The Liberal education bills: conflict and compromise in religious issues and Liberal Party educational policies 1906-1908

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THE LIBERAL EDUCATION BILLS

CONFLICT AND COMPROMISE IN RELIGIOUS ISSUES AND
LIBERAL PARTY EDUCATIONAL POLICIES 1906-1908

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of Ph.D
in the School of Education

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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 1</strong></td>
<td>The Legacy of the School Boards and the Education Act of 1902</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 2</strong></td>
<td>The Working of the 1902 Act</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 3</strong></td>
<td>The Election of 1906</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 4</strong></td>
<td>The Education Bill of 1906 and the House of Commons</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 5</strong></td>
<td>The Education Bill of 1906 and the House of Lords</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 6</strong></td>
<td>The Education Bills of 1908</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bibliograph</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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THE LIBERAL EDUCATION BILLS 1906-1908

THE ABSTRACT
THE LIBERAL EDUCATION BILLS
Conflict and Compromise in Religious Issues and Liberal Party Educational Policies 1906-1908

This study follows the religious and educational issues which formed the background to the Education Bills of the Liberal Government in the period 1906-08. The role of the churches and their place in society in the 19th and early 20th Centuries is outlined. The problems of educational provision and lack of resources through the voluntary agencies is reviewed and the impact of the Education Act of 1870 during the period of the School Board era is considered.

The position of the Church of England is outlined alongside the provisions of the Education Act of 1902 and an assessment is made of the working of that Act. The claims and grievances of the Nonconformists are reviewed.

The political consequences of the Conservative Government’s defeat and the return of a Liberal Government to power in 1906 is outlined together with a review of that Election. The role of the newspapers and the demands of the various bodies with a declared interest in religion and education are considered.

A detailed examination of the negotiations undertaken between the Liberal Government and the various denominational interests in their attempts to remedy the Nonconformist grievances over the 1902 Education Act during the period 1906-08 is included. The work of the Archbishop of Canterbury on behalf of the Established Church is closely followed to draw the distinction between those working at the highest level of negotiation and those at grass roots level.

The Liberal Government’s social reforms and the decline in popularity of the Liberal Party as a vehicle for political Nonconformism is reviewed alongside the stalemate in educational legislation affecting religious issues. The growth of that Government’s intervention into the field of social welfare and the lessening impact of religion in the overall life of the Nation is also considered together with a review of changes in attitudes towards religion and its part in educational provision in more recent times.
INTRODUCTION
This thesis seeks to widen the understanding of the interaction between education, religion, politics and social change during the period of Liberal Government in the early 20th Century, with a particular emphasis on their Education Bills of 1906 and 1908. It seeks to outline the conflict of interests between the churches and the Liberal Government and the attempts at compromise which followed that Government's proposals to amend the Education Act of 1902.

The study assesses the currents and cross-currents of opinion amongst the political parties of the day, examines the viewpoint of the various religious and other groups concerned, and documents the circumstances in which the 'religious problem' came into prominence together with the solutions offered to reach a settlement.

Those problems within education and politics at this period are addressed to identify those issues which lay at the root of this conflict. There are several major questions and areas of interest and concern to be highlighted before the Education Bills of 1906-08 are examined.

The question of the role of the churches in the lives of the working classes is raised. The end of the 19th Century is regarded as the period during which the influence of the churches had begun to decline, but the Liberal Education Bills of 1906 and 1908 brought forward the strongest of protests from all sides of denominational interests.

The question of the grievances of the Nonconformists over the Education Act of 1902 are discussed and the problems encountered by the newly elected education authorities to administer the Act are outlined as it is against this background that the Liberal Government introduced their elementary Education Bills of 1906 and 1908.

The election of 1906 brought the Liberal Party back into office believing it had a mandate to right the wrongs of the Nonconformists over the Education
Act of 1902. This thesis follows that election and questions whether the Liberals put forward a constructive policy on educational reform which would then be accepted as the basis of their Education Bill of 1906.

It is questioned to what extent the various denominational protests throughout the country were to influence the Liberal Government's own policies and to what extent the leaders of the main denominations were successful in reaching solutions which would be accepted by their own followers.

The failure of the Liberal Bills is discussed. It is questioned whether these failures were inevitable at this particular point in political history or whether solutions might have been reached even if further compromises had to be made on all sides to come to an agreed settlement.

Documentation is available (see full bibliography) on all aspects of religious controversies, education and politics.

The relationship between these major elements which was to contribute to the inability of the Liberal Government to complete its own educational legislation is examined and in so doing shows that the early 20th Century was a period of rapid social and political change. Some of these aspects are outlined in "The Making of Victorian England" (1) in which G. Kitson Clark traces the impact of social change and identifies the new social groupings of the late nineteenth century which altered the structure and policies of the Liberal Party. G. Kitson Clark was to claim that what probably in the long run determines the shape of politics are the social movements, the grouping and re-grouping in the mass of the community which are beyond the reach of politicians. Speaking only in general terms he does not stress the importance of educational change nor the impact of the decline in religious controversy after the early years of the twentieth century. He identifies two processes which have been at work. In the first instance he points to the increase in wealth, and secondly, to the development of
the confidence of the working class which was to create a new social group whose centre of gravity so to speak was at a lower point in the economic and social pyramid than in the group on which the Liberals had depended. Thus whilst laying the basis of his argument on social change, Clark does not attempt to integrate the education question into his theories.

Similarly, Keith Hutchinson in his "Decline and Fall of British Capitalism" (2) argues that the rise of collectivism meant that although the Liberal Party remained in power until the First World War by making concessions to the working class, it was an inevitable outcome of economic and political forces set in motion by the extension of the franchise in 1867 and 1884 that had undermined the grass roots support for the Liberal Party. Hutchinson states that "the immediate results of the Third Reform Act...so far from proving the beneficiary of the enlarged franchise, the old Liberal Party was the chief victim....In carrying the constitutional reforms from whom it sprang to their logical conclusion - a democratic franchise - it sealed its own doom." (3) Again the arguments take no account of education change nor of the determination of the Nonconformists to reverse the Education Act of 1902. His arguments for social change are based upon economic arguments claiming that class relationships are the key to historical events but does not include education and its impact upon the lives of working class people as a major force for social change.

Sir Ivor Jennings claims that the future of the Liberal Party after 1886 lay in an increasingly working class policy, but the Party itself was ill-adapted to the change. (4) Jennings believes that the Liberal Party remained too class bound at all levels, and that its leaders were uncreative on social issues. His claims are not fully conclusive as it can be argued that the Party had already adopted a working class policy by 1906 and much had
been achieved in the field of social reform by the time of the First World War. Jennings does not draw upon the educational shades of opinion in this era, but concentrates on matters of Home Rule and Free Trade to pursue his case. He also ignores the religious controversies of this period upon which John F. Glaser, the American historian, approaches this issue. Glaser argues that the decline of the Nonconformist influence corresponds directly with the decline in Liberal support, writing in his article "English Nonconformity and the Decline of Liberalism" (5) that an essential part of this previous greatness and then the decline of Liberalism was the greatness and decline of English Nonconformity. Glaser makes no direct reference to the inability of a powerful Liberal Government to pass its own major educational legislation based upon Nonconformist interests in education and politics, and no direct reference is made to the gradual lessening of interest in these policies or to the increasing demands then placed upon the Government in respect of social reforms.

Similarly Martin Pugh in his account of this period entitled "The Making of Modern British Politics 1867-1939" (6) concentrates on parliamentary politics in its wider social context. Although the state of the parties both in and out of Parliament is discussed and the social background is interpreted, the place of the educational debate assumes only a limited role with the total period of Liberal domination.

An overall view of this period can be gained from R.C.K. Ensor's study "England 1870-1914" (7) which outlines many of the changes which took place during this period and is a judicious mixture of information and judgment but is without detail or comment, or, by the nature of a work of this length, without a depth of information or comment upon matters of educational interest. W.L. Guttsman's "The British Political Elite" (8) takes a broad overview and thus lacks comment on political issues at a local level,
but this can be counter-balanced by J.E.B. Munson's article in the "Historical Journal" Volume XX (1977) in which he outlines the educational position at the beginning of the twentieth century, but his article is restricted to the Unionist position during this period. (9) This work also complements the writings on some aspects of popular Conservatism by Hanham in his "Elections and Party Management"(10) and J. Robb in her book "The Primrose League" (11) which together with K.O. Morgan's "The Age of Lloyd George" (12) and the collected essays entitled "The Lower Middle Class in Britain: 1870 - 1914," (13) edited by G. Crossick, cover this period under consideration from a variety of different viewpoints, but without any emphasis upon educational matters. The work of George Dangerfield entitled "The Strange Death of Liberal England" (14) details his own views on the decline in fortunes of the Liberal Party but no emphasis is given to the controversies over religion and education in the period 1906-08.

Both Brian Simon's "Education and the Labour Movement"(15) and Colin Cross in his "The Liberals in Power 1905-14." (16) pursue a deliberate course of inquiry. Simon puts forward the development and growth of socialism and the Labour Party as a main contributory factor in educational and social change, and Cross follows a mainly political theme, but neither take as a main standpoint the churches involvement in education. So too, J.S. Shepherd's thesis "The Lib-Labs and English Working Class Politics 1874-1906" (17) is concerned with the growth of socialism and the Labour Party as its main theme rather than with the educational problems and policies which these developments were forced to debate. A more detailed study of the educational question is given in L.O. Ward's Ph.D. study under the title of "An Investigation into the Educational Ideas and Contribution of the British Political Parties 1870-1918" (18) This study is concerned primarily with a theoretical approach to the policies pursued by the parties and therefore does not take into account an overall view of the education questions as these affected the religious bodies of that period.
J. Walker in his "British Economic and Social History 1700-1982" (19) puts forward the case that after 1870 social class was the main factor in determining the type of education a child would receive, and conversely the education received would determine to a large extent the social strata in which that child would live. Cheap elementary education was to be provided for the masses. Edward Boyle follows the same theme claiming in his "Modern Britain - A Social History; 1750-1985" that secondary education was not for the masses, "the odds against a child from an elementary school gaining a scholarship to secondary school in 1894 being 270 to 1." (20)

The decline of the Liberals as a Parliamentary force is assessed by K. Robbins in "The Eclipse of a Great Power; 1870-1975" (21) where the period from 1905 is viewed as one in which the Liberal Government had its authority undermined by its confrontation with the House of Lords. The fate of the Education Bill of 1906 is shown as being one of the issues in which the Liberal Government had to accept defeat.

This thesis examines the position of the Liberal Government from 1905 and questions the role played by that Party in supporting those policies demanded by its supporters with special reference to its educational policies. It is also questioned whether the success of the Liberal Party in the General Election of 1906 was the result of an acceptance of Liberal policies by the electorate rather than a rejection of a lack-lustre Conservative Government under the leadership of A.J. Balfour.

The Liberal Government was returned to power in an overwhelming election victory early in 1906. Backed by a huge majority in the House of Commons and supported by its own election pledges it was expected that this Government would introduce educational legislation which would right the grievances of the Nonconformists who had opposed the Balfour Education Act of 1902.

This study follows the General Election campaign of 1906 and assesses
the importance placed by candidates on educational issues. It will be necessary to contrast this issue with the other main election issues so that an overall assessment can be made of the support to be expected by the Liberal Government for their proposed legislation which would affect educational issues.

The problems of the Liberal Government from 1906 onwards are explored in a number of studies. Alan Sykes' "Tariff Reform in British Politics - 1903-13" (22) emphasises the difficulties faced by the protectionists whilst the suffragette movement is placed in perspective by Andrew Rosen in his critical study of the W.S.P.U. entitled "Rise Up, Women."(23) M.D. Pugh, writing in the Historical Association Pamphlet of 1980 also seeks to place this movement into historical perspective in his article "Women's Suffrage in Britain 1867-1928." The work of Frank Bealey on the Liberal-Labour alliance fully examines this aspect of manipulative politics in his "Electoral Arrangement Between the Labour Representation Committee and the Liberal Party" in the Journal of Modern History dated December 1956. R.I. McKibbin's "Evolution of the Labour Party 1910-24" (24) accepts that the working classes could not be contained within such an alliance. This opinion is backed by the findings of both Pelling and Pugh. Additional material is to be found in C. Cook's "Short History of the Liberal Party 1900-1976" (25) but this is not based upon the educational controversies. Henry Pelling traces the social roots of political change in the late Victorian period in Britain in his "Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910" (26) and is an invaluable guide to this period. His collection of essays under the title of "Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain"(27) discusses the initial hostility of the working class to authority and the origins of the Welfare State. This theme is given a broader interpretation in Frank Parkin's article in the British Journal of Sociology, Volume 18 of 1967 under the heading of "Working Class Conservatives,"
A more detailed approach to the educational problems of the Liberal Party during the early twentieth century is given in S. Koss' "Nonconformity in Modern British Politics" (28) and in A.D. Gilbert's "Religion and Society in Industrial England"(29) but neither draws together the strands of religion, education, politics and social change.

Essential to this research is the standpoint of the members of the Liberal Cabinet relating to religious and educational issues. This thesis traces the views in education as expressed by the members of the Cabinet of 1906 to ascertain how united they were in presenting their educational policies. The roles of the Prime Minister, the President of the Board of Education and the Lord Privy Seal are of particular importance. It is questioned whether the problems associated with the Education Bills during this period were partly the result of disunity within the Cabinet over the detail of their own educational policies or whether there would be insurmountable difficulties in presenting any Education Bill which would satisfy even its own Liberal supporters.

The influence of the three Presidents of the Board of Education is studied with particular reference to the varying approaches in their own negotiations with the various denominations, and in particular with the Archbishop of Canterbury as the leader and chief negotiator for the Established Church. It is questioned whether any of the Liberal Bills might have succeeded if further agreement had been reached on the major issues before the Bills were presented to Parliament.

The position of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the negotiations drawn up between the Liberal Government and the Established Church is considered during this period so that an assessment can be made of his position within the Church of England with a particular reference to the National Society and to the Representative Church Council. It is to be considered whether
the Archbishop of Canterbury as chief negotiator had consulted these bodies to ascertain to what extent they were prepared to accept any agreement with the Liberal Party which might have undermined the position of the Church of England in the elementary education provision and control in the country.

The stance taken by the Roman Catholics is considered, and their position in the light of the Liberal proposals is assessed. This study therefore seeks to establish the relationship between the churches and the political parties over educational issues at the turn of the century. An emphasis is placed on the role of the Established Church, together with the position taken by the Roman Catholics, showing the conflict of interests between these bodies and Nonconformist interests.

The influence of various members of the churches in calling their own supporters to their cause is assessed and the methods by which this support was gathered is reviewed. Included in this survey is a study of the information available at the end of the 19th Century to the mass of the people in the form of newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets, and examines the extent to which these were blatantly religious or politically biased. Use is made of leaflets and pamphlets containing the views of prominent leaders in the various public debates or of those societies or parties which they represented. These printed arguments would reach a far wider audience than would have otherwise been possible in a single one night public meeting. Lengthy tracts were also produced examining and commenting upon the clauses of the Liberal Education Bill of 1906, together with further commentary upon the Education Act of 1902 and its working. These, together with the Annual Meetings and Reports of the various societies and denominations with a vested interest in elementary education give an indication of the depth of feeling at national and local level of the various issues involved.

The Reports and Minutes of Meetings of the Education Committees of the
County and County Borough Councils and the Annual Reports of the Education Department give a further indication as to the administrative problems and successes of the period under consideration. This thesis argues that there was a wide variation between different Local Authorities after the implementation of the Education Act of 1902 in the provision of suitable educational facilities. The Education Act of 1902 had been received with reservations by many who saw the additional burden of supporting the voluntary schools from their rates as undesirable, and saw no need for such a change. The research examines the development of elementary education in the Potteries in the School Board era and compares this with the development of elementary education in Crewe and in Macclesfield where there was a predominance of Anglican voluntary schools. Further examples of the development of the work of the Local Authorities are assessed with particular reference to Cheshire and Staffordshire County Councils and asks whether by the end of the 19th Century the Education Act of 1870 was outdated. A more centralised form of control had already been established by the formation of the Board of Education and by the realisation that the County and County Borough Councils would be able to fulfil the necessary administrative role at a local level.

This study notes the Cockerton judgment and the subsequent Education Act of 1901 and the Education (Renewal) Act of 1902 which the Liberals saw as an affront to the School Boards and as an attack on the provision of higher education for the working classes via the popular higher grade schools. It is accepted that the Acts were to establish the principle that the proper authority for organising secondary education was the County and County Borough Councils through their own Education Committees, and that this in turn provided a further step towards the acceptance of these authorities as the controlling bodies for elementary education. It is argued that there was some feeling that the removal of the School Boards
from the field of post-elementary education would give some protection to
the voluntary schools, many of which had few facilities to cope with the
increasing demands for post-elementary education. It is seen that the
Cookerton judgment and the subsequent Education Acts relating to this were
part of the preliminary ground-work in the transferring of the responsibility
of the broader field of education to the County and County Boroughs, thus
laying the foundation for the Education Act of 1902 and a simpler form of
administration.

J. J. Minshall in his "Creation and Development of
a Local Education Authority following the 1902 Education Act" (30) traces the
development of Cheshire County Council in its early years as an L.E.A.,
viewing the progress made as inevitable under the terms of that Act but
also stresses the difficulties faced with regard to the increasing expenditure
both in the provision of adequate schools and staffing at both elementary and
secondary level, and with the increase in administrative costs.

This claim is backed up by E. C. Midwinter's article "The Administration of
Public Education in Late Victorian Lancashire" (31) and also by W. M. Chaloner
where the greatest pressures to extend and improve local education were to
be based on financial considerations. The Ph.D. thesis by D. K. Drummond
entitled "Crewe - The Society and Culture of a Railway Town 1842-1914" (33)
also supports Chaloner's findings. Further evidence of the position of
the new Local Authorities is in J. A. Dewey's Ph.D. thesis "Church and
State in Elementary Education - North Staffordshire" (34) and in Goldstraw's
M.A. thesis "The Rise and Development of Education in the Staffordshire
Potteries" (35) Both argue that the Education Act of 1902 was opposed
not only by the Nonconformists but also by those who believed that education
administered through a Local Authority would increase local rates. The
work of the School Boards prior to the Education Act of 1902 is fully
outlined by S. Clews in his thesis "The School Boards of Stoke-on-Trent" (36)
and by L. Goldschmidt in "The Pottery Towns in the School Board Era" (37) where the composition of the local School Boards is given and the over-all provision of elementary education and the state of those schools up to the end of the School Board era is discussed. This contrasts sharply with the article by C.D. Rogers in the Chester Archaeological Society Journal 1970-71 under the title of "The Case Against the School Boards in Cheshire - 1870-1902" where he argues that the County in line with many other predominantly rural areas would have been able to provide sufficient elementary education through the voluntary system if sufficient grants had been made available.

This study evaluates the working of the Education Act of 1902 at a local level to determine the effect of that Act upon the County and County Boroughs. It will be necessary to outline the provision of both voluntary and board schools prior to this Act in order to assess the difficulties or otherwise of its implementation.

Throughout this period the newspaper reports, both national and local, give first hand accounts of events together with their own commentary upon issues of major current interest. These lean in favour of one or other of the major political parties. The interest which the press gave to educational legislation during the period when a Bill was before Parliament and the controversy it caused can also be judged from the detail and prominence of the various reports. An indication of the impact of political manoeuvring on the reading of the majority of the people of the country might therefore be judged according to its relative newsworthiness.

Tracts and special reports are also used as a valuable source of information, but the purpose of such publications had been to persuade those interested in such issues to support one particular side of the argument. Papers and files from the Public Record Office form the necessary basis for the majority of Government-based material used in this study, but these by
themselves do not give a full understanding in depth of the personal nature of negotiations as were undertaken during the Liberal Government's administration when both Birrell and Runciman in particular endeavoured to reach the necessary agreements at a personal level between the major personalities in the conflict over their Education Bills. It is therefore essential to study the Private Papers of such persons where this is possible, and to study their own accounts of events in biographies and autobiographies.

This thesis questions the role of the major pressure groups, and particularly those of the main denominational groups. The position of the main churches is examined and the stance taken by their leaders is questioned. A particular emphasis is placed on the role of Dr. Davidson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, during this period to assess how far his attempts towards reaching an agreed compromise might have been successful. It will be necessary to undertake a detailed examination of the Liberal Education Bills and their passage through the Houses of Parliament together with their subsequent amendments to review the various attempts at compromise. It will be necessary to question the failure of each Bill and to indicate the points of final disagreement where no compromise was possible.

Controversy between the religious bodies, the administrators and the educationalists had been apparent even in the earliest years of the 19th Century. It is accepted that this was no new clash of opinions and ideals when the Liberal Government came to power in the early 20th Century. It is acknowledged that the State had extended its role in the provision and content of education alongside the churches from 1834, through the giving of grants and through the Concordat of 1840 the State had also obtained the right of inspection and the right to press for improvements in elementary education. Even at this point the High Churchmen in particular saw this as State intervention, and the National Society with its influence and with its insistence upon the teaching of Church dogma in its schools was to
become one of the main centres of conflict.

The research outlines the role of the National Society during the passage of the Liberal Bills in 1906 and 1908 to determine whether it had the support of the mass of the Church of England behind its opinions. K.S. Inglis in his "Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England" (38) reviews the political significance of the main religious controversies of this period and a more detailed approach to the elementary education question is to be found in J.S. Hurt, "Elementary Schooling and the Working Classes" (39) which contains much information directly related to this period but is not intended as a political commentary or as a detailed study of the Liberal Government's educational policies. A.I. Taylor in his unpublished Ph.D. thesis "The Church Party and Popular Education 1897-1902" (40) assesses the impact of the Church Party on the formulation of the Education Bill of 1902 detailing the contributions of the party members at this time as a High Church pressure group. This again is put into perspective through a study by R. Clark under the title of "A Critical survey of the Churches Involvement in Education in Church and State Schools 1870-1970" (41) and by R.E. Ellins, "Aspects of the New Liberalism 1895-1914" (42) which seeks to outline the radical changes in Liberal policies during the given period though not necessarily emphasising problems within the educational field. The outline position of the educational argument is clearly stated in "Church and State in English Education" (43) by Marjorie Cruickshank, but this concentration on educational matters leaves the social and political arguments and changes without any depth of study in this particular area. The social changes and developments throughout this period are assessed in some detail by G.A.N. Lowndes in his "Silent Social Revolution" (44) where he outlines the changes in Government thinking and the policies which had a profound impact on the lives of the masses of people and the conditions in which they lived. The changes in educational provision are commented
upon to support his arguments for the gradual development of governmental interference and an acceptance of government responsibility for the overall welfare of the general population. His work shows the changes in attitudes of the working classes and the middle classes to the social background which they had inherited and shows that the churches were having less impact upon the lives of the ordinary people than ever before.

The thesis questions the overall role of the churches in society and asks to what extent the controversy in religious teaching within the educational question was inflamed by the extremists of all shades of opinions. Each major attempt to draw the voluntary sector closer to the provided sector had resulted in a bitter conflict which had been both religious and political in its expression. The controversies raised by both parties and by the Radical National Education League and the Conservative and Anglican based National Education Union in 1870 to forward their views at a point when educational legislation was under consideration, indicated the pressures that could be put upon a Government which might not have otherwise been there without the leadership of the denominations themselves. In 1870 W.E. Forster had much in common with the Dissenters but was of the opinion that the religious controversy was over-rated, believing that it had been brought to a head not by parents and educators, but rather by the churches themselves. It was then apparent that although the country was dis-united in religious matters, the country was also not yet ready to accept a fully secular solution to this educational problem. The 1870 Education Bill was therefore essentially a compromise between the principles of voluntary provision and those of State education. Following the introduction of his Bill on 17th February 1870 Forster was to declare in the House of Commons that what the Government wanted to do was "that which the majority of parents of this country really wish; and we have no doubt whatever that an enormous majority of the parents of this country prefer that there should be a Christian training for their children."
The Education Bill of 1870 was to receive the Royal Assent on 9th August having been considered in the House of Lords from 22nd July to 2nd August, and finally being passed only with the assistance of the Conservative opposition. Upon this point the Education Bill of 1906 was to receive a very different reception. The 1870 Education Act had established the dual system of State and Voluntary provision in the field of elementary education. There were then to be two types of school, different "not only in the spirit of their religious teaching but different also in their control and management. The gulf was enormous, the tragic consequence was the churches and school boards, instead of being partners in the work of education, were to be rivals and competitors." (47)

This study acknowledges that there had been a division between Church and State in elementary education and that attempts had been made in the latter half of the 19th Century to address this problem and to attempt to reach a compromise between Church and State. The advent of a Liberal Government in 1906 did not bring any new controversy into being, but did arouse issues which had been of national concern, particularly in the 1902 period which had not been forgotten. It is argued that these issues were not issues of the immediate moment to be once heard and then forgotten, but rather that they surface each time the questions of education, politics and religion are thrown together in order to try to achieve legislation agreed to by all interested parties. This work takes the view that despite the understanding that the issues of religion and education were not sufficiently strong enough to call the nation to account, the issues of religion and education were still emotive enough to cause any government to tread a careful path on such matters. The problems of the Conservative Government in bringing in their own Education Act in 1902 are addressed, for that Government was to be faced with various denominational interests before they could bring in any legislation which was to affect elementary education.
This thesis outlines these problems with particular reference to the place of religious teaching in the elementary schools and the problems associated with the use of rate aid for the voluntary sector. The question of rate aid for the voluntary schools had been approached by the Cross Commission reporting in 1888. This had shown that the Roman Catholic schools were in need of additional support and therefore they were to press for rate aid as being the most appropriate way of achieving this support. The National Society on behalf of the Established Church and with the support of many diocesan education committees rejected the suggestion of rate aid at their Conference on 6th November 1888. Then their over-riding fear was that the assistance given to schools through a system of rate aid might also mean a loss of independence for their schools. There were also those within the Anglican Church who could see the benefits of rate aid and that such aid would outweigh the difficulties of some loss of independence. There was all the more reason for such an approach as year by year the Education Department was to insist on higher standards of education, more teachers and better buildings with better equipment. The Roman Catholics under the leadership of Cardinal Vaughan were in favour of rate aid, but under the leadership of Dr. Benson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Anglicans were still divided upon this question. Following the death of Archbishop Benson the lack of unity on the question of rate aid was removed when in November 1896 Archbishop Temple called a joint conference of the Convocations of Canterbury and York to discuss the problems of the voluntary schools and in particular that of their finances in relation to the acceptance of some form of rate aid. The result showed that a majority were then in favour of rate aid for their schools in the School Board districts, as well as pressing for additional State aid for all their schools. (48)
It is clear, therefore, that the voluntary sector was in need of financial aid by 1902. How this aid should have been given, and to what extent, had then been resolved by that Education Act but it was clear that the Nonconformists and the growing numbers in support of a purely secular education system were not in favour of providing a heavy financial backing for a voluntary system which would leave the denominations still in sole charge of their schools. This study reviews the working of the Education Act of 1902 with a particular emphasis on those areas of religious controversy. These included the problem of the demand for the removal of religious tests for teachers, and of the monopoly of Church of England schools in many rural areas. The continuing question of rate aid is also discussed together with an assessment of the success of the action taken by the Nonconformists against the use of such aid.

The research shows that the Nonconformists saw the Education Act of 1902 as a purposeful continuation of the dual system, for the Act itself was a modification of this system, leaving the voluntary schools on a more equal footing with the new Council schools. It is shown that the Nonconformists had wanted one system under popular control which many believed could have been achieved through the Education Act of 1870 and would have eventually squeezed out the voluntary sector from the main field of elementary education. It is argued that the claims of the denominationalists show that there was a need for urgent legislation, but that these groups had certain points upon which no compromise could be reached. It is shown that those who did not support denominational teaching were themselves not united in their own approach to religious teaching, some demanding a purely secular approach and others wanting simple Bible instruction without any specific dogmatic teaching.

This thesis addresses the problem that any Government would be faced with various denominational interests if they were to bring in any
legislation which would affect elementary education. Any legislation would have to overcome the religious problems then associated with the denominations, and also would have to satisfy the splinter groups within the main organisations.

This study outlines and assesses the conflict between the Governments of 1902 and of 1906-08 and the main denominational groups, and questions to what extent these groups had the main support of the population behind them. The main religious groups came directly under the main religious organisations of which the Church of England was merely the largest and most influential of the three main groups. The role of the Church of England and its influence is outlined by E.R. Norman in his study "Church and Society in England 1770-1970" (49) and by B.I. Coleman in "The Church of England in the Mid-Nineteenth Century" (50). The Roman Catholic Church was to be included within this group. This church had increased in volume more than any other, aided by the massive Irish immigration in mid-19th Century in particular. This aspect is discussed by E.R. Norman in his book "The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century" (51) whilst Reynolds' book "The Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales" (52) gives an overview of this period. A detail of information with an emphasis on the provision of Roman Catholic schools and their commitment to education is to be found in Benjamin Sacks' "The Religious Issues in State Schools of England and Wales 1902-14" (53). Methodism was the third force which embraced a large number of Nonconformists, many of whom were not supporters of the Conservative Party. Allied to this group of Nonconformists were the new dissenters like the Congregationalists and the Baptists, but both these groups, including the Methodists, were to show signs of membership decline towards the end of the 19th Century. The rise and decline of the Methodist Church is detailed in D. Hempton's book "A History of the Methodist Church - Vols. 2 & 3" (54) and similarly R.T. Jones follows
the same theme in his "Congregationalism in England 1662-1962" (55)
The old dissenters such as the Quakers, the Presbyterians and the
Unitarians were a minority group, their supporters having shown little
change throughout the latter part of the 19th Century. There had also
been a new Presbyterian movement relying mainly upon Scottish expatriates
which from 1876 had formed its own Presbyterian Church of England but this
sector had little power to force any issues on its own behalf. The
development of the Salvation Army with its movement towards the Free Church
Movement of Christianity still retained its distinctive religious cultural
phenomena. Outside the Christian based denominations the Jews had
also shown a direct interest in the education of their own children. They
had established their Jewish Religious Education Board in 1894 with the
firm intention of expanding the number of its own teachers and schools.
The work of this Board and the problems of Jewish integration are discussed
in detail by E. C. Black in his "The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880-
1920" (56) and by D. Cesarani (Ed.) in "The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry" (57)
which outlines the effects of the Jewish system of developing a few highly
centralised institutions dominated by London Jewry before the First World
War.

It is questioned whether the mass of the population were directly
concerned with the stance taken by the various denominations over the finer
points of the religious education question. There were many who had no
connection with religious groups whatsoever and although they might call
themselves "religious" they were outside any recognised church but would
support the general call for some form of religious instruction in the
elementary school. The main groups concerned with particular dogmas
were those who were involved in church affairs. However, the
Church of England was seen as the denomination which might expect the
greatest support from those with no great affiliation to any particular
denomination.
The working classes divided their allegiance between the Church of England, the Catholic and the Nonconformist Churches. Although the Church of England was the established national church it had not been able to attract and retain its hold on the poorest members of society so that they could identify themselves with that Church. To the large mass of the labouring poor the habit of Church-going was foreign. Only the Roman Catholic Church as a whole had taken up the challenge to keep its membership fully active. Even had the churches provided a sufficient number of places for this group of the population it seems unlikely that a habit of church-going would have been formed. It is doubtful that any such habit was ever universal for when the churches were provided, the mass of the poor did not attend, and neither was the provision such as to indicate that they were expected to attend. Wickham was to conclude in his study of Sheffield that "the common people have been outside the churches. The industrial working class culture pattern has evolved lacking a tradition of the practice of religion." (58) This view is re-inforced by the mass of evidence provided by George Haw when in 1906 he edited a symposium entitled "Christianity and the Working Classes." (59) He acknowledged the Labour view as given by Arthur Henderson, M.P. on the lack of influence of the church on the lives of working people. Thus broadly speaking the over-all decline in church attendance in the nation began in the late years of the 19th Century. The peak was reached between 1881 and 1900 and passed and a slow deflection commenced. The date of this and the beginning of the recession of the churches cannot be given with exactness. "Social customs do not change overnight, nor do they change uniformly over a nation, city class or identically within the various denominations.....Certainly it is a matter of legitimate argument when decline begins in any particular, as also the pattern of decline." (60) It is to be noted that the boom of Free Church building programmes was terminated in the early years of the 20th Century
not withstanding the increase in the population. (61) Thus the greater part of the labouring poor were never within the power of the churches and were in fact suspicious that the churches' motives, and especially those of the Established Church were more to uphold the pre-eminence of property and to ensure that they kept their place in society rather than to save their souls.

This work considers the role of the churches in drawing the members into the controversies which surrounded each Education Bill at the turn of 19th Century and seeks to establish the role of church leaders at a local level also indicating those classes of people and their allegiances who attended the mass rallies and meetings. Consideration is also given to the development of the movement for secular education only and to the growth of the Labour movement in this respect.

There were men in the churches who saw the power which might lie behind the Labour Movement and saw that this movement would further reduce the support for all denominations within their churches. An interest in the churches and the social standing which was associated with this support was to be superceded by movements outside the churches. A. Blake in his local study of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne area during the period 1868-1910 directly relates the growth of organised labour in this region with a growing disinterest in the work of the churches and in particular ascertains that there was an increasing apathy among the electorate for educational reforms notwithstanding the controversies in education and religion during this period. (62)

It had been clear to many that the churches were insensitive to economic and social problems. The churches had their own vested interests and they were not those of the working class. By the end of the 19th Century the political composition of the churches, whether Conservative or Liberal, whether they had been deeply implicated in politics or not, precluded any sympathy towards the new working class political organisations that were being born.
The "British Weekly" dated 10th March and 17th March 1955 comments on the decline of the churches and shows that though the membership of the major Free Churches in England and Wales had continued to increase from 1900 to 1910 there began a decline which was more serious than the loss of membership suggests. An increase in overall population would nominally also mean an increase in church membership if this is also to remain as a static percentage of the population. A numerically static figure with a population increase, or only a small increase in numbers would show a percentage decrease in membership. At the beginning of the century the "British Weekly" claimed that the free churches had as many adherents as they had members, but by the inter-war years the situation had become one where it was unusual to find a Free Church congregation that was larger than the membership of the Church. The loss of adherents, therefore, was much larger than that of members, and points to a weakening of the habit of worship on the part of those who may not have been fully committed, and it also points to the greatly diminished influence of the Nonconformists on the public at large. "Speaking broadly it is probably true to say that the general over-all decline of church-going in the nation begins in the late years of the 19th Century." (63)

By the turn of the century Mudie-Smith, writing in 1904 in his "Religious Life of London", (64) concluded that in the South of the capital one man out of every six and one woman out of every five attended some place of worship at least once every Sunday, but this excluded the poorest classes who did not attend services on Sunday. The exception to this was the attendance at Roman Catholic churches which were supported by all classes of people.

It seems evident that the decline in church attendance was directly linked to the continued estrangement of the working classes, and as these
moved into the suburban areas, so too followed a decline in attendance. Charles Booth's findings followed a similar pattern. In his "Life and Labour of the People of London" (65) showing the influence of social class on religious observance he was able to state that wherever the regular working class was to be found and in whatever proportion it was to the rest of the inhabitants, it seemed equally impervious to the claims of religion. Booth maintain that the influence of religion on the lives of the people was not likely to be long-lasting unless it was maintained by the atmosphere of the home or unless it was supported by social usage. Thus although doctrinal teaching could be inculcated in childhood, this was of little use unless it found its use in every-day life. He believed that it was to social usage that the upper classes trusted, and claimed that it was in the union of home and church that the strength of the Nonconformists lay.

C.F.G. Masterman, then Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, interpreted the 1903 findings concluding that in every section of London the poor and the working class were substantially estranged from the churches. By 1904 Masterman was able to write that "...it is the middle class that is losing its religion; which is slowly or suddenly discovering that it no longer believes in the existence of the God of its fathers, or of a life beyond the grave.....Among the middle classes, the centre and historical support of England's Protestant creed, the drift away is acknowledged by all to be conspicuous." (66)

Although there was a general movement away from the influence of the churches and particularly of those from the lower working classes this thesis questions whether the phases of political agitation and instances of religious revival tended to coincide, and therefore political agitation was an important catalyst in religious revival and especially so when associated with inter-religious controversy. It is argued that such movements were to begin with a religious group striving for an increase in
personal religious awareness and were to attract the attention of non-members, eventually bringing about an inter-action between the new wider social climate and the existing atmosphere within the religious organisation. Thus generally well-organised, essentially middle-class agitation coincides with high growth rates of religion when religion is involved with that agitation. In this sense politics and religion become inseparable and so the task of canvassing political support and securing religious commitments are linked. This was to happen when A.J. Balfour introduced his Education Bill of 1902, and was to continue through to 1908 when the involvement of the church, chapel and education policies were to be aired as part of the political scene and were to reveal major areas of conflict between all interested parties.

It would appear that the Nonconformists had to work harder than the Established Church for their support and were more active in canvassing that support. Members of the Established Church would not expect or demand such a vigorous campaign from a church which was the recognised church of the country. This study maintains that the bulk of church-goers already had a connection, however small, with a church and therefore the revivalists and their activities brought into religion those who already came from families of believers. Their main converts were therefore people on the peripheral of organised religion, and were not essentially newcomers to religion itself. This theme is considered by A.D. Gilbert in "Religion and Society in Industrial England" (67) and an assessment of the link between the political parties and the religious issues in education is made by N.J. Richards in "The Journal of Ecclesiastical History" Vol. 23 under the title of "The Education Bill of 1906 and the decline of Political Nonconformity." (68) It is maintained that the breakdown of persons connected with religious groups shows that there were those with no
connection with the religious groups whatsoever, and although they might call themselves "religous" they were outside any recognised church. The main group was connected with some form of church but had limited contact. There were those also who were implicated in church affairs and it was to this group that many of the revivalist activities were to be associated, and who could bring into their work those who were still on the fringe. Thus although it might be generally accepted that many people were outside the influence of any church, it is essential to assess the impact which religion made upon the lives of many people and to what extent such people were prepared to voice their own opinion either as individuals or en masse during a period of religious controversy, and particularly when that controversy was linked to educational issues.

This study therefore seeks to establish the relationship between the churches and the political parties over educational issues at the turn of the century. An emphasis is placed on the role of the Established Church and on the conflict of interests between this body and Nonconformist interests. In the understanding of such issues it is necessary to refer to both social and political change for these two aspects of study are interwoven with religious and educational issues and all are necessarily based upon their own particular brand of historical development.
INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER I

THE LEGACY OF THE SCHOOL BOARDS
AND THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1902
...at present stands they are capable of being worked in perfect harmony together." (4)

The Rev. Starner retained this double chairmanship until he was appointed Bishop of Shrewsbury in 1888. In similar manner at Longton, the Rector the Rev. Adam Clarke was elected Chairman of their first School Board and remained in this office from 1871 to 1883. In Hanley the Vicar of Northwood, the Rev. de Vine was also Chairman for many years and on each of the Potteries Boards it became customary to have clerical representatives from the Church of England, the Nonconformist Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. (5)

To avoid complaints about religious instruction within the Board Schools the Potteries Boards issued nearly identical resolutions concerning this subject. The schools were to be opened each morning with the singing of hymns previously approved by the Boards, together with the Lord's Prayer and the Benediction. The Authorised Version of the Bible was to be read, portions of the text having been selected by the Principal Teacher but subject to the direction of the Board.

When the 1902 Education Act was to be implemented the Pottery Towns had 38 Board Schools under their control leaving only 22 voluntary schools outside the Boards' influence. (6) The number of Board Schools did not necessarily indicate that these were newly provided by the School Boards but included those voluntary schools which were taken over by the Boards as in the cases of the Wolstanton School Board and the Newcastle School Board which had both been set up immediately after the 1870 Act when it had been shown that the voluntary system had proved to be inadequate. Both Boards were to take over some of the existing voluntary provision where resources had been inadequate. Thus the British School was taken over in Wolstanton in 1876 and the Wesleyan School in 1877 in Newcastle and there no new schools were to be erected by the subsequent Newcastle School Boards. In Wolstanton...
the School Board took over the Primitive Methodist School in 1875 and opened a new replacement school in 1877 in Mill Street. A further new school was opened in the Chesterton area in 1876 replacing the Primitive Methodist buildings. This school was to be enlarged in 1877 and 1891. Further take-overs were made in 1893 by the Wolstanton School Board which took over the Neslyan School in its district following a large scale rebuilding of the school by its managers which had led them into financial difficulties. As a result of this expense the entry in the School Log Book for 24th April 1893 reads:

"The managers of the school have decided to transfer the control of the school to the Wolstanton School Board. The negotiations have been completed, the school will from Monday next, the 1st May, be conducted by the Wolstanton School Board, the whole of the staff will be taken over."

On 1st May the Log Book states:

"On Monday morning the school was formally opened as a Board School and was declared free in all classes." (7)

The pecuniary handicap was too much for many voluntary schools within the Pottery area, the cost of keeping the voluntary schools open was a charge upon the Managers, with the help of certain State grants, so that in spite of Lord Sandon's Act of 1876 giving some relief to the voluntary schools by raising the Government grant from 15/- to 17/6d. per head, the voluntary schools had still to depend very largely upon the patronage of the local gentry and upon philanthropy, despite the school pence and government grants, but there were many which were fighting a losing battle. Thus within the Pottery towns the shortcomings of their educational provision under the voluntary system had led to the widespread recognition of the fact that the standards demanded by the 1870 Education Act could only be achieved through the operation of school boards. (8) The acute nature of the problem had
the election of a School Board in his area in 1871 as follows:—

"We hope that by means of School Boards, every parent will, ere long,
be compelled to educate his children. Whilst we continue our existing
schools, under Government Inspection for the superior class of scholars,
steps will be taken for the benefit of neglected children." (14)

The Wesleyan School in Hanley also enjoyed a similarly exalted position in
the regard of many parents. By charging higher fees it could achieve a
reputation of social exclusiveness. This particular school was to provide
Higher Grade education in the late 1880's for which it was charging the
maximum fee of 9d. per week. (15)

Although the denominationalists worked vigorously in the period following
the 1870 Act their efforts declined in the following decades in the face of
rising costs and diminishing income. Many of the traditional supporters of
the voluntary effort discontinued their active patronage with the advent of
the School Boards. A letter from the Master of Wellington National School
in Hanley which accompanied an application for a grant from the National
Society is illustrative:—

"...I have worked in these schools since 1st January 1866 and to me it
is indeed a woeful thing to have to send children from beneath the wings
of our good old National Church to fill either Dissenters or still more
godless Board Schools.

One gentleman, a member of a large manufacturing firm, which since
the establishment of School Boards had firmly closed its purse against
anything like enlargement or building of Day Schools, has, I'm happy to
say, been induced by the urgency of my case to relax its rule and he has
kindly promised me one-fifth of the whole cost...." (16)

Others, finding the financial demands excessive, were found to place
limits upon their involvement in further expense, e.g.

"I (John Shaw, agent) yesterday had an interview with Sir John Crewe and
discussed the matter with him and Sir John regrets with me that he is quite unable to undertake any further school building in North Staffordshire at present."

In spite of the lack of financial backing from local sources to maintain the voluntary school system the decisions to build Board Schools in some areas had provoked antagonism and conflict, as at Newchapel (Staffs.) in 1877 where the local vicar complained that the proximity of a Board School to his Church school was causing unnecessary difficulties:

"The school is being carried on vigorously by both the teachers under the trying circumstances in which they have been placed ever since they came into the Parish...... Only lately again they of the Board School have drawn off three more children by appointing the mother to clean the Board School room and thus they are using every endeavour to steal our children." (18)

There was widespread belief that the Boards were deliberately enticing children from the denominational schools. The Vicar of Normacot, near Longton, Staffs. complained strongly in 1886 that the School Board Attendance Officer was attempting to draw the Anglican schools' children into the Board Schools. Naturally the allegation was refuted and the officer was given the full support of the School Board. (19) Nevertheless, in the face of the threat of State intervention there were signs of a closing of the denominational ranks, as is exemplified in the instance of the Wesleyan minister in Cheadle who in 1891 cited the local Roman Catholic priest's support for a Wesleyan school:—

"The Roman Catholic priest, in an interview he had with him last week said so crowded was his school that the opening of the Wesleyan School was a great relief to him." (20)

In the years following the 1870 Education Act which had set up the School Boards it was to become increasingly clear that the voluntary system was to find it much more difficult to reach the standards of efficiency as required under
that Act. The evolution of the elementary system in terms of provision in North Staffordshire between 1870 and 1903 follows the main lines discernible on a national scale. School Boards in the predominantly urban areas were able to provide relatively ambitious educational schemes. It was in such areas, where the deficiencies had been most acute and where the pressures persisted the longest, that the progress was most impressive. The result was an increasing disparity between the standards of the elementary education service within the larger towns and that of the rural areas where the voluntary agencies with limited resources exercised a predominant influence.

The pattern of the general distribution of public elementary schools in the rural districts of North Staffordshire had been established to a significant extent even before 1870. Of the school in North Staffordshire, outside the Potteries, just over three-quarters had been set up before 1870. (21) The dominance of the Church of England in North Staffordshire in its provision of voluntary schools can be seen when school provision in the Newcastle (Staffs.) Union showed that there were 12 Anglican schools and only 2 Wesleyan schools which were deemed to have reached the necessary standard to be counted as efficient for grant purposes. In Stone some 20 Anglican schools and 1 Roman Catholic school fulfilled the requirements; in Cheadle there were 15 Anglican, 2 British and 4 Roman Catholic schools; and in Ashbourne only 7 Anglican schools met the required standard in 1871. Only in the Leek Union, principally as a result of the presence of the Parish of Norton and the town of Leek itself did the pattern show a greater variety. Here the schools comprised 17 Anglican, 5 Wesleyan, 1 British, 1 Congregational, 1 Primitive Methodist and 1 Roman Catholic. In the town of Leek the provision of accommodation was almost sufficient in 1871, there being 4 National Schools, 2 Wesleyan, 1 British and 1 Congregational schools. These were considered adequate within the terms of the 1870 Act and the need to provide further accommodation was not pressing. (22) In addition there existed the Roman Catholic school which became sufficiently efficient to qualify for a grant in 1880.
Thus the Education Act of 1870 did not bring the School Board into existence in many areas of North Staffordshire. The Board system operated in only 6 parishes outside the Potteries, but within this system the schools controlled through the Boards were able to make a notable contribution to education in North Staffordshire. Much of their work involved the taking over of existing schools as in Mucklestone where Knighton and Aston Church schools were taken over in 1875 and 1883 respectively. Similarly the Norton School Board obtained possession of Smallthorne Wesleyan New Connection School in 1876 and the Wesleyan and National Schools at Milton in the same year. This Board subsequently replaced the school at Smallthorne with a new building in 1879 and built a further school at North Green in 1879-80. The Bradley Green Board School was opened in 1896 and three schools were built by the Caverswall School Board between 1876 and 1884. The responsibility of maintaining the Hulme and Werrington school was shared with the Stoke School Board as it provided education for children of both parishes.

The deficiencies in the moorland parishes of Heathlyee, Onecote and Warslow and Elkstones were also made up by the establishment of Board Schools although the only school to be built by the School Board in the area was at Upper Ecklestone. In all other cases the existing schools were taken over. Although the establishment of new schools in the rural areas was less frequent than in the towns the improvement of school premises to bring them up to the standards demanded by the Education Department was less rare. Many of the rural schools had commenced their existence in very unpromising circumstances. East Vale National in Cavershall Parish was probably not untypical. It had started in a tub-room at the back of a local public house in 1666. The school, situated over a pig-sty and stables had to be approached by a wooden ladder which had been, so it was reported, the cause of several serious accidents.
In like manner the condition of Aston National School in the parish of Mucklestone occasioned the following comments from H.M.I.: -

"I have reported it in Form XA to be a farce as regards instruction. Moreover the building is fitted up as a place of worship and not as a school. It is entirely without offices, and without desks, books and other apparatus......."

(28)

It is clear that in North Staffordshire that many of the voluntary schools were in need of improvement and this was essential if these schools were to qualify for their appropriate grants. In part the consequences of the Education Act of 1870 had been to initiate a great expansion in the building of voluntary schools to off-set the school board provision, and this, when linked to the absolute need to improve the conditions of many existing voluntary schools called for an increase in public commitment to these schools to provide them with sufficient financial backing to keep them in line with Government regulations and also on a par with the board schools. The great expansion in the provision of schools, both board and voluntary, was accompanied by a commensurate increase in costs. The Annual Parliamentary Grant to North Staffordshire schools rose from £11,046 in 1872-3 to £77,650 in 1902-3. The rise in the areas outside the Potteries in absolute terms was less dramatic, but in relative terms was still formidable, having increased from £3,791 in 1872-3 to £19,926 in 1902-3. (29) It is seen that in the six urban School Boards in North Staffordshire the education rate, which before 1875 had been below 5d. in the £, by 1880 had exceed that figure everywhere except in Hanley where school building had been deferred to as late a moment as was decently possible. This contrasts sharply with the Government's statement at the time of the 1870 Act that it had been reckoned that a 3d. rate would be quite sufficient for school purposes. (30) During the 1880's, which were a relatively quiet time in terms of school building (31) the rate remained fairly stable and only in the case of Burslem did the rate
own denomination for successive elections, the 'circuit' arrangements precluded the possibility of a long period of residence by the Nonconformist minister in one locality. The influence of individual ministers depended to a large degree upon the length of service and in this respect the Anglicans and Roman Catholics had some advantage over the nonconformist ministers. The consequence of this caused some concern to the members of the Longton School Board in 1901, as follows:

"There is all the more reason that he (Mr. French) should not retire from the Board because the Rev. Mr. Fleming, the esteemed Chairman of the expiring Board will be removing from the district in the course of 18 months, in consequence of the Circuit arrangements of the Church, and as the Board will then, at any rate, if not before, lose the advantages of Mr. Fleming's services, it is extremely desirable that the Board should not also be minus the present Vice-Chairman." (34)

The length of service by ministers of religion who had served on the six urban School Boards in North Staffordshire shows that 46.4% of the Anglicans and 55.7% of the Roman Catholics served for more than 5 years. This is in contrast with 21.5% of Nonconformist ministers who served for more than this 5 year period. To emphasise this, 15.1% of Anglicans and 22.2% of Roman Catholics served for over 10 years and no Nonconformist minister served for more than that length of time. (35)

The position of the Roman Catholics and their continued re-election to the local School Boards was achieved by heavy plumbing in the voting preferences. Of the 6 urban School Boards, Newcastle was the only Board to have at any one time two representatives of the Roman Catholic persuasion. In contested elections the Roman Catholics succeeded in gaining at least one seat on every urban board, except on one occasion in Hanley in 1888. By heavy plumbing the Roman Catholics consistently achieved percentages of the vote varying from 4.5% in Wolstanton in 1895 to 23.1 in Newcastle in the same year.
The Roman Catholic candidate in the Longton election of 1898 summarised the Roman Catholic platform. He asked that he be returned, not only plumbing for him, "but by asking their friends, like good neighbours, to lend a hand to those whose voting power was not so strong as their own. The Catholics had strong claims to the confidence of the ratepayers from the very fact that during the last 8 years they as a body expended £6,000 in school buildings in the town thus saving the ratepayers' pockets to that extent. He was perfectly independent of the two great rival parties and was not bound to either one or other by any tie whatsoever." (36)

Thus at the turn of the century the position of the voluntary schools and those provided through the School Boards had settled into one in which it was becoming increasingly clear that the Board Schools were able to fulfill government requirements much more easily with their dependence upon rate aid than the voluntary sector which had not this ready source of income. In spite of the difficulties encountered by the voluntary sector to maintain its schools there were those throughout the country who were reluctant to see the formation of a School Board which many saw as a direct threat to their own voluntary provision.

Within the county of Cheshire there were to be only 26 School Boards and some 30 Board Schools compared with over 300 voluntary elementary schools. By the end of the 19th Century it was estimated that only about 1/3 of Cheshire pupils attended Board schools. In the County the rural school Boards were confined to those areas of strong Protestant Nonconformity, these being in the South of the County between Burwardsley and Wrenbury and in the North between Daresbury and Weaverham. In essence Cheshire was a County well supplied with churches and a tradition of local government via the parish vestry, but the growth of industrial towns in the later years of the 19th Century meant that Nonconformity had established itself alongside the Anglican Church leading to the building of many voluntary schools, so that as a consequence of the Education Act of 1902, the County Council inherited a massive predominance of voluntary schools. (37)
The "School Board Chronicle" maintained a running battle with Cheshire over its lack of enthusiasm for School Boards throughout this period, the following editorial comments giving some idea of the strength of the hostility which the paper reflected in 1882:

"We have observed in the County of Cheshire generally, a backwardness in realising the advantages which a community derives from a system of education under public control." (38)

By 1891 the Editor's comment included the following:

"It is one of the most curious facts in the current social history of this country that the County of Cheshire has in a manner for these twenty years, marked out a position for itself, and set itself apart from the rest of the country, in the spirit and degree in which it has held on to the mediaeval pretensions of an exclusive priest-managed voluntary system." (39)

In both Crewe and Chester there had been no School Board and the opposition to the 1902 Education Act was to be based entirely on the religious argument against "putting Rome on the rates." In Crewe a Free Church Council had been created in 1897 to oppose such proposals and was to become increasingly vociferous in its objections to such a scheme with Dr. William Hodgson being the leading protagonist for the Free Churches. He was a leading Baptist, making many speeches on religious education and was regarded as a voice of moderation in spite of his vehemence. He was to urge that "the State should take its hands off the consciences of the people, and allow them free scope in religious matters, giving them one common platform to advocate and preach the principles which the different denominations believed." (40)

That Crewe did not need to establish a School Board lay partly in the fact that the town had been well supported by the London & North Western Railway Company (L.N.W.R.). This company had supported the initial foundation of a number of Anglican Churches in the town (e.g. Christ Church,
St. Paul's, St. Barnabas, St. John's, etc.) in the mid-19th Century and had also made provision for eight railway schools with accommodation for over 4,000 pupils. The managers of these schools included representatives from the Company, the local community and also from the Anglican Church and thus in fact were more Anglican in outlook than would have been possible in any Board School. However, the willingness of the Railway Company to provide the bulk of the educational facilities did mean that there had been a lack of public responsibility for elementary education in Crewe before the implementation of the Education Act of 1902. It also meant an increasingly heavy education rate afterwards to update and maintain the existing railway-provided schools after the new Education Committee had come to a series of agreements with the Railway Company which led to the Company's Chairman to declare that: "Crewe Borough Council would be starting under the New Education Act in circumstances more favourable than any other town in the country." (41) Perhaps not sharing his unqualified optimism the Borough Council assumed control of the schools which the Railway Company had built and substituted 'Council' for 'L.N.W.R. Company's' in their official titles. (42) That these railway schools were considered to be connected with the Established Church is shown in Eardley's Crewe Almanack for 1903 where he states that schools connected with the Established Church provided for over 5,000 pupils, compared with 2,300 in the Nonconformist schools. (43) Crewe was, therefore, a town without a School Board and without Board schools but by establishing the Borough Council as the Local Education Authority the Education Act of 1902 brought a sudden and involuntary end to the resolute campaign to preserve the denominational independence which had pervaded the administration of elementary education in Crewe throughout the School Board era. Any Act which would provide rate aid for the voluntary schools and in particular those of the Established Church would not find favour with the Crewe Nonconformists, the Crewe Free Church Council organising passive resistance to any rates levied for this purpose as being for the support of the Established Church. (44)
In similar manner the town of Macclesfield in Cheshire had not elected a School Board and therefore the town had no board schools. The voluntaryists had successfully staved off several determined efforts to introduce Board Schools but only with great difficulty which had involved many harassing years of money raising in a town where trade was depressed, the population declining and the district Diocesan funds had been exhausted. Even so, at the end of the School Board era, Macclesfield was supplied entirely by voluntary schools dominated by the Established Church, the distribution being 1 British, 1 Roman Catholic, 2 Wesleyan, and 12 Church of England schools. (45) The provision of elementary schools by the voluntary bodies did not mean that these schools were of a sufficiently high standard of maintenance to receive government grants. The area inspector, H.M.I. Ward, severely criticised the state of the buildings in 1903 following the Education Act of 1902 his Reports showing that seven buildings were declared unfit and the rest were seriously defective. He was to note, however, that the backing for the voluntary schools and their association with the churches was particularly strong. This was to be reinforced when the newly appointed members of the Local Education Authority counted 19 out of 28 members with definite Anglican loyalties. H.M.I. Ward also concluded that the support for the denominational schools was reinforced by the fact that the retention of these schools was seen by many people as a cheaper alternative to spending large sums of money on new buildings. (46) However, when the 1902 Act came into force the voluntaryists saw it as a means of securing their schools particularly in areas like Macclesfield where it was obvious that much needed to be done to fulfill the requirements of the Board of Education. In its operation it seemed the schools were harder pressed than ever. Morant and Balfour had foreseen this. In 1902 Morant had written:

"Voluntary managers will find it a much more expensive business than they at present realise to bring and keep their buildings up to the increasingly heightened standards of the Local Authority." (47)
The Inspector's reports were devastating but could not have been entirely unexpected. Building deficiencies hanging over their heads were not new to the voluntary school managers. The buildings had been patched up to the Education Department's requirements in the 1890's but invariably the minimum was done. What was to be new in the post-1902 situation was the extreme thoroughness of the survey and, more so, the determined follow through of the new administration. The managers' weapons were all manner of delaying tactics, and the Board's in the end, was its control of the purse strings.

A similar picture emerges from the city of Chester where there had been no School Board schools erected. The Foundation Managers' Minutes for the period 1902-06 for the Chester British Schools' Association show that their schools in Chester and nearby Broughton were in a reasonable state of repair but they would be unable to complete any major alterations. This was to cause concern as it was expected that new Board of Education regulations would necessitate some improvements to their schools. Furthermore, the growth of population particularly in the Broughton area would mean overcrowded schools unless further provision could be made by the voluntary sector without the necessity of a Board school being erected. Chester supported some 21 elementary schools all of which belonged to the voluntary bodies except for one. Owing to the circumstances of their origin the schools were comparatively numerous although small. There were 38 departments with an average of 164 on roll. Not all these schools were in a satisfactory state of repair for following the Education Act of 1902 seven schools were to be withdrawn from the grant list, of which six were to be closed and the remaining one being carried on without the assistance of public funds. As in Macclesfield and again in Crewe one of the over-riding considerations in the provision of elementary schools was to be the additional costs this would place on the rate-payers and whether such rates should be used to support a voluntary system which in the main was under the control of the Church of England.
In Lancashire there had also been a reluctance to form School Boards and again this was due in part to the predominance of the Church of England's provision of elementary schools. In 1870 the County had just over 1000 schools receiving government aid with an attendance of over 200,000 pupils. The grants then totalled some £100,000 per year. The Established Church, principally through the National Society, controlled 544 schools - well over half of the grant-receiving total, the remainder being made up of 125 Roman Catholic schools, 88 British schools and some 87 Weslyan schools. The remainder were a varied collection of Nonconformist voluntary schools but also included a Jewish and Moravian school. Lancashire elected 13 School Boards in the first two years of the 1870 Act and by 1876 there were 35 Boards working in the County. By the turn of the century and on the eve of the 1902 Education Act there were 50 school boards serving some 2½ million of the County's 4 million inhabitants. Of these 50 Boards, 24 had been formed under compulsory orders and ranged in size from the 11 county boroughs and 8 municipal boroughs to the 38 parishes, some of them very small indeed. In 1902 three county boroughs and 5 municipal boroughs still had no school boards. By 1900 Lancashire could only muster 200 Board Schools and many of these had been straight transfers from the voluntary sector. Even so, the number of pupils in Board schools was about 1/3rd of the County's total attendance. A meaningful factor in this low fraction was obviously the huge clerical effort to keep in step with the 1870 Act which had meant the raising of large sums of money to meet the ever increasing demands of the Department of Education and its regulations. At this date the total number of 1814 schools was composed of 257 Board Schools; 815 Anglican schools, 305 Roman Catholic Schools and a further 437 schools of other minor denominations and other trusts. This was therefore a gross increase of 803 schools of which the School Boards had contributed less than 1/3rd. On the other hand the Anglicans, over and above closures, contrived to open an additional 271 schools - more
than all the School Boards combined. With their 180 schools the Roman Catholics had maintained and extended their footing, but the relative tiny rise of other types of schools was perhaps symptomatic of the prevailing mood, in part of the Nonconformists acceptance of a State system, and in part of the slackening of the Nonconformists effort in the overall field of education. (51)

In general terms, therefore, the Established Church was reluctant to release any of its schools to the School Boards and would only do so in exceptional circumstances where it had become impossible for the Church to maintain a particular school and where there was little chance of a change in fortune in that area. In many instances the local parish had been hard pressed to raise sufficient funds for its own school, and this had become more apparent as the Board of Education demanded better facilities and more adequate premises. Many areas claimed to have a sufficient accommodation in the existing voluntary schools so that no Board Schools were built within the whole of the period from 1870 - 1902 and although the 1902 Education Act did by no means solve the problem of these varying areas, it did succeed in giving complete national coverage to elementary education. The basic weakness of the School Board movement was its random and patchy incidence. The end of the 19th Century was to show the wide differences in elementary education provision throughout the country combined with total reluctance of the Established Church to release its over-riding control over much of the elementary provision, even though that provision was of doubtful quality and in obvious need of financial assistance.

The Report of the Archbishop's Committee on Education in January 1895 stated: "Of all the dangers that beset the Church and beset religion in this country none is more serious than that which must follow the general surrender of the voluntary schools. These schools are the hope of the future and the religious condition of England thirty years hence will largely depend upon the action of churchmen now." (52)
The elementary education provided through the Board Schools with the assistance of rate aid, and that provided through the voluntary system were inevitably compared and therefore the Archbishop's Committee were able to state quite clearly that the School Boards with their practically unlimited resources at their command had an undue advantage. (53)

The Archbishop had already declared in July 1893 at the Canterbury Diocesan Conference that "We should get on a great deal faster with what we want to get on with if people would cease their futile denunciation of Board Schools." (54) But the Established Church was unable to present a united front and were to disagree among themselves concerning the state of their schools and the proposed solutions. On the one hand the Bishop of Hereford had refused to sign the "Archbishop's Memorial" asking for additional public money for denominational schools, and at the same time the Bishops of Durham, Salisbury, Carlisle and Coventry were to commend the religious instruction which was then taking place in the Board schools in their diocese. The Bishop of Norwich had claimed that his clergy were not taking all the opportunities which existed for them in their own schools. The Manchester Guardian of 27th June 1894 had indicated that the Bishop had stated that about a quarter of the clergy gave no religious instruction in their own schools, and in some 43 Board School Districts in which clergy would be permitted to give some religious instruction, they did not avail themselves of the opportunity. Thus even before the problems of the voluntary schools were to become acute, the Established Church had not given sufficient lead to its members to take a more active and positive role in the place which it might have taken in religious education. The church was willing to raise the issues of concern to itself in broad terms but had been unable to transmit these down to the parish level of concerted action. In spite of this, the most important single controversy was that of religious instruction. John Clifford, speaking at the London School Board election
of 1894 had declared: "Indeed in this century of religious, political and social warfare, there has not been a controversy in which such momentus interests have been imperilled or such bewildering and confusing issues raised." (55)

Clifford, as the Hon. Secretary of the London Progressive Council, had admitted that "the great mass of the working classes are unfortunately utterly indifferent to education, and if we are to win them over, we must, to a certain extent, appeal to self-interest." (56)

The London School Board of 1894 had produced a programme of undenominational religious instruction which was given by regular teachers and based on specific Bible reading. This pattern was followed by the majority of School Boards and by the end of 1894 of the 2,392 Boards in England and Wales only 91 had no religious instruction and of these 70 were Welsh Boards. The problem was to remain as to what specific teaching should be undertaken, for it was recognised that a Church of England teacher would give a Church of England bias, and a Unitarian would put forward that particular point of view and so on. The ideal was to preserve the general Christian character of religious instruction and to prevent the imposition of any form of denominational bias, and yet both the High Church and the Roman Catholics were opposed to a system of non-denominational religious teaching. There were, therefore, those who were not prepared to see a development of a religious education within schools which might satisfy the majority of parents, but the churches had to face the inevitable conclusion as outlined in the Guardian that: "One of the most terrible facts which confront churchmen that even if every voluntary school in the country were made financially secure, the School Boards would still hold wide possession of the elementary schools in nearly all the great centres of industry and of intelligence." (57)

Thus the main problem was to lie not with the provision of the Board Schools but rather with the continued existence of the voluntary schools and
to make them more competitive with the School Board provision. The Bishop of Manchester writing in the Manchester Courier on 24th October 1885 had then declared: "It is absolutely necessary in any training scheme aiming at the assistance of voluntary schools that you should diminish the power now possessed by the School Boards of ruining the voluntary schools by unscrupulous competition." (58)

At that time the Archbishop of Canterbury had suggested that the problem ought to be faced in three sections, these being the question of payment for the continuation of the voluntary schools; the control of the religious education given in the schools; and the question of who was to control these schools. It was agreed that financial assistance would have to be sought on a scale adequate for church schools to be brought into line with the then existing Board schools. The differences of opinion lay in where that assistance should come from. Opinion was divided on whether it should come from the Exchequer or from the local rates. It was unanimously agreed by the Established Church that it should have right of entry into schools, including Board schools to give denominational teaching. How this was to be achieved with agreement from a Nonconformist element had not been solved, but it was anticipated that a compromise might be reached. The matter of control over the schools could only be achieved by the members of the Established Church 'capturing the Board Schools' during the elections of members to those Boards. Lord Salisbury's election speech to the National Society as reported in the Times of 13th June 1895 had called for the Church "to capture them in the first instance under the existing law, and then....under a better law which shall place you under no religious disability.....we must do all we can to strengthen the voluntary schools and to swell the resources on which they rest. By all means let us get what we can out of the increased contributions from the National Exchequer." (59)
Even within the Church of England there was a growing concern especially among the High Church Party at the spectre of "undenominationalism" particularly when set alongside the obvious decline in the available funds for use in the voluntary schools. The more extreme members of the High Church party felt that their grievance about "undenominationalism" was equal to the Nonconformists' protests about "denominationalism". An open letter to the Times of 1st May 1902 claimed that "The Churchman whose conscience forbids him to be satisfied with Board School religion is compelled first to pay for non-Church schools, and secondly to pay for Church schools." (60)

The fear of increasing secularisation was the one point upon which the Anglicans were united. The Schools Boards were to be blamed for this erosion of "faith" by the Established Church for they had been seen by the Nonconformists as a system of popular education for all people. They were to be a part of the system of democratic education not based on the Established Church and under its control, but were to be outside what was called a "religious institution". To impose what was called a "religious test" for pupils was to re-assert church control and was therefore not acceptable. By the end of the century the constant issues of religious instruction in the Board Schools were not so frequently raised as the Board Schools had been in existence long enough for a pattern of religious instruction to have been devised and to have been put into practice. Sir Michael Sadler was to comment that "the Boards had become associated with denominational disputes of which the public - the flesh being stronger than the spirit - was getting weary." (61)

He too was to write in his "Comments on the History of Education in England" that the "religious issues had become irrelevant to the new generation of intellectuals whilst the unification of local government services had become popular with the left wing intelligentsia under the persistent influence of Sidney and Beatrice Webb." (62)

The Fabian Movement had changed its attitude over the period from 1894 to 1902. In 1894 their Tract No. 52 entitled "State Education at Home and
Abroad" had advocated a system of universal school boards of an adequate size to control both elementary and secondary education. In 1901 it had published Tract No. 106 entitled "The Education Muddle and the Way Out" under the guidance of Sidney Webb. This now called for the abolition of the School Boards and for the creation of the new county and county borough or borough councils to be responsible for education. It would have made the county councils the authorities for education with jurisdiction over both Board and voluntary schools alike. It also provided for a system of rate aid for the voluntary sector. The Fabian policy for the voluntary schools was stated in their tract to be to put them under the control of the local education authority; to improve and strengthen their committees of management; to raise their efficiency; to provide better salaries for their teachers; to make impossible the tyrannical vagaries of foolish clergymen in the village schools; and to bring these into co-ordination with the rest of the educational system. (63)

Both Sidney and Beatrice Webb were to support the 1902 Education Act, and this support included George Bernard Shaw. Shaw, like Beatrice Webb felt that on practical grounds sectarian teaching was unavoidable, writing: "...unsectarian education or secular education means....a counsel, not of perfection, but of impossibility." (64) Sidney Webb also opposed the excessive concern of the government to deal with such interests, stating that "we cannot deal within our schools without candidly accepting the principle that the State, if it is to educate at all, not only may, but frankly must, subsidise error." (65)

Like the High Church Party the Roman Catholics were not prepared to make concessions which would affect their approach to religion and education within their schools. Catholic clergy and educationists were to see the Education Act of 1902 as "an instalment of justice" (66) in their struggle to educate Roman Catholics in Roman Catholic schools. Unlike the Anglicans, the
Roman Catholics recognised themselves as a minority religion and were therefore fighting for their own liberty in education within the State. Cardinal Vaughan had outlined this position in 1895 stating:

"The basis of a popular system of national education will never be satisfactorily laid until religion ceases to be a bar to equality of treatment in the matter of state payment for ..., compulsory education." *(67)*

The matter of state payment to support the voluntary system of elementary education would have to be solved if the voluntary system was to continue and was to be placed on a more equal footing with the Board schools. Although the need for financial aid was apparent, there were those who did not wish this to be in the form of rate aid. Chamberlain was of the opinion that the compulsory use of rate aid should be opposed. A further Exchequer system of grants would have been more acceptable to him but this was not possible owing to the high cost of the Boer War. He was finally to agree to rate aid, but this was to be permissive in the first instance. Balfour also supported the basic principle of permissive rate aid although he could see that this might lead to future difficulties and further conflict between the denominationalists and those who had supported the Board schools. *(68)* On the one hand the Conservatives believed that compulsory rate aid would split their party, but this would mean that the voluntary schools would still be at the mercy of the education committees for their aid, and these might not be favourable towards the voluntary sector. Morant had investigated the plight of the voluntary schools and was to write that "some drastic treatment must be found unless a large number of voluntary schools are to be extinguished and board schools to take their place." *(69)* Balfour and Chamberlain were still not in favour of a compulsory rate aid scheme within the proposed Education Bill of 1902, and therefore rather against the advice of Robert Morant, the Bill was to include the adoptive principle on rate aid instead of a compulsory clause.
The position of the Church of England which, although not being united over many questions to be raised by the Bill, was to be stated by the then Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Davidson - later to become Archbishop of Canterbury. Writing to Balfour on 8th December 1901 he showed his concern over the content of the proposed Bill insomuch that it might not give sufficient support to the voluntary schools but he did not believe "that the Government is incapable of dealing in such a manner with the mass of its supporters who have so bravely struggled on for the last few years in the face of ceaseless difficulty - many of them making greater financial sacrifices than anybody will ever know in order as they believed, to render impregnable the continuance, in elementary schools, of Religious Education really worthy of the name....I do not like to contemplate what I should now have to say to those men were we to learn that all this had been a misapprehension; that no relief was to be given; and that our voluntary schools, after all the money we have spent on them - many of the clergy literally denying themselves everything for the sake of the schools - were to be allowed simply to be closed or handed over to the School Boards under existing Regulations......We can no longer appeal for voluntary subscriptions on the existing scale with any prospect of success....We believe ourselves to have established an indisputable claim to relief. We have long understood that that claim, in a large and general way, was admitted by the present Government, and we are counting upon this Session for securing to us something at least of what we have been waiting for."(70)

The Roman Catholic position, although similar to that of the Church of England was more of one of isolation within their own school system, and would therefore welcome anything that the Government was able to do to meet the needs of the Roman Catholic position. Even before the Bill had reached the Commons, the Catholic League of South London had convened a demonstration to press the Government to place Roman Catholic elementary schools on a position of financial equality with the Board schools, and at
their meeting the Chairman of the League, the Bishop of Southwark, stated
that they had met in consequence of a distinct crisis which had arrived in
the history of elementary education in the country. Lord Edmund Talbot, M.P.,
at the same meeting moved that "No measure of reform of the Education Acts can
be accepted by the Catholics as satisfactory which does not safeguard and
preserve intact the denominational character of Catholic elementary schools."
(71) Dr. Bourne, as Roman Catholic Bishop of Southwark, had always believed that
Roman Catholics should be given every possible support to maintain their own
schools. (72) Following the introduction of the Education Bill in March 1902
the Roman Catholic comment was to be delayed until after the Bishops' meeting
with Cardinal Vaughan and until after the meeting of the Catholic School
Committee, for it was this Committee which officially represented matters
which concerned elementary education and Roman Catholic policies in all their
dioceses of Great Britain. (73)

The Church of England had held a joint meeting of Convocation on 4th
July 1901 where they drew up a scheme to be adopted to give support to the
voluntary schools. They suggested that the maintenance of voluntary schools
should be undertaken from either public funds raised locally or centrally,
but this would exclude the cost of buildings. The control of the school, and
the appointment and dismissal of teachers was to be left to the existing
managers, which were to include nominees from the Local Education Authority,
this number being up to one-third of the total number of managers. On the
question of religious instruction the Convocation suggested that wherever
a reasonable number of parents demanded it, denominational instruction in a
public school should be provided at public expense. The Established Church
had no intention of watering down its religious education in its own schools,
and had a further desire to extend its teaching into the non-voluntary sector.
Such a position would bring about an immediate clash of interests which would
result in bitter conflict with little hope of compromise between the various
interested parties. The Established Church had seen the absolute necessity of financial assistance for its schools, but it was a Government decision as to whether this should be a system of permissive or compulsory aid.

Sir Almeric Fitzroy was to write about the Cabinet meeting which preceded the introduction of the Bill in Parliament. The differences of opinion over the question of rate-aid and the form it should take was to prove to be a key question at the Cabinet meetings. In his Memoirs for 20th January 1902 he writes:

"The preparation of the Education Bill marches on. Harry Anstruther, on behalf of the Whips, strongly advocates a comprehensive measure and tells us that it would be hazardous to ignore the feeling of the great bulk of the party in favour of rate aid to voluntary schools, for the sake of removing the scruples of a few Radical Unionists in the Midlands; and I have taken care that this information reaches the Lord President. Meanwhile Gorst is kept in ignorance that he is not to have charge of the Bill." (74)

The position of Balfour was to prove difficult, as the Cabinet at this late stage were not able to show a united front. Pressure had been put upon the Government particularly by the Church Party and the voluntary school supporters, and Balfour had no choice but to tackle this problem on behalf of the Church schools, and to provide a more efficient system of elementary education. There were still 8,500 single school districts where parents were obliged to send their children to the only school available, and there had been an increase from 8,281 voluntary schools with their 1,693,000 pupils to a total of 14,319 schools with 3,056,000 pupils by 1902. (75) Since 1870 when the income of the voluntary schools had been roughly one-third fees, one-third subscriptions and one-third exchequer grants, this had shown a considerable change by 1902 when fees accounted for only 9% with other sources of income accounting for 14% and the exchequer grant had risen to 77%.
However, there was no doubt that the voluntary sector was a major supplier of elementary school accommodation. It had provided 1,475,000 pupil places at an approximate cost of £7 million between 1871 and 1891 and therefore the contribution to the education system could not be ignored by the Conservative Government. That the School Boards had provided for some 2,211,299 pupil places costing £29,468,477 during the period 1870 to 1895 was also in no doubt, but this had not been given as a direct contribution towards the securing of an education system as had the voluntary contributions which had enabled the voluntary societies to undertake such a large programme in the post-1870 period. (76) By 1895 the education system was dealing with 5,235,286 pupils of whom some four million were under the age of 10 years. Thus although the Parliamentary election of 1895 had given the Conservatives a working majority of 152 over the Liberals and Irish Nationalists, Balfour was aware that the percentage turn-out for that election had only been 76% and that his working majority had only been achieved by a margin of 31,000 votes. Although he had a clear mandate on paper, in reality he could not call upon a national support for reforms which had not got the majority support of the nation behind him.

He was well aware that the Nonconformists would oppose any financial aid given from the rates to help the voluntary schools as they saw this as being a means of perpetuating the voluntary system. In their opinion they would prefer an effective extension of the School Board system throughout the country as opposed to using Morant's new local education authorities, and would demand that all voluntary schools should be handed over to the School Boards and then incorporated into a national system in which no denominational teaching would be given at public expense.

On the other hand the voluntary schools had always maintained that the managers in their schools must retain control of the appointment and dismissal of teachers as it was not merely a question of reserving the right to give religious instruction at specified hours but the whole of the school's teaching programme whether secular or religious, was needed to be given by
a teacher who believed in their own particular denominational teaching of religion. (77) The acceptance of rate aid into the voluntary system was seen as being one step away from relinquishing this right.

For some extremists in the Church of England the position was not so simple as this. The "rapprochment" with the Roman Catholics had been made possible by the rise of Anglo-Catholicism and had started the gradual introduction of "ritualist" practices into the Church of England. This group of High Churchmen were to make much of securing control over the schools, and thus when the Bill was passing through Parliament the Kenyon-Slaney amendment to the Education Bill which limited all religious instruction in voluntary schools to the terms of their trust deeds brought forth a violent outcry on the part of the High Church party.

The Nonconformists were opposed especially to this alliance of High Anglican and Roman Catholic as they saw in it the revival of "papism" in the Church of England. Many Nonconformists believed that much of the religious teaching in the Church of England schools was not confined to Anglican formularies, but that some of the clergy had introduced catechisms based on Romish doctrines. Thus the Nonconformists demanded a Biblical but not a denominational form of religious instruction. This had been the provision made in the Board Schools, but even so such schools had not been available for every Nonconformist. The Cowper-Temple Clause of 1870 had limited undenominational religious instruction to the Board schools and the timetable conscience clause of 1870 had not been as successful as it had been hoped. The N.E.A. Series 2 Pamphlet stated: "There is a Conscience Clause but it works least where it is needed most. It is a thing on paper." (78) It was not so much the numbers of Anglican schools in single school areas as the complaints of persecution against Nonconformists in those schools. The Liberal Opposition was to use the single school argument in its case against the Bill. On the
one hand they were to submit that the Anglican schools were ineffective in the teaching of their religious instruction, but at the same time it was felt that the children of Nonconformists were being "persecuted" in those same church schools. The Guardian of 1st July 1891 had claimed even then that pupils were "made conspicuous by withdrawing from religious instruction and for those that remained it was felt that Churchmen have no desire to make proselytes of the Nonconformist children who attend Church schools." (79) With such calls upon the fairness of the existing system the Nonconformists would have called for the total replacement of all voluntary schools but this was not practical on account of the cost alone. (80) On the other hand there was an outcry against closing Church of England schools because of financial limitations. Voluntary schools had been built and held in trust for educational purposes and therefore they should be handed over to the Boards to carry on with their educational work, rather than to be closed. As E.L. Stanley observed in his pamphlet "The Advantages of the School Board System" commenting upon the proposed Education Bill: "At present it frequently happens that an insolvent and badly equipped school protracts its death agony through several years because the managers have no-one to whom they can transfer it." He saw the obvious body as being the School Board, and the Nonconformists were to use this as an argument for the universal extension of the School Board system. They saw the new local education authorities as then being proposed and generally under discussion as not being directly elected, but merely appointed by the Municipal and County Councils. They were charged with the expenditure of the rates on the voluntary schools if the Bill were to include rate support for these schools, and yet they would not be directly responsible to the people. The Nonconformists were also against any proposals to subsidise denominational instruction from the rates. They were to ignore the fact that already the county councils were empowered to levy rates for secondary
education, which could legitimately be used to help that particular category of voluntary school, and they also ignored the fact that the voluntary sector had been subsidised previously from their own taxes in the past. (81)

The Established Church had admitted to "the intolerable strain which its voluntary schools had suffered" and this had led to a reactionary attitude towards education reform by the Church as financially it was clear that "the mischief of the present situation is that in order to keep going our own church schools, we are obliged to block whenever we can, the general advance of the education movement." (82)

L. yulph Stanley, as early as 1893 had claimed that "voluntaryism is tottering under the burden even of its present education obligations." By 1902 the situation had not improved. The Nonconformist opposition estimated that subscriptions amounted to no more the ½d. per Church of England communicant per week (83) which was an indication of how low the voluntary subscriptions had fallen for their schools. The Nonconformists also claimed that this showed that there was little indication of strain on the voluntary subscribers who were now demanding more aid from resources other than the church. In single school areas the level of subscription was claimed to come to no more per Anglican than a school rate would have been. There was, therefore a wide difference of opinion on the claims of the Church for additional aid, and also within the Church on what aid would be acceptable to the voluntary schools without any loss of control. In his "Memoirs" Sir Almeric Fitzroy wrote concerning the events in Cabinet leading up to the final stages of the preparation of the Education Bill, and it is clear that within the Cabinet these issues had not been resolved even up to a very late stage in their debates.

On 8th February 1902 he writes of the proceedings of the Cabinet Meeting of 7th February stating: "Yesterday's Cabinet brought the
education controversy nearer an issue in as far as the efforts of Chamberlain, and subsequently of Ritchie, to devise alternative schemes, have failed and it looks now as if even the first will agree to the introduction of compulsory rate aid under some adoptive form, which may reduce the area of attack." (84) By 10th March, a fortnight only before the Bill was due to be presented in Parliament, the situation at Cabinet level had not been resolved, Fitzroy writing: "The prospects of the Education Bill are not bright. Chamberlain taking advantage of the lukewarmness of some members of the Cabinet, and the ignorance of others, is striving all he can to wreck it.... Chamberlain expounded his views with great vigour, whereupon the Lord President called Morant in, asked Chamberlain to repeat his argument and requested the other to offer his comment. This he did with such success that Chamberlain admitted the case against him was unanswerable, and the meeting broke up in some heat, the Duke only just preventing a resolution hostile to anything touching elementary education being adopted. It looks as if Chamberlain foresaw the possibility of the Government's not surviving the attempt for the failure to deal with the subject, and realises that the moment to join hands with Lord Rosebery may be precipitated. "At any rate, it is significant of Chamberlain's attitude to the Duke of Devonshire's educational policy that he should have said to another of his colleagues, 'We could easily engineer a demonstration of the County Councils against being asked to take over Elementary Education!' This would in effect have been playing into the hands of the nonconformist opposition who wished for the continuation of the Board system. It had been made clear that they did not want a continuation of the dual system, and preferred one set of schools under popular control stemming from the 1870 Act. Dr. John Clifford, the Baptist leader of the Free Church Movement based in Westbourne Park, London, was of the opinion that the voluntary schools should foot their own bills and there were many that
supported his arguments." (85)

By mid-March Fitzroy was able to write: "The die is cast and the Education Bill is to be introduced on Monday 24th March. Both the Duke and Arthur Balfour think the question will wreck the Government and there are some who perhaps intend that it shall. The form in which it is introduced cannot be final, and the crisis must arise over the adoptive clauses, if they are reached. Mr. Balfour got the Cabinet to agree that if the second reading was taken, they would set to any period in order to pass the Bill, which he is to take charge of himself, a timely attack of influenza having withdrawn Gorst into obscurity." (86)

Even by 21st March it was clear from his Memoirs that agreement had not been reached over major issues within the proposed Bill, Fitzroy writing: "After three hours deliberation in the Cabinet, the Education Bill details are still undetermined. Arthur Balfour appears to have limited discussion to certain practical issues, but these are still far from settlement, and will probably have to be decided by the Draftsman." (87)

Thus when the Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 24th March 1902 it was Balfour who was able to state in his opening speech: "Nobody can be more impressed than I am with the difficulty of the task the Government have undertaken....It is only because we are of the opinion that it cannot with national credit be much longer delayed that we have resolved to lay before the House our solution of the great problem which, for so many years past has embarrassed the legislature and the reformer." Balfour then took opportunity to detail the short fall of the Education Act of 1870 and the work of the school boards, stating: "The Legislature of 1870 was aimed at supplying a gap....filling up the vacuum which voluntary effort had left empty. It was for that object and that object alone that School Boards were called into existence." (88)

His criticism of the work of the School Boards included the
"embarrassment into which the voluntary schools were thrown by the rivalry of the rate-aided Board Schools," and the "wholly unexpected expenditure by School Boards....and the voluntary schools were subjected to a competition which, however good for education, was certainly neither anticipated nor desired by the framers of the Act of 1870....a strain.... was put upon local finances....through the action of a body of responsible men, indeed to the community so far as regards education, but having no responsibility for general expenditure, which was of course in the hands of the local authority." (89)

Balfour maintained that the 1870 Act needed to be reviewed as it contained three important omissions: "In the first place, the Act of 1870 provided no organisation for voluntary schools. Board schools....were organised under the school boards. But voluntary schools...were isolated and unconnected..... The second omission was....that there was no sufficient provision for the education of the great staff of teachers required for our national schools. And....third...our primary system was put in no kind of rational or organic connection with our system of secondary education, and through the system of secondary education, with the University education which crowns the whole educational edifice."(90)

In forwarding the case for the local education authorities to be the county or county borough councils Balfour claimed that: "Our reform if it is to be adequate, must in the first place, establish one authority for education - technical, secondary, primary - possessed of power, which may enable it to provide for the adequate training of teachers and for the welding to higher technical and higher secondary education on to the University system. In the second place....this one authority for education being as it is, responsible for a heavy cost to the rate payers, should be the rating authority of the district. In the third place....voluntary schools must be placed in a position in which they can worthily play their necessary and inevitable part..." (91)
Balfour declared that it was impossible for the voluntary schools either to be left as they were, or to be absorbed into the new authorities without any reference to their denominationalism, declaring that "the idea of the voluntary schools being swept away by an Act of Parliament or by any other method is absurd. The mere magnitude of the forces with which you have got to deal renders it impossible, the mere magnitude of the gap which would be created in the system of national education renders it impossible. Voluntary schools must remain, and, that being the case, they must be reinvigorated." (92)

Thus the opposition attacked the Bill basing their rallying point on the abolition of the school boards, whilst the Nonconformists were to claim that voluntary schools were being "put on the rates" and this was a way of supporting the Established Church and what it stood for. The option clause relating to the adoptive principle of rate aid was struck out by a free vote on 9th July, with Balfour voting for the compulsory clause for rate aid on the grounds that it would provide the only safeguard against religious conflicts recurring at every local election. Chamberlain was to vote against the compulsory clause. (93) This change now meant that the Nonconformists could argue that the rate was now a compulsory church school rate, and those who had hoped that the voluntary sector would not be able to flourish even under an adoptive clause saw this as giving the voluntary schools an indefinite life.

Support for the compulsory rate aid clause had been gathering among the Anglicans particularly after the Bill had been introduced with its initial adoptive principle and what might have then resulted in the policies of local education authorities. The Rev. W.O. Burrows, addressing the Leeds Ruridecanal Conference in Leeds in April 1902 stated: "Ever since 1870 the Church Schools had been struggling in an unequal competition against the rate-aided School Board system and
many of them by the turn of the century were dragging along a miserable existence." (94)

The Anglicans in wishing to receive additional financial assistance for their schools really wanted not just denominational teaching, but teaching of this side of their work in a suitable atmosphere which in reality meant the subjection of teachers to religious tests and the retention of denominational control of the schools. The Anglicans, in common with all the major denominations, had recourse to the sacred doctrine of the Parent's Right, undeterred that perhaps few parents really harkened after the creed and the sacrament for their children. Sir William Anson, on behalf of the Church of England was to declare in Parliament that "It appears to me that if the State takes a child from the parent during its best weekday hours....the parent may justly demand that during some portion of that time, the child should receive the religious teaching which the parent desires, in order to bring him up in the faith of his parents." (95)

Dr. Clifford had declared that the idea of "atmosphere" in schools was a preposterous assumption, and printed in his "Fight Against the Education Bill - What is at Stake" (No. 9):

"All things on earth we have endowed, Church, army, land and beer, And now our statesmen cry aloud, 'Endow the atmosphere'." (96)

The Liberal viewpoint was to be echoed by Asquith in the Commons during the second reading of the Bill when he said he could see "no reason why children should be separated into theological flocks and herded into ecclesiastical pens" in order that their children might be "stereotyped in the parental status quo." (97)

This was a contradiction of belief for many churchmen, and was immediately contradicted by the High Anglicans who had always been hostile to the undenominational Bible teaching which prevailed in the
School Board system where the function of denominational religious education was to initiate the child into the fellowship of believers and therefore any training not distinctive of a Church was not religious education. The insistence by the Nonconformists that there was a sub-stratum of religion common to all denominations and therefore Bible teaching was a suitable medium for schools which provided an education for all denominations regardless of what Christian flock they belonged to.

The quality and religious conviction of much of the Anglican religious teaching had been called into question by Canon Malcolm MacColl of Ripon who claimed that many clergy paid too little attention to religious instruction and the teachers therefore tended to neglect it in favour of those subjects which earned a Government grant. (98)

Thus the publication of the Bill in March 1902 was cautiously welcomed by the majority of the Established Church for they saw that churchmen would no longer have to bear the double burden of supporting their own schools while at the same time paying the education rate wherever such a rate had been levied. They also stressed to the Nonconformists and the opponents of the Bill that in future the rate payers would have a distinct advantage as they would be able to use rent free the existing voluntary schools, which were theoretically worth an estimated £25 million and this advantage would far outweigh the cost of providing religious instruction in the denominational schools. This idea of financial savings by the community through the churches providing rent free school accommodation was to be taken up by the National Society and in their Annual Report for 1903 they asserted that the Anglican Church, by providing school accommodation, was saving the public about £715,000 per year, and their estimate was that the cost of providing religious instruction in church schools was some £176,000 and this could be compared with the accommodation savings.
The Bill was generally welcomed by the Anglicans, and by April 1902 Anglican meetings all over the country had passed resolutions in favour of the Government's proposals. The Rochester Diocesan Board of Education was typical of many Diocesan Boards which had resolved to associate itself with the general resolutions adopted by the Committee of the National Society on the Education Bill. (99) The Chester Diocesan Minutes of the Meetings of Archdeacons and Rural Deans of 9th April 1902 show that a long discussion took place on the Bill, and the general opinion was that the optional or permissive Clause should be withdrawn and that larger populations and areas were preferable to smaller ones. It was evident that many matters required elucidation, but the general opinion was favourable to the measure. The following resolution was passed - the Archdeacon of Macclesfield alone dissenting:

"We desire to express our hearty thanks to H.M. Government for the introduction of the Education Bill, and our general approval of the provisions of that measure. We trust that the optional principle in Clause 5 will be withdrawn, that the districts as regards area and population will be sufficiently large to secure a local authority of a strong and independent character, and that every effort will be made to pass the Bill into law." (100)

The Chester Diocesan Church Schools' Association were having difficulty in raising sufficient funds for the maintenance of their schools, and four years previously in 1898 their Committee had drawn up a list of criteria by which schools requesting additional grants from the diocese could be classed as "necessitous" under any or all of the following heads:-

(a) Insufficient subscription.
(b) Poverty of the neighbourhood.
(c) Competition (from Board Schools).
(d) Small government grants.
believed that the Bill might harden then damage the inter-denominational relationships which many had been developing between the religious groups. Some saw the willingness of their own Church of England to exploit a favourable Parliamentary situation as being unscrupulous. Dr. Percival, then Bishop of Hereford, was to give a moderates view of the situation during the Lords debate when he stated: "I regret that the Church seems to have acquiesced too readily in the policy which is described in an old doctrine that 'they should get, who have the power; and they should keep who can.' That is what people sometimes describe as a policy of grab. I do not like it." (106) Dr. Percival had favoured a greater degree of public control assuring at the same time that this would not endanger freedom of religious instruction. He had the support and agreement from a large number of Anglican moderates, for it was among this group that personal friendships as well as theological affinity had begun to cross the gulf which separated the denominations. There was already a remarkable degree of co-operation between the Anglicans and the Nonconformists in areas where there was support for the Bishop of Hereford.

The bulk of the Churchmen supporting the centre were those who were prepared to make concessions and had no ill-feelings towards the Nonconformists. The Bishop of Rochester voiced the opinions of many within this group in his letter to the Times on 19th April 1902 in which he expressed his regret at the forthcoming rift between the Church of England and the Nonconformists, whereas he saw the future of religious development in England being dependent upon the growth of "mutual respect between the different Christian denominations." (107) Similarly the Bishops of Ripon, Exeter, Wakefield and Winchester all supported the ideal of conciliation towards the dissenters rather than a renewed conflict, the Bishop of Winchester's letter to the Times on 27th May voicing the opinions of this group. (108)
The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Temple, had also spoken of the good work of the School Boards in the Convocation on 2nd May 1902 and also at the Annual Meeting of the Church Committee for Church Defence and Church Instruction where he stated that "whatever might be said by individual churchmen in the heat of the controversy, it was not the mind of the Church as a body to act in a hostile manner towards the Nonconformists. Churchmen should do everything possible to remove Nonconformist grievances and while the Bill was passing, they should show their moderate spirit." (109)

This group were prepared to make some limited concessions, mainly centred around the question of single school districts, of which there were an estimated 5,600 Anglican Districts, but also some 1,900 others, a figure given by Balfour in the House of Commons on 30th July 1902. The Bishop of Manchester, Dr. Moorhouse, and the Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Davidson, were both prepared to allow undenominational teaching for Nonconformists in these single school districts. Other concessions to lessen the controversy were put forward to admit pupil-teachers without religious tests, and this had the support of the Bishops of Coventry, Winchester and Rochester. The admission of Nonconformists to Teachers' Colleges controlled by the Church of England was given support by the Bishop of Exeter. (110) However, none of these proposals had any chance of success. There was no concensus of agreement throughout the Established Church or full support for any single or individual suggestion, and therefore the Government found it impossible to act on behalf of a disunited Church, and under such circumstances it would have been doubtful if any of these concessions would have appeased the opposition.

The High Churchmen, followers of Lord Hugh Cecil, the youngest son of Lord Salisbury, were unwilling to yield on any point of the Bill. Although Cecil had said that they "must look to an amicable understanding
between the Church and Nonconformity" his followers, nicknamed Hughligans, were not moderates. Most High Church Bishops supported Cecil and were well aware that the article by the High Churchman D.C. Lathbury entitled "The Clergy and the Education Act" argued that the Church was neglecting its duty to Board School children by concentrating on the survival of its own schools at any cost. The solution was the full freedom of religious instruction in all the schools of the nation, but as this was not possible they should press for the independence of church schools. He objected to the Board Schools teaching a type of Christianity which put morality first before baptism and church membership.

Cecil in his speech in the House was to liken education as "a school with two doors - one from the street, through which the children come in; the other to the church, through which the children went out." This idea was firmly rejected by the Liberals, Campbell-Bannerman replying: "What we say is that if a child goes into a school, he should go in through the open door, and he should come out into the open street and then enter any church that his conscience or his inclination or his conviction may lead him to go in."

Fitzroy had recorded in his Memoirs that "Hugh Cecil's speech on the second reading of the Education Bill made a prodigious impression. Occupants of both Front Benches turned as one man to listen to him, though it was not exactly the speech which Ministers wanted in support of the line they had taken in regard to the Bill."

Those Anglicans who found themselves to the right of centre were in general in favour with the Bill, and continued to support it clause by clause. They were directly and completely opposed to the School Boards and the Nonconformists position and therefore wished for the destruction of those Boards. In May 1902 the Times was to publish a report of a speech made by Prebendary Covington at Holborn where he stated: "The
Act of 1870 has practically been the endowment of dissent. It had given the Nonconformists an education with which they are satisfied. He has closed his schools and put in his chapel pocket the money he has saved thereby. At the same time the Churchmen who conscience forbids him to be satisfied with the Board School religion, is compelled, first to pay for non-Church schools, secondly to pay for Church schools, and thirdly to see the schools which he loves undermined by the unlimited and unchecked use of a rate....This injustice is now to be remedied." (116)

This was the view shared by many Anglicans who supported the Bill in the way that appeared to reduce the powers of Nonconformists by removing the school boards.

The Times, acknowledging the difficulties faced by the Government over the religious issues was to comment in its report on the introduction of the Bill by Balfour:

"Over the thin ice of the religious difficulty Mr. Balfour skated discreetly and warily. Whether the Bill will satisfy either the militant denominationalists or the militant undenominationalists, each of whom he hoped would find in it some crumbs of comfort is perhaps doubtful."(117)

The Bill was to be rejected outright by the National Education Association at their meeting held in London on 26th March 1902, the Hon. Lyulph Stanley declaring that he had never expected any good Education Bill from the present Government, but "the measure introduced by Mr. Balfour exceeded in badness anything he had anticipated." Dr. Clifford had also telegrammed that meeting with the message: "Must resist Bill to the utmost." (118)

Lloyd George who was soon to be opposed to the Bill had in fact welcomed many of the new proposals contained within the Bill, writing:

"Balfour is developing a most revolutionary Education Bill. Creates the County Council the educational authority for the County and puts the
Board Schools and Voluntary Schools under it. Up to the present I rather like the Bill. It is quite as much as one would expect from a Tory Government—in fact, more than anyone could anticipate." (119)

However this did not restrain him from speaking at Pwllheli at the end of March 1902 against the hold of the Church of England on elementary education, claiming that "priestcraft was at the root of the evil in the education system and the new Bill tended to pander to priestcraft as it called upon Nonconformists to pay towards fostering Church of England principles." (120)

In similar manner the "Crewe Chronicle" had stated the new Bill was "far in advance of anything yet prepared by Government if indeed it may not be hailed as a fair effort to grapple with the vital question of popular education.......and we hope all friends of education and of national progress will deal with the new Bill in that spirit without too much regard for the tainted source from which it emanates." (121)

The newspaper was to return to the Education Bill in subsequent issues when it became clear that the voluntary schools would become rate-aided. By April the Editorial comment was as follows:-

"We make no apology for returning to the subject of the Education Bill for a further consideration leads to the conclusion that it is intended rather as an additional endowment of the Church than a serious attempt to settle the question on broad national principles. The Bill does violation to the fundamental principles of taxation without adequate representation.......This measure should be a sharp call to arms. The Nonconformists will again have to save the country from the attempt of the Church to capture the schools. We say advisedly that the priest of the Church of England is not the proper person, by his theological training and his extreme views to be entrusted with the control of elementary education." (122)
To counter-act the growing opposition to the Bill the General Association of Church School Managers and Teachers, holding their Annual Conference in Hanley in May 1902 passed the following motion, moved by the Dean of Ely:

"The Congress, believing that the present Education Bill is the best solution of the Education Question ever submitted to Parliament and recognising the supreme importance of placing it upon our statute book, would strongly urge all friends of voluntary schools to support the Government in their endeavour to secure its passage through Parliament."(123)

The Association included the Archbishops of Canterbury and York among its Patrons, and the Bishop of London as its President. Its objects included the protection of "the liberty of Religious Teaching in Church Schools and to enable Managers and Teachers to lend their combined influence to secure its efficiency." (124)

The Nonconformist resistance was to increase as the Bill passed through the House of Commons and was to gain further momentum during the summer recess. The Nonconformist campaign was led by Dr. John Clifford and was joined by other leaders of the Nonconformist Churches, including Hugh Price Hughes and Scott Lidgett of the Methodist Church, and by Dr. Parker and the Rev. J.H. Hollowell. Hollowell had become the secretary of the Northern Counties Education League and had been responsible for much of the agitation against the Bill in the north and for the mass demonstration in Leeds which had been reported in the Times on 22nd September 1902. Dr. Clifford, through the use of the national press and particularly through the Daily News had written a series of articles attacking the proposals under consideration in the Bill using his phrase of "Rome on the Rates" to denounce rate aid for denominational schools which would include Roman Catholic schools as well as those supported in the main by the Established Church. The Roman Catholic Church had welcomed the Bill, Cardinal Vaughan reminding those who would have preferred a different solution that the Roman Catholics at that particular time "are an unpopular and insignificant minority in this country and must take care
least by seeking to obtain the ideal we do not lose what we have hither-
to gained." (125)

The series of letters in the Daily News were to be published under
Dr. Clifford's direction as a series of pamphlets and therefore reached a
wide readership. This had an alarming effect upon the Established Church
and the intensity of feeling which the articles roused on both sides of
the argument prompted Bishop Davidson of Winchester to write to Balfour
about the claims of the Nonconformists led by Dr. Clifford, but conced-
ing that not all Nonconformists held the same opinions. On 17th
September Davidson wrote: "...I find Rosebery obviously somewhat dis-
quieted by the extravagancies of Dr. Clifford's appeal to the Nonconform-
ist public. He thinks Clifford's absolute misinterpretations ought to
be corrected, lest the lie gets too good a start." (126) When commenting
upon the church position over the progress of the Bill in September he
was again to write to Balfour, stating: "The position, so far as we Church
men are concerned, has become most perplexing, but speaking for myself and
a good many others I may say that we shall of course stand by what you
have secured in the House of Commons if you find that, on the whole, it
is best to attempt no modification. At the same time I ought to say
that I, for one, am impressed by what in the last few days has been urged
upon me by leading Nonconformists, as to the wish of a large number of
the more moderate men to come to some reasonable arrangement with us if
it can be devised...They are I think, irritated by Clifford's violence
and ashamed of his merely pugilistic attitude - and if this be so, we
look at the question from a religious rather than a merely political
standpoint, should we be thankful to find it possible to meet such men
half way. Dr. Paton of Nottingham is assured by Hugh Price Hughes
that neither he nor the Methodists generally have in any way committed
themselves to Clifford's position....It is strange how difficult every
body seems to find it to be, to say how far Clifford's diatribes have already affected the minds of the people at large." (127)

The Nonconformists were to continue their resistance throughout the summer and autumn of 1902. Lloyd George in his speech to 500 Liberals at Caxton Hall on 15th October 1902 called for the withdrawal of the Bill on the lines that the Government were taking to secure rate aid for church schools, and the pamphlets issued by Clifford under the titles of "The Fight Against the Education Bill - What is at Stake" and "Clericalism in British Politics" had by then been so widely read and discussed that replies to these were given by Balfour in his own pamphlet entitled "Letters from the Rt. Hon. A.J. Balfour, M.P. on the Criticisms of an Opponent of the Education Bill." The Bishop of Chester, Dr. Jayne, was to denounce the "wild orgy of misrepresentation" on the part of the Bill's opponents when he addressed the Diocesan Conference on the Education question on 7th October 1902. (128)

There was, however, a minority of High Churchmen who felt that the church was conceding too much to the State in return for financial support. The Rev. Joseph Nunn of Ardwick, a former chairman of the Manchester School Board, thought that it was wrong that Church Schools would be forced to accept rate aid whether they wanted it or not. In his pamphlet "The Education Bill Examined" written in 1902 and also in his letter to the Times dated 7th April 1902 he declared: "Our schools were built upon no such contract, and it is unfair to force upon them this new relationship under pain of extinction." (129) He wished the voluntary schools to have no dealings with the proposed new authorities, receiving grants from Whitehall as formerly and preserving their independence. Churchmen, he claimed, should also be free to allocate their local education taxes to the school of their choice.

There was therefore, a small body of Anglicans who were opposed to
the key measures in the Bill. Although this was a minority group, their influence was widely felt and recognised. The Bishop of Ripon had found it necessary to remonstrate with the Anglican extremists and to assure them that the Education Bill contained nothing "calculated to do grievous injustice to the Church." (130)

In the meantime the Northern Counties Education League had outlined their main objections to the Bill, and had declared that they would defend the existing school board system against the attacks of the ecclesiastical parties. They were to demand that all schools receiving Government grants or rates should be brought under popular control, and wished to see a universal school board system based on the same lines as the Scottish Education system. They believed that training colleges maintained at public cost must be thrown open to all without test of creed or denomination.

It had been in his letters that Dr. Clifford had stated that if the Bill of 1902 was to become an Act of Parliament, then to undo this there would have to be a three stage process to undo the new system. This process would have to include the return of a Liberal Government with a majority in favour of a repeal. This new Government would then have to pass a Bill of Repeal and Reconstruction through the House of Commons, and thirdly and perhaps the most difficult, they would have to face "the tremendous task of getting such a just measure through the hereditary and non-elective House of Lords on whose benches sit the Archbishops and Bishops who are so largely responsible for this Bill and so eager with the aid of the present khaki majority to push it through; that is, we shall have to 'end or mend' our second chamber before we can undo the mischief." (131)

He was further to write in his pamphlets that: "It is only for the
people - the whole people - of this land to wake up and fight their
own battles, not for a party, not for a section, not for a class, but
for the nation, for the primary elementary rights of citizens against
the arbitrary encroachments of an archaic clericalism that knows neither
the hour of the day, nor the real spirit of the time. Let the people
rise and as sure as they rise they will conquer." (132)

In his replies to Dr. Clifford, Balfour was to issue his own pamphlet
through the National Reform Union, in which he was to declare: "Dr.
Clifford seems more pre-occupied with politics than with either
religion or education," and claimed that Clifford's statement that the
"whole cost for voluntary schools falls upon the taxpayer and the rate-
payer is a mis-statement," the truth being that the payment would be "in
part by the tax payer and the rate payer." Balfour was to conclude:
"I have often wondered how a man of Dr. Clifford's high character and
position can sink to methods like these and I am disposed to find the
explanation in the fact that he is the unconscious victim of his own
rhetoric. Whatever may have been the case originally, he is now the
slave, not the master, of his style, and his style is unfortunately one
which admits neither of measure nor of accuracy." (133)

Clifford's rhetoric was not to be silenced by Balfour or by any of
the supporters of the Government's Bill. He saw his campaign as being
one which would bring the Nonconformists together to fight against the
Bill claiming: "What is at stake is not education merely; not the inalien-
able birthright of the citizen only; but chiefly our retention of
that divinest gift to us men; the right to the free unfettered and full
use of his inmost soul." (134)

In calling for the exclusion of the Established Church from the
educational system he wrote: "Why not, then take our courage in both
hands and fling aside this clerically inspired Bill, eject denominational-
ism from education altogether, buy the voluntary schools from their
present possessors, if they are willing to part with them, or rent them for so many hours a day for public education, publicly controlled, leaving the Anglican Church to teach at its own cost its own distinctive teaching at other times." (135) He was to conclude on 4th September 1902: "We are fighting for a free, compulsory, unsectarian education with local control, and popular election; and we shall win, if not today, then tomorrow, or the day after." (136)

The Liberal Party published their own comments on the Education Bill through the Liberal Publication Department. This was a short summary of the Bill together with the text and comments. They were particularly concerned with Part III concerning the secular instruction of voluntary schools within the control of the education authority, for under the terms of the Bill the education authority would have the power to inspect and the accounts of the managers would be subject to the audit by that authority. As far as the appointment of a teacher was concerned the consent of the local authority for this appointment would be required and would not be withheld except on educational grounds, thus the voluntary school managers continued to appoint staff and the education committee would only have the power of veto. Thus the question arose as to whether the personal character of the teacher was to be considered as "constituting an educational ground."

Under the terms of the Bill voluntary school managers had to keep the school in good order and to improve and alter school buildings if required by the local authority. It would be argued that the school might include the school house, and if it did not, then the voluntary school managers might charge a rent for it, to be paid out of the rates and then this could be spent on denominational work. The Liberal Party saw certain flaws in the Bill which could be exploited by the
church interest if allowed to do so. They were also to object to the
balance of the managers of the proposed scheme for voluntary schools
under the control of the local authority for although the local authority
had under the terms of the Bill the right of appointing additional
managers, this number was not to exceed one-third of the total members,
and therefore the voluntary school would still retain an overwhelming
church influence.

The Liberal Party were to acknowledge that under the terms of the
Bill, the grant under the Voluntary Schools Act of 1897 in respect of any
school maintained by the Local Education Authority would now be paid by
the Board of Education to the Authority. This virtually abolished the
Voluntary Schools Associations created by the 1897 Act and meant that the
grant aid of 5/- per child was not to go to the provision or upkeep of
the school-house. (137)

Sir George Kekewich, a member of the National Education Association,
was to give his own opinion on the 1902 Education Bill, and also upon
the Voluntary Schools Act of 1897. According to his reckoning this Act
should have been sufficient to enable schools to meet their current
expenses, and also to relieve those schools which were struggling, but
was not sufficient to bolster up those which were approaching bankruptcy.
The financial gains were not to be used for payment of debts, and thus
many voluntary schools could still claim to be under an "intolerable
strain" and "only the power to draw on the so-called bottomless purse of
the rates could, in the view of the clerical party, effect the salvation
of the denominational schools." According to Kekewich the Voluntary
Schools Act of 1897 had relieved the voluntary schools' financial
pressure so that the schools were not insolvent as a whole when the Bill
of 1902 was introduced, for he claimed that it would have been possible
by combined effort for the aggregate of the balances in hand to have
exceeded the aggregate amount of the liabilities. Thus if the surplus could have been re-distributed to those in need, then the Church Schools would have been in no difficulty. He was to point our that the great majority of Church schools were held in trust for education. Every school so held in trust was technically a charity, and the school would not belong to the Church but to the public. (138)

After the passing of the Act, Kekewich was to call it "An Act for furthering educational endowment of the Church of England out of the rates." He claimed that it had been suggested by Churchmen and had been promoted by the Church. As some schools had failed to make their income meet their expenditure, it had been determined by the Church and the Government that all should be endowed from the rates. Kekewich acknowledged that the voluntary schools had been falling off and the Board Schools were better provided and better taught. He agreed that many areas had no choice of school except for the existing voluntary school and in many places parents were compelled to pay school fees even though this was limited by the Act of 1870. He claimed, however, that when the voluntary subscriptions declined it had been possible to increase school fees to make up the deficit up to 9d. per week up to the Free Education Act, limiting this to 3d. per week. The managers of the Church of England schools therefore lost much of their local resources, but then turned their attention to taxes for additional grants for their voluntary schools. Kekewich was to claim that such help had already been given by the Voluntary Schools Act of 1897. (139)

The 1902 Education Bill was disputed line by line in the House of Commons, the introduction of the Kenyon-Slaney amendment threatening to wreck the whole Bill. The High Churchmen were already unhappy at other concessions made by the Government in Committee. Their main grievances were outlined in the Times in November 1902 where they had
objected to the clauses in the Bill which gave the managers of the schools the authority to appoint teachers without religious tests if they so desired, regardless of the trust deeds. They also objected to the provision that the Local Authority would nominate pupil teachers if there was an excess of applicants. The High Churchmen objected to the obligation to grant the free use of the schools to the Local Authority on three evenings per week. Their objections of the obligation laid on the managers to meet the full cost of the wear and tear in the schools was upheld in the House of Lords and was struck out of the Bill. (140)

The North Berkshire Clerical Association was to declare that the amendments accepted by the Government contravened the principles of the Church of England, and the Diocese of Chichester Voluntary Schools Association thought it would be better to close their schools rather than to violate their denominational character. (142) By the middle of November 1902 some 500 clergymen had sent protests to their Archbishops concerning the Education Bill, and this move had wide support from the High Churchmen including the Bishops of Oxford, St. Asaph and Worcester.

Bishop Davidson was likewise aware of the problems which the Kenyon-Slaney amendment would bring. Writing to J.S. Sandars on 29th October 1902 he stated that he was aware that some members of the clergy "can at any minute and without appeal be ousted from the schools in which they have perhaps taught for years by a vote of a body of managers whereof two may be hostile nonconformists and one or two very lukewarm Churchmen. If it is further enacted that these men, again without appeal, may decide what is or is not the doctrine of the Church of England the position is not an easy one to defend." (143)

Within the Cabinet the protests against the Bill had caused some concern. Fitzroy in his "Memoirs" dated 12th October 1902 had written: "There appears to have been some ground for the belief that a short time
ago the Prime Minister's confidence was shaken by the outcry against the Education Bill, but the resolution to proceed was inevitable. Chamberlain views the outbreak in Birmingham with some apprehension and says not withstanding his diplomacy, Liberal Unionists are transferring their allegiance by hundreds. (144)

Balfour was to resist the idea of compulsory facilities, and for the introduction of a clause permitting voluntary schools to opt out of the new settlement. (145) He claimed that under the terms of the Bill the Nonconformists were to be provided with opportunities to be appointed to all teaching posts in schools, except that of headmasterships in the voluntary schools. His acceptance of the Kenyon-Slaney amendment was to mean that whatever the stipulation of the trust deed, responsibility for religious instruction in voluntary schools was to be removed from the absolute control of the parish priest, but would now rest with the body of the managers. This clause was directed mainly at High Anglican practices in the single school areas. (146) Thus essential to the Bill was the compromise on the religious issues. The right of withdrawal from religious instruction on grounds of conscience in all public elementary schools, including those run by the churches was guaranteed. The Cowper-Temple clause laid down that in schools "hereafter established by means of local rates, no catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive to any particular denomination shall be taught."

Balfour had accepted this amendment believing that this would reassure the Protestant Anglicans and would also restrict the Romanising influence of a section of the clergy. In the House of Commons he claimed his reasons for accepting the amendment, stating: "The follies and indiscretions of a single individual are multiplied by public rumour until they almost stand up as a great public danger....It is because I desire to see this danger removed for ever from the path of religious
denominational education that I am anxious to see the amendment of my honourable and gallant friend accepted." However, the amendment to place religious instruction in church schools under the control of the whole body of managers instead of the parish clergyman alone as before was regarded by the anti-clericals as a "trifling concession" but the High Churchmen and the Roman Catholics regarded the amendment as an intolerable insult to the clergy. Lord Hugh Cecil and his High Church group protested against the amendment, but could only muster 41 votes against it. The Rev. D.C. Lathbury was to comment that the 1902 proposals embodied "the greatest ecclesiastical revolution that the Church had ever seen since the Reformation." (148)

By 14th November there had been a large Anglican demonstration in the Albert Hall in favour of the Bill, but this was to develop into a debate on the Kenyon-Slaney amendment. Lord Hugh Cecil moved a resolution in favour of the Bill at this meeting, declaring that while the Kenyon-Slaney amendment was wrong in principle, it would only affect a handful of parishes at the most. He therefore urged Churchmen not to reject the measure which so greatly improved the general situation of their schools. This resolution was passed and the support for the Bill effectively ended the High Church revolt against it. (149) Hugh Cecil himself had made a major speech during the second reading of the Education Bill where he had objected to that amendment and the control it placed for religious teaching in the hands of the managers. The wording of the amendment had been: "Religious instruction shall be given in a school not provided by the Local Education Authority in accordance with the tenour (if any) of the Trust Deeds relating thereto, and shall be under the control of the managers." (150)

The acceptance by Hugh Cecil of the much debated amendment meant that the so-called "Church Party" would almost certainly accept it likewise. The Church Party was a group of approximately 60 Conservative
and Liberal Unionist M.P.'s who had formed themselves into a cohesive parliamentary and extra-parliamentary unit in 1893. At a Meeting held at the Church Defence Institution Headquarters in London on 20th November 1893 a resolution proposing the establishment of a Church Party in the House of Commons had been passed, their resolution being: "That in the opinion of this Committee it is desirable that the Members of the House of Commons interested in the work of the Church Defence should organise themselves into a Church Defence Party whose business it would be, acting in co-operation with the Church Defence Institution, to watch all questions affecting the Church raised in Bills, or in any other way; to consult together whenever desirable as to the best policy to pursue; and to issue Whips to its members on all important occasions." (151)

The Church Party, following the collapse of the Liberals in 1895, had established a new role as an education pressure group with direct links with the Unionist Party through family connections. There was Edward Talbot, the Bishop of Rochester who was a family friend of the Cecils, and it was to be Talbot who introduced Balfour to Robert Morant. Among their members they could count on members of the aristocracy including Cavendish who was to become 9th Duke of Devonshire; Cranbourne (its first leader) who was Lord Salisbury's eldest son and therefore A.J. Balfour's first cousin; Wolmer the Second Earl Salbourne; Curzon, the Fifth Baron Scarsdale and First Baron Curzon; St. John Brodrick, First Earl of Midleton - all of whom were full-time gentlemen in full-time politics. Included in their number were several career politicians including Sir John Dorington and Stanley Leighton, and a number of part-time politicians like Alban Gibbs who was the head of the banking family and who, as a dutiful politician, was to give up his safe seat to Balfour after the election of 1906.
The Cecil family as a whole was known to be a bastion of Anglicanism. Lord Cranbourne (James Cecil) was the oldest of five brothers and two sisters and he had established himself as a member of the church militant, with his own views veering towards High Church Reformism, regarding the Nonconformists as his enemy. Evelyn Cecil was to become a member of the London School Board (Evelyn being a cousin of the main family) and was to take over the role of Lord Cranbourne as the leader of the Church Party when he was appointed as Under Secretary at the Foreign Office in 1900. Evelyn Cecil along with Bishop Talbot had worked on behalf of the Archbishop's Voluntary School Committee set up by Archbishop Benson in an attempt to influence the Conservatives into taking action on behalf of the voluntary schools.

Lord Robert Cecil, another of the brothers was then practising as a barrister, but Lord Hugh Cecil had become an active Conservative M.P. also veering towards the High Church Party. It was Lord Hugh Cecil who was to take over the leadership of the Church Party and therefore the acceptance of the provisions in the Education Bill of 1902 in the Albert Hall meeting was an indication that the Bill might have a more favourable reception among the High Church Party.

The Established Church as a whole had lacked leadership from its Archbishop of Canterbury during the period from 1895 up to the appointment of Randall Davidson to that office. In 1896 "a muted sigh of relief had greeted the death of Archbishop Benson, but the optimism that had surrounded the appointment of Temple as his successor was soon to be replaced by gloom.....If members of the Church Party were to look to the Archbishop for guidance and leadership they were to be disappointed ..... the two most prominent members of the episcopal bench to take the initiative were Randall Davidson and Edward Talbot." (152)

Their work as intermediaries and agents of pressure was to ensure
that the Nonconformists title for the 1902 Education Bill, the Bishops' Bill, as it was known in the Nonconformists groups, was a reasonably accurate assessment of how the character of the measure was carried out.

By 27th November Fitzroy was able to record that "The House of Commons confirmed by a huge majority its adoption of the Kenyon-Slaney sub-section ensuring to the managers a voice in the religious instruction of denominational schools. The author of the clause referred to letters of extreme violence and even indecency he had received from clergymen..... It is in this hysterical, not to say frenzied, spirit that a large section of the clergy are disposed to meet a provision that commends itself to lay opinion with a most striking unanimity. It is curious that a Bill in the conduct of which the Government have exposed themselves to bitter attacks for their alleged surrender to ecclesiastical pressure should have been the occasion of a most remarkable demonstration of the little hold clerical influence has on the temper of the House of Commons." (153)

The Bill continued to be debated clause by clause over its passage through the Commons. Five days had been spent on the First and Second Readings and a further 48 days in Committee, thus the new procedure of closure was used in the Commons, from early November onwards, to enable the Bill to be passed to the House of Lords by early December.

The Bill was introduced on 4th December 1902 into the Lords by the Duke of Devonshire, but the main speech on the content of the Bill was to be given by Randall Davidson from the Bishop's Bench on 5th December 1902. In his speech he stated that the claims of Dr. Clifford indicating that the Board Schools were practically to be swept away were totally without foundation, remarking that put in that form the words were the wildest distortion of the provision of the Bill. Davidson dealt with the main provisions and objections to the Bill and answered the critics that the Bill gave control without adequate popular representation, and would enable
rates to be used for denominational teaching, and at the same time it
retained denominational tests, and these were claimed by the Nonconform-
ists to be particular severe for teachers wishing to be promoted to head
ships with the restrictions laid upon those headships within the volunt-
ary sector. On the religious issue Davidson was to oppose the Kenyon-
Slaney Clause which gave the control of the religious teaching to the
whole body of the managers, but the debate on the Second Reading in the
House of Lords was not remarkable for the disclosure of any new points
of view in the handling of the subject.

The Bishop of Winchester had argued the case with prudence from not
a too ecclesiastical standpoint, but no one was at pains to show that the
solution now offered was the logical outcome of the relations of the
State with the religious bodies ever since education became a matter of
public concern. This was the bedrock of the situation, and therefore
the arguments in favour of State aid were based upon the sense of oblig-
atation by the State when it had in times past encouraged a voluntary system.
It could therefore in common fairness hardly have repudiated the liabil-
ities towards distinctive religious teaching which it accepted at the
outset and had then done so much to encourage and even incorporate into
a national system.

During the Committee Stage on 11th December Lord Rosebery had
suggested that the Nonconformists should rally against the Bill by a
system of non-payment of rates. This had been severely criticised by
Lord Goschen. There had also been differences of opinion between the
Bench of Bishops and the Lords, so that it was clear that the Government
and the Bishops had not been working together. Thus an amendment
moved by the Duke of Northumberland to give religious instruction a lay
flavour, providing that the Bishops consent should be requisita to the
withdrawal from any clergyman of the right to give religious instruction,
was met by the Duke of Devonshire with the declaration that the Government might be disposed to view it with some favour, if "they obtained a declaration from the Bishop (Davidson) that they would use their power to prevent a clergyman giving religious instruction which was unpalatable to his parishioners. The Bishop of Winchester gave the pledge in the most unqualified terms on behalf of his brethren, and was followed in the same sense by the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Ely and others. The Duke subsequently rose and said that their efforts to restrain the clergy having hitherto proved so futile, he could not attach any importance to their pledges - an intimation which the Bench accepted with Christian meekness, and the incident was at an end." (154)

The Bill was to receive the Royal Assent on 18th December 1902, but there were still those who did not believe that this would be a permanent settlement. The Nonconformists were pledged to fight the proposals, and Hugh Cecil did not see any final solution that was not either frankly secular or denominational, though the current Act was considered to be one of the outcomes of a natural progression.

Although it had been administratively desirable to bring in legislation to solve the School Board crisis and to relieve the voluntary schools of some of their financial burdens it was to be seen if the Act had indeed solved these problems. During the passage of the Bill it had been clear that the use of rate-aid for the voluntary schools had not been universally accepted either by the Conservatives or by the whole of the Established Church. There was also the obvious opposition and conflict over this provision from the Nonconformists. Much would depend upon the composition of the Education Committees within the County and County Borough Councils. The working of the Education Act of 1902 would show whether the voluntary sector was still in need of further financial assistance from Government or local sources, and if this was
to be the case, then further controversy over the composition of the
managers and the appointment of staff in voluntary schools would again
be called into question.

It was to be seen if the terms of provision of new schools in the
voluntary sector was adequate and whether the system of eligibility for
voluntary school grants towards repairs for fair wear and tear was found
to be workable.

All interested parties were to agree that the appointment of teachers
in the voluntary schools was to remain a controversial matter, particu-
larly in the single school areas, and the matter of religious tests for
certain staff in such schools might prove to be an area of further
conflict. The ease by which pupils might be withdrawn under the terms
of the conscience clause was to be tested for the Nonconformists believed
that pupils who exercised this right would be in an obvious minority. It
was also seen as a compromise system which in fact would lead to conflict
if all parents were to put this into action in denominational schools.

It was to be seen if the 1902 Education Act which had contained
much controversial legislation and which had not had the unanimous support
of the Conservative Party or of the Church of England had laid the found-
ation for development and improvement in elementary education in both
voluntary and provided schools.
CHAPTER I

The Legacy of the School Board Era and the Education Act of 1902

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CHAPTER II
THE WORKING OF THE 1902 ACT
In spite of the wide powers vested in the new Authorities, the controversy over the Education Act of 1902 was to centre mainly over the religious issues, and little was made over the provisions made under the terms of the Act for the secular subjects or the progress which was to be encouraged in the growth of secondary education.

It had been recognised by the Government that the Anglican voluntary schools were in need of help and were directly contrasted with the then Board schools which had been able to afford to spend more on their own schools and therefore it had become obvious that the voluntary schools had been falling behind on the provision of facilities and equipment, apart from finding the increase in general maintenance costs harder to meet. Their patrons felt strongly about paying rates for school board provision and then also for contributions towards the upkeep of their own voluntary schools. In the period 1897 - 1901 the National Society had calculated that their voluntary contributions had shown a short fall of some £280,000 in that four year period, and yet it was also estimated that the Church of England had spent some £29 million on school buildings since 1870 and by 1901 were providing about 50% of school places. Voluntary pupil numbers were estimated to be 2,492,536 in some 14,319 schools, whilst the board schools had been educating 2,239,375 pupils in their 5,797 schools. In order for the Boards to have achieved this rapid growth it was suspected by the voluntary agencies that some Boards with a predominantly Nonconformist membership had set up their own schools close to the voluntary schools on purpose to attract pupils to their own schools, and thereby reduce the pupil numbers in the voluntary sector.

The Anglicans, even under the terms of the Act would still require assistance in the financial running of their schools, for they would still
have to find or purchase new sites for their new schools, erect the new buildings, and still would be responsible for structural repairs. This would or could be costly if the new Local Authorities made unreasonable requirements in building standards.

Under the terms of the Act, a new school could only be provided following the publication of a Public Notice, and then followed three months in which managers of an existing school or ten rate payers could appeal to the Board of Education that it was not required, or another body, other than the local education authority, which might well in many cases be the voluntary agencies, were better suited to provide this need. The final decision was to be made by the Board of Education. Under the new arrangements, therefore, a religious need could be deemed as a sufficient reason to authorise a new Church school, and therefore this was to the advantage of the voluntary schools and their Associations, even though the building funds had to be raised by subscription. The danger was that Council schools would be built out of the rates, and therefore the Local Authority must find it easier to find the necessary resources.

The Roman Catholic Church held a parallel position to the Anglicans, particularly in their need for additional finance. They would, in any case, find the cost of their own new buildings, although this would be a crushing obligation. They would, therefore, accept any help with financial provisions providing these did not undermine their approach to religion and education.

Under the terms of the 1902 Education Act the Anglican Church deemed it necessary to form the Church Schools Emergency League. This started on 16th November 1903 as the Manchester Church Day Schools' Emergency League, but had then extended to the whole country by July 1904 with the Rev. Cleworth as its secretary. The aim of the League was simply to
preserve the voluntary schools and their religious purposes. Their plan of campaign was to place pressure on Members of the Education Committees, Managers of schools, and Members of Parliament. They were to use leaflets, to call meetings, and to send deputations where necessary. Members were to participate in County Council elections. Their actions were to be undertaken and put into effect when there was a curtailing of time spent on religious education in schools, or when teachers' salaries were threatened to be cut for time spent on the teaching of religious instruction. Action was also to be taken by the League when Local Authorities required expensive repairs to be carried out to voluntary schools, or when the local authority tried to evade its own responsibilities under the wear and tear maintenance clause.

The Roman Catholic response followed the same lines of attack as the Church of England. Their own Catholic Schools Committee was replaced in 1905 by the Catholic Education Council which was to integrate primary, secondary and college policies incorporated into the 1902 Education Act.

The Nonconformists had wished for a continuation of the dual system, and would have preferred one system of education under popular control stemming from the 1870 Education Act, and thus would have wished for an extension of the work of the School Boards. Pressure for such a move had come in the main from Dr. John Clifford who held the opinion that the voluntary schools should foot their own bills. The Nonconformists held that the Church of England had built too many schools which they were now unable to support, and much of their trouble stemmed from the period of massive voluntary school building in the period immediately following the Education Act of 1870.

The Nonconformists had disagreed with the Church of England's claims of the costs of replacing the Church of England schools if such schools were to be withdrawn, and likewise they disagreed over the original costs
of Church of England schools, claiming that much of the money counted in the Church of England accounts was in fact part of the grants given by successive governments.

Under the terms of the Education Act of 1902 the Nonconformists pointed out that the system of allowing three months notice for a new school building to be erected should favour the voluntary system as the expense of the building then would not come off the rates, and therefore this would appeal to the indifferent rate-payer who had little or no interest in education of religion. It would be an advantage for the ratepayer not to have to finance the building of new schools. This system might also see a rise in the number of small schools and therefore in the long term these would be more costly to run and maintain and would lack resources from a limited income based on numbers on rolls.

The appointment of teachers in the voluntary schools was claimed by the Nonconformists to favour the recruitment on a religious basis, rather than on the ability of a person as a secular teacher. Thus the Nonconformists were opposed to the appointment of teachers in those schools where they could not see the Nonconformist teacher getting promotion in the Church of England-controlled system of management, and yet those who applied for such appointments would still be expected to join in with Church of England activities as part of the normal school work. Nonconformists claimed that there were some 8,000 parishes where voluntary schools were the only available schools, and in those parishes the Nonconformists claimed that parents did not like to use the withdrawal conscience clause as those parents would then be known to oppose the Church of England if they did take such action. They also believed that it was inevitable that books and pictures in voluntary schools would reflect the denominational character of the school even if pupils withdrew from religious teaching.
Very few Nonconformists ever withdrew from religious instruction in the voluntary schools because it was felt that this would make those pupils stand out from the others, and therefore it was easier and less harasing to stay in, than to opt out, of the instruction given in such schools. Thus the Nonconformists felt trapped within the voluntary system and would still have to face a denominational system in certain parts of the country. Augustine Birrell, the son of a Nonconformist minister had said: "One only has to read what the clergy say in their own Church organs is that they regard "their" schools as missionary enterprises as the best means of reclaiming the masses to true views, to Church authority and Sacramental grace." (1)

The Education Act of 1902 had provided the basic idea for the local administration of education. Although the Act had established a national system of education it could not achieve this as a short term measure, but nevertheless the basis on which a system could be built had been formed. An important result of the establishment of the Local Education Authorities was that education became one of the local services for which the councils were totally responsible. The other services included the highways, water supply, sanitation, parks and recreation grounds, the local police force, fire prevention and public libraries. Thus education had moved, by virtue of the 1902 Act to something which was the responsibility of a local authority and as a social service provided by that authority, rather than something which was outside the main system of local government.

The Nonconformist opposition did not vanish when the Act became law. Encouraged by Dr. Clifford and by Lloyd George, a National Passive Resistance League was formed in December 1902 and was to start its campaign by May 1903. Its Chairman was Dr. Clifford, and information on the campaign was written in the main by the Rev. Hollowell in
the 'Crusader' but the 'British Weekly' became the main channel for passing on the tactics to be employed to the supporters of the movement.

The plan of the movement was to appoint its own local councils to give an impetus to local action, but these were to raise funds for a central scheme which would give financial aid to those who were "Victimised" under the law. Legal aid was to be provided through this central fund. The aims of the passive resistance movement were not to resist the working of the Act in areas which had the old board schools in them only. The emphasis was to be on the deduction from their own rates in voluntary school areas the amount of rate estimated to be proportionate to that which would have been paid towards the voluntary schools in that particular area. The Passive Resistance Movement did not anticipate the deliberate breaking of the law, as when the rate had not been paid in full, the rate collectors could still claim the amount against personal belongings, and if this failed, then the defaulter could be sent to prison. Dr. Clifford and other main supporters of the Passive Movement transferred all their personal possessions into their wife's name and therefore as in law they had no personal possession with which to set against the required rate deficit, they had to face a prison term. A prison sentence, although short, gave added publicity to their cause.

According to Dr. Clifford the right to revolt was at the heart and foundation of English liberties, and saw the presence of the House of Lords which he claimed as being dedicated to Church interests as being justifiable circumstances for the mounting of an anti-Government campaign. He claimed that a school rate to support the voluntary schools was a reminder of religious inequality, and therefore the Nonconformists could see a development of a High Church movement, similar to the education as demanded in the Roman Catholic schools of this country, and therefore it would be possible for Church of England schools to become centres of Church of England teaching based upon Roman Catholic lines.
The Passive Resistance League was not fully supported by all Non-conformists and there was a certain amount of opposition within their own ranks. Many were believers in the force of law, and saw the League as being in defiance of a Measure passed by their own elected body. Such anarchical conduct could harm the prestige of Parliament. Others claimed that electors had not refused to pay their taxes for other unpopular measures like the Boer War, and therefore the correct method of disapproval ought to be to appeal to the ratepayers in the capacities as voters to turn out the Conservative Government.

Even so, the fighting alliance formed between organised Nonconformity and the Liberal Party had spread. By March 1904 it was a recognised movement, and by October 1905 some 230 Passive Resistance members had been imprisoned and thousands had been fined. The Free Church Council which had started as an interdenominational body in the 1890's provided the network of regional and local groups for opposition to the Education Act of 1902.

Within the Resistance Movement there was found to be a problem with the Wesleyan Schools of which there were some 452. There was an inconsistency with such schools for it was a simple issue that Nonconformists should not pay rates for such schools as otherwise they would be in the same class as the Church of England voluntary schools. The body of Nonconformists wanted the Wesleyan schools transferred to the Local Authorities, but the Wesleyans disagreed with these proposals thereby producing a split within the Nonconformist ranks.

A part of the Nonconformist strategy was to enforce those conditions set out in the 1902 Act for rate-aid eligibility. The main plan of campaign and that which was put into action specifically in Wales under the direction of Lloyd George was the enforcement of the conditions which were to apply in schools eligible for grants. Thus to be excluded were
those schools where teachers were required to give distinctive religious
teaching dogma. Not eligible also for grants were those schools unless
the teachers had been appointed by the Local Authority without sectarian
tests. Voluntary schools were not eligible for grants until such schools
were put in good condition. Thus whilst these conditions were in the
process of being enforced, then the County Councils would only give the
voluntary schools their grants for efficiency in accordance with the
reports of inspectors. In England the emphasis of Nonconformist strategy
was laid upon those clauses which stipulated that voluntary schools must
be in good shape to receive rate aid, and on this question the Nonconform-
ists claimed that rate aid was still forthcoming even if the voluntary
schools were making no attempt to comply with building standards. Within
this argument was the additional claim that the voluntary schools were
making claims off the rates for fair wear and tear to cover other items
such as classroom partitions, yard asphalt and gas fittings. This was
defended by the Anglicans on the grounds that many such claims would have
to be forthcoming with the normal grant aid within the terms of the 1902
Education Act. It was further claimed that under the new constitution of
the managerial body of voluntary schools it was possible for the represent-
atives of the Church to call meetings and to pass resolutions without the
full body being present. Thus the Nonconformists were able to claim that
it was possible in voluntary schools for the vicar as chairman of the
managers to avoid calling meetings if he so wished, and was also able to
conduct correspondence without reference to the full body of managers.

The Government response to enable the voluntary schools to be put in
to order as required by the 1902 Act was to pass the Education (Local
Authority Default) Act of 1904. This Act was designed to undermine the
Nonconformist campaign, particularly in Wales, whereby the Board of
Education would pay managers of voluntary schools for any expenses
properly incurred and take this amount off the Parliamentary grant to the County Council. In the final event, this was only applied to two authorities because public opinion was strongly opposed to making pupils victims of a political and denominational quarrel, but there had been an immediate response to the Act headed by Lloyd George arguing that the central Board of Education should be given direct responsibility for all Welsh elementary schools. He was to advise that education committees should resign if the Act was invoked, thus making it unworkable. Education might be carried on in the many Welsh Nonconformist chapels which would be used for school purposes and then their teachers would be paid out of contributions.

This plan was not carried out as it became clear that if chapels were to be used, then no rate aid and no exchequer grants would be forthcoming. Those against any action were concerned that if the Welsh schools were to be handed over to the Board of Education, then those who had been elected as councillors should not have taken office, as when they were elected they should have known and realised the consequences of their actions, and were at that time expected to accept the obligations of that office. Thus if any Act was unsatisfactory then this should be changed through the election of a majority rather than through the irregular pressure groups of minorities.

The Anglicans argued and admitted that Nonconformists had paid taxes which since 1870 had made up part of the exchequer grants to voluntary schools, but then the Anglicans were paying taxes and rates for religious instruction in Board Schools which they had not liked, and claimed that in fact they may have been paying more in this way than they did to their own schools.

In spite of the Nonconformists protests, the Anglicans argued that the issue of educational reform and its urgency was well-known for the
issue had not died away following the abortive Gorst Bill of 1896. The Act of 1902 had been a matter of necessity, and it was impossible to govern properly if every item of government business required a direct mandate. The Anglicans argued that as the majority of the country were nominally Anglicans, then the dictates of the majority were being served. Both the Nonconformists and the Anglicans realised that the 1902 Education Act had not been a main platform issue during the previous election. The Government had been elected to carry on the general business of the Empire, and therefore in common with many Nonconformists the Anglicans were to stress that the task of the minority was to seek redress by persuasion, and thus the Nonconformists had to convert the majority to their way of thinking.

The Roman Catholic response to the 1902 Education Act suggested that they believed that it would cost no less after the 1902 Act than it had done before in their own voluntary contributions, as now there were much stiffer requirements of conditions for aid laid down by the Local Authorities.

In the Annual Report of the Board of Education for the year 1902-3 the Committee were to state: “The enactment of the Education Act, 1902 is probably the most important event in the history of education in England since the full recognition of Elementary Education as a national duty in 1870. Many of the provisions of the Act have been and continue to be matters for controversy; but the Board are gratified to find that in the majority of localities there is much willingness to accept it as a step towards bringing education, co-ordinated in all its forms, into more intimate connection with other branches of local life, and to unite in administering it in a spirit of fairness and liberality. It will be the endeavour of the Board to do all within their power to encourage and
assist such an attitude." (2)

Thus although the 1902 Education Act may not have been seen by many to have been the best way to deal with the education situation, and the development of secondary education was to closely resemble the education provided in the traditional grammar schools, the Board of Education were able to state: "The rapid progress made with the preparation of Schemes for Education Committees and with the other preliminary work of the Councils has rendered it possible to bring the Act into operation at comparatively early dates. The 1st April 1903 was the earliest 'appointed' day which could be conveniently fixed for any Council. The Councils of 8 Counties, 13 County Boroughs, 15 Boroughs and 2 Urban Districts were ready to begin the whole of their education administration upon this date. By 1st August 1903 the Act was fully in operation in the Districts of 31 Counties, 45 County Boroughs, 95 Boroughs and 37 Urban Districts and was also in operation for the purposes of education other than elementary alone in the districts of 16 Counties and 1 County Borough." (3)

The work of the voluntary schools in providing for additional places was acknowledged by the Board's Report and likewise the financial contributions which had been made to the voluntary schools were acknowledged. Their statistics show that "additional accommodation has been provided since 1870 to the extent of 1,844,745 seats by voluntary effort, being an increase of 98.2%, and to the extent of 2,957,966 seats in board schools. In the past year the accommodation in voluntary schools has decreased by 5,932, and in board schools has increased by 76,811 places." (4)

It would appear that the voluntary subscriptions which had kept the voluntary schools going for so many years had begun to diminish, the truth being "that after 1870 there was a flush of enthusiasm which led to a large scale of subscriptions which could not be maintained." (5)

The pressure for a more centralised authority with the control this
would give was viewed by some with favour as the most direct means of establishing a truly national system of education. However, the Act had established 317 Local Education Authorities and there were over 120 County Councils and County Borough Councils responsible for higher education in their areas, which included secondary education, under Part II of the Act and also for elementary education in their own areas under Part III of that Act. In addition, there were now over 180 non-Borough Councils with a population in excess of 10,000 and urban district councils with a population exceeding 20,000 (based on the 1901 census figures) which were to retain powers for elementary education under Part III of the Act.

There was no obligation for any to co-operate and all was to be dependent upon goodwill and understanding, and in some cases it was to become obvious that such a system was not a sound one for administrative and financial reasons.

The Act had given rise to the administrative dichotomy between Part II and Part III local authorities which was to prove the major weakness in many County areas. Once the 1902 Act had met the demands of the municipal boroughs and larger urban districts for a major say in local educational development it was difficult thereafter to deprive them of the privilege even in the interests of educational efficiency.

In conjunction with the Board of Education Act of 1890 and the Act of 1902 a new administrative framework had been established with more cohesive and more effective working between the two levels of administration than had been possible before. On this basis it was possible to forge a crucial partnership between central and local government and therefore the State was able to project itself more decisively into the field of "other than elementary" education.

The transfer of schools from the voluntary system to the local authority were to be highlighted by the question of compensation to the
voluntary schools. Lancashire Education Committee were decisive in their approach, and had decided that "when any proposal is made for such a transfer then as a general rule no compensation either in the shape of capital or rent be paid to owners or managers to obtain a partial or complete transfer of a school to the County Authority." (6)

Similarly the 1902 Act had not clearly defined specific provisions for the keeping of furniture in repair, and the same Education Committee realised that "such matters may have to be resolved by the Board of Education under Section 7 of the Act. It was agreed by the Committee that if the school was to be kept efficient (and this was a responsibility under the terms of the Act) then it must be them to provide the necessary furnishings." (7)

By 1904 the transfer of schools to the local authorities under Section 8 of the 1902 Act in Lancashire alone were described as being "numerous" and in that authority all had been accepted, though mainly on the grounds that if those schools had been closed permanently, then the school accommodation in the neighbourhood of those schools would have been insufficient. (8)

However, the financial implications of taking over the existing voluntary schools in Lancashire amounted to £73,500 whilst the same period showed an expenditure of only £10,500 on maintenance in the Council schools. In the same period the voluntary schools had cost the Local Education Authority some £291,000 and the Council Schools some £40,500. However, not all existing voluntary schools were taken over by the Local Education Authorities. The conditions found in some of the voluntary schools led these to being condemned by the Education Authorities. One example given in the Report of the Lancashire Education Committee of 19th September 1904 indicates the size of the problem and therefore of the
amount which would have to be raised through rate aid in bringing the whole sphere of elementary education up to a reasonable and acceptable standard. The Report states: "Notwithstanding the fact that the Chapel Street Council School with accommodation for 1,200 children was only recently opened, the Committee find that owing to some of the existing voluntary schools in the District having been condemned by the Board of Education, it will probably be necessary to take steps for providing another Council School." (9)

The problem of wear and tear and the general overall standards of the voluntary schools in particular and of some of the Board schools were to cause some dismay in the projected costs of bringing these schools up to the standards required by the Board of Education. The Lancashire Education Committee refer to this in some detail, stating in their Report for February 1904 that: "It may generally be assumed that the standard of excellence which would have sufficed for most of the voluntary schools prior to the Act coming into force, will not be up to the standard which will satisfy an Education Authority, as the latter is necessarily impressed with the desire to give as far as is reasonably possible, equal treatment to the schools throughout its whole area, and that will doubtless mean a levelling up to the best standard, and will involve a general improvement in the internal conditions of most of the schools." (10)

Although the major changes in administration had taken place amidst strong protests from certain bodies within the political and religious groups, the Report of the Board of Education 1903-4 appeared to be satisfied with the progress that the administration of the Act of 1902 had made up to that date. The Education (London) Act of 1903 had become law on 14th August 1903 and on 1st May 1904, the London County Council had taken over its responsibilities for all purposes except certain minor provisions for which the appointed day was to be 1st October. Thus the Government
could claim that "These Acts have for the first time made it possible for the various forms of education activity to be dealt with as parts of a co-ordinated whole in each area, and they have already brought within reasonable distance of solution important educational problems which could not be solved until, as it now made possible, they were given careful consideration in each area in close connection with the other parts of the local educational system." (11)

The Board of Education acknowledged the difficulties which the new Education Authorities were facing, and were prepared also to accept that special difficulties had been experienced in dealing with Governing Bodies and teaching staff of the smaller voluntary schools and with the managers and their roles in these schools, which had arisen partly from the differences encountered between the work of the councils and the work formerly undertaken through the Technical Instruction Acts. There had also been some difficulty experienced on the part of the Local Education Authorities over the responsibilities of the new governing bodies and the power which they might yield in their schools without reference to the authority. The Board of Education were of the opinion that "It will take no long time for all to learn - what many have already grasped - the relative importance of general education and special instruction, and the value to the school of increasing the interest by increasing the responsibilities of Governing Bodies and Headmasters." (12)

The Report of the Administration Committee to the Lancashire Education Committee was to comment favourably on its own first year in office following the Education Act of 1902. In their first full annual report that Committee stated: "The Special Committee appointed to consider and report generally on the effect of the present system followed by the Education Committee in the administration of the Education Act....beg to report that they have very fully considered the subject, so far as
elementary education is concerned, and are of the opinion that the system of dividing the County Elementary Education area into Local Areas... is a sound one, and considering the abnormally large and complex area which the Lancashire Education Committee have to control and the difficulties inherent to bringing into complete working order a new and untried organisation, the scheme for Elementary Education Administration as formulated by the Education Committee has, speaking generally, passed through the ordeal of the first twelve months satisfactorily." (13)

After the Education Act of 1902 Lancashire had established some 47 Local Education Authorities of which the County Council and the now 17 County Boroughs qualified as Part II Authorities, leaving some further 29 Part III Authorities. There were also clear cases of administrative perpetuation in terms of boundaries, identity, organisation and personnel. 23 of these had been previously enjoyed the authority of their own School Boards, and 19 had organised their own School Attendance Committees and some had also experienced the work of the Technical Instruction Sub-Committees. Thus the 1902 Act had changed the mould rather than the contents of educational administration even though there had been the abrupt termination of 82 statutory bodies save where indirectly the new County administration might draw upon their experiences. (14)

The difficulties which faced the new Authorities were deemed to be so great that in both Staffordshire and Cheshire the implementation of the Act had to be postponed so that their Committees could finalise their schemes. (15) Cheshire was to appoint C.E. Thornycroft as the Chairman of their Education Act 1902 Scheme Committee. His report to the full County Council in February 1903 was to indicate that the immediate effect of the 1902 Education Act was to vastly increase the burden of work that would fall on the County Council, and it was obvious that a large number of meetings would have to be called to cope with the administration. (16)
This had been foreseen by Balfour when introducing the Bill, stating:

"If the Bill adds to the work of the County Councils and Borough Councils, undoubtedly it will also add great dignity, it will increase the importance of their functions - I believe it will induce some persons to seek civic honours who have never thought of so doing."(17)

By 1904 the Chairman of the Cheshire County Council in his Triennial Address was able to give a clear and unequivocal warning to the County Council that a great deal was needed to be done to comply with the requirements of the 1902 Education Act coupled with the warning to the ratepayers that the provision of Secondary Education was a large and expensive subject for which the 2d. rate allowance under the Act was not sufficient.(18)

Initially the problems facing the Cheshire Education Committee were of the quantity and quality of the buildings which they had inherited for all types of education and for which they were then responsible. By late 1903 it was becoming clear that the sums needed to be spent on Secondary Education were likely to be markedly in excess of the revenue, so being likely to lead to confrontation with the ratepayers. The burden on the officials was going to become ever heavier since the Committee had to call for a report on each of the schools for which it was then responsible and the first fruits of this endeavour were already showing something of the gaps which needed to be filled. In the case of Crewe, a Part III Authority, the Medical Officer of Health had reported that most of the schools were not only badly ventilated and dirty, but were positively insanitary. Here the work of extension and repairs or alterations was to go on continuously until 1914 against a background of antipathy to spending on education when it was realised that rates would rise to pay for the necessary renovations. The ire of the Nonconformists had been raised by the necessity to pay rates towards the maintenance of Church of England schools in Crewe and a Citizens' League was formed in 1903 with the avowed
aim of waging a campaign of passive resistance to the Act in the form of a refusal to pay their education rate. More moderate Nonconformists opted for the more constructive path of trying to manipulate the Act by using their influence within the Borough and County Councils, by such methods as securing the election of William McNeill to the chair of the Crewe Education Committee where he would be able to support the Baptist Dr. Hodgson in his efforts on the County Education Committee. Hodgson was already using his influence to try to ensure non-sectarian Religious Education in the schools and was to urge the creation of a non-sectarian County Training College to be sited, he argued, in Crewe.

The Crewe Chronicle of 6th December 1902 had already condemned the Education Act on behalf of the Nonconformists in Crewe, claiming:

'It is a thoroughly bad Bill as we all know....The Country for the first time in its history is to be taxed, and taxed heavily too, to endow the Church of England and the Roman Catholic body...... School Boards which gave a most broad and enlightened education have been swept away because they ignored the denominational interest." (19)

From the beginning the Education Committee in Crewe had made it clear that henceforth all sectarian religious instruction in the schools was to be given at the managers' expense outside school hours, and that attendance at such instruction was not to be obligatory. As the schools came under the direction administration of the Committee a plan of undenominational Religious Instruction had to be drawn up and this was completed by 1905.

Of greater concern to the majority of rate payers in Crewe was to be the cost of the new Education Act. The lack of public responsibility for education in Crewe before 1903 - mainly because of the subsidised school provision by the railway company - meant a heavy education rate afterwards. It was to rise to ls. 6d. in the pound in 1909 - 10 and Crewe thereupon became eligible for a special Board of Education grant as a "necessitous
school area". The rate did not remain at 1/7½d. but soared to 1/11d. and opinion in the town was to harden against any further new schools. (20)

The three Wesleyan school leases in Crewe were not to be transferred to the Education Committee until January 1908, (21) even though the first major task which the newly elected Committee had to undertake had been the transference of the elementary school buildings from their various proprietary bodies to the local education authority. Considering the long history of voluntary control in the town it was fortunate that in the event the Committee had to conduct negotiations with only two categories of school proprietors, the Railway Company and the Wesleyan Methodists. Even so, some of these negotiations proved to be so fraught with complexities that the whole procedure took five years to complete. Even then, two schools in the Borough, St. Mary's Roman Catholic School and the L.N.W.R. Company's Hightown school in Adelaide Street, remained semi-independent and "non-provided", St. Mary's eventually being transferred to the Local Authority in 1925. (22)

The reluctance of Nonconformists to accept the provisions of the Education Act of 1902 had been clearly expressed by the Education and Legal Committees of the National Free Church Council which had passed the following Resolution immediately it was seen inevitable that the Education Bill would become law:

"In view of the imminence of the Education Bill becoming an Act the executive of the Free Church Council records its deliberate judgment that the Bill does not provide the educational machinery which the country requires, while it increases and perpetuates the injustice from which Freechurchmen - parents as well as teachers - already suffer. It therefore emphatically declines to accept the Bill as an educational settlement and will continue to work to replace it on the Statute Books by an Act on national lines and really unifying education." (23)
In Cheshire the religious controversy was sparked off again in February 1901 by the first County Council elections since the passage of the 1902 Education Act. This gave the opportunity for more splanatic writing and talking as in the case of Admiral Maclure, speaking at Eddisbury on the subject of the Act:

"It is subversive of the King's authority. The King sits upon the throne of Great Britain and Ireland by virtue of being a Protestant, and this Act condemns Protestantism right and left and is not an Act in Accordance with the Principles of Protestantism." (24)

The Crewe Chronicle was also to point out that the elections would not be primarily of educational interest, but rather to those with an interest in denominationalism, stating:

"The first County Council elections since the passing of the Education Act fulfil a prediction. Opponents of the Act for abolishing School Boards and handing over the control - so far as there is control - of education to be County and Borough Councils foresaw that the proposed change on coming into operation would completely alter the character of these elections for these bodies by introducing into all or most of them the jarring note of sectarianism.......The issue placed before the electors of Cheshire and North Wales is not a particular candidate's general fitness for county administration, but his attitude on the national question of sectarian versus publicly controlled education." (25)

In spite of the predictions of many the composition of Cheshire County Council remained a fairly even balance between the two major parties. The Liberal Party did not begin to lose ground until after 1928, but it never won the majority of seats. The Conservatives secured an overall majority between 1895 and 1904, and again between 1907 and 1922, but the numbers concerned were so small that the Liberals could still provide an effective challenge to the Conservative caucus. (26)
This lack of overall majorities did not appear to lead to any attempt
to delay or obstruct the implementation of the 1902 Education Act within
the County. Many of the necessary improvements to schools were proving to
be too costly for the County to undertake for the immediate implementation
of the Act. The Chairman of the County Council, Colonel Dixon was to
state in his Triennial Report of February 1904:

"It is found that many of our Elementary Schools are much over-
crowded, that the accommodation is insufficient and in many cases
very unsuitable, and that alterations and additions of a very
extreme character are required." (27)

Thus the County could not devote all its attention and energy to the
building of new schools, but had to deal with those already in existence,
but this also included those that could not be considered to be of any
educational value whatsoever. There were those like the Endowed School
at Kingsley near Runcorn which had been reported by the County Inspector
to be "an establishment totally beyond redemption and possessing no merit
whatsoever." (28) Adjoining the school was a stable, still in use, and
the entrance to the school was reached by passing a manure heap. The
Inspector's Report noted that there were no blackboards, easels, maps or
other apparatus, and of the 17 children on the books, 6 were free under
the terms of the Trust, while the remainder paid fees of 2d. or 3d. per
week. The Master, Mr. Thomas Gerrard, was nearly 78 years of age, was
very deaf, and spoke with a pronounced Cheshire dialect. (29)

This must have been one of the most backward schools in the County,
but decrepit as they were, the Grammar schools at Audlem, Malters and Tarvin
were at least recognisable as schools, and the majority of the 287
Voluntary schools in the county in 1907 were recognised by the County Council
as being of some educational merit. (30)

In February 1907 Colonel Dixon, as Chairman of the County Council
had made his Triennial Address to the retiring Councillors, and reviewed the
progress made by the education service since 1904. In his address he
was to note that the full Committee had met on 36 occasions, while the
various Sub-Committees had logged up a total of 1,804 meetings. The
County was then (1907) responsible for 287 Non-Provided schools and Voluntary
schools, and 53 Provided or Council schools in the elementary sector for
which the salary bill had risen from £35,093 in 1904 to £142,123 in the
nine months then ending 31st March 1906. He was able to claim that in
spite of the increase in the wages bill, the cost to the rate-payer in the
County was gradually falling since the Government gave "Special Aid" grants
under Section 10 of the 1902 Education Act, this being 4s. Od. per scholar
plus 1½d. per scholar for every complete 2d. per scholar by which the
amount produced by a ld. rate fell short of 10s. Od. per scholar. (31)

In an effort to ease the worries of some members concerning the
financial implications of a proposed building plan for Secondary Education,
Colonel Dixon stressed that wherever possible Cheshire would use existing
buildings. However, new schools would be needed in Crewe, Hyde, Wallasey,
Macclesfield and Altrincham and the estimated cost would be between £40 and
£50 per head. (32)

Given the state of the schools, as revealed by the reports from the
County Inspectors and by the comments of Dr. Hodgson on the state of the
schools in Crewe in 1905 there never had been an adequate education
 provision in Cheshire in most areas of the county. Sufficient had been
done to keep out a School Board, but it had not been possible to keep out
the implications of the Education Act of 1902, and now the Education
Committees were having to do what might have been done many years ago
under a school board. (33) The lack of funding for the voluntary
schools and the reluctance to increase local rates for the funding of
the board schools now meant that the County were to face a growing cost
to provide a satisfactory standard of education in the County. The
County Council were aware of the pressure which was put upon them not to increase the education rate, several Resolutions being passed in this period on this matter. E.g. At a meeting of the Cheshire County Council held at Chester Castle on 18th May 1906 "an interesting discussion took place in regard to the increased cost of education in the County, and a resolution was passed urging the Education Committee to exercise greater economy." (34)

Similar discussions were to take place in Staffordshire where in 1906 the summary of the Education Committee's work for the year included the following comments:

"At several meetings the cost and administration of elementary education were discussed. Criticism was chiefly directed to the large rate of 1½d. in the pound which is required in the Administrative County for the purpose of elementary education, as compared with the much smaller costs in counties like Shropshire, Derbyshire and Worcestershire. There is undoubtedly a good deal of feeling throughout the County at the amount and increase of the education rate but it was made abundantly clear that the Education Committee have the Council at their back in the great work which the Committee are carrying on." (35)

The controversies over increased spending on education were again the subject of the Education Committee's work for the next year (1907) where the following comments were to be made:

"Owing to the outcry in the rural districts against the increase in the rates levied by the Council, especially with regard to the expenditure on education, greater interest was taken in the elections than at any time since the first election in 1889......The official reply to this criticism is that the increased expenditure has been forced upon the County Councils by Imperial legislation and notably by the Education Act which alone has added about 1/- in the pound..."
to the rates. In point of fact the county rate is very little higher than the figure at which it stood prior to the passing of the Education Act." (36)

However, the Education Committee of Stoke-on-Trent had found the financial working of the 1902 Education Act to be satisfactory as far as their Authority was concerned. At their Education Committee Meeting on 5th July 1904 their Chairman stated that when the Education Act had been introduced it was expected that it would prove satisfactory from a financial point of view, and he was pleased to say that "he was right in his estimate of the income and expenditure under that Act." In his outline of current expenditures he declared they had received:

"...£2,319, a sum which had not been received previously. The cost of the voluntary schools had been met by the allowance under Section 10, and there was a sum of £352 left. If the School Board had continued to exist it would of necessity have had to raise at least that sum of £352 and in that financial aspect at all events the Act of 1902 had been extremely satisfactory as far as the rate payers of Stoke were concerned." (37)

Stoke had been careful concerning the use of rate-payers' money, the local "Staffordshire Sentinel" commenting upon the new Church of England school in Stoke:

"....the building may be commended to the notice of the local Education Committees who wish to build a school at small cost....The school is to accommodate 250 boys and the building contract is £1,650. Probably the entire cost will come out at near £2,000. Even then the school will be cheap." (38)

This comment had followed their report of the 1904 "Summary of the Year's Work by the County Council which had declared: "The heavy expenditure entailed by the burdens thrown upon the County by the Education Act has been
the subject of frequent discussion. The position of the Education Committee is a difficult one, from the pressure put upon them by the Board of Education to increase the efficiency of backward schools, and the raising of salaries owing to the dearth of teachers. At the Annual Meeting of the Council in March a resolution was passed urging that a larger proportion of the cost of education should be borne by the Imperial Exchequer."

There were those who considered the County Council to have made little progress in the field of education since 1903. In reporting to the Staffordshire Church Schools' Association on 13th September 1909 Graham Balfour, then Director of Education, stated:

"Our main difficulty is the heavy cost of education, which falls with very unequal weight on different areas owing to the differences in rateable value and hardly on any County more heavily than Staffordshire. My Committee are engaged simultaneously on two incompatible tasks - to render their teachers and schools daily more efficient, and at the same time - in spite of the fresh duties and more exacting requirements laid on them by Parliament and the Board - to maintain expenditure on education at no more than its present figure, if it be not possible actually to reduce it.

Progress may be slow, but so far as it can be tested, not by vague impressions, but by figures or any definite record, it has during the last seven years been very real and considerable in Staffordshire, as in many other parts of the Kingdom."

The County had been responsible in 1903 for taking over the whole or in part of the work of 29 School Boards. The 1902 Education Act had left Staffordshire with 6 County Boroughs entirely autonomous for education, and within the administrative County area there were 5 non-County Boroughs of which 2 were autonomous for elementary education. The Borough of Stafford was to surrender its powers under Part III of the Education Act to the County. In addition there were 26 Urban Districts of which 6 were autonomous for Part III administration, and also 18 Rural Districts.
Within the county area there had been some 370 elementary schools in 1903 of which 302 were voluntary and 68 immediately became the new Council schools. By 1912 of the 374 elementary schools in the area some 258 still belonged to the voluntary system, and 116 were classified as Council schools.  

The loss of the voluntary schools with the possibility of enforced closure was a haunting fear for the voluntaryists, for this would almost certainly give rise to the building of new Council Schools. This was particularly so in towns like Macclesfield in Cheshire where the town had supported 9 National Schools and 2 Church Schools; 1 British School, 2 Wesleyan Schools and 1 Roman Catholic School in 1903. There was no Board School. In April 1903 the Macclesfield Borough Council Education Committee resolved "that steps be at once taken to obtain a report by a competent Architect and Surveyor upon the present state of repair of the interior of all the elementary schools, including school furniture."  

H.M.I. Ward has already reported on the state of Macclesfield schools in 1903, his reports indicating that the Church did not make him welcome, nor did it take his recommendations to heart. He complained at one point that Christ Church managers had "tried to throw dust" in his eyes, and further stated that the Rev. William Laycock, the Hurdsfield vicar, "delighted to be caustic at the expense of the Board or its officers." Both schools had seriously defective buildings.

As late as 1909 the Rev. Coade as new vicar of Macclesfield had arrived to find his school off the list of recognised schools because the managers could not find money for essential repairs. He immediately began a campaign to save it and two others in his parish. He and his supporters underwrote the £2,500 needed for alterations and repairs and £2,009 was raised in 18 months, which with grants for £200 for each school cleared all debts.  

The Rev. A.C. Evans had to press his own case for additional grants
from the National Society in 1910, writing of his fear of the imminent
closing of half the denominational schools in the town and urged speed so
that his own school of St. George's should be made acceptable to the Board
ready to receive an increased number of pupils before any Council School
should open and (he inferred) got hold of them. (47)

This plea had been made more urgent for in May 1908 the Local Education
Authority had issued notices for the building of two new schools to
accommodate 800 pupils each. (48) The Board had reminded the L.E.A. of
"the extremely unsatisfactory nature of public education in Macclesfield
in which 6 out of 14 schools were under condemnation." (49)

However, the issuing of the notices for the building of the two Council
Schools only resulted in further delaying tactics by the local Education
Committee. During the Board's attempts to get the L.E.A. to build these
schools, a colleague of H.N.I. Ward recorded that he had it from a private
source "that the Church of England party bossed the town council and the
Local Education Authority" and that no decision would be made until the
Church group was certain that it could not extend its own schools. (50)
Thus although the notices for building were issued in May 1908, it was two
years later before plans were produced for the first school and approved by
the Board, and Macclesfield had to wait until January 1912 before Byron
Street Council school was to open, followed by the second school - Athey
Street Council school - in 1913. (51)

In spite of the problems at a local level concerned in the main with
the growing cost of education which included the subsidisation of the
voluntary schools through rate aid, and the meeting of the requirements of
the Board of Education, the Education Act of 1902 had been seen by the
denominationalists as being vital to the survival of their schools.
Within the Diocese of Chester the Archdeacons and Rural Deans meeting of
April 1904 recorded:

"Some conversation took place on the working of the Act specially so
far as it seemed to interfere with the duties of managers. The general impression was favourable and it was believed that with a little patience things would work out smoothly. In the end the following Resolution was passed, and ordered to be sent to the Prime Minister and the Marquess of Londonderry:

That the Archdeacons and Rural Deans of the Diocese of Chester, assembled under the presidency of the Lord Bishop, desire to express to His Majesty's Government their conviction that the large amount of success which has already attended the working of the Education Act, where it has been fairly tried, justifies the belief that when it has been firmly and loyally administered throughout the country, it will prove the true basis of a sound system of national education.** (52)

The Bishop of Chester, Dr. Jayne, was then serving as a member of the Local Education Authority, and had been so from the time of its constitution.

On behalf of the Roman Catholics Cardinal Vaughan had welcomed the Act of 1902 "which recognised the principle that both sorts of school should have an equal claim for maintenance costs," and regarded it as the sign that "his last work was done."

"The Act," as he reported to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, was "favourable to Christianity, secured only because the Conservative administration had won such a large electoral majority on the South African War policy. The general effect of the new law is to make Christian and Catholic Education a part of the law and Constitution of England. In principle we have made a large and important advance." (53)

The 1902 Education Act had also found favour with the Jewish Religious Education Board for its schools were able to qualify for rate aid on a par with those of the Established Church, the Roman Catholics, and other denominations. Thus the Act had preserved the Jewish parochial schools although their managers still had to satisfy the inspectors by bringing them up to the standard set by the Board. However, most Jewish children had
to attend Board Schools in spite of all the efforts to expand their own voluntary system. By the turn of the century the Religious Education Board had never managed to enrol more than 1/3rd of its potential student population, and neither had it the resources to improve this situation. By 1904 the Board had already out-run its resources having 9,893 pupils in its classes and 46 men and women being trained by their teachers' training committee. The Board was forced to turn down all requests for more classes and additional rooms where institutions were already in place, let alone to extend its work in other districts. (54) The Act of 1902 had "finally brought home to the community the extent of its needs and responsibilities" (55) but it was to be impossible to provide Jewish children with a Jewish education. The Jewish Year Book of 1906 reported over 30,000 Jewish pupils in London of whom 8,000 attended Jewish schools, leaving some 22,000 to attend London County Council schools, 15 of which were in the Borough of Stepney. Three schools in the East End had 1100 Jewish pupils but lacked any provision for their Religious Education. (56) The Board could never catch up with Jewish numbers. In addition the dispersal of Jewish settlements to new areas, each of which required its own facilities meant that available resources were insufficient. The Education Act of 1902 had eased the burden on existing schools, but had not meant an increase in existing provision, and the majority of Jewish pupils were therefore to be educated within the Council school system. (57)

The Board of Education in its own Report for 1903-4 were to comment upon the progress of the application of the Act of 1902. They were to claim that "The rapid progress made throughout the country, during the previous year, in bringing into operation the Act of 1902 has been continued and is now practically complete." (58)

The Board were able to show that the Act of 1902 was successful as an administrative measure in that it had given the control of local education to a local body in the local education committees, but those who opposed this measure claimed that the new education authorities could contain a
majority of members who were initially elected by the Council, but when it appeared desirable, then under the terms of the Act there may be other members in an unspecified proportion who were not members of the Council, but who could be nominated by other bodies as being persons of experience in education or persons with a knowledge of the schools in the district. Thus in theory the Education Committee need not contain a single member of the Council of which it was a committee. (59)

It was also seen that under the Act the provision of new schools was in the final analysis for the Board to determine, but the objectors noted that a school actually in existence was not to be considered unnecessary in which the number of scholars in average attendance, as computed by the Board of Education, was not less than 30.

The Liberal Pamphlet No. 1891 claimed that this was "a wide departure from the existing law under which a deficiency in school accommodation has to be proved before a new school can be built and recognised. The almost certain result will be to (1) multiply small schools, a policy educationally unsound, and (2) that every new school will be denominational."

S. Lowry Porter, writing in 1907 in his article "The Education Bill of 1906" was to state:

"The Act of 1902 was necessitated by the inability of the voluntary schools to cope with the altered conditions of the increase in population and the stricter insistence upon the suitability of the structuring of the greater expanse of education and also the wider ground over which it spread. But the Act was, however, something more than a measure for the assistance of voluntary schools. It was the first attempt made to co-ordinate English elementary education." (60)

S. Lowry Porter contended that the denominational principle was partially followed in the Act of 1902 in that those denominational
bodies which had been instrumental in erecting schools for the teaching of their own dogma should be permitted to continue to teach it, and this was based on that statement that undenominationalism was the only type of teaching given in the Council schools, and therefore the denominational schools should have the opportunity of giving their own particular brand of teaching in their own schools without exception.

Cardinal Vaughan had already written to J.E. Redmond in the Roman Catholic paper The Tablet on 11th October 1902 stating: "We see the triumph of the Government (of 1902) over the Nonconformists opposition as strong a guarantee as we can ever expect to get for liberty to educate Catholic children in the Catholic faith in our elementary schools." (61)

Thus in many ways the Act of 1902 may be seen as an Act which would be thought of as being reactionary in its terms. It had called a halt to the actions of the school boards and had therefore to assess and modify the developing system of secondary education. This development was to take a rigid line or division between elementary and secondary education which in fact had been less noticeable with the development of the higher board schools. The Act had perpetuated the dual system, and had found it impossible to arrive at a solution which would have been acceptable to all religious parties. The further claims of the Churches to continue with a stake in the provision of education in a changing social and educational context had caused the Government serious difficulties in framing the legislation. This underlying difficulty was to continue through the Hadow re-organisation process after 1928 and continued into the drafting of the 1944 Education Act, where the church interest was still strong enough to negotiate the introduction of compulsory religious worship and instruction into all State maintained schools.

Although the Act had established a State system of secondary education which was to expand rapidly in the years following the Act, much
of the system was a fee paying system with some provision for scholarship awards to enable elementary school children to transfer to secondary grammar schools. Ultimately the rejection of the 19th Century concept of secondary education only for pupils of the middle and upper classes was to be upheld, this being given an added impetus by the free place system of 1907 which had pointed the way for further development along these lines.

The abolition of the larger and more progressive school boards which had championed the cause of educational advance meant also the abolition of the higher grade schools with their widening opportunity for secondary type education, these being absorbed into the fee paying system of State grammar schools or were to revert to the strictly elementary role. With these boards had been those schools which had given an impetus to technical and scientific education. This had been particularly so in some higher grade schools and evening continuation schools, but this was to be lost in the subsequent pre-occupation with the development of State education along the more traditional secondary grammar school lines.

Thus the Act had its opponents on all political sides, and the Liberals pledged themselves to reform the Act at the earliest opportunity. The Act had "brought all the fighting Nonconformists into the field and made of them active, not passive, opponents." (62) During its passage through Parliament it had nearly brought down the Government, and was to be one of the factors contributing to their election disaster of 1906. The Act had had the support of many moderate Anglicans and also of the Roman Catholics, since it saved them from the acute financial embarrassment which was threatening their schools. By the turn of the century the "eternal lack of pence in the voluntary schools was acute and something less peddling than constantly recurring special aid grants was then required." (63) However, the Act had been opposed by the Nonconformists who opposed all the financial aid given to the voluntary schools and
objected to such measures as they had looked forward to the bankruptcy of the voluntary schools and now they saw them being saved through the system of rate aid. It was claimed that the Act was "saturated through and through with the very spirit of sectarianism," (64) Harcourt having declared during the Commons debate, "It is not an Education Bill, it is a Convocation Bill. It is in that nest the egg was laid and it has been brought here for us to hatch it." (65)

The slogan of the "Church on the Rates" continued to sweep through the country alongside the Passive Resistance Movement which had in turn led to the Education (Local Authorities Default) Act of 1904. The Nonconformists were also claiming that Balfour had violated the settlement of 1870 which had taken schools using rate support away from the full control of the Church, as his Act only gave two seats out of six to the Local Authority on the managers of a denominational school. The Nonconformists considered it of little importance that few non-provided schools were up-to-date in 1902, and that a solution had to be found for the many voluntary schools whose financial position was such that they could not replace worn out or obsolete buildings without further Government assistance. It was (and was to remain) an impossibility on capital costs alone even if desired, to replace voluntary schools by Local Authority schools. The voluntary schools had been incorporated into the new system without them losing their separate identities. Although the burden of their upkeep fell upon the rates, the managers retained the right to select staff subject to the consent of the local authority, but this consent could only be withheld on educational grounds. Thus the Nonconformist teachers, supported by the National Union of Teachers, were to claim that this system of managerial control in the non-provided schools meant that no headteachers were likely to be appointed who were Nonconformists, (66) and neither were Nonconformist staff likely to be appointed if members of the appropriate denomination were to apply for
Thus although all teachers except the headteacher were to be appointed without further reference to their membership of the religious body to which ostensibly they belonged, this did not appear to avoid the issue. The National Union of Teachers therefore wished to see the abolition of all denominational tests for teachers, and for the abolition of all dogmatic teaching, which would have ultimately removed the Anglican and Roman Catholic influence from the publicly supported elementary schools. At first there had been no "necessary antagonism between the ideals of the N.U.T. and the religious claims of the church, and the antagonism that did arise was mainly due to the almost complete link-up between the Established Church, the Conservatives and the Public Schools. The grievances raised by the Nonconformists of having to submit to religious tests was not new and was not introduced by the Act of 1902. Religious tests had been operated in those schools of the National Society from the earliest part of the 19th Century.

Likewise the Nonconformist grievances over the predominance of denominational schools in single school areas, and in particular those in rural areas, was not an outcome of the Education Act of 1902. It was claimed by the Nonconformists that between 8,000 and 9,500 out of some 14,000 denominational schools were the only schools available to any child in certain districts, thereby forcing some 700,000 children and some 300,000 Nonconformist children and a few agnostics to attend such schools. Although no pupils could be compelled to attend religious worship or religious instruction, they had the choice of "making themselves conspicuous by withdrawal from religious instruction or to run the risk of petty proselytisation."
had thus been wholly violated by the Act of 1902, as full local control
was not possible where only two of the six managers were appointed by
the Local Authority. The Nonconformists thought they had a clear mandate
to restore these principles which they believed had been violated by the
Act of 1902.

The defence of the 1902 Education Bill as it had passed through
Parliament had been set out fully in the "Primrose League Gazette" of
1st October 1902, claiming that "the Church and Nonconformist schools
will benefit by the education rate, but only for secular education" and "as for religious teaching, all that the Bill does is to leave
churchmen and Nonconformists the right they have always had of giving
their own religious instruction in the schools they have built and main-
tained." (71)

As all schools under the 1902 Act were to have a conscience clause
without prejudice to the position of the pupil in the school, and also
extended, in effect to all assistant teachers and pupil teachers in non-
provided schools, religion should have been an individual matter in which
the State was not concerned, this being the intention of Balfour who dis-
liked any form of religious controversy. (72)

Alongside the Nonconformist movement to overcome their grievances,
the T.U.C. continued to press for State-supported schools which should
be "controlled and administered by the directly elected representatives
of the people." (74) The Annual Conference of the Labour Representation
Committee of February 1906 was to support the T.U.C. policy, thus
indicating that "the national working class organisation has now
expressed itself clearly in favour of secular education," and agreed at
the same time that the choice lay between teaching all religions in
schools, or none at all, thus to teach none was "the only practical
solution." (75) The Labour Party Members in the House of Commons
were eventually to be called upon to fight for this principle.

Although the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics had supported the main arguments of the Act, for many High Churchmen this Act had not gone far enough to strengthen the hold of the denominations on their schools. Dean Gregory, Chairman of the National Society and former Chairman of the Convocation Education Committee, and described by Archbishop Temple as the foremost veteran of the fight for maintaining definite religious teaching, had criticised the former school boards' religious teaching as having lowered the tone of morality in the country. He had been one of the die-hards who demanded that voluntary schools should be on the same footing as the provided schools, with equal grants and rate-aid for all purposes, but without terms or conditions of any kind. (76)

Bishop Knox, then suffragan Bishop of Coventry, during the Birmingham School Board contest of 1900 had pressed for Bible teaching in all provided schools even going so far as to state he "confessed that the cry of the impossibility of undenominational teaching amazed him." (77) This was to strengthen his case for some form of religion in all schools. Bishop Knox had been a supporter of the 1902 Act, approving those measures which strengthened the denominational interest and he was to be the most outspoken of the Anglican Bishops against the Liberal Government's policy on education. (78)

The Archbishop of Canterbury, when Bishop of Rochester (1891-95) had also seen the value of undenominational religious teaching in the Board Schools, declaring: "It is trifling with a grave subject to ignore that the Board's Bible teaching lays the foundation upon which the ampler teaching of the Christian Faith could be securely built." (79) But the Archbishop did not see this as replacing denominational teaching and neither was this to mean that Davidson, a Soot of Broad Church views,
would, as Archbishop, relinquish easily any gains made by the Church under the Act of 1902. As Dean of Windsor from 1883 to 1891 he had got to know most of the leading politicians of the time. He had become well acquainted with Balfour who had recommended him as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1903, being Bishop of Winchester at that time. (80)

Thus the Education Act of 1902 had still left three main bodies of opinion concerning the place of religion and denominationalism in the schools. There were those who were in favour of separate secular and separate religious instruction, drawn from all shades of belief, but excluding the Roman Catholics; there were those who favoured an education which embodied Bible teaching and Christian ideals but which excluded any form of dogma - drawn from the Nonconformists and some Anglicans; and lastly there were those who affirmed that religion and education were inseparable, and that dogmatic teaching was a part of their work - this included the Jews, the Roman Catholics and some Anglicans.

The collapse of the Balfour Government in 1905 gave opportunity for these groups to present their views on the election platform in early 1906. It was to be seen to what extent the leaders of the political parties were to be influenced in their election campaigns by the education question and to what extent the general population would expect or demand educational reform. As not all adults were entitled to vote, then the question of a Liberal "landslide" victory needs to be considered in the light of general public opinion on the education question. Any victory did not necessarily mean that the overwhelming majority of the non-voting adult population were in favour of the proposed Liberal policies. A victory at the polls in 1906 by the Liberal Party might indicate an opportunity for some form of educational legislation, but it did not necessarily indicate the scale of this support.
CHAPTER II

The Working of the 1902 Act

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CHAPTER III

THE ELECTIONS OF 1906
The passing of the Education Act of 1902 had paved the way for a more comprehensive system of elementary and secondary education, but Balfour's problems when he assumed the Premiership had been many.

A successful sixth session would not be possible under such a strain within the party. It was hoped that the Liberals would have difficulty in forming a Government, as the Conservatives were well aware of the differences in policy on the Irish question between Lord Rosebery and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

Although Asquith, Grey and Haldane had not supported Lord Rosebery since September, it was still not certain whether they would serve together under Campbell-Bannerman. (1) Campbell-Bannerman had been in favour of a gradual approach to Home Rule for Ireland and in this he had the support of Asquith, Grey and Haldane, thus it became easier for the Liberals to form a Government than Balfour had contemplated. The quick dissolution of Parliament gave the Conservatives little time for election organisation, while the Liberals had made some preparations, organised by Herbert Gladstone. In the Conservative ranks it was held that Midleton had lost interest in his work after the death of Lord Salisbury in 1903, and his successors Captain Webb and Colonel Haig were failures. Midleton had run the Central Office as a superb machine, and this was to decline quickly and catastrophically although this was still under the personal and direct control of Balfour. The dual control and organisation of the Conservatives linked with the Liberal Unionists added to their own confusion. (2)

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Commons, was called upon on 5th December 1905 to form a Government, pending an election which was to run from 12th January to
8th February before the final results were known. Parliament was to be dissolved on 8th January 1906.

Balfour had offered his resignation as Prime Minister in early December - not on the spur of the moment, but at what he had hoped would be to the tactical advantage of the Unionist Party. In October Archbishop Davidson had written in his notes during his stay at Whittingeham:

"He wants to have opportunity of resigning very soon after Parliament meets - preferably on defeat of some minor (not major) point in the debate on Address. Thus he would hope to be out of office by the end of February. Absolutely clear course for resignation rather than dissolution." (3)

Davidson was also to comment on the outcome of an immediate election, writing: "No real doubt about Liberal victory at the polls. How great a victory, nobody can guess....he thinks it good for country that the Liberals should now come into office and have the sobering and steadying influence of responsibility and be compelled to 'possess their souls' and find out what their real position towards public questions actually is." (4)

Thus Balfour had resigned because the Unionist Party was "split from top to bottom" but he had hoped that by not asking for a general election he would snatch the advantage from the Liberals. According to Philip Magnus he "plumed himself upon his success in enticing the Liberals into accepting office before Parliament was dissolved, and he hoped in that way to focus the nation's attention upon deep rifts which existed within the Liberal Party." (5)

Before polling took place there was much speculation about the results. Constituencies did not all vote on the same day, and therefore newspapers were able to reprint articles from other regions and from other newspapers or sources with a national reputation as a matter of
course. Thus readers were able to see how others viewed the local scene from a distance, and therefore voters who polled late in the full campaign had the chance of seeing what the general trend was becoming, and many would then vote accordingly.

The political parties had grown up in the constituencies after 1832 because candidates and M.P.'s had needed to have ready for instant use some kind of organisation capable of shepherding the electors to the polls. Local leaders of these parties arranged to replace one candidate with another as necessary, and encouraged a sense of solidarity among all party supporters by promoting entertainments and social clubs. The agents, who were formerly the registration agents in the mid-19th Century were appointed to carry out much of the routine work and business of the local party, including ensuring that known party supporters were properly registered as voters. Before the Secret Ballot Act of 1872 agents would predict the results of polls with great accuracy. Their work remained important until 1918 even though they could not be certain about the loyalty of voters using a secret ballot.

Elections made considerable inroads into party funds, one of the main costs being incurred when compiling the register of voters. The system of registering is detailed in A.L. Lowell's "The Government of England" of 1908 where he states: "It is not enough that a man possesses the requisite qualifications for the franchise. His name must also be upon the register of voters for the constituency, and the process of compiling the register is cumbrous and expensive. This is due in part to the complicated nature of the various franchises which may involve intricate questions of law and of fact, and partly to the practice of leaving the duty of proving claims and objections mainly in the hands of private individuals. The lists are made up in the first instance by the overseers of the poor in each parish; but any person whose name is
on the lists may file an objection to any other name which he thinks ought not to have been included. These claims and objections are heard in September by the revising barrister. It is his duty to revise the register. In doing this he is not limited to names against which objections have been filed. In practice, however, the cases are prepared beforehand and argued before him, by the local agents of the two political parties, whose object is to get the names of their partisans on to the register, to keep off those of their opponents. The process is repeated every year, and the work and cost involved considerable, the money being provided by the candidate for Parliament, or by means of subscriptions to the Party funds. This is one of the things that makes elections expensive; and it helps to explain the desire of each party in a constituency to have a candidate at all times, even when an election is not pending."

In many areas groups of party supporters had formed leagues or clubs to fight their cause. The League of Young Liberals which had been formed in April 1905 within the Parliamentary Borough of Newcastle was typical of many of this period. It was to constitute a branch of the League of Young Liberals then being formed throughout the country whose headquarters were in the New Reform Club, London. The main objects of the League, as stated on a leaflet distributed among the audience at their initial meeting on 21st April 1905 were:- (a) To stimulate the study of questions of national importance - historical, social and industrial; (b) to promote progressive principles among young men and young women. These objects, it was added, were to be promoted by debates, lectures, circulation of books, and such other means as from time to time might be deemed advisable by the Council of the League of Young Liberals, or by the Branch Committee.

How far they were to succeed may be indicated by the above League
for the Parliamentary Division of Newcastle programme which was reported
in the 'Newcastle Guardian' on 7th October 1905, some six months after
their initial meeting. Their programme was to "consist of ten meetings
in all, to be held every three weeks, when the following subjects will
be taken:- Conscription, Old Age Pensions, Chinese Labour, State
Feeding of School Children, Nationalisation of Railways and Waterways,
Education, Temperance Reform, Mining Royalties, Retaliation, and Land
Reform. Mr. Josiah Wedgwood, President of the League, opens the list
at Newcastle next week on Conscription." (8)

The report was to note that "The League of Young Liberals is making
marked progress; there are already upwards of 100 members, and as yet
meetings have not been held to speak on the League's work, and aims etc.
in all parts of the constituency. This will shortly take place, when a
considerable addition to the membership is anticipated. Apart from the
above ordinary programme, special speakers will be brought down into the
constituency from different parts of the country." (9)

In the same district the Conservatives, through their own North
Staffordshire Union of Conservative Clubs were to promote their own style
of canvassing. They had held their third annual ball in the Municipal
Hall in early January 1906 when "during the evening Sir Alfred Seale
Haslam, M.P. made his appearance and stayed for a short time, his presence
being greeted with rounds of applause." (10)

Both Josiah Wedgwood and Sir Alfred Haslam were to contest the same
seat in the forthcoming 1906 election, the result was to be in favour of
Wedgwood polling some 5,155 votes and Haslam 2,948 votes. Mr. Wedgwood
was to recall in his 'Memoirs of a Fighting Life' that "Of the election
itself I remember nothing save that I had a car, and Sir Alfred Seale
Haslam still used a carriage and pair. Mr. George Wade, my agent,
managed everything (including the Irish vote) for £900." (11)
This was the first election when candidates were able to use motor cars, not only for transporting themselves more quickly from meeting to meeting, but also to take voters to the poll.

The constituencies decided upon their own date for polling, and the whole election for a new Parliament took nearly three weeks to determine. Early results were quickly reported in the press and their unexpected nature, when appropriate, was heavily emphasised.

It may remain obscure how far people decided their political opinions from the press, how far through the press there was an informed dialogue between politicians and public, and how far the press was able to influence governments. The major daily newspapers were split along well-defined political lines. Thus supporting the Conservatives was 'The Times' together with 'The Daily Mail' and 'The Standard' whilst the opposing camp included 'The Daily News' together with 'The Daily Chronicle' and the 'Manchester Guardian'. Some papers with a considerable influence such as 'The Speaker' and its successor 'The Nation' had only a limited circulation of some 4,000 which was only to rise to some 5,000 under Massingham. The 'Westminster Gazette' had a circulation figure of only 27,000 even though it was highly regarded. Similarly the 'Daily News' had only a readership of some 30,000 in the early years of the century partly owing to its views on the Boer War, though this was to rise to 400,000 after it had reduced its price to 1d. and had also launched a Northern Edition printed in Manchester.

The Liberal Party had a group of wealthy men who supported their press. There were men like George Cadbury who financed the 'Daily News' and Sir George Newnes of the 'Westminster Gazette' whilst the 'Speaker' and its successor 'The Nation' had the support of the Joseph Rowntree Social Service Trust. C.A. Pearson, the Chairman of the Tariff Reform League had bought 'The Standard' at this time. Even so, the Liberal
press was sensitive to the serious role which it undertook to forward its own policies, and therefore, as a press which could command the talents of well-known writers, was also thought to be able to add additional weight to its political columns and thereby influence the general public opinion.

Under the leadership and editorship of Gariner, the 'Daily News' had included among its editorial staff such well-known personalities as H.W. Massingham, G.K. Chesterton, J.C. Hammant, R.C.K. Ensor, H.N. Brailsford, H.W. Nevinson and C.F.G. Masterman. Masterman was an active journalist contributing articles to a number of periodicals, which in the main offered to a wider audience the concerns and solutions of his own books. This aspect of his work was to cease when he accepted office in 1908. He was to write for the 'Independent Review' which also had used Lowes, Dickinson, Hirst and G.W. Trevelyan among its editorial council. Thus the relationship between editors and politicians was a wary and delicate matter. Spender had always seemed to assume that an editor was a positive participant in the political process. Likewise C.P. Scott had clearly believed that the 'Manchester Guardian' would carry weight in the contentious issues within the Liberal Party leadership crisis in 1899 and that its editorial support be given to those likely to support his favoured line. Scott was to write to Hobhouse on 20th June 1899 about the question of party leadership that: "My own view is that primarily we hold by Bannerman as long as we can and try to keep him and the party straight but that Morley be kept well to the front as the possible leader in case of absolute necessity and above all as the reserve man against Rosebery." (12)

The influence of the 'Manchester Guardian' was also to be acknowledged by Lloyd George when he enlisted Scott's help in February 1911 against McKenna over the Navy Estimates so he would then have the support of that newspaper, stating "...that when we come to strike we should
have the support of a paper like the Manchester Guardian which appeals so much to the intellectuals of our Party....No paper carries such weight with this class as yours." (13)

Local newspapers which had a very limited circulation reprinted articles from newspapers with a national reputation as a matter of course. In this way the readership of the national papers reached a far wider number of people than their circulation figures would indicate. At a local level most constituencies had pressure groups which sought to win support from a Parliamentary candidate for particular objectives, and if the local press could also give support then this would add an extra dimension to their campaign. In turn, these groups could mobilise votes and act as allies of a political party. The Independent Order of Good Templars was one such group of temperance organisations seeking to regulate and reduce the sale of alcohol. These groups were opposed by the Licensed Victuallers' Association, which was the trade association of publicans and off-license shopkeepers. The Trades and Labour Councils were a means of linking together the branches of various trade union activities in a particular area. Thus at the meeting of the members of the North Staffordshire Trades and Labour Council held in the town hall in Hanley, the group was able to support the nominations of the candidates for the expected election of 1906, the candidates representing the Liberal Party and the Liberal-Labour pact. The Council "had agreed that they were fit and proper persons to represent them in the House of Commons. As they were likely to have an election sprung upon them in a few days it was time that the members of the Council put their shoulders to the wheel, and their promises into action.....it was moved that the Council pledges itself to do all that it could to secure the return of Messrs. Edwards and Ward (the candidates) by canvassing and holding meetings...." (14)

The Labour Representation Committee which had been set up in 1900
to secure an increased number of Labour representatives in Parliament had received an influx in membership with the enrolment of unions to their membership following the Taff Vale decisions. Herbert Gladstone, the Chief Whip for the Liberals, was alarmed at the thought of a flood of L.R.C. candidates who might draw off working class votes which otherwise might go to the Liberals. He was to discuss this question with Ramsay MacDonald, then Secretary of the L.R.C. and they were to reach an agreement whereby Liberal and Labour candidates would not oppose each other in the majority of constituencies, which otherwise would be to the advantage of the Conservative candidate. As the manual workers were not a dominant section of the electorate, the L.R.C. could not expect to win many seats, but their votes would be essential to the Liberal candidates in marginal constituencies.

In many areas the Free Church Councils saw the forthcoming elections as an opportunity to encourage the resistance to the 1902 Education Act by more active participation in the Passive Resistance Movement. In the previous year (1904) the General Assembly of the National Free Church Council had declared: "The members of the Assembly feel the injustice of the Education Act of 1902 and they heartily sympathise with those brethren who under restraint of conscience, have been compelled to adopt the attitude of passive resistance and have submitted even joyfully to the spoiling of their goods and to imprisonment." (15)

Actions such as those taken by the Rev. Robert Curzon, a Primitive Methodist minister of Newcastle, were highlighted in the local press and brought to the attention of the public at large the question of religious education within the framework of the 1902 Education Act. As such this was to become an election issue at a local level. The Rev. Robert Curzon had been gaol for one month in Stafford Gaol for "refusing to pay for the teaching in school hours of doctrines which were opposed to
his most conscientious convictions." (16) He was released on 8th December 1905 with full press coverage of the occasion, the local newspaper reporting: "Demonstrations took place on the day of his release by sympathisers with the passive resistance movement. One took place in Hanley at a crowded Victoria Hall....A resolution of cordial approval of the courageous stand taken by the Rev. R. Curzon on behalf of civil and religious liberty was carried. The following resolution was also carried on the motion of the Rev. C. Silvester Horne, seconded by the Rev. Curzon:

"That this meeting expresses the unanimous and emphatic condemnation of the Education Acts of 1902-3 as violating the established principles of the Constitution, as involving grave wrong to many consciences, and indescribable suffering to hosts of our most worthy fellow citizens, and that it demands a national system of education, entirely free from both theological and ecclesiastical tests and from sectarian teaching, that it expresses its deepest sympathy with the men and women who, on conscientious grounds, have deemed it their duty to refuse voluntarily to pay the denominational portion of the education rate, and, in view of the near election, that it pledges itself to return to power, with an overwhelming majority the only party to whom it can look at present for the removal of injustice and oppression." (17)

The great majority of electors did not belong to pressure groups. To them the elections provided entertainment and a different form of street drama from that normally to be found. Candidates attracted large audiences for meetings in schoolrooms, halls and in the open air. Newspapers were to report these events and the speeches delivered with a wealth of detail.

After an election was called, all the candidates were able to publish their own 'Address to the Electors' in their constituencies. These indicate the issues which the parties wanted candidates to debate, and
also contained those matters which the electorate thought important. The Conservative and Unionist candidates were to defend the record of the Balfour administration in both foreign and domestic affairs. They also proposed some form of tariff control and had to oppose any pressures put upon them for Home Rule for Ireland. The Liberal and Liberal-Labour candidates were to promote a far wider range of issues combing their traditional "peace, retrenchment and Reform" role with attacks on Balfour's legislation, his approval of the employment of Chinese labour in South Africa, and his proposed retaliation policy on tariffs.

Through the eyes of the Liberal leader writers in the major national newspapers, the election was to be about Free Trade, about Chinese Labour, about sectionalist legislation and about Unionist extravagance and mis-management. The Education Question and the matter of Plural Voting and the Licensing Bills were seen by the Liberal press as important measures and issues, but the more time they occupied, then it was thought the greater frustration would be caused lest the reforming zeal of the expected Liberal majority would be engulfed by the attempted resolution of older conflicts. Already in January 1905 Winston Churchill in his North West constituency had spoken of the growing feeling that urgent social questions had been neglected and that political enfranchisement had as yet in no way ameliorated the condition of many working people.

"It was for the Liberal Party to confront these problems and to show itself fertile of practical solutions if it is long to preserve the confidence of the people." (18) Thus there was a growing awareness for the need for reform of social and economic structures in a new Liberal Government. At the very best the role of the State had become acceptable, and, implicitly the Liberal emphasis on liberation had assumed a form appropriate to the realities of everyday experience in a largely industrial society. As the prospect of a Liberal Government drew nearer, Home Rule - the "ark of the Covenant to some, an electoral
albatross to others" began to rear its head. (19) Lord Crewe had
realised that Home Rule and the issues involved would not immediately
help their political standing. Writing to Campbell-Bannerman on 19th
November 1905 he stated: "It is supremely important to get the largest
possible majority for Free Trade. It is not our fault that this
question elbows out all others. To introduce Home Rule must complicate
the issue in the electors' minds, make the meaning of victory uncertain,
and actually lose the votes of many electors." (20)

Asquith also believed that Campbell-Bannerman should make it clear
that a Home Rule Bill would not form any part of a Liberal Government's
programme, believing that "any commitment to Home Rule would do incalcul-
able and fatal mischief." (21)

Before the General Election Campbell-Bannerman had also been inform-
ed that education was an issue of concern to many of their supporters,
many claiming that "the vote which will make or mar our majority is
composed of Unionist Free Traders and educationalists." (22)

Campbell-Bannerman's key speech at the Albert Hall on 21st December
1905 centred round the need to develop the country's estates, and to
turn the land into a treasure house for the nation instead of a pleasure
ground for the rich. His speech generated something of a radical tone
but the thrust was towards the fiscal issue. His election address, like
those of his front bench colleagues, returned to the iniquities of the
Unionist Government, this being "a well nigh unbroken expanse of mis-
management of legislation conducted for the benefit of the privileged
classes and powerful interests." (23)

He had laid the main stress of his speech on free trade, followed
by a careful reference to Ireland, the Chinese slavery question, Trade
Union law and unemployment, together with reference to the reform of the
poor law and the rating system - a speech upon which the leading article
of the 'Times' was to comment that the Government policy was "robbery of everyone who has anything to be robbed of." (24)

He had also laid down his Government's proposed programme where he had declared that the broad issue at stake was the fight against "powers privileges, injustices and monopolies which are unalterably opposed to the triumph of the democratic system." (25)

Again, at Stirling, Campbell-Bannerman's election address was concerned with the South African question and with free trade, but also condemned the Conservatives for refusing to deal with social problems, claiming,"It will be our duty....to secure those social and economic reforms which have been too long delayed." (26)

Other election addresses by Liberal candidates followed his lead, and thus all refer in part to the fiscal issue, the Licensing Act, to Chinese Labour, to the Taff Vale judgment and to electoral reform. Above all, land reform ran through the majority of Liberal election addresses throughout Great Britain, ranging from the advocacy of tenant right and the importance of small holdings to land nationalisation. Many candidates clearly identified land reform as central to the solution of urban problems like housing and unemployment. The election addresses suggest a party of great divergence.

The question of tariff reform was to become an issue over the whole election period. The Liberal Party policy was to press for a system of "standard" free trade, whilst the Unionists were split by the Chamberlainists pressing for "Imperial" preferences. This had evoked the cry of "dearer food" coupled with the display of the large Liberal loaf and the same but smaller Conservative loaf on election platforms at Liberal rallies. (27) For the leading Liberal members Tariff reform could be represented as a "desperate or retrogressive policy which made the rich richer and the poor poorer and which accumulated all that was unjust
and made for privilege and monopoly and for corruption, financial and political." (28) Campbell-Bannerman had condemned Tariff Reform as "a system whereby the workman does not get at property, property gets at the workman, and property gets at the consumer also.....a system by which the aggressive power of wealth is fortified by Parliament." (29)

Asquith, campaigning in East Fife, called for measures dealing with social and domestic reform, but made no reference to education, nor to the election pledge that the Liberals desired to "secure not only public control, but also improvement in the quality of education." (30)

Similarly Sir Edward Grey in Berwick on Tweed devoted his time to trade and to South Africa, and to the promise of Irish Reform. Chamberlain in Birmingham claimed that a Liberal Government would be "essentially Home Rule and Little Englander Government" concentrating upon the question of tariff reform. (31) Lloyd George, the new President of the Board of Trade, who had been much involved in the Passive Resistance campaigns in Wales after the passing of the 1902 Education Act had been more forthright over the education controversy, declaring at Conway that "the first thing that the Government was going to do was to remedy the wrongs of the Education Act." (32)

A. J. Balfour's own Manifesto noted that "Home Rule, disestablishment, the destruction of the voluntary schools, and the spoliation of the licence holder have not lost their ancient charms in the eyes of the Radical law-makers." In his main election address in East Manchester in January 1906 he claimed that the destruction of the voluntary schools would be one of the many changes advocated by a Liberal Government." (33)

The Labour candidates were to campaign on all issues of free trade, the prevention of Chinese slavery, Home Rule, and the demand for secular education, although J. R. MacDonald's circular for proposed campaign topics dated 6th December 1905 made no mention of education as an issue. (34)
On the domestic front the Liberals had no clearly defined policy thus the candidates who were to form the main back bench of the incoming Government were to use local issues as main propaganda platforms in their own election addresses. It was agreed that fresh licensing proposals would have to be introduced, as the Licensing Act of 1904 had provided compensation for brewers and publicans for the withdrawal of their licences from a fund levied on trade. This had aroused the fury of the temperance reformers. The Education Act of 1902 was also promised to be amended, and electioneering on the grounds that this Act had handed over "the nation's schools to the clergy" (35) without losing their separate identities was to provide a basis upon which to arouse religious excitement and sectarian passion amongst the Nonconformists, but the Liberals appeared to possess "no definite programme, no definite ideas, and no definite plan of campaign." (36)

Seen through the eyes of the leader writers, particularly those of the national newspapers, it was an election about Free Trade, about Chinese Labour, about sectionalist legislation and about Unionist extravagance and mismanagement. The main platforms were not based upon educational questions or the grievances of the Nonconformists. The 'Independent Review' which had been founded in October 1903 at the moment when the Liberal revival was gathering momentum maintained that "the idea that social reform is the prime business of the Liberal Party in this age of ours is slowly gaining ground." (37) This ideology was accepted by the Liberal press and it was not so much the social radical programme that would win the election of January 1906, but rather the reflection on the significance of that election which was to show them that it was in such programmes that the Liberal Party's future might lie. Thus the Liberal press was to support the proposed changes which a new Government would introduce. It would support the Education Bill and the Plural Voting and Licensing Bills as these were seen as important measures,
but the more time they occupied then the greater the frustration was to be seen in their editorial comment and the greater their concern lest the reforming Liberals with their enthusiastic followers for reform would be engulfed by the attempted resolutions of older conflicts and were therefore alarmed "lest the new energy is wasted and dissipated." (38)

The election of 1906 was to demonstrate beyond doubt that "the epoch of social and economic as distinct from political reform had arrived." (39)

Outside the main election campaigns the question of the amendment of the Education Act of 1902 had been more predominant. The Annual Congress of the Trades Unions of 1904 had already declared that the Conservative Government was "concerned only with the defence of property and capital," and at the 1905 Annual Congress of the T.U.C. the President declared "a worse Government than the present one we could not possibly get," and members were urged "not to forget what we have to avenge." This included their grievances over the Education Act of 1902. (40) Similarly the Labour Representation Committee condemned the education policy of the Conservative Government, calling for major changes in the education system. At their fifth Annual Conference in January 1905 the L.R.C. agreed that all schools—elementary, secondary and technological—should be under the control of "the directly elected representatives of the people," and that education should be free. (41)

Dr. John Clifford, the Baptist Minister, then President of the Baptist World Alliance, and also a former executive of the National Liberal Federation had been much involved in the Passive Resistance Movement and was to renew his efforts to remove the Nonconformist grievances caused by the 1902 Education Act, and would therefore support a government which promised to fulfil such expectations. It has been written of Clifford: "His was the voice of fighting Nonconformity - a Nonconformity which still winced under a sense of its social and political inferiority." (42)
Nevertheless Dr. Clifford was to write to R.M. Smith during the debates on the 1906 Education Bill: "How I wish this Education question was out of the way. But it is the fight of the hour." (43)

Outside Parliament those pressure groups which had been brought to bear on the Education Act of 1902 were to press their claims again, but for the general public the newspapers were the only means of carrying information outside election meetings. The 'Daily News', the 'Daily Chronicle' the 'Manchester Guardian' and the 'Tribune' - all supporters of Liberal policies - made little out of the education question. Neither did 'The Times', the 'Morning Post', the 'Daily Telegraph', the 'Daily Express', the 'Daily Mail' or the 'Standard' - all supporters of a Conservative policy - see any need to defend the existing legislation on the education question in any great detail. Thus the election campaigns of December 1905 through to February 1906 were concerned mainly with major issues of tariff reform and Chinese slavery with the Irish Question and domestic policies playing but little part in the major campaigns of the main political contenders. As the Editor of the Macclesfield Courier and Herald was to comment: "...Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the new Prime Minister, has recently made Home Rule the greater issue for the General Election by declaring himself in favour of it. The Tariff Question will be in the running also, but no sensible man, looking at the sign of the times doubts for one moment that the country stands once again on the brink of a great peril respecting this vexed question of Home Rule." (44)

Thus the question of educational reform and particularly of the 1902 Education Act was not seen as an election campaign platform issue by the front bench spokesmen. The only exception was to be Birrell, the newly appointed President of the Board of Education, and therefore the one most expected to raise this issue. The Archbishop of Canterbury (Davidson)
had written to Birrell when he was first appointed to his new post as President concerning any proposed legislation which might affect the Education Act of 1902. His letter to Birrell dated 15th December 1905 states:

"...I have no fears at all that the cause for which I mainly care... will suffer unfairly at your hands. I am sure also that you are one of those who realise what have been the continuous sacrifices made by generations of poor men, especially clergy to whom these principles are sacredly dear, and that you are not likely to disregard historical facts when dealing with contemporary perplexities." (45)

Birrell, reply to the Archbishop of 17th December 1905 stated:

"...Saturated though I am with the traditions, the noble traditions, of English religious Nonconformity - I have yet read enough in other directions to recognise the force and permanence of the Church Tradition....I hope from the bottom of my heart a settlement may be arrived at which will leave small room for bitterness, but it is a job." (46)

Archbishop Davidson had already foreseen the outcome of the election, commenting after talking to Lord Rosebery in October 1905 that "Balfour will be tremendously beaten. The Liberals will have a majority over Tories and Irish combined." (47)

Outside the main election campaigns the education question was still in evidence. The National Council of Evangelical Free Churches at their Conference in February 1905 had even then appealed to all Free Churchmen to support only those candidates who pledged themselves to secure an early and complete reform of national education. At this Conference, under the Chairmanship of Rev. F.B. Meyer and attended by Dr. Clifford and Dr. Fairbairn, three major resolutions were moved by Dr. Clifford and seconded by Rev. J.M. Jovett. All were concerned with the Education Act of 1902 and
its amendment, and were as follows:-

"The National Council re-affirms its demand for a national system of education co-ordinating all its branches under complete popular control and entirely free from both theological and ecclesiastical tests and from sectarian teaching."

"The Council expresses its deepest sympathy with the men and women who on conscientious grounds have deemed it their duty to refuse voluntarily to pay the denominational portion of the education rate."

"This Council declares that it will never consent to any proposals to introduce into State-paid schools during official school hours the services and sectarian dogmas of any denomination." (48)

Their resolutions included its condemnation of the Education (Defaulting Authorities) Act, the Council "assuring the Welsh people of its deepest sympathy and if necessary, of its practical support in the struggle." This was moved by the Rev. J. Scott Lidgett.

The importance of this particular Annual Meeting, held in Manchester in February 1905 may be judged by the attendance of over 3,000 persons with over 2,000 delegates representing some 800 Free Church Councils in England and Wales. The Meeting affirmed the position of the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches. It was a position of no compromise, the Council still wanting:-

(a) The management of the schools to be so open as to be really controlled by those who had to find the means for their maintenance.

(b) Complete freedom for teachers from subscription to, or membership of a body, and from clerical control.

(c) Higher standards and better remuneration for teachers.

(d) Smaller administrative areas, believing that a County was too large a unit.
Among the major Nonconformists grievances were those concerned with the difficulty in inspecting Minute Books of voluntary schools, as those managers did not have to forward their Minute Books to the Local Authority for inspection. They also believed that the Nonconformists representatives were inadequate in numbers on the Education Committees, giving the instance of Hertfordshire where there were 37 Roman Catholic members and Anglican members but only 14 Nonconformist members. The Council were opposed to the clergy domination in voluntary schools over the appointment of staff, and instanced cases where Anglican staff had been appointed to posts in preference to Nonconformists even though the Anglican candidate had not been suitably qualified.

The resolution which was to carry most weight for the Nonconformist element during the elections of early 1906 was that which contained the following statement:-

"This Council recognises that the highly iniquitious Education Act of 1902 was passed at the instance of the Church established by law, and for the purpose of securing special advantages for that institute. The Council urges the Free Church Councils to advance the cause of absolute religious equality as the surest means of putting an end to educational as well as other difficulties." (49)

The Northern Counties Education League Manifesto published as part of their election campaign in 1906 the following statement outlining their position clearly:--

"We now pay over £25,000,000 a year in rates and taxes for education yet not one of the State-paid schools in England and Wales has under it the control and management of persons chosen by the people for that purpose.

"Will you give to the rate payers in the control and management of State-paid schools through education boards properly and popularly
elected for that purpose?

"Will you vote for the abolition of theological and sectarian tests for teachers?

"Will you vote for the removal of sectarian teaching and influence from the official work of the State-paid schools?" (50)

The Bishop of Chester replied to the Northern Counties Education League in an open letter to the Hon. Secretary of the Chester Church Day Schools' Association, commenting on any possible amendments to the Education Act of 1902. He was to write:

"The attitude of Churchmen towards legislation affecting schools should surely be this. They should steadfastly stand - and expect their Parliamentary representatives no less steadfastly to stand - by the Education Act of 1902 which rests upon a broad basis of thought and experience, which is a sincere and by no means unsuccessful attempt to deal equitably with conflict in interests and convictions, and which in spite of the radically anarchical obstruction it has encountered in some parts of the country, is on the whole, being administered with remarkable unanimity and intelligence." (51)

Campbell-Bannerman was to visit Chester on 10th January as part of the election campaign mounted by Alfred Mond. In his short address the Prime Minister avoided the education question, but the candidate Alfred Mond - the son of Ludwig Mond, then managing director of Brunner & Mond Co. (to become the I.C.I.) had already issued an election statement declaring that "the passing of a partisan and sectarian Education Act has deeply offended the conscience of the Nonconformists of the country and hindered, rather than forwarded, the solution of the question of popular education which is so vital to the progress and well-being of the Empire." (52)

The Prime Minister was accompanied on this occasion by Sir John
Brunner. also of Brunner Mond & Co. and whose son J.F.L. Brunner was to be elected as the Liberal M.P. for Leigh (Lancs.) in the 1906 election.

The Conservative candidate opposing Alfred Mond was the Balfourite and Free Trader R.A. Yerburgh. On the education question he was to claim that "As regards the question of education, while they have to the great advantage of the country and to the relief of the poorer classes, made it free, they have improved and co-ordinated its entire system, elementary, secondary, technical and higher throughout England and Wales." (53) In the election which was to follow, Alfred Mond gained the seat (Chester) from Yerburgh by 47 votes only - 3,524 to 3,477. In the other local seat Arthur Lyulph Stanley stood against Cotton Jodrell as the Liberal candidate, and made the education question a part of his local issue, declaring that he "would support to the utmost all efforts to undo the injustice worked by the Education Act of 1902. He was in favour of full public management of all schools publically paid for and was opposed to the imposition of any religious test upon teachers employed in these schools. He was equally opposed to the teaching at public expense any particular creed or doctrine." (54) Stanley was to be returned to the Eddisbury district by a majority of 1,123 in the 1906 election.

The strongest case for the Conservatives was made by the Hon. Alan Egerton, M.P. meeting at Bollington near Macclesfield whose meeting was reported in the 'Macclesfield Courier and Herald' stating that "Mr. Egerton was a strong believer in the value of a religious education for children, but on the other hand the Liberal candidate was a man who did not believe in religious education, who believed that religious education if it was necessary should be given at home, and that the time at school should be kept solely and entirely for teaching secular subjects....they must decide which they were going to give their vote to, the man who believed in religious education and would maintain the Act which kept
that in force, or the man who held that religious education was not necessary and that the best thing would be to keep it out of the schools altogether and let their children grow up Atheists." (55)

The election addresses given by the opposing candidates in the 1906 elections make reference to the education question in varying degrees of thoroughness. Charles Bill, who had been the Conservative Member of Parliament for the Leek division since 1892 in his election address on 8th January stated that "The inclusion in the new cabinet of such a pronounced opponent of the Education Act of 1902 as Mr. Lloyd George makes it probable that this Act will be marked out for early attack. I shall offer the most strenuous opposition to any alteration in it which would deprive managers of Denominational Schools, erected with the sanction and support of the State through a long series of years, of the right of controlling the religious instruction now given therein....but I would gladly support any amendment designed to obviate any reasonable Nonconformist grievance in country parishes where only a voluntary school now exists...." (56)

His opponent, Robert Pearce, had previously stood as a Liberal in opposition at the general election of 1895 and had been defeated by 614 votes. In 1900 he contested the Leek Division again and was defeated a second time by a majority of 759. In religious beliefs Mr. Pearce was a Unitarian, and was a practising solicitor in London. Pearce was to defeat Bill in the 1906 election with a majority of over 1,590 in an 86.8% turnout of the total electorate.

Alfred Billson, the Liberal candidate for the North-Western Division of Staffordshire considered it "one of the first duties of the new administration to amend the Education Act. Nothing had so deeply stirred the hearts of the people of this neighbourhood as the course which had been taken in regard to this important subject. It is not the question
of church or chapel, but one of fair dealing with the consciences of men. I am in favour of full public control of all schools supported by public funds, and the abolition of religious tests for teachers. These two principles firmly secured, reasonable facilities might be allowed for any religious denomination to give its own distinctive teaching outside school hours." (57)

His opponent, Sir James Heath, the Conservative and Unionist candidate was to base his campaign on tariff reform and free trade. He had to concede that the 1902 Education Act had increased the education rate in each of the local districts more than had been anticipated and this had been especially so in the rural areas. He was to maintain that the Act was working well, and was the most satisfactory solution to a difficult question. James Heath was not to be re-elected. (58)

A more direct approach to the education question had been taken by the Conservative and Unionist candidate for Stoke-on-Trent, D.H. Coghill. In his speech at Stoke Town Hall on 10th January 1906 he put forward the following points:-

"....Now we are told that the voluntary schools are to be handed over to what may be called popular control. If that is to be, then the managers of these schools will be bound by the provisions of their trust deeds to cease operating them, and other seats will have to be found for the children. At whose expense? The ratepayers' expense? It will cost the ratepayers some £4,000,000. Where are those forty four millions to come from? I would like to know how we are going to get £4 million from the ratepayers to replace the seats taken away by the closing of the voluntary schools...We owe a great deal to the voluntary schools. They have done much for the education of this country when there was no other education at all....and I think they are entitled to some very handsome treatment at our hands..." (59)

His opponent, John Ward, claimed to have taken a leading part in all
phases of the Labour Movement during the last 26 years. He was currently the Chairman of the National Democratic League which some three years previously had introduced him to the North Staffordshire Trade and Labour Council as a suitable candidate for Stoke, and was to fight this seat on a strong Labour and Democratic ticket. (60)

Thus the interest in the education question had been sparked off by the direct involvement of the local politicians rather than from any direction from the Cabinet. Early in January Campbell-Bannerman had been interrupted in his speech in Liverpool by women demanding the right to vote, but there had been no mention of any educational reform or changes to the Education Act of 1902. The Dean of Hereford had met Campbell-Bannerman in Hereford on 10th January 1906 but again there had been no discussion on the education question. (61) Without direction from the prominent members of the Government, or from the Opposition the prospective candidates took the most direct party line without deliberately antagonising the opposition. Thus William Brocklehurst, the Liberal candidate for the Macclesfield Division was able to state frequently in his speeches that "The Education Act passed by the late Government in 1902 is a constant source of discord. It has taken public money for educational purposes without providing for public control. It imposes religious tests upon public servants and endows sectarian teaching to which many conscientiously object." (62) No solution to this problem was offered, and neither did his Conservative opponent, Col. Bromley-Davenport comment upon the education question in his own speeches.

Balfour in his speech in the Queen's Hall, London, had said that "he never pretended that the Bill of 1902 could solve the religious problem, or that it reached the ideal, but it was the best that could be done." (63) On the other hand Campbell-Bannerman's manifesto had made no mention of educational reform. Thus for the Conservatives, the main issues were
centred on Home Rule and Fiscal Reform, but with the over-riding possibility of a Liberal victory, the education question had been brought to the fore by the various religious groups, and by the pressure on M.P.'s and other candidates at a very local level. In anticipation of change, the Church of England in the Tunstall area held a protest meeting against any amendment of the Education Act of 1902 resulting in pressure being put upon local candidates to define their own position on the education question.

The President of the Board of Education, Birrell, had not enlarged upon the educational issue in his own election campaign. 'Vanity Fair' on 20th January 1906 had summarised his future as follows:-

"He is an honest, clever sagacious man, but an intellectual; and men of that type have failed in the parliamentary melee before now. And he will be in the thick of this melee." (65)

Birrell speaking in Lowestoft on 23rd January 1906 on the education question had then stated that: "...so far from injuring the cause of religion we should maintain and support it." He did not want to see "the secular education of the country divorced from the religious feeling of the people" and he hoped it "would be possible in their elementary schools to give simple religious teaching for those who were content with it, and also give facilities to those people who wanted more definite dogmatic instruction" but on the condition that it would be of benefit to receive this definite dogmatic instruction. (66)

Immediately after the general election, Archbishop Davidson expressed his belief that the Government would act with fairness, writing to the Secretary of the National Society on 2nd February 1906:

"I may be over sanguine, but I cannot believe that the problem of reconciling the results of the recent election with the maintenance of the principles for which Churchmen have contended is really insoluble. Certainly every power which I possess is at the service of those who take
such a task fairly and considerately in hand." (67)

This mild view was not accepted in many parts of the country and protests about the proposed Bill were already being organised. The Church of England's official view was made by the Upper House of the Canterbury Convocation on 22nd February 1906. This stated that:

"No scheme of national education can be established with justice or accepted as permanent unless full recognition is given to the right of parents to obtain for their children, as far as is possible, instruction in their own faith; that such instruction must, if it is to serve its purpose, be given within school hours, and that it is a moral necessity that all religious instruction should be given by those who can give it with genuine belief." (68)

Balfour had already claimed in his main speeches that the destruction of the voluntary schools would be one of the many changes advocated by an incoming Liberal Government, but was more concerned with holding the middle position between the free traders and the protectionists on the basis of a retaliation policy which contained the idea of being able to force concessions from the protectionists and thus restore genuine freedom of trade. In the event this policy failed to satisfy either side.

It was estimated that 83 out of 392 Conservatives were free traders. Some had joined the Liberals, and others were not re-nominated for their constituencies, and others were then not to be re-elected.

During the election the pact between MacDonald and Gladstone to tie down the Conservatives in all constituencies was to be a distinct disadvantage to that party. 31 of the 50 L.R.C. candidates were to be unopposed and that 24 out of the 29 L.R.C. candidates won by virtue of Liberal withdrawals. It would be possible to argue that the total 401 Liberal seats would not have been materially smaller in number in the absence of co-operation with the L.R.C. The emergence of the Labour
Party was less of a sign of a more radical type of politics than a reinforcement of Progressive Liberalism. This was borne out by the electoral revival based not on the traditional re-action in favour of free trade Nonconformity, but on the social and economic issues characteristic of 20th Century politics.

Many radical Unionists had joined the Liberals because the 1902 Education Act had become a part of the social reform platform to improve the conditions of the masses in the fields of education and health, and would also redress the balance in favour of the Nonconformists. This can be coupled with a shift that was taking place in the emphasis of political debate reflecting a move away from the community and religious groups which was the basis of voting in the 19th Century towards the class based voting of the 20th Century. Thus the party divisions begin to coincide with the fundamental social cleavages for the first time. It is doubtful whether the question of franchise in making the distinction between voters and non-voters would drastically alter party support. The Labour Movement of this time never behaved as though an extension of the franchise was the key to its success - at this time it did not have, in any case, the organisation to compete against the larger parties.

Campbell-Bannerman's performance in the election was cursory, making only two major speeches, one on 21st December 1905 in the Albert Hall, and the second in Liverpool on 9th January 1906. He then spent the whole campaign in Scotland contenting himself with one printed address to his constituents and was returned by them, unopposed. His speeches contained no specific proposals, but concentrated on criticizing his predecessors. The detailed programme dealing with education, drink, trade union reforms and old age pensions were left to other Liberals, particularly to Asquith.

Asquith was the undisputed second man in the Liberal team, and was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. He came from a solid middle class
Yorkshire family and had made his own reputation by his performance as a barrister and M.P. He was no revolutionary but believed in social and political reform and was prepared to fight hard to achieve these objectives. He enjoyed the company of people who could match his own wit and intelligence. His critics thought him lazy and casual, but in fact it may well have been the realisation that most problems are far more complex than politicians like to pretend, and therefore he was prepared to wait for the right opportunity before acting.

Everything appeared to be in favour of a Liberal majority. The Unionists had antagonised two important sections of the electorate - the Nonconformists, and also the organised labour, with the Education and Licensing Acts, and also their failure to reform trade union law after the Taff Vale case. There was also the Chinese Slavery question, and most important of all, the Unionists had torn themselves apart over the tariff reform issue.

When Parliament re-assembled after the election it was clear that the Liberal Party led by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had achieved an overwhelming victory. In the House of Commons the Liberals claimed 377 seats; the Conservatives some 157 of which 109 were supporters of Chamberlain; the Irish Nationalists under John Redmond held 83 seats, while the Labour M.P.'s numbered 53. (69) Of the 53 Labour M.P.'s returned 24 were closely allied to the Liberal Party "while most of the remaining 29 owned their seats to an electoral agreement which spared them Liberal opponents." (70)

There was therefore a transference of 245 seats from the losers to the victors, though if both Ireland and the Universities were omitted it could be shown that 56.4% of the total votes went to the Liberals and Labour candidates, and 43.6% to the Conservatives. The losses suffered by the Liberal Party were almost entirely confined to England, losing
40 borough and 55 county seats, mostly in the South. Only two were lost in Wales, two in Ireland and none in Scotland. The Conservatives failed to gain a single seat in Wales where every constituency had returned either a Liberal or a Labour candidate. At the dissolution, the Party which had been in power for 10 years had then had a comfortable working majority of 74; the election put it in a minority of 365. The Liberals and their allies, the Labour and Irish Nationalist parties, won a resounding victory, the magnitude of which was indicated by the fact that there had been a transference of 245 seats from the losers to the victors.

The political landslide was, of course, due in part to the character of the electoral system. If in the final calculations both Ireland and the Universities were to be left out of account, and only the 560 remaining seats were to be considered it can be shown that allowing proportionally for the voting strength of the 30 uncontested seats, 56.4% of the total votes cast went to the Liberal and Balfour candidates and 43.6% to the Unionists. Had the strength of the parties in the House been proportionate to these percentages, the former would have numbered 316 and the latter 244, giving the Liberals and their allies a majority of 72 as against an actual majority of 296. If now the entire House could be taken into consideration, then it can be shown that while the actual anti-Conservative majority was 356, then proportionally it should have been 132.

This disparity was in no part of the Kingdom so pronounced as in Wales. The Liberals and their allies won every seat in the Principality, yet making due allowance for uncontested seats, it was estimated that 167,000 votes were cast for the Liberals and 86,000 for the Unionist candidates. Under proportional representation Wales would have been represented by 11 Unionists, and only 19 Liberals instead of 30 Liberals only.
It can be seen, therefore, that the overwhelming Liberal victory did not necessarily mean a massive swing in party voting, and the assumption that this victory meant that the Liberal policies would have the vast majority of the electorate as a numerical force to back these policies was ill-founded. The tide of Liberalism flowed more strongly in some areas than in others. In London the election yielded a preponderance of radical members of more than two to one, yet the fact remains that the capital returned a higher proportion of Unionists than did the country at large. Again it is of interest to observe that while every seat in London was fought - the majority for the 42 Liberal and Labour members returned was on an average 1,250 votes each while the majority secured by the 19 Unionists averaged 2,105 votes. 77% of those on the Register voted.

The swing to the left was more pronounced in the English provincial boroughs than in the Metropolis. The previous position was exactly the reverse of the election. Thus while these Boroughs, including the Universities, had been represented by 122 Unionists and 47 Liberals, including Labour members and one Nationalist, in the new Parliament they were now represented by 122 Liberals and Labour members and 1 Nationalist and 47 Unionists. This means that there had been a transfer of 75 seats from Unionism to Liberalism in these boroughs. No less striking was the victory won by the Liberals in the counties. An electoral map of England shows that in 1900 Liberalism was well established in the extremities of the country; in addition a narrow belt of Liberal constituencies ran through the Midlands in a North-West direction. In 1906 success at the polls took Liberalism over the whole of East Anglia (except two Essex divisions) and over a broad belt in a South-West direction to Somerset. It was only the counties of Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire that were untouched by this tide and Devon interposed a Unionist barrier between the
Severn and Torbay. Scotland, like Wales, became a Liberal stronghold. Unionism had reached a high water-mark in Scotland as a result of the 1900 election when 72 Unionists were represented in the Scottish constituencies. In 1906 a mere dozen Unionists were to be elected.

On the other hand the election did not produce any great change in the parliamentary representation of Ireland. The Nationalist Party made two gains, and in addition to 82 Nationalists, 17 Unionists, 1 Liberal-Unionist and 3 Liberals were returned for Irish constituencies.

Thus the strength of the Liberals, together with the Labour members and the Irish Home Rulers, numbered 513 against the "miserable remnant of 157 Conservatives and Liberal Unionists which did not even include some of the most prominent men who had served in the Conservative Government since electors - no respecters of persons - had rejected Mr. Balfour himself." (73)

The new Parliament contained 670 members of which 318 were taking their seats for the first time. The Conservative Party was composed of Balfourites, Chamberlainites, and Unionist Free Fooders and could now lay no claim to homogeneity. A significant aspect of the election result was that in the Unionist ranks the Free Fooders had done badly - of the 157 Unionists elected, 109 were Chamberlain supporters, 32 could be classified as Balfourites and only 11 were self-styled Free Fooders. Thus Chamberlain, in party terms, had won the Battle. However, he was now over 70 years old and had been seriously injured in a cab accident in London in 1902 and within months of the election had suffered a stroke (July 17th, 1906) which incapacitated him totally.

Balfour had lost his seat on the second day of the results in Manchester. So, too, had Walter Long and Bonar Law. Balfour, having thus been defeated in East Manchester was offered the seat of Mr. Alban Gibbs for the City of London in January, and was elected as their Member on 27th February having then defeated the Unionist Free Trader Gibson Bowles.
In the meantime the election of 1906 had given the Liberal Party in the House of Commons an overwhelming majority, not only over the Unionists, but over all other sections combined. In total the Irish and Labour M.P.'s together with the Liberal Government could count on a majority of 356 - a figure unequalled since 1832. Even if all parties combined against them, the Liberals would still have a majority of 132 if supported by the Liberal-Labour members. The Unionists received 43.6% of the popular vote and returned only 157 M.P.'s whilst the Liberals received 49% and returned 401 members. In its way this shows that Britain was still a very Conservative country in spite of everything that had happened since 1900. The various religious groups which each of the M.P.'s supported in the new Parliament are given by Halevy in the Free Church Book for 1906. The continued dominance of the Church of England is clearly indicated, the breakdown being as follows:

180 Dissenters
16 Jews
300 Church of England
13 Scots Presbyterians
80 Irish Catholics
10 English Catholics (74)

The Unionist vote per opposed candidate was approximately the same as during the elections of 1900, this being circa 4,300 per candidate, but the Liberal vote rose about 25% from circa 4,100 to 5,200. This suggests that there was no mass conversion to Liberalism but rather that many who had abstained in 1900 were sufficiently antagonistic to the recent Unionist policies to support an anti-Unionist vote in 1906.

The loss of the working class constituencies in Lancashire and London which the Unionists had held in 1900 would seem to confirm that a significant number of working class votes had turned against them, the key issues being the Taff Vale judgment, the question of Chinese Slavery and the "big loaf, little loaf" debates. A 15% swing to the Liberals in the middle class London seats would suggest that ground had been lost with middle
class voters. Nonconformists coupled with temperance and humanitarian interests were hostile to the Unionists handling of education, the licensing laws and to the Chinese Slavery question.

Thus the Liberals won the election because of the way in which they were able to capitalise on the Unionists mistakes and unpopularity. They claimed that they were opposed to "food taxes", to "Chinese Slavery" and to the Taff Vale judgment and to the unemployment system. They hoped that they would bring about social reform which would capture many working class votes for their Party, although social reform issues had played very little part in their election campaign.

The Government had to decide what to do with its success. The Liberals in 1906 had not asked for a clear statement of public support for a single proposal. Many of the newly elected Liberal M.P.'s were less interested in Britain's external affairs than in the poverty and unemployment which they could see at first hand at home. The report on the conditions of the poor in London drawn up by Booth (75) had awakened interest in such matters, and so too had books like "The Heart of the Empire" by G.P. Gooch, G.W. Trevelyan and others published in 1901. Young Liberals had argued that people should worry about social conditions in England as well as the problems of the Empire. After its success the Liberal Government had no immediate social legislation ready for discussion, but the Labour Party had already formulated its proposals for reversing the Taff Vale decisions. These proposals were readily accepted by Campbell-Bannerman in order to keep the Labour Party closely linked to the Liberal Party. (76)

At the time of the Liberal and Labour exhilaration, there was no premonition that this was to be the last General Election in which the Liberals had more M.P.'s than Unionists, nor that in less than five years the triumphant majority of 1906 was to be cut down to exact parity.
No notice had been taken of the significant remark made by Balfour on 15th January at Nottingham to the effect that it was the duty of all to ensure that the "great Unionist Party should still control, whether in power or whether in Opposition, the destinies of this great Empire." (77)

The then current political situation should have provided the cause for Balfour's remarks as in the House of Commons the Liberals had a majority of 356, but in the House of Lords the Unionist Party had a majority of 391.

This situation was not new to the Liberal Party. During their previous period of Government the balance in the House of Lords had been in favour of the Conservative Party so that it was possible the moment a Liberal Government was formed for the House of Lords to present an effective opposition to its policies. Many saw this as a permanent barrier against the Liberal Party.

Balfour, commenting upon his defeat and the defeat of the Conservative Party to Lady Salisbury wrote: "What has occurred has nothing to do with any of the things we have been squabbling over in the last few years. Campbell-Bannerman is a mere cork dancing in a torrent which he cannot control and what is going on here is a faint echo of the same movement which has produced massacres in St. Petersburg, riots in Vienna, and socialist processions in Berlin." (78)

The political persuasions of the House of Lords were hardly affected by the election of 1906. Of the 602 peers including 25 Bishops entitled to take part in the proceedings, some 355 described themselves as Conservatives, and a further 124 as Liberal Unionists, as against a mere 83 Liberals, this including Lord Rosebery who was uncertain to support the Government. It was estimated that 35 peers, including 14 Bishops (and four Princes of the Blood) were of no political persuasion, thus
leaving a nominal majority of the Unionist Party supporters in the Lords of 391. This huge and unwieldy majority was greater than the Liberal majority in the House of Commons. (79)

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had formed his Government on the resignation of Balfour on 5th December 1905. By 7th December all the principal places in the new Government had been filled and the Cabinet announced by 11th December, though "not without some difficulties as to personnel, which, however, yielded rapidly to the goodwill and sense of duty of those immediately concerned." (80) Lloyd George, writing to his brother on 14th December was to note that "Macnamara has refused a post under Birrell in the Board of Education" but did not consider this to be a loss. (81)

Although the new Government did not include Lord Rosebery, it was received with "acclamation from nearly every quarter, being generally regarded as a new 'Ministry of All the Talents' and one well deserving of success." (82)

Campbell-Bannerman, as Leader of the Liberal Party had become Prime Minister "more from the default of others than from his own ability." (83) Others thought that Lord Crewe "was the ideal man for the hour." (84) Of Campbell-Bannerman's relationships with the senior cabinet members, "the reticent aloofness of Grey, the Foreign Secretary, and the idiosyncrasies of Haldane at the War Office remained to him rather a mystery. With the other Liberal Imperialist, Asquith as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Campbell-Bannerman was on more congenial terms, though they diverged widely at times." (85)

As a lukewarm Scottish Presbyterian, Campbell-Bannerman had retained an attitude of detachment from English religious disputes, preferring a solution in English education whereby the State should drop all religious teaching, leaving the various denominations equal facilities
to teach their own tenets in public schools. (86) This solution had been applied in Scotland where religious differences were within limits which enabled this to be undertaken, whereas Campbell-Bannerman realised that in England the more powerful churches held it to be their mission to impregnate the schools with their own special atmosphere. Thus Campbell-Bannerman was not among the partisans for one particular solution, and his Scottish detachment should have made him a good arbiter in this English issue. (87)

Of the other members of his Cabinet, who were to take some part in the debates on the education question in the House of Commons, Lloyd George - new to the cabinet and new to the office of the Board of Trade - had declared he held no dogmatic faith but was the "apostle of Nonconformity" having been associated with the Baptists and Dr. Clifford in rallying the Nonconformist pressure groups following the 1902 Education Act. (88) Asquith, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was an agnostic from a Congregational background, while Haldane, whose parents were Baptists, claimed he was a Deist. Augustine Birrell, the new President of the Board of Education, like Lloyd George, was new to the office and to the cabinet. He was the son of a Baptist minister, but considered his father to be a moralist first and a Christian second. He had his early education in both a Nonconformist boarding school in Birmingham, and at the Church of England Liverpool College. This was followed by a short period at the Nonconformist school at Caversham in Oxfordshire, and later at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He could claim he "never really was an orthodox Nonconformist at all." (89) In his election campaign in Bristol North he had called for an attempt at a reasonable compromise with regard to religious instruction in schools, stating that "children should be taught the simple religious truths...while children whose parents desired definite religious teaching should receive it, not indeed as part of the public school curriculum, but nevertheless on
school premises, if need be, though out of school hours." (90) It could be claimed that Birrell had a depth of understanding of the religious problems in education, but his sympathies lay with the Free Churchmen and their resentment over the Anglican monopoly of elementary schools, particularly in the rural areas.

Dr. John Clifford, the Baptist leader, was also powerfully represented among the Liberal backbenchers who were to demand a full amendment of the Education Act of 1902, but also within the same Party was the backbencher Charles Masterman, an Anglo-Catholic with High Church views - later to join the Secular Education League in 1907. Hilaire Belloc was among other Roman Catholics. (91)

Thus in the House of Commons alone it was impossible for the Liberal Party to show a united front on any issue involving religious differences, such differences also being clearly marked within the Cabinet members from the House of Commons. The 83 Irish M.P.'s were for the most part Roman Catholics and could not be relied upon to give support for measures seemingly against their own denominational interests.

This very mixed assembly of Liberal M.P.'s caused King Edward to write to the Prince of Wales when the cabinet was announced that "It is certainly a strong Government with considerable brainpower. Let us only hope that they will work for the good of the country and, indeed the Empire." The King had taken considerable interest in the members of the cabinet. (92)

The composition of the Commons was also to lead Lord Knollys to write to Esher that "the old idea that the House of Commons was an assemblage of gentlemen has quite passed away." (93)

In the House of Lords the Leader and spokesman for the Liberal Party was the Marquess of Ripon, Lord Privy Seal, a devout Roman Catholic. As a Liberal peer and Leader in the House of Lords, educational legislation involving religious differences had caused him some concern. This had
been obvious during the debates on the Education Act of 1902 which he regarded as being unjust to the Nonconformists and of "very dubious advantage to his own co-religionists," and consequently he had "refused to speak or vote on it." (94) Lord Ripon was faced with the problem of reconciling the views of the Roman Catholic Church with the ideals of the Liberal Party and his own attachment to "moderate denominationalism." Lord Ripon had suggested his own resignation on 3rd March 1906 being "much enfeebled by age and recurrent heart trouble." (95) Lord Crewe agreed to act as his lieutenant in the Lords. This "rather unorthodox and unwieldy condominium" was to last for a period of two years, until April 1908 when Lord Crewe finally became spokesman for the Government. (96) Lord Crewe, a new member of the Liberal cabinet, had accepted the position of Lord President of the Council, his former Government appointment having been that of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1892-95). He had, therefore, "no pre-eminence in Parliament, or in the country, or in the counsels of the Party" but was reputed to have "an almost uncanny soundness of judgment." (97)

It was to be seen that when the Government introduced their new educational legislation into the House of Commons how far the obvious problems of disunity and the lack of leadership in this matter was to affect the content of the Education Bill. The election of 1906 had brought to the surface once again the great public debate on the elementary education question, and therefore the need to reach some form of compromise in the intended legislation which would be acceptable to the Church of England and to the Nonconformist interests was of paramount importance to the Liberal Cabinet. It was to be seen how far and to what extent a compromise Bill would be acceptable to the Church of England via the negotiations with Archbishop Davidson when it was
realised that the main areas of concern were to be the control of those schools receiving rate-aid, and the place of religious instruction in rate-aided schools together with the difficulties of overcoming the problems associated with religious tests for teachers.

Thus although the Liberal Party claimed to have a mandate which would give them the authority to change the working of the Education Act of 1902, it was to be seen whether that Government which had given no clear indication as to the content of its educational legislation during its election campaigns, and which had not been united even within its own Cabinet in this matter, could carry through both Houses of Parliament legislation which by its very nature would have to be controversial.
CHAPTER III

The Election of 1906

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CHAPTER IV

THE EDUCATION BILL OF 1906 AND
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
The members of Campbell-Bannerman's cabinet who were to be most concerned with the introduction of a new Education Bill were not unanimous in their views on the ideal solution to this problem. It was clear that some form of compromise would have to be reached even at cabinet level before any final decisions could be made. Almost half the members of the cabinet were Scotsmen by birth and less than one-third were even nominal members of the Church of England. Men like Lloyd George who did not belong to the old ruling order and who was a supporter of Non-conformity were to discuss such issues in the cabinet with Lord Ripon, a Roman Catholic, balanced by Augustine Birrell who was to be in favour of a reasonable compromise with regard to religious instruction. The cabinet was presided over by Campbell-Bannerman who stood somewhat aloof from the various parties in this controversy. The solution to the education problem was an inevitable compromise resulting from the inevitable conflict of opinions within the Liberal leadership.

The Liberal Government had received from the electorate an unexampled majority in the House of Commons, leaving the Conservative Party with no hope of resisting Government legislation in that House. Before the opening of Parliament on 13th February, Balfour having been defeated in the election had already indicated that the challenge would continue. His belief that it was to be the duty of all members of the Conservative Party to see that they should still exercise political control where possible was a claim that the Unionist Party should retain and re-assert its political predominance, and if this was not possible in the Commons, then it should continue doing so in the House of Lords. This was not
a new scheme. In 1884 a crisis had developed over the Franchise Bill, the final clash between the Lords and the Commons only being avoided by negotiation. (2) The Liberal Government under Gladstone (1892-95) had also experienced serious differences of opinion between the two Houses, but a final clash had not arisen as the Liberal majority in the House of Commons including the Irish Nationalists, did not exceed 40, and neither had Gladstone the full weight of the country behind him. Even so, Gladstone had foreseen that a solution would have to be found. In his last speech in the Commons he stated:-

"A resolution will have to be found for this tremendous contrariety and incessant conflict upon matters of high principle, and profound importance, between the representatives of the people and those who fill a nominated chamber." (3)

It follows that the differences between the two houses were only to become apparent when a Liberal Government was in office. Of about 600 members of the House of Lords nearly 500 would support Conservative policies, and although many peers rarely attended or voted, in an emergency they would respond to the party whip. Although the Lords had always been a very right wing body in political outlook, the Liberal Government of 1906 hardly expected the Lords to ignore the wishes of the electorate when these wishes had been so clearly expressed.

The inadvisability of using the power of the Conservative and Unionists in the Lords to block any Liberal legislation was expressed by Lord Lansdowne in a letter to Balfour pointing out the need for the Balfourites and the Chamberlainites to present a united front in party policy, although "with a majority of over 200 against us, we are - for the moment, at all events - relieved of the necessity of bringing forward a constructive policy of our own." As for the Conservative Party in the House of Lords he wrote that he "particularly disliked the idea of tarring
the House of Lords with the brush of Protection." (4)

The Liberal cabinet realising their overwhelming predominance in the House of Commons and their barely audible minority in the House of Lords were to develop a strategy of presenting as many important Bills as possible to the House of Lords, on the assumption that "that Chamber, however daring, would not in a single session venture to destroy more than one first class measure passed by a great majority in the House of Commons." (5)

The House of Commons assembled on Tuesday 13th February for the selection of the Speaker, and the rest of the week was occupied by the necessary preliminaries, obtaining the Royal approval for the Speaker, and the swearing-in of members. The King, accompanied by the Queen opened the new session of Parliament on Monday 19th February 1906. The King's Speech to the newly assembled Parliament contained some thirteen measures of prime importance, and his speech included statements on overseas affairs, national expenditure, statements on Ireland, the condition of rural life in England and the expected statement that:

"A Bill will be laid before you at the earliest possible moment for amending the existing law with regard to Education in England and Wales." (6)

King Edward VII had expressed surprise at the number of measures anticipated, but Campbell-Bannerman had claimed that "This list appears long, but many of the measures do not raise very disputable questions and need not occupy much time." (7)

The King's Speech also contained references to the other two most controversial Bills of the session - the Trade Disputes Bill, and the Plural Voting Bill.

It would appear that the Liberals were convinced even at this stage
that a reaction would follow their success at the election, and thus it was desirable to push as many measures as possible through Parliament without loss of time, and thus overloading the Lords with Bills believing that the Lords "would not venture to throw out more than one measure of real importance in a session." (8)

The Education Bill was not to be the first important measure introduced into the House of Commons. The Merchant Shipping Amendment Bill (20th March), the Workmen's Compensation Bill (26th March) and the Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Bill (28th March) were to receive their First Readings while the outlines of the Education Bill were still under consideration and discussion. In the meantime A.J. Balfour had returned to the House of Commons as Member for the City of London on 12th March 1906, determined to restore the confidence of the Party in Opposition. The 157 Unionists "were soon experiencing the joys of battle as only a small opposition under an inspiring leader can," (9) and Balfour had "almost immediately recovered the unique position which he had held there during the previous Parliament." (10)

In the House of Lords the Opposition continued to be led by Lord Lansdowne who was responsible for the huge and unwieldy majority in that House. Faced with the responsibility for the employment of the only effective weapon left to the Unionists in view of their minority in the House of Commons, Lansdowne wrote his memorandum dated 5th April 1906 examining the need for close co-operation between the Opposition in both Houses, suggesting a weekly conference:-

"It is essential that the two wings of the army should work together, and that neither House should take up a line of its own without carefully considering the effects which the adoption of such a line might have upon the other House." (11)

If Lord Lansdowne was looking for guidance and leadership from Balfour then Balfour's plan was quite clear. The House of Lords was already
harnessed to the Conservative Party and could confront the Liberal Government with a permanent majority in the Upper House. In his reply to Lord Lansdowne, Balfour acknowledged the difficulties of the situation, foreseeing that the Liberal Government would "bring in Bills in a much more extreme form than the moderate members of their Cabinet probably approve." They could expect to have some modifications made by the House of Lords, but would at the same time be able to make a case against the Upper House for such interference in Bills passed by the House of Commons. Balfour, realising that it was "impossible to foresee how each particular case is to be dealt with," was to advise that "we should fight all points of importance very stiffly in the Commons and should make the House of Lords the theatre of compromise" as it "is evident that YOU can never fight for a position which WE have surrendered." (12)

Balfour's position and intentions were clear. He was to use the Conservative majority in the House of Lords in curtailing or amending Government legislation. Although a headlong clash between the Lords and the Commons was an ever-present possibility, and although neither Party desired such a thing, Balfour was not to encourage attempts to evade the challenge, and least of all did he wish to preserve the powers of the House of Lords by declining to exercise them. With certain Government measures a tactful approach and procedure would have to be exercised, the importance of the Bill, and the weight of national opinion backing such proposals would have to be considered.

That the newly elected Government would amend the Education Act of 1902 had not been in any doubt. The Conservatives did not believe that they had lost the election through general dissatisfaction over their own Education Act of 1902. Fitzroy's comments upon the election results state: "A great many causes have contributed to this result, among which I am not disposed to underrate the capital which has been so shamelessly made out
of Chinese Labour; but with all that can be conceded to the resentment of the nonconformists at the educational policy of the late Government, there can be no doubt that the greatest part of the victory has been won upon the fiscal issue." (13)

Similarly Fitzroy was to note that "Stanley attributed his defeat and all the disasters in Lancashire to the uprising of Labour. Working men who had been his supporters for years and had actually been working for him in the earlier stages of the contest, suddenly transferred their allegiance to his Labour opponent on the direction of the Trades Union authority. Stanley does not believe the fiscal question as such had much effect, except in so far as the Labour organisations have for the moment accepted Free Trade as an article of their faith; it was rather the conviction for the first time born in the working classes, that their social salvation is in their own hands and the accident that this conviction happened to coincide with a period of Liberal re-action in the political sense, that gave any party significance to the defeat of Toryism in Lancashire." (14)

Although these conclusions had been reached by Fitzroy, the question of educational reform had been raised at local level during the general election rallies. Liberal candidates had taken the view that all elementary and secondary schools should be under complete popular control and religious tests for teachers should be abolished. Many would press for Teaching Colleges which were supported from public funds to be open to all entrants. (15) The Conservatives believed that the Education Act of 1902 "was working well, and will work better in the future. It was an honest attempt to deal with a very difficult question." (16) They were to claim that "it was a misrepresentation to say there was not popular control of the schools. The County Councils and Borough Councils controlled the schools." (17)
The 'Morning Post' article of 29th December 1905 had reviewed the situation as regards the possible alternatives for educational legislation, seeing only two logical and fair methods under which the Government could proceed. There was that of granting universal denominational teaching in all schools, or alternatively, that of confining all State supported education to secular work only. (18)

The Cabinet had been occupied with the drafting of their Bill from early January, but Lord Ripon, although a Cabinet Minister, refused to take his place on the Cabinet Committee on Education. He subsequently attended when requested at later stages to give his own views and those of the Roman Catholics.

According to Fitzroy, by early February "the Cabinet Committee on the Education Bill had met two or three times this week in the Lord President's room....I heard afterwards that Lord Ripon, having taken the whole time of the Committee in the development of his views, that were in the main contrary to the proposals of his colleagues, concluded with the information that these were his own personal opinions which, as a matter of fact, it was of no great moment to know, and he had no title to speak for the Catholic Hierarchy, which, after all, was the body about whose demands the Government were somewhat anxious." (19)

Those interested parties who were not directly involved had already begun to dictate their own terms for proposed settlements. The leader article of the 'Sunday Times' dated 11th February 1906 was to anticipate the forthcoming struggle, stating: "Intelligent anticipation of the new Bill has made its appearance in various quarters bearing on its surface ominous indications of the controversial calm that precedes the storm." (20)

Local newspapers were to take up this theme, indicating that there could not be a solution which would satisfy all parties. The 'Staffordshire Sentinel' commented: "The Government are anxious to give affect to the
views of the great majority of the Liberals and Nonconformists but they find it extremely difficult to discover any scheme which will have this result, and which will meet the reasonable views of Anglicans and Catholics." (21)

The Nonconformists were in general agreement that they could not forward a measure which would substitute their own grievances for those of Churchmen. The Education Act of 1902 could not be remedied in the minds of many Nonconformists by having a new Bill which would ignore the religious beliefs of others. (22)

At the same time pressure had been put on the Government by the Nonconformists to solve the religious question and it seemed as though the Nonconformists were "determined to exact their pound of flesh, and make the Bill as crude a triumph for ultra-Nonconformity as the complaint was that the last Act had been for the Anglican Episcopate." (23)

The National Free Church Council had already issued a manifesto calling for legislation which would create a national system of education under public control and which would abolish religious tests for teachers. This manifesto had been issued during the election period. (24)

The Established Church had also stated its position having called a meeting of the Council of Associations of Church Schools in March 1906 where they passed a resolution pledging the Council to resist to the utmost (a) any attempt of the Government to force on Church Schools compulsorily and by Act of Parliament any use of those schools inconsistent with, or prejudicial to the object contained in the Trust Deeds; (b) any attempt by the Government to establish and endow exclusively at the expense of the whole community any form of religious education, whether undenominational or otherwise for all schools throughout the country which would place the Bible in the hands of teachers whose belief in the Christian Faith and whose qualifications and ability to
teach religion may not be in any way ascertained. The Council urges all associations to do everything possible to secure support for the foregoing resolutions." (25)

Bishop Gore of Birmingham had also been active on behalf of the Church Schools, holding mass meetings during March to promote the value of such schools, and to argue the case for the extension of the work of the Church into all levels of society, and that this should be based upon a Christian education. (26)

In his Diocesan Magazine for March 1906 the Bishop discussed the Education Question, a part of his article stating:-

"If a fresh departure is to be made in the State policy of education we must claim that the existing situation should be faced, and fair consideration shown both to the principles and to the property of the Church." (27)

He was to state on many occasions throughout the debates on the Education Bill of 1906 that "a secular system of education could never imply to a Churchman an efficient education." (28) This view had the support of many Conservative candidates during the 1906 election period. It is best summarised in the Election Notice of 8th January 1906 in support of the Conservative candidate for the Newcastle Division, Sir Alfred Haslam, M.P., where he stated:-

"The Education Bill passed by the late Government is a measure of great importance, the benefit of which will accrue to the rising generation and cannot be overstated. Religious teaching is preserved, and a measure of justice is being done to Voluntary Schools belonging to the Church of England, the Roman Catholics and the Weslyans." (29)

The case for a system of secular education had been forwarded by Philip Snowden, M.P. and had been widely reported by the press. His article stated:-

"It is still necessary to explain what a system of 'secular' education
means. It does not mean anti-religious education. The advocates of secular education recognises the obvious facts of the situation. There is no such thing possible as "simple religious instruction!" It passes the wit of man to devise a scheme of religious instruction which would be acceptable to all religious bodies. Religious teaching must be dogmatic. If it be not, then its value to the respective sects is gone! Parents who want religious teaching for their children want their own religious teaching and faith inculcating......Although agreement in regard to the character of religious teaching in the schools is impossible, yet it would be no difficult thing to formulate a scheme or syllabus of moral education to which none would object. Secular education does not involve the expulsion of the Bible from the school.....To any liberal education or moral training the Bible must contribute." (30)

As expected, this view was not held by the Roman Catholics or by the Church of England. The Salford Roman Catholic Diocesan Schools Association passed their resolution "never to surrender their schools, no matter what the consequences might be," on 23rd February 1906 (31) the 'Tablet' having commented upon the election results warning that "The speeches of the Liberal Leaders have made it quite certain that if the present Government remains in office they will bring in an amending measure involving far more serious changes." (32)

The fear of adverse changes in educational legislation which might severely affect the Roman Catholic schools had also been echoed by the President of the Birmingham Catholic Reunion (Mr. Justice Walton). In his 1906 January speech to the Reunion he forwarded the case for Roman Catholic schools stating that since 1870 "the number of schools had been continuously increasing. In 1871 they had 383 schools; today (1906) they had 1070. A thousand of these had been built during the past 75 years.......Out of
the 1070 schools the grant was received in respect of 87 only. The total amount of grant received from first to last for those 87 schools was £50,579 and the amount voluntarily subscribed for the building of those schools was £143,612......The whole of their schools had cost something approaching £3,000,000 to build and of that amount one-sixtieth part only had been provided by the State." (33)

Following his speech the following motion was unanimously carried:

"That the Catholics of the Diocese of Birmingham are determined to maintain the tradition which they have inherited from their forefathers of patient, strenuous and self-sacrificing effort in support of all Catholic good works, and especially in providing for and securing the efficient education of their children in Catholic schools." (34)

In similar vein the Newport (Mon.) Diocesan Catholic Association were to issue all their Roman Catholic parents with postcards to be sent to the President of the Board of Education, the cards reading:—

"I declare that I shall never allow my children to attend non-Catholic schools or schools which are Catholic only in name. Moreover as an inviolable right and a vital necessity of my religion I demand and insist on having Catholic schools for Catholic children under Catholic teachers and Catholic management." (35)

The Cabinet were to discuss which of the various alternatives they should adopt in drafting their Bill. One solution — as indicated by the Morning Post (36) — would have been to accept a purely denominational system, whereby all denominations would have equal rights to teach their own beliefs on equal terms. This would have been acceptable to Campbell-Bannerman who held that a "statutory common creed was as objectionable as a statutory specific creed." (37)

However, such a scheme might have meant that religious instruction would have to be placed as a "timetabled" subject in the curriculum which
would not be acceptable to either Roman Catholics or to Anglo-Catholics who held that a religious atmosphere should penetrate the whole of school life. This would only be possible where all pupils were of the same religion, but elsewhere schools would have to classify their pupils into denominational groups and arrange for the "Right of Entry" for ministers of various religions, who, in all probability would be well-meaning amateur teachers. This scheme would undoubtedly disrupt school organisation and would prove unworkable. The alternative to granting "Right of Entry" was the introduction of definite religious tests for teachers. This scheme would be contrary to the Government's election pledge, and would arouse further hostility among the teaching profession, this being one of the main grievances of its Nonconformist members.

The directly opposing view which would call for total secularisation in all rate-aided schools was opposed as the Cabinet were all but unanimous that the complete abolition of religious instruction was not possible, solely on the grounds of the religious tradition of the country.

Thus it was impossible for the Cabinet to adopt either of the main alternatives, and, furthermore, it was apparent that of the denominational schools, those could also be separated into two main categories. There were those of the Jews and Roman Catholics attended almost without exception by children of the same denomination and therefore the teaching was distinctively doctrinal. The Cabinet realised that such schools would probably opt out of any State support if this meant relinquishing their particular brand of religion and their belief that it should permeate the whole of the work of the school. This might also include some Anglican schools.

Birrell had, therefore, to consider any solution which would satisfy such schools - mainly those of the religious minorities - of which he was to claim he had certain sympathies. (38) However, the major conflict
was to be over the vast numbers of denominational schools controlled mainly by the Church of England, many of which were in rural and "single school" areas. Such schools drew their pupils from a variety of denominational groups - Anglicans and Nonconformists - the school still being able to give denominational teaching, although pupils could withdraw from this instruction if requested by parents. Birrell had doubted the efficiency of the Conscience Clause, believing it made parents and children too conspicuous if they wished to withdraw. He was also in favour of the opinion expressed by the Free Churchmen that the Anglican schools in the rural areas should be handed over to public control. (39)

R.B. Haldane was to outline his own proposals in his Memorandum which he submitted to the Cabinet on 12th January 1906. (40) Both he and Lord Crewe were to stress the need for a national system of elementary education but "from the first it was clear that the Nonconformist insistence on getting rid of the Church Schools and their system blocked the way." (41) The Cabinet agreed that "the Church Schools were indeed very deficient. But they could not be abolished at once." (42) Haldane's Memorandum gave two alternatives for discussion. One such method would be to establish a system of national schools by "building, leasing or purchasing them, no other schools to receive any public money." (43) The advantages of buying out the voluntary schools were obvious in that all schools would then be equally efficient; there would be full public control; they would be equally accessible to all; there would be no religious tests; and no ratepayer would feel that he was paying for the support of any one particular type of religious instruction." (44) It was realised that this scheme was too complicated and too costly, "especially as money was urgently wanted for secondary education." (45) The cost was estimated at some £31 million working on a payment of £10 per place in each voluntary school. (46)
the existing system "by putting all rate-aided schools under popular control by giving those that are at present voluntary, the option of complete transfer or establishing the principle of 'no popular control, no rate aid'." (47) Even so it was estimated that the additional cost to the Local Authorities would be approximately £500,000 per year. Lloyd George was to state this would be insufficient, the amount subsequently being agreed at one million pounds. (48)

In his following Memorandum, Lord Crewe believed that this would cause many voluntary schools to opt out - certainly the Jewish and all Roman Catholic schools, and perhaps some Anglican schools - and in fact Haldane's Memorandum would not solve the single school problem. The opting out by a large number of schools would mean that a national system was further away than ever. Lord Crewe was to agree that it was impossible to buy out the voluntary schools, and even in the cases of optional transfer "all the complicated questions connected with rent or purchase and user would have to be faced." (49)

Birrell's own Memorandum for the Cabinet, dated 22nd January, 1906, indicated that Haldane's methods were too harsh, believing that a two year breathing space should be given before any voluntary school could be closed, so by the time this period was completed, "moderate councils would probably prevail." (50) He contended that if the proportions of managers in the voluntary schools were to be reversed this would eventually affect the denominational character of the schools. If a system of opting out were to be used, Birrell was to suggest that such schools should receive neither grant nor rate-aid, as they would now be out of the control of the Local Education Authorities. Schools supported solely by Government grants, he claimed, were always below the mark. Haldane was to argue that any school opting out should still receive Government grants as many would still want to be transferred to the Local Authority at a later date. (51)
It was to be left to Robert Morant to point out that the problem of placing an undenominational school in the reach of every child was not a problem solely confined to the rural areas, but also extended to the towns and cities "in an acute form." (52) The Cabinet were to agree that this appeared to be an additional difficulty. (53) Morant was also to press for changes in the existing Acts to deal with Educational Endowments, of which "a large proportion...is in a position in which it cannot be modernised." (54) The Education Act of 1902, Section 13, had made serious changes to the application of elementary education endowments, but this needed amending as "it had been found almost impossible to apply its provisions in practice." (55) Morant was to point out that this was urgent "if this Government intends causing the voluntary schools as such to cease to exist." (56)

The controversy over the religious teaching in both Local Authority schools and in the non-provided schools was to centre around the position of the teachers; the type of instruction to be given in both types of school; and whether this should take place as part of the curriculum, or solely outside school hours. Haldane was of the opinion that whether schools were "provided" or not, then "religious teaching should be given outside curriculum hours," being in favour of denominational teaching in provided schools, under such an arrangement." (57) The variations and alternatives included no religion at all; or, any kind of religious instruction that the Local Authority directed; or Bible teaching and no other; or the Local Authority to be responsible for secular work only, leaving religious instruction outside the curriculum to be paid for by the denominations; or to allow the Local Authority to undertake Bible teaching, with further denominational teaching outside school hours.

Birrell preferred to allow dogmatic teaching only "to those children whose parents wish it during compulsory hours, though not as part of the
prescribed school curriculum." (58) His alternative was to include elementary religious teaching as part of the ordinary school curriculum but including a conscience clause, and also allowing facilities for dogmatic instruction "possibly on two days per week" in all schools. (59) He was to write: "If we are prepared to offer real facilities for denominational teaching....and not to insist too absolutely upon a compulsory transfer we ought to be able....to effect a settlement for the religious difficulty, and give real education a fair chance." (60)

Birrell was to re-state his opinion at a meeting with Lloyd George and Asquith at the Hotel Metropole at Brighton on 28th January 1906. Lloyd George wished to see Cowper-Temple religious teaching in all schools, but allowing denominational teaching in two days only in the non-provided schools, but all outside school hours. Lloyd George was strongly of the opinion that the transfer of the voluntary schools must be at the option of the Local Education Authority, thus between these two Cabinet members there was no real agreement, although both had discussed Morant's Memorandum of 22nd January concerning administrative and religious problems relating to the Trust Deeds of the voluntary schools. (61)

Although Lord Ripon had declined to attend Cabinet Committee Meetings on Education, he was asked to do so on 6th February when he spoke "only on his own personal behalf as he did not know what the Roman Catholic Hierarchy were prepared to accept; he had avoided asking them - their position was probably that of 'The Tablet'" (62) but Lord Ripon had declared himself to be in favour of Roman Catholic teachers in Roman Catholic schools. These should not have any form of Cowper-Temple teaching, although he was also in favour of Parents' Committees. Both these points were declared by Lloyd George to mean religious tests for teachers.

In fact the position of the Roman Catholics was already well known.
They desired full equality in any post-1902 education system. Archbishop Bourne had declared in 1903 "...those who regard a sound dogmatic teaching as the foundation of all true education should not have less favourable treatment than their fellow citizens." (63)

Following the General Election 'The Tablet' had stated the position of the Roman Catholic schools in relation to the Liberal Government:

"...we do not pretend not to know that the Liberal Party has triumphed at the polls and is pledged to secure complete popular control over the schools. The old machinery may have to go - our task is to reconcile popular control with the inalienable rights of Catholic parents......No settlement of the education question can be lasting or even tolerable for a time, which ignores the rights of Catholic parents." (64)

'The Tablet' had previously stated that "no settlement can be either lasting or national which rides roughshod over the most sacred and cherished convictions of the Catholic body." (65)

The Archbishop of Westminster had acknowledged that the position of the Roman Catholic schools was a difficult one, 'The Tablet' outlining his position as follows:-

"The Archbishop has put it on record that he asks for no separate treatment for our schools, and certainly nothing that has happened in the last twelve months is likely to have induced him to reconsider his position in that respect. To claim a position of privilege, a position which should leave only 'Rome on the rates' is not practical politics." (66)

Archbishop Bourne's Pastoral Letter published on 3rd March had stated the same principles, but added: "We are not wedded to the machinery of the Act, and if you can give us the same results in any other way we shall be quite content." (67)

He was to ask "first for visibly Catholic schools, then for Catholic teachers, and thirdly for effective Catholic supervision of the Religious Instruction given to Catholic children." (68)
That the Roman Catholics were to be determined to fight for their schools was to be left in no doubt. Before the contents of Birrell's Bill were made known, there had been demonstrations organised by Roman Catholics against any moves which might be made against adequate provision for their schools by the Liberal Government.

In Liverpool the Roman Catholic Dioecesan Association which claimed to speak officially for the Roman Catholic population of some 400,000 and for its 167 schools with 80,000 on their rolls passed the following resolution:

"That this meeting views with indignation and alarm expressions made use of by the Minister of Education from which may be inferred as intention to convert all the elementary schools of this country into Nonconformist schools." (69)

In Preston a Roman Catholic rally of protest was called for on 20th February 1906. 'The Preston Guardian' reporting the proceedings, stated:

"An estimate which probably does not err at some 8,000 adults should be sufficient to impress the mind of any statesman as to what Catholic parents think of this religious question ..... We cannot doubt that the demonstration of Tuesday night will have weight in the quarter where it was meant to produce that effect ..... Catholics have not only a right but are under a clear obligation to their consciences to present their case to the Government in the most practical and convincing manner." (70)

The rally was to be followed by a public meeting in the Public Hall where the following resolution (among many) was unanimously agreed:

"That we, the Catholic parents of Preston, regarding our schools, built at the cost of untold sacrifice, as a sacred trust to be defended and preserved intact, hereby pledge ourselves to resist to the utmost of our power any settlement of the education question which takes away from Catholics the right to have for their children Catholic religious instruction during school hours given by Catholic teachers in Catholic schools under Catholic control." (71)
The determination of the Roman Catholics to keep their schools at all costs had been noted by the Anglican Bishop of Manchester, Dr. Knox. At the opening of a new Church of England Infant school in Preston shortly after the Roman Catholic rally he was to declare:

"It was not much use opening that school unless they were determined to keep it......Whatever the plans of the Government might be it was clear from all that they read the Roman Catholic community - all honour to them - meant to stand by their schools and not to surrender them at any price. There was no uncertainty about their utterances - no brag or boast - but a stern determination to bring up their children in the way of their fathers. He honoured them for it." (72)

He was to hope that he would see established "a great league of Church parents who would demand in the name of religious freedom that their children should be brought up in Church schools, with Church teaching under Church teachers." (73)

Michael Sadler, in an open letter to The Times had put forward his own solutions to the problem of establishing a national system of education calling for publicly controlled schools in every district which would afford facilities."...according to parental choice, but not under denominational control," seeing the need for some purely denominational schools, for "a religious tradition transmits itself not through formal instruction only, but through a way of life." (74) These ideals were to form the basis upon which the Education Settlement Committee was to be founded.

Archbishop Davidson had remained outside the election issues over the education question. Morant had visited the Archbishop of Canterbury on 17th December 1905 to give him a brief outline of the main problems concerned with any changes in the Act of 1902, indicating also that negotiations were likely to be lengthy and arduous, Morant claiming the 1902 Bill had been "preceeded by futile chaotic discussions," and was to add that "so far as I was concerned (the Bill) was the construction of a
complete publicly controlled and publicly financed school system in every corner of the country and for all grades of education." (75)

For Morant, the religious controversies both in 1902 and again in 1906 were only of interest in so far as they gave him the opportunity of securing an improvement in educational administration.

By early February the Archbishop announced in an open letter to the Secretary of the National Society that he could not believe that "the problem of reconciling the results of the recent election with the maintenance of the principles for which Churchmen have contended is really insoluble" adding that every power which he possessed was "at the service of those who took such a task fairly and considerately in hand." (76) The more militant Church of England members were not so easily persuaded concerning the Government's intentions. The Church Schools' Emergency League's programme was put into a state of readiness, headed by the Bishop of Manchester (E.A. Knox) and supported by Sir John Gorst, although the 'Daily News' was to declare on 6th February that "the Archbishop of Canterbury intimates that in no practically possible circumstances would Passive Resistance by members of his Church be justifiable." (77) This, however, did not deter the 'Church Times' on 16th February from publishing a letter claiming that "there are thousands of fathers and mothers ready to sign a petition, if it simply claims that our children shall be taught in school the religion we approve." (78)

By 17th February Birrell found it necessary to submit a lengthy Memorandum to the Cabinet outlining what progress had been made towards a draft Bill. (79) He considered the Government to be bound by its two election pledges, i.e. popular control if using public money; and no teacher appointed by the Local Education Authority who was to give instruction in any public elementary school, should be subjected to any kind of religious test.
It was clear that the Cabinet was not agreed over the giving of grants to schools which might opt out. Certainly this would cause controversy if no financial help was made available, but Birrell was to claim that "it is obvious that the State must have the right to disestablish its connection with the schools whenever it thinks right to do so," otherwise, "the partnership could never be dissolved and the present system would be eternal." Birrell's proposals were designed "to destroy for once and for all the distinction between Provided and Non-provided schools - to get rid of it, and to have in the country but one kind of public elementary school, and that a school under complete popular control with teachers subject to no religious test." 

This scheme was, as Birrell realised, fraught with difficulties, for it had been agreed that the country could not make accommodation available elsewhere for the three-and-a-half million children then in the non-provided schools, and of the 14,500 voluntary schools then in use, Morant had pointed out that the Government had to distinguish between three main categories of ownership, even if the Government could force voluntary schools into financial difficulties if they chose to opt out. There were those voluntary schools which were privately owned, there being some 2,652 of these with an average attendance of 275,867 pupils. These schools could not be compulsorily purchased or taken over. Similarly, schools designated as "Trust Property" - approximately the same number as the privately owned schools - could not be compulsorily acquired. These could be sold on the open market if so desired. In both cases such schools could only be taken over by mutual consent. Birrell proposed to offer these schools the repair and maintenance of their whole fabric in return for their use by the Local Education Authority on five day per week. Seven-ninths of the voluntary schools were outside these two groupings. These were the schools held under educational charitable
trusts. If such schools opted out of the Government system, Birrell proposed they should become "Certified Efficient Schools". The alternatives were to allow the Local Education Authority to carry out elementary education for five days per week, or for the schools to alter their Trust Deeds as they were no longer able to conform to them. As most schools of this grouping were held under National Society Trusts, which provided that "the children shall be taught in the principles of the Church of England, and that the teacher shall belong to that denomination," Morant was instructed to obtain an opinion from the Law Officers as to how far the Board of Education "could make a new scheme for Voluntary Public Elementary Schools under Trust, by which the building of such a school should be compulsorily placed at the disposal of the Local Authority."

The reply was favourable to the Government's intentions, holding that "the Courts would not, in our opinion, set aside or refuse to sanction a scheme of this kind established under such circumstances." (84) Birrell, however, did not wish to apply legal compulsion, (85) as this would not finalise the type of religious instruction to be given in these schools. Birrell was of the opinion that in the Church of England schools the catechism was taught either once or twice only during the week, the rest of the scripture being similar to that given in the provided schools. He was to press for reasonable facilities "for denominational instruction in all the public elementary schools of the country." (86) In this way it should be possible to provide denominational teaching in all schools where demanded by parents, and if paid for by the denominations. Birrell thought this would help his Bill to gain the support of the denominations which held the voluntary schools, although realising at the same time that the Nonconformists would oppose such a measure as they desired no provision for facilities in any State or rate-aided schools. (87)

Even if such proposals were accepted by the Cabinet, there was still the problem of the teacher to overcome. It was the Government's intent-
ion to abolish any form of religious tests for any teacher in State
supported schools, thus Birrell in line with this policy was to state in
his Memorandum: "The ordinary teacher should not be allowed to give the
facilities instruction, since were he available for that purpose, it would
be said that his chance of getting the appointment as teacher would in
many cases be made to depend upon the expression of his willingness to
teach the catechism." (88)

However, Birrell did propose that the undenominational teaching should
be given as part of the State system by the ordinary teacher, for "if no
religious teaching at all is to be given by the ordinary teachers, it is
not too much to say that a secular system would practically follow." (89)
This had not been his intention. He was to write later:-
"I knew, or at least I thought I knew, that the religious teaching
in our primary schools, clerical, no less than State provided, was as
conducted, day in and day out, inadequate, impoverished and uninspiring
At times it hardly seemed worth fighting for - yet to give it up would
have been worse, even if it had been possible." (90)

The Cabinet was still faced with the problem of the Roman Catholic
schools, which would opt out of any Government system so far proposed,
and which would then be faced with grave financial difficulties. Birrell
was aware - if only through the opinion expressed by Lord Ripon (91) that
Roman Catholics would demand their own teachers to give the religious
instruction. He was to state: "It is, however, supposed to be im-
possible to offer to the Church of Rome terms which are not offered to
the Church of England" (92) and was to express an opinion on behalf of
the Catholics and Jews that allowances should be made whereby these
minorities "should be entitled to ask that denominational teaching should
be given in these schools." (93)

Lord Crewe still wished for a general national system whereby schools
opting out of the State system would receive neither rates nor grants. Within the State system he agreed with Birrell in that religious instruction in all State supported schools should be of the Cowper-Temple variety, together with a conscience clause, agreeing also that facilities could be allowed by the Local Education Authority twice per week "if demanded by not less than 20 parents" and being taught between 9.00 a.m. and 9.45 a.m. (94) Ordinary teachers would not be permitted to give denominational or facilities teaching, and the 1903 (Anson) Byelaw No.3 approved by the Board of Education enabling parents to withdraw their children from the school building during the period of religious instruction was to be continued.

Thus Lord Crewe, as Lord President of the Council, and spokesman in the House of Lords on educational matters, and Mr. Birrell, the spokesman in the Commons were practically united in their agreement on the main outline of religious instruction in the proposed Bill.

Both the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church had had forebodings concerning the new Liberal Government and what they understood to be its policy regarding education.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, Archbishop Bourne, in an open letter to 'The Times' expressed the accepted Roman Catholic view that "a Catholic education implied three things - Catholic schools, Catholic teachers and effective Catholic oversight of all that pertains to religious teaching." (95) This was to be repeated in his Lenten Pastoral, printed in 'The Tablet' on 1st April 1906. The Catholic Education Council had also passed the following resolution in March:

"Any proposal to lease, rent, or assign Catholic schools to the Local Education Authority cannot but be viewed with grave anxiety, and that any such proposal which conflicts with their Catholic character must be rejected." (96)

Sydney Smith on behalf of the Roman Catholics had asked for Cabinet
consideration over their schools, claiming that if they were to opt out of a State system they would still deserve a share of the taxes and rates, "in view not of the religious, but of the secular education given in them." (97)

Likewise the Jewish voluntary schools through their Association sent a deputation to Birrell on behalf of their 11,425 pupils to state they felt "the religious teaching at present given in provided schools is not adequate for the needs of the Jewish children." (98)

This view was not shared by Dr. Clifford who objected to preferential treatment, declaring: "It is wholly wrong that the law should be called upon to assist actively in bringing up children in the faith of their parents." (99)

The Archbishop's letter to the National Society had stressed that the Established Church could not accept "the withdrawal of the right to carry out principles which for more than half a century successive Governments of all parties have encouraged us to maintain." (100) Both the Lower and Upper Houses of the Canterbury Convocation meeting between 20th and 22nd February 1906 were to support the full claims of the Church of England in its role of educator to some three million children. The Lower House of Convocation passed the following resolution at its meeting on 20th February 1906:

"That in the opinion of this house, no system of national education is worthy of acceptance, or will commend itself to the public mind, which does not have regard to the religious element in the training of the young." (101)

The Upper House, likewise, meeting on 21st February, had moved:

"No scheme of national education can be established with justice or accepted as permanent unless full recognition is given to the rights of parents to obtain for their children...instruction in their own faith; that such instruction must, if it is to serve its purpose, be given
within school hours and that it is a moral necessity that all religious instruction should be given by those who can give it with genuine belief."  

The Upper House were to be concerned over the lack of some form of religious tests for teachers "as it was necessary that they should undergo tests in order that it might be ascertained that they were capable of honestly conveying the instruction which they were required to convey." In the same meeting the Bishop of Winchester was to state that "the Church ought not to be ashamed to insist on the right to ascertain that those in whose hands the teaching of religion was to be placed should be able to teach it honestly and fairly." 

These authoritative statements, supported unanimously by the Upper House of the Canterbury Convocation, were conveyed by the Archbishop to the Prime Minister and to Birrell. The Archbishop in his letter dated 22nd February to Birrell was to write that the Resolutions now had been agreed upon by all the Bishops of the Province and that Birrell would "find that no word was spoken otherwise than in a spirit of open-minded readiness to consider respectfully any proposals which...the Government may make for amending the existing Education Acts, provided that the principles embodies in the Resolutions are adequately safeguarded." 

By late February the Cabinet Committee were able to furnish a more complete draft statement of their Education Bill, though this did not necessarily mean that many clauses would remain unaltered. It had been agreed that there should no longer be two types of school supported by rates of taxes. All State supported schools were to be under public control, but such schools were not to be purely secular. The Local Education Authority could provide undenominational teaching and this should be permitted "in some way or other, not only in ex-voluntary schools, but in ALL schools alike."
There was however the problem of those schools which could show the suggested 4/5th majority of pupils of the same denomination as to whether the Local Authority might be empowered to allow the denominational teaching to be given by the ordinary teacher on the whole of the five school mornings of the week, as this "would go far to meet the Catholic difficulty without naming the Catholics as such, or giving them as such, special treatment." (107)

The draft Bill of 26th February 1906 stated that schools would not be recognised as Public Elementary Schools unless they were under the full control of the Local Education Authority, complying with the provisions as laid down in the Bill, such schools not being subject to any special trust or conditions. Provision was also made for denominational instruction on two days per week if the parents of 20 or more children asked for such instruction, and other children need not attend school during the times when such instruction was taking place. The Local Authorities could, if they wished, permit teachers to give this religious instruction. (108)

This draft outline was to be worked upon by the Cabinet Committee, the required clauses being drafted by Morant and Thring. Throughout the following weeks Birrell was to receive deputations and resolutions from all parts of the country, each expressing separate views as to what the Government should achieve through its intended legislation. The Nonconformists had outlined their proposals which they hoped would form a part of the Government's Bill. At their National Council Meeting on 3rd March 1906 their resolutions called for the abolition of religious tests for teachers, following the banning of all denominational teaching within school hours, and they were to continue to press for an end to the dual system, replacing it with a uniform system of publicly provided and publicly controlled elementary schools. (109)
Birrell and the majority of the Cabinet were agreed that it was necessary to curb the influence of the Church of England particularly in the single school rural areas, and would have welcomed the means of ending the dual system by putting all schools under the same control with the same management, control and religious education provisions. It was impossible to achieve such a drastic measure, thus the solution was the inevitable compromise.

The Roman Catholic Education Committee under the Chairmanship of the Duke of Norfolk, had passed its resolution on 14th March condemning any proposals which "did not safeguard the Catholic character of the Catholic schools." Lord Ripon, whose attendance had been requested at a number of Cabinet Committee meetings, had found himself, as a Roman Catholic, in an unenviable position, but as the Bill was finally drafted he was able to claim that "in it denominational influence" it had been "the subject of various compromises between himself and Birrell and he was disposed to regard it in substance as a reasonable measure." (111)

Although the Cabinet were agreed that it was necessary to break the existing dual system and that a scheme of voluntary transfer would go far to achieve this, this in itself would not solve the single-school problem and the religious instruction issue in many rural areas. There were various possible alternatives, "none of which could please all their supporters and all of which were open to legitimate objections." (112)

The draft Bills prior to the First Reading on 9th April therefore included a clause which allowed the Local Authority "to afford extended facilities for religious instruction...in any transferred voluntary school in an urban area." (113) This was to be the subject of certain provisions including the results of a ballot as to the wishes of parents and that there would be "sufficient accommodation in schools not affected
by a permission under this section." (114)

By 20th March Lord Crewe and Birrell considered the draft proposals to be sufficiently agreed upon to discuss them with the Archbishop of Canterbury at a meeting in the House of Lords. Birrell, in outlining the Government's policy as regards the voluntary schools and the religious instruction stated that the draft proposals would require that all schools receiving any form of grant would have to have popular control, the Local Authority being empowered to rent the denominational schools if they so wished. Birrell had set the population figure at 7,000 as the minimum for an urban area, and a 3/5ths majority of parents demanding fully denominational schools, providing other schools were within reach, but this was still under consideration by the Cabinet. (115)

From the Archbishop's notes on this meeting it is clear that the proposed Bill contained a clause which would enable denominational teaching to take place in the provided schools, in addition to their own undenominational teaching, although paid for by the denominations concerned. The Archbishop's note is as follows:-

"In provided schools, the normal teaching shall be as under the present law, the L.E.A. being allowed to arrange for anything between pure secularism and, e.g. the London School Board Syllabus. But the L.E.A. shall have power if it likes, to allow denominational facilities, paid for by the denomination on two days in the week." (116)

The Archbishop was to point out that as the Clause was then drafted, it did mean that the Local Education Authority could in fact refuse to allow these facilities if it so desired, and stressed that this should be made a compulsory clause. He also wished to clarify what two periods of denominational teaching would mean for the teacher, Lord Crewe replying that as the Clause then stood a teacher could give denominational teaching on more than two days per week, but it was each class that could receive
such instruction twice only. (117)

This could have been an acceptable solution both for the Roman Catholics, who with a 3/5th majority only would undoubtedly be able to retain practically the whole number of their existing schools, and also for the Anglicans who would be able to extend their denominational teaching on two mornings per week into the provided schools, if this was made mandatory upon the Local Authorities to allow them these facilities.

It was hoped by both Birrell and Lord Crewe that such Clauses would also satisfy the other members of the Cabinet Committee when they met the following day - 21st March - but this was not to be. Lloyd George was strongly against any form of compromise, (118) taking the view of the Free Church Council that the Bill should free teachers from all denominational tests, leaving religious instruction as an undenominational form of Bible teaching. This policy also had the support of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. (119) The Cabinet were acutely aware of their election promises to free all teachers from religious tests, which would hardly be possible under the clauses as then drafted, and also their desire to free the country from the dual system. Birrell was to state later to the Welsh National Liberal Council:-

"The question of the non-provided schools is not quite so clear as it would be, were it plain that the L.E.A.'s were ready and willing to provide at their own expense accommodation for children who at present went to these schools." (120)

It was thought that the 3/5ths majority clause suggested for the fully denominational schools would encourage too many schools to remain fully denominational. Thus, between 21st and 24th March the Bill was radically altered in Committee. The main changes affecting the Church of England's interest and those of the Roman Catholics were the substitution
of 4/5ths in place of the 3/5ths, and the clause enabling Local Authorities to allow facilities in provided schools was removed, while in the transferred voluntary schools these facilities were to be made entirely obligatory. (121)

Neither Lord Crewe nor Birrell were confident that such drastic changes would in any way be acceptable to the Churches. Lord Crewe wrote to the Archbishop almost immediately on 24th March giving a brief outline of the important modifications, writing:-

"Without troubling you with details on minor points, I must tell you that it has now been decided NOT to confer upon the Local Authority the option of permitting facilities in what are now provided schools." (122)

The Archbishop was, understandably, displeased with the outcome of the Cabinet meetings, and requested that Robert Morant should visit him at Lambeth Palace to discuss the situation with him on 25th March. The same day the Archbishop replied to Lord Crewe, stating:-

"The main principle of compensation which had - with an obvious wish to be fair - been introduced into your plan now disappears altogether, and this of course alters at one stroke the whole aspect of the Government policy....This is a sweeping change indeed." (123)

After his interview with Morant the Archbishop was to note that "Morant is in a condition of semi-despair about the Bill and its authors," laying much of the blame on Birrell who "keeps vacillating and shirking the difficult points and....is slack and lacking in real business power for dealing with so big a question." (124) The same memorandum notes that Morant appeared to have very little respect for the other members of the Cabinet and their dealings with the Education Bill.

The Committee Meeting on 23rd March had made it clear that compromise was needed even within the senior members of the Government. Fitzroy noted in his Memoirs for that date that "Lord Crewe tells me the Govern-
ment are having a great difficulty with the nonconformists over the Education Bill. In return for their contribution to the ministerial majority, they seem determined to exact their pound of flesh and make the Bill as crude a triumph for ultra-Nonconformity as the complaint is that the last Act was for the Anglican Episcopate. Lloyd George who had accepted a compromise, is now pressing his colleagues to make large concessions and the whole problem is still in the melting pot. Crewe takes a very sensible view in treating this Bill too exclusively from the aspect of party requirements, and it would seem as if the only possible compromise will be on the lines which will impose a very serious financial burden on the ratepayers, when it will quickly appear that pockets are even more sensitive than consciences." (125)

Lord Crewe and the Archbishop were to meet at the House of Lords on the following day (26th March) to discuss further the Government's decision concerning the withdrawal of facilities. Lord Crewe was to state that in the Cabinet Committee he had expressed his surprise and regret that "the Government should have decided otherwise." (126) The Archbishop was to point out that the position he had then taken "was cut away if they now deprive me of the argument I had always used, that the Government was sure to try to act fairly." (127)

The Archbishop noted that Lord Crewe was "crestfallen and obviously disappointed at the turn matters had taken." (128) Later in the evening of 26th March the Archbishop was to press his views upon Asquith, stating:-

"Let the Government introduce a Bill grossly unfair to the Church and the whole ground is cut away from under my feet in urging moderation on the part of the denominationalists." (129)

Birrell was also dissatisfied with the result of the recent Cabinet Committee Meetings, but Campbell-Bannerman in reporting to the King at the end of March was to avoid all references to possible friction either
inside the Cabinet or elsewhere, stating:

"The Cabinet believes that while remedying the injustices in the previous Act which they have promised to remove, the provisions of the Bill will meet the reasonable desires of moderate Churchmen, especially of laymen, and will at the same time guard as far as possible the interests of Catholic Schools." (130)

Birrell was aware of the implications to the Anglican Church that his clause proposing that undenominational religion should be given in all schools - except the 4/5th schools - with facilities to be given for more definite denominational teaching on certain days on all schools, had ceased to be possible. This clause had been struck out, and Birrell was to claim that "the proposed new system is a dual system, consisting of Cowper-Temple schools without facilities and the old voluntary schools as may be transferred under the Bill, where facilities are made obligatory." (131) Thus the Clause was to read as follows:

"The Local Education Authority shall afford reasonable facilities for permitting special Religious Instruction to be given on not more than two days a week....in any public elementary school which is a transferred voluntary school." (132)

The Archbishop was to meet Lord Crewe again in the House of Lords on 2nd April where it was confirmed that the Cabinet had not re-considered those clauses concerning facilities, thus the position of the provided schools' facilities were to remain unchanged. (133)

Again in the House of Lords the Archbishop met Birrell on 3rd April where he asked if it was finally settled that no facilities would be allowed in provided schools, and that no teachers would be allowed to give ordinary facilities instruction. (134) Birrell was to reply that he "feared that it was so, but it was not his wish, and that as regards teachers he hoped that it would mean the head-teacher only." (135)
The Archbishop was also to note that Birrell thought the Bill as it then stood would be modified during its passage. This was also the opinion of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman when he met the Archbishop on 4th April whose statement concerning modifications was quickly taken up by the Archbishop who replied that the Government would then "be throwing the responsibility on the House of Lords, for it will pass readily enough through the Commons." (136)

Balfour had also believed that the moderate members of the Government would rely upon the House of Lords to modify the more radical measures in any Bill, writing to Lord Lansdowne on 13th April, "I do think the House of Lords will be able to escape the duty of making serious modifications to important Government measures." (137)

The Government members were also aware that the House of Lords was certain to be involved in conflict with the Commons. Lord Ripon, writing to Lord Loreburn on 11th May stated that he hoped that "if we are to break with them, it is surely most important that it should be on some large question in which strong public interest is felt." (138)

The Archbishop was again to call Morant for interview on 4th April to hear his opinion on what support the Cabinet was giving to the Education Bill as it then stood. Again the Archbishop noted that Morant "was in considerable distress about the whole situation," and that "none of the members are indignant at the line the majority has taken," this including Asquith, Birrell and Lord Crewe. (139) The Bill was not to go before the Cabinet again and "Birrell was cross and despondent saying that the Bill will be thrown out in the Lords." (140) Morant had also stated that the Bill was, in his opinion, "so clumsy in its plan and so sweeping in its anti-Church trend that the Opposition has a magnificent opportunity if it only knows how to use it." (141) The Archbishop had replied that "he had no wish to make Conservative gains," but he regarded the attitude
of the Government as "disastrous in the public interest." (142)

Several of the Cabinet members felt that the Bill could have been less harsh, as it appeared to be framed in such a manner as "to provoke the maximum degree of opposition from the outset, and to leave the Government with very little room for subsequent manoeuvre." (143) Later, Birrell was to repudiate the Bill as his own, describing it "really Lloyd George's drafting forced on him by a Cabinet majority." (144)

During the new few days the draft proposals were circulated among certain leading Liberal M.P.'s who were alarmed on two main points of the Bill. These were outlined by the Prime Minister in his letter to Lord Ripon, dated 7th April 1906, pointing out that the Bill must contain "an explicit forbidding of tests for teachers," for "unless it is included in the terms, great hostility will be created," and secondly that the facilities in non-provided schools "should be out of school hours, so as not to be defrayed by public money." (145)

Campbell-Bannerman was to call a Cabinet Meeting before Birrell made his speech on the First Reading on 9th April 1906. Thus the final draft was not completed until 8th April, this then becoming the Bill for the First Reading. Much of the controversy surrounding the Bill had centred around those Clauses which affected denominational interests. Throughout the drafting stages Morant had co-operated with the Cabinet although he "must have seen that the extra cost of maintaining or replacing the Church schools would seriously handicap the Local Authorities in their attempts to remedy the shortage of secondary schools." (146) Morant had stressed that if this Section (Part II) of the Bill of 1906 were to be unacceptable or dropped, then it would be necessary "to consider afresh how to meet the difficulties of amending schemes from endowments. Morant had seen an opportunity to re-phase the working of the Education Act of 1902, as the Liberal Government had no intention of replacing the existing
Local Education Authorities by the re-introduction of a School Board type of authority. Morant had found that under Section 13 of the 1902 Act some difficulty was being experienced "in affording to the Local Authority any adequate share of the income from endowments." In his memorandum of 22nd January 1906 he had emphasised that Section 7 of the 1902 Act had provided that the Local Authority "shall maintain a non-provided elementary school only so long as certain conditions are complied with," but in cases of infringement the only real power available to the Local Authority was "to refuse to maintain the school." (147)

Morant had, therefore, used this opportunity to strengthen the administrative element of the 1902 Act, but had found difficulty in working with the members of the Cabinet Committee, particularly with Birrell, the Archbishop having noted that "Birrell keeps wanting to throw on Morant and Thring - the draftsmen - the responsibility for settling difficult points, and they have to re-iterate every day that they can draught nothing until they know what is the policy which they are to embody in the Clause." (148) Birrell, on the other hand, had found that "this was excellent and bracing company," but as regards the preliminary negotiations and meeting with deputations he had found his work like that "of missionaries among the heathen" for "the work upon which all these good people were engaged seemed to lie outside the regular life and daily interests of the actual inhabitants of the land." (149)

The Bill, even before being presented to Parliament for its First Reading had neither the full approval of the whole Cabinet (150) nor were Morant and Thring satisfied with many of the existing clauses. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster had expressed his own dissatisfaction with the religious instruction clauses after being shown these on 6th April, and Archbishop Davidson's opinions were well known by the Cabinet.
The Cabinet, in order to fulfill their election pledges were attempting to redress the balance in education in favour of the Nonconformists, but the new Labour Members of Parliament were more prepared to press for a strictly secular system of education as outlined in the T.U.C. Education Bill which had been introduced in the House of Commons by Will Thorne on 2nd April 1906. In view of the impending Government Bill the T.U.C. Bill was withdrawn but it made provision for full local control with no financial support for any denominational school, the instruction in all State-aided schools being secular only, thereby releasing teachers from any form of denominational tests. This Bill also included a "medical examination and treatment" clause.

The Cabinet could hardly expect the Labour Party M.P.'s to support fully the Government Bill as it was not in any sense a secular Bill, but the Cabinet had been agreed that "English opinion was not ripe for the abolition of State religious instruction." Birrell had also declared that "nothing would have induced me to make myself responsible for a Bill that sought to banish King James' Version....from the primary schools of England." The Government Bill was likely to satisfy no party. It was essentially a compromise measure based on the necessity of redeeming the Government's promise, the initial object of which was "to meet the grievances of the passive resisters." The Government were quite prepared to accept amendments to their Bill and both Campbell-Bannerman and Birrell were fully aware that this was inevitable, not only in the House of Commons where the Liberal Party had an outright majority, but also in the House of Lords where the Liberal peers would be almost powerless to resist any Conservative amendments.

The Bill was considered to be ready to be introduced for its First Reading on 9th April 1906. As it had been clearly impossible to re-
establish the School Board system after a lapse of four years, the County and County Borough Councils were to remain as the authorities for all grades of education. The main feature was, as expected, the abolition of the existing dual system, by establishing a uniform system of public elementary schools having to hand themselves over to the Local Authority unless they chose to carry on without any public support. The only concession made to their previous denominational character was that the Local Authority might allow special facilities on two mornings per week in such transferred schools. Alternatively, extended facilities could be given at the cost to the denomination concerned on each day, if, after public inquiry the parents of 4/5ths of the pupils expressed a wish for it. Thus there were to be two types of denominational schools - the moderate, and the extreme of 'atmosphere' denominational school.

In the first type of school the regular teachers were excluded from giving denominational instruction, and in the second type of school the Local Authorities might if they thought fit, permit teachers to give such instruction. In both types of school the option of giving instruction as a result of transfer was to rest with the local authorities who were to pay rent for the schools thus transferred.

The first category of school, described as Clause III Schools was intended to include the majority of Anglican schools, the second category or Clause IV Schools was intended to include the smaller number of Roman Catholic schools and the twelve Jewish schools and a minority of Anglican schools. The intention was to make the undenominational or moderately denominational school only where it existed over and above the ordinary school supply of the district. To qualify for EXTENDED facilities two conditions had to be upheld, these being that 4/5ths of the parents of the pupils attending the school must ask for these facilities, and secondly, that the school must be situated in an urban area with over 5,000 inhabitants. In general, any existing school which was a denominational school
wherever it was situated and however small the demand might apply for ordinary facilities but before a school could claim extended facilities it must be both urban in situation, and homogeneous in character.

The conscience clause (Clause 6) of the Bill stated that a parent should not be under any obligation to send his child to school except during the times allowed in the timetable exclusively to secular education. Birrell hoped this Clause would prove to be more effective for Nonconformists than the previous conscience clause had been.

In the Commons, Campbell-Bannerman was to describe the Bill as "an undenominational Bill setting up an undenominational system" and it was this undenominational principle behind the Bill which seemed to the Conservatives to be like the endowment of a new religion. The Bill in fact had been designed to eliminate the Anglican monopoly in the rural and single school areas, and in its original form the Bill dealt harshly with the denominations, for it gave them no security that their schools would be accepted as either Clause III or Clause IV schools.

The main provision affecting the voluntary schools with regard to control, teachers and religious instruction were as follows:-

(a) As from 1st January 1908 no school would be recognised as a public elementary school unless provided by the Local Education Authority. (see Clause 1)

(b) The Local Education Authority may arrange to take over voluntary schools by agreement with the Managers, and may obtain schemes for the compulsory transfer in certain circumstances. (Clause 2)

(c) No teacher was to be employed in a public elementary school who would be required as part of his duties to give any religious instruction, and was not to be required to subscribe to any religious creed. (Clause 8(2).)

Thus in public elementary schools there were to be no religious
tests, staff appointments were to be made by the Local Education Authorities based upon secular qualifications only.

(d) Undenominational teaching (Cowper-Temple type) may be given in all schools — both transferred and provided — and could be given by the teacher (unless he pleaded conscientious objection) at the discretion of the Local Education Authority. Thus in such schools undenominational teaching could be given by teachers who might or might not be qualified to give it.

(e) Denominational teaching may be given on two days per week in the transferred schools, if this was made a condition of transfer, but not at the cost of the State, nor by the regular members of the teaching staff. (Clause 3)

This provision was inserted to meet the point that, if the teacher had the option, he would be practically under compulsion since in most cases he would be unable to decline without disqualifying himself for the appointment.

(f) Extended facilities for denominational teaching may be given in transferred schools in urban areas with a population of over 5,000 where the Local Authorities were satisfied after a public inquiry that at least 4/5ths of parents had desired such facilities. In such schools the regular teachers were to be allowed to give the denominational teaching, but not at the expense of the Authority, and only if the teacher was willing and permitted by the Local Authority to do so. (Clause 4)

These extended facilities were included to meet the case of the homogeneous schools, mainly the Roman Catholic and Jewish schools, or a minority of Church of England schools.

Thus the Bill distinguished between the two types of existing denominational school. The Clause 4 schools would be able to remain
denominational in character, even though maintained out of public funds.

For the rest, where the Local Authority was to assume all responsibility for the fabric, the buildings were to remain at the disposal of their owners in the evenings and on Saturdays and Sundays. The Bill was aimed at forcing the majority of Church of England schools, and those in the rural areas, to become Clause 3 schools. Three Commissioners were to be appointed to arrange terms for the transfer of voluntary schools held under educational trusts where the owners were unable to come to a voluntary agreement with the Local Authority.

Thus the original Liberal policy for a National plan for State schools was only partially fulfilled by the Bill. The intention was to make the Clause 3 schools the normal type of available school together with provided schools allowing purely denominational schools only where sufficient school accommodation was available in the Clause 3 or the provided schools. The system as outlined by Birrell could hardly claim to unify the existing system as the Bill made provision for three types of elementary school. There were the purely denominational schools (Clause 4); the transferred schools with limited facilities (Clause 3); and also the existing Local Authority schools with no facilities. For all public elementary schools Birrell had included a conscience clause, under which the parents would "not be under any obligations to cause the child to attend at the schoolhouse except during the times allotted in the timetable exclusively to secular education. (Clause 6).

The Bill to be outlined by Birrell in the Commons was therefore much changed from the draft outlines shown to the Archbishop in March. An indication of the interest that this Bill had given rise to is shown that when, on 9th April 1906, "the mildest revolutionary who ever came out of the University of Cambridge" (157) introduced the Education Bill to a full House of Commons, the Archbishop of Canterbury together with the Archbishop
of York sat over the clock in the Peers' Gallery, and Archbishop Bourne was in the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery. Behind him sat Dr. Clifford, "like some alert schoolmaster who had come to listen, fearful, perhaps that his teaching might have been ignored." (158)

Birrell's speech was to outline the Government measure, realising at once that the religious instruction clauses would attract the most attention. (159) He was able to claim that the Bill was a Liberal pledge and that it was also a natural consequence of the 1902 Act, stating that "the Act of 1902 held the Bill of 1906 within its arms, many saw it there." (160) He was to state that the "abolition and destruction of this vexatious dual system will come as a great relief" (161) to those most concerned with education. To repudiate the accusations of the denominationalists he was to claim that the former school board religious instruction was not a nonconformist invention or religion, as many Local Education Authorities had now permitted the use of syllabuses agreed upon by "good and pious men of every creed." (162) Such instruction, he claimed, was "in conformity with, suits the needs of, and has secured the approval of the large majority of the Protestant population of this country." (163) The only alternatives were either to offer denominational education for all creeds, which was not possible; or to "banish the opening prayer, to silence the familiar hymn and to exclude the Bible save in elegant extracts." (164)

Of the transferred schools Birrell was to stress that there could be "no contracting out of public control and all that public control means, and no contracting out of the obligation on the part of the Authority to maintain the fabric." (165) He thought, therefore, it would be advantageous for the voluntary schools to transfer themselves as their owners would still retain their sole and exclusive possession with freedom of use on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as weekly evenings in return for
the maintenance of the whole cost of the permanent upkeep of the building.

In his explanation of the Government proposal that teachers in the
Clause 3 schools would not be permitted to teach the facilities religious
instruction, Birrell was to explain that this would have meant religious
tests for teachers, but "if this should happen to be given by the clergy-
man of the parish, that, after all, would only be restoring to that
important person what has always been his canonical duty." (166) The
Bill was not to exchange the existing religious instruction in the exist-
ing provided schools, all teaching of a religious character being "optional
with the Local Education Authorities." Birrell was to add that most Local
Education Authorities did make some provision for a form of religious
instruction, but "it would not have been possible to make these facilities
compulsory" without conflict between the Board of Education and the Local
Education Authorities. (167)

In explaining the provision made under Clause 4, Birrell was to point
out that the remaining fraction of children (1/5th or less) need not attend
such denominational teaching. There was also the Conscience Clause (Clause
6) which, however, would "not meet the necessities, real or supposed" of the
Jews and Roman Catholics. (168) As Birrell said, "All minorities must
suffer. It is the badge of their tribe." (169) Clause 4 was intend-
ed to give such minorities a chance of retaining some of their schools with
Government aid at the same level as the provided schools.

Of the schools which were to opt out of Local Authority control,
Birrell was to state that they could become a "certified efficient" school,
which was "a school within the law in this sense, that to attend it is to
obey the law, but it does not receive assistance from the rates or taxes."
Throughout his speech Birrell was to emphasise that the Bill was in no
way a secular Bill, but that the Government was to call an end to religious
tests for teachers, and to put the Local Authorities in over-all control
of schools which were supported by grants and rates. (170)
Thus the Education Bill was presented by Birrell to the Commons, the immediate re-actions being varied, ranging from those of the Labour Party supporters who had expected a Bill nearer to their own secular Bill which they had withdrawn, to the denominationalists who saw their schools being starved out of financial existence by the Liberal Bill.

The Bill at once became the centre of the strongest opposition on the part of Churchmen, both Anglican and Roman Catholic. Most outspoken of all was to be Bishop Knox of Manchester - formerly the Archbishop's coach at Oxford - who had followed Birrell's opening speech in the House of Commons. Birrell's election speeches had promised that the voluntary schools would be secured, but the First Reading had made it quite clear that nothing of the kind was now contemplated. Bishop Knox was to write later, "Birrell had brought in a Bill which, no doubt, seemed to him a charter of religious freedom," but Knox claimed that under it "there must be an end of all compulsory religion. Neither was any Local Education Authority to be bound to provide for any religious instruction, nor any teacher to give it, nor any child whose parent objected, to receive it." (172)

The Archbishop likewise was to condemn the Bill in an open letter to the National Society on 10th April, referring especially to "the compulsory silencing of thousands of trained qualified and devoted teachers in Church Schools" so far as denominational teaching was concerned if the Bill became law. (173) He had written on the same day to the Vicar of Eccles that he "was not happy about the new Bill, and yet...do not feel without hope that it can be made into something workable. I think that the Government is open to pressure." (174)

The Bishops also declared their opposition to the Bill at a meeting with the Archbishop on 11th April. This opposition was to cause problems for the Archbishop in presenting a united front from which to voice their
Opposition to the Bill. Davidson was to note that "some wished to adopt a firm and uncompromising attitude to kill the Bill altogether. This 'no surrender' policy was pursued by the Bishop of Manchester, Dr. Knox who issued his own manifesto denouncing the Bill under the terms that "it imposes religious tyranny...it is nothing but a very thinly veiled Bill for secularism in the schools....it is a Bill of pure robbery and confiscation." (175)

The following statement was issued by the Bishops at the end of this meeting:

"A meeting of the Bishops of the English and Welsh dioceses was held yesterday at Lambeth Palace. Thirty-two Bishops were present. The following resolution was passed:

"The Bishops without entering as yet into the details of the Government's Education Bill which today has been published, feel bound to express at once their conviction that the Bill as it at present stands must be met with unhesitating opposition." (176)

Dr. Knox was to organise a large scale demonstration in London to protest against the Bill and wished to use the Lambeth Palace grounds as a meeting point for his united demonstration, but Davidson was against the whole idea of mass rallies, writing to Knox on 24th April: "Personally I doubt whether that mode of demonstration is the most effective, but I am old-fashioned in such things and may quite possibly be wrong. We could not have a camp at Lambeth." (177)

By 13th April the Archbishop had written to King Edward VII - then in Athens - complaining that the account given to him of the Bill's provisions before the First Reading were "more favourable to the Church than the actual text as laid before the House of Commons," and although the Commons "might accept some modifications in the sense which he desired," he was still anxious to work "towards an amicable, reasonable and permanent solution."(178)
The King was to reply that he was "much interested in reading the Archbishop's letter which is an excellent one. He has not been well treated by the Government.....The conduct of the Government in the matter is, by the Archbishop's letter, most Jesuitical." (179)

The Archbishop's letter had expressed his own dismay at the Bill, and this had resulted in the King minuting his own comment that "the Bill is most unfair and dangerous and instead of smoothing matters, will produce violent dissensions between the Church of England and the Roman Catholics on the one side, and the Nonconformists on the other. In fact a kind of political-religious warfare will ensue which is most undesirable." (180)

The Prime Minister had also written "a seven line account" on the proceedings of 9th April to the King, upon which the King had scrawled "What valuable information!" (181) He had then written to Lord Esher stating: "This new Education Bill is deplorable and has driven the Church of England and the Roman Catholics to despair. What can the Government be thinking of - in excluding teaching religion in our schools? Do they wish to copy the French? I look with considerable alarm to the way the Prime Minister is going on, and needless to say, he never brings anything before me - never consults me in any way." (182)

The Archbishop had reviewed the possible policies which he could adopt. His own Memorandum dated 11th April shows three possible approaches. (183) He could take an attitude of uncompromising opposition, or alternatively he could confine his amendments to points of detail. The third approach would be to outwardly oppose the whole Bill but to gain concessions over the employment of teachers for denominational teaching in Clause 3 schools, and to modify the 4/5ths Clause. If possible he would press for access into provided schools and to have a guarantee of no secularisation by the Local Education Authority in the transferred schools.
In contrast to the position of the Church of England, and in particular to that of Archbishop Davidson who foresaw the need for compromise, the Roman Catholic opinion was to remain firm. The Archbishop of Westminster, in his Lenten Pastoral, had already stated:

"What then is our claim? A Catholic education, and not a Protestant education, whether the latter be expressed in its simplest or in its most highly developed terms. A Catholic education implies three things: Catholic schools; Catholic teachers; effective Catholic oversight of all that pertains to religious teaching and influence." (184)

This statement was to be echoed throughout the Roman Catholic Dioceses. In the North-West the Roman Catholic Bishop of Salford was to provide leaflets to be distributed throughout the Salford Diocesan Schools. Each pupil was to receive two leaflets - "one for his own private study, the other for his M.P. or Nonconformist neighbour, or to be placed in the window so that passers by may read." (185)

The Bishop stated:

"Hence our claim: That our Catholic children shall be educated in Catholic Schools by Catholic teachers appointed by Catholic authority, to whom alone it belongs to judge of their fitness to teach Catholic faith and practice.

"That and no less we claim for ourselves; just as we gladly acknowledge the same right to our fellow citizens of other creeds, Anglican, Jews or Dissenters." (186)

In Hanley there had been an immediate protest meeting called by the Roman Catholics as soon as the clauses of Birrell's Bill had been made known. The Manchester Guardian reporting this meeting claimed that there were some 3,000 persons present. The purpose of the meeting had been to bring to the attention of the authorities how much the Roman Catholics had already sacrificed for their schools "and that they meant to hand down this priceless gift to their children." (187) They were also to protest "against the
attempt to impose on the whole community a system of education based on principles that found favour with but one section." (188)

It was apparent to the Roman Catholic Bishops that their schools were in a delicate position and yet Lord Ripon as a member of the Cabinet, and also their chief spokesman had not backed their cause with as much vigour and determination as they would have wished. "The Tablet" was to comment upon the position of Lord Ripon as follows:-

"It is impossible not to know that the position of Lord Ripon is a source of no little perplexity to the great majority of his fellow Catholics and it is idle to suppose that the complacency of Catholic editors can permanently keep back all expression of the general dissatisfaction." (189)

'The Tablet' was also to note that "the Resolutions of the Bishops, supplementing those of the Education Council, have fairly committed the Catholics of the U.K. to a trial of strength with the Liberal Government. The quarrel is none of our seeking - we are threatened with a new penal law and have no choice but to fight for the very existence of our schools." (190)

The Education Bill of 1906 was thus perceived as an attack on the educational role of the church, not only of the Roman Catholic church, but also of the Church of England. As in other Anglican dioceses the Chester Diocesan Schools Association under the direction of the Diocesan Bishop, Dr. Jayne, was to take the lead in the local attack upon the Bill. In an open letter published on 10th February 1906 Dr. Jayne had invited all clergy and church school managers to examine the Bill from the point of "conscience and Trust Deeds, and of the broad interest of National Education." (191)

The Bishop defined the attitude towards the Diocesan schools by stating that "for churchmen all education must be religious" and must therefore be provided through good Church schools. (192)

Following the introduction of the Bill in April 1906 the Chester Diocesan Association responded by passing the following resolution:-
"...that this Association...feels bound to express its conviction that the Bill...must be met with unbending opposition." (193)

The Association then called all churchmen and interested citizens "to resolute and organise action in defence of our schools" as it saw that the Bill would prevent Church teachers and Church people from providing the people with "doctrines of the catechism about their duty towards God and towards their neighbour." (194)

This contrasted to the standpoint of the Nonconformist who claimed that "Mr. Balfour violated the principles of the settlement of 1870 by providing for the entire cost of the maintenance of the so-called voluntary schools to be taken from the rates and taxes, whilst leaving two-thirds of the management in religious instruction and in the all-important question of the appointment and dismissal of the teachers in the hands of the denominationalists. Mr. Balfour's Act also destroyed the School Boards which had rendered the greatest service to the cause of education." (195)

The publication of the Education Bill had thus caused an outcry from both the Church of England and the Roman Catholic church, but had given them some common ground upon which to fight with the main point of issue being the absolute right of teaching denomination religious instruction in their own denominational schools, yet at the same time the denominations would have to admit their need for financial aid to retain their denominational schools.

However, not all interested parties were from religious sects. The 'Labour Leader' following the First Reading was to state: "The new Education Bill is undoubtedly a big step forward," but it did point out that the Bill still favoured the Nonconformists, as the Bill was in no way a measure for purely secular education. (196) The other major weekly of the Labour Party 'Justice' was more critical, stating on 11th April that "The Bill cannot be said to be acceptable, either by virtue of its principles or by reason of its compromising clauses." (197)
Both the Independent Labour Party and the S.D.F. Annual Conferences in April 1906 were to pass resolutions opposing the Bill, both calling for a national secular system only. The S.D.F. also formed its own education committee with Will Thorne as Chairman to watch the Government's Education Bill in Parliament. (198)

The National Union of Teachers was also resolved to "fight against any increased control by the clergy or any attempt to impose religious tests on teachers" and was to welcome the Bill, the N.U.T. demanding that any further public aid to the non-provided schools should involve an extension of public control. (199) At their Annual Conference in April 1906 they passed a resolution expressing their approval of "those principles of the Education Bill of 1906 under which all public elementary schools, their teachers and managers, are to be brought under complete popular control, and under which, creed tests for teachers are to be abolished." (200)

The National Council of Free Churches also saw the Bill as "a serious attempt to establish a national and just system of State education." (201) This was also supported by the Primitive Methodist Sunday School Union. The Quarterly Review of April 1906 was to regard the Bill as not being in the interests of the Established Church but pointed out that the Roman Catholics would not suffer as the Liberals had a Roman Catholic leader in the House of Lords. (202)

Concerning Clause 4 the 'Review' was to point out that the Jews and Roman Catholics were massed in the urban areas and were more likely than the Church of England to be able to reach a 4/5ths majority, concluding:

"It is impossible to conceive anything more arbitrary, illiberal and re-actionary than this attempt in a strongly Protestant House of Commons, 350 years after the Reformation, to establish peculiar educational privileges for Jews and Roman Catholics, while practically denying them to members of the Established Church." (203)
Balfour was also to take note of this view. Speaking at the Cambridge Guildhall on 6th May he was to state: "This is a Bill directed against one denomination, and that alone should condemn it." (204)

The question which faced the Archbishop was the method which he should use to oppose the Bill. The feelings within his own Hierarchy were not unanimous. Both the Archbishop and the Bishop of Hereford were to appeal for a cautious and moderate approach. From April to the end of July there were over 1,400 public meetings called by various interested parties all over the country, and at the height of the controversy this amounted to between 30 and 40 reported meetings against the Bill per day. More than ½ million persons were to sign the various petitions concerned with various aspects of the Bill, and the vast majority of these were concerned with those clauses directly affecting the provision of religious instruction. Birrell, in his opening speech in the House of Commons had already foreseen that "the ill-omened name of the religious difficulty" would be the most contentious aspect of the Bill although he believed "it was not the most important aspect, but unhappily it is the one which attracts the most notice." (205)

The 'Tribune' was to publish an "Extra" edition under the heading of "The Wiser Voice of the Church" dated 11th May 1906 which included many noted clergy from different religious bodies who were agreed that "The proposals of Mr. Birrell's Bill offer a basis for an equitable and practical solution of the present difficulty in the establishment of a National System of Education." This was agreed by representatives of the Church of England (Dr. Douglas Morrison and Mr. Arthus Symonds) and the representatives of the Free Churches (Rev. F.R. Meyer and the Rev. Dr. Forsyth and the Rev. J.H. Shakespeare). The Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association was represented by the Rev. Copeland Bowie and A.J. Mundella as Secretary, represented the National Educational
Association. At the same meeting it was also agreed that "a large body of responsible opinion inside as well as outside the Church of England was in favour of such a re-adjustment of the system of primary education as Mr. Birrell's Bill proposes."

The list of supporters for this statement included the Rt. Rev. Dr. Percival, then Bishop of Hereford, who was to express his own moderating opinions during the progress of the Bill through Parliament. He was supported by Dr. G.W. Kitchin the Dean of Durham, and Dr. W.H. Fremantle the Dean of Ripon. Among the Nonconformists who supported the statement were the Rev. J. Scott Lidgett the President of the National Free Church Council; the Rev. Dr. C.H. Kelly the President of the Wesleyan Conference; the Rev. F.B. Meyer the President of the Baptist Union together with Dr. John Clifford; and also the Rev. J.H. Jowett the Chairman of the Congregation Union. (206)

The Bishops of London and Manchester had decided on an uncompromising attitude. (207) The Bishop of Manchester had issued a manifesto which denounced the Bill in the following terms:-

"It is nothing but a very thinly veiled Bill for secularism in the schools....it is a Bill of pure robbery and confiscation...your tea, your sugar, your tobacco, your beer and your incomes are to be taxed that the children of the Church may be robbed of their Church education, and that your schools...may be made useless for your own requirements." (208)

Bishop Knox was to write later that he thought of the voluntary schools as a "weekly branch" of the Sunday Schools and were the centres of much parochial activity. To him the school felt itself to be in a real sense "the Church". He had founded a "Church School Debt Fund" in Manchester and had wiped out debts totalling £70,000 in addition to raising funds for building six new Church schools between 1904 and 1906. Bishop Knox was in every sense a voluntaryist in the Church of England. (209)
In similar vein the Bishop of London announced a mass meeting to be held in the Albert Hall on 11th May, expecting full co-operation from his fellow clergymen in a combined protest against the Liberal Bill. (210) The Bishop of Birmingham protested against the Bill in his letter to the 'Guardian' on 25th April stating: "It is easily conceivable that in a given schools there might be neither teachers willing to teach the vague religion established by the Bill, nor children to listen to it." (211) The Bishop, Charles Gore, objected to the Bill on four main grounds, insomuch that he considered that under the terms of the Bill the teaching of religion could not be properly carried out. He believed that religion could not be taught without some form of dogma, stating: "The only way to give simple Bible teaching of any kind is to teach dogmatically." Any religion not so taught must be "of so unreasonable and unsatisfactory a character that its exclusive or preferential establishment can only result in bringing religion into disrepute." He believed that national and municipal politics should be kept as free as possible from religious questions. (212)

Similar critical opinions of the Bill had been voiced by other leading Churchmen of the Church of England. Under the Chairmanship of the Bishop of Chester, the Chester Diocesan Church Schools Association had condemned the Bill at their Meeting on 27th April 1906 but in reply Lord Stanley of Alderley stated that "the cry of the Bishops was insincere and dishonest and he thought they would not find the average Englishman at their backs." (213) The Bishop of Chester was also to preside over a mass meeting in Chester where a resolution condemning the Bill was adopted. Their object "was not to wreck the Bill but to make it sound and seaworthy, if possible. It carried at present what looked like a black flag of confiscation....he (Dr. Jayne) believed that a secular system of education would sooner or later lead to disastrous results coming perilously near to national apostasy." (214)
This condemnation was echoed by the Archdeacon of Macclesfield at his own meeting on 18th May where he claimed: "The Church was undoubtedly in danger of losing one of the claims of usefulness she possessed, that was to say, the opportunity of teaching, training and influencing for good the children in the elementary schools which she herself had built." (215)

It was to be expected that the support for the Bill was to be given in the main by Nonconformists at the local level. The Rev. James Travis, the ex-President of the Free Church Council, was to state: "It is evident that the Bill will not come up to my ideal. On the whole, I think the Bill will form the basis of a fair and just settlement on an issue which has for so long divided us." Likewise, Mr. E. Pitchford, the then President of the Free Church Council, was to take a similar view, stating: "In view of the bitterness aroused by the Act of 1902 and the number of conflicting interests to be considered, I think Mr. Birrell is to be congratulated upon having submitted a scheme which while it does not give any one section of the community all they think they ought to have, yet it is as just to them all as it is possible to be." (216)

Local Liberal M.P.'s had to face a barrage of criticism as the terms of the Bill became known and understood. The newly elected Liberal M.P. Alfred Mond (Chester Division) called the Bill "a great and statesman-like solution" the main object being "to have a national system of education controlled not by any one sect or another, but controlled by the elected representatives of the people on the education authority." (217) As the controversy grew he had to defend the Government's actions to his own supporters. By June he replied to their questions on the Bill to a Liberal Meeting held in Chester, writing: "I would like strongly to state that the Bill introduced by the Government carries out in its main lines the policy advocated by Liberal candidates and endorsed by the electors at the last election, namely the policy of public control should go with the
expenditure of public money; that the teacher paid for by the public authority should be appointed by the authority which provides the salary; and that any one in the public service should not be subject to a religious test." In his support, Lord Stanley of Alderley was to declare that "Education was a municipal and not a clerical institution." (218)

Members of the Government continued their support for the Bill as it progressed towards its Second Reading on 10th May. Fitzroy had already noted that Haldane "made no attempt to disguise the situation created by the Bill which represented a complete surrender to Nonconformist demands and assured me they had been warned by their Whips that any other course would result in defeat at the hands of their own supporters. He deplored the indifference of his colleagues to any aspects of the educational problem outside the miserable limits of sectarian controversy and particular their lukewarmness towards higher education in which he was interested." (219)

By 23rd April, Archbishop Davidson had prepared a concise memorandum explaining in simple terms the objections to the Bill raised by the Church of England. This was forwarded to the King, the Archbishop concluding:-

"I thought the Bill as it stands must be opposed outright....I had hoped to be able to co-operate with the Government in finding a satisfactory solution, It now rests with them to say whether they can make that possible or not." (220)

Lord Knollys, on behalf of the King, informed Davidson on 6th May that the King thought the Archbishop "had not been well treated by the Government." (221) In his reply Davidson was not fully in agreement, stating:

"With all respect I do not think I was treated badly. I do think that the Government was weak and vacillating and that the real authors of the Bill (Lord Crewe and Mr. Birrell) ought to have stood to their guns and kept the Bill in its original form....I also think it is a most miserably weak form of government and leadership to introduce a Bill in the hope that it may be greatly altered by your opponents." (222)
The Education Bill had also been the centre of discussion in both the Lower and Upper Houses of the Canterbury Convocation Meeting in the first week of May. The Lower House was to agree with Canon Deane who claimed that there were no real grievances over tests for teachers, as stated by the Nonconformists. As he declared:

"There are approximately not more than one quarter of them who are Nonconformists who are not either Anglicans, or Romans or Weslyans. Well, that quarter of the total number of teachers have half the schools of this country open to them - what we used to call the Board Schools. It is no grievance." (223)

The Lower House were unanimous in their agreement over continuing religious tests, the Archdeacon of Exeter moving:

"That it is highly desirable that members of the school staff should take a leading part in imparting Religious Instruction but that none should be employed in this duty who do not give reasonable security that they accept the truths which they teach." (224)

They were to note, however, that the Bill did in fact retain a religious element, but their Education Committee "had grave reasons to apprehend that the Bible may not be taught at all in some schools, nor always in a Christian sense in others." (225)

Their resolution of 3rd May that "It will be the duty of Churchmen to offer strenuous opposition to the Education Bill, 1906" was given unanimous support. (226)

In the Upper House consideration of the Bill was to last for three days, mostly in Committee. The Archbishop reported his general attitude after considering the resolutions passed in the Lower House, his main criticism being outlined against the permissive powers of the Local Education Authority with regard to religious instruction. The Arch-
bishop in his address was to state:-

"We find a Bill so fashioned that if it becomes law there is no school in England of which you can positively say that, if the L.E.A. were hostile, it must nevertheless remain a religious school. There will be no teacher who will be bound to give Religious Instruction; there will be no child who will be bound to attend such instruction." (227)

The Archbishop still left open the question whether the Bill was to be opposed altogether, or amended, but stressed:-

"Unless the Bill be so changed as to recognise the principles which we have set forth, we must, so far as in us lies, continue to offer to it a determined opposition." (228)

The Prime Minister, acknowledging his copy of the Resolutions adopted by the Convocation, replied to the Archbishop on 7th May, writing:-

"Perhaps you will allow me to say that I recognise fully the temperate and reasonable, although firm and decided, tone in which this statement of view treats this difficult and important question, and you may be sure that it will receive careful consideration." (229)

In the meantime the Roman Catholics were to direct their opposition to the Bill via Lord Ripon and John Redmond, the chief spokesman for the Irish Nationalists. Early in May Birrell was informed that the Bill was not acceptable unless the 4/5ths clause could be made more favourable to the Roman Catholics, and that the population minimum of 5,000 would suit their purposes better if it could be removed altogether. The Roman Catholics would welcome any proposal which would strengthen the finances of their schools, but the Local Education Authority must not have permissive powers as regards the allowing of any type of religious instruction. The Roman Catholics would only support those measures which would safeguard Catholic teaching by Catholic teachers in Catholic schools. (230) The Roman Catholics, in spite of their negotiations with Lord Ripon through
their leaders, and in particular with Archbishop Bourne, were not convinced that Clause 4 as it then stood would satisfy their claims that all their schools should remain fully denominational. (231) The Roman Catholics had no interest in the Clause 3 schools, and would have preferred in the first place, following the First Reading, to retain their existing position, as under the Bill the Local Authorities were not obliged to take over their schools, and even if taken over, were not obliged to give extended facilities. Even if such facilities were granted, the staff were not obliged to give religious instruction. The Roman Catholics were to be concerned over the intended abolition of religious tests for teachers, since if Clause 4 was to work satisfactorily in Roman Catholic and Jewish schools, the teachers would have to be of the respective denomination. Birrell had given no safeguards on this point, but had assured the Jewish delegation meeting him on 3rd May that the Clause was designed to allow such schools to continue as before. (232)

The Roman Catholic protest meeting, led by the Archbishop of Westminster at the Albert Hall on 5th May, unanimously agreed to the following resolution:

"This meeting pledges itself to resist to the utmost the Education Bill as a violation alike of religious equality, common justice and civil equity." (233)

Although Birrell was to claim that the Clause 4 schools were a natural consequence of any solution apart from a completely secular system, the denominationalists were to continue to oppose the Bill, seeing it as a "practical endowment of Nonconformity and as a stepping stone to secularisation." (234)

The Liberals were anxious to retain the allegiance of the Irish Nationalists, and were to seek ways of making Clause 4 more acceptable, the Roman Catholics working closely with John Redmond in the House of
Commons. The problem had been simply stated by the Roman Catholic M.P. Mr. T.P. O'Connor when he stated that "The feeling of the Roman Catholic people in this country is that the Bill threatens to extinguish the Catholic character of their schools." (235)

'The Guardian' did not share this view, asking, "Was it to be supposed that Lord Ripon was remaining in the Cabinet for nothing?" (236) Outside Parliament the Labour Party supporters had also denounced the Bill, seeing it as a measure to secure religious instruction as a part of every school's timetable. In May the Independent Labour Party meeting advocated the 'Labour Solution of the Education Difficulty', the meeting being under the chairmanship of Keir Hardie. This would have provided for secular teaching only in a publicly controlled national system of education, the resolutions being moved by J. Ramsay MacDonald. (237)

The position of the Roman Catholics was also outlined by the Rev. Father Dominic of the St. Francis' Roman Catholic Monastery when he stated that "Mr. Birrell did not intend being unjust to the Catholic Schools, he evidently led Catholics to believe that he did not wish to arouse the opposition of the Irish Party and it was on that Party that their only hope of being justly treated lay." (238)

The condemnation of the Bill was highlighted by a series of printed speeches in May written by the Bishop of St. David's, Dr. John Owen, under a general heading of "Criticisms of the Education Bill" in which he was to write:-

"This Diocese, like every other diocese of the Church, will do its best to prevent this Bill from becoming law as it stands. The Bill as it stands would cause grave injury to the nation and gross injustice to the Church.....I strongly resent what Dr. Macnamara more than once has called the 'cleverly contrived' character of this Bill. To my mind, clever contrivances in a Bill dealing with so vital a condition of
national welfare as religious education, are not entitled to respect." (239)

The Bishop of Knaresborough, speaking at Leeds Parish Church on 26th May 1906 was to call for a more moderate approach, stating:-

"I do not think we shall act wisely if we take up an attitude of uncompromising opposition. We must recognise that an Act more or less on the lines of the bill before us is inevitable. It seems to me that the unification of the elementary schools system and the complete public control and management of the schools is bound to come. Let us rather put forward our just demands reasonably and temperately." (240)

The Bill had been read a second time on 10th May in the House of Commons, Fitzroy noting that "After four days debate, the Education Bill has been read a second time by a majority of 206, some thirty less than that by which the Act of 1902 was passed at the same stage. While no clear indication was given of the direction in which amendments would be accepted, the general declaration of Ministers was in favour of compromise. Haldane's assurance that the Government would be resigned, if not cordial, to changes suggested in the Upper House in the interests of denomination and the sincerity and emotion with which its cause has been defended have not been without a very considerable influence." (241)

At a further protest meeting at the Albert Hall, London, on 11th May the Bishop of London was to declare:-

"I say that when the authors of the Bill themselves acknowledge that while you may save 100% of the Jewish schools, and 77% of the Roman Catholic schools, you can only save 25% of the Anglican schools, it is unfair in the face of that confession." (242)

The 'Guardian' was to comment further on the same meeting as follows:-

"We now repeat that the Church of England will refuse absolutely to agree to any settlement, however acceptable its other features may be, which is based upon the monstrous assumption that any other religious
body possesses claims that are superior to her own." (243)

Similar meetings were held where Churchmen made "solemn protests in great demonstrations against the Education Bill, this being described as "a wanton and wicked Bill." (244) At such mass meetings resolutions were passed very similar to the one held in Macclesfield on 30th May 1906 and was reported as follows, the speech by Col. Bromley-Davenport claiming:

"That this meeting, with every desire for a permanent and just settlement of the Education Question, feels obliged to express its solemn conviction that the Bill now before Parliament cannot be accepted as such as a settlement and that it would be strenuously opposed as contrary to the best religious and civil interests of the Nation." Other opponents of the Bill were to declare: "It is not an Education Bill at all. It does nothing for education, or for the educational advantage of the children. There is not a child throughout the length and breadth of this land whose education would be improved by one jot or tittle if this Bill ever passed into law. The already heavy burden of the education rate would still be further and very seriously increased. The Bill does nothing for education. It does nothing for secondary education. It does nothing for necessitous districts. It makes no provision for passing into higher schools the children of poor parents who show exceptional ability." (245)

Bishop Knox of Manchester was to undertake his protest march in London followed by a mass meeting in the Albert Hall on 8th June. Among the speakers were the Bishop of London, Lord Halifax, Lord Ludlow, Sir Alfred Cripps (later Lord Parmoor) and F.E. Smith (later Lord Birkenhead). 'The Times' reporting the meeting on the following day observed:

"The proceedings of yesterday, whether we think that they were the best possible or nor, do not call for an apology. But they certainly repay examination, and that is what we hope this Government will give them.
There must be something not wholly satisfactory in a Bill if it leads many strangers to leave their homes and utter a collective protest. (246)

At the same time as the major meetings in the larger cities were taking place a series of meetings were being held throughout the various dioceses to protests against the provisions of the Education Bill. These were to take the form of passing resolutions against the Bill to the effect that "Church religion should be taught in Church schools during school hours by people who believed what they taught." (247)

The Second Reading of the Education Bill had begun on 10th May and was to follow the pattern of its First Reading with renewed criticism from the Church in particular, but with the counter claims being forwarded by those demanding a less denominational approach.

Mr. Perks, the new Nonconformist M.P. was to claim that the Nonconformists were "determined to put an end at the earliest possible moment to the using of those Anglican schools for the purpose of alienating the children of Nonconformists from the faith of their fathers." (248)

The Labour members argued that religious teaching was the concern of the Church, and not of the State, thus MacDonald considered the Bill "as being to a very small extent an Education Bill, and to a very large extent a sectarian Bill." (249) Chamberlain declared himself in favour of a State secular system but allowing facilities to all denominations, thus "affecting a rather perilous combination with the Churchmen, who wished to make an end of Cowper-Templeism." (250)

Balfour, who saw in the Bill a Nonconformist desire to humiliate the Church of England (251) saw it also as an attempt to destroy his own Act of 1902, and thus was prepared, as leader of the Conservatives in Opposition to accept all allies who would help him amend the Bill. His speeches in the Commons "were in his very best vein" (252) taking full
advantage of the diversities of opinion within the Liberal Party and its supporters. (253) Birrell was to write later: "I was soon to discover that it was impossible to carry on an argument in the House of Commons on the question as to what is meant by either Christianity or religion.... never have I drawn my breath in so irreligious and ignorant an atmosphere as that of the House of Commons when debating religion." (254)

The attacks on the Bill continued from politicians wishing to retain the existing system, although Asquith and Bryce were to defend it as being a more democratic approach to the local administration of education. (255) Those in favour of denominational schools such as Balfour, Wyndham, Middlemore and Anson spoke of the violation of the principle of religious equality and of the religious freedom of parents. They were to claim that the Bill would substitute one form of religion for another - their so-called 'Birrelligion.' (256)

The English Nonconformists - 128 strong in the House of Commons were also opposed to certain Clauses of the Bill, particularly to Clause 4 which they saw as being intended to make an exception in favour of the Jews and Roman Catholics, yet the Irish Nationalists, supported by the English Catholics and advised by Archbishop Bourne were to press for amendments to this Clause to make it more favourable in their own interests. (257)

Birrell was to write: "I was accused, and not unfairly, of having a soft place in my heart for religious minorities,...and I...did my best to secure their position and entitle them to State Aid in all schools where an overwhelming majority of the parents....demanded it." (258)

The greatest problems were to centre around Clause 4, of which the main objections by the denominationalists were to be concentrated on the general understanding that:-

(a) The Local Authorities were not obliged to take over their schools.
(b) The Local Authorities were not obliged to give extended facilities.
(c) The Local Authorities were not obliged to let the teachers give the facilities teaching.

Birrell, pressed for amendments on each of the above points was not to give way on the right of the Local Authority to take over only those schools which were required, stating that the schools would be willing to come over and that the Local Authorities would be desirous to take them, but he saw no reason why they should be compelled to accept a school as a transferred school simply because it was there. (259) Of the two remaining points Birrell was to accept some modification. The Archbishop arranged to meet Birrell on 25th May to review the position of the teachers being allowed to give denominational teaching. Birrell was "fairly satisfied with the progress made in the Commons" (260) but the Archbishop's memorandum on this meeting was to show that Birrell had not realised the importance which the Church attached to the teaching of the Catechism, the Archbishop writing, "I told him I felt it to be of the very first-grade of importance if Biblical teaching was to be helpfully and pointedly applied to the rules of daily life." On the subject of whether or not the teachers were to be allowed to give denominational teaching, the Archbishop was to state: "It raised very big questions indeed, and that personally I attach to it supreme importance." The memorandum also noted: "I think he had hardly realised the feeling about teachers in country parishes being silenced. I did my best to set it before him." (261)

After consideration of both the Anglican and Roman Catholic positions Birrell announced in the Commons that he was prepared to accept two amendments to Clause 4. Concerning the permissive powers of the Local Authority to allow extended facilities, Birrell stated that the Local Authority would be compelled indirectly to grant such facilities. Of the second amendment, Birrell announced on 16th June that if parents were not satisfied with the facilities instruction they could appeal to the Board of Education, and arrangements might be made for such a school to contract out.
Neither amendment was received with enthusiasm by either the Nonconformists or the Roman Catholics. For the Nonconformists, Birrell appeared to be making concessions which would extend the scope of the exceptions to a national system, whilst the Roman Catholics claimed that the Local Authorities could still evade their responsibilities, and had no wish to be forced into contracting out. Both amendments were finally accepted, but in a highly complicated form to overcome difficulties. In his Cabinet Memorandum of 18th June on these two points Birrell stated:

"The Cabinet must bear in mind that to the Roman Catholics it is not enough to say: 'All reasonable Local Authorities will grant the Clause 4 facilities, or may be compelled to do so by mandamus.' The Bill will have to either ensure that the Local Authorities would allow the Catholics to employ their own teachers (who were very often nuns) or make provision for 'contracting out'."

The Roman Catholics had called Clause 4 "a bundle of futilities" and regarded Clause 3 as providing religion "as a fancy extra to be taught only by amateurs." They saw the provision for contracting out as a measure forced to starve their schools out of existence, and were more alarmed when Birrell explained on 27th June that a 4/5ths majority was to be of those who were entitled to vote, and not of those who did vote. The Roman Catholics had expected a high percentage turn-out in such a poll, but this would be of no importance in such a system. As the law forbade Roman Catholics from refusing Anglican entry into their own schools it would be possible for the 4/5ths majority to be eroded, thus robbing the Catholics of their fully denominational schools.

At all costs the Government and its supporters would accept no compromise on the abolition of tests for teachers, thus the Conservative amendment to make provision for the teachers to give the facility teaching in Clause 3 schools was not even considered as a possibility by Birrell in the House of Commons. Clause 7 inhibiting teachers in the
ordinary facility (transferred) schools from giving denominational instruction was to be agreed by 364 votes to 183, in spite of the Archbishop's meeting with Birrell.

The Roman Catholics had also continued to press for a modification of the 4/5ths majority, and to make it applicable to a wider area in order to include a greater number of their schools. Lord Ripon was to write to Birrell, asking:

"Is it possible to get rid of that horrid 5,000 limit in the House of Commons. 'I should be very grateful if it were done." (267)

Birrell was to outline the Government's position quite clearly in his Memorandum dated 19th June 1906 where he stated the following:

"The Government clearly cannot undertake either (i) to secure Clause 4 privileges to any school unless accommodation in other schools is secured for the 1/5th children," or on the other hand, "(ii) to give power of mandamus to the Board of Education to force the Authority to provide accommodation for the 1/5th." (268)

Birrell was prepared to accept the amendment to Clause 4(1)a. that the wishes of parents in the extended facilities schools should be determined by ballot. The Anglicans had also wished to reduce the 4/5ths majority substituting "a reasonable number of parents" in its place, and making it applicable to all areas - not to urban areas only, but Birrell refused to consider this,(269) the Anglicans having previously rejected an amendment which would have compelled all voluntary schools to be handed over to the Local Authority, the Local Authority likewise being compelled to accept every school, but extended facilities were only to be given where the school was transferred to the Local Authority free of any rent or other payment, and the Authority would still retain its permissive powers regarding such facilities. (270)

The Nonconformists outside Parliament, like those in the Commons,
were to oppose any amendments to Clause 4. The National Passive Resistance Committee with Dr. Clifford, and the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches with the Rev. J. Scott Lidgett both brought deputations to see Birrell, and both opposed Clause 4 as it then stood. Dr. Clifford had presided over a Nonconformist Conference held in the Caxton Hall, Westminster on 25th June where the chief resolution called for the withdrawal of Clause 4 as the Bill did not go far enough and that Clause 4 in their judgment and that of "hundreds of thousands of their countrymen was a grave injustice." The meeting called for the Government to reconsider the whole situation and demanded that a Bill better suited to the needs of the country should be brought before the Commons. These resolutions were passed, and a Vigilance Committee was also formed to watch the progress of the Bill through Parliament. (271)

The aggressive methods used by Dr. Clifford to highlight the Nonconformist case had drawn him to the attention of the national press. He was to be challenged over the validity of his D.D. degree. The 'Daily Mail' had taken up this challenge, printing the following statement:

"Dr. Clifford, the apostle of passive resistance and the most active of political Nonconformists is no longer "Doctor" Clifford, but Mr. Clifford. The challenge offered by Mr. Sydney Young in yesterday's Daily Mail backed by a cheque for £10 to be paid to Mr. Clifford if he could prove that his reputed degree of D.D. was conferred by any university is declined. In a letter from Mr. Young it was stated that the "Bates university" by which the "degree" in question was conferred was not a university at all, but an American seminary for black and white boys and girls. Mr. Clifford now tacitly admits in an interview with the Daily Mail representative that it is not a university and requests us to return Mr. Young's cheque to the challenger. It is all the more surprising that Mr. Clifford should have passed for so many years under a sham title, as 20 years before it was conferred upon him he had obtained with distinction the genuine
degrees of London University, not including, however, the degree of D.D." (272)

The Prime Minister had taken very little part in the House of Commons debates on the Education Bill. On 26th June he intervened in the debate on Clause 4, claiming that in his view the Government had introduced — subject to one exception — "an undenominational Bill, setting up an undenominational system" which was designed to remove the Anglican monopoly in the single school areas, but adding, "In this country you cannot pursue any system, undenominational or otherwise, in so complicated and controversial a matter as education, to the extreme length." (273) Any settlement of the question after the voluntary schools had become transferred schools "must and could" only be undenominational. He claimed to sympathise with those teachers who wished to give the facilities teaching, but held that "when Churchmen decided to quarter their schools on public funds it was not in reason that they should both relieve themselves at the expense of the public, and expect the State-paid teachers to be at their disposal for the teaching of their particular tenets." (274)

Campbell-Bannerman had supported the 1870 Education Act, but had been totally opposed to Balfour's Education Bill of 1902 which he claimed had aroused strong feelings and outraged the Nonconformists as they saw it as an attempt to finance the Church of England schools from State funds. Campbell-Bannerman had seen this Education Act (1902) as a cause through which the Liberals could be united in opposing it. He had described it in a letter to Bryce as "an attempt to revive Church funds while retaining Church supremacy....the supremacy of Church interests is incompatible with popular control, and popular control there must be." (275)

In his own views there should have been a recognition that most people really wanted in public schools some form of religious instruction, and therefore he saw that this could be achieved by the adoption of one of
three schemes, these being as follows:-

(a) An inoffensive dose of Christian doctrine in all State schools, supplemented by peculiar teaching of tenets by the sects at separate hours;

(b) A purely secular teaching system in State schools, supplemented as in (a).

(c) The option to be given to each locality which of these should be applied.

He was to declare that "for myself I dislike a statutory common religion almost as much as a statutory specific religion and therefore (b) would be my choice. But I am much mistaken if we shall not have to go for one or the other of these, and the more courage we have, the more chance of success....All the casual Tories I have met take one line - why did they meddle with the hornets' nest?" (276)

How much Campbell-Bannerman was in sympathy with either the more radical of the Nonconformists or with the more reasonable claims of the Church of England or Roman Catholics is not clear. He claimed that he saw the education issue in simple terms, having told Vaughan Nash that "the professors, Fabians, philosophers et hoc genus omne take no account of these plain and honest opinions." (277) Similarly he claimed that "I am a Presbyterian and I do not know even what is a Rural Dean. But Higgs knows all about these matters. He is a member of the Church of England and keeper of my Ecclesiastical conscience." (278)

The Prime Minister and the Archbishop were to become good friends, Campbell-Bannerman referring to the Archbishop as "my countryman Randal." But the Archbishop commented that no one more constantly sought his advice and more seldom took it." (279)

The passage of the Education Bill of 1906 was to take some three months in the House of Commons, and during this time Campbell-Bannerman
was preoccupied with his wife Charlotte and her illness, and in these circumstances the conduct of the Bill was largely left to others, and particularly to Birrell who was to write: "Never have I drawn my breath in so irreligious and ignorant an atmosphere as that of the House of Commons when debating religion. It often shocked me." (280)

On 25th June Morant had completed a series of memoranda for the Cabinet Committee on Education, outlining the administrative problems which would arise if many schools were to contract out as Birrell had indicated as a possibility in the House of Commons on 25th May. The memorandum also contained a detailed analysis of the problems associated with the rights of parents in cases of appeal for contracting out, and a note on Balfour's proposal to amend Clause 4, submitting "shall" in place of "may" with regard to the duties of the Local Authorities. (281)

Whilst the Commons were continuing their debates, the Archbishop also continued to meet all parties concerned with the Education Bill. On 25th June he held a series of individual meetings with the Lord Chancellor, Lord Crewe, and Lord Goschen, endeavouring to forecast the attitude the House of Lords would take towards the Bill. The Lord Chancellor declared he agreed with the demands of the Anglicans as outlined by the Archbishop having himself "High Church leanings." Lord Crewe thought the Government would be satisfied with an agreed compromise. Lord Goschen was more anxious about the situation, declaring that Lord Lansdowne was also concerned about the attitude which the House of Lords might take. The Archbishop was to note:-

"Goschen emphatically supported my views that the House of Lords, speaking roughly, is never anti-Church, but always anti-clerical, and that leadership by the clergy is the last thing they will like." (282) It was therefore agreed that in the House of Lords "the Archbishop should take the leading role in Episcopal matters rather than any of the Bishops who might do real harm by irritating the peers." (283)
The 'Guardian' had also noted that the Bill was causing concern among the clergy, particularly those like the Bishop of Hereford, who were in this "difficult and embarrassing position, that, although they have been powerfully instrumental in putting the Government into office, they are unable seriously to modify, and still less control legislation which is necessarily extremely distasteful to them. (284)

The Archbishop again requested to see Morant, the meeting taking place on 30th June. Morant explained the problems associated with the Clause 4 facilities, claiming that Birrell was finding it hard "to keep all his initial promises" and that this had led to "serious friction between Birrell and the Cabinet, or at least between Birrell's policy and the Cabinet." (285)

According to Morant the climax had come when Birrell had announced the real meaning of the provision for two days' facilities - two days per child, not per teacher. The Cabinet were "furious" and Morant thought his (Birrell's) resignation that night "quite possible." Morant was also to criticise Lloyd George for not playing any constructive part in the Cabinet, but "merely criticising afterwards," the Archbishop also noting that Morant was altogether vehement about the clumsy and harmful mismanagement of the Bill during the last fortnight." Following this meeting with Morant the Archbishop was to write:-

"On the whole the Bill is going out in an unwieldy and ill-considered shape and will honestly need a great deal of amendment to make it workable; even apart from questions of principle. The Government fully expects the House of Lords to make big amendments." (286)

He also realised the Bill was no longer being debated on the religious question alone. Writing to Lord Nelson on 12th July he stated: "This is a Parliamentary rather than an ecclesiastical question." (287)

This was also borne out in the interview which took place in the
House of Lords between the Archbishop and the Duke of Devonshire, who
the Archbishop noted: "Does not believe that there is any great enthus-
iasm throughout the country in opposition to the present Bill, nor does
he think there is any enthusiasm in its favour except on each side among
a very limited set of people." (288)

The Duke of Devonshire was in favour of the principle of the Bill
being accepted, but agreed with Davidson that it would require considerable
amendment. The Archbishop was also to note:—

"He was more familiar with the subject than I had supposed he would
be, and seemed to have both the Act of 1902 and the present Bill very
much at his fingers' ends." (289)

Before the final Reading in the Commons, the Archbishop was to see
Balfour to establish his views on the possibility of the Lords accepting
a suggested compromise whereby Cowper-Temple teaching would have been
made mandatory in provided schools. This had already been discussed
between the Archbishop and Morant who had outlined the consequences of
such a scheme in relation to denominational teaching for the Cabinet in
May. The Archbishop was to write to Balfour on this point as follows:—

"I wholly agree with you in thinking that we cannot have a settle-
ment, however conciliatory or malleable the Government may prove to be —
if we accept Cowper-Templeism as final, complete and immune from attack,
even in places where no alternative accommodation exists." (290)

The Bill during its course through the House of Commons had become
the victim of party politics, the religious issues involved becoming the
means through which various parties in the House could whip up either
Government support or the support of the Opposition, not particularly for
the religious controversies involved, but for Party political purposes.

The Roman Catholics realised that they had lost their case in the
House of Commons, but stated in the 'Tablet' that the real fight had
not yet begun, as they declared they would lose "something like 80% of their schools," this being based on the 4/5ths requirement, the rural restrictions, and the need to have alternative accommodation in urban areas. (291)

The Bill, which from 20th June had been dealt with under a form of closure by compartments, including the Committee and Report stages as an agreed measure by the Cabinet in order to secure the Third Reading before Parliament was adjourned for the summer recess was to receive its Third Reading on 30th July in the House of Commons. (292) Most M.P.'s were aware that the House of Lords would amend the Bill, Charles Masterman declaring that "he regretted that this Bill should go to another place in this forlorn condition. They were sending a Bill to another place knowing that large changes would be made there and were prepared to accept at least a certain number of these changes." (293)

The Third Reading was passed by a majority of 192, the voting being 369 to 177 in favour, not withstanding the alliance of the Irish Nationalists with the regular opposition. Except for the amendments to Clause 4 which in themselves hardly altered the terms of the Bill, the Government measure - after some 28 days debating time - had retained the form in which it had been presented to that House on 9th April. The opponents of the Bill now looked to the Conservative majority in the House of Lords to carry out their desired amendments. On the Third Reading Balfour had hinted that such amendments would be forthcoming, remarking:

"Members must have begun to feel that the real discussion must begin elsewhere....it is in the highest degree improbable that the Bill will come back in the shape in which it leaves us." (294)

Balfour had thus indicated that he wanted nothing but to destroy the Bill, and therefore to maintain his own Act. To that end he was willing to accept all allies who would help him to make trouble for the Government.
As the Bill left the Commons the main provisions had remained in tact in so much as all public elementary schools were to be under popular control, and the Liberals believed that under the terms of the Bill generous facilities had been afforded for denominational instruction. They had included special arrangements under Clause 4 for schools of a homogeneous character whereby on request of 4/5ths of the parents in any school in an urban area, where alternative accommodation was available, denominational instruction was permissible on every school day in the week by the regular teachers of the schools. However, no school was to give denominational teaching paid out of public money or given by the teachers in the school except for Clause 4 schools, and then only if the teacher was willing and was permitted by the Local Authority to do so.

The main objections to the Bill as forwarded by the Church of England were based on the inadequacy of the financial provisions which they believed would be totally insufficient and therefore were to be labelled as confiscatory. They also believed that the ordinary facilities which could be given twice per week were insufficient, noting that Birrell (and later copied by McKenna) had limited this to transferred schools and given by outside teachers at the expense of the denomination concerned. (Under McKenna this was also to be taught either before or after normal schooling). The Church of England doubted whether these extended facilities would be of any benefit to the Church since they were restricted to urban areas of more than 5,000 population. The concern over the proposed prohibition of religious tests for teachers was also an issue which the Church had wanted to resolve in its own favour.

Little had been stated about the Bill of 1906 and its provisions for co-ordinating all types of schools. The Bill of 1906 went further than the Act of 1902 in this respect. However, in proposing to standardise as far as possible all public elementary schools and to prevent the
increase of further exceptions to the normal type, no provision was made
in the Bill for the recognition by the State of schools built by the
voluntary agencies after the passing of the Act. The undenominational
principle had been adopted in the Bill of 1906, but in deference to the
position of the denominationalists, certain modifications had been made.
The Liberal Government had claimed that the denominational principle lay
in its claim upon the contention that it was unfair for State schools to
teach any dogma which is not acceptable to the whole body of parents. A
common basis of religious belief was thought by the Nonconformists to be
found in all Christian teaching, and therefore for the vast majority
of Englishmen. This basis, was fairly represented by the
Cowper-Temple teaching then given in provided schools. For many Non-
conformists it was sufficient for schools to take the highest common factor
of English religious dogma and make that compulsory in all schools. (295)

The National Society printed its own statement concerning the
Government’s handling of the Education Bill as if left the House of
Commons at the end of July 1906. They were critical of the Government’s
position during the closure procedures, stating:—

"The discussion in Committee was necessarily inadequate owing to
the closure. Upon the closure resolution itself there is no need to
speak. It was expected that the methods adopted by the late Government
to get the Education Act of 1902 through the House of Commons, though
denounced at the time by the Opposition, would be imitated by them when
in office, in order to pass an Education Bill of their own. The sur-
prising matter is that the closure arrangements made by the present Gov-
ernment in respect of the Bill of 1906 should have been so drastic as to
bear no resemblance to those adopted in 1902. No defence of their
action upon its merit was attempted by the Prime Minister or his
colleagues. The only ground alleged was, in effect, the necessity of
bringing the first part of the session to a close at the beginning of
August and of making the debates upon the Education Bill fit in with that plan." (296)

The National Society were sceptical of the Government's ability to handle the Bill in the House of Commons being able to claim "divergencies of opinion as to the meaning of important clauses were from time to time apparent on the Treasury Bench, Mr. Birrell having one explanation, the Solicitor-General another, while Mr. Birrell's views were not always constant from hour to hour. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Mr. Lough) also made important declarations of principle and of interpretation which did not meet the views of all his colleagues on the Treasury Bench or of his supporters behind him." (297)

The Society was also to criticise the form in which the amendments were made, stating:—

"Important Government amendments, exhibiting all signs of haste in preparation, were frequently put down shortly before the day for discussion (under closure) of the Clauses concerned, e.g. upon the Friday preceding the Monday upon which the debate on Clause 4 began, more than 40 lines of amendments were found upon the paper in Mr. Birrell's name: Lord Stanley of Alderley, referring to the proceedings upon Clause 4 stated that "the Government's amendments had been flung on the paper quite unconsidered. Justice could not be done in the limited time assigned to the clause, to the immense new problem before them." (298)

The National Society were also to point out that Birrell had not mastered his own Bill, claiming that he "showed ignorance and lack of understanding" instancing "in his speech Birrell stated most distinctly that facilities granted under Clause 3 were to be compulsory and NOT dependent upon the will of the Local Education Authority. However, there was NO foundation for such an assertion, so far as the actual provisions of the Bill were concerned. Mr. Birrell was gradually
forced not only to admit but to insist upon the fact that, owing to the taking over of any voluntary school being entirely a matter for the option of the Local Authority, the granting of facilities to any such school necessarily depended entirely upon the Local Authority's discretion."

The National Society was also to show that Birrell had been inaccurate in some verbal answers in the Commons, giving the instance where he had supposedly quoted Clause 8(2)(9b) from the Draft Bill, stating:-

"They (i.e. the Commissioners) may by the scheme require the Local Authority to comply with such conditions as to payment or otherwise not being inconsistent with this Act, as they think just."

But the Clause should have originally read as follows:-

"They may by the scheme make provision for the purpose subject to such conditions if any as to payment or other matters as may be agreed to by the Local Education Authority and as the Commission think just."

The National Society also claimed that Birrell had altered the basic case for the Bill and particularly for the necessity of introducing Clause 3 to safeguard the Roman Catholics, stating:-

"The concessions expected by the Roman Catholics and needed to satisfy their just claims have been refused and appeals to the General Election and to the physical necessities of the case have in Mr. Birrell's later speeches replaced earlier claims that the Bill was a generous attempt to give concessions to Denominationalists. At the same time, one of the most noticeable effects of this increasing frankness upon the part of the Government has been to emphasise the fact which was at first concealed, namely that Clause 4 was NOT intended for the Church of England, but for the Jews and Roman Catholics." (299)

However, the Roman Catholics had claimed that the proposed 4/5ths majority was vulnerable owing to child movement, especially of the floating Irish population of the North West.
They also opposed the lack of religious tests for teachers, believing that there would be difficulty in retaining the correct atmosphere in their schools. No religious tests would lead to a general secularist tone in such schools and neither did they see any great value in the twice weekly facilities for religious instruction and even less use in the Cowper-Temple teaching for Roman Catholic pupils. Like the Church of England they were very critical of those Clauses relating to the opportunity for extended facilities in the rural areas, wishing to replace the figure of 5,000 population with a less precise or lower figure.

Thus for the Roman Catholics as the Bill entered the House of Lords, the facilities offered under Clause 4 were seen to be illusory and therefore half of their schools would be cut out by the statistical qualifications and the character of the other half would depend upon the favour of the local community. The Roman Catholics denounced the Bill as a new penal law, but even so, some members of their own Catholic Education Council had preferred to stand out of the new arrangements altogether and return to the pre-1902 conditions of State aid since they feared that facilities under local control would mean "pawning the atmosphere in order to buy the words of the Catechism." This idea was opposed by Monsignor W.F. Brown who stated that to return to this system would be suicidal and would mean large classes and small salaries - it would be better to establish good relations with the Local Authorities, but could not see a future in contracting out. The Roman Catholics had appointed a Watching Committee on 18th June to work closely with the Irish members to secure amendments to Clause 4.

The Clause 4 objections had been made more problematic simply because the Liberals were anxious to retain the allegiance of the Irish Party. They were in some difficulty because of the problem of how to reconcile the Liberal pledge of "no tests for teachers" with a denominational
insistence on the fitness of teachers to teach religion - since if Clause 4 was to work properly and effectively the regular teachers must be practising members of the denomination concerned. The original drafting of Clause 4 had included three areas of direct concern to the Roman Catholics, insomuch that the Local Authorities were not obliged to take over their schools, and also where they did take them over they were not obliged to grant extended facilities. Where they did grant extended facilities they were not obliged to permit the regular staff to give the facilities instruction. Birrell had made no further move on the first point believing that schools would be willing to come over and that the Authorities would be desirous to take them, but had announced two Government amendments before the final draft of the Bill had been agreed so that indirect compulsion was to be placed on local authorities to grant extended facilities, and secondly he had referred specifically to the facilities instruction and had given dissatisfied parents the right of appeal to the Board of Education, and the Board could, if it thought fit, transfer a school into a contracting out school. Both these amendments were elaborate ways of surmounting the difficulties but this was inevitable if election promises were to be kept.

The Roman Catholics were not satisfied for as the Irish Nationalists pointed out, the Local Authorities could still evade their responsibility and nor did the contracting out provision suit them. There was some movement by the Roman Catholics to try to put their schools on the same footing as their own industrial schools and to be provided wholly from public funds, but Birrell refused to consider arguments brought about through the more extravagant Roman Catholic propaganda.

In spite of the protests of the Roman Catholics over the provisions of the Bill and in particular of Clause 4, the denominationalists, and particularly the strong Anglican supporters, claimed that Clause 4 had
been purposely drawn up to favour the Roman Catholics rather than the Church of England, while the terms of the Clause 3 would be easily satisfied if the authorities allowed the children "to receive their church instruction in the playground or on the street." (300)

Clause 4 was also the most contentious issue for the majority of Nonconformist supporters who had hoped for a more secular solution. Their main objection rested on Clause 4 because of the principle of rate aid to denominational schools. This objection was in spite of Birrell's argument that Clause 4 was a consequence of the Nonconformist rejection of the secular solution. As he had declared: "You cannot deal with education in this country unless you adopt boldly the secular course - you can only deal with it in a spirit of compromise." (301) Later, Birrell was to state:

"When a system of moral training has for centuries of folly, noise and sin been associated in the minds and memories of the bulk of the population with the one bit of good literature known to them, to kick out the Bible, and the practice of prayer that the Bible enjoins, out of the doors of the schools against the wishes of the parents whose children are compelled by law to attend those schools would, in my opinion, have been a combination of stupidity and tyranny." (302)

The Bill had therefore provided clauses inserted to protect the conscience of minorities, and his Bill was full of such clauses. He had maintained that in many cases the teaching of the Church of England within their own denominational schools was on very similar lines to the teaching in the old Board schools, and thus claimed:

"The opponents of the Bill maintained with iterations that the religion permitted by the once famous Cowper-Temple Clause, and allowed by the Bill, was the 'religion' of the Nonconformists but was not the religion of the Church of England, so that whilst the children of the
Nonconformist parents got the religion their parents desired them to have, the children of the Church of England parents did not get the religion their parents would wish them to have. Now how could this argument be met except by pointing out that Board Schools religion - though not the religion of the Nonconformist - did contain four terrific dogmas of the Christian faith common to all orthodox Christian Churches, viz: the existence of God; the authority of the Scriptures; the life hereafter; and the judgment to come. But when I urged this, I was accused of bad taste by mentioning such things in the House of Commons. (303)

Birrell had acknowledged that "the real difficulty was created by the fact that the friends of the Church of England in the House were not prepared to recognise that save in some High Anglican schools which could have procured protection under a clause in the Bill, the enormous majority of church going folk were quite content with the religion their children were receiving in State aided schools; nor did they find that when those children were being prepared for confirmation they were in any way at a disadvantage with other children who had attended clerically managed schools." (304)

The Government was to be faced with the prospect of their Bill being sent to the House of Lords with little or no chance of it retaining its basic proposals. It was to be seen how far the expected amendments would alter the Bill and what would be the influence of A.J. Balfour upon the Conservative peers in their decisions to amend the Bill. It was to be seen what part the Liberal peers could play in reaching a compromise agreement between interested parties and to see how far the Archbishop of Canterbury could influence both his own Church leaders and the Conservative peers into accepting a compromise.
CHAPTER IV

The Education Bill of 1906 and the Commons

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CHAPTER V

THE EDUCATION BILL OF 1906 AND
THE HOUSE OF LORDS
The overwhelming Parliamentary mandate had given the Liberal Government complete assurance in the House of Commons, and therefore anything that could be done by the administrative process was completely within their power. However, when it came to legislation then they had to reckon with the permanent majority of Conservative peers in the House of Lords. Both Lansdowne and Balfour as Unionist leaders in the Lords and the Commons had realised that they were now able to utilize the theoretical rights of the House of Lords under the Constitution. Letters between the two leaders in April 1906 (1) show that the House of Lords was to be used from a purely party standpoint and therefore a course of Bill-wrecking of proposed legislation, which would thus lessen the impact of the Liberal election victory and their vast majority in the House of Commons was thus considered to be the most appropriate approach for the Conservative Party. It was clear that to many the Constitution was to be exploited with "no scruples regarding fair play - a course bound eventually to cause fatal collisions with the fair-play instincts of common Englishmen." (2) It was clear that when the Education Bill was brought before the House of Lords this would be one area of conflict between the Government and the Opposition, and there would be very little room for manoeuvre or compromise on political grounds alone, regardless of the wishes of the educationalists or those with denominational interests.

The Education Bill was to be given its First Reading on 30th July and began its Second Reading on 1st-3rd August in the House of Lords before Parliament was adjourned for the summer recess. Before this
Balfour had prepared and circulated a memorandum dated 4th July of suggested policy for the Conservative peers, part of which read:

"I assume that the House of Lords will read it (the Bill) a second time, and that they will amend it drastically in Committee. I assume the first because I think its rejection on Second Reading is a policy which so far commends itself to no responsible members of the Opposition, and I assume the second because of strong feelings which the Bill has aroused in every part of the country which would not, I think, be satisfied with merely surface amendments." (3)

This was followed on 14th July by a further memorandum containing more detailed suggestions and explanations, together with a scheme of amendments. (4) The Lords were to insist upon the rights of parents who demanded denominational teaching for their children. Balfour had stated: "This should be the governing element in any scheme the House of Lords may substitute for the plan of the Government." (5) Balfour was therefore advising the Lords to let the Bill pass the Second Reading, leaving the full debates on his whole table of amendments to take place during the Committee stage when Parliament had re-assembled in October. The Committee stage was to begin on 25th October, lasting through until the Report Stage on 29th November 1906.

When the Education Bill came up for the Second Reading on 1st August in the Lords, Lord Crewe explained the measure to a full House, in "a well-reasoned and gracefully expressed argument." (6) Both Birrell and Asquith were present, as was Dr. Clifford. Twenty Bishops were also in the House. It had been decided that between the Archbishop and Lord Goschen that it would be appropriate if the Archbishop would speak after Lord Crewe. (7) According to Fitzroy, "the Archbishop contributed a very striking speech, taking a high and statesman-like line which produced a very great impression." (8)
His speech was directed against the Bill proclaiming it to be more advantageous to religious minorities than to the Established Church. Although agreeing that the nation had declared itself in favour of popular control and an end to religious tests for teachers, he thought the Bill was one-sided as it made no provision for undertaking to find out if teachers were duly qualified for the teaching of religious instruction. He was to outline six major points in which the Bill would require some amendment - and these "were pretty far-reaching." He was to press for religious teaching in all schools, subject to a conscience clause, religious teaching not being left to the permissive powers of the Local Authority. As he stated:

"We are told that the Local Authorities will not on any large scale destroy or even impair the system of religious teaching, but are we quite sure that this can be counted upon everywhere? I am quite prepared to say that Local Authorities in the main will try to act fairly, and I would trust them generally, but the Bill binds them in one direction to allow no denominational teaching, and leaves them free in another to go as far in the secular direction as they like." (12)

He was to press for religious teaching to be given by teachers who believed in what they taught, and for definite religious instruction for all children whose parents desired it, subject to reasonable limitations by the Local Authority, his arguments being similar to those proposals shown to him by Lord Crewe and Birrell before the First Reading in the House of Commons. The Archbishop was to stress that teachers if they were so willing, ought to be allowed to continue to give definite religious teaching, outlining further those points he had made to Birrell on 25th May. Like the Roman Catholics he was to argue and to urge the enlargement of the principle of the 4/5ths schools in the urban areas, criticising the Bill most strongly on this point, and also on the fact that those
who appoint the teachers should have something directly to do with the school and what it stood for. He saw the Bill as a step towards secularisation using the voluntary schools to achieve this, commenting:

"What does the Bill do? It takes 14,000 existing schools with their trusts, and demolishes, not the mere wording of the trusts, but the very essence and pith of them. The characteristics that make a denominational school different from others are abolished and the school is handed over to a Local Authority, which may, if it likes, refuse to take it; or, if it does take it, may practically secularise it save for some two hours in the week, and may appoint teachers who are unwilling to give, or untrained to give, religious teaching; and it religious teaching is given, and the teachers are willing to give it, no child need go to school until the religious lesson is over." (13)

The Archbishop concluded by expressing his desire not to throw out the Bill but to amend it on the lines which he had put forward. He did not see the Bill as it stood offering any security for the voluntary schools under the permissive powers given to the Local Authorities, adding:

"If I am right, if it is really possible that these things can come about, surely it is childish to tell us, Yes they can do all that if they like, but Mr. Birrell hopes they won't. Does the security come to anything else?" (14)

The Archbishop had thus stated his main objections to the Bill and had given those points upon which he would be seeking to make amendments.

Speeches in the evening came from the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Cawdor, and Lord Robertson. The Duke of Devonshire's speech "was the first and came as a surprise to the Government by the weight and incisiveness of his attack.....Cawdor delivered a very animated criticism in detail.....and Robertson stripped the Bill of every pretention to fairness or finality." (15)
During the Second Reading Lord Ripon was to speak in favour of the Bill, thereby causing the Roman Catholics many misgivings as to its future. 'The Tablet' came to the conclusion that "Lord Ripon was simply no influence in the Cabinet," and "it must be pointed out.....the grave responsibility which Lord Ripon has incurred in thus placing himself in direct opposition.........to the whole body of co-religionists." (16) Of their 1,056 schools 'The Tablet' claimed that 243 would be lost, being in rural areas, and a further 254 in urban areas would be unable to show a 4/5ths majority, thus 'The Tablet' failed to see why Lord Ripon should support such a measure. (17)

In the final stages of the Second Reading it had become clear that the Opposition would drastically amend the Bill. The adjournment of the House of Lords did not mean that discussions upon the Education Bill were to be left until the Autumn.

After the House of Lords adjourned the Archbishop left Lambeth Palace for Italy, later staying with Campbell-Bannerman in Scotland at Belmont, and then with Balfour at Whittingehame. Neither August nor September were to see any lull in the negotiations and meetings between the various parties, which were to be further complicated by a judgment in the Court of Appeal in August. This Court had upheld that the West Riding County Council was justified in refusing to pay teachers for giving denominational religious instruction in non-provided schools under the Act of 1902. They had, therefore, upheld that a Local Education Authority was justified in deducting from salaries such portion as was deemed proportionate to the time spent on this instruction (said to be 10%) their findings being based on the main grounds that the Local Education Authority was alleged to have no control over, or responsibility for, such Religious Instruction. (18) This judgment plainly upset the intentions of the 1902 Act, causing consternation among Churchmen, although being welcomed
by the Nonconformists. (19) For the Government it was to pose a delicate question, as this decision would coincide with their own policy. It would have been possible to have used it as a lever against the Opposition, many Government supporters being in favour of holding this decision as an alternative line of attack should the House of Lords alter the Government Bill beyond Liberal acceptability.

The Archbishop had been informed of the Court of Appeal decision by Lord Lansdowne, Lansdowne writing:-

"Upon the whole I should say that the most valuable by-product of the West Riding judgment is this: that should we be compelled to throw out the Bill, owing to the improbability of obtaining adequate amendments, we shall have a stronger case on which to appeal to the country." (20)

In his reply from Italy on 27th August, the Archbishop was not prepared to take the issue as far as Lansdowne, replying:-

"I cannot myself feel that either party in the controversy gains very much by the W. Riding legal decision." (21)

On returning to England the Archbishop was to write to Lord Northbourne indicating that in his view "there will be wide differences of opinion on both sides of both Houses as to the way in which this W. Riding judgment out to be treated." (22)

The West Riding judgment was to be the subject of part of the discussions between the Archbishop and Campbell-Bannerman at Belmont on 28th September, the Archbishop noting that the Prime Minister "did not know what could be done about appealing or not appealing.....but he himself was in favour of appealing." (23)

Balfour, whom the Archbishop met at Whittingehame also "thought an appeal against the West Riding judgment was essential because it is at least possible that the Government Bill may be thrown out or withdrawn
and then if there had been no appeal, everything would remain chaotic pending the enactment of a new law." (24)

Lord Lansdowne, on meeting the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lansdowne House on 4th October was of the same opinion. (25)

Birrell was to be in favour of an appeal against the decision of the Court of Appeal, stating: "If the present Bill passes into law before Christmas, the confusion now prevailing will not be removed." (26) The Prime Minister agreed that to leave this question unsettled would create further administrative confusion, and also understood the value of such a judgment in the hands of his opponents. (27) The Cabinet therefore decided to appeal, but it was not until 4th December 1906 that the House of Lords, by a unanimous decision, upset the judgment of the Court of Appeal and declared the payments for religious instruction to be obligatory in Local Authorities. The position in law was that all persons had supposed it to be, but this matter was to remain as a constant side-issue for the whole of the time the Government's Education Bill was in the House of Lords after its Second Reading. The issue had received wide press coverage and was watched with close interest by all Local Authorities. The Cheshire Education Committee saw the judgment "as a matter of some importance" and were not to take any action "for a period of three months while further information was received by their Committee." (28) This issue had also aroused the Passive Resisters who saw this as an opportunity to bring the matter of rate-aid for denominational teaching to the attention of the general public. Passive resisters were to be fined for non-payment of the equivalent of the education rate in many parts of the country. (e.g. Fines imposed on passive resisters in the Chester City Police Court ranged from 1/9d. to 18/9d. as reported in the local Chester Chronicle, dated 8th September 1906).

Other Passive Resistance movements saw this judgment of the West
Riding case as a means of forcing their own Local Authority to withdraw payment for any form of denominational teaching in elementary schools. Thus the Winsford Passive Resistance League requested the Cheshire County Council, in view of the West Riding decision, to withdraw payment for denominational teaching in the day schools. Letters were also received from the Winsford Free Church Council embodying a resolution protesting against public money being appropriated for the payment of denominational teaching. (29) Such action by the Nonconformist groups was widely reported in the local press and was to add to the conflict over the Bill itself. Not all Liberals were satisfied with the way the Bill had been passed through the Commons. Lord Stanley of Alderley, a Liberal, declared at a meeting at Alderley Park that "all he had to say about the Education Bill was that he would have been very glad to have got something better and should be sorry to get anything much worse." (30)

The Bishop of Manchester had already indicated that "against the Government's Bill we must renew our conflict this Autumn." (31) The Bishop of Chester had also addressed the representatives of the Church schools in his diocese in July 1906 where he declared: "It was an open secret that not a few on the Government side now hoped that the Lords would do their duty, England expected this. That duty had been admirably defined by Lord Lansdowne."

In reply to this statement, the M.P. Alfred Mond (Liberal) had to defend the Bill at his constituency meeting in Chester where he declared:-

"The Bill would not drive the Bible out of the schools any more than the Bible had been driven out of every council school throughout the length and breadth of this country. The House of Lords was very good at making bargains and always had been, and no doubt they would arrive at something. If they did not, he did not imagine that the Liberal
Party would regret it, but the House of Lords might." (32)

At Government level it had been clear, following the Second Reading of the Education Bill in the House of Lords that the Opposition were to amend the Bill to suit their own purposes, or to alter it to such an extent that the Government would be forced to drop the measure altogether. The Liberal spokesman in the House of Lords did not appear too certain as to what kind of strategy to employ. Lord Crewe, acting as "Lieutenant to Lord Ripon" was expected to take the initiative, being also President of the Council. Lord Ripon, already in a difficult position between supporting his Government and appearing to be trying to appease the Roman Catholics at the same time, had already been denounced by the Roman Catholic Bishops and had "suffered much painful obloquy at the hands of his co-religionists." (33) Ripon, with the support of Birrell, had already framed various compromises in Cabinet meetings, but nothing had come of them. Archbishop Bourne of Westminster had also been in constant correspondence with Ripon over his unenviable position, realising the wisdom of Ripon's policy to say as little as possible in the debates in the House of Lords. (34)

During the summer recess Lord Crewe was to be in constant correspondence with Lord Ripon over Government strategy. Campbell-Bannerman had given no clear indication as to what the Government policy should be, thus Lord Crewe wrote to Lord Ripon on 21st August as follows:-

"Are we going to make any possible concessions as we go on, leaving the House of Commons to stand out for the Bill as we think it ought to be, yielding nothing else? Or are we to fight everything, leaving the House of Commons to do the bargaining? Or are we going to combine the two plans, making concessions and leaving others a matter of bargain between the two Houses? In this last case, what are the points to be?" (35)

In his reply Lord Ripon was to state that "It would probably be
advisable to make some minor concessions in Committee, and to leave one or two larger questions for compromise at the last moment." (36)

By early September Lord Crewe was disturbed at the memorandum that Balfour had drawn up for the detailed amendments which he was intending the Unionist peers to move as soon as the House re-assembled and commenced the Committee stage of the Bill. Again Lord Crewe was to write to Lord Ripon, on 12th September, outlining his own proposed policy:-

"If we find ourselves obliged to stick to the Bill exactly as it stands and to fight every amendment we shall be debarred from making any appeals to the more moderate opposition when the extreme amendments are brought up....The result will be...that almost every amendment that is put down, however extravagant, will be carried; and that the Bill will be returned to the Commons in a scarcely recognisable state....I am confirmed, therefore, in the opinion that while it may be necessary to leave some of the biggest points for final concession by the Commons, we shall be more likely to get the Bill through if we can meet the moderate opposition on several minor points, thus preserving the power of invoking their aid against the fanatics." (37)

It would seem that at this stage Campbell-Bannerman was to leave the preliminary stages of the House of Lords debates to the Liberal peers. The Archbishop met the Prime Minister at Belmont on 28th September to discuss the whole education question, the Archbishop's personal notes were to contain the following observations:-

"He (the Prime Minister) amazed me by his real ignorance of the question, and so far as he did express an opinion, it was entirely in favour of such modifications of the Bill as I should myself desire." (38)

It appeared that neither the Prime Minister nor the Lord Chancellor had thought the proposed amendments outlined by the Archbishop in his
speech on the Second Reading were unreasonable. The Archbishop was to press for his own views on the need for some form of religious tests for teachers who were to give religious instruction, the Prime Minister is noted as having said:

"No man of common sense could doubt the necessity of such enquiry... and that all he particularly objected to was the subscription to a definite denominational faith." (39)

The Prime Minister was agreed that teachers should be allowed to give religious instruction, if they so wished, and neither could he see "any legitimate ground for the distinction drawn between urban and rural areas in Clause 4," admitting that "dear old Ripon had fought against that from the first, and I think he is right." (40)

The problem of the Roman Catholic school in urban and rural areas to fulfill the requirements of the Bill of a 4/5ths majority had come under scrutiny in 'The Tablet' on 6th October 1906 where it was claimed that there were then many Roman Catholic schools which would be affected by the Bill, the commentary stating:

"There are altogether in England and Wales 1056 Roman Catholic schools. Under the provisions of the Bill" the Tablet stated, "we have long ago explained that our rural schools and our schools in town districts which are not 'urban areas' number 243 - all are sacrificed. Each of these 243 Catholic schools has to be either hired out to the Local Authority and used as a Protestant school, where the municipal religion will be taught every morning or must be carried on as a Catholic school without any help from either rates or taxes.

"Then of the schools in the urban areas 254 would be lost to us at once because owing to the unwanted presence of Protestant children, they
cannot show the required 4/5ths majority. That represents a total of 497 schools which must perish the day the Bill comes into force.

"But that stands only for a part of the loss. How many of the remnant of our schools would be allowed to claim the benefit of "the extended facilities" and how many would have to be content with a licence to starve?

"It is our settled conviction - a conviction based on careful and detailed inquiry - that at the very outset the Bill will rob us of something like 80% of our schools." (41)

Campbell-Bannerman would appear to have been willing in a personal sense to reach an agreement with the various Church interests, but as the leader of a Party trying to fulfil its election pledges, he stated to the Archbishop of Canterbury:-

"Remember I am not speaking authoritatively; I am not a master of the details of the subject, and I have had no consultation with Birrell upon these points since the Bill left the House of Commons." (42)

The Prime Minister, in writing to the King on the position of the Government with regard to the obvious intentions of the Unionist peers was not disposed to write an any great length or in any great detail, Lord Knollys, on behalf of the King, writing:-

"The King scarcely appreciated the courtness of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's communications and his frequent failure to mention matters which the King deemed to concern the Sovereign." It would not be denied that the Prime Minister appeared to be "one of the more leisurely of mankind." (43)

On 29th September the Archbishop travelled to Whittingehame to assess Balfour's opinion of the situation, but was to note:-
"He did not seem to me to be so keenly interested as before on the
details of the Education question, but was quick as usual to grasp special
points of controversy." (44)

When pressed for his views on the outcome of any drastic changes made
by the House of Lords, Balfour replied he thought the conditions as being
so chaotic from an administrative point of view that the "Government might
possibly wish to be able to save their face by withdrawing the Bill on the
grounds of quite unreasonable and impossible amendments being proposed in
the Lords." (45)

On 4th October the Archbishop met Lord Lansdowne at Lansdowne House
where it was agreed that Lord Lansdowne would leave the policy of partic-
ular amendments in detail to the Archbishop. (45)

At the same time the National Society had also written to the
Archbishop (on 4th October) realising that the struggle was to be fought
out in the coming weeks in the House of Lords, declaring:-

"The responsibility now rests with the Bishops, and the Opposition
leaders, in the House of Lords, to secure that the worst features of the
Bill are removed, or, failing that, that its passage should be prevented,
and the Bill withdrawn." (47)

Lord Crewe, who foresaw that the Lords would make serious changes to
the Government Bill was to visit the Archbishop of 18th October, before
Parliament re-assembled on 23rd October, to discuss any possible compromise
agreeable to all parties. The Archbishop was "prepared to accept the
principle that denominational teaching should not be paid for out of the
rates," but on the other points he remained firm. He re-iterated that the
Clause 4 as it then stood could easily be made in-operative by the Local
Authorities, and that the facilities offered in the transferred schools
could suffer in the same way. The Archbishop would still prefer and wish for a settlement on the same lines as the original Draft Bill, and "should press the point of keeping the Government to its pledges." Part of the Archbishop's notes of this meeting are as follows:-

"I told him I was practically pledged to some attempt to restore 'your own Bill as you brought it to me' so as to make facilities universal. He still thinks, as he did at first, that that is reasonable. He says the objection to it comes from educationalists more than from the Nonconformists as such. The people who most object are Yoxall, (of the N.U.T.) and Macnamara." (48)

Thus in spite of the efforts of both the Archbishop and Lord Crewe, no immediate agreement or compromise could be reached before the Lords re-assembled on 23rd October, the Government well aware both from the Third Reading in the House of Commons, and from the Second Reading in the House of Lords, that this Bill could be amended almost at will by the Unionist peers.

In his main speech to the House of Lords before the summer recess the Archbishop had outlined his main objections to the Bill, expressing a desire not to throw out the measure but to amend it where amendment was vital to the Church of England interests. He had considered six points which he admitted were "changes which were pretty far-reaching" these being centred upon the religious instruction question in the different types of schools, together with the right of teachers to teach such instruction, and the problems of the 4/5ths majority. (49)

These points had been taken and used as rallying points for the Anglican Church throughout the country at their meetings to oppose the Bill. Thus the Bishop of Chester (Dr. Jayne) had called a meeting of protest in October where he said that they "met at a crisis, on the eve of
action" passing resolutions to the effect that they "believed that the Education Bill has been inadequately considered by the representatives of the people" and that such a Bill should not be passed by the House of Lords. Similar meetings were to be held across the country, the Bishop of Chester's meeting promoting further rallies in the diocese in Knutsford, Stalybridge, Stockport, Congleton and Macclesfield in October. (50) These meetings each passed similar resolutions, a typical one being held at the skating rink in Macclesfield attended by 1,200 persons on 28th October, where it was unanimously agreed: -

"That in the opinion of this meeting, the Education Bill as it now stands is injurious to the Nation and unjust to the Church; and that this meeting earnestly hopes that the House of Lords will not pass it without such substantial amendments as will provide amongst other things, for denominational religious instruction being given in all schools during school hours to all children whose parents desire it for them by teachers, whether on the staff of the school or not, who are able to give it with conviction."

This particular resolution, along with many others, was forwarded to the Rt. Hon the Lord Chancellor, and also to the Rt. Hon the Marquess of Lansdowne, and to the Archbishop of Canterbury. (51)

Bishop Knox of Manchester, speaking at Oldham on 29th October, at the Church Defence Association meeting, in protest against the Bill, declared that it would "soon be as dead as a door nail."

In reply, the Nonconformists were also to call meetings in favour of the Bill, Col. Brocklehurst holding such a meeting in Macclesfield shortly before the protests organised by the Church of England had taken place. There it had been claimed that the following points should be noted: -

"The object of this Bill is to make education generally under the
control of the ratepayers, or the representatives of the ratepayers who paid rates for it. Given time, all denominations will find out that they have been treated fairly, honestly and well and that an honest endeavour has been made to deal fairly with all denominations and all sects and creeds." (52)

The Congregational Union had also formed its protest groups in opposition to what they saw as an inevitable change in the Bill in the House of Lords. A protest meeting in Wolverhampton in early October declared that "no educational settlement will be satisfactory which does not provide for the complete abolition of all ecclesiastical and doctrinal tests for teachers and the establishment of effective public control over all schools supported out of the rates and taxes." (53)

The House of Lords commenced the Committee stage of the Bill on 25th October 1906. It was clear that things would rapidly approach an impasse. The Liberal Bill which had passed the Commons by a majority of some 200 was to reach a solid wall of inflexibility from the majority of Unionist peers. Unless a compromise could be found there was bound to be a clash between the two Houses. The Lords who had made no difficulty about Balfour's far reaching Bill of 1902 then introduced by an ailing administration, saw nothing incongruous in challenging and changing the first major measure introduced by a Liberal Government fresh from a massive victory at the polls.

It became clear from the outset of the Committee Stage of the Bill in the Lords that there were to be two main lines of attack on the Government's position - those of the Conservatives whose aim was to block the Bill solely for political reasons as a means of trying to break the Liberal-Irish unity of the House of Commons; and those of the Established Church seeking amendments for extended facilities, both in
the rural areas and to the extent of wanting such facilities in all
schools. The number of the amendments, and their character, produced
by the Archbishop and his Bishops, and agreed to in some measure by the
Roman Catholics, and those of the Conservatives, led by Lord Lansdowne
soon revealed that a crisis would have to be faced owing much to the
weakness of the Government Bench in the Lords.

Outside Parliament the Liberals and Nonconformists were angered by
the character of the amendments being debated in the Lords. The "Liberal
Monthly" issued a full explanation of the meaning of the Government Bill
in October, claiming that under the 1902 Act "it is the Church which has
the selection of teachers. The Church is allowed to call the tune, while
you pay the piper." Under the Liberal Bill "public money will be spent
on public schools, not on voluntary schools managed by one particular
religious denomination," and "every parent must have the chance of send-
ing his child to a school of a really public kind." (54)

'The Guardian' was not of the same opinion, its leading article of
31st October declaring:

"The House of Lords has struck the right note at the beginning...the
amendments now being made by the House of Lords should bring home to them
the fact that when the electors returned them to power they had no
intention whatever of encouraging them to cast aside every tradition of
fairplay, to deny elementary religious liberty to more than one half of
the population, and to lay violent hands upon other people's property."

The Archbishop met the Prime Minister at Downing Street on 28th
October to explain the position of the Established Church and what
amendments it was to insist upon, the Archbishop again referring to the
original draft Bill, claiming that "your own justice showed you at first
one way of doing this (i.e. giving denominational teaching) by allowing
facilities in all schools - provided as well as non-provided. You put that in your Bill at first. Why were you frightened out of that fairer policy? We at all events must put it back." (55)

Thus in the House of Lords the amendments were designed to extend facilities to the rural areas, Lord Londonderry claiming that the Government Clause including the 5,000 population minimum was aimed to exclude many Church of England schools. (56) The Bishop of Birmingham was anxious to secure facilities in all schools in return for handing over the voluntary schools to the Local Authorities. (57) The combination of these two amendments was to turn Clauses 3 and 4 of the Government Bill inside out, straightway changing the meaning of the Bill and thus the wishes of the Commons. As the amendments then stood, Clause 4 made extended facilities available in all urban and rural areas, the appropriate section then reading:

"A Local Education Authority shall afford extended facilities for Religious Instruction of some special character....in accordance with the trust deeds, if any, of the school, in every transferred voluntary school." (58)

It also proposed that the 4/5ths proportion should be replaced by a bare majority of parents to keep a school fully denominational. Later amendments secured the right of teachers to give denominational instruction if they wished, and such instruction could also be given in provided schools if desired in place of the normal "Cowper-Temple" instruction.

The House of Lords was also to change Section 25 of the Bill, this being concerned with the Register of Teachers, adding to this Clause which had removed the obligation to "frame, form or keep" such a register, that a one-column register could be made lawful by an Order in Council. Morant was to be concerned over this amendment, devoting a memorandum to the problems of such a register, writing: "The Govern-
ment is absolutely impotent in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons only able to move on this subject with the assent of the N.U.T." Birrell, who had also consulted Morant over Section 25 conferred with Acland about such a "one-column" register, but did not propose to disagree with the amendment, "but will accept it." This also caused Morant some concern, he in turn consulting Acland, stating that he had "grave doubts both as to the composition of the new Registration Council and as to the Regulations which it, if it ever comes into existence, is likely to lay down." (59) One of his objections was based on the point that a single column register would treat all educationalists from Infant School to University as a single category, which would be so wide as to be meaningless.

The amendment was to remain unchanged in the House of Lords, and was not to be the subject of prolonged debate. The main debates continued to be over the amendments to Clauses 3 and 4, and the pressure exerted by the Archbishop for the need of some form of religious test for teachers. Upon this point the 'Schoolmaster' accused the Archbishop of pleading for the liberty of the teacher, but was "wielding a two-edged sword, for, unless the teachers are allowed to volunteer, the giving of denominational teaching in the great towns could not be effectually carried out," thus, asks the 'Schoolmaster' what would become of the policy of securing immunity for the teachers from religious tests? (60)

'The Guardian' on the other hand was to state that the Bill was undenominational "by the confession of its authors, but if justice is to be done it is essential that a great deal of denominationalism should be left in it." (62)

Birrell was to be violently opposed to the drastic amendments then being carried out in the Lords. Speaking in Bristol at the Colston
Anchor Banquet on 13th November he expressed the unanimous opinion of the Liberal Party when he said:—

"They had no use for a measure... which now fastened and bolstered up denominationalism... it is a Church of England measure. It is not a National measure and therefore we can have no concern with it... Far better the Act of 1902 itself than any such proposals as these."

He had been speaking about the changes made in the House of Lords, claiming that the Bill as it then stood "is a Bill of noble parentage. It was born in the House of Lords. It is the offspring of a mixed marriage between Church and State, and I am bound to say, so far as I have been able to study its lineaments, it seems to me to have inherited all the weaknesses of both its parents and the strength of neither the one nor the other." (62)

Birrell's outspoken remarks were not to please King Edward VII who the Archbishop noted, "was very angry with Birrell, who is, he thinks, simply playing to the gallery and not trying to treat the situation with fairness or statesmanship. He said he would press on Campbell-Bannerman the absolute need of a conciliatory attitude and a readiness to hear reason." (63)

At Oxford Lloyd George was also being outspoken and critical of the role of the House of Lords, asking "whether this country is to be governed by the King and the peers, or by the King and his People." This was to bring forward a series of letters between King Edward VII who objected strongly to being brought into the issue, and Campbell-Bannerman. Lloyd George had already launched other bitter attacks on the House of Lords which the King saw as being only one step removed from the criticism of the Crown. This friction had already caused the King to declare that "nothing would induce him to visit Cardiff unless Mr. Lloyd George learns how to behave with propriety as a Cabinet Minister." (64)
In defence of his Ministers Campbell-Bannerman was to reply:—

"It will be hard to restrain the feelings certain to be legitimately aroused when a Bill so largely supported in the country...is deliberately converted by the House of Lords into a measure whose purpose is the exact opposite." (65)

The Archbishop was still to seek a solution which would be agreed upon by all parties, yet as the Committee Stage proceeded the situation was to worsen. Lord Loreburn (the Lord Chancellor) had become ill in October thus leaving the defence of the Bill to Lord Crewe who was then practically unsupported in the House of Lords, and yet had little independent authority. The amendments proposed thus made the Bill in effect an extension of the Act of 1902, Lord Crewe being powerless against the forces which opposed him. The Archbishop doubted if the Opposition had grasped the overall effects of their own proposals and arranged to meet John Morley (of the India Office) to express his concern over the extraordinary unfairness of this situation, seeing that if this continued the Bill undoubtedly would be withdrawn by the Government and all chance of settlement would thus be lost. In his notes of his meeting with Morley the Archbishop writes:—

"We were trying in the House of Lords, or at all events, I was trying, to suggest in the Bill amendments which should be reasonable and consistent with the large principles on which I believe the country to have expressed itself." The Archbishop was to state that he considered his amendments not to be "wrecking amendments" but "our position is one almost of helplessness as regards commending what we say to the men on whom real responsibility rests," pointing out that there were five members in the Cabinet in the House of Lords, of whom Elgin, Tweedmouth and Canningham had not spoken in the debates." Lord Ripon had also only spoken "as a sort of figurehead without pretending to take any lift
of the matter; and everything has rested on the shoulders of Lord Crewe, who quite obviously has had no authority given him to speak or act in a responsible or independent manner. The result is that what we say might as well be spoken to the wind." The Archbishop was to conclude that "Crewe's position, even if his capacity had been of the first order (which it is not) is only that of a subordinate." Morley was to agree that none of the other Liberal peers had taken any interest in the Bill except for predominantly political reasons. (66)

It had become clear that the amendments to the Bill had changed the Bill beyond recognition, but in so doing the Unionists and the Established Church had brought in too many changes for the Bill to be considered by the Liberal Government. Fitzroy was to note the following detail:

"The House of Lords, in dealing with the Education Bill, have not shown discretion. There has been no subordination of the amendments to any definite and coherent plan; there has not even been any effectual effort towards their mutual correlation, so that they often contain provisions that are self-contradictory and in some cases obviously fatal to the intentions of their authors. Instead of concentrating their essays upon a few salient points and leaving the direction in competent hands, each one has obeyed his own prompting to take a share in the work, and, once at it, no effort of concentrated authority has been able to evolve order out of chaos....Lord Crewe....has made up for the weakness of his battalions by the tact, knowledge, courtesy and courage which he has displayed with very little support from his Front Bench....The Archbishop has shown under a mask of strength, his lack of control in not seeing to it that no independent action of any particular Bishop should imperil the character of moderation which he has claimed for the objects of the Bench; his support for the Bishop of Oxford was such an example. The greatest of blunders was shown by the fact that the Archbishop of
York and several other Bishops went into the Government lobby."

The confusion which arose over some of the proposed amendments was not only apparent on the Bishops' Bench but also amongst the other members of the peers. Fitzroy was to note that "on the day on which a certain amendment was to be moved by the Archbishop, Camperdown on entering the lobby found the Duke of Devonshire... half forbidding communication, whereupon Camperdown said he intended to vote against the amendment, and the Duke replied that he intended not only to vote against it, but to speak against it. In due course the Duke got up and spoke strongly against the Archbishop's amendment and was followed by Lord Lansdowne as strongly in its favour..... The issue is a deplorable jumble from which neither the Opposition nor the House of Lords emerge with advantage."

By mid-November all the principal amendments affecting the voluntary schools, the teachers and religious instruction had been debated - these being mainly Clauses 1 to 8. The changes would be far-reaching, and were summarised by the Cabinet Committee in Education, to consider what steps they should take towards effecting a compromise if this should be acceptable. The amendments thus outlined on 17th November were to show how far the Lords had gone in strengthening the denominational hold on the elementary schools. It was clear that the House of Lords had not shown any discretion. The amendments did not follow any definite plan or coherent pattern, resulting in provisions which could be interpreted only with difficulty to avoid contradicting other clauses. Neither the Archbishop nor Lord Lansdowne had exercised control over proposed amendments from the Conservative peers or from the Episcopal Bench, which had led on more than one occasion for the Lords to inquire exactly what they were debating. Lord Ripon had also failed to express concisely the Roman Catholic view, 'The Tablet' maintaining that Clause 4 as it then stood on 10th November
would allow a single dissenting child in a denominational school from granting that school extended facilities if no alternative accommodation was available. On this basis the Roman Catholics would lose a further 93 schools. A survey of the amendments made by the Lords showed the Bill to be a contradiction of that Bill presented to them by the House of Commons.

In Clause One the Lords proposed to enact that one of the conditions for recognition as a public elementary school should be that "some portion of the day is set aside for religious instruction." (70)

The practical effect of this amendment would have been small, it being claimed that there were only 7 schools in England and 158 in Wales where no religious instruction was given.

The Clause Two amendment would compel Local Education Authorities to take over voluntary schools, "if required to do so by their owners," but the L.E.A. could appeal against compulsion." (71) The Local Education Authority might thus have to maintain an unnecessary number of schools.

In the original bill the only compulsion was to be for the 4/5ths schools.

Under Clause Three the amendment allowed for ordinary facilities on every day of the week if demanded in these schools, thus this would have ensured that such schools would remain as practically fully denominational schools, this also applying to single-school areas. It would have meant the near-repeal of the Cowper-Temple Clause, and could in fact admit the principle of pan-denominationalism if parents of more than one denomination demanded facilities within the same school. The Clause, on consideration, would probably prove unacceptable to the Church and would therefore be open to amendment.

Under Clause Four amendments there had been considerable changes, these being as follows:-
(a) The population limit defining an urban area was removed.

(b) The 4/5ths proportion was removed and a bare majority only was to be required.

(c) The Local Authority "shall" (not 'may') grant facilities to be given by the teachers.

(d) Religious Instruction was to be placed under the control of a Parents' Committee.

This last point would have meant some form of religious test for teachers, as would Clause 8 which was amended to allow teachers to give facility instruction "if they were willing to do so" in any school. (72)

Under Clause Seven, the amendment concerning attendance during the period allocated to religious instruction made such attendance compulsory during such time. This was not seen as an important issue, as the Government had been made aware of the difficulties concerned by Morant regarding the attendance of those who opted out of all religious instruction and whether they should remain on the premises or stay away from the school during this period. (73)

Lord Crewe, faced with the Bill as it then stood, and still in favour of compromise, outlined his own views as to what concessions the Cabinet might give in order to save the Bill. (74) The main problems continued to lie with Clauses Three and Four.

Of Clause Three school facilities Crewe was emphatic that the Head-teacher should not be allowed to give denominational teaching. He would compromise over the position of the Assistant Teachers. They should be allowed to give instruction, but only with the consent of the Local Authority. This should be limited in extent, excluding single school areas and rural parishes, and in all other areas unless the school "is of large size." (75)
Of Clause Four schools Lord Crewe was not in favour of any single school in a rural parish becoming a Clause 4 school with extended facilities, but in other cases he suggested the Cabinet "should not want to be too rigid, and a very small number of dissentient children shall not prevent the privileges." (76)

He was also prepared to give a smaller fraction than 4/5ths, the results to be calculated on the total number of parents of the children in the school, and not on the results of those who voted. He also agreed that Catholic children should be given prior right of admission into their own schools, so that the required fraction would be more readily reached.

Lord Crewe assumed that "in no case a teacher should be required as a condition of appointment, to give any form of religious instruction" this including Clause 4 schools but in such schools the proposed Parents' Committee was to be given a "definite consultative voice in the selection of the teachers." (77)

The Cabinet Committee on Education were to agree with Lord Crewe concerning the above compromises if these could be reached in the House of Lords. (78) If in order to save the Bill, further concessions were to be made, then in Clause Three schools assistant teachers were to be allowed to give facilities teaching, but in urban areas only, thus still omitting all rural areas and therefore most of the single school areas. Further concessions could be made to Clause 4. Extended facilities could be given in schools in the rural areas, but then alternative accommodation would be required if more than ten children did not wish to attend such facilities instruction. It was agreed that the 4/5ths majority of parents (not 2/3rds voting) would be acceptable, and teachers would be allowed to give religious instruction if willing to do so. Although
the Local Authority was to appoint the teachers, in Clause Four schools the Parents' Committee had to be consulted.

These concessions were seen by the Cabinet as being the very limit of what they would concede. Any further steps would be felt to have been a breach of their election pledges, and would lose the support of many of their Party. The hope of the Liberal Party was that an agreement would be reached and such hopes had been stated in the national press throughout November.

The 'Daily Telegraph' had indicated that "the Commons hope that when the measure leaves the House of Lords it may contain elements which will form the basis of agreement acceptable to Parliament as a whole." (79) Other opinions in the press over the outcome of the changes made in the House of Lords included the remark by the 'Daily Chronicle' that "the House of Lords are doing their best to prevent a settlement of the educational problem," (80) whilst the 'Daily News' commented that "the House of Lords has not weakened the Government but strengthened it. There will be no appeal to the country. There may be no chance of saving the Bill, but the loss of the Bill against an overwhelming vote of the electorate and of the Commons will be one of those events which, as the saying goes - will come home to roost." (81)

'The Truth' also claimed that "small minor amendments involving no principle may be accepted by the House of Commons, if they deemed improvements by it, but there must be no yielding of principle." (82)

Although Birrell had spoken in Hanley in late November at a Liberal rally and had not disagreed with a speaker who said that the loss of the Bill would not mean the Government would call an election, the 'Staffordshire Sentinel' also reported on 28th November that "we have scarcely any doubt at all that a compromise is about to be effected between the Govern-
It had become evident that the Cabinet Committee on Education, without a clear directive from the Prime Minister, were forced to take decisions regarding the concessions needed to save the Bill which would be unacceptable to many within their own party. It was already felt by those in the Cabinet and also by their Labour supporters that the Bill— even before being amended by the Lords—was leaning too far towards appeasing the denominations. These concessions were to be made only as a last resort to save the Bill, and if a less demanding solution could be reached, then the above concessions were then not to be offered.

Thus of the six points outlined by the Archbishop in his speech during the Second Reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, the Government were prepared to make some concessions towards meeting these demands. They were prepared to give some voting power to those who had a direct interest in the school in the appointment of the staff by giving some authority to the Parents' Committees. They were willing to alter the 4/5ths majority to 2/3rds to make it easier for schools to become Clause Four schools. Clause One of the Bill had been amended so that there would be religious teaching in all public elementary schools, the Government being prepared to accept this amendment.

There were points still remaining which would cause further conflict. The Government would not allow definite religious instruction for children whose parents desired it in all schools. This was available only fully in Clause Four schools; in part in Clause Three schools; and did not intend it to be in the provided schools. This also meant that some teachers might be unable to give definite religious teaching even if they so wished, as this would depend upon the Local Authority, the Government demanding that this should be permissive and not mandatory, on the part
of the Local Authority. The Archbishop had also stressed the need for religious teaching to be given by teachers who believed what they taught. This would have meant, inevitably, some form of religious test for teachers, especially when appointed to those schools giving denominational teaching. The Government, on the other hand, as part of its election pledge, had promised to remove such tests for teachers. It was to be upon this point that the negotiations between the Established Church and Government were to prove the most difficult. Both the Archbishop and the Government had realised that the situation by mid-November was serious enough to warrant the withdrawal of the Bill, and therefore if this was to be avoided, then a series of careful negotiations towards a settlement would have to be undertaken. This was best done outside the House of Lords, thereby giving the opportunity for a series of meetings between the Archbishop and the leaders of both parties.

The Archbishop was to spend 17th - 19th November at Windsor, Campbell-Bannerman also being present. The Prime Minister had already informed the King on 7th November that "it was evident that the House of Lords could not expect or indeed invite the House of Commons to accept any of the fundamental alterations, if they are persisted in, and a most regrettable situation would then arise." (84)

This he repeated to the Archbishop on 19th November, stating:—

"This is a very bad business. Nothing can, so far as I can see, be done with your House of Lords work. I should not be able, even if I tried, to restrain my people at all from making sharp work of what you have been doing...You have been making a new Bill, it is not our Bill at all." (85)

The Archbishop was to explain the difficulties of the balance of power in the House of Lords, as on the Liberal benches there were "no hearers there whose position is responsible or whose ultimate judgment matters," thus each Clause had to be amended separately as it was not
known what would happen to their other amendments. The Archbishop was anxious to know what the remainder of the Cabinet felt about the situation, and of letting them know what view the Archbishop was taking. The Archbishop noted:

"To my amazement he then went through the Cabinet and practically denounced them all....It was an odd exposition by a Prime Minister of the composition of his own Cabinet.....My general conclusion was that the Liberal Party is being somewhat strangely lead, if leadership it can be called." (86)

The Archbishop also noted that the King was extremely indignant, calling the Prime Minister "a nominal head wagged by his own tail." (87)

The Archbishop was to meet Campbell-Bannerman again that day, the Prime Minister outlining his own policy as to the future of the Bill, stating that the Commons would refuse entirely to consider the Lords amendments and would send the Bill back to the Lords for them to deal with as they liked, admitting that "the Lords could not with any self-respect take action upon such a rejoinder, and therefore the Bill would not be further considered and would simply be dropped." (88)

He had already written to Lord Esher stating that no compromise was possible, and that the House of Commons would pass a resolution refusing to consider the amendments. (89)

The impression left by Campbell-Bannerman on the Archbishop was that "he is terribly in the hands of the more popular force among his followers." (90)

The same day (19th November) the Archbishop held an interview with Lord Lansdowne who was opposed to any negotiations with the Government at that stage. (91) This was followed by a meeting with Lord Crewe who was anxious to reach some settlement in the House of Lords as he "knew that
the House of Commons would decline to waste time in going through the amendments in detail." Lord Crewe also wanted the Lords "to reduce the present impossible demands to small dimensions." (92)

This view was also expressed by John Morley who met the Archbishop the next day (20th November), Morley being "inclined to think that compromise is not only possible, but eminently desirable," but added that the Cabinet was still not sure what line it should take. (93)

Dr. Clifford was also to visit Morley early in December to press him to support an approach to the Archbishop to accept that "the Bible should be used as literature, like Milton, etc...," but Morley thought this approach would not be likely to succeed. (94)

Although Lord Lansdowne had indicated the Opposition would not be prepared to approach the Government with offers of negotiation at that time, he wrote to the Archbishop on 21st November, stating: "We have a small committee at work on the drafting aspects of the amendments," the committee requesting advice from the Archbishop. (95)

This Committee was to meet under the chairmanship of Lord Lansdowne at Lansdowne House on 23rd, 26th and 27th November, Balfour, Lord Goschen and the Dukes of Devonshire and Norfolk being among the principal members. Some of the more extreme points raised by the Committee were agreed to be given up, but the Archbishop was to note:

"From the first it became apparent that there is a good deal of difference of opinion as to the comparative harmfulness of (i) the rejection of the Bill and (ii) the continuance of the existing strife."

Although some of the members of the Committee including the Archbishop and the Duke of Devonshire, were in favour of compromise, Balfour and Goschen in particular were to press for no compromise on important issues, and that the Lords should make out the Bill "clearly in a form
which we think reasonable, and not trouble ourselves as to whether or not the things we ask for are obtainable from the present House of Commons." (96)

By the third meeting on 27th November Balfour with his supporters including A. Chamberlain, Lyttleton, Douglas, Anson and Hood had all expressed their wishes to be "in the direction of the Lords refusing to give way at all, and they regarded with equanimity the loss of the Bill which would ensue." (97)

In view of the prevailing attitude in these meetings the Archbishop felt that the Opposition had not taken into account the existing state of the voluntary schools, thus he was to point out that "quite apart from these political considerations there lay ahead of us a most grave difficulty as regards the condition of our school buildings. The County Councils have ordered repairs on an extensive scale. We have hitherto succeeded in postponing the carrying out of these, pending the fate of the present Bill." (98)

The Archbishop was to press for compromise, but declared:--

"We should not give way upon really essential points, and above all that we should stand firm about the employment of the teacher who volunteers to give denominational teaching." (99)

While these meetings had been in progress, the King had been in constant communication with the Prime Minister. By 23rd November the King had become uneasy over the situation, asking through Lord Knollys to be kept informed. This was followed by a second letter on 25th November, the King writing:--

"In view of the serious state of affairs which would arise were a conflict to take place between the House of Lords and the House of Commons on the amendments passed by the former House on the Education Bill,
the King feels certain that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman will agree with him in thinking it is most important that there should if possible, be a compromise in respect to these amendments."

The letter was also to suggest a meeting between the Prime Minister and the Archbishop in the hope that "some modus vivendi on the line of mutual concessions could be found."

In his reply of the same date Campbell-Bannerman indicated that such a meeting might not be very fruitful, writing:-

"Probably matters have ripened somewhat.....but it may be that the time has not yet arrived for an actual accommodation." (100)

The Archbishop had also received a similar letter from the King, and wrote at once to the Prime Minister to arrange the meeting, but stating:-

"It may be possibly the case that matters are not yet sufficiently matured to enable us to go much further in conversation than we went last week at Windsor." (101)

The meeting took place next day at Lambeth Palace, the Archbishop being confined to bed with gastric influenza. He was to note that the Prime Minister "had really nothing to say, and did not appear to me to be more familiar with the Bill than he was when I talked to him at Windsor." (102) When the Archbishop continued to press the case for the right of teachers to give denominational instruction, and therefore the need of discovering the qualifications of such a teacher, the Prime Minister "simply kept referring to his own majority and the need to satisfy it," and "kept saying these are points on which his people were very hot." (103)

It was therefore agreed that the conversation could go no further, and the following day the Prime Minister sent an account of this meeting to the King, outlining the Government's position at that time, the letter
to the King being as follows:

"Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, with his humble duty, knowing the deep interest which Your Majesty takes in the present education controversy and its possible future course, begs leave to say that last evening he visited the Archbishop, whom he regretted to find suffering from serious indisposition. This fact, however, did not prevent them from having a long discussion; but they both agreed that they could not carry it much further than they had gone at Windsor a week ago.

"The Archbishop showed, as usual, a most fair and conciliatory spirit. Practically the principal point on which His Grace insisted as all-important was that the ordinary teacher should not be prevented from giving, if he were willing to do so, the special and distinctive religious teaching. Your Majesty's Government, on the other part, thinks that this would be inadmissible in its full extend, because it would leave the voluntary denominational schools practically as they now are in this respect with all their powers and privileges, notwithstanding their being nominally under the control of the local authority, who would pay rent to the Church for their schools. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman gathers that with the Archbishop this is the main point of difference.

"They were both in agreement that while the Upper House considers the Bill on Report, the representatives of the Government should maintain their quiescent and merely observant attitude. But the Archbishop promised to inform Sir Henry of any new incident or suggestion, while the latter on his part gives his assurance of the great desire he had for conciliation and arrangement." (104)

The King was to reply on the same day:

"The King has received Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's letter of 27th Inst. this evening and is greatly interested in learning the result of his interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury who the King greatly
regrets to learn is indisposed.

"The King quite sees the difficulty of the position of his Govern-ment and of the Primate, but from the last paragraph of the P.M.'s letter the King is glad to learn from Sir Henry's evident wish for con-sideration that an arrangement may yet be possible which would prevent a collision between the two Houses of Parliament." (105)

Sir Henry then wrote to Arthur Acland on 27th November. His letter was to be read out at a special meeting of the General Committee of the National Liberal Federation, claiming that the amended Bill "perpetuates, if it does not extend, the very grievances and wrongs that were fixed upon the country by the Act of 1902." The letter continued: "We can have no tampering with the main principles on which our Bill is founded. If within those limits, and without prejudice to the cause of education, an arrangement can be come to, well and good; if not, it will be for us to see that on this question of education and on others a way may be found by which the wishes of the country may be made to prevail." (106)

The Archbishop was now to find himself in a difficult position, wanting on the one hand, a solution which would satisfy the Established Church, and on the other, not being prepared to allow the principles on which the Liberals stated their case was to rest. Outside Parliament 'The Guardian' was to write:-

"Very little, if any, more can be given up by the friends of the Voluntary schools without abandoning the great cause for which so gallant a fight has been made. Whether they abandon the Bill or come to a fair and reasonable compromise is immaterial. In either case we win the fight." (107)

The Nonconformists, led by Dr. Clifford, were already urging the Government to create new Liberal peers to redress the balance in the
The Archbishop was to assess the situation in two letters, both dated 28th November. Writing to Lord Lansdowne he was to impress upon him the need to reach a settlement rather than a rejection of the Bill, if solely on the effects such a rejection would have upon the majority of voluntary schools, writing:

"I think it difficult to exaggerate the gravity of the question which will arise about the repairing and improving of our school buildings if no solution is at present reached, and Churchmen are called upon to provide tens of thousands of pounds forthwith for the improvement of buildings which we are rightly called upon to improve, and which nobody will subscribe to with the knowledge that his money may prove to have been thrown away." (109)

His second letter included a memorandum to the Prime Minister stressing that he wished to see that no vital principles, constitutional or religious were imperilled by anythings which was outstanding as a point of divergence, but he continued to press for the freedom of all teachers to give denominational teaching if they were suited for this purpose, and if they were willing to do so, arguing that it seemed a grievous wrong that teachers who had given such services should now be deprived of this right to give it freely. (110) This led Campbell-Bannerman to believe that the Church would not, and indeed could not, yield on this point, and although the Archbishop's aim had been to keep down the political temperature and to arrange a compromise through private negotiations, this point was likely to be the final stumbling block, and in particular that section of Clause Three which was designed to exclude the teacher from giving denominational instruction.

Birrell in his Cabinet notes for 3rd December was to write:

"If this Bill is lost, it will be because the Government cannot
meet the Church of England in regard to Clause Three schools."

The issue at stake was whether a teacher should be allowed to volunteer to give the two-day denominational teaching. For the Church of England this was essential but the Nonconformists thought it would make the whole school denominational, and would also require tests for teachers.

Under Clause Four Birrell was to indicate that the Irish Nationalists would support the amendment - as suggested by Lord Crewe on 17th November - to the effect that "no teacher should be appointed by the Local Authority without the concurrence of a Parents' Committee" as this would go some way towards pacifying the Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholics had sent a deputation to the House of Lords to meet Lord Lansdowne, this deputation included the Duke of Norfolk. Its purpose had been to express the strong opinions of Roman Catholics on the Education Bill. They believed that the Bill, as then amended, "was not such a one as would coincide with their views did it rest entirely with themselves." They were to claim that the one dominant note throughout their meetings and throughout the whole of Catholic England was to ask for "real Catholic teaching by real Catholic teachers and they would welcome heartily any settlement of this great question which did not compromise that one and vital principle." 

In his answer to this deputation Lord Lansdowne was to state:-

"Our principle has been to endeavour to convert the privileges which are offered to the different denomination from sham privileges into real privileges. We desire that those denominational schools......should retain what is sometimes spoken of as their denominational atmosphere. Now your special interest, no doubt, is in the fourth Clause of the Bill - I mean the Clause which gives what we call 'extended facilities'.

"Extended facilities, I take it, are the goal at which your co-religionists are intending to arrive. Now the object of our amendments
has been to render that goal one which there is at any rate, a reasonable prospect of your people being able to attain. Our view generally of the principle to be observed with regard to the teachers is this - that while on the one hand we desire to respect to the full the liberty of conscience of the members of that very honourable profession, we do think that where they are willing and able to give the kind of instruction you desire that there the law should not be allowed to stand in their way." (114)

Birrell was to press for compromise, not on religious grounds, but for administrative reasons, stating:-

"In my opinion, if the present Bill is lost, a new Bill of some kind or other must be introduced next session, and passed into law. If it is not, the administration of the Act of 1902 must become impossible." (115)

Birrell was not optimistic about the outcome of the West Riding Judgment then awaiting appeal in the House of Lords, and saw further demonstrations by the Passive Resistance Movement would become inevitable. There had already been conflict between Local Authorities and the denominational schools, and Birrell thought that he might have to make use of the 1904 Local Authority Default Act.

He saw the need for a "series of private interviews with leading members of our own side in order to lay before the Opposition the present situation and to ascertain from them what support we might expect if we made any proposals partaking of the nature of a compromise." (116)

The Northern Counties Education League was also to press for changes in the Bill. At their Annual Meeting at the end of November under the Presidency of Alfred Illingworth they had declared in favour of no religious tests for teachers, and no religious instruction to be given in schools hours in publicly supported schools. They supported Bible reading without comment. (117)

The Archbishop had continued to keep in touch with both Government and with the Opposition. On 1st December he met the Lord Chancellor who was of
the opinion that the Tories in the House of Commons were "practically united in desiring that the Bill should not pass" laying the blame for this attitude on Balfour whose speeches "in the Commons and outside have been political rather than educational." (118)

Lord Lansdowne had also corresponded with the Archbishop on 1st December acknowledging the Archbishop's plea to save the Bill solely on the grounds of the financial state of the voluntary schools, adding:-

"I don't think that any of us regard you as a "peace at any price" man. What you say as to the consequences of dropping the Bill cannot be left out of account." (119)

The Archbishop was to reply to Lord Lansdowne on 3rd December stating that he believed "there is a strong section in the Cabinet genuinely anxious to make some real concessions to us with a view to passing the Measure," but he continued to outline four points which would have to be secured, these being:-

(a) Religious education in all schools within school hours with full protection of conscience.

(b) A reasonable expectation that the schools would (where fit) be taken over by the L.E.A.

(c) The reasonable use of teachers for facilities children under Clause Three.

(d) Practicable and effective conditions for retaining as extended facilities schools, the existing denominational schools in areas where the children have access to another school of a non-denominational type.

The Archbishop wrote that he did not see that these points could be called "wrecking amendments" but was to question two of the amendments already in the Bill - concerning denominational teaching in provided schools, and the acquisition of extended facilities even where there was
no alternative school. On the first point he thought the amendment was justified "in the limited degree and form in which we ask for it" as this principle had been defended by Birrell in the draft Bills. On the second point the Archbishop was to feel more hesitant, but came to the conclusion that:

"We could not, if we pass the proposed amendment, deny that we are turning the Bill round, and transforming into the rule or norm of many rural areas what was always and avowedly put forward by the Government as an exceptional provision to meet particular cases." (120)

The position taken by the Archbishop in desiring such a compromise alarmed those Conservatives who wished the Bill to be withdrawn. Lord Salisbury visited the Archbishop the following day (4th December) being concerned over the proposal, but the Archbishop continued to press for compromise, stressing that should the Bill fail, religious strife would continue. The voluntary schools were already short of financial help, and would not be likely to raise their own money under the continued Liberal threat to abolish the voluntary schools. The Archbishop also pointed out there was a great danger that a future Bill might be a secular Bill, thus there was the "unlikeliness of our getting hereafter a better Bill than the present." (121)

The Archbishop again wrote to Lord Lansdowne pressing for a compromise rather than withdrawal, stating that "On the whole I should like the Bill to pass if our amendments are reasonably accepted, though possibly with verbal modifications, and I deprecate the cry that the Bill had better perish." (122)

He wrote again the following day on 5th December to clarify his own position stating that "What I am anxious for is that the Bill we send down to the House of Commons should be a Bill which we are prepared to defend and in all essential points to stand by." (123)
The same day Lord Crewe met the Archbishop, agreeing that as regards Clause Four, "some arrangement might very likely be arrived at," but the problem of teachers in Clause Three schools would still remain. The Government would outline alternatives to those sub-clauses affecting denominational teaching in such schools, but Lord Crewe was to warn:—

"The House of Commons is exceedingly hot upon the danger of widespread recurrence of denominational tests." (124)

The Archbishop was to write to the Prime Minister on 5th December explaining the distinction between the "appointment of a teacher to a school, and the assigning to him the duty of giving Religious Instruction," adding, "Extreme men on both sides obviously desire that the Bill should not in any form pass into law. I am profoundly convinced that they are wrong." (125)

The Roman Catholics were still not satisfied with the Bill concerning the necessity of having alternative accommodation available, and were to press Lord Lansdowne to accept and include an additional amendment under which suitable provision would be made in the school or elsewhere for the children of those parents who declared their objections to the religious instruction.

If this could be secured then the Bill would then safeguard all but a handful of their schools when this amendment was related to the changes in Clause Four. In the House of Lords the Bill in its amended form had passed through the Report Stage on 29th November, and passed its Third Reading on 6th December 1906 by 108 votes to 28, but this did not mean that such Roman Catholic safeguards could be guaranteed.

It was apparent that the Opposition had turned the Bill inside out. From an undenominational Bill it had become a strongly denominational measure. All teachers, whether head or assistant had been given the option of teaching denominational religious instruction. Local
Authorities were also encouraged to allow this teaching in the provided schools, permitting also the teacher to give such instruction, which if conceded would have been a new conquest for the Established Church in the field of elementary education. The Bill had cancelled the option which had been given to the Local Authorities in regard to religious teaching as no school should get any public support unless some portion of the school hours was set aside every day for that purpose. The restrictions which were to limit the extended facility schools to urban areas only were removed, the Local Authority being compelled to establish them in rural areas also, where 2/3rds of the parents demanded it. Clause Four therefore had been made virtually ineffective as the voluntary schools could remain almost wholly unchanged (denominationally) by the Bill. The denominational position being thus fortified, the Bill strengthened the compulsion by the Local Authorities to take over existing schools and to maintain them out of the rates and taxes. Provision was also made for the erection of denominational schools where school provision was found to be deficient. The proposed Welsh Council was also removed from the original Bill.

The Opposition had in effect turned the Bill into an extension of the Act of 1902, turning "rules into exceptions and exceptions into rules." (126)

Although the Bill presented the House of Commons with an extraordinary dilemma - whether to take the Lords' amendments separately, according to the usual practice, or to reject them "en bloc" - negotiations between leading members of both parties continued, Lord Lansdowne the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Crewe, Birrell and the Archbishop all preferring a settlement.

However, to the radical Nonconformist it seemed intolerable that the Church of England should look to the State for the complete maintenance
of the voluntary schools and yet expect at the same time to retain the
right of appointing teachers who could be relied upon to teach the
Church's dogmas and doctrines.

On the other hand to the Churchmen it seemed wrong that men and
women who had spent their lives giving this teaching and considered it
the chief of their privileges as teachers to do so should suddenly be
deprived of the right of even offering to give it. The Churchmen claimed
that it was a free-will service rendered by teachers, who had the power
to decline it if conscience forbade. In reply to this the Liberals and
the radicals claimed that 99% of the teachers who declined to give relig-
ious instruction in church schools would lose their appointments and there-
fore the only way of settling the argument was to disallow the option. In
view of the two extremes of opinion there would be no compromise possible
between these two positions and the Church had the advantage of being in
possession with the strength of the House of Lords behind it, and also
with the leader of the Opposition (Balfour) concerned to defend his own
legislation of 1902. The Archbishop was not in a position even if he had
wanted to, to make the sacrifice which alone could have saved the
situation.

Lord Crewe wrote to Lord Lansdowne on 7th December suggesting that in
view of the gravity of the situation a small meeting would be arranged
as "exchanges of views might be valuable." (127) He was not hopeful of
the outcome, writing at the same time to Lord Ripon, concerning the
proposed meeting that "It must be doubtful if anything can come of it in
view of what is universally stated as to Balfour's intentions. Still,
Balfour is not quite omnipotent; and in any case we shall have done
what we can towards a settlement." (128)

It was becoming clear to those interested in compromise that any
settlement was not the policy of Balfour. The Archbishop noted after
meeting Sir William Anson on 7th December:

"Mr. Balfour had been greatly apprehensive that the House of Lords might on the Third Reading give way to a dangerous extent." (129)

Later on 12th December Lord St. Aldwyn was to state to the Archbishop that "the real difficulty lies in the fact that the leader of the Party does not want a peaceful solution." (130)

Lord St. Aldwyn had met Herbert Gladstone on 7th December, Gladstone then writing:

"He is strong for a settlement and thinks it quite possible...he is confident that a compromise could be carried. He declared the Tory peers were by no means under the thumb of the party in the House of Commons." (131)

The Prime Minister, however, had decided to reject the Lords' amendments "en bloc" but whilst so doing, the Government should try to leave room for further negotiations between both Houses. Birrell and Lord Crewe were opposed to this decision which in itself was admittedly a novel course in governmental procedure. The Archbishop noted on 14th December at a meeting with Lord Crewe and Birrell:

"They made no secret of the fact that they had both of them been adverse to the action of the House of Commons in sending to the House of Lords the general "en bloc" resolution. Birrell said he had fully contemplated and desired the discussion of the amendments seriatim, and evidently he did not think there would have been any impossibility in doing this. They both then admitted that the House of Lords had received a rebuff or insult which no such body could be expected to accept tamely." (132)

The Prime Minister realised that to use the normal procedure and gradually recover their own Bill might have taken months and would have re-opened the entire controversy. It would also have involved re-phras-
ing their plans for the coming session without any assurance that the Bill would be saved in the end.

The Prime Minister conveyed his decision to the King on 8th December indicating that there was still some hope of a solution being reached, but King Edward VII did not appear to be impressed, replying:

"...He confesses he does not quite see where the spirit of concession comes in, in the proposal of the Cabinet, and he is afraid from what Sir Henry says, that the chance of a compromise is not very bright. He moreover doubts whether the adoption of so drastic and novel a measure as the rejection "en bloc" of the whole of the amendments of the House of Lords will be regarded by them as a desire on the part of the House of Commons to arrive at an amicable conclusion....The King does not, however, understand how the government is to know whether they will or will not be accepted by the Opposition unless the Cabinet put themselves into communication with Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Balfour previous to Mr. Birrell's speech......Sir Henry may have already done so, but he makes no allusion to this point in his letters, and should the King be correct in his surmise, he hopes that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman will arrange a meeting with them before the commencement of the debates." (133)

The Prime Minister was to reply on 19th December that this method would give time for negotiations to take place, writing:

"....While anxious not to place too high the chance of a harmonious solution of the difficulty, he assures Your Majesty that the chance still exists and has gained rather than lost during the last few days. On the rising of the Cabinet on Friday, steps were taken to sound one or two leading members of the Opposition, but owing to the general absence of members of the two Houses on Saturday and Sunday it was doubtful whether this could be accomplished and this was the reason why Sir Henry did not mention that intention to Your Majesty.
but not of 2/3rds as proposed by Lord Londonderry on 29th November, 1906 although Lord Jersey had asked for a bare majority. Birrell had also promised to review the urban areas, stating that the Bill as it stood was not wanted, but if the Opposition "were to feel themselves at liberty to withdraw their amendments as a whole," then, he claimed, "hope is still possible for us." (136)

However, although his speech was to leave the door open for negotiations, his view that the Bill as amended was nobody's Bill - certainly not the Government's and probably not in any real sense the Bill of the Lords - caused the Archbishop to write to the Lord Chancellor on 10th December expressing his dismay at the policy taken by the Cabinet to reject the amendments "en bloc" feeling that all chances of a settlement would be lost, writing:

"You will not wonder at the feeling of dismay and despondency with which I hear this evening of Birrell's speech and the P.M.'s prospective speech, flaunting our endeavours to arrive at a settlement..." (137)

The Archbishop was also to write to the Prime Minister expressing his "keen feeling of depression as to the prospects of such a solution as you and I agree in desiring in the interests of peace." He indicated to the Prime Minister that "very much - perhaps almost everything may turn upon your own speech today. Those who, like myself, desire a peaceful solution, if it can be got on fair and reasonable terms, have a difficult cause to maintain, and it will at once become a hopeless cause if the Prime Minister does not help us by the tone and manner as well as by the matter of his reference to the position, the work, and the policy of the House of Lords." (138)

Birrell's speech, he wrote, was "whether intentionally or not, a sort of demand that the House of Lords shall come almost apologetically,
"Lord Lansdowne has, however, been seen this morning by Lord Crewe, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer who explained the reasons for the course of returning the Amended Bill without detailed discussion and of inviting further changes in it, and also indicated the points on which concessions would be considered. Lord Lansdowne of course reserved his opinion, but they were satisfied with his attitude.

"Your Majesty will bear in mind that very leading members of the Opposition have denounced the Bill in unmeasured language and that not a single Bishop voted for it, even amended by their own wishes as it has been. It, therefore, behoves the Government, whose desire it is to save the Bill and thus settle the conflict at least for a time, to proceed with the utmost caution lest they "give away"themselves and their friends in vain. The procedure that they have followed has this object in view and they have good hopes of success." (134)

Birrell was to announce in the House of Commons the Government's decision to reject the amendments "en bloc" on 10th December. He was careful to leave room for negotiations to be considered, although his speech was blunt and forthright in its attack on the proceedings "in another place" calling the amended Bill "a miserable, tortured, twisted tertium quid," adding "it is something which no man will father." (135) The question of special denominational teaching and of the functions and duties in regard to it, of the teachers remained the main basis on which there was disagreement, but Birrell was to offer considerable concessions if this would be acceptable in order to reach a solution. He was prepared to modify the position of teachers in Clause Three schools, and to agree that Parents' Committees should be consulted by the Local Authorities on the appointment of teachers to Clause Four schools. The Government, he declared, was also prepared to amend Clause Four and to withdraw the 4/5ths proportion substituting instead a fraction of 3/4ths
or hat in hand, to ask the Government to listen to the proposals and that it shall begin by practically withdrawing what is now suggested and substituting something quite different in its place." (139)

The Archbishop was aware that most of the aggression was to come from the Opposition benches when the Government had decided to reject the amendments "en bloc". He had also realised that before the debates on the 11th December had closed that it was to be assumed that Balfour meant to kill the Bill, and therefore it would be doubly difficult to pass a measure which would now satisfy both parties.

The Prime Minister had replied to the Archbishop immediately on 11th December believing his policy to reject the Lords' amendments to be the right one if a chance of a solution was to be kept open. In defence of the tone of Birrell's speech he wrote:

"As to the language used and the tone employed, it was not one wit overstrained when the general effect of all that has been done in the House of Lords is considered. You cannot expect people to be quite mealy-mouthed in the circumstances..."

He concluded the letter by stating:

"...We cannot of course say what we should agree to without knowing whether our agreeing would save the Bill in such a way that we could pass it." (140)

Before Campbell-Bannerman delivered his speech on 11th December, Lord Lansdowne met the Archbishop at Lambeth Palace, where he explained to the Archbishop that Lord Crewe "strongly" and Asquith "on the whole" as well as Birrell were still in favour of the Bill being passed, and that the rejection of the amendments "en bloc" was, according to the Government, the "simplest mode of securing such a position as might lead to compromise and settlement." (141)
The Archbishop was to point out that much would depend upon Balfour's attitude, and that he "might make a hostile fighting speech instead of accepting the olive branch which Campbell-Bannerman holds out." (142) He asked for Lord Lansdowne's views as regards Balfour's policy of letting the Bill pass, the Archbishop's note of Lansdowne's reply being as follows: -

"He evidently did not think that Balfour felt as clearly as he himself does that on the whole it is better that the Bill should pass. He thinks Balfour's view to be this: If we attempt compromises now they will very likely be unsuccessful and break down in the end upon some particular point. Then it will be alleged that the House of Lords had wrecked the Bill because they could not have their way on that particular point. Whereas if the Bill perishes because the House of Lords policy as a whole is rejected in favour of the House of Commons policy as a whole, the House of Lords stands, Balfour thinks, in a stronger position." (143)

When the debate was resumed in the House of Commons on 11th December, both sides had shown some willingness to reach a solution. The concessions made by Birrell to Clause Four had removed most of the objections raised by the Roman Catholics, (144) the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster having indicated that he wished the Bill to pass, having written to Lord Ripon to press for a settlement. (145)

The Anglican Church had also gained valuable concessions to Clause Four, but no compromise had been reached over single school areas remaining fully denominational or over the permissive power of the Local Authority to permit teachers in Clause Three schools to give denominational teaching. The Prime Minister outlined the reasons why the Government refused to take the amendments separately, and then referred to Balfour as "...a sort of unrecognised mouthpiece of the House of Lords....we have seen him quite recently assuming the character of a sort of director-in-chief. He is a man having authority over (both) Houses; and he says to
the one, 'Go' and he goeth, and to the other, 'Do this,' and he does it....I decline to be lectured on proper constitutional conduct in matters between the two Houses by the Rt.Hon. Gentleman."

The Prime Minister was anxious to know if Balfour wished to save the Bill. Balfour had no desire to save it. Apart from any political advantages he could gain, what he desired to save was the educational system of which he had been the chief architect, thus replying:

"I do not want it to survive in the form in which you propose to send it back to the House of Lords by your Resolution. Rather, far rather, would I see the Bill perish."

Balfour's speech was more than usually aggressive, throwing the blame upon the Government for making it impossible for the Bill to be passed, and denouncing the Government for denying free discussion upon the Lords amendments.

Both sides of the Commons were to be left with the strong impression that Balfour would use his influence against any concessions that might be made to save the Bill. The Cabinet was urged against proposing further concessions which would damage their credit without conciliating their opponents.

The motion "That the question of agreement or disagreement with the Lords Amendments....be put with respect to the amendments as a whole" was carried by 306 to 104 votes, a Government majority of 202. On 12th December the motion "This House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendments," moved by Mr. Lough, was carried by 416 to 107 votes, John Redmond giving the support of the Irish Party to the Government realising that the proposed amendments to Clause Four were favourable to the Roman Catholics, in spite of the Catholic peers having condemned the Bill in the House of Lords before hearing the Government's final concessions.
The action of John Redmond caused Edmund Talbot, M.P. to write an open letter to 'The Times' on 24th December 1906 in which he questioned the reasoning behind Redmond's decision. He was to declare:—

"It is not for me to say that they (Redmond & Dillon) are wrong, but I feel bound to point out that the policy they advocate differs materially from that of the official representatives of the Catholic body in England, and judging from the recent utterances of the Bishop of Limerick, from the views of the Irish Hierarchy as well.

"Mr. Redmond and Mr. Dillon have declared they are prepared to support the Bill with the concession of four amendments....I do not here wish to discuss all these points in detail; all I need say is that they have been most carefully considered by the Catholic Education Council which represents Catholic School Managers throughout Great Britain and that body have come to the conclusion that the Bill, even with such concessions, would wholly fail to secure justice for the Catholic schools." (149)

In his reply on 15th December John Dillon, M.P. outlined the amendments required, which included making Clause Four mandatory; the reduction of the majority required to three-fourths of the parents voting; the abolition of the urban area limit; and the omission of Clause VI which would have driven religious teaching out of school hours. He was to state:—

"When the Education Bill was introduced the Leader of the Irish Party, in consultation with the Catholic Bishops of England, formulated a series of amendments which in our judgment, were essential to protect the Catholic Schools, and make the Bill....tolerable for the Catholic population of England." (150)

These were the above amendments, Dillon claiming that the amendments required by Lord Edmund Talbot would have led to the withdrawal of the Bill and the Roman Catholics would then "face the war of extermination which was sure as a consequence to be waged against our schools." (151)

Talbot's final reply claimed that Dillon's tactics were "illusory in the absence of any public pledge from the Government that they would insist on the minimum demands of the Catholics being accepted by the House of Commons." (152)
The Bill had already been returned to the House of Lords for their further consideration. Fitzroy was to comment on the proceedings in the House of Commons on 12th December stating that the Opposition had intended to obscure the chances of compromise. He further commented as follows:

"It had been arranged that Walter Long should wind up the debate for the Opposition but during Birrell's speech in reply it was seen that Mr. Balfour had taken the position from which he usually addresses the House, and was obviously intending to speak. This he did in the most defiant tones, and in language which, while throwing the responsibility of failure on the Government, showed that he at any rate, had nothing to offer which Ministers could accept. His own Party were evidently taken by surprise, and, though they responded to his efforts by some perfunctory cheers, I am told that never, in the failing days of his Ministry did he encounter so much latent antagonism in the House of Commons." (153)

On the same day - 12th December - the Conservative leaders had met at Lansdowne House, the Archbishop also attending. Among those present were Lord Lansdowne, the Dukes of Norfolk and Devonshire and A.J. Balfour. At this meeting it was agreed that any moves should come from the Government, but Balfour was not in favour of any form of compromise. In this he was supported by the Duke of Norfolk. Balfour recognised that "the difficulties of the Government were immense....they take refuge in generalities and change their phraseology to suit the occasion of the moment." (154)

The Archbishop saw this meeting as an opportunity to press for compromise, but wished for an amendment which would allow the Local Education Authorities to sanction denominational teaching in provided schools where there was no such provision available for church children. The Archbishop noted:

"I said I regarded this as unlikely to be conceded and although we ought to make a hard fight for it, I was not clear that we ought to let
the Bill perish for lack of it." (155)

However, Balfour was to state that these were the very conditions on which he insisted, and that if they could secure these amendments as desired by the Archbishop they "ought to consent to pass the Bill," but added "the Government had definitely stated that it would not grant these things." (155)

Balfour was only prepared to accept the Bill on his own terms, which in fact he knew would not be agreed upon by the Government. Lord St. Aldwyn was to remark to the Archbishop that "...our real difficulty lies in the fact that the leader of the Party does not want a peaceable solution." (157)

The following day the Archbishop again saw Lord Lansdowne who then informed him that Balfour still intended the Bill to be dropped, stating:-

"Balfour...declared that he did not think that he could get his followers in the Commons to assent to such an arrangement as it was possible for the Government to accept." (158)

The National Society had been sitting in Committee on 14th December then still believing that as reported in 'The Standard' Campbell-Bannerman was arranging a compromise with the Archbishop. This view was given some support when on 15th December Lord Crewe wrote to the Archbishop, outlining an agreement reached on the procedure to be adopted in the House of Lords should the Opposition insist upon their amendments, this procedure having been decided upon on 13th December. (159) Both Lord Crewe and Birrell had studied the Bill in detail with the Archbishop on 14th December, the Archbishop noting that "Upon some it was clear that Birrell - just as I had supposed - had never understood our position properly." (160) But the Archbishop feared that Lord Crewe and Lord Lansdowne had come to an arrangement not to debate the Bill in the Lords, but merely to follow an
agreed procedure which would have ended all chance of compromise, thus
writing to Lord Lansdowne on 16th December:—

"I should myself regard it as a disaster if the prospects of a settle-
ment were destroyed merely on the point (important though it is) of
procedure." (161)

Negotiations were to continue between both parties in the interval
before the House of Lords was to consider the rejection of its amendments
by the Commons. The leading roles was taken by Lord Crewe and Birrell on
behalf of the Government, and by Lord Lansdowne and Lord Cawdor on behalf
of the Opposition, in place of the Duke of Devonshire. Of this "substit-
ute" Birrell was to write:—

"I was bent on securing the attendance of the Duke of Devonshire....
who was I know anxious that if possible the Bill in some shape should
pass.....The Duke was willing to come. But Mr. Balfour was determined
to keep him out, and was able to get his own way, and to put in his place
Lord Cawdor, who had been his fag at Eton." (162)

The House of Lords met again on 17th December, no compromise having
been reached through private negotiation. The peers knew that the Bill
was "in extremis" Lord Lansdowne moving the resolution protesting against
the rejection "en bloc" by the House of Commons as an innovation in
constitutional procedure, and invited the Government to state its attitude
towards the amendments in detail, thus leaving room for further compromise.
Lord Crewe defended the Government's action and outlined those concessions
which he was able to make on behalf of the Government. He indicated that
the assistant teachers, but not the head teachers might be permitted to
give denominational teaching in the large Clause Three schools except in
single schools in rural areas. He further indicated that the 4/5ths
proportion whether it remained at 3/4ths or was made 2/3rds could again
be reviewed, but what ever was agreed, this poll must be of all parents,
not just of those who voted. If this was acceptable a lower fraction might be allowed. He was not prepared to accept single-schools in rural areas as Clause Four schools, but this would not be rigidly enforced. To pacify the minority denominational schools prior right of entry was to be allowed in certain schools for children of that particular denomination. Further provision might be made against the refusal by a Local Authority to take over the voluntary schools, the right of appeal would thus be reviewed for "redundant" schools. Lord Crewe had thus left the way open for further negotiations and a possible settlement.

Fitzroy commenting upon the proceedings in the House of Lords and in particular upon Lord Crewe's announcements wrote:—

"Crewe then proceeded to announce the concessions the Government were prepared to make. Those who heard him were much struck by their substantial character, and the news quickly spread that the Government had yielded. George Wyndham, coming in from the House of Commons after Crewe sat down, asked me excitedly whether it was true that they had given way. To me....it seemed that they had. Percy, whom I saw in the lobby, thought that the Catholics had obtained all they wanted, but doubted whether the Church would be satisfied." (163)

The following day (18th December) Lord Knollys writing on behalf of King Edward to the Archbishop requested him to be present at a meeting of both parties. (164) The greater part of this day was spent at a meeting between Lord Crewe, Asquith, and Birrell on the one hand, and Lord Lansdowne, Lord Cawdor and Balfour on the other, the Archbishop also being present.

Lord Crewe and Birrell had already attended a Cabinet meeting where they had determined to obtain the maximum of concessions required to save the Bill. This had taken place on 17th December, but the obstacles had remained two-fold. One was the point of substance, and the other of form,
the last which was possible to remove through negotiation with Lord Lansdowne. Lord Crewe and Birrell were also well aware of the immensely difficult administrative problems which would await the Board of Education in implementing any legislation as it then stood. The attitude of their Nonconformist supporters had also to be taken into consideration, Fitzroy commenting that Campbell-Bannerman "with the recollection of 1870 and 1874 in his mind, had not hitherto been disposed to run any risks."(165)

The preliminary discussions on 18th December at the meetings requested between the interested parties by the King were concerned with the detailed examination of the amendments, this taking place at Crewe House in Curzon Street. Lord Crewe was to stress that should the Government give way any further, the Bill would not be worth fighting for. The Government had declared itself willing to substitute 3/4ths as the majority of parents required for an extended facility school, and to waive the stipulation of vacant places elsewhere if less than ten parents demanded them. They had consented to include future as well as present voluntary schools under the extended facilities clause, thus giving the denominations a chance of establishing such schools and making these a charge on the State. Further, they had agreed in such schools that the Local Authority should consult with the Parents' Committees and appoint teachers capable and acceptable to them to carry out their duties, and that in all schools the attendance of children should be compulsory during the hours of religious instruction unless a parent withheld his child to attend some form of religious or moral instruction elsewhere. They had even yielded on the teacher question so far as to permit assistant teachers to be employed in denominational teaching except in single school areas, and even in these, if the school provided accommodation for more than 250 pupils and the Local Authority thought that the circumstances justified the permission, such teaching could be carried out.
As all parties were aware already that such concessions were available, the Archbishop noted that little or no progress was made. (166) This meeting adjourned, but both groups met again in the early evening in Balfour's room at the House of Commons, before which time the Conservatives had agreed that they "were unanimous in regarding the teacher question as absolutely vital, and that "all teachers in all transferred schools ought to be allowed to volunteer their services." (167)

When the full discussion took place it was agreed it should centre on the question of the teachers. The Conservatives and the Archbishop demanded full freedom for all teachers in all schools, but this was not considered even as a possibility by the Liberals, their compromise then extending to assistant teachers only in schools with over 250 pupils, and only with the consent of the Local Education Authority. Lord Crewe stated that unless the question of the teachers in the Clause Three schools could be settled, it was useless to approach other questions, as the Liberals "were already on the edge of a precipice in consequence of the concessions which had been made." (168)

The final meeting took place later that evening at Crewe House where the two parties spoke only of the teacher question. The Liberals declared they could offer nothing more than the amendments already on the paper, which "included the absolute right of the Local Education Authority to refuse leave to all teachers if they so desired." Balfour refused to accept this, maintaining "his friends would be satisfied with nothing less than all the teachers in all the schools having power to volunteer." At these words the Archbishop was to note that "it was obvious that neither side saw any hope of an agreement," but Balfour refused to cut the thread stating that the final decision must be postponed until after his friends had met him the next morning. (169)
Thus the deadlock lay on the absolute supremacy of the Local Education Authority over the right of teachers to give denominational teaching but the Archbishop, still seeking compromise, requested Lord Crewe to see him the next morning, on 19th December. Lord Crewe, in accepting the invitation wrote:

"I greatly fear that it is too late to hope for any settlement."

The meeting was a short one, the Archbishop pressing Lord Crewe to relax the Liberal point that the Local Education Authority must be supreme and have power to refuse any teacher to give denominational teaching. Lord Crewe agreed that this was the vital point, but was not likely to be able to change the Government's position. The real question was "whether or not the gulf was unbridgeable, and he clearly indicated that he thought it was."

Immediately following this meeting the Archbishop went to Lansdowne House to report its outcome. There he found Balfour bed-ridden with influenza but this made little difference at this advanced stage. With the exception of the Duke of Devonshire, all were agreed that no further negotiations were possible, and that there was nothing to be done but to declare the gulf insuperable.

The general opinion expressed by the press was echoed in the regional newspapers, taking their lead from the national press, many reporting: "There is good reason to believe that the Archbishop of Canterbury is willing to come to terms with the Government. It is Mr. Balfour, more Royalist than the King, who is stiff and unyielding and who interposes obstacles to the settlement that is so passionately desired by the overwhelming mass of the nation."

Fitzroy was also to comment upon the situation on 19th December, writing as follows upon the events and current meetings:
"After 48 hours spent in negotiations, the curtain rose on a policy of no surrender. The passions of political wreckers were unchained. The Duke of Devonshire declined to share in the conference at Crewe House yesterday, as soon as he became aware of the narrow limits within which Mr. Balfour was willing to allow Lord Lansdowne a discretion, and, as Lord Crewe said subsequently in his speech, a very few minutes sufficed to show that negotiation had only been undertaken in order to give an air of plausibility to the action of irreconcilables. I saw Lord Crewe immediately after the Cabinet, who told me all was up; and Birrell, whom I met leaving the office a few minutes later, repeated the same thing." (374)

When the House of Lords re-assembled the same afternoon on 19th December Lord Lansdowne immediately proceeded to move "The House do insist upon its amendments to which the Commons have disagreed." (175)

In his supporting speech he claimed that the freedom of the teachers was the key of the matter, and as the Government had refused this freedom then this remained an insuperable obstacle to peace. Lord Crewe was to outline the concessions which the Government had declared willing to make to Clause Three and to the use of Parents' Committees in Clause Four schools, though realising that such concessions might lead to religious tests for teachers, stating:

"I confess that I am in a difficulty. I am bound to admit that it must be owing to the very special circumstances treated as an exception to that excellent rule." (176)

Lord Crewe was to claim that no such concessions as were now before Parliament would ever be offered again from a Liberal Government, and that having been rejected they must be considered "gone and cleared away."

Lord Crewe stated that the responsibility for the wrecking of the Bill lay not only with the Opposition, but also with the Bench of Bishops who had "chosen war in this matter rather than peace." (177) The Government must
therefore refuse responsibility for the consequences which must now rest upon the shoulders of "the noble Lords opposite and the Right Reverend Bench." (178)

The Archbishop spoke after Lord Crewe, expressing his disappointment over the failure of the Bill, but stated that unless the Government was willing to meet them over the question of the teachers it was better that the Bill should disappear. (179)

In the debates which followed, the Duke of Devonshire dissociated himself from the Opposition and Lord Goschen expressed his extreme doubts on the motion then before them.

Lord Lansdowne's motion was carried by 132 votes to 52, the Archbishop and seven other Bishops voting with the Opposition, the Bishop of Hereford supporting the Government, and the remainder abstaining. The Duke of Devonshire also voted with the Government.

The same day, 19th December, the Prime Minister wrote to King Edward an explanatory letter concerning the fate of the Bill, stating:-

"The purpose for which the Bill was introduced was the exact opposite of this, and therefore the Cabinet cannot hope to save the Bill."

He also outlined the three points on which no compromise was possible, these being as follows:-

"That liberty to teach dogmas should be given (a) to head teachers as well as assistants; (b) in all schools, large and small, in town and country; (c) with or without the assent of the Local Authority." (180)

Nothing now remained but for the Prime Minister to announce the withdrawal of the Bill in the House of Commons. This he did on 20th December, but justified the attitude of the Government and declared it to be intolerable that the House of Commons should be thwarted in its attempts to carry out those policies which the electors had demanded to be passed into law. He was to add that the resources of the House of Commons were not exhausted, and that "a way must be found, a way will be found, by which the will of the people expressed through their elected
representatives in this House, will be made to prevail." (181)

Thus the Education Bill of 1906 was withdrawn, having been debated on over fifty days of Parliamentary times in the Commons and the Lords.

Following the withdrawal of the Bill Lord Ripon who had not played a leading part in the House of Lords was to write to Birrell:

"We have lost the Bill and the situation created by its rejection is a very serious one...The failure of the Bill must be a great disappointment to you....My position has been a difficult one, but for you, it would probably have been an impossible one." (182)

Birrell was also to write to Morant as follows:

"It has been an exciting, interesting time...Your position has been a peculiar one and has, of course, exposed you to much criticism...it was not your Bill, but the Government's, but you certainly did your very best and utmost to make it a workable and helpful measure." (183)

There had been a prodigious outcry by Government supporters following the loss of the Bill. The Prime Minister, on political grounds alone, had wished the Bill to be passed, although being aware from the earliest stages that much would depend upon Balfour. He was to state:

"If there had been only the Archbishop of Canterbury to deal with, a compromise could have been arranged." (184)

The Roman Catholic opinion was to be summarised by the Tablet, which declared: "What so many have hoped for so long and worked for so well has come to pass at last - the Education Bill is dead. Today it lies with its jaws tied up for the burial and tomorrow it shall be hurried away and safely rammed down under the stones." (185)

There had been supporters in all parties who had been anxious to reach a settlement believing the narrow differences of opinion could be overcome. To the radicals it seemed intolerable that the Church should demand from the State the complete maintenance of her schools, and yet expect to retain her right of appointing teachers who could be relied
upon to teach Church doctrine. The Radicals believed that the teacher who declined to give such instruction in a Church school would not be appointed, and therefore the only way to set the teacher free was to remove this option.

The Churches on the other hand, considered it a grievous wrong that teachers should be deprived of the right to give such teaching, if they so wished, as a "free-will service cheerfully rendered." There was in reality no compromise possible between these two ideals, but the Church had always had the advantage of the support of the majority of the Opposition in the House of Lords in 1906, and Balfour was also anxious to defend his own legislation of 1902. It is clear that Balfour had not wanted a settlement, and it was Balfour rather than the Archbishop who remained uncompromising.

Balfour, speaking at the Junior Constitutional Club on 28th November had then issued a challenge to the Government, suggesting that the anxiety shown by the Liberal leaders to pick a quarrel with the House of Lords was due to their desire to conceal their general short-comings and lack of constructive ideas, but declaring: "They will not dissolve, they know better." (186) Thus he predicted that the Government would not dissolve Parliament over the education question, and had never altered this view from the beginning of this conflict.

'The Times' also took this standpoint, remarking:--

"....if the Government really believed their Education Bill represents the settled wishes of the nation, not of a combination of sects accidently successful at the polls, their course is simple. They have only to ask the country whether it really meant what it is now declared to have meant." (187)

'The Guardian' was also to comment:--

"It may be that the official opposition was somewhat less ready
than the leaders of the Church to seek for a peaceful solution." (188)

Both Lloyd George and Grey were willing to accept Balfour's challenge but were over-ruled by the rest of the Cabinet. That the Bill had been lost not on the merits of the Church schools, but rather on political grounds was accepted by Lloyd George declaring in Oxford after the failure of the Bill that "if dissolution comes sooner or later, it will be, in my judgment, a much larger question than education." (189)

Balfour had taken two calculated political risks in forcing the withdrawal of the Bill. Many Government supporters would be opposed to a second General Election within one year on personal financial grounds alone; and neither had the Liberals been long enough to be sure of retaining their large majority at the polls. The municipal elections in November had indicated that the country was already moving away from the Liberal Party, and the Unionists had captured one Liberal seat at a by-election in August. (190) Both the Liberals and the Conservatives realised that education was not a big enough issue to afford favourable conditions from which to force the issue of the House of Lords. Despite the importance of the question, too few people were keenly interested in education. Birrell himself was also aware of this, writing that "no election cry, no parliamentary majority, can make at least it could not in 1906, the education of the people a real, genuinely felt National question. Education is in most of its aspects a teachers' question, and smacks more of the Lecture Hall, or a Social Service Congress than of a mass meeting." Thus Birrell "could never bring himself to believe that the cause of education in the primary and secondary school rooms of England, was dear to the great heart of the people." (191)

Fitzroy had seen that the outcome of the withdrawal of the Bill would persuade the Conservatives "that the issue will not be the House of Lords versus the people, but Church versus Chapel, and on that basis
they believe it possible to reconstruct the Opposition as an effective force." (192)

The Prime Minister at this time also felt that a "great majority were of the opinion that the Education Bill was not big enough for the great issue which must be raised before the final battle was joined." (193)

The country at large, ignoring the mass protest meetings in the Albert Hall, was largely indifferent to the religious controversy, while in Parliament the Labour members, whilst expressing indignation at the tactics adopted by the House of Lords, did not regard the Bill as a severe loss. Keir Hardie was still to press for a free national system of education which would be secular and under popular control. The working classes in general wanted a secular solution by which any religious instruction would be given outside of school hours. Ramsay MacDonald writing in the 'Fortnightly Review' in 1908 criticised the Liberal Government's policies on elementary education, stating:-

"The Nonconformists will not consent to denominational schools being put upon the rates; the friends of denominational schools will not accept undenominational teaching as a settlement; and our Ministers, afraid to educate public opinion and devoid of courage, produce legislation, not to settle things, but temporarily to tide Governments over difficulties." (194)

Thus the Bill which had seemed promising with a large number of initial supporters in the House of Commons had been put forward as a measure to eliminate most of the Nonconformist grievances, had found itself in conflict even within the ranks of the Government which had then to compromise not only with members of its own cabinet but also between its various groups of Nonconformist supporters. Yet never again were the Nonconformists able to exert their collective powers and collective political pressures to persuade the Liberal leaders to commit the party
to the type of Education Bill which they desired.

Dr. John Clifford had predicted the fall of political Nonconformity late in 1906 when he foresaw the outcome of the Education Bill, writing:

"Our people will, I am sure, re-assert themselves in due course, and eject the priest from political and municipal power." (195)

Thus although the original Bill as introduced by Birrell had been supported by the Baptists, the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists, there had been the feeling that "pious Nonconformists" were out of step with the majority of Liberals. (196) The executive body of the National Free Church Council had objected to the Bill as it failed in any way to deal with the denominational Training Colleges which although supported by the State were allowed to impose religious tests on both teachers and students. The National Free Church Council had also objected to Clause Four which originally had intended to allay the fears of the Roman Catholics that the denominational character of their schools would be destroyed, but Dr. Clifford had declared that he would tolerate "no statutory foothold for sectarian privilege in the State school system." (197)

The feelings in the House of Commons of the Liberal Party was to be one of acute irritation rather than of grief. Campbell-Bannerman had stated in 'The Times' that the aim of his Government was "to secure a national and not a denominational system, public not sectarian, on the general basis of a common Christianity instead of sectional Christianity," but the Bill had brought criticism from members of the Nonconformists groups. (198)

Hirst Hollowell, the leading Congregationalist who had helped to create the Northern Counties Education League to fight against the 1902 Education Bill had stood for the barring of all religious teaching from
schools receiving State aid, and had written to Birrell stating that Clause Four "sacrifices Nonconformists who did largely get the Government in, to Lancashire Catholics who did not." He had further warned that "if Clause Four is forced upon us, Nonconformist enthusiasm will have been killed." (199) Had the Bill become law it is probable that the loyalty of the Nonconformists to the Liberal Party would have been lost over the Clause Four issue.

Thus the heterogeneous nature of Campbell-Bannerman's Government and of its supporters, including the Irish Nationalists and the representatives of the Labour movement in the Commons were not enthusiastic about the Bill. For some it was seen as the point on which the coalition between the Liberals, the Socialists and the Irish Nationalists who had all worked together towards the victory of the General Election would be broken. From this point of view the 1906 Bill was a weak measure on which to fight the Lords as it was not fully supported by the Socialists and the Irish.

Although no agreement was reached, there had been some efforts between the religious leaders to work out some kind of compromise regarding the role of religion in education. Some liaison had resulted in better relationships between the Anglicans and the Nonconformists, based on the common belief that progress in education should not be slowed down by sectarian problems.

The Rev. J. S. Lidgett, then President of the National Free Church Council was in close contact with the Archbishop of Canterbury during the progress of the 1906 Education Bill. (200) The main Nonconformist groups had pressed for there being little compromise in the Education Bill as it had been sent to the House of Lords. They had agreed that the Bill as then passed by the House of Commons would satisfy their
demands and would object to any significant changes made by the Lords.

In November 1906 a deputation had seen Campbell-Bannerman representing the National Free Church Council led by Lidgett to inform the Prime Minister that no further changes should be made and all the changes that had occurred already in the House of Commons were discussed as to their acceptability.

The Congregational Union of England and Wales had also protested against the amendments being made in the House of Lords in November 1906 and by the end of that month over 100 members from the Parliamentary Nonconformist Committee had signed a petition urging the Government to totally reject the Lords Amendments. (201) However, a letter in 'The Times' on the same day (28th December) expressed doubt as to whether the Nonconformists in their masses were deeply moved in the controversy. (202)

The withdrawal of the Education Bill had been the work of Balfour, based upon the knowledge that his political tactics would succeed if he could control the Conservative peers and the Episcopal Bench. It is also probably true that the majority of Conservatives did not want a peaceful settlement and it was they rather than the Archbishop who had remained hard and uncompromising. To them the Education Bill was part of a general Liberal offensive against the established order and therefore they were compelled to use their supremacy in the House of Lords in order to repulse the attack. Education was in itself not a sufficiently important issue to rouse popular support and Balfour was well aware that the great masses of the electorate were becoming increasingly apathetic and indifferent to the religious controversy, and was therefore able to calculate his last minute act of defiance with his deliberate challenge that the Government would not dissolve and appeal to the electorate.

The skill with which he did this was acknowledged by Birrell, who was to
"The Bill's chief executioner was Mr. Balfour, who had by a marvellous exhibition of intellectual supremacy recovered in a House from which scores of his old supporters had disappeared at the polls, a position almost as powerful as the one from which a few months before, he had been almost contemptuously hurled." (203)

Balfour was to write later, acknowledging his own responsibility for the action of the Opposition, stating:

"What difference my continuing to lead the Opposition has made neither I nor anyone else can accurately gauge. But I strongly suspect that the Education Bill of last session would have become law in what I think a very pernicious form had I been away." (204)

Birrell was also of the same opinion, writing:

"Whether if Mr. Balfour had been out of the way a settlement could have been come to with the House of Lords and the Bill saved - who can say? I think it might, though the one or two alterations it would have been necessary to make would have greatly annoyed many of the best supporters of the Government." He was to conclude that "The loss of the Bill was a great affront to the Party who saw itself flouted by the other House from the start, but in a country like England to have resigned upon a question of education would have been foolish." (205)

Thus the fate of the Bill seemed to have rested upon the shoulders of Balfour, and it was he far more than Lansdowne who had carried matters to the extreme. In his summary of the changing political scene and the growing radical influence and the rise of the Labour Party to challenge the established order Robert Ensor comes to the conclusion that:

"The Constitution was to be exploited with no scruples, regarding fair play - a course bound eventually to cause fatal collision with the fair-play instincts of common Englishmen....no student can avoid asking
how practical men like Balfour and Lansdowne... could be so short-sighted. The psychology of it was that both were aristocrats born in the purple. Passionately devoted to the greatness of England, these men were convinced that she owed it to patrician rule. In their view her 19th Century parliamentarianisms had worked successfully, because the personnel of parliaments and cabinets was still upper class and the function of the lower orders was limited to giving the upper system a popular imprimatur by helping to chose which of two aristocratic parties should hold office... from their point of view the House of Commons elected in 1906 was far worse than that of 1880.... To persons born like Lansdowne and Balfour (and only a little less to Rosebery) it appeared out of the question that a House of Commons so composed and led should effectively rule the nation; and... they felt justified in using any resources to crush the challenge..." (206)

Balfour was to defend his actions in a speech in Manchester in October 1907 where he claimed:—

"The power which the House of Lords has, and which it undoubtedly ought to exercise, is not to prevent the people of this country having the laws they wish to have, but to see that the laws are not... the hasty and ill-considered off-spring of one passionate election." (207)

At the close of the 1906 session, Birrell, as "the Minister who, sitting in the Commons, could not get his Bill through the House of Lords" was to be appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland. His place was taken by Reginal McKenna, reputed to be a Dr. Clifford supporter, and therefore hardly likely to bring a measure before Parliament which would be more favourable to the voluntary schools or to the established church. Mr. McKenna's appointment as President of the Board of Education was ratified on 11th February 1907.
It had been the Archbishop of Canterbury who had declared that the loss of the Bill would have serious consequences for the voluntary schools on financial grounds alone, and had also expressed the opinion that religious controversy would continue. H.B. Binns, writing in 1908 was to state:

"In my judgment it would be difficult to over-state the disaster to education caused by the loss of this brilliant endeavour to effect an educational settlement." (208)

The withdrawal of the Bill had been a political triumph for the Opposition, and especially for Balfour. The Bill itself had not been well received, except initially by the administrators as it would have given a more unified system. Morant had seen the Bill as an opportunity to remove the administrative difficulties then being experienced by the full working of the Education Act of 1902 and of re-organising existing secondary school endowments. Two types of Local Education Authority had been established by the Act of 1902. County Boroughs, like Canterbury with a population of 25,000 were autonomous for all forms of education under the 1902 Education Act, while urban districts with populations of approximately 100,000 (such as Willesden and Tottenham) had powers for elementary education only. Morant had seen the administrative inconvenience of such discrepancies, thus requiring that the Bill of 1906 should include clauses changing the population limits for Borough and Urban districts in order to make the degree of autonomy more uniform than under the 1902 Act. (209)

Under the terms of the 1902 Education Act the Local Education Authorities were finding it impossible to produce an over-all elementary education scheme within their areas. It had been impossible to amalgamate the voluntary and the provided schools in areas where this was
required, thus the two types of school continued to function side-by-
side, to the educational advantage of neither. Voluntary schools
with over 30 pupils could not be discontinued except with the consent
of their managers, but the Local Education Authority had to continue to
pay their teachers, provide equipment and to fulfill their obligations
regarding fair wear and tear, which in itself was proving difficult for
the Local Authority could not itself repair the actual voluntary school
buildings. The Board of Education had desired that the Local Education
Authority should departmentalise their schools into infant/junior/senior
departments, or into separate schools but again this was proving impossible
without the co-operation of the voluntary school managers who would have
to finance changes in their own schools from voluntary sources. This
was proving to be beyond their means. The 1902 Education Act which had
continued the dual system had strengthened the hold of the denominations
over their own schools to the extent that co-operation between them and
the Local Authority had become strained to breaking point in some areas,
this being one of the factors which had led Birrell to press for the
passing of the 1906 Bill.

Thus in the period between 1902 and 1906 experience had shown that
some portions of the 1902 Act had caused serious problems for the Board
of Education concerning administration, apart from those problems which
called for a rationalisation of local arrangements.

The problems of the Liberal Government had been three-fold. They
had pledged to give public control over schools using public money. They
had pledged to abolish religious tests for teachers. They desired to
remove the Anglican hold over some 8,000 single-school areas - a problem
which was accepted as such by the Church of England. The Education Bill
had dealt with these in a viable manner. The voluntary schools were to
get aid which included full maintenance of buildings on the same basis as
the provided schools, but this did not include the provision of new buildings. This alone would have saved many denominational schools from becoming "Black List" schools and would have enabled educational re-organisation to have taken place more quickly under changes recommended by various Government reports and inquiries, and would also have made the implementation of Board of Education Regulations more effective.

The Education Bill of 1906 would have partially solved the question of Religious Tests for teachers. The teachers in the Clause Three schools (the voluntary transferred schools) would have been appointed on the same basis as those in the provided schools, and therefore as "State" schools and "State" teachers they would have been allowed, without prejudice to their appointment, to withdraw from the giving of any religious instruction about which they might have conscientious scruples. The payment out of public funds for denominational teaching in these schools would have been illegal.

The Bill would have removed the Church of England's hold in the single school areas, putting these schools under public control. This had been one of the main aims of the Bill in order to achieve a more unified system of control from an administrative point of view. The Bill would have brought some 13,837 voluntary schools and their 3,574,371 pupils under the same administration and under Local Authority control as the then existing 7,046 provided schools with their 3,468,595 pupils, but would still retain some schools with a denominational element through the use of Clause Four extended facilities for a minority of voluntary schools.

The Bill attempted to unify educational administration, but recognised the need for the continuance of a modified form of the dual system. Had the Bill become law it would have integrated all types of elementary school (unless opting out altogether) into a national system financed from rates and taxes, yet reserving some portion of a national system
for those who wished to receive their education in a fully denomination-
al school.

Thus from one point of view the Education Bill of 1906 would have
given the many advantages of a unified education administration. From
the denominationalists point of view their schools would have been made
financially viable before 1944 even if this had meant the loss of some
portion of their fully denominational character. The Bill had offered
solutions to these problems which could have led to a permanent settle-
ment.

The failure of the Bill left the Liberal Government with no firm
educational legislation on the statute books. It was to be seen what
should be attempted next as in the eyes of many the education question
had been a key issue in the 1906 General Election, and thus this had been
a key Government measure. It had been shown that the Liberals would
have accepted compromise, and so too would the Archbishop of Canterbury,
but there was to remain a number of interested parties who would accept
no compromise upon such issues.

It was clear that any future legislation concerning the educational
problem would have to reach agreement with interested parties and this
would clearly indicate a compromise solution which would satisfy no
particular group. The Government might be anxious to reach a settle-
ment to fulfil its election pledge on educational reform. The problems
would centre around those issues which had been highlighted in the 1906
Education Bill and would be concerned with the financial arrangements for
the voluntary schools, the place of religious instruction, and the need
for religious tests for teachers in certain types of elementary schools.

It was to be the task of Reginald McKenna, and then of Walter
Runciman to attempt to redress the grievances of the Nonconformists in the
years immediately following Birrell's Bill of 1906.
CHAPTER V

The Education Bill 1906
and the Lords

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CHAPTER VI

THE EDUCATION BILLS OF 1908
By the end of 1906 the expected major legislation in the field of education had been brought to nothing. Other important projected legislation had included a Trade Disputes Bill to reverse the Taff Vale Judgment, and a Plural Voting Bill to prevent the owners of several property qualifications from voting more than once. Balfour had thrown down the gauntlet on the Education Bill having decided that "the Education Bill was not big enough for the great issue which must be raised before the final battle was joined." (1) The Plural Voting Bill was thrown out on its Second Reading after a cursory debate of barely half-an-hour. The House of Lords together with Balfour were very careful to accept the Trade Disputes Bill which relaxed the law of conspiracy in respect of peaceful picketing, and exempted Trade Union funds from liability in action for damages for torts. The Trade Disputes Bill had been the outcome of the Report of a Royal Commission set up in 1903 when Balfour had been Prime Minister. It virtually reversed the previous judgment of the House of Lords on the Taff Vale Case which had made the Trade Unions liable to be sued for their funds. This decision had then aroused large scale controversy among the working classes, and mounting resentment against the decision had been seen in the growing number of Labour supporters in the 1906 election.

The Conservatives would have been faced with a hostile working class movement had the Lords rejected the Trade Disputes Bill and this would have been a much more powerful national issue than any controversy over education.

The growing power of the working classes to challenge the two
traditional parties of the country and the privileged positions they then held was not to the liking of the Conservatives, Balfour believing in the capacity of Englishmen to use the exceptional powers of moderation which he believed they possessed, and that any combination of employers might in the future prove as dangerous as any combination of workmen. (2)

The acquiescence of the House of Lords over the Trade Disputes Act had deprived the Government of a most advantageous opportunity of bringing a strong case against the tactics of the Conservatives in the House of Lords. The main legislative outcome of the first year of the Liberal Government was not a particularly successful one following their election victory, the education question having reached a stage of apparent deadlock, and the Liberal Party as a whole suffering from a 'sort of persecution mania' on the subject of the House of Lords. Lloyd George had put their sentiments into words when he had called it not the watch-dog of the constitution, but Mr. Balfour's poodle.

Reginald McKenna was to bring in a One Clause Measure - A Special Religious Instruction Bill (1st McKenna Bill) - in 1907 which was designed to transfer from the Local Education Authority to managers the cost of denominational instruction which was estimated to be one-fifteenth of the teachers' salaries in non-provided schools. It was intended to be a short interim measure designed to afford a temporary remedy for the Passive Resisters, but the Bill was withdrawn when the Prime Minister promised Parliamentary time in the following year for the full consideration of a comprehensive Education Bill.

This Bill was to be the work of McKenna and was to be brought before the House of Commons on 24th February 1908, but following the withdrawal of the 1st McKenna Bill those with a denominational interest
in any new Measure had already pressed their claims on the public platform.

The Liberal Monthly had supported the 1st McKenna Bill in their October 1907 issue, declaring that "there was ample mandate for the measure and the Prime Minister's Albert Hall speech before the General Election had shown that the policy pursued by the Government had been throughout consistent and in strict accordance with the declared principles of their party." (3)

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had outlined the difficulties of his party in its relationship with the House of Lords and the failure of the Birrell Education Bill of 1906 in his speech in Edinburgh on 5th October 1907 where he declared:

"As long as the House of Lords stands where it does, the Conservative Party is never out of power." (4)

On the education question he was to claim: -

"The children in the schools have been wronged, and why? Because educational advancement and the composition of the religious difficulty in England would have entailed some encroachment on the privileges of the Established Church." (5)

The Manchester Conference of the Association of Catholic Teachers meeting on 28th December 1907 called for a common course of action on the Education Bill which was then to be introduced by McKenna in the next session of Parliament. Their resolution, proposed and passed, read:

"That no Education Bill can be regarded as satisfactory which does not make due provision for the Religious Instruction of the child in accordance with the wishes of the parents." (6)

Mr. W. O'Dea of Bolton, speaking at the same Conference, summed up the case against the policy of "contracting out" by declaring that it meant "starving out", and as "citizens we refuse to be starved out. If
there is to be Protestant or undenominational teaching for Protestants and undenominationalists, there must be Catholic teaching for Catholics." (7)

"The Tablet" was to draw the attention of its readers to the possible contents of the proposed Education Bill in the light of McKenna's Bill of 1907. In its issue of 4th January 1908 it stated:

"We have now entered upon a new year which is fraught with danger to our Catholic schools. A new Education Bill is in preparation under a Minister who has not hesitated to declare his hatred for the denominational system and who has stated that our educational system must be nationalised on two principles - full popular control, and no tests for teachers. If we cannot secure Catholic teachers for our schools they will no longer be Catholic, and so by this Bill we are threatened with no less than the destruction of our Catholic public elementary schools. The only concession apparently that is to be offered us is the liberty to contract us out of our share of the rates and to maintain our schools as best we may on a Government grant slightly higher than what is now paid to the local authorities in consideration of the efficiency of the scholars in our schools." (8)

On 3rd February at the Council Meeting of the Catholic Federation the resolution had been passed whereby the Council "calls upon its borough branches to organise and hold public meetings in the various boroughs.... and to invite local M.P.'s to attend them so as to explain Catholic demands and assert the rights of Catholics as parents and citizens." (9)

There were still those who wished to steer a middle course calling for compromises to be made by the denominationalists. Councillor W. Frost of Macclesfield, writing in the Macclesfield Division Liberal Magazine of December 1907 in appealing for undenominational religious instruction asked:

"...Is it too much to hope that the system which has served so well for more than 30 years may be continued and that we may still retain in our schools the one book which more than any other influence has been instrumental in exalting England among the Nations of the Earth?" (10)
The Nonconformists had persisted that something should be done to right their grievances in spite of the opposition in the House of Lords, but the difficulty was to know what to do. Measures directed against the Church of England and its voluntary schools did not commend themselves to those who had been involved in Birrell's Education Bill.

McKenna's First Bill which had been withdrawn had been designed to relieve the Local Authorities of the cost of special religious instruction reckoned to be one-fifteenth of the salaries of teachers in non-provided schools, and this would have removed the special grievance of the passive resisters and would also have made law what the Court of Appeal had declared it to be in the West Riding case, concerning the payment of teachers teaching religious instruction within the normal school hours. It was also felt by the more radical Nonconformists that such action might be taken as the full settlement of their grievances, and therefore although this might have seemed a logical and just step to take there was no enthusiasm for the Bill. Teachers were also in doubt as to whether the denominations would make up the one-fifteenth part of the salary which it was proposed to cut, and many thought that the teachers would be left to bear the loss. Campbell-Bannerman was to write to King Edward saying that: "every solution suggested is open to objection, and the Cabinet is engaged in trying to discover the least objectionable." (11)

The Second McKenna Bill, introduced on 24th February 1908 was to place all rate-aided schools under the control of the Local Education Authorities, and non-provided schools in single school areas were to be transferred to the L.E.A.'s and in such schools denominational instruction might be given out of schools hours. The remaining non-provided schools were to be given the option of becoming contracting out schools. The Bill thus dealt ruthlessly with the voluntary schools whereby many would have to be compulsorily transferred
to the Local Authorities. As McKenna stated:

"There shall be but one type of public elementary school provided by the public, managed by the public and with teachers in them appointed without religious tests." (12)

Other schools might, if they so wished, contract out and would then receive a Parliamentary grant of 47/- per head. This amount could be supplemented by the charging of school fees, McKenna stating that the voluntary schools "will receive grants but no rate aid and will be voluntary in fact as well as in name." (13)

In the transferred schools, facilities for denominational teaching were restricted to single school areas where such instruction might be given out of school hours and by volunteers. Thus this Bill like the 1906 Bill recognised only one type of elementary school, that being provided by the Local Education Authority, but the voluntary schools could continue as such, receiving Parliamentary grants by a system of contrasting out of the national system. This was with the provision, however, that no denominational school in a single school area would be allowed to contract out. (14)

Balfour was to criticise the Bill, claiming that "it had been brought in to abolish the religious controversy" but declared that he had never known a Bill "less calculated to fulfil its declared intention." According to his understanding of the Bill it "did not attempt to remedy one part of the grievance in single school areas - that of the parents who desired denominational teaching - but merely multiplied it indefinitely." He claimed "that everything from the voluntary point of view depended on the definition of a single school area which was to be left to the Local Authority." It would, therefore, "be folly to pretend that the proposed grant would enable the voluntary schools to maintain the present standards. The intention was to starve out every school where the
religion of which the Liberal Party happened to approve was not taught. Balfour was to declare: "Nothing could make this Bill a good Bill." (15)

During the First Reading Asquith argued that the Bill was "the best of three possible solutions" and was of the opinion that "when the people had fully considered its provisions, they would say the Government had carried out strictly and to the letter of their pledge that where local contributions were made local control should follow." (16)

Critics of the Bill included J. Ramsay MacDonald who believed that the Bill "held out no hope of allaying the religious agitation, and also failed to face the logical issues of secular education which was the only practical solution." (17) In this he was supported by Masterman who was also of the opinion that secular education was the only way out of the conflict. F. E. Smith went further, believing that "the Bill was one that was never intended to pass and they were driven to the conclusion that the application of the sword to the Upper House meant that the present Bill was more drastic than the previous one." (18)

The Bill was read for the first time without division, but outside the Commons opposition was to come immediately from both the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics, both declaring that the Bill as it then stood would make the majority of their schools outcasts from the national system. In direct contrast the Nonconformists saw the Bill as a solution to their own grievances concerning the denominational schools. The Liberal Monthly of March 1908 was to write:--

"This Bill is a great act of justice. It removes the great and admitted grievances of the parents in the single-school areas, chiefly in the country villages. In all rate-aided schools it secures complete popular control and no religious tests for the teachers. Provided the parent has a choice of a school of this kind for his child, it permits the denominations to provide other schools if they are willing to contribute to their cost. It prevents
the ratepayer being asked to contribute to the cost of a school in which denominational teaching is given. It leaves undisturbed the simple Bible teaching which the experience of 38 years has shown to be satisfactory to the parents." (19)

Support for the Bill was also given by the Liberal Press at local level where the general feeling was that "the Education Bill in the main satisfies all friends of education....and generally by those who put the future of the child before the teaching of dogma." (20)

The Liberal M.P. for Chester, Alfred Mond, speaking at a meeting of the Chester Liberal Three Hundred Group on 6th March 1908 on the right of entry by denominationalists into schools to teach their own dogma outlined the difficulties, arguing that "if every parent has a right to say that in the elementary schools of the country his child has a right to be taught the religion of the parent, where are you to stop? If we were satisfied with a Protestant and Catholic religion, then I dare say this thing would work. But take a small school of 80 children. Some of them belong to the Church of England, a few possibly might be Roman Catholics, a few Calvinists, a few Wesleyans, a few Baptists, a few Uniterians, some of them Quakers, and there might be a stray Mohammedan or Buddhist. Does anyone mean to tell me the parent of every one of these children has a right to call on the State to provide for the teaching of his own particular form of denominational religion at the expense of the common purse? Does anyone mean to say that it is a practical proposal in a school with two classrooms and two teachers? Of course not!" (21)

The Roman Catholics were to condemn the Bill outright, the Bishop of Salford simply stating:

"From the general point of view I regard the Bill as setting up a new State religion. It erects Cowper-Templeism into the national religion and on that ground alone, of course, it is unacceptable." (22)
In Woolwich a protest meeting of Roman Catholics on 25th February 1908 unanimously agreed that the new Bill "will inflict gross injustice upon the Catholic parents of this country by depriving them of sufficient financial aid to maintain Catholic schools with Catholic religious teaching in school hours by Catholic teachers under Catholic control." (23)

The Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Bourne, addressing the Annual Meeting of the Leeds Catholic Federation at the end of February 1908 was to outline his own views on the educational controversy declaring that the Education Act of 1902 was not "in every respect satisfactory to the Catholic body," but they had been "willing to sacrifice details in order that main principles might be preserved." (24)

Of Birrell's Education Bill of 1906 Dr. Bourne said that if this had been passed as drawn, "it would have meant the destruction of more than half of their Catholic schools. But they saw that by certain amendments the Bill might assume a workable character and negotiations were carried on with a varying amount of success and the Bishops acted in accordance with the fundamental principles he had laid down." He claimed that "at the last stage we went to the very limit of conscience in order to arrive at an agreement." (25)

The Archbishop was to comment upon McKenna's First Education Bill of 1907, remarking that the "little Bill was not only an impossible Bill, but a Bill impossible of amendment. We made our opposition manifest and the Bill was not proceeded with." (26)

He then commented upon the 1908 Bill declaring: "Our attitude will be precisely the same. Our claim is for equality and that claim, no matter what comes - no matter what arrangements we may be forced to tolerate for a time - that claim we shall never relinquish." (27)

The Archbishop believed that the proposed legislation would leave the Roman Catholic schools in a position of inferiority. They would be
left in a position of having to raise and increase their income from other sources, but would find "it is quite impossible for us to find more than a certain amount of money every year." (28)

By March 1908 'The Tablet' reported that "the opposition to the Bill is becoming cumulative.....the N.U.T. ...has condemned the contracting out clauses in the most uncompromising fashion...The London Catholic Teachers' Association has not only condemned the Bill but is preparing a statement to be presented to the Bishops and has moreover, arranged for a deputation which shall seek the powerful intervention of Mr. John Redmond. From Salford comes a series of resolutions formulated on behalf of the Diocesan Schools Association which pledge the members first to resist the Bill, and then in the event of its becoming law, to do the utmost to prevent its becoming operative. In Liverpool the Catholic School Managers Association says roundly "that nothing will satisfy Catholics except absolute equality of treatment" and they further condemn contracting out as "unjust and as putting Catholic schools in an inferior position." (29)

The Church of England, in common with the Roman Catholic Church was to agree that the difficulties arising from the terms of the Bill were insuperable, particularly relating to the rural areas since in many of these areas the Bill would alienate the school buildings from the Anglicans to whom they belonged and would create the single school area grievance in reverse. It was clear too, that the transfer of such schools to the Local Authority might be impossible, as in the case of those voluntary schools on the estate of the Duke of Westminster. Here the Duke's agent had written to the Clerk of the Cheshire Education Committee as follows:-

"I am desired by his Grace the Duke of Westminster to inform you, as clerk to the Cheshire education authority, that, owing to the legislative proposals now before Parliament, he has instructed me, as his agent, to give notice on the proper day to the managers of some eight schools in his
ownership to terminate their agreements, with the intention, if the Bill becomes law, to resume possession of the school buildings. I am further desired to state that his Grace has at all times been willing that facilities should be granted for children to receive the religious instruction desired for them by their parents; as however, the schools were built by his predecessors as Church of England schools, he could not submit to their being appropriated by the State under the conditions laid down by the Bill before Parliament." (30)

Similarly another Cheshire landowner, Lord Egerton of Tatton had given notice to the managers of Rostherne School and the Egerton School to quit the school premises by March 1909. Then Lord Egerton had sent a letter informing the managers that such notice was given with the intention of resuming possession of the schools if the Bill before Parliament became law. (31)

To the Nonconformists such actions were seen as members of the Church of England obstructing the establishment of a national system of elementary education by fighting for the privileges of private control. Under the auspices of the Rural Decanal Church Defence Committee in the Diocese of Chester a meeting was held in the Macclesfield Drill Hall on 20th May to voice the Church's "rights" in education. Commenting upon this meeting the local Macclesfield Division Liberal Magazine was to comment:

"This recent discovery, the so-called inalienable right of the parent is no right at all, but an absolute myth. No Government, Liberal or Tory, has ever acknowledged it, and the Statute Book will be searched in vain for any trace of it. The "right" was clearly unknown in 1870 and Mr. Balfour in 1902 gave it no recognition in his Education Act under which there are today 8,000 parishes in which the Nonconformist parent has to choose for his child between the Anglican teaching and no religious instruction at all." (32)
The same Liberal Magazine was to comment that it believed that there were signs that "many men holding widely divergent views on the Education Question are very weary of this protracted and embittered strife and there is now some prospect that Mr. McKenna's Bill may be approached in a more reasonable spirit of compromise than was in evidence in the final stages of the debates in the House of Lords upon the 1906 Bill." (33) The magazine was to remind its readers that "in view of the frenzied diatribes of the Bishop of Manchester and other Anglican extremists it cannot be too often insisted upon that this question of the elementary schools is a civic and not an ecclesiastical one. Privilege, it has been remarked, tends to make one insolent and dies hard." (34)

The Bishop of Manchester was to support the "Manchester Conference" in June 1908 which was to be formed for the purpose of considering the education question with a view to arriving at an agreement upon point of dispute. This "Manchester Concordat" was able to produce a majority report, but this also included a minority statement as well. In spite of this, it was to be seen by many as "a real encouragement to those who in other ways and by other means are seeking to remove this stumbling block from the feet of religious men and indeed from out of the national life." (35)

Its work was criticised by 'The School Guardian' and by Dr. John Clifford but included in its membership three Roman Catholics, three Jews, three from the Church of England, and six Free Churchmen.

'The Schoolmaster' in commenting upon its Report stated:

"The Manchester Conference is to be welcomed by all who desire peace. But having said this, we are most reluctantly obliged to conclude that the results are small when compared with the weight of the attached signatures." (36)

Both the Government and the rank and file of the Opposition were anxious for a settlement of such a perplexing controversy. Church opinion was not particularly sympathetic, though some of the Bishops were in favour of a Second Reading, but these excluded the Bishops of
Birmingham and Manchester. Before the Second Reading in May the Bishop of St. Asaph (Dr. Edwards) with the encouragement of Lloyd George and others had drafted a separate Bill which intended incorporating as much of McKenna's Bill as was applicable to their cause, and at the same time making a quite new departure from the line taken by the Government. (37)

The Bill was to change the financial arrangements contained in the McKenna Bill and was also intending to omit any provisions for contracting out. The power of the Local Authority to claim the transfer of any building was to be removed.

In addition to the main clauses thus left within the McKenna Bill this new Bill was to include the use of the school building by the voluntary body on two days per week, plus use on Saturdays and Sundays. Right of entry on at least three days of the week was to be given and teachers were to be allowed to volunteer to teach religious knowledge under the Cowper-Temple clause or alternatively could teach denominational religious knowledge.

Thus the draft Bill involved the transfer of all schools to the Local Education Authority, and undenominational religious teaching would then be taught in all schools at the expense of the L.E.A. Facilities for denominational teaching in all schools would be allowed during school hours on the three days per week to children whose parents desired it, and complete freedom was to be given for the teachers to give either undenominational or denominational teaching if they so wished. (38)

The Government appeared to be sympathetic towards the ideas contained within this Bill but were cautious and doubtful of persuading the rank and file of their followers to give it full support. (39) The debate on the Bishop's Bill was subsequently adjourned to give an opportunity for further conferences between the promoters and the Government.
The right of teachers to give denominational teaching was to continue to be the subject of prime importance to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who in his letter to McKenna on 11th April 1908 outlined how seriously he considered this point to be, stating:

"I hope I made clear to you how gravely apprehensive I feel as to the possibility of a harmonious settlement if it be really essential from your point of view that the Head Teacher in a transferred school should be forbidden to give any denominational teaching. I regard such a provision as disastrous, if not fatal, both from a sentimental and an administrative point of view." (40)

The Roman Catholic position had remained firm, their Catholic Federation pamphlet No. 2 issued after the 1st Reading of McKenna's Education Bill on 24th February had then stated:

"Catholics have an equal right to demand Catholic Schools for Catholic children, and to be paid from the same funds to which they contribute equally with Protestants." (41)

This had followed their pamphlet No. 1 in which it was claimed that Catholics must have the atmosphere of a Catholic school for their children and this would not be achieved under the terms of the McKenna Bill. (42)

It was subsequently claimed by the Catholic Federation that under the terms of the McKenna Bill the income of the Diocese of Westminster and Southwark would be reduced by some £52,392 and this would then have to be found from their own sources, and yet they were expected to pay rates. (43)

It was apparent that although the Church of England might consider some form of compromise, the Roman Catholic position was clear that it would keep its own 'atmosphere' schools at all costs.

In the meantime the Prime Minister, having been unwell since early February, was to resign at the beginning of April. On 6th April he was succeeded by Asquith as Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury.

The "Northwich Chronicle" of 11th April commenting upon Mr. Asquith as the new leader of the Liberal Party wrote in its leader article:
"It is not given to mortals to forecast the future. Mr. Asquith is a clever man; a keen polished debater; a hard logical thinker; a man of blood and iron - to use a phrase applied to another distinguished and successful statesman. To us he lacks the one touch which makes men kin. A little more humour, a little less domination; a little more consideration for the underdog; a little less of a stickler for his pound of flesh; and he would be an ideal leader of this historic party...... without sentiment, without the poet's power of vision, a great leader such a man cannot well be; a prudent ruler he probably will be." (44)

The newspaper was also to report the death of Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, the Member of Parliament for Newport (Salop) on 2nd May 1908, whose Clause in the religious controversies had paved the way for much advance in religious agreement in the debates on education.

The Second Reading of the McKenna Bill in May was to pass by a majority of 165 votes, the Irish voting against the Bill (370 to 205 votes). During the debate the Prime Minister put the Nonconformist grievances in the single school areas as follows:-

"The Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Balfour) I think has never realised to what extent the conditions of things created by that Act not only exasperate the feelings but intensified the reluctance of the Nonconformist inhabitants of the villages to continue to acquiesce in the state of things which has grown up - a state of things which exists now in thousands of parishes in England and Wales in which while the whole cost of the school is defrayed out of the rates and taxes, the teachers are appointed by a non-representative authority, the nonconformist pupil has no chance in the world of attaining to the headteachership of the school, and the nonconformist child has the alternative either of having no religious instruction at all, or of having certain dogmatic and sectarian instruction. I have not heard one such word in favour of such things." (45)
Mr. T.P. O'Connor was to express the views of many that "throughout this controversy the Nationalist members felt that in single school districts Nonconformists suffered a great and grievous wrong, and that Nonconformists had their full support in remedying that wrong. The Government, it appears, to us, has carried conciliation to the verge of surrender. We can go no further. The demands of the Church that every parent should have the right of calling for the religious education be requires for his child at the public expense is clearly impracticable."

Thus the Bill had not received the support that McKenna had hoped even from the Liberal ranks. The Roman Catholics saw the acceptance of the Bill as a return for them to the conditions of the pre-1902 era, and the Church of England saw the problems associated with the Bill as being "insuperable."

The Fabians, likewise, could see no advantages from the McKenna Bill, claiming it to be "unique among the many Education Bills of the past fifty years in not containing a single clause which even professes to make the school better or local government more efficient."

The Bill was withdrawn after its Second Reading towards the end of May, and McKenna in a Cabinet reorganisation was replaced by Runciman as President of the Board of Education. McKenna was to be moved to the Admiralty.

Walter Runciman had inherited the problems of the Liberal educational policies. The McKenna Bill like the Birrell Bill before it had the common feature of destroying the denominational character of the single-school areas, but the difference in these Bills lay in the fact that Birrell's treatment of the urban denominational schools would have led to their acceptance as an integral part of the educational system and would have relieved them of all financial burdens. The McKenna Bill on the
other hand would have driven such schools into an isolated education stream of inferior status supported only on grants and their own incomes or other charity. As the McKenna Bill stood at the time of its withdrawal, the contracting out schools would have stood apart from the main stream of educational provision, and this would have included the non-participation in government scholarship schemes as well as exclusion from the developing municipal provisions for medical and social care. The outcome of such a Bill would have been financially disastrous for the denominational schools, and would have severely impaired the efficiency of educational administration as a whole. Birrell's plan would have unified the whole educational system from the administrative point of view, and would have discriminated between two kinds of denominational school. The Anglicans would have had to have given up the majority of their village schools and those which qualified for extended facilities would have been strengthened by the newly proposed financial relief.

This might have been seen as drastic action at the time but the Bill would also have pruned the national system of those schools which were the products of an age of benevolence which no longer corresponded to the needs of society at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The McKenna Bill had once again raised the issues which the Birrell Bill had highlighted in 1906. The main issue was to be that of denominational teaching or secular education with simple Bible teaching. Runciman was fully aware of the position of the various educational groups. The difficulties of the Liberals were to answer those points raised in 1908 in the national and local press. In anticipation of an Education Bill the 'Northwich Guardian' leader writer had stated:

"The cardinal principles of an Education Bill will be simple Bible teaching in the schools.... We are told by the Bishop of Manchester, Mr. F.E. Smith and many bishops and clergy that the right of the parent to
demand the religious education he requires for his children is unassailable. Very good! But is it to apply all round? Is the principle to be extended to the training colleges, and the Church schools governed by trusts? We know that it is not; that what the extreme clerical party demand is parental right in provided schools and no such right in voluntary schools. If the parent is to decide in the one case he must also decide in the other." (50)

The Bishop of Carlisle writing in 'The Times' in January had then declared:-

"Throughout the length and breadth of the land we have the County Councils and the Local Education Authorities moved with a consecrated purpose as their syllabuses prove, to do all in their power to bring Christian inspiration to the help and uplifting of children." (51)

The Liberal press commented that "We feel this noble appeal will fall on deaf ears. The sectarians are fighting rather for a privileged position rather than for equal treatment. If the Government can settle this thorny religious question on the basis of reasonable compromise everybody in education will have cause for congratulation. But beyond doubt what will be proposed is what is known as simple Bible teaching which the Bishop of Carlisle so warmly recommends. If the Lords at the invitation of the Bishops again wreck an Education Bill, nothing can save us from a secular solution." (52)

The 'Northwich Chronicle' leader writer was to state his own opinions, these following the main political arguments:-

"Mr. Birrell's Bill had been wrecked by the High Church Party in alliance with the House of Lords....and it failed because the Lords, at the bidding of the Bishops, refused to accept it as a settlement." The writer, commenting upon Mr. Balfour's statement that the McKenna Bill had done gross injustice to the Church schools was to comment:-
"That depends entirely on the way you look at it. The nation unmistakably declared at the General Election that denominationalism should not in future be taught at the public expense."

Runciman was also well aware of the call from his own party to avoid further direct confrontation over the denominational issue. To many, simple Bible teaching in those schools supported from the rates would solve the major grievance of the Nonconformists. As Alfred Mond, Liberal M.P. for Chester was to declare at the Chester Liberal Meeting in March 1908:

"If the clergy maintained their schools no one would have the least objection, but to ask the nation to keep going and leave them with full power to inflict this injustice is absurd. The nation neither wants Church, Nonconformist nor sectarian education. It wants simple Bible teaching."

The Liberal press had also commented upon the forthright tones of the Bishop of Manchester, declaring:

"The Bishops and the brewers are both uttering lamentations and threats against the Government; the former being not one whit behind the latter in the strength of the language they use. Listen, for example, to this passage from a letter by the outspoken Bishop of Manchester, to his clergy:

"As a specimen of class legislation, of unscrupulous rapacity and religious intolerance in the C.20th the Bill will no doubt deserve a place in historical archives by the side of racks, thumbscrews, boots and other instruments of torture, but it can never in its present form find a place in the Statute Books of England. Nevertheless neither time nor trouble must be spared if it is to be defeated and relegated to its proper place in the limbo of legislative abortions."
The editor was to comment that "even a good case can be spoiled by indiscreet advocacy. The country awaits argument, persuasion, advice; it is in no mood for passion and prejudice even from a Bishop who should set an example of moderation." (55)

The Secular Education League had also published its own articles in a series of pamphlets during 1907 and 1908 to give support to its own programme of advocating a secular solution to the education problem. It had already criticised McKenna's First Bill - the Education (Special Religious Instruction) Bill which it claimed was unjust insomuch that Nonconformists were to be rated for the support of Religious Instruction which would satisfy the High Churchmen and the Roman Catholics. They believed therefore that those High Churchmen and Roman Catholics should likewise be rated for the support of that form of religious instruction which would satisfy the Nonconformists. The policy of the Secular Education League was to let the State provide the secular part of education and let parents and churches at their own expense provide in addition such Religious Instruction as they approved. (56)

The Secular Education League were also able to quote from various sources the comments of leading politicians of the day to support their own views on secular education. Their pamphlets included Campbell-Bannerman's speech at Alexandra Palace on 1st November 1902 where he had stated:

"If we (Liberals) had our way there would be no religious difficulty at all. We should confine ourselves - I believe 9/10ths of Liberals would confine themselves - to secular education, and to such moral precepts as would be common to all and would not be obnoxious to people who do not come within the range of Christianity." (57)

They were also able to quote Ramsay MacDonald as Secretary of the
Labour Party when he had stated:

"I think that the attempts that have been made by mistaken persons to establish the school with its official teachers in the place of the Church and the family as the giver of religious instruction to the children, must be pronounced by every intelligent man as a disastrous failure." (58)

The Secular Education League were also able to use speeches made by Joseph Chamberlain dating from 1902 where in speaking to the Liberal-Unionists in Birmingham he declared:

"I endeavoured to persuade my countrymen that the only logical just solution of the great education difficulty was that the national schools should confine themselves entirely to secular instruction and should have nothing whatever to do with religious teaching. I should be delighted if I thought that that were acceptable to the majority of the people." (59)

Similarly the League was to quote Lord Rosebery from his speech at the City Liberal Club in October 1902 where he had stated:

"I suppose the ideal - logical and philosophical - view of education is that the State should be solely responsible for secular education and that the Churches should be responsible for religious education." (60)

The League were also to publish the views on secular education from the leaders of those religious groups in favour of a secular solution. Among these was the Rev. Dr. Fairbairn who had written to the 'Daily News' on 11th January 1907:

"I do believe that the grasp of any Church or clergy round the throat of the State is, in the highest degree, dangerous. If, therefore, we are faced by a multitude of men who threaten to lead our schools into ecclesiastical controversies, I, for my part, would see no option save adopting the secular approach." (61)
The President of the Baptist Union, Rev. Henderson, was quoted from 'The Baptist Times' of 26th April 1907 as follows:

"Even if all our resources were exhausted there would be the greatest objections to the principle that the State, as such, should determine what prayers are to be addressed to God, and what religious ideas are to be taught to the people, young and old." (62)

Similarly the Secular Education League was to use the commentary from the Rev. J.H. Jowett when he addressed the National Council of Free Churches when he declared that "it would be better for the matter for controversy to be removed clean out of the public schools and that Religious Instruction should be committed to the Churches, who are primarily responsible for it." (63)

Hirst Howell was to write to the 'Daily News' and this was to be quoted by the Secular Education League that "The State school must be restricted to national and moral education and religious teaching of all kinds must be thrown upon the Church in private hours, at their own cost, and by their own agents." (64)

Thus the views of the Nonconformists were known to Runciman, and therefore his main task was to consult these bodies in the preliminary stages of outlining his own measure which he hoped to present to the House of Commons in the Autumn of 1908. He believed that if he could find mutual points of agreement between the Nonconformists and the Anglicans then this would provide a firm foundation for the necessary further negotiations.

The Nonconformists were to agree that there must be a general transfer of the majority of voluntary schools to the Local Authorities, but were prepared to accept that a small number of exceptional schools would contract out. These would be the Roman Catholic schools, the
Jewish schools and a small minority of Anglican schools. In return for this concession the Nonconformists would be prepared to consider some relaxation of the Cowper-Temple Clause by allowing restricted denominational teaching in all council schools. This was to be given on three mornings per week and excluded such teaching by the headteacher. Any such teaching had to be financed from sources other than public money and neither had this teaching to be in addition to the Cowper-Temple instruction which would be considered as the normal religious instruction provision of these schools. (65)

Runciman had been able to outline his main proposals for consideration by the Archbishop of Canterbury. As it then stood the proposals meant that all schools receiving rate aid would be under the control and management of the Local Education Authority. The voluntary schools in the single school parishes were to be transferred to the Local Authority, subject to an obligation on the part of the Authority to give facilities for denominational instruction to those children whose parents required it on two mornings in the week, but such instruction was to be paid for from other than public funds. Those voluntary schools in other than single school parishes could be transferred and then the obligation to give facilities for denominational teaching on two mornings in the week would be similarly imposed. Contracting out by voluntary schools would be possible in areas which were not single school areas, but such schools would not receive rate aid, but would be supported by a Parliamentary grant which would give them a reasonable chance of existence, but would also leave them a substantial burden to be borne by the denomination.

The proposals included the provision by the Local Education Authority for Cowper-Temple instruction in all of their schools for any child whose parents demanded it. Assistant teachers would be allowed to volunteer to give the denominational instruction subject to the consent being
given by the L.E.A. with the proviso that the L.E.A. should not refuse consent except on the grounds that they themselves simultaneously required the teacher's services. A right of appeal was to be allowed through the Board of Education. It was agreed that the owners of the transferred voluntary schools could transfer the buildings absolutely, or the buildings could be loaned to the Local Authority.

These outline proposals went a long way in satisfying the Archbishop of Canterbury that some solution could be reached. He was to be in constant touch with Runciman throughout the negotiations with all interested parties. In June 1908 Runciman had written to the Archbishop stating:

"We shall of course, assume that your undertaking to support a series of points for a settlement if and when put forward in our Bill will mean that you will use your utmost endeavours (with reasonable prospect of success) to bring all the Church Schools into the State System on the conditions thus arrived at." (66)

This meant in practice that all schools in the State system were to be under the control and management of the Local Education Authority and the Headteacher would not be able to give denominational teaching "to prevent the appearance or suggestion that the State School is mainly pervaded by any one denomination, the Headteacher must not be employed for giving denominational instruction." (67)

This statement was to take the Archbishop by surprise, for he had anticipated that the position of the Headteacher and the teaching of denominational religious instruction would be one of the points upon which any Bill might flounder. His reply to Runciman stated:--

"I must confess to a feeling of puzzled disappointment. Either I must have inexplicably misunderstood what you kindly said upon some points last Saturday, or else you have on consideration found it to be impossible to give effect to the wishes you then expressed." (68)
Runciman was to defend his statement to the Archbishop, replying:—

"In one respect we are both in the same position. I don't like to have it said that I put forward these points as Government proposals - for very much the same reasons as makes you dislike anyone supposing that they are yours.......In this matter we must (if I may say so) trust each other." (69)

The position of the Headteachers had already been brought to the attention of Runciman. Upon his appointment as President of the Board of Education in May 1908 Lord Crewe had written to him that the Bishop of Ripon had given him some ideas of possible compromise, adding "it is interesting to note that he gives up the head-teachers" and that "he would be willing to introduce a Bill to this effect though he had no desire to do so." (70)

The Nonconformist view had also been outlined to Runciman at the same time, J. Scott Lidgett writing to him in May 1908, asking "would it not be possible to ease the way of the Archbishop of Canterbury in giving way as to Head teachers by some compensation elsewhere? .... I feel that a large section of Nonconformists would accept reasonable concessions on these lines in order to reach a settlement." (71)

That the Government should act to redress the grievances of the Nonconformists was in no doubt to the Rev. John Clifford. In his letter to Runciman of 10th July 1908 he was to complain about the lack of Government action, writing:—

"Yesterday I met large numbers of Free Churchmen....and found a condition of acute disappointment that after two years and a half of Liberal rule nothing has been done to get rid of the injustices of the Education Act of 1902." (72)

The difficulties facing Runciman over the voluntary schools were to be further highlighted when the Archbishop of Westminster wrote to him
outlining his own position should an educational settlement be reached.

The Archbishop's letter of 24th September 1908 stated:

"On this account I feel that it is right to tell you that in my judgment it would be unwise to look for any satisfactory arrangement at the present time. As you are aware I have always been willing to consider carefully the various proposals of the Government and while unable to compromise any principle I have anxiously sought some basis of settlement.

"In the interest of the Government and of yourself as Minister of Education and of a future settlement, I very strongly urge upon you a postponement of this question." (73)

It was clear to Runciman that the Roman Catholics would not be drawn into a compromise over the issue of religious instruction in their own schools. In writing to Prime Minister Asquith about the problems of the education question in general, Runciman included the following concerning his relationship with the Archbishop of Westminster:

"The Catholics must take their chance. They are never reconcilable, and although the Archbishop of Westminster in the enclosed letter (quoted above) adopts a truculent tone, they can be still bought off. His conversation with me was never antagonistic in manner and showed that money was all he expected. The only alteration in his relations to me is apparently that he thinks himself now freer to say that no terms can be accepted by them as final. Perhaps that was always the Catholic attitude; now he intends to express it. If you approve I propose to leave him alone until about the middle of November...." (74)

In order to bring a settlement closer and more acceptable to the Church of England the Bishop of Stepney had forwarded a Memorandum to Runciman on 30th September 1908 containing suggestions for a compromise "which he believed might be accepted (though not acceptable) to the bulk of the
Church of England representatives, arrived at after discussion with the Archbishop and others. " (75) Those Bishops prepared to support the proposals included the Bishops of Southwark, Oxford, Wakefield, Chichester and Hereford, but opposing them were the Bishops of Birmingham, Manchester and London.

The proposals included a National System of Elementary Education under the control of the Education Authorities, but to exclude Clause VI schools which would contract out. Religious instruction would be of the Cowper-Temple variety given in all schools on every day by the class teacher, but two days were to be set on one side for denominational instruction in all schools in school hours where this was called for. This denominational teaching was to be provided by the denomination concerned, and could be given by the clergy or by trained teachers, but teachers were to volunteer to do this. (76)

By 16th October Runciman had prepared his own outline of the proposed Education Bill, forwarding a copy for the Archbishop of Canterbury to study. At a meeting on 23rd October 1908 Runciman, Morant, the Bishop of Southwark and the Archbishop discussed these outline proposals. According to Morant's detailed notes on the conversations which they took place, there were indications of a possibility of an agreement to general resolutions, but enormous difficulties if any details were to be specified.

Morant detailed the problems of finance for those schools which would contract, or opt out, of the main scheme, which would be the Roman Catholic schools, the Jewish schools, and an unspecified number of Anglican schools. The position of the Headteacher over the matter of denominational teaching had not been finalised, and neither had the proposals dealt with the fixing of satisfactory rents where voluntary schools were to be taken over by the Education Authorities. (77)

It was clear to Runciman that further negotiations would be necessary
and that the position of the Roman Catholics should be made clear to those concerned with such negotiations. Runciman was to write to Archbishop Bourne on 24th October 1908 outlining the negotiations which were taking place and inviting him to attend "a formal Conference of those who are prepared to obtain peace by mutual concession if such a meeting can be arranged." (78)

In his reply from the English College in Rome the Archbishop of Westminster again outlined the position of the Roman Catholics, writing:—

"My attitude is what it has always been. The average Catholic thinks that the Government which has worried us in Education matters ever since it came into power, has now gone out of its way to wound us in our most cherished religious convictions.... If the Prime Minister can find an opportunity (even while maintaining that, so long as our difficulties remain on the Statute Book, it is necessary to remind us of their existence) of publicly assuring Catholics that he will consider how he can place them on an equality with their fellow subjects, it will be easier for me to answer your letter as I should desire to do." (79)

The negotiations were therefore to continue without the Roman Catholic representatives although those issues raised to the advantage of the Church of England would also be to the advantage of the Roman Catholic schools where this would keep their necessary 'atmosphere' within their system. The Government's proposals at the beginning of November 1908 contained the provision to give Cowper-Temple teaching in all schools and also gave facilities for denominational instruction in the transferred voluntary schools. However, the Archbishop of Canterbury hoped to press for statutory facilities for denominational teaching in council schools, and also wished for headteachers to give denominational teaching as a matter of right. The Archbishop also wished that the Bill would include the facility for the Anglicans, and therefore also for the Roman Catholics, to build new
"contract out" denominational schools, and to have Parents' Committees to concern themselves with the provision and quality of religious instruction.

Although the Anglicans were prepared to transfer their schools in single school areas, they hoped for a large scale contracting out of their denominational schools in the other areas. The facilities teaching in the council schools was also to prove to be a stumbling block as the Anglicans wished this to be available to them at any time during the day and to be given without restriction from either inside or outside the school.

Archbishop Davidson was not to be given a free hand in the negotiations, for the National Society had called their Standing Committee together over the proposed Bill to outline their own stand against any Bill which would be against the interests of the Anglican Church. The Standing Committee was to meet Davidson on 4th November 1908, the Archbishop's notes showing the problems he had encountered in trying to reach a united front:

"Rather a trying meeting of the National Society Standing Committee. I stated in outline what had passed and told them plainly that I was prepared to agree to a settlement if the lines I had laid down could be genuinely followed. Speeches of mingled remonstrance, indignation and despair were made by Hugh Cecil, Canon Cleworth, the Dean of Canterbury (who was especially wrathful) and John Talbot (sad rather than wrathful). The Bishop of Southwark spoke admiringly on my side, though confining himself rightly to general terms. Brook was less hostile than might have been expected and indeed went a long way towards actually supporting me. Athelstan Riley did not speak. Salisbury was not wholly Cecilian, or at least not so uncompromising as Hugh." (80)

Runciman was also to find negotiations with the Nonconformists very difficult, the Archbishop noting that he had said, "...it was quite as bad on the other side, and that Dr. Clifford is at the present almost tearfully complaining of the position in which he finds himself, of being bombarded as a weak-kneed Moderate." (81)
John Clifford had made his position clear in his own letter to Asquith, detailing the three main points upon which the Nonconformists would not compromise. He wrote to Asquith on 4th November 1908, stating:

"We have no hesitation however, in saying that we would rather remain subject to the hardships and injustices of the present situation than consent to any compromise on the following three points:-(82)

(1) The need for public control.

(2) No denominational tests for teachers.

(3) Any denominational teaching was to be paid for by the denomination concerned.

On the matter of the right of entry, Clifford was to state that he found "the most intense and bitter antagonism to the grant of the right of entry." (83)

Dr. Clifford's views were to be published in all leading papers on 12th November, these following the main points which he had outlined to the Prime Minister, 'The Tablet' also stating his case:

"My own judgment (i.e. Clifford's) is that the nation cannot give statutory right of entry to the sectarians into Council schools or allow the headteacher to become a Church Officer, but the furthest limit of safety is reached when (1) contracting out, (2) local option for the entry of denominational teaching exclusively at the cost of the denominations are permitted, and (3) the teachers in non-provided schools are allowed to give denominational teaching during the period of their occupancy of the post they now hold."(84)

The position of the N.U.T. on behalf of its members had been given on 7th November 1908 in which they had declared they were in favour of full local public control together with the abolition of religious tests for teachers. They would not oppose denominational teaching out of school hours in the present denominational schools, but their resolution included the following statement:--
"The contracting out of voluntary schools would wholly vitiate their principles, fatally injure the schools contracted out, and should be uncompromisingly opposed." (85)

The Northern Counties League, meeting in Manchester on 6th November 1908 had also re-iterated their call for freedom from religious tests for teachers, and also unanimously passed resolutions emphatically repudiating the proposals which they claimed would destroy the unsectarian character of the council schools. (86)

'The Daily News' believed that a compromise could be reached even though the Church of England had raised objections over the proposed exclusion of headteachers from the sectarian instruction and also wanted absolute right of entry into all schools if they were expected to open their own schools to Cowper-Temple teaching. (87)

In view of the wide expressions of opinion on the proposed Bill, Runciman had met the Nonconformist M.P.'s on 9th November to explain the Government's position. 'The Manchester Guardian' reporting:-

"The speech of Mr. Runciman was discussed in detail. Several Nonconformist members strongly opposed any idea of granting a "right of entry" to denominational teachers in council schools. Considerable divergence of opinion is said to have been displayed. Ultimately the following resolution was carried with six dissentients in a meeting of about 150:-

'That this meeting of Nonconformist M.P.'s having heard Mr. Runciman's statement regarding the proposed compromise on the Education Bill is prepared to support the Government on the lines proposed by him." (88)

'The Manchester Guardian' was also to state that the Cabinet was understood to be unanimous in its approval of the terms put forward by the Minister of Education.

These terms were not acceptable to the Bishop of Manchester, who in writing an open letter to 'The Manchester Guardian' on 13th November 1908
declared:-

"The authorities of our Church by surrendering nearly all our schools and possibly all of them to the State, give up the Church principle and accept that of the State...... We are only to be allowed to put a patchwork of creeds and catechisms on religious instruction over which we have no control and thereby to encourage the average Englishman in his belief that Church teaching is something distinct from Bible teaching." (89)

The Church Schools Emergency League had met on 11th November and was to confirm its position with a resolution moved by its Secretary, Canon Cleworth, and unanimously carried, the Resolution being:-

"That in the opinion of this meeting, Churchmen should refuse to accept any settlement of the Education Question which does not adequately provide for the religious education of children in accordance with the wishes of their parents in all schools and which does not accord perfect equality of treatment as between existing and future denominational and undenominational schools, teaching and teachers." (90)

Likewise the National Society's Standing Committee, also meeting on 11th November 1908, had passed their own resolution outlining their position on the education question, this resolution stating:-

"That the Standing Committee of the National Society is most anxious that the prolonged strife on the subject of national education should be brought to a close, but in its opinion there would be neither justice nor any hope of permanence in any settlement which is not founded on the principles that all forms of religious teaching are equal in the eye of the State and that every child should be instructed in religion by a qualified teacher in accordance with the belief of its parents." (91)

The Archbishop of Canterbury had written to Runciman on 10th November stating that he would do his best to overcome the problem raised in the Bill over the position of Headteachers and the teaching of denominational
religious knowledge, indicating this might be solved if current headteachers were to be exempt from this clause. (92) This led Runciman to believe that he might be close to an agreement with the Archbishop of Canterbury over the position of Headteachers (93) but there would still remain the Roman Catholics to deal with. (94)

Runciman had written to Lord Ripon explaining the position of the Roman Catholics and particularly of the stance taken by Archbishop Bourne having come to the conclusion that "we are having to devise as generous terms for the English Catholics as we can without Conference with their Representative." (95)

'The Tablet' commenting upon the negotiations between the Government and the denominations, was to remark:

"The most satisfactory feature of the recent negotiations between the Government and the representatives of the Established Church in connexion with the Education Bill is the fact that they were carried on without the slightest reference to the Catholic body. When two parties approach one another with a view to a bargain or a compromise it is essential if business is to result, that each should have something to give away. On this question the Catholics of this country have nothing to give away. . . . . . . the work of the Conference was immensely simplified by the fact that it was essentially and indeed exclusively, a gathering of Protestants." (96)

It was agreed that the Roman Catholics would decline any change of control which would almost certainly affect their special and all-pervading 'atmosphere'. Thus according to 'The Manchester Guardian' "some measure of freedom to contract out of the new system would be inevitable, the contracted out schools receiving no support from the rates, but instead an increased efficiency grant from the taxes." (97)
The Archbishop of Westminster was to query the various details of the proposed Bill, particularly concerning pupil rights, but was to state in his letter to Runciman:

"You will not expect me at this moment to express a definite opinion but it is only fair to you to say that I can hardly discern in your proposals a basis of permanent settlement as far as we are concerned." (98)

The Catholic Education Council at their meeting on 12th November 1908 had again reiterated their statements that the rights of Catholics and their choice of education in a Catholic school system must be safeguarded. (99)

'The Tablet' was to be concerned over the changes in the Bill which had taken place since its First Reading. In many respects they considered it to be a new Bill, commenting:

"Mr. Asquith announces that the 'new' Bill will embody the compromise arrived at between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Nonconformist leaders. What does it mean? It means that the Bill is to be rushed through the House of Commons. The Prime Minister can do what he wills there and there is no power in the land to hinder him. Can we look to the peers to save us a second time? The Archbishop of Canterbury has immense influence in the House of Lords and if he and the majority of the other Bishops are content it is hardly likely that the lay Lords in a matter so closely bound up with religion will care to oppose them. In that case the Bill becomes law." (100)

In order to reach a settlement before the Bill was to be introduced into the Commons and in order to give time to reach a compromise the Archbishop of Canterbury had to ask for a clear statement from Asquith as to the liberty of the headteacher in a transferred school to give such teaching. His letter to Asquith on such matters dated 17th November 1908 stated:

"...In expressing assent to the provisions as they stand I must of course reserve the right, which I presume you would also claim, to reconsider such assent in the event of amendments being carried which
affect the general structure and balance of the measure. And lastly I must ask again that it be clearly understood that the assent which I am able to give to the Government's proposals expresses, not the claim which the Church of England is in my judgment reasonably entitled to make, but the sacrifice in which I can, speaking for myself, recommend my fellow Churchmen to acquiesce in the interest of religious and educational peace." (101)

This reply was not detailed enough for Asquith, and therefore the Bishop of Southwark wrote on behalf of Davidson to clarify the following points:

"...He (Davidson) wishes me to say that, if you are able to allow the following points, that is to say:-

(i) The power of building new contracting-out schools;

(ii) The right of the existing headteacher in transferred voluntary schools to give denominational instruction during the full tenure however long, of his existing Headmastership; and further, to give it for a period of 5 years from now in any Headmastership in any transferred voluntary school to which he may be moved; and

(iii) If you will give a clause permitting L.E.A.'s to form Committees of advice in the way that has been suggested for matters connected with the religious teaching - he will not himself press further for the right of the future Headteacher, though on this point he cannot answer for others." (102)

In his reply to the Bishop of Southwark, Runciman stated on 19th November 1908 :

"I am authorised to say that, for the sake of securing a balanced settlement we acquiesce in:-

(i) The power to provide from private sources, a new contracted-out school where the money is forthcoming and a sufficient number of
parents desire it;

(ii) The right of the existing Headteacher to volunteer as described in your letter and with a 5-year time limit;

(iii) And we raise no objection to the L.E.A.'s setting up religious instruction committees similar to those set up by the old London School Board and other School Boards for the purpose of agreeing on syllabuses etc. But as I often stated, it must be clearly understood that we could not concur in any arrangement which might lead to the employment of direct or indirect tests on the teachers...." (103)

On the same date, 19th November 1908, Asquith had announced in the House of Commons that a concordat had been reached on the school question and their first Bill would be completely withdrawn and therefore a new Bill which had the general approval of the Archbishop would be introduced. Asquith stated that the new Bill also had the general approval of the leading Nonconformists who had promised they would give it their support as far as their authority and influence would let them.

This view was supported by the Liberal press. The 'Northwich Chronicle' was to declare:-

"Mr. Runciman has brought representatives of the Church and Nonconformity together and it is considered that there is an excellent prospect of a settlement. But the nearer the end of the dispute, the louder the shouts of the disputants. The issue turns upon the right of entry - in school hours or not? Of course, if the clergy claim a privileged position, it is a waste of time arguing with them. We must have control of the schools and the school staffs.

"Now outside that, what can we reasonably grant to those who built the schools? Certainly not an exclusive right of entry, but a right of entry which is guaranteed to all denominations alike....Of course we do
not hope to convince the extreme men in the Church like Bishop Knox, Lord Hugh Cecil and Lord Halifax. They are fighting hard for preference and privilege which it is impossible to recognise in State-maintained schools. Short of that we trust a reasonable compromise will be sought." (104)

In the meantime Runciman had kept the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster informed of the progress of the negotiations, but had not included the Roman Catholics in such discussions. The Archbishop was to show concern lest the Roman Catholic schools were forced to accept the contracting out status which would leave them in a state of financial stress and would also be isolating them from the main stream of educational provision via the Local Education Authorities. The Roman Catholic Archbishop knew well that a settlement would depend upon the attitude of the Anglican Church rather than upon any discussions which he might have with Runciman. This point was made at a Special General Meeting of the Catholic Education Council after the Bill had been given its First Reading when the Archbishop declared:-

"I knew Runciman and I knew perfectly well that until he had squared the Anglicans it was no use speaking to us, because the whole arrangement depended upon that." (105)

Runciman’s negotiations had been thorough and therefore by the end of November it was felt that the new Education Bill could be presented to the House of Commons. The major point which had not been discussed in any great detail with the Anglicans was the grant terms which would be available to those schools which would contract out. Although Runciman had assured the denominations that the settlement on this matter would not stand in the way of a solution, the money proposals embodied in the Bill were shown to the Archbishop of Canterbury on 20th November only. These were not satisfactory for the Archbishop to accept on behalf of the Church.
The Archbishop's concern over the financial provisions for those schools which would contract out had been brought to the attention of Runciman in a letter dated 19th November, written by the Archbishop whilst confined to bed. He wrote:

"I am of course still in ignorance of the financial part of you measure (terms of contracting out, and rent for transferred schools). The more nervous of my friends are inclined to blame me for consenting to so much without a definite assurance on the financial details.

"I have replied that I reply without fear upon the good faith in the Government, Runciman in repeated and explicit terms having assured me that if I would let this straw over the terms would be found to be not only fair but so generous that no difficulty we should be placed in.

"So I decline to be uneasy." (105)

Runciman was then to send the scale of contracted out grants to the Archbishop, still confined to Lambeth Palace, adding his note:

"I hope that you will be satisfied with this scale," with a further note on the proposed Rent Schedule for transferred schools that he "believed it is higher than many of your people expect." (107)

The Archbishop was to reply immediately having seen the scale of grants stating in his letter to Runciman:

".....on first sight it looks to me as if it would be absolutely impossible that on the terms suggested any contract out schools could reasonably be expected to survive.

"It will indeed be a 'debacle' if we are obliged to say that the figures having only been shown to us now they are such as to render that whole part of the Bill a perfectly vain offer." (108)

Runciman was to consult Robert Morant over the proposed financial scales of grants and rent schedules, his advice being as follows:

"If the official opposition endeavours to oppose on the grounds of the
inadequacy of grant for contracting out schools, they will have to make some clear statement as to the amount or the proportion which they think the Denominations can properly be called upon to pay, in addition to providing the buildings." (109)

The Archbishop was also to write to Prime Minister Asquith on 21st November wanting absolute details on the financial arrangements before the Bill was put before the House of Commons. He was to make it clear to the Prime Minister that such arrangements "also very markedly concerns Roman Catholic schools wherever they exist.....and I have endeavoured repeatedly to show that an arrangement fatal to the efficient continuance of Roman Catholic Schools would in my judgment be one to which the Parliament of England ought not to give its assent." (110)

The Archbishop was clearly not satisfied with the financial arrangements and was particularly displeased in this matter as during his recent illness Runciman had indicated to the Bishop of Stepney that "...money can be discussed immediately we have the other two matters out of the way - and we can be generous." (111)

In a further letter to Runciman Archbishop Davidson was to state his own case concerning the lack of precise information from the Board of Education on the financial provisions which were to be incorporated into the Bill, writing:-

"You probably scarcely realise how vehement has been the criticism of my action in having abstained from insisting upon seeing the proposed figures before allowing my assent to the settlement plan to be quoted. In answer to such protests I have said not once, but a dozen times, that I had your assurance that we need not worry about the financial part of it provided the rest was satisfactorily settled, that you saw your way to devising a plan which would be generous and that, though you could not then tell me what it was, I had implicit trust in what you had said. That
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trust I still retain and do not believe now that if it can be shown that the plan in the Bill would mean a general impossibility of contracting out (except perhaps in well-to-do neighbourhoods) you would wish to hold to it as it stands. I ought not perhaps to shrink from telling you that I have been laughed at by more than one friend for this confidence - "a simple Simon negotiating with people who are not simple Simons at all" - and so forth. I have simply reiterated that, foolish or not, I had complete confidence in what you had said." (112)

A conference had then to be arranged between the representatives of the Archbishop and those from the Board of Education to discuss in full the details of the Bill, and in particular the financial arrangements and their implications, and therefore the numbers of voluntary schools which might contract out under the terms of the Bill.

J. Scott Lidgett had written to Runciman on 22nd November stating: - "Our Weslyan Committee will meet next Friday morning. I entertain little doubt that they will on the whole support the Bill."

He was also to write that the Bishop of Southwark "seemed disappointed and disquieted by the scale of the grants provided in the schedule for contracted out schools. These, he has been informed, will prove inadequate."

Runciman was not to agree with this, and therefore sent an official letter from the Education Department to the Archbishop of Canterbury claiming that viewed overall the proposed Bill "was a fair deal." (114)

The Liberal press was to acknowledge the work undertaken by Runciman in trying to reach an agreement 'The Crewe Chronicle' editorial stating: - "We are in the throes of an educational crisis, but it is now considered there is an excellent prospect of an agreed compromise." (115)

Runciman was to stress that compromises had been made on all sides and particularly by the Nonconformists and the Anglicans in order to reach
an agreement, and that much had been given by the Nonconformists in permitting facilities in every provided elementary school. In return the Anglicans had agreed to give up their monopoly in the single school areas. Runciman had provided a scheme for the wholly denominational schools under a system of contracting out. These were to be strictly limited as non-provided schools and as such were to be supported only by annual State grants of between 46/6d. and 55/- per child according to the size of the school. This system of support was to replace local grant aid and any deficiencies in financial arrangements would have to be filled by the denominations through a subscription and donation system. Although they were excluded from rate-aid, Runciman had seen such schools as being a part of the national overall system, and therefore their pupils would still be eligible for inclusion in Local Authority courses in handwork, gardening and cookery. Teachers in such schools were also to retain the same rights of pension as teachers in the State system.

Runciman saw such schools as being the main-stay of the Roman Catholics, and of the Jewish educational system, rather than that of the Church of England, for he believed that the Church of England had gained the advantage of "facilities" teaching in every public elementary school as part of the regular curriculum.

In spite of this, the Anglicans seized on the financial terms of the Bill which related to those schools which would be classified as 'non-provided' schools. The Nonconformists believed that they had given enough in general terms of the Bill, the Liberal press on explaining the terms of the Bill to the public at large summarising the main outlines in the following terms:--

"The Bill, which consists of 12 Clauses and 3 Schedules, provides that only schools under local control are to receive rate aid, and that in rate-aid schools no teacher is to be subjected to religious tests or
be required to give religious instruction. Cowper Temple instruction is to be given for three-quarters of an hour each day of the week, and that is the only time at which facilities may be afforded for denominational or Church teaching in provided schools. No part of such teaching is to be borne by the Local Authority. Contracting out is not to be allowed in single school areas, and schools contracting out of the Act may share in the Parliamentary grant. An organisation has been established composed of moderate Churchmen and Nonconformists to assist the Government in getting the Bill through both Houses of Parliament. It does not profess to be anything but a compromise but it does the minimum of violence to the religious convictions of parents and children. The extreme High Church party is bitterly opposed to the Bill, but then if it had its way it would reduce the National Church to a mere sect." (116)

Whilst the Archbishop and the Board of Education were trying to arrange a Concordat, further opposition to the Bill had been growing, headed by the Bishop of Manchester and by the National Society. The Bishop of Manchester in an open letter to all Bishops had denounced the Bill in the 'Church Times' dated 27th November 1908 describing the current negotiations as "the peace of death." (117) The National Society, using its own publication 'The School Guardian' also declared that the acceptance of the Bill in its current form would be a "colossal surrender" and were to agree on a policy of opposition at their Standing Committee meeting on 27th November 1908. (118)

The Bill began its Second Reading on 24th November. Although according to the Nonconformists, the Anglicans would immediately be able to give denominational instruction in all council schools, the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics were to attack the contracting out clause. Runciman was aware that the more generous the terms for contracting out, then the greater number of schools there would be which would opt for
this status. He had tackled this question in the terms of contracting out which he saw as "a penalisation and not a privilege." (119)

The Roman Catholics believed that their position had not been taken into full consideration, for the Anglicans had gained the right of entry into Council schools, but this was of no interest to them. They saw their position as one which would become outside the main stream education system. Under the terms of the Bill the Roman Catholics were now faced with an entirely new situation, for the Anglicans may have been satisfied with a settlement, but this would leave them completely segregated and they would also be deprived of the financial advantages which the Education Act of 1902 had given them. They believed that they would "be condemned to a state of semi-starvation." (120)

The success of the Bill for the Anglicans would have rested largely upon the stance of the teachers upon whom the denominations would have to rely very heavily for their denominational teaching. Many teachers objected to the right of entry into council schools as proposed by the Bill, as well as to the recognition of a section within the educational system of non-provided schools. All that the Nonconformists had achieved in agreeing to the general terms of the Bill was the right to appoint headteachers and staff in a proportion of Church schools, and it was possible that the Nonconformists could also lose ground in elementary education to the denominationalists. (121)

The N.U.T. were suspicious lest teachers seeking appointments under the Local Authorities should be pressed if they were willing to give some form of denominational teaching, which in its way would be a form of religious testing for teachers. The growing awareness of the Anglicans that the teachers may not wish to give denominational teaching in the council schools was to put some further pressure on the Church of England.
to press for better financial terms for the schools which would contract out. Moderate Churchmen foresaw the financial difficulties which would appear once a school had opted out of the main stream provision, the Bishop of Southwark declaring that the right of entry into the council schools would offer new opportunities for the Church in an "expanding future" rather than having to prop up the current position whereby the Church was losing its denominational schools and also losing the financial strength to keep them afloat. (122)

In spite of the many objections to the Bill it passed its Second Reading on 30th November. It had been unfortunate that the details of the financial terms of the Bill were not known in advance. It was then estimated that each school place was worth about £3 per head and yet when the property was subject to "absolute transfer" - which meant that no use could be made of the property by the trustees even on a Sunday - the Bill proposed to offer sums varying from £3.00 to £1/10/0d. per child in average attendance.

The two examples of what this might mean were cited in "The School Guardian" of 5th December 1908. It was to claim that the National School in Swansea which had been built on a new site for £13,000 with their old buildings then being estimated at being worth about £5,000 would be transferred under the terms laid down in the Bill for an absolute transfer figure of £3,225. Similarly at Mickleham in Surrey, the National school there was valued at £2,500 but this would be transferred for £260 only. Similar examples were to include the National school of St. John in Lambeth with its 600 pupils being transferred for an absolute charge of £2,745 having cost approximately £22,913 to build. At the other extreme the "School Guardian" were to show that small schools such as Grayswood in Surrey with its approximately 100 pupils which had cost
over £2,000 to build would be transferred for the sum of £312 giving a rent of only £15 per year. (123)

Notwithstanding the financial problems which the Bill had brought into the open, the Liberal press was to declare that the Bill was "the best possible thing which could happen for our national education," which would include a "friendly settlement of the controversy over our elementary schools." (124)

The Macclesfield Liberal Magazine of December 1908 called for support for the Runciman Bill writing:-

"...No one imagines that the Tory Act of 1902 can be left as it is with rate aid being given to denominational schools under private management and with teachers appointed under a religious test.

"Now as a result of prolonged and careful consultation with the Church, represented by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with the leaders of Non-conformity, Mr. Runciman, the Minister of Education, has brought in a new Bill which is designed to be a compromise on this question.

"....Support a Bill which is a fair and reasonable settlement of a controversy which, so long as it lasts, can only do harm to the education of the children." (125)

'The Crewe Chronicle' supporting the measure, declared:-

"It does not profess to be anything but a compromise but it does the minimum of violence to the religious convictions of parents and children. The extreme High Church Party is bitterly opposed to the Bill, but then if it had its way it would reduce the National Church to a mere sect." (126)

Thus although the Bill was to have the general approval of the majority of Nonconformists who wished for a compromise settlement this did not indicate that the Church of England would also accept the Bill without further modification.

Walter Runciman had been congratulated by Morant on his handling of the First Reading, writing: "...It was a cruelly difficult task: quite
admirably done. I do sincerely congratulate you." (127) However, the First Reading had also been the signal for the Bishops of the Church of England to query the detail of the Bill.

The Archbishop had informed Runciman on 26th November that he was still not satisfied with the financial details of the Bill, (128) and the Bishop of Southwark had written to Morant concerning the difficulties contained in the Bill over the rights of entry, stating:-

"You will see how hard it is for us to look critics in the face and say that we have got a solid statutory entry in exchange for all the sacrifices which seem to them, and are, so great." (129)

The Bishop of Gloucester, writing to Runciman on 28th November 1908 expressed the views of many of the clergy when he stated:-

"I feel very keenly that we are within measurable distance of finding ourselves unable to persuade Churchmen to accept the settlement." (130)

This view was shared by the Bishop of London and by the Bishop of St. Albans, both of whom were to write to Runciman asking for further details of the grant scales to be made available under the terms of the Bill. (131)

Between 2nd and 3rd December the Archbishop and Runciman were to exchange a series of letters concerning the detail of the financial arrangements which would apply should a settlement be reached, but by 3rd December these negotiations had become so difficult that Runciman had written to the Archbishop wanting to know if a settlement "is off, or is off unless we will give modifications which you know it is impossible for us to agree to." (132)

The Archbishop of Canterbury had realised that the National Society were opposed to the terms of the Bill, and therefore asked to hold a meeting with the Representatives of the Church Council to discuss this. This meeting was duly held on 3rd December, the Archbishop there stating his case based upon the following argument:-

"Some 550 Church of England schools closed in the last three years, with
accommodation for more than 160,000 children, while in the same three years there has been an increase of 1,056 Council Schools with accommodation for 478,000 children. What about the Church's care for these children? Such transfer of children will, for obvious reasons, be greatly accelerated in the next few years. And at such a moment we are offered the opportunity - an opportunity which may never recur - of securing by law that in every elementary school in the country - present and future - the right to give denominational teaching shall have a permanent place." (133)

The Representative Church Council had been formed in 1903 with the explicit purpose of recommending legislation which would be the concern of the Church of England. The more extreme Anglicans on the Council would not agree with the argument put forward by the Archbishop, as they believed that religious teaching in the majority of schools, which would be all those which had not opted for the contracting out status, would gradually become undenominational, and therefore the denominations would have lost their influence in the vast majority of schools in England and Wales. Thus no agreement could be reached by those who held this view and the Archbishop.

Opposing the Archbishop were Sir Alfred Cripps, Lord Halifax, and the Bishops of Manchester and Birmingham together with the Dean of Canterbury. It was this group which was to sponsor and carry the resolution condemning the entire compromise based upon the amendments proposed by the Bishop of Salisbury which would have radically altered the final terms of the Bill.

The voting at the meeting on 3rd December of the Representative Church Council was crucial for the Archbishop if he was to continue to seek a solution to the education question. Without their backing there would be little point in continuing negotiations with the Government. An acceptance of the proposals forwarded by the Bishop of Salisbury would have given room for further compromise with the Government, but the rejection of these would indicate that the Representative Church Council, by a
majority vote, were not prepared to negotiate any further.

The voting on the Bishop of Salisbury's amendments was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>For</th>
<th>Against</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bishops</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laity</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Archbishop was to note immediately the results were known at the meeting: "I think it is clear that this is equivalent to carrying Cripp's resolution." (135) Thus the voting and the attitudes of the Representative Church Council had changed the whole situation.

The Government was also quick to realise that the balance of power did not now lie with the Archbishop in matters relating to the voluntary schools and the Education Bill. Prime Minister Asquith was to write to Runciman on 4th December for further details of the events which had taken place at the Representative Church Council meeting. He was to write:

"We are not to blame for this misconception, if there be any. I think you might firmly ask the Archbishop if we are to assume from his letter that the substantial part of the Bishop of Salisbury's resolutions are to be regarded as a mere expression of a pious opinion, and that he repudiates them, as, in any sense an essential part of the settlement." (136)

Runciman's letter to the Archbishop of 4th December 1908 concerning the results of the Representative Church Council meeting pointed out that this "has altered the whole situation", his letter adding that their new demands "were supported by nearly all the Bishops and were prefaced by a declaration that unless conceded the Church cannot be advised to accept the Bill. Under these circumstances we are most reluctantly forced to the conclusion that despite your untiring efforts in the cause of conciliation you have not found it possible to obtain adhesion to the terms on which the settlement was based." (137)
It was clear to the Archbishop that Runciman had not fully understood what had taken place in the Representative Church Council meeting on 3rd December, and how the system of voting had worked. The Archbishop replied to Runciman's letter the same day (4th December) explaining in more detail stating that:-

"The vote taken was between a motion of Sir Alfred Cripps which ran as follows:-

'That this Council considers that a peaceful settlement of the Education Question is only possible on a basis of all-round tolerance and equality, irrespective of creed and without distinction between Denominationalists and Undenominationalists, and for this reason cannot accept the terms of the compromise embodied in the Education Bill,"

and the first clause of an Amendment moved by the Bishop of Salisbury which clause ran as follows:-

'This Council gladly recognises in the Government Education Bill now before Parliament an advance in the direction of a reasonable settlement of the Education Question but the Council cannot recommend the Church to accept the Bill without serious amendment."

It was this Clause which the Bishops supported by 21 votes against 3." (138)

The national press was to add confusion over the events of the Representative Church Council meeting, publishing the full series of amendments which were to be put forward by the Bishop of Salisbury. These were to have included a better safeguard for the right of entry and the inspection of denomination religious instruction by the denominational bodies. His amendments also included further financial reviews of any transfer costs, and schools which were to opt out were to receive grants in proportion to the cost of elementary education in that district. (139)

The Archbishop was to point out that although there had been a number of resolutions on the order paper for the meeting, the failure of the Bishop of Salisbury to carry the first one consequently meant that the others were not put under discussion. The press had been incorrect on this point, the Archbishop writing to Runciman to outline the position
concerning the voting as follows:

"...There had been some misconceptions by various bodies over the voting as the actual resolutions upon which the vote had been taken were inaccurately published by the press. The press had printed the full number of resolutions, but in fact only the first was of any consequence as the rest were based on the first being passed, but it was not."

According to the Archbishop "What the Bishops did was to vote, twice over, against the abandonment of our attempted settlement upon the lines suggested, although they thought some of the conditions should be amended.... I honestly believe that despite present difficulties and objections and even minatory words, based often upon misapprehension and the fear of haste, there is a steadily growing desire for a "balanced" settlement upon the lines which have now become so familiar to us, and it would be lamentable were we, on account of mere shortness of time, to let a great opportunity pass away unused." (140)

Runciman, realising that the Bill was no longer viable, and would therefore have to be withdrawn without the support of the Church of England, wrote to the Archbishop commenting:

"I hope that you will allow we to console igyself with the knowledge that our connection has become something in the nature of a friendship." (141)

In reply the Archbishop stated:

"I think that you will agree that I did everything which I possibly could and did it just as you would, in all the circumstances, have done in my place." (142)

The press was fully aware that the Education Bill was in difficulties following the Representative Church Council meeting 'The Northwich Chronicle' series, of Liberal persuasion, commenting:

"All compromises are viewed with suspicion and hostility by men who hold their own convictions as a matter of faith and principle."
Thus we have an Education Bill assailed by men of all parties and creeds, and in spite of the fact that an arrangement was come to between the Government and representatives of Church and Chapel. At the very last moment we have the Church Party demanding increased State grants which would make contracting out the rule and not the exception....It is tolerably obvious to readers of Parliamentary Reports that in spite of the moderate counsels of men like Mr. Alfred Mond (M.P. Chester, Liberal) who spoke in such an optimistic spirit in Chester on Wednesday, the Bill is being vehemently attacked, and if it fails no responsibility will rest with the Government. The attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable will have to be made....It is certainly the last effort this Government will make to solve this vexed problem." (143)

Runciman, writing to the Rev. Herbert Gresford Jones on 6th December 1908 about the failure of the Archbishop of Canterbury to win over the support of his own Church claimed it was due in part to the inability of the Archbishop to continue with negotiations at a personal level because he was bed-ridden during the crucial stages, Runciman writing, "he became dependent for his technical information on the officials of the National Society, all of whom, with the exception of old Sir Francis Powell, were his inveterate enemies and deeply pledged against a settlement." (144)

Certainly Sir Alfred Cripps had made his own position clear with regard to any compromise which might be offered to the Established Church. In September 1908 he had written an open letter to 'The Morning Post' in which he had outlined his own views of the Church of England's position as one which would not compromise and therefore along with the Representative Church Council "unequivocally condemned the Government Education Bill of 1908." (145)

The Dean of Canterbury had also taken a strong line on the role of the denominations in the elementary schools. His resolution in the Queen's
Hall, London, on 13th July 1908 was passed unanimously. It stated:

"That this meeting affirms the right of parents to determine the character of the religious teaching of their children in the schools of the country and to have such teaching given in school hours by teachers who are qualified and believe in what they teach." (146)

The stance taken by the Representative Church Council in opposing the efforts of the Archbishop to reach a settlement was to be fatal for the future of the Bill, for there was no room for further negotiations or compromise. The Government were to make no secret of the fact that they believed its failure was entirely due to the stand taken by the Anglican Church, and on 7th December 1908 Asquith in the House of Commons announced that the Bill was to be withdrawn as it could no longer be called an agreed measure.

Runciman was to write: "This ending is a sad blow to me and the Government also suffers, but what is more serious it is an effective blow at the cause of unity." (147)

The Rev. J.H. Shakespeare, then Secretary of the Baptist Union wrote to Runciman on 6th December 1908 declaring: "No one else has brought a settlement so near or could have done so." (148)

In similar vein, William Anson wrote: "I must send you a line of sympathy and regret at the loss of your Bill." (149)

This view was not shared by the Roman Catholics, for they had realised that the financial arrangements would be totally inadequate for their needs which would in effect mean that if no improvement was to be forthcoming then the deficit would have to be made up from their own resources. The Roman Catholic "Monitor" dated 5th December 1908 had stated that Archbishop Bourne had not sent a deputation to the Board of Education but had "for its sole purpose the object of demonstrating the truth of the financial statistics collected from our schools which had been challenged by the
Board" which showed there would be a considerable deficit if the Government did not advance their offer. (150) The withdrawal of the Bill was to leave the Roman Catholic schools in the same position as they had been since the Act of 1902.

The Dean of Manchester, writing to The Times after the withdrawal of the Bill claimed that its loss would be a serious blow to the Church, writing:-

"If the Church were gaining ground educationally, or even holding her own ground, it might be possible to look upon the defeat of the new compromise embodied in the Bill as a triumph of Churchmanship. But the figures quoted by the Archbishop of Canterbury tell a different story. Some 550 Church of England schools with accommodation for more than 160,000 children have, His Grace says, been closed in the last three years, while in the same three years there has been an increase of 1050 Council schools with accommodation for 478,000 children. Such is the process now going on, and the Archbishop evidently anticipates that it will be accelerated in the coming years. But if so, the enemies of denominational education need only bide their time and the children of the Church will be generally educated in schools from which definite Church teaching is excluded." (151)

The Northwich Chronicle was to comment on the Dean's letter in the Times, stating:-

"This is the voice of reason appealing for a hearing amid the clamour of the extreme men on both sides who have been more anxious to defeat the Bill than find a basis of settlement acceptable to all reasonable men." (152)

Davidson was to add in his own records that he regretted the failure of this Bill, but he had been in no position to reach an agreement on behalf of the Church of England. Davidson's biographer, Bell, was to
"The Bill failed, and to the Archbishop then and for many years to come it remained one of the grievous disappointments of his life." (153)

Asquith, too, had been disappointed over the failure of the Bill which he had seen as a workable compromise between Anglicans and Nonconformists, and which would have removed many of the grievances held by the Nonconformists which the Liberal Government had promised to overcome following their election success in 1906. Asquith was to state:--

"I am not ashamed to confess that I have never experienced a more heavy and thorough disappointment. I say again I do not regret the attempt that has been made, and I would far rather have made that attempt so far as my part is concerned, than for fear of failure not to have made the attempt at all." (154)

Compromise had almost been reached over the major issues of popular control, religious tests for teachers, and the compulsory simple Bible instruction for pupils.

However, the attitude of the Anglicans, and in particular the stance taken by the Representative Church Council, had been a determining factor. It had been impossible for a Liberal Government to pass any legislation without the overall approval of the Established Church. Thus the denominational question had not been solved, and neither was this likely until the Church of England could present a united front on all aspects of those problems involved in such issues. The Roman Catholic Church had stood firm to its own commitments throughout the negotiations.

The failure of Runciman's Bill following the previous attempts to legislate on the education question by both Birrell and McKenna was to force a lull in the conflict between parties as neither party could hope to reach an agreed compromise on the basic differences which had emerged since the Liberals had taken office.
In spite of the lack of progress by the Liberal administration in passing an Education Bill through Parliament, the period from 1906 was not without any educational advance for the pupils in the elementary schools. The T.U.C. had commented on the 1906 Birrell Bill that "the bulk of the working class were indifferent on the subject of religious instruction because they saw what little good had come to the country from religious instruction of church and chapel alike." (155)

Although the 1902 Education Act had done much within a decade to transform English education, the religious issue continued to haunt the politicians and in spite of the general lull in the country after the failure of the Runciman Bill a minority of Free Churchmen continued their campaign for further passive resistance with isolated gestures of defiance. Thus for many years to come statesmen could not contemplate the problems of dual control without thinking of the possibility of reviving those issues which had done so much to destroy the Liberal hopes in reaching an educational settlement.

The Free Church Council continued its campaign to make single school areas come under Council conditions, but Joseph Pease, the President of the Board of Education who followed Runciman claimed that there was not enough time before the election the due in 1915 to over-ride the Lords probable veto, and therefore education change should become an issue for the next election. The advent of the First World War prevented any further developments, and no government was anxious to awaken the old rivalries when this did not appear to be absolutely necessary.

Even as early as March 1906 when Birrell's Bill had first come under public discussion, the 'Sunday Times' was to comment:-

".....among those who are determined to force the Government to redeem its pledges we find the Nonconformist section, who insist on
pushing forward a new Education Bill...The Prime Minister and some of his colleagues are undoubtedly aware of the danger of trouble over a Bill and they would willingly postpone the evil day if the more extreme supporters would allow them to do so...The system adopted in 1902 has on the whole worked well and no suggestion has ever been made that the secular or clerical representation on the Councils was inadequate to safeguard the different denominational interests. It is therefore perhaps only natural if we assume that the present outcry for popular control is not due to any real shortcomings, but the outcome of political agitation by an extreme section and directed very largely against the National Church." (156)

The 'Sunday Times' was also to comment upon the failure of the Birrell Bill as being inevitable in early December 1906, declaring:-

"Most people will agree that the nation is growing heartily sick of the quarrel over the religious side of education. As long as it lasts bitter feelings are roused up and stimulated, and until it is settled, other matters of national importance cannot go forward." (157)

The loss of the Liberal Bills was to see a long war of attrition which gradually robbed the Anglicans of a large number of their schools, for as the financial provisions of the 1902 Act had to be implemented, then it was clear that many denominational schools would not be able to meet the required standards set by the Board of Education. Thus both the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics were opposed to major educational improvements simply because they would not have the financial backing to make the necessary changes. It was to become visibly clear to many parents that the educational provision made by the Councils in their schools contrasted most favourably to those of the denominations who still had out-dated buildings with poor facilities. In spite of such hardships there were still those denominational leaders who were to remain inflexible
in their attitudes toward change, and this antagonism was felt by teachers and administrators for the unequal balance in facilities within the system of council and denominational schools was to impede and retard the whole process of reform in both kinds of school alike. It had been the Archbishop of Canterbury who had declared that the loss of the 1906 Education Bill would have serious consequences for the voluntary schools on financial grounds alone, and had also expressed the opinion that the controversy over the provision of religious education in schools would continue.

H.B. Binns, writing in 1908, was to state:

"In my judgment it would be difficult to overstate the disaster to education caused by the loss of this brilliant endeavour to effect an educational settlement." (158)

Not all had been lost. Clause 24(c) of the 1906 Education Bill had made it the duty of the Local Education Authority to provide for the medical inspection of children "before or at the time of their admission to a public elementary school and on such other occasions as the Board of Education direct." The clause had been inserted by Birrell after being influenced by the arguments of C.F.G. Masterman. (159) Although lost with the Bill, the Clause was revived in the Administrative Provisions Act of 1907.

The Government had also sanctioned the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill introduced by the Labour M.P. for Westhoughton, W.T. Wilson, but not all had supported the idea of meals for necessitous children, for many believed that this provision would reduce parental authority and responsibility. The real pressure had come after the publication of the Report on Physical Deterioration which showed that between 15% and 16% of the child population was underfed, and therefore "it was the height of cruelty....to subject half-starved children to the processes of education." (160)

The Board of Education was to comment upon the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act of 1907 in its Annual Report 1906–07 stating it to be
an event of the first educational importance. (161) The following year's Report - 1907-08 - stated that the progress "in the organisation of the work (of Medical Inspection) is being made throughout the country and that with few exceptions, Local Education Authorities are doing their best to perform the duties which Parliament had imposed upon them." (162)

Thus in spite of the conflict which had arisen over the Education Bill of 1906 and in particular over the controversy surrounding the place of the voluntary schools and denominational teaching within the elementary education system, there had been legislation passed by which the general health and care of pupils in the elementary schools would benefit. These measures however had been outside the influence of the denominationalists and were of general concern to those with an interest in the welfare of school children.

The Second McKenna Bill had been withdrawn through a lack of support on all sides but the Runciman Bill of 1908 which had resulted in close co-operation and negotiations between the Government and the Established Church through the Archbishop of Canterbury was to fail in spite of major concessions made by all interested parties. In the Report of the Board of Education for 1907-08 (p.10-11) commenting upon the Bill's passage through Parliament it was stated:

"It became apparent however, after some progress had been made in Committee that denominational assent could only be obtained by still further concessions, including a substantial increase in the grant to contracting out schools. Your Majesty's Government have always maintained that the number of schools availing themselves of the privilege of contracting out must be strictly limited, that the grant provided by the Bill was sufficient to afford a limited number of schools a reasonable chance of existence, and that to increase the grants beyond this sum would enable the great majority of schools to take advantage of the privilege, and would involve the establishment of a system of contracting out as the
rule instead of the exception. In view of the impossibility of obtaining agreement without such amendments as were in the opinion of Your Majesty's Government, inadmissible, it was found necessary to withdraw the Bill."(163)

The loss of this Bill had removed any possibility of any direct denominational teaching in Council schools, which, together with their own contracting out schools would have ensured a wider scope for this type of teaching than had otherwise been envisaged or have been possible under the terms of other bills.

The withdrawal of the Bill, and in particular of the Birrell Bill of 1906 had been a political triumph for the Opposition, and especially for Balfour.

This Bill had not been well received, except by the administrators as it would have given a more unified system for them to operate. Morant had seen the Bill as an opportunity to remove the administrative difficulties then being experienced by the full working of the Education Act of 1902 and Morant had seen the administrative inconvenience of such discrepancies. Thus the Bill of 1906 was to include clauses changing the population limits for Borough and Urban Districts in order to make the degree of autonomy more uniform.(164) Under the terms of the 1902 Act the Local Authorities were finding it impossible to produce an over-all elementary education system within their own areas. It had been impossible to amalgamate the voluntary schools and the provided schools in areas where this was required, thus the two types of schools continued to function side by side, to the educational advantage of neither. Educational change in the voluntary schools in many areas was seen to be impossible for resources were not available to the managers and it had been seen that the 1902 Act which had strengthened the hold of the denominations over their own schools was now at breaking point in many areas.
Thus in the period between 1902 and the attempts by the Liberal Government to bring in their own legislation, experience had shown that some clauses of the 1902 Act had caused serious problems for the Board of Education concerning its overall administration, apart from those problems which called for a rationalisation of local arrangements.

The problems of the Liberal Government had been three-fold. They had pledged to give public control over schools using public money. They had pledged to abolish religious tests for teachers. They desired to remove the Anglican monopoly over some 8,000 single school areas - a problem which had been acknowledged by the Church. The failure of their Bills left these pledges unfulfilled. As a long term policy it became necessary to by-pass the religious controversy as far as was then possible, even though this was to mean pouring additional money into the voluntary schools in order to make educational development a reality.

In the years following the withdrawal of the Liberal Bills the Anglicans were to find it more difficult to maintain their existing schools. As Lord Crewe had warned, the Liberals were not to offer such terms again to the voluntary schools. During the course of the continued Liberal Government money was voted annually by Parliament in the Appropriation Acts for the building of new Council schools in areas where parents had hitherto no option but to send their children to denominational schools. The Government also undertook to review all cases where school premises were defective or unsuitable, and were to present the Local Authority or the school managers concerned with a comprehensive statement of the defects. New schools were to provide minimum areas of 10 sq.ft. per child, this regulation to be extended to all public elementary schools as soon as practicable. Pressure was also put on training colleges to admit students who were not necessarily of
that particular denomination. (167)

Faced with ever increasing demands to improve their facilities in order to comply with the Board of Education Regulations, the voluntary schools were to receive no further financial assistance from the Liberal Government. Immediately following the 1902 Act the Church had been reasonably satisfied with that settlement, but it was to become clear that their resources were far from adequate. From providing some 3,509,914 school places in 1906 the voluntary schools could only provide 2,808,775 places in 1911 - a decrease of 701,119 places. Their total number of schools likewise had fallen from 14,082 to 12,637 in the same period, but council schools had increased their total number by some 460,853 places. The Roman Catholic schools were to retain their approximate numbers. (168)

Major changes were only to occur when it was realised that the dual system was an inevitable part of educational provision and therefore changes would have to take account of this system. Lloyd George was to state:

"If you recognise the denominational principal at all, enable the schools to do their work properly - don't starve them." (169)

The Liberals had lost their drive in educational reform following the 1910 elections for they had now to consider the policies of those parties on whose support they depended. The work of the House of Lords before these elections had made many Liberal supporters discontented with the progress of their Party with their promised legislation. As education, religion and politics were inseparable at this time, it was not in the direct interests of the Liberal Party to pursue a policy of conflict and confrontation on educational matters when they had no overall majority and when all parties knew that education itself was
not an issue over which the majority of electors in the country cared very greatly. No Government would force an issue to the extreme unless this was an absolute essential, and education policies had never come into this category.

The Liberal Government had been able to pass legislation which was to affect the lives of the ordinary people in this country, and their Bills passed through Parliament during their term of office, and up to the First World War shows that the "laissez faire" attitude was changing and that it was becoming increasingly the work of the Government to take action on the part of the nation as a whole to look more closely at the lives of its citizens. The Government was now seen as the only means whereby certain things could be achieved in the field of general social welfare. This would include conditions of work, health and employment, and education. The attitude thus gaining ground represents a major shift in outlook and was a move away from voluntary provision. Education was to become the responsibility of the State rather than the responsibility of the voluntary bodies. Although the voluntary bodies were reluctant to give up their hold on education, and no Government could afford to replace the voluntary network, the majority of people were to accept the provisions for education as undertaken by the State. In the long term these were to outweigh by far the voluntary provision, so that without a major Act of Parliament the long held position of the denominations in elementary education was to be broken by the increase in State provision.

Such changes had their beginnings at the turn of the twentieth century, the Liberal Government bringing forward a programme of social legislation at a time when social attitudes were changing, and the long held view of the social strata of the class system was being challenged.
The issues of education were only one of a number of changes which had challenged the Liberal Government and which had brought conflict between interested parties to the surface. In some areas agreement had been reached and legislation for social improvements had been undertaken, but the problems associated with the educational question and its relationship with the denominational interests were not to be solved by the Liberal Government.
CHAPTER VI

The Education Bills of 1908

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CONCLUSIONS
Changes in educational policy coincide with the changes in social development, and are therefore closely linked with changes of attitude towards religion and the part religion should play in society. The changes of attitude brought about by a changing way of life for the masses of the population from the middle of the 19th Century is reflected in the struggle by the denominations and in particular the Church of England to preserve what that Church thought and understood should be rightly its own.

Despite the general assumption that the Church of England had played a major role in the development of education it is shown that in many areas it had not reached the masses of the working classes and had totally neglected the poorest members of society. This indifference to the plight of the masses had widened the gulf between them and the Church of England. This had only been partially filled by the efforts of the Nonconformists who in their turn had also failed to attract the poorer classes into their churches. The poorest members of society were not expected to attend the church in any of its many forms, and therefore the gulf between the churches and this part of the population was almost impossible to bridge.

The Church of England had long been identified with the established order and although it could support both a High Church and a Low Church membership it was most certainly associated with Toryism, and was to look to this political party for its own support in those policies which would strengthen its own hold on the status quo.

The Nonconformists had always held a broader viewpoint, and had therefore appealed to many who did not associate themselves with the Established Church and what it stood for, but nevertheless considered themselves as active Christians. Politically such groups would tend to be supporters of the Liberal Party with their ideals of breaking down the
establishment barriers to introduce policies which would be more in keeping with those people in the country who wished for more radical reforms.

It is clear that even in the mid-19th Century there would be differences of opinion on what the role of the Established Church and its voluntary schools should have in the overall policies of any government which would declare that there should be sufficient schools for all children in the country.

There were those who would support neither the Established Church and its claims, nor the Nonconformist claims that some form of religious instruction was necessary in schools, believing that if the denominationalsists were to demand that such instruction should be taught, then it should be given outside school hours. This view also coincided with the general decline in church attendance and with the growth of material possessions of many working class people. The churches were to find themselves on the outside of this movement, and in particular on the outside of the struggle for existence of the working classes. The majority of the citizens of the country were not prepared to forsake their religious beliefs, but on the other hand the Established Church had not given a clear lead in answers to social problems. The Nonconformist Churches approached change with a more radical policy and therefore appealed to many who wished to seek for change but were not prepared to reject Christianity for a non-denominational political party which in educational terms would mean the support of a totally secular system outside the control, direct or indirect, of any denomination.

The Conservatives had been in power for ten years from 1895 to 1905 and therefore this had been a period which might be considered as being favourable to church interests. It was clear that the voluntary bodies were having more difficulty than the Schools Boards in maintaining standards and were to resent any advancement in those standards for their own schools.
With the development of the Board Schools the church was to become a junior partner in the nation's school provision in many areas, and yet had retained much of its influence particularly in the single school districts. The Conservatives in office were to be seen favourably by the denominationalists for it was expected that the Established Church would have influence upon this political party which would be to the advantage of the denominational schools. In reverse, this was seen as a threat to the Board Schools which were supported by those outside the Established Church so that the balance within Parliament was critically important for those including the Roman Catholics and the Jews who were directly involved in the provision of schools in this country. (1)

As religion and politics were therefore inseparable, it was clear that no system would be acceptable without the inclusion of the voluntary schools if the Conservatives were in office, and neither could the Established Church be ignored. The Church believed that it had a right to claim further Government relief for its denominational schools, and by the turn of the century it was clear that the voluntary schools were in need of further financial assistance, but the major question was to be the place of denominationalism in such schools if rate aid was to be given, and then the problem of control would also arise. Whilst the Conservatives were in office the Established Church had no intention of watering down their religious education in their own schools, even if they were to accept rate-aid. The High Church Party had wanted access into schools provided by the Local Authorities under the terms of the proposed 1902 Bill to allow denominational teaching, but this extreme demand was not met, thereby leaving the Cowper-Temple tradition of teaching in the Local Authority Schools. That rate-aid was needed in the voluntary schools was not in any doubt if these schools were to be a part of the overall national system. (2) Under the Act the church was financially limited to
the construction of new schools, and the structural repairs of existing ones. Rate-aid could be claimed when such improvements as were necessary had been carried out. The Act as far as the voluntary schools were concerned gave them eligibility for local rate-aid whilst still being eligible for a slightly increased national grant.

The Nonconformists saw the Education Act of 1902 as a purposeful continuation of the dual system. Their grievances show that they wanted one system of popular control which they believed could have been achieved through the Education Act of 1870 by squeezing out the voluntary sector through the work of the School Boards, or by forcing the voluntary schools to be incorporated into a fully national system. The School Boards had been seen to have achieved considerable success in those areas where there had been a need to extend the provision for elementary education already provided by the voluntary agencies.

The pattern of the success of the School Boards is illustrated by reference to the Pottery towns of Staffordshire and to those in various parts of Cheshire. The School Boards were successful as in the Stoke area where there was no clerical opposition to the establishment of a School Board (3) but opposition was to be faced where it was felt that educational provision was sufficient under the existing voluntary bodies to meet local needs. (4)

The financial difficulties facing the voluntary schools during the School Board era are shown when it is seen that in areas where their subscriptions were inadequate, the voluntary school was transferred to the School Board. (5) Throughout the country the majority of elementary schools had been established before 1870, the majority of these being Church of England foundations. (6) It was this large number of small denominational schools which were to become one of the main grievances of the
Nonconformists in elementary education provision for many of these were to be in rural areas and could provide sufficient accommodation for all pupils in those areas. In such circumstances, no Board school was to be built. This situation was apparent in the county of Cheshire where few Board schools were to be built in the rural areas. (7)

In this county the town of Crewe had not established a School Board (8) and had not seen the need to do so but the Education Act of 1902 was to mean a rise in local rates to fulfil the requirements of the Board of Education for its existing schools. This was to lead to resistance in the paying of increased rates by the Nonconformists as they believed that the schools were still run on denominational lines. (9)

The determination of the denominationalists and in particular of the Church of England in certain areas to stave off the School Boards can be seen in the town of Macclesfield where there was sufficient provision of voluntary elementary schools throughout the School Board era. The determination of the voluntaryists to keep out the School Boards was to continue into the post 1902 period to keep at bay the provision of Council schools in that town. (10)

As in Crewe the grievances of the Nonconformists in Macclesfield were all too apparent for the voluntary provision was deemed to be sufficient for that town and in similar manner the additional cost of Board school provision to the rate-payers was a further reason for a reluctance to encourage the development of Board schools. (11) This pattern was to emerge in the city of Chester, and again in the county of Lancashire. (12)

Thus by the end of the 19th Century the Board schools had been established only in areas where there had been a proven need. The Church of England had endeavoured to fill existing gaps with its own building programme and by holding on to its own schools despite rising costs and the rising standards demanded by the Board of Education.
The basic weakness of the School Board movement was to be its random and patchy incidence, \(^{(13)}\) but it had been shown that the membership of these Boards could provide a workable team to provide elementary education outside the voluntary system in its own area, and that membership could include clergy from the different denominations who could show that they were prepared to work for the cause of elementary education rather than for their own denomination. \(^{(14)}\) However, this did not mean an acceptance by the denominationalists that the Board schools would be a satisfactory replacement for the voluntary schools.

It is clear that the voluntary schools were the poor partners in elementary education provision by the end of the 19th Century. Before the Education Act of 1902 they had no rate-aid and many of them were housed in old buildings in constant need of repair. They could be contrasted directly with the new Board schools, many being purpose built with their adequate resources funded from grants and from rate-aid.

It had become increasingly clear that the dual system of 'have' and 'have not' would have to be resolved, and that the question of additional aid to the voluntary sector would have to be addressed by the Government. The use of rate-aid for the voluntary schools was bound to cause major controversy, even among many Conservatives, \(^{(15)}\) but as religion and politics were inseparable, it was clear that no system would be acceptable without the inclusion of the voluntary schools if the Conservatives were in office, and neither could the Established Church be ignored. The Church believed that it had a right to claim further Government relief for its denominational schools, and by the turn of the Century it was clear that the voluntary schools were in desperate need of further financial assistance. The major question was to be the place of denominationalism in such schools if rate aid was to be given, and then the problem of
control would arise. Whilst the Conservatives remained in office the Non-
conformists believed that there would be little conflict between the Estab-
lished Church and the Government. Both had an interest in the retention of
the established order and this would include the retention of the voluntary
schools. It would be easier for the voluntary school supporters to reach
a satisfactory compromise over all aspects of voluntary school provision and
finance with a Conservative Government in office.

The use of local rate-aid for educational purposes had caused some
controversy during the School Board era, and the additional levies which
would be required to support the voluntary schools when placed into a
similar scheme was not to be welcomed by local rate-payers. The formation
of a School Board and the maintenance of schools under its control from
rate-aid had been seen by many as an almost unnecessary expenditure levied
upon the local rate-payer. (16) It is seen that the increase in expend-
iture by the School Boards provoked much criticism but the rising costs were
inevitable if a satisfactory elementary education was to be provided in their
areas. The provision of rate-aid to the voluntary sector was seen by the
Nonconformists as a church school rate which would give the voluntary schools
an indefinite life. The inclusion of the voluntary schools into the rate-aid
system meant that the Local Education Authorities, following the 1902
Education Act, were to become responsible for such schools and it is clear
that the condition of many and the lack of general facilities which local
inspectors were to find meant that for many years the Local Education
Authorities were to expend much of their resources upon updating and improv-
ing their inherited voluntary schools rather than upon commencing programmes
of new Council school buildings. (17)

The estimated cost for the Government to replace or provide all
public elementary schools, thus excluding all voluntary establishments
unless they were totally self-supporting, was to be prohibitive. It would be an impossible target even if a Conservative Government had wished to approach the problem in this way. In any case the Boer War had proved to be more of a financial drain upon the Exchequer than had first been estimated. It was hoped that the financial difficulties of the voluntary schools would be solved by the 1902 Education Act, and therefore their survival would be ensured. It was also hoped that the financial measures would enable the voluntary schools to raise their standards of elementary provision.

The Nonconformists on the other hand claimed that there were too many Church of England schools for that Church to support, and this had been the case since 1870. The subscriptions had never been sufficient to maintain all their schools, and therefore the Nonconformists failed to agree upon the giving of rate-aid for schools belonging to the denominations which those denominations would insist upon keeping as their own denominational schools with doctrinal teaching, but which they were totally unable to support. (18)

The inclusion of the voluntary schools into the rate-aid system would also mean increased costs for rate-payers, thereby bringing into the argument those who did not wish to see rises in demands for local rates.

The Nonconformist Resistance Movement, following the Education Act of 1902, led by Dr. John Clifford, formed the National Passive Resistance League, this having the intention of deducting from their rates in the voluntary school areas, the amount they estimated would be spent on these voluntary schools. This movement was only partially successful because many Nonconformists believed that such action would be harmful to the prestige and democracy of an elected Parliament. Such action would be an action to defy their own elected body and therefore many believed that the democratic way to object was via the power of the vote. To those who did take part in such actions, it was pointed out that rates were used in many instances for purposes not wholly approved by each individual rate-payer. (19)
The Anglicans argued that the majority of the country's population was nominally represented by the Church of England, and therefore the interests of the majority were being served. The opposition to the Education Act of 1902 by the Nonconformists was unsuccessful as they were a minority group compared with the Church of England in the House of Commons, and their main political party, the Liberals, were not in office. They also had very few schools to fight for, and were disadvantaged in every position where power was needed at the turn of the century whilst the Conservatives remaining in control of both Houses of Parliament.

Their opposition to Balfour's Bill centered upon their claim that it would strengthen the hold of the Established Church on the elementary education provision in the country. This would be most apparent in the single school areas where the voluntary schools would still be the only ones available to Nonconformist families. They were also to oppose any subsidisation of denominational instruction from the rates.

The Church of England was divided upon the question of compromise. Some including the more moderate Bishops were prepared to make concessions in order to reach an agreement and a lasting settlement. Others, including those of the High Church Party and the supporters of the National Society were not prepared to accept any conditions which would be unfavourable to the Established Church and its place in elementary education provision.

The Roman Catholic Church was to welcome those Clauses in the Bill which would strengthen their own hold within their own schools.

The Education Bill of 1902 had not the total support of the Conservatives and neither had it the absolute backing of the Established Church. The Cabinet had not been united in their own policies but it had been established that legislation was needed to correct the imbalance between the voluntary and board schools and their systems of funding.
The disbanding of the School Boards and the introduction of the County and County Borough Councils as the new Education Authorities was to help to remove the difficulties being experienced by the small or inefficient School Boards. The inclusion of the voluntary schools into local rate aid payments would thus alleviate many of their financial problems. Each provision contained within the Act was against the direct interest of a particular party, and therefore the Education Act of 1902 was to continue the friction and controversy between the Established Church and the supporters of denominational teaching in schools supported from public funds, and the Nonconformists who did not believe in State support for denominational schools without public control.

The 1902 Act had perpetuated the dual system and thus continued the problem of balancing the claims of the State and the interests of the Churches. The Nonconformists were able to claim that the 1902 Act was favourable to the Church of England basing their arguments on the advantage of the appointment of Church of England teachers into Church of England schools, the granting of rate-aid to denominational schools without any local control and the continuation of the denominational school in the single school areas. The Nonconformists were also to claim that the increase in rates was in large part due to the additional finance which the new Education Authorities had to find to up-date and maintain the existing voluntary schools.

The work of the new Education Authorities in implementing the 1902 Act not only meant an increase in staffing to carry out the necessary administration but also an increase in rates to cover these additional costs. This was in addition to the cost of fulfilling the requirements of the Board of Education in respect of the schools themselves. The rise in the cost of education and therefore of local rates was a constant source of concern to County and County Borough Councils. Where possible the building of new Council schools was to be suspended and other improvements were to be curtailed in the first
years following the passing of the 1902 Education Act. This increasing cost was of greater interest to many rate-payers than the religious issues which had accompanied the passing of the Act.

The supporters of the voluntary schools had seen that the Act had come to the rescue of their schools. This included not only the Roman Catholic schools, but also the Jewish schools. Even so, there were those in the Churches who would have liked to see the Act of 1902 give them a stronger hold over their schools and the question of denominational teaching but in its final terms the Act was generally accepted as being of considerable benefit to the voluntary sector.

In direct contrast the secularist argument was that the 1902 Education Act would have served posterity better if the voluntary schools had been forced to contract out of the State system, or into a purely State system on the same exact basis as a Council school. This had not been the intention of the Conservative Government. Initially the Church schools were able to benefit from the 1902 Education Act. For a time they were able to modernise and were considered to be on equal terms with the Council schools, but it was clear how many voluntary schools were well below the standard of maintenance required under the new legislation.

The N.U.T. had criticised the terms of the Education Act of 1902 which were directly concerned with the position of headteachers in the Church of England schools reasoning that the Act had gone nowhere in solving the single school area problem which still prevented the Nonconformist teacher from being appointed as headteacher in such schools. The N.U.T. had wished for the abolition of all denominational tests for teachers. Religious tests for staff in voluntary schools had always been in force from the earliest days of the National Society in the early 19th Century, but the Nonconformists and the N.U.T. thought these should be removed if the voluntary schools were to be supported from the rates. They also argued
for the removal of the predominance of church appointed managers in schools supported from local rates, where such schools were denominational schools. The T.U.C. was also to declare itself in favour of secular education in State supported schools, and was therefore in direct opposition to the Roman Catholic and High Church views on this matter. (34)

Thus following the 1902 Education Act there was a stronger call for a secular education system which had not been so well represented in the previous century, thus any educational legislation of a major nature would have to take various groups of opinion into account. (35) The Roman Catholics, the Jews and the High Church Anglicans saw that education and religion were inseparable even to the point of retaining their schools for denominational teaching purposes and to retain the 'atmosphere' in such schools even though this might mean being outside the mainstream educational provision. Many Nonconformists and Anglicans believed that a compromise could be reached on the place of Religious Instruction in schools, the Nonconformists believing that a non-dogmatic approach based on Christian beliefs and ideals would be acceptable to most groups, and in this many Church of England members were agreed although preferring that time should be given within the schools for a more denominational approach should this be called for. The secularist approach would have left all forms of religious instruction to be undertaken outside school hours, and not then given by the school staff who would then be outside any question of having to undergo religious tests. The call for a purely secular education was to die down immediately following the withdrawal of the Liberal Bills as the Religious Instruction given in the elementary schools under Council control seemed to meet the general approval of the mass of parents. Moderate elements on both sides of the argument had recognised that the dual system was the only reasonable solution to an immediate problem, and that again the pressure for the retention of fully denominational schools had been made through the Established
Church and the Roman Catholics, rather than from pressure brought about from grass-root level of parents of pupils in those schools. The Education Act had been a part of a major reform by the Balfour Government in an area in need of revitalisation as far as the Established Church was concerned, but educational arguments had not been key issues for the Conservative Government.

The Conservative Government had been harrassed over the poor economic conditions prevailing at the time. It had been criticised by Joseph Chamberlain over its policy of Tariff Reform, and had further antagonised the rising Labour movement with the Taff Vale issue which was seen to be directly against the interests of the Unions. The Government's Irish policies over the Irish Land Purchase Act of 1903 had lost it some supporters, as had also its failure to carry public support with its Licensing Bill of 1904. The Liberals were able to denounce the Government over the question of 'Chinese Slavery' in South Africa, and in this they were supported by the Trade Unions.

Thus the Liberals were able to show the Conservative Government as one in a state of disagreement among themselves over the Tariff Reform issues, and also in a state of disagreement with the electorate on many issues of national and international concern. It was agreed that the Conservative Government of 1905 had become a "lack lustre" government, and that the election in early 1906 would return the Liberals to office. For many it was merely a question of the majority of a Liberal victory which was undecided as the country went to the elections in 1906.

The Nonconformists who nominally supported the Liberal Party saw the return of a Liberal Government as their opportunity to right their grievances over the Education Act of 1902, but this was not the only grievance to be righted. The education issue was to be one of the many in a series of
Liberal attempts to remedy the so-called wrongs which the Conservative Party had inflicted upon the nation during their term of office. (37) The main attack by the Liberal candidates was upon the Government's record, leaving the Conservative candidates to defend their position on all those policies which they had undertaken during their term of office. In similar vein the Liberal leader, Campbell-Bannerman was to stress the failure of the Conservatives rather than formulating working policies of his own. This poor leadership by the Cabinet of the Liberal Government during the election period in giving little positive direction on their own programme of reform led to a broad spread in the issues raised during the election campaigns, of which education was only one. (38) Prospective candidates were to concentrate on those issues which would give them immediate support and were of local interest rather than debating issues which had little or no impact on the lives of their voters. (39)

The question of "Chinese Slavery" was used to highlight the attitudes of the Conservatives towards profits in business and their lack of compassion and understanding of the working classes. The Nonconformists saw that a Liberal Government in power would be able to right the wrongs which they felt about the Education Act of 1902 and therefore it was to be expected that Nonconformists would support Liberal candidates who declared in favour of that Education Act being amended. Thus the local interest in the education question was brought to a head by Liberal candidates who saw this as a vote catcher rather than from any clear indication or direction by the Liberal Government to pursue this line of campaign. The Liberals had not asked for a clear statement of public support for any of their policies except that they would amend those Acts which the Conservatives had forced upon the electorate and which the Liberals had opposed at the time. (40)

The election of 1906 had brought to the fore many controversies of
general public interest of which elementary education and the Education Act of 1902 was but one issue. None of the Liberal Cabinet with the exception of Birrell as the President of the Board of Education had deliberately brought the education question into the forefront of their attack upon the Conservative Government, and neither was this subject to provide the main platform of attack on the Conservative Party by the national Liberal press. (41)

Thus the 1906 election was neither won nor lost on the education question alone, but could not be ignored altogether. It had been brought into prominence by those interested in education and religion and particularly by the Nonconformists who saw this election as their main chance to right their grievances which they claimed to be suffering under the Education Act of 1902. (42) Their rallies and meetings, although not part of the overall election campaign did draw the attention of the general public to their cause, and in return the supporters of the voluntary schools were to retaliate with their own meetings and propaganda. (43)

It had been anticipated that the Liberals would win the 1906 election the final results showing that they had achieved a major victory with an overall majority over all other parties in the House of Commons. (44) However, in spite of this majority it could not be expected that this would also represent a swing away from the Conservative view and opinions on the place of voluntary schools and denominational teaching. Many supporters of the voluntary schools and of the Established Church would not have qualified to vote in the election. (45) The Liberal Party may have succeeded in winning a large majority in Parliament, but this did not necessarily mean it had an equally large support in the country as a whole for its policies. It could, and did, claim it had a mandate based upon the results of the election, but in the event the controversies which educational change aroused, also aroused others who would have taken no part in the election itself. (46) The Liberal Party may have been given
a clear mandate to govern but in essence had not completed its own working policies on what measures should be undertaken, or what elements were to be included and with what degree of success such measures might be received. (47)

Although the education question had not been a key issue in the election campaigns, the Liberals pledged themselves to abolish religious tests for teachers, and to break the monopoly of the Anglicans in the single schools areas, putting all State supported schools under public control. Outside the election campaigns the T.U.C. and the Labour Representation Committee had called for secular education whilst the Nonconformists led by Dr. John Clifford had been actively engaged in calling for the amendment of the Education Act of 1902 with their emphasis on the Passive Resistance Campaigns ever since that Act had been passed into law.

The election pledges on education given by the Liberals ought to have been easily carried out, the electors returning the largest number of Nonconformists ever to assemble in Parliament. This did not take into account the House of Lords with its overwhelming Unionist majority.

The drafting of the Education Bill was to cause concern amongst the Cabinet Committee on Education, there being no unanimous support for one particular policy or scheme, and neither was this Committee composed of men of the same religious convictions. (48) Thus the solution adopted was an inevitable compromise even between Cabinet members, and was hardly expected to receive the support of all interested members even within the Liberal Party, and certainly not of the Labour M.P.'s who had withdrawn their own secular education Bill in April 1906.

The appointment of Augustine Birrell as President of the Board of Education was not a wise choice. He had not been in Parliament for some five years, and had not been present when the Education Bill of 1902 had passed through a Conservative House of Commons to understand the intensity
Of feeling which religious controversy could arouse. Although a capable man in many ways he did not have either the background working knowledge of his own department or the intensity of personality to force his own opinions on a divided Cabinet, and much less on a divided Liberal Party. It was difficult for him to assume the role of leader in educational matters in the House of Commons debates, and was to be no match for the singularly-minded Balfour who had a far deeper knowledge of the subject than almost anyone on either side of the House of Commons.

Campbell-Bannerman had shown some indifference towards the educational question as a whole, and had refused to be drawn into debates on this subject. He had offered no dynamic leadership in a campaign in which the Liberals had floundered against attacks from their own supporters and from the Opposition. (49)

The stance taken by each of the denominations had been clearly outlined to the Government. The Roman Catholics were to remain firm in their convictions that education for them meant Roman Catholic children in Roman Catholic Schools, taught by Roman Catholic teachers under Roman Catholic control. (50) The Jews also wished to retain their few 'atmosphere' schools which provided a fully integrated Jewish education.

The Church of England wished to retain control over their schools without giving up their denominational interests in religious instruction, teacher appointments or overall managerial control, and yet the majority of these schools would not be able to opt out of a State system without substantial financial support from rates or Government grants.

There was no way in which the country as a whole could ignore the voluntary sector on the grounds alone of the number of elementary school places it was providing. (51)

The Nonconformists wished to break the monopoly of Anglican schools,
particularly in the rural areas and wished to abolish religious tests for teachers. They were to claim that denominational teaching in schools should be paid for by the denominations concerned and that this should be outside normal school hours where a school was supported by rate-aid.

The discussions and compromises reached had been negotiated outside the Commons and the Lords, mainly through the work of Archbishop Davidson. Lord Ripon had not been a leading spokesman for the Liberal peers, remaining outside the main moves as he felt his own obligations towards his Roman Catholic supporters under threat. (52) It is seen that the preliminary negotiations which had taken place before Birrell's Bill was presented to Parliament show how divided the Cabinet had been on the basic clauses of the proposed Education Bill. (53) The work of the Archbishop of Canterbury in making known precisely where the Established Church stood on the various issues raised indicates that he had a thorough understanding of the problems involved, perhaps even to a greater extent than the Cabinet itself which was not united on all issues. (54)

The Bill was to be condemned by Roman Catholics and Anglicans alike but Archbishop Davidson was prepared to continue with negotiations with the Government to salvage a better deal for the voluntary schools. (55) There were also those from other denominations who were prepared to seek a compromise with the Government. (56)

That the Government was prepared to compromise was indicated by the amendments to Clause Four in June 1906, but conflict was to remain over the issues of religious tests for teachers in the denominational schools and the position of the headteacher regarding the teaching of denominational religion education. (57)

The negotiations conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury were not to be confined to the Liberal Government but were to include senior members of
the Conservative Party. During this period the Archbishop realised that it was Balfour's intention to destroy the Bill no matter what advantageous terms the Archbishop might agree with the Government. (58)

In the House of Lords the Conservative majority far outnumbered that of the Liberals. In addition to this imbalance of party representation Lord Crewe, on behalf of the Liberals, had a doubly difficult task in trying to save the Bill from total mutilation by the Conservative peers. He was dependent upon the decisions of the Cabinet before he could act on their behalf, and therefore at no time did he have a free hand to negotiate a settlement which he thought fit to carry through. (59) His role became that of 'middle man' between the Archbishop representing the views of the moderate Church party, and the views of the Government. Placed in such a position and in such a situation Lord Crewe found it impossible to present to the House of Lords a clear statement of the Government's intentions and of the Government's compromises and how far these were to be extended should an agreement be within reach.

The compromises reached in negotiations while the Bill was in the House of Lords indicates that both the Government and the Archbishop were both prepared to go some way towards an agreed compromise. (60) It was also clear that the Government could only go so far in their compromise with the denominationalists without introducing further friction between themselves and their own supporters, many of whom had indicated that they believed that the Government had already given in too far to the demands of the Established Church. The amendments made to the Bill in the House of Lords were clearly unacceptable to the Liberal Party for they had changed their Bill to be one which was in many ways a Bill in support of the continuation of the denominational schools. Thus the amendments were seen as 'wrecking amendments' to destroy the Bill.
The actions taken by A. J. Balfour had not been entirely unexpected for he had warned the Government that the House of Lords could not be expected to accept the Bill in the form in which it was presented to them by the House of Commons. In spite of the negotiations to save the 1906 Bill in late November and into December of that year it is clear that A. J. Balfour was not interested in rescuing Birrell's Bill by agreeing to the proposed compromises undertaken through the negotiations between the Archbishop and the Liberal leaders. (61) These agreements had the approval of the Roman Catholics and the Anglican Church had gained valuable concessions in Clause Four, but further concessions by the Government would further alienate their own supporters.

Balfour had every intention of using the House of Lords to achieve those things which he himself could not achieve in the House of Commons, and therefore prepared the strategy which the Conservative peers were to adopt in the Lords. (62) It is seen that if Balfour's strategy was to make this Bill unacceptable to the Nonconformists and if he was not prepared to accept any compromise or to make any major concessions, then the Prime Minister had no choice but to withdraw the Bill, and therefore any points of detail were of no consequence. (63) Although the attitude of Campbell-Bannerman had appeared to be one of indifference and of one who failed to understand the deeper religious feelings which Birrell's measure had aroused, it is also clear that the success or failure of the Bill depended not on the religious controversy in its later stages but upon A. J. Balfour. (64) Both Balfour and Campbell-Bannerman knew that education was not a large enough issue over which to call for either a general election or for the reform of the House of Lords. (65)

Balfour had taken this opportunity of forcing the withdrawal of the Bill not purely on the religious issues involved, but for political reasons. (66) The religious issues were the means whereby he could force the Liberals
into such a position that compromise became impossible. Neither Lord
Crewe nor Birrell had the political expertise of Balfour, and were unable
to avoid the stalemate. It would also appear that other members of the
Cabinet Committee on Education had approached the problems in an indifferent
manner and had not had a Prime Minister with a firm conviction to overcome
differences in Cabinet opinions to present a united front. This was cert-
tainly the view of Robert Morant who may be described as their professional
'par excellence'. (67)

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, had played the
role of leading negotiator on behalf of the Established Church. He had
pressed for a compromise at all stages of the proceedings. The Bill
failed not through the lack of goodwill on the part of the Archbishop, but
through the Anglican belief in the right of the teacher to give denomin-
ational teaching, thereby calling for the need for some form of religious
tests for teachers if this instruction was to be carried out successfully.
Balfour had realised that this would be the point upon which the Bill would
be wrecked, and had therefore insisted upon its inclusion, thus forcing the
stalemate in negotiations and the subsequent withdrawal of the Bill. Many
of the concessions made by the Archbishop in the hope of saving the Bill
would have been unpalatable to the denominationalists, but his policy was
to reach a settlement which, while it might not give the Church all it wanted,
was likely to be better than that offered or obtainable in the future.

The Government had failed to realise or to understand the depth of
feeling over the religious question concerned with the religious tests for
teachers, and although concern was expressed by the Church over the
proposed facilities teaching, the Church was not prepared to give way over
the matter of religious tests for teachers in denominational schools. The
Bill had been seen by the Conservative Party and by the Church as an out-
right attack against the established order.
The Nonconformists had seen the emergence of a Liberal Government as a chance to break the power of the Church of England in the field of elementary education, particularly as the main stream provider of elementary education in areas where the Boards had not provided any educational facilities before the Education Act of 1902. Thus the main issues raised by the 1906 Education Bill were based on religious grounds rather than upon academic ones.

The 1906 Education Bill failed because the Nonconformists themselves were not united and nor were they all of one mind. Some were satisfied with the working of the Education Act of 1902.

The Bill failed because there was no way that the new Local Education Authorities could take over all the voluntary schools without very substantial rate increases which would not have been acceptable to their own Liberal Party supporters at a local level.

The Bill failed because there was no way that the Roman Catholics would leave the education of their pupils to a State system, and therefore a dual system would have to be retained in some form or other, and this would then also include some schools of the Church of England which could afford to adopt the same strategy as the Roman Catholics and the Jewish schools. The 1902 Education Act had shown that it was possible for Church and State to work side by side and many were not prepared to give up a part of what had become a traditional provision of elementary education within the country. The idea of a totally secular system was not a majority appeal. (68)

In spite of a very limited demand for totally secular education in schools, the Bill of 1906 failed because the impact of the power of religion and the churches on many lives and the influence it had within the home was in gradual decline, but was not yet at a point where the majority of people
would wish to dis-associate themselves from it altogether. Outwardly many could express opinions concerning religion and its place in schools but this did not mean necessarily that such persons were regular members of any particular church. It was agreed by all parties that neither education nor religion was sufficiently strong enough in Parliamentary terms to call the nation to account over party policies in such matters. (69)

The Bill was to maximise opposition from the Conservatives as it changed the concept of their own Act, and minimised the assistance which their Act had given to the voluntary schools. The Birrell Bill of 1906 had failed because the Roman Catholics and the Church of England were hostile to the Nonconformist position, and were basically satisfied with the settlement they had reached through the Education Act of 1902. The Liberal Government had found it impossible to negotiate with all religious factions at the same time, and therefore a solution which was satisfactory to all was almost impossible to achieve.

In spite of the fall in church membership, the Church of England still claimed its right to be heard in the field of elementary education and still saw itself as a main provider of education whose efforts were worthy of the financial assistance of any Government without the Church losing any of its own control in its own schools even though these were heavily subsidised from sources paid for by all people of any denomination or none at all. The Church of England had objected to Birrell's Bill claiming that its financial provisions were insufficient and confiscatory, although in fact it would have compulsorily relieved the Anglicans of many rural schools which had become a burden to the Church, and it would have left them with the larger schools with extended relief on the financial side, thus making these schools equally in line with the Local Authority schools and therefore in direct competition on an equal basis.
The denominationalists were prepared for further Government action before McKenna's Bill had been published in 1908 being aware of the clauses in the First McKenna Education Bill of 1907 which had been withdrawn almost immediately. (70) The Roman Catholic position was not to change, (71) but the Nonconformists were to press for changes in the pattern of denominational schools, particularly in the rural areas, and for changes in the use of compulsory tests for teachers where denominational teaching was to be undertaken. They also called for public control in all schools which were to be supported from public funds.

The McKenna Education Bill of 1908 as placed before the House of Commons was totally unacceptable to the Roman Catholics and found little favour with the Church of England as it would make the majority of their schools have to operate outside the national system if they were to continue with their denominational role. Further to this it was not clear that if any school was to opt out of the national system what provision would be available for any inclusion into a scholarship scheme or into the developing health and social care schemes. It was clear that the financial provisions for schools which had to opt out on religious grounds would create a gap between those schools which could provide good facilities for their pupils and supported by the Local Education Authorities, and those which would be more self-supporting. (72) The Local Authorities saw problems of administration with the Bill as it would undermine their powers in administering both groups of schools and would encourage a divided system. (73) It is seen that no educational measure could complete its course through Parliament without the agreement of all interested parties in the preliminary discussions. It is shown that Walter Runciman as the new President of the Board of Education had taken some deliberate care over the content of his Bill before presenting it to Parliament in 1908. From the passing of the 1902 Education Act the denominations were opposed
to many changes in educational provision. On the one hand they had gained much from rate-aid and their inclusion into the State system as far as this had been possible, but on the other hand too many changes in educational requirements and regulations would again pose a serious threat to their existence. It was therefore unrealistic in the eyes of the voluntary schools to have to opt out of a State system without sufficient financial grant-aid to enable voluntary sector to keep pace with Local Authority schools.

The Secular Education League were again to press their own case so that Runciman was fully aware of the pressures he was under and the parties he would have to satisfy before any legislation could be agreed.

His negotiations with the Archbishop of Canterbury between May and November 1908 show that both sides were willing to negotiate a settlement which would, under the circumstances, satisfy both parties. It is also clear that the whole of the Established Church was not behind the Archbishop and that there were those who would not be prepared to accept any agreement which would weaken the hold of the voluntary schools in the field of elementary education. The National Society was also opposed to any measure which would be against the interests of the Church. In such circumstances the Archbishop of Canterbury had not only to negotiate with the Government, but also with his own Church.

In direct contrast the Roman Catholics continued to remain firm, their attitude remaining what it had always been. The Roman Catholics had been left out of the negotiations and compromises reached between the Anglicans and the Government, but as their position had been made quite clear and was already known to the Government, any advantageous agreements made for the Church of England's voluntary schools would also benefit the Roman Catholic schools. The Jewish schools were to find themselves in the same position.
The Bill had the general support of those Nonconformists who wished for an agreed settlement, and thus the Bill had appeared to be fairly well agreed by the negotiators. However, little had been discussed on the financial provisions of the Bill except the understanding being that they would be adequate. These provisions were to be disclosed only immediately before the Bill's introduction on 20th November 1908 to the House of Commons and then proved to be a major stumbling block to further progress.

It is shown that too much financial aid would have alarmed the majority of the Nonconformists as many voluntary schools might then opt out, but too little aid would make it impossible for the vast majority of schools to even consider such action, and thus on these grounds the Bill was not acceptable.

Although the Archbishop of Canterbury had indicated a possible settlement over denominational teaching in Council schools, the Church Council was not unanimous over this point and no compromise was to be reached. The Church of England is shown not to be unanimous in its approach to solving its own difficulties or in having a unanimous policy which could be agreed by High and Low churchmen alike for the sake of their own denominational teaching.

The role of the Representative Church Council was to prove crucial for the Archbishop of Canterbury. This Council did not accept the arguments for compromise and therefore of settlement, and by rejecting the amendment of the Bishop of Salisbury on 3rd December 1908 the Council effectively rejected any further negotiations to be carried out by the Archbishop and the Liberal Government on behalf of the Established Church.

Thus in spite of the compromises reached by the Archbishop and in spite of his role as negotiator on behalf of the Church of England, the
Archbishop, without the full backing of the National Society or of the Representative Church Council, was unable to put forward an agreed settlement to the Liberal Government.

Administratively the Bill did not offer a total solution to the dual system. At a local level the facilities would cause confusion and resentment in the Local Authority schools whilst schools which opted out would become impoverished. It had become clear that there would have to be a divergence of schools and that included a varying degree of denominational interest. This was inevitable if the education system was to develop without further controversy. The Anglicans together with the Roman Catholics and the Jews had made it clear that they were not willing to relinquish their hold on elementary education and therefore their position and the demands of the Nonconformists had reached a stalemate whilst the Liberals were in office. (82)

Legislation which was not the direct concern of the denominations was, however, possible, and therefore this period before the First World War is a period in which there was a gradual development in matters more closely concerned with pupil development than with the religious issues. The introduction and expansion of medical inspection and of the provision of school meals, together with higher standards of school buildings, equipment and better teacher training were all measures supported by the L.R.C. and the Unions including the N.U.T. These were not issues of whether such services should be brought into being, the only issue was to be when and to what extent. (83)

The growth of the Council schools was to outstrip the provision of the voluntary agencies, and thereby the influence of the denominations in the field of education was to lessen except in the single school areas where the retention of this influence was still to cause concern among the Nonconformists. The churches were no longer to provide the bulk of the
accommodation in the larger towns and cities, nor was it seen to have any major part to play in the wider sphere of pupil health and social care in its elementary schools. The L.E.A.'s were to develop as the providers and leaders in educational reform and progress. (84)

The new Local Education Authorities had gained the confidence of the majority of the people, and many thought that the religious education which was given in those Council schools was adequate and met the needs of their children. A sense of disinterest in the religious controversy was to develop so that the question of religious instruction was only a religious question of any significance in those schools which believed in the religious atmosphere which a true denominational school would give.

In this respect it had always been understood that the Jews and the Roman Catholics and a minority of Anglican schools would remain fully denominational, and having accepted this it was clear that it would be impossible for major legislation in the field of elementary education to take place without affecting this balance, and which would undoubtedly cause further conflict should the denominational aspect of these schools be called into question. It would have been impossible for a Liberal Government to have introduced further controversial educational measures following the two elections of 1910 which left that Party without an overall majority in the House of Commons.

The gradual growth of support for the Labour Party meant that educational issues with any religious content would have to satisfy three main groups; viz. the Established Church and the Roman Catholics represented mainly by the Conservatives; the majority of Nonconformists represented by the Liberals; and also the growing numbers who would require simple undenominational scripture teaching or a purely secular system represented by the majority of the Unions and the Labour Party. No government would have a mandate strong enough to over-ride all other considerations and to adopt
its own policy without reference to other interested parties. A system of concessions and compromises and not major legislation was to be undertaken to advance education without antagonising one or more of these interested parties.

The late 19th Century and early 20th Century had seen the churches at work to secure their own voluntary schools both in and out of Parliament, this contrasting sharply with the Nonconformists call for a less powerful hold by the Established Church on the country's elementary schools. Nonconformist and the Roman Catholic and Church of England movements were supported by a strongly partisan and religiously biased press, which would give full coverage to all meetings at both national and local levels. The local press was able to use national articles for its own comment on matters of national importance. Thus those of the general public who wished to be well-informed at both local and national level were able to find suitable material for their own cause without any difficulty. (85) Certainly the major nationals considered their own opinions to be worth the writing and their columns were also used for propaganda purposes by all shades of opinion via their correspondence columns. It would be expected that those who supported particular sections of the press were already converted to that particular cause and in such circumstances the power of the press was confined to not losing support rather than to gaining converts. The press was to forward the arguments for particular points as the need arose to arm their supporters with all available ammunition for their own cause. (86)

In similar vein the wealth of pamphlets and articles produced by all sides in any controversy was aimed not so much at converting the opposition, but rather to staking the claims of the writer's public to every possible point and argument which might strengthen his case. In such circumstances and through the use of printed virtuous indignation, mountains could be made
out of molehills for the sake of ridiculing the opponents' arguments, but this would only serve to strengthen the 'righteous cause'.

This widespread press coverage at the turn of the century came at a time when a more literate working class population had access to the vast array of newspapers of all shades of quality and opinion, both political and denominational. In addition to the newspapers there was also a constant bombardment of pamphlets and single spread sheets commenting upon issues of the moment. Many societies including those associated with the various churches also produced their own papers, articles and magazines for mass distribution. There was an interest in public affairs brought about by this easy access to information through mass printing. Thus attendance at public meetings on public issues was expected to be high. This was true of meetings called on all religious questions, and especially of those concerned with education and religion. Speakers of national importance could command vast audiences, but it was the already converted who came to such meetings rather than those opposed to the views of the speakers. (87)

As a majority of families described themselves in very loose terms as 'Christian' and belonging to, although perhaps not attending, one of the major churches, then this majority had a national cause upon which to fight. The points of debate could be followed in their newspapers, and the two concerns of education and religion linked together would bring many families into the political arena through this common double interest. As religion and education and politics were closely linked in their different allegiances, then it was to be expected that the arguments and debates with this triple issue would encourage, would also bring about mass participation, and therefore would become heated and bitter from time to time. In a sense without too much personal hardship and pressure, many ordinary people could associate themselves with a good cause which although it might do them little harm, could do them some good in the eyes of the local community, especially
if their commitment had a worthy religious context. Attendance or support did not necessarily mean any further action for their cause, unless it was a mass lobby or march or petition where the sheer numbers involved in such exercises make impressive statistics. (88)

Throughout the negotiations of both the Birrell and Runciman Bills and to a lesser extent the short-lived McKenna Bill, there had been pressure from the rank and file members of the community stating their own claims and opinions as to what form the Bills should take. Demonstrations and rallies were common-place, pamphleteering and petitions were also common, but solutions and decisions and the resulting compromises were not only the result of those public outcries, but rather the weighted opinions of high church and high government officers. Thus although pressure groups alone could not claim to be responsible for major changes in policy, the impact that they would have on the mass of the public would be noted by interested parties and in this respect the ammunition they provided as a mass lobby would be seen as a measure of support for their cause. Notice had to be taken of the Convocations of York and Canterbury and of the National Society, but these in themselves were major institutions with far reaching influence and could not be compared with the public rallies and demonstrations undertaken by various groups for various political and denominational propaganda purposes. Negotiations with Government are shown to have continued on an individual and personal basis, as in the case of Archbishop Davidson and Birrell and with the Archbishop and Runciman, which were far removed from the massive protest meetings held throughout the Parliamentary proceedings.

After the failure of the Liberal Bills the education and religious question became less of an issue. The decline in religious issues including those linked with the education question shows that the beginning of the 20th Century was the last of the great education-religious movements, but even at that time the impetus of this movement was in the process of decline
as the role of the State into the lives of the majority of the people in the country was to become more influential than that of the churches.

Education had begun to develop outside the sphere of the religious dominance which had held it for so long, and on financial grounds alone it had become clear that this could never be reversed. From the development of the School Boards in the 1870's the Church of England had always had some difficulty in maintaining its own schools without Government support. The more progressive and advanced that education, even at the elementary level, has become, then the more the voluntary sector has had to rely upon Government support. The Education Act of 1902 gave positive help in this direction and this had to be accepted by a majority of all parties when it was seen that the new system of Local Authority administration proved to be satisfactory, and it was also seen as the only overall worthwhile solution when it became clear that it was totally impossible to dispense with the voluntary schools altogether. Under such circumstances the dual system had to remain intact. Any other solution to force the voluntary sector out of the main stream system financed through rate-aid would have led to a voluntary sector of an impoverished nature which would not be able to welcome any educational change which was dependent upon financial availability and resources.

The period of the Liberal administration from 1906 marked the turning point in the influence of the denominations upon education and the beginning of the trend towards State intervention at all points of contact in the lives of many people. Education and religion were still inseparable and therefore there could be no easy policy which might overcome the inbuilt problems of a system based upon denominationalism from the previous century. It was expedient that the Church and State should work together to make progress in elementary education a successful compromise without the conflict which had marred its progress in the past.
The period 1906 - 1908 was to see no major legislation in the field of elementary education. The differences between the various shades of opinion had proved to be insurmountable. Compromises had been attempted but the conflict was to remain. History has not only indicated what concessions the churches as a whole were prepared to make in order to obtain education for their children in publicly owned schools, but had also shown what concessions they were not prepared to make for that purpose.
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10. Chapter I : p. 45
11. Chapter I : p. 46
12. Chapter I : pp. 47-48
13. Chapter I : p. 49
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15. Chapter I : p. 52
16. Chapter I : pp. 46-47
17. Chapter II : pp. 114, 118-120
18. Chapter I : pp. 40, 46
19. Chapter II : pp. 102-105
20. Chapter I : pp. 60-61
21. Chapter I : p. 61
22. Chapter I : p. 71
23. Chapter I : pp. 72-73
24. Chapter I : pp. 54, 76
25. Chapter I : pp. 78-79
26. Chapter I : pp. 85-86
27. Chapter II : p. 101
29. Chapter II : pp. 110-122
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33. Chapter II : pp. 111, 114-116, 118-119, 122
34. Chapter II : p. 132
35. Chapter II : p. 134
36. Chapter III : p. 139
37. Chapter III : p. 148
38. Chapter III : pp. 149-150
40. Chapter III : pp. 162-163
41. Chapter III : pp. 152-153, 163
42. Chapter III : pp. 155-157
43. Chapter III : pp. 155-158
44. Chapter III : pp. 166-171
45. Chapter III : pp. 140-141
46. Chapter III : pp. 140, 147
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61. Chapter V : pp. 322-323, 327-328
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(Additional Note: The Bishop of Manchester organised 30 special trains carrying 10,000 men into London from his Diocese. The procession on 8th June 1906 was 2 miles long marching from Cumberland Green to the Royal Albert Hall. Their main slogan was "We want religion, not rent.").
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