were willing to receive bishops was unconvincing.[78] Events appear to have convinced Sherlock that Walpole was right, because in 1751 he complained to Philip Doddridge about the intolerance of the New England dissenters who 'used all their Influence to obstruct the Settleing of Bps in

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73 L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, XI, fol. 183: Johnson to Secker, 12 Nov. 1766.

74 In 1776, the 2nd earl of Hardwicke recalled that his father, 'When asked what he thought of Mr Grenville's scheme for taxing America, said - They had not been used to taxes: told Abp. Secker, when he proposed sending a Bishop, that the Americans left England to avoid Bishops.' *The diary and letters of his excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, ed. P.O. Hutchinson (2 vols., London, 1883-6), II, 131. Likewise, on 10 August 1761 Newcastle wrote to Hardwicke that if he resigned, he would oppose 'any alteration, that may be proposed, of any part of the present Constitution, or receiv'd usage and practice, with regard either to Scotland, Ireland, or our Settlements in America'. Quoted by L.B. Namier, *England in the age of the American Revolution* (2nd edn., London, 1961), p. 287.

75 A.G. Olson, *Anglo-American politics 1660-1775* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 146-7.

76 Sykes, *Sheldon to Secker*, p. 209.

77 L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fols. 176-7.

78 B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 60-9: H. Walpole to Sherlock, 29 May 1750.

the Episcopal Church of England'.[79] From this time on a regular feature of colonial correspondence was the injunction to New England anglicans that the consent of the dissenters was an essential prerequisite of the creation of bishops.[80] On the other hand, it was feared that a resident episcopate would make the colonies more independent of England. In view of the vigour with which New England anglicans argued that bishops were the best way to secure the dependence of the colonies on the mother country, and the credit which the dissenters appear to have given such arguments, it is somewhat ironic that English politicians should have suggested that they would encourage the opposite tendency. But the attention given to this objection by Benson, Secker and Gibson, among others, indicates that it was considered a serious one, and it was still being advanced as late as 1765.[81]

A third reason has been put forward by J.A. Henretta, who found domestic rather than colonial politics the most convincing explanation of the ministry's opposition.[82] Again there is considerable contemporary evidence to support this interpretation. The ministry were afraid that the issue would disturb 'the tranquillity of [the king's] Government'.[83] The most comprehensive explanation of these fears was made not by a member of the ministry, but by Horace Walpole. His arguments, however, can be taken as representative of those of the ministry. As auditor-general of plantation revenues, a post he had filled since 1717, he was not unacquainted with colonial affairs, and his opinion was thought to have enough weight for Sherlock to seek his comments on his proposals.[84] Both Hardwicke and Pelham approved of his answer to Sherlock, and thought it would be of use 'in suppressing [his] foolish schemes'.[85] But it was Newcastle who indicated most clearly that Walpole was echoing the opinions of the ministry. He thought the letter 'an admirable good one', and told him that he 'was so happy' as to have come to many of the same conclusions.[86] Walpole argued that if a scheme for sending bishops was made public, it would immediately become 'a matter of controversy in ye Pulpitts, as well as by Pamphletts, & Libells' and this controversy would be all the more bitter and acrimonious because the subject was religion. Not only would the dissenters make representations against it, but if the matter came before parliament Walpole feared that

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79 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XIII, fols. 41-2: Sherlock to Doddridge, 11 May 1751.

80 E.g., Chandler, *Life of Johnson*, pp. 175-7, 196-9: Secker to Johnson, 19 Mar. 1754, 22 May 1764.

81 Benson, *S.P.G. sermon*, p. 24; Secker, *Works*, v, 109; L.P.L., Fulham Papers, XXXVI, fols. 132-3: Samuel Johnson to Gibson, 25 Nov. 1745; L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fols. 183-4: 'Dr Bentham abt American Bps Oct 1765'.

82 James A. Henretta, *'Salutary neglect': colonial administration under the duke of Newcastle* (Princeton, 1972), pp. 328-9.

83 B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 133-4: Herring to Newcastle, 20 June 1750.

84 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 60: Walpole to Sherlock, 29 May 1750.

85 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 256: Pelham to Newcastle, 2 July 1750; fol. 49: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 6 June 1750.

86 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 158: Newcastle to Pelham, 23 June 1750; fols. 167-8: Newcastle to Walpole, 2 July 1750.

> it will not be canvassed without ye greatest heats & animositys, & perhaps a Division among those that are best affected to his Majesty's Governmt in both Houses, these animositys & Divisions will flow from ye Parliament into ye Country, & all contests in ye Choice of Magistrates, or for Members of Parliament will be again Governd by that Odious, & pernicious distinction of High Church & Low Church . . . [which] has occasioned great mischiefs in this divided Country in former Reigns.[87]

Most often, both domestic and colonial political considerations were deployed together. Walpole summarized his arguments in a letter to Herring, in which he warned 'that should ye episcopall scheme be carryed into execution . . . it would be attended with very disagreeable, & dangerous consequences, in this Island as well as in America'.[88] The same point was made by Edward Bentham in October 1765.[89] But the situation in the mid-1760s was very different from that in 1750, and it is arguable that the more important consideration for the Pelham administration was the fear of domestic political agitation.

In the first place, Walpole laid much more stress in his letter to Sherlock on domestic considerations than on colonial ones. Newcastle likewise emphasized the danger of 'reviving old Disputes, & Distinctions, which are, at present, quiet'.[90] Secondly, although the decision against a colonial episcopate in the 1720s was primarily the responsibility of Walpole and Townshend, both Newcastle, as the secretary of state responsible for America, and Hardwicke, as one of the crown's legal officers, were involved in it. Then the fear of provoking rebellion in New England was not used as an argument against Gibson's proposals, but they were rejected because it was thought 'a dangerous Step with respect to ye Peace, & Quiet of ye State'.[91] This would suggest that the domestic political situation was still the main consideration of the politicians in the 1740s, even if it was no longer the only one. Thirdly, it is doubtful whether the ministry was aware, even in 1750, of the seriousness of the threat to public order in the colonies, especially in New England, if bishops had been sent. In the 1760s there was violent and outspoken opposition to such a plan, but this bitter internal debate over the introduction of episcopacy did not begin until Jonathan Mayhew published his *Observations* in 1763. As late as 1751, James McSparran, a Rhode Island missionary, could write to Sherlock that he had 'never heard any such objections [as those set out in the S.P.G. minute] made on this side of the Atlantick, to ye sending us over Bishops'.[92] Moreover, although in 1749 Benjamin Avery and Eliakim Palmer[93] received the thanks of the Massachusetts house of representatives for their efforts against bishops, the decision of the dissenting deputies to wait on ministers and to represent to them their objections to the settlement

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87 B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 60-9: Walpole to Sherlock, 29 May 1750.

88 L.P.L., MS 1123/I/51: Horace Walpole to Herring, 2 Jan. 1751.

89 L.P.L., S.P.G. Papers, X, fols. 183-4.

90 B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 60-9, 167-8.

91 B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 62v.

92 L.P.L., Fulham Papers, VIII, fols. 319-22: McSparran to Sherlock, 26 Mar. 1751.

93 Avery was chairman of the dissenting deputies, Palmer was colonial agent for Connecticut.

of episcopacy in America was taken entirely on their own initiative.[94] Indeed, even when the question began to be agitated again in the 1760s, there is very little evidence to suggest that either the congregationalists of New England or the presbyterians of the middle colonies used their undoubtedly close links with both the English dissenters and the Church of Scotland to put their objections to colonial bishops before the government. What representations were made by dissenting bodies in England were made without application from America.[95]

If ministers were indeed more worried about the possible repercussions in domestic, rather than colonial, politics, then the testimony of the bishops about the reasons for the failure of their proposals must be reconsidered. Their preoccupation with colonial opposition to an American episcopate arose not from belief in the strength of that opposition, but from a desire to avert its emergence or for polemical purposes. The injunctions of Secker and his colleagues to the New England anglicans can be explained simply as proceeding from their knowledge that it was better to reassure non-anglicans than to stir up opposition through extravagant claims, especially such as converts from congregationalism, like Johnson, were fond of making about divine right episcopacy or about the iniquities of a colonial government run by dissenters. Sherlock's statement to Doddridge, on the other hand, reveals a different intention. In 1749 Sherlock had expressed considerable irritation at the activity of the dissenting deputies,[96] which was doubtless increased when Doddridge wrote to him complaining about the intolerance of anglicans in Virginia. Rather than admit that the government was responsible for the failure of the episcopal scheme, he blamed the New England dissenters and, by accusing them of intolerance, he was able to make the same charge by implication against Doddridge's fellow English dissenters.

The ministry's opposition to proposals for an American episcopate because of their fear of domestic political agitation was, in fact, merely one manifestation of their anxiety about the consequences of debate of church reform. Walpole and Townshend 'layd it down as a fundamentall principle . . . not to suffer any religious dispute to be canvassed in Parliament or any attempt to be made, if they could prevent it, to alter ye Laws relating to spirituall concerns'. The controversy over religious policy in the reigns of William and Anne had convinced them that debate of such issues would encourage the cry of 'the Church in danger' and revive the party conflict of that period. The consequence would be not only to threaten the continuation of the administration, and, by implication in the eyes of many whigs, the security of the Hanoverian dynasty, but also to interrupt and impede the business of government. They believed that the 'high Church party' was 'so numerous, & warm and ready to lay hold of any occasion to inflame ye nation, that any alteration in ye form or doctrine of ye Church of England, would be . . . a

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[94] *Journals of the house of representatives of Massachusetts* (Boston, 1919-), xxvi, 43, 48; Minutes of the dissenting deputies, 5 Apr., 5 May 1749, 28 Mar., 30 May 1750, quoted in B.L. Manning, *The protestant dissenting deputies* (Cambridge, 1952), pp. 416-7.

[95] See Scottish Record Office, CH1/1/35-67: General Assembly Acts, 1735-80; CH/1/2/43-122: General Assembly Papers, 1720-80; Dartmouth Papers, Staffordshire Record Office, D(W)1778/II/182: presbyterian church of New York to the Church of Scotland, 18 Mar. 1776, outlining the assistance given to them by the Church of Scotland; M.W. Armstrong, 'The dissenting deputies and the American colonies', *Church History*, xxix (1960), 298-320.

[96] B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 438-9: Herring to Hardwicke, 1 Dec. 1749.

dangerous attempt, as productive of greater troubles, than ye good expected from it could compensate'.[97] The abandonment of this policy in 1736, marked by ministerial support for the Mortmain and Quaker Tithe Bills, resulted in the bishops' opposition to the latter and the alienation of a minority of the bench from the Walpole administration. Its subsequent reassertion was demonstrated most strongly by Walpole's unequivocal opposition to a motion for the repeal of the Test Act in 1739.[98] Newcastle, Pelham and Hardwicke maintained Walpole's policy of attempting to prevent the parliamentary debate of religious questions, although their personal allegiance to the Church of England was perhaps stronger than Walpole's. There was, indeed, 'nothing that Mr Pelham is more averse to, than that any thing relating to Church affairs should be started in Parliament'.[99] It was considerations such as these that informed Hardwicke's opposition to Bishop Maddox's motion in 1754 for a committee to take into consideration the religious and moral state of the nation. Hardwicke argued that the terms of reference proposed were too general, and he feared that it might be extended 'to the Consideration of the *Whole Ecclesiastical Constitution*'.[100] Even the more radical whigs among the ministerialists shared these concerns. Horace Walpole believed that the easing of the terms of subscription to the 39 Articles was not only 'a most rational thing', but also 'in its selfe desirable, & right'. However, as late as 1751 he believed that it was 'impossible', since to attempt it would 'raise a great Flame all over the kingdom' and give to the 'Lay-Jacobites', who, he believed, were 'more numerous . . . than ever', an opportunity to attack the government.[101]

Even during the apparent political calm of the Pelhamite years it is clear that the ministry's desire to avoid the debate of religious issues was not simply the product of paranoia. In the localities the division between church and dissent still often dominated politics.[102] In some areas, such as Yorkshire, religion had indeed ceased to be a central political issue by the 1740s, and the vast majority of the lower clergy were to be found supporting whig candidates at elections.[103] By contrast in Lancashire, for example, the tories still claimed a monopoly of Church of England sentiment, much to the irritation of many local whigs.[104] One, Richard Kay, a presbyterian, lamented in 1747 the prevalency of 'Church Bigotry' and complained that there were 'too many

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97 *A letter on a proposed alteration of the 39 Articles. By Lord Walpole* (London, 1863): Walpole to Nockold Thompson, 12 Dec. 1751.

98 Stephen Taylor, 'Sir Robert Walpole, the Church of England, and the Quakers Tithe Bill of 1736', *H.J.*, xxvm (1985), 51-77; *The correspondence and diary of Philip Doddridge, D.D.*, ed. John Humphreys (5 vols., London, 1829-31), m. 364-8: David Fordyce to Philip Doddridge, 23 Apr. 1739; William Coxe, *Memoirs of the life and administration of Sir Robert Walpole, earl of Orford* (3 vols., London, 1798), m. 520: John Selwyn to Thomas Townshend, 7 Apr. 1739.

99 Walpole, *Letter on the 39 Articles*.

100 The motion was defeated without a division, and Maddox, whom Herring referred to as that 'active and vigilant Spirit', entered his protest. Portland MSS, Nottingham University Library, PWV/121/107: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 8 Feb. 1754; *LJ.*, xxvm, 193, 201.

101 Walpole, *Letter on the 39 Articles*.

102 Linda Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy. The tory party 1715-60* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 107.

103 J.F. Quinn, 'Yorkshiremen go to the polls: county contests in the early eighteenth century', *Northern History*, xxi (1985), 137-74.

104 S.W. Baskerville, 'The management of the tory interest in Lancashire and Cheshire, 1714-47', D.Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1977, pp. 296-8.

now a Days' in the Church who 'run Matters into an Extream, place Religion in that wherein it really is not, say too much about their Church Priviledges'. Such 'Bigotry' found its expression in the attempts of the 'High Church Men' at Baldingstone 'to wrest the Power of the School out of the Hands of the Presbyterians', in order to ensure that local children were educated according to the principles of the Church of England.[105] These prejudices were reflected among the clergy themselves. In the Chester election the same year, 20 of 27 clergymen supported the tories, and one other divided his votes between the parties.[106]

The ministry hoped to prevent these divisions from surfacing in parliament. The fragility of this policy, however, was dramatically revealed by the Jewish Naturalization Act of 1753, an apparently minor measure which the bishops believed was 'totally unconnected' with 'our Religion and Church Establishment'.[107] The Jew Bill was a very limited proposal allowing individual Jews to bring private naturalization bills into parliament. Indeed, it was possible for it to be viewed only as a rationalization of the law, since Jews who resided in the American colonies for seven years could already obtain naturalization under an act of 1740.[108] The bill's passage through the house of lords and then the house of commons aroused little comment until its third reading in the commons. Then a public clamour began against it. It was denounced as inconsistent 'with our established religion' and the national character of the Church, 'for there is a great difference between . . . giving the Jews the protection of the laws whilst they live honestly and peaceably among us, and . . . naturalizing or associating them into our society'.[109] Rather than ceasing when the bill received the royal assent, this clamour increased throughout the summer and autumn.[110] Thomas Herring saw it as the product of 'Faction working upon the good old Spirit of High Church', an opinion echoed by Lord Temple.[111] To Robert Ord, M.P. for Morpeth, it resembled 'the Sacheverel madness'.[112] The ministry surrendered. On the first day of the next session the duke of Newcastle, seconded by Bishop Secker, brought in a bill for the act's repeal.[113] Some, notably the earl of Halifax, who had introduced the bill, were concerned that its repeal in the present circumstances would lessen 'the Authority of Parliament'.[114] But ministerial speakers argued that, however unjustified the agitation, as the act was of little importance its

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105 *The diary of Richard Kay, 1716-51 of Baldingstone, near Bury, a Lancashire doctor*, ed. W. Brockbank and F. Kenworthy (Chetham Society, 3rd series, xvi, 1968), pp. 123-4: 25 and 26 Nov. 1747. For similar happenings at Bury, see *ibid.*, p. 116: 1 Dec. 1746.

106 Baskerville, 'Tory interest in Lancashire and Cheshire', p. 301.

107 B.L. Add. 32733, fol. 162: Herring to Newcastle, 30 Oct. 1753; *Parl. Hist.*, xv, 114-15 (Secker).

108 13 Geo. II, c. 7. See T.W. Perry, *Public opinion, propaganda and politics in eighteenth-century England. A study of the Jew Bill of 1753* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), p. 15.

109 *Parl. Hist.*, xv, 139-40 (Thomas Prowse).

110 Perry, *Public opinion, propaganda and politics*, cpts. 5-6.

111 B.L. Add. 32733, fol. 162: Herring to Newcastle, 30 Oct. 1753; Warwickshire Record Office, CR 1368 Box 5/5/7: John Dobson to John Mordaunt, 20 Nov. 1753, quoted in Colley, *In defiance of oligarchy*, p. 89.

112 *H.M.C.*, 15th Report, Appendix, Part vi, p. 207: Robert Ord to the earl of Carlisle, 17 July 1753.

113 Perry, *Public opinion, propaganda and politics*, pp. 146-7.

114 B.L. Add. 32733, fol. 237: Halifax to Newcastle, 12 Nov. 1753; Add. 35599, fols. 125-6: Herring to Hardwicke, 8 Nov. 1753.

repeal was an act of prudence, not of weakness.[115] In the house of commons Henry Pelham was explicit about the ministry's fear of the revival of religious controversy. Like Ord he compared the agitation over the Jew Bill with the Sacheverell affair. The consideration which 'alone' decided him for repeal was that 'I have always observed, that when religion is brought into any dispute, reason is from that moment laid aside, and it becomes on both sides a sort of enthusiasm, the effect of which has been fatal to this nation'.[116]

What the discussions about the American episcopate reveal most clearly, however, is not differences between ministers and bishops about church reform, but the common ground which they shared. The bishops were equally fearful of the repercussions of political controversy over the Church, and it is this attitude which most helps to explain why the tensions between ministers and bishops over the colonial episcopate did not lead to fiercer public criticism of the ministry or to increased opposition in parliament. It is important to stress that Newcastle, Hardwicke, Pelham and Horace Walpole never denied the desirability of the proposals on purely ecclesiastical grounds. Halifax and Bedford, though at a later date, appear privately to have admitted it.[117] Their opposition was based on political considerations. Likewise, the bishops admitted that it was primarily a question of government policy. They recognized that the union of church and state made it so, but they were well aware of the benefits of that union and had no wish to challenge its foundations. Herring consistently opposed Sherlock's attempt to force the question, and was especially concerned at his making it public before the S.P.G., not through any doubt in the strength of the Church's case, but because the ministry were not prepared to propose the establishment of an American episcopate. He admitted to Sherlock, 'that speaking as an Ecclesiastick, he & I agreed, but as this was a point of Policy in our Government, I thought our Governors the only Judges of it'.[118] Twenty-five years later Bishop Green of Lincoln, for whom Herring had secured the mastership of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and who, like Herring, was closely connected with the Yorke family, made a plea for bishops in his sermon before the S.P.G. But he shared the opinion of his patron that the Society should 'submit . . . to the wisdom of government, to judge and to make use of the most proper opportunity'.[119]

It is not, perhaps, surprising, that some bishops should have been more sympathetic to the ministry's case than others. More remarkable is the extent to which these attitudes were shared by the more vocal advocates of American episcopacy, like Secker and even Sherlock. In the late 1750s and early 1760s Secker constantly emphasized to his American correspondents that it was useless for the Church to press for bishops until it had the support of ministers, and on one

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[115] *Parl. Hist.*, xv, 93, 99-103.

[116] *Parl. Hist.*, xv, 142.

[117] Chandler, *Life of Johnson*, pp. 196-9: Secker to Johnson, 22 May 1764; L.P.L., MS 1123/II/213: Secker to Johnson, 4 Nov. 1760.

[118] B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 50-1: Herring to Hardwicke, 21 Oct. 1751. Herring did make some private efforts to persuade the ministry to do something for the colonial church. B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 409-12: Herring to Hardwicke, 7 Apr. 1749; Add. 35599, fols. 30-1: Herring to Hardwicke, 6 Nov. 1750.

[119] Green, *Sermon before the S.P.G.*, p. 24. For Herring's role in the Corpus Christi mastership election of 1750, see Nichols, *Literary illustrations*, vi, 794: Herring to Heaton et al., 16 June 1750.

occasion he alleged that the design had been checked by Sherlock's 'unseasonable step' in attempting to push the matter against the wishes of the administration.[120] There were also limits beyond which Sherlock was not prepared to go in attempting to persuade the ministry to adopt his proposals. After informing the S.P.G. meeting of 25 May 1750 of the opinion of the regency and advising them to suspend proceedings, he gave as his reason that 'It has been my own care & shall be, never to engage in any thing contrary to the Opinion of those Noble Persons, who the King entrusts wth the Affairs of the Publick, & I think it would be peculiarly unbecoming the Clergy to act otherwise'.[121]

In agreeing with the politicians that the creation of an American episcopate was a political question, the bishops did not only mean that the decision when and how their proposals were to be put into effect should be made by the ministry. They were also aware that the domestic political repercussions from an untimely agitation of the affair that worried the ministry would be as damaging to the Church as to the state. Herring was expressing precisely this fear of 'the revival of a frightful Spirit, wch . . . has been dormant for some years', when he warned that the letter of thanks from the Massachusetts assembly to the dissenting deputies might provoke a violent reaction among the London clergy.[122] Bishop Gilbert disapproved of Sherlock's placing the American affair before the S.P.G. on the same grounds, believing that the tory clergy might take advantage of his action to raise an agitation.[123] The bishops were, therefore, peculiarly vulnerable to the argument of Horace Walpole and Newcastle that raising the issue would place the Church back at the centre of politics. The majority of Walpole's letter to Sherlock was devoted to the political controversy that would attend the public debate of the question, but Secker, in a long reply to this letter, never once addressed this argument directly. He could only retort that to disapprove the scheme might exasperate some of the clergy.[124] It is significant that none of the bishops ever answered this, the most important of the ministerial arguments against episcopacy.

This is not to suggest that they ignored the argument. It indicates, on the contrary, how susceptible they were to the force of it, because they shared precisely the same fears. Indeed, some bishops made serious attempts to find expedients to lessen the force of these arguments. As Secker admitted, the major concern was 'contests' in parliament. Hence he suggested that to circumvent the need for parliament to create new dioceses, or to extend the diocese of London to include the colonies, the bishop of London could appoint suffragans under the old act of Henry

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[120] E.g., L.P.L., MS 1123/II/121: Secker to Johnson, 27 Sept. 1758; ibid., II/207: Secker to William Smith, 12 Oct. 1760. There is no evidence to suggest that Secker expressed this opinion of Sherlock's proposals in 1750.

[121] B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 11-12: Herring to Hardwicke, 26 May 1750.

[122] Herring warned that the clergy would not relish being told by a body of dissenters that 'Episcopacy is contrary to the Liberties of a Protestant Country'. B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 436-7: Herring to Hardwicke, 26 Nov. 1749.

[123] B.L. Add. 32721, fols. 109-10: Gilbert to Newcastle, 14 June 1750. Sherlock himself appears to have been inconsistent in raising the American episcopate question at the S.P.G., for he had earlier criticized Bishop Maddox for a similar action, presumably in 1745. B.L. Add. 32721, fol. 49: Hardwicke to Newcastle, 6 June 1750.

[124] Secker, 'A letter to the right honourable Horatio Walpole, Esq. written Jan. 9, 1750-1. Concerning bishops in America', in *Works*, vi, 503.

VIII,[125] renew Bishop Gibson's patent for colonial jurisdiction, and send the suffragans to America as his commissaries, where their episcopal character would give them power to confirm and ordain.[126] Secker was not the only person to think along these lines, and there is evidence that Gibson also examined ways in which the king could regularize the position of the Church in America by his prerogative power.[127] Such expedients, however, could never have wholly removed the objections, and it was likely that such a conjunction of the royal prerogative and 'church power' would have provoked equally fierce attacks upon the ministry.

Thus, just as the American episcopate question provides an insight into ministerial attitudes to church reform, so it helps to illuminate the dilemma of the bishops. They had no doubt of the necessity of reform to enable the Church to fight the 'corruption of manners' more effectively. But they were as afraid of the revival of politico-religious controversy as the whig politicians. Not only might such disputes damage the administration, but also, and more importantly, there was no guarantee that the Church would emerge strengthened from them. Experience had shown that attempts at reform both divided the Church and provided anti-clericals with opportunities to attack the establishment. It is hardly surprising to find Gibson expressing concern about the latter in the 1730s: 'it was not safe . . . to let anything come into parliament relating to either [Church or clergy], lest some peevish or spiteful motion of one kind or another should be grafted on to it'.[128] At this time the Church was so beseiged that its best, perhaps its only, hope was to exploit the divisions among 'those who are for destroying it'.[129] But as late as 1761 Secker used the same argument when publicly criticizing suggestions that a licence should be sought from the crown to enable convocation to embark on the reform of church discipline. Such an action, he suggested, would merely unite the Church's enemies and provoke renewed attacks on it. He also feared that disputes about the rights of convocation would be revived along with the institution, re-creating the bitter divisions among the clergy which had made convocation so barren and had diverted the Church from its pastoral responsibilities.[130] Such views were widely shared. Convocation during Anne's reign had seen a succession of 'triffling' disputes turn 'men from considering wt might be of real service to ye Church to ye perusing of wt must always be of real disservice to it unnecessary & uncharitable quarrells & dissensions'.[131] Its history caused William Warburton and Richard Hurd, who was himself to become a bishop later in the century, to agree on the '*expediency*', if not the '*right*', of its continued prorogation. Warburton felt that 'we have avoided

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[125] 26 Hen. VIII, c. 14. This act, however, made no provision for the maintenance of suffragans, besides allowing them to hold two benefices with cure of souls.

[126] Secker, *Works*, v, 504; B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 38-9: Herring to Hardwicke, 24 Nov. 1750.

[127] B.L. Add. 35908, fols. 95-6: 'Ld Bp of London's Quaeries concerning the exercise of Eccl: Jurisdn: in ye Plantations', n.d.

[128] Quoted in Sykes, *Sheldon to Secker*, p. 203.

[129] B.L. Add. 39311, fol. 39: Benson to Berkeley, 7 Feb. 1738.

[130] Secker, 'Oratio quam coram synodo provinciae Cantuariensis anno 1761 convocata habendam scripserat, sed morbo praepeditus non habuit, archiepiscopus', in *Works*, v, 508-25.

[131] B.L. Add. 39313, fol. 83: 'Charge delivd to ye Clergy of ye Archdeaconry of Berks. at ye Primary Visitatn . . . 1722', by Martin Benson.

one extreme only by falling into an another', but he did not doubt the 'mischiefs' that would be the consequence of an active convocation.[132]

In the intervening years two archbishops had voiced similar sentiments. Potter was as much influenced as Secker by what he had witnessed during Anne's reign. His policy of '*non movere quieta*' was founded on the knowledge that 'the unsettling any regular Establishment often proves a greater Evil, than any of these Inconveniences, or Defects, which it is intended to remedy'.[133] In 'the present unsettled state of things', moreover, his caution received the wholehearted support of his episcopal rival, and Newcastle's confidant, Thomas Sherlock.[134] Potter's successor at Canterbury, Thomas Herring, was equally averse to attempts at reform. He too disapproved the idea of convocation doing business, 'for these are no times for Stirs in the Church, & I own, our present Establishment and Liturgy is good enough for me'.[135] He was perhaps less inclined to favour change than many of his brethren, admitting that he studied 'nothing so much as quiet'. But if he was content with the present establishment, nonetheless his dislike of reform was founded primarily on his concern about the consequences. Herring was quite candid on this point. He told his cousin, William Herring, that he felt unable to support a bill, drawn up by a clergyman, Ferdinando Warner, proposing a provision for the widows and children of the clergy, 'for such are the Times, every Innovation begets Faction'.[136]

These attitudes were also apparent in the bishops' response to the other major issue of reform to surface, albeit briefly, in this period: comprehension. During the mid-1740s both Secker and Herring expressed their enthusiasm for the idea, and both were also convinced that the majority of their brethren felt the same way. Certainly Sherlock and Gooch, the two men on the bench who had close links with tory clergy and might therefore be supposed to be least favourable to comprehension, were involved in discussions with Samuel Chandler, and both seemed willing to agree to Chandler's major demands: that ceremonies should be left indifferent, the Articles expressed 'in Scripture words', and the Athanasian creed discarded.[137] Given such unanimity among the episcopate it is hard to see why some reform was not proposed. Sherlock put his finger on part of the answer when he raised with Chandler the question whether nonconformist ministers would have to be re-ordained by bishops. This was a vexed issue, which had dogged every discussion about a broader national church since 1660.[138]

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[132] *Letters from a late eminent prelate to one of his friends* (2nd edn., London, 1809), pp. 309-14: Hurd to Warburton, n.d., Warburton to Hurd, 14 Oct. 1760.

[133] B.L. Add. 32701, fol. 96: Sherlock to Newcastle, 4 Sept. 1743; John Potter, 'A charge delivered to the clergy of the diocese of Oxford, in July, 1725', in *The theological works of Dr John Potter late lord archbishop of Canterbury* (3 vols., Oxford, 1753), I, 416.

[134] B.L. Add. 32701, fol. 96: Sherlock to Newcastle, 4 Sept. 1743.

[135] B.L. Add. 35599, fols. 217-8: Herring to Hardwicke, 10 Oct. 1754.

[136] Nottingham University Library, PWV/121/114: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 5 Jan. 1755. For Warner's earlier efforts, see *Scheme of a fund*; *Ecclesiastical history*, II, 661-5.

[137] Nichols, *Literary illustrations*, III, 485: Secker to Philip Doddridge, 21 Feb. 1745; Nuttall, *Correspondence of Doddridge*, pp. 267, 281-2: John Barker to Doddridge, 2 Feb. 1748, Philip Doddridge to Mercy Doddridge, 4 Aug. 1748.

[138] Nuttall, *Correspondence of Doddridge*, p. 267.

Nor did the attitudes of either churchmen or dissenters help the negotiations. There is no reason to suppose that the bishops' support for comprehension was insincere, but there was a genuine ambivalence in their feelings towards dissent. It was revealed in part by Gibson in 1735 when replying to a suggestion from John Hough, bishop of Worcester, and one of the advocates of comprehension in 1689, that those plans should be revived. Gibson wished that reform had been achieved then. But he believed that since the 1690s the prejudices of dissenters against the Church of England had increased rather than diminished and proposals for a comprehension would merely encourage them in their attacks on the church establishment.[139] The Church's confusion about the character of dissent was represented much more accurately, however, by Herring. While reaffirming his support for 'the Establishment', he was favourable to pleas for a comprehension and maintained friendly relations with several prominent dissenters.[140] Yet he also shared the antipathies of a clegyman like William Cole, who grouped presbyterians and independents together with deists and atheists in a league against the establishment and even 'Christianity itself'.[141] Herring denounced 'this restless set of men', whose attempts to repeal the Test Act were, in reality, aimed at overturning the establishment and securing one for themselves in its place.[142] Such views exaggerated the hostility of dissenters to the established Church, but Gibson was correct in seeing a change in their attitudes since the days of men like Richard Baxter, who had still regarded themselves as members of the national church. Church discipline among the presbyterians had considerably weakened since the Revolution and many dissenters believed that much more separated them from the Church of England than a few ceremonies or even differences about the form of church government. Doddridge and Chandler were possibly in a minority in wishing for a comprehension. The majority may have had more in common with those who, on hearing rumours of Chandler's discussions, cried out, '- We Wont be comprehended - We Won't be comprehended'.[143]

But a more important concern was fear of political controversy. What perhaps did most to widen the gap between old dissent and the Church of England was the development, especially among presbyterians, of a liberal theology, emphasizing individual liberty to inquire freely into the scriptural grounds of accepted christian doctrines.[144] Paradoxically, this led a number of presbyterian ministers to conform, since they found the Church of England rather more tolerant than their own communion of the arian tendencies to which their inquiries had led them.[145] But

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139 Gibson Papers, Bodleian Library, MS Dep. c. 237, fols. 60-1: Gibson to Hough, n.d.

140 Nottingham University Library, PWV/120/54: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 26 Dec. 1747; Nuttall, *Correspondence of Doddridge*, p. xxxi.

141 *The Blecheley diary of William Cole 1765-7*, ed. F.G. Stokes (London, 1931), p. 178.

142 Nottingham University Library, PWV/120/18: Thomas Herring to William Herring, 17 Jan. 1739; PWV/121/113: same to same, 7 Dec. 1754; Pearce Papers, Westminster Abbey Library and Muniment Room, WAM 64581: Herring to Pearce, 1 Jan. 1755.

143 Nuttall, *Correspondence of Doddridge*, p. 267.

144 Roger Thomas, 'Presbyterians in transition', in C.G. Bolam et al., *The English presbyterians from Elizabethan puritanism to modern unitarianism* (London, 1968), pp. 151-74; Jeremy Goring, 'The break-up of old dissent', in *ibid.*, pp. 175-218.

145 Thomas, 'Presbyterians in transition', p. 173.

for many presbyterians it made subscription to a set of doctrinal articles, and therefore conformity, more difficult. This is not to suggest that some members of the Church of England did not share similar ideas. Indeed, at about the same time as Herring's conversations with Doddridge, the archbishop learnt of some 'alarming Evidence, That some . . . scheme of Reformation of our Establishment in its Doctrine, Discipline & Liturgy, is now on foot, and ready for publication'.[146] This was probably the *Free and candid disquisitions*, published in June 1749. It proposed the reform of the establishment along more liberal lines, and was the first of a series of proposals attacking subscription culminating in Archdeacon Blackburne's *Confessional* and the Feathers Tavern petition of 1772. Sherlock's willingness to concede that the 39 Articles should be expressed in 'Scripture words' indicated the extent to which such tendencies were prevalent within the Church, although there is no doubt that Sherlock and many others believed that Scripture supported the doctrine of the Church of England, and that free inquiry, if conducted impartially and with due recognition of the limits of human reason, could only confirm that doctrine. Yet the re-writing of the articles had not been an issue in 1689 and its importance in the 1740s provides the key to the failure of comprehension.[147] Geoffrey Nuttall had argued convincingly that 'Chandler's conversations, Doddridge's interview and the *Free and Candid Disquisitions* were all part of a single operation'.[148] Links between the dissenting advocates of comprehension and the critics of subscription within the Church make it clear that they did not share Sherlock's certainty about orthodox doctrines. In itself a sensitive issue, the widening of the debate about comprehension to include the question of subscription to the doctrinal articles would inevitably have been divisive and controversial. Herring emphatically refused to embark on any policy that would be attended with such controversy and danger, stating that 'as to . . . the Establishment, I shall stick by it till somebody shows me a Better & at the same time points out a clear method, how to bring it about in practice'.[149] He summed up his attitude to reform thus: 'there is no rest for the soles of our Feet, but by standing upon a good-naturd Establishment wth a legal Toleration appendant'.[150]

Church reform, therefore, was not a neglected issue in the mid-eighteenth century. Most clergymen and many laity recognized that, however primitive and pure in doctrine, the administrative structure of the Church of England was hindering it in its fight against immorality, irreligion and corruption. Many improvements in diocesan administration were made by the

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146 B.L. Add. 32716, fols. 213-6: Herring to Newcastle, 12 Sept. 1748.

147 For the recognition among churchmen that doctrinal differences now divided them from the dissenters, as well as those of government and ceremonies, see [Thomas Sherlock?], *The history of the Test Act: in which the mistakes in some late writings against it are rectified, and the importance of it to the Church explain'd* (London, 1732), pp. 17-19.

148 Geoffrey Nuttall, 'Chandler, Doddridge and the archbishop. A study in eighteenth-century ecumenism', *Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society*, 1 (1973), 53.

149 B.L. Add. 35598, fols. 419-20: Herring to Hardwicke, 18 July 1749.

150 B.L. Add. 32724, fol. 164: Herring to Newcastle, 5 Mar. 1751.

bishops to improve the pastoral effectiveness of the Church. Any fundamental reform, and even many minor reforms, however, required parliamentary action. Yet for most of the eighteenth century ministers and church leaders co-operated to prevent this question being discussed in parliament, a policy that did much to contribute to the political calm of the Pelhamite years. It was precisely such calm that ministers wished to achieve, fearing that debates about the Church would reinvigorate toryism and revive the party strife of Anne's reign, threatening the stability of the administration and disrupting the business of government. The bishops were prepared to acquiesce in, and even support, this policy, not through indifference, but because they believed such conflict would be at least as damaging to the Church as to the state. Even if reform proposals were not exploited by anti-clericals to attack the Church and weaken the establishment, controversy about and within the Church could only undermine its pastoral work. Their fears were reinforced by memories of Anne's reign. However fertile it may have been in ideas, every reform had implications for such sensitive issues as 'church power', or the position of the established Church within the state, or the rights of the dissenting sects. Divisions among clergy and laity alike halted the impetus of reform, and the period's only achievement was the foundation of Queen Anne's Bounty. On the other hand, the conflicts of the period inflicted wounds on both Church and nation which took many years to heal. By the early decades of the nineteenth century, in contrast, the issue of church reform, enabling the Church to work more effectively to combat moral and spiritual corruption, had been divorced from that of church-state relations. The latter was, indeed, still divisive and became an important source of party controversy in the 1830s. But many of the laity's fears of 'church power' had disappeared, and the successes of the church reform movement of those years were founded on a consensus within parliament and the Church about the necessity of reform and a willingness to find agreement on the details of that reform.[151]

[151] See Richard Brent, *Liberal anglican politics: whiggery, religion and reform 1830-1841* (Oxford, 1987), intro.

10. Conclusion

The 1740s and 1750s were relatively peaceful decades in the religious history of the eighteenth century. Only the Jew Bill of 1753 brought religious divisions to the forefront of parliamentary politics. In contrast the earlier years of the whig supremacy had witnessed first the Bangorian controversy and then the virulent anti-clericalism of the 1730s, while from the 1760s political debate was aroused by attempts to revise the liturgy of the Church of England, to relax subscription to the 39 Articles, and to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts. To some extent the mid-century calm can be attributed to the conscious attempt by the whig ministers to avoid religious controversy. In part this policy was pursued with the aim of remaining in power and maintaining the whig oligarchy. Religious controversy was feared because it was divisive and gave the tories the opportunity to exploit the popular cry, 'the Church in danger', as they had done to such effect during the reign of Queen Anne. The avoidance of religious controversy necessitated suppressing discussion of church reform. But it would be misleading to see in this policy the subordination of the interests of the Church to those of the state or the dominant political group within it. The bishops, admittedly whigs themselves, were prepared to acquiesce in this policy because they shared ministers' desire to keep the Church out of parliamentary politics, fearing that a repetition of the conflict of Anne's reign would damage its pastoral work. Nonetheless, in 1743 and 1748 they demonstrated that they were prepared, as a body, to oppose the ministry when they believed that it was promoting measures inimical to the interests of religion or the Church.[1] It is perhaps significant that Newcastle and Pelham were more successful in stifling discussion of religious issues than their predecessor, Walpole. Walpole's reputed scepticism and intimacy with noted anti-clericals like Lord Hervey cast doubt on his claims that the Church was in no danger under a whig regime, whereas the reassurances of the Pelhams, both of whom were prominent churchmen, carried greater conviction despite the lapses of the Gin Bill and the Bill for disarming the Highlands.[2]

Moreover, as was stressed in chapter 1, the relationship between church and state in the mid-eighteenth century cannot be understood if the Church is seen simply as a potential political issue. The Church was an integral part of the domestic apparatus of the English state, entrusted with the provision of education and charity and, above all, with the responsibility of teaching men to be good citizens. In this way the relationship between church and state resembled that which prevailed through most of Europe during the early modern period. Bishops and clergy were acutely aware that they were, in part, agents of the state, as they demonstrated by their propaganda efforts to raise the nation to the defence of the Hanoverian succession during the '45 rebellion. The king's ministers were also conscious of the importance of the Church's secular

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1 See above, pp. 173-7.

2 See above, pp. 121-2, 173.

role. The ministry's ecclesiastical policy during these years was directed by the duke of Newcastle. His first priority was administrative; his overriding concern the good government of both church and state. Newcastle's management of ecclesiastical patronage was dominated, not by parliamentary politics, but by a desire to ensure that the Church was governed by men who were both loyal to the Hanoverian succession and capable pastors and administrators.

But the concern of both clergy and politicians with the secular duties of the Church did not mean that the whig supremacy saw the subjection of the Church to the demands of an increasingly secular state. The dominant theories of church and state in the mid-eighteenth century did not follow the arguments of Hoadly and Warburton that politics and religion were separate spheres of activity. Church and state were believed to be linked in an indissoluble union; they were still regarded as two different aspects of the same whole. The assumption that God intervened directly in the affairs of men and nations required that a christian society be governed by christian principles, while for the individual salvation was believed to be more easily attainable within the framework of a christian commonwealth. In their disposal of ecclesiastical preferments Newcastle and Hardwicke, churchmen themselves, demonstrated that they accepted the trust of patronage. Above all, through their charges and sermons the bishops ensured that their clergy never lost sight of their responsibility for the salvation of souls. Practical christianity was emphasized primarily as a religious rather than a social duty.[3]

The eighteenth century in England was, however, a time of change, a fact which has often been obscured in this dissertation by its concentration on only two decades. Religion remained a central issue in politics until late in the nineteenth century, but the role of the Church as an institution in English society had changed fundamentally by then. The Toleration Act of 1689 was a significant point in the process, a recognition that in some respects the Church of England was only one denomination among several. But that act was accommodated within the concept of the confessional state. Later in the eighteenth century the theory of church-state relations outlined in this dissertation was under increasing pressure. The culmination of this process came in 1828-9 with the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts and Catholic Emancipation, but its main impluse was the gradual change in attitudes towards Roman Catholics and protestant dissenters, as more and more people came to accept that heterodox religious opinions should not be a bar to participation in civil life.[4] Consequently, the early and mid-nineteenth century witnessed a renewed and often virulent debate about the nature of the Church: whether it should be a broad, comprehensive, and, above all, national, church, emphasizing the general principles of christianity, or whether it was the repository of the only true faith.

At the same time the Church was declining in importance as an agent of the state. The reform of the poor laws, the beginnings of state involvement in elementary education and the foundation of the University of London were some of the events which marked the diminution of its role in

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[3] See above, pp. 41-66, 89-90, 115-20, 144-7.

[4] For changing attitudes towards Catholics, see C.M. Haydon, 'Anti-Catholicism in eighteenth-century England', unpublished D.Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1985.

local government and education. Most significant, however, was the failure of the Church to respond to the problems created by the rapid population growth and urbanization which began in the 1780s. The ineffectiveness of the Church's parochial structure in the increasingly important urban areas was one of the reasons behind the growth of dissent, and by 1851, as the religious census of that year demonstrated, the Church of England could no longer claim the adherence of the vast majority of the nation.[5] In the eighteenth century and earlier the Church's significance had lain in its informal, yet pervasive influence over all aspects of English society. By the mid-nineteenth century it could be of only marginal importance as an institution of government.

[5] Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian church. Part I* (3rd edn., London, 1971), p. 369.

Appendix. A note on terminology: high church, low church and latitudinarian.

The terms high church, low church and latitudinarian, particularly the latter two, have been little used in this dissertation. This is largely the consequence of scepticism about their usefulness. The justification for the labelling by historians of individuals or groups of men must be either to describe contemporary perceptions or to elucidate past reality. When describing the nineteenth-century Church, especially after the emergence of the Oxford Movement, these three terms perform both these functions. When applied to the eighteenth century, however, it is far less clear that they throw light on the religious opinions of the period. Rather, nineteenth-century resonances often obscure the eighteenth-century reality.

The descriptions high church and low church have been usefully applied to religious divisions during the reigns of William and Anne, distinguishing those who sought firm political action to restore the old church establishment through the reimposition of religious uniformity from those who were prepared to accept and work within the framework created by the Toleration Act. The depth of these divisions was strikingly manifested by the Convocation controversy. But if the church parties which emerged during these years may be described as high church and low church, as contemporaries did themselves, nonetheless it is important not to assume that these terms have the same meaning as in the nineteenth century. In his stand against the high church claims over convocation Archbishop Tenison may be regarded as one of the leaders of the low church party. Yet he recommended the use of 'Devotional Pictures' and crosses and celebrated monthly communions while he was vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields.[1] Likewise Francis Atterbury was one of the most vocal of the high churchmen. His assertions about the rights and privileges of the lower house of convocation were, however, an implicit limitation on the authority of the bishops in the government of the Church.

Later in the eighteenth century the usefulness of these terms is less apparent. Only one of them, high church, was regularly used by contemporaries. But for them its meaning was primarily political. 'High church' was synonymous with 'tory'. When Horace Walpole referred to the 'high Church party', he meant the tory clergy. A similar meaning was attached to the description by those who saw Thomas Sherlock as a potential leader of the 'High-Church' party. Thus, when George II objected to the promotion of Richard Trevor to the see of Durham on the grounds that he was '*a High Church Fellow*', Newcastle replied by assuring the king that Trevor had the support of the Durham whigs.[2] Conversely, contemporaries did not use the phrase high church to

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1 J. Wickham Legg, *English church life from the Restoration to the tractarian movement considered in some of its neglected or forgotten aspects* (London, 1914), p. 145; Edward Carpenter, *Thomas Tenison, archbishop of Canterbury. His life and times* (London, 1948), pp. 19-20. In fact more than one communion service was held each month, but there was a regular celebration on the first Sunday in each month.

2 *A letter on a proposed alteration of the 39 Articles. By Lord Walpole. Written 1751* (London, 1863), pp. 5-8. For Sherlock, see William Warburton, 'Dedication to the edition of Books IV. V. VI. of The divine legation of Moses; 1765', in *The works of the right reverend William Warburton, D.D. lord bishop of Gloucester* (new edn., 12 vols., London, 1811), IV, 6-7; B.L. Add. 32717, fol. 38; Henry Pelham to Newcastle, 7 Dec. 1743; Add. 35598, fols. 378-9; Herring to Hardwicke, 6 Jan. 1749. For Trevor, see above pp. 81-2.

describe opinions which were regarded as characteristic of high churchmen in the nineteenth century. The dissenter, Philip Furneaux, did not refer to those who held an elevated conception of episcopacy as high churchmen, but as men 'of the old *jure divino* stamp'. Similarly, Edmund Gibson, though repeatedly denounced for clericalism and compared to Archbishop Laud, was not called a high churchman.[3]

To describe eighteenth-century clergymen as high churchmen in any sense other than that used by contemporaries must, therefore, cause confusion. Moreover, to use any of these three phrases, high church, low church, and latitudinarian, obscures eighteenth-century religious sensibilities with later connotations. It has already been argued in this dissertation that the dominant themes of eighteenth-century religious thought were irenicism, charity, and a desire to avoid controversy.[4] Church parties, definable by theological or ecclesiological criteria, simply did not exist.

Latitudinarianism, for example, defined as the belief that christianity is an easy religion, consonant with the temporal interests of men, was a belief held by most mid-eighteenth-century churchmen. The problems of using it in this sense, however, are illustrated by Peter Nockles, who admits that a succession of eighteenth-century divines who might be called high churchmen, including even Joseph Trapp, the manager for Sacheverell at his trial in 1709 and a fierce critic of Hoadly during the Bangorian controversy, were latitudinarians 'in spiritual and moral tone'.[5] The Hutchinsonians, a group invariably labelled high churchmen, condemned the coldness of their contemporaries and practised a more ascetic spirituality. But to define high churchmanship by the criteria of Hutchinsonianism necessarily excludes figures such as Gibson, Sherlock and Secker, all of whom were vigorous defenders of the rights of the Church and advocates of episcopacy. Their conception of the Church as an independent society, deriving its spiritual power and authority from God himself, was seen as a characteristic of high churchmen in the nineteenth century. To round off a confused picture, Secker's theology, for example, could be described as mildly evangelical in tone.

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3 Philip Furneaux, *Letters to the honourable Mr Justice Blackstone, concerning his exposition of the act of toleration, and some positions relative to religious liberty, in his celebrated Commentaries on the laws of England* (2nd edn., London, 1771), p. 193n. For Gibson, see e.g., John Miller, *Religion in the popular prints 1600-1832* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 192-3.

4 See above, pp. 101-3.

5 P.B. Nockles, 'Continuity and change in anglican high-churchmanship in Britain, 1792-1850', unpublished D.Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1982, p. 284.

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Bishopthorpe Papers, Bp. C & P XIX - Correspondence and papers relating to the dean and chapter of York

Bishopthorpe Papers, Bp. C & P XX - Correspondence and papers relating to courts and officials

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Add. MSS 4101-4478 - Birch collection

Add. MS 5828 - Cole collections

Add. MS 5831 - Cole collections

Add. MS 6043 - Reports of the debates of the house of lords from 1735 to 1745 by Bishop Secker

Add. MSS 6460-82 - Papers of Bishop Edward Chandler

Add. MS 32686 - Official correspondence of the Duke of Newcastle. General correspondence, 1697-1723.

Add. MSS 32687-737 - Official correspondence of the duke of Newcastle. Home correspondence, 1724-54.

Add. MSS 32852-945 - Official correspondence of the duke of Newcastle. General correspondence, 1755-62.

Add. MSS 32993-33002 - Memoranda of the duke of Newcastle

Add. MSS 33028-30 - Newcastle papers, relating to the American and West Indian Colonies

Add. MSS 33033-7 - Newcastle papers, relating to proceedings in parliament, 1689-1768

Add. MSS 33051-3 - Newcastle papers, relating to the civil government

Add. MS 33061 - Newcastle papers, relating to local matters, including the Universities

Add. MS 33062 - Memorandum-books of the duke of Newcastle

Add. MSS 33064-72 - Private correspondence of the duke of Newcastle

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Add. MSS 35598-9 - Correspondence of the 1st earl of Hardwicke and Thomas Herring, 1736-57

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Add. MS 35907 - Hardwicke papers: reports and papers relating to the Plantations in America, 1721-36

Add. MS 35908 - Hardwicke papers: opinion of law officers on questions relating to the American Plantations, 1720-33

Add. MSS 35909-12 - Hardwicke papers, relating to the American colonies, 1710-83

Add. MSS 39304-16 - Berkeley papers

Add. MS 41843 - Middleton papers: correspondence and papers, mainly of William Wynne

Add. MSS 61101-710 - Blenheim papers (used selectively)

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MS Add. 7113 - Letters to Samuel Clarke, etc.

MS Add. 8134 - Books and papers of Bishop Horne

MS Add. 8332 - Collections of T.F.J. Kendrick relating to Benjamin Hoadly

MS Add. 8495 - Letters of Mary Fleming to Bishop George Fleming

Cholmondeley (Houghton) Papers

EDR/B/7/1 - Ely Diocesan Records: Rural dean returns, 1779-80

University Archives, Gov. Ac. 1

William L. Clements Library

Shelburne Papers, 59

Cumbria Record Office

DRC/1/7-8 - Episcopal registers of bishops Fleming, Osbaldeston and Lyttelton

DRC/5/22-47 - Visitation call books, 1736-68

D/Sen - Senhouse papers

Exeter College, Oxford

Bray MSS

Gloucester City Library

GDR 2858(1) - Bishop Benson's diocese book

Hastings Public Museum and Art Gallery

Ashburnham of Bromham Papers

Hertfordshire Record Office

A.H. - Ashridge Papers

D/EP - Panshanger MSS

House of Lords Record Office

Proxy Books

Huntington Library, California

L 10 E1 - Gibson Papers

Lambeth Palace Library

MS 1123 - Papers relating to the American Colonies

MS 1130 - Letters and papers respecting transactions at court, 1748-66

MS 1349-50 - Papers of Archbishop Secker

MS 1719 - Miscellaneous letters and papers, 18th century

MS 2872 - Miscellaneous papers

Potter Papers

Secker Papers

Fulham Papers

Papers of the S.P.G.

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