On 16 December 1909, David Lloyd George addressed a large gathering of free churchmen at the Queen's Hall in London.[1] Amidst the din of a crowd indignant at the House of Lords' rejection of the Liberal budget, Lloyd George's speech was both impassioned and defiant. The 'implacable philistines' in the House of Lords were denounced for rejecting Liberal bills relating to education and licensing trade reform. Bound by aristocratic prejudice and in thrall to powerful interest groups like brewers and denominationalists, the peerage was 'thoroughly biased against the interests of Nonconformity'. By contrast, the conscience of free churchmen was marked by the qualities of 'sobriety, honesty, industry and thrift'. They constituted some of the 'best citizens in the country'. Lloyd George's subsequent allusion to the figure of Robert Perks, a Liberal MP and leading Wesleyan layman, elicited a loud clamour of disaffection from the assembled audience. Perks had previously suggested that the sitting Liberal government was partly responsible for the constitutional impasse over the terms of the People's Budget. Lloyd George unsurprisingly dismissed these claims and attacked Perks for talking as 'if the Nonconformist conscience were locked up in his city safe'.

Perks' response came five days later in the form of a letter published in the correspondence section of the *Times*.[2] Pointing to the failure of the Liberal Party to pass legislation amenable to nonconformist interests, Perks called on ministers 'to banish from their minds the delusion that a great public meeting addressed by a cabinet minister carries them even one step further towards religious equality'. The political divisions prompted by the Home Rule Crisis of 1886 would be replicated in 'the absence of explicit pledges' from the government. Faced with the resurgence of the Home Rule issue and the 'socialist' taxes of the Budget, Perks predicted that many free churchmen would choose to support the Unionist policy of tariff reform. These sentiments were echoed by the leading Baptist

minister John Gershom Greenhough. In a January 1910 letter published in the *Evening Standard*, Greenhough attacked the 'government's truckling with socialism' and its abandonment of Ulster Protestants to the 'tender mercies of a large, disaffected and priest-ridden Catholic majority'.[3] Nonconformists were not 'hidebound to accept every shibboleth and swallow every unknown…offered by the Liberal government of the day'.

These heated exchanges indicate the fracturing of the once symbiotic ties that bound together the outlooks of nonconformity and liberalism. This process of political and religious change has been extensively analysed by historians. John Glaser asserted that many middle class nonconformists moved away from the Liberal Party when confronted by the Independent Labour Party and the spread of socialist ideas in the 1880s and 1890s.[4] The work of David Bebbington has demonstrated the extent to which the Liberal-Nonconformist alliance was strained by the Home Rule crisis of 1886.[5] The Home Rule issue provided a 'welcome opportunity' for wealthy nonconformists, influenced by social conservatism and alarmed by policies like Joseph Chamberlain's Radical Programme that appeared 'to presage the legislative redistribution of wealth', to shed their attachment to liberalism. Bebbington also identified anti-Catholicism and imperialism as important factors drawing nonconformists towards unionism. The motivation for prosperous sections of nonconformity to vote unionist in the Edwardian period was buttressed by the social and economic policies of the New Liberalism, the increasingly political role taken by groups like the Free Church Councils, the growing prominence of Christian Socialism and the electoral breakthrough of the Labour Party.[6]

Much of this narrative of historical transition was shaped by theoretical approaches that stressed the primacy of class interest in shaping political allegiance. Historians

influenced by the insights of labour history, electoral sociology and Marxism generally situated the nonconformist gravitation towards unionism within a wider sociological framework where class was gradually replacing religion as the primary determinant of political belief.[7] This realignment of politics along class lines undercut the appeal of religious liberalism and helped to push the middle-class electorate into a defensive alliance with the Conservative Party.[8] These developments were complemented by the emergence of a class-conscious labour movement, which reinforced the growing divisions in society between capitalists and workers. The ultimate decline of the Liberal Party, and while historians may have disagreed about the exact timing of this process, was generally attributed to its inability or unwillingness to represent sectional interests.[9]

A rich vein of scholarship over the last thirty years or so has substantially challenged and revised these assumptions. Historians now generally point to the enduring appeal of both traditional and newer forms of liberalism before 1914 and tend to stress the relatively limited nature of the advances made by the Edwardian Labour party.[10] Much of this body of revisionist work registers the influence of the wider linguistic/cultural turn in the humanities and social sciences, rejecting the notion that politics is expressive of a pre-existing social base or cleavage and accentuating the importance of language, culture, identity and locality.[11] This Liberal historiographical revival has been matched by a recent resurgence of interest in the Liberal Unionist Party. Conventionally depicted in older accounts as an instrument of socio-structural change, facilitating the incorporation of all forms of property into the Conservative Party, newer research conducted on liberal unionism stresses its distinctive political identity.[12] Far from merely reflecting underlying economic grievances, the party championed traditional liberal causes, carefully guarded its independence from the

Tories, and aligned itself with local political traditions in Scotland and Lancashire.[13] A less positive picture of liberal unionism has been painted by James Moore and Naomi Lloyd-Jones who both emphasise the weakness of the party in Leicester and Wales respectively.[14]

This article will contribute to these debates by focusing on the life, thought and activism of the Baptist minister John Gershom Greenhough. Greenhough, a figure neglected by historians, was an influential nonconformist leader in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, serving as the president of the Baptist Union in 1895 and the president of the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches in 1901. A Liberal 'by birth, training, sympathy and inclination', Greenhough crossed the political divide and became a Liberal Unionist in 1886.[15] **The issue of Irish Home Rule appears to have been the crucial factor underpinning this decision. Speaking to a newspaper reporter nearly a decade later in 1895, Greenhough stated that he 'was one of the great many' who had opposed Gladstone's Irish policy but added that he would vote for the Liberal Party again once it was free of the 'Home Rule question'.**[16] This rapprochement was decisively aided by the receding threat of Irish self-government after 1895, largely attributable to the conclusive Conservative and Unionist victory at that year's general election, the emergence of the Liberal Imperialists, a loose grouping of politicians and intellectuals led by the idiosyncratic politician Lord Rosebery, and Conservative education policies which sought to provide rate-aid for Anglican and Catholic denominational schools. In 1902, the parliamentary correspondent of the *Daily Mail* named Greenhough as a prominent nonconformist supporter of Lord Rosebery's Chesterfield programme, which rejected Home Rule and advocated Liberal unity on the basis of 'National Efficiency'.[17] Holding the historic dissenting view that denominational instruction should not be funded out of public taxation, the ever-

present spectre of ‘Rome on the Rates’, Greenhough vigorously opposed Conservative efforts to reform education along lines preferential to voluntary schools. He was particularly prominent in the Free Church Council's campaign against the Education Act of 1902, serving on national deputations, making public speeches and lobbying for public support. Speaking to a gathering of Free Church Council members in 1903, Greenhough expressed his utter contempt for Arthur Balfour’s Conservative government but also remarked, approvingly, that the Education Act ‘had put new life into a certain political party’.[18] Liberals were ‘standing on their feet…waiting for the next general election’.[19]

The failure of the Liberal Party to broker a workable educational bill after its landslide election victory of 1906 initiated a drift amongst many nonconformists away from overt political activity. This revocation of politics, as Bebbington correctly indicates, was linked to the sense that excessive partisanship diluted the spiritual imperatives of the churches.[20] Dissatisfaction with the political role of the free churches was also exacerbated by the emergence of the Labour Party and the growing prominence of Christian Socialists in nonconformist congregations. Greenhough's deep-seated anti-socialism led him to become one of the founding members of the Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union. Sharing the same London offices as the Conservative-aligned Anti-Socialist Union, this organisation claimed to oppose the mixing of politics with religion and pledged to withstand the advance of socialism in the free churches. Greenhough was also active in the union's successor organisation, the Anti-Socialist Union of the Churches. Claiming to be non-political and independent, both groups focused entirely on the sins of liberals and socialists and were clearly agitating on behalf of Conservative interests. Greenhough's involvement with the

pressure groups of Conservative anti-socialism was indicative of his final break with the Liberal Party.

This article argues that Greenhough's opposition to socialism was the main factor provoking his political shift to the Conservative Party. **These views did not play a major role in Greenhough's decision to adopt a Liberal Unionist stance in 1886 but became especially pronounced in the 1890s and early 1900s as Greenhough responded to debates about the changing role of the state, the labour movement and the growing prominence of social Christianity in the free churches.** As noted above, scholars have commonly pointed to the role played by class interest, Home Rule and imperialism in convincing nonconformists to abandon their historic allegiance to the Liberals. These arguments are less applicable when applied to the case of Greenhough. His anti-socialism was premised on the traditional nonconformist principles of religious liberty, freedom of conscience and individual responsibility, and, therefore, cannot be read as a purely negative construct that reflected the class prejudices of prosperous ministers and layman**.** Greenhough was deeply opposed to Irish autonomy and a staunch imperialist, **publicly denouncing leading Nonconformist 'Pro-Boers' like Silas Hocking during the Second South African War.**[21] **However, these motives by themselves were not capable of pushing him into active support for the Conservatives**. His liberal unionism was contingent on the Home Rule question, he drifted back towards the Liberal Party after the issue became less pressing after 1895 and there is no surviving evidence to indicate that Greenhough was ever involved with the Nonconformist Unionist Association, a pressure group formed to drum up free church support for the Conservative and Unionist alliance.[22] Indeed, Greenhough appears to have only spoken publicly about Home Rule on two occasions which contrasts starkly to his

repeated condemnation of socialism at national religious conferences.[23] His nationalism and sympathetic support of British imperialism drew him back towards the Liberals rather than the Conservatives in the 1890s.

The article will be divided into three sections. The first provides biographical details about Greenhough's life and examines his theological beliefs. The second section analyses Greenhough's anti-socialist critique and places it within religious and political contexts. The third section examines Greenhough's opposition to pulpit politics and argues that it was a deliberate strategy employed to discredit the claims of socialists and social reformers.

I

Greenhough was born in Germany in 1843 to working class parents from Yorkshire.[24] Raised from an early age in Bradford, he soon distinguished himself as an eminent scholar at the city's Mechanics' Institute. In 1862, at the age of nineteen, he won the Prince Consort's Prize and a cash award of twenty-five guineas for achieving first-class certificates in arithmetic, history, geography, English literature, algebra and geometry.[25] The prize, awarded by the Royal Society of the Arts, was 'the foremost won by any member of any mechanics institute in England'.[26] Following this success, Greenhough was offered and accepted a clerkship in the Privy Council office under Earl Glanville, a position which he relinquished two years later in order to enter the Baptist ministry.[27] Attending the Baptist training college at Rawdon in Yorkshire from 1864 to 1867, Greenhough successfully passed the matriculation exam for London University and eventually attained the degrees of BA (1866) and MA (1867).[28] Academies like Rawdon were theologically grounded in a moderate Calvinism that called on Baptists to spread the word of the Gospel and seek conversions amongst people in the wider world. Reflecting the pervading influence of this evangelistic

ethos, Greenhough would later become president of the Baptist Missionary Society and was described by a former tutor at Rawdon 'as one whose hold upon evangelical truth is strong and true'.[29]

Greenhough was selected to minister at Coseley in Staffordshire upon his graduation from Rawdon.[30] He later moved to Bristol and taught classics at Bristol Baptist College until 1878.[31] The college was the oldest centre of Baptist learning in England and had gained a reputation for open-mindedness in relation to intellectual innovations in the secular and theological spheres. Frederick Gotch, the president of the college during Greenhough's tenure, was disdainful of those who adopted the attitude that religious leaders should not engage with the ideas and theories of modern science:

> It is not the part of a brave or prudent man to shut his eyes against suspected danger. And we nonconformists claiming freedom of thought and action for ourselves…. are the last persons who should refuse the freedom to others.[32]

The college also promoted an inquisitive approach towards the findings of higher criticism. Higher criticism, which had originated from German biblical scholarship, applied a historical-critical method to the study of the scriptures and cast doubt on the traditional evangelical belief that the Bible was the infallible word of God.[33] For theological conservatives like the **Congregational** preacher Joseph Parker, the truth of the Bible was largely self-evident; 'its knowledge of human nature, its moral sublimity and its infinite anxiety for the good of mankind' provided the basis for all considerations of moral truth.[34] The intellectual culture at Bristol rejected such doctrinal rigidity and encouraged engagement with the theories of higher criticism. Dr James Culross, Gotch's successor as president of the college, announced in 1887 that an evangelical outlook was perfectly compatible with an appreciation of

modern scholarship.[35] This tolerant brand of Christian learning appears to have made a lasting impression on Greenhough. 'Most intelligent men', he warned conservative clergymen in 1902, 'had accepted some of the best-established positions of the higher critics'.[36]

Greenhough accepted an invitation to minister at Victoria Road Church in Leicester towards the close of 1878 and would serve here until his retirement in 1903.[37] The church had been founded on a non-denominational basis in 1866, membership being open to all believers in evangelical Christianity, and largely catered to the spiritual needs of Leicester's increasingly prosperous nonconformist population, many of whom 'were now living in fashionable suburbs'.[38] Leicester's economic dynamism during the latter decades of the nineteenth century was predicated on the success of the hosiery and boot-making trades. The two industries employed over sixty percent of the town's workforce by 1891 and were largely owned by affluent nonconformist families like the Woods, the Pagets, the Viccars and the Walkers.[39] Prominent local business leaders like George Viccars, head of the wool stapler Viccars & Wheeler, Edward Wood, chairman of the shoe retailer Freeman, Hardy & Willis, and Robert Walker, senior partner at the hosiery firm Robert Walker & Sons, were important patrons of the church at Victoria Road.[40] Greenhough established a particularly strong bond with Wood, ministering at his daughter's wedding to a local councillor in 1889.[41] Wood, a distinguished figure within the local Liberal party and a four-time mayor of Leicester, served as a deacon at the church.[42]

Church records, which include minute books and private letters, say disappointingly little about the great political controversies of the day.[43] Greenhough resided in the wealthy suburb of Stoneygate, identified by Moore as an area where sizeable numbers of Liberal

Unionists lived.[44] Liberals in Leicester consistently referred to the elitism of their rivals, portraying Liberal Unionists as 'wealthy manufacturers defending old privileges'.[45] This line of attack, motivated by partisan considerations, failed to capture the complexity of political behaviour in suburban areas. Wealthy businessmen, for example, dominated the upper echelons of both Liberal parties in Leicester and prosperous suburbs like Stoneygate, Knighton and Clarendon Park remained important centres of Liberal support after 1886.[46] Edward Wood, the most prominent politician associated with the Victoria Road Church, lived in the affluent Hinckley Road area.[47] There is no direct evidence linking Greenhough to the Leicester Liberal Unionist Party and his residence in Stoneygate cannot be taken as proof that class interest influenced his decision **to leave the Liberals** in 1886. The dearth of political discussion in church records also make it hard to decipher whether leading laymen may have swayed his opinion on issues.

An 1884 survey of religious life in Leicester noted that Greenhough 'had attracted and succeeded well in interesting a large and intelligent congregation in scholarly and what can only be called modern preaching'.[48] He also actively participated in the wider civic life of late nineteenth century Leicester. He served on the Free Libraries Committee of the town council, spoke at meetings of the Literary and Philosophical Society and acted as chairman of the cricket club associated with Victoria Road Church.[49] Despite his firm opposition to Home Rule, Greenhough supported local efforts to provide relief for distressed areas in the west of Ireland during the famine of 1879/80. He urged crowds at a public meeting of the Irish Relief Fund to remember that Ireland had strong claims of kinship upon the British nation, notwithstanding the actions of Charles Stewart Parnell and the outrages of agrarian unrest.[50]

Greenhough helped to establish a Free Church Council presence in Leicestershire. Initially formed in the 1890s as vehicles for inter-denominational cooperation, the councils consisted of representatives of chapels in a town or a village and their work largely centred on the planning of temperance demonstrations, school-board meetings and evangelistic missions.[51] A national body called the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches was instituted in 1896 to co-ordinate the activities of local councils.[52] The inaugural meeting of the Leicester and Rutland Federation of Evangelical Free Churches was held in Victoria Road Church on December 14, 1895, and Greenhough was duly elected as its first president in the following year.[53] In its formative years, the federation opposed the use of public money for Sunday musical performances, organised demonstrations in support of school board education and convened the local Cromwell Tercentenary celebrations of 1899.[54] Greenhough was a keen evangelist for the movement, travelling throughout the midlands and the north addressing meetings of local councils.[55] The council movement became a significant political force in the Edwardian period, largely due to the efforts of its London-based leadership. As Koss noted, the National Free Church Council provided a 'recognised means by which secular organisations.... might harness the electoral energies of the nonconformist multitudes'.[56]

Greenhough was first thrust into the national religious spotlight in the spring of 1887 when Charles Spurgeon denounced the growth of liberal theological trends in the Baptist churches. Spurgeon was one of the most popular evangelical preachers of the nineteenth century, renowned for his **passionate** sermons and unyielding adherence to traditional Calvinist orthodoxies.[57] In a series of articles written between March and August of 1887 in the magazine *The Sword and the Trowel*, Spurgeon, and allies like Robert Shindler, attacked a

group of unnamed Baptist ministers for their supposed 'downgrading' of religious faith.[58] They stood accused 'of giving up the atoning sacrifice, denying the inspiration of the holy scripture and casting slurs upon justification by faith'.[59] **Greenhough, along with other ministers such as James Thew, Roger Littlehales and James Leonard who felt themselves to be under attack, vigorously contested Spurgeon's claims in letters published in the leading religious newspaper the *Christian World*.**[60] Writing in September 1887, Greenhough reaffirmed his belief in the great facts of human sin, rejected mechanical theories of biblical inspiration, criticised the belief that man was responsible for a guilt and sin not his own, and condemned Spurgeon for his attempts to force antiquated expressions of doctrine upon Baptist churches.[61] In the ensuing furore, Spurgeon resigned from the Baptist Union, a decision motivated by 'the widespread refusal of the defenders of Nonconformity to admit that there was a significant theological problem'.[62] The so-called 'Downgrade Controversy' eventually came to an end in April 1888 when the Baptist Union adopted a declaration of faith which reaffirmed belief in core doctrinal principles. The declaration was essentially a compromise position, rejecting the strongly anti-creedal language of John Clifford and recognising that some Baptist ministers did not accept 'the common interpretation' of the 'words of our Lord'.[63] This resolution was unsatisfactory to Spurgeon as he had considered outright defeat more favourable to his cause as it would have provoked more resignations from the Baptist Union, thus 'vindicating his claim that proponents of the old and new theologies could no longer remain in fellowship'.[64]

Greenhough's theology diverged significantly from the mainstream of British Baptist thought, which remained devoted to the atonement as the primary means of salvation.[65] He sought to widen the study of the atonement away from a singular focus on Christ's death.

The cross was not merely the 'piece of wood, or the physical sufferings of the Divine Victim, or the painful shameful death of crucifixion scene'.[66] Its positive moral influence manifested itself in a multitude of empathetic acts performed by human beings on a day-to-day basis:

> We see the Cross everywhere. In the alms-houses, where the aged and indigent are sheltered; in the hospitals, where the sick and wounded are nursed; in the orphanages, where the neglected children are trained; in the refuges, where the penitent ones have another chance of a better life.[67]

The cross was only a dimension of the life of Christ in Greenhough's theology; he argued that biblical thinkers like St Paul intended to convey the cross as including all the miracles 'of the Incarnation mystery'.[68] The presence of the almighty could be observed in the thoughts and actions of human beings. In his 1907 collection of sermons *Sunset Thoughts: Or Aftermath*, Greenhough argued that the 'divine image' resided within the souls of individual believers, making them more 'blessed and divine than any grand temple built in Corinth or Jerusalem'.[69] Man was great because 'the great God is in him', creating 'reverences, pure affections and mighty hopes', subduing all those things which were opposed to him, and earnestly imploring all to 'have a measure of the Holy Spirit'.

In his 1891 address to the Baptist Union, the leading Christian Socialist minister John Clifford approved of a speech made by Greenhough where he declared that Christ 'spoke continually about a Kingdom of God to be established and enjoyed in the visible sphere'.[70] This doctrinal perspective, as mention of Clifford indicates, is usually associated with the Christian Socialist tradition. Proponents of the 'social gospel' argued that the older tenets of evangelical dissent placed too **exclusive** an emphasis on individual salvation and the preparation of souls for the afterlife. Identifying iniquity in social and economic structures,

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they called on nonconformists to jettison their traditional hostility to state action, imploring them to become involved in the fight against the great social ills of poverty, prostitution, unemployment, gambling and drunkenness.[71] This period of campaigning, the so-called 'Nonconformist Conscience', challenged the prevailing predominance of individualistic approaches, such as voluntarism and the ethics of self-help, to social and political problems. These changes were theologically underpinned by the belief that Christ's incarnation had sanctified the material world and consequently, it was the duty of all religious believers to strive for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.[72] Departing from an orthodox evangelical position, Greenhough found common cause with Christian Socialists in relation to the necessity of establishing a divine earthly kingdom but disagreed stridently on the 'methods, weapons and economic principles' needed to bring it into existence.[73] Individualism, competition and capitalistic initiative constituted the true drivers of social progress and possessed divine sanction from the teachings of the Bible. Socialism, with its levelling tendencies and disdain for individual liberty, sought to reduce human beings 'to a dull, dead level of lumpish mediocrity'.[74] These fears were further heightened by prevailing secular trends in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain. The increasing acceptability of socialistic legislation, the emergence of newer forms of liberalism which countenanced an enhanced role for the state in the lives of individuals and the growing prominence of avowed socialist groups such as the Independent Labour Party all indicated the supersession of individualism by collectivism in the mind of Greenhough. The next section examines, in fuller detail, the nature of Greenhough's anti-socialist critique.

II

Greenhough believed socialism was analogous to the rise of collectivism in economic, social and religious organisation. He declared in 1901 that 'all forces, whether commercial, economic, political, social or religious, were grouping themselves into large masses for united action'.[75] Specific examples of this societal trend towards aggregation and centralisation included the federation of workers into trade unions, the joining of capitalists into huge syndicates, the drawing together of the colonies and the metropole, the union of religious bodies and the municipalisation proposals of city councils. This movement, he declared, with a pessimistic tone was irreversible and universal in application:

> Individual enterprise is being increasingly relieved of its functions by the corporation and the municipality, which presently is doing everything for us, except give birth to our babies.[76]

He perceived the same tendencies manifesting themselves in New Zealand when he visited the country on a Baptist Union-sponsored trip in 1902. The Liberal government of R.J. Seddon had set up compulsory arbitration boards, run by the state, to mediate in disputes between employers and employees and had begun to develop a system of old age pensions insurance. Greenhough portrayed these boards as having almost unlimited power; 'they fix the wages which have to be paid, the hours of labour, the number of apprentices' and 'they practically overrule the employers' right to discharge the workman'.[77]

These trends seemed to mark a shift away from conceptions of economic and social practice which championed the ideals of personal liberty and freedom of conscience. Socialism, in stark contrast, depended on external compulsion through the mechanism of

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the state. Greenhough's suspicion of the state emanated from the historical repression suffered by nonconformist communities. The state was perceived as an oppressive institution that had systemically discriminated against free churchmen since the late seventeenth century. Through prejudicial legislation like the Test and Corporation Acts and the Education Act of 1870 and **the privileges granted to the established church** the state directly infringed on the nonconformist principle that religious faith should be a matter of individual conscience. The link between church and state formalised religious practice, repressed religious expression and blunted a man's **responsibility for seeking his own salvation**.[78] The socialist use of the state as an instrument of oppression was a continuation of historical **precedents**. While the state had once pandered to the special interests of the aristocracy and Anglican clergymen in the period before the Reform Acts, it was now increasingly dependent on the class interests of organised labour.

Greenhough's antipathy to socialism also rested on the belief that it was beholden to a materialist epistemology which sought salvation for humanity through schemes of social reform that were solely aimed at the improvement of man's exterior being. **At an 1891 meeting of the Baptist Union**, **he asserted that the radical mistake of the socialist was in 'supposing that with favourable material conditions, moral qualities would at once bloom into perfection'**.[79] Although admitting, on occasion, that morality could partially be determined by environmental conditions, Greenhough placed little faith in measures that prioritised the needs of the masses over those of the individual.[80] The Kingdom of God would be brought about by the personal efforts of men and women to become 'soberly, brotherly and pure'.[81] In his presidential address to the spring assembly of the Baptist Union in 1895, Greenhough remarked that all good Christians should listen to 'the battle cries of

the city life, to the complaints of the underprivileged'.[82] Solving the plight of the urban poor was dependent on individuals becoming aware of their sinful nature and accepting the requisite solutions of faith and repentance. The promotion of inward spiritual renewal constituted the main mission of the churches; socialist panaceas, on the one hand, would inevitably destroy the motive power of 'individual forces' and abolish all forms of 'moral distinction'. On the other, religious leaders had to **guard carefully** against the 'pressures of the lower nature' and were implored to remember that Christianity was a creed shaped by moral and spiritual considerations.

Greenhough's individualistic brand of anti-socialism was also espoused by other leading nonconformist defectors from the Liberal Party in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. George Brooks, a Wesleyan minster and opponent of Home Rule who penned an 1887 article in *Blackwood's Magazine* entitled 'Why I Became a Liberal Unionist', argued that socialist doctrine placed all power in the hands of the state and utilised compulsive force to ensure adherence to its tenets.[83] Christian teaching, by contrast, relied on the power of 'moral forces', 'acting from within', and placed its faith in individual liberty rather than statist legislation.[84] Arthur Mursell, a Baptist preacher and prominent member of the Nonconformist Unionist Association, shared Greenhough's suspicion of overbearing state power. Governments and politicians, often catering to the interests of trade unions, consistently engaged in unmanly interference with private industry, ignoring the immutable laws of political economy. [85] Mursell left the Liberal Party under the tutelage of R.W. Dale and Joseph Chamberlain in Birmingham and would later join forces with Greenhough in the Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union. The Liberal Imperialist and Wesleyan Robert Perks, who resigned his parliamentary seat in protest at the 'socialist' policies of the People's Budget,

argued that there was no scriptural evidence relating to the desirability of socialism.[86] Strongly individualist and opposed to centralisation, ‘on account of its impersonal character’, Perks invoked the anti-socialist implications of John Wesley's teachings.[87] The founder of Methodism, famously supportive of Toryism, promoted the duties of the individual citizen and rejected the utopian doctrine of common ownership as espoused by the Anabaptists.[88]

Criticism pertaining to socialism's alleged materialism and contempt for individual liberty resonated widely outside the confines of the nonconformist tradition. Liberal moral arguments in the nineteenth century continually emphasised the threat posed by materialism, which stressed selfish lower interests over public and humane ones, to the pursuit of reason and progress.[89] Materialistic urges affected all classes in society; the irresponsibility and selfishness of the middle and upper classes **were** offset by the presence of vice, crime and sensuality in the lower orders.[90] Socialism was defined as a materialistic creed that sapped individual responsibility and doled out economic favours to special interest groups like trade unions.[91] This definition was commonly used by Liberal Unionists and 'conservative liberals’ who remained loyal to the party after the Home Rule Crisis of 1886.[92] Both groups upheld the rights of private property and attacked socialism’s reliance on confiscatory taxation and state bureaucracy.[93] The Oxford historian and Liberal Unionist George Brodrick believed that the advance of socialistic ideas in society, which he equated with franchise extension, would initiate a vast system of state regulation where the needs of the working classes were prioritised over 'the community at large'.[94]

Progressive liberals also worried about the materialistic and statist tendencies of socialism but generally tended to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable variants of the form. John Rae believed that few words were more 'wantonly abused' than socialism

and he carefully distinguished between 'the modern German theory of state socialism' and the indigenous theory by which 'the state, though not socialist, is very frankly a social reformer'.[95] The New Liberal theorist L.T. Hobhouse identified two types of socialism that were illiberal in tone and character.[96] The first, 'Mechanical Socialism', which corresponded to Marxism, relied on the materialist conception of history and attributed primacy to economic forces in the shaping and development of the 'phenomena of social life'. The second, 'Official Socialism', was commensurate with Fabianism and looked to create a trained caste of government officials tasked with dictating economic and political policies to ordinary people, those 'ostensible leaders of democracy' who with a little degree of management 'could be set to walk in the right direction'. A liberal form of socialism would empower the individual to 'build the fabric' of his own 'independence, comfort and…wealth'.[97] Advocates of the social gospel like Charles Gore held similar reservations about secular forms of socialism. Socialist efforts to reform society failed to eliminate the conspicuous prevalence of values like selfishness, greed, pride and lust, all of which emanated from the defective characters of man. The Christian effort for social improvement was primarily directed at the 'regeneration and sanctification of the individual spirit'.[98]

There was little awareness of these ideological nuances in Greenhough's thought. Socialism certainly had a plurality of forms; the atheistic creed of H.M. Hyndman and his acolytes in the Social Democratic Federation differed from the 'type' espoused by 'Victor Grayson' and the Independent Labour Party, which could in no way be considered 'anti-religious'.[99] The intensely anti-Christian nature of socialism on the continent, 'where the proletariat had revolted from the church and lapsed into virtual atheism', had not been replicated in Britain.[100] Most British people maintained 'a deep traditional belief in the Bible'

and as a result the indigenous socialist was more circumspect about flinging insults at the Christian faith.[101] Despite this recognition of variability, Greenhough identified a certain number of characteristics common to all forms of socialism. A 'socialist' action unduly focused on the material side of life, ignored individuality, rejected competition, glorified equality and invested too much power in the hands of the central state.

The relative crudity of Greenhough's analysis resembles the extreme anti-statist propaganda of organisations like the Liberty and Property Defence League. The league was formed in 1882 to resist collectivist legislation, advocate individualism and combat undue state interference in economic and social life.[102] It was the main pressure group active within a late nineteenth century Individualist movement that sought to uphold laissez-faire economic ideals and the rights of private property.[103] Individualist thinkers like Herbert Spencer and Wordsworth Donisthorpe believed that the Liberal Party had embraced socialist values in the 1880s, exemplified primarily by pieces of legislation like the Irish Land Act, the Employers' Liability Act and the Ground Game Act. This 'new radicalism' was considered to have adopted the 'principle of which the mid-Victorian state was the negation, namely that it was the duty of government to accept responsibility for the positive welfare of its individual citizens'.[104] Moderate individualists like A.V. Dicey, Goldwin Smith and W.E.H. Lecky, who differed from Spencer and his followers by wanting to draw a distinction between legitimate and illegitimate forms of governmental interference, began to move towards the Conservative Party, via the Liberal Unionists, in the 1880s.[105]

III

Greenhough claimed to be wary of initiatives that sought to carve out a political role for nonconformity. He publicly criticised the partisanship of the 'Nonconformist Conscience' in a letter published in the *Daily Telegraph* in February 1895.[106] The social and political campaigns of the 'Conscience' assumed that nonconformists spoke with one collective voice, 'that their moral conceptions were formed in the same mould. The true conscience of nonconformity was open to a **heterogeneous** number of beliefs and 'was as varied as that of any other class of men'. Reiterating these sentiments three months' later to the Blackburn *Weekly Standard and Express* newspaper, Greenhough remarked that the supposition that most nonconformists identified as 'Gladstonian Liberals' was positively absurd as many dissenters, especially in 'Midland counties', were Liberal Unionist or Conservative in their political outlook.[107] 'The religion of righteousness', he told a gathering of the Leicestershire Free Church Council in 1897, 'knew no party and he did not think they were going to be the handmaid of any political party'.[108]

Despite such statements, Greenhough eagerly conflated religious and political interests throughout the course of his public life. In 1879, just one year after he had taken up his ministry at Leicester, Greenhough criticised those who sought to censure nonconformist ministers 'from making their opinions known on public matters'.[109] Exercising their rights as democratic citizens, they were suspected of 'making political allusions even if they ventured to pray that more wisdom might be given to government'.[110] A firm proponent of disestablishment Greenhough preached the annual sermon at the Liberation Society in 1896.[111] Two years later in July 1898, he spoke at the national conference of the Nonconformist Political Council, an organisation founded to secure 'united action' on the

part of dissenting MP's in relation to matters concerning religious equality.[112] **The council was an overtly partisan organisation, established to bypass conflicts in the Free Church Councils over political issues, and counted prominent Liberal politicians like Robert Perks and David Lloyd George as members**. Greenhough's speech at the conference approved the formation of the council, in support of a resolution made by Lloyd George and referenced Gladstone's famous phrase about nonconformists being the backbone of the Liberal Party.

This growing politicisation of the links between nonconformity and liberalism was accelerated by the Education Act of 1902. Devised by the civil servant Robert Morant, working closely with church leaders and Conservatives, and supported by Anglicans, Catholics and secular proponents of 'National Efficiency', the act replaced school boards with local educational authorities and provided denominational schools with funds financed from national taxation. The bill provoked the ire of nonconformist opinion because it threatened public control of education, illustrated most pertinently by the democratically-elected school boards, and supplied rate-aid for Anglican and Catholic doctrines, considered an affront to the principles of conscience. This latter clause was felt to be particularly egregious in the estimated 8,000 mainly rural areas where the only educational option available was the local Church of England school.[113] The Free Church Council movement was the main focal point of nonconformist resistance to the bill. Opposition materialised in the form of protests, public meetings and a passive resistance movement led by John Clifford which refused to pay the portion of the education rate that would go to the maintenance of denominational schools.[114] These efforts were supported by the bulk of the Liberal Party in the House of Commons, and the controversy provided a rallying point for Liberal unity in the wake of divisions over Home Rule and the Boer War.[115] Liberalism's ability to mobilise

nonconformist outrage at the Education Act, allied to the resurgence of the free trade issue, helped it win a huge electoral majority in the 1906 general election.[116]

As stated earlier in the introduction, Greenhough played a notable role in this campaign of resistance. At a Free Church Council demonstration in Leicester in 1902, he warned of the dangers of abolishing school boards in smaller towns and country districts where the influence of 'the squire, the parson and the Anglican' held sway.[117] 'The whole of the Free Churches and all the Liberal Party' should unite 'in uncompromising resistance to the measure'. The following year, Greenhough signed a resolution adopted by the educational committee of the National Free Church Council which called for a national system of education recognising only one form of publicly-funded school.[118] In 1906, he sat on a special national committee of the Free Church Council, convened to consider the House of Lords' obstruction of Augustine Birrell's amended education bill.[119] Supporting Birrell's plan to end public funding for voluntary schools and sharing the stage with other leading nonconformist luminaries such as J. Scott Lidgett, John Clifford and the Liberal MP Charles Silvester Horne, Greenhough observed that they were 'eager to take up the battle which the haughty bishops and insolent peers had thrown down'.

How do we explain Greenhough's support for certain forms of political activity and clear disdain for others? He attempted to justify this contradiction by claiming his involvement in causes such as religious equality and education was motivated by spiritual objectives. For example, the provision of public monies for denominational schools legitimatised the teaching of 'Romanised' doctrines, a threat, nonconformists had faced down since the time of the Reformation.[120] The fundamental lines of conflict were drawn between 'those men who gloried in the principles and doctrines of the reformation and men

whose eyes were towards Rome'. The revival of Catholic practices in the Church of England meant that sacerdotalism now confronted 'them at their very doors'. The usage of ceremonial incense, the wearing of Eucharistic vestments and the prominence of Marian devotion were signs of the increasing predominance 'of the imitators of Rome' in the established church.

Greenhough's line of argument, with its rather neat separation of religious and political goals, paid little heed to the fact that some of the most pressing spiritual problems faced by nonconformists, ills such as priest craft, sin, materialism, immorality, unbelief and state religion, could be most effectively remedied by political action. Causes such as disestablishment, licensing trade reform and public education reflected the practical application of Christ's teaching and upheld the sanctity of conscience. As one correspondent noted in the *Baptist Times*, nonconformists, since the 'stirring days of the Civil War', had always ranged themselves on the side of public righteousness.[121] Greenhough's opposition to 'pulpit politics' was itself motivated by partisan considerations. He deployed the argument to discredit socialists, liberals and proponents of social reform, those who advocated the wrong sort of politics. This claiming of the non-political ground was also a strategy employed by Arthur Mursell. Despite being a member of the Nonconformist Unionist Association, Mursell claimed to oppose the mixing of religion and politics and decried Christian Socialists who valued 'gospels of drainage and pure air and short hours and wages'.[122]

Groups and interests loyal to the Conservative Party sought to make political capital out of this argument in the immediate years following the general election of 1906. The appeal of politics for many nonconformists was diminished by the inability of the Liberal administration to pass an acceptable educational settlement during its first term of

government. A 1909 book entitled *Nonconformity and Politics* summed up this wider sense of disillusionment.[123] Its author, a **Congregational** minister based in London, argued that nonconformity was forsaking its spiritual ideals in favour of corporate political action. Tensions relating to Liberal social legislation, the electoral breakthrough of the Labour Party and the growing prominence of radical Christian Socialist ministers such as R.J. Campbell further discouraged the airing of political views. Concerns about partisanship and socialism comprised major themes of a 1907 book entitled *The Nonconformist Conscience: A Persecuting Force*. Written by a Manchester-based Wesleyan minister named J.A. Newbold, *The Nonconformist Conscience* argued that 'official liberalism's intrusion into religion' was now superseded by the efforts of socialists.[124] Figures like J.A. Rattenbury, a Wesleyan proponent of Christian Socialism, were brazenly using pulpits and mission halls to propagate socialist ideology. A letter addressed to the *Baptist Times* in March 1909 recapitulated the substance of such views.[125] The anonymous letter writer claimed that the newspaper was being used to realise political ends. Such overt bias 'appeared to take it for granted that we Nonconformists are all radicals, if not socialists'.

Right-wing newspapers looked to exploit these tensions by linking the work of political nonconformity with socialism. The *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail* published letters by free churchmen who complained of socialist domination of chapels.[126] One letter referred to the partisan electioneering of nonconformists during the London County Council election of 1907 and remarked that he had 'heard crude socialism spouted'…'in pulpits which were originally intended as places for divine worship'.[127] These rhetorical attacks should be placed within the context of a wider Conservative anti-socialist campaign, initiated in 1907, that commonly equated the aims of radicals and socialists. This strategy was

continually employed by Tories to discredit Lloyd George's People's Budget during the fractious political stand-off between the Lords and the Commons in 1909/10. For many Conservatives, the progressive taxation of the budget, which targeted landowners, brewers and financiers, 'represented the quintessence of socialism'.[128]

The Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union emerged out of these efforts.[129] The union was founded at the Baptist Church House in London in April 1909. A movement of self-defence, it sought to protest the 'use of the pulpit for political reasons' and 'withstand the encroachment of socialism in the Free Churches'. Greenhough was named on the organisation's executive committee, serving alongside Arthur Mursell, Dinsdale T. Young, A.C. Crane, Joseph Sabey and George Freeman. He was also commissioned to write three papers for the union covering the religious, economic and moral aspects of socialism.[130] The Conservative bias of the union was clearly discernible at its first meeting when Arthur Mursell declared that tariff reform was the best solution to social problems like unemployment. The presence of Liberal Unionist politicians like John Scurrah Randles and Carlyon Bellairs on the organisation's central council is further proof of its partisan nature.

The Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union proved to be a short-lived venture. There is no mention of the union's activities after January 1910 when it appealed for donations from interested members of the public.[131] The organisation was reconstituted two months later as the Anti-Socialist Union of the Churches.[132] Requesting the 'support and sympathy of various denominations', this new group looked to expunge the socialist ideal from the Christian churches. Greenhough, the Bishop of Durham and Unionist politicians like Lord Winterton and William Bull attended the union's first meeting at the Holborn Restaurant in London. According to the *Daily News*'s account of the meeting, Greenhough made a long speech

ridiculing the actions of the Liberal government to 'the unconcealed delight of Lord Winterton'.[133] This successor group to the Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union was not a particularly active one. Mirroring the fate of older organisations like the Nonconformist Unionist Association, 'which did little effective work apart from holding banquets', the Anti-Socialist Union of the Churches lacked popular appeal and held a paltry total of six meetings in the five-year period between 1910 and 1915.[134]

The apolitical stance of both unions was roundly condemned in the nonconformist press. A report published in the *Christian World* in April 1910 attacked the Anti-Socialist Union of the Churches for trying to conceal its links to Conservative politicians like William Bull.[135] The report could not detect 'either the un-sectarian or non-political character of this new organisation'. John Clifford called on the Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union to admit that it was 'doing definite Tory work'.[136] Its propaganda was 'composed of bad definitions, loose statements and false generalisations'. Clifford's Baptist colleague, J.E. Roberts, also picked up on this point, criticising the 'false arguments and misleading statements of the Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union'.[137] Even the normally wary *Methodist Recorder,* which tried to refrain from commenting on political topics, weighed in on the controversy surrounding the two unions. One of its writers, the Rev. W.H. Heap, questioned how organisations like the Anti-Socialist Union of the Churches could claim to be politically neutral when they were actively campaigning to remove the Liberal Party from power.[138]

IV

The Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union and the Anti-Socialist Union of the Churches were too closely identified with the interests of the Conservative Party to elicit mass support from nonconformist communities. They struggled to rally religious believers to the cause of

anti-socialism. The non-political identity they adopted, however, is significant. It is best viewed as a precursor to the strategy employed by Conservatives in the interwar period. Conservative politicians like Stanley Baldwin deliberately deployed non-political and national idioms to combat the growing popularity of the Labour Party. Baldwin's rhetoric and leadership, as Peter Catterall notes, **were** attractive to many nonconformist leaders in the 1930s.[139] They were 'reassured by the appearance of national unity after the industrial and social conflicts of the 1920s and 1930s'.[140] The free churches, of course, still played a major role in the parties and institutions of the left, being disproportionally likely to be involved in Liberal, Labour and trade union activism.[141]

Greenhough's involvement with the pressure groups of Edwardian anti-socialism was symbolic of his ideological transition from liberalism to conservatism. His earlier repudiation of the Liberal Party in 1886, contingent on the issue of Home Rule, constituted a temporary political position. The embrace of imperialism by certain sections of liberalism, the dampening of Liberal enthusiasm for Home Rule after the party's 1895 election defeat, and Conservative education proposals comprised important converging factors that helped to bring Greenhough back into the Liberal fold. The threat of socialism, which first becomes a prominent theme in Greenhough's speeches during the 1890s, fatally undermined this process of reconciliation, spurring him to become engaged in Conservative activism, a development that had not arisen previously as a result of Liberal support for Irish Home Rule. Greenhough believed that socialism gravely imperilled the religious, political and moral principles that underpinned the worldview of the dissenting chapels. Greenhough was a nonconformist traditionalist who celebrated individual liberty and feared the expansion of the central state. Socialists, through the medium of the state, would merely replicate

the historical oppression that nonconformists had suffered since the late seventeenth century, while also re-affirming the class-based nature of the polity through their support for the interests of organised labour. Socialist ideology failed to address matters of individual morality and focused wholly on material questions. Greenhough's opposition to the 'Nonconformist Conscience' and Christian social reform more broadly was, on the surface, attributable to his dislike of 'pulpit politics'. This stance was in fact, deeply political, and was only utilised to criticise socialists, radicals and liberals.

[1] 'Mr. Lloyd George and Free Churchmen', *The Daily Telegraph*, 17 Dec 1909.

[2] 'Mr. Lloyd George and Nonconformity, *The Times*, 21 Dec 1909.

[3] 'Letters', *The Evening Standard*, 5 Jan 1910.

[4] J.F. Glaser, 'English Nonconformity and the Decline of Liberalism', *The American Historical Review*, lxii (1958), 358.

[5] D.W. Bebbington, 'Nonconformity and Electoral Sociology, 1867-1918', *The Historical Journal*, xxvii (1984), 633-656; *The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics, 1870-1914* (London, 1982).

[6] D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, 1989), p. 213; N. Blewett, *The Peers, the Parties and the People: The General Elections of 1910* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 346-348; S. Koss, *Nonconformity in Modern British Politics* (London, 1975), pp. 100-124; R.S. Moore, *Pit-Men, Preachers & Politics: The Effects of Methodism in a Durham Mining Community* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 54-64.

[7] For the labour history view see examples like J. Belchem, *Class, Party, and the Political System in Britain, 1867-1914* (London, 1990), p. 4; K. Laybourn & J. Reynolds *Liberalism and the Rise of Labour, 1890-1918* (Kent, 1984); H. Pelling, 'Labour and the Downfall of Liberalism', in *Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain*, ed. H. Pelling (London, 1968), p. 120; For Marxism see E.J. Hobsbawm, 'The Making of the Working Class', 1870-1914', in *Worlds of Labour: Further Studies in History of Labour*, ed. E.J. Hobsbawm (London, 1984), pp. 194-213; For electoral sociology see P. Clarke, *Lancashire and the New Liberalism* (Cambridge, 1971); K.D. Wald, *Crosses on the Ballot: Patterns of British Voter Alignment since 1885* (Princeton, 1983).

[8] For a representative article outlining the middle-class drift towards Conservatism in the

late nineteenth century see J.P. Cornford, 'The Transformation of Conservatism in the late Nineteenth Century', *Victorian Studies*, vii (1963), 35-66.

[9] Labour historians like Roy Gregory and Ross McKibbin argued that Liberalism's decline pre-dated World War One. Peter Clarke and H.V. Emy disputed this claim, asserting that the Liberal Party was not facing the prospect of immanent eclipse by the Labour Party before 1914. The debate between the two positions largely revolved around the question of whether the Liberal Party had successfully adapted to the demands of class politics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. See R. Gregory, *The Miners and British Politics, 1906-1914* (Oxford, 1968); R. McKibbin, *The Evolution of the Labour Party, 1910-1924* (Oxford, 1974); H.V. Emy, *Liberals, Radicals and Social Politics*, *1892-1914* (Cambridge, 1973); For an attempted synthesis of the two approaches see G.L. Bernstein, *Liberalism and Liberal Politics in Edwardian England* (London, 1986).

[10] D. Tanner, *Political Change and the Labour Party 1900-1918* (Cambridge, 1990); E. F. Biagini & A.J. Reid (eds.), *Currents of Radicalism, Popular Radicalism, Organised Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850-1914* (Cambridge, 1991); J. Lawrence, 'Popular Radicalism and the Socialist Revival in Britain', *Journal of British Studies*, 2 (1992). 163-186*; Speaking for the People: Party, Language and Popular Politics in England, 1867-1914* (Cambridge, 1998); J.R. Moore, *The Transformation of Urban Liberalism: Party Politics and Urban Governance in Late-Nineteenth Century England* (Hampshire, 2006); M. Roberts, *Political Movements in Urban England, 1832-1914* (London, 2009).

[11] For a wider perspective on the linguistic/cultural turn see G. Eley, A *Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society* (Michigan, 2005); For the application of these theories to modern British political history see Lawrence Black, 'Popular Politics in Modern

British History', *The Journal of British Studies*, 40 (2001), 432; D. M. Craig, ''High Politics and the 'New Political History'', *The Historical Journal*, 53 (2010), 453-457; Steven Fielding, 'Looking for the 'New Political History'', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 42 (2007), 515-524.

[12] For the view that Liberal Unionism was an expression of class interest see G. L. Goodman, 'Liberal Unionism: The Revolt of the Whigs', *Victorian Studies*, iii (1959), 173-189; P. Fraser, 'The Liberal Unionist Alliance: Chamberlain, Hartington and the Conservatives, 1886-1904', *English Historical Review*, lxxvii (1962), 53-78.

[13] I. Cawood, *The Liberal Unionist Party: A History* (New York, 2012); V.C Barbary, 'From Platform to Polling Booth', (Cambridge, PhD thesis, 2007); C.M.M. MacDonald, 'Locality, Tradition and Language in the Evolution of Scottish Unionism: A Case Study, Paisley, 1886-1910', in Unionist Scotland, 1800-1997, ed. C.M.M. MacDonald (Edinburgh, 1998), pp. 52-72; W. Ferris, 'The Liberal Unionist Party, 1886-1912', (MacMaster, PhD thesis, 2008); A. Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture: 'Habits of Heart and Mind'* (Oxford, 2015), p. 348; For an older re-evaluation of Liberal Unionism see J. Parry, *The Rise and Fall of Liberal Government in Victorian Britain* (Yale, 1993), pp. 292-304.

[14] J. Moore, Liberal Unionism and the Home Rule Crisis in Leicester, 1885-1892', *Midland History*, 26 (2001), 177-197; N. Lloyd-Jones, 'Liberal Unionism and Political Representation in Wales, c.1886–1893', *Historical Research*, lxxxviii (2015), 482-507.

[15] 'A Distinguished Divine in Blackburn', *The Weekly Standard and Express* (Blackburn), 4 May 1895.

[16] 'A Distinguished', *The Weekly Standard and Express*.

[17] ''C.B.'s'' Latest Move, *Daily Mail*, 04 Mar 1902; For the standard account on the Liberal

Liam Ryan: Writing Sample: 'Nonconformity and Socialism: The Case of J.G. Greenhough'. Accepted Historical Research Article

Imperialists see H.C.G. Matthews, *The Liberal Imperialists*: *The Ideas and Politics of a post-Gladstonian elite* (Oxford, 1973).

[18] 'The Gloucester Baptist Free Church', *Gloucester Journal*, 24 Oct 1903.

[19] 'The Gloucester', *Gloucester*,

[20] Bebbington, *The Nonconformist*, pp. 79-83.

[21] **Silas Hocking, a Methodist preacher, popular novelist and pacifist, was a vociferous opponent of militarism. His public protests against the Boer War were criticised by Greenhough in January 1900. See 'The Free Churches and the War', *Leicester Chronicle*, 6 Jan 1900.**

[22] For the Nonconformist Unionist Association see Bebbington, *The Nonconformist*, 93-105; Cawood, *The Liberal Unionist*, 153-155.

[23] The two occasions include his denunciation of the Liberal government in 1910 and his interview in the Blackburn *Weekly Standard and Express.* Both have been cited above.

[24] J.H.Y. Briggs, *The English Baptists of the Nineteenth Century* (Lowestoft, 1994), p. 186.

[25] 'Bradford Mechanics Institute Annual Soiree', *Bradford Observer*, 25 Sept 1862.

[26] 'Bradford', *Bradford Observer*.

[27] 'A Distinguished', *The Weekly Standard*.

[28] Briggs, *The English Baptists*, p. 186; 'Rawdon College', *Manchester Times*, 1 Jul 1865.

[29] Quoted in G. T. Rimmington, 'Victoria Road Church, Leicester: A Victorian Experiment in Ecumenicity', *Leicestershire Archaeology and History Society*, lxxi (1997), 83.

[30] 'Northern Baptist Education Society', *Leeds Mercury*, 24 Jun 1869.

[31] N. S. Moon, *Education for Ministry: Bristol Baptist College, 1679-1979* (Bristol, 1979), p. 52.

Liam Ryan: Writing Sample: 'Nonconformity and Socialism: The Case of J.G. Greenhough'. Accepted Historical Research Article

[32] Quoted in Moon, *Education for Ministry*, p. 53.

[33] For a very useful account of the impact of higher criticism on nonconformist communities in the nineteenth century see M. Watts, The *Dissenters: Volume III: The Crisis and Conscience of Nonconformity* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 20-35.

[34] Quoted in A.P.F. Sell, *Theology in Turmoil: The Roots, Course and Significance of the Conservative-Liberal Debate in Modern Theology* (Eugene, 1998), p. 51.

[35] Moon, *Education for Ministry*, p. 55.

[36] J.G. Greenhough, *Towards the Sunrising; or, a Voyage to the Antipodes* (London, 1902), p. 154.

[37] He preached his first service on 2 Feb 1879 see 'Nonconformity in Leicester', *Leicester Chronicle*, 15 Feb 1879.

[38] 'The New Victoria Road Nonconformist Church', *Leicester Chronicle*, 21 July 1866.

[39] W. Lancaster, 'Radicalism to Socialism: The Leicester Working Class, 1860-1906', (Warwick, PhD Thesis, 1982), 378; For other accounts of liberalism in Leicester see D. Tanner, *Political Change*, pp. 284-314; P. Thane, 'Labour and local politics: Radicalism, Democracy and Social Reform, 1880-1914', in *Currents of Radicalism Popular Radicalism, Organised Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850–1914*, eds. E.F. Biagini & A. J. Reid (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 244-270.

[40] For Viccars see 'Multiple News Items', *Leicester Chronicle*, 14 Feb 1885; For Walker see 'The Late Mr Robert Walker'. *Leicester Chronicle*, 21 July 1883.

[41] 'Marriage of Miss Wood', *Leicester Chronicle*, 29 June 1889.

[42] 'Marriage', *Leicester Chronicle*.

[43] The records consulted are as follows: The Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and

Rutland, Victoria Road Baptist Church: Letters from members of the congregation, 1877-1882, DE2613- N/B/179/189; Deacons' Meetings minute book, 1879-1885, DE2613 - N/B/179/182; Deacons' Meetings minute book, 1885-1889, DE2613 - N/B/179/183; Church Minute Book of Christian Society meeting at Victoria Road, 1867-1888, DE2364-N/B/179/58; Victoria Road Church minute book,1888-1904, DE2364-N/B/179/59.

[44] Greenhough's residence is named as Stoneygate Road in a November 1885 meeting of the church council see Leic. Record., Church Minute Book, 1867-1888, DE2364-N/B/179/58, fo. 253; Moore, *Urban*, p. 106.

[45] Moore, *Urban*, p. 106.

[46] Moore, *Urban*, p. 106.

[47] Wood's address was 45 Hinckley Road, Leicester. See his 17 March 1879 letter to the church. Leic. Rec., Letters From, 1877-1882, DE2613 - N/B/179/189, unnumbered folio.

[48] 'Church Life in Leicester', *Leicester Chronicle*, 7 June 1884.

[49] For the free libraries see 'Leicester Town Council', *Leicester Chronicle*, 15 Nov 1884; 'Leicester Town Council', *Leicester Chronicle*, 12 Oct 1895; For the Literary and Philosophical Society see 'Literary and Philosophical Society', *Leicester Chronicle*, 8 Mar 1884; For his involvement with the cricket club see 'Victoria-Road C.C.', *Leicester Chronicle*, 1 Dec 1883.

[50] 'Irish Relief Fund', *Leicester Chronicle*, 13 Mar 1880.

[51] Bebbington, *The Nonconformist*, p. 61

[52] Bebbington, *The Nonconformist*, p. 61.

[53] 'Federation of Nonconformist Churches: Conference in Leicester', *Leicester Chronicle*, 14 Dec 1895.

[54] 'Leicester Free Church Council and Sunday Bands', *Leicester Chronicle*, 29 May 1897; For

education see 'Leicester and District Free Church Council, *Leicester Chronicle*, 6 Feb 1897; 'Cromwell Tercentenary', *Leicester Chronicle*, 29 Apr 1899.

[55] He spoke at a council meeting in Rotherham in 1899 see 'Rotherham & District', *The Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 1 December 1899; In 1897 he addressed the inaugural meeting of the Bolton Free Church Council see 'Rev J.G. Greenhough at Bolton', *Leicester Chronicle*, 16 Jan 1897; In the same year he spoke at a meeting regarding the formation of a Free Church Council in East Lancashire 'Rev. J.G. Greenhough and the Federation of the Free Churches', *Leicester Chronicle*, 6 Nov 1897.

[56] Koss, *Nonconformity*, p. 29.

[57] For Spurgeon's theology see M. Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic Generation: Evangelical and Liberal Theologies in Victorian England* (Milton Keynes, 2004), pp. 232-241.

[58] Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic*, p. 193.

[59] 'Notes', *The Sword and the Trowel*, Apr 1887.

[60] **M. Hopkins, 'Spurgeon's Opponents in the Downgrade Controversy', *Baptist Quarterly*, xxxii (1988), 285; Watts, *The Dissenters*, 67.**

[61] 'Letters to Editor', *The Christian World*, 8 September 1887.

[62] Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic*, p. 202.

[63] Quoted in Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic*, p. 225.

[64] Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic*, p. 230.

[65] D.W. Bebbington, 'British Baptist Crucicentrism since the late Eighteenth Century', *Baptist Quarterly*, xliv (2011), 23

[66] J.G. Greenhough, *The Cross in Modern* Life (London, 1914), p. 3.

[67] Greenhough, *The Cross*, pp. 9-10.

Liam Ryan: Writing Sample: 'Nonconformity and Socialism: The Case of J.G. Greenhough'. Accepted Historical Research Article

[68] Greenhough, *The Cross*, p. 10; Bebbington, 'British Baptist', 15.

[69] J.G. Greenhough, *Sunset Thoughts: Or Aftermath* (London, 1907), p. 136.

[70] Watts, *The Dissenters*, p. 68.

[71] For the impact of Christian Socialism on the free churches see K.S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working-Classes in Victorian England* (London, 1964), pp. 287-302; P. d'A. Jones, *The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914: Religion, Class and Social Conscience in Late-Victorian England* (Princeton, 1968), pp. 305-431; P.T. Philips, *A Kingdom on Earth: Anglo-American Social Christianity, 1880-1940* (Pennsylvania, 1996); For Nonconformity's relationship with the wider labour movement see P. Catterall, 'The Distinctiveness of British Socialism? Religion and the Rise of Labour, c. 1900-1939', in *The Foundations of the British Labour Party: Identities, Cultures and Perspectives*, 1900-1939, ed. M. Worley (Surrey, 2009), pp. 131-153; L. Smith, *Religion and the Rise of Labour: Nonconformity and the Independent Labour Party in Lancashire and the West Riding* (Keele, 1993).

[72] P. Catterall, *Labour and the Free Churches, 1918-1939: Radicalism, Righteousness and Religion* (London, 2016), pp. 15-16.

[73] 'J.G. Greenhough, *Socialism and Christianity* (London, 1910), p. 7.

[74] 'Mr Greenhough's Brilliant Reply', *The Baptist Times*, 8 May 1908

[75] 'The President's Address at Cardiff', *The Baptist Times*, 15 Mar 1901.

[76] 'The President's', *The Baptist Times*.

[77] Greenhough, *Towards*, p. 131.

[78] J. Parry, *Democracy and Religion: Gladstone and the Liberal Party, 1867-1875* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 202.

[79] 'The Baptist Union', *Birmingham Daily Post*, 1 May 1891.

[80] 'Tamworth Baptist Chapel', *Tamworth Herald*, 14 December 1895.

[81] 'Tamworth', *Tamworth*.

[82] J.G. Greenhough, *A Puritan Message to the Democracy* (London, 1895).

[83] G. Brooks, *Industry and property: a plea for truth and honesty in economics and for liberty and justice in social reform: being a discussion of present-day labour problems, with proposals for their solution, counsels to employers and employed and warnings to statesmen, politicians and social reformers, Vol II* (Suffolk, 1892), p. 499. For more information on Brooks see 'Mr Labouchere and the Rev. George Brooks', *North Wales Chronicle*, 16 Feb 1895; 'Industry and Property', *Newcastle Journal*, 30 May 1893.

[84] Brooks, *Industry*, 499.

[85] A. Mursell, *Address to the Working People of Birmingham* (Birmingham, 1880), pp. 5-7.

[86] D. Crane, *The Life Story of Robert Perks*, (London, 1909), p. 227; for his abandonment of Liberalism see Bebbington, 'Electoral Sociology', 653.

[87] Crane, *The Life Story*, pp. 228-229.

[88] Crane, *The Life Story*, p. 229.

[89] J. Parry, *The Politics of Patriotism: English Liberalism, National Identity and Europe, 1830-1886* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 88-90.

[90] Parry, *The Politics*, pp. 88-89.

[91] Parry, *The Politics*, p. 124.

[92] The phrase 'conservative liberals' is used by Michael Freeden to refer to those on the right-wing of the Liberal Party in the late nineteenth century. For discussion of this theme see M. Freeden, *The New Liberalism*: *An Ideology of Social Reform* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 61-65.

[93] Freeden, *The New*, p. 62; These beliefs, which were identified by Freeden as being held by

'conservative liberals', were also shared by Liberal Unionists.

[94] G. Brodrick, 'Fallacies of Modern Socialism ', *The National Review*, xix (1892), 300.

[95] Quoted in Freeden, *The New*, p. 60.

[96] L.T. Hobhouse, *Liberalism* (London, 1911), pp. 167-171.

[97] L. T. Hobhouse, 'The Contending Forces', *English Review*, iv (1909–10), 368.

[98] C. Gore, *The Social Doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount* (Oxford, 1894), p. 8.

[99] 'Spring Assembly of the Baptist Union', *The Baptist Times*, 4 Apr 1908.

[100] J.G. Greenhough, *Socialism*, p. 2.

[101] Greenhough, *Socialism*, p. 2.

[102] W.H. Greenleaf, *The British Political Tradition: Volume II: The Ideological Heritage* (Oxford, 1983), p. 272.

[103] For the Individualist movement see E. Bristow, *Individualism Versus Socialism in Britain*, 1880-1914 (New York, 1987); S. Collini, *Liberalism and Sociology: L.T. Hobhouse and Political Argument in England, 1880-1914* (London, 1979), pp. 13-51; N. Soldon, 'Laissez Faire as Dogma: The Liberty and Property Defence League, 1882-1914', in *Essays in Anti-Labour History: Responses to the Rise of Labour in Britain*, ed. K.D. Brown (London, 1974), pp. 208-234; M.W. Taylor, *Men versus the State: Herbert Spencer and Late Victorian Individualism* (Oxford, 1992).

[104] Taylor, *Men*, p. 13.

[105] Taylor, *Men*, pp. 18-19.

[106] 'The Nonconformist Conscience', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 Feb 1895.

[107] 'A Distinguished', *The Weekly Standard and Express*.

[108] 'A Public Meeting', *Leicester Chronicle*, 3 April 1897.

[109] 'The Baptist Union at Glasgow', *Daily News*, 10 Oct 1879.

[110] 'The Baptist', *Daily News*.

[111] 'Baptist', *Daily Mail*, 16 May 1896.

[112] 'Nonconformist Political Council', *The Baptist Times*, 18 Nov 1898.

[113] Catterall, *Labour*, p. 44.

[114] Bebbington, *The Nonconformist,* p. 143.

[115] G.I.T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain, 1869*-1921 (Oxford, 1987), p. 263.

[116] For the significance of free trade in the 1906 election see F. Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation*: *Commerce, Consumption, and Civil Society in Modern Britain* (Oxford, 2008).

[117] 'Free Church Council Demonstration', *Daily News*, 27 Mar 1902.

[118] 'Education Problem', *Daily News*, 01 Dec 1903.

[119] 'National Council of the Free Churches', *Daily News*, 6 Nov 1906.

[120] 'The Education Bill', *Leicester Chronicle*, 23 May 1896.

[121] 'Nonconformity and Politics', *The Baptist Times*, 09 Feb 1909.

[122] A. Mursell, *Hush and Hurry: or, Thoughts for the Home and for the City* (London, 1902), p. 69.

[123] 'A Nonconformist Minister', *Nonconformity and Politics* (London, 1909).

[124] J.A. Newbold, *The Nonconformist Conscience: a Persecuting Force* (Manchester, 1907), p. 190.

[125] 'Nonconformity and Politics', *The Baptist Times,* 10 Mar 1909.

[126] 'The Political Tyranny of Nonconformity', *Daily Mail*, 01 May 1906; 'Socialism in the Pulpit', *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 Jul 1907; 'Pulpit Politics', *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 Jan 1909.

[127] 'Socialism in the Pulpit', *The Daily Telegraph.*

[128] E.H.H. Green, *The Crisis of Conservatism: The Politics, Economics and Ideology of the British Conservative Party, 1880-1914* (London, 1995), p. 132.

[129] Information in this paragraph comes from the following two articles 'Nonconformists and Socialism', *The Times*, 3 Apr 1909; 'Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union', *The Times*, 10 Dec 1909.

[130] The papers were entitled 'The Meaning and Aims of Socialism with the Various Schools', 'The Moral Aspects of Socialism with Glances at its Economic Results' and the above cited 'Socialism and Christianity'. Only the latter paper appears to have been circulated in print.

[131] 'Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union', *The Times*, 12 Jan 1910.

[132] The Anti-Socialist Union of the Churches', *The Times*, 17 Mar 1910.

[133] 'The Anti-Socialist: First Annual Gathering in London, *Daily News*,31 Mar 1910.

[134] For meetings of the Anti-Socialist Union of the Churches see 'The Churches and Socialism', *The Times*, 31 Mar 1910; 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 20 Apr 1910; 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 6 Jul 1910; 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 7 Feb 1912; 'Ecclesiastical Intelligence', *The Times,* 22 Apr 1913; For this quote on the Nonconformist Unionist Association see Bebbington, *The Nonconformist*, p. 96.

[135] 'Free Churches & Socialism', *The Christian World*, 25 Apr 1910.

[136] The Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Union', *The Baptist Times*, 10 Dec. 1909.

[137] Fortnightly Letter to Young People', *The Baptist Times*, 06 Apr 1910.

[138] 'Letters', *Methodist Recorder*, 16 Dec 1909.

[139] Catterall, *Labour*, p. 212; For Conservative language and use of non-political strategies in the interwar period see P. Williamson, P. Williamson, *Stanley Baldwin: Conservative*

Leadership and National Values (Cambridge, 1999); R. McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England, 1918-1951* (Oxford, 1998), 96.

[140] Catterall, *Labour*, p. 212.

[141] Catterall, *Labour*, p. 8.