

The City of Today

Glorious, glorious England. As the Empire spreads some say "so does its glory"; others mumble of the price which we pay for our greatness. Many of us Londoners have read, if not discussed, the intriguing debate transpiring between Sir Andrew Ure and Sir James Phillips Kay. Are the cities of great England truly representative of the jewels in Her Majesty's Crown? Or are they the stain of exploitation and abuse that some have proclaimed?

Sir James Phillips Kay, an M.D. at Edinburgh and the Secretary to the Manchester Board of Health, has recently published a work titled, "The Moral And Physical Conditions of the Working-Class Employed in Cotton Manufacturing in Manchester." (Kay/Ure Debate, Handout) He argues quite persuasively about those poor wretches living in the most hideous of conditions. Half the blame he attributes to the Irish and the other half to the environment of an industrialised city. The Irish immigrants have brought to Manchester a system called "cottier farming". Sir James argues that this system is responsible for the "demoralisation and barbarism" of the working-class. If that is not bad enough, the potato has been introduced as a main article of food. Influenced by the Irish subsistence living, the working-class are abandoning those values which promote increasing comfort. They seemingly have given up the hope of betterment and adopted hopelessness.

Sir James does well in his description of the living conditions of the working class is living in. The mere thought of such suffering and misery is shocking to the soul. The problem Kay argues, is caused by combinations of poor living and working conditions, lack of education, influence by a lesser culture and the presence of great immorality. This recently published work is a plea to the Capitalist, to convince him to concern himself with his workers.

Andrew Mearns, another prominent fellow on these matters goes into even greater detail in his work, "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London". Making a study of our city, he has reported, with astonishing detail, that the filth present in Manchester can be found in this city! Mr. Mearns makes his argument to the church in his call to unite and fight this growing misery together. He cites examples of immorality, poverty and heart-breaking misery. His call also addresses the need for the state to intervene on the behalf of the organisations trying to elevate the working-classes' misery.

What can be done for the motherless children, diseased and ailing siblings and the poor forced into thievery for filthy lucre? Nothing! Yes, that is correct. We are to do nothing. Sir Andrew Ure, an M.D., who teaches in the university at Glasgow is a proponent of this controversial mind set. Traveling to these various "terrible" places, Sir Andrew came to a completely different conclusion. First, the workers suffering is being greatly exaggerated. Upon visiting these "horror zones" (factories), both on announced and unannounced visits, no such extremes were found. Instead of the finding the

bleak picture Sir James and Mr. Mearns painted, Ure found something quite the opposite. Children play outside in playgrounds during their breaks, and factories provide a safe haven for the children from the ill-use of their bad parents.

Second, the terrible food situation is an exaggeration as well. The amount of food given to the factory workers is sufficient. It is comparable, if not surpassing to that food consumed in the rural communities from where the working class came from. What is to be the conclusion of this bitter argument? one thing is certain, the Kay/Ure debate will continue with us as long as we have factories with a working class. This much can be assured. 19th Century Evangelical Christianity In England Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19

Religion was an important facet of the British Victorian society. It molded public opinion, dictated morals and values, and created social divisions. The dominant religion of the middle-class during this time was Evangelical Christianity. This essay will discuss the relationship between Evangelicalism and the middle-class. It will also argue how Evangelicalism affected the attitudes towards different races and the role of the British empire in the world. Evangelicalism was the strongest ideological influence present in the Victorian Age. This religious movement , a product of the Church of England, was mainly comprised of the middle-class bourgeoisie. In addition, the leadership of the Evangelical movement was greatly influential in politics. As high-ranking members of the Whig party, they played a crucial part in both policy making in the government and establishing the party's power base.¹

The most important leaders of the Evangelicals were the Clapham Sect. They had two basic issues which acted as both a political platform and a social order. The first issue concerned the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in England. Many political battles were fought over the issue of slavery and its trade, but its abolition in the early 1800s was a great political and social victory for the Evangelicals.² The second issue was its was the Evangelical transformation of national morality. Catharine Hall argued that in the Clapham sect the "concern was to redefine the available cultural norms and to encourage a new seriousness and respectability in life."³ This issue was supported and propagated as if it were a political campaign. Pamphlets, the media and church sermons in church were used to spread this word.

The greatest influence of Evangelicalism was on the British society itself. It set standards for defining family and home-life. A crucial aspect of Evangelicalism was its definition of a woman's role in society. They defined a women as a homemaker, a wife and a mother. Detailed instructions on how to become a good "mistress" were easily accessible. An excellent example of this was the writings of Isabella Beeton. She went into detail about what attitudes and habits a mistress should have. Mrs. Beeton argued that "there is no more fruitful source of family discontent than a housewife's badly-cooked dinners and untidy ways."⁴ The Evangelicals

rejected the notion of equality between the sexes. This Evangelical belief stemmed from a fundamental difference in the position of men and women. They were "naturally distinct".⁵ Evangelical doctrine also argued that, although a woman should be educated, it is for the sole purpose of making her a better wife and mother.⁶

This idea of sexual equity and other radical ideas emerged from France even before the infamous Revolution took place.

The ideology coming from France both before and after the revolution was never accepted in England. The English bourgeoisie used the evangelical ideas to combat the foreign influence of the French

Another important sphere of influence to Evangelicalism was the home. This arena was viewed as the building block of British society and culture. If national morality was to be changed, and in some cases created, then morality must be taught at home. The home "was one place where attempts could be made to curb sin."⁷

Evangelicalism was not merely a national fad. As the Clapham Sect and other influential politicians began their campaign for the abolition of slavery, the slave trade was also targeted. This created the need for international intervention. It was not enough that slavery was to cease being a legal commodity of labor, or to be viewed as immoral. The entire industry of the slave trade was immoral. It was seen as an infringement on the individuals natural rights. In the book, *White Dreams In Black Africa*, the British empire began to target the African tradesmen who sold the slaves for Christianization. The plan was to export the greatest gift the English could give, thus creating a moral society, educated, and most importantly, the elimination of the slave trade. This gift was Evangelical Christianity.

Africa was not the only target for evangelism. The Irish, who were predominantly catholic, united with England January 1, 1801. This unification caused Irish culture to be spread abroad in the working class of England. This spread of Irish influence was described by James Phillips Kay as, "debased alike by ignorance and pauperism".⁸ He blamed the penetration of British culture by Irish values as the cause for the debauchery and immorality in the working class. This posed as a proverbial splinter in the lion's paw for the evangelicals. This was brought to the attention of the middle-class moralists, which tried even harder to "persuade" their moral standards on the Irish.

This persuasion came about by the merging of the Church of England with the Catholic Church of Ireland. The national church was Anglican by denomination and protestant. Needless to say, the Irish were not happy with the arrangements nor with the tithe that they were required to pay.⁹ In conclusion, England during its Victorian Age was tremendously influenced by religion. This influence dominated the society and culture of Britain. Its effect can be traced from the home and family life to the heirarchy of the Parliament. The relationship between Evangelicalism and the English middle-class was

strong. It also affected the Empire's attitudes towards other races of people and defined some of its foreign policy concerning the slave trade.

Ireland and England in the Active Union 1801-1920

January 1, 1801 Ireland joined with Britain in what is called the Active Union. The Active Union was an attempt of both states to integrate themselves on a political level. This union lasted approximately 120 years and was wrought with constant turmoil. A common term used by British Members of Parliament was the "Irish question", or what to do with the Irish. The real question, however, concerned the identity of Ireland. Was Ireland an Integral part of Britain or another British colony? An analysis of this union revealed three basic areas of contention that shed light on this topic: politics, religion and economics. These areas show that parity between the two states was never achieved. This essay will address the question of identity in the special case of Ireland and its engagement with Britain during the Active Union.

The political problem of the Active Union was the unequal nature of the agreement. Both parliaments passed the amendment which stipulated a dissolving of the Irish parliament. Upon this elimination of the Irish parliament, 100 elected M.P.s were sent to England for Irish representation. Parliament consisted of 615 members and required majority voting for bills to be passed. The Irish were proclaimed to be equal partners, but, in reality, were grossly out-numbered. However, no other colony possessed direct representation of its people in Parliament.

The British law stated that only protestants were allowed to sit for government. Ireland's population was 80 percent catholic and 20 percent protestant. This restriction of representation of the religious majority in Ireland furthered the inequality of the union. Ireland's true political desires were neither voiced nor given much attention. In the Empire the head of government and most of the local government administrations were British and protestant. The English never attempted to make the Irish, English citizens, which would have given them equality in the Empire. In fact, the common British interpretation of their relationship with Ireland was understood in terms of occupation.

These facts identified a severe disparity between the two states. The political aspects clearly pointed to a unique form of colonization of Ireland which was established with Ireland's consent. Thus, Ireland as a political entity was, by all means and purposes, a colony of England.

The area of Religion related directly to society . Religion helped form national identity, social order and morals/ethics. As previously stated Ireland's population was predominantly catholic. Upon merging, parliament voted that the "national" church of the two states was to be the Church of England. This specific church was of the Anglican Denomination and protestant. As a result, the Irish population was subjected to mass conversion by the English. Further, the Church of

England imposed a tithe on the Irish peasantry. This behavior was categorized as belligerent and was not congruent with the concept of equal partnership. To force religion or any other ideal on a society does not promote peace nor does it exemplify equality.

The economic relationship between Ireland and England was severely unbalanced. Ireland's economy is 80 percent agrarian. The Act of Union caused no growth in the Irish Industrial sector. In fact, Irish industrial production, per capita, receded. Creating a free trade zone, which had been done by the Act of Union agreement, put the ailing Irish industry into direct competition with England's enormous industrial sector.

Ireland joined the English empire voluntarily, assuming there would be an equitable relationship between the two states.

The relationship was to provide political parity, religious cooperation and a mutual economic boom. Consequently, Ireland was reduced to colonial status by superior British power. Ireland was considered to be a colony of England politically, religiously and economically. The result of this union was 120 years of constant political strife and the eventual separation of the two states.