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POLITICAL REACTIONS IN THE GLASGOW CONSTITUENCIES
AT THE GENERAL ELECTIONS OF 1885 AND 1886

A Thesis presented for the degree of Ph.D. at the
University of Glasgow by John F. McCaffrey 1970

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Bibliographical Note: Unless otherwise stated the
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referred to in this thesis is London

In order to provide a recognisable framework for political events in the Glasgow constituencies in the mid-1880's it is necessary to give a preliminary survey of the area in which these events took place. In doing this it is not intended to draw hard and fast lines of causation between the social and economic background of Glasgow and the political behaviour of its inhabitants. The way in which politics were organised and by whom, the way in which events and issues were presented to the electorate give the most coherent and direct explanation of events during the two elections. Nevertheless facts such as the nature of the city's population and its general environmental and historical experience, for instance, or the existence of a large Irish group within that population are important in explaining the framework within which political events took place in 1885 and 1886.

The striking feature of Glasgow in this period is the large number of its inhabitants. With a population of 511,532 in 1881 it contained more people than the next three largest Scottish cities added together - Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen - and only a little under the combined total when the next largest - Greenock - is added.¹ In addition to its own size, the city, ringed by satellite burghs and suburban areas, formed only a part, albeit the chief one, of a much wider urban concentration.² As the head of the Clydeside region

¹ Census Report. Scotland 1881, I, 147. Pride in its size and importance prompted the city chamberlain to compile a list where, by juggling with the figures, he was able to place it tenth among the great cities of the world. James Nicol, Vital, Social and Economic Statistics of the City of Glasgow 1881-1885 With Observations Thereon, (Glasgow 1885), pp. 11-16. The pioneer work in this field, A.F. Weber, The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century, (first published New York, 1899. Reissued Cornell University Reprints 1963), p. 450, gives a more objective assessment but the importance he attributes to Glasgow in this work explains to some extent the feelings of local pride and uniqueness felt by contemporaries such as Nicol. Contemporary figures of city populations throughout the world in this period are also given in G.G. Chisholm, The Two Hemispheres, (1882).

² Nicol, op. cit., p. 21, and Vital, Social and Economic Statistics of the City of Glasgow With Observations Thereon 1885-1891, (Glasgow 1891), p. 14.

it dominated the surrounding area.¹ This fact explains the awareness of contemporaries of their own consequence and importance and a prominent official in the city's administration can show this even when making a comment on the adverse tendency for Glasgow's rate of population growth to be slowing down at this time: "the development of our staple industry, shipbuilding, with its cognate trades, has not added to the population of Glasgow proper, but has rather attracted to the suburbs the thousands of operatives employed therein. The best life-blood of Glasgow flows out along the banks of the Clyde."²

In addition to its size Glasgow was also remarkable for its population density. With 84 persons to the acre it was conspicuous among the cities of the United Kingdom. Outside of London only Liverpool exceeded it in population and density and Glasgow to a greater degree than Liverpool formed a community within a community.³ As the city's medical officer observed "one acre inhabited by 84 people is not so grave a fact as 6,000 inhabited at the same rate"⁴ especially, one might add as the half million inhabitants of Glasgow formed only the core of the heavily populated, industrialised Clydeside region. Besides the highest density Glasgow also had the highest death rate, the greatest number of persons per room and the greatest number of one apartment houses in Scotland.⁵ Within its boundaries in 1881 126,264 people (24.7% of

¹ "Undoubtedly the first in Scotland for population, trade, industries and wealth ... not merely a home of manufactures, but a seaport and a centre of trade ... the main centre of distribution north of Tweed.... In a local way she is even a metropolis, for she is the base of supply for the West and South-West, for the Highlands and Hebrides, and therefore the goal of all restless folk in these districts." J.H. Muir, Glasgow in 1901, (Glasgow 1901) pp. 43-44.

² J.B. Russell, The Decade 1871-80 in Glasgow - A Sanitary Retrospect, (Glasgow 1881), p. 13.

³ J.B. Russell, The Vital Statistics of the City of Glasgow, (3 parts, Glasgow 1886), I, 35-36.

⁴ Russell, op. cit., I, 34.

⁵ Ibid.

the total population) were born, lived, grew up, created families and died in houses consisting of one small room.¹ Another 228,629 (44.6% of the total population) lived in only two rooms. Altogether 354,893 persons (nearly 70% of the total city population) therefore lived in cramped, often insanitary, and always potentially adverse conditions.² Regarded on this scale it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons with other Scottish cities (and also with other English cities because of the different housing traditions there). Edinburgh, the second largest Scottish city, had just under 17% of its population living in one-room houses. In actual figures, however, this only represented 38,500 persons out of a total population of 228,326 which was less than the number of Glaswegians living in two rooms.³ Such figures show how unique Glasgow's size made it in the context of Scottish, and indeed most British cities. One can easily imagine how magnified the feelings, the tensions, the relationship between human beings must have been in the city at this time. Its inbuilt pressures as well as its size must be kept in mind.

The background to these conditions is largely explained by the rapidity and complexity of Glasgow's economic development in the nineteenth century. This was mainly due to the extent and variety of its natural resources. Like London it occupied the position of a great commercial centre. Like Manchester its climate had made it particularly favourable to the establishment of the textile industry. Finally, like Birmingham it was fortunate to be situated in the middle of a great coal and iron district.⁴ With these advantages the

¹ Russell, an experienced eyewitness, has left a graphic account of these conditions in his pamphlet 'Life in One Room'. This is reproduced in A.K. Chalmers (ed.) Public Health Administration in Glasgow. A Memorial Volume of the Writings of James Burn Russell, (Glasgow 1905), pp. 189-206.

² Russell, Vital Statistics of Glasgow, I, 47, table IV.

³ Russell, loc. cit.

⁴ Weber, Growth of Cities p. 60.

textile industry (with its associated printing, dyeing, and chemical interests) had given it its first experience of widescale industrialisation. On top of this it had then become the centre of the great mid-nineteenth century Scottish iron industry.¹ Finally, growing skill in engineering plus the commercial advantages derived from its geographical and geological position made "Glasgow," "shipbuilding," and "heavy engineering" almost synonymous terms by the late nineteenth century.² By the 1880's, therefore, a very complex economic structure had evolved in Glasgow. In 1891 it was observed that "no other city in the Kingdom presents such a variety of manufacturing industries"³ and, in fact, it was generally recognised that "nearly every important branch of manufacture carried on in any part of the Kingdom is pursued here (in Glasgow) on a large scale."⁴

These developments determined the almost exclusively industrial and

¹ Although never in its own location the main seat of the iron and steel industries it was "nonetheless the focal point of the area in which they are situated." R.H. Campbell in The Third Statistical Account of Scotland. The City of Glasgow, (eds. J. Cunnison and J.B.S. Gilfillan. Glasgow 1958), p. 153. In 1885 there were 127 foundries located in the city. Nicol, Vital, Social and Economic Statistics 1885-1891, p. 305.

² The nineteenth century economic development of Glasgow can best be traced in the following: Notices of Some of the Principal Manufactures of the West of Scotland, (British Association. Glasgow 1876), A. McLean (ed.) Local Industries of Glasgow and the West of Scotland, (British Association. Glasgow 1901), W.S. Cormack, An Economic History of Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering with Special Reference to the West of Scotland, (Ph.D. Thesis. University of Glasgow 1930), J. Cunnison and J.B.S. Gilfillan (eds.) Third Statistical Account of Scotland. The City of Glasgow, and R. Miller and J. Tivy (eds.) The Glasgow Region, (British Association. Glasgow 1958).

³ Nicol, Vital, Social and Economic Statistics 1885-1891, pp. 304-307.

⁴ Chisholm, The Two Hemispheres, p. 74. Some idea of the range can be gathered from the principal exports from its port at this period. In 1885 out of £12.6 million of exports the bulk was taken up by textiles (£6.3m), followed by iron and steel (£1.9m), machinery (£1.3m) and coal (£0.2m). In 1895 the picture was similar except that coal exports had doubled in the period. As well as these dominating interests Glasgow was next in importance to London and Liverpool in the export of glassware, earthenware and books. Annual Statement of Trade of the United Kingdom for 1885, (C.-4820) pp. 196-199 and Annual Statement of Trade of the United Kingdom for 1895, (C.-8097) pp. 258-261.

commercial characteristic of the city's population. The occupational tables in the 1881 Census show that the proportions of Glasgow's working population in these two classifications was considerably higher than the Scottish average.¹ That the city's population was mainly working-class and had very little of an upper or middle class is shown by the fact that despite its size the numbers returned for the professional and domestic classes was considerably less than for Scotland as a whole. This can be seen too from the fact that the large commercial class in Glasgow contained very few merchants and was made up mainly of clerks and bookkeepers (7,893) and commercial travellers (1,717). Out of a total of 12,000 for the classification of merchants, clerks, etc., the merchants numbered only 170.² The low number of domestic servants relative to the great size of Glasgow's population also denotes the absence of any sizeable professional or middle class element. Edinburgh with less than half the size of Glasgow's population employed 16,578 domestic servants to Glasgow's 12,404. In addition the Census listed only 164 lawyers and writers in 1881 in Glasgow. Surrounding suburban areas just outside the city boundary line, however, like Hillhead, Kelvinside, Crosshill and Pollokshields were credited with 411. In fact the post office directories for the period showed that the majority of these were in fact Glasgow lawyers with their practices, clients

¹ Census Report. Scotland 1881. Tables of Occupations. These show the following proportions:-

<u>Class</u>	<u>Order</u>	<u>% of Glasgow Work-force</u>	<u>% of Scottish Work-force</u>
I	Professional	4.9	6.0
II	Domestic	7.6	11.0
III	Commercial	13.8	8.2
V	Industrial	73.2	58.0

Up to the Census of 1911 all occupations were classified according to the occupation of the employer. Like all figures, therefore, these given above have to be used with reservations. In broad outline, however, they show the main features. Census Report. Scotland 1911, vol. I, part 2, p. 48.

² This and other figures mentioned here are calculated from the occupational tables given in the 1881 Census for Scotland.

and interests within the city although their domiciles lay outwith its actual boundaries.¹

At this time, therefore, the actual city area of the seven Glasgow constituencies contained a predominately working class population: and this was so because its middle classes were technically non-resident since they lived just outside the city boundaries in the contiguous suburban areas. Aware of this the town council in 1885, seizing the opportunity afforded by the current redistribution of parliamentary constituencies, tried to ensure that Glasgow's future political importance would reflect its size and position. Representing to Mr. Gladstone and the Boundary Commissioners that parliamentary redistribution would offer a first-class opportunity to revise and enlarge the city boundary they proposed the absorption of the small burgh and suburban areas encircling the city. The council hoped in this way to remove the barriers to the city's further extension.² The Boundary Commissioners, however, reported in 1885 that they had felt unable to accede to this request since they were precluded by their instructions "from adopting any other boundaries than the existing ones ... between counties and burghs" or recommending "any extension of boundary which would disturb the apportionment of representation made by the [Redistribution of Seats] Bill."³

In forming the seven new seats to which Glasgow became entitled in 1885

¹ Nicol, Vital Statistics of Glasgow 1881-1885, p. 281. Increased railway facilities and the growth of cheap tramway networks had extended the opportunities for mobility lower down the social scale by 1903 by allowing "the lower middle-class population facilities for returning from their work in the town to homes in the suburbs" Glasgow Municipal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, (Glasgow 1904), minutes of evidence, p. 84. The reverse was also true for Glasgow working-men who worked outside but lived inside the city. Nicol, op. cit., p. 282 and Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes 1884-1885, [C. 4409 - I], vol. V, p. 48, Qn. 19,443.

² Report of the Glasgow Boundaries Commission 1888, [C. 5382], xlvi, vol. I, appendix I, passim.

³ Report of the Boundary Commissioners for Scotland 1885, [C. 4288], p. 6.

the Boundary Commissioners, therefore, were limited to dealing with the area of the municipal burgh of Glasgow. The old single burgh constituency area was extended in only a minor way to conform to the municipal area as defined in 1878.¹ The seven new single-member constituencies which were created in 1885 radiated outwards like the segments of a fan from the city centre.² Five of them stood on the north side of the river (Central, College, St. Rollox, Camlachie, and Bridgeton), only one stood wholly on the south side (Tradeston), while the seventh (Blackfriars-Hutchesontown) straddled the river north and south like the lynch pin of the whole.³ The Commissioners' instructions had been to create constituencies approximately equal in population and in so doing to have special regard to the pursuits of the population.⁴ Given the social characteristics of the city already outlined it is difficult to see any other arrangement which could have been made. The Commissioners found that the area covered by five of the constituencies were of "a mixed industrial and residential character." Only two were in any way different - the Central division which contained "the great bulk of the best business premises with a western extension" and the College division which they found to be "the most residential."⁵

It is difficult to construct a more precise social profile of these seven

¹ See Appendix G, infra. In this way, as can be seen in Appendix Map A, only three areas were included:- firstly the small segment in the west of the city at Gilmorehill containing the University: secondly, a small area to the south between Govanhill and Pollokshields consisting mainly of open spaces; thirdly, the area to the north which was mainly industrial containing railway depots, locomotive works, chemical works, mills and foundries.

² See Appendix Map A, infra.

³ The Boundary Commissioners considered that the population south of the Clyde was "insufficient for entitlement to two members but largely above the average for one." They therefore joined one of the southern divisions to a municipal ward north of the Clyde. Report of the Boundary Commissioners for Scotland 1885, p. 31.

⁴ Ibid., p. 4.

⁵ Ibid., p. 31.

constituencies in 1885 than has already been done from official sources like the Census Reports. In the 1881 Report the city is dealt with as a unit. In the 1891 Report, too, facts like the occupational statistics, or the birth-places of the inhabitants are given either for the overall city area or in statistical units which cannot be easily related to any single constituency. Fortunately, however, these gaps can be filled from the very detailed and skilful local sanitary or public health reports compiled on Glasgow in the later nineteenth century by the city's medical officers of health. The most interesting and important, issued in 1886 by Dr. James B. Russell, gives a detailed study of the various sanitary districts into which his department had divided the city.¹ Russell claimed that the information given in this form was unique: "there is no city in Great Britain which possesses such information regarding the various districts within its borders."² Russell's information was based on the householders' census schedules in 1881 to which he had been given access before their transmission to the Registrar-General

¹ J.B. Russell, The Vital Statistics of the City of Glasgow, (3 parts. Glasgow 1886), (cited hereafter as Russell, Vital Statistics). The Glasgow Health and Welfare department have confirmed the city archivist's present information that Russell's original papers have not been found. This published version, based on his personal researches and day-to-day experience, is however obviously a work of primary importance because of the amount of detail in it which is not available from any other source. The sanitary districts into which Russell's data are grouped were formed in 1871 by the municipal committee on health under the guidance of Russell's predecessor Dr. Gairdner. By using these districts the medical officer and his staff aimed at providing themselves with areas sufficiently compact and homogeneous for detailed social and sanitary comparison. For the locations and names of these sanitary districts see Appendix Map B, infra. The origins of the districts are discussed in Russell, Vital Statistics, I, 12 and II, 12, and in A.K. Chalmers, The Health of Glasgow 1818-1925, (Glasgow 1930), pp. 74-76.

² J.B. Russell, Old Glasgow and its Statistical Divisions as at 5 April 1891. Greater Glasgow as constituted by the City of Glasgow Act 1891, (n.d. Glasgow) p. 17, (cited hereafter as Russell, Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow.) In his successor's opinion Russell's writings "stood almost alone in the wealth of detail which they supplied to the legislator and social reformer alike, and scarcely anywhere else - within the limits of a single community at least - were the difficulties which beset the life of the poor in cities the subject of so much patient enquiry and sympathetic description." Chalmers, The Health of Glasgow 1818-1925, p. 78.

in Edinburgh.¹ The same procedure was adopted in 1891 and 1901 when he and his successor issued reports on the city based again on the census information given in the statistical unit of the sanitary district.² The information in these surveys is valuable since these sanitary districts can be related to each of the Glasgow constituencies. The descriptions and information given for each unit can, therefore, be used to construct a picture of each of the seven.³

From the Census it can be seen that a high percentage of Glasgow's population - 13.1% - had been born in Ireland.⁴ From Russell's survey this statistic can be expanded to show the location of this Irish group. The heaviest concentrations appeared to lie in the east end of the city. Bellgrove, Calton, Greenhead and Barrowfield sanitary districts between them contained about 30% of the city's Irish-born (some 19,500 out of some 65,000). Another 20% lay along a line running up the old northward axis of the city from Gorbals up the High Street to the Canal in the sanitary districts of Gorbals, Bridgegate and Wynds, High Street and Closes (East and West), St. Rollox, Port Dundas and

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics, III, 8 and Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow, p. 7

² Russell, Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow, and A.K. Chalmers, Census 1901. Report on Glasgow, (Glasgow 1902).

³ A detailed discussion of the method used to correlate the sanitary districts with the constituencies is given in Appendix A, infra. It is shown, for instance, in Appendix A that it is possible to construct estimates of the relative population totals in the constituencies in 1881 as well as estimates of Irish-born in each constituency in 1881, 1891 and 1901 thus remedying the deficiencies of the Census Reports. Total populations for the seven constituencies in 1891 and 1901 are given in Census Report. Scotland 1891, vol. I, p. 174 and Census Report. Scotland 1901, vol. I, p. 193. The ward population in relation to the constituencies is given for 1901 in Census Report. Scotland 1911, vol. I, part 2, pp. 43 and 59. In 1881 the numbers of Irish-born are given by Russell as percentages of the total population in each sanitary district. In 1891 and 1901 the numbers of Irish-born are given, however, in figures. See Appendix B, infra.

⁴ Census Report. Scotland 1881, vol. II, appendix table LXIV.

Cowcaddens (approximately 14,000). Other sizeable concentrations lay in the south side of the city in Hutcheson Square, Laurieston, and Kingston sanitary districts (approximately 10,000) and immediately north of the river in Anderston, Brownfield and St. Enoch Square sanitary districts (approximately 7,000). Another 11,000 were distributed in the west and north of the city in Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford, Woodside, Blythswood, and Maryhill and Springburn sanitary districts.¹

Russell's surveys demonstrate, too, that the area covered by the seven constituencies was already ageing in 1885. His investigations revealed that since the 1860's the population increase of Glasgow had come from the growth of the circumferential areas of the city² which expanding outwards were linking up with the adjoining burghs and suburbs.³ Areas at the city's edges like Woodside, Springburn and Maryhill, Dennistoun, Kelvinhaugh, and Kingston sanitary districts were being developed with new buildings, new populations, while the old central city areas like Barrowfield, Anderston, Port Dundas or Calton were becoming static or registering population decreases. These circumferential districts which had shown the greatest increase since 1861 contained the bulk of the new industrial tenements built under the City Improvement Act of 1866 and contained over half of the city population by

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics, part II, passim. This distribution corresponds almost exactly with that of the major Roman Catholic parishes in the archdiocese of Glasgow. Ten of the fourteen city churches at this time lay in a belt which ran along a south-north axis from Gorbals up through the old city centre to Townhead and along the canal in Cowcaddens, and eastwards out through Calton and Bridgeton districts. Catholic Directories for Scotland 1885 and 1886. Estimates of the numbers in each constituency are given in Appendix C and Appendix D, infra.

² See Appendix Map D, infra and Appendix Map E, infra.

³ Russell, Vital Statistics, II, pp. 66-68.

1881 (over 56%).¹ The static roughly circular area of the constituencies laid down in 1885 was becoming, therefore, ever more characteristically older, more industrial and working class by contrast with the surrounding districts. The parliamentary boundaries after 1885 stopped just short of a suburb many of which were soon to be absorbed in the municipal extension of Glasgow in 1891.² Increasingly, therefore, the tendency for the prosperous Glasgow citizen to make the transition to suburban living meant going across the line of the parliamentary boundaries. A comparison of house rents between the parliamentary and surrounding areas shows all this clearly. In 1891 the average rent per house in the seven constituencies was £10. 12. 2d. and the average rent per person £2. 4. 10½d. per year. The corresponding figures for the suburban areas surrounding the constituencies was £25. 4. 4½d. and £4. 18. 4d.³ After 1885 as the suburbs and municipal area expanded the parliamentary area of the seven constituencies became ever more definitely tied to old Glasgow, the industrial and commercial centre, the area of tenements and closely packed humanity.

The shape into which the seven constituencies had been divided meant that each included a part of the old city centre.⁴ As they radiated outwards towards the boundary they each covered some section, too, of the new growing

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics, II, pp. 74-75. For the effort to clear out the old densely populated city centre and get rid of the old subdivided and farmed out property see C.M. Allan, "The Genesis of British Urban Redevelopment with Special Reference to Glasgow," Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol.18, no. 3, (Dec. 1965), 598-613; J.B. Russell, The Sanitary History of Glasgow (Glasgow 1895); and Municipal Glasgow its Evolution and Enterprises (Glasgow 1914).

² See Appendix Map A, infra, and Third Statistical Account. The City of Glasgow pp. 787, 788. The tendency for the more central areas of Glasgow to decrease is noted in Census Report Scotland 1891 p. 194, Census Report Scotland 1901, p. 5 and Census Report Scotland 1911, vol. I, part 2, p. 42.

³ Russell, Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow p. 35.

⁴ See Appendix Map A, infra.

circumferential districts. Their form and location also meant that they each contained to some degree a share of the various factories, industrial and commercial undertakings in the city. Russell's survey divides the city into four groups of districts ranging from those with the best to those with the worst social conditions.¹ Group I was comprised of all the west-end of the city "with a large admixture of the middle class and best of our working class population."² This group contained the highest average number of rooms per house and the lowest number of persons per room. Group II was made up of circumferential districts and, thus, contained the great mass of newly erected industrial housing built since the Improvement Act of 1866. Group III, by contrast, consisted mainly of the old village centres such as Anderston and Camlachie with very few of the houses in it occupied as originally intended. Group IV was composed wholly of the worst districts in the city "both morally and physically." By every test, whether of density, death-rate, infant mortality, or number of persons per room it exhibited the worst sanitary and social conditions in Glasgow.³

Seen in the light of these four classifications all the constituencies contained a mixture of districts ranging from good to bad according to the mortality rate, the number of rooms per house, and the persons per room.⁴

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 73-76. The groups were made up of the following sanitary districts: group I - Blythswood, Exchange, Monteith Row, Woodside, Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford: group II - Springburn and Maryhill, St. Rollox, Bellgrove and Dennistoun, Greenhead and London Road, Kingston, Hutcheson Square: group III - Port Dundas, Barrowfield, St. Enoch Square, Anderston, Laurieston: group IV - High Street and Closes, East and West, St. Andrews Square, Calton Proper, Brownfield, Bridgegate and Wynds, Cowcaddens, Gorbals. See Appendix Map B and Appendix Map F for the distribution of these groups between the various constituencies.

² Russell, loc. cit.

³ Russell, loc. cit.

⁴ See Appendix Map B and Appendix Map F, infra.

According to the populations ascribed by Russell to the sanitary districts in 1881 the area covered by College and St. Rollox constituencies had the greatest proportion (in population numbers) of good districts to bad (a ratio of about 4.4 to 1 and 7.7 to 1 respectively). Bridgeton and Central constituencies had a roughly equal proportion of good to bad (about 1 to 1 each). In between came Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, Camlachie, and Tradeston constituencies with a proportion of good to bad districts of about 3 to 1, 2 to 1, and 2 to 1 respectively.¹ Even this division, however is an artificial one for each of the four groups contained within them, to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the overall classification samples of the best and worst conditions in the city.² College and St. Rollox constituencies, for instance, which on Russell's classification had the highest ratio of good to bad social areas, included within their bounds sanitary districts like Cowcaddens and parts of the High Street and Closes districts where some of the least desirable housing features in Glasgow existed. The radial form of the constituencies ensured that each one contained some cross-section of the city's population and social conditions. All of them contained a high proportion of Irish-born population³ and if it is accepted that these were generally labouring and working-class then College constituency, which contained the best residential areas in the city, emerges with the lowest percentage of Irish born but even then only narrowly so. In general the sanitary conditions in each of the constituencies

¹ Appendix Map F, infra.

² Russell was careful to insist that the general social conditions in Glasgow were poor. The lowest districts merely showed "in their greatest intensity the physical condition and the associated vital and social characteristics which determine the position of every other district of Glasgow in the sanitary scale. The difference in the causes which produce the different results is a difference in degree, not in kind." J.B. Russell, Sanitation and Social Economics (Glasgow 1889) pp. 2-3.

³ See Appendix C and Appendix D, infra.

corroborates all the other evidence which shows the social tone of the city to be mainly industrial and commercial.

An outline of each of the constituencies in turn confirms this conclusion. Central constituency,¹ according to Russell's divisions of the sanitary districts into four classes graded from the best to the worst could be described as a mixed constituency containing some of the best city areas in Exchange, Kelvinhaugh and Blythswood,² the oldest in St. Enoch Square and Anderston, and one of the worst in Brownfield. Its boundaries contained an area full of diverse characteristics with examples of business and administration as well as of industry, of middle- and working-class housing as well as of slums. At the city (or eastern end) of its northern half it contained the administrative and business areas bounding George Square - the City Chambers, the Post Office, the Royal Exchange, the North British Railway Station, various hotels and banks. From here it ran westwards through the commercial grid up the slopes of Blythswood along St. Vincent Street, West Regent Street and Bath Street. In this section it comprehended the commercial and legal nerve centre of the city.

Further west from the old west-end this commercial part shaded gradually into a residential area of stately terraces like Fitzroy and Sandyford Places. This commercial-cum-residential character was carried to its logical conclusion in Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford district with the residential area to the south of West End Park looking over to the new University buildings. Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford, however, was not a completely homogeneous district. The south-west corner was occupied by a cluster containing among other things the

¹ The information on the seven constituencies which follows has all been derived from Russell's sanitary survey and the large map of the city both given in his Vital Statistics. Details of the populations of the seven constituencies are given in Appendix C, infra.

² J.B. Russell, The House in Relation to Public Health (Glasgow 1887).

Queen's Dock, wharves, a shipbuilding yard, an abattoir, a timber depot, a flour and cotton mill, and engineering works. Interspersed with these were areas of housing containing new working-class tenements like those built on land bought and feued by the Improvement Trust at Overnewton and those around Dover and Dorset streets. From there the housing shaded northwards back into the select area around Charing Cross.

The remaining three districts in this constituency, Anderston, Brownfield and St. Enoch Square lay along the line of the river back towards the city centre. As might be assumed from their position these districts contained many of the city's mercantile and industrial undertakings - the riverside quays, grainstores, bonded warehouses, foundries, machine shops, bakeries, along with hotels, sailors' boarding houses and the St. Enoch Railway terminal. The three districts were all included in Russell's two categories (III and IV) showing a higher death rate, a lower number of rooms per house and a higher number of persons per room than the averages for the city. Anderston, although it contained examples of the worst backlands and narrow streets in the city, was put into category III by Russell because of the presence there of some of the better class tenements erected for working men in Cranstonhill.¹ Brownfield, sandwiched between Anderston and St. Enoch Square area was the smallest sanitary district in Glasgow. Yet on the slopes of Cranstonhill there was a population of 3,826 tightly packed on 11 acres giving a density of 348 persons per acre, the highest in the city. The only open space (since the side giving on to the river was enclosed by warehouses) lay in the streets themselves.

¹ Anderston remained notable as an area containing some of the worst housing in the city. "The sunk flat houses even in a hot dry summer remain damp and unwholesome. The stairs down to these houses are almost invariably dank and dirty, the passages pitch dark on the brightest day so that only by feeling along the walls can one discover the doors ... one street is known as 'The Coffin Close', so bad is its repute - narrow stairs, twisting lobbies, with no light and absolutely no air." Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Industrial Population of Scotland 1917 [Cd. 8731] p. 4.

St. Enoch Square district as befitted its location at Glasgow Bridge just south of the commercial grid was almost wholly made up of public building, "many extensive warehouses, stores and other business premises, with hotels and sailors' boarding houses."¹ Its population fringed the edges of this area and although it contained backlands much of the worst housing had been cleared for railway premises since 1871.

In general Central provides a good example of the kaleidoscopic nature of the Glasgow constituencies. It was neither wholly residential nor wholly industrial. The picture it presented was a mixed one divided as it was pretty evenly between its better (northern) and worse (southern) halves. In population distribution, too, it split almost equally. In 1881 half of its inhabitants dwelt in its upper part, half in the lower where the concentration and density of population was much greater. Its Irish-born population was much more definitely weighted towards the older districts along the Clyde, the estimated proportion there to the Irish-born in its upper parts being somewhere in the region of 3:1. Between 1891 and 1901 the constituency registered a decrease in population, all the sanitary districts except Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford and Exchange remaining static or declining in numbers. This most likely points to a shift in the population balance towards the outer edge at Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford since this was the only district to have a consistent increase over the period 1881-1901 and show evidence of new building in the 1890's.² The increase in Exchange was not likely to have had a noticeable effect within Central constituency. This, most probably, occurred in the sections of Exchange in St. Rollox constituency since it is in that

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 26.

² Ordnance Survey Map of Glasgow. Revised and re-surveyed 1892-4.

area that evidence of new building is to be found in the 1890's.¹ And, the already predominantly commercial nature of the part of Exchange in Central in 1881 is a further argument against any major part of the increase here affecting Central.

College constituency lay to the north of Central and comprised the remainder of the sanitary districts of Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford and Blythwood, all of Woodside and Cowcaddens together with a segment of Maryhill consisting largely of open ground. Again, this was a mixed constituency with, however, a more noticeable bias to the better areas than any of the other seven. The portions of Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford, Blythwood and Woodside which Russell counted in his top category of areas as regards health and housing lay in this constituency.² Cowcaddens district alone in College belonged to the worst category. That part of Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford enclosed by College contained the new area of the University, a residential quarter of good, solid, middle-class houses especially noteworthy to the north of the West End Park in its majestic terraces and crescents. To the east of this and showing the same characteristics lay the portion of Blythwood which contained the old residential parts of Garnethill.

North of Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford and Blythwood districts lay Woodside. The squares and terraces of the Great Western Road area and the newer tenements around North Woodside Road in this district formed a coherent whole with the sort of environment already noted in the Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford and Blythwood districts. Here, west of St. Georges Road and Woodside districts, were situated parts of the new West-End which merged along the line of Great Western Road into the contiguous burgh of Hillhead just across the city

¹ Ibid.

² Blythwood, Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford districts contained the best "average house" in Glasgow. Russell, Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow p. 19.

boundary. As Russell was at pains to point out,¹ however, even in districts such as Blythswood and Woodside contrasts could be found. Towards the city (eastern) part of Blythswood there was a fringe of inferior housing of the worst type behind Cowcaddens Street and in West Russell Street. In Woodside district between New City Road and the canal there lay the largely working-class area of Garscube Road. The existence there of a large number of works and factories along the line of the canal led to a demand for vacant ground for housing for workers and this had absorbed most of the vacant space even spilling out west and south of New City Road into the residential fringes of Woodside and Kelvinside. This gradual penetration, which was changing the social content of the area is best illustrated by the fact that between 1873 and 1880 the proportion of houses of five apartments and upwards had fallen while that of two and three apartments had risen.

Between this and the city end of Blythswood lay the only district in College constituency placed in Russell's worst category, Cowcaddens, which, typically, had the fourth highest density in the city of 249 persons to the acre. Russell summed up the housing here as "dense blocks of buildings packed with back tenements and intersected by narrow lanes ... old and squalid."² This district contained not only some of the most densely packed housing but also foundries, chemical works and sawmills especially along the line of the canal. It was mainly a working-class area the inhabitants belonging "chiefly to the unskilled labouring classes"³ with part of it (Lyon Street and neighbourhood) "largely in the possession of a very rough,

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 16.

² Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 42-3.

³ Ibid., II, 43.

unruly population."¹

Altogether then College constituency, like Central, showed mixed characteristics. It contained the new and desirable areas around Kelvinhaugh, the University and the Park, and Kelvinside. As its boundaries narrowed in the direction of the city centre it showed an increasing admixture of the best and the worst features in working-class environment. The industrial belt in the northern and eastern portion along the canal coloured the whole tone there presenting a sharp contrast to the residential areas to the west and south dominated by the Park and Gilmorehill areas. In the middle, somewhere about the line of New City Road, the two contrasting halves became blurred as they merged to take on varying proportions of social and economic colouring from each other. In general, the dominant tone suggests that it was the most residential and least working-class of all the city constituencies. It had the lowest percentage of Irish-born in its total population.² The population balance was towards the areas with a higher number of rooms per house, lower number of persons per room and lower death rate than the averages for the city. The population here in relation to those in Cowcaddens was roughly in the ratio of 4½:1.³ By 1901 the distribution of population in this constituency had moved heavily towards the Woodside sanitary district, the increase being from some 45,000 in 1881 to 58,000 in 1891 and 70,000 in 1901. Neither Cowcaddens nor Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford's populations, which

¹ Ibid. No improvement occurred in the density or sanitary conditions of Cowcaddens during the next thirty years. The Royal Commission on Scottish Housing reported in 1917 that in the older tenements here the passages were often dark, narrow and foul smelling. "... in certain passages in the Cowcaddens Ward in Glasgow there are as many as ten or twelve houses opening off one passage." Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Industrial Population of Scotland 1917, p. 4.

² See Appendix D, infra.

³ See Appendix Map F, infra.

also grew during this period, did so at anything like the same rate.

(The segments of Maryhill and Springburn enclosed by this constituency comprised a negligible proportion of that district's population in 1881, the rest being mainly open ground).

The exact figures for St. Rollox constituency are difficult to calculate before the census of 1891. Of the seven sanitary districts which helped comprise it five were shared with other constituencies. Even more than Central or College the St. Rollox population figures can only be approximated. The largest of the city constituencies in area, much of which was open ground in 1885, it contained the most of the northern part of the city east of Craighall Road, Port Dundas Road and Buchanan Street and north of Duke Street. It also included that part of the municipal burgh which was added in 1885 to the parliamentary burgh north of the canal and Garngad Road viz. Rockvilla, Sighthill, Springvale and part of Springburn.

As a constituency it again shows a markedly complex character. Towards the city hub there lay the districts designated by Russell as High Street and Closes (East) and (West) portions of which lay in St. Rollox. This was an area which had seen major clearances under the operations of the Improvement Trust but which even yet in 1885 exhibited some of the worst features of high density and overcrowding. High Street and Closes (East) still contained the highest proportions of persons per room. Similarly, the houses in High Street and Closes (West) were described by Russell as abodes where some of the most debased of the city's population lived.¹ Lying next to High Street and Closes (East and West) districts were the northern part of Exchange engrossed by St. Rollox with Port Dundas and St. Rollox sanitary districts on either side. These were all mainly areas of working-class housing dominated by the presence of the canal to the north and a large

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics II, 38.

admixture of industrial and public works which included wharves, timber basins, foundries, potteries, glassworks, the City Poorhouse and the Caledonian Railway station. The population, though mainly industrial, ranged from the newer, better, working-class housing of St. Rollox district to that of the poorest persons on the fringes of Rottenrow.

Towards the east of this whole area, on the other hand, moving towards the city boundary lay the part of Dennistoun and Bellgrove district enclosed by this constituency. This consisted of the open streets, squares and crescents of the villas and "superior flatted houses" being developed on Dennistoun and Golfhill estates. This development lay north of Duke Street and south of Alexandra Parade, a relatively new area containing most of the unbuilt ground of Glasgow including Alexandra Park. The population of this part, however, according to Russell "was very heterogeneous in employment and status" since it covered "the old villages of Parkhead and Camlachie" besides "the villas, self contained lodgings and superior flatted houses of Dennistoun (and) the new and superior tenements along the west end of Alexandra Parade."¹ To the north of this along the line of the canal heavy industrial enterprises such as foundries, bleach works, chemical works, the Tharsis Sulphur and Copper works, Blochairn Steel works, and the Glasgow Iron Works were situated.

Maryhill and Springburn district was largely composed of vacant spaces, large areas of which were occupied for railway purposes, or by large public works. For instance, in this district, besides the North British Railway Sidings and Depot, the Caledonian Railway Company's works and the Hydepark Locomotive works there were also the St. Rollox Chemical works along with various foundries, sawmills, flourmills and distilleries. The population was centred in three main areas, in Garngad Road, Springburn, and Rockvilla.

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics II, 25.

It was dominated by the working-class comprising all grades from those labouring in the chemical works to the skilled workers of the Cowlairs and Hydepark locomotive works.

The population of St. Rollox constituency, therefore, seemed to be mainly industrial with a sizeable admixture of the middle-class in the residential eastern portion. Large industrial undertakings especially of those connected with the railways and heavy industry provided a sharp contrast to the newer residential areas being opened to the east in Dennistoun. A concentrated portion of the constituency's population was jammed into the older and worse parts of the constituency which hinged on the city centre. The great majority, however, were located in the more open, peripheral districts to the north and east. The ratio of population in these better areas¹ to those in the worse was 7.7:1. St. Rollox constituency also had the highest percentage of Irish-born in its total population and this, too, was distributed in the highest ratio between the good and bad areas, 6.2:1.

In general, then, St. Rollox exhibited another highly heterogeneous area comprising all the gradations of social environment. Capable of expansion because of the large undeveloped areas to the east and north it maintained a steady growth between 1881 and 1901. By the latter date it was by far the largest of the Glasgow constituencies. This was mainly achieved by the filling up of the open spaces in Maryhill, Springburn and Dennistoun. During this period the concentration of population in the direction of these areas became ever more marked, the districts bunched at the city end failing to maintain the same rate of increase or even declining.

¹ These were placed by Russell in Group II since they were "the great mass of the newly erected industrial tenements in the city ... New Glasgow, built under the Police Act of 1866." Russell, Vital Statistics II, 74-75.

Camlachie constituency, like St. Rollox, Bridgeton and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, is difficult to assess from Russell's statistics as the parliamentary lines cut across all the sanitary districts contained in it. In Camlachie this is especially so as it comprised only part of Bellgrove and Dennistoun, High Street and Closes (East), Greenhead and London Road, and Barrowfield districts and no district wholly. And, generally those parts it did contain showed their worst features here. On its west side, towards the city centre, lay the worst. Along the line of High Street there were the portion of warrens usual to this area between Havannah Street and Duke Street, inhabited, says Russell, "by the usual miserable class of people who haunt such localities."¹ A major swathe below this area had been cleared for railway purposes by the College Station and the Glasgow and South-Western Goods Station. Despite the fact that this had reduced the density by more than half conditions for the population which remained were no better than they had been. It still had "the largest proportion of any in the city of one apartment houses," and Little and Great Dovehill were still bad spots in 1885. Despite the clearance in this district "the character of the population still left in the old buildings is quite the same as that of the thousands who have been dispersed".² In the portion of Barrowfield district in Camlachie lay the eastern part of Calton, a former weaving village. The population here was wholly industrial and the housing contained examples of the worst siting and overcrowding in the city. In Little Street, for instance, there were tenements "four stories in height, with 8 single room houses on each landing."³

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 44.

² Russell, Vital Statistics, ibid.

³ Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 39.

Here also was situated 'The Rookery' (a sufficiently descriptive term) in Orr Street, which had once been a distillery.

In that portion of Dennistoun and Bellgrove district to the south of Duke Street, however, going towards the eastern end of the constituency there lay a more socially confused area neither wholly good nor wholly bad. As in St. Rollox constituency the aspect became ever more open and less congested towards the city boundary. The old villages of Camlachie and Parkhead were situated there along with the more newly built artisan tenements of Annfield and Bellgrove. Chemical works preponderated in this district and Parkhead Forge was also located there. In Greenhead and London Road district north of Canning Street and London Road this pattern continued. Going east towards the boundary most of the housing was of recent construction. The character of this area and of its population was completely industrial comprising, Russell says, "all grades of the working-classes". Dyeworks, paintworks, potteries, foundries, and textile factories abounded. Indeed, in Camlachie as a whole one seems to find the first completely working-class constituency even though it, too, could show several variations in the wide range of social environment enjoyed by its inhabitants.

As in St. Rollox the better areas lay towards the boundary and the worse at the part which hinged on the old city centre. The population distribution in the ratio of good to bad districts was around 2:1 and between 1881 and 1901 the open, eastern part grew steadily. As the central portions of High Street and Closes (East) and Barrowfield declined in the same period the main weight of population increased greatly towards the outer edge of the constituency during these years.

Bridgeton constituency was composed of the districts of Monteith Row, St. Andrew's Square, Calton Proper together with the southern halves of Greenhead and London Road (including all the Greenhead area) and Barrowfield.

Bordered wholly on its southern side by the Clyde and containing many brickworks, potteries, dyemills and a heavy concentration of textile works as well as the Corporation Gas Works Bridgeton could be called an industrial constituency. But, like most of the Glasgow constituencies, it had its contrasting aspects. Besides a heavy concentration of industries it had many examples of the historical past of Glasgow. Charlotte Street, for instance, contained stately old villas, built in the later eighteenth century for rich city merchants,¹ which were still occupied as such. Along the line of the Green there were superior flatted houses so that a proportion of Greenhead's population consisted, according to Russell, of "the better class" (of worker).² Glasgow Green (the largest open space in the city) and the largely vacant land towards the eastern boundary made up much of the constituency. In between these open outlooks along the line of London Road lay a mixed area of industry and housing. Improvement Trust clearances had opened up the area at the northern end of the constituency and the new streets had been formed to make up Bridgeton Cross. Many of the houses in this part of Bridgeton constituency were thus of recent build and the streets were straight and wide. The population was "wholly industrial" comprising "all grades of the working classes".³ Towards the city centre former blackspots like the Saltmarket area and the eastern part of Calton had also benefitted in large sections by the operations of the Improvement Trust. All types of working-class environment could be found in these districts and the large open space of the Green fringed by its sample of middle-class housing provided a contrast in what was a solidly industrial area. On the other hand and in

¹ J. Pagan, Glasgow Past and Present (3 vols. Glasgow 1884) III, 177, 180.

² Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 30.

³ Ibid., II, 30, 39.

line with the pattern in other constituencies, towards the city centre several of the sanitary districts contained a great deal of the constituency's population in quite extensive pockets of high density. St. Andrew's Square, once the abode of merchant princes¹ now teemed with a poor population living in every room of the original substantial houses which were now heavily subdivided. Calton Proper district had between one-third and one-quarter of the constituency's total population crammed into a teeming area of 66 acres giving it a density of 335 persons to the acre. Only six of the other sanitary districts had a higher percentage of one-roomed houses.

This again, therefore, was a mixed constituency, leavened by small pockets of middle-class areas, but on the whole mainly indicative of the industrial character of Glasgow, of the whole range of working-class environment and of its attractiveness for the immigrant. In most of the sanitary districts which made up this constituency the percentage of persons born in Ireland ran from 12% in Greenhead and London Road district to 21% in St. Andrew's Square. In 1881 the distribution of population was still towards the central, city end of the constituency located in a broad sweep along the line of the Green running from the Saltmarket. It was very firmly based, as a constituency, on old historic Glasgow areas, the textile villages of Calton and Bridgeton (not for nothing did it contain a Muslin Street and a Monteith Row), the Green, and the old St. Andrew's Square areas flanked by Saltmarket and Gallowgate dating back to the days of Virginia merchants and beyond. In the proportion of environmental areas by population according to Russell's classification, the bad narrowly outweighed the good in the ratio of about 1.6:1. In the period 1881-1901 the population growth was mainly in the eastern, more open part of the constituency on the river thus causing the

¹ Pagan, Glasgow Past and Present, I, 129.

distribution to move outwards. The districts towards the city end declined or remained static. Only St. Andrew's Square district registered any significant increase and this, as it occurred when its total of one-apartments was decreasing, resulted in further congestion here due to pressure on the resources of one and two-roomed houses.¹

Blackfriars-Hutchesontown constituency lay like the interlocking piece of a jigsaw holding firmly together the densely packed area clustered round the old city axis of the High Street, Trongate and the river, with that part of its equally packed and matched neighbour on the south side - Gorbals. Beyond Gorbals it fanned out into the wider streets and vacant spaces of southern Hutcheson Square district bounded on the west by Crown Street and on the south by the municipal boundary.

Russell's district of Bridgegate and Wynds and those parts of Exchange and High Street and Closes (West) districts which constituted the northern half of this constituency portrayed the worst sanitary and social conditions in the city.² Although he had placed Exchange in the best group of districts (group I) he described it as "mixed, middle class and poor". That part of it enclosed by this constituency obviously comprised the poor. "Tall tenements with back lands of old construction densely populated by the poorer classes"³ is his description of the area. Again, although to its east the district of High Street and Closes (West) had been thinned out and its density lowered by the Improvement Trust the flatted houses which remained had been converted into nests of small houses. "Unwholesome, stifling dwelling places of the poor and often depraved" is the description applied by Russell.⁴ Its

¹ A.K. Chalmers, Census 1901. Report on Glasgow, pp. 24-9.

² Russell, The House in Relation to Public Health, p. 12.

³ Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 20.

⁴ Ibid., II, 38.

percentage of one-room houses was the fourth highest of all the sanitary districts (46 $\frac{1}{2}$ %) and its density fifth highest (239 persons to the acre in a total area of only 42 acres). To the south of these two districts lay the worst sanitary area in Glasgow - Bridgegate and Wynds - a district which "consumed more life than it produced".¹ Lying between Trongate and the Clyde and, as it were, disembowelled by the operations of the Improvement Trust there still remained a population here, in Russell's words, "the like of which for social and moral degradation is not to be found in the city."² Bridgegate contained the largest proportion of persons per inhabited room in the city, the second highest proportion of one-apartment houses and, perhaps significantly, the largest proportion of persons born in Ireland. That part of Gorbals district which was contained in this constituency (the north ends of Thistle Street, Crown Street, and Rose Street) had similar blackspots with densely populated backlands. Thus, from Gorbals district across the river northwards the upper area of this constituency demonstrated the worst, ingrained consequences of rapid urbanisation on the dense, solid block of an old established city centre.

Although some black spots existed in Hutcheson Square district the aspect of the rest of this area (and of the rest of the constituency) afforded some change from the upper part of the constituency. Open spaces to the south-east, the Southern Necropolis and the Gorbals burial ground helped to relieve the monotony of the built up area to the north. Dyeworks and print-fields lay along the Clyde while the Govan Ironworks lay to the south. The population, as might be expected from this description was mainly working

¹ Russell, Sanitation and Social Economics, p. 18. "It would be safer to fall asleep at the foot of a tree in Central Africa than at the foot of a lampost in the Bridgegate." Ibid., p. 8.

² Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 45.

class and, due to the feuing of the Oatlands estate by the Improvement Trust, most of them were being housed in "modern superior industrial dwellings."

With a concentration of public and administrative buildings (like the County Buildings and the City Hall) and part of the business area on its north-western fringe, this constituency's worst areas were those towards the city centre. For the environment of its population, given the shape and location of the constituency, this meant it was mainly notable for the concentration within its boundaries of some of the worst areas in the city,¹ a situation only partially relieved by the better character of the much less congested area to the south and south-east. Although over one-half, at least, of its population lay in this better southern half of the constituency this part still contained poor spots and a good third were still crammed into the northern narrow part. In the period 1881-1901 the balance of population, however, shifted ever more towards the more open Hutcheson Square sanitary district, the other remaining fairly static or declining. The population of Bridgegate and Wynds fell by half in these years.

Tradeston constituency, the only one wholly on the south side of the river, was made up mainly of Kingston district and part of Hutcheson Square districts together with the small districts of Laurieston and most of Gorbals. Kingston district which constituted most of the western half of the constituency represented a mixture of residential and industrial areas with old but better class streets like Carlton and Abbotsford Place and recently built, good, working-class tenements to the west. Although there were isolated blackspots this district's housing exemplified, on the whole, the better, more normal conditions which could be enjoyed by all classes in Glasgow. The

¹ Russell, Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow, p. 19.

quays and docks of the river ran along the northern boundary of the constituency while to the south much of the area was open space occupied mainly by railway yards. In between, various industrial and public undertakings were scattered throughout the district. Despite this industrial intermixture, it was on the whole one of the better districts with "the preponderating mass ... houses of a good character." It presented a happy contrast to its neighbour - Laurieston district. The population of this latter area was packed into twelve single blocks of buildings, all with backlands, hemmed in on the north by the river, to the south and east by the railway, and to the west by the tenements of Kingston; and all this in an area of only 49 acres. With a population of 9,131 this gave it a density of 186 persons to the acre. That part of the district of Gorbals included in Tradeston constituency exhibited only slightly less similar characteristics. With a density of 274 persons to the acre (though improved by the demolitions and reconstruction carried out by the Improvement Trust and the formation of the railway) it still remained one of the worst environments in the city. To the south, however, that part of Hutcheson Square district which lay in Tradeston mirrored the more relaxed and open character of the southern part of neighbouring Kingston. The large acreage here consisted almost exclusively of open ground or was covered by the extensive works of the Caledonian Railway goods and Mineral Depot. The population was gathered mainly around Cumberland Street above the area covered by the Caledonian Railway sheds. Although it was mainly a working-class district there still remained around Apsley Place some of the large flatted houses of the old south side.

In short, the good areas in Tradeston constituency largely outweighed the bad. Despite the presence of districts like Laurieston and Gorbals it exhibited to a much greater degree many more satisfactory features than the southern half of neighbouring Blackfriars-Hutchesontown constituency. As in

all the other constituencies the less favourable areas were those hingeing on the city centre, the better those towards the outer edge.

As a constituency Tradeston is difficult to place in perspective. Working-class in character it had the smallest population in 1891. It was still in this position by 1901 having increased its total only fractionally in the interval. Although the area containing the bulk of its population (Kingston) was the best in character and the largest in size the balance of the population distribution flowed only fractionally towards it during these years. The areas towards the city end, contrary to the pattern in other constituencies, did not drop in numbers substantially, remaining in 1901 practically the same size as thirty years earlier. For some reason the distribution of the inhabitants remained fairly static. Perhaps the pattern of the railway developments in the constituency forbade any extension towards the more open, southern boundary furthest away from the city centre such as had happened in the rest of Glasgow. Baulked in this direction population movements may have spilled over into the neighbouring burghs of Kinning Park or Govanhill, or east towards Oatlands.¹ Whatever the reason, of all the Glasgow constituencies Tradeston was least marked by any notable change in this period. Perhaps associated with this, it was also, apart from College constituency, the one with the lowest percentage of Irish-born among its inhabitants.

Given this general picture of the seven Glasgow constituencies how did the population in them react politically? As has been stated already it is not intended to link the social background of the city to the election results directly but rather to outline the context in which electoral activity

¹ Certainly by 1885 Russell was saying that Kinning Park Burgh "represents the most recent development of the district (Kingston)." Vital Statistics, II, 68.

took place. With this reservation in mind, however, and before the electoral history of Glasgow in 1885 and 1886 is discussed there are several preliminary questions which require to be answered. As will be shown in the next chapter electoral activities and political organisation were largely dominated and controlled by middle-class professional and businessmen who, while they might reside outwith the city, preferred to play their political role inside its bounds where their business and commercial interests lay. What proportion then of the nameless thousands who listened to and followed the lead given by these middle class party organisers, especially of the majority who lived in one- and two-room houses had the vote?¹ What degree of electoral participation was there in a population which has been shown to have been mainly industrial? What chance had the working men of Glasgow to express their political preferences at the ballot box?

The generalisation that universal male suffrage became the rule after the reforms of 1884-1885 has been increasingly challenged in recent times.² A recent survey of British politics in this period with this in mind, however, has still concluded that electoral reforms since 1832 had brought about a situation in which by 1885 "for the first time the process of voting was largely free of the grosser forms of corruption and the franchise sufficiently widely distributed to include the majority of adult males."³

¹ In 1881 the population in one and two room houses in Glasgow was 354,893 out of a total population of 510,929, i.e. 87,849 families out of a total of 114,759. Russell, Vital Statistics, I, 47. In 1891 the city assessor estimated that 69.1% of the houses in Glasgow were of one or two apartments. Glasgow Municipal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, minutes of evidence, p. 3.

² Donna Torr, Tom Mann and his times, vol. I, (1956), pp. 89-94. N. Blewett, "The Franchise in the United Kingdom 1885-1918," Past and Present, no. 32, (Dec. 1965), 27-56. P. Thompson, Socialists, Liberals and Labour. The Struggle for London 1885-1914, (1967), pp. 68-72.

³ H. Pelling, Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910, (1967), p. 1.

The classic study of electoral reform in nineteenth century Britain admitted that within the overall electoral framework differences could and did exist between the various sorts of constituencies. Although the burgh constituencies had enjoyed the household-occupier franchise since 1867 the ratio of voters to population was lowest in the large industrial towns, lower even than in the country districts. The reason for this lay in the fact that "the rural population was less ... subject to migratory habits than the urban, and less affected by the residential qualification."¹ This would affect the lower sections of the population in Glasgow to some extent in qualifying for the vote since it was well known that "nearly all the single-apartment houses are let monthly, and a very large percentage of the occupants are, for various reasons migratory in their character."²

If the average population for the Glasgow constituencies in the 1880's and 1890's is taken and divided by the registered electorate approximately one in seven of the population possessed the vote. This is consistent with the ratios to be found in similarly large cities such as Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol and Wolverhampton at this time.³ An inspection of the electoral registers for Glasgow in this period⁴ also reveals the wide range of occupations included in the electorate and this confirms Seymour's generalisation that "the majority of voters in boroughs were workingmen."⁵ How far his general conclusion from this, that by 1885 "the democratic franchise was

¹ C. Seymour, Electoral Reform in England and Wales 1832-1885, (New Haven 1915), pp. 484-485.

² Glasgow Municipal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, minutes of evidence, p. 1.

³ Seymour, loc. cit.

⁴ A continuous series of the electoral registers for Glasgow is located in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

⁵ Seymour, op. cit., p. 487.

firmly established"¹ is true in the case of Glasgow must now be examined.

Many of the anomalies in British electoral law which had become apparent by the later nineteenth century sprang from rules governing the occupier franchise in burghs.² In general ratepayers qualified for the vote after 1867³ but whereas in England householders who compounded their rates and rents to the landlord were eligible the test in Scotland resided in personal payment by the tenant.⁴ This had the effect of disfranchising the slums since in the case of those at the very bottom of the social scale who occupied houses valued at less than £4 per annum it was the landlord not the occupier who paid the rates.⁵ This does not seem to have affected the great bulk of the population in Glasgow in 1885 since the number of houses with rentals valued at £4 and under had become relatively small. Out of the total of 120,357 houses in Glasgow in 1885 only 8,379 had rentals under £4 and the city chamberlain had noted that "the low-rented houses do not increase with the increasing population."⁶ By far the greatest number

¹ Ibid.

² For a general summary see Blewett, op. cit.

³ Statutes of the Realm, 31 and 32 Vict. c.48. section 3.
F.B. Smith, The Making of the Second Reform Bill, (1966), p. 196.
Seymour, op. cit., pp. 262 et seq., especially p. 278.

⁴ J.W. Whitelaw, Manual of the Qualifications and Registration of Voters in Parliamentary, Municipal and Local Government Elections, (Edinburgh 1904), pp. 55-65, passim.
Smith, loc. cit., p. 226.

⁵ M. Atkinson, Local Government in Scotland, (1904), p. 35.
S.H. Turner, History of Local Taxation in Scotland, (Edinburgh 1908), p. 205.
Smith, loc. cit.
Blewett, op. cit., p. 37, states that about 60,000 electors were disqualified annually in Scotland for this reason, but A.L. Lowell, whose Government of England, (2 vols. New York 1912), he cites as his authority gives the figure (vol. I, 212-3) as 50,000.

⁶ Nicol, Vital Statistics of Glasgow 1885-1891, p. 73.

of houses were valued at rentals above £4 and under £10 - 76,977. The remaining 35,001 had rentals valued at £10 and upwards.¹ The question to be settled, therefore is whether the houses with rentals under £4 housed a significant proportion of the population. Some indication can be obtained from the housing statistics available at this time. The first point to be stressed is that the one-room houses were by no means confined to those with rentals under £4. The greatest number of such houses were rented at above this figure at valuations of £4, £5, and £6. As has been stated the great bulk of houses in Glasgow were in the £4 - £10 range. In 1891 the average rental of one-room houses was stated to be £5. 5s. and the proportion of such houses to the total was given as 24.8% (33,446 out of 134,882).² The average rental of two apartment houses was £8. 10s. and houses of this sort constituted 44.3% of the total (59,768 out of 134,882).³ Now, in 1881 35% of the families in Glasgow resided in one-room houses while another 40% inhabited two-rooms. A further 23% lived in three, four, and five room houses.⁴ Since 75% of the total number of families lived in houses with average valuations in this period of £5. 5s., and £8. 10s., and another 23% inhabited houses at higher valuations again it is, therefore, clear that the great majority of the adult male population would theoretically qualify for the vote as occupiers who paid their rates personally. Conversely the number who lived in houses at valuations under £4 and who were thus statutorily barred from the franchise was relatively small.⁵

¹ Ibid.

² Glasgow Commission on the Housing of the Poor, minutes of evidence, p. 3.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Nicol, op. cit., pp. 73, 86.

⁵ Atkinson, op. cit., p. 317.

The question, therefore, which now remains to be settled is how many of this great majority did in fact manage to get their names entered in the electoral registers in spite of the difficulties surrounding the process of enfranchisement. Fortunately records do exist which indicate the probable answer to this question. Among the departmental records in the Glasgow City Archives office is a series of Collectors Rates Books which were used to record the payments made to the City Collectors Department by each individual ratepayer.¹ Since this means that they only record the names of those occupying houses valued at over £4 annually they thus provide the total number of occupiers theoretically qualified to exercise the franchise.² They are arranged in three districts - Central, Eastern, and Southern - and each of these was in its turn subdivided into further sections. The volumes for each section consist of folio pages with twenty-five entries on each page giving the names, addresses, occupations, and annual house valuation of each ratepayer. Unfortunately, only the volumes covering the first section in each district have been retained.³ Those which have survived cover parts of Bridgeton, St. Rollox, and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown constituencies in 1885-1886.

Since these records are not complete they cannot be used to provide statistical data for the city as a whole. However, they can still be used in a limited way to provide general indications as to the degree of electoral

¹ The number of this collection in the Glasgow City Archives is D-CC 10,1.

² This is made clear when the entries in the Glasgow Valuation Rolls are compared with those in the relevant Collectors Rates Book. All occupiers' names appear in the former but only those rated at over £4 in the latter. Valuation Rolls for the City of Glasgow, Scottish Record Office, VR 102 (331-335).

³ Information supplied by the Glasgow City Archivist and the Glasgow City Collectors Department.

participation in the city. For instance, by taking one of the streets cited by Russell in his sanitary survey as containing examples of the worst housing conditions in the city the valuations of such houses can be discovered from the relevant collectors rates book. Some estimate of the extent of electoral opportunity in such an area can then be made by comparison with the names in the voters' roll. Middleton Place in the St. Rollox constituency has been chosen as a good example to be tested in this way since it was described by Russell¹ as well known to the health authorities as a black spot because of the 'rookeries' it contained.² Other streets of a similar nature like those in the portion between Havannah and Duke Street, which were still occupied by "the usual miserable class who haunt such localities" or those like Little and Great Dovehill with their continuing "bad spots"³ could not be tested by this method since the sections of the collectors rates books which covered their areas have not survived.

Middleton Place contained 122 houses of uniformly low valuations mainly at £4. 4s., £4. 10s., or £4. 11s.⁴ Only 12 were listed at valuations above £6 and 9 of these were shops. If the shopkeepers and female occupiers are excluded from this list the total number of occupiers left who ought to qualify for the franchise is 100. The occupations of these occupiers are almost without exception given as labourers. The electoral rolls for 1885 and 1886⁵ when compared with these lists in the collectors rates books show that

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics of the City of Glasgow, II, 25.

² A sufficiently descriptive term the connotations of which must have been well known at this time since Russell often uses it simply and without comment in his survey as one of the indicators of the low social standing of a district.

³ Russell, loc. cit., II, 44.

⁴ Glasgow City Archives, D-CC 10,1, Central District, 1885-1886, section 1, fo.10 - fo.15.

⁵ Register of Parliamentary Voters for the Burgh of Glasgow 1885-1886.

47 of the rated occupiers possessed a vote.

It has to be remembered that Middleton Place was the sort of area most likely to be affected by the complexities of registration. It was mainly inhabited by the sort of casual workers who "managed to pay their rents, but to the collector when he pays his quarterly or half-yearly visit they turn a deaf ear, or apply for exemption on the grounds of poverty."¹ Receipt of poor relief disqualified for the vote² and the folio pages for Middleton Place contain notes in the margin signifying exemption on these grounds.

Furthermore, the short lengths of tenancy likely in Middleton Place would limit the numbers of occupiers who could get enrolled in the electoral register. For example, residence in one house for one year and payment of rates would not necessarily qualify the occupant.³ A tenant might not stay long enough to fulfill the residence qualifications or, on the other hand, he might move after having qualified but would retain the vote at his former address. Evidence of this latter point can be seen in that the voters in the electoral register qualified as rate-paying tenant/occupants in Middleton Place was much greater than the number whose names appeared in the current collectors rates book who also had the vote. In 1883-1884 there

¹ Atkinson, op. cit., p. 35.

² Statutes of the Realm, 31 and 32 Vict. c.48, section 3. Whitelaw, Manual of Qualification etc., of Voters, p. 43.

³ The householder had to have twelve months possession prior to 31 July of the year in which he claimed to be registered. There then followed a delay between the preparation of the register and 1 November when the registers became effective in Scotland. Thus the minimum period to qualify for registration as a tenant-occupant in Scotland was at least 17 months. Whitelaw, op. cit., pp. 35, 55-65. "If the voter had changed his type of qualification or his residence any time within the (qualifying) period he would have to wait up to a maximum of two and a half years before being entitled to vote. The average period for provisional qualification was regarded as about two years one month." Blewett, op. cit., p. 35.

were 71 voters registered in the electoral registers on a tenant and occupant qualification for Middleton Place; in 1884-1885 there were 79 and in 1885-1886 there were 81.¹ In almost every case these voters were described simply as 'labourers'. The explanation of the discrepancy between the 81 who were qualified on a tenant and occupant basis in 1885-1886 and the 47 who tally with the occupiers lists in the collectors rates books probably lies in the migratory habits common in such districts.² Some had qualified for a vote but by 1885 had moved elsewhere whilst some of those in actual occupation in Middleton Place in 1885 had not yet achieved the time necessary for the residence qualification.

Remembering that this was one of the worst streets in Glasgow one would expect to find the greatest number of non-registered voters there and the figure of 47% does not seem to be, therefore, surprisingly low. To conform to the mean it would be natural to expect that one of the worst areas would show a lower, and, conversely, that other more highly valued areas, a higher incidence of electoral participation.³ Since only some of the collectors rates books have survived it is not possible to undertake a 10% sample which would give a statistically accurate picture of the city as a whole. By sampling those which do remain, however, results can be obtained which show the degree of electoral participation in their respective areas and these

¹ Registers of Parliamentary Voters for the Burgh of Glasgow, 1883-1884, 1884-1885, 1885-1886.

² "the people who live in those (poorer) houses are more of a moveable class. Their work changes; they are in Anderston this week and in Bridgeton the following week. Labouring men have to go where they can find work". Evidence of the City Assessor, Glasgow Municipal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, minutes of evidence, p. 4.

³ It fits in with the 53.8% of adult males for the total Glasgow area who had the vote in 1891. Figures calculated from Census Report Scotland 1891 and T. Wilkie, The Representation of Scotland, (Paisley 1895). The national average of males otherwise qualified to vote who were ever on the electoral registers at any one time by 1911 was 59% - 60%. Blewett, op. cit., p. 31.

can be taken, with the reservations as to statistical accuracy already noted, as giving a general indication for the whole city.

For the year 1885-1886 there are 203 folio sheets covering parts of the third, fourth and fourteenth wards situated in the Bridgeton, St. Rollox and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown constituencies respectively.¹ The method used to sample these was to take the last entry on each folio (excluding shops and female occupiers). Of the 203 occupiers extracted at random in this way 53 (26.1%) occupied houses valued at £5 or under, 102 (50.2%) occupied houses valued at £6 - £10, and the remaining 48 (23.1%) houses valued at over £10. The occupiers provided a fairly representative sample of the sorts of occupations found in the electoral registers at this period. Forty-three were engaged in a variety of manufacturing trades such as glassmaking, tobacco spinning, clothing and shoemaking. Labourers accounted for thirty-one of the group followed by twenty-seven engineers and mechanics, twenty-four joiners, plumbers, slaters and painters. There were nineteen carters and porters and seven with no occupation. Shopkeepers numbered nineteen and there were twenty-one salesmen, clerks, and travellers. Eight followed a miscellaneous variety of occupations (three contractors, two seamen, one fireman, one prison warder and one policeman) and the remaining four were an engineer, a surveyor, a jeweller, and a veterinary surgeon. When the names of these occupiers were then compared with the electoral registers 156 (76.8%) were found to be registered. This method, therefore, gives a figure for actual electoral participation of about $7\frac{1}{2}$ in every 10 for the whole area for which records exist. If the proportion from the above sample - 76.8% - is taken together with that for Middleton Place - 47% - then on average it might be expected that about 61.9% of the tenant-occupiers

¹ Glasgow City Archives, D-CC 10,1, Eastern District 1885-1886, section 1, fo.1 - fo.43; Central District 1885-1886, section 1, fo.1 - fo.97; Southern District 1885-1886, section 1, fo.1 - fo.63.

in Glasgow would be able to vote at parliamentary elections.

This figure, however, can only be applied to cover the parts of three of the city's constituencies for which the collectors rates books exist. They do not allow of a statistical conclusion for the city as a whole. What they do provide is a general indication of the proportion of the adult males otherwise qualified in Glasgow who were likely to possess the vote. The trends they indicate make it safe to conclude (as has been done in studies of electoral participation in England) that after 1835 "for the first time we can study the election returns with the hope of finding a genuine reflection of popular feeling."¹ (italics mine). A study of the general elections of 1835 and 1836 in Glasgow, should give some indication of what the political opinions of the bulk of the population were. The 1835 elections in Glasgow will, therefore, be considered next and the major issues viewed through the focus of each of the parties and pressure groups in turn beginning with the most important, the Liberals.

¹ H. Pelling, Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain, (1968), p. 6.

Chapter II

The Liberals in Glasgow in the 1885 Election

Before any treatment of the Liberals in Glasgow is undertaken brief consideration must be given to the previous electoral history of the city.¹ It is appropriate to do this in a chapter dealing with the Liberals since Glasgow's political history in the nineteenth century is largely a record of Liberal activity and Liberal dominance.

The Reform Act of 1832 transformed political life in Glasgow. The revolution thus effected can be measured by contrasting the state of representation before and after that act. Prior to 1832 Glasgow had had to share a member of Parliament with the neighbouring burghs of Renfrew, Dumbarton and Rutherglen. However equitable this arrangement may have been in 1707 it had clearly become anomalous by the early 19th century when Glasgow greatly overshadowed the other three burghs in population, wealth and commercial importance.² Besides having to share one member of parliament with three burghs vastly inferior to itself more serious electoral inconsistencies existed within the city itself. In Glasgow this quarter share of representation was based on an oligarchic franchise, exercised on behalf of a population of some 147,000 in 1820 by a mainly self-perpetuating Town Council of some 30 members.³ In 1832, however, when

¹ There is some incidental material in R.W.M. Cowan The Newspaper in Scotland (Glasgow 1946) and D.A. Teviotdale examines the structure of political life at the period of the Reform Bill in The Glasgow Constituency 1832-46 (Glasgow University B.Litt. Thesis, 1963). Both these works cover only the first half of the century.

² J. Cleland, Annals of Glasgow, (2 vols. Glasgow 1816), I, 48.

³ J. Cleland, Rise and Progress of the City of Glasgow, (Glasgow 1820), pp. 65-68.

J. Cleland, Statistical Tables Relative to the City of Glasgow, (3rd edn., Glasgow 1823), pp. 6-7.

R. Renwick, Sir John Lindsay, G. Eyre-Todd, History of Glasgow, (3 vols.

the vote was given for the first time to the ten pound householders a literally fresh state of electoral conditions was created.¹ Political influence was taken from the narrow basis of the Town Council (composed of representatives from the Merchants' and Trades' Houses) and transferred to some 7,000 electors mainly drawn from the rising, prospering middle classes.² Against this background of political restriction the struggle for franchise reform had naturally been attended with keen and sustained interest in the city.³ It was hardly surprising, therefore, that after 1832 the natural political bias of the city's new voters should veer away from the Tories and move towards the Reform party. The single constituency of Glasgow created by the Reform Act in 1832, given the right to elect two members now, proceeded to return Liberals in unbroken succession right up to the general election of 1874.

This political continuity in Glasgow must be seen as part of the general allegiance of the Scottish burghal electorate to Liberalism.⁴ Political commentators then and since have explained this monolithic support in the following terms: the greatest support from Free Traders and church reformers was concentrated in Scottish towns in the nineteenth century. There, too,

¹ Renwick, Lindsay, Eyre-Todd, loc. cit., p. 484.

² The list of electors with occupations is given in The Glasgow Voters' Manual, (Glasgow 1832).

³ P. Mackenzie, Reminiscences of Glasgow, (3 vols. Glasgow 1865), II, 228-31, 241-52, 256, 335-344.
Renwick, Lindsay, Eyre-Todd, op. cit., III, 479-84.

⁴ According to G.S. Pryde the dominance of the Liberals in Scotland after 1832 was based on their almost total hold on the Scottish burghs. "The determining factor was the burgh vote, for all or almost all of the burghs returned Liberals at each election ... there were actually in 1885 more burgh seats with than without unbroken records of Liberal representation since 1832." Scotland from 1603 to the present day, (1962), p. 209. See also G.S. Pryde and R.S. Rait, Scotland, (second edition 1954), pp. 120-121 where the same point is made.

were situated increasingly the new, urban working classes, generally radical and anti-Conservative in temper. Consequently the Scottish burghs were Liberal and anti-Conservative in tendency in the nineteenth century.¹

Until 1874, therefore, the Liberals in Glasgow were secure in their hold on the affections of the electorate. At that election the complacency of the Liberals received a sharp jolt, however, with the first electoral success of a Conservative candidate in the city. The reasons for this abrupt change in the pattern of Glasgow's parliamentary representation are to be largely found in the conditions created by the second Reform Act of 1868 (and to a lesser extent from complacency on the part of the Liberals combined with improvements in the morale and organisation of the Conservatives). By this act the franchise was widened to include rate-paying householders and £10 lodgers. In Glasgow this extended the vote to 37,500 new voters² mainly drawn from the working population of the city. The composition of the electorate was now greatly influenced by the inclusion of this new social group in the electorate.³ More important, by the redistribution provisions of the act Glasgow was given a third member. In single constituencies returning three

¹ Scottish burgh support for the Liberals (and Glasgow is a prime example here) was due to "The evil memory of the unreformed burgh corporations, the genuine national aspiration for a 'Christian Democracy', the dissenters' distrust of authority and repression, the general adherence to free trade doctrines, and the influential support of the leading newspapers" Pryde, Scotland since 1603, p. 209. The newspaper files covering the Glasgow elections after 1832 generally indicate overwhelming support for the Liberal candidates on a general programme of liberalising institutions in Church and State and removing trading restrictions.

² In 1865 the constituency numbered 16,278 electors: in 1868 47,854 electors. T. Wilkie, The Representation of Scotland, (Paisley 1895), p. 142.

³ G.J. Holyoake in an address to workingmen in 1868 while noting that "all that the sons of labour have gained at present, is the advantage of being consulted", did go on to underline the importance of the extension of the franchise by saying "whoever is member will have to take them into account". Quoted in H.J. Hanham, Elections and Party Management, (1959), p. xii.

M.Ps., however, each elector, due to the provisions of Cairns' clause, could only cast two votes.¹

Although this further extension of the franchise came from a Conservative administration reforming enthusiasm among the electorate at first ensured Liberal success in Glasgow, as in much of the rest of the United Kingdom, in the 1868 general election. Quite fortuitously (for there was no effective Liberal organisation in Glasgow at this time) the three Liberal candidates at this election received an almost equal distribution of votes leaving the one Conservative trailing a very poor fourth at the polls.² Almost by chance the necessary conditions for success in a three-cornered constituency, overwhelmingly Liberal in complexion, were fulfilled in 1868 in Glasgow. Firstly, only three Liberal candidates stood for the three available seats and secondly, the Liberal electorate, faced with the choice of spreading two votes to best advantage among three candidates, managed somehow to achieve a distribution which ensured almost equal weight for each of the three.

The results of the next general election in 1874 proved that the Liberal success in 1868 in Glasgow had been due more to chance than to any degree of electoral planning. In 1874 five Liberal candidates between them dissipated their strength and allowed a Conservative to win one of the seats. This was mainly caused by the split in the Liberal vote as the following table

¹ This clause was inserted in the Reform Act in order to ensure that strong minorities (Conservative, it was hoped) would really share in the representation of such three-member constituencies. M. Ostrogorski, Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties, (2 vols, 1902), I, 111.

² The result was:

Dalglish	(Lib)	-	18,287
Graham	(Lib)	-	18,062
Anderson	(Lib)	-	17,803
Campbell	(Cons)	-	10,824

T. Wilkie, The Representation of Scotland, p. 142, and Glasgow Herald, 5 Feb. 1874.

demonstrates.¹

1874 results:	Cameron	(Lib)	-	18,455
	Anderson	(Lib)	-	17,901
	Whitelaw	(Cons)	-	14,134
	Hunter	(Cons)	-	12,533
	Crum	(Lib)	-	7,453
	Kerr	(Lib)	-	4,444
	Bolton	(Lib)	-	169

Comparisons with the statistics of 1868 demonstrate that in 1874 the total polled for both Conservative candidates showed very little increase in Conservative strength. In 1868 Campbell got 10,824 and in 1874 Whitelaw and Hunter received 12,113 each on their double ticket.² The vast majority of Campbell's support in 1868 came from 'plumpers' i.e., voters who cast only one vote and retained their other one since there was only one Conservative on the ballot.³ The traditional overwhelming preference of the electorate in 1874 for the Liberals was still very much in evidence (48,423 votes as against 26,667 for the Conservatives). Although an increase in Conservative morale and organisation was noticeable in Glasgow in 1874 these figures prove conclusively that their success was due more to Liberal disunity than to Conservative support.⁴ A Liberal candidate at this election in Glasgow who had withdrawn before polling declared that this "essentially Liberal

¹ Wilkie, Representation of Scotland, p. 143.

² This represents the hard core of Conservative support, i.e., those who gave their two votes evenly to both Conservative candidates. The extra votes for Whitelaw and Hunter came from voters who split their choice between them and one of the other five candidates or who 'plumped' for them. Glasgow Herald, 5 Feb. 1874.

³ Glasgow Herald, ibid. "In a two member constituency each elector could, of course, vote for two candidates. If he 'plumped' for one candidate, leaving his second vote unused, he was said to have given a 'plumper'. The enhanced value to the recipient is obvious." N. Gash, Politics in the Age of Peel, (1953), p. 127. This principle applied equally, of course, in three member constituencies like Glasgow after 1868 where each voter was entitled to cast two votes.

⁴ The Glasgow Herald regarded Whitelaw's victory as due to lack of Liberal preparation, organization and general mismanagement. Glasgow Herald, 14 and 16 Feb. 1874.

constituency" had lost a seat to the Conservatives because of a lack of unity between the "moderate Liberals" and "the compact and powerful organisations representing the industrial classes; and by the consequent nomination of more Liberal candidates than could possibly be elected".¹

His analysis seems to have been essentially accurate. The 'moderate' wing of the Liberals had insisted on putting forward two candidates (Crum and Bolton) although the total votes cast for them showed that there was little support for their brand of Liberalism.² Their presence served to divert and waste Liberal voting strength in Glasgow. The Irish party had put forward Kerr in their interest and the analysis of the voting showed that the Catholics who voted for him did so to the exclusion of all the other Liberal candidates: nine out of ten of this bloc of voters had deliberately thrown their second vote away in order to further the ends of their section.³ Equally exclusively the two advanced Liberals representing labour and radical interests - Cameron and Anderson - polled massively totalling between them over half the votes cast.⁴ A more judicious spread of the Liberal votes in other words would have ensured the retention of all three seats by the Liberals. Even discounting the Catholic vote for Kerr the total polled for the Liberals was 43,979. Split evenly three ways (at 14,660) the Liberals could clearly have brought their massive strength to bear to squeeze the two Conservatives out as the latter managed at best to muster only just over 14,000 votes.⁵

¹ Letter from P. Stewart MacIver, Glasgow Herald, 16 Feb. 1874.

² Article on the Glasgow election, Glasgow Herald, 5 Feb. 1874.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

Drawing the moral from these figures the Liberals resolved to adopt Gladstone's motto of "Liberal Unity" to prevent a repetition. Attempts were made in 1875 to create an effective Liberal organisation in the city.¹ The effort "to urge upon all Liberals ... to subordinate minor differences of opinion ... to return a third Liberal for Glasgow at the next election",² however proved abortive and the matter was allowed to drop. Interest in the necessity of organising Liberal opinion in the city was revived again in 1878, however, when it was rumoured that a by-election was pending. A meeting was held to consider the "untoward position of the party in Glasgow, in consequence of there being no representative body in existence which could legitimately take action (concerning) the parliamentary representation of the city."³ As a result a Liberal Association was established in Glasgow and soon began to busy itself in moulding its organisation in the image of Birmingham. After "giving anxious consideration to the problem of returning three Liberal members at the next general election, Mr. Schnadhorst made a special visit last August (1879) in order to give the committee the benefit of his extended experience."⁴ One of the lessons brought by Schnadhorst from the fount of radicalism was that an essential condition of success was "that only three Liberal candidates for the vacant seats be nominated."⁵

The electoral similarities between the two cities and Birmingham's record of successful organisation under Schnadhorst naturally led the Glasgow group to look there for inspiration. The problem as they saw it was that "while

¹ First Annual Report of the Glasgow Liberal Association 1879, (Glasgow 1880), p. 1.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., p. 2.

⁴ loc. cit., p. 4.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

there can be no doubt that the number of Liberal Electors is more than sufficient to secure the return of three Liberals, yet under the operation of the ballot, success will be hopeless, except through the loyal support of all sections of the party to the plan that may commend itself as most likely to return all three seats for the Liberal cause."¹ Hence the turning of Liberal eyes in Glasgow to the example provided by Birmingham and the experience of the man who controlled that city - Schnadhorst. Birmingham, like Glasgow, was a three-cornered constituency which had had a great addition to the electoral roll in 1868. Like Glasgow it, too, had a clearly dominant Liberal majority with the attendant difficulty of distributing the double vote of each Liberal elector so as to ensure an even spread for the return of three Liberal candidates.

In Birmingham the problem had been solved by "good organization (which) made the Liberal vote more effective by uniting Liberals behind an agreed slate of candidates".² The Birmingham Liberal Association was formed in such a manner that the Liberal strength of the city was channelled upwards from the wards to the executive at the top. Each ward elected members to a General Council which had as its main responsibility the selection of an agreed list of Liberal candidates. This Council's executive, largely middle-class in composition, dominated the structure and received authority from the approval given to it by the active support of the artisan and shopkeeper classes in the ward committees. At the 1868 election the efficiency of this 'caucus' was demonstrated when the Liberal electors in each ward solved the problem of distributing two votes among three candidates by voting obediently on an

¹ Ibid., p. 4.

² Barry McGill, "Francis Schnadhorst and Liberal Party organization," Journal of Modern History, vol. 34, (March 1962), no. 1, p. 22.

approved pattern for the assigned candidates.¹ No record seems to exist either in the newspapers of the time or in other sources of what Schnadhorst said to the Glasgow Liberal Association. From the information cited above, however, the likelihood is that he outlined the merits of the organisation which had been evolved in Birmingham for the edification of the Glasgow Liberals. Equally clearly the Glasgow Liberal Association from the evidence of its annual reports, had adopted by 1882² a structure closely resembling that of Birmingham. In the 1880 general election by organising its electoral strength in the city behind three agreed candidates it had successfully recaptured the third seat from the Conservatives. It seems clear, therefore, that the Glasgow Liberal Association adopted the organisational and electoral techniques of the Birmingham model.

The complete control of the representation of Glasgow exercised by the Glasgow Liberal after 1880 did not, however, last long. The third Reform Act of 1884/5 once more upset the electoral elements in Glasgow. By the redistribution provisions of this legislation the traditional pattern of double and three member constituencies was altered and the principle of

¹ T.R. Tholfsen, "The Origins of the Birmingham Caucus," Historical Journal, II, (1959), p. 184. This method of "vote as you are told" accounted for the hold of the Birmingham Liberals on all three seats after 1868, Ibid., p. 161.

In Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties, I, 113-4 and 161-7, Ostrogorski gives these details of the procedural methods used by the Liberal caucus in Birmingham. First, a preliminary canvass was made in the wards to ascertain the exact number of Liberal electors. This having been ascertained, the minimum of votes necessary to carry all three seats was next worked out. Third, the vote was then distributed "in such a fashion that each candidate would only receive the number of votes strictly necessary to obtain a majority at the poll, and the other votes over and above this would be given to one of the other two candidates so that each of them should eventually have a majority." Ibid., p. 162.

² Glasgow Liberal Association Third Annual Report February 1882, (Glasgow 1882), pp. 1-8.

single member constituencies was introduced.¹

At the 1885 election new problems, therefore, faced the Liberal party managers in Glasgow. In a three-cornered constituency it had been possible to cater for a wide range of interests by giving each group some say in the choice of candidates. In such a situation it had been feasible to appeal to each of the interest groups to sink their differences and compromise in the total choice of candidates for the sake of party unity and the general reforming cause. For instance, multi-member constituencies made it possible to maintain the old convenient device used by the Liberals of running whigs and radicals together.² The creation of new single member constituencies now, however, swept away a situation in which some compromise and room for manoeuvre had been possible by allowing major interests the chance of returning at least one candidate out of three suited to their tastes. Instead, the likelihood now was that in the new seven single-member Glasgow constituencies sectional struggles between rival Liberal interests (such as the Disestablishers and the Church Liberals, the moderate whigs and radical working men) would reappear and the pattern of the 1874 election would be repeated. Control of the local party machinery and hence over the choice of candidate and the degree of reforming enthusiasm to be allowed to represent the Liberal electors of each constituency would now become a burning question.³

¹ "the historic communitates (counties and boroughs) ceased to be, as such, the basis of the house of commons. The individual for the first time became the unit, and numerical equality (one vote, one value) the master principle." R.C.K. Ensor, England 1870-1914, (Oxford 1936), p. 88. Historians have tended to treat the implications of the redistribution of seats in 1884/5 lightly. More attention is normally given to the equalization of the county franchise to that of the burghs, an aspect which did not affect Glasgow.

² Ensor, op. cit., p. 89.

³ C. O'Leary, The Elimination of Corrupt Practices in British Elections 1868-1911, (Oxford 1962), p. 183.

It is against this background, therefore, that the preliminary manoeuvring among the Liberals in Glasgow in the 1885 elections must be seen.

The general election held in the November of 1885 had been preceded by a protracted period of public debate. Ever since the defeat of the Liberal ministry in the summer, which had put the Salisbury administration into office, it had been clear for all to see that an election could not be long delayed.¹ Besides the uncertain strength of a Conservative administration dependent to some extent on support from the Parnellites² there were other reasons necessitating an appeal to the country. For one thing the completion of the new Franchise and Redistribution Acts made it inevitable. For another it was clearly becoming ever more necessary for some judgement to be passed on the Liberal government's record since 1880.³ The reforming ministry ushered in so auspiciously in that year had obviously been running out of steam for some time. Gordon's death, foreign complications, unpalatable coercion in Ireland, failure to ease the economic distress at home, had all been signs of this. Growing external unpopularity had also been compounded by internal party dissensions. Growing rivalry and unease between the Whigs on the one hand and the Radicals on the other could no longer be papered over.⁴ For these reasons, therefore, the elections debate had really begun in earnest

¹ Two tasks faced the Salisbury government in 1885, "to wind up Parliament and go to the country." A.G. Gardiner, The Life of Sir William Harcourt, (2 vols, 1923), I, 536.

² W.S. Churchill, Life of Lord Randolph Churchill, (2 vols, 1906), I, 394-5.

³ H. Pelling, Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910, (1967), p. 15.

⁴ K. O'Shea, Charles Stewart Parnell, (2 vols, 1914), II, 21. Churchill, Lord Randolph Churchill, I, 376-7. The Annual Register for 1885 said (p. 96) "both parties seemed desirous to bring rapidly to a close a session in which neither could hope to obtain credit or advantage." Quoting the Economist it also said (p. 133) that this was "a Parliament of drawn battles and postponed issues ... postponed for our new electors to decide as they will."

some five months before polling took place in November.¹

An important factor in all this was the growing vociferousness on the part of the radicals in giving expression to Chamberlain's 'Unauthorised Programme'.² It not only made the latent division between the Chamberlainites and the Hartingtonians explicit at the top level of politics, but also helped to underline similar tensions within the Liberal ranks in the Scottish constituencies. In constituencies like those which had just been formed in Glasgow this problem became very acute for the Liberals in 1885. Being new entities new political organisations had to be formed in them. With seven chances now instead of three of entering parliament to forward their own deeply-felt convictions and policies, progressive politicians who would naturally gravitate under the Liberal umbrella began to press into the constituencies to establish their claims as prior contenders for the franchises of the population. However, whether 'moderate' or 'advanced' in their views they all, in varying degrees, soon came up against the caucus control which had been quickly established through the formation of seven Liberal constituency associations. Struggles, therefore, naturally arose over who or which interest was to have the choice of candidates.

In the upshot, given the contentious nature of the prevalent issues, double Liberal candidatures (and more) proliferated in Glasgow as

¹ O'Leary, The Elimination of Corrupt Practices in British Elections, p. 182.

² The main planks in this were Free Primary Education (which implied the secularisation of schools), compulsory land purchase to provide allotments, and a programme of fiscal reform. On a less emphatic plane Disestablishment was included along with a series of other radical proposals. C.H.D. Howard, "Joseph Chamberlain and the 'Unauthorised Programme'," English Historical Review, vol. 65, (Oct. 1950), 477-91. For the difference in emphasis between this radicalism and that which inspired Glasgow's radicals see J.G. Kellas, "The Liberal Party in Scotland 1876-1895," Scottish Historical Review, vol. 44, (April 1965), 6.

elsewhere.¹ As late as 5 November, only three weeks before polling, there were no less than nineteen candidates listed by the Glasgow Herald for the seven constituencies.² In a completely new situation, each branch within the Liberals sought to impose their own pattern from the outset on the newly-formed separate constituencies. Naturally, dissensions among the Liberals (mainly over the Church question and, to a lesser extent, over the exact measure of radicalism acceptable in a Liberal on issues such as the social question) seriously weakened their unity. Under the pressing imminence of an election dissensions also led them to indulge in a great deal of public debate. In consequence, besides exposing the holes in the texture of Scottish Liberalism, this also added heart to the Conservatives in Glasgow who could only hope to benefit from the defection of Church Liberals driven over by the intransigence of the Disestablishers.

Into this confused situation where the Liberals, on the one hand, hoped to maintain their ascendancy by establishing a domination in all seven seats (similar to that which they had enjoyed in the old three-cornered constituency), and in which the Conservatives, on the other, hoped to secure a new foothold, there was added the intervention of independent 'labour' candidates. These latter, spurred by the previous year's visit of Henry George, the contemporary trade depression and the hopes of a new course from Chamberlain, disillusioned by the moderation of the Scottish Liberals and influenced by the events of the "Crofters' War," stood separately in three constituencies in Glasgow. Known variously as 'Land and Labour' candidates or 'Land Restorationists' they were all products of the Socialist revival which marked

¹ According to J.G. Kellas, "The Liberal Party and the Scottish Church Disestablishment Crisis," English Historical Review, vol. 79, (Jan. 1964), p. 36, there were 27 double Liberal candidatures in the Scottish constituencies in 1885, 13 of them being divided on the church issue.

² Glasgow Herald, 5 Nov. 1885.

the 1880's. The Scottish Land Restoration League with its headquarters in Glasgow was the organisation through which they expressed the interests of labour in Glasgow.¹

Opposed, naturally, by the Conservatives, ridiculed (and perhaps feared) by the Liberals, they introduced a new, unknown and potentially disruptive element into the political life of Glasgow in 1885. Despite their lack of success in 1885, their very candidatures demonstrated their belief in the principle of independent labour representation.² As well as this, their presence and activity heralded a potential threat to what had hitherto seemed the impregnable and all-embracing nature of Scottish Liberalism. In the immediate circumstances, however, of customary control and popular feeling, the Church question was the one which was to prove the greatest danger to party unity in 1885.

Because of all this, perhaps the most notable feature of the 1885 elections in Glasgow was the confusion in the Liberal organisation due to the number of Liberals of varying shades of opinion fighting between themselves for the party nomination in the constituencies. At one time Bridgeton, for example, was being wooed by no less than six candidates of Liberal hue.³ When nominations closed on November 25, in only three constituencies (Central, College, St. Rollox) was there a straight fight between Liberal and Conservative, and this closing of the ranks had only been achieved in St. Rollox after the necessity of a trial ballot between two Liberals. In three (Tradeston, Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, Bridgeton) there were three-cornered

¹ James Mavor, My Windows on the Street of the World, (2 vols. 1923), I, 174,175.

² According to G.D.H. Cole in British Working Class Politics 1832-1914, (1941), p. 100, they are to be regarded as the first truly independent Labour candidates in the nineteenth century.

³ Glasgow Herald, 14 July 1885.

fighters between a Liberal, Conservative and Land Restoration League candidate. In Camlachie, two radical Liberals were in the lists vying with each other as well as the Conservative candidate.

The primary cause of this disunity in the party which, since 1832, had been dominant in Scotland can be attributed to a growing movement of radicalism within the Liberal ranks. This had become evident in recent years within the wider context of Scottish Liberal party organisation. The struggle within the Scottish Liberal camp had centred mainly on questions of organisation.¹ This, however, only served to mask the real fight which was basically between two opposing social and political philosophies. The 'radicals' in Scotland intended to make the party organisation more effective by 'democratising' it so that it would reflect popular feeling in the constituencies and act as a pressurising force on the party leadership. The influence here, of course, of the Chamberlainite National Liberal Federation in England is obvious. In October 1885 the latter recorded with approval that "in many Scottish Burghs the Liberal Associations had been affiliated to the Federation and that on many important occasions (Liberalism in Scotland) had shown that it was in sympathy with the work of the Federation."²

This movement was opposed by the 'moderates' who reacted in their more cautiously 'whig' tradition by opposing any attempts to fetter the individual judgement of members which would force them to adopt a prescribed 'party' line at the dictation of the majority. Freedom from any coercion, especially the

¹ This was still the case in 1885. Arguing the case against the radicals desire to commit the Scottish Liberal Association to a definite electoral programme Lord Elgin wrote to Rosebery, "I feel more strongly, and I believe I do not speak without knowledge, that for the sake of the unity of the party it is absolutely essential that the question of organisation, and the work of organisation, should be kept distinct from those other questions and movements on which different sections of the party hold different opinions." Lord Elgin to Rosebery, 18 Dec. 1885, Rosebery Papers, National Library of Scotland, Box 61, (Consulted by courtesy of the trustees of the National Library of Scotland.)

² Annual Report of National Liberal Federation 1885 quoted in Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

coercion of 'King Numbers' as a fundamental tenet of Scottish Liberalism, was bound to clash with the ever more popular contemporary theory of the advantages of party organisation designed to reflect popular opinion more effectively. In this contest Glasgow had taken the lead in reaction to the negative approach to questions of organisation adopted by the Whig leaders of Scottish Liberalism.¹

As far back as 1882, battle had been waged between the 'radical' and 'whig' wings in the Scottish Liberal Association on this topic with Glasgow normally spearheading the radical challenge.² At the first Annual General Meeting of the Association held in Glasgow, the chairman, Lord Fife, had laid it down as a nostrum that "the prominent objects of the Association ... was (sic) to promote the unity and strength of the Liberal party in Scotland, without interfering in any way with the independent action of the local Associations ... it was also important to maintain an amicable connection with all the influential Liberal bodies in the constituencies."³ Later at the same meeting the

¹ For this whole topic see Kellas, "Liberal Party in Scotland," Scottish Historical Review, vol. 44, (April 1965), 1-16.

² As early as 1881 the duties of great cities in furthering Liberalism had been outlined by A. Taylor Innes, a radical Liberal and prominent Disestablisher, in an address given to the Glasgow Junior Liberal Association, (published as Great Cities and Liberalism, Glasgow 1881). Glasgow, he declared, was more than "a mere concourse of human atoms on the banks of the Clyde." It had a persona as a city - "that is, it is an organized society of mutually interdependent men; an historical society, with traditions of growth in the past, and greatness in the present, which give the exact measure of its responsibilities for the future." (pp. 6-7). As such these responsibilities were to be tackled by cities like Glasgow becoming "the centres of Liberalism, and their duty to Liberalism and the Liberal party is that of headship or leadership" (pp. 10-11). Sentiments such as these clearly inspired the Glasgow radicals to achieve a position in Scottish Liberalism which would reflect their already established economic and social importance. This pamphlet is bound in the McGrigor Collection, Glasgow University Library, pressmark Ea2-f2.

³ University Library, University of Edinburgh, Scottish Liberal Association Minute Book, 5 Jan. 1882.
Scotsman, 6 Jan. 1882.

Solicitor-General, alluding to the object of this type of organisation of Liberal opinion "to afford an opportunity for leading liberals in Scotland ... to meet and concert measures for the furtherance of the Liberal cause", pointedly referred to the appropriate venue in which the first meeting of the Association was held - Glasgow. "The Liberals in Glasgow", he said, "had proved themselves great adepts in the art of organisation".¹

To test the value of these sentiments and acting on them at their face value one of the Glasgow delegates, Dr. W.G. Blackie, tried to bring up the question of Disestablishment for discussion. A long and confused debate on the propriety of raising this sort of question led to some searching examination of the objects of the Association. This was continued in the struggle to popularise the Association and finally ended with the breakaway of the radicals in 1885, headed by Glasgow again, to form the National Liberal Federation of Scotland.² Much of the impetus behind the movement to make the Scottish Liberal Association into an effective voice for 'Liberal Scotland' which would dictate policy to the Liberal leaders (on the model of Chamberlain's Federation in England) came from Glasgow. A great part, too, of the dialectic in this debate came largely from the negative, stonewalling stand taken by Whigs like Lord Fife. The Annual Report of the National Liberal Federation of England summed up the case of the Scottish radicals pointedly. Welcoming the action of the Glasgow Liberals it said, "it is understood that the existing organisation (the Scottish Liberal Association) which had claimed to represent Scottish opinion, had neither been sufficiently representative nor energetic to meet the wishes of the more active section of the Scottish Liberals."³ The same point was made even more intransigently by Chamberlain

¹ Ibid.

² Outlined in detail by Kellas, loc. cit.

³ Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

in a private letter to Rosebery at this time. "The 'Whigs'," he wrote, "seem to me to be even more irrelevant in Scotland than in England. If they insist on making Disestablishment a test question by refusing their support to Disestablishment candidates they must take the consequences."¹ Typical of the state of affairs causing this tension had been Fife's action, as chairman of the 1882 meeting, in closing the discussion on Blackie's point on Disestablishment by stating flatly that "the association was merely one for purposes of organisation, and not for the advancement of any particular political question".²

Between 1882 and 1885 the topical issues in Scottish politics did nothing to allay tension between the different factions among the Liberals in Scotland. Chief among these was the Church question. The bitter contentions arising from religious conflict between the various branches of the Presbyterian church in Scotland provide the background to the Disestablishment controversy which bulked so large in Scottish politics in the later nineteenth century. Since 1733 when a secession had taken place from the Church of Scotland a strong body of dissenters had been in existence, keeping itself strictly aloof from the establishment. The root of their dislike of the Church of Scotland and the main bar to unity in Scotland lay in the existence and operation of patronage (the choosing of ministers by a patron, not by the congregation). Abolished at the 'Glorious Revolution' this had been reintroduced by a Tory ministry in 1712 as one of the first-fruits of the Union. Although splitting still further among themselves over the exact degree of compromise to be tolerated in their dealings with the state the

¹ Chamberlain to Rosebery, 29 Aug. 1885, Rosebery Papers, National Library of Scotland, Box 61.

² Scottish Liberal Association Minute Book, 5 Jan. 1882.

main body of these dissenters had come together again by 1820 to form the 'United Secession' church. This group soon came to uphold the 'voluntary' principle and in 1847 they united with the next largest body of Presbyterian dissent, the Relief Church (also believers in 'voluntaryism'), to form the United Presbyterian Church. As the largest body of exponents of 'voluntaryism' both in principle and in practice the U.P.s were extremely strong and well organised in the Scottish towns.¹ They were also rightly regarded as providing the backbone of Liberal strength in the burgh constituencies.²

The disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843 saw the creation of another formidable body of Presbyterian dissent - the Free Church of Scotland. During the period 1834-43 an evangelical group within the established church tried and failed to popularise that organisation by neutralizing the effects of the operation of the law of patronage. In so doing they sought to maintain both before and after 1843 their adherence to the twin ideals of establishment and the purification of the Scottish church. They occupied a position, therefore, midway between the U.P. church and the Church of Scotland. However, once out of the establishment after 1843 although "no

¹ 'Voluntaryism' denotes a principle which maintains that religious observances should be provided by the various religious bodies and conversely abhors the maintenance of religious 'establishments' through the united action of Church and State. Despite the implicit secularism in this principle its exponents all assumed the necessary existence and continuance of Christian beliefs and consciences in society. A good definition of what voluntaryism meant by 1885 was given by Dr. John Cairns, leader of the U.P.s. He said, "I believe that no nation can be neutral in relation to God or Christianity, can disregard the voice of Revelation ... it is the duty of nations to further Christianity.... But I cannot regard the state as called to be the supporter and propagandist of Christianity in the way which is alone possible in State Churches ... the distinctive action of the State is coercive, and of the Church voluntary." A.R. MacEwen, Life and Letters of John Cairns, (1895), pp. 607-8.

² See The Life of Duncan McLaren by J.B. Mackie (2 vols. Edinburgh 1888), which illustrates the influence and links between religion, politics, and economics as exemplified in the career of the most prominent Scottish dissenter in the nineteenth century.

'voluntaries' by conviction, Free Churchmen became of necessity 'voluntaries' in action ... so that in time their theories were reshaped to fit the new facts."¹

When patronage, the original grievance, was abolished in 1874 by the Disraeli administration this was regarded by the Free Church, however, not so much a step towards unity as a trap liable to ensnare the unwary back into the fold of an erastian establishment. The Free Churchmen realised that the basic question raised in 1843 of the nature of the link between Church and State, of who in the last analysis controlled the expression of religion in Scotland, had still been left unresolved.² Already before the Bill abolishing patronage was passed "the Free Church resolved the problem could only be solved by the termination of the present connexion of Church and State in Scotland".³ Thus instead of inaugurating a period of religious harmony in Scotland 1874 saw a new generation of Free Church leaders scorn "the notion of returning to the establishment, even after the abolition of patronage, and turn instead to the United Presbyterians".⁴ Increasingly in the 1870's and 1880's the main dissenting Presbyterian groups in Scotland, the U.P.s and the Free Church, moved closer together in a mutual sympathy based on support for voluntaryism in principle and a concerted public attack on establishments in general.⁵

¹ Pryde, Scotland from 1603, p. 265.

² The abolition of patronage in 1874 "raised into sharp prominence the question whether the root grievances of Dissent had been removed, and whether an establishment partly emancipated was free from the Erastian fetters fastened upon it in 1843." J.R. Fleming, A History of the Church in Scotland 1875-1929, (Edinburgh 1932), p. 26.

³ Sir T. Raleigh, Annals of the Church of Scotland, (O.U.P. 1921), p. 325.

⁴ Pryde, loc. cit., p. 265.

⁵ "an instinct of self preservation as well as fear of unfair advantage stirred the other churches to hostility and a demand for a fair field and no favour", Fleming, op. cit., p. 27.

In 1872 the U.P. church and then in 1877 the Free Church declared themselves publicly in support of a policy of Disestablishment.¹ Besides these policy declarations by the chief dissenting churches a branch of the 'Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control' was established in Scotland in 1878² and later a Scottish Disestablishment Council was set up.³ The activities of the Liberation Society in its efforts "to promote the election of M.P.s favourable to the principle of religious equality"⁴ soon brought the church question into prominence in Scottish political life. The Scottish branch felt in 1882 that the time had now come "to endeavour to obtain satisfactory pledges from candidates at all elections, and also to take steps for raising a discussion in Parliament".⁵ In 1884 a special Disestablishment conference resolved to bring the question up at the next general election "and press it energetically ... on constituencies and on candidates".⁶ The disestablishers considered that "nothing ought to prevent (the question of Disestablishment) from being coupled with other leading questions in the tests to be applied to candidates". What was needed in Scotland were "good men and true as Parliamentary candidates, men like Cromwell's Ironsides who, knowing their duty would fearlessly do it."⁷

¹ MacEwen, Life of John Cairns, p. 603.
P. Carnegie Simpson, Life of Principal Rainy, (2 vols. 1909), II, 1.
Proceedings and Debates of the Free Church of Scotland 1877, (issued annually Edinburgh), pp. 183, 205, 318.

² Annual Report of the Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Control May 1878, (London 1878), pp. 10-11.

³ Fleming, op. cit., p. 27.

⁴ Report of the Triennial Conference of the Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Control May 1883, (London 1883), pp. 39-40.

⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

⁶ Annual Report of the Scottish Council of the Liberation Society for 1883, (Edinburgh 1884), p. 16.

⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

Motions in Parliament raising the question (like J. Dick Peddie's, Liberal M.P. for Kilmarnock Burghs, in 1882 and 1885) were to be used as tests for the illumination of the Scottish electorate "so that Liberal who voted in the wrong lobby, or refused to vote, might be spotted and dealt with by their constituents".¹

With active agitation of the church question like this and a joint campaign being waged by the U.P. and Free Church leaders² the Church of Scotland reacted in ways which inevitably made the issue dominate Scottish politics. In 1882 it set up a Church Interests Committee in order to defend itself from the attacks of the disestablishers.³ Faced with increasing pressure from its opponents from 1882 onwards both in parliament and the country at large the established church became increasingly militant. By the Spring of 1885 a political convulsion seemed imminent within its ranks. All the signs clearly indicated that the disestablishment controversy would force Church Liberals to feel bound to vote against the Liberal party if it became committed to the disestablishment cause. For instance, an informal meeting of ministers held to consider the forthcoming report of the Church Interests Committee in 1885 on the mounting disestablishment campaign "assumed something of a political complexion ... and the cry of 'Church before Party' was raised by several ministers."⁴ The Report itself indicated the prevalent mood of crisis and the necessity on the part of Church members of some imminent decision on where they stood. For long, the Committee said,

¹ loc. cit.

² A. Taylor Innes, Chapters of Reminiscence, (1913), pp. 144-6.
MacEwen, Life of Cairns, p. 604.
Simpson, Life of Rainy, II, 11-12, 13-14, 16, 25.

³ Memoir of Robert Herbert Story by his Daughters, (Glasgow 1909), p. 198.

⁴ The Scotsman, 27 May 1885.

they had confined themselves to a defensive policy and had kept out of any public agitation. Peddie's Disestablishment Bill of 1885 had now forced them to take the offensive.¹

In April, under guidance from the Committee, a petitioning campaign had been launched from the Scottish parishes on behalf of the Church of Scotland. Within a few weeks 1,192 petitions had been presented to the house of commons bearing 649,881 signatures against the provisions of Peddie's Bill. The Committee felt this move had become all the more necessary since it was notorious that in the coming general election an attempt was to be made to put forward the disestablishment question as a test question for candidates. "Hitherto those actively in favour of Disestablishment have secured a great deal more influence than is due to their numbers, and members of Parliament have been in consequence apt to suppose that they represented the opinion of the country far more than they really do.... If members and friends of the Church will only exert themselves more actively in their respective districts to protect the great interests represented by a national Church, the Committee have no doubt that Scottish Parliamentary candidates will assume a very different attitude towards the Church than has been anticipated in some quarters".²

Obviously, therefore, the church issue had become politically contentious and divisive by early 1885. The mood of many Church Liberals resembled that shown in the speech of the Convenor of the Church Interests Committee - Principal Tulloch - when he said that the time had come for Churchmen to be active and move into the political arena where Liberal Churchmen especially

¹ Memoir of R.H. Story, p. 201.

² The Scotsman, 26 May 1885.
Annual Reports on the Schemes of the Church of Scotland for the year 1885,
(Edinburgh 1885). Report of the Committee on Church Interests, pp. 533-7.

should make their presence felt. He continued, "We must stand somewhere. We stand here. We cannot give up the principle of national religion, or parley with assaults on that principle."¹ Several other speakers, speaking as convinced Liberals, declared that if forced to choose between a liberationist and a Conservative candidate they would vote for the latter.² Thus fired, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland then decided to set up Church Interests Committees in every Presbytery to use "every available means of defending the church." The feeling generated can be gauged from Principal Story's declaration at this time that "in the face of much obloquy ... I have sometimes been tempted to desire that we could go back for a little to the days of the Covenanters, and on the bare hillside meet the traducers of our mother Church foot to foot and hand to hand."³ This mood was still common among Liberal Churchmen and, if anything, had become heightened as the 1885 election drew near. A correspondent writing to Rosebery drew his attention to the mounting concern among Liberal Churchmen at the continuing efforts of the radicals to make disestablishment a test question for candidates. If this were to happen, he warned Rosebery, the general mood among his contacts (derived from his position "as a Liberal of some position, and as a Procurator of the Church") was such that "the result would be that a large body (I believe the majority) of Scottish Liberals would be put (altogether against their will)

¹ The Scotsman, 28 May 1885.
Memoir of R.H. Story, p. 201.

² The Scotsman, 28 May 1885.

³ Memoir of R.H. Story, p. 202. Story's activities at this time are indicative of the political moves taken by members of the established church in order to offset the political activities of the U.P. and Free Churchmen. He spent the months before the 1885 election almost entirely in a series of speaking tours held by Church Defence Associations all over Scotland. Ibid., pp. 202-3.

to choose between their party and the Church - there would be a consequent disruption of the party more or less serious."¹

The religious passions aroused by the Disestablishment agitation were especially strong in Glasgow. This had already led to splits between the influential members of the Glasgow Liberal Association demonstrating that not even here on this local level, therefore, was radicalism all-prevailing.² In 1882 a well-known Glasgow lawyer, Dr. A.B. McGrigor, a public figure in the city and a prominent member of the Glasgow Liberal Association, was elected President of that body.³ McGrigor was described by the chairman of the Executive who introduced him as a moderate who enjoyed the confidence of all sections of the Liberal party in Scotland. The chairman went on to express the hope that since many Liberals in Glasgow had hitherto held aloof from the Association because they regarded it as too radical, they would, reassured by the election of a man of such moderate views as President, now join.⁴

This admission that not all Glasgow Liberals were so vociferously extreme as the forward members of the Association shows that already the Glasgow Liberal Association was a far from united body. The chairman's hopes for a future comprehending all shades of opinion in the party in Glasgow were, however, to be dashed only some four months later. On 12 June 1882 the radical majority of the Association prepared and passed a motion calling for the immediate disestablishment of the Church of Scotland. At this, McGrigor, the hoped-for symbol of unity immediately resigned the Presidency because of

¹ Sheriff Mackintosh to Rosebery, 27 Oct. 1885, National Library of Scotland, Rosebery Papers, Box 61.

² North British Daily Mail, 28 Oct. 1885.

³ Third Annual Report of the Glasgow Liberal Association February 1882, pp. 7-8.

⁴ Ibid.

his opposition to such proposals.¹ The position, therefore, was that even already in the early 1880's the moderates had been overcome by radicals over the Church question. McGrigor, although he left the Glasgow Liberal Association, still declared his intention to remain a Liberal working for the party's interests.² However, the fact that the Disestablishment issue could shake the President from his position in Glasgow testified to the growing unease within that body. Thus, by 1885 the internal difficulties which were disturbing Scottish Liberalism on a national scale had already made the official organ of Liberalism in the city, the Glasgow Liberal Association, something less than all-embracing. To add to this confusion, in 1885 these radicals were now being challenged by extremists over the land question.

In the mid-1880's, too, various unforeseen issues had blown up by 1885 to shake the Liberal conscience still further. Events such as the "Crofters' War" and the trade depression, besides their overall challenge to the Liberal mind, had especially deep physical and psychological consequences on an industrial metropolis like Glasgow with its many Highland connections.³ Under the pressure of burning issues like these, the struggle by 1885, therefore, was over what sections should capture control over the whole shape and course of the future of Liberalism in Scotland.⁴

¹ Fourth Annual Report of the Glasgow Liberal Association February 1883, (Glasgow 1883), p. 4.

² Ibid.

³ Details of the land struggle in the Highlands and Islands were brought vividly before the Glasgow public by the extensive coverage given to this topic by the popular North British Daily Mail.

⁴ The proposal, mooted at the Annual Meeting of the Scottish Liberal Association in January 1885, to establish a Scottish Liberal Federation to decide on an electoral programme was received in a way which showed the marked differences of opinion existing between the whig and radical wings of the party on these issues. Scotsman, 17 Jan. 1885, and Scottish Liberal Association Minute Book, 16 Jan. 1885.

The initiative in such a confused situation on the eve of a general election, with no lead from Gladstone beyond a general call to support Liberal principles, clearly lay with those already in charge through long experience and control of the Liberal organisation in Glasgow. To forestall the side-tracking of the 'whig' section in the Scottish Liberal Association and provide an opportunity for the true "authoritative voice of Liberal Scotland to be heard on the issues of the day", the Glasgow Liberal Association arranged and held a conference in Glasgow in September 1885.¹ It was this conference which signalled the establishment of the National Liberal Federation of Scotland and symbolised the determination of the 'radicals' from Glasgow to strike out on their own and set up a fully democratic organisation for the expression of Scottish Liberalism.² Some idea of the influence of Glasgow among the radicals can be gauged from the fact that delegates from 160 different local Liberal associations in Scotland attended.³ To underline their position and set the seal on their new course, they had also invited Chamberlain to make a major speech to the assembled delegates.⁴ Pointedly, too, they omitted to seek the approval of the two major Scottish Liberals, Gladstone and Rosebery.⁵

Some indications of what exactly was meant by terms such as 'Liberalism' or 'attachment to Liberal principles' used by the various sections of the radicals in Glasgow can be deduced from the proceedings at this meeting. First of all the general social position of the Liberals in control in Glasgow

¹ Conference of Liberal associations convened by the Liberal Association of Glasgow reported in Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept. 1885.

² Kellas, loc. cit., pp. 6-7.

³ North British Daily Mail, 16 Sept. 1885.

⁴ Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept. 1885.

⁵ Kellas, loc. cit., p. 7.

can be gauged from an analysis of those most prominently associated with this venture. Gilbert Beith, who presided, had already been one of the members in the affairs of the old Glasgow Liberal Association and was very recently a prominent founder member of the Central constituency Liberal association of which he was the first President. From Stirling originally, the son of a Free Church minister, he was intimately connected with the commercial life of the city as a Cotton Yarn Merchant and Warehouseman in the firm of Beith, Stevenson & Co. Although he resided in the west-end of the city, with his premises in the business heart of the city he was qualified for membership of the Central Constituency association and obviously preferred to play to the much larger audience there of commercially-minded Liberals. Besides being a merchant he was also a director in an Insurance Company. A prominent Free Church elder, he was a keen activist in the Disestablishment cause.¹ In politics, Beith had spearheaded the Glasgow radicals in the movement to organise the Scottish Liberal Association as an effective policy-making body in the process earning for himself the anathema of the moderates,² He supported the Chamberlainite programme in 1885 taking a forward position on all the issues of the day and was a devoted follower of Gladstone. Towards the latter he tried to achieve a position as the 'voice of Scotland' and in 1886 followed his chief as a Home Ruler.³

Another was Sir William Collins, the head of the famous Glasgow publishing

¹ A. Taylor Innes, Chapters of Reminiscence, (1913), p. 150.

² Kellas, op. cit., p. 7.

³ Scottish Conservative and Unionist Association, Glasgow Office. Typescripts of constituency histories compiled by Sir Lewis Shedden. (Hereafter cited as Shedden T/S). Shedden was a full-time official of the Conservative organisation in Glasgow first as Assistant Secretary from 1884 to 1896 and from 1896 onwards as secretary of the Western Divisional Council of the Conservative party in Scotland. His typescripts are unsorted and uncatalogued.

house of Collins and Sons, who was a lifelong Liberal, active in the affairs of the Free Church and connected with a range of philanthropic ventures, most notably the cause of Temperance. Others prominent included Councillor John Macfarlane, a vice-President of the Central Liberal constituency association and Alexander Cross. The latter, also a vice-President in Central association, was another Glasgow businessman operating one of the largest seed-making and manure businesses in the city.¹

In all, these men were a representative sample of the group which had arranged the whole meeting. Such men presented a cross-section of the commercial, middle-class Liberal in Glasgow. All of them had been prominently associated with the Glasgow Liberal Association. Their names appear continuously in the various public societies of the time like the Glasgow Philosophical Society, and in philanthropic bodies like the Glasgow Benevolent Society. A great many were members of the Chamber of Commerce, but none of them was associated with the front ranks of industry or commerce in the city.²

Under the new conditions of the Redistribution Act, while most of them gravitated into the new Central constituency Liberal association through having their businesses in the commercial district, others because their business interests were less centrally located percolated into the executives of the other city Liberal associations. This can be seen very clearly from the way commercial interests tended to dominate and take the initiative in forming the Liberal associations in those constituencies which lay geographically along the line of the commercial area in Glasgow. Central, Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, and St. Rollox Liberal associations are all good examples of this

¹ Details from: Shedden T/S: Third Annual Report of the Glasgow Liberal Association 1882, pp. 8-9: Fourth Annual Report of the Glasgow Liberal Association 1883, pp. 7-8: First Annual Report of Glasgow Central Constituency Liberal Association for 1885, (Glasgow 1885), pp. 1-3, 6-8: Glasgow Chamber of Commerce Directors Report 1885. List of Members for 1886, (Glasgow 1886), pp. 2-11: Glasgow Post Office Directories 1878-88, passim: Directory of Merchants: Export Shippers 1885, passim.

² Ibid.

in the way that the businessmen there arranged and ran the associations. In this way Sir William Collins of the publishing house took his initiative and experience in directing Liberal organisation in the old Glasgow Liberal Association to help form the new St. Rollox Liberal association. William Fife, past vice-chairman of the Glasgow Liberal Association, in the same way became heavily involved in the new Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Liberal association. Ex-bailie John Burt, once a vice-President of the Glasgow Liberal association, became the first President of the new Bridgeton Liberal association. In this way their influence spread throughout the city although, it must be noted, in less concentrated forms than in Central and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown constituency associations where the main business heart of Glasgow lay.

Beith was clearly the leading spirit behind the September meeting in Glasgow. He had arranged for Chamberlain to come to Glasgow and he also entertained the great man to dinner after his meeting.¹ The executive committee of the new Central constituency Liberal association were prominently represented at it. They were also prominent in the committee which was appointed to draw up rules for the guidance of this conference.² The membership of this committee is a better guide to the nature of Liberalism in Glasgow than the newspaper notices of who were present at the meeting. The Press only noted those on the platform and did not give a full list of the members present from whom this committee was formed. As they were picked by the meeting they provide a better clue as to its mood free from the partiality of a reporter with a bias towards the most famous local personages present. In this way the membership of this committee provides a good guide to the type of Liberal from Glasgow who was most forward and active in taking basic steps

¹ Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept. 1885.
North British Daily Mail, 16 Sept. 1885.

² Central Liberal Association First Annual Report 1885, pp. 6-8.

about more effective organisation and, hence, more effective presentation of their particular radical views on Liberalism.

Of the thirty members fifteen were from the Glasgow Liberal Association, and of these fifteen, eight were associated with the Executive of the Central Liberal constituency. Because of the lack of printed evidence on the Glasgow Liberals at this time information cannot be had of all the fifteen. However, working on stray references in newspapers and checking the names and addresses available from the existing Glasgow Liberal Association Annual Reports with the Glasgow Post Office Directories the following information appears. Two, and possibly three, of the committee were from St. Rollox Liberal association, one from Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, and one from Bridgeton. Of the remaining two no information as to their exact social status or constituency affiliation has yet come to light. Six were merchants or manufacturers with premises in the city's central business area. Three were printers and publishers, two of them being connected with the running of two of the largest publishing firms in the city. One was a solicitor, while another was the full-time secretary of the Central constituency Liberal association. Five of them were members of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and at least four were connected as Directors with Insurance Companies in addition to their own main business interests.¹

From the reports of the debates at the September conference, the policies they put forward appear to have expressed the main, dominant interests of middle-class, commercial, radical Liberalism in Glasgow.² Firstly, there was

¹ Central Liberal Association First Annual Report 1885, pp. 3, 6-8.
Glasgow Liberal Association Annual Reports 1882 and 1883, pp. 8-9.
Glasgow Chamber of Commerce List of Members 1884, pp. 2-11.
Glasgow Post Office Directory 1885-6, passim.

² At the meeting complaints were made that the agenda had been drawn up and agreed to by the organisers alone while no notice of the details proposed for discussion had been given to the delegates who had come from outside of Glasgow. North British Daily Mail, 16 Sept. 1885.

a general attack on privilege (so long as it was only privilege connected with the landed classes). This can be seen in the general attack at the meeting on the House of Lords, on the abuses of the land law designed to benefit a territorial aristocracy, and on the privileges of the Established Church. Equality of opportunity was the keynote sounded at the meeting and this would be largely achieved, it was said, by a policy of local government reform guaranteeing the extension of popular rights through all branches of local life. For example, to benefit the working-classes the principle of 'local option' would, in this way, allow residents to reform the tone of local life by preventing the conditions of unhappiness, squalor and depravity.¹

Those connected with the old Glasgow Liberal Association were heavily represented among the official speakers chosen to propose the six resolutions at the meeting.² Typical were ex-bailie John Burt, Councillor Colquhoun, Alexander Cross, and Sir William Collins, respectively a factory owner, a lawyer, and two businessmen.³ Although such men were all regarded as part of the radical wing of Glasgow Liberalism the discussion on the motions showed, however, that there were others in the ranks of Glasgow Liberalism who were even more advanced. When Burt moved for reform of the House of Lords William Bond, secretary of the newly formed College association, and James Nelson of the Camlachie association tried to get the conference to agree to a more radical step viz. the total abolition of the upper Chamber.⁴ Bond's political position can be deduced from the fact that he was a member

¹ Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept. 1885. North British Daily Mail, 16 Sept. 1885.

² Ibid.

³ Central Liberal Association First Annual Report 1885, pp. 3, 6-8.
Glasgow Liberal Association Annual Reports 1882 and 1883, pp. 8-9.
Glasgow Chamber of Commerce List of Members 1884, pp. 2-11.
Glasgow Post Office Directory, 1885-6, passim.

⁴ Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept. 1885.

of the Scottish Land Restoration League and an active supporter of Dr. Cameron (who was now defending College constituency).¹ It was Cameron's newspaper, the North British Daily Mail, that had been active in providing publicity and support for the Crofters. Bond's motion, however, of a particular line of reform by calling for the destruction of the non-representative Chamber of the Legislature in order to curb the power of the landed classes was defeated in favour of the more generalised official motion which contented itself in simply calling for reform.²

Again, the motion calling for reform of the land laws provided further evidence of differences of approach between the delegates. The motion sponsored by the organisers of the meeting dealt mainly with conditions in the Highlands. A small part of it, however, related to the current land controversy in large centres of population. This called on the Government to look at the question of the unearned value of land which could soar due to demand for sites in cities. A radical, J. Costelloe, who was currently aspiring for the Liberal nomination to St. Rollox constituency, tried to have this made more definite by calling for powers of compulsory purchase of such land to be given to Town Councils. A long debate ensued in which Shaw Maxwell, the 'land and labour' candidate for Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, spoke in an attempt to claim that the motion comprehended such a principle. Significantly, the conference chairman, Gilbert Beith intervened to declare that on such a question (which had strayed far from the dominating 'Crofter' aspect of the motion) the conference could not tie the Liberal party to any one specific solution: that the motion would have to be left in a general

¹ Manifesto of the Scottish Land Restoration League 1884, (Glasgow 1884), p.1. Glasgow Herald, 21 Aug. 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept. 1885.

led by the Glasgow radicals like Beith pushed this motion through.¹ It is revealing of their particular brand of radicalism that they were willing to divide the party by pressurising it on an issue like Disestablishment. On an issue like land reform, however, they were less willing to lay down a firm line of policy especially if it looked like taking the form of an attack on the principle of property which might affect them in the towns.

Examples of like-minded expressions of this particular brand of radicalism can be found coming from others in positions of influence in the Glasgow Liberal associations during 1885. In this category come the views of a Glasgow Liberal like William Fife in the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown association. Fife, who had a long connection with the party organisation in Glasgow as a former vice-chairman of the old Glasgow Liberal Association in 1883, was a commission merchant in the business section of the constituency.² Like most of the office-bearers in the neighbouring Central Liberal association in that he resided outwith the constituency he, too, qualified for office in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown through the location of his business premises there. Fife's views can be deduced from the speech he had given when Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, appeared early in July as a prospective candidate for this constituency. Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, while it contained many commercial enterprises, had a population which lived in some of the poorest and most wretched districts in Glasgow.³ According to Fife what was needed for Glasgow (and presumably for Blackfriars-Hutchesontown in particular) was "someone connected with commercial experience and no man had more to do with commercial matters that related to the well-being of the working-classes of Glasgow than Lord Fitzmaurice".⁴ He carefully omitted to explain why the noble Lord's recent

¹ Ibid.

² Glasgow Post Office Directory 1884-5.

³ See Chapter I, supra, pp. 27-29.

form at the moment.¹ One is left with the feeling that Beith saw that the motion, which contained an attack mainly on landlords, was drifting uncomfortably close to a particularly contentious solution. It was a solution, moreover, on very radical terms which, in fact, came close to the tenets of the Land Restorationists. There is some irony in the fact that those who were now breaking away from the Scottish Liberal Association because of the refusal of the 'old Guard' in that body to tie the members down to any particular line of policy should now in their turn refuse to be tied down to policies which were more radical than they could allow. He quickly intervened, therefore, to nip this movement in the bud before it ran away with the conference.

Significantly, however, on the motion which only affected the property of the Church, not the landowner in towns, the commercial element were prepared to lay down a particular line. On the motion calling for the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland the official speaker, Councillor Paton of Glasgow, a manufacturer of oil proof garments, demanded to know why, as the bulk of Scottish Liberals were dissenters, they should stay their hand on this thorny topic in case it led to a split in the party. "Should they give in", he asked, "to those who formed only a small minority of the party?" He then went on to argue that the price of any split would be worthwhile since "the bulk of Churchmen were already Tories and therefore they wouldn't have their support whether we went in for Disestablishment or not".² Despite the heated and solemn protests of the Liberal Churchmen (one of them, C.C. Cameron of Aberdeen, declaring himself to be in the agonising position of being at once a Churchman and a radical Liberal) the official organisers

¹ Ibid.

² Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept. 1885.
North British Daily Mail, 16 Sept. 1885.

led by the Glasgow radicals like Beith pushed this motion through.¹ It is revealing of their particular brand of radicalism that they were willing to divide the party by pressurising it on an issue like Disestablishment. On an issue like land reform, however, they were less willing to lay down a firm line of policy especially if it looked like taking the form of an attack on the principle of property which might affect them in the towns.

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¹ Ibid.

² Glasgow Post Office Directory 1884-5.

³ See Chapter I, supra, pp. 27-29.

position in the Foreign Office had quite obviously failed to make any impression on the current depression and unemployment in industrial centres like Glasgow. His justification of such a choice for such a working-class constituency rested on his expressed assumption that what was good for the commercial interests of the city was bound to be good for the workers in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. Such logic as Fife's saw no inconsistency in a radical urging the claims of a lord to a seat in the commons "on his great commercial experience"¹ for a constituency which contained sanitary districts like Bridgegate and Wynds and High Street and Closes.

The type of Liberalism expressed by Fife while sincere and (to him) logical, quite obviously had its limits. It clearly, too, had a great deal to do with the emergence of independent 'labour' candidates in such working-class constituencies. Shaw Maxwell, the 'land and labour' candidate in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, attacked Fitzmaurice's candidacy on these very grounds that it would only represent the wealth and commerce of the division. What was in need of representation, he claimed, was not the wealth and commerce of this constituency. It was the people and their condition, he claimed, that needed a spokesman.²

In a broad sense, therefore, Fife's attitude correlated with the type of thinking of Glasgow Liberal businessmen like Cross, Macfarlane and Beith in neighbouring Central Liberal association and could find echoes, although perhaps not such dominant ones, in most of the other constituencies. Constituency associations like Central and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown by their very nature summed up this middle-class, commercial Liberalism exactly because of

¹ North British Daily Mail, 4 July 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 8 July 1885.

the nature of the constituencies.¹ Although most of the Central constituency Executive lived outside of the city Rule 2 of the association's constitution allowed the business element to mass their strength in one political body just as effectively and centrally as their commercial interests which were located in them.² Although other constituencies were less dominated by this commercial clique they all had, to a greater or lesser degree, some similar element in their respective Executives.

Thus, men like Fife and Beith can be taken as sufficiently representative of the radicalism in Glasgow which was seeking to dominate the constituency Liberal associations and which had in many cases succeeded in taking the initiative in the formation of these bodies. It was a branch of Liberalism which certainly found itself at home amongst the main body of Glasgow Liberals who took the initiative in holding this September meeting in the city to give definition and expression to their aims. It was these same individuals from this class who earlier in the year had taken the initiative in playing a dominant role in setting up and controlling the seven Glasgow Liberal associations. As businessmen they were used to having control of affairs; indeed they almost seemed to assume it as their right. Having had to make their way in the secular world by their own efforts they were traditionally against privilege in any form. In this much they could find common ground with the working-class radicals and base their claim to leadership. The limited extent of their beliefs, however, found typical expression in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown in the candidacy of Lord Fitzmaurice. Another

¹ Beith was regarded as the best candidate for Central because "he would worthily represent the commercial interests of that important division." North British Daily Mail, 28 Oct. 1885.

² "Rule 2. The Association shall embrace all persons who, having a parliamentary electoral qualification within the Division or residing or occupying premises there apply for admission." Central Liberal Association Annual Report 1885, p. 3.

speech made there to support Fitzmaurice's candidacy underlined the assumptions which had been expressed by Fife. In an attempt to minimise the contrast between the background of the candidate and that of the constituency he sought to represent, the following remarkable and world-wise argument, put forward by Councillor Simons of the constituency association's executive, was used. Simons, a man with a background and interests similar to Fife's, said that although Fitzmaurice had "the misfortune to be a lord ... they must recognise institutions as they existed ... they knew very well that social prestige went a great length.... What Glasgow wanted was a representative who could back up its just demands, and who would not be denied, as a mere ordinary commoner might be".¹

Among such men radicalism found its greatest expression on the question of Disestablishment: that is to say their sense of justice was more exercised in the religious passions of the day. Whether deliberately or not their drive for equality found its most attractive goal in the constant demand for religious equality. It was this steady attack on the Church of Scotland which most of all earned for them their reputation for radicalism in the context of Scottish Liberalism since it was on this issue above all that they were willing to split the party.² The danger signals against their course had indeed already been hoisted. As recently as July 1885 a meeting of Church Liberals had been held in Edinburgh to discuss and concert measures against the dangers to the Church from the Disestablishment campaign. At this, warnings were given that the continuance of Disestablishment pressure might possibly lead to a split in Liberal unity in Scotland. In the upshot

¹ Glasgow Herald, 7 July 1885.

² It was unreasonable to expect that "the Dissenters of Scotland, who formed by far the greatest bulk of the party, should be expected to give in to those who formed, after all, only a very small minority of the party". North British Daily Mail, 16 Sept. 1885.

the probability of this happening was made quite plain. A resolution was carried that as Liberals they would do all in their power to maintain the Liberal cause at the coming election. However, it went on, "if a candidate declares he'll press ... Disestablishment ... on the Government or vote (for it)" as Churchmen they would not support him at the polls.¹

To a lesser extent the radicalism of the leading Glasgow Liberals found an outlet in the social question but even here it mainly concentrated on support for the Crofters in the Highlands and attacks on the 'unearned' wealth of Highland landlords as well as the over-representation of the 'landed interest' in the affairs of Parliament. While some businessmen like Caldwell in St. Rollox and Watt in Camlachie dealt in their election campaigns at some length on the problem of the poor in the cities it was only in solutions expressed in terms of social moderation which would appeal to right-thinking men such as themselves. Caldwell's main proposals, for instance, dealt with the topic of the land problem particularly as it affected tenants in the Highlands. Only as a sort of afterthought did he turn to the problems of city dwellers and advocate some form of compulsory purchase of land in the towns by the local authorities "at fair prices". The building of working-class tenements on this land, he was careful to add, should be for owner-occupation on the co-operative principle. To make his position on social issues quite clear he then went to some pains to outline exactly what he was not advocating by quickly moving on to a wholesale condemnation of the principles and solutions proposed by Henry George and the Land Restorationists.² Watt, too, while he made great play in his speech to the Camlachie Liberal association on the need for better conditions for the working-classes

¹ Glasgow Herald, 15 July 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 7 July 1885.

never went beyond generalisations. Pressed by questioners on whether he supported the proposal for nationalising the land on Georgite lines, he temporised by saying he would only support any practical measures for land reform.¹ Further than that he refused to commit himself.

The economic uncertainties of the decade, the rising demands for more drastic social legislation, the efforts of Chamberlain to lead the Liberal party into a more radical direction, all pointed clearly to the likelihood of a clash between growing working-class activity and the paternalistic assumptions of the businessmen group. As well as this there was the likelihood of a clash inside the latter section over the extent to which radical demands should be met. Caldwell, one of the aspiring candidates for St. Rollox, the self-made proprietor of a calico factory,² was regarded as a radical. Yet his refusal to go all the way with the more extreme Disestablishers brought him into collision with men like Beith. Nor was Caldwell in favour of extensive land reform by the means advocated by the Land Restoration League. To him the prospect of standing for a working men's constituency like St. Rollox held no terrors since in his experience, he declared, while working men were in favour of progressive reform they "were not ... in favour of confiscatory legislation."³ On the other hand, it was possible to find a man from the same background in Glasgow in opposition to Caldwell on this very point. Already in June and July Alex. A. Mathieson, one of the proprietors of the Saracen Tool Works Factory, was conducting a correspondence in the Glasgow Herald advocating the full implementation of the Land Restoration

¹ Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

² Shedden T/S.

³ Glasgow Herald, 14 Oct. 1885.

League's proposal for a 4s. in the £ tax on all landowners in the city.¹ More seriously for Liberal unity in 1885 was the headlong clash which the agitation of the Disestablishers was making inevitable in the ranks of the commercial clique between Church and Dissenting Liberals. With various combinations of issues and men possible under the pressures of a general election the Liberals, therefore, in the seven constituencies of Glasgow were faced with quite major internal difficulties.

In the event the difficulties within the Liberal body in Glasgow came to centre largely on questions of organisation. In view of the changes brought about by the Redistribution Act the Glasgow Liberal Association had proposed draft outlines of two plans of organisation to meet the new situation created in now having seven separate constituencies to deal with.² The second of these plans seems to have been the one adopted by each constituency. This called for the complete autonomy of each electoral division in directing its own affairs and in choosing a candidate. To this end meetings of Liberals were to be called in each new constituency in order to form associations and elect office-bearers. From these seven associations there was to be formed a United Liberal Association which was to crown the whole organisational edifice in Glasgow. To create a link between this and the individual constituency associations there was to be a United Council which was to be made up of the United Liberal Association and four main office-bearers from each constituency association (the President, Chairman of Executive, Treasurer, and Secretary). The President of the United Liberal Association was to be Chairman. The Association itself was to consist of what was now to be called "The Liberal 1200 of Glasgow", distinguishing it from the old "Liberal 600" of the former

¹ e.g. Ibid., 7 July 1885.

² Central Liberal Association First Annual Report 1885, p. 1.

Glasgow Liberal Association. Its members were to be made up of the office-bearers and some 160 members from each constituency association.¹

The whole structure was to be closely interlinked, tightly knit, ensuring by organisation as far as was possible the control of Liberal expression in Glasgow. The crucial point of the plan in 1885 centred around the absolute control of each constituency association to choose its own candidate. In short, it was a perfect example of the 'caucus' system. Clearly the Glasgow Liberal Association meant to maintain its control in the seven new constituencies just as it had done in the former more easily managed, three-member constituency.² By mid-1885 constituency associations had been formed in all the seven constituencies. From the record of newspaper reports of proceedings in the new constituencies the indications are that they were similar in structure and origin to the Liberal association which had been formed in Central constituency. An investigation of the workings of the Central Liberal association will help, therefore, to illuminate the procedure followed in the other Glasgow constituencies.

In Central a committee was appointed on 15 April, 1885 to consider the steps necessary to form a Liberal association for the constituency. A public meeting was called on the requisition of those who had always been forward in such moves - the Liberals from the business centre.³ Prominent among them were Gilbert Beith, Councillor Colquhoun, Alexander Cross, Bailie Dickson,

¹ Central Liberal Association First Annual Report 1885, p. 2.

² The only records which remain to give an outline of these new organisations and the procedure followed in their establishment are in the Annual Report for 1885 of the Central constituency association cited in fn. 1 above. It is contained in the Bound Pamphlet Collection in Glasgow University Library (pressmark y10 - d9). Others may exist in private collections but there are none extant in the Scottish Liberal Association offices, the National Library of Scotland, or in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

³ Central Liberal Association First Annual Report 1885, p. 3.

R.C. Grant, Councillor John McFarlane and ex-Provost Ure. Of the twenty-eight who signed the requisition all were connected in some way with the commercial and public life of the city. Seven of them were merchants, four were manufacturers, two were solicitors, and one was a stockbroker. R.C. Grant, who was connected to a firm of wrights as a joiner is perhaps, at first sight, the only odd man out in the group. However, as head of the Glasgow Trades Council he held a sufficiently influential position to have been elected one of the vice-Presidents of the Central Liberal association executive.¹

The vital point in all this is that no-one had given them any authority to speak for the 13,000 or so electors of the new constituency. They acted, as they had always done, on their assumed right to control and speak for Liberal opinion in Glasgow. This authority they had established through its constant exercise ever since the formation of the Glasgow Liberal Association in 1878.² They simply held a meeting (largely organised by the type of man prominent in the September convention of Liberals already referred to) and unanimously resolved that "all the persons now assembled constitute themselves into such an association".³

This new body then proceeded to draw up a constitution to make their control of affairs concerning Liberal voters in the constituency effective. This was a task which was largely performed by a solicitor in a well known

¹ Glasgow Post Office Directory 1884-5.

Grant was obviously one of those working-class leaders who regarded their main political outlet to be through the Liberal party organisation; in spite of the fact that he had chaired a meeting of the Trades Council in July which decided to raise funds to elect a working man's candidate. Glasgow Herald, 2 July 1885, and Glasgow Trades Council Minute Books, 1 July 1885. (Consulted by courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Glasgow). He was prominent among the supporters of Gilbert Beith when he came forward as Liberal candidate for Central later on in October 1885. Glasgow Herald, 12 Oct. 1885.

² Glasgow Liberal Association First Annual Report 1879, pp. 1-4.

³ Central Liberal Association First Annual Report 1885, p. 3.

Glasgow legal firm with premises in the Central constituency - William Borland.¹ (He was also prominent as a member of the Executive of the Scottish Branch of the Liberation Society.² It is significant that so many of the others associated in organising the Central Liberal association were, like him, zealous Disestablishers.) The constitution stated that the aim of the association was to unite the Liberals of the constituency for political purposes. It was to include all who were electors in the constituency or occupied premises there and applied for membership. Funds were to be maintained by the subscriptions of the members and one shilling per year was to be the minimum qualification for membership. Those in arrears with this sum or failing to meet it were to be disqualified. Each of the five wards in the constituency were to elect representatives to the Executive and the office-bearers were to be chosen at the Annual Meeting. A general meeting was to be held before the support of the association was given to any parliamentary candidate.³ The whole structure of the association was thus tightly organised right through from ward level up to the Executive. As the constitution was put into operation in each ward and an Executive elected the whole structure gave the appearance of having valid claims to speak for all the Liberals in the constituency. Certainly nothing so effective was organised by those who dissented from the views of the controlling members. The constitution was accepted on 28 May and on 14 July office-bearers were elected. These were composed completely of the men who had initiated the whole movement of founding the association.⁴

¹ Ibid.

² Glasgow Post Office Directory 1884-5. Society for the Liberation of Religion. Annual Report of the Scottish Council 1883, pp. 1-2.

³ Central Liberal Association First Annual Report 1885, pp. 3-4.

⁴ Ibid.

As far as can be judged from newspaper sources the same procedure was taken in the other six constituencies and led immediately to the first outbreaks of dissension within the Liberal ranks in Glasgow. Ruptures began to appear from the rival claims of aspiring candidates who saw the frustration of all their hopes in the control of candidate selection by the constituency associations. This was the case in St. Rollox where Caldwell had been in the lists for some time in 1885 nursing the constituency with a view to offering himself as Liberal candidate. Quite clearly Caldwell saw in the establishment and staffing of the local constituency association a barrier to his aspirations. Equally clearly he saw that because of the tight control of this body he would now have to submit himself to its judgement and take his chances with other aspirants before the final decision was reached. In all this he clearly felt a barrier was being interposed between him and the electors. The sight of his chances slipping from him obviously accounts for the vehemence of the attack he made on the association executive for arrogating to themselves the functions of the electorate, an attack which he was to maintain throughout the election campaign. Caldwell publicly disputed the claim of the St. Rollox association to speak for all the electors in the district, arguing that it had only been got up on the initiative of several men and consisted of only some 700 members.¹ How could it then, he demanded, speak for all the Liberals in the constituency. All that had been done, he stated, was that bills had been posted advertising a meeting to decide on forming an association, several prominent men in the district had addressed this meeting, and at its close a provisional committee had been formed.²

¹ Glasgow Herald, 1 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid.

"It was perfectly evident that the object the association had in view was that they should rule and control St. Rollox Division." North British Daily Mail, 1 Oct. 1885.

In such an industrial community as St. Rollox constituency¹ the initiators responsible for the founding of the association were not so heavily weighted to the commercial interests as those in the executive of the Central constituency association were. Sir William Collins of the publishing firm was the President and prominent, too, was another representative of a publishing firm, Dr. W.G. Blackie. The chairman of the Executive was Thomas Wilson who worked for a merchant in the city and who resided in the constituency.² It might be expected that in such men's eyes moderate radicals could expect to find favour. Yet the first two candidates to be heard by the association left them unsatisfied.³ These were Edward Tennant, a young political aspirant from the local chemical family, and J.M. Caldwell, the textile industrialist from Campsie. After hearing both of these men it "was thought desirable to have another Liberal whose views were more likely to harmonise with those of advanced Liberal opinions".⁴

According to what might be termed the 'Old Whig' opinion of the Glasgow Herald the constituency might count itself lucky to gain the representation of Caldwell who, although he took a "moderately advanced position", was a "good, sturdy candidate ... with considerable local ties"⁵ and (more telling

¹ See Chapter I, supra, pp. 20-22.

² Glasgow Herald, 16 Oct. 1885. Blackie is a good example of the sort of man usually to be found as a leading Liberal in Glasgow at this period. As well as his publishing interests he was active as an educational reformer and became involved with University reform first as an active member of the Glasgow University General Council (1860-1874) then as a member of the Universities' Commission in the late 1880's and early 1890's. He was also a director of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, a Principal of St. Mungo's College (1888) and a director of the Clydesdale Bank (1880-1898). Walter Graham Blackie Ph.D., LL.D., 1816-1906, some notes by W.W. Blackie (London & Glasgow 1936).

³ North British Daily Mail, 30 Sept. 1885.

⁴ Report of the Chairman of the Executive committee to the St. Rollox Liberal association reported in Glasgow Herald, 30 Sept. 1885.

⁵ Ibid., 14 July 1885.

in his favour in the Herald's eyes) who was on the right on the Disestablishment issue.¹ This, however, may have told against him, whatever his social moderation, in the opinion of Sir William Collins and of Dr. Blackie, who were both zealous supporters of Disestablishment.

Next, a barrister from London, B.F.C. Costelloe, noted for the radicalism of his Liberal opinions, was tried by the St. Rollox Executive. Instead of being adopted, however, the Executive hung on in obvious indecision. The correspondence in the Glasgow Herald at this period all hints at a split in the Executive. Manoeuvring by a strong Land Restorationist group in the constituency to get a Liberal candidate more to their suiting was also spoken of. The Glasgow Herald harshly, but probably with some accuracy, stormed in its columns that "what the so-called Liberal Association (of St. Rollox) wanted is not a sound Liberal candidate, but a tool."² It then went on to imply that those responsible for the delays and those that ensured the final nomination of their constituency's candidate were "the land restorationists".³

There seems to have been some accuracy in the Herald's analysis of the situation for by 29 September the association had made its choice in the person of a former Wigtownshire farmer, J. McCulloch. McCulloch, "a well-known Scottish agriculturalist and land reformer",⁴ had for many years been one of the vice-Presidents of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture and a medallist of the Highland Society. In 1880 he had gone to Canada and the U.S.A. to work as a land inspector and valuer. With his background in farming and land valuation McCulloch had gained fame (the Herald would have said

¹ Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Shedden T/S.

notoriety) by his writings in the cause of land reform. A paper he wrote on the industrial revolution had attracted the praise of the radical economist Leone Levi and it was said in 1885 that this work had much to do with the invitation made to him by the land reform wing of the Liberals in St. Rollox to stand for the constituency.¹

Such a choice as this sparked off a public debate, and led to an internal quarrel between the members of the association's executive who now found themselves hoist by their own petard. Having delayed for so long over the choice of a candidate the wire-pullers like Collins, Blackie and Wilson now found that the control over the choice of candidates which they had made so absolute was now being used by a group within the association anxious to secure a candidate radical enough on the social question to suit the views of the land reformers.

Several clues arising from the debate that followed this choice seem to confirm this. Accusations were made by the Glasgow Herald, for instance, that a clique of wire-pullers had intrigued to have McCulloch chosen.² The question is who constituted this clique. Caldwell spoke darkly of the local caucus of the 5th ward Liberal association as being the moving spirit behind the move.³ Wilson, the chairman of the Executive, resigned and added his support to a rearguard movement which was now being fought against McCulloch by Dr. Blackie.⁴ In the unaccustomed position of having to try and influence the association Blackie now began to advocate at this late stage the balloting of all the Liberal voters in the constituency to see who should be given the backing of

¹ Details from Shedden T/S.

² Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid., 1 Oct. 1885.

⁴ Ibid., 16 Oct. 1885.

popular approval.¹

The clique stigmatised by the Herald seems to have revolved around three main personages, David Fortune, a member of the Executive, Councillor Morrin, and his relative Alexander Morrin. These were the men the Herald obviously had in mind when it spoke of "the caucus of St. Rollox ... David Fortune and Co. ... the land restorationist wire pullers."² David Fortune was the President of the Scottish Legal Life Assurance Society and nothing appears to connect him with the Scottish Land Restoration League. It is clear, however, although the Herald did not make the distinction, that Fortune's share in the blame for the emergence of McCulloch as the official candidate lay in his insistence on the choice lying with the association. He had, thus, in this way opened the door to radical excess and worse. Although Fortune was a supporter of Costelloe, he had been hoodwinked by the land restorationists into having McCulloch voted in. In this way he deserved to be included with the land restorationists, according to the Herald, which then went on to moralize about 'caucus' control by pointing out the pitfalls prepared for all who followed such a course.³

To clinch the fact that the selection of McCulloch had something to do with the land restorationists in St. Rollox an anonymous letter to the Herald⁴ insinuated that McCulloch and the Land Restorationists had come to an agreement between them. It also rather intriguingly flung out the assertion that the "No Popery" party in St. Rollox had been easily played on by the Land Restorationists and that there was a third section at the adoption

¹ Glasgow Herald, 7 and 16 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid., 2 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 5 Oct. 1885.

meeting opposed to any local candidate at all being chosen.¹ There is a possibility that Costelloe, despite his professional and radical qualifications, suffered because he was a Catholic. If so this throws an interesting light on the strength of the "No Popery" party in St. Rollox if they, in conjunction with the land restorationists, were strong enough to block his acceptance. Certainly the North British Daily Mail in a leader on Costelloe's subsequent candidacy in the Edinburgh South constituency hinted as much. It pointed out that G.J. Goschen, whom it called a Tory in Liberal disguise, had the support of the Scotsman for this constituency: and that the Scotsman was agitating against the candidacy of Costelloe on the grounds of his religion.² Whatever the truth in all this the fact that McCulloch's choice was skilfully managed is proved by another letter to the Glasgow Herald from the former chairman of the Executive, Thomas Wilson. This asserted that McCulloch only got in by the skilful management of the land restorationists who were able to use the votes of those who, while they were not for McCulloch, were definitely against the other candidates.³ Certainly the voting at the adoption meeting was hardly evidence of overwhelming Liberal support for McCulloch since he only got 195 out of 376 votes. Wilson also asserted that "56 members who were not electors voted ... at our meeting".⁴

¹ Glasgow Herald, 5 Oct. 1885.

² North British Daily Mail, 5 Oct. 1885.

³ "It is well known many voted, not as approving McCulloch, but as protesting against the other candidates." Letter from Thomas Wilson, Glasgow Herald, 16 Oct. 1885.

It was said that one-half of the members of the association were absent when the final vote was taken. Therefore, the Land Restorationists by mustering all their strength were able to get their man adopted. North British Daily Mail, 1 Oct. 1885.

⁴ Glasgow Herald, 16 Oct. 1885. Wilson's figures are quoted here as he was on the platform at the meeting. The newspaper account gives the voting for McCulloch as 232 out of 431, Ibid., 30 Sept. 1885.

Other letters suggest there was some truth in these statements.

Alexander Morrin, who wrote in support of McCulloch in this controversy, declared that he was the candidate who would prove more acceptable to the views of this constituency. It had been, he said, the chairman of the St. Rollox association and a few others who had been intriguing for the choice of Costelloe.¹ The interest in this letter, however, does not come from the accusation that the capacity for intrigue was not all on the one side. Rather, it lies in the fact that the address it gave revealed that Morrin was a relation of Councillor David Morrin, probably a brother since the Post Office Directory lists them together.² David was a councillor in the fifth municipal ward, probably one of the caucus of the 5th ward Liberal association anathematised by Caldwell.³ He was also a member of the Executive committee of the Scottish Land Restoration League. Both he and Alexander were small shopkeepers, the former being a Boot and Shoe Maker, the latter a Hairdresser.⁴ Clearly then such men, at the opposite end of the commercial scale from Collins and Blackie, could exert an influence on the Executive of the local constituency association. Much seemed to depend on the background of the constituency as well as the skill with which political tactics were carried out at the association meetings. As in Central constituency Liberal association the make-up of the Executive could reflect the commercial interests of the district. However, unlike Central which was so heavily

¹ Glasgow Herald, 9 Oct. 1885.

² Glasgow Post Office Directory 1885-6.

³ When Councillor Morrin was seeking re-election to the Town Council for the 5th ward in October his re-election was publicly opposed at a ward meeting by a Mr. Gulliland, the same man probably who was acting as agent for Caldwell in October 1885 in his candidacy for the parliamentary seat. Glasgow Herald, 1 and 7 Oct. 1885.

⁴ Manifesto of the Scottish Land Restoration League 1884, p. 1.
Glasgow Post Office Directory 1885-6.

dominated by these commercial interests, the weight of men like Collins and Blackie could not guarantee the strict control and management of Liberal affairs according to their wishes. The highly industrial nature of St. Rollox ensured that with a few activists and much political manoeuvring the final choice of the St. Rollox association could be made to reflect the dominating interests of a section other than the Executive.¹

Unlike Central association with its strong commercial interests, those who captured the association in St. Rollox chose a candidate more directly in the interest of the working man. McCulloch stood for something less predictable and more akin to the thinking of the Land Restorationist agitators than Beith did.² The industrial nature of St. Rollox constituency allowed those in favour of a radical like McCulloch to clinch his candidature against the disapproval of a powerful organ of the Liberal press like the Glasgow Herald and the claims of candidates like Caldwell or Costelloe. Small businessmen like the Morrins were able in St. Rollox to thwart men like Collins and Blackie who had much greater individual commercial and social weight and the greater prestige of long experience in the Glasgow Liberal Association. They were certainly able to out-manoeuve Fortune, the President of a large Life Insurance Company.

The latter, along with Blackie, was still trying after McCulloch's adoption to work for its overthrow as late as 7 October 1885. On that date Wilson, Fortune, and others met in the office of Blackie's printing works to present a requisition to Sir William Collins inviting him to stand.³ There was a great deal of truth in the summing up of the whole confused affair made

¹ North British Daily Mail, 1 Oct. 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 9 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid., 7 Oct. 1885.

by Wilson. He attributed the success in choosing a candidate to suit one section of Liberal opinion in the constituency to "the fact that our association, like the others in Glasgow, has been formed within the last few months and ... the membership has been created amid the preparations of a General Election ... subject to the special influences and dangers of such a time."¹ In such a situation and given the head start of effective organisation the fluctuating opportunities in 1885 could give the advantage to those Liberals who could dominate or manipulate the party machinery in the constituency. The events which led to the choice of McCulloch in St. Rollox demonstrate the main reasons which underlay the contests among Liberals and the number of double candidatures in Glasgow in 1885. These were firstly the determined elevation of particular policies by sectional interests above the cause of party unity. The second is related and reflects this. It lay in attempts by Liberal party organisers to gain the power to do this through control of the local constituency machinery.

No firm evidence exists of the real cause of the quarrel over candidate selection in other constituencies. The main reason which emerges from the newspaper reports of constituency association meetings seems to revolve around the determination of the Executives of the constituency Liberal associations to control the choice of candidate. An interesting example of this occurred in College constituency where Dr. Cameron, the sitting Liberal member for the city, had chosen to go on the redistribution of seats. Even here the sitting Glasgow Member had to endure a clash over the endorsement of his candidacy which shows the conflicting interests struggling for control in Glasgow at this time. A section of the association in College refused to treat the adoption of Cameron as a mere formality and tried to insist on inviting candidates, including Cameron, to speak before the association. The final

¹ Glasgow Herald, 16 Oct. 1885.

choice between the contenders would then be made by the association.¹ This, too, in spite of the fact that when the Redistribution Act was passed the Glasgow Liberal Association, acting as the formal organ of Liberal control in the city, had actually invited Cameron to choose for himself which seat he should defend at the forthcoming election.² The reason for the temporising attitude on the part of the College association members turned out, in the course of the discussion, to have arisen as a direct result of Cameron's championship in Parliament of the Disestablishment cause.³

In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Bridgeton, also, other examples of sectional interests clashing with the 'caucus' control of the Liberal association can be found. In the former Shaw Maxwell, the labour candidate, had refused to submit to the control of the constituency association and therefore had decided to stand independently under the aegis of the Scottish Land Restoration League free from any ties with the Liberals. Maxwell revealed that the constituency association had promised him every consideration "if he would be conciliatory".⁴ Clearly, however, he distrusted his chances of being chosen by men such as those who dominated its Executive. How much he might have had to compromise his views to "be conciliatory" can be judged from the eagerness with which its Executive, composed of men like William Fife and Councillor Simons, had pushed through the candidacy of Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice. According to one of Fitzmaurice's constant labour hecklers, John Flynn, the meeting which endorsed Fitzmaurice was composed of many who were not electors in the constituency at all; to cap all some 1,000 seats had been reserved in the hall for such men while Flynn and other electors in the

¹ Glasgow Herald, 21 Aug. 1885.

² North British Daily Mail, 21 Aug. 1885.

³ Glasgow Herald, 21 Aug., and 7 Oct. 1885.

⁴ Ibid., 8 July 1885.

constituency, he claimed, had had to wait half an hour before being admitted.¹

In Bridgeton, too, William Forsyth, the Scottish Land Restoration League candidate and President of that body, had written to the constituency association as soon as it was formed pointing out his prior claims to stand for the progressive voters in the constituency. He claimed that he had received a requisition signed by 1,860 electors. When asked by the association to put himself in their hands and abide by their judgement he, like Shaw Maxwell, had refused on the grounds that such a course would involve compromising his freedom of action.² This was probably a wise choice as there were four other candidates at this time in Bridgeton aspiring for the Liberal nomination. A candidate like Forsyth trying to propagate one aspect of Liberalism to the exclusion of all else was hardly likely to succeed in appealing to all Liberals in the constituency without some compromise. This was especially likely to be so since he had roundly declared the Conservative and Liberal parties to be out of date as far as the interests of the working man were concerned since they were too self-seeking in their views, too narrow in their sympathies, and too slow in their remedies.³

The candidate finally adopted by the Bridgeton association turned out to be an advanced radical and a follower of Chamberlain, E.R. Russell, the editor of the Liverpool Daily Post. Russell had declared himself in favour of reform of the land laws and measures aimed at the betterment of the working-classes. Other points in his programme included Disestablishment, Free Education, Temperance Reform, and some limited measure of Home Rule for Ireland. This last measure was of some importance in a constituency with a

¹ Letter from John Flynn, Glasgow Herald, 13 July 1885. Fitzmaurice later withdrew due to illness. For a full list of the candidates finally chosen in Glasgow see Appendix F.

² Glasgow Herald, 22 Aug. 1885.

³ North British Daily Mail, 22 Aug. 1885.

large Irish population.¹ Forsyth, on the other hand, declared himself opposed to any measure of Home Rule for Ireland that would mean repeal of the Union of Ireland and Britain.² In a contest between Russell and Forsyth the likelihood of the latter with his background as President of the Scottish Land Restoration League being chosen was remote. In any case the decision of Forsyth to stand independently in the interests of 'labour' had simplified matters although inevitably it was bound once again as in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown to lead to a split in the Liberal vote.

The choice of Russell, therefore, probably reflected the wishes of the Bridgeton Executive better than that of the Land Restorationist, Forsyth. The association's President, ex-bailie Burt, had been a radical member of the old Glasgow Liberal Association and was now, because of the location of his business interests there, qualified to speak in Bridgeton.³ Burt was the proprietor of a leather factory and the majority of those associated prominently with the meetings of the Bridgeton association seem to have been drawn from the same commercial background. They were usually either small factory owners or substantial shopkeepers such as leather or china merchants.⁴

In the Glasgow constituencies in 1885, therefore, it was clearly difficult for any candidate or group to try and gain endorsement except through the constituency associations.⁵ For a start many of the men associated with the

¹ Glasgow Herald, 16 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid., 22 Aug. 1885.

³ His domicile, like that of so many of the Glasgow Liberals of the same type, lay outside the constituency and the city, in his case in Rutherglen.

⁴ Glasgow Post Office Directory 1885-6, passim.

⁵ "The election of 1885 was the first to be more or less dominated by the party associations. In 1880 many candidates had stood on their own initiative; in 1885 very few were not nominated or actively supported by their local party groups. The caucus system was little short of perfect." O'Leary, Elimination of Corrupt Practices in British Elections, p. 183.

origins of the constituency associations brought with them their reputation as traditional leaders of Liberal opinion in the city. Such men had already shown in the past their readiness to make Liberal organisations too uncomfortable for those who did not conform to their particular views. The events which had terminated Dr. McGrigor's Presidency of the old Glasgow Liberal Association demonstrated this. Some candidates, therefore, worried in case the final selection went in such a controlled situation to the man who had intrigued sufficiently with a section of the local association, attacked the 'caucus' control assumed by such bodies. This was certainly a factor behind the confused situation in St. Rollox. Others, like Shaw Maxwell in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown or Forsyth in Bridgeton, resented the assumption on the part of middle-class, commercially minded constituency association executives to speak and choose for the overwhelmingly working-class population there. They, therefore, stood independently to prosecute specifically 'land and labour' programmes with the inevitable prospect of splitting the Liberal vote. Liberal unity was seriously undermined, therefore, during the 1885 election in Glasgow.

The determination of the members of the old Glasgow Liberal Association to maintain a tight grip on the party organisation in the new constituencies in order to determine the tone of Liberalism there largely ensured this. This brought about clashes with the moderates who felt that the more impersonal forces of the Redistribution Act would lead Liberal expression too far in a radical direction. In Central because of the concentration there of the commercial interest, the particular type of radicalism of those who had been most active in the affairs of the old Glasgow Liberal Association could be maintained most easily. The men there had already forced out moderates like Dr. McGrigor on the Disestablishment issue and in Beith found the perfect embodiment of their brand of Liberalism. In other constituencies the strength of such views was less certain of easy acceptance since it had to contend with

the more working-class nature of the electorate. In St. Rollox, for instance, a radical like McCulloch managed to squeeze in despite the opposition of an influential part of the executive. Even so, the candidacy here had still been kept within the bounds of the constituency organisation despite the alarm it caused to the moderate Liberalism of the Glasgow Herald. In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Bridgeton, on the other hand, the assumption of the Liberal association to speak for all shades of Liberal opinion led to the independent candidacies specifically devoted to a 'labour' programme.

The 1885 election took place, therefore, against a general background of confusion in the Liberal camp. On the national front Chamberlain's mobilisation of radical opinion in his 'Unauthorised Programme' had sparked off a reaction from the moderates. In Scotland repercussions were still felt from his visit in September when he had hinted at radical solutions of the land and Church questions, although these were couched in terms which did not completely satisfy the Scottish Disestablishers.¹ Along with the bitter feelings aroused by this the Irish question and the activities of the Irish National League also continued to provide yet another bone of contention in the national debate. The current trade depression along with the flirting of some sections of the Conservative party with a 'Fair Trade' policy, the poor Liberal record in foreign affairs, all added fuel to the political fire. All of these issues influenced the public debate in Scotland and aroused the consciousness of the electorate.

When this is all boiled down to main trends, however, the Scottish elections centred round two principal issues. These were first of all the Church and its future. The second was the land question, principally as it

¹ Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept. 1885. Professor Ramsay, one of the anti-Disestablisher element in the College Liberal association, used Chamberlain's speech to taunt the radicals in the constituency. Ibid., 7 Oct. 1885.

affected the Crofters, but also used in the towns to focus the forces and arguments of 'labour' propagandists.¹ Of these two it was the former which most occupied the attention of the Glasgow Liberals causing a clear cut division between radicals and moderates.

In Glasgow the Church of Scotland was in a minority being outweighed in membership by the Free and U.P. Churches combined. The latter two had considerable strength in the city.² The Disestablishment party were, therefore, in a strong position and as a consequence much of the public debate in the 1885 election in Glasgow took place as much between the differing branches of the Liberals in the city as between them and the Conservatives. This is well demonstrated in what happened in the constituencies. College provides perhaps the best example of the dissension which could arise among the Liberals over Disestablishment. As has been noted this constituency had been picked by Dr. Cameron to defend in 1885 on the invitation of the Glasgow Liberal Association. Despite this, a series of delaying moves by a section of the constituency Liberal association had prevented his formal adoption as a candidate.³ These moves were clearly inspired by a group of Liberal Churchmen in the constituency who objected to Cameron's strong views on Disestablishment and they were influential enough to delay Cameron's adoption up to October 1885. Cameron, by then forced out of an easy passage, decided to fall back on his popularity in the city as sitting member and fight the Liberal Churchmen at

¹ Both themes have been treated in their Scottish context by J.G. Kellas, "The Liberal Party and the Scottish Church Disestablishment Crisis," English Historical Review, vol. 79, (Jan. 1964), 31-46, and D.W. Crowley, "The 'Crofters' Party'," Scottish Historical Review, vol. 35, (Oct. 1956), 110-126. Crowley's findings have been recently re-examined in H.J. Hanham, "The Problem of Highland Discontent, 1880-1885," Trans. Royal Historical Society, 5th series, vol. 19, (1969), 21-65.

² See Appendix E, infra.

³ Glasgow Herald, 21 Aug. 1885.

their own game. He issued a statement saying that if he were adopted by the Liberal association he would welcome its support. Whether it adopted or rejected him, however, he still intended to fight the election for the constituency.¹

By early October the dissension over the Church question was brought out clearly into the open at a public meeting of the constituency Liberal association called to decide on Cameron's adoption. The President, Professor Caird of the University, as a Churchman made the extraordinary opening statement that if the majority voted for Cameron he and the minority would not be bound by such a decision.² Caird, as a representative of moderate Liberal opinion in Glasgow, believed as an article of the Liberal faith that any coercion by sheer numbers of the consciences of a minority within the party was completely contrary to the spirit of Liberalism. Caird, as a Professor of Moral Philosophy, might naturally be expected to have a reasoned and articulate defence for his argument. It is interesting, therefore, to compare his philosophical beliefs with his reactions in practical politics when called on to face the tactical problem which Cameron's candidacy as a known Disestablisher posed for him as a Liberal. Commenting on Liberty Caird was later to write, "Freedom and association are not opposed but interdependent ideas...." However, he continued, "If anyone asserts the unity of society we need to ask what is the nature of the society he would maintain; how far it secures its unity by a mere despotic suppression of differences...."³ Obviously, therefore, majorities alone could not be held sufficient to justify decisions. Individual

¹ Glasgow Herald, 7 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid.

³ The Moral Aspects of the Economical Problem, (1888), pp. 12-13, quoted in Sir H. Jones and J.H. Muirhead, Life and Philosophy of Edward Caird, (Glasgow 1921), pp. 325-6.

beliefs and conscientious reasons for dissent ought to be given scope in deciding actions. This view clearly underlies Caird's argument in the debate over the adoption of Cameron for College. Equally clearly it gives some measure of what Liberalism meant to such a man. In it individual and group rights had to be balanced without lasting injury to either.

Caird's statement at this meeting, therefore, throws an interesting light in helping to pinpoint the reactions which could come from a minority group within the Liberal constituency organisation on a matter of conscience. Caird went on to declare that he personally would vote for Cameron as against a Tory candidate in the election but further than that he would not go to help him in his campaign.¹ The implication obviously was that if another Liberal came forward he would vote for him instead. This meeting is significant, too, for the light it throws on these minority feelings which were dividing this constituency and how far they were prepared to go even at the risk of a split. All the speeches which were made against adopting Cameron at this stage freely admitted he was overwhelmingly supported in his candidature and his views by the majority of Liberals in the constituency.²

From the side supporting Cameron James Beveridge listed his qualifications to stand without question as the obvious Liberal choice as follows: firstly, his proven ability and record as an M.P. for the city; secondly, the fact that his views were in strict accord with the great majority of the constituency; thirdly, his courage in appearing without dissimulation as a proclaimed radical and Disestablisher. He then went on to make the allegation that an attempt was being made by some Liberals to defeat Cameron by allying with the Tory party in the constituency.³ This charge was also made by the man who

¹ North British Daily Mail and Glasgow Herald, 7 Oct. 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 7 Oct. 1885.

³ The account which follows is drawn from the versions given in the Glasgow Herald and North British Daily Mail, 7 Oct. 1885.

formally proposed Cameron at the meeting, A.R. Cross. Without going as far as Beveridge he stated that the reasons for the delaying tactics of the Church Liberals was to facilitate their efforts to find an alternative Liberal candidate who would stand against Cameron in the interests of the Church. Cameron, Cross declared, "was representative of most Liberals in College.... Did he not belong to that section of the party that even in the hearts of the Whigs must be admitted to be the party of the vast majority in the city?" It is interesting that the strong support for Cameron came not only from the businessman Cross, but also from Beveridge who was the General Secretary of the Associated Carpenters and Joiners' Union. A later speaker, who was also a working man, alluded likewise to Cameron's popularity especially with the working men of Glasgow. Other speakers in support of Cameron expressed their amazement at the reservations which had been made by Caird. With some logic they pointed out that to function as an association some rule must prevail and that this must be the majority rule "leaving it to the good sense of the minority to fall in with the majority". The dissentients were even advised to leave the association if they were dissatisfied with the prevailing opinion in it. It was stated that if, in spite of the majority, the anti-Disestablishers felt justified in dividing the party then there was nothing to prevent them doing so.

Cameron's opponents freely admitted that their objection to him was based mainly on his known views on the Church. Dr. A.B. McGrigor who, as has been stated, resigned from the Presidency of the old Glasgow Liberal Association on this issue, Professor Ramsay of the Chair of Humanity in the University of Glasgow, and the association's President, Professor Caird, led the main attack. Significantly, these men were also all prominent amongst those associated with the Conservatives at the great Church Defence Association meeting in St.

Andrew's Hall later on in the month.¹ Their objections rested on extensions of the argument against restricting the principles of Liberalism which had been laid down by Caird at the beginning of the meeting. In a long speech pleading hard for delay McGrigor said only one Scottish M.P. had the right to 'book' a constituency, Gladstone. McGrigor's view was that as there were still some weeks to go before polling they ought not to tie themselves to one man with such definite views so soon. Seconding this Professor Ramsay widened the opposition argument by the thinly veiled threat of secession from the association if College was to be committed to a particular policy like Disestablishment. Although he freely admitted a poll of the constituency would show overwhelmingly in Cameron's favour he moved for delay before the Rubicon be crossed.

In a division only ten votes went in favour of the amendment to delay and Cameron was voted in as Liberal candidate overwhelmingly by the meeting. What emerges from all this is the last ditch effort articulate men like McGrigor and Ramsay were prepared to make in order to support the Church cause. Although they were in a minority numerically their fluency, social prestige and past connection with Liberalism in Glasgow still gave great strength to the Church party among Glasgow Liberals. This strength and Disestablishment pressure both caused Liberal unity to crack in 1885.

In Central constituency where there was also a heavy concentration of social and commercial strength combined with articulate expression there had also been a long series of delays in adopting a candidate. As in College constituency this was partly because of the efforts of a minority of Church Liberals to prevent the adoption of a Disestablishment candidate. One of those who had been approached as a possible candidate had been Sir John Ure,

¹ Glasgow Herald, 21 Oct. 1885.

a former Lord Provost of the city. His candidacy had the favourable backing of the anti-Disestablishment Glasgow Herald.¹ Ure, however, was loath to submit himself to the judgement of the constituency association. Thus, on hearing that he would not be allowed to walk into the candidacy without first submitting himself to the scrutiny of the association he withdrew.² The Herald, noting his withdrawal, with regret, took the opportunity to indulge in a little backhanded criticism of the Central constituency association's Executive. The radicals in control in Central, it felt, were forcing the Liberal party into a major break-up by their insistence on a candidate favourable to Disestablishment.³ W.V. Jackson, a Glasgow chartered accountant, had been one of those who had been most forward in advocating Ure's candidacy. He was also extremely active in 1885 as a member of the Executive of the Church Defence Association.⁴ At the meeting which finally adopted Gilbert Beith as candidate Jackson, "speaking as a lifelong Liberal", made a spirited protest at this choice because of Beith's known views on the Church question.⁵ When Beith was overwhelmingly adopted Jackson formally resigned "for the time being" from the Central Liberal association.⁶ This sequel indicated how Liberal unity could break down over the Church question. It is perhaps worthy of note here, also, that men such as Jackson, prominent in the constituency associations in 1885 in defence of the Church, were among the first to organise the Liberal Unionists in the city in early 1886 when the party broke up over Home Rule.

¹ Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 29 Sept. 1885.

⁵ North British Daily Mail, 28 Oct. 1885.

⁶ Glasgow Herald, 28 Oct. 1885.

All the Glasgow Liberal candidates finally chosen supported Disestablishment either featuring it prominently on their manifestoes or dealing with it in the affirmative at their election meetings. Ironically Cameron, the only Glasgow candidate who had already committed himself as a Disestablisher by his parliamentary activities cloaked his election promises on this issue in rather cryptic terms. Probably to overcome the dissensions in the College constituency and because of his past record which needed no amplification he declared no more than that he would be prominent in bringing forward questions in Parliament on Scottish issues where a widespread conviction for reform existed.¹ The others, Beith in Central, McCulloch in St. Rollox, Russell in Bridgeton, Henry in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, and Corbett in Tradeston all declared themselves for Disestablishment. In Camlachie the Liberal candidate, Hugh Watt, who was a Churchman, gave a pledge to a constituent at an election meeting that if his party brought it in as a measure he would vote for it.² Certainly in the 1885 election in Glasgow the Church question played the most consistent and prominent part in rousing the feelings of all those who, like their mouthpiece the Glasgow Herald, felt that such a policy was intrinsically bad and would lead the Liberals to their downfall.

¹ Glasgow Herald, 13 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid., 11 July, 7, 12, 26, 31 Oct. 1885.

Chapter III

The Attitude of the Conservatives in Glasgow to Religious and Economic Issues in the 1885 Election

If the Church question had a great effect in 1885 on the Liberals in Glasgow it also had far reaching consequences for the Conservatives in their electoral campaign. As electioneering activity grew the Glasgow Herald drew attention to the number of Church Defence Associations which were springing up in the Glasgow area.¹ In its view the emergence of such groups only served to underline the dangers of the course on which the radicals were set.² Such fears, however, were dismissed out of hand by the leaders of the Glasgow radical wing. Their view was that since there were so few Church Liberals in Glasgow they could only act effectively in concert with the Conservatives. Councillor Graham, speaking at the Perth meeting of the Scottish Liberal Association in October 1885, claimed that in order to give themselves an all-party appearance the Church Defence Associations in Glasgow always tried to have a Liberal act as chairman and secretary at their meetings. Despite this he hinted, the attendance at their gatherings was overwhelmingly Conservative.³ However, it is worth noting from Graham's speech that the Church Defence Associations were admitted by him to be very active and that the Conservative party was using the Church issue to profit from the disagree-

¹ Glasgow Herald, 29 Sept., 12 Oct., 6 Nov., 1885.

² Ibid., 15 July, 23 Oct., 1885.

³ Scotsman, 17 Oct., 1885.

Graham's opinion as to the largely Conservative nature of the Church Defence Associations was one which was shared by James Patten, Secretary of the Scottish Liberal Association. James Patten to Rosebery 21 Oct. 1885, National Library of Scotland, Rosebery Papers, Box 33.

ments between the various sections of the Liberals in Glasgow.¹

Certainly the furore raised by Disestablishment provided the Conservative candidates with a trump card to play in the speeches and meetings which preceded the polling in November in Glasgow. However much radical Glasgow Liberals like Councillor Graham might discount the defections from their ranks as being of little importance numerically, as sacrifices which were well worth making for the great principle of religious equality, the fact remained that in a city where religious feelings ran high the issue provided the Conservatives with a golden opportunity.² As has been pointed out, support for Disestablishment in 1885 was an essential ingredient of the type of radicalism which dominated the Liberal caucuses in Glasgow. This was especially so in constituencies like Central and College where the commercial element preponderated in the local Liberal association. Disestablishment featured prominently in the manifestoes of all the chosen Liberal candidates.

¹ Glasgow Herald, 17 Oct. 1885.
North British Daily Mail, 27 Oct. 1885.

² Writing somewhat optimistically to Gladstone Principal Rainy, the Free Church leader, nevertheless pointed out with some realism the necessary consequences on the political allegiances of Church of Scotland Liberals if the movement for Disestablishment were seen to come from pressure groups and not from the leadership of the Liberal party. "Look at the position of Liberal Churchmen.... If Disestablishment were recognised as one inevitable result of Liberal principles (to be carried out when it reasonably can be) an enormous number of Liberal Churchmen would accept it without difficulty, not as something forced upon them by competing sects, but as coming from another quarter. Their Liberalism has prepared them for that. But when they are told it is to be a fight and that, as far as the Liberal leaders are concerned, those who fight best will win, it is very difficult for men loyal to their own church to help taking rank on her side and warming to the battle. And after they are committed and heated, after they have accustomed themselves to electioneering and voting along with Conservatives for Church candidates of whatever colour, they will be in a quite different position from that which they are conscious of occupying now. Many Liberal Churchmen are resisting these influences; but many are veering." (italics mine). Rainy to Gladstone, 27 October 1885, quoted in P. Carnegie Simpson, Life of Principal Rainy, II, 32.

Moreover, it was the one issue which threatened to divide the party. Indeed, the complaints made by the moderates were that this issue was being used as proof of a Liberal's identity.¹ The latter had reacted by appearing prominently in the various Church Defence Associations and in such great Church defence rallies as that held in October in St. Andrews Hall. Men like A.B. McGrigor, the former activist in the old Glasgow Liberal Association, W.V. Jackson of Central Liberal association, and W.L. Blench of the Glasgow Junior Liberal Association were stung into this decided opposition by the radicals' attacks on the Church.²

Such decisive political activity over religious issues might at first sight appear somewhat out of place in a city where the constituencies were mainly industrial in character. Far from this being regarded as unusual, however, the note sounded by the political and social leaders of the city quite obviously touched a responsive chord among the working-class electorates. Nothing is more striking in the lively heckling and questioning at election meetings than the number of times religious or sectarian topics were touched on. That Disestablishment should dig deep into the religious feelings of Glasgow is understandable. Figures show that in the city the strongest body of Presbyterianism was formed by the dissenters; the Established Church was in a numerical minority.³ However, below this again lay a deep undercurrent of protestant fundamentalism which was distrustful of anything which should seem to threaten the presbyterian ethos of the city. Moreover, the presence of a large and growing body of Catholics largely made up of Irish immigrants had helped to keep alive a strong feeling for Protestantism which

¹ For example, by the moderates who opposed the nomination of Beith for Central constituency. Glasgow Herald, 28 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid., 21 Oct. 1885.

³ See Appendix E, infra.

was very active and highly hostile to anything smacking of Catholicism.¹ Sectarian feeling, therefore, helped provide a ready market as it were for the reception of religious issues. As such it added further weight to the Conservatives as they adopted the position of championing the native protestant heritage of Scotland especially as typified in the maintenance of the established church.

Michael Davitt, speaking at one of his many meetings during his active campaign in Scotland on behalf of the cause of 'land and labour' representation, felt it necessary to allude to the prevalence of these feelings in Glasgow. In a speech at Govan he deplored the anti-Catholic bias shown by the working-class electorates in Glasgow. This feeling, he implied, was distracting such electorates from the pursuit of their true economic and political interests. The number of questions which were asked of candidates in the Glasgow area as to the necessity of inspecting Catholic institutions led him to declare that such an attitude reflected no credit on Scotsmen.² Evidence supporting Davitt's observation is not difficult to find in this election. Almost all the Glasgow candidates were at one time or another asked if they would enforce the statutory inspection of Catholic convents. Forsyth, the Land Restoration League candidate in Bridgeton, got into considerable trouble over this point. In answer to one such question he had declared himself at one of his early meetings to be in favour of the inspection of convents. With considerable courage, however, he prefaced his speech at his next election meeting with a categorical retraction of his previous position.³ After enquiries he had made (which, with the wealth of detail he

¹ See J.E. Handley, The Irish in Modern Scotland, (Cork 1947), especially pp. 93-121 passim.

² Glasgow Herald, 23 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid., 28 Oct. 1885.

used, seemed to have been made to a priest or an informed Catholic layman) he declared that now he would have nothing to do with any such interference. This was greeted with a storm of boos, hisses, and the accusation that he was angling for the Catholic vote.¹

Other candidates were not so scrupulous and managed to whip up a vociferous cheer for their firm intentions, if returned to Parliament, to leave no stone in the Catholic world unturned. This was more obvious in the Conservative campaign. For example, J.G.A. Baird, the Conservative candidate in Central, added some fire to his meetings by making such a declaration.² W.C. Maughan, the Conservative in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, even featured the compulsory inspection of monasteries and convents as part of his election manifesto.³ The way in which even Liberal candidates equivocated on this question shows the strength of the militantly protestant undercurrent which was always present at Glasgow election meetings. The candidates obviously felt that this was a sentiment which it was necessary to placate without, at the same time, losing the Catholic vote. This produced some nice verbal tight-rope walking on the part of the candidates. Russell, the Liberal in Bridgeton, in reply to a questioner demanding the compulsory registration of all births (sic) and deaths in convents, instead of denying any such need rather lamely pointed out that registration was already compulsory.⁴ Somervell, the Conservative in Tradeston, similarly (although erroneously) pointed to the protection of Habeas Corpus to cover the fears of a like questioner.⁵

¹ Glasgow Herald, 28 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid., 7 Nov. 1885.

³ Ibid., 24 Sept. 1885.

⁴ Ibid., 16 Oct. 1885.

⁵ Ibid., 22 Oct. 1885.

Another aspect which points to the strength of religious preoccupations among the Glasgow electorate and the working men in it is the attention which was paid to Sabbatarianism. In a city with a very active body like the Glasgow Working Men's and West of Scotland Sabbath Protection Association, there were strong feelings aroused by the radical working men's demand for the Sunday opening of museums and art galleries. There had even been a great deal of division amongst the trade representatives at the Trades Council meetings on this issue. After devoting a considerable time to discussing the issue the Trades Council finally decided to vote against such Sunday openings.¹ At election meetings similarly this issue became a perennial question in October and November 1885. In Bridgeton E.R. Russell, to loud applause, declared himself opposed to such Sunday opening.² Maughan, in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown,³ and Somervell⁴ and Corbett⁵ in Tradeston pledged themselves similarly. Corbett in the latter constituency even went the length of declaring, by way of a rider to the question, that he judged his answers to all the questions put to him in the light of his religious feelings.⁶

Altogether, therefore, there was obviously a great deal of sectarian prejudice waiting to be tapped in the Glasgow electorate. Much of it was bound up with genuine religious feeling. Much of it, however, found its expression at a common or rude level. The existence of religious interest certainly gave the Conservatives their chance in the seven untried seats in

¹ Glasgow Trades Council Minute Books, 26 Aug. 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 16 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 22 Oct. 1885.

⁵ Ibid., 31 Oct. 1885.

⁶ Ibid.

Glasgow by allowing them to whip up support by raising the cry of 'the Church in danger'. All seven Conservative candidates came out strongly with unequivocal condemnations of their opponents' intention to disestablish and disendow the Church. By making great play of this they obviously hoped to consolidate the Conservative predilections of their own convinced supporters. They clearly hoped also to attract Church Liberals by stressing the priority which the claims of the Church had at such a time over the claims of party. Because of the insistence of the Liberal caucuses on Disestablishment E.V. Agnew, the Conservative candidate in Bridgeton, could claim that defectors from the Liberals were dropping daily into the Conservative side in his constituency.¹ It became a common occurrence for ministers of the Established Church to be present on the platform at Conservative election meetings during 1885.² Just three weeks before the election the Sessions of the various Established Churches in Central constituency decided to pool their resources to canvass systematically on behalf of the Conservative candidate among their total membership. They resolved to do this especially among the known Liberals in their churches on the grounds that Baird was the only one of the two candidates in Central pledged to support the Church.³ In College, the chosen seat of the arch-Disestablisher, Dr. Cameron, the first election address of the Conservative, Sir William Cunninghame, was preceded by a long introductory harangue on the necessity of all Churchmen to vote for him irrespective of party. It was pointed out that when the giant Church Defence rally had been staged in St. Andrews Hall many Liberals from this constituency had pledged themselves to support the Church candidate. Despite their

¹ Glasgow Herald, 5 Nov. 1885.

² Ibid., 18 Sept., 1885.

³ Ibid., 6 Nov. 1885.

Liberalism they would now have to vote for Cunninghame, it was argued, to be true to that pledge and to their Church principles.¹ Cunninghame himself stated quite frankly that he would not have consented to stand if he had not thought he would have a chance of winning through attracting the votes of Liberal Churchmen from Cameron. "It was", he said, "because he believed that a great many had at heart the public interest (i.e. the Church) more than mere party that he thought there was some prospect of his being elected."²

Cunninghame expressed the confident mood of the Conservatives quite exactly when he said that it would have seemed peculiar to stand as a Conservative in a city with such a record of Liberalism unless they had hoped to unite those opposed to Liberal radical demands.³ Since the Great Reform Act only once had a Conservative held a seat in Glasgow. Now, because of the insistence of the Glasgow radicals in pressing the Church question the somewhat alien character of Scottish Conservatism could be transformed into a positive advantage. Because of their expressed aim to "maintain the Fundamental principles of the Constitution which secured ... the Protestant Succession ... and to resist the attempts to subvert our Protestant faith",⁴ they could hope to whip up a great deal of unexpected support. This would come from the feeling among a section of the Liberals that the attack on the Church was the last straw in a programme which seemed to spell doom to the established order of society. By stressing their intention to defend the Church against the onslaught of radical disestablishers, they could thus pose

¹ Glasgow Herald, 29 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Constitution of the Glasgow Conservative Association. Given in Glasgow Post Office Directory 1884-5, supplementary index p. 110.

as the true conservationists of a vital Scottish institution. In this way J.G.A. Baird was introduced to the voters of Central as "the champion ... of the Church party."¹ The other five Conservatives, too, identified themselves just as strongly with the defence of the Church.

In other ways, also, the radical Liberal campaign gave ammunition to the Glasgow Conservatives which they were careful to exploit. Part and parcel of the radicals' schemes to disestablish the Church of Scotland was a concurrent movement to disendow her. The funds released were to be applied to promoting another plank in the radical programme viz. Free Education. By opposing this as part of the Disestablishment programme the Conservative candidates could again pose as champions for the preservation and support of another distinctive Scottish institution - the tradition of parochial education. Thus, in all seven constituencies the Conservatives declared themselves equally firmly against Free Education. Somervell in Tradeston was able to make great play on the iniquities of the State Educational Scheme which had been introduced into Scotland by the Liberal's 1872 Education Act. The note he sounded in dealing with this topic in this largely working-class area was based very much on religious and class lines. The 1872 Act, he claimed, had subverted the purpose of Scottish education by preventing the teaching of religion in the prescribed forms as well as imposing a burden on the ratepayers. Free education, he argued, could only lead to the further watering down of religious education in Scottish schools leading to the loss of the national Protestant heritage bequeathed by the Reformers.² Before 1872, Somervell continued, the old parochial system of education (under the aegis of the Established Church) as well as fulfilling its function of teaching religion had been truly free. Now not only was doctrinal education forbidden but poor

¹ Glasgow Herald, 30 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid., 3 Nov. 1885.

people in order to obtain remission from the new fees had to undergo the indignity of applying as paupers to the Parochial Boards for relief.¹ In Camlachie, too, Arnott Reid sounded the same note by opposing Free Education on the grounds that it really meant secular education.²

The opposition of the Conservatives to Free Education as revealed in these arguments is relevant in another way. The point about the degree of direction of parental interests by the State in a free education system when shorn of its Protestant tinges would find a ready response in the heart of the city's Catholic population. The Catholic case against Free Education was based on the fact that it generally meant secular education.³ On this the Conservatives and the Catholic clergy were in agreement. Thus by a reflected logic the Conservatives could hope in this way to attract Catholic support on this issue. Catholics, in order to maintain their own denominational schools, had kept out of the State system and consequently from all the benefits conferred by the setting up of the local School Fund in 1872. Their burden of maintenance was high and now, if Free Education did come in, would be even higher both through indirect taxation and the added difficulties of countering the advantages and attractions of the free system.⁴ This correlation of attitudes which might seem unlikely on historic grounds became doubly important in the 1885 election in Glasgow. Parnell's instructions as to the direction of the Irish vote⁵ enjoined the Catholics, in effect, to swallow their anti-Conservative feelings in Glasgow and vote for men who, on religious

¹ Glasgow Herald, 3 Nov. 1885.

² Ibid., 7 Nov. 1885.

³ Glasgow Observer, 21 Nov. 1885.

⁴ Ibid., 14, 21 and 28 Nov. 1885.

⁵ K. O'Shea, Charles Stewart Parnell, (2 vols. 1914), II, 25.
See infra Chapter V, p. 167 et seq.

grounds, were their greatest opponents. With this background the spectacle of the Glasgow Catholic newspaper - The Observer - extolling the civic virtues of Conservative candidates becomes less incongruous.¹ The adherence of the Glasgow Liberals to Free Education as part of the radical programme, therefore, sparked off another controversy which helped to keep the situation fluid for the Conservatives in Glasgow.

In other ways, too, the nature and history of Conservatism in Glasgow made a policy of defending the Church attractive since it allowed the Conservatives to stress their own deepest interests. In Glasgow Conservatism had a long-standing identification with the more militant side of popular protestantism.² Besides the prominence given to the maintenance of general Protestant principles in the constitution of the Glasgow Conservative Association³ several of the Conservative candidates were conspicuously active in Protestant societies. Especially noted in this field was the Conservative candidate in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, W.C. Maughan, the Honorary Treasurer of the Glasgow Conservative Association, was connected prominently with the Scottish Protestant Alliance, a body which had as its main object the express duty of defending "our common Christianity, opposing and exposing Romanism ... or any other form of unscriptural error."⁴ Maughan, in fact, had always played a prominent part in Glasgow by enthusiastically attending to these aims.

¹ "We cordially congratulate the electors of the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown division of Glasgow that they have before them ... a candidate well qualified to represent this important division in the Palace of Westminster." Glasgow Observer, 21 Nov. 1885. On the effect of the Education question swinging Catholic voters against the radicals see C.H.D. Howard, "The Parnell Manifesto of 21 November 1885, and the Schools Question," English Historical Review, vol. 62, (Jan. 1947), 42-51.

² D.W. Urwin, "The Development of the Conservative Party Organisation in Scotland until 1912," Scottish Historical Review, vol. 44, (Oct. 1965), 100-1.

³ Glasgow Post Office Directory 1884-5, supplementary index p. 110.

⁴ Ibid., p. 93.

Earlier that year, for instance, he had been one of the principal speakers at the great West of Scotland Orange Walk. At this demonstration his speech consisted of a round condemnation of the principles which motivated the Disestablishers.¹ The tone of this meeting can be best gauged by the fact that Maughan's speech appeared reasoned and moderate when it is set alongside those of the other speakers who seemed unable to make up their minds as to who presented the greater threat to the British constitution - the Liberal party or Pope Leo XIII.² Maughan's activities in this field were continuous. Some years later he was in the public eye once again in exposing the dangers to Scottish protestantism from Rome this time at a National Convention of Protestants held in Glasgow to explore and expose the theme 'The Papacy in Modern Times'.³ The tone of this gathering can be gauged from the allegations which were solemnly made at it. For example it was revealed to the assembled delegates that the Jesuits had already infiltrated the Church of England and were successfully subverting the honest faith of Anglicans in the secluded ease of the rural vicarages of England. Their success in this task was being ensured by their aptitude for disguise, the one most frequently adopted being that of a country vicar. Worse still men and women were also, it was said, being held against their will in the numerous Catholic religious institutions in Britain.⁴

There were several other societies active in Glasgow for the dissemination of this type of popular militant protestantism. There was, for example, the Glasgow Protestant Laymen's Association founded "to combat and expose ... the

¹ Glasgow Herald, 13 July 1885.

² Ibid.

³ National Convention of Protestants Held in Glasgow. The Papacy in Modern Times, (Glasgow 1887).

⁴ Ibid.

pretensions and claims of the Papacy."¹ There was also the Working Men's Evangelistic Association which operated from the Saltmarket district. The latter had been found in 1870 by "pious operatives anxious to stem the tide of Papacy in Glasgow and offer effective opposition to the infidel's propaganda coming to this city at set intervals from London."² Its full-time organiser in charge of publicising all its activities was Harry Alfred Long. He was also the founder of a secret society which was called 'The Knoxites'.³ This organisation was typical of Long's activities. It had been designed by him to ensure the representation of "true protestant principles" on the Glasgow School Board, an aim which was to be achieved principally by preventing the election of Catholic members to that body. The interesting and significant fact is that men like Long were prominent in the support of Conservative candidacies in 1885. Long was prominent, for example, in support of Maughan in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and E.V. Maitland in Bridgeton.⁴ There are other strong indications, too, of a tie-up between the Conservatives and Protestant organisations. J.N. Cuthbertson the Conservative candidate in St. Rollox, for instance, was prominent as the Honorary President of the Glasgow Working Men's Evangelistic Association.⁵

Not all the Glasgow Conservative candidates were so prominent in the cause of militant protestantism of course. However, there is a definite impression when reading accounts of the meetings and speeches in 1885 of a close liaison between Conservatism in the city and the popular militantism

¹ Glasgow Post Office Directory 1884-5, p. 92.

² Ibid., p. 93.

³ Reasons for Organising a Protestant Confraternity to be Called 'The Knoxites', (Glasgow 1881).

⁴ e.g. Glasgow Herald, 18 Sept., 2 Oct. 1885.

⁵ Glasgow Post Office Directory 1884-5, p. 93.

well known to be associated with sections of the working-class. With a large Irish population in their midst religious clashes had erupted periodically in the nineteenth century in Glasgow to underline the basic anti-Catholic ethic of its working population. Against this background it is not surprising that the Conservatives were able to use the Church question, raised by the radicalism of the Glasgow Liberals, to arouse some fundamental reactions in their audiences.

There is, too, a noticeable contrast between the way in which the Church debate was handled by the Liberals and the Conservatives in the campaign. In the Liberal camp it was dealt with as a topic between equals on the general principle of equality. Propounded largely by businessmen with undeniable Presbyterian backgrounds it could not, for all the heat it engendered between men like A.R. Cross and Dr. A.B. McGrigor, be accused of being used to stir up bigotry. It was a debate conducted on their side mainly on legalistic grounds, one which revolved around principles of natural justice and which was deeply informed by a knowledge of history. On the other hand, the Conservatives' condemnation of Disestablishment was made more generally and on a more popular level by stressing the dangers such a move would imply for the whole Protestant heritage of the community and the country at large. Theirs was an appeal which would naturally have its greatest effect on the popular Protestantism of the normal working-class Glasgow electorate. As has been said, however, the Conservative attitude to Free Education also helped prepare the ground for Irish support. It perhaps drew some of the fire from the militant protestantism associated with sections of the Conservatives in Glasgow in the eyes of the Catholic voters.

The Conservative campaign in 1885 seems to have kept its outlines sufficiently fluid and all-embracing to appeal to a wide variety of differing and often incompatible groups. The evidence for their connections with sections

of the working-class electorate on militant religious lines can be drawn by inference from the tone of their meetings. Obviously, however, it was not limited to this sort of appeal. What, therefore, was the character of Conservatism in Glasgow at this period? There are some difficulties in the way of a ready and comprehensive answer to this question. No handbooks of the Conservative Association in Glasgow seem to have survived from this period which would allow some analysis of the character of that body to be made.¹ The one closest to this date which has been traced is an Annual Report for 1890 which gives details of their organisations in the seven constituencies. Again, the Conservatives in Glasgow, unlike the Liberals, were not riven by internal dispute. Thus, if they had grievances they did not air them in the press and so provide such clues as names and addresses which would help to trace the background of the people associated with the candidates' campaigns.

However, by working from the names of the candidates and their proposers who signed their nomination papers, and from those names which can be traced in connection with the Conservative candidates' campaign some rough idea of the background of Conservatism in Glasgow can be obtained especially if contrasted with the Liberals.² In general, the appearance it gives is one which reflected to some extent the industrial nature of Glasgow. It seemed to rely more strongly on an explicit association with working men, and much less on the commercial middle-class of the city than the Liberals did. This impression receives some substantiation from the observation made in the Report of the Executive of the Camlachie Conservative association in 1889. "Our Association", it said, "in the past has been almost solely conducted by

¹ The Conservative organisations have been contacted for the existence of any such evidence but without result.

² See Appendix F, infra, for full nomination lists in 1885 and 1886.

Working-Men Conservatives ... we would earnestly invite the gentlemen belonging to our party in the Division to cooperate and take their share in the general work and meetings of the Association."¹ With its general bias to the maintenance of the institutions of the state (including the Church), on the other hand, it also drew to a greater extent than the Liberals did from the landowning class outside of the city for candidates. Obviously, within the limitations imposed by the anonymity of the names that can be traced in the electoral nominations of 1885, all of these observations can be qualified. But a comparison of the Liberal with the Conservative candidates and of their sponsors at the nominations tends to emphasise these broad outlines.

In the two constituencies which embraced the commercial centre of Glasgow, Central and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, the Liberals were well represented by the commercial interests. Gilbert Beith in the former was a well known city merchant, prominent in business circles, resident in the city's west-end with his business premises in Queen Street in the commercial centre of the city.² His Conservative opponent was J.G.A. Baird, the second son of William Baird of Gartsherrie. After being educated at Eton and Oxford he had been commissioned in the army and had served in the Guards and the Lancers. Now, after resigning his commission he seemed, at 32 years of age, to have taken up the life of a private gentleman in Ayrshire with the means, leisure and desire to occupy his time with a role in public life.³ The man

¹ Annual Report of the Camlachie Conservative Association, in the Annual Report of the Glasgow Conservative Association for 1890, (Glasgow 1890), p.3. The Conservatives' deficiencies in this respect were openly acknowledged. Speaking at a dinner in Edinburgh presided over by Lord Salisbury, the Lord Advocate, J.H.H. Macdonald, observed: "The great fault of the Conservative party ... in Scotland ... is that they will not condescend in the time when there is no political excitement afloat to be doing persistently, earnestly, and steadily the work of commending their principles to the people among whom they live." Glasgow Herald, 4 July 1885.

² Shedden T/S.

³ G. Eyre-Todd, Who's Who in Glasgow, (Glasgow 1909); Shedden T/S: Ernest Gaskell, Lanarkshire Leaders Social and Political, (London n.d.).

instrumental in bringing Baird forward to the constituency had strong business connections with the candidate's family. This was William Laird, the President of the Glasgow Conservative Association and subsequently President of the National Union of Conservative Associations for Scotland.¹ In 1878 he had been assumed as a partner in the Bairds' iron empire.² Baird's sponsors were John Burns of the Glasgow shipping family (who was also connected with Ayrshire), and James King a Glasgow industrialist soon to be Lord Provost of the city. King was prominent in industrial circles as the senior partner in the Hurllett & Campsie Alum Company and as a director of the Caledonian Railway Company.³ He had also been a director of the Clydesdale Bank since 1867 and a director of the board of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce since 1865.⁴ Beith's proposer and seconder for nomination were both resident in the city. One was a merchant while the other was the current President of the Glasgow Trades Council.⁵

In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown the official Liberal nominee had finally emerged in the person of Mitchell Henry who was in contemporary repute a millionaire. A landowner in the West of Ireland he had formerly been M.P. for Galway.⁶ His candidacy was described with some irony by Shaw Maxwell as one which was only too truly representative of the commercial interests of the Trongate area of the constituency.⁷ Henry, who had formerly been a doctor

¹ Shedden T/S.

² Who's Who 1897.

³ Eyre-Todd, Who's Who in Glasgow; J.M. Hamilton, Prominent Profiles, (Glasgow 1902); The Lord Provosts of Glasgow 1833-1902, (Glasgow 1902).

⁴ Lord Provosts of Glasgow.

⁵ Glasgow Post Office Directories, 1884-5 and 1885-6.

⁶ Glasgow Herald, 24 Oct. 1885.

⁷ Ibid., 4 Nov. 1885.

before he took up parliamentary life, was indeed able to claim a long-standing connection with the city through the firm of A. & S. Henry & Co., of Manchester and Glasgow.¹ Henry's two sponsors were typical representatives of that commercial class which controlled the constituency Liberal association. One was a commission agent while the other was one of the largest fruit importers and brokers in the city. Both had business in the city centre and residences outside of Glasgow, the one in Langside and the other in Dunoon.² Henry's opponent was W.C. Maughan, already alluded to for his interests in sustaining and promoting the protestant cause in Scotland. Maughan was a chartered accountant who was a resident of Roseneath on the Gareloch about which he wrote two books.³ Maughan's proposer was a Glasgow merchant with a warehouse in Glassford Street. His seconder was a working man occupied as a cloth-lapper who resided in Oatlands,⁴ the new area of "modern, superior industrial dwellings newly erected at the extreme edge of the constituency".⁵

In College constituency, the most residential of Glasgow's seven seats, the Liberal candidate was Dr. Charles Cameron, the sitting city member since 1874. A Dubliner, trained in medicine in that city as well as in Paris, Berlin and Vienna, he was best known as proprietor of the radical liberal newspaper, the North British Daily Mail.⁶ Neither of Cameron's sponsors were notable in the city's life. One was a private citizen whose name is absent from the city directories, the other was a grocer, a small shopkeeper to

¹ Glasgow Herald, 26 Oct. 1885. Shedden T/S.

² Glasgow Post Office Directories.

³ Shedden T/S.

⁴ Glasgow Post Office Directories.

⁵ Russell, Vital Statistics of Glasgow, II, 28.

⁶ Shedden T/S.

judge from his address. The Conservatives in the constituency provided a complete contrast to Cameron. Their candidate was Sir William Cunninghame, a soldier by profession, a veteran of the Crimea where he had distinguished himself by winning the Victoria Cross.¹ Cunninghame's description of himself as being of that class which had the time and leisure to come forward to offer themselves for the service of the community at Westminster sums up his social position neatly.² Sir William had represented Ayr Burghs between 1874-80. Since then he had been living the life of a private country gentleman resident like so many of the Glasgow Conservative candidates in Ayrshire. Cunninghame had been introduced to the constituency by an old friend, J. Wyllie Guild, a Glasgow Chartered Accountant³ and his sponsors were in marked contrast to Cameron's. One was connected with upholstery and cabinet-makers' businesses in the city, was a Lieutenant Colonel in the 1st Lanark Rifle Volunteers and had a town residence in the west end of the city and a country house at Blairmore on the Holy Loch. The other, also a resident of the west-end occupied the chair of Clinical Medicine at the University.⁴

To some extent the Conservatives in all these three seats had, like the Liberals, some connections either in themselves or their supporters with the commercial and industrial nature of the city. More than the Liberals, however, their connection with the landed interests in the surrounding shires was much more pronounced. Again, their backgrounds were much more attuned to the traditional establishments of the country. By contrast, on the whole the Liberals were self-made merchants owing their position not to military prestige

¹ Glasgow Herald, 29 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Glasgow Post Office Directories.

but to their commercial attainments in the city. Lastly, while Dr. Cameron had one small shopkeeper as one of his proposers, only Maughan, the Conservative who stood out most for his support of the Protestant establishments of the country, had a working man sign his nomination papers.¹

In St. Rollox the official Liberal was John McCulloch, a former Wigtownshire farmer who had gravitated to the job of land valuer in the U.S.A. and Canada. A confirmed land reformer, McCulloch was active in publishing his views. As has been mentioned, for one paper he wrote on the industrial depression he gained praise from the economist Leone Levi, a fact which confirmed his reputation for radicalism.² His two sponsors were firstly a doctor and secondly the owner of a boot and shoe-maker's shop.³ His Conservative opponent, John N. Cuthbertson, on the other hand, was a well-known figure in Glasgow public life. A chemical and produce broker, he was fourth in the direct family line of an old established mercantile business. Coming from an old Glasgow family, Cuthbertson was noted for his philanthropic and social work and for his interest in educational affairs. He was, for instance, President of the Glasgow School Union and Chairman of the Glasgow School Board.⁴ His sponsors also included a medical man who later became Professor of Forensic Medicine at Glasgow University. The other proposer was connected with St. Rollox Chemical Works but in which capacity is not

¹ The latter was hardly the same type of working man as R.C. Grant who supported Beith in Central. As leader of the Trades Council, Grant, through his long association with the Glasgow Liberal Association, was quite obviously representative of the traditional 'Lib-Lab.' type of trade unionist.

² Shedden T/S.

³ Glasgow Post Office Directories.

⁴ Who's Who in Glasgow: Fairplay, 23 Oct. 1885: Glasgow Contemporaries at the Dawn of the 20th Century, (Glasgow n.d.).

known.¹

In Camlachie two carpetbaggers faced each other for the Liberal and Conservative interests. Hugh Watt, the official Liberal candidate, was described as a merchant from London.² However, accusations were made during the campaign that his mercantile interests were shadowy and that his only interest in gaining a seat in Westminster was in order to be able to use it to gain directorships.³ Watt's two proposers were solidly from the middle of Glasgow's commercial group. One was a thread manufacturer who had been Chairman of the Glasgow Liberal Association from 1880-1885. The other was head of a wholesale and export confectionery business.⁴ Reid, the Conservative candidate, was a young man who was popularly regarded as a journalist on the make. His candidature was a stop-gap one the first approached by the Conservatives having been made to Isaac Beardmore, who was at that time head of the great Parkhead Forge Works.⁵ The Conservatives' declared intention in approaching such a figure was because of the attraction he would have as a candidate on the basis of his position as a great employer of labour in the city. Beardmore, however, declined on the grounds, to which great publicity was given by the Conservatives, that he preferred in a time of economic depression to provide Parkhead with bread and butter to representing it in Parliament.⁶ Beardmore, however, agreed to propose Reid's candidature and this was seconded by a local surgeon.

¹ Glasgow Post Office Directories. 1884-86.

² Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

³ Glasgow Herald, 3 Oct. 1885: Fairplay, 22 Jan. 1886.

⁴ Glasgow Post Office Directories. 1884-86.

⁵ Glasgow Herald, 7 Nov. 1885.

⁶ Ibid.

In Tradeston it was the Liberals who seemed to be presenting a young and untried candidate who had no immediate links to the city's economic life. A. Cameron Corbett (later Lord Rowallan) had had a grandfather who had practised medicine in the Gorbals area and whose reputation for beneficence was still remembered in the area. Corbett's father had been prominently associated with many philanthropic movements in the city and the West of Scotland, notably in connection with Quarrier's homes, and also as the originator of a scheme for providing cheap restaurants for working men.¹ However he had moved to London, where he had made a fortune in trade with Australia. Corbett, who had been educated privately, had inherited this money and decided to use it as a basis from which to make his entry into public life. Still under 30 in 1885, he resided at Milliken in Ayrshire.² Corbett's proposers included first a Glasgow merchant who was also the proprietor of several tubeworks in the city, and secondly a wholesale news-agent.³ His Conservative opponent was James Somervell of Sorn, a candidate who had already been actively campaigning in the city. He had been chosen by the Glasgow Conservatives to contest the city before the Redistribution Act of 1885. When this had changed the electoral set-up in Glasgow he had elected to fight in Tradeston.⁴ Somervell, who had his country seat at Sorn castle, was an Ayrshire landowner of some 6000 acres.⁵ Somervell's sponsors to his nomination were well known in Glasgow. They were firstly the current Lord Provost, William McOnie. He had been proprietor of a prominent

¹ J.S. Jeans, A Gallery of Western Worthies, (Glasgow 1872), pp. 184-90.

² Who's Who in Glasgow: Fairplay, 22 Jan. 1886: Shedden T/S.

³ Glasgow Post Office Directories 1884-86.

⁴ Glasgow Herald, 14 July 1885.

⁵ F.H. Groome (ed.), Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland, (3 vols. Edinburgh 1884-6), III, 368.

engineering firm in the city (one branch of which afterwards developed into Mirrlees, Watson & Co.), and on the competence amassed from this he had retired to play a part in the affairs of the city. A prominent member of the Established Church, he was also Chairman of the British & African Steam Navigation Coy.¹ Somervell's other sponsor was one of the family which owned the Kingston Dock Sawmills.²

In Bridgeton the Liberals had chosen the Editor of the 'Liverpool Daily Post' as their candidate. Prominent in that city's Liberal circles, he had been forced to come to Glasgow to seek a seat because of local party jealousies.³ Russell was popularly regarded as a carpetbagger. His two sponsors were firmly connected with the small businessmen sections of Glasgow's commercial life which seemed to dominate the Liberal organisation in that constituency. Both were proprietors of small tanning and leather factories.⁴ Russell's Conservative opponent was Elphinstone Vans Agnew Maitland who was the son of a General in the Royal Artillery.⁵ Connected with the Earls of Lauderdale, he seems to have been a Wigtownshire landowner with no connections with the city.⁶ Maitland's two sponsors to his nomination were both from the east-end of the city. One was a Glazier in Calton, the other was the proprietor of the London Road Iron Works in Bridgeton.⁷

¹ Who's Who in Glasgow. Lord Provosts of Glasgow. Prominent Profiles.

² Glasgow Post Office Directories.

³ Shedden T/S.

⁴ Glasgow Post Office Directories.

⁵ Shedden T/S.

⁶ Burke's Peerage.

⁷ Annual Report of Glasgow Conservative Association 1890. Glasgow Post Office Directories.

Several facts emerge from this survey, limited though it is, of the Conservative candidates and their backers. Firstly, in contradistinction to the Liberals with their commercial background, the Conservatives are most noteworthy in drawing heavily on the landed gentry and on such institutions as the army for their candidates. Only Cuthbertson was firmly connected with Glasgow's commercial life, having his main centre there. Apart from his party label, his background is almost indistinguishable from that of any one of the typical stalwarts of the Liberal organisation in Glasgow. Two of the Conservative candidates had come from elite British army regiments and the others came from military families.

Again, although the Liberals had solid connections with the commercial and economic life of the city, they had no connections with industrial families of the first rank in heavy industry. There was nothing on the Liberal side to equal the interest shown in the Conservative campaign by men drawn from the Iron industries in Central, by the Beardmores of Parkhead in Camlachie, and on a lesser scale, the Stewarts in Bridgeton.

Finally, while the Liberals in Glasgow had prominent leaders of Protestant Evangelism in their ranks, they could not make so much capital from this as Conservatives like Maughan and Cuthbertson could. By their very Liberalism, and because of the importance of angling for the Irish vote, possibilities in this direction were muted for the Liberal candidates. In contrast Maughan, Cuthbertson, Baird, Cunninghame, were all prominent members of the Established Church. The first two obviously benefited, the one from his militancy, the other from his evangelistic and philanthropic reputations in the Glasgow constituencies. With stern rhetoric, they could all set their faces against violations of the Sabbath proposed in the Sunday opening of museums and gain credit in a city where Sabbatarianism, as debates in the very

Trades Council had shown,¹ flourished among the working population.

In the midst of a trade depression, which began to affect more and more families in Glasgow, as winter and polling drew nearer² the speeches of the Conservative candidates began to centre as much on economic questions as on religious. Some indication of this is given in the campaign of Maughan in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. In his election address, Maughan concentrated on seven main points - the maintenance of the Church, opposition to free education (i.e. secular education), opposition to any break in the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, support for the inspection of convents, for the principle of local option and some limited reform of the succession laws and local government.³ Four of these, (on the Church, education, convents, local option) and possibly five (if Ireland is included), had sectarian or moral overtones. Yet during his campaign, Maughan kept repeating the claim in his speeches that the Conservative party was the friend of the working man.⁴ He laid great stress on the claim that his candidature was one which had been brought forward mainly by working men.⁵ Although in his answers to questions Maughan revealed himself as anything but a working-class candidate, by hammering at Home Rule for Ireland, at the "dark secrets" of Catholic institutions, at the necessity for maintaining the Sabbath, he possibly managed to draw some of the fire from his opposition to measures such as an increased working class franchise. When questioned on

¹ Glasgow Trades Council Minute Books, 26 Aug. 1885.

² There are many references to short-time working, lockouts, and unemployment in the city at this period in the Glasgow Trades Council Minute Books, e.g. 21 and 28 Oct., 25 Nov., and 9 Dec. 1885.

³ Glasgow Herald, 24 Sept. 1885.

⁴ e.g. ibid., 2 and 16 Oct. 1885.

⁵ Ibid., 2 Oct. 1885.

the land issue, he either equivocated in his answer or turned it into a general attack on the Chamberlainite demagogues and the dangers they heralded for the institutions of the country.¹ Possibly in this way he managed to maintain his pose as a representative of the workers. Certainly what is significant is that Maughan felt the need to make an all-out appeal to them directly as a class.

More constructively in Central, J.G.A. Baird, made greater play in his election address on the necessity of following a strong and assured foreign policy and in looking to the contemporaneous Royal Commission on Trade set up by Salisbury for an answer to the Depression.² As this Commission had been shunned by Liberals because of the high number of Fair Traders in it under Lord Iddesleigh this line perhaps gives some clue to the economic outlook he sought to offer the electorate in Central. That there was an opinion in support of Imperial trading policies in the city not confined merely to Conservatives is clear from several sources. There was the fact that the Glasgow Junior Liberal Association had only a week before invited Goschen, well known for his Liberal Imperial views, to address a public meeting in Glasgow. At this, Goschen had spent some time outlining his views to his audience on the necessity of maintaining the Empire so as to have an assured outlet for British manufactures.³

This view was certainly current amongst sections of public opinion in the city to judge by the welcome it received at this meeting. Moreover, in the very Trades Council this argument had been openly pressed to a more extreme position by some of the members. One of the representatives of the

¹ Glasgow Herald, 16 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid., 23 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid., 15 Oct. 1885.

Trades had even declared that one of the main reasons for the trade depression was the Free Trade principle and went on to declare "that no trade unionist could be a free-trader."¹ To appeal to the protective instincts of the working men in Glasgow and to stress the benefits of a bread and butter policy to them was quite obviously, therefore, a worthwhile line for the Conservatives to adopt in the city. It all fits in neatly to a pattern which explains why they gave some publicity to the support they enjoyed as a party from large employers of labour in the city.

In this way Baird stressed the trading interests of the electorate. He declared that the only way out of the present trade depression was to find new markets by conserving British Imperial interests as outlets for British commerce.² Baird illustrated this by referring to the recent acquisition by Germany of part of the Cameroons and Northern New Guinea. This he represented as a necessary consequence of the vacillating policy followed by the Liberal Government which the Conservatives under Salisbury would quickly reverse.³ His message was obviously meant to imply that the Conservatives would look after the working-man by looking after trade. The Liberals, on the other hand, through their commitment to Free Trade were crippling the economy.

Baird quite bluntly stressed the necessity for economic self-interest in his campaign, at one point flatly declaring that the agricultural depression was due to Free Trade.⁴ To say this in a city in which commitment to Free Trade was one of the great reasons for Liberal dominance gives some measure of the campaign being mounted by the Conservatives. It shows some of

¹ Glasgow Trades Council Minute Books, 12 Aug. 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 7 Nov. 1885.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 30 Oct. 1885.

the grounds on which they were basing their appeal to the mainly working-class electorate. If the Church question was bound to make some of the Liberals turn to them, then their Imperial and Fair Trade line in the current economic depression certainly gave them hopes of posing as the friends of the workers by providing an answer to their economic problems.¹

In College Sir William Cunninghame also made the point in his election address that the interests of trade depended on the maintenance of a strong foreign policy.² His point was reiterated in print and speech by Reid in Camlachie.³ In that mainly working class constituency great play was made in the Conservative campaign of the claims of a party which was supported by large employers of labour like Beardmore to the support of the voters. Reid at one point mounted a slashing attack on the principle of Free Trade denouncing it as a one-sided arrangement harmful to the working classes because it led to the starvation of the people in the midst of plenty.⁴ Calling for restrictive tariffs to protect home manufacturers, he also managed to work in an attack on the Liberal stand on economic questions in Glasgow. He pointed out that false calls for Land Reform and Disestablishment from the radicals were distracting the electorate from the true issues of the trade depression, the resulting unemployment and short time in their midst.⁵ Somervell in Tradeston, too, was able to claim that the vast majority of Liberal and radical candidates in Glasgow were trying to win

¹ "another factor in the Conservative voting in the towns was a dissatisfaction with the state of trade, which probably attracted a number of votes to the Conservatives." Pelling, Social Geography of British Elections, p. 16.

² Glasgow Herald, 23 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid., 7 Nov. 1885.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

votes by a policy of denouncing the disadvantages under which the country voters in Scotland were suffering, especially in the crofting counties. The reason why they had avoided the question of the trade depression in their midst, he claimed, was because they had no answer to offer.¹

Confirmation of the importance attached by the Conservatives to this line of attack is found in the fact that the radical North British Daily Mail found it necessary as the election gained momentum to attack "the Tory Protectionists in Glasgow" for the stress they were laying on 'Fair Trade' in their speeches.² The broad social question, therefore, was another major topic on which, like Disestablishment, the Conservatives could capitalize in their appeal to the Glasgow electorate.

¹ Glasgow Herald, 3 Sept. 1885.

² Obviously aware of the danger of a 'Tory Democracy' appeal in Glasgow the Mail felt itself impelled at one point to devote a first leader to a defence of the use of Belgium-made iron in the construction of the new Municipal buildings. North British Daily Mail, 13 Nov. 1885.

Chapter IV

Reactions to Social Questions in Glasgow in the 1885 Election

It is perhaps necessary to turn now to what can be described broadly as the Social Question in order to see how this topic was dealt with by the parties.¹ In the later 1870's and 1880's the accepted social and economic order inherited from the high point of mid-century prosperity in Britain began to be questioned in new and radical ways.² Probably the most potent and all pervasive reason for this was the continuance of the 'Great Depression' during this period. In the minds of many, conditions in the mid-1880's had disproved the idea of a triumphant, continuing progress in

¹ It is possible in the 1885 election in Glasgow to assess its impact on organised political expression since Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, Bridgeton and Tradeston constituencies provided platforms for three of the five candidates put forward in Scotland by the Scottish Land Restoration League. Only the two main ones, J. Shaw Maxwell in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and William Forsyth in Bridgeton, are dealt with in any detail in this chapter. This approach is necessitated by the fact that the appearance of the third, Wallace Greaves in Tradeston, came extremely late on in the election and his decision to fight the seat seems to have been taken on a last minute impulse. For this reason his election campaign did not occupy any length of time and does not, therefore, afford an opportunity to analyse it in any depth.

² There is a summary of a pertinent, modern, short study of the revival of Socialism in The Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, no. 11, (Autumn 1965), 13-19, by John Saville. Though it deals with the English background, many of the general issues he notes as arousing working-class protest can be applied equally to Scotland in this period. R.E. Dowse, in Left in the Centre, (1966), pp. 1-2, lists the following reasons for the growing attraction of socialist and independent politics in the 1880's: the facelessness in business life which was making contact between man and man less personal; the growing threat of foreign competition industrially and the consequent fading of the idea of laissez-faire as a utopian battle cry; the activities and writings of social reformers and critics like George and Ruskin and the sympathetic audience they now commanded; and the emergence of advocates of the necessity for a separate working-class movement like H.M. Hyndman and Keir Hardie.

either the commercial, industrial or agricultural sectors through the unrestrained play of laissez-faire policies. In the search for an alternative, radical solution, various types of socialist or 'labour' groups began to burgeon. H.M. Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation, for example, founded in 1884 was symptomatic of this fin-de-siecle feeling of malaise. Other groups seeking to provide solutions for contemporary ills were the Land Restoration League with organisations in both England and Scotland. The Scottish organisation in fact antedated the formation of the better known and ultimately more longlasting and potent Social Democratic Federation.

Although the Scottish Land Restoration League was not a socialist body, many of its adherents were. When the Social Democratic Federation set up branches in Scotland members were drawn from the Scottish Land Restoration League and some found a congenial niche inside either organisation. Thus, in this early flush of "labour" enthusiasm it is not possible, or even desirable, to separate many of the leading figures as regards their activities in both bodies. In time, with the formation of the independent Scottish Labour Party in 1888, many of the adherents of the Scottish Land Restoration League in turn gravitated into this new, more broadly based coalition.

The resurgence of the labour movement in Scotland was evident in the renewed demand for separate labour representation. Indicative of this feeling were the Scottish Land Restoration League candidatures of 1885. Perhaps the most potent elements at this time in helping to stimulate such ideas had been the visit of Henry George to Glasgow in early 1884 as part of his speaking tour of Britain. It was as a direct result of his meeting in the City Hall that the Scottish Land Restoration League had been inaugurated in February 1884.¹ A provisional committee was set up to spread the land

¹ Scottish Land Restoration League Manifesto 1884: C.A. Barker, Henry George, (New York, 1955), pp. 401-2.

reform ideas of George; a declaration of intent was published on 24 February 1884; and a constitution for the new body was drafted. Its declared object was to secure "the restoration of the land to the people by the abolition of all private property in land, the appropriation of the rent thereof for public purposes, and the relief of the people thereby from all Imperial and local taxation."¹ As E. Eldon Barry has pointed out, the Scottish Land Restoration League "adopted George's views completely."² George's idea of the Single Tax in the form of the old land tax of 4s. in the £ was to be the means of ensuring "the appropriation of rent ... for public purposes."³ The first president of the Scottish Land Restoration League was William Forsyth, the Bridgeton candidate, and J. Shaw Maxwell of Blackfriars-Hutchesontown was appointed a member of the first executive committee.⁴ By the middle of 1885 enough enthusiasm had been generated for the executive to undertake plans to raise an election fund to return members representing the principles of the Scottish Land Restoration League.⁵

The publication and distribution of George's book "Progress and Poverty" (1879), and the establishment of the Scottish Land Restoration League came at a moment particularly opportune for the spread of leftward ideas. At a time when disillusionment amongst radicals over the Liberal government's handling of the Irish problem was growing, when the agitation surrounding the Crofters' War was receiving widespread publicity and adding to working-class

¹ Scottish Land Restoration League Manifesto 1884, p.3.

² E. Eldon Barry, Nationalisation in British Politics, (1965), p. 74, fn. 73.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Scottish Land Restoration League Manifesto 1884, p.1.

⁵ First Annual Report of the Scottish Land Restoration League, printed in full in The Christian Socialist, June 1885.

discontent, when the effects of the Great Depression were really beginning to bite in industrial areas like Clydeside, George's visit and the active dissemination of his ideas provided a focal point for labour-minded reformers.¹ Men prominently connected with the early socialist movement in Scotland like J. Bruce Glasier, J. Shaw Maxwell, and John Murdoch, who were later to be connected with the foundation of the Scottish Labour Party in 1888 and then the Independent Labour Party in 1893, formed their first connections with 'land and labour' policies and gained their political experience in the Scottish Land Restoration League's ranks.² It is significant that when Glasier listed the influences which had brought men in Glasgow to join Socialist groups he gave prominence to the reading of George's "Progress and Poverty" and the "land for the people" agitations.³

In any consideration of the Scottish Land Restoration League candidatures in Glasgow in 1885, therefore, the existence and strength of that body in the city cannot be overestimated. The League's activities in organising labour opinion, in proselytising and spreading its views by means of pamphlets, lectures, public meetings and correspondence in the Glasgow Press must have had a great effect in preparing the ground for independent labour candidatures like Forsyth's and Maxwell's.⁴ In its membership the Scottish Land Restoration

¹ The Land Restoration movement "took especial root in Glasgow probably because in that city the crofter question and the Irish land question, as well as the questions of unemployment and trade fluctuation had been forced into prominence by events." Mavor, My Windows on the Street of the World, (2 vols. 1923), I, 174.

² Scottish Land Restoration League Manifesto 1884.

³ J.B. Glasier, William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement, (1921), p. 67.

⁴ The correspondence columns of the Glasgow Herald, which was violently opposed to these "crackbrained theorists", contain many examples of the arguments sparked off by the League's spokesmen in the early part of the electoral campaign in June and July.

League had at least one printer and in J.M. Cherrie, a cashier at Beardmore's Forge in Parkhead, they found an extremely competent and articulate pamphleteer.¹ They thus did not lack the means for conducting a vigorous propaganda campaign. Besides the individual working men who joined the Scottish Land Restoration League, the executive committee was composed mainly of what could best be described as small 'rentier' interests. There was a good sprinkling of the small businessman and small shopkeeping class of Glasgow on the committee. Also prominent among the Glasgow office bearers were several dissenting clergymen from the city. The others included a hotelier, a warehouseman, the proprietor of a bonded store, a solicitor and several small stationers and printers.²

Besides the presence and activity of the Scottish Land Restoration League in the labour campaign of 1885 there were in existence in the city other bodies specifically socialist in their philosophy, all helping to promote alternative ideas to those offered to the electorate by the traditional Liberal or Conservative parties. At this time there existed in Glasgow active branches of Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation and William Morris' rival Socialist League.³ Their presence in Glasgow at this early stage in their development could do nothing but help to encourage Shaw Maxwell, Forsyth

¹ Scottish Land Restoration League Manifesto 1884: Glasgow Post Office Directories. Examples of Cherrie's debating skill can be seen in his letter to the Glasgow Herald, 7 July 1885, and in his pamphlet The Restoration of Land to the State Plainly Demonstrated, (Land Restoration League Tracts, Glasgow 1884).

² Scottish Land Restoration League Manifesto 1884. Glasgow Post Office Directories.

³ H.W. Lee and E. Archbold, Social Democracy in Britain, (1935), p. 140. W.M. Haddow, My Seventy Years, (Glasgow 1943), p. 32. J.B. Glasier, op. cit., p. 15. P. Henderson (ed.), Letters of William Morris, (1950), pp. 218-9.

and Greaves in their attempts to point a new direction to the Glasgow electorate. To read the recollections of those active in this period in furthering the cause of labour and social justice is to gain the impression that any efforts aimed at advancing such ideas were to be welcomed and encouraged with enthusiasm. The prevailing spirit of protest as organised in these Societies could be counted on to aid any efforts aimed at mitigating the conditions of the working classes.¹

The Glasgow branch of the Social Democratic Federation had been formed in the summer of 1884.² The inaugural meeting was held in October of that year and Hyndman himself came to Glasgow and delivered an address before an audience of about 1,000 in the Albion Hall.³ Then, in the following December, there came the split in the movement between Hyndman and William Morris which resulted in the latter establishing the Socialist League. This break was reflected in Glasgow when an estimated half of the membership of the Social Democratic Federation seceded and formed a branch of the Socialist League in January 1885 in order to preserve unsullied the faith of Morris' Glasgow supporters. Morris himself took an active part in building up support for the movement in Glasgow by visiting this branch in the winter of 1884-1885.⁴

There were thus in 1885 besides the Scottish Land Resotration League two active socialist bodies in Glasgow which, in spite of their differences, were helping to keep alive the active discussion and dissemination of socialist

¹ This is certainly the impression given by J.B. Glasier, op. cit., and W.M. Haddow, op. cit.

² Haddow, op. cit., p. 32. Glasier, op. cit., pp. 20-1, 28.

³ Haddow, loc. cit. M. Tsuzuki, H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism, (1961), p. 64.

Mavor, My Windows on the Street of the World, I, 177.

⁴ Glasier, op. cit., pp. 17, 25, 98. P. Henderson, op. cit., pp. 221, 227. Lee and Archbold, op. cit., p. 91. Mavor, loc. cit., I, 179-80.

ideas. At this stage in their development both of these Socialist organisations were continuously prone to a process of splintering to preserve their own particular ideology. There was also a wide gulf between the means and aims of the Scottish Land Restoration League and these two socialist bodies. The latter's presence and activity, however, did provide a basis for the mutual encouragement and support of 'labour' thought and action in the city.¹ There was, therefore, an already established background by 1885 giving some encouragement to the efforts of the three Scottish Land Restoration League candidates in Glasgow to stand as working-class alternatives to the Liberal and Conservative candidates.

The activities of this broad political 'left' were rooted solidly in this area. The secretary of the Social Democratic Federation was W.J. Nairne, a Glasgow man who laboured as a stone-breaker. According to Glasier he more than any other was a founder and pioneer of the socialist movement in Glasgow.² A constant propagandist for the socialist cause he later became a regular contributor to the Social Democratic Federation journal 'Justice'.³ Nairne seems to have been one of those dour, solid men who keep movements going by their singlemindedness and tenacity. According to Glasier, who is perhaps biased here, he was a faithful supporter of Hyndman and consequently frigid in his attitude to the Socialist League and suspicious of Morris'

¹ "The Land Restoration movement had no importance in itself ... but it indicated clearly that there was gradually arising among the people, especially in Scotland, a feeling of hostility to both political parties...." Into it were attracted ... "All of these groups (in Glasgow) (Ruskinites, secularists, etc. who) had come to be dissatisfied with both political parties" and with "the absence of a definite social policy" on the part of both major parties. Mavor, ibid., I, 174, 175.

² Glasier, op. cit., p. 17.

³ Lee and Archbold, op. cit., p. 140.

idealistic enthusiasm and flamboyance. When Andreas Scheu started up a branch of the Social Democratic Federation in Edinburgh in August 1884 known as the "Scottish Land and Labour League", Nairne, as secretary of the already established Glasgow branch, chaired the meeting.¹ It could scarcely have gladdened his heart when, at the split between Hyndman and Morris, this same Edinburgh branch followed the latter and affiliated itself with the breakaway Socialist League.² Other pioneers with Nairne in the Social Democratic Federation are even more obscure figures like Robert Hutcheson, a shoe-maker, and David McCullough, the Glasgow branch secretary in 1885.³

In a similar manner those responsible for the activities of the Socialist League were rooted in the city's background and several were to achieve fame in later years as the moving spirits in the struggle first to establish the Scottish Labour party and then the Independent Labour party. J. Bruce Glasier is the most prominent figure in this connection. At this time he lived in Crown Street and from this base his activities stretched throughout the Glasgow area in organising meetings in the effort to spread socialist ideas.⁴ Glasier had been active first in helping to establish the Social Democratic Federation in Glasgow⁵ and then in helping the breakaway Socialist League to fulfil its mission of "education and organisation" - a necessary preliminary to direct political action on the part of the working-

¹ Lee and Archbold, op. cit., p. 66.

² Glasier, op. cit., p. 17.

³ Lee and Archbold, op. cit., pp. 140-1. According to Mavor the original membership consisted of a few working men, one or two designers in cast iron and calico, and a few clerks. Mavor, op. cit., p. 177.

⁴ There is a good deal of incidental autobiographical material in his William Morris and the Early Days of the Socialist Movement concerning his early activities in the Glasgow area.

⁵ Lee and Archbold, op. cit., p. 66.

classes. The Socialist League had a good representation from academic circles in the city. The first Glasgow secretary was James Mavor, author of "My Windows on the Street of the World." He was at this time described as Professor of Political Economy at St. Mungo's College and later became Professor of Political Economy and History at the University of Toronto.¹ Other active members at this time according to Glasier, were R.F. Muirhead, described as Assistant Professor of Greek, Robert Thomson who was a great-grandson of Robert Burns, William Pollok who later founded the Civic Press, and Pete Curran the well-known Labour pioneer.² A more exotic member of the League in Glasgow was Leo Melliot, who had been Minister of Justice in the Paris Commune.³ Described by Glasier as "a French refugee well known in scholastic circles"⁴ he must have provided a touch of practical, continental realism amongst these early Glasgow socialists.

Such was the background to the attempts to put forward the first truly "labour" candidates in Glasgow. At this embryonic stage in the development of the movement there were others who brought a great deal of personal support to bear without being linked formally to either the Social Democratic Federation or the Socialist League. In helping to generate this feeling for independent labour representation, Shaw Maxwell was prominent. By 1885 Maxwell was already well known in Glasgow labour and radical circles and had appeared as one of the first committee members of the Scottish Land Restoration

¹ Haddow, op. cit., p. 32.

² Ibid., p. 33.

³ Glasier, op. cit., p. 40.

⁴ Ibid.

Mavor spells his name Melliet and describes him as being a member of the Judicial Committee of the Commune and a refugee in Scotland for nearly 30 years. Mavor, op. cit., I, 112.

League executive in 1884.¹ He was not a member of the Social Democratic Federation when it was formed, but it is indicative of the early enthusiasm in seeking a new approach for the general cause of social reform and justice that he is always spoken of as connected with the early Social Democratic Federation group. Maxwell gave a great deal of help in getting the branch established in Glasgow in the first place through his propaganda activities in lecturing and debating.² Another link between the socialist bodies and the Scottish Land Restoration League was provided by James M. Cherrie whom Haddow lists as one of the prominent sympathisers³ although he remained unattached to the Social Democratic Federation and seems to have confined his main activities within the ranks of the Scottish Land Restoration League. From these interconnections it is clear that there were a number of men busily active in the general cause of "labour" in Glasgow by the later part of 1885 whether as members of full socialist groups like the Social Democratic Federation or the Socialist League, or in the less extreme, non-socialist Scottish Land Restoration League which provided shelter for those who can be labelled broadly as "radical."

From yet another angle, this time by providing another connection between the Irish Nationalists and the labour sentiment in the city, the activities of men like John Ferguson and Michael Davitt during 1885 must be noted. The former was in business as a stationery merchant in the city. A resident of the outlying village of Lenzie, he had come to Glasgow originally from Ulster. Well known for his staunch support for the Irish cause Ferguson had been prominent for some time in both Glasgow Liberal and Irish

¹ Scottish Land Restoration League Manifesto 1884, p. 1.

² Haddow, op. cit., p. 32.

³ Ibid., p. 33.

Nationalist circles.¹ Ferguson's Irish sympathies and his friendship with Michael Davitt fostered his deep attachment to radical measures. At this time he was a supporter of the idea of direct labour representation. When the Scottish Labour party held its first Annual General Meeting, these sympathies were rewarded by his election as Honorary Vice-President along with the Crofter M.P., Dr. G.B. Clark.² With the advent of Land Restorationist candidates in Glasgow in 1885, it comes as no surprise to find him prominent in giving moral and physical support at both Forsyth's and Shaw Maxwell's election meetings.

Besides this, he proved a potent force in the Glasgow political scene in other ways in encouraging the independent labour principle in the city in 1885. As a friend of Michael Davitt, Ferguson often appeared with the latter in Glasgow whenever Davitt was making his forays into Scotland to propagate his views on land reform. Davitt's effect on the voting in the Glasgow area would clearly be crucial in 1885 since through his reputation and ideas he provided the link between the various strands of the land reform movement and the nascent labour movement. This is mainly because of what had become by 1885 an essential part of Davitt's land reform programme viz. his stress on the necessity for independent labour representation as a prior condition to achieving his ultimate aim of the national proprietorship of all the land.³ A meeting of the Land Law Reform Association in Glasgow on October 19, 1885, provides an example of both the composition of a left-wing

¹ J.E. Handley, Irish in Modern Scotland, pp. 269-290 passim. John Denvir, The Irish in Britain, (1892 edn), pp. 265, 273.

² Haddow, op. cit., p. 34.

³ For Davitt's role in the Scottish Labour Movement see T.W. Moody, "Michael Davitt and the British Labour Movement," Transactions Royal Historical Society, 5th series, vol. 3, (1953), 53-76.

gathering at this time and the type of propaganda it was listening to from a man with the reputation of Davitt.¹ On the platform the chair was occupied by William Forsyth, the Land Restorationist candidate in Bridgeton. Accompanying him were J.M. Cherrie, John Macpherson (the "Glendale Martyr"), Davitt, John Ferguson, and Shaw Maxwell, the Land Restorationist candidate in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. Forsyth and Cherrie were drawn from the ranks of the Scottish Land Restoration League. Macpherson directly represented the current crofting agitation for land reform in the Highlands. As one of the ringleaders of the Glendale resistance in Skye, he had been arrested in 1883 and had had the distinction of having a gunboat sent by the Government to back up his seizure. Davitt and John Ferguson represented the Irish Nationalist agitators, the latter as their best known leader in Glasgow. Finally, both Ferguson and Maxwell were directly in that awakening stream of Labour consciousness which was soon to lead to their part as founders of the Scottish Labour Party three years later.

The keynote of the meeting can be gauged from the denunciations made at it of private property in land as both a fraud and a robbery.² When Davitt spoke his ideas were couched in more practical vein. After some encouraging comments on the new found unity between Scottish and Irish democrats in their "battle for justice," he swung into an extended argument outlining his main point. From all angles the message in it was the same: in their struggle against the common enemy of landlordism, the first practical means of achieving this end was to work for the return of "men of the people" to represent them in Parliament.³ In short, his reputation and powers of

¹ Glasgow Herald, 20 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

persuasion in Glasgow at this time were mainly directed at ensuring the establishment of the principle of independent labour representation.

Besides these activities, personalities and contemporary ideas which have been noted as operating so positively at this time, mention must also be made of one other element in the situation when the Scottish Land Restoration League candidatures were being fought in the mid 1880's. Less colourful, less personal, but without doubt more all pervading and most widely evident at this period were the consequences and effects of the 'Great Depression' on industrial areas like Glasgow. By the latter part of 1885 there are plentiful indications of the widespread distress being caused on Clydeside by the slump in the economy. The tonnage output from the Clyde yards had fallen from 419,664 tons in 1883 to an estimated 182,866 tons for 1885. In Partick and Whiteinch seven out of every ten men were said to be idle. Plans were being laid by October to relieve the distress in the coming winter by opening soup kitchens and providing work for the unemployed.¹ In Lanarkshire the coal miners were engaged in an effort to try and offset the reduction in wages in the Depression by industrial action.² In early November, for instance, the miners of Larkhall and part of Hamilton and Burnbank were staging a series of one day strikes to try and force the employers to grant them a wage increase.³ In the city itself, the Cotton spinning owners tried to offset the effects of the Depression by the familiar expedient of reducing wages. As a result the cotton spinners, mainly women and girls, started a strike on 2 November 1885 which caused the main Glasgow

¹ Glasgow Herald, 31 Oct. 1885.

² Letter from William Small, Secretary of Lanarkshire Miners' Union, ibid., 23 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid., 5 Nov. 1885.

establishments - The Glasgow Cotton Spinning Coy., Todd & Higginbotham, and George Grant and Co. - to close down for a time.¹ In the integrated economy of the Glasgow area, therefore, there were plentiful instances of the general nature of the effects of the trade depression.

The correspondence columns of the Glasgow Herald also reveal widespread awareness of the hard times which characterised the latter part of 1885. On 19 October the Charity Organisation Society issued a public appeal from its Bath Street Office for funds to help in their work of relieving destitution.² A week later they repeated their appeal this time supporting it with evidence from their visitors of the incidence of contemporary destitution. The visitors had reported that the destitution which existed was something out of even their normal experience. "The children clamour for bread," it was said, "which the parents are unable to give them, and it is no uncommon thing to find that families have been without food for a day or two at a stretch."³ Corroboration of these conditions in the city was provided the next day by a letter from a physician at the Dispensary of Anderson's College. Referring to the facts revealed by the Glasgow Charity Organisation Society, he gave it as his opinion that destitution was very widespread amongst "the industrious and deserving poor", i.e. those normally in employment. Of the twenty or thirty patients he had to deal with daily at the dispensary he estimated that two-thirds required food and clothing as much as medicine, a figure which, he said, the staff at the College would corroborate. Hundreds of decent men and women, he went on, could get no work because of the depression.⁴ The North British Daily Mail also carried letters

¹ Glasgow Herald, 3 Nov. 1885.

² Ibid., 19 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid., 27 Oct. 1885.

⁴ Ibid., 28 Oct. 1885.

to the same effect referring to the amount of destitution present in Glasgow through lack of work at this period.¹

There is also a great deal of direct evidence of increasing unemployment, short time working, reduction of wages with consequent strikes amongst not only the unskilled but also the skilled workers from the Glasgow Trades Council meetings at this period. In September there were allusions to the contemporary depressed state of trade.² This was followed in October by news of a series of strikes in the city as a result of attempts by manufacturers to reduce wages.³ A power-loom manufacturer in Bridgeton, for instance, had reduced some of his workers' wages by over 30% in order to offset his costs during the depression.⁴ Again, the Lathesplitters were reported as having had their wages reduced from 6d. to 5½d. an hour. Some of their employers were trying to compel them to work piece-work which meant that their already long hours would have to be extended in an effort to make 20s. a week.⁵ In November as the winter hardened 1,300 boilermakers were reported as being out of work in the city, apparently for some time as their union benefit was said to be running out.⁶ In early December the question of the "present distressed among many respectable working men" was again brought up for discussion.⁷ All the indications point, therefore, to the acute effects of the depression on the working population of Glasgow heightened by the onset of winter.

¹ North British Daily Mail, 31 Oct. 1885.

² Glasgow Trades Council Minute Books, 30 Sept. 1885.

³ Ibid., 21 and 28 Oct. 1885.

⁴ Ibid., 21 Oct. 1885.

⁵ Ibid., 28 Oct. 1885.

⁶ Ibid., 19 Nov. 1885.

⁷ Ibid., 9 Dec. 1885.

The rise of interest in the social question for all these reasons in Glasgow in 1885 is, therefore, of some importance in this election. The awareness amongst a section of the electorate that all was not well marks what can be termed the first stirrings towards an organised "labour" political campaign operating independently of the Liberal party. The general intellectual and economic background provided some justification for the novelty of the Scottish Land Restoration League candidatures in the city at the 1885 election. It is true that the specific programme of the Scottish Land Restoration League was non-socialist in that it aimed at restoring the land to the people not by nationalisation but by taxing the value of land (the so-called Single Tax). Yet, despite this difference in means between the Socialists and the Land Restorationists, it did not prevent them from uniting on an informal level at least for the common cause in the 1885 campaign. As has been pointed out there was a good deal of cross-fertilisation in membership and ideas between the two groups at this time. Thus, even if their beliefs were not specifically socialist this fact should not prevent the Scottish Land Restoration League candidates in Glasgow from being regarded in 1885 as first true "labour" candidates to appear since the Chartists. In the general ferment among the early labour movement in Glasgow, the Scottish Land Restoration League candidatures were certainly the only ones which appeared in 1885 in this industrial city to make a direct class appeal to the electorate.

The social question, therefore, did play a part although not a dominating one in Glasgow in 1885; and the activity surrounding it provides a focus through which the reactions of the political spectrum in Glasgow can be observed. Certainly at every election meeting there is evidence suggesting organised activity on the part of the socialist groups. Questions were raised constantly on this topic. From their repetitious nature, and the form

in which they were couched, it was obvious that a well organised body with labour views was attempting to permeate the electorate. The eight-hour day, the taxation of land values, a graduated income tax, landlordism, the nationalisation of mineral royalties, the reduction of the civil list and, of course, the current issues of the Crofters' War, were all questions which came up over and over again as a test of the candidates' sympathies.¹ For instance, Beith in Central was questioned closely at one meeting on, consecutively, the grievances of the Highland crofter; Sheriff Ivory's conduct in Skye; the necessity for preventing Procurator-Fiscals in the Highlands from being drawn from the ranks of the landlords' factors; on the need for the eight-hours day; state schemes to provide employment for the unemployed; and the nationalisation of all mineral royalties.² This sort of activity, therefore, is useful in the opportunity it allows of judging the reactions of the candidates (and hence the parties) to these problems.

In the light of the election debates there appears, perhaps to be some truth in the Conservative taunt that the Liberals in Glasgow were only radical in so far as the radicalism they advocated did not affect their position in the community or specifically benefit the working classes in the city. On the social question, the Liberal candidates generally followed the Chamberlainite line by making general attacks on the alleged evils of landlordism. This they did by concentrating mainly on denunciations of peasant hardships in Ireland and the Highlands. As panaceas for contemporary problems nearer home, however, their promises were only couched in vague statements about increasing the number of peasant proprietors, providing allotments for city workers or introducing a graduated income tax. Only in

¹ e.g. at a Blackfriars-Hutchesontown election meeting on 9 July 1885, Glasgow Herald, 10 July 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 12 Oct. 1885.

the most general terms did they bind themselves to support "the just claims of labour" and this was sometimes qualified by promising generally, at the same time, to support equally those of capital. Concentrating mainly in their speeches on the ready-made ammunition provided by the conditions of the Highland Crofters they revealed themselves as social moderates when pressed by Socialist or Land Restorationist questioners for specific answers to the trade depression and the position of the industrial working classes in Glasgow. In St. Rollox, McCulloch, after a long speech on the necessity of land reform "lock, stock and barrel" by abolishing entail and primogeniture, tried to side-step a questioner, who, looking for specific details, asked if land taxation would not lead more quickly to the same result.¹ Temporising his commitment to radical reform, McCulloch drew some fire from the question by saying the abolition of entail would hasten the demise of the House of Lords.² It was hardly a conclusion with which Socialist or Land Restorationist questioners would disagree but one which did not go far to meeting the questioner's specific point.

Such an attitude, radical in its general attack on the evils of landlordism, cautious in specific remedies for working class grievances, is hardly surprising in a city in which Liberalism was largely led by the commercial section. In Central, Gilbert Beith was agreeable to mineral royalties being applied to national purposes. He was less enthusiastic about pressing for the eight-hour day for industrial workers, however, and was definitely opposed to supporting public employment for the unemployed and the state ownership of railways and shipping.³ Watt's attitude to the social question

¹ Glasgow Herald, 29 Sept. 1885.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 12 Oct. 1885.

in the Liberal campaign in Camlachie was perhaps more forthright. He wanted a tightening up of the Employer's Liability Act and the representation of working men in all institutions which touched their interests.¹ Even this, however, reflected an attitude which was grounded in the Liberal belief in salvation through representation. Despite what the moderates anathematized as Chamberlain's appeal to the classes, the radical Liberal campaign in Glasgow was removed from anything like collectivism by an unbridgeable gap. Such a position was almost inevitable, of course, given the all-embracing, reforming nature of which Liberalism in Scotland was composed. When pressed on whether he would support a land nationalisation bill on Georgite lines, Watt, like McCulloch in St. Rollox, refused to be tied to any particular line of action saying merely that he would support any practical measures for land reform.² Both Corbett in Tradeston and Russell in Bridgeton expressed similarly generalised support for the urban worker, but only as part of a general radical reforming platform based firmly on the principles of Free Trade, individualism and gradualism.

This inability on the part of Liberals, even radical Liberals, because of the implicit individualism of their creed, to tie themselves to any one class accounts, in part, for the phenomenon of three independent Land Restoration League candidates running in Glasgow in 1885. Dissatisfaction with the good intentions of Liberal promises, especially in a city where the controlling Liberal caucuses were so firmly anchored to the commercial classes therein, obviously provided one of the main spurs towards this move to independent labour representation. Also, close questioning of candidates of both the traditional parties on social and economic issues was often designed to make

¹ Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid.

this need clear. In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown the Conservative, Maughan, for instance, was catechised about his views on the State ownership of the railway systems, the necessity for greater freedom in the sale of land, and the rightness of abolishing mineral royalties. After eliciting unsatisfactory answers, one of the audience, obviously ready for the move as a sequel to these questions, tried to move Maughan's unfitness for the constituency in that his election address contained nothing which would benefit the working classes.¹

Over and over again this point as to the necessity of independent labour representation free from the control of the Liberals was stressed in the campaigns of the three Scottish Land Restoration League candidates. In Bridgeton the Scottish Land Restoration League declared that the only question for the electors to decide was whether to be represented by one of their own kind willing to express their working-class background or be dragged along at the coat-tails of the imported Liberal representative, E.R. Russell. Russell, it was said, was one of those who by birth, education and position "belonged to that class which had shackled them with chains".² Behind this argument lay the long-standing grievance among the Forsyth election committee that the Liberal caucus in Bridgeton had refused to consider the land candidate as their natural choice in such an industrial community. Instead they had tried to channel his views and energies within the Liberal organisation where they would naturally have to be watered down.³ Forsyth consoled himself, however, by claiming that in the current drift of all institutions towards full democracy the Conservative and Liberal factions were out of date

¹ Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid., 7 Nov. 1885.

³ Ibid., 22 Aug. 1885.

being both too self-seeking in their remedies and narrow in their sympathies.¹

Similarly in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Shaw Maxwell's message was for the electorate to understand their own interests.² Blackfriars-Hutchesontown was pre-eminently a working man's constituency. Over its whole area, he alleged, 95% of the population lived in houses of two rooms or less and in Hutchesontown 99% of the population were working people. Hence his insistence on the necessity of returning a representative who would truly represent the constituency.³ What was wanted in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, he claimed, was the representation of all the inhabitants, not just the representation of the district's commercial interests.⁴ For too long the industrial electorate had been defrauded and duped by party cries, he declared, and the remedy was now in their hands. He pointed out with some truth that whether elected or not, independent Labour candidates in Glasgow would have accomplished one great thing by coming forward in 1885 viz. the political education of the working classes.⁵ The Labour historian G.D.H. Cole certainly confirms Maxwell's claims. According to Cole, the very fact that these Scottish Land Restoration League candidates stood and fought a campaign independent of the Liberal organisation made them pioneers in the battle for independent labour representation.⁶ A great deal of feeling in fact already existed in Glasgow for this cause. On July 1, for instance, the cautious-moving Glasgow Trades Council came to a decision to work for the election of a working man

¹ Glasgow Herald, 22 Aug. 1885.

² Ibid., 8 July 1885.

³ North British Daily Mail, 7 Nov. 1885.

⁴ Glasgow Herald, 24 Oct. 1885.

⁵ Ibid., 8 July 1885.

⁶ G.D.H. Cole, British Working Class Politics 1832-1914, (1941), p. 100.

candidate.¹ Similar moves were being made around the Glasgow area at the same time. In Partick, for example, the local Labour Association at this time declared its support for the payment of M.P.'s to facilitate direct labour representation in Parliament.²

In some ways, and despite the economic objections which could be raised against the Single Tax solution, the programme of the Scottish Land Restoration League had a particular relevance in Glasgow. As a highly industrialised area with an expanding need for improved housing for its workers, with areas of land development on its fringes, the point of urban land reform hit every city worker in Glasgow especially those from the areas being thinned out by the Improvement Trust. There was a widespread feeling that the rents of new accommodation were excessive. Many claimed that this was due both to the inflated price of city land and the stalling tactics of land speculators in city property.

Certainly this point was touched on during the election campaign in St. Rollox concerning the new developments in housing towards the Springburn district of that constituency.³ Again, a questioner at one of McCulloch's meetings referring to the widespread publicity given to rack-renting in the Highlands alleged that the evil was present nearer home in the factored houses of Glasgow.⁴ To this current problem the Scottish Land Restoration League, whatever the validity of their economic arguments, at least offered an answer. Both in their writings and in their speeches they declared their intention of fixing land values in great urban centres where they were high

¹ Glasgow Trades Council Minute Books, 1 July 1885. More fully reported in Glasgow Herald, 2 July 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 3 July 1885.

³ Ibid., 24 Oct. 1885.

⁴ Ibid.

or increasing. The Land Restorationists argued that these increases had come about through no effort on the part of the proprietor but rather because of the industry of the workers in the area. They contended therefore that since the latter were having to pay rent and high taxes, either personally or indirectly, the burden ought in justice to be shifted to the landlord. By taxing the value of his land at 4s. in the £, all taxation could be payed from this source. According to this theory, therefore, the price or the rent would be equalised for the great majority of Glasgow's inhabitants by shifting the burden onto the landowner. It would also have the effect of putting more land on to the market, it was argued. This would be the consequence of a heavy tax of 4s. in the £ on the value of land. If the proprietor found the burden too high (as the Georgites hoped it would to judge from their slogan 'Don't buy the landlords out, don't KICK them out; but TAX them out') he would then be forced to sell the land to those who would utilise it for the general good.¹ Scottish Land Restoration League candidates and propogandists made great play on the eminent justice of this solution which would, they claimed, solve the problems of bad housing and unemployment in Glasgow. J.M. Cherrie argued this point with some emphasis over a considerable period of time in the correspondence columns of the Glasgow Herald striving therein to relate the appeal of his solutions to the problems of the badly housed and unemployed in the city.²

It is doubtful if all or even any of the electorate principally aimed at by the Scottish Land Restoration League could understand the complexities of the arguments used to substantiate that body's aims. One thing, however, emerged from their campaign. It represented an attack on landlordism, on

¹ J.M. Cherrie, The Restoration of the Land to the State. Scottish Land Restoration League Manifesto 1884. English Land Restoration League Manifesto, (London n.d.).

² e.g. Glasgow Herald, 7 July 1885.

"them" as distinct from "us", and thus sought to utilise any discontents which existed among the Glasgow workers as a class for political ends. In this way Forsyth in Bridgeton advocated the better housing of the working classes through the Single Tax. He attacked the City Improvement Act saying it had pulled down slums but failed to produce alternative reasonable accommodation. The remedy, to him, was the simple one of taxing to the full the value of all the unoccupied land in the city.¹

As has been stated an all-round picture of the interest shown in the social question can be detected from the activity of 'labour' opinion at the Liberal and Conservative election meetings as much as from those of the Scottish Land Restoration League where the general 'labour' interests of the candidates were obvious. The necessity for the 8-hour day, for some reform of the Land laws in the Highlands, the payment of M.P.'s were all questions posed at one time or another to the candidates. In St. Rollox, for instance, the 8-hour day was specifically linked there with the long hours which the railway employees in the Springburn district were having to work.² Another popular topic was the equalisation of taxation and the nationalisation of mining royalties which, for the general interest it raised in Glasgow, must also be included in this category. Overall, both Forsyth and Shaw Maxwell concentrated on attacking the existing social system in general, landlordism in particular, and in advocating the necessity of working men to be represented by those elected to act primarily in their interests. The current labour troubles in the Lanarkshire coalfields also provided a stimulus to their campaign and allowed Shaw Maxwell, in particular, to come out in support of the miners. William Small, Secretary of the Lanarkshire Miners' Union, had

¹ Glasgow Herald, 22 Aug. 1885.

² Ibid., 22 Oct. 1885.

been drawing attention in the correspondence columns of the Press to the victimisation by colliery managers of union organisers who were as a consequence being driven from pit to pit in search of employment. There was, he declared, a system of boycotting of miners' ringleaders in Lanarkshire which deserved as much public attention as was given to the boycotting of landlords in Ireland.¹ Maxwell immediately drew attention to Small's statements at his election meetings declaring his full support for the miners in their efforts to secure both wages and conditions.² Forsyth, too, was able to work in a note of support by promising to ameliorate conditions of service for colliers if he was returned.³ It is perhaps significant that of all the candidates seeking the suffrages of a mainly working class electorate in the city, only these two publicly stood up in support of these men, drawing attention to their plight and linking their cause with their own campaign for labour representation in the city.

¹ Glasgow Herald, 23 Oct. 1885.

² Ibid., 24 Oct. 1885.

³ Ibid., 22 Aug. 1885.

Chapter V

The Attitude of the Irish Nationalists in Glasgow in the 1885 Election

In a city so heavily populated with working men, it might be expected that the 'land and labour' candidates would receive the support of the Irish voters. This is especially so as the Irish were mainly to be found in the ranks of the industrial and labouring classes which formed the great bulk of the city's population. Active and prominent Irish Nationalists like John Ferguson and Michael Davitt, involved in both the struggle of labour and the struggle of the Irish for full emancipation, were prominent in the Land Restoration League campaign in the city. Both Shaw Maxwell and Forsyth were accused by their opponents of angling for the Irish vote.¹ Clearly the appeal which the Land Restoration League candidates might make to the sympathies of the Irish electorate in 1885 would be an important factor in the election.

Maxwell was well known in Glasgow for his championship of the Irish cause. In the election campaign he certainly indicated this by refusing to pledge himself to support Gladstone's measures for the reform of Parliamentary procedure intended to by-pass the obstructionist tactics of the Parnellites.² Also, in answer to attacks that he was trying to attract the Irish vote he often pointed out at his meetings that his support for the Irish Nationalists was well known in Glasgow long before the 1885 election campaign had begun. On the other hand, Forsyth in Bridgeton quite definitely refused to declare

¹ Glasgow Herald, 26 and 28 Oct. 1885. It is perhaps a significant sign of contemporary attitudes to the Irish in the city that these statements were made in an attempt to discredit their candidatures.

² Ibid., 26 Oct. 1885.

himself in favour of the repeal of the Union of Ireland and Great Britain. The furthest he would go was to promise general support for any efforts to improve conditions in Ireland.¹

According to the Glasgow Observer, a Catholic and Irish weekly begun in 1885 to serve the needs of the Irish in Glasgow, there were ten well organised branches of the Irish National League in operation covering all the areas of the city.² Forsyth's reactions to Protestant questioners who tried to trap him on the old chestnut of inspection of convents showed, perhaps, by his retractions of a former agreement with a questioner on this point, some courage and honour.³ It showed, too, perhaps a realisation as the election progressed of the need to conciliate and woo the Irish and Catholic electors in Bridgeton.⁴ The Irish Vote was well organised and active if the number of questions put consistently to the candidates as to their views on Irish Home Rule is used as a yard-stick.⁵ Both Bridgeton and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown in particular give indications of the presence of a large Irish interest in this respect. In the latter, the size of the Irish vote was alluded to several times in the press.⁶ Mitchell Henry, the Liberal candidate, several times had his meetings end in disorder due to organised Irish interruption of the proceedings.⁷ After the noisiest on 29 October,

¹ Glasgow Herald, 22 Aug. 1885.

² Glasgow Observer, 31 Oct. 1885.

³ Supra, p. 110-111.

⁴ Glasgow Herald, 28 Oct. 1885.

⁵ The Glasgow "Home Rule" branch of the Irish National League was reputedly one of the largest, wealthiest and best-organised in Britain. J.E. Handley, Irish in Modern Scotland, pp. 275-6.

⁶ Glasgow Herald, 4 Nov. 1885.

⁷ Ibid., 27 and 30 Oct. 1885.

the police were summoned and arrests had to be made before order could be restored. At the trial of the hecklers at the Glasgow Central Police Court the evidence pointed undisputably to the fact that the Glasgow Home Government Branch of the Irish National League had acted with some premeditated deliberation to organise the disruption of Henry's meetings.¹ The reason for the particularly violent opposition of the Irish in this constituency to the Liberal representative lay in the fact that he had been a follower of Isaac Butt.² As such he had opposed Parnell and consequently he had been forced to move from the Nationalist stronghold of Galway.³ Symptomatic of the attitude of the Irish to Henry were the congratulations showered by William O'Brien, the Nationalist M.P., on the Irish voters of this constituency for their opposition to Henry. They had shown by their actions at Henry's meetings, he said, that they knew how to deal with a betrayer of his country's cause.⁴

However, despite the affinities between the Irish cause and that of the Crofters and the Land Restorationists, of the many bonds of sympathy between Ireland and the population of Glasgow, there was no guarantee of ready support from this quarter for Maxwell or Forsyth. The Irish vote in Britain had been consistently organised ever since 1873⁵ in order to provide the

¹ Glasgow Herald, 11 Nov. 1885.

² Henry's views were "self government to as great an extent as is compatible with a fixed determination to preserve the unity of the Empire". Ibid., 26 Oct. 1885. The conditional nature of this view which could be maintained within the Irish party under Butt's leadership had automatically excluded Henry from the main nationalist movement after the former had been ousted by Parnell. Denvir, The Irish in Britain, 269-71.

³ Shedden T/S.

⁴ Glasgow Observer, 7 Nov. 1885.

⁵ Denvir, loc. cit., p. 265.

leaders of the movement with an effective weapon. Under a variety of titles¹ Irish strength in England and Scotland had been thrown first behind Isaac Butt and then his successor, Parnell.² The latter especially saw the Irish vote in Great Britain as the main card in his hand in the Parliamentary game, with Home Rule as the prize to be won. As such, therefore, it was not something which would be given lightly in order to back any one party, still less to be frittered away on one so small as the Land Restorationists. The general election of 1880 had confirmed Parnell's attitude in this. As the Liberals had been returned in such strength then they had been able to act independently of the Irish Parliamentary group. "Had this been foreseen more discrimination would have been used in supporting certain candidates or otherwise, and in this way the balance between the two parties might have been held by the Irish vote, and greater pressure could thus have been brought to bear on the party in power to yield justice to Ireland."³

Despite the note sounded by Davitt and Ferguson, therefore, in early October of co-operation between Scottish and Irish democrats in the cause of social justice the Irish voters in Glasgow were soon to be given more cautious advice by the Irish National League. Signs of how the Irish vote was to be marshalled were not slow in appearing. Parnell had already opened his election campaign in August with an uncompromising demand for Home Rule for Ireland⁴ and it is now well known that he hoped for realisation of his

¹ First as the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain, then as the Irish National Land League of Great Britain and finally in 1883 as the Irish National League of Great Britain. Denvir, loc. cit., pp. 285, 314, 315.

² C.C. O'Brien, Parnell and his party 1880-90, (1957). p. 7. Denvir, op. cit., p. 271.

³ Denvir, loc. cit., pp. 287-8.

⁴ K. O'Shea, Charles Stewart Parnell, (2 vols. 1914), II, 24.

aims from the Tories in return for swinging the Irish vote behind Conservative candidates in Britain.¹ By the end of October a letter from "a Catholic Elector" alleged in the North British Daily Mail that the Irish Catholics of College constituency had already been told to vote for the Conservative candidate and had unanimously agreed to this strategy.² At a great meeting of the Irish National League in the Wellington Palace Hall on 11 October the Glasgow Irish were addressed by T.P. O'Connor, M.P., and motions were passed supporting Parnell and pledging themselves to vote as instructed by the League's executive.³ Later at another mass meeting of the League, held this time in the Grand National Hall early in November, O'Connor again reiterated the Parnellite policy by calling on the Glasgow Irish voters to stand aloof from either of the "English political parties" i.e. the Conservatives and Liberals.⁴ The Irish voters in Glasgow as elsewhere were to hold themselves in readiness to vote for the overriding cause of Home Rule and this meant for whichever party would be most willing to suit the Parnellites' aims. Thus, in the current state of the British party political system Land Restoration League candidates could not be considered in the distribution of the Irish vote.

It was generally suspected from the accommodating tone adopted towards Irish aspirations in the Conservative campaign that Parnell was concluding a

¹ W.S. Churchill, Life of Lord Randolph Churchill, (2 vols. 1906), I, 394-5. B. Holland, Life of the Eighth Duke of Devonshire, (2 vols. 1911), II, 64. John Viscount Morley, Recollections, (2 vols. 1917), I, 219. O'Shea, loc. cit., II, 23-5.

² North British Daily Mail, 31 Oct. 1885.

³ Glasgow Herald, 12 Oct. 1885.

⁴ Ibid., 2 Nov. 1885.

deal with the Conservatives in return for Home Rule.¹ Thus, there was certainly no great hope that the novel claims of independent labour candidates would be heeded by the bulk of Irish voters. In fact, when O'Connor spoke in Glasgow he went out of his way to emphasize to the Irish voters the dangers to the Nationalist cause of allowing themselves to vote in false sympathy with radicals of the Shaw Maxwell variety. No matter how much they might appear as friends of the Irish cause their support if returned, he said, would be worthless to the Irish party in Parliament. Only by allying to one of the great English parties to overturn and obstruct the Government in power could the Nationalists wring Home Rule concessions from Britain, he declared.²

Reactions among the Irish in Glasgow in 1885, therefore, must be seen in relation to the course which was being followed by Parnell himself at the centre of affairs. Since the defeat of the Liberal government by the Tories acting in conjunction with the Irish parliamentary party Parnell had been engaged in a game of bid and counter-bid with both political parties.³ The tone of the Salisbury administration towards Ireland in the Summer of 1885 had seemed to hint that Parnell could expect most by way of concessions from

¹ Various unofficial pourparlers between leading representatives of the Conservative party and Parnell had taken place during 1885. O'Shea, Parnell, II, 23-4. Churchill, Life of Churchill, I, 394-5. P. Magnus, Gladstone, (1954), pp. 332-3 et seq. After the Salisbury government had taken office in 1885 the conciliatory tone adopted in their Irish administration contrasted with the severity of the last phase of Liberal rule and suggested to public opinion that some sort of electoral deal was in the offing. A.G. Gardiner, Life of Sir William Harcourt, (2 vols. 1923), I, 536-7. For instance the new Irish Viceroy, Lord Carnarvon, had met secretly with Parnell on taking office, O'Brien, Parnell and his party, pp. 102-3, 104-5.

² Glasgow Observer, 7 Nov. 1885.

³ Morley, Recollections, I, 219.
"It was sound tactics on the brink of the election, to indicate (by helping the Conservatives to overturn the government) to the Liberal party that it would require something concrete to win over the Parnellites". O'Brien, Parnell, pp. 97-98.

the Tory party.¹ In September Gladstone had spoken publicly though vaguely in conciliatory terms and in return Parnell had indicated in his election campaign in November in a public speech that the Irish vote in Britain would be given to the highest bidder. Gladstone had refused to be drawn further, however, and so on 21 November Parnell gave instructions to his followers in the Irish National League in Britain to cast their votes against the Liberals at elections where no Nationalist candidate was standing.²

The Parnell 'Manifesto' of 21 November, therefore, came as a blow to the hopes of the Scottish Land Restoration League candidates. It also placed the Irish voters in constituencies like Blackfriars-Hutchesontown in an ironic situation. To offset the anomalies created by this instruction the Home Government Branch of the Irish National League in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown on the eve of the election sent off a last minute telegram to the League's executive in London asking that an exception be made in their constituency.³ Quite clearly Maxwell's candidature and appeal had made its impact in this division and besides this, John Ferguson, who was a prominent supporter of Parnell had been placed in an invidious position by appearing in support of Maxwell. Again, Maxwell had been popular for some time with the Irish in Glasgow due to his outspoken support of their cause.⁴ Also, others besides Ferguson would be placed in a bad light if the League's instructions were followed to the letter. It was argued by the branch that there were around 1,800 Irish voters in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and no more than an estimated

¹ Supra, p. 166, fn. 1.

² O'Brien, loc. cit., pp. 104-5.
O'Shea, Parnell, II, 25.
Magnus, Gladstone, p. 337.

³ Glasgow Observer, 28 Nov. 1885.

⁴ Ibid.

1,000 Conservatives. To vote Conservative by the Irish, therefore, would not be sufficient to ensure Maughan's return in a constituency of nearly 10,000 electors. Thus, the renegade Henry would win, take his seat in the House of Commons and add to the numbers in Parliament committed against Home Rule. Worse than that, to vote Conservative in the broad strategy of the overall Irish National League campaign would, it was argued, mean voting for a man who was not only a prominent anti-Catholic but also a Grand Master of the Orange Lodge in Scotland.¹ No remission was granted to the Irish Home Government Branch in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown by the League's executive, however.

The lengths to which the League would go to ensure uniformity among the Irish voters was demonstrated by the leader which appeared in the Glasgow Observer a week before polling. In a survey of the Glasgow candidates Maughan came in for especially favourable notice from the Observer which quoted (from the unlikeliest of sources, the Craftsman) a catalogue of his public virtues for the edification of its readers. No mention was made of his record of anti-Catholic activities but instead great stress was laid on the fact that for a time he had worked in a Rome bank.² If any proof is needed of the determination of the League to enforce the Parnellite line then this astounding volte-face on the part of the Irish and Catholic Press in Glasgow provides it. On the very eve of the election John Redmond came to the city to address a great meeting of Irish voters in the City Hall to urge them to stand firm for the broad Nationalist aims and vote Conservative. In reply to a questioner, he stated quite flatly and categorically that no exceptions were to be made for land or labour candidates.³ Thus, there arose

¹ Glasgow Observer, 28 Nov. 1885.

² Ibid., 21 Nov. 1885.

³ Ibid., 28 Nov. 1885.

the spectacle of Irish leaders engaged in a battle for Home Rule in Westminster, coming down from London to constituencies such as those in Glasgow where sectarian feeling was particularly acute to urge the Irish Nationalists who were in the main both Catholics and working men to vote for Conservative candidates. In the local conditions of Glasgow this led to other anomalous situations besides the one outlined above in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. In St. Rollox, if the Irish acted on the League's instructions, they would find themselves in a position of voting for Cuthbertson a candidate who, according to the Glasgow Herald, had the combined backing not only of the Conservative interests in the division, but also that of the Church of Scotland, and the Orange Lodges.¹

Just what effect the Parnell manifesto had on the organised Irish vote and on the Glasgow election results is difficult to assess. In Camlachie the Irish National League branch executive reported that the Irish had turned out to the polls 'en masse' 1,800 strong and voted for the Conservative candidate.² What credence can be placed on this is difficult to say since the executive were reporting the findings of the Conservative agents at the polling stations at second hand. Again, what went on in the ballot booths and what was said to agents when they questioned voters as to the directions of their votes were perhaps two different things. It would be only too easy for an Irish voter with the known directions of Parnell ringing in his head to try to please all sides and claim he had voted according to the Irish leader's directions. The figure of 1,800, too, is suspiciously like that of the similar round number quoted in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown earlier and may have only been a guess. What is certain is that John Ferguson was censured by the Irish National League's Central Executive for having appeared on radical and

¹ Glasgow Herald, 2 Oct. 1885.

² Glasgow Observer, 5 Dec. 1885.

labour platforms in opposition to the League's directive to all Irish voters to hold aloof from both the Liberals and Conservatives till the League had issued final orders.¹ The Home Government branch in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, however, carried an amendment expressing full confidence in Ferguson in defiance of the League's wishes.² Michael Davitt, too, had sent an eve-of-election telegram of support to Maxwell obviously hoping to counteract the League's wishes being carried out in this constituency.³ On the other hand Richard McGee, writing to Davitt after the election, stated that Maxwell, in spite of the sacrifices he had made for his steady advocacy of the Irish cause, had received scarcely a dozen Irish votes.⁴

Because of the provisions of the 1872 Ballot Act, the final answer as to the effect of the Irish vote will always remain uncertain. However, the Parnell manifesto to the Irish voters in late November certainly added to an already confused situation in Glasgow. It must have had a considerable effect on the prospects of all the candidates for good or ill, particularly those standing for the general interests of 'land and labour'. Socially and economically their candidacies might be expected to have attracted the support of the Irish voters in Glasgow because of their general affinity to a campaign to promote the interests of social justice and oppose the evils of landlordism. However, because of the grand strategy demanded by the exigencies of the Parliamentary battle this could never be regarded as definite. As has been noted often, the overriding cause of Home Rule was one factor which constantly weakened the early labour movement in Scotland by draining off a large and

¹ J.E. Handley, op. cit., p. 276. Glasgow Observer, 5 Dec. 1885.

² Handley, ibid.

³ Glasgow Observer, 5 Dec. 1885.

⁴ R. McGee to M. Davitt, 14 Dec. 1885, quoted in T.W. Moody, loc. cit. p. 64.

organised section of the labouring and artisan population in other directions.¹

This had to be seen in perspective, however, The Irish place in the lower ranks of society might make it appear in retrospect that they ought to have seen their true interests in voting for the labour candidates. But it has to be remembered that the Irish voters in Glasgow were not all or even a great part of the working class electorate there. Their concern with Home Rule was only one of the difficulties which the early labour movement faced in Scotland. Labour and Socialist campaigners in Scotland often encountered a great deal of violent opposition from the working class audiences they tried to address for a long time after 1885. Glasier records that the old Glasgow radicals frowned on the Socialism preached by Morris. To men of their generation the independent candidatures of the Scottish Land Restoration League were nothing less than attempts to wreck the Liberal party.² Thus while the Irish working class voters did not respond to Labour candidates, their failure to do so was not the sole cause of the smallness of the Scottish Land Restoration League's votes in Glasgow.

Irish aspirations, therefore, just like the religious ones of the Disestablishers operated as a powerful factor in the Glasgow election campaigns of 1885. They caused powerful cross-currents which swayed the electorate of Glasgow. It is remarkable that this should happen in a major industrial and commercial centre which was so noted for the low standards of living enjoyed by its inhabitants. As an illustration of this dichotomy between social background and political expression the following account of an incident in Glasier's "Life of William Morris" may be of interest. Morris, on one of his proselytizing visits to Glasgow in the interests of Socialism, stayed with

¹ see e.g. J.G. Kellas, "The Mid Lanark By-Election (1888) and the Scottish Labour Party (1888-1894)," Parliamentary Affairs, vol. 18, (Summer 1965), 322-3.

² J.B. Glasier, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

J. Bruce Glasier, who at that time lived "up a close" in a tenement in Crown Street, Gorbals. Although Glasier regarded this home as "one of the more spacious and improved dwellings of its class", the whole atmosphere which was typical of the housing he had noted in his visit to Glasgow repelled the aesthete in Morris. Morris told Glasier that when he saw the conditions of life in Glasgow with its unending line of smoke-grimed tenements he did not know whether to be more surprised that the Glasgow people were not all revolutionists or that any of them had enough imagination left in them to be socialists at all. "I wonder", he mused, "what sort of chap I should have been, Glasier, had I been brought up a fellow townsman of yours?"¹ Perhaps, had he known the strength of the mental and spiritual life which could have such deep effects on the city's inhabitants, (probably intensified psychologically in reaction to the drabness which surrounded them physically in their daily lives) he could have supplied an answer.

¹ J.B. Glasier, op. cit., p. 98.

Chapter VI

The Election Results in Glasgow

In the 1885 election in Glasgow several issues stand out either because of the interests of the electorate or because of the guidance in thought supplied by the controlling activists in the political party caucuses. First and foremost Disestablishment provided the main dividing line between the two major parties and engendered the greatest amount of articulate discussion. For the Liberals, it provided proof of the validity of one's Liberalism and, by so doing, forced Church Liberals in the direction of their erstwhile Conservative opponents. As well as this the whole apparatus of the Church both in organisation and in publicity was known to be geared to the support of the Conservatives. Disestablishment allowed the Conservatives, on the other hand, a firm base from which to fire their election shots in a city where religious differences and attitudes counted considerably. Linked with this, the current agitation over the economic depression and the Crofters raised the whole issue of the social question. In this the Conservatives were able to put forward their 'Fair Trade' and 'Bread and Butter' policy as the second stage of their two-pronged appeal to the Glasgow electorate. Articulate working-class opinion, disillusioned by the tone of Liberalism in the city and the disastrous record of the late Liberal administration of 1880-1885, signalled its reawakening in this confused decade by the emergence of three independent Land Restorationist candidates. The Scottish Land Restoration League, by its appeal to the Socialists and at the same time its non-socialist aims, was able to spearhead this movement because of the comprehensive support it could tolerate within its ranks. On the other hand, the Irish question, very much active in a city with so many Irish immigrants and descendants, caused the attitude of the voters organised by the Irish National League

branches in the city to cut across party lines. The nascent labour movement in this way was likely to be baulked of much of its support, despite the actions of prominent Nationalists like John Ferguson and Michael Davitt in associating themselves in sympathy with the aims of the Land Restoration League.

In general, therefore, the Glasgow contests reflected broadly the overall campaign in Scotland. Surveying the campaign in Scotland as a whole the Glasgow Herald pointed to the fact that in 22 constituencies, Liberals were standing in opposition to each other, and said this had mainly been effected by the impact of the Church and Crofter questions on the conscience of the Scottish Liberals.¹ In Glasgow, where politics since 1832 had almost continuously been Liberal, it was only natural, therefore, that the questions exercising the Liberal mind should automatically have been the main issues in the city.

The Glasgow electorate, therefore, went to the polls on November 27th after a lively campaign replete with a complex inter-relationship of motives which made the outcome uncertain up to the last moment.² In a city with seven new untried seats, these first results in the new constituencies would clearly count for a great deal psychologically for the organisational position of the parties in the city. The general feeling was that this election marked a turning point in the political history of Glasgow.

The results when announced emerged as follows with the Liberals making a

¹ Glasgow Herald, 18 Nov. 1885.

² "The election of 1885 is the most difficult of all to associate with one dominant issue". Pelling, Social Geography of British Elections, p. 15.

clean sweep of all seven seats:

<u>Central</u> (13,208)	G. Beith J. Baird	(L) (C)	- 5846 - 4779
			<u>1067</u>
<u>College</u> (11,934)	Dr. Cameron Sir W. Cunninghame	(L) (C)	- 5662 - 4139
			<u>1523</u>
<u>St. Rollox</u> (11,926)	J. McCulloch J. Cuthbertson	(L) (C)	- 4950 - 4824
			<u>126</u>
<u>Blackfriars-Hutchesontown</u> (9,725)	M. Henry W. Maughan J. Maxwell	(L) (C) (LRL)	- 3759 - 3137 - 1156
			<u>622</u>
<u>Bridgeton</u> (10,058)	E. Russell E. Maitland W. Forsyth	(L) (C) (LRL)	- 3601 - 3478 - 978
			<u>123</u>
<u>Tradeston</u> (9,222)	A.C. Corbett J. Somervell W. Greaves	(L) (C) (LRL)	- 4354 - 3240 - 86
			<u>1114</u>
<u>Camlachie</u> (9,220)	H. Watt J. Reid J. Martin	(L) (C) (L)	- 4047 - 2883 - 177
			<u>1164</u>

L = Liberal C = Conservative LRL = Land Restoration League

The figures in brackets are those of the electorate for the constituency.

The total poll was extremely high and thus can be taken as giving an overall picture of the position of the Glasgow electorate. The first striking feature of the election results lies in the number of votes gained by the Conservatives. Split into parties, the total vote in Glasgow divided as follows:-

Liberals	32,396
Conservatives	26,480
Land Restoration League	2,220

This represented a sizeable increase in support for the Conservatives. Comparisons with the election result in 1880 are difficult to make because of the double vote which each elector had had in the old three-cornered single Glasgow constituency and because of the different size of the electorate and the area of the new constituency. However, as near as can be calculated, 35,517 voted for the Liberals in 1880, and 11,346 for the Conservatives, giving a distribution to the former in the proportion of about 3 to 1. The 1885 figures show, therefore, how much the Conservatives had increased their support in the interval. Liberal strength, in fact, had remained almost constant, almost all the increase in the numbers of the total electorate between 1880 and 1885 going to the Conservatives if the Land Restoration League 2,220 are counted in with the Liberals. Voters had obviously hived off, therefore, from the Liberals and the Land Restoration League total certainly confirms this. In both Bridgeton and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown their intervention split the vote sufficiently to put the Liberal's chances in jeopardy.

On the other hand, it can be seen that, despite the dissensions in the Liberal ranks over questions of 'caucus' dictation, of Church politics, of the degree of radicalism to be adopted to suit the aspirations of working men, Liberalism was still strong enough in the city to weather the storms of 1885. By winning all seven seats it showed it still contained enough resilience to

be able to afford the luxury of internal debate and disunity and still remain in control of Glasgow, even after the city had been divided up into the less-managable proportions of seven separate constituencies. However, the figures do suggest that the Church issue had affected to a considerable extent the traditional dominance of the Liberals in the city. Again, the effect of Parnell's directive to the Irish to vote Conservative must be seen to have had some effect on the Conservative resurgence. The Glasgow Herald, torn between its Whig and Free Trade principles, its hatred of radicalism and the unpleasant alternative of supporting the Conservatives, was forced reluctantly to the conclusion that Liberal waverers and in some divisions the bulk of the Irish had made for a high Conservative vote.¹

The evidence of the campaign, however, does not tend to support its next conclusion that the strength of the Tory vote showed that Glasgow was inclined to moderate courses and averse to extremist politics.² Rather than benefiting from the inherent attractiveness of their policies, the Conservatives would rather seem to have benefited by inheriting the windfall of dissentients from the Liberal camp. Where there was a strong alternative radical challenge to the official Liberal - in Bridgeton and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown in the candidatures of Shaw Maxwell and Forsyth - the fact that the official 'caucus' Liberal won is no argument for the moderate opinions of the Glasgow voters. By reason of their long tradition of control and dominance over the political expression of Glasgow it was the Liberal constituency associations which benefited from the inherited advantages of habit, of official liberal organisation, of funds and social standing. The Land Restoration League candidates, on the other hand, importunate and impertinent as they seemed to the official

¹ Glasgow Herald, 28 Nov. 1885.

² Ibid.

Liberal organisation, were starting from scratch in the city. At a time when independent Labour representation was as new a phenomenon as the Chartists had been in the 1830's and 1840's, they had done remarkably well in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Bridgeton. The matter for comment is not that the official Liberal Association candidates won these seats but that the Land Restoration League candidates managed to get so many votes with all the odds inevitable against new parties and policies.

In detail the contests and the results bear out these generalisations. In Central, the constituency with the largest electorate which comprised sections from all the social levels in the city, there had been a straight fight between a Chamberlainite radical and a moderate Conservative. Beith (despite his rampant radicalism especially on the Church question) had got in and, therefore, party had prevailed over Church. It had been alleged that the Liberal victory had come about only by the grace of the Church Liberals deciding at the last minute to sink their differences for the sake of Liberal unity.¹ The Glasgow Herald stated that Beith's accommodating attitude to the question of Home Rule for Ireland had lost him a large number of Liberal votes.² But the large number voting for Baird in a traditionally Liberal district was clearly not disappointing for the Conservatives who probably benefited most, as in all the other constituencies, from the transferred allegiance of some Liberal Churchmen and Irish nationalists. Baird's vote was the second highest of the Conservative candidates in Glasgow. According to Beith, his opponents' support had included the bizarre combination of "the Church party, the Whisky party and the Irish party".³

¹ Fairplay, 22 Jan. 1886.

² Glasgow Herald, 27 Nov. 1885.

³ Ibid., 28 Nov. 1885.

In College, the size of the Conservative vote against a very popular sitting Liberal member argues, too, the effect of Cameron's uncompromising stand on Disestablishment on the result. The Tories had certainly used the Church issue as a central plank in their attack on Cameron during the campaign. To the Glasgow Herald on the eve of polling, a Conservative victory in this constituency could only be ascribed to the "wrong-headed, unpatriotic and ill-judged way" in which the Disestablishment has been forced on by the Liberal candidate and his supporters.¹ As the only Glasgow candidate with a parliamentary record of active prosecution of the Disestablishment cause as distinct from electoral rhetoric, the Herald's strictures on Cameron were, if predictable, to some extent true. Again, in College, the fact that the Conservatives came within 1523 votes of winning against an established parliamentary hand can be related to the dislike in which Cameron was held by the Irish voters in Glasgow for both his and the North British Daily Mail's secularist educational and anti-Catholic views.² The tone of the reports of meetings of the Irish National League indicated that whatever might be thought about the Parnell manifesto, it would be a pleasure for the Irish in College to vote against Cameron.³ The Glasgow Herald stated that the large Irish vote in College was said to have gone to the Conservatives.⁴ Like Beith in Central, Cameron, in his election victory speech, alleged that he had had to fight a combination consisting of the publicans, the Kirk, the Orangemen and the Parnellites.⁵

¹ Glasgow Herald, 27 Nov. 1885.

² The Glasgow Observer maintained a running attack on Cameron on these two points at this period. See e.g. Glasgow Observer, 21 Nov. and 5 Dec. 1885.

³ Ibid., 21 Nov. 1885.

⁴ Glasgow Herald, 28 Nov. 1885.

⁵ Ibid.

In St. Rollox, the early mishandling of the selection of a candidate showed its effect in the result. There the Conservatives lost by only 126 votes, the second lowest Liberal margin in Glasgow. At first sight, the fact that the Conservatives should do so well against the official Liberal candidate, a noted land reformer with extreme radical notions, might seem surprising in what was a largely industrial constituency containing many factories and large public works. On the other hand, the early difficulties of the caucus in selecting a candidate had led in the end to the selection of a Liberal from the "wild fringe" of the party, a consequent split in the Executive's unity and the exclusion of a good moderate candidate who was also a local man in the person of Caldwell.

On the other hand, Cuthbertson, the Conservative had also strong local connections, was a public figure in the city, and the brand of Conservatism he expounded during his campaign was barely distinguishable from that of a moderate Liberal. It might be felt here that the reaction of the Church Liberals plus the Irish vote helped account for Cuthbertson's polling the greatest number of all the Conservative votes in the city. On the other hand, there are indications there that Liberal voters did not vary much from before the date of polling because of last minute changes of heart. On November 22 the Liberal constituency association finally tried to clear the field and prevent a split in the vote by holding a test ballot of all the Liberal electors in the constituency to judge the rival support for either Caldwell or McCulloch. This ballot seems to have been arranged to cover as many of the Liberal electors in the constituency as possible and steps were taken to prevent Conservative voters from entering and upsetting the validity of the result. When the known Conservative votes were discounted, McCulloch emerged by a narrow margin as victor over Caldwell by 2475 to 2419 votes.¹ Caldwell,

¹ Glasgow Herald, 23 Nov. 1885.

therefore, withdrew to leave the field open to McCulloch and the total of 4,894 known Liberal votes thus evidenced would seem from the total he received at the election to have gone to McCulloch.

In this constituency, it was reported that local employers did all they could to arrange their factory hours so that the workmen could march off in a body and vote.¹ If this is true, it would account for the high vote in a largely working-class constituency. In College, which was nearly comparable in size and which contained a much higher proportion of voters likely to turn out at any time of the day without inconvenience, a fractionally lower percentage of its electorate polled - 82% to 83%. The efforts of employers to facilitate voting may, perhaps, have allowed the vote in St. Rollox to express the natural wishes of the electors. Thus, taken in conjunction with the size of the Liberal vote manifested before the poll in the trial ballot, Cuthbertson's support might have been as much due to the moderation of his campaign and his personal popularity as to a backlash of Liberal defections due to the Church and Irish questions, and the quarrels over the type of Liberal candidate selected.

In Tradeston a three-cornered fight did not develop until late on in the election campaign, thus it is difficult to analyse the support for the candidates. Greaves, President of the Manchester branch of the English Land Restoration League had three disadvantages which discount his campaign from being taken into account in any assessment of the Scottish Land Restoration League impact in Glasgow in 1885. Firstly, he was a later starter in a constituency where a Conservative and Liberal had already largely pre-empted the field and dominated much of the debate. Secondly, the lateness of his entry made it easy for him to be dubbed a carpetbagger. The same charge was

¹ Glasgow Herald, 28 Nov. 1885.

made against some of the Liberal and Conservative candidates in Glasgow, but in the case of a man trying to make a case for a novel political programme in the rough and tumble of the actual election this was an epithet he could ill afford. Thirdly, the working men from whom he would expect most support might not rally so readily to an unknown candidate from England who had appeared in Glasgow only at the very last moment. This, allied with his other disadvantages, made him seem a certain loser almost from the start. Corbett's support for Disestablishment and opposition to any major concession to Irish Home Rule probably reinforced the Church Party and the Irish in their opposition. This probably explains why Somervell, a man who did not seem to have a very forceful personality, did better than Reid who was a not very popular Conservative choice in the similarly sized constituency of Camlachie. Again, Corbett, who had a family tradition of radicalism in the cause of working men, perhaps suffered less from the entry of the Land Restorationist because of this.

In Camlachie, in another three-cornered fight, the Liberal scored the most convincing win of any in the seven constituencies. Reid, a journalist, was perhaps the least inspiring of the Conservative candidates in Glasgow. Despite the fact that he had the support of some working men, his was the lowest Conservative vote in the city. Even in this very industrial constituency, the Church issue and Irish National League directive obviously had their effects. Between 100 and 150 men were reported to have marched "bearing the Conservative colours" from a tan-work in Duke Street to the polling booth.¹ Watt, described by his last-minute Liberal opponent Martin, as the "nominee of a wire-pulling clique"² had certainly been given in some

¹ Glasgow Herald, 28 Nov. 1885.

² Ibid.

quarters during the campaign a reputation as a carpet-bagger who sought political honours only as a step to self-advancement in the commercial world. Whatever his motives, his campaign was radical enough for him to become the nominee of a constituency Liberal Association in Glasgow and he was supported by the known radical Liberals in the division.

Camlachie is perhaps the most difficult constituency along with Tradeston to analyse. Its elections followed no fixed pattern and did not throw up many dominant personalities. The only consistency in its history was a penchant for three- and four-cornered contests marked by a great deal of bitter and, at times, amusing in-fighting between the various factions both without and within the local Liberal organisation.¹ Perhaps the reason for this was that, as a constituency where old-established industrial centres lay cheek by jowl to new and ever expanding suburban areas, the new conditions laid down by the 1885 Redistribution Act had not had time to settle down into fixed lines by this election.

In Blackfriars-Hutchestown the potency of Maughan's blend of Protestantism and "friend of the people" role had obvious results in this perhaps the most industrial and socially lowest constituency in the city. The strength of Maxwell's appeal is obvious here in the fact that on this first attempt at independent labour representation in the city, he polled one-third of the strength which either the Conservative or Liberals with their superior resources and prescriptive right could muster. The Glasgow Herald correspondent covering this election contest reported that the main slogans in evidence showing the political antithesis which was presented here, were "Shaw Maxwell the Labour Candidate" and "Maughan and the Church forever".²

¹ Shedden T/S.

² Glasgow Herald, 28 Nov. 1885.

Quite obviously Maughan's well-known rabid opposition to any tampering with the Protestant Establishment of the country played a great part in giving the Conservatives such a large slice of the vote in such a constituency.

Reference has already been made to the cross-currents caused by the Parnell manifesto in this constituency. Any analysis of the election results here must give full weight to the importance of the Irish vote. On balance it cannot be said to have gone completely and solidly to Maughan from the evidence of Maxwell's showing. On the other hand it can be said with certainty that it did not go to Henry. In a post-electoral inquest the Irish National League members in Glasgow alleged that Irish support for Maxwell and not for Maughan had let the anti-Parnellite Liberal in.¹ The Glasgow Herald, however, reported that the Irish vote was directed against Henry and for Maughan.² The shifts and turns of the Liberal caucus early on in the campaign to find a candidate suitable to themselves was another contributory factor. These had, as Shaw Maxwell pointed out, resulted in the choice of an extremely rich man, an Irish landowner unsuitable for the electorate he had represented in Galway. Perhaps this choice, suitable enough to the traditional and dominant commercial interests of the controlling Liberals in the constituency, showed how out of touch they were with the interests of an extremely working class constituency. The small number of votes cast for him as the Liberal candidate shows this pretty conclusively. The particular animus shown by the large Irish electorate here against a man they regarded as a renegade only served to compound the difficulties the Liberal Association had got itself into in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. By the middle of the campaign the feeling against Henry on the part of the Irish was obvious to his supporters and already it was being

¹ Glasgow Observer, 5 Dec. 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 28 Nov. 1885.

said openly that telegrams were passing from Ireland to Glasgow giving the word that "Henry was on no account to get a hearing in this city".¹ Henry's total was the second lowest of all the Liberal candidatures except in Bridgeton where again, in an extremely working-class area with a large and well organised Irish population, another imported Liberal "caucus" nominee only just scraped through. Therefore, on balance, it seems that wherever the Irish vote went, it obviously did not go to Henry.

In Bridgeton there was again a three cornered fight and clearly the intervention of the Land Restoration League candidate, by splitting the vote as in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, almost caused the Liberals to lose the seat. The Glasgow Herald reported that in this constituency both the local Church Defence Parliamentary Committee and the Irish National League were very active in urging their respective voters to support Maitland, the Conservative. The Irish vote thus directed was the main reason given by the Glasgow Herald in explanation of why in "Radical Bridgeton" the Conservatives had done so well.² The narrowness of the Liberal victory, however, must surely be mainly attributed to more positive causes, viz. the split in the Liberal vote caused by the candidacy of Forsyth for the Scottish Land Restoration League. Not so popular with the Irish as Maxwell was, Forsyth had fared almost as well and perhaps would have equalled the latter's total if he had been as popular with this group in Glasgow. What is perhaps significant in this constituency, noted for its radicalism, is that Russell, although he was counted as a radical in Liberal centres, only won so narrowly. The Church issue and Ireland clearly had a great effect in making up the size of the Conservative vote.

In all, therefore, the results had clarified the confused situation:

¹ Letter in North British Daily Mail, 31 Dec. 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 28 Nov. 1885.

which had developed in Glasgow's political life in 1885. These were due to the growing radicalism of the Liberal organisations, the struggle for control which developed as a result in the seven new constituencies, the consequent reaction of the Church Liberals over Disestablishment, and the new challenge presented by social problems which were crystallised in the appearance of independent labour candidates standing under the Scottish Land Restoration League banner. As a result, while the Liberals showed themselves strong enough to withstand their growing inner dissensions by holding all seven seats, their positions was being challenged by the Conservatives in a (for them) new position of assurance in Glasgow. Some of this support clearly came from reactions to the more extreme direction in which Liberalism was moving as it became less of an all-embracing national creed composed of all shades of opinion and more of a party of particular interests and causes. Still, the fact that in Bridgeton, Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Tradeston which were all overwhelmingly working-class constituencies, the Conservative vote was on the 3,000 mark and that in Central, College and St. Rollox, which contained the very core of the city and all it stood for, it was on the 4,000 mark clearly shows that there was something more positive to the Conservative revival than reaction from the direction Liberalism was taking. Obviously the stand of the Conservatives for support of the stable institutions of the State in an age of change and their policy of economic imperialism in a period of depression and unemployment was making its effects felt in a city whose life revolved around trade and industry.¹ At the same time, and despite the conditions of life in Glasgow, the preoccupations of the electorate to such a large extent with ideas like Disestablishment and Ireland showed that the

¹ In Pelling's view it seems possible in 1885 "that 'Fair Trade' had a positive attraction to many urban workers who were unemployed in the existing trade depression." Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain, (1968), p. 7.

political reaction of the city was due to more than environment.

Chapter VII

The Effects of the Irish Home Rule Crisis of 1886 on the Alignment of Political Allegiances in Glasgow

It might have been expected that 1886 would usher in a period of quiet after the hectic electioneering which marked the latter part of 1885. In the event, however, the developments in the parliamentary scene over the winter of 1885-1886 made it inevitable that the relief provided to political tensions by the recent general election would only prove to be short lived.

The reason for this lay in Gladstone's resolve to solve the Irish problem. For some time his growing concern over Ireland had increasingly forced him to contemplation and self counsel on this issue.¹ As his hopes that this particular nettle would be grasped by the Conservatives were eroded by events over the winter, however, he had found himself forced at last to make up his mind.² His decision, at first hidden and then only by stages gradually unfolding until it dominated every attitude, had a twofold effect. Firstly it led to the excitement and uncertainty of a second general election within seven and a half months. Secondly it released those forces which had been threatening to loose the formal bonds of Liberalism in Glasgow, a threat which up until now had only with some difficulty been held in check.

To state the matter briefly the Irish Home Rule crisis of 1886 brought into the open the elements of political power in Glasgow; it highlighted the

¹ Magnus, Gladstone, pp. 330 et seq.
H. Gladstone, After Thirty Years, (1928), pp. 306-14.
Holland, Life of the Eighth Duke of Devonshire, II, 64-65.
O'Shea, Parnell, II, 26-31.

² Gladstone, loc. cit.
J. Morley, Recollections, I, 213.

many interests which had a determining influence in the structure of life in the city. The steps by which a regrouped, more unified and more radical Liberal organisation, and a breakaway Liberal Unionist group emerged as a result of the political turmoil of 1886 provides the investigator with an ample set of ingredients to illustrate this. Again, the way in which the Conservatives in Glasgow gained in this situation by playing a mainly passive role allows one to discern the general forces which went into the make-up of political life in Glasgow. More generally an inquiry such as this into local reactions to the general national crisis helps to deepen our knowledge of the wellsprings from which the dominant figures at the centre of this situation like Gladstone, Chamberlain and Hartington drew their strength.

In order to understand the direction of events in Glasgow in early 1886 it is necessary first to put them in their national context. The general election of 1885 was completed by late November and so the Christmas recess intervened before the new Parliament could meet. The result of that election, however, helped to sustain a high level of political discussion and speculation over the festive season as to the future course of events in Parliament since no one party had emerged with an overall majority. The results had made it clear that the pattern would, of necessity, revolve around the question of Ireland. The Liberals with 335 seats sat in uneasy equilibrium with 249 Conservatives and 86 Irish Nationalists.¹ With the help of the Irish party, the Conservatives could theoretically remain in office and oppose the Liberals. But no one seriously considered that the Tory party would willingly give one hundred percent support to the price which Parnell would demand for this alliance. On the other hand, Parnell and his followers could give the

¹ There are varying estimates given of the state of the parties after the elections of 1885 but this is the most commonly accepted one.

Liberal party an overwhelming majority if Gladstone and the party leaders could bring themselves to agree to Parnell's demands.¹ If they did so, however, it would expose them to easy accusations of having sacrificed principle for the sake of party advantage. The verdict of the electorate, thus, obviously nullified whatever possibility there had been of a rapprochement between the Conservatives and the Parnellites and seemed to leave the burden of future decision on Gladstone. Would he now unseat the Conservatives by negotiating for Parnell's support with the promise of favourable treatment of Ireland's claims?

It was on this point that contemporary rumour and speculation centred. Although the recent election campaign in Glasgow had touched here and there on the question of Ireland it had never been the dominant, overriding interest. In December 1885, however, the new balance of the parliamentary parties brought it into prominence with particular relevance. To those close to the centres of power the drift of Gladstone's thinking on Ireland was already becoming apparent by as early as the latter part of 1885.² In the present uncertainty of parliamentary manoeuvre, however, informed opinion was necessarily limited to those at the centre. In the provincial centres opinion was at most based on suspicion combined with an acute reading of the political auguries. In general, therefore, it would be true to say

¹ Morley, Recollections, I, 203.

O'Shea, Parnell, II, 30.

"the situation for which he (Parnell) had been working during five years was realized with fantastic precision. He became visibly the arbiter in Parliament; though while he could keep either English party out of office, only the Liberals were strong enough for him to put them in", Ensor, England, p. 94.

² Holland, Life of the Duke of Devonshire, II, 79, 80-6, 96.

A. Elliot, The Life of George Joachim Goschen, (2 vols. 1911), I, 316.

J.L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, (4 vols. 1932), II, 128, 131-2.

Magnus, Gladstone, pp. 337-9.

J. Morley, Life of William Ewart Gladstone, (3 vols. 1903), III, 216.

that most people in the country were unaware of the possible future direction of events until the middle of December 1885. The necessity, however, of deciding on future courses of action within the framework of the existing state of the parties forced the conclusion that some sort of accommodation was being hatched between the Parnellites and Gladstone. Increasingly in December, the main Glasgow newspaper, the Glasgow Herald, began to warn its readers in ominous tones of this possibility. The views of those close to Gladstone on the settlement of the Irish problem were subjected to the sort of oracular interpretation which is given in the present day to news items emanating from the Chinese Republic. For instance, the nuances in the views of Herbert Gladstone on future Liberal policy as regards Ireland were given prominence on the 12th December.¹ Two days later the Herald in its leader stated bluntly that "Home Rule has become a more burning question within the last day or two". In the tone of one hoping vainly for the best but obviously prepared for the worst the writer went on to state that communications had been exchanged between Gladstone and the Irish leaders "with a view to joint action in the coming session."²

On 17 December the tension created by this sort of speculation was burst with the hoisting of the so-called "Hawarden Kite" by Herbert Gladstone who gave to a Press Association correspondent what was generally regarded as an inspired leak from Hawarden of his father's intentions. By 18 December, the news was in all the country's newspapers.³ The Glasgow Herald's London correspondent spoke of "hints from an excellent source" that Gladstone

¹ Glasgow Herald, 12 Dec. 1885.

² Ibid., 14 Dec. 1885.

³ H. Gladstone, After Thirty Years, (1928), p. 306.
Magnus, Gladstone, pp. 339-40.
Holland, Life of the Eighth Duke of Devonshire, II, 77.
D.C. Savage, The General Election of 1886 in Great Britain and Ireland, (London University Ph.D. Thesis, 1958), p. 12.

intended to force the Salisbury administration's hand on Ireland as soon as possible in order to test its intentions.¹ The strategy to be followed in Parliament by Gladstone was, briefly stated, to wait and see at the opening of Parliament what the Conservatives would propose in the Queen's speech. If they were not prepared to concede to Parnell's wishes then Gladstone would move an amendment on behalf of the opposition to the effect that it was the Government's duty to give Ireland serious study soon. This would imply Gladstone's willingness, if put into office, to introduce some measure of Home Rule. Salisbury would be bound to move the negative and Gladstone, therefore, would overturn the Government and form a new administration since the 86 Home Rulers would be bound to vote with him on the amendment.²

The importance of this brief outline of the drift of affairs at the centre during December 1885, lies in the framework it gives to political reactions in Glasgow. In any overall survey at this period these reactions could be categorised as twofold. On the one hand there were those who disliked this direction in which events were moving even to the point of active opposition. This was to become apparent later on in early 1886 but generally their views were catered for by the Glasgow Herald which made no secret of its dislike, firstly, for the perilous nature of the course on which the Liberal party under Gladstone seemed to be set; and, secondly, for the whole idea of giving Ireland Home Rule in any form. During the remainder of December and January up until the opening of Parliament the Glasgow Herald's leader columns continued to highlight the difficulties which would surround any attempt at a radical solution of the Irish problem. On Christmas Day, for example, it took the opportunity afforded by the Bishop of Meath's call to the Roman

¹ Glasgow Herald, 17 Dec. 1885.

² Ibid.

Catholics of England for support to speculate on the position of the Protestants of Ireland under any form of Home Government there. Would the Roman Catholic Church become established? If so, would the Protestant Irish have to pay tithes? Who would enforce these collections if they refused? Would it be the army acting under the control of the Imperial Parliament at Westminster or the Irish constabulary under the orders of a Dublin Parnellite legislature?¹ The implication, even at this early date, that Home Rule would mean Rome Rule, that religious tyranny would lead to the oppression of loyal Irishmen by moonlighters and cut-throats gives a clear indication of the political creed to which the Glasgow Herald adhered. From the beginning of the Home Rule Crisis, the Glasgow Herald spoke for many in Glasgow and the West of Scotland in its almost total opposition to Home Rule both for the principles implied and the effects it would have on the Liberal party.

On the other hand, there were those in the seven constituencies who, whatever their reservations about supporting Gladstone on Irish Home Rule, were unwilling to voice their misgivings so loudly as to strain still further Liberal unity in the city. For this reason, their opinions are more difficult to uncover at this period. Broadly speaking, however, their attitudes followed those put forward in Dr. Cameron's North British Daily Mail.² The North British Daily Mail's policy was obviously one of waiting to see the outcome in order not to make things more difficult for the Liberal leaders.³

¹ Glasgow Herald, 25 Dec. 1885.

² In the late 1880's the North British Daily Mail's circulation was c. 60,000 and the Glasgow Herald's above 40,000. J.G. Kellas, The Liberal Party in Scotland 1885-95, (London University Ph.D. Thesis, 1961), p. 370.

³ As late on in the crisis as 19 April 1886, the message in the Mail's leader column still consisted of an appeal to radicals to at least consider the Home Rule proposals on their merits. The same policy had been advocated in the Mail on 9 April 1886.

For this reason, apart from general expressions of confidence in Gladstone's leadership, little was said about the implications and consequences of the new political alignment appearing in Parliamentary politics. The same is true of the reactions in the various constituency Liberal associations. In the northern division of the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Liberal association for instance, two resolutions were passed at this period. One expressed the members' satisfaction at the return of Mitchell Henry at the recent election. Now, as has been pointed out, Henry's name was quite obviously anathema to the Irish in Glasgow and he had made no secret of his opposition to any Home Rule solution based on Parnellite lines. Despite this a second resolution was passed in conjunction with the first expressing their unabated confidence in Gladstone as leader of the Liberal party.¹ The inconsistency must have been clear to many but it is evidence of the "wait and see" attitude typical of the Glasgow Liberal loyalist. After all the optimists could claim that with any luck as far as anybody knew time and events might reconcile the inconsistencies between Henry's past record and opinions and Gladstone's mooted future actions. According to Elliot in his "Life of Goschen", the normal Liberal attitude at this time against which Unionists like he had to battle was "For Heaven's sake let us temporise a little or disaster will befall the Liberal party".² Gilbert Beith, M.P. for Central, with that rather desperate disregard for the future possibilities of developing political schizophrenia which is not unknown in public men, is reported as having said at this juncture that "whatever Mr. Gladstone proposed and whatever the Liberal party proposed, he would support".³

¹ Glasgow Herald, 27 Jan. 1886.

² Elliot, Life of Goschen, II, 6.

³ Glasgow Herald, 26 Dec. 1885.

It is clear, therefore, that between the election of November 1885, and the opening of the new Parliament in January 1886, the moves and counter-moves on the part of the principals at the centre to meet the Irish problem were already creating tensions among the electorate at large. In Glasgow the thin lines of fissure were already becoming apparent. The question was whether they would become inevitable. On December 17, the Glasgow Herald pinpointed the crucial question. If Gladstone's intentions were as reported, it asked, would the Liberals remain united. It pointed out that it was already well known that there was one section of the Liberals anxious for Gladstone's retirement and another which was opposed to any attempts to weaken the links between the component parts of the United Kingdom and the Empire.¹ With some irony in view of the future course of events, there followed a report a week later from the Central Constituency Liberal association in the usual, complacent and self assured mood so used to equating politics in Glasgow with Liberalism. This was a proposal from the Central association to join with the other six constituency associations to form a United Glasgow Liberal Council for the purpose of consolidating the Liberal control over all the city constituencies.²

The reaction among the Liberals of Glasgow to the now dominant issue of Ireland can best be traced by relating them from now on to the various moves made at the centre of affairs in Westminster. In this way the gradual and, in retrospect, lasting break up of the former all dominant Liberalism in Glasgow can be seen in its true historical perspective. Parliament reopened after the Christmas recess in the third week of January. As expected all attention was devoted to the Government's intentions as regards Ireland as

¹ Glasgow Herald, 17 Dec. 1885.

² Ibid., 24 Dec. 1885.

outlined in the Queen's Speech. This, however, referred only to the necessity of maintaining the Union with Ireland and obviously showed, therefore, the unwillingness of the Salisbury government to make any positive attempt to resolve the situation. In these circumstances, it came as no surprise when four days later, on 25 January, the government was defeated on a motion by the radical Jesse Collings deploring the lack of any promise of agricultural reform.¹ On 1 February, Gladstone took over the business of government and set about forming a new administration.

What was revealing in all this was the new alignment which emerged. On Colling's motion the Irish party voted en bloc with the Liberals. As expected, however, Gladstone could not persuade the whole of the Liberal party to embark with him in the direction this new alliance seemed to be pointing. Between 70 and 80 Liberals were absent from the House of Commons when Colling's motion was voted on and more ominously still a Whig wing of some 18 or 19 Liberals led by Hartington and Goschen voted with the Conservatives.² That this dissension would increase in more positive circumstances became obvious when Gladstone tried to form a cabinet. Such well known leaders in the Liberal party as Bright, Lord Derby and Lord Selborne, in addition to Hartington and Goschen all refused to join. A somewhat reluctant Chamberlain followed by Trevelyan did enter the government while Gladstone was engaged in drafting measures designed to conciliate Ireland. When, however, these were unfolded in the Cabinet on 13 March, both these leaders of the radical Liberals resigned in protest at the proposals contained in them.³ In public view, therefore, the Liberal party was openly split during the first three

¹ Magnus, Gladstone, p. 341.

² Ibid., pp. 341-2.

³ Ibid., pp. 343-4, 353.

months of 1886 by the resistance of both Whig and radical elements to Gladstone's policy of giving Ireland some form of self-government. The former's opposition came from a general feeling of distrust for any measure which would include some form of separation. The latter's took the more particular form of opposition to the actual details of separation such as the exclusion of Irish M.P.s from the Westminster Parliament and the associated proposal to solve the land problem in Ireland through a policy of buying out the Irish landlords.

In Glasgow, reactions, in so far as they can be traced, tended to fall into the same categories. Those opposing the whole drift of events were naturally more forthcoming in expressing their distaste or reservations. Into this category comes the Glasgow Herald. In January, on the defeat of the Salisbury government it declared that "much uneasiness existed" both in Parliament and the country at large, and went on to point out that "anxiety" had prevailed in the country at the possible direction of Gladstone's intentions.¹ Three days later it sounded the warning that if Gladstone were "to contact Mr. Parnell he must go so far as to strain the loyalty of many members of his government and of his party."² At the end of December, it had already been giving prominence to arguments which were later to be urged by the Whig opponents of Home Rule, i.e. a month before Gladstone took over as Prime Minister and four months before the actual shape and content of his first Home Rule Bill became public. From the outline of the Duke of Argyll's arguments which it gave prominence to in its columns at this point a picture can be formed of the ideas which the Herald began to endorse from now onwards.³

¹ Glasgow Herald, 25 Jan. 1886.

² Ibid., 28 Jan. 1886.

³ Letter from Duke of Argyll quoted ibid., 30 Dec. 1885.

These said, firstly, that there would be dangers to the Imperial status of Westminster in any scheme of Home Rule because it would be difficult to know where to draw the line between what were truly local and what were truly Imperial matters. Secondly, even if relative powers were statutorily drawn up effective control over the actions of a local Dublin Parliament would probably only be exercised with difficulty. The pressure on Ministers at Westminster would either be to rid Britain altogether of the strain of constant supervision or to enforce British responsibility at the cost of aggravating still further relations with Ireland. Thirdly, there was the possibility, as hinted at by Parnell himself during the recent election, that an Irish legislature would protect Irish industrial interests by protective tariffs and hostile duties.¹ Lastly, and perhaps most potently the Catholic religion of the great majority of Irishmen might lead to all sorts of future embroglios over the status of the Protestant minority and the position of church establishment in Ireland.

Such sentiments undoubtedly were echoed in the minds of many of the Herald's readers. At this stage, however, little appeared in public in Glasgow to give expression to formal discontent in terms such as those which could be exercised by figures like Hartington or Chamberlain. For instance, the executive of Central constituency Liberal association meeting just after the fall of the Salisbury Government discussed the Crofter Agitation but made no mention of Ireland.² Undoubtedly many were disturbed at the present drift of events. But, just as undoubtedly, many dissentients were holding on at this stage, remaining silent in public, hoping that better times would come

¹ On the previous day the correspondence columns of the Herald featured a letter referring precisely to this point viz. that an independent Ireland might put the Free Trade principles of British Liberalism in jeopardy. Glasgow Herald, 29 Dec. 1885.

² Ibid., 26 Jan. 1886.

and that the threatened split in Liberal unity would be averted. After all, before the moment of decision was reached many possibilities must have suggested themselves to the minds of Glasgow Liberals. Gladstone might be superseded in the leadership by a figure like Chamberlain under whom a less compromising liaison with the Parnellites might be evolved. Again, Home Rule might only turn out to be a version of the radicals' call for a greater extension of democracy in the organisation of local government. As the Herald put it "it will not be ... until Mr. Gladstone discloses his policy for Ireland that his difficulties will really begin."¹ Again, in the event of a constitutional crisis some formula between the opposing parties might be worked out on the lines adopted over the recent Franchise and Redistribution Bills. All of these possibilities could comfort the ordinary man in the street in his moments of doubt. Action, with all its tendency to commit the actor inextricably, was at a discount in these early months of 1886.

Besides this natural reluctance to act positively, one other factor has to be taken into consideration in understanding why few positive opinions were expressed in Glasgow at this time. This was the great asset which Gladstone had in the situation - time. As the man in power, he could choose the moment which would be best to unfold his Home Rule proposals. Since he did not do so until April, many to whom the whole idea was at first sight distasteful were given time to get used to the notion.²

Again, there were long gaps between each significant point of action in the crisis. The first public hint of Gladstone's intentions came in mid December 1885 - right in the middle of the Christmas recess. Parliament had

¹ Glasgow Herald, 28 Jan. 1886.

² The strategic difficulties counter opponents of Home Rule had to contend with are outlined succinctly by one of the chief Unionists, (Arthur) Elliot in his Life of Goschen, II, 33-4, 60-61.

not reopened until near the end of January. The Conservatives were turned out of office on 25 January and Gladstone took office on 1 February. Then, from that time right up until the actual shape and content of the first Home Rule Bill along with the associated Land Bill was introduced on 8 April, nothing tangible emerged on which the public could form an opinion. Not until the first week in April did the first definite element in the debate appear on which public argument and judgement could be firmly based. All the speculation, all the jockeying between the public figures had, it is true, the effect of confirming the suspicions of those opposed to any Home Rule in principle. But, it also had the more important effect of adding to the uncertainty and drift amongst the great mass of ordinary Liberals who, while they might dislike the idea, were prepared to suspend judgement to wait and see exactly what the 'old parliamentary hand' intended.

In such a situation, of course, time could work to the advantage of those prepared to follow Gladstone. Not until 8 April did Liberals in Glasgow have to make their decision to stand up and be counted as either opponents or supporters of the Gladstonian line. During this period, therefore, the tendency was for the constituency Liberal associations in Glasgow to harden in their support for Gladstone's policies. Opponents could be easily identified by their active opposition since the great mass of Liberal voters could afford to remain in general loyal support of the Liberal party, for the time being at least. It is significant that at the early stages in January, James Caldwell, the former Liberal candidate in St. Rollox, who was soon to become the Liberal Unionist opponent of Gladstonian Home Rule there, could declare before a meeting of Liberals in Glasgow his belief in Gladstone as the only man capable of solving the Irish problem. Furthermore, he felt confident he would do so without in any way impairing the Imperial unity of the United

Kingdom.¹

The general response in Glasgow, therefore, up until the details of the Home Rule Bill were unfolded on 8 April could be described as one of "wait and see". Typical of this mood was the vote of confidence couched in general terms of support for Gladstone which was passed in the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Liberal association on 19 January. The President, William Fife, expressed the hope that Gladstone's "remaining days would be spent in the promotion of such measures as would serve to draw the three countries closer together", and at the same time "be the means of bringing happiness ... to that portion of Great Britain called Ireland".² The attempt to straddle both sides of the question by giving prominence to Imperial unity as well as justice to Ireland was obvious.

The hard core of opposition tended to be confined to the anonymity of the correspondence columns of the Glasgow Herald.³ The efforts of some Glasgow Liberals to concert opposition to Home Rule were obviously getting under way at this time. These will be dealt with later, but it is sufficient for the present purpose here to note that, up until the beginning of April, their position remained obscure. The unfolding of the details of Gladstone's Irish plans on 8 April was the catalyst which caused all the uncertainty to date to crystallise into attitudes which came increasingly to take the form of violent support or opposition up to the election in early July.

Briefly stated, Gladstone's proposals in April, consisted not only of what came to be termed the first Home Rule Bill but also of an associated Land Bill. Both were interlinked. The main proposals involved the exclusion

¹ Address by James Caldwell to the Glasgow Central Constituency Liberal Association reported in Glasgow Herald, 30 Jan. 1886.

² Ibid., 20 Jan. 1886.

³ e.g. letter from a "Central Division Elector", ibid., 26 Dec. 1885.

of the Irish members from Westminster and the establishment of a Dublin legislature. To this body, local matters were to be delegated, while the Imperial Parliament was to deal with various 'reserved' categories, such as defence and trade. By the Land Bill, present landlords were to be bought out and the peasant occupiers were then to become the proprietors.

Reactions in Glasgow to these concrete proposals were not slow in appearing. The North British Daily Mail made a canvass of prominent Liberals in Glasgow the day after the Bills were published. Opinion seemed to be almost evenly divided between cautious acceptance and outright opposition.¹ Most of those who were against the Bills, especially to the proposed establishment of a separate Irish Parliament, were soon to become prominent in the first Liberal Unionist organisation in the city. The fact that they were so publicly opposed on the very day after the Bills were published suggests that their distaste had been germinating for some time and only needed their publication to be called forth. All those interviewed, both supporters and opponents, agreed on one thing, viz. their opposition to the proposals in the Land Bill to buy out the Irish landlords. To this extent they found common cause in their radicalism.

From this date onwards a hardening can be detected in the attitudes in Glasgow as Liberals began to line up on both sides. The position of the Glasgow Conservatives was, of course, one of opposition to Gladstone's proposals, and this was assumed quite naturally in the Press. There seems to have been so little political activity on the part of the Conservatives in Glasgow that their opinions and activity went largely unrecorded in the newspapers at this time. Amongst Liberals, however, the need to line up in support or opposition created a tension which came to be increasingly reflected

¹ North British Daily Mail, 10 April 1886.

inside the constituency Liberal associations.

Generally, the pattern followed in the Glasgow constituencies was one of debate which brought out the identity of the protagonists. This would then be followed by a vote on a motion of confidence in Gladstone. Sometimes, in an attempt to preserve Liberal unity, the debate would be postponed and carried over into a second meeting in order to allow passions to cool. Sometimes, if the Chairman of the meeting was opposed to Gladstone's proposals, he would adjourn in order to allow more time for the Unionists in the Association to lobby the waverers. Typical of this pattern were the actions of the Camlachie Liberal association. Four days after the publication of the Home Rule Bill it met to consider Gladstone's proposals. The dissentients had already drawn up an anti-Home Rule resolution which was submitted for debate by one who was later to become a prominent Glasgow Liberal Unionist. Its submission signalled a barrage of angry, almost affronted questions as to its authorship. This drew forth the avowal of a Mr. Mowat that it was his work. On the opposite side, there then came declarations of support from Thomas Begg and the Rev. D.M. Duncan calling on the constituency association to fall in behind Gladstone. At this point the Chairman adjourned the meeting for a week to allow time for thought before a decision was reached.¹ A week later, the meeting continued with further alignments on both sides. At this second meeting, it transpired that the Chairman, Col. Clark, was himself one of the anti-Gladstonians. After debate on both sides a motion deploring Home Rule received only twenty-two votes whereas an amendment pledging support in principle to the lead given by Gladstone received sixty-five votes.² If the motion had been purely on whether to support the present proposals in detail,

¹ North British Daily Mail, 13 April 1886.

² Ibid., 20 April 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 20 April 1886.

then the Gladstonian victory at the meeting might have been more difficult to obtain. It is evident from these proceedings in Camlachie that the position of the dissentients within the association had now become very precarious. Obviously, the question they now had to face was whether to stay passively within the Liberal fold or move outside to carry on their opposition more effectively.

Much the same course was followed in the other six constituency Liberal associations in the city. In those where the deepest cleavages of opinion became apparent, the meetings hardened into solidly opposing blocs. The motion of confidence in Gladstone would then be put and overwhelmingly supported. This would then leave the anti-Gladstonians revealed and in a highly untenable position. In short, therefore, the publication of the Home Rule proposals on 8 April caused opinions to harden and men to cast their lot in with one side or the other. In the Central constituency Liberal association, motions of confidence and the need to support Gladstone were passed at three successive meetings on 20, 23 and 26 April.¹ The reason for the three meetings lay in the attempts of the Unionist Liberals led by the President of the constituency association, Alexander Cross, to pass resolutions condemning Gladstone's Irish policy. Each attempt only served to widen the rift within the association and to create extreme parties ranged on either side. On 20 April, the Chairman had made a plea to the members to have regard for party unity in their consideration of the Irish legislation by asking each side not to play into the hands of the Tories by pressing their particular views too hard.² Cross had replied with a condemnatory motion and his speech was frequently interrupted with hisses and cries of disapproval. He was followed by

¹ Glasgow Herald, 21 and 27 April 1886.
North British Daily Mail, 21, 24 and 27 April 1886.

² North British Daily Mail, 21 April 1886.

Councillor Peden who tried to put forward an official Executive resolution couched in terms which were intended to cover the gap between the opposing factions. He welcomed Gladstone's proposals but hoped they would be modified in detail and that they would help reconcile Great Britain and Ireland.¹

Cross's first anti-Gladstonian resolution, however, proved too much for the radicals for them to consider Peden's motion as being a sufficiently strong rejoinder. Led by R.C. Grant, a fulsome motion of support for Gladstone's efforts and the need for all Liberals to support him at the present juncture was put and this the meeting overwhelmingly passed.²

The reason for this antagonism towards their President and his unionist friends in the Association probably lay in the fact (which will be discussed later) that they had already taken active steps to form a Unionist Liberal group in Glasgow. Undeterred by their defeat and perhaps relying on their influential position in the Central association's executive, these Liberal Unionists returned to the attack on two further occasions in an attempt to reverse the earlier decision of the Liberal association. Cross and another prominent Unionist, William Borland, "compelled with great regret to form an opinion different from that of many of those gentlemen with whom they'd hitherto been associated in politics"³ encountered increasing opposition. The fact that they were shouted down by the overwhelming opinion of the meetings indicates the extreme and irrevocable fissure which had emerged by now. The Gladstonian speech at the third meeting indicates the bitterness felt at the actions of those who were regarded as Liberal traitors. Alexander McDougall

¹ North British Daily Mail, 21 April 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 21 April 1886.

² North British Daily Mail, 21 April 1886.

³ Cross, at Central association meeting of 26 April 1886, reported in Glasgow Herald, 27 April 1886.

moved, to loud applause, that contrary to the opinion of Cross and his friends, the proposals for Ireland of their great leader, Gladstone, provided a satisfactory solution to the Irish problem. Referring to the Unionist opposition he declared that by the grossest misrepresentations for weeks they had tried to create enemies against the supporters of Gladstone. Winding up to the approving cries of members who obviously felt that each point should hit home, he declared their opponents to be nondescript and weak-kneed Liberals.¹ McDougall's resolution resulted in a resounding defeat for the Unionists in the Association led by Cross and Borland.²

Central Liberal association experienced perhaps the longest struggle over attempts to swing it into the anti-Gladstonian camp. This was obviously due to the strength and ability of the Unionists in it since many of those who were in the process of becoming leaders of the Liberal-Unionist circle in Glasgow were grouped there. The result of their opposition was to force those giving a general support to Gladstone's lead into a more extreme position. In the process the Unionists found themselves more and more isolated. In other constituency associations lack of such a strong opposition resulted in easier victories for the Gladstonians. On 23 April the issue was fought out in College and resulted in a victory for the Gladstonians.³

The result of the resolution of support for the pending Irish legislation revealed a less unanimous approval of Gladstone than had been shown in Central passing by only 100 votes as against 85. In College, however, the leader of the anti-Gladstonians (the President of the association, Professor Caird) while opposing the present line of the Government refused to be drawn into

¹ Glasgow Herald, 27 April 1886.

² Ibid.

³ North British Daily Mail, 24 April 1886.

the Liberal-Unionist camp. The struggle there was, therefore, given up quite early on.¹ Besides the neutrality adopted by the chief anti-Gladstonian in the executive the Unionists in College also had to face the fact that the sitting member, Dr. Cameron, was a renowned Gladstonian, that his newspaper the North British Daily Mail was constantly in the forefront in its support of Gladstone to its Glasgow readership, and that the association contained a strong body of radicals like the secretary, William Bond, already noted as a prominent member of the Scottish Land Restoration League. All this suggests that the Unionists were prepared to leave the College Liberal association to its own incorrigible ways. At the same time, the size of the vote against Gladstone there on the 23 April (85 as against 100) probably made them feel that future success might come more easily by working on this substantial minority in conjunction with the Conservatives to turn Cameron out.

In both St. Rollox and Bridgeton, the Unionists must have felt that radical feelings of support for Gladstone in these largely working-class constituencies would prove too strong to overcome. In the former a massive vote of support for Gladstone's efforts to solve the Irish problem was passed overwhelmingly on 26 April. Attempts to move the direct negative were hooted down and so great was the support for Gladstone that the opposing motion was not even put to the vote.² Similarly in Bridgeton an overwhelming vote of support for Gladstone was passed on 29 April in spite of reported attempts by

¹ Caird refused to compromise his Liberalism at this juncture by moving outside of the Liberal party. The Presidency of the College Association was taken up by Sir William Collins of the St. Rollox association. Caird refused an invitation to become one of the first vice-presidents of the West of Scotland Liberal Association in 1887. West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association Minute Book, pp. 45-9. (Consulted by courtesy of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Association, Glasgow Chief Office. See Chapter VIII, *infra*, p. 215, fn. 1).

² North British Daily Mail, 27 April 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 27 April 1886.

Orange and Tory elements in the audience to disrupt the proceedings.¹ This support for Gladstone was reiterated a week later on 5 May,² this time without interruptions.

The reaction of the remaining two Glasgow Constituency Associations was less straightforward. Both Tradeston and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Liberals laboured under the disadvantage of having parliamentary representatives who were opposed to the official Gladstonian line from an early date. On 24 April the North British Daily Mail, carried a letter in its correspondence columns from a resident in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown constituency claiming he had proof that their M.P., Mitchell Henry, intended to oppose any attempts to give Ireland Home Rule. "The majority of his constituents favour Home Rule", the letter stated, "and we should insist that he should represent our opinions in Parliament, not his own".³ Henry's unpopularity with the Parnellites had, of course, been painfully evident during the recent election. Equally, it was well-known that he had been forced to move from his seat in Galway to Glasgow because of a Parnellite veto on his return in Ireland. Accusations that Henry, therefore, intended to oppose Gladstone's Home Rule Bill needed little confirmation. As early as 12 May, the North British Daily Mail stated quite bluntly that Henry was a member of the Liberal 'secession'.⁴ Before this Henry had shown his sympathies openly. On 7 April a deputation from the Irish Presbyterian General Assembly had lobbied Scottish members in Westminster for support against Home Rule. From the report of the meeting

¹ North British Daily Mail, 30 April 1886.

² Ibid., 6 May 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 6 May 1886.

³ Letter from Peter Anderson in North British Daily Mail, 24 April 1886.

⁴ North British Daily Mail, 12 May 1886.

Henry emerged quite clearly as the only Liberal member present who was in any way in sympathy with the deputation's aims.¹

The attitude of their member, therefore, obviously made for some caution in handling the Irish issue on the part of the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Liberal association. There is also a great deal of evidence that a section of the executive were in sympathy with him and wished to postpone a decision as to their future course of action for as long as possible. This is quite clear from the sequence of events there. On 5 May the constituency Liberal association recorded a vote of thanks to Henry for his representation of their interests in the House of Commons.² This was couched in terms general enough to command if not overwhelming support then at least to make a negative highly unlikely. By this date, Henry had not yet committed himself openly to opposition to Gladstone. On 10 May, however, the association followed this up by forwarding a resolution, carried by 182 votes to 73, supporting Gladstone's attempts to solve the Irish problem.³ This, of course, brought the issue of confidence between member and association right out into the open. Henry replied on 13 May acknowledging receipt of the association's resolution of support for Gladstone's Irish proposals. This, he stated, he could not agree with, however, and then proceeded to outline the grounds for his opposition, not least of which were "the large minority of my supporters (who have) voted against this motion".⁴

The attitude of their member was not the only thing hampering clear-cut support for Home Rule in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. There was also the strong

¹ North British Daily Mail, 8 April 1886.

² Glasgow Herald, 6 May 1886.

³ Ibid., 11 May 1886.

⁴ Letter from Mitchell Henry to the Secretary of the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown constituency Liberal association published ibid., 15 May 1886.

element in it which, even after Henry had split from the majority of his constituents by voting against the second reading of the Home Rule Bill, delayed calling a meeting to consider the position in order to make Henry's readoption a necessity 'faute de mieux'.¹ Letters to the North British Daily Mail spoke of the "shocking Tory tactics" of some of the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Liberal association in these manoeuvres. The convener and sub-convener of the executive were alleged to be members of the Unionist Liberal "cave".² These accusations were well founded since all the members of the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown executive described as "Tory/Goschenite Canvassers" appeared later as members of the General Executive of the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association.³ Not until 18 June, only some three weeks before the 1886 Home Rule election, was Henry rejected by the association by a vote of more than 2 to 1. This rejection signalled the final exit of the dissentients who one by one rose to tender their resignation and leave the meeting.⁴

In Tradeston the hardening of attitudes after the first reading of the Home Rule Bill was just as acute but not so long lasting as in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. One reason for this might have been the lack of a strong and strategically placed core of Unionists in the local Liberal association executive. Certainly, there is no evidence for such in the newspaper reports of the meetings of the Tradeston Liberal association. There was, on the other hand, a claim made that over 100 of the former Liberal election committee in Tradeston would support the sitting member in his opposition to Irish Home

¹ This was the accusation made by the North British Daily Mail, 15 June 1886.

² Letter from Alexander Fraser, North British Daily Mail, 12 June 1886.

³ West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association Minute Book, p. 71.

⁴ North British Daily Mail, 19 June 1886.

Rule.¹ There must have been some truth in this since in the event Corbett obtained sufficient Liberal support to retain the seat as a Unionist.

In the Easter recess after the first reading of the Home Rule Bill Corbett was reported to be in league with the anti-Gladstonian Glasgow Liberals.² On 22 April, he was accused of equivocating at a meeting of his electoral committee as to the course of his future conduct in regard to the Government's Irish legislation. The impression he gave at least one of his constituents was that he intended to vote against Gladstone.³ Some knowledge of their member's probable views might, thus, have been responsible for the reserved tone in which the Tradeston Liberal association expressed its support for Gladstone on 23 April. The resolution which was passed approved the Liberal leader's attempts to entrust the Irish with a greater measure of control over their domestic affairs "while not committing (the association) to every detail of the measures".⁴ Corbett's increasing commitment to the anti-Gladstonian wing of the Liberals, however, steadily divorced him from the constituency association. On 12 May he was named as a member of the Liberal 'secession' in Glasgow, as a man whose sentiments were in direct opposition to his constituency association's support for Gladstone.⁵ On 26 May his intention to vote against the second reading of the Home Rule Bill was known;⁶ and on 7 June, the day on which the Bill was defeated on the second reading his constituency association repudiated him as their M.P.

¹ North British Daily Mail, 16 June 1886.

² Ibid., 28 April 1886.

³ Letter from "A Tradeston Elector", ibid., 29 April 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 24 April 1886.

⁵ Ibid., 12 May 1886.

⁶ Ibid., 26 May 1886, and letter from A. Cameron Corbett, ibid., 27 May 1886.

because of his declared intention of joining the rebels.¹

Clearly, therefore, the publication of the details of the Government's Irish legislation provided the catalyst which began the process of determining Liberal allegiances in Glasgow. Increasingly, as the details were discussed attitudes were taken up, arguments and expressions were used which proved fatal to Liberal unity. By the end of April, all the Glasgow Constituency Liberal associations had fallen into line behind Gladstone. While this may be regarded as proof of the overall radicalism of Glasgow's Liberals it is proof even more of the potency of Gladstone's appeal. The nature of the resolutions of support, since they were couched in terms of general support for his leadership, all basically amounted to a policy of trusting him to see things through in accordance with Liberal principles.

Equally clearly some pointers emerge from the way the issue was resolved in each of the constituency associations. Where the radicalism of the constituency was evident, the decision in favour of Gladstone was almost unanimous and relatively painless. This was the case in both Bridgeton and St. Rollox which significantly were both working-class in composition with no commercial interests present in any large grouping. Where the struggle was hardest was in those constituencies where the executive contained a core of active Unionists. Such was the case in Central, Camlachie and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. Here the executives all contained men highly placed in office who were all to become prominent leaders of the Liberal Unionist Group in the city. It is significant, too, that both Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Central contained a heavy admixture of the Glasgow commercial interests in their membership. In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown also, the disagreement between the sitting member and the majority of the association provided an element which

¹ North British Daily Mail, 8 June 1886.

could be exploited to maintain the Unionists' struggle for control in the coming election.

In both Tradeston and College the defection of the former's M.P. and the latter's President was not supported within the association and so the Unionists resigned themselves to working apart from the local Liberal organisation. Clearly the control of the local party machinery and of the choice of M.P. was crucial and, if a possibility existed of gaining it, then the Unionist Liberals would not let up in their efforts to ensure this. Central constituency, where Cross and Borland kept up the attempt to get the association to deplore Gladstone's policies, is an example of this. So, too, is Blackfriars-Hutchesontown where the Unionists in the executive tried to delay meetings to endorse a candidate knowing that an election was imminent and that the seceding member, Henry, would stand a good chance of re-adoption if the time to find an alternative proved too short.

To sum up, therefore, the hardening of attitudes for or against Home Rule squeezed the Unionist Liberals out. In this process they were themselves partly to blame because of their increasing identification in speech and public appearance with policies quite clearly similar to those of the Conservative party. This served only to rile the faithful followers of Gladstone and to finalise the split. The reasons for this hardening of attitude and of the whole process of the first rise of a Liberal Unionist group in Glasgow must now be examined.

Chapter VIII

The Emergence of Liberal Unionism in Glasgow

April - June 1886

Without doubt the growth in Glasgow of extreme feelings over the Home Rule issue was due in part to the increasingly firm opposition shown by the Liberal Unionists. Step by step as the struggle for control became crucial their antagonism to Gladstone's course together with the growing polemical tones in which it was expressed widened the fissures within the ranks of Glasgow's Liberals.

From mid-December 1885 when Gladstone's volte-face on Ireland became known to the general public until April 8th and the publication of his Irish legislation there was, as has been pointed out, little evidence which would give any clear indication of how the Glasgow Liberals were reacting. On a national scale the Whigs led by Hartington and radicals like Chamberlain and Trevelyan had signalled their opposition or distaste for Gladstone's proposed course by their actions and speeches within Parliament. Amongst the Liberal activists in this city, however, the general tendency had been to lie low and adopt a waiting policy. The actions of those who later emerged in the debates in the constituency associations during April and May as dissentients or Liberal Unionists are difficult to trace in this period. The Glasgow Herald, it is true, adopted a line at this time which can best be described as admonitory hoping faintly for the best from Gladstone but quite obviously fearful of the worst. Fortunately, however, there are other sources available which help to provide a clue as to the way opposition was forming at this time. The early minute books of the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist

Association have survived from this period¹ which help the investigator to supplement and at times infer from the newspaper sources. Although the earliest entry is dated 10 May 1886, the contents of these Minute Books together with identification of the principal dissentients through newspaper reports allows one to unravel the steps by which an organised Liberal Unionist group came into existence in Glasgow.

As have been noted, between December and April little definite indication appears as to the actions of those who later emerged as Liberal Unionists in the city. Once Gladstone unfolded his Irish proposals to the public on 8 April, however, certain elements in Glasgow began to emerge here and there which were all from the first prominently connected with organised Liberal Unionism in this city. The same names appear again and again in this connection and, like a thread running through them, the attitudes which emerged from their public utterances all tend to give an impression of concerted action. By piecing together their public appearances from that date on and correlating the personnel with those who appear later in the official Liberal-Unionist records some idea of when they started begins to appear.

The crucial dates which give an outline to early Liberal-Unionist development are the two months stretching from 8 April to 8 June 1886. Gladstone's Home Rule and Land Purchase Bills had their first reading on 8 April and this was completed by 13 April when Parliament recessed for Easter. The ensuing interval was one of intense excitement, debate and activity over

¹ These consist of four large quarto volumes covering the period of the separate existence of the West of Scotland Liberal Unionists (1886-1912) until they merged with the Conservatives. Among other things they give details of membership, decisions of Committee in the form of minuted headings, and Annual Reports. They have been consulted by courtesy of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Association Glasgow Chief Office. The references in this thesis are all from the first volume of the minutes. They are cited hereafter as W.S.L.U. Minutes.

all the country not least, as has been seen, in Glasgow as those with opposing views jockeyed for position. On 10 May Gladstone moved the second reading which after prolonged debate was defeated in the early hours of 8 June amid scenes of sustained excitement. Within this period positions were taken up which fundamentally changed the composition of British political parties. On the evening after the end of the first reading, 14 April, there came the famous Opera House meeting in London organised to oppose Home Rule at which Hartington and Salisbury appeared together on the same platform. Hartington's appearance at this meeting thereby signalled the open opposition of the Whig wing of the dissentient Liberals, their alliance with the Conservatives to oppose Home Rule, sink their differences and maintain the Union with Ireland. On the same day, followers of Hartington like Goschen, A. Elliot and Craig Sellar (Liberal M.P. for Govan) had met earlier to discuss arrangements for holding meetings during the recess all over the country to oppose Gladstone's proposals.¹ This group was clearly the nucleus of the first small Unionist Committee which had emerged by 20 April in London.² Corroboration of this and some hint of the activity and atmosphere of the time are given by the diary of Alfred Milner who was at this time private secretary to Goschen.³ After mentioning the personnel involved in organising this committee Milner wrote "up to his neck - clouds of circulars - work among Liberals and Whigs ... people had to be told privately that he (Hartington) was behind the movement. Goschen has subscribed more than half the funds - £80."⁴

The question now arises within this background as to when similar moves

¹ Elliot, Life of Goschen, II, 50-51.

² Ibid. D.C. Savage, The General Election of 1886, p. 510.

³ J.E. Wrench, Alfred, Lord Milner, (1958), pp. 77-8.

⁴ Quoted ibid.

began in Glasgow on the part of Gladstone's opponents. The answer is that they began almost exactly at the same time. On 17 April only three days after the end of the first reading the first definite signs of the Liberal Unionists as an organised group appeared. The Glasgow morning papers of that date carried notices announcing a meeting to be held four days later on 21 April in St. Andrew's Hall against Home Rule.¹ Arrangements for this meeting were in the hands of a group described as a "Committee of Management". By this date, therefore, there was an organised body opposed to Home Rule operating in Glasgow. Considering that it would take time to arrange the booking of the Hall and organise the appearance of speakers the existence of this formal group can, therefore, be dated to before 17 April at least. The probable indications are in fact that it was operating at about the same time as the London group of Liberal Unionists. As has been indicated such a definite organisation was in train in London from 14 April. Equally clearly, from the evidence of the newspaper notices alone, some similar organisation was in existence in Glasgow by 17 April if not earlier. The rapidity and readiness with which the dissentient Liberal went into action here in line with the Hartington opposition in London implies that the ground had already been well prepared in Glasgow for the seed being sown broadcast by the actions of the principals at Westminster.

The definite and planned way in which the Glasgow group moved forward to the full establishment of a Liberal Unionist party in the weeks and months after 17 April argues this. The 'Committee of Management' named in the newspaper reports of 17 April contained a selection of notable Conservatives and Liberals in Glasgow, the latter outnumbering the former. Taking the names of the Liberals mentioned one finds on examination that they formed the first

¹ Glasgow Herald, 17 April 1886.
North British Daily Mail, 17 April 1886.

group around which the Liberal Unionist's organisation in Glasgow was formed. In this 'Committee of Management' named on 17 April were many of the men who later formed the first Executive Committee of the Liberal Unionist party in Glasgow.¹ Apart from the difference in the titles the two groups were in fact almost identical. The names and addresses of the same men appear over and over again in connection with growing Liberal Unionist organisation in Glasgow at this period, a fact which the hostile North British Daily Mail seized on to christen the group as the "Union Quartet".² The list included the following well-known Glasgow Liberals: Dr. A.B. McGrigor, Dr. David Murray, Sir William Thomson, Professor George G. Ramsay, W.V. Jackson, and James Grahame.³ Others who shortly gravitated to this first nucleus were Matthew Arthur, William Borland, Alexander Cross, William Crouch and George Browne.⁴ These names have no familiar ring in the Home Rule crisis of 1886 but in Glasgow at this time were all well-known and carried weight in the city's political, commercial and social 'establishment'. The connection in personnel between those organising the first anti-Home Rule movements in Glasgow and the later official Liberal Unionist Executive in the city is too obvious to be overlooked.⁵ All the evidence suggests a degree of concerted organisation in their movements from at least mid-April and the probability is that it existed even before this during the period of speculation between

¹ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 1, 10 May 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 17 and 22 April 1886.

² Leader in North British Daily Mail, 28 June 1886.

³ Glasgow Herald, 17 April 1886.
North British Daily Mail, 17 April 1886.

⁴ W.S.L.U. Minutes, 10 and 12 May 1886, and newspaper files of Glasgow Herald for April and May, passim.

⁵ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 1.
Glasgow Herald, 17 and 22 April 1886.

January and April.

Various activities on their part suggesting that their actions were concerted occurred at this period in mid-April. On 19 April, only two days after the publication of the names and aims of this 'Committee of Management', this embryonic group made its presence felt again in opposing the whole idea of Home Rule this time within the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. This movement began a week earlier on 12 April when the question of whether to debate the government's Irish proposals in the Chamber was brought up.¹ It is significant that this discussion was initiated and carried through by a man who appears in May as one of the first Honorary Vice-Presidents of the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association.² At the quarterly meeting of the Chamber, on 19 April, Dr. A.B. McGrigor, by now revealed as one of the Liberal dissentients in the Anti-Home Rule 'Committee of Management' of 17 April, persuaded the Chamber to register its opposition officially to Home Rule for Ireland.³ This historic institution, which embodied the formal expression of Glasgow's economic life, was in this way won over from the beginning to the Unionist side. And this, too, in spite of minority protests that the Chamber ought, on this occasion above all, to adhere to its strict traditional line of avoiding contentious political issues.⁴ Dr. McGrigor's speech was almost wholly political and contentious in tone and was obviously to the taste of the enthusiastic audience in the Chamber. The motion condemning Home Rule on commercial grounds passed by an overwhelming majority and the Chamber followed this up a week later on 26 April by drawing up an anti-Home

¹ North British Daily Mail, 13 April 1886.

² W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 50-51.

³ Report of Quarterly Meeting of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce on 19 April 1886 in Glasgow Herald 20 April 1886 and North British Daily Mail 20 April 1886.

⁴ Ibid.

Rule petition for presentation to the House of Commons.¹ Quite obviously the dissentient Liberals who appear as the principal actors here had been working and preparing for this from at least around 8 April, the opening date of the parliamentary battle, if not before. The names and their connection with the later Liberal Unionist Executive, the dating of these events - the raising of the Home Rule issue in the Chamber of Commerce on 12 April, the 'Committee of Management' against Home Rule advertised in the Press on 17 April, the onslaught of McGrigor et al at the Chamber of Commerce on 19 April - all lead to one conclusion viz. that this dissentient Liberal group were acting in concert from 8 April and possibly before.

When the background of the men involved in the nascent Liberal Unionist group is examined one can begin to see why they were so quick to initiate opposition to Home Rule from within the Liberal ranks in Glasgow. From the addresses and meeting places of these Liberal opponents it is quite clear that many of the group had already been active in organising a lobby from within the ranks of prominent Liberals in Glasgow as long ago as the preceding December and January. The evidence for this comes from two letters which are bound into one of the series of Church Tracts in the David Murray collection in Glasgow University Library.² From these it appears that David Murray, A.B. McGrigor and Professor G.G. Ramsay were all in correspondence with an Edinburgh group of Liberals to form a Liberal Anti-Disestablishment Association for Scotland. The impetus for these arrangements lay in the recent efforts of the radicals in Scotland to steam-roller Disestablishment through

¹ Glasgow Herald, 20 April 1886 and North British Daily Mail, 20 April 1886. Glasgow Herald, 27 April 1886. The petition is in the McGrigor Collection in Glasgow University Library: Proceedings in the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Glasgow on 19 April 1886, (pressmark Ea2 - f.7).

² Glasgow University Library David Murray Collection, (pressmark Mu44 - e.20).

the Liberal organisations at the general election in November. The object of this group, which included Murray, McGrigor and Ramsay, was to form a national Church Defence organisation amongst the Liberals.¹ Thus, even before the storm over Gladstone's Irish legislation burst, a section of the Liberal Unionist group which appeared in April was already displaying its anti-radical tendencies. Confirmation of the identity of the Liberal Unionist group with this earlier Church Defence group can be found in the North British Daily Mail's rather hostile report of the anti-Home Rule meeting held by the 'Committee of Management' of 17 April. This stated flatly that the 'Committee of Management' was made up of "almost the same gentlemen who composed the Church Defence Committee".²

When rumour and counter-rumour were flying in December and January in the wake of the 'Hawarden Kite' this group was thus already in existence in Glasgow gaining experience from within the Liberal ranks in all the tactics of organising an opposition; in making contacts to concert action; in forming the nucleus of a party. It is significant that so many connected with this earlier Church Defence group were connected so prominently from the beginning with the later Liberal Unionist movement in Glasgow. In one way, therefore, their promptness at organising in April behind Hartington comes as no surprise once their origins are probed to some depth. Disillusioned by the radicalism of the Liberal organisations in Glasgow as expressed through the Disestablishment Cause at the 1885 election, this new direction in which the party seemed to be headed over Ireland must have been the last straw to such men. Their adherence to the Liberal Unionist cause gave it the fire that comes from long frustration and rebuff. More important, they provided the nascent Unionist

¹ Letter from Lindsay Mackersy to David Murray, January 1886. David Murray Collection, Mu44 - e.20.

² North British Daily Mail, 22 April 1886.

group in Glasgow with the framework of an organisation.

In the background of the men who emerged in April 1886 as Liberal Unionists there are other reasons, too, which explain their ability to set up promptly an official opposition to the Gladstonian line in Glasgow. As a whole, the group was made up of men who had all either been active in, or had held office in recent years in the Liberal organisations in the city. They all knew each other politically. Most of them, too, came from a broadly similar social and commercial background. They were nearly all substantial businessmen or lawyers. There were no industrial or commercial giants in their ranks but they all held solid positions in the city's establishment. Many of them were familiar to each other through membership of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. They all shared geographical propinquity, too, which must have helped them maintain informal contacts. Nearly all of them had their business offices near to each other in that tight block of the commercial grid bounded east and west by Queen Street and Blythswood Square and north and south by Sauchiehall and Argyle Streets. Many of them knew each other socially, too, and had common bonds in sharing the same intellectual interests and enthusiasms. Some were even related.

Dr. A.B. McGrigor seems to have been the moving spirit at this period in the anti-Home Rule group. His political experience has already been mentioned. As President of the Glasgow Liberal Association in 1882-3, he was one of that group responsible for the organisational efficiency of the Glasgow Liberals in the 1880's.¹ A well-known lawyer, prominent in the social and political life of the city, McGrigor was in the habit of holding open house both at his home in the west-end of Glasgow and at his office in St. Vincent Street where fellow enthusiasts for rare books or politics could drop in at any time to

¹ Third Annual Report of the Glasgow Liberal Association Feb. 1882, pp. 7-8.
Fourth Annual Report of the Glasgow Liberal Association Feb. 1883, p. 4.

discuss current topics or exchange notes about books or ideas.¹ It is significant that the first committee meetings of the Liberal Unionists were held in McGrigor's Chambers and that they should continue to do so for a time even after they were formally organised as a political group.² McGrigor's Chambers would be a natural venue for this group of Liberal Unionists to congregate and talk things over since most of them were either his friends or business colleagues.

Besides McGrigor there was David Murray who already had close connections with the former as a fellow antiquarian, bibliophile and lawyer.³ Besides this long-standing connection both had been involved in organising the Liberal Anti-Disestablishment Association earlier that year.⁴ Another member of the nascent Liberal Unionist executive, George Ramsay, Professor of Humanity at Glasgow University, had likewise been associated with them in this venture.⁵ From the University, too, was Sir William Thomson (later Lord Kelvin) Professor of Natural Philosophy, who brought his already acknowledged fame to the group by acting as their Chairman. Thomson's connections with Glasgow Liberal Unionism were reinforced by his family ties to the Crums of Thornliebank.⁶ Alex Crum of Thornliebank became one of the first Honorary Vice Presidents of the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association.⁷ Thomson's

¹ In Memoriam A.B. McGrigor LL.D. By an Old Friend, (Glasgow 1891).

² Report of Executive to General Committee 27 May 1886 appended in W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 15.

³ In Memoriam A.B. McGrigor LL.D.

⁴ Lindsay Mackersy to David Murray 28 Jan. 1886. (David Murray Collection, Mu44 - e.20).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ James Muir, John Anderson Pioneer of Technical Education and the College he Founded, (Glasgow 1950), p. 115.

⁷ W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 50-51.

brother, James Thomson, Professor of Civil Engineering, was another of that band of academics associated with this early Liberal Unionist group in May 1886.¹

Others included James Grahame who had been a Vice-President of the Glasgow Liberal Association in 1885. He was a partner in a well-known firm of chartered accountants in the city. W.V. Jackson, the Secretary of the group, was a partner in a firm of jewellers and silversmiths. He had been a member of the Executive of the Glasgow Liberal Association in 1882 and was well-known for his activities in organising Church Defence Associations to meet the challenge of the radical Disestablishers.² Three other members of the group were connected prominently with the Central constituency Liberal association executive. George Browne was a Committee member, William Borland was a Vice-President and Alexander Cross was the President. The first, a Justice of the Peace, operated in the city as a ship and insurance broker. The second added still further legal representation to the group as a partner in the firm of Borland, King and Shaw. The third was a partner in one of the city's largest seed merchant firms which had a warehouse in Anderston, works at Port Dundas and extensive trading connections as distributors of chemical fertilisers.³ The remaining two who were prominent in this group were Matthew Arthur and William Crouch. Crouch was a civil engineer. Arthur, a son-in-law of McGrigor,⁴ was a warehouseman and manufacturer with factories in Anderston, Londonderry and Leeds. Of the nine in this group who were

¹ W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 8-9.

² Church Tracts in David Murray Collection, Glasgow University Library, pressmark Mu44 - e.24.

³ Shedden T/S.
Reports of Court of Session Cases, Fourth Series, vol. VI, 934-5, and vol. XVI, 584-90.

⁴ In Memoriam A.B. McGrigor LL.D.

lawyers or businessmen six were members of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce.¹

These were the men who came into the open in Glasgow in April 1886 to lead the Liberal opposition to Gladstone's Home Rule proposals. It was the same group which came to form the first Glasgow and West of Scotland Liberal Unionist group a month later. All this perhaps explains why the Liberal Unionists got off to such an eager flying start here. The men involved from the beginning represented a substantial cross-section of the mercantile and professional classes typical of Glasgow at this period. They were all well placed by their widespread commercial, social and political connections both to act in concert and to make contacts. In short, they were well placed through their background to spread their influence in Glasgow.

As well as advantages in position and experience they also brought a great deal of zeal to the Unionist cause in Glasgow. This can be seen from the speed with which they organised and established themselves as a full-time group. As has been pointed out, this Unionist Liberal group were busy forming a working committee to initiate activities to advance their views, between the first and second readings of the Home Rule Bills (8 April to 10 May). On the evidence already adduced small informal groups like this were emerging almost simultaneously in London and Glasgow. The advertisement of the projected anti-Home Rule meeting stating the aims and membership of the 'Committee of Management' appearing on 17 April, the Chamber of Commerce anti-Home Rule meeting of 19 April, are both symptoms of this movement. On 27 April their activity continued with the group, now calling themselves the 'Liberal Committee for Union', advertising in the Press their aim to make Liberal opposition to Home Rule felt in Glasgow claiming that "large numbers had

¹ The details of these early Unionists have been culled from the Glasgow Post Office Directories and the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce Directors Reports for this period.

joined them".¹ Next day they met to concert arrangements to allow a deputation from the Irish Presbyterian General Assembly to address Glasgow Liberals on the dangers of Home Rule.² During this time various pro re nata meetings were held in Dr. McGrigor's Chambers to consider ways and means of making their opposition more effective.³ From these meetings came the decision "to form an Executive Committee to work in harmony with the general Liberal Committee, formed by Lord Hartington as President and with its headquarters in London".⁴ This obviously referred to the "Liberal Committee for the maintenance of the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland", that clumsily named body which marked the original Liberal Unionist party. On 5 May advertisements appeared in the morning newspapers of the similarly named Glasgow body.⁵ The embryo Glasgow group of early April was therefore in full operating existence now. Five days later, 10 May, it began formally to minute its meetings which it held every few days up until the general election in early July. It is worth noting that in Liverpool, a city where one could expect reactions similar to those in Glasgow, such a committee was still only in the throes of organising itself by this date.⁶ In the East of Scotland, too, there was no association like the one being formed in Glasgow at this time.⁷

By mid-May the original Glasgow group were running well in gear. On

¹ Glasgow Herald, 27 April 1886.

² North British Daily Mail, 29 April 1886.

³ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 15.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Glasgow Herald, 5 May 1886.

⁶ Ibid., 10 May 1886.

W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 1-2.

⁷ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 4.

20 May the full executive committee list was published. It was composed largely of that small group of dissentients which had been prominent since the beginning in Glasgow.¹ By mid-May, therefore, they were well enough established to be in a position to undertake responsibility for co-ordinating the Liberal Unionist campaign in a much wider area than Glasgow, one which stretched from East Renfrewshire to Haddington.² It was only an acknowledgement of the position they already held when on 2 June they accepted Hartington's invitation to assume the job of organising the Liberal Unionist campaign in each of the thirty West of Scotland constituencies.³

At each point in their early development, therefore, it can be seen clearly that no time was lost by the Liberal Unionists in Glasgow. At each step the enthusiasm and determination of this small band to act decisively is apparent. Their aims had the virtue of simplicity and directness. These were to invite "all Liberals in the West of Scotland to form themselves in a General Committee to oppose these measures (the Irish Government Bill and Land Purchase Bill) ... to oppose the election of all candidates who voted for the second reading of the bills, and in the event of a general election to promote the return of M.P.s pledged to the maintenance of the Legislative Union between the Kingdoms".⁴ The small ad hoc group of unionists who came into being in Glasgow in early 1886 acted with directness and determination to implement their ends. Once the course of events began to take shape from early April onwards they gathered a momentum which they never lost right up until the election in July. In the process they ceased from being merely a

¹ North British Daily Mail, 20 May 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 20 May 1886.

² W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 4, 9.

³ Ibid., pp. 18-19.

⁴ Ibid., p. 15, Report of Executive 27 May 1886.

pressure group and acquired the status of an established political party.

Examples of their busy, prompt activity in opposing Home Rule are not hard to find. It is well known, for instance, that an electoral compact had been arranged between the Liberal Unionists and the Conservatives nationally by early June 1886.¹ In Glasgow, however, a great deal of local initiative had already been displayed in this direction in order to anticipate the effects of an early dissolution and subsequent general election. For instance, before 12 May A.B. McGrigor had been in touch with the local Conservative leaders in the Ayr Burghs constituency to get them to guarantee the Liberal member's seat there if he were to take the plunge and vote against Gladstone on the second reading.² Nor was any time lost in preparing to meet the eventualities which would arise from any sudden appeal to the country by the Government. On 17 May the Liberal Unionist Committee meeting in McGrigor's Chambers agreed to draw up a candidates list in readiness.³

Early efforts were made, too, during May to give the Committee a permanent basis by obtaining a wide membership and building up an adequate treasury in readiness for future developments. Already, before May 10, the date of their first formal minuted meeting, the group operating from McGrigor's Chambers had started to circularise Liberals asking for their adherence and requesting money for a Guarantee Fund.⁴ This soon produced a crop of replies from those willing to support the aims of the Committee.⁵ By

¹ P. Fraser, Joseph Chamberlain, (1966), p. 105.
D.C. Savage, "Scottish Politics 1885-6," Scottish Historical Review, vol. 40, (Oct. 1961), p. 134.
P. Fraser, "The Liberal Unionist Alliance," English Historical Review, vol. 77, (Jan. 1962), p. 57.

² W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 3-4.

³ Ibid., p. 9.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 1-2.

⁵ North British Daily Mail, 1 May 1886.

May 10 the Guarantee Fund stood at £160¹ and by 12 May this had risen to £267.² A further 100 adherents had also been added³ by this time bringing the total membership to around 200. By 17 May the adherents had risen to almost 400 and the Guarantee Fund to £371.⁴ From there the membership rose steadily until by 21 May £426 had been gathered for the Guarantee Fund⁵ while a week later upwards of 600 "of the best known Liberals in Glasgow and the West of Scotland had adhered expressing their willingness to act in concert against Home Rule".⁶ This takes account only of the formal adherents: it does not include the greater number of ordinary voters who were won over by their propaganda and voted for the Unionists in the Glasgow constituencies in July. From these figures it is evident that the Unionist Liberals were not slow in organising to meet the Home Rule challenge and that there was a nucleus of active supporters ready to be organised.

Two initial handicaps spurred them on in the necessity for speedy action. Firstly they were starting a new organisation from scratch at a time when old attachments and new revolutionary proposals were confusing the public, making men hesitant of precipitate action and causing opinion to fluctuate.⁷ Secondly they knew that if their opposition was successful in destroying the Home Rule Bills the issue would be put to the test at a general election. For this

¹ W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 1-2.

² Ibid., p. 3.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 8, 9.

⁵ Ibid., p. 10.

⁶ Ibid., p. 15. Report of Executive 27 May 1886.

⁷ This is what, in retrospect, most struck the speakers who formally inaugurated the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association in Glasgow on 20 Oct. 1886. Glasgow Herald, 21 Oct. 1886.

eventuality, therefore, it was all the more important for them to be prepared because of the present state of public opinion and their own present unfledged state of organisation.¹ The great enemy was time. The uncertainty of not knowing what the outcome of the Parliamentary battle would be until the last moment kept many Liberal waverers from openly joining the Unionists.² Up to almost the last minute many of these Liberal waverers hung back from openly committing themselves to the Unionists hoping that the party would somehow, by some last minute expedient, be saved from foundering on the Irish rock. As each day of the second reading passed the pressure on the small group of the Glasgow Unionist Liberal Executive became more intense. "Many Liberals who disapproved of the Government's proposals were yet hopeful that Mr. Gladstone would so modify his scheme as to preserve the unity of the Liberal party and were indisposed yet to sever their connection with the older organisation ... many active and sincere Unionists were hindered from joining and had their hands tied on account of their loyalty to their respective Liberal Associations".³ Hence their constant activity in building up a solid body of adherents and in gathering money.

The early response to their efforts outlined above was all the more remarkable since "they were hampered by the threads and machinery of the Liberal organisation being in the control of Gladstone's supporters ... they thus had difficulty in knowing to whom to address their circulars and notices".⁴ To overcome these handicaps active steps, however, continued to be taken by the

¹ Glasgow Herald, 10 May 1886.
W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 2, 4, 5, 9, 13-14.

² The second reading of Gladstone's Irish legislation lasted, in mounting national excitement, from 10 May to 8 June.

³ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 28 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., p. 15. Report of Executive 27 May 1886.

nucleus working from McGrigor's Chambers to gain the initiative. To rally Liberal opinion to their support the publicity campaign, already being carried out by means of circulars, had been extended to the newspapers. In May a series of advertisements appeared in the Glasgow Herald, the Scotsman, the Citizen and the North British Daily Mail publicising the existence and aims of the Liberal Committee in Glasgow set up to maintain the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland.¹ On 27 May the Executive issued a plea to all Liberals to send in their names on the grounds that "while every Liberal's influence is more directly felt in his own particular constituency, it extends often in a very valuable way by means of connection with other constituencies where he may have political and private friends".² This active publicity campaign of the Unionist Liberals in Glasgow to attract members to themselves was also prosecuted with the distribution by hand of leaflets and pamphlets.³ On 21 May by a piece of quick thinking the opportunity afforded by the spring holiday in the city was taken advantage of and some 17,000 of these were handed out at the wharves and railway stations to the crowds congregating there.⁴ By this date, too, some 4,340 adhesion circulars had also been issued.⁵ No opportunity was lost of bringing before the public notice any support which came from well known political figures.⁶ At the first anti-Home Rule meeting, for instance, in St. Andrew's Hall on 21

¹ W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 6, 9.

² Ibid., pp. 5, 15.

³ Ibid., p. 33.

⁴ Ibid., p. 10. Great attention was devoted to this means of influencing public opinion. By August 1886 the Unionists claimed to have distributed some 800,000 pamphlets. W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 35.

⁵ Ibid., p. 10.

⁶ Glasgow Herald, 6 May 1886.

April the preliminary to the speeches was the reading of a long telegram of support from the veteran Scottish radical Duncan McLaren.¹

By such means the existence of the Committee was gradually made known to an ever widening circle. In return, from this circle there came an ever widening response. This active probing for information in order to tap the hidden springs of sympathy amongst the public resulted in the Executive Committee being able to report that despite their initial difficulties in starting from scratch they had succeeded in building up a chain of contacts and a body of adherents "by means of assistance given to them by independent Liberals and at considerable trouble".² The small group of Liberals who had started in early 1886 to meet in Dr. McGrigor's Chambers had some reason to congratulate themselves for their efforts to overcome their initial handicaps. By aiming at consolidation to utilise the strength of Unionist feeling in Glasgow and the West of Scotland, by fighting against the weaknesses and dangers inherent in dispersal of effort, by means of activities such as those outlined above urging the advantages of organisation a considerable, consolidated body had been gradually built up in Glasgow during April, May and early June.

The degree of assurance which they had achieved is well illustrated at the end of May. On May 27 Gladstone, by now alarmed at the rising tide of opposition to the Home Rule and Land Purchase Bills, convened a special meeting of the Parliamentary Liberal party in the Foreign Office.³ The proceedings made it clear that Gladstone hoped both bills would go through. However, he indicated a modification in his position, intended to disarm the

¹ Glasgow Herald, 22 April 1886.

² W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 15. Report of Executive 27 May 1886.

³ J. Morley, Life of Gladstone, III, 332-4.
J.L. Garvin, Life of Joseph Chamberlain, II, 237-245.

Liberal opposition on its strongest point, by promising to devise some means whereby Irish members would be retained occasionally at Westminster. In the hope of diminishing the opposition still further, he gave an assurance that a vote in the second reading in favour of the Home Rule Bill would not bind them to voting for the Land Bill. To the Unionists these concessions contained the greatest threat since it was widely felt that they would allow the radical Liberals led by Chamberlain to abstain.¹ If they did so then the Home Rule Bill would just scrape through and those who had led the most active opposition to it would be left out on a limb. These concessions and promises, however, whatever effect they may have had on Liberals in the House of Commons in helping them make up their minds, only served to stiffen the determination of the Glasgow Liberal Unionist executive. Coming too late to prevent the open rupture there, Gladstone's proposed modifications prompted the executive unanimously and at once to maintain their opposition to the Irish Bills until both had been defeated and safely buried. At a time when the principal Liberal dissentients in London were trying to make up their minds² wires were sent to both Hartington and Chamberlain from the Glasgow group declaring their refusal to accept Gladstone's terms and "to carry on the opposition to the second reading with increased determination."³ They fully intended, they said, to make "as public as possible 'their determination to oppose' both Bills ... as (each) always implying the other."⁴ Perhaps the determination they showed

¹ B. Holland, Life of the Eighth Duke of Devonshire, II, 156.
P. Fraser, Joseph Chamberlain, p. 96.
Glasgow Herald, 28 May 1886.

² A. Elliot, op. cit., II, 72-3.
P. Fraser, op. cit., pp. 97-9.
J.L. Garvin, op. cit., II, 240-2.

³ Glasgow Herald, 29 May 1886.

⁴ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 33. Report of Executive 1 Aug. 1886.

sprung from their knowledge of how effectively their work had cut off their retreat back to the constituency associations in Glasgow.

The question naturally arises why there was so much feeling over Gladstone's Home Rule proposals in Glasgow¹ to generate the sort of busy activity and organisation of opposition which has just been outlined. Clearly the local reasons for the strength of the opposition to Home Rule have to be surveyed to provide an answer. The most immediate answer is that at this juncture they began to act as an organisation opposed to the Gladstonian Liberals simply because they were being virtually outlawed within local constituency associations. During the intense political excitement and debate in April and May the local associations, as has been shown, gradually and increasingly began to pass resolutions of confidence in Gladstone's actions.² Thus, as the Gladstonians gained control of the party machinery the dissentients were being slowly squeezed out. The choices facing them were equally difficult to make. On the one hand they could stay nominally within the party, accept their inferior position and their tactical defeat for the time being. Thus, they would be keeping the Liberal party intact and at the same time could perhaps hope to cushion the effect of Gladstone's proposals. Some did follow this line, for instance Councillor Paton the chairman of Central constituency Liberal association executive, who declared his opposition to his member's Irish policy but supported him on the strength of his overall radical

¹ The distaste felt by some of the Glasgow Unionist group for Gladstone's high proposals was long-lasting. Seven years later Sir William Thomson (Lord Kelvin) found time during a summer tour to attend the debates on the second Home Rule Bill. Writing to a colleague at the University of Glasgow he expressed the hope that this Lords' debate (which effectively killed the Bill) would help "to prove to the country its true character, and prevent the like of it from ever being brought before Parliament again." Lord Kelvin to Professor George Buchanan, 9 Sept. 1893, National Library of Scotland, Mss 741, no. 197.

² Supra, Chapter VII, pp. 200-213.

Liberalism.¹ On the other hand, the dissentients could take the steps which have been already outlined by putting principle above party and moving outside. The choice they made helped to complete the situation which all Liberals in Glasgow had been trying to avoid viz. the establishment of a formal group of Liberals opposed to the official Liberal organisations. The confused nature of recent events leading to a 'crise de conscience' amongst a section of the Glasgow Liberals and a consequent struggle for control of the party machinery was the immediate reason, therefore, behind the rise of Liberal Unionism here.

There were, however, more deep seated motives which help to explain the stand they took. They fall into several categories which are not all exclusive and which combined and interacted in various ways. In outline they can all be summed up in the various arguments current at that time. They are given here as they stand without the Gladstonian counter-arguments since it is the Unionist ideas which are important in this context, not the debate which raged around them. There was first of all what can be called the political objection to Home Rule. This maintained that the Home Rule proposals of 1886 struck at the fundamental beliefs of British Liberalism. Gladstone's proposals involved the establishment, for instance, of an independent Parliament in Dublin and the consequent exclusion of the Irish members from the Imperial Parliament at Westminster. Yet, the ultimate control of Imperial taxation was to be retained at Westminster. In other words, argued the dissentients, the position was one ultimately of taxation without representation.² As an argument it tended to strain at the gnat, while swallowing

¹ North British Daily Mail, 15 June 1886.

² Speech of G.J. Goschen, 13 April 1886, in Hansard, vol. CCIV, (1886), columns 1471-2.
Cameron Corbett in letter to North British Daily Mail, 27 May 1886.
Duke of Argyll reported in Glasgow Herald, 20 Dec. 1885.

the camel. Taxation without representation did strike at the oldest principle of Liberalism in Britain. On the other hand the main question was about justice to Ireland which, as a general principle, could hardly be claimed as being something which was against the Liberal tradition. Whatever its merits this was an argument which was often made in Glasgow at this period in 1886. Given the long tradition of Liberal thought and dominance here it could perhaps be expected to have an intellectual appeal especially in its effect on waverers by helping them to rationalise their opposition. An extension of this argument displayed much greater political substance. This was the claim that the form of separation which Irish Home Rule took would remove effective control and equal administration of the laws in Ireland from the Parliament at Westminster. As a makeweight in the political debate it tied in particularly with the fourth line of argument (outlined infra) to make a powerful appeal to the attitudes and circumstances present in Glasgow.¹

The second main line of argument could be termed strategic and/or Imperialistic. Home Rule, it was claimed, under the conditions laid down by Gladstone would only lead to endless friction between Britain and Ireland; to a position where Ireland might become a backdoor threat to British security. It was a position which could lead to war in which Britain would be involved through lack of control over the Home Government of Ireland. These very points had been raised from a paper on 'Possibilities of Invasion' read in Glasgow at the West of Scotland Tactical Society earlier in December.² This had led to a correspondence which lasted throughout the rest of December in the Glasgow Press. From this, the balance of opinion appeared to favour the view that Glasgow and the West of Scotland were open to invasion due to the

¹ North British Daily Mail, 27 May 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 20 Dec. 1885.

² Glasgow Herald, 22 Dec. 1885.

insufficient numbers of volunteers in the area. The anti-Home Rule argument on strategic grounds therefore, given the proximity of the towns on the Clyde to Ireland, especially to Northern Ireland, had a great deal of force behind it. This must have made an impression on the public mind especially when linked with accusations like those made by the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland at this time that Home Rule would lead to "the establishment at a most vulnerable point of the empire of a drill ground for hostile armies and a dockyard for foreign fleets."¹ Dr. McGrigor went so far as to assert at the Chamber of Commerce on 19 April that "through the supineness or encouragement of the local power the country (Ireland) may become the choice refuge for all the dynamitards of Europe".² Given, too, the growing feeling of Imperialism in Glasgow business circles, the argument that Home Rule would be the first step in the break-up in imperial unity struck home, particularly in Glasgow - the industrial and trading centre of Scotland.³

The third main argument against Home Rule leads on from the second. This was couched in economic terms and asserted among other things that an independent Ireland would inevitably set up tariff barriers to protect its own industries.⁴ Furthermore, it went on, if the Irish were balked in this wish, friction would start all over again between Britain and Ireland until the demands were granted. As McGrigor asked "are the future masters of Ireland to rest satisfied with no control over these matters?"⁵

¹ Glasgow Herald, 22 Dec. 1885.

² North British Daily Mail, 20 April 1886.

³ Glasgow Herald, 29 Dec. 1885. The reports of the Chamber of Commerce at this period are notable for the concern they show with foreign trading regulations.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 20 April 1886.

An independent Ireland, too, it was claimed would cause a credit collapse. This would be inevitable since Home Rule would lead to internal troubles between the North and South of Ireland, or at least to a panic drain of capital from the country once it came under the rule of those wild men the Irish Nationalists.¹ Rule by the Nationalists would, it was claimed, bankrupt the progressive (and therefore Protestant) North by a policy of high taxation levied in order to maintain the poverty stricken (and therefore papist and ignorant) majority in the South and West of Ireland.² Mitchell Henry's election address contained a long peroration on the repugnance felt by the Irish of the North about being put under the domination of Nationalists "who consider the cruellest forms of boycotting and intimidation legitimate weapons of political warfare." The idea of cutting them off "from this Great Imperial Empire of which they are so proud and with which their lives and fortunes and those of their forefathers have been bound up", he declared, was equally repugnant to these same people of the North.³ Furthermore, an independent Ireland no longer part of the single United Kingdom would take away a vast area for the investment of British capital. What, too, it was asked would be the fate of business interests in Ireland once Home Rule was granted?⁴

¹ Glasgow Herald, 22 April and 26 May 1886.

"The fiscal success of the proposed scheme depends on the continued prosperity of Ulster ... the result of handing over its administration to a Nationalist Parliament (would be) the inevitable withdrawal of British capital from that district." Proceedings in the Chamber of Commerce on 19 April 1886, (McGrigor Collection, Glasgow University Library).

"All hope of a union of feeling between Protestant Ulster and the rest of Ireland must be abandoned", Glasgow Herald, 15 May 1886.

² Glasgow Herald, 26 May 1886.

Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland 1886, pp. 167-8.

³ North British Daily Mail, 16 June 1886.

⁴ Glasgow Herald, 20 and 22 April 1886. "British holders of Irish securities were in a panic ... where fixed capital could not be safe circulating capital would not remain". Ibid., 26 May 1886.

Such in general terms was the form which the economic argument against Home Rule took.

The fourth main line of argument can be styled the "kith and kin" line and the undertones it sounded made it tie in with aspects of the three previous arguments, especially the economic one. Briefly stated it claimed that to grant Ireland Home Rule would endanger the loyal minority of Protestants in the North both economically and religiously. It would lead to both a Romish ascendancy over their Irish Presbyterian brethern and to the severance of those economic links which connected them with their commercial colleagues.¹ "The passing of the Home Rule Bill," Dr. Killen of the Irish Presbyterian Church told the General Assembly in Edinburgh, "would be injurious to the interests of Protestantism, to the prosperity of Ireland", it would "lead to Romish ascendancy in Ireland".² In short, the class bound to Scotsmen by the ties of blood, religion and commerce would be denied the protection of the equal laws enjoyed by British citizens and left at the mercy of a Dublin legislature which was to be run by men who, in Gladstone's phrase of his pre-Home Rule days, were marching through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire. Mitchell Henry wrote to the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Liberal Association that to prevent this "we cannot consent to weaken the supreme authority of the Imperial Parliament or to deny to the North of Ireland a local organisation for self-government separate from the rest of that country".³ One of the Irish Presbyterian deputation addressing the Free Church General Assembly based his appeal to his Scottish co-religionists for support in preventing Home Rule in these terms: that it was "a bitter blow to be sent out

¹ Glasgow Herald, 20 and 25 Dec. 1885.
North British Daily Mail, 27 May 1886.

² Glasgow Herald, 26 May 1886.

³ North British Daily Mail, 15 May 1886.

of your citizenship of the British Empire and be placed at the mercy of a small section of the Empire without appeal to the class with whom we have kindred".¹ This was the subtler and more emotive form which this argument could take viz. that the Home Rule proposals as they stood in 1886 gave no protection to a sizeable minority which had always looked to Britain for protection and which at the same time had always been the most loyal of the Queen's Irish subjects. Cameron Corbett was to put it bluntly this way: "We dare not as a righteous nation hand over the Protestants of Ulster to those who hate them with a cruel hatred."²

Now, all of these arguments were common currency in the political debate in 1886 all over Britain. They were not peculiar or indigenous to Glasgow but were familiar to everybody in this period. In outline there is nothing in them to distinguish Glasgow from other parts of Britain in putting forward these reasons for opposing Home Rule. On the other hand, common as they were throughout the land some of the points in them struck home with particular intensity in this city. For a start there was a large Irish-born minority present in Glasgow, as well as a larger group of Irish descent. From its situation among the lower classes of the city it was hardly well placed to advertise the capacity of Irishmen for self-government. Besides that most of these Irish suffered from the additional disadvantage of being Catholics. And, to add to this, this Catholic Irish minority were reputedly amongst the best drilled of Parnell's voting battalions in Britain.³ More grist here, therefore, for the argument that their like in Ireland, led by the Parnellites, would sweep the loyal Irish Presbyterians back across the sea into Britain.

¹ Proceedings and Debates, Free Church General Assembly 1886, p. 168.

² North British Daily Mail, 27 May 1886.

³ Glasgow Observer, 31 Oct. 1885.

Here, it was claimed, they would land expropriated and impoverished to become yet a further burden on the already hard pressed British taxpayer.¹

Irish presence in great numbers in Glasgow gave strength and edge to anti-Home Rule feeling. It added the element of religious antipathy which was especially noticeable on the popular, rude level. On 23 April, for instance, the Glasgow Orangemen held a great anti-Home Rule demonstration and procession. The tone of the speeches were politically predictable in that the main theme revolved around the thesis as to whether Gladstone's actions could best be explained on the grounds that he was either a Jesuit or, more charitably, a madman. At the end of the demonstration a retiring collection was taken up to "assist men such as Dr. Hanna to stir up the people".² This seems to have taken immediate effect since the procession then wound its way from Argyle Street southwards over the river in the direction of Kinning Park where it proceeded to attack and smash in the windows of the local Catholic church. The prompt action of the parish priest of St. Margaret's who was in the Church at the time taking the Good Friday service, prevented an ugly scene developing for he commanded the congregation to stay put and ensured their compliance by locking the doors. His presence of mind probably saved the situation, since the inhabitants of the police station of Kinning Park, next door to the church, followed his example and remained indoors declaring themselves unable to prevent the attacks of the demonstrators.³

¹ Proceedings and Debates, Free Church General Assembly 1886, p. 167.

² North British Daily Mail, 24 April 1886.
Dr. Hanna, an Ulster clergyman, was a prominent organiser of anti-Home Rule meetings in Britain. The theme of these meetings was that Home Rule would lead to the overthrow of Protestantism in Ireland. For this and his connections with the sectarian Scottish Protestant Alliance see Savage, The General Election of 1886, pp. 461-2, 480-4.

³ North British Daily Mail, 24 April 1886.

Happenings like this, demonstrating the hair-trigger passions which could enter a political question from the religious and social composition of Glasgow, show why so much force could be brought to bear in the propagation of anti-Home Rule arguments here. It was this sort of feeling which allowed Dr. Killen of the Irish Presbyterian Church to appeal to Scotsmen for support in opposing Home Rule on the grounds that it "would be injurious to the interests of Protestantism".¹ Indeed a letter to the North British Daily Mail alleged that desperate efforts were being made by the Orange party in Glasgow to work up feeling against Home Rule. One means of getting up 'public' meetings of this sort, it stated, was to make tickets for them obtainable only at Orange Lodges in order to ensure "a unanimous vote against Home Rule."² It was the awareness of this element of religious antagonism in Glasgow which prompted the deputation of Irish Presbyterians arranging a meeting with the Liberal Unionists to ask that "it should be understood the meeting which they wanted was to be got up independently of the Orange party".³ All this helps to explain why the National Liberal Federation of Scotland were led to caution the Scottish electorate from being led away "... by false issues. The question", they went on, "is purely one of national and civil right. Religion is being dragged into it for party purposes".⁴

As well as religious antagonism the anti-Home Rule agitation was also strengthened by that social or racial prejudice which had always been generated by the presence of the Irish group in Glasgow. This is a difficult topic to substantiate historically, but it is one which is bound to strike

¹ North British Daily Mail, 27 May 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 26 May 1886.

² North British Daily Mail, 20 April 1886.

³ Ibid., 29 April 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 12 June 1886.

any investigator in the social history of Glasgow in the nineteenth century. However, it would be true to say that every publication or official inquiry which touched on, or dealt with the Irish ever since they had come to Glasgow in great numbers contains evidence of this.¹ Most of the long-sung complaints made against the Irish in Glasgow by Scottish commentators could be classified as social. For instance, the sort of thing which was said again and again was that they lowered the moral tone of the Scots by their social habits. The Irish were fond of enjoying themselves since they drank not only often, but what was worse, openly:² they made a great deal of noise in public, especially in the streets:³ they were uncleanly in their habits and persons.⁴ This reputation was well established by the 1880's and received unquestioning acceptance especially from the middle class bourgeoisie of the city - the class well represented in the Liberal Unionist group. Again, much of the argument used by these Unionists seemed to imply that it was impossible to trust the Irish to act like gentlemen. One of the most over-worked contentions, for instance, was that the Protestants of Ulster could not be left to the tender mercies of the Irish majority under Home Rule.⁵ The Dundee Advertiser noted this attitude at a Glasgow anti-Home Rule meeting by

¹ For instance, State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain, First Report, Appendix G. Parliamentary Papers 1836, (40), XXXIV, 105-127, passim. Select Committee of Inquiry on Drunkenness, Parliamentary Paper 1834, (559), VIII, 318-20, 529-31. Pagan, Glasgow Past and Present, I, 21-127, passim. New Statistical Account of Lanarkshire, appendix to the article 'Glasgow'.

² Drunkenness Inquiry, p. 529. Irish Poor in Great Britain, pp. 119-20.

³ Irish Poor in Great Britain, pp. 118-9.

⁴ Pagan, op. cit., I, 21-23, 25-26.

⁵ e.g. by Cameron Corbett, North British Daily Mail, 27 May 1886 and J.G.A. Baird, ibid., 22 June 1886.

saying that "it simply indicated a settled dislike to any recognition of self-government as far as Ireland is concerned".¹ The presence of a large Irish minority in Glasgow, therefore, must have influenced the spread of anti-Home Rule feeling. To the Glasgow upper classes of 1886 the prospect of Ireland run by Irishmen must have appeared alarming, even unnatural.

There are instances chosen at random which further suggest this confused social attitude to the Irish. As already stated part of the Unionist case against Home Rule was that it would cause migration of labour to Scotland because of the economic and social dislocation which would follow in Ireland. This appeal was presented by Dr. Killen of the Irish Presbyterian Church (when he addressed the Free Church General Assembly) in terms where he envisaged loyal Protestant Scotsmen, who had been brought over by Irish noblemen to improve that country's economy, being driven back again to Scotland because of Irish intolerance.² Here the main emphasis lay in its appeal to brother Scots for their sympathy. But, as an argument, it was capable of wider interpretation and the more usual form it took was to point out that Home Rule would impoverish Ireland and lead to a further period of immigration by hordes of desperate poor Irish willing to undercut native Scottish labour in the search for employment. Thus the Scotsman in its leader columns declared that Scotland would be flooded by poor Irish, after Home Rule had bankrupted that country, who would compete with native Scots in the labour market.³ R.V. Campbell, the Unionist candidate in College constituency, put it more bluntly: "We in Scotland" he said "occupied a peculiar and special position upon this Irish question. We were the nearest part of the United Kingdom to Ireland.

¹ Quoted in North British Daily Mail, 21 April 1886.

² Proceedings and Debates, Free Church General Assembly 1886, p. 167.

³ Scotsman, 25 June 1886.

We felt more quickly and rapidly any change for the worse that took place in Ireland. If there were disturbance of business there ... and if employment were scarce, it was in our labour market that the stress was felt. There was increased competition in our labour market and the struggle for existence here among our Scotch fellow countrymen was made all the harder".¹ The more usual emphasis shown here, therefore, was towards resurrecting the old social and economic prejudice against the Irish immigrant with his allegedly deleterious influences on Scottish life. In short, therefore, the presence and activities of the large Irish minority must be taken into account as providing a great deal of the impetus to anti-Home Rule feeling in Glasgow.

Less contentiously, at a different level there were deep economic, social and religious links between Glasgow and Ireland. To take only one instance, the reasons for Sir William Thomson's stand as a Liberal-Unionist as the first Chairman of the Glasgow Liberal Unionist executive are not difficult to imagine. He was by 1886 a well known Glasgow, indeed international figure on account of his contributions to the study of electricity. Nevertheless, he was an Ulsterman by birth, descended from a Scots-Irish family, a member of the Presbyterian "establishment" in the North of Ireland and related personally to members of the professional and commercial classes there.² Thomson was a well known member of a much larger anonymous group of Ulster Presbyterians who had come to make their life in Glasgow and who were connected, like Thomson, by deep bonds of personal and religious sympathy with Ulster. An example of this less well known group was one of the executive members of the

¹ North British Daily Mail, 29 June 1886.

² Sylvanus P. Thompson, Life of William Thomson, Baron Kelvin of Largs, (2 vols. 1910).
Mrs. E. King, Lord Kelvin's Early Home, (1919).
A.G. King, Kelvin the Man, (1925).
Obituary Notice of Lord Kelvin in (Proceedings of the Royal Society, Series A, vol. 81, appendix, 1908).

Glasgow Junior Liberal Association, M.S. Grady, who flung in his lot with the Unionists and broke with the Liberals because of his Ulster origins.¹ He is an example of those many others with similar backgrounds and with similar reactions to Home Rule in 1886 as Sir William Thomson. A factor which helped to underline Glasgow's connections with Ulster was the rewarding policy of importing working men and clergymen from there to help put over the Liberal Unionist message to the Glasgow electorate.²

There were close links, too, between the Irish Presbyterians and the Scottish Presbyterians. This was especially true of their links with the Free Church of Scotland.³ There was a long established habit of movement of people and ideas on this religious level between Scotland and Ireland in the nineteenth century. For instance, Scottish ministers had been welcomed to Irish charges after the troubles of the Disruption.⁴ Again, by the 1880's Irish Presbyterian students were still coming to study in Glasgow. They were fewer now in number than they had been it is true, but they still helped to maintain these strong ecclesiastical and social links between Glasgow and Ulster by their presence here.⁵ As has been noted deputations from the Irish Presbyterians addressed both the Church of Scotland and Free Church General Assemblies in May 1886 and followed this up by addressing meetings on Home Rule organised by the Liberal Unionist Committee in Glasgow.⁶

¹ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 57.

² Ibid., p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 28 June 1886.

³ Proceedings and Debates, Free Church General Assembly 1886, p. 166.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Proceedings and Debates, Free Church General Assembly 1886, Appendix to Report of College Committees, pp. 14-18.

⁶ Proceedings and Debates, Free Church General Assembly 1886, passim. Glasgow Herald, 26 May 1886.
North British Daily Mail, 29 April and 27 May 1886.

On this personal level and on the religious side, therefore, these examples must only be regarded as tokens signifying the many hidden connections which existed between Glasgow and Ireland. What affected Ireland and the North of Ireland in particular, therefore, as the Home Rule issue did, must have affected many interests and individuals in Glasgow. One of the most oft-repeated arguments made on behalf of the Liberal-Unionists in Glasgow at this time was that Home Rule would mean Rome Rule. To judge by the number of times it was said the speakers must have felt it a particularly good line to adopt here. They must have felt it would strike deep answering chords in this city.

The same is true of the general economic arguments used by anti-Home Rulers to support their case. As with the social and religious lines of attack these again had particular application in Glasgow's case. At the Chamber of Commerce meeting held to discuss Home Rule Dr. McGrigor's argument was aimed at appealing to the commercial self-interest of his audience. The main points stressed by him were the dangers an independent Ireland would pose to their rights as traders by ending the Free Trade principle between the United Kingdom and Ireland. Furthermore, the pledging of British credit to help an independent Ireland to buy out the landlords he castigated as a thoroughly unbusinesslike piece of fiscal legislation. Lastly, he emphasised the possible loss to Scottish interests of an Irish market for their investments and goods.¹ Home Rule, he declared, would be "prejudicial to the commercial interests of the United Kingdom" and in that setting he obviously meant prejudicial to Glasgow's commercial interests. "What would happen", he asked, to the loyal minority of Irishmen "the merchants, the manufacturers, the bankers, the traders of Ulster who have made the North of Ireland what it

¹ Proceedings in the Chamber of Commerce on 19 April 1886, (McGrigor Collection, Glasgow University Library).

is trusting to the protection of that United Kingdom of which they are proud to be subjects?" Home Rule would lead, he claimed "to never ceasing disputes in matters of trade and commerce ... to the destruction of a great field for the employment of British capital".¹ Such were the arguments used to tap commercial sentiment. The terms in which they are couched constantly referred to "British" rather than "Scottish" interests and in this it is significant that the Chamber saw no inconsistency.² It is obvious from the economic debates of the day in Glasgow that there was in these years a feeling among the commercial and industrial interests that they were an important part of the economic links of the Empire.³ To break this Empire therefore by giving Ireland Home Rule went against this growing feeling they clearly began to have of themselves that they were part of a great trading Empire as Britons first and Scotsmen second. From the number of times this sort of argument was used to point out the dangers of any crack in the Imperial framework⁴ it is clear that narrow nationalism in the Home Rule sense was expected to make little appeal to them as businessmen.

To elucidate what lies behind these generalisations one can only pick out isolated examples of this economic involvement of Glasgow and the West of Scotland with Ireland. Isolated though they tend to be, however, when they

¹ Proceedings in the Chamber of Commerce on 19 April 1886, (McGrigor Collection, Glasgow University Library).

² Indeed, to judge from the newspaper reports McGrigor's speech was received with the heartiest approbation and encouragement from the businessmen present.

Glasgow Herald, 21 April 1886.

North British Daily Mail, 21 April 1886.

³ Glasgow Herald Annual Review of Trade in the West of Scotland for 1885, in Glasgow Herald, 26 Dec. 1885.

⁴ For example, by R.V. Campbell, Unionist Candidate in College constituency on 24 June and 30 June 1886. North British Daily Mail, 25 June and 1 July 1886.

are added together they add substance to the generalisations. For one thing, at this period Scotland was reputed to revel in foreign investment. Between 1870 and 1900 "Scotland was an area of capital export on proportionately greater terms than England".¹ Three quarters of the foreign and colonial investment companies were of Scottish origin or based on Scottish models,² so that "even English ones find it necessary to come to Scotland for the debenture money and the deposits with which high dividends are conjured up".³ Scotland, in fact, as Byres points out, revelled in the field of foreign investment⁴ and "among the minor reasons for this great amount of Scottish investment abroad were a desire to circumvent tariff barriers".⁵ There was, in short, a substantial outflow of Scottish capital at this period seeking profitable venture furth of Scotland. With this background, therefore, the drift of McGrigor's speech to the Chamber of Commerce becomes more pertinent. Part of this outflow obviously found its way to Ireland and what happened there, therefore, would affect at least some Scottish investors. If Home Rule were to lead to an unsettled condition in the most economically active part of Ireland, the North, then obviously Scottish business interests would feel the consequences. As was pointed out in the Chamber of Commerce as early as 12 April "there was an immense amount of money held by English and Scottish capitalists in property in Ireland" and "there was no saying what might be done by an Irish Parliament in regard to these loans" if Home Rule

¹ T.J. Byres, The Scottish Economy during the Great Depression with special reference to the Heavy Industries of the South-West, (Glasgow University, B.Litt. Thesis, 1963), vol. I, p. 272.

² Ibid., p. 271.

³ Quoted ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., p. 298.

became a fact.¹

In other ways, too there were close connections between the economy of the West of Scotland and Ireland. At the Greenock Chamber of Commerce it was pointed out that "one-third of the sugar refined in Greenock (67,630 tons) was shipped to Ireland". After Home Rule, it was contended, "this would cease and at least three other sugar refineries would be added to four now silent and smokeless".² Ireland, too, was becoming an important market for the coal mined in the West of Scotland. Byres points out that Ayrshire and Lanarkshire coals were coming to rely a great deal for disposal on shipment to Ireland.³ Thus, the area on whose continued prosperity that of Glasgow's to some extent depended, would be sensitive to any proposed changes in Ireland. Again there were personal links, too, between Scottish manufacturers and traders and Ireland in this picture. Matthew Arthur, for instance, a prominent member of the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist executive was not only a manufacturer in Glasgow but also had textile manufacturing concerns in Londonderry.⁴ Again, the pages of the Glasgow Directories for this period reveal other examples of Glasgow merchants with a foot on both sides of the Irish sea. Examples here are Wm. McNeill & Sons, Timber Merchants and Turners of McAlpine Street, Glasgow, who had steam Saw-Mills in Ireland at Longford, Killarney, Enniskillen and Sligo.⁵ Others ranged from Cantrell and Cochrane who supplied Aerated Waters and Mitchell and Coy., Whiskies, to Muller and Kruger Bros., Seeds and

¹ North British Daily Mail, 13 April 1886.

² Ibid., 5 May 1886.

³ Byres, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 444, 447, 484. Table 109, p. 446. Vol. II, p. 518.

⁴ J.F. Barclay, The Story of Arthur and Company Limited, Glasgow, (Glasgow 1953), pp. 60, 68, 103.

⁵ Glasgow Post Office Directory, 1886-7.

General Produce and Alexander Paterson & Coy., Dry Goods.¹ Examples of the classes of goods shipped between Glasgow and Belfast included chemicals and drugs, coals, cottons, drapery and dry goods, general merchandise, hardware and iron manufacturers, iron, steel, tinplates, metals as well as machinery and tools.² Conversely there were Ulster manufacturers with works in Ireland who supplied markets in the West of Scotland. D. Anderson Ltd., who manufactured Tarred and Hair Felts at the Lagan Felt Works, Belfast, had offices and stores for Scotland at the Broomielaw, and Alexander McAra supplied Irish Lime and Cement to his Glasgow stores at Morrison Street in the South side of the city.³

Over and above all these many and varied contacts Gladstone's proposals to grant Ireland Home Rule came right in the middle of the Great Depression. This particularly affected the economy of the West of Scotland which relied so much on the well-being of the heavy industries of Clydeside.⁴ 1886 saw one of the worst phases in Glasgow of this cycle of slumps. The Glasgow Herald reported that "the year which is now fast drawing to a close will long be remembered on account of the great depression which has existed in the ship-building trade".⁵ The great Fairfield's yard was in a state of collapse, for instance, and this naturally affected the heavy industries associated with shipbuilding.⁶ The staple trade of the West of Scotland, iron, which was looked on as the barometer of trade in Glasgow was very hard hit.⁷ All

¹ Directory of Merchants: Export Shippers 1885, pp. 834-8.

² Ibid., pp. 722-9.

³ Glasgow Post Office Directory, 1886-7.

⁴ T.J. Byres, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 408-26 passim, 492-502 passim.

⁵ Glasgow Herald, 19 Dec. 1885.

⁶ T.J. Byres, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 496-7.

⁷ Glasgow Herald, Annual Review of Trade, 26 Dec. 1885.
North British Daily Mail, 1 Jan. 1886.

trades reported feeling the effects of the depression. In the Bridgeton manufacturing concerns "such universal depression" had never "been seen or felt".¹ General ironfounding, boilermaking, chemical working and metalworking all reported stagnation of trade and consequent distress amongst the operatives.² Of the Blacksmiths 25% were reported as out of work in mid-winter and, in general, all trades spoke of higher unemployment rates than had been experienced before.³ The general percentage of unemployed for all unions in the engineering, shipbuilding and metal working of Clydeside had risen from 2.7% in 1883 to 12.9% in 1885 and 13.5% in 1886.⁴ The reception for Home Rule, therefore, among business circles, already unsure because of the trading links between the Clyde and Ireland must have become doubly so in this decade of economic uncertainty. The prevailing industrial and commercial depression provided a great deal of ready made ammunition for the Liberal Unionists to use in attacking the idea of Irish Home Rule in Glasgow.

To sum up, therefore, it seems clear that the implications arising from Irish Home Rule touched many deeply felt interests in Glasgow and the West of Scotland because of the many historic links between the two areas. Certainly if one goes by the number of times the 'kith and kin' line of argument was used to show how Home Rule would harm their co-religionists, their relatives and fellow countrymen, their economic counterparts and interests then the reasons for the depth of the opposition to the Gladstonian line in Glasgow becomes apparent. The attraction of the contemporary Unionist arguments and the strength behind the Liberal Unionist movement in

¹ Glasgow Herald, 19 Dec. 1885.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ T.J. Byres, op. cit., vol. II, Table 141, p. 593.

the sectarian soil of the covenanting capital of industrial Scotland is
all more easily understood.

Chapter IX

The Home Rule Election of 1886
in the Seven Glasgow Constituencies

The general election period in 1886 officially lasted four weeks. These can be dated from the announcement of the dissolution of Parliament on 10 June up to polling a month later on 5 July. All parties in both Parliament and the country had been prepared for the sounding of the election trumpets long before this, however. The defeat of the Home Rule bill in its second reading in the early hours of 8 June provided relief for the tension built up by months of close reasoning, doubt and violent party argument. Now the gauntlet was fairly down and battle could commence in earnest to settle the issue.

Signs of growing tension and increasing electoral activity in preparation for an early election had been evident for some time in Glasgow. Just after the Home Rule Bill had been published the attitude of those in charge of the Liberal organisations in the city had been one of waiting and seeing, of preaching the necessity for party unity in spite of growing doubts.¹ At the Central constituency Liberal association the Chairman's plea was that "if they were going to maintain their position in the country ... they must ... endeavour to see eye to eye.... Those against the Bill on the one hand must not press their views too strongly and on the other hand so too mustn't those in favour. The great object to be accomplished was the unity of the party."²

In the event the explosive elements in the issue proved too much for such detached views ever to have any hope of success. By June the desire to settle

¹ This was the line adopted by the North British Daily Mail, e.g. on 19 April 1886.

² Glasgow Herald, 21 April 1886.

the issue once and for all was well in evidence amongst all parties. The North British Daily Mail noted on 9 June that this feeling of "eagerness for the fray is greatest in the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Tradeston divisions." There "the advanced Liberals had completely broken away from the present members" and were anxious now to prove their dislike by "bringing forward candidates favourable to a legislative assembly in Dublin."¹ By late June the emphasis on party unity had quite evaporated and William Fife at a Blackfriars-Hutchesontown meeting could sum up the general policy of the Gladstonian radicals by declaring himself delighted and undismayed to find that so many seceders had left their ranks.²

The reasons for the growing rancour between Gladstonian and Unionist Liberals became increasingly obvious during this period largely because of the refusal of the Unionists to accept the Gladstonian line meekly. The more they had pressed their point of view the more did tension grow between the two wings. Increasingly both Gladstonian and Unionist Liberals' sense of outrage grew as each sought to lay down a line of Liberal conduct to be followed by the other. It must be noted that in this process the Liberal Unionists were the first to combine high moral indignation along with invective. At the Chamber of Commerce meeting for instance terms like "infamy", "ghastly", "perfidy", "betrayal" had all been used to describe Gladstone's Irish proposals.³ Thus, by May and June it had obviously become a point of honour for both sides to have the issue settled. A Gladstonian in the Central constituency association expressed a widespread feeling in declaring his inability "to forget that those opposed to the Home Rule measure did by the grossest

¹ North British Daily Mail, 9 June 1886.

² Ibid., 24 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 20 April 1886.

misrepresentations for weeks before try to create enemies against them."¹
To him the Liberal Unionist meetings were attended by "Tories, a few
nondescripts, and weak-kneed Liberals".² And Sir James Campbell of Tullie-
chewan felt himself similarly obliged in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown to object
to Unionists lording it "as if they (the Gladstonian Liberals) were against
the Empire".³ Electoral activity therefore, had begun in Glasgow long before
the battle fanfare was officially sounded by the defeat of the Home Rule
Bills.

As the voice of radical Liberalism in Glasgow the North British Daily
Mail was under no illusions as to the growing intensity of the struggle nor
of the electoral dangers to be apprehended from the growing strength of
Liberal Unionism in the city. This can be seen from the mounting bitterness
with which it attacked the Liberal seceders led by McGrigor, Jackson, Thomson,
et al. Of the Chamber of Commerce meeting in April it thought "that in the
present condition of trade ... in this district ... our local Chamber of
Commerce would have found subject matter enough ... without tranching on the
field of politics".⁴ It was not the interests of Commerce, it declared,
which prompted the raising of the question. Rather, it sprang from their
intentions "of doing their best to provoke a violent political controversy
and to encourage the opponents of the Government". The Chamber of Commerce
criticisms of Home Rule, in short, "owed their origin to party passion".⁵
Following this up a few days later the Mail was not slow to warn its readers

¹ Glasgow Herald, 27 April 1886.

² Ibid.

³ North British Daily Mail, 24 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 19 April 1886.

⁵ Ibid.

of the dangers to be apprehended from such critics. "The representative Liberals of the city" were conspicuous by their absence from the St. Andrew's Hall anti-Home Rule meeting "and there were few of those present who cling to the name whose reputations as political Liberals (had) not long since become bankrupt".¹ Underlining this point for its many readers who, like the Mail, supported Disestablishment it drew attention to the similarity in personnel between those who opposed Home Rule in Glasgow and those who had opposed the Disestablishers at the late election.² By June the Mail was calling on all the Liberal constituency associations to be up and doing in order to perfect their organisation for the coming election. This extra effort was "especially necessary", it declared, at the present time in order "to defeat those calling themselves Liberal Unionists".³ That committee consisted of men who ostensibly abhorred "the dark deeds of the 'caucus' and denounced 'wire-pulling' and 'machines'.... Yet as a matter of fact they are a caucus of the worst type ... elected by nobody", responsible to nobody but themselves and, worst of all, "working secretly for the Tories ... passing money through underground channels in the shape of anti-Liberal literature" to incite the electors to desertion.⁴ As the election grew closer so did the irony and bitterness of the Mail increase. On one occasion it pictured the Liberal Unionists, those "self sufficient, 'superior' persons" who "think they know everything better than anyone else", as a sort of musical "Union Quartet" trotting round each meeting in a desperate attempt "to keep up appearances".⁵ By June, therefore, this sort of uninhibited electioneering

¹ North British Dail Mail, 22 April 1886.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 10 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 28 June 1886.

tone had long been normal in Glasgow.

The Mail's policy of attacking the Liberal Unionist organisers in Glasgow displayed considerable perspicacity. It had good reason for expecting the greatest danger to the exclusive Liberal control of the city constituencies to come from this direction. Mention has already been made of the Unionists' early activities in preparing themselves for electoral contests. This had come to a head on 27 May when Gladstone had convened the Foreign Office meeting with all the implications it had posed for the Liberal Unionists' group. The decision taken then to go forward meant all possibility of retreat had been cut off. From this date onwards electioneering for them had really begun in earnest. In order to counter any possibility of compromise on Home Rule the Glasgow Executive took steps to inform Liberal M.P.s by letter of their attitude in order to strengthen their resistance and maintain a pool of possible candidates in the event of an early election. Although "a number of Liberals are now sanguine that the second reading will be carried", it stated, "on account of Mr. Gladstone's late statement ... at the Foreign Office meeting" the hard core opponents would "not be captured or convinced by any of the statements then made by Mr. Gladstone". Although the exclusion of Irish members from Westminster was now conceded by him to be not vital to the scheme it was still wrong for "Liberals to believe that it is only the principle of local government that is going to be affirmed by the second reading. It is far more true to say until such time as the Purchase Bill is withdrawn altogether that it is the principle of a United Kingdom that is going to be denied by that vote and, in this sense, undoubtedly the members voting for the second reading will be held responsible by their Unionist constituents".¹ The last, sting-in-the-tail sentence with its veiled threat of

¹ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 28 June 1886.

retribution clearly reveals an attempt to attract the sitting members to the Unionist cause in Glasgow. The sense of purpose evident at each step in the formation of the Liberal Unionist group was evidently being mobilised now to make them into an effective electoral force. The Foreign Office meeting, by making the issues clear, marks the opening of the electoral campaign in Glasgow.

By June, therefore, the Glasgow Executive Committee of the Unionist Liberal group were trying to ensure a supply of future candidates to lead them from amongst the Liberal M.P.s in the House of Commons. Steps in this direction were essential if they were to have any hopes of success in sustaining their point of view. Such moves, however, also presented them with a tricky situation in which they had to employ all their deftness and ability for organisation and timing. The unusual position into which Unionist Liberals had been placed by political events required some careful steering if they were to avoid the Scylla of Toryism on the one hand and the Charybdis of Gladstonionism on the other. To the Liberals in the constituency associations the Unionists stood in active league "with Sir James Bain,¹ a leading light of the Tory party in the city,"² recognisable now as men who organised anti-Home Rule meetings for which "tickets of admission had been freely distributed by the Conservative Association",³ members of "a 'Whig Cave' in Glasgow ... conspicuous in their eagerness to unite with the Tory party"⁴ and "working secretly for the Tories".⁵

¹ He had acted as Chairman at the Chamber of Commerce anti-Home Rule meeting.

² North British Daily Mail, 20 April 1886.

³ Ibid., 22 April 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 28 April 1886.

⁵ Ibid., 10 June 1886.

Such a reputation, damaging to their bid for popular support from like-minded Liberals, was almost inevitable. In the election campaign of 1886 they found themselves like the Conservatives with the same political aim - the necessity of crushing the dangers from Home Rule. Unlike the Conservatives, however, they could not afford to shrug this off as the normal concomitant of political battle. They had no tested electoral organisation, were indeed just in the throes of moulding one, through which to bring public opinion to bear against Home Rule at the polls. So far as they could tell all the popular feeling, all the huzzahs and shouts of approval at their protest meetings might evaporate once the electorate were faced with actually voting against the traditional party led by the idol of the masses, Gladstone. At the same time, therefore, as they were trying to build up popular support and forge it into a workable electoral machine they had, because of the probability (which quickly became a fact) of a sudden dissolution and an early election, to persuade Unionist minded M.P.s to put their trust in the organisation they were fashioning. Only in this way could their efforts to organise a party be crowned with success and their separate identity from the Conservatives on the one hand and the Gladstonians on the other be established. That the Glasgow group were aware of the necessity for establishing themselves on their own merits to avoid the danger of absorption by the Conservatives is clear. When arrangements were being made for speakers to appear at the Unionist Liberals' first anti-Home Rule meeting in St. Andrew's Halls it was reported that "Conservative speakers' offers were not accepted".¹ Similarly in making arrangements for the meeting with the Deputation from the Irish Presbyterians anxiety was expressed that it should be understood that it was "got up

¹ North British Daily Mail, 19 April 1886.

independently of the Tory party".¹

Hopes of success could only come their way, therefore, by a constant effort to complete their organisation with generals as well as an army. Only in this way could they save themselves from the pitfalls of Liberal abstentions at the election or absorption into the camp of their erstwhile enemies, the Conservatives. The latter could have meant electoral suicide. The difficulties of persuading like-minded Liberals to vote for the Unionist brand of Liberalism were great enough. How much more difficult then would it have been for them if they were to appear as merely an extension of the Conservative party in Glasgow? Their only hope thus lay in establishing themselves as an individual party. No other course was open to them now and in this way they found themselves committed to playing for the highest stakes, all or nothing.

In June, therefore, a feat of political juggling was undertaken by the brokers meeting in McGrigor's Chambers. While the efforts to stir up the public in Glasgow and the West of Scotland were being continued similar efforts were directed amongst the anti-Gladstonian members at Westminster. While they were being reassured that if they opposed Gladstone there would be an organisation ready in the constituencies to which they could turn in a general election, efforts were being made at the same time to secure the equally important condition that in contesting their seats now as Unionists they would not be opposed by Conservatives as well as Gladstonians with the consequent certainty of splitting the Unionist vote.

As was the case with contacting the Liberal public by newspaper advertisements, private letters, circulars, leaflets and pamphlets the Liberal Unionist Executive in Glasgow displayed the same urgent zeal in assuring friendly M.P.s and candidates of their best efforts on their behalf. Since 12 May informal

¹ North British Daily Mail, 29 April 1886.

contacts had been made to ensure electoral compacts with the Conservatives in West of Scotland seats.¹ Plans for a full scale joint defence of all Unionist seats by a Unionist Liberal-Conservative alliance had been considered at an early stage in their existence² and their cogitations evidently bore fruit to judge from their subsequent actions. By late May Cameron Corbett of Tradeston and Mitchell Henry of Blackfriars-Hutchesontown were known to be definitely committed to voting against the second reading of the Home Rule bills.³ By 1 June tentative candidates lists had been drawn up for West of Scotland constituencies and preliminary approaches had been made to various unionist minded Liberals to sound them out as regards standing for Glasgow seats.⁴ By 1 June, too, the Liberal Unionist Executive had been approached by the Conservative Association offering their support to Liberal Unionist candidates and the establishment of a joint consultative committee to work on this problem.⁵ The Liberal Unionist executive responded by establishing a sub-committee⁶ and on 11 June it was able to report that several informal meetings had been already held with the Conservatives who wanted to meet representatives from each constituency with a view to arranging joint action.⁷

As has been pointed out already there were good reasons for the tentative way in which these negotiations were undertaken by both sides. To the Liberal secessionists the danger of being regarded as Conservative candidates

¹ W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 3-4, 9.

² Ibid, pp. 4-5.

³ North British Daily Mail, 26 May 1886.

⁴ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 16.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 16-17.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., p. 23.

gave strength to their deep conviction of the necessity of retaining a separate identity distinguishable from both Gladstonians and Conservatives alike by the establishment of their own separate organisation. To the Conservatives likewise a too hasty commitment of support for Liberal Unionist candidates in all seven of the Glasgow constituencies might deprive them of the golden opportunity to gain a foothold in a Liberal stronghold.¹ Inevitably, however, both Unionist wings drew closer together as the sound of the election guns drew nearer. In a careful but increasingly cordial atmosphere of negotiation the need to co-operate or perish helped the Liberal Unionists achieve their intention of establishing themselves as a separate, permanent party with a successful record in that area where in the last analysis it counted viz. that of getting the vote out and their own candidates in.

After the division was taken on the second reading on 8 June the uncertainty of this phase was cleared up for the Liberal Unionist group in Glasgow and the outline of the plan of battle became clear. The division lists showed that as expected five of the city's M.P.s had voted for Gladstone and two, Henry and Corbett, against. The Liberal Unionist Executive were now faced, therefore, with the task of finding contestants for College, Camlachie, Central, St. Rollox and Bridgeton and defending Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Tradeston. The "extremely delicate nature" of these "preliminary conferences of the joint Committees of both parties to arrange candidates for Central, College, Camlachie and Bridgeton"² was hinted at in the North British Daily Mail. It reported two days later that the Liberals in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Tradeston would be supported by the "Tory-Whig Coalition

¹ Despite a thorough search no records from this period have emerged to throw light on the details of this joint negotiation in Glasgow from the Conservative side.

² W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 28 June 1886.

but beyond this (both sides) had been unable to agree".¹ The Conservatives in fact were hoping "to contest three Divisions and the Whigs (i.e. the Liberal Unionist group) four in Glasgow".² The three in which the Conservatives felt they would have to be admitted in any negotiation, simply because an outright Conservative would be a more acceptable choice than an in-between Liberal Unionist, were College, Central and Bridgeton.³ In St. Rollox a Liberal Unionist "Mr. Caldwell will be brought forward as the Whig nominee and will also get the solid Tory vote" while in Camlachie it was believed that another Liberal Unionist "Colonel Clark might succeed by aid of the Tory vote."⁴

Although there was little question of other than joint support for the Liberal Unionists already in the field in Tradeston,⁵ Blackfriars-Hutchesontown⁶ and St. Rollox,⁷ agreement in the other four city constituencies took longer to achieve. In College joint support for a Liberal, R.V. Campbell, was not

¹ North British Daily Mail, 10 June 1886.

² Ibid.

³ "The Tories believe the Whigs are powerless to carry the College Division against Dr. Cameron even with their support; they wish them to unite in support of a Tory, and the bait being held out is that they will bring down a leading ex-Cabinet Tory Minister to oppose the Doctor". Ibid., 10 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ It was alleged that Corbett had received the promise of Conservative support even before 8 June if he were to vote against the second reading of the Home Rule Bill. Ibid., 14 June 1886.

⁶ The former Conservative candidate in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, W.C. Maughan spoke in support of Henry at the Conservative meeting which endorsed the latter's candidature. Ibid., 23 June 1886.

⁷ Caldwell, the Liberal candidate who had given way to McCulloch in 1885 can be regarded as having been in the field in St. Rollox since before November 1885. The St. Rollox Conservatives gave him their support on 23 June 1886. Ibid., 24 June 1886.

secured until 23 June.¹ In Bridgeton, a Conservative, Colin Mackenzie, was adopted as the Unionist candidate on 24 June,² and in Camlachie a Liberal, Bennet Burleigh, was accepted on 28 June.³ In Central, J.G.A. Baird, the recent Conservative candidate, was accepted by both parties by 22 June⁴ but only after prolonged efforts by the Liberal Unionists to secure a candidate from the Liberal ranks. On 17 June a joint meeting of Conservatives and Liberal Unionists in Central had been held with Lord Provost McOnie, a Conservative, in the chair in order to agree on a candidate. Ex-Lord Provost Ure was decided on as the best compromise choice.⁵ By 19 June, however, he had refused the offer from the Unionist alliance.⁶ According to the Mail Baird, the Conservative, was waiting on the side-lines "until the Liberal Unionists ransack the list of Lord Provosts past and present to get some Liberal who would get the Tory vote!"⁷ Ure's refusal thus cleared the way for Baird and on 24 June the Liberal Unionist Committee in Central decided that party differences should be so far extinguished as to offer to have a Liberal sign his nomination papers.⁸

In spite of the dashing of their hopes in Central (the businessman's constituency in Glasgow), the Liberal Unionists could count on having secured five candidates (two of them sitting members) by the end of June to the

¹ North British Daily Mail, 23 June 1886.

² Ibid., 24 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 28 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 22 June 1886.

⁵ Ibid., 18 June 1886.

⁶ Ibid., 21 June 1886.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 25 June 1886.

Conservatives two. This seeming effacement of the Conservatives was, of course, almost inevitable in a city with such a tradition of Liberal dominance as Glasgow.¹ Although the last election had shown an increase in their support in the city the immediate strategy for them to adopt was not to try and turn this into an overall majority for Conservative candidates in each of the seven constituencies but to defeat Gladstone's Irish proposals decisively. The best hope of doing this, therefore, was to sink party differences as much as possible in order to get an anti-Gladstonian Liberal returned, a conclusion for which the Mail jeeringly declared "they were eager to abase themselves".² On 18 June, in fact, Lord Salisbury had called on all Conservatives in Britain to give their wholehearted support in those constituencies where a Liberal Unionist was standing.³ Presumably if the Liberal split were to prove permanent then the Conservatives, by agreeing to this course and by accepting numerical inferiority in the Glasgow Unionist alliance, could expect to reap the benefit in the fullness of time; in fact to pay now but live later.

While all this was going on strenuous efforts were being made to convert the feeling of support for Liberal Unionism in Glasgow into a well marshalled electoral force. By 1 June a start was made by dividing the roll of members who had already joined into electoral districts with a sub-agent in each whose task it would be to organise sub-committees in each district to work in liaison with the Liberal Unionist Central Committee.⁴ (This designation, Central Committee, is a sign of the new position being taken up now by the

¹ It has already been noted that since 1832 only one Conservative had ever been successful in a Glasgow parliamentary election.

² North British Daily Mail, 21 June 1886.

³ Ibid.

⁴ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 17.

Glasgow Executive Committee¹ in the overall context of organising branches in the West of Scotland since from now onwards it generally began to be referred to as this). On 2 June the Liberal Unionist committee in London, meeting to consider the implications of the Foreign Office gathering, gave the go-ahead signal to the Glasgow Executive to organise the Liberal opposition to the Government's Irish policy in all the counties and burghs of the West of Scotland.² To underwrite this, £250 from the central Election Fund in London was forwarded and with this and the £400 already in their Guarantee Fund the Glasgow Executive now began in earnest to shoulder their new responsibilities.³ Running from now on in top gear "every available hour of each day was earnestly occupied by the Committee in efforts to make the organisation a power in the West of Scotland".⁴ The scheme of organising sub-committees in the constituencies had been got under way and to whip up support flying columns from the Central Executive were to attend the first meeting of these groups in order to explain policy, co-ordinate the efforts of the active and prominent Unionists in the district and generally assist in the local organisation.⁵ Four days later on 11 June constituency committees were in operation in five of the Glasgow constituencies, Bridgeton, Central, Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, St. Rollox and Tradeston, all in liaison with the Central committee and arrangements were in train for one in Camlachie.⁶ By 16 June Liberal Unionist

¹ Built up, of course, around the original nucleus of Sir William Thomson, Dr. McGrigor, David Murray, William Borland, Matthew Arthur, et al.

² W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 18-19.

³ Ibid., p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 28 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., p. 19.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

electoral committees had been established in all the Glasgow constituencies.¹

Arrangements had been made to co-ordinate this electoral enthusiasm through the Central Committee. This was to be enlarged by the appointment of five representatives from each constituency electoral committee as soon as they had been established.² Thus, in order to cope with this rapid increase in business the Glasgow executive began to put themselves on a more permanent basis. The meetings which up until now had been held in McGrigor's law chambers were moved to a more permanent base in the Glasgow Central Chambers in Ingram Street.³ Extra staff were engaged in order to deal with the increased work of classifying the membership roll into constituencies and sending out large parcels of literature to the constituency electoral committees.⁴ Signs of increasing expansion can be seen, too, in the decision on 11 June to hold meetings in the evenings instead of, as before, in the afternoons in order to accommodate the greater numbers present.⁵ Speakers to present the Unionist case to Glasgow audiences were provided and for this purpose arrangements were made to add a touch of realism by bringing over several working men and clergymen from Ulster⁶ (a practice also to be adopted by the Liberals).⁷ As a result of such efforts the membership rose progressively from the 600 reported in the Glasgow and West of Scotland area in May to a figure which was

¹ W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 27-28 and p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 28 June 1886.

² Ibid., pp. 19-20.

³ Ibid., p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 28 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 25-26.

⁶ Ibid., p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 18 June 1886. North British Daily Mail, 29 June 1886 and 1 July 1886.

⁷ e.g. in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown on 28 June 1886 and in Central on 30 June 1886. North British Daily Mail, loc. cit., and Glasgow Herald, 1 July 1886.

considerably over 2,000 by the end of June.¹ Even this figure may have been underestimated since it did not include the accessions to the district committees in the various constituencies. Indeed, the First Annual Report of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association claimed that if these, together with those gathered by the candidates' committees were included then the number of active, working adherents could probably be in the region of over 5,000.²

As the membership swelled the opportunities for wider more ambitious action grew as is shown by the Parkinsonian-like proliferation of committees which the Liberal Unionist Executive began to set up now to help themselves maintain their effectiveness. By mid-June a separate organising Committee had been established to take practical charge of overall electoral organisation in the constituencies.³ Other committees were likewise established to attend to printing and publishing, office work, and finance, some of which met from day to day.⁴ By the end of June during a review of the work completed to date the first steps to transform this electoral energy into a permanent organisation were taken and arrangements were made to prepare a constitution and rules for a permanent Liberal Unionist Association.⁵

To this point it might seem as if the Unionist Liberals were making all the running in the election in Glasgow. Such an impression would, however, be a distortion of the true picture. In the position of having to take the

¹ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 28 June 1886.

² First Annual Report of Executive of West of Scotland Branch of the Liberal Committee for the Maintenance of the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland 1 August 1886.

³ W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 24-25.

⁴ Ibid., p. 23 and p. 33. Draft Report of Executive 28 June 1886.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 29-30.

Gladstonian Liberals' position by assault they were of necessity on the offensive and had not only to be active but be seen to be so. The Gladstonian Liberals were in the position of control with five of the seven Glasgow M.P.s on their side as well as all the constituency Liberal associations. If there was any weight to be gained by either the Unionists or the Gladstonians as inheritors of the Liberal tradition of dominance in the city then all the signs were that it would go to the latter group. In spite of all this, however, the Liberal organisations were not slow in getting their own electoral campaign under way to meet the fierceness of the Unionist challenge. The voting on the second reading of the Home Rule bills presented them with a situation which, with some variations, was exactly the reverse of that facing the Unionists. The Gladstonians only had to find two new candidates to oppose sitting members in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Tradeston. In both constituencies the advanced Liberals were already being reported by 9 June as ready to bring forward Home Rule Candidates.¹ In Tradeston this was a comparatively straightforward arrangement since the constituency association was unanimous in its desire to oust Corbett for his abandonment of Gladstone.² On 21 June it was clear that negotiations were in train to find a suitable candidate³ and by 25 June the election manifesto of the final choice, J.M.D. Meiklejohn, a Professor from St. Andrews University, appeared in the Glasgow press.⁴

In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, however, the choice of a suitable alternative to Mitchell Henry was to prove more difficult. There were two problems to be overcome before a Gladstonian candidate could be agreed on there.

¹ North British Daily Mail, 9 June 1886.

² Ibid., 8 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 21 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 25 June 1886.

Firstly, there appears to have been a strongly entrenched Unionist lobby well placed in the constituency association. Their aim seems to have been to let the arrangements for choosing a new candidate drag on for so long that Mitchell Henry would be left in undisputed possession as the only Liberal in the field. The longer Henry remained in sole possession during the electioneering period, therefore, so the more hurried any eventual rival candidature would have to be. Thus, Henry's hope of success would accordingly increase with each day that passed. Secondly, the mixture of political interests in the constituency ranging from the Liberal businessmen well represented in the Liberal executive through the strong Irish group to the local Radical Association made the rapid choice of an alternative less likely since there were so many disparate elements to be considered. The North British Daily Mail reported that the Irish vote was so strong in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown that "if the choice of a candidate is anything fortunate Mr. Mitchell Henry has not the ghost of a chance".¹ However, it qualified its enthusiasm by cautiously remarking that the difficulty of the Liberal opposition to Henry lay "in getting a candidate advanced enough to secure the support of the radicals as well as the Gladstonian Liberals".²

The delaying tactics of the Unionist group in the constituency executive became evident from the moves that were made by the political managers in the constituency in the days that followed. On 15 June the executive were reported to be still procrastinating about deciding on a candidate due to "a cowardly and unfair element not willing to call a meeting until they have done their utmost to get Mitchell Henry readopted."³ Apparently two prominent

¹ North British Daily Mail, 10 June 1886.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 15 June 1886.

office bearers, William Fife and Campbell of Tullichewan, were opposed to Henry but were obviously handicapped by their desire not to split the association since so many others on the executive were his supporters.¹ Attempts to bring all this to light seem to have come mainly from working-class Liberals in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown who appeared to be less loth to castigate the crypto-unionists and bring their delaying tactics into the open than either Fife or Campbell were. On 12 May a correspondent to the Mail describing himself as a working man in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown described the delaying moves of part of the Liberal executive as "shocking Tory tactics" by "Tory-Goschenite Canvassers" acting in the guise of Liberals.² Two days later he returned to the attack this time giving the names and addresses of the ringleaders and alleging their connection with the Unionist group in Glasgow³ (a statement which was well founded since the three specifically mentioned, Alex. Scott, William Jack and R. Wylie, can all be identified as members of the General Executive of the Liberal Unionists in Glasgow).⁴ The mood of the Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Radical Association can also be gauged at this time from their resolve "to support no candidate unless he is prepared to support Mr. Gladstone in his Home Rule Bill,"⁵ a clear warning to the Executive that Henry would be unacceptable to them.

On 15 June there was further trouble at a constituency meeting again over the delay in calling a meeting to decide on a candidate.⁶ With some difficulty

¹ North British Daily Mail, 15 June 1886.

² Ibid., 12 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 14 June 1886.

⁴ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 61.

⁵ Report of Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Radical Association meeting on 14 June 1886 in North British Daily Mail, 15 June 1886.

⁶ Ibid., 16 June 1886.

because of the strong lobby for Henry it was finally decided to hold a meeting for this purpose on the following Friday. Some indication of the tactics used by the lobby to increase Henry's chances of success emerged from the acrimonious argument and accusations which were bandied about in the heat of this discussion. It was only with some difficulty that questioners from the body of the meeting elicited from the executive answers which brought the procrastinators out into full view before the association. It appeared that the Secretary of the constituency association, H.R. Taggart, had attempted to give a false impression of the mood of the Liberal electors who had passed a resolution of confidence in Gladstone.¹ Although he was forced as Secretary of the association to give press publicity to this he had sought to counter its effect by publishing Henry's answer which rejected the resolution as binding "because a large minority of my supporters voted against this motion".² At the same time, as he admitted to the meeting, he had suppressed a letter from Gladstone welcoming the constituency association's resolution of support.³ On 18 June these struggles on behalf of Henry were finally resolved with the defeat of his lobby and this resulted in the departure of the Unionists from the meeting. To make the split as obvious as possible the Treasurer, the Secretary and the Convener of the organisation committee all resigned publicly from the platform.⁴ Such tactics thus helped to delay the adoption of a Liberal candidate until 24 June. The man chosen after consultation between the constituency selection committee and the Liberal Whips was

¹ North British Daily Mail, 11 May 1886.

² Ibid., 15 May 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 15 May 1886.

³ North British Daily Mail, 16 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 19 June 1886.

A.D. Provand, born in Glasgow, but better known as a merchant from Manchester.¹

In spite of difficulties such as these, however, the Liberal organisation in Glasgow was still better placed than the Liberal Unionists in preparing for the election. Compared with the latter's task of finding five candidates suitable to the Unionist alliance the former only had to bother about two. In only one of those, Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, was there any real difficulty. In the other five the situation was perfectly straightforward in the main. It is true that McCulloch, the sitting Gladstonian member in St. Rollox, intimated his intention of refusing to fight another election so soon² but this must have been foreseen since almost immediately an alternative candidate of suitable views was approached and then adopted by the constituency Liberal association.³ In Camlachie, also, there were some murmurings from the constituency association as to future support for the sitting member, Hugh Watt, mainly because of doubts as to the sincerity of his professions of radicalism. A correspondent in the Mail described him as a "weathercock politician" who would promise anything in order to further his own ends.⁴ His electoral promises, which had been so far advanced as to secure the support of the Scottish Land Restoration League in November, had all been broken it was alleged.⁵ On the Crofters' Bill he had voted in the opposite lobby from the Crofter M.P.s and the rest of the Scottish radicals. Yet in January he had gone on record before the constituency association as "a representative of

¹ North British Daily Mail, 24 June 1886.
Shedden T/S.

² North British Daily Mail, 12 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 14 and 17 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 15 June 1886. This charge reiterated what had been said against him when he had first come before the constituency as the Liberal candidate in the previous November.

⁵ Ibid.

Labour (who) would always profess to promote that interest".¹ On the Church issue he had abstained from voting with the other six Glasgow M.P.s in favour of Dr. Cameron's Disestablishment motion and in fact had tried to get the House counted out before the vote could be taken.² On Ireland he had voted for Gladstone on the second reading yet his Election agent was well known for his anti-Home Rule views. In short, the writer concluded, he was not drawn from the ranks of "the men to suit radical Camlachie".³ All this accounts for the lukewarm nature of his readoption which obviously only went through for want of a suitable alternative candidate at that late hour.⁴ This can be seen from the number of protests which were made at his readoption meeting against his votes on the Crofters' Bill and the Disestablishment motion. The constituency association's vice-chairman grudgingly gave his support to Watt "principally on the ground that if another man were brought forward it would have a tendency to spoil the Liberal vote in the district".⁵ As the election date drew nearer, however, and the intensity of party conflict grew doubts such as these were subordinated to the overall interests of party victory.

Out of the line-up of candidates which thus emerged in Glasgow in June 1886, only Campbell, (College, Liberal-Unionist), Meiklejohn, (Tradeston, Liberal), McKenzie, (Bridgeton, Conservative), Provand, (Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, Liberal), and McLiver, (St. Rollox, Liberal) were new to the Glasgow electorate. The rest were the same men who had recently fought in

¹ Report of Camlachie Liberal association meeting on 8 Jan. 1886 in North British Daily Mail, 9 Jan. 1886.

² Ibid., 14 June 1886.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 19 June 1886.

⁵ Ibid.

the November 1885 election.¹ As has been pointed out the actual election period was short. As forecast by the North British Daily Mail nominations in Glasgow closed on 1 July and polling took place on 6 July.² The main issue on which the battle was fought was of course on support for or opposition to the proposal of Home Rule for Ireland. All the candidates featured this as the main item in their election manifestoes. The arguments used for or against were the same familiar ones which had been constantly in the air since the Home Rule crisis had begun. For this reason it is not proposed to deal at any great length with the actual electoral battles in Glasgow in 1886.

The Unionists' case simply followed the various lines of opposition which have already been outlined in Chapter VIII. Thus, Caldwell in St. Rollox was for the principle of Home Rule but only when Scotland and England received similar benefits³ (the Chamberlainite angle of Home Rule mostly as an extension of local government). Home Rule, too, he declared, could only be granted if law and order could be maintained in Ireland, the Empire kept intact and the Imperial Westminster Parliament retain its supremacy.⁴ The same arguments were used by Mitchell Henry in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown (with the additional one that Home Rule would lead to civil war and foreign entanglements)⁵ and by Cameron Corbett in Tradeston.⁶ In Central, J.G.A. Baird went further by

¹ See Appendix F, infra.

² North British Daily Mail, 15 June 1886. The Mail said that wherever there was a large Irish population, as in Glasgow, special efforts would be made to have polling over before the Orangemen's special day, 12 July, in order to avoid public disorder.

³ Election address of James Caldwell to Electors of St. Rollox. North British Daily Mail, 12 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Election address of Mitchell Henry to Electors of Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. Ibid., 16 June 1886.

⁶ Election address of Cameron Corbett to Electors of Tradeston. Ibid., 18 June 1886.

declaring not only his reasons for opposing Home Rule (the weakening of Imperial Unity, the endangering of the loyal Protestant minority, the fact that it would not end here but would lead in time to complete separation) but also what he would do to solve the Irish problem.¹ He would, he stated, "co-operate with the eminent statesmen of both the historical parties" by conceding Liberal local government which might equally be granted to Scotland and Wales and England too, "subject to the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament and supported by consistent firm and impartial administration of the law".² This statement, though it was aimed at Liberals and Conservatives alike, hardly succeeded in disguising its Tory origins. By implication it admitted in its conclusion the truth of the Liberal counter-challenge that the only alternative to Home Rule was a renewal of a policy of coercion and military rule in Ireland.

This was certainly the way the matter was seen from the Liberal side. Although willing to counter each specific anti-Home Rule argument the Gladstonians' campaign in Glasgow took its stand on Home Rule on a more general level by treating it as a matter of civil and international justice. In this way E.R. Russell in Bridgeton contented himself with arguing for the principle of the Bill saying that the choice facing the electors was either to trust Ireland or subject her to another period of coercion.³ Similarly Cameron in College presented the issue in terms of a straight choice - either acceptance of the Home Rule principle with hopes of success and conciliation in Ireland or rejection with all the consequences of protracted conflict and

¹ Election address of J.G.A. Baird to Electors of Central. North British Daily Mail, 22 June 1886.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 23 June 1886.

chaos.¹ Meiklejohn, too, in Tradeston defined the choice as simply one of conciliation or coercion, the policy of Gladstone or Salisbury, a final solution now or a protracted struggle against feelings of natural self determination.² In this way the Glasgow Liberals mostly reiterated the appeal to justice and true Liberalism which had been made by the radical Scottish National Liberal Federation to the electors of Scotland. According to them the only questions to be answered at this election was how Irish claims were to be dealt with. Was it to be "by Gladstone with the strengthening hand of fellowship or by the Tories and a section of the Liberals by coercion?" Their advice to the electorate was to follow "our great and trusted leader (whose) appeal was to the British people, to their humanity, to their sense of justice, to their faith in Liberal principles. On the other hand (were) grouped men whose appeal is to fear, prejudice and religious intolerance.... Let not the people of Scotland be led astray by false issues. The question is purely one of national and civil right."³

Some of the specific Unionist arguments against Home Rule were dealt with by Gladstone when he addressed a crowded meeting in Glasgow during the campaign.⁴ Dealing with the parts of his Irish proposals which particularly

¹ Election address of Dr. Cameron to Electors of College. North British Daily Mail, 24 June 1886.

² Election address of Professor Meiklejohn to Electors of Tradeston. North British Daily Mail, 25 June 1886.

³ Election appeal to Liberals of Scotland by the National Liberal Federation of Scotland, ibid., 12 June 1886.

⁴ Gladstone's identification with the Scottish Liberal electors can be gauged from contemporary press accounts of the enthusiasm with which he was greeted. Typical of the inscriptions on the banners waved to greet him was one reading "Up, Willie, waur them a'." Ibid., 18 June 1886. For the same identification in the 1880 general election see R. Kelley, "Midlothian: a study in Politics and Ideas," Victorian Studies, vol. 4, (Dec. 1960), 119-140.

affected Scotsmen he declared that the fear of religious persecution in Ireland was a chimera. Ulster was to be given every protection, he said, but the crux of the matter was that far from the Catholics of Ireland presenting a threat it was, in fact, the Tories and Orangemen who had systematically persecuted the former. The argument that before Ireland should merit special treatment Scotland, England and Wales should be considered first was described by Gladstone as a red herring. The rest of Britain, he declared, had not shown the same desire for self-government as Ireland had. To hold it up until the others were ready could only defer a solution indefinitely.¹

The sectarian argument was important enough for the Glasgow Liberal candidates to deal with it at some length. Hartington, at a Unionist meeting in Paisley, had devoted most of his speech to the dangers to Protestant Ulster which would follow from rule by a Catholic Irish majority in control of both the government and police.² A Belfast man described as both a Protestant and a Nationalist was introduced at one of Beith's meetings in Central in order to give a living contradiction to such allegations.³ Meiklejohn, too, in Tradeston sought to stymie Chamberlain's expected appeal to Presbyterian Scotland to support Ulster by citing his own personal experience of the Irish situation. Such charges, he declared, were inconsistent with the Liberal creed of fair play since Protestants were to be found in positions of authority all over Ireland but no Catholics were allowed to hold office in Ulster.⁴ The same theme was taken up by McLiverin St.

¹ North British Daily Mail, 23 June 1886.

² Ibid., 28 June 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 28 June 1886.

³ North British Daily Mail, 1 July 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 1 July 1886.

⁴ North British Daily Mail, 25 June 1886 and 28 June 1886.

Rollox¹ and Provand in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown² and Professor McNeil from Trinity College, Dublin and J. Jordan, the Nationalist M.P. from West Clare, were brought forward to speak on Liberal platforms as Protestant Irishmen to dispel fears that Home Rule would mean Rome Rule.³ Finally at the eve of election rally arranged by the National Liberal Federation of Scotland in Glasgow Green, the Glasgow Liberal candidates' speeches were all supported by members of the Irish Protestant Home Rule Association to attempt to counter up to the very last moment the Unionists' sectarian argument.⁴ The economic argument that Home Rule would depress the Scottish labour market still further by forcing emigration from Ireland was also specifically countered. In Camlachie Professor McNeil pointed out with some truth that the immigration of Irishmen which had affected Scotland during the Nineteenth Century had been in fact largely due to Westminster and landlord rule, not Home Rule.⁵ This point was also dealt with by McLiver in St. Rollox⁶ and the speeches at the Liberal demonstration in Glasgow Green reversed the Unionist argument neatly by appealing to the self interest of the Scottish working man by saying that if Home Rule were defeated then further large scale migrations into Scotland would ensue.⁷

In general, therefore, the Liberal candidates appealed for support on the basis of the general principles of justice involved in giving Home Rule

¹ North British Daily Mail, 26 June 1886.

² Ibid., 29 June 1886.

³ e.g. Ibid., 29 and 30 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 5 July 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 5 July 1886.

⁵ North British Daily Mail, 30 June 1886.

⁶ Ibid., 3 July 1886.

⁷ Ibid., 5 July 1886.
Glasgow Herald, 5 July 1886.

to Ireland, although they were willing to counter specific Unionist allegations during the course of their electoral campaign. This said, however, it must still be pointed out that the general appeals in their manifestoes served to mask the fact that they had little constructive to say on the issue. The indications are that in common with the rest of the Scottish Gladstonians they regarded the Irish problem with less than one hundred per cent enthusiasm. Their commitment to it seems to have taken the form of an instinctive support for Gladstone rather than for the measures he was undertaking. This is why the issue was so often presented as a vote for Gladstone rather than one for Home Rule for Ireland. Perhaps they sensed that 1886 saw the beginning of a new polarisation in British politics when decisions taken now either for or against the Gladstonian line would determine not just personal attitudes to Irish Home Rule but also to all those other issues, social, economic and Imperial, which were to divide Liberals from Conservatives and Whigs from Radicals, over the next 20 years. There is little one can put a finger on to substantiate this conclusively but there are indications here and there which tend to suggest that this was so. For instance, the Chairman of Central constituency Liberal Executive pledged his support to Beith but only on the grounds of support for the general Liberal cause, not because he shared the candidate's views on Ireland.¹ Again, some of the Bridgeton Liberals tried to pledge their candidate, E.R. Russell, to vote only for Home Rule but in no way to support a Land Bill which would put money in the pockets of Irish landlords.² Beith, in Central, supported the principle of Home Rule but at the same time he was careful to qualify this by reserving his freedom of action in deciding what form this

¹ North British Daily Mail, 15 June 1886.

² Ibid.

Home Rule would take.¹ McLiver, in St. Rollox, supported the principle but added that this was because it would smooth the way for giving untrammelled attention "to our domestic and social legislation".²

On the other hand, there was another side to the Liberal campaign in Glasgow in 1886 which must be noted to their advantage. This is that they were able to adopt a more wide-ranging, positive approach, a tactic which was not possible to the Liberal Unionists, thirled as these latter were to a negative, single-minded opposition. Unlike the Unionists the Liberals included other issues in their electoral campaigns. McLiver included measures to better the condition of the working classes, licensing reform, religious equality and further land reform in his manifesto to St. Rollox.³ Beith included support for Disestablishment and further land reform in his in Central⁴ while in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Provand promised tax revision to benefit the poorer classes of the community, land law reform and a policy of governmental economy.⁵ The questioning of candidates by audiences at election meetings shows that Ireland was by no means the all-absorbing topic in Glasgow. What is striking were the great variety of questions put to the candidates regarding social topics such as housing and working conditions in the city. There was, of course, the normal interest in the usual radical fare such as Disestablishment, free education and popular control of liquor licenses. The Synod of the United Presbyterians, for instance, had already drawn attention to issues other than Ireland during the election by calling

¹ North British Daily Mail, 23 June 1886.

² Ibid., 19 June 1886.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 23 June 1886.

⁵ Ibid., 25 June 1886.

on electors not to be distracted by the current polemics and to ensure that Disestablishment was held forth as an issue.¹ Provand in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown was asked questions on his views on the Church issue² and it was also one of the issues in Camlachie.³ Local option also appeared as a topic of more than normal interest in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown, Tradeston and St. Rollox⁴ and a large deputation from the Scottish Temperance Union interviewed McLiver to satisfy themselves on his views on local option before promising him their support in his campaign.⁵

Questions on social and labour issues, however, figured more prominently. Caldwell, for instance, was treated in St. Rollox to questions as to his support for shorter hours for shop workers and the restoration of the land to the people.⁶ In Camlachie, too, Watt was closely questioned on the topic of housing in Glasgow. He was asked if he would support measures to tax waste land in order to make more land available for building purposes and consequently help ease the congestion in working-class areas.⁷ Both Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and St. Rollox in particular showed the greatest amount of interest in social legislation. Both of course contained active radical and Land Restoration League organisations as well as large working-class electorates. St. Rollox also had a candidate well known for his support of Labour interests. McLiver was prominently identified with the interests of the

¹ North British Daily Mail, 19 June 1886.

² Ibid., 24 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 15 and 19 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 19, 22, 24, 25 June 1886.

⁵ Ibid., 18 June 1886.

⁶ Ibid., 17 June 1886.

⁷ Ibid., 25 June 1886.

Railway Servants' Protection Association and was active in the T.U.C.,¹ and was no doubt keen to promote this reputation by answering questions of a social nature at length. The 10-hours day for railwaymen, which he supported, was one particular topic which was bound to raise interest in a railway constituency like St. Rollox which included parts of Springburn and Cowlands.² Other topics of constant interest to questioners in these two constituencies were the condition of the Crofters,³ methods to better the housing of the working-classes in Glasgow,⁴ payment of M.P.s, reimposition of a Land Tax and the abolition of mineral royalties.⁵

As has been pointed out, in fact, part of the Liberal campaign in Glasgow was to represent the granting of Home Rule to Ireland as something which would rid Parliament of a time-consuming problem so as to ensure the free passage of much needed social legislation.⁶ Amongst the Unionists only Caldwell in St. Rollox⁷ and Burleigh in Camlachie⁸ tried to vary their anti-Home Rule fare by dealing with such matters. However, it is significant that both these men seemed somehow out of place against the background of Liberal Unionism in Glasgow at that time. Caldwell could never be described as belonging to the 'Whig' wing of Scottish Liberalism in the way that men like R.V. Campbell or Dr. McGrigor did. He could indeed be called a moderate Liberal with radical tendencies especially in the cause of Free Education. A

¹ North British Daily Mail, 14 and 28 June 1886.

² Ibid., 22 and 28 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 22 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 28 June 1886.

⁵ Ibid., 25 and 26 June 1886.

⁶ Ibid., 19, 23 and 28 June 1886.

⁷ Ibid., 12 and 19 June 1886.

⁸ Ibid., 28 June 1886.

self-made businessman the only reason why he had been rejected by the St. Rollox Liberals in the previous election was that he had refused to be tied to any one specific reforming line from either the Land Restorationist or Disestablishment lobby.¹ Indeed after the first passions aroused by the proposal to give Ireland Home Rule had died down he gradually began to break his connection with the Liberal Unionists in 1890.² Indeed his Liberalism was such that the Conservatives of St. Rollox in 1886, even at the height of Unionist fervour, were reported to be lukewarm about supporting him.³ Burleigh, too, who had stood as the advanced Liberal and Labour candidate for Govan in 1885,⁴ was reduced to some tortuous pleading in his speeches in order to try and reconcile his radicalism with the Unionist line. For example, the argument that Home Rule would break Imperial Unity was transmuted by him into dangers "against the supremacy of the People's Parliament".⁵ Home Rule could only be secured at a price of £200 million "to be wrung from the already over-burdened British working classes" and by it "Ireland would be reduced to the status of a tax paying tributary province no longer to be ruled by the People's Parliament but by that Secret or Privy Council of the Crown".⁶ A note of desperation in his efforts to be all things to all men can be seen from a typical election address he made. "He was a Protestant as against the disintegration of the Empire! He was a

¹ Shedden T/S.

² W.S.L.U. Minutes, pp. 123, 129, 166.

³ North British Daily Mail, 15 June 1886.

⁴ In the next election, in fact, Burleigh stood as the official Scottish Labour party candidate against a Gladstonian and a Liberal Unionist in Camlachie. Shedden T/S.

⁵ Electoral manifesto of Bennett Burleigh to Electors of Camlachie. North British Daily Mail, 28 June 1886.

⁶ Ibid., 28 and 29 June 1886.

Tory, a radical and a Liberal for Tory, radical and Liberal votes. He was for the 'democratic' vote".¹ In fact, Burleigh's radical views and his present Unionism left him open to the charges constantly made against him that his candidature was a "radical burlesque", "in reality a pale Tory croak", and that his present campaign in Camlachie had been sponsored by his former Conservative opponent, Pearce of Govan.²

An overall review of the electoral campaign in Glasgow, indeed, heightens the impression that the major split was not just one between Unionists and Home Rulers but one which separated the "masses" from the "classes". Gladstone had, of course, declared this to be the basic element in the struggle - the will of the people as against the power of the oligarchy, justice as against repression, 'Us' versus 'Them'. Certainly the indications are that in Glasgow, as elsewhere, the Home Rule Issue caused political attitudes to split on class lines as much as on anything else. Mention has already been made of the social composition of the Liberal Unionist group in the city. It is true that lawyers, merchants, and factory owners were also to be found in the Liberal side in 1886 but the Irish issue brought to the normal middle class leadership of Glasgow Liberalism the close support of the radical, socialist and Irish groups in the city all drawn in the main from the ranks of "the masses". The Liberal Unionists, on the other hand, were in a position of open alliance with their erstwhile opponents - the Conservatives. They also drew most of their support from those who had become alarmed at the disjointed nature of the times as shown by such things as the current outbreak of labour discontent, or the more radical direction in which Scottish Liberalism had seemed to be heading in recent years over issues like

¹ North British Daily Mail, 30 June 1886.

² e.g. North British Daily Mail correspondence columns, 28 June and 5 July 1886.

Disestablishment or the Land question. In fact, their alarm at the threat of popular as opposed to exclusive control, seen in their abhorrence of democratic rule through the tyranny of mere numbers, showed an acute foresight of the future polarisation of British politics along class lines.

The secession of the Unionist Liberals while it provided greater strength for the right wing in Glasgow's politics also left the Liberal organisations both more radical and more capable of radical attitudes. When efforts to retain Mitchell Henry were finally defeated in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and the Unionist Liberals resigned one by one it is significant that the first act of the majority remaining should be to decide overwhelmingly to affiliate the constituency association to the radical National Liberal Federation of Scotland.¹ Indicative, too, of the growing polarisation of politics in Glasgow were the forces which lined up in support behind the Liberal candidates. The Irish electoral associations, of course, organised their vote solidly in the seven constituencies for them² and to help in this, Irish Nationalist M.P.s were drafted in to help in this task and to speak at the candidates' election meetings.³ In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown in particular their enthusiasm was sharpened by the fact that the Unionist candidate was the "renegade" Henry. Besides disrupting his meetings⁴ 300 members of the William O'Brian branch of the Irish National League sought to make his defeat doubly sure by sacrificing a day's wages on polling day to act as volunteer helpers for Provand's Committee.⁵ The Scottish Home Rule

¹ North British Daily Mail, 19 June 1886.

² Ibid., 15, 21, 28 and 29 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 23 and 28 June 1886.
Glasgow Observer, 10 July 1886.

⁴ North British Daily Mail, 25 June and 3 July 1886.

⁵ Glasgow Observer, 10 July 1886.

Association spurred by the current controversy also provided another source of general support.¹ So, too, did the Land Reform and Socialist organisations in the city. The Scottish Land Restoration League under J. Shaw Maxwell made a special point of issuing a manifesto during the election calling on all its members to support Gladstone's policy for Ireland.² William Morris at one of his proselytising visits to Glasgow in June called on his Socialist supporters to support Gladstone.³ The Blackfriars-Hutchesontown Radical Association expressed their support for the struggle against the Liberal Unionists.⁴

The reasons for the support of both the Scottish Land Restoration League and William Morris are indicative of the way in which the electoral issues were begun to be seen in Glasgow at this time. Morris had castigated the opposition to Home Rule as being due largely to class prejudice⁵ and the Scottish Land Restoration League's manifesto declared its support for Home Rule as a matter of "social and democratic advance" which was being resisted by "the classes".⁶ The note here was one which was sounded early and grew in volume during the election. Thus, in May a prominent Liberal had called on Glasgow voters to beware the snares of the Liberal Unionist group since it contained men whom the working classes should shun. They wanted working class support, he said, but only in order to give support to men with views like the Duke of Argyll's.⁷ The Mail's line of attack on the Liberal

¹ North British Daily Mail, 19 and 21 April and 26 June 1886.

² Ibid., 17 and 29 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 28 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid., 25 June 1886.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 29 June 1886.

⁷ Ibid., 20 May 1886.

Unionists was to portray them as "a machine which has been made with money and which is kept going with money to cram the views of the 'classes' down the throats of the 'masses'".¹ A letter from a working man in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown founded his protest at being asked to give his support to the Liberal Unionists on the fact that as a party they were composed of men "who have at all times opposed any extension of political right to my class." Being a working man his indignation was roused "by being expected to bow when they would beak".² In the election speeches in the campaign the same note was constantly being struck. Thus Beith in Central represented Home Rule in terms of extending the principle of "government for the people by the people".³ At the Gladstone meeting, too, the votes of thanks were cast in the same 'classes v. masses' mould. The audience were told that this was a battle "of the rank and file not of generals". Those opposed to Home Rule were significantly "either Lords or Whigs" whose policy was to "keep the people down and dole out gifts as charity to them," whereas the true Liberal policy was "to give the people their rights and so set them free".⁴ In Bridgeton Russell claimed that the real Unionist policy was to retain "the Irish difficulty so as to hold up British legislation and then when social legislation did get through to vote against it".⁵

This, therefore, is how the parties stood on the eve of polling. The over-riding issue of Ireland had placed a section of the Liberals in league with the Conservatives and caused them to concentrate on attacking Home Rule

¹ North British Daily Mail, 28 June 1886.

² Ibid., 12 June 1886.

³ Ibid., 23 June 1886.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

to the exclusion of all else. The Liberals, on the other hand, in general sympathy with Gladstone had found the solid support of all the radical elements in the city ranged behind them. As the Glasgow Herald put it the "precise issues of the election (were) a good deal clouded in certain quarters" so that the result was in doubt right up to the last minute in many constituencies.¹ Both sides held mass rallies at the end of the campaign. The National Liberal Federation had theirs in Glasgow Green when all seven Liberal candidates made their final speeches.² The seven Unionist candidates similarly were adopted at a final meeting held to signify publicly joint Liberal Unionist and Conservative support.³ The results of the polls in the seven constituencies were as follows (the 1885 results are given also for purposes of comparison):-

¹ Glasgow Herald, 6 July 1886.

² Ibid., 5 July 1886.
North British Daily Mail, 5 July 1886.

³ W.S.L.U. Minutes, p. 33.

<u>Constituency</u>	<u>1886</u>		<u>1885</u>	
Central	J. Baird	(U) 5779	G. Beith	(L) 5846
	G. Beith	(L) 4423	J. Baird	(C) 4779
		<u>1356</u>		<u>1067</u>
Tradeston	A.C. Corbett	(LU) 3878	A.C. Corbett	(L) 4354
	J. Meiklejohn	(L) 3174	J. Somervell	(C) 3240
			W. Greaves	(LRL) 86
		<u>704</u>		<u>1114</u>
Camlachie	H. Watt	(L) 3467	H. Watt	(L) 4047
	B. Burleigh	(LU) 3308	T. Reid	(C) 2883
			J. Martin	(L) 177
		<u>159</u>		<u>1164</u>
College	C. Cameron	(L) 4880	C. Cameron	(L) 5662
	R.V. Campbell	(LU) 4225	Sir W. Cunninghame	(C) 4139
		<u>655</u>		<u>1523</u>
St. Rollox	J. Caldwell	(LU) 4788	J. McCulloch	(L) 4950
	P. McLiver	(L) 4669	J. Cuthbertson	(C) 4824
		<u>119</u>		<u>126</u>
Blackfriars- Hutchesontown	A. Provand	(L) 4201	M. Henry	(L) 3759
	M. Henry	(LU) 3337	W. Maughan	(C) 3137
			J. Maxwell	(LRL) 1156
		<u>864</u>		<u>622</u>
Bridgeton	E. Russell	(L) 4364	E. Russell	(L) 3601
	C. MacKenzie	(U) 3567	E. Maitland	(C) 3478
			W. Forsyth	(LRL) 978
		<u>797</u>		<u>123</u>

(L - Liberal U - Unionist LU - Liberal Unionist
C - Conservative LRL - Land Restoration League)

Overall the Liberals had retained four seats, the Liberal Unionists had won two and the Conservatives one. It would be tempting to speculate on the effect of the Irish vote in all seven contests were it not that any analysis along these lines would be highly tentative or suspect since so little is known of the distribution of the Irish vote. The only indications of the size of the Irish population by constituency are those estimates contained in Table 1, Appendix C (infra) which are based on Russell's survey of the sanitary districts. A contemporary survey of Irish voting strength in Britain based its figures on a rule of thumb calculation that the proportion of voters to population was roughly in the region of 1 : 7.¹ But this took no account of the variables likely to be present at any one date such as removals or the numbers disqualified through receipt of poor relief, conditions which were both likeliest to apply to the Irish population. If this method were acceptable it would, on the basis of the figures calculated for 1881,² give an extremely rough distribution of the Irish Electorate in Glasgow as follows:- Central (1304), Tradeston (1120), Camlachie (1302), College (1153), St. Rollox (1772), Blackfriars-Hutchesontown (1401), Bridgeton (1502). How suspect such a calculation is can be shown by the way it fails to reflect the oft-repeated assertion made in 1886 that the heaviest Irish voting bloc was in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown. The above figures show this distinction to belong to St. Rollox. Arithmetically this is inevitable since the digits are ratios of 1 : 7 of the constituency Irish-born and the largest Irish-born population in Appendix C appears to have been in St. Rollox. Further proof of the uselessness of such figures comes from the various newspaper estimates in 1886 of Irish voting strength. The Glasgow Herald said it was 1,700 in

¹ Glasgow Herald, 1 July 1886.

² See Appendix C, Table 1, infra.

Central but the North British Daily Mail, on the other hand, put it at 600.¹ The Mail said the Irish vote in Colledge was the smallest in Glasgow (presumably because the Liberal candidate, Cameron, was the Mail's proprietor, and by minimising thus the Irish vote in Colledge his narrow victory would seem all the more convincing). The Glasgow Observer, on the other hand, denied this saying that his narrow return was only ensured by the Irish vote which it put at over 1,500 in that constituency.² The only certain thing about the effect of the Irish Nationalist vote in Glasgow during this election was that it would go to the Liberal. Even this, however, leaves a question mark over the effect of the non-Nationalist Irish vote which inevitably must remain a mystery until some way is found of distinguishing the Irish group in Glasgow on religious lines.

The plain fact was that the Liberal Unionists had done extremely well in their first electoral test. To take (in conjunction with the Conservatives) three of the seven Liberal seats was no mean feat considering the short time they had had to organise an electoral machine. Their victories, together with the extremely narrow margins by which the four Liberals got in is a sure indication that their feelings about Home Rule were shared to a certain extent at least by the Glasgow electorate. On the other hand, the Liberals could point to the fact that despite the opposition which might have been expected in Glasgow to the idea of Home Rule for Ireland on economic, patriotic and religious lines they had managed to retain four seats out of the seven. In the three seats lost to the Unionist alliance there were several mitigating factors which could help to explain their reverses. In

¹ Glasgow Herald, 1 July 1886.
North British Daily Mail, 21 June 1886.

² North British Daily Mail, 6 March 1886.
Glasgow Observer, 10 July 1886.

Central Baird had already shown how close he could run Beith in the previous November. The fact that he won in the atmosphere of uncertainty created by Gladstone's apparent new departure over Ireland came therefore as no surprise. To turn a deficit of over 1,000 to a majority of 1,300 plus was more surprising. Beith thought that abstentions by unconvinced Liberals accounted for the majority against him,¹ a point which the Nationalist M.P. sent to organise the Irish vote in Glasgow agreed with.² The latter also blamed the Central Liberals for lack of organisation,³ however, and this was the moral the North British Daily Mail drew from the election results. "The great lesson of the day," it said, "is the need for greater Liberal organisation so as to bring the Liberal electors together as a united working body",⁴ If this were true then one constant factor noted by all observers in the voting in Glasgow must have handicapped Beith considerably. The election had been fought on the unamended November electoral roll and since then a great many of the annual house removals had taken place.⁵ "The elections have followed so closely on the 'flitting' term that many voters have hardly had time to get settled in their new houses, and removed from one constituency to another have not returned to vote in the old constituency for which they were registered".⁶ This plus the contentious issues involved in the election must have helped swell the number of abstentions as can be seen by the drop in the

¹ North British Daily Mail, 6 July 1886.

² Glasgow Observer, 10 July 1886.

³ Ibid.

⁴ North British Daily Mail, 6 July 1886.

⁵ Ibid.

Glasgow Observer, 10 July 1886.

Glasgow Herald, 6 July 1886.

⁶ Glasgow Observer, 10 July 1886.

numbers voting compared to 1885. The Herald estimated that 1,000 electors had removed from Central since November¹ and Cameron complained of suffering loss of votes in College for the same reason.²

In Tradeston Corbett's advantages were that he was the man in possession. He was also (unlike Mitchell Henry in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown) popular in the constituency through his family connections. The Mail summed his victory up as due to the fact that "he had got a hold on the constituency for his father's sake and as a strongly religious man and a champion of the temperance party".³ It was, in fact, notable that Tradeston's Liberal association spoke of his defection always in tones more of sorrow than of anger. There was none of the bitterness which had envenomed the election campaign in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown of that other Liberal M.P. turned Liberal Unionist, Mitchell Henry. Meiklejohn, therefore, in spite of a rousing campaign came too late into the field to overcome Corbett's advantages as the man in possession. Apart from his views on Ireland Corbett was an acceptable Liberal for the Tradeston voters and held the seat successfully in 1892 and 1895 as a Liberal Unionist, in 1900 as Independent Liberal and in 1906 as a Liberal once more.⁴

For much the same reasons Caldwell's victory in St. Rollox was hardly a disaster for the Liberals. Caldwell had been nursing the constituency since before last November, he had the benefit of his local connections and he had been making Liberal speeches for some seven months before his opponent came

¹ Glasgow Herald, 6 July 1886.

² North British Daily Mail, 6 July 1886.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Shedden T/S.

on the scene.¹ Inevitably, therefore, McLiver despite his reputation as a champion of the working man in a largely working-class constituency, had to start off from behind to get himself known.

Of the other four constituencies Bridgeton's vote for the Liberal as against a Conservative was hardly surprising considering its social composition and its large Irish population. In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Camlachie, too, the natural advantages lay with the Liberals, and in both these constituencies the Irish Electoral Associations and the Scottish candidates' committees worked hand in hand to ensure victory.² In Camlachie the Irish voters from the Parkhead district marched in a body to the polling booths.³ In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown the antagonism of the Irish voters towards Mitchell Henry can be gauged not only from the rowdiness of his meetings but also from the sentiments wrung from him in defeat. His defeat was due, he claimed, to the large numbers of Irish in the constituency who would not give a man a fair hearing. In a final, bitter parting, he expressed the hope "that a longer residence in Scotland would teach them to gain the self respect of their fellow men for which the first step necessary was to practise justice and fair play towards their opponents".⁴ In College, the very heart of Liberal Unionist sentiment and organising ability, the Liberals could take most cheer. Despite all their opponents' efforts and their well known antagonism towards Cameron's radical views he had managed (narrowly) to retain the seat. This might have been due to Conservatives'

¹ Glasgow Observer, 10 July 1886.
North British Daily Mail, 6 July 1886.

² Glasgow Observer, 10 July 1886.

³ Glasgow Herald, 6 July 1886.

⁴ Ibid.

unwillingness to vote for a Unionist candidate who was also a well known Liberal, R.V. Campbell. Mention has already been made of the fact that it was in this constituency that the Conservatives had felt themselves strong enough to contemplate running one of their own candidates. Their faithfulness to the Unionist cause was certainly in some doubt right up to polling day. On polling day the Liberal Unionist Committee found it necessary to advertise a call to "The Conservative Electors of College appealing to them to cast aside party and personal feeling" for the higher cause of defeating Gladstone.¹

The last word, however, must be given to the Liberal Unionists for it was they who provided the shocks in 1886. They had knocked a considerable hole in the hitherto all prevailing Liberal control of Glasgow. Liberalism in the city, noted for its organisational efficiency since the 1870's, had to reckon from now on with opponents who had shown that they, too, could organise a party, marshal support and win seats. The 1886 election while it had helped polarise the tendencies evident in Glasgow's political life into more definitely radical and conservative categories had at the same time narrowed the gap between the two. The Unionist alliance had mustered 28,882 votes in the seven constituencies as against the 29,180 for the Liberals. The majority this gave the latter of 298 over all contrasted unfavourably with their 8,136 majority of the previous November (taking Liberal and Scottish Land Restoration League votes together for purposes of comparison). This surely must have suggested that there were some issues such as Ireland which could not be certain of 100% allegiance on the part of the mainly working-class electorate in Glasgow even with organisational skill and leadership such as that provided by the constituency Liberal association Executives.

¹ Glasgow Herald, 5 July 1886.
North British Daily Mail, 5 July 1886.

Chapter X

Conclusion: Political Action and Reaction in Glasgow
at the General Elections of 1885 and 1886

A pioneering study such as this is highly specialised both as to time and place. This is necessarily so since there is little else written to which the researcher can direct himself for guidance in the political history of Scotland at this period. Much of the time has to be spent simply in preparing the groundwork and establishing the main features. The search for primary material is often frustrated by the absence or destruction of letters of the principal characters involved. This is perhaps inevitable due to the minor character of such people since politically they were important only in their own local setting.

As well as being particular and local such a study has at the same time to be very general. Relationships to all aspects of contemporary political history have to be made in order to provide its subject matter with a framework. Studies in modern Scottish history cannot afford to be inward looking. Because of the subordinate relationship of Scotland as part of the United Kingdom it has to be seen at one level in relationship to the organic political unity embodied in Parliament at Westminster. On the other hand, political dependence does not deprive a country of its individual existence and particular blend of development. Thus, the overall viewpoint must be qualified by detailed local knowledge. Only by investigating the social composition of the bodies concerned with political organisation in particular settings (like Glasgow) can some of the flavour of this Scottish political history be sampled. It would be true to say in fact that these two election surveys show that Glasgow's political behaviour in the 1880's was conditioned by the political interests and balance of the overall United Kingdom organism.

Its response, however, was Scottish and local and individual. The existence of a highly developed political framework here is undoubted, as the preceding chapters clearly demonstrate.

In the involved political debates which took place in Glasgow in 1885 and 1886 the degree of detailed argument which was engendered flowed naturally from the deep impact of the national issues on the interests and consciousness of the city's inhabitants. However biased or partial the statements and claims made during these elections were it was this dialectic of the hustings which roused the political attitudes of Glasgow. To take the public debate as it emerged in all its imperfection, therefore, is to see the mental furniture of the mass political consciousness of the time. Whether people were swayed by it or by pre-existing conditions such as their social and economic position, their past political beliefs or their religious affiliations can never be finally determined. But, it is important to give it pride of place in this assessment of the political belief in the seven constituencies since all the indications are that it played a part in the formation or modification of that belief. The number of public meetings, the large audiences attracted by them, the correspondence columns of the press, the questions sparked off and debated between candidates and questioners, the amount of energy expended by party activists all go to prove the high level of interest in politics. As early as four months before polling day in 1885 this activity led the Glasgow Herald to declare that the electorate were already being begun to be entertained to "what may best be described as a political salmagundi.... All (its) ingredients are complete and the constituencies will have ample time to acquire a taste for the compound before the general election renders it a permanent institution in the community".¹ It certainly proves the high level

¹ Glasgow Herald, 14 July 1885.

of political interest when the percentage polling in 1885 was 81.1% and in 1886 (despite the many removals in the interval) was 77.1%.¹

The spirit of Victorian earnestness which permeated the political activity of 1885 and 1886 because of the contentious, personal nature of the issues involved meant that they were given serious and prolonged consideration. Thus the debate had an inbuilt tendency to being, even by late nineteenth century standards, both long-winded and involved.

Perhaps this involvement was heightened by the tension springing from the constant juxtaposition and readjustment of new with old elements which Glasgow experienced in the nineteenth century.² This must have added to and exerted an influence on the intensity of its political commitment. In many ways Glasgow in its size, variety of interests and human composition was a 'new' city in the nineteenth century constantly re-charging itself with fresh supplies of inhabitants from 'old' areas with long-standing historic ideas, traditions and cultures. These immigrants, necessary for the development of the city, had to be assimilated into its context, thus colouring and adding to its ever fluctuating composition. The city's reaction to the questions of Irish Home Rule, to the Land Question in the Highlands, to the questions affecting commerce, or the relations of Church and State, must have been largely influenced by this inter-relationship in Glasgow's population of Irish, Highland, and Lowland with the established, native commercial elements and interests.

This can be seen, for instance, in the response to the issues in each election. The typical nineteenth century polarisation in Britain between

¹ Figures calculated from Wilkie, Representation of Scotland. This puts the overall percentage poll in Scotland as 81.4% and 72.1% in 1886.

² "Here in this frontier everything is in embryo, and here where, looking one way you see the country and the other way the city, it might well be that the spirit of Glasgow would be found." J.H. Muir, Glasgow in 1901, pp. 21-22.

Conservatives and Liberals took a specific form in Glasgow. The radical programme took on a particularly Scottish note crystallising at one level over the Disestablishment controversy. The bitterness of this conflict was thus perhaps intensified simply because it occurred in Glasgow not over rival dogmas but over similarities of organisation which made the privileged position of the established Church seem all the more anomalous. Again, radicalism in Glasgow took on a peculiarly Scottish and Glasgow hue in its involvement with the land question. Interest in the reforming cause here was heightened by the current agitation among the Crofters and the present unemployment and the inadequacy of housing in the city. These issues served to create a further link with another element peculiar in the reaction it aroused in the particular milieu of Glasgow. This came from the presence of the large proportion of the city's inhabitants connected with Ireland. Irish presence here demonstrated the importance of local population factions in determining the rise of the Unionist branch of the Liberals and the outcome of the 1886 election on Liberal fortunes. Altogether the religious and social background in Glasgow helped to focus the growing differentiation between the parties as each became more extreme in its policies. It is surely not without significance that in 'Liberal' Scotland the Conservatives, first by themselves, and then, in conjunction with the Liberal Unionists, should begin to make inroads in a city like Glasgow. The interplay of national issues like Disestablishment, Free Trade versus Fair Trade, Irish Home Rule, Land and Social reform on the particular social, religious and commercial make-up of this city must have played a large part in this process.

By developing these themes this can be seen in a number of ways. The traditional brand of Liberalism which had grown up in the old single Glasgow constituency was carried over into the seven, new single-member divisions in 1885. As this Liberalism was given its leadership and direction by the

commercial elite of the city's population this middle-class dominance in political affairs naturally showed itself most strongly concentrated in the west end of the city covered by the two new constituencies of College and Central. The other five constituencies, however, also showed in varying degrees the influence of this type of Liberalism. Associated as it was, however, with the commercial and industrial expansion and self-confidence which marked Glasgow in the nineteenth century this brand of Liberalism was beginning by the 1880's to show that it contained within itself the seeds of its own decay. The 'Great Depression' which covered this period was causing voters to question the direction which political Liberalism (associated with radicalism) was beginning to take. It could be said that increasingly the course of events caused the commercial mind to find itself less and less at ease in the Liberal party. For instance, the need of a manufacturing and trading community to cultivate and depend on foreign markets helped the Conservatives with their less conscience-stricken attitude to Imperial possessions and policy to breach the Liberal stronghold in Glasgow. This perhaps partly explains why the seemingly impregnable Liberalism of Glasgow began to show signs of splitting in 1885 and finally burst asunder in 1886.

Other issues, too, besides the trade depression coincided at this time to further this re-examination of hitherto seemingly established voting patterns in the city at the 1885 and 1886 elections. Perhaps of most immediate importance was that concerning the Church. Disestablishment was pressed to such an extent by the radicals that it caused a clear-cut division between them and the moderate Liberals. The consequent soul-searching which this caused amongst the Liberals brought the party dangerously near to splitting. To the Conservatives in the city the Church issue brought the twin benefits of an attractive and convincing battle cry plus new adherents distrustful of the direction in which radical enthusiasm seemed to be leading the Liberals.

The church question in its turn became entwined with the attitudes and reactions called forth by the Irish Home Rule issue to make these two the main topics dominating these years. With a pattern of religious affiliation such as Glasgow had and given the largely working-class nature of the electorate it is scarcely surprising that these two issues should produce some shattering political reactions. This electorate was deeply involved in the religious topics of the day. This was reinforced through the direction and domination of the political debate according to the interests of a middle-class political leadership. Besides this, as has been shown the electorate also contained a high proportion of Irish-born and Irish descendants. Their presence and their political activities helped to make the city notable for the extent of the great Liberal split in 1886 into Unionists and Gladstonians.

The likelihood of some fissure had already been indicated from another direction through the heavy involvement of the leading Glasgow Liberals in the Disestablishment controversy. This middle-class radicalism which dominated the Liberal organisations in the city forced the moderates and especially the Church Liberals out into a fringe position in the party. When the Irish Home Rule issue exploded in 1886 many of these same moderates found the twin burden too much and either broke off to form the Liberal Unionists or became finally committed to the Conservatives. Given this pattern of the interconnected effects of the Church and Irish question reacting on the leading Glasgow party activists in this way it is not surprising that the largely working-class electorate should be stirred to consider new allegiances. In a significant way the choice before the electorate was more open and less inevitable at this period.

The presence of a small group of Land Restoration League candidates standing in the general interests of labour and making a direct class appeal helped to emphasize this fluidity in 1885. The immigrant background to so

much of the social composition of Glasgow as well as the current publicity given to the 'Crofters' War' must have sparked off a reaction to the economic plight of the Highlander. From this the Land Restorationists hoped to extend interest to a general questioning of the social order in favour of the working-classes. Several factors seemed to be in their favour in 1885. A common background of oppression and landlord tyranny could be expected to have created bonds of sympathy between the Irish group in Glasgow and the Land Restorationists. As well as this the current trade depression and the overcrowding and insanitary conditions affecting so many Glasgow lives made some sense of their general humanitarian programme of land acquisition for the benefit of the masses (in spite of the objections which could be levelled at the practicality of their programme). From all these various discontents an atmosphere was built up which made the launching of a general independent labour campaign in the city supported by all the Socialist bodies in Glasgow at this time seem propitious.

In short there are several social and economic factors which can be singled out as involved in the politics of Glasgow in these years. There was first of all the presence of a large Irish element in what was a mainly working-class electorate with all the deeply held prejudices and conservative habits of thought usual to such a group. This had obvious implications in determining attitudes arising over the Irish question in 1886. It had its part to play in providing the prejudices which some Conservatives tried to utilise to whip up support for the Church in 1885. It also had its effects on the distribution of votes between Liberals and Conservatives from the Irish group in the electorate. Parnell's manifesto in 1885 directing Irish voters to fall in behind the Conservatives in cities like Glasgow (where there were no Nationalist candidates) caused cross-voting against traditional allegiances to the Liberal party. Not only that, it also thwarted to some extent the

response expected by working-class labour candidates from among this important group.

The call of the radical group of the Glasgow Liberals in accordance with Chamberlain's 'Unauthorised Programme' for 'Free Education' only helped diminish still further the appeal of the traditional reform party. Whatever attractions this may have had in the Disestablishment campaign by using the money from the disendowed Church to abolish school fees the implicit secularism and anti-clericalism of this plank only served to antagonise groups like the Glasgow Catholics who were mainly Irish in origin. As the largest body of proprietors of denominational schools they were already suffering financially. Their efforts to provide their own denominational schools implied a sacrifice for the principle of parental choice. Free education was resented by the Catholics as inimical to this principle. In consequence they were constantly urged in their press and by the Catholic hierarchy to oppose this demand. As the Catholic group was largely Irish in sympathy the attacks of the Conservative candidates against this plank in the 'Radical Programme', therefore, must have had some influence on the swinging allegiance of the Irish voters in 1885 especially when coupled with the directive of Parnell to vote Conservative for patriotic reasons.¹

The heavy involvement of the city in manufacturing and trading was also clearly of serious moment in the attitude of both middle- and working-classes to the rival claims of Conservatives and Liberals against the background of the current economic depression. In Glasgow this had obvious implications when the Conservatives made a determined bid to win the working-class electorates through the 'bread and butter' policy which formed a large part of their

¹ "The effect of the clergy's advice to vote against the enemies of the voluntary schools was nearly, though not quite, the same as that of Parnell's to vote against all liberals and radicals." C.H.D. Howard, "The Parnell Manifesto and the Schools Question," English Historical Review, vol. 62, (1947), p. 46.

platform. This is even more important when it is seen that the great Glasgow industrialists who were large employers of labour like Beardmore and Arrol were generally to be found in 1885 and 1886 active on the Conservative side. The Liberal leadership in the city, on the other hand, was dominated by a group composed generally of merchants and industrialists of the second rank.

The involvement of the city's leading Liberal political organisers in the Disestablishment controversy helped to provide the Conservatives with a ready-made supply of Liberal dissentients and at the same time helped reinforce the latter's changing allegiance when the final blow of Irish Home Rule was proposed by Gladstone. The working-class electorate, too, clearly had an image of itself as Protestant and this was expressed in a militancy which was lacking in the Liberal middle-classes' consideration of the religious angle. This background was obviously of importance in the Disestablishment controversy of the period as well as, as has been noted, in shaping attitudes to the Liberal leader's attempt to draw his party on to his Home Rule for Ireland line of thought in 1886.

Finally, the mainly working-class nature of the electorate and the social conditions it lived in in Glasgow made sense of the attempts of independent Land Restoration League candidates to make a bid for support in 1885 to draw attention to the wider social questions of the day as these affected the interests of the masses. Both the economic and social background of the city and the hard times of the trade depression provided a coherent link for the campaign made by these early 'labour' candidates. At the same time the rival attractions of Disestablishment and Ireland provided an unwelcome cross-current in the working-class electorate which these labour candidates hoped to woo in 1885.

Although the Liberal hegemony began to break up thus in these years the

process was still, however, in its infancy. The constant feature of political behaviour in Glasgow at this time lies in the way in which Liberalism was regarded as the mark of political normality. To be an upholder of the Conservative interest was clearly regarded as being somehow out of tune with the natural mental, spiritual, economic and social background of the city. It is hard to find definite documentary proof of this but in the general assumptions which permeated political discussion and most notably in the preponderating attention given in public to Liberal concerns one's impression must be that Glasgow was regarded as quite definitely a 'Liberal' city.¹ And yet it is difficult to give a precise definition as to what was meant by this word Liberal as it applied to those concerned with manipulating this feeling so as to produce nearly packaged electoral results. Perhaps it is significant that when precise definitions were attempted (over the Church, the Irish, or social issues) a section of the Liberals broke away in a rightwards direction. Although these secessions found rationalisation in arguments against 'the caucus' or 'the tyranny of majorities' the impression is that social factors underlay these fractures. The Liberal Unionists, for instance, were obviously connected with the residential west end of the city and with a narrowly based commercial and professional group. To men like Dr. McGrigor, the idea that obnoxious views should be forced on others seemed to be the very negation of Liberalism. Was Liberalism, therefore, to him the capacity and willingness of fair-minded men to live and let live, something which would ensure the least amount of interference with the individual's actions, above all with his conscience and beliefs? Certainly the type of Liberalism

¹ Glasgow can be included in the judgement of one commentator that "Scottish Liberals are Liberals not so much of their deliberate choice, as because Liberalism has been for half a century the atmosphere they breathed. They were born into it." Scotland at the General Election of 1885 by a Tory Democrat (Edinburgh 1885).

believed in by men like Dr. Cameron, J.M. Cherrie, Gilbert Beith, by those Glasgow Liberals prominent in the National Liberal Federation of Scotland, was one which was committed to a strict programme, one which was known to all, an organisation, in other words, in which little leeway was allowed for personal considerations.

If anything can give a clue to the political tone of Glasgow in the 1880's, to its political commitments and beliefs it is that impression of the dominating, all-pervading Commercialism of the city. This can be seen in a variety of ways. Commerce and industry were the staple elements which gave unity to the whole life of the seven constituencies. In none of the seven were they absent. Only College could in any way be regarded as a residential constituency and even then only to a small extent. In Glasgow, the centre through which the industry of the West of Scotland channelled its products, the state of trade determined the pattern of life for its inhabitants. Commerce was the factor which made all the difference between well-being and poverty, between a full belly or hunger. The city was dominated physically and visually by trade and industry from the great railway works in the north to the many small foundries of the east-end; its streets were thronged by the thousands who kept trade and industry going; because of commerce its houses were blackened and congested. The men who organised and dominated political life in Glasgow were in the main representative of these trading interests. In the constituency associations the businessmen manned the executives. The candidates they chose reflected their interests. Both Forsyth and Shaw Maxwell, for instance, were by-passed in 1885 in predominantly working-class constituencies in favour of men from the same class as the merchants because they had refused to be bound to the control of such men. It is indicative of the nature of Liberalism in Glasgow that the Conservatives had far fewer candidates in 1885 who were connected directly

with trade and that it was the Liberals who won all seven seats. In 1886 the commercial arguments over Home Rule at times appeared to occupy more time than the religious ones.

This leads to another aspect of politics in Glasgow at this time viz. the great emphasis placed on organisation, the way in which politics were seen as something to be managed and directed just like a business. That trait, in fact, reflects the businessmen's grasp of political control in the city in that he tended to exercise it with as much enthusiasm and effort as he would his own commercial concerns. This is not to say that other interests did not appear in Liberal circles in Glasgow, only that they never completely controlled the organisation of politics like the businessmen did. The political managers in Glasgow were Liberal businessmen who worked in top gear at election times, maintaining interest in the period in between by a constant process of meeting and discussion to maintain their momentum. In contrast Conservative activities were either defunct or dormant between election campaigns and hardly appeared at all in the columns of the press. It is notable that Liberal Unionist organising ability was largely the result of having men with a Liberal background in control; and that lawyers like McGrigor and Borland, businessmen like Cross and Arthur left the Liberal associations because their ability to influence the direction of Glasgow Liberalism had been lost to radicals.

A large part of the stuff of political life in Glasgow came from the obvious enjoyment in 'managing' it. As well as this the amount of sheer hard work put into it was remarkable. It was treated with all the attention one would expect to be given to a business venture. Nor, it is worth noting, was interest in public affairs confined to a small exclusive circle. On the contrary, the evidence for popular participation in politics is overwhelming. The number of electoral meetings held, the crowds reported at them, the

lively heckling and thoughtful questioning of candidates are all tokens of this. Politics in Glasgow, in other words, was seen as something popular in which the population took an active part. Nothing provides a greater contrast to the present day in searching the newspaper files of the time than the sheer amount of space (by the page, not the column) given to election speeches and meetings in the 1880's and the small amount given over to sporting events.

Even more striking is the contrast provided by this popular participation between the social and economic background of the city and the types of issue which aroused interest. Disestablishment and Ireland were the great topics in these years. The social question, too, raised a great deal of obvious feeling, but although crucial it never wholly dominated the political scene in 1885 and 1886. The depression in trade was a major topic in these years but somehow it too appeared only as a background against which the rival plays directed by the constituency organisers for Gladstone and Salisbury were set. The loudest cheers and groans so faithfully recorded by the newspaper reporters were those called forth by references to the position of the Church or the state of Ireland or the Crofters. It is impossible to plumb the motives behind the voting of the mainly working-class electorate in Glasgow a large part of which lived and worked in conditions which were appalling by modern standards. Perhaps they balloted hoping in general for a better deal, a larger wage packet or more settled conditions from the party label behind the candidate. In effect, however, because of middle-class control of candidate selection and middle-class interpretation of party interests they voted for or against issues like Disestablishment and Ireland. But even given this pattern of middle-class control the masses clearly indicated their deep involvement in issues which transcended their own particular time and place. The Glasgow electorate

certainly proved by their participation at election meetings and in the press their awareness of and involvement with national issues which had a direct reference to their hopes and beliefs even if they had little connection with their economic background. To what extent this would remain true, only further studies of Scotland in the nineteenth century at the requisite depth will provide definite and individual answers.

Appendix A

The Sources for the Study of Social Conditions in the
Seven Glasgow Parliamentary Constituencies in 1885

Appendix Map B (infra) gives the names and locations of the sanitary districts used by Russell and his successors. It also demonstrates that no single constituency can be composed of any one group of these sanitary districts. All the seven parliamentary divisions were made up of various proportions of some of them. The figures in Appendix B and C, (infra) therefore, as applied to the constituencies must be treated as showing the information in the most generalised form. By relating them, even in this general way, however, they can be used to provide information about the seven constituencies not otherwise available. It is in this spirit they have been used to estimate the social conditions and the total populations of the seven city areas in 1881 which became the seven Glasgow constituencies in 1885, and the numbers of Irish-born resident in each constituency in 1881, 1891 and 1901.¹ The way in which this was done for this present study was to start off with a map of the city of Glasgow in 1885 and the information given by Russell. For example, by comparing the maps of the political divisions (Appendix Map A) and the sanitary districts (Appendix Map B) Central constituency can be seen to include that part of sanitary district no. 1 (Exchange) comprising the area bounded by Cathedral Street, John Street, and Glassford Street. Although in area this is about one-third of Exchange sanitary district much of it in the south-western corner is occupied by the municipal buildings and business blocks. According to

¹ Figures of Irish-born for 1881 are given by Russell as percentages of the total population in each sanitary district. See Appendix B, infra.

the evidence in Russell's survey the main population areas were located in the wedge running between Parliamentary Road in the north and George Street in the south since, at its extreme northern tip, the district contained the large open ground occupied by the Caledonian Railway Station's sheds and railway lines.¹ Given the mainly commercial nature of that portion of Exchange sanitary district which lay inside Central constituency, and given the fact that it contained only about one-sixth of the area of closely grouped housing in Exchange, then a rough estimate of the population lying in this overlapping area was put at one-quarter of the total population of Exchange sanitary district. Again, part of Maryhill and Springburn sanitary district lies within College constituency. However, this was filled mainly with open ground, foundries and mills and the total number of houses here are fractional compared to that much larger proportion in the greater acreage lying in St. Rollox constituency. Therefore, to avoid minute fractions in the calculations this whole sanitary district has been placed in the latter constituency, the loss of numbers being regarded as negligible to the total population of College constituency.

The above method was repeated for each of the other sanitary districts which lay partly in any one of the seven constituencies. By this means allowance could be made for non-residential parts, and heavy concentrations of population so that the relationship which the sanitary districts had to the constituencies was assessed as follows:

¹ Russell, Vital Statistics, II, 19-20.

Table I

<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Sanitary District</u>
Central	quarter of 1 (Exchange) two-thirds of 17 (Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford) one-half of Blythswood 12 (St. Enoch Square) 13 (Brownfield) 18 (Anderston)
College	one-third of 17 (Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford) one-half of Blythswood 15 (Woodside) 16 (Cowcaddens)
St. Rollox	three-eighths of 1 (Exchange) Maryhill and Springburn one-quarter of 3 (High Street and Closes, West) one-half of 5 (Bellgrove and Dennistoun) one-quarter of 6 (High Street and Closes, East) 2 (Port Dundas) 4 (St. Rollox)
Camlachie	one-half of 5 (Bellgrove and Dennistoun) three-quarters of 6 (High Street and Closes, East) one-third of 7 (Greenhead and London Road) one-half of 8 (Barrowfield)
Bridgeton	two-thirds of 7 (Greenhead and London Road) one-half of 8 (Barrowfield) 9 (Monteith Row) 10 (St. Andrews Square) 11 (Calton)
Blackfriars- Hutchesontown	three-eighths of 1 (Exchange) three-quarters of 3 (High Street and Closes, West) one-fifth of 22 (Gorbals) five-sixths of 21 (Hutcheson Square) 14 (Bridgeway and Wynds)
Tradeston	one-sixth of 21 (Hutcheson Square) four-fifths of 22 (Gorbals) 19 (Kingston) 20 (Laurieston)

Using this relationship for 1891 and 1901 to compare the census figures for the population of the constituencies and the figures derived from the constituency/sanitary district relationship of Table I the following correlation emerged:

<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Table I Figures</u>		<u>Census Figures</u>	
	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>
Bridgeton	80,334	89,210	81,396	91,242
Camlachie	68,344	80,844	71,157	78,011
St. Rollox	92,693	109,715	94,569	118,626
Central	76,615	77,021	75,379	74,601
College	99,175	113,143	98,047	112,492
Tradeston	71,352	71,233	70,649	71,278
Blackfriars- Hutchesontown	76,449	81,437	73,784	76,122

These results show that even separated by 10 or 20 years from the circumstances of 1881, during which time conditions in the districts changed and varied, the apportioning of sanitary districts to constituencies adopted in Table I provided an adequate working basis. In 1891 the largest variation between the assessed total for a constituency (by the Table I method) and the exact census total occurs in only Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and Camlachie and is no more than 4%. In 1901 the largest variations occur in Blackfriars-Hutchesontown and St. Rollox by 7.7% and 6.6% respectively. In these three areas the largest discrepancies would be expected to occur as they were the ones most likely to be affected by population movements due to new building or demolitions. They are also the three constituencies containing the greatest proportion of parts of sanitary districts. The correlation, therefore, between the official census figures and those using the sanitary

districts shows that Table I can be used to apply the data supplied by Russell in 1881 to the area of the constituencies.

Further proof of the accuracy of this apportionment of the sanitary districts to constituencies comes if the constituency totals of Irish-born worked out by this method are compared to the totals of Irish-born given by the Medical Officer of Health in 1901 since in that year the statistical data is given by Chalmers not only by sanitary districts but by municipal wards, also.¹ The wards can be related to the constituencies very much more easily than the sanitary districts can. Central, College, Camlachie, Bridgeton,² and Tradeston constituencies were composed of complete wards. In the case of St. Rollox and Blackfriars-Hutchesontown which were composed of some wards partly in and partly without the parliamentary boundary the exact relationship could be calculated with the help of the Registrar-General's Census Report for 1911 where the exact proportions of the burgh wards in each city constituency are given.³ The Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report for the city of 1903 included a map⁴ which shows the boundaries of the wards in their physical relation to the city and its constituencies. According to all these sources the relationship of the wards to the constituencies was worked out thus:

¹ Chalmers, Census 1901. Report on Glasgow, (Glasgow 1902), p. 43, table II, p. 57, table IX.

² Dalmarnock Ward in Bridgeton in fact extended beyond the parliamentary boundary for a small portion as did Dennistoun ward in St. Rollox. As the actual population would make only a fractional difference to the total in both cases they have been treated as lying wholly within the constituency.

³ Census Report. Scotland 1911, vol. I, part 2, table V, p. 53.

⁴ Appendix Map C.

Table II¹

<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Municipal Ward Composition</u>
Central	wards 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14
Bridgeton	wards 1 and 2
College	wards 15, 16 and 17
Camlachie	wards 3 and 4
Blackfriars-Hutchesontown	wards 9, 18 and $\frac{1}{3.74}$ of ward 21
Tradeston	wards 19 and 20
St. Rollox	wards 5, 8, $\frac{2}{3}$ of ward 6, $\frac{2}{3}$ of ward 7

This constituency-ward relationship makes it a simple matter to compute the Irish-born population which emerges from the ward figures given by Chalmers in his 1901 report² thus:

Central	- 8,378
Bridgeton	- 8,823
College	- 7,914
Camlachie	- 6,709
Tradeston	- 6,338
Blackfriars-Hutchesontown	- 6,426
St. Rollox	- 11,113

As has been stated, Chalmers in 1901 gives the figures of Irish-born by sanitary districts, too, so that the above, more accurate figures for Irish-born in each constituency can therefore be used to check the accuracy

¹ These relationships were established by correlating the figures given in Census Report. Scotland 1901, p. 5, and vol. I, p. 218, except for St. Rollox where they are from Census Report. Scotland 1911, p. 59, table XVI. This is necessitated by two of the wards in St. Rollox lying partly within the constituency. The exact figures for the areas lying within the constituencies are given in 1911. In Blackfriars-Hutchesontown the figure for the one ward lying partly within could, of course, be established simply by subtraction.

² Chalmers, op. cit., p. 43, table II; p. 57, table IX.

of the fractions used in Table I by comparing the totals with those derived from the arrangement in Table II.

	Irish-born by constituencies calculated according to the constituency-sanitary district relationship of Table I	Irish-born by constituencies calculated according to the constituency-ward relationship of Table II
Central	8,269	8,378
Bridgeton	8,328	8,823
College	8,118	7,914
Camlachie	7,222	6,709
Tradeston	6,605	6,338
Blackfriars- Hutchesontown	7,002	6,426
St. Rollox	11,196	11,113

It should be stated that these totals are only estimates drawn from sources arranged for different areas and calculated, as nearly as can be judged, from maps and tables of figures only to approximate to the area of each constituency. There is no way of guaranteeing, for example, that the Irish-born in Blythswood sanitary district were distributed equally between the portion lying in Central constituency and the portion lying in College constituency. Again, Chalmers' figures for the Irish-born by wards must be treated with caution since his overall population figures for the wards do not tally with those given in the Registrar-General's Census Report of 1901. The most likely explanation of the discrepancy is that in the short time in which the census schedules were available to him he had no opportunity of making corrections. If his total figures show discrepancies in a number of wards when compared with the official census returns then obviously the Irish-born figures, which are included in the totals, must be handled with reservations. With all these qualifications, however, the way in which the

ward-constituency totals of Irish-born approximate to the totals of Irish-born, calculated according to the method in Table I, proves the value and accuracy of the latter method.¹ These comparisons (of the 1891 and 1901 constituency total populations and of the 1901 constituency totals of Irish-born) show that the proportions of sanitary districts making up constituencies which suggested themselves from a reading of Russell's study of them and the details on his map seem to be roughly accurate by 1901. As they appear to be fairly accurate some thirty years after his survey it would be fair to assume they were at least as accurate in 1881. Because the constituency-sanitary district correlation is never exact (since the constituency boundaries cut across most of the sanitary districts) figures and trends can be shown, however, only in the most general terms. Yet by this method a fairly accurate impression of the social nature of the constituencies in the period of the late 1880's and early 1890's can be obtained.

Russell's figures, therefore, and his descriptions of the sanitary and topographical features of the city in the 1881-85 period are of primary importance. They throw some light on the situation behind the raw figures given in the 1881 Census Report for the total Glasgow area and the figures given for the constituencies in 1891 and 1901. They give the observations of a man on the spot in great detail presenting an eyewitness picture of the physical and social scene at this time. By using Russell's 1886 publication² and the census statistics (as related to the sanitary districts) provided in 1881, 1891 and 1901 a coherent picture of the approximate social background

¹ Blackfriars-Hutchesontown shows the greatest variation but as has been pointed out comparisons are most likely to be false here since movement and loss of population had affected four out of the five sanitary districts of which it was partially composed. See Appendix Map E.

² Russell, loc. cit.

of the seven constituencies in this period can be obtained. Not only that but the figures issued by him and by Chalmers in the period 1881-1901 are the only source giving the distribution and totals of the Irish-born by constituencies in those years.¹ In this lies the value of these sources.

¹ The total populations calculated in this way for 1881 and the Irish-born population for 1881, 1891 and 1901 are given by constituency in Appendix C, (infra).

Appendix B

Total Populations of the Sanitary Districts of Glasgow
and the Numbers of Irish-Born Inhabitants Therein
1881, 1891, 1901

<u>Sanitary Districts</u>	<u>Total Population</u>			<u>Irish-Born Population</u>		
	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>
Blythswood	26,789	28,543	28,548	1,366	1,349	1,538
1 Exchange	20,617	21,663	24,431	1,732	1,505	1,646
2 Port Dundas	4,704	4,655	5,326	874	666	653
3 High Street and Closes (West)	10,058	9,356	9,669	1,628	1,042	747
4 St Rollox	14,252	15,751	15,903	1,756	1,645	1,544
5 Bellgrove and Dennistoun	54,195	63,348	79,211	6,343	6,109	6,661
6 High Street and Closes (East)	7,745	7,487	7,102	1,309	1,139	904
7 Greenhead and London Road	44,795	52,725	66,197	5,371	4,880	5,469
8 Barrowfield	28,807	26,944	27,696	4,352	3,312	2,783
9 Monteith Row	4,914	4,643	4,267	458	453	336
10 St. Andrew's Square	4,151	4,418	4,794	860	707	658
11 Calton Proper	22,094	22,637	22,169	3,439	2,806	2,297
12 St. Enoch Square	3,624	3,429	2,952	473	421	454
13 Brownfield	3,788	3,788	3,880	659	660	756
14 Bridgegate and Wynds	7,798	5,689	3,880	2,466	1,323	554
15 Woodside	45,080	58,609	70,145	3,593	3,662	3,990
16 Cowcaddens	15,233	16,235	18,206	3,258	3,010	2,695
17 Kelvinhaugh and Sandyford	26,466	30,180	31,553	1,602	1,759	1,993
18 Anderston	28,866	29,612	28,771	5,811	4,995	4,551
19 Kingston	37,660	40,908	40,079	3,208	2,836	2,834
20 Laurieston	9,051	9,029	8,973	1,354	1,168	1,239
21 Hutcheson Square	54,704	63,493	70,229	5,876	5,546	5,858
22 Gorbals	13,156	13,544	13,096	2,874	2,216	1,944
Springburn and Maryhill	22,217	28,278	35,527	4,453	4,309	4,638
Totals	510,764	564,964	622,609	65,115	57,518	56,742

Sources: Figures in these tables exclude the shipping population. Total

population figures for each sanitary district in 1881 are derived from Russell, Vital Statistics of Glasgow, part II. Shipping population has been deducted in the relevant sanitary districts according to the information given in his Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow 1891, Appendix, Table I. Total population figures for each sanitary district in 1891 and 1901 are reproduced from Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow 1891, Appendix, Table I, and A.K. Chalmers' Census 1901. Report on Glasgow, Appendix, Table I. Irish-born population in each sanitary district for 1891 and 1901 are taken from Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow, Appendix, Table II, and Census 1901. Report on Glasgow, Appendix, Table II. As the percentages of Irish-born used by Russell in 1881 are given in his 1891 statistics more exactly (to two decimal places instead of the nearest whole number) these have been used together with the total population figures given for 1881 to calculate the numbers of Irish-born population in each sanitary district.

Appendix C

Table I

Total Constituency Populations and Irish-Born Populations
Calculated from their Composition by Sanitary Districts
 (by method adopted in Appendix A)

<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Total Population</u>	<u>Irish-Born Population</u>		
	<u>1881</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>
Central	72,470	9,128	8,298	8,269
College	82,529	8,068	7,932	8,118
St. Rollox	80,454	11,637	10,784	11,196
Camlachie	62,239	8,118	7,192	7,222
Bridgeton	75,426	10,513	8,876	8,328
Blackfriars-Hutchesontown	71,288	9,806	7,731	7,002
Tradeston	66,352	7,841	6,700	6,605

Sources: J.B. Russell, Vital Statistics of the City of Glasgow
Old Glasgow ... Greater Glasgow
 A.K. Chalmers, Census, 1901. Report on Glasgow

Table II

Constituency Populations 1891 and 1901

<u>Constituency</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>
Central	75,379	74,601
College	98,047	112,492
St. Rollox	94,569	118,626
Camlachie	71,157	78,011
Bridgeton	81,396	91,242
Blackfriars-Hutchesontown	73,784	76,122
Tradeston	70,649	71,278

Source: Census Reports (figures exclude shipping population)

Appendix D

Table I

	Percentage of Irish-born of the calculated total population in 1881 residing in areas classified as I and II by Russell in each constituency	Percentage of Irish-born of the calculated total population in 1881 residing in areas classified as III and IV by Russell in each constituency
Central	6% $(\frac{2185}{36192})$	19.1% $(\frac{6943}{36278})$
College	7.1% $(\frac{4810}{67296})$	21.3% $(\frac{3258}{15233})$
St. Rollox	14% $(\frac{10029}{71297})$	17.5% $(\frac{1608}{9157})$
Camlachie	11.8% $(\frac{4961}{42029})$	15.7% $(\frac{3157}{20210})$
Bridgeton	11.6% $(\frac{4038}{34778})$	15.9% $(\frac{6475}{40648})$
Blackfriars- Hutchesontown	10.3% $(\frac{5544}{53316})$	23.7% $(\frac{4262}{17972})$
Tradeston	8.9% $(\frac{4187}{46777})$	18.6% $(\frac{3654}{19575})$

Source: J.B. Russell, Vital Statistics of the City of Glasgow

(Groups I and II were regarded by Russell as being, on average, above the mean for sanitary purposes; groups III and IV were regarded as being quite definitely below average in the city. The area covered by groups I and II was 5,320 acres in 1885. That covered by groups III and IV was 791 acres).

Table II

Percentage of Irish-Born Calculated
for each Constituency in 1881

Central	12.5%
College	9.7%
St. Rollox	14.4%
Camlachie	13%
Bridgeton	13.9%
Blackfriars-Hutchesontown	13.7%
Tradeston	11.8%

Appendix E

Religious Statistics of Glasgow
in the 1880's and 1890's

The following short tables have been extracted from R. Howie's Churches and Churchless in Scotland, (Glasgow 1893), in order to give an estimate of the strength of the various denominations in Glasgow and especially to show how strong the body of dissent was in the city. Several caveats, however, have to be entered before any use is made of figures such as these. For one thing statistics of church membership are extremely difficult to quote accurately. Each source is vitiated to some extent by the bias of the case it tries to make out for its own denomination. This period of the later nineteenth century is particularly rich in sources which give details of church membership. Unfortunately as they were mainly sparked off by the Disestablishment controversy their usefulness is almost always in inverse proportion to their volume. Pamphlets issued by the Scottish Council of the Liberation Society (e.g. Statistics relating to the Established Church of Scotland, 1888) quote figures of church membership mainly in an effort to prove that the Established church had all the benefits of endowment but only a minority of adherents. Figures given in answer to these attacks, e.g. by J. Rankin, Handbook of the Church of Scotland (4th edition, Edinburgh 1888), sought to show that the Church was improving its position and that far from declining in numbers of adherents it was the dissenting bodies which were losing ground. One source did claim to be objective in its estimates of church affiliation in Scotland at this period. In The Distribution and Statistics of the Scottish Churches (Edinburgh 1886), the anonymous authors declared themselves free from "sectarian or polemical aim", their intention being merely "to show, as far as can be shown by means of available statistics

what is done for the supply and support of religious ordinances ... (in) Scotland." However, since they relied on the publications of the various Scottish denominations for their information their figures are still doubtful even if their impartiality is guaranteed. In general, therefore, the plethora of facts concerning church membership at this time cannot be given the weight which would be in keeping with its size.

In addition it has to be remembered that tests of church strength either by number of communicants, by attendance or just by general adherence alone are too subjective to give a fully accurate, comprehensive and convincing picture of the religious pattern in any one area. This is inevitable, no matter the impartiality of the source, when dealing with the individual private conscience. Even a census taken by neutral investigators questioning each individual in the city would not have resulted in a clear-cut picture. To quote Howie, "any such return by persons themselves of their church connection ... would be of the most misleading nature. It is well known, at least by every home mission minister, that although ... a very large proportion of the people of Scotland have no church connection in any proper sense of the term, there are few of them who will admit that they belong to the 'churchless' class. It is further well known that the churchless are all but certain to claim connection with the Established Church, even though for years in succession they have never entered any church...." (loc. cit. xix-xx). To add to the confusion still further some writers, in their anxiety to make their case completely watertight, introduced the complexities of birth-rates by denominations either to add weighting to their computations of adult membership or to prove that a particular denomination was in a potentially stronger position.

Howie's figures of church affiliation are estimates of the population of each denomination. As he was primarily concerned to find out how many of the

population were not connected with the churches rather than with the numbers which the various denominations could claim this offsets his anti-establishment bias to some extent. In this sense the case he makes out for the non-established churches is only incidental to his main theme. The figures he gives are in each case estimates of the population of each denomination. In the case of Roman Catholics his estimates are based on the statistics given in the Catholic Directory.

Table I shows one of his several estimates of church affiliation. Table II shows (a) the number of congregations in each denomination, and (b) estimates of the total membership of each to provide a comparison between 1879, 1885 and 1891. The area of measurement which Howie used was that covered by the Presbytery of Glasgow. This was considerably larger than either the Parliamentary or Municipal Burgh area at that time. However, as it is used as the same area for each denomination in these tables it allows a comparison of their relative positions to be made.

Table I¹

Presbytery of Glasgow

Total population in 1891	-	845,298
Numbers affiliated to	{ Established Church	- 133,740
	{ Free Church	- 90,434
	{ U.P. Church	- 89,654
	{ Other Protestant Denominations	- 34,188
	{ Roman Catholic Church	- 133,255

¹ Howie, loc. cit., Table vii, p. 54.

Table II¹

(a) Number of Congregations

Presbytery of Glasgow

Established Church	-	98
Free Church	-	96
U.P. Church	-	75
Other Churches	-	106

(b) Membership

Presbytery of Glasgow

	<u>1879</u>	<u>1885</u>	<u>1891</u>
Established Church	58,454	--	66,870
Free Church	36,312	--	45,217
U.P. Church	39,573	--	44,827
Other Protestant Churches	--	16,153	17,094

If a contrary source is used to test Howie's figures for membership of the Church of Scotland a rough corroboration can be obtained. Rankin (op. cit., p. 364) gives the number of communicants of the Established Church as 61,052 in 1883 and 64,380 in 1886. This would fit in broadly with the figures given by Howie for 1879 and 1891. Confirmation comes too from the figures given in The Distribution and Statistics of the Scottish Churches (p. 23). Although the area of measurement used here was smaller the overall picture reflects Howie's with 56,069 members credited to the Established Church in 1885, 39,368 to the Free Church, and 41,500 to the U.P. Church.

Thus, although accuracy cannot be expected due to the contentious nature of the sources available they all agree on one main point. In

¹ Howie, loc. cit., Table xi, p. 72.

Glasgow the Established Church was not in undisputed possession of the religious adherence of the population and was balanced pretty evenly by the presence of virile, non-established churches. In the early years of the nineteenth century this pattern of religious adherence in Glasgow was already becoming clear. For instance, Cleland in The Rise and Progress of Glasgow (p. 14) gave the distribution of seating accommodation thus:

Established Church - 23,270 sittings; other denominations - 32,704 sittings.

By the 1880's the proximity and existence of strong Established and non-Established bodies, therefore, made it almost inevitable that when religious issues like Disestablishment arose active and heated discussion would follow in this area.

Appendix F

Lists of Candidates Nominated for Glasgow
Constituencies in 1885 and 1886*

1885

Blackfriars-Hutchesontown (electorate 9,725)

William Charles Maughan (C), Chartered Accountant, Kilander, Roseneath.
proposer - Thos. Mills Wilson, Merchant, Glassford Street, Glasgow.
seconder - Thos. Henry Stewart, Cloth-lapper, 69 Braehead Street,
Glasgow.

Mitchell Henry (L), Merchant, London.
proposer - Wm. Fife, Commission Agent, 9 Campside Crescent, Langside.
seconder - Michael Simons, Broker, 206 Bath Street, Glasgow.

Bridgeton (electorate 10,058)

Elphinstone Vans Agnew Maitland (C), Freugh, Wigtownshire.
proposer - Duncan Stewart, 112 Baltic Street, Glasgow.
seconder - Charles Summers, 20 Kent Street, Calton, Glasgow.

William Forsyth (LRL), Proprietor of Cobden Hotel, Glasgow.
proposer - Archd. McCallum, 154 London Road, Glasgow.
seconder - John McMillan, 45 Canning Street, Glasgow.

Edward Richard Russell (L), Editor of 'Liverpool Daily Post'.
proposer - John Burt, 139 Great Hamilton Street, Glasgow.
seconder - John Livingstone, 46 St. Andrew's Square, Glasgow.

St. Rollox (electorate 11,926)

John McCulloch (L), Land Valuator, Glenhead, Stranraer.
proposer - Councillor David Morrin, 72 Parson Street, Glasgow.
seconder - Dr. J.R. Buchanan, 92 Stirling Road, Glasgow.

John Neilson Cuthbertson (C), Chemical and Produce Broker, 25 Blythswood
Square, Glasgow.
proposer - Peter Galbraith, 17 Huntly Gardens.
seconder - Dr. John Glaister, 5 Grafton Place.

* L : Liberal C : Conservative LRL : Land Restoration League
LU : Liberal Unionist GL : Gladstonian Liberal
U : Unionist (i.e. former Conservative)

Tradeston (electorate 9,222)

James Somervell of Sorn (C).

proposer - William McOnie, Heathbank, the Hon. Lord Provost of Glasgow.
seconder - Bailie Shearer, 8 Royal Crescent.

Archd. Cameron Corbett (L), Milliken, Johnston.

proposer - John Wilson, Hillhead House.
seconder - Robert Graham, 19 Regent Park Square, Strathbungo.

Camlachie (electorate 9,220)

Hugh Watt (L), Merchant, 119 St. George's Road, South Belgravia, London.

proposer - William Clark, 16 Montgomery Crescent, Kelvinside.
seconder - James Mowat, Fernielea, Mount Vernon.

James Martin (L), Carincraig House, Foxley.

proposer - Wm. Young, Surgeon, 274 Great Eastern Road.
seconder - Gavin Black, Portioner, 46 Whitevale Street.

Thomas Arnot Reid (C), Journalist, Conservative Club, 46 Renfield Street.

proposer - Isaac Beardmore, Symington Lodge, Bothwell.
seconder - John Edmond Fairlie, 348 Duke Street.

Central (electorate 13,208)

John Geo. Alexr. Baird (C) of Muirkirk, Ayrshire.

proposer - John Burns, Castle Wemyss and 1 Park Gardens, Glasgow.
seconder - James King of Leverholm and 15 Wellington Street, Glasgow.

Gilbert Beith (L), Merchant, 15 Belhaven Terrace.

proposer - John McLaren, 5 Hanover Street, Glasgow.
seconder - Robert Couper Grant, 6 Cleveland Street.

College (electorate 11,934)

Dr. Charles Cameron (L), 14 Park Circus.

proposer - Scott Duncan, 10 Windsor Terrace.
seconder - James Galloway, 59 Garscube Road.

Sir Wm. Montgomery Cunninghame, Bart., (C), of Corsehill, Kilbirnie, Maybole.

proposer - Professor Thomas McCall Anderson, 2 Woodside Terrace.
seconder - Lieut. Col. Joseph Newbigging Smith, 19 Holyrood Crescent.

1886

(electorates same as in 1885)

Blackfriars-Hutchesontown

Mitchell Henry (LU), Stratheden House, Knightsbridge, London and Kylemore Castle, Galway, Merchant.

proposer - Hugh Lamberton, Stanley House, Pollokshields.

seconder - Henry Lawson Taggart, Gartferry House, Chryston.

Andrew Dryburgh Provand (GL), Guildhall Chambers, Albert Square, Manchester, Merchant.

proposer - Wm. Fife, Commission Agent, 9 Campside Crescent, Langside, Renfrewshire.

seconder - Michael Simons, Fruitbroker, 206 Bath Street, Glasgow.

Bridgeton

Colin Mackenzie (U), 6 Down Street, Piccadilly, London, Retired Merchant.

proposer - Duncan Stewart, Engineer, 12 Montgomery Crescent, Kelvinside.

seconder - James Macfarlane, Baker, 6 Seton Terrace, Glasgow.

Edward Richard Russell (GL), 6 Abercrombie Square, Liverpool, Editor of the 'Liverpool Daily Post'.

proposer - John Anderson, junior, Manufacturer, 2 Park Circus.

seconder - Thos. McBride, Leather Merchant, 11 Monteith Row.

St. Rollox

James Caldwell (LU), Kincaidfield House, Milton of Campsie, Calico-printer.

proposer - John Thomson, Founder, 15 Burnbank Gardens.

seconder - John Alexander Blackie, Publisher, 28 Westbourne Gardens.

Peter Stewart Macliver (GL), Ardnave, Weston-super-Mare, Newspaper Proprietor.

proposer - Sir Charles Tennant, Bart., 195 West George Street, Glasgow.

seconder - David Fortune, Manager, 89 North Frederick Street.

Tradeston

Archibald Cameron Corbett (LU), 132 Piccadilly, London, Gentleman.

proposer - Alexr. Smith, Engineer, Westbourne, Ibrox.

seconder - John Laing, Property Agent, Westwood, Bellahouston.

John Miller Dow Meiklejohn (GL), 2 Howard Place, St. Andrews, Professor in the University of St. Andrews.

proposer - John Wilson, Tube Manufacturer, Oxford Street.

seconder - Robert Graham, Newsagent, 61 and 63 Eglinton Street.

Camlachie

Hugh Watt (GL), 119 St. George's Road, London, S.W., Merchant.
proposer - Daniel McLaren Scott, Draper, 127-131 Canning Street,
Glasgow.
seconder - W. Ure, Ironfounder, 21 Whitevale Street, Glasgow.

Bennet Burleigh (LU), Lionel Villa, Overton Road, Brixton, London, S.W.,
Journalist.
proposer - Wm. Clark, 11 Montgomery Crescent, Kelvinside.
seconder - James Mowat, Fernielea, Mount Vernon.

Central

Gilbert Beith (GL), 15 Belhaven Terrace, Kelvinside, Glasgow, Merchant.
proposer - John Farquhar, Grain Merchant, 12 Hope Street, Glasgow.
seconder - Henry Shaw Macpherson, Commission Merchant, 62 Queen
Street, Glasgow.

John George Alexander Baird (U), Muirkirk, Ayrshire, Esquire.
proposer - Peter Hutchison, Ship Agent, 3 Lilybank Terrace, Hillhead.
seconder - Alex. Cross, Seedsman, 16 Woodlands Terrace, Glasgow.

College

Richard Vary Campbell (LU), 37 Moray Place, Edinburgh, Advocate.
proposer - Sir Wm. Thomson, Professor of Natural Philosophy,
11 Gilmorehill, (University).
seconder - James Reid Stewart, Merchant, 19 Park Terrace.

Charles Cameron (GL), 14 Park Circus, M.D., LL.D.
proposer - John Scott Dunn, Timber Merchant, 10 Windsor Terrace.
seconder - James Rough, Upholsterer, 11 Great Western Road.

Sources: Glasgow Herald, 25 Nov. 1885.
Glasgow Herald, 2 July 1886.

Appendix G

Areas of the Municipal Burgh and the Parliamentary
Burgh of Glasgow 1832-1891

<u>Year</u>	<u>Municipal Burgh</u>	<u>Parliamentary Burgh</u>
1832	----	5,063 acres
1843	2,373 acres	5,063 acres
1846	5,063 acres	5,063 acres
1872	6,033 acres	5,063 acres
1878	6,111 acres	5,063 acres
1885	6,111 acres	6,111 acres
1891	11,861 acres	6,111 acres

Source: Third Statistical Account. The City of Glasgow, pp. 787, 788.

Note on Sources and Bibliography

Since most of the personalities in this study were only important locally it has been difficult to trace private papers which would throw more light on political events in Glasgow in the 1880's. Although efforts were made to contact the descendants of leading political figures in Glasgow no manuscript sources came to light in this way. As it was more likely that relevant manuscript material would be preserved in the collections of nationally important figures the following were tried but with a similarly negative result: the British Museum, the National Library of Scotland, the Scottish Record Office, the National Register of Archives (Scotland), the Labour Party (Scottish Council), the Independent Labour Party (Scottish Divisional Council), the Library of the University of Glasgow, the Natural Philosophy Department, University of Glasgow (which contains some Kelvin Papers), the Library of the Royal Faculty of Procurators, Glasgow, the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, the Glasgow City Archives Office. As a result, the bulk of the basic information on political events in Glasgow at this period has been drawn from the newspaper files of the Glasgow Herald, the North British Daily Mail, and to a lesser extent, the Glasgow Observer. Together they provide the single most important source in this study. They have been used extensively to compile information on the day-to-day happenings over 1885 and 1886 and also for related information in the 1870's and 1880's. In the fashion of the time they all give expansive and detailed coverage to political events. A detailed perusal of their correspondence columns over an extensive period of time also provides valuable information about the attitudes of the ordinary voter whose views normally remain hidden. In their day by day build-up of political activities their importance in giving the reader the feeling of the direction of events and the relative

importance of issues as they appeared to contemporaries cannot be minimised.

Although the Glasgow Herald's whiggish mistrust of political and social change is patent it provides, of the three, the most factual record. Its news reports are unadorned and extensive. Although the North British Daily Mail adopted a more popular, more eye-catching layout of the news it, too, proved invaluable for its extensive political coverage from the radical Liberal angle. Its large correspondence columns were found to be particularly useful in allowing the views of the radical electorate to be assessed. Although the North British Daily Mail and the Glasgow Herald took opposing attitudes to political questions often highlighting different aspects of the same event, their factual correlation in reporting the details of local political happenings argues for their high degree of accuracy as newspapers of record (on a local scale at least). The Glasgow Observer was smaller in scope and size than either of these two. It appeared only weekly whereas the others appeared daily. As the organ of the Roman Catholics in the West of Scotland with a strong Nationalist bias it, however, gives the views current among the Irish electorate in a very specific manner. Apart from ecclesiastical and small items of local news and its weekly serial story its columns were mainly devoted to topics which were of direct political interest to the Roman Catholic Irish.

In addition to the newspapers the Minute Books of the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association have proved invaluable. Details of meetings, of the personnel involved, of the debates and decisions reached are given relatively extensively. While newspaper accounts can be used to supplement most of the major entries the information in these Minute Books is not always available in the newspaper files. This is especially true during the early period of their organisation in 1886 when the Liberal Unionists involved in Glasgow had to act circumspectly. For richness of detail, therefore, these

Minute Books have been of primary importance in this study. They were consulted by permission of the Glasgow Head Office of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party in whose custody they are kept. Also discovered in the Conservative Party office in Glasgow were a great number of miscellaneous typescript notes made by Sir Lewis Shedden who was a full time official with the Conservative organisation in the West of Scotland from 1884. These consist of articles and notes on the history of the West of Scotland constituencies and their candidates and are based to some extent on the author's intimate knowledge of the contemporary political scene. For biographical detail and for identification of little-known names they have been invaluable. As indicated in the text of this study they have been cited for convenience as Shedden T/S. The Glasgow Post Office Directories between 1878 and 1890 were also of primary importance in helping to identify the personalities prominent in Glasgow political circles from the names and addresses given in sources like the Annual Reports of the Glasgow Liberal Association and the Annual Reports of the Directors of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. The information available in the Minute Books of the Scottish Liberal Association (housed in the Library of the University of Edinburgh and consulted by permission of the Scottish Liberal Party) tended to be formal and stereotyped in nature and for fuller coverage of discussions at Liberal meetings in Scotland recourse had again to be made to the contemporary newspapers.

The correspondence files in the Rosebery Papers in the National Library of Scotland (boxes 61, 62, and 33) yielded useful information as to the general political scene in Scotland which could be related incidentally to events in Glasgow at this period. The series of Registers of Parliamentary Voters for the Burgh of Glasgow, housed in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, and the series of Collectors Rates Books in the Glasgow City Archives (D-CC, 10, 1), were of greater direct value in analysing the local political situation

especially as to the level of electoral participation in Glasgow. These sources were used in conjunction with the Valuation Rolls for the City of Glasgow, Scottish Record Office, VR 102 (331-335). The Minute Books of the Glasgow Trades Council (located in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow) give a view of economic and social conditions in the 1880's as seen by some of those directly affected. Like all minute books, however, the information in this source is restricted to short notes under headings of items of business. While they provide information as to debates, policy, identities, etc., their summaries of discussions within the Trades Council have to be supplemented from other sources like the newspapers of the period. Mention should be made here of two manuscript letters which came to light in the course of this study. Dated January 1886 they deal with the efforts of some Scottish Liberal churchmen to combat the attacks from the disestablishers. They provide an interesting clue as to the identities of those who were associated first with the anti-disestablishers and later the anti-Gladstonians in Glasgow Liberal circles. They are bound into a series of Church Pamphlets in Glasgow University Library, David Murray Collection (pressmark Mu44-e.20).

The most important sources for the basic information regarding the social background of the constituencies are printed works. These are the decennial Census Reports, Scotland and Dr. J.B. Russell's and Dr. Chalmers' surveys of social conditions in Glasgow in the census years. Russell's and Chalmers' studies contain a wealth of statistical information which, as has been shown, can be related to the constituencies in a variety of ways. They give the comprehensive, detailed picture that would be expected from men with intimate knowledge and close observation of the daily life of Glasgow's population in the later nineteenth century. The most important and extensively detailed is J.B. Russell's Vital Statistics of the City of Glasgow (3 parts, Glasgow 1886). This is followed by the same author's Old Glasgow and its

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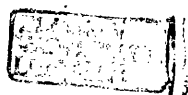
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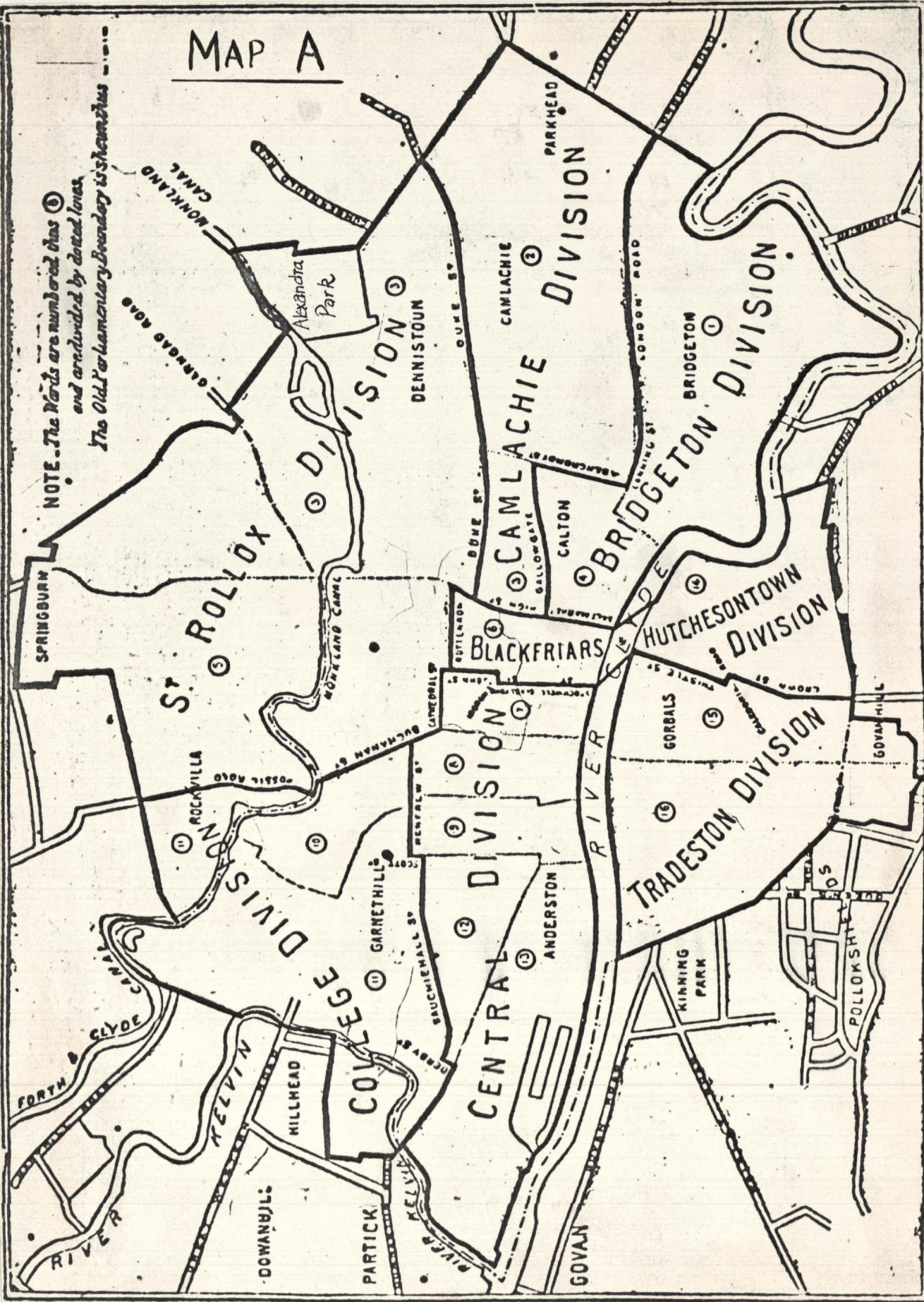
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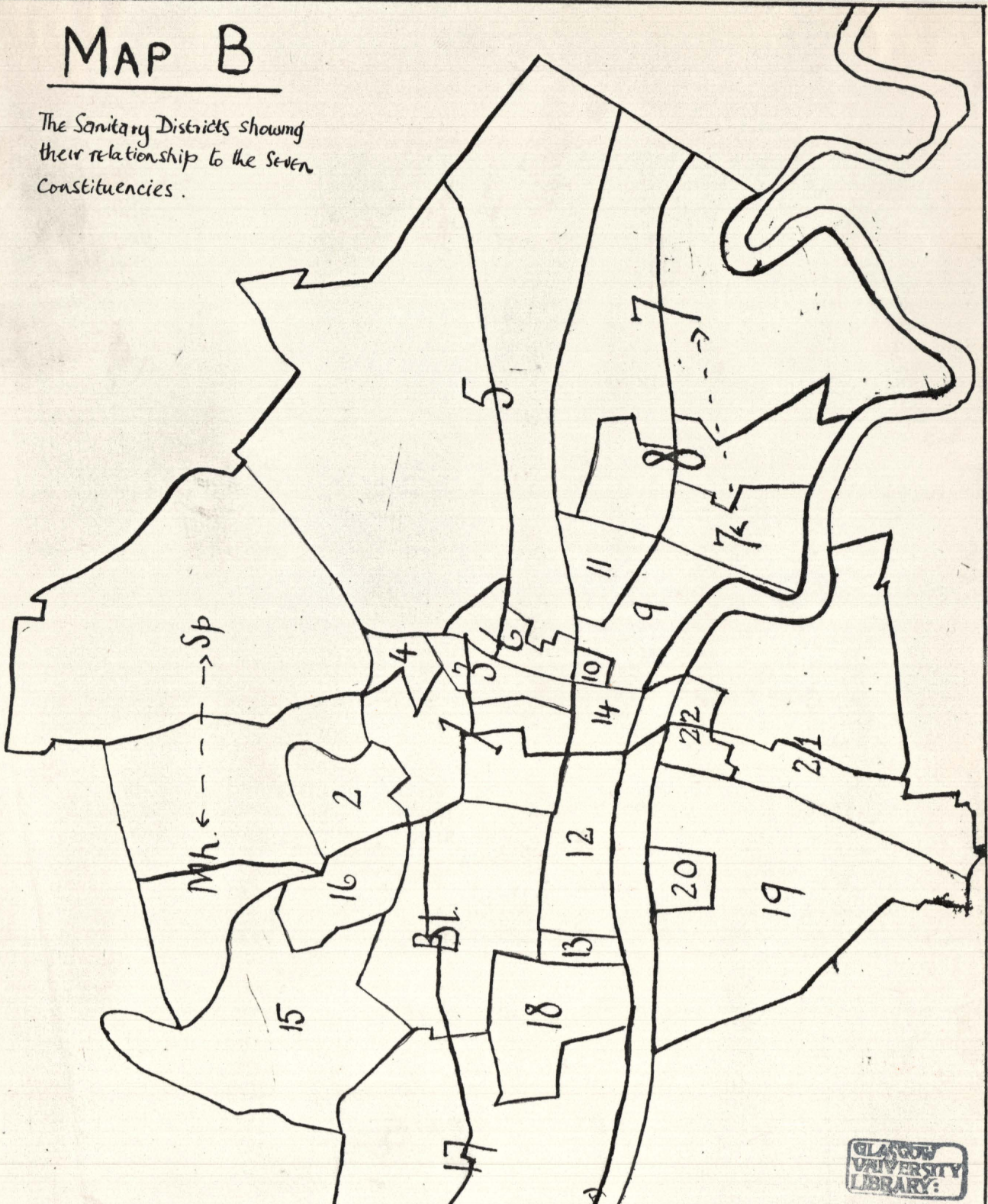
MAP A

NOTE - The Wards are numbered thus ① and are divided by dotted lines. The Old Parliamentary Boundary is shown thus - - - - -



MAP B

The Sanitary Districts showing their relationship to the Seven Constituencies.



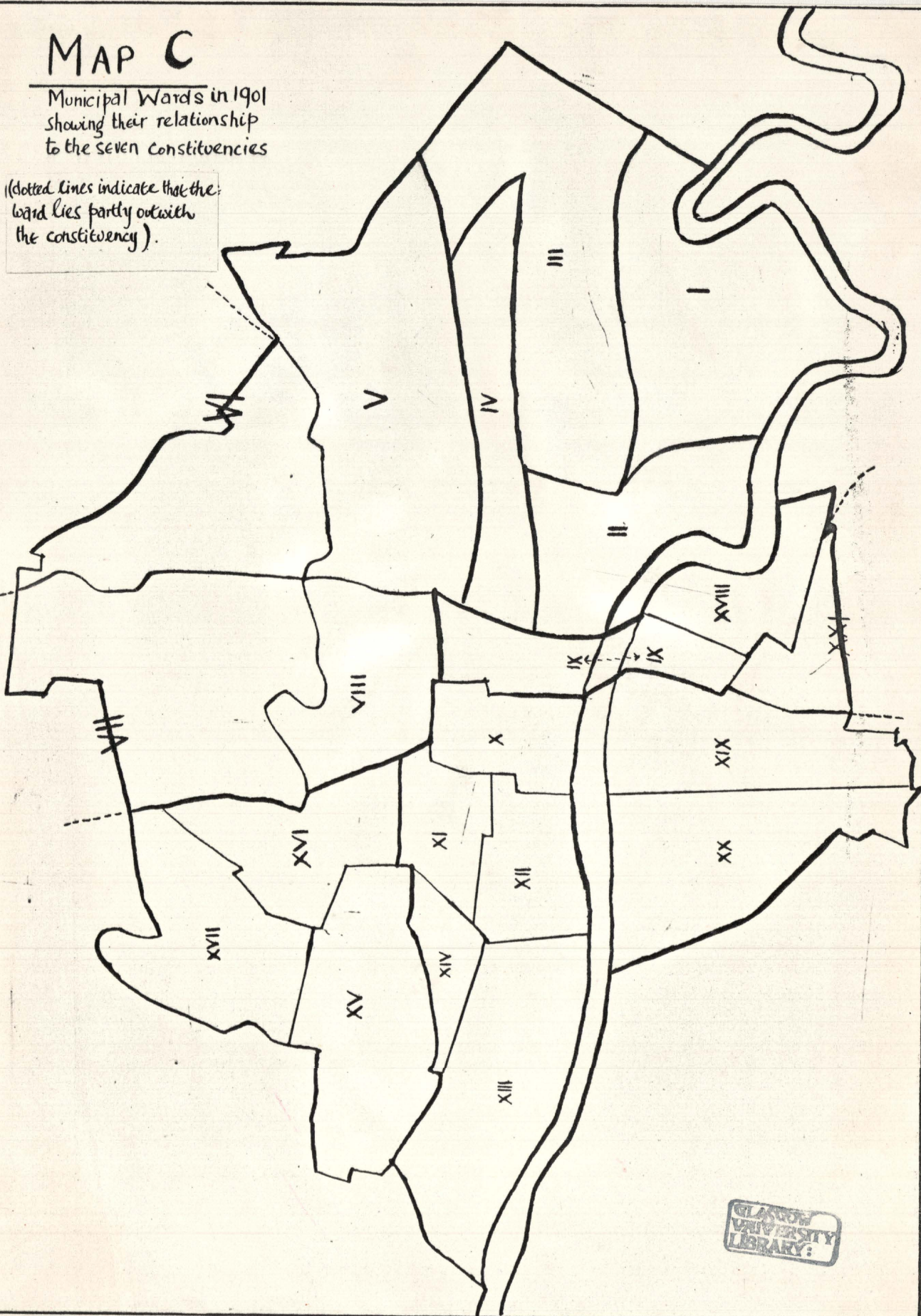
- Bl - Blythwood (266 acres)
- 1 - Exchange (215 acres)
- 2 - Port Dundas (73 acres)
- 3 - High St. & Cloves (W) (42 acres)
- 4 - St. Rolox (45 acres)
- 5 - Bellgrove & Dennistoun (1152 acres)
- 6 - High St. & Cloves (E) (50 acres)
- 7 - Greenhead & London Rd. (857 acres)
- 8 - Barrowfield (123 acres)
- 9 - Monteith Row (115 acres)
- 10 - St. Andrew's Square (22 acres)
- 11 - Calton Proper (66 acres)
- 12 - St. Enoch Square (84 acres)
- 13 - Brownfield (11 acres)
- 14 - Bridgegate & Wyllys (35 acres)
- 15 - Woodside (336 acres)
- 16 - Cowcaddens (61 acres)
- 17 - Kelvinhaugh & Sandyford (626 acres)
- 18 - Anderson Proper (127 acres)
- 19 - Kingston (389 acres)
- 20 - Laurieston (49 acres)
- 21 - Hutcheson Square (453 acres)
- 22 - Gorbals (48 acres)
- Mh - Marryhill (866 acres)
- Sp - Springburn (866 acres)



MAP C

Municipal Wards in 1901
showing their relationship
to the seven constituencies

(dotted lines indicate that the
ward lies partly outwith
the constituency).

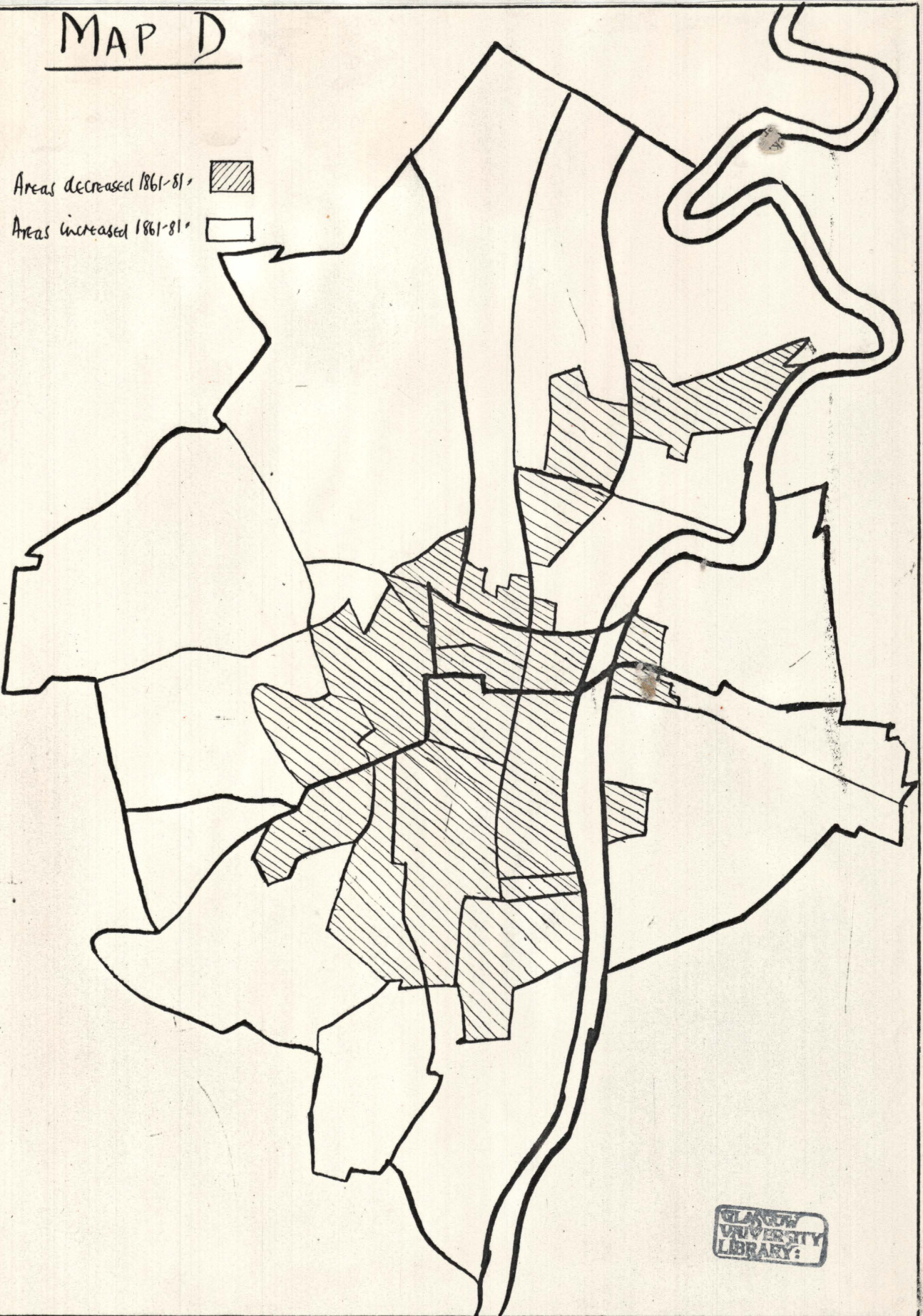


MAP D

Areas decreased 1861-81



Areas increased 1861-81



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MAP E

Unshaded Areas show increased population 1871-1901

Shaded Areas show decreased population 1871-1901



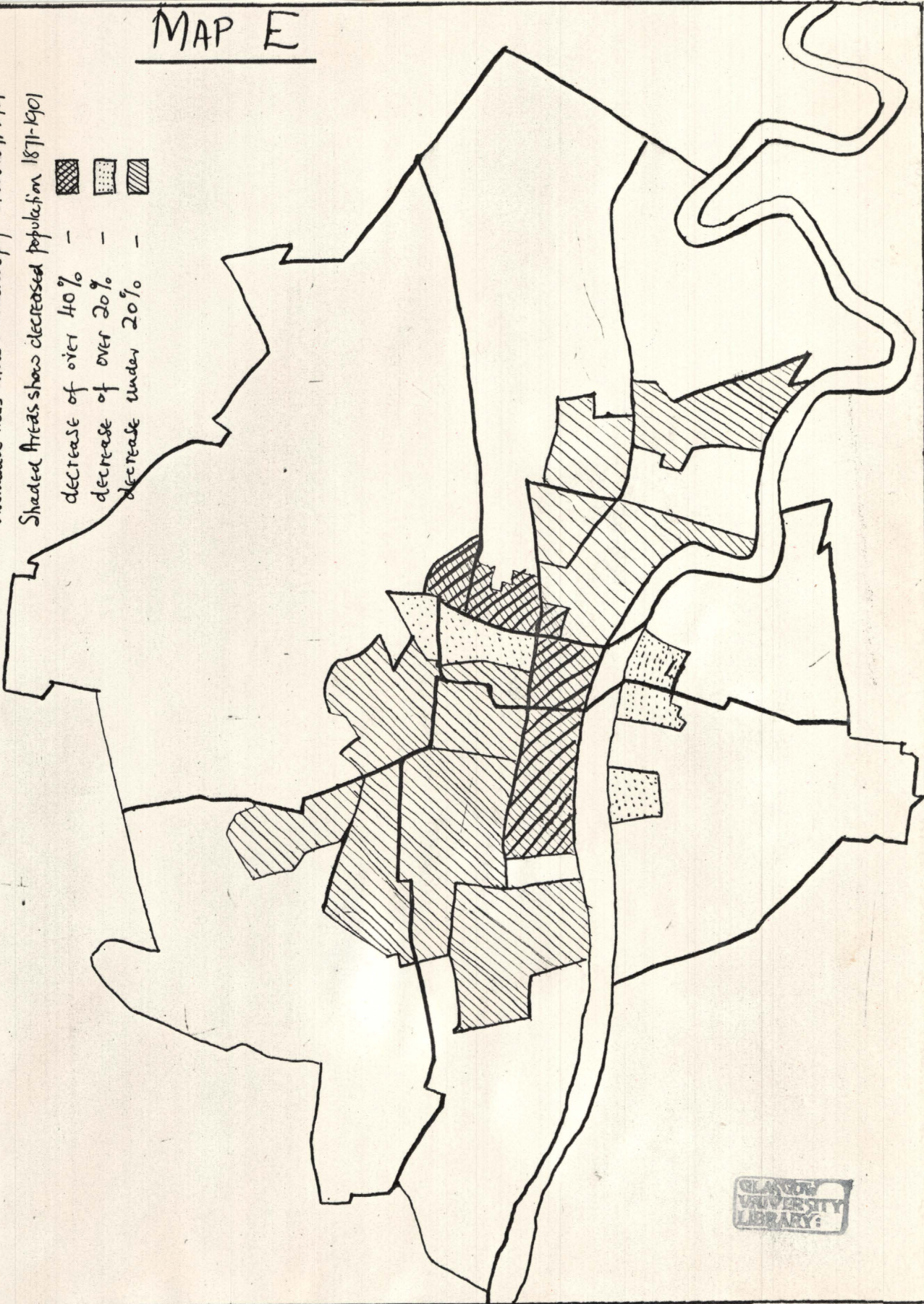
decrease of over 40%



decrease of over 20%





decrease under 20%



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(F)

MAP F.

Sanitary groups I & II = 
 Sanitary groups III & IV = 

ST. ROLLOX
 Population 1881 = 80,454
 Distribution - 71,297
 - 9,157

CAMLACHE
 Population 1881 = 62,339
 Distribution - 42,029
 - 20,210

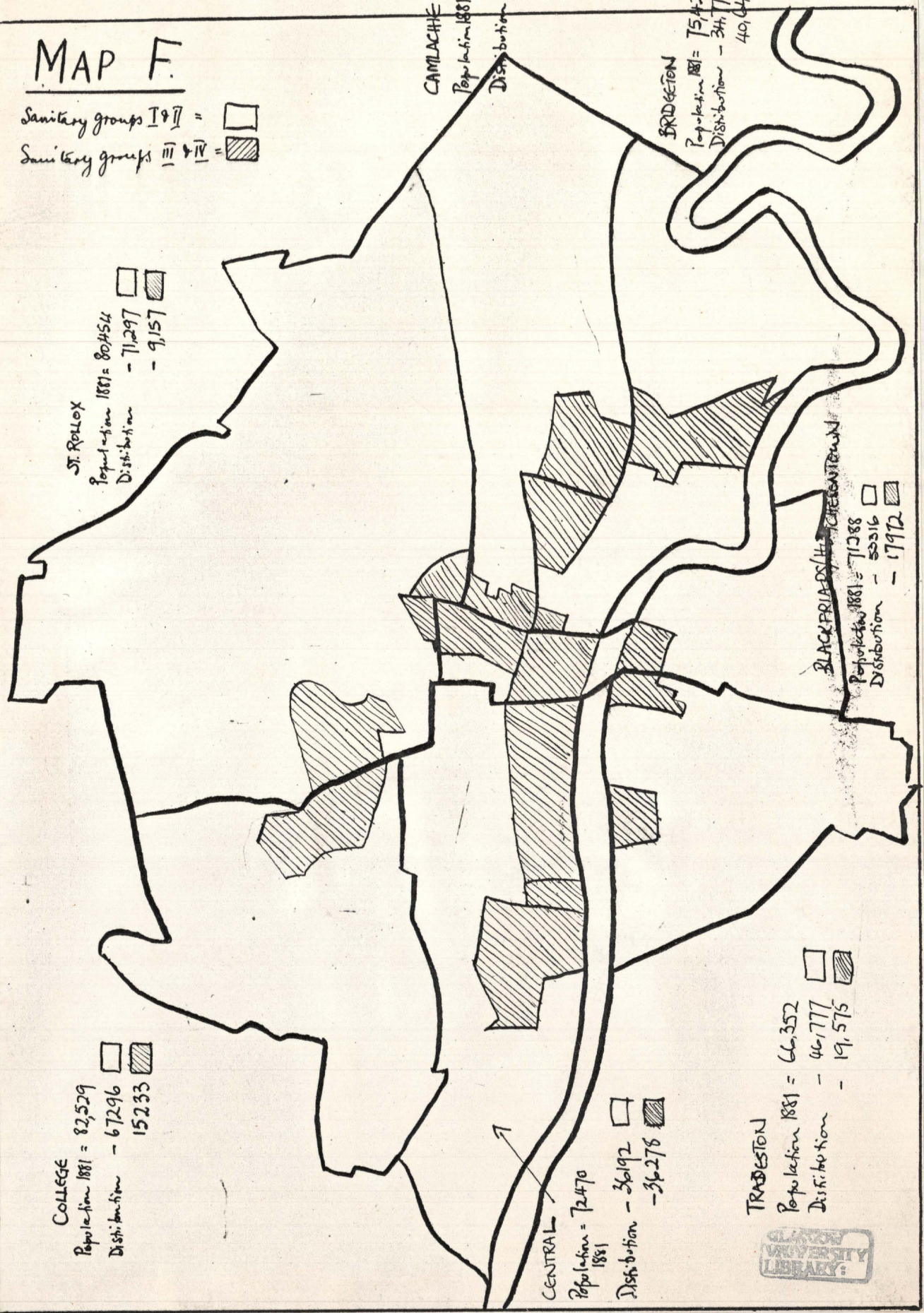
BRIDGEFEN
 Population 1881 = 75,426
 Distribution - 34,778
 40,648

BLACKPRIARDS/H. CATEBOURNE
 Population 1881 = 71,388
 Distribution - 52,916
 - 17,972

COLLEGE
 Population 1881 = 82,529
 Distribution - 67,296
 15,233

CENTRAL
 Population 1881 = 72,470
 Distribution - 36,192
 - 36,278

TRADESTON
 Population 1881 = 66,352
 Distribution - 46,777
 - 19,575



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- Map A - The seven Glasgow constituencies in 1885
- Map B - Sanitary districts showing their relationship to the seven Glasgow constituencies
- Map C - Municipal wards in 1901 showing their relationship to the seven Glasgow constituencies
- Map D - Areas of increase and decrease in population in Glasgow 1861 - 1881
- Map E - Areas of increase and decrease in population in Glasgow 1871 - 1901
- Map F - Distribution of constituency populations in Glasgow according to sanitary groupings

