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Tractarian Pastor: Edward Monro of Harrow Weald

I. The Practice of the Parish Ministry

BRIAN HEENEY

WHEN THE Reverend Edward Monro wrote *Parochial Work* in 1850 it was enthusiastically received in High Church circles. John Keble, the archetypal Anglo-Catholic country parson, described Monro's book as "the best 'Country Parson' that has appeared in our times: the most effectual help towards bringing our authorized machinery to bear . . . on our present tasks and emergencies."¹ *The Guardian* remarked of Monro that "scarcely any man in the English Church has a better right to respectful attention. . . . He tells us the principles upon which a parish ought to be worked; and he speaks with unhesitating confidence because he has practised what he preaches, and has tested the truth of his precepts by actual experiment."² Favourable comment, both on Monro's book and on his character as a parish priest, was not confined to Anglo-Catholics and High Churchmen. *The Christian Observer*, the principal organ of responsible Evangelical opinion, found some dangerous doctrine in *Parochial Work*; yet it found much to admire in the achievements of its author, described approvingly as "active, fervent, industrious, imaginative, with a touch of enthusiasm."³

Parochial Work was Edward Monro's first substantial work on pastoral theology; but it was by no means his only contribution to the understanding and development of the pastoral profession. Not only did he produce a number of pamphlets, printed sermons, and talks, and one more sizable book on the life and work of the clergy,⁴ but he also actively engaged in pastoral experiments, both inside and outside his parish boundaries, which attracted the attention of fellow churchmen. For most of his life Monro was a devoted and beloved country parson, a living embodiment of Anglo-Catholic pastoral zeal with a flair for systematizing and articulating the principles of pastoral practice. But he was more than this. Unlike so many of his generation of

1. John Keble, *Occasional Papers and Reviews* (Oxford and London: James Parker, 1877), p. 339. This quotation is from a long (43-page) review article of Monro's book, which originally appeared in *The Christian Remembrancer* in 1850. The reference is clearly to George Herbert's *Country Parson*. Herbert was the seventeenth-century divine upon whom Keble modelled his own ministry. See G. Battiscombe, *John Keble* (London: Constable, 1963), p. 55.

2. *The Guardian*, May 15, 1850.

3. *The Christian Observer*, January, 1851.

4. The Bodleian catalogue lists twenty publications of this character by Monro (including *Parochial Work*). The second major book was *Pastoral Life: The Clergyman at Home and in the Pulpit* (London: Henry Hammans, 1862).

Anglo-Catholics, he was aware of the challenge presented to the Church by industrial society, aware of the millions living in cities, labouring in mines and factories and on railway works, to whom the Church was either unknown, irrelevant, or obnoxious. This awareness led him to make proposals for modifying and supplementing the parish ministry in ways which seem remarkably modern and which were far removed from the stodgy sanctity of Keble's life at Hursley or the tedious triviality of many battles fought by mid-Victorian ritualists.

Monro deserves a place in the Anglo-Catholic pastoral tradition alongside W. J. Butler of Wantage and the best of the Puseyite slum priests. That he has never achieved any place at all in that tradition, either as a practising pastor or as a writer on pastoral theology, is curious. Monro is rarely mentioned (never at any length) in volumes on Victorian church history; and when his name does appear it is as a writer of popular stories and allegories.⁵ In fact, the many tales and works of fiction which flowed from his pen have no real significance apart from their pastoral purpose. They were stories told to make points, the same points that Monro repeated again and again in books and papers explicitly devoted to pastoral theology and the cure of souls.⁶

Monro was born in 1815 into a distinguished London professional family. His father, Dr. Edward Thomas Monro, was principal physician to the Bethlehem Hospital; according to a family historian he was the fourth in direct succession, from father to son, to occupy this senior medical post. For many years he was also treasurer of the College of Physicians in London, and was highly regarded as an expert on mental illness.⁷ Like his father before him young Edward was sent to Harrow, whence, again following family tradition, he entered Oriel College in 1833, the year of Keble's Assize Sermon and the first *Tracts for the Times*.

The theologically charged atmosphere of Oxford in the 1830s affected Monro deeply, and by the time he took his degree in 1836 he was identified with Tractarian men and ideas. Throughout his life this identity was maintained. On the great occasions of Monro's parish life the people invited to participate in the celebrations and to preach were clergymen of the Movement and laymen of like mind. For example, when the cornerstone of a new church building was laid at Harrow Weald in 1846, John Keble preached in the morning and H. E. Manning occupied the pulpit in the

5. He is not mentioned in Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, Vol. I (London: A. & C. Black, 1966). But see F. Warre Cornish, *The English Church in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1910), Vol. I, p. 251. Also see S. L. Ollard, *A Short History of the Oxford Movement* (London: Mowbray, 1933), p. 220. The only mention I have seen of Monro as a writer of pastoral theology is in J. R. H. Moorman, *A History of the Church in England* (New York: Morehouse-Gorham, 1954), p. 364, where his name is misspelt.

6. The Bodleian catalogue lists over twenty published allegories, tales, and stories (or collections of these) by Monro. Among the best known were *Harry and Archie* (1848), *The Vast Army* (1847), *Walter the Schoolmaster* (1854), and *Edwin's Fairing* (1867).

7. Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Monros* (Inverness: A. and W. Mackenzie, 1898), pp. 450 f.

evening; also present on the same occasion were Charles Marriott, William Dodsworth, Henry Wilberforce, and Beresford Hope.⁸ Toward the end of his ministry Monro was still spiritually dependent on Keble, who was probably his confessor.⁹ In 1863, only three years before his death, long after many Anglo-Catholics had become mired in disputes he detested, Monro publicly acknowledged that he had acquired his religious principles from his Oxford teachers when the Movement was at its height.¹⁰

Monro was ordained in 1837 and became curate at the parish church of Harrow. Soon afterwards he married.¹¹ In 1842 he was placed in charge of a small chapel at Harrow Weald, which, after its establishment in 1815, had been staffed and directed from the parish church. Harrow Weald became a separate parish in 1845, and Monro remained its incumbent until his removal to St. John's, Leeds, in 1860.¹² He was chosen as vicar of this well-endowed urban parish from a field of no less than 122 candidates. Four years after he had settled at Leeds, Monro's health broke down. He spent the last two years of his life in southern England in a vain attempt to recover, returning to his Leeds parish only a few weeks before his death on December 13, 1866 at the age of fifty-one.¹³

In the following pages Monro's writings are considered under three general heads:

1. His views on the practice of the parish ministry, the working of the traditional parish system under Anglo-Catholic inspiration (the theme of this first article);

2. His analysis of the gifts and duties of the professional pastor, the parish priest;

3. His observations on the impact of industrialism on Victorian society, the pastoral problems created by new social and vocational population groups, and the reforms required to enable the church to deal with these problems.

It is quite impossible to abstract Monro's writing from his own experience. He rarely, if ever, developed any professional opinion apart from personal pastoral experience. Much of his writing is full of example and illustration taken from his own life at Harrow Weald. Even those pamphlets dealing with people, situations, and problems remote from country parish life, were constructed on the basis of personal visits to coal mines and factories in the North. Monro never wrote academically. He always had some person or some group of people in mind.

8. *The Guardian*, July 8, 1846.

9. E. Monro to John Keble, July 8, 1859 (Oxford, Keble College Papers).

10. E. Monro, "Church Principles, Bible Principles," *Lectures in Defence of Church Principles* (Oxford: Mowbray, 1864), p. 1.

11. Montagu Burrows, "Edward Monro," *Dictionary of National Biography*, XIII, 630. See also *The Harrow Gazette and General Advertiser*, January 1, 1867.

12. Walter W. Druett, *The Stanmores of Harrow Weald* (Uxbridge: The Hillingdon Press, 1938), pp. 223 f.

13. *The Yorkshire Post*, December 15, 1866; *The Leeds Mercury*, December 14, 1866. I am indebted to the Reverend Canon R. J. Wood of Leeds for information about St. John's Church, and about Monro's appointment in 1860.

In 1849, a reviewer in *The Guardian* deplored the absence, in the English Church, of "practical books" dealing with the cure of souls. Referring to Jeremy Taylor's similar lament in the preface to *Ductor Dubitantium* nearly two centuries before, the writer went on:

Except his [Taylor's] own work . . . we hardly possess any one manual for the assistance of pastors in this most difficult part of their office; a want which will be always felt in proportion to the awakening and activity of the religious life of a people. We had hoped, when the chair of Pastoral Theology was founded at Oxford [in 1842] that this whole abandoned branch of sacred science would have been restored. To that professor would naturally fall in his proper province the treatment of moral theology, systematic casuistry, the subject matter of confession and catechising; and, under the latter heads, the theory of education as related to conscience and the pastoral office.

Evidently nothing satisfactory had emerged from Oxford by 1849, although the reviewer still hoped that "this whole branch of theology might formally be revived among us." It was not on the professor, however, but on Edward Monro of Harrow Weald that the writer pinned his hope. These lines were written as part of a review of a short pamphlet by Monro on education, a pamphlet which encouraged the reviewer to believe that Monro could contribute much more substantially and generally to the revival of pastoral theology.¹⁴

This greater contribution was made in *Parochial Work*, which appeared in the next year. Although it was certainly not the first book on the subject since Jeremy Taylor,¹⁵ it was the pioneer work of Tractarian or Anglo-Catholic pastoral theology. Some of the topics covered in the book had been dealt with in sermons and tracts by other Tractarian divines,¹⁶ but never before had the "Church system" as applied to parochial life by Keble at Hursley, by Butler at Wantage, and by Monro himself at Harrow Weald, been systematically elucidated in print. As has already been observed, this novelty attracted much attention in the Church press, and it prompted Keble to write a review article about one-sixth the length of the book itself.¹⁷

Great as was Monro's own devotion to the "Church system," he felt that pastoral work was essentially the personal work of the parish priest, principally his activity in reconciling the poor and outcast of society. Over and over again he urged clergymen "who have hitherto lived for their few rich, now to live for their numberless poor . . . those who have hitherto kept a reserved distance between themselves and their flock, to break it down and merge the mere gentleman in the minister of God."¹⁸ This understanding

14. *The Guardian*, April 25, 1849.

15. Gilbert Burnet's *Discourse of Pastoral Care*, for example, was written in 1692. It has been described as the first Anglican "general treatise on the work of a pastor." (J. T. McNeill, *A History of the Cure of Souls* [New York: Harper, 1951], p. 236.)

16. E.g. the two sermons by Pusey on *Entire Absolution of the Penitent*, published in 1846.

17. *Parochial Work* contains 263 pages. Keble's review in *The Christian Remembrance* was 43 pages (Keble, *Occasional Papers and Reviews*, pp. 338 ff.).

18. E. Monro, *A Few Words on the Spirit in which Men are Meeting the Present Crisis in the Church* (Oxford and London: J. H. Parker, 1850), pp. 19 f. See also E. Monro, *Parochial Work* (Oxford and London: J. H. Parker, 1850), pp. 179 f.

of parochial work is nowhere clearer than in a pamphlet devoted to the obligations of the parish priest to transient railway workers:

The parish priest must devise some means to bring the banished home. They have no one else to look to; there is no one else responsible for their souls; there is no other man who is bound by such laws and obligations to place himself in their way, warn them of sin, cheer them when discouraged, visit them when sick, meet their arguments, and convince them of the reality of sympathy and genuine love.¹⁹

Monro did not need the Religious Census of 1851 to tell him that the masses were alienated from the Established Church. It was a "painful truth" that the Church was not doing its work among the people.²⁰ "Our poor," he wrote, "are in large masses recognizing no need of grace and asking no help of God from whom alone they can gain strength, and this is the case when they are living and dying a stone's throw of the minister of God." Infrequent at the communion rail, ignorant of the Creed, mouthing childish prayers (if they attempted prayer at all), the poor were inclined to mistake baptism "for parish registration, or some other merely civil arrangement."²¹ Their moral habits were no more elevated than their religious understanding. Fornication, for example, was

looked upon with the greatest lightness and indifference. . . . The poor view it as no sin at all, and scarcely in the light of a necessary evil. . . . The poor of parish after parish will be found to look upon it as not only excusable but a nearly necessary state of things, that before marriage the bounds of chastity shall have been transgressed between the parties.²²

Monro never blamed the poor themselves for their low religious and moral state. Much of their behaviour derived from an appalling physical, emotional, and spiritual environment:

To starve through infancy, through boyhood fight,
 Drink through the years of youth, and then return
 In manhood all the coin that they received,
 Cool negligence repaying with stern hate,
 And die at last without a thought of Heaven.²³

No little blame for the state of the poor rested squarely upon the parish clergy of England. Although the parish system itself was a superb instrument for the guidance and care of the poor, although "in the past twenty years [before 1850] every diocese, every archdeaconry, we might almost say every parish in the kingdom has felt the throb of the quicker pulse of the Church's renovated life,"²⁴ yet still too many clergymen failed in their responsibility. Rather than labour to make the system work, too many of the "awakened" clergy preferred to desert to Rome, to lay "open our wounds with the keen

19. E. Monro, *The "Navvies" and How to Meet Them* (London: Joseph Masters, 1857), p. 5. This pamphlet is one of a series of five under the general head *The Church and the Million*.

20. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 3.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 20 f.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

23. E. Monro, *The Parish* (Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1853), p. 104.

24. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 5.

knife of satire and contemptuous comparison," to retire "into a life of meditation or private tuition," or even to sit in idleness "content with criticizing mistakes in practice and finding out flaws in her [the Church's] ecclesiastical discipline."²⁵

In Monro's writing and practice six elements of parochial work emerged as of special importance: "personal intercourse" or consultation between the parson and individual members of his flock; daily worship in the parish church; the sacramental life of the parish; the preaching of the pastor; parish visiting; and, finally, parish schools. Principally through these instruments, according to Monro, the poor might be reconciled to God and the wounds of parish society healed.

"Personal intercourse" was Monro's own expression,²⁶ and it signified a practice closely related to private confession. The priest's object was so to gain the confidence of his parishioners that they would voluntarily come to him to confess their sins.²⁷ Not surprisingly *The Christian Observer* suspected that Monro was introducing the "Romish" confessional thinly disguised.²⁸ Although there can be no doubt that Monro shared the general Anglo-Catholic approval of private confession, he was careful to advise against "the attempt to work a systematic confession with all the detail of the Roman mode of applying it."²⁹ Private confession was, in Monro's view, the result, not the means, of "personal intercourse."

The chief aim of private consultation between priest and people was the individual knowledge of each sheep by the shepherd. Monro objected to the notion that the parson's job was to give superficial moral tone to village society, "generally leavening the people."³⁰ The cure of souls involved knowledge of each individual person. Remarking favourably on Monro's insistence on individual consultation, Keble used a medical analogy: "Who would think of being 'cared' for, medically cared for, without telling his case to the physician? Who would be satisfied if only care were taken to dispense good medical books among those who were in danger of taking a complaint, and to see to it that the books were read and understood by them."³¹ Despite the threat of the confessional, Evangelical comment on Monro's main thesis was approving, and *The Christian Observer* warned Evangelical parsons against the attempt to "influence and guide the poor . . . only through the medium of collective addresses."³²

Monro offered a plan by which "unreserved use of conversation on holy subjects" between priest and people would be facilitated. It was a plan for an agricultural parish of about one thousand people (350 adults and 650 minors), and it involved seeing each parishioner for a fifteen-minute inter-

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 3 f.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

28. *The Christian Observer*, January, 1851.

29. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 45.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

31. Keble, *Occasional Papers and Reviews*, p. 350.

32. *The Christian Observer*, January, 1851.

view on a regular basis. The clergyman should devote three evenings a week (from six until nine o'clock) to this work; by so doing he would see each member of the parish privately several times a year.³³ Such a plan could not be practised successfully by a priest insensitive to the individual peculiarities of his people, or unaware of the social barriers which normally divided priest and poor parishioner. Monro himself knew full well that the system could not be instituted overnight. He recommended developing personal relationships naturally and easily before imposing any system of regular interviews: "A confirmation, or a recovery from sickness, the loss of a child, or friend, some particular anxiety or doubt, will naturally make an introduction, which, if followed up with earnestness and perseverance, will soon realize the intercourse desired."³⁴

In his advocacy of daily services (Morning and Evening Prayer) in the parish church, Monro was at one with Keble.³⁵ He expatiated on the virtues of regularity in public prayer, and the "calm monotony" of the Prayer Book offices. Twice a day they reminded parishioners of the sacred nature of the secular round.³⁶ Monro's remarks on this subject moved Keble to commend "a certain monotony, a low unvarying accent," in public worship; he vigorously approved Monro's advocacy of the "Church's monotonous song."³⁷

Monro observed that most parishes in which daily services had been inaugurated had very small congregations.³⁸ He also noted that in most such churches the services were held at hours which virtually excluded the working poor. Even in winter it was impossible for the poor farm labourer to be present at a service between 7 A.M. and 7 P.M.; yet in most country churches Morning Prayer was said either at eight or ten o'clock, and Evening Prayer was nearly always said before 7 P.M.³⁹ In London the situation was no better.⁴⁰ The poor man was thus automatically excluded from participation in public worship. "This suiting the hours to the convenience of the higher class of society [wrote Monro] tends strongly to create a suspicion that the clergy themselves have calls in the evening superior in their minds to the spiritual good of the poor."⁴¹ Monro pressed the parish clergy to change the hours of prayer to accommodate the working poor. Keble was dubious about this. More sensitive to the requirements of aged and infirm persons and children than to the situation of the working poor, Keble thought it a mistake to move all service hours; at least one daily service should be retained during working hours for the non-working classes.⁴²

True to his Tractarian training Monro encouraged a rich parochial

33. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 53.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

35. cf. Battiscombe, *John Keble*, p. 176.

36. cf. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 65.

37. Keble, *Occasional Papers and Reviews*, p. 367.

38. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 67.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 79.

41. *Ibid.*

42. Keble, *Occasional Papers and Reviews*, p. 363.

sacramental life. In the Gorham dispute Monro came down firmly on the Catholic side, pointing out that "around the doctrine of regeneration is wound every Christian truth."⁴³ Yet he suggested that not false doctrine but inadequate preparation really lay at the root of the "careless and deficient way" in which the poor treated the sacrament of Baptism. To remedy this he recommended the careful choice and preparation of sponsors.⁴⁴

Holy Communion should be celebrated weekly, at an early hour on Sunday morning when "it can easily be received before the morning meal, and comes at an hour when the work of the day and the calls of children do not interfere."⁴⁵ Monro was doubtful about the value of special pre-Confirmation instruction; he felt that over-emphasis on Confirmation classes really constituted an admission that regular school instruction in religion had failed and that a cram course was therefore required. He considered that the customary age for Confirmation (then fifteen or sixteen) should be lowered, and that preparation for First Communion should be emphasized. The really important event, thought Monro, was reception of the body and blood of Christ; yet current practice emphasized the lesser ordinance of Confirmation at the expense of First Communion.⁴⁶ The importance that he attached to the Eucharist, and particularly to First Communion, was reflected in Monro's popular fiction. For example, in *Old Robert Gray* (1846), Robert, the guardian and godfather of young Charlie Lee,

constantly talked to the boy about . . . the day he would be confirmed and particularly when he should take the Holy Communion . . . when he should, for the first time, be allowed to receive His precious Body and Blood, by whom alone we have everlasting life. . . . Charlie had so often heard him talk of this blessed day that it was the great day of his life he most looked forward to.⁴⁷

In all this Monro evidently practised what he preached. When the Bishop of Ripon visited Monro's parish in Leeds in April 1862, he not only confirmed a large class of 102 young people, but also addressed a "First Communion Class" of between eighty and ninety children who had been confirmed in the previous year. Bishop Bickersteth stated that it "was very seldom, if at all, that he had the opportunity of meeting again those whom he had confirmed in previous years." At the same service fifty-five children were present who were already being prepared for Confirmation in the following year.⁴⁸ Thus did Monro demonstrate the continuum of sacramental preparation which he had advocated in *Parochial Work* many years before.

43. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 104.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 153 f.

47. E. Monro, *Old Robert Gray* (London: James Burns, 1846), p. 5.

48. cf. *The Leeds Intelligencer*, April 12, 1862. St. John's parish, in 1860, had about 1,200 inhabitants (*The Leeds Intelligencer*, March 17, 1860).

One of the most important elements in Monro's own ministry, and a feature of the parochial system which he commended repeatedly in his writing, was popular extemporaneous preaching. He denied that sermons should take the place of sacramental or liturgical worship; but he insisted on the vital place of "preaching of an earnest, and, if possible, extempore kind" especially among the poor.⁴⁹ His devotion to the Tractarian system did not prevent him from criticizing some of its exponents who "throw discredit on the whole ordinance";⁵⁰ indeed, a considerable section of his book *Pastoral Life* (1862) was devoted to "A History of the Schools which have Undervalued Preaching," by which he meant the old High Church and newer Tractarian schools.⁵¹ Preaching, he wrote, if it was to reach the poor, must always be simple and clear: "The refined language of the scholar, the finished lectures of the essayist, or the cold and chastened style of the philosopher, will no more achieve this work, than the harmonies of music will delight a man destitute of musical ear or taste."⁵²

In 1862, Monro distinguished two types of sermon: that designed for the "work of evangelization," and that which formed part of the regular services of the Church. Both types were legitimate and necessary. Evangelization, however, should be separated from regular worship. "On a large scale [he wrote] this end could be reached . . . by opening the naves of our cathedrals for preaching on Sunday afternoons, and preaching *only*, with the slight addition of prayer referable to the sermon, and the singing of hymns."⁵³ There is no doubt that Monro himself was good at this sort of thing. His writings show that he preached to haymakers in barns, to navvies in taverns, to miners in the bowels of the earth, and to factory operatives in their places of work.⁵⁴ He was remembered after his death as a brilliant preacher, and he deserves to rank among those whom Dieter Voll has termed "Catholic Evangelicals."⁵⁵ In contrast to the "great general work of evangelization," the sermon within the regular church service had "a more specific definite and limited design: either the explanation of the Lesson, Gospel or Epistle; the exposition of the ecclesiastical season in which the day may fall, and the practical teaching of it; or a special recommendation to communicate and to prepare for the Eucharist."⁵⁶

Monro's views on preaching contrasted sharply with those of Keble, who, as Mrs. Battiscombe has pointed out, was extremely suspicious of popular sermons.⁵⁷ Keble suspected that "Mr. Monro has a little over-estimated the

49. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 91.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

51. Monro, *Pastoral Life*, pp. 110 ff.

52. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 93.

53. Monro, *Pastoral Life*, p. 136.

54. See E. Monro, *The "Navvies" and How to Meet Them; The Collier and the Operative and How to Affect Them; Haymakers and Their Habits* (London: Joseph Masters, 1858). These were all published under the general title *The Church and the Million*.

55. See Dieter Voll, *Catholic Evangelicalism* (London: The Faith Press, 1963). For evidence of Monro's reputation as a preacher, see the obituary in *The Yorkshire Post*, December 15, 1866.

56. Monro, *Pastoral Life*, p. 136.

57. Battiscombe, *John Keble*, p. 175.

power of speaking without book," and he was convinced that "preaching must in general partake of that calmness and (almost) monotony with which the Church in her services speaks to her people. . . . The earnest and sober inculcation of truths and practices acknowledged to be right, will of itself savour of monotony."⁵⁸

Monro attached much importance to purposeful parish visiting. The pastor should know his flock; he must "connect himself as closely and intimately as possible with the people, and the scenes of domestic life and occupation tend more than almost anything to strengthen this tie. . . . [Visiting] destroys the distance which exists so often between the two orders of society."⁵⁹ In order to strengthen the sense of identity between priest and poor, the visitor must be free of the clerical vices of "stiffness of manner," "magisterialism," and "condescension," showing his love without any aspect of superiority.⁶⁰ Common courtesy was important. No clergyman had a right "to cross the poor man's threshold with a covered head, nor in any degree to demean himself as superior within the walls of the cottage."⁶¹

The home was not the only place to visit the poor. Monro found that, during the haying season, the country parson wasted his time visiting cottages; for all the poor were in the hayfields. Consequently, during this season the priest should abandon his customary routine of home visiting, and accommodate himself to the life of the haymakers. "Make up your mind to look upon the hayfield . . . as your parish," he advised,

Judge of your parish . . . more truly; there it lies. Empty cottages, and for a moment the empty church is not your vocation; souls, living souls, immortal souls, they are your vocation, and they are in the hayfield. Go out then at five in the morning with them. Take your stick and call your dog. Pack up your dinner in a basket. . . . Go pic-nic with them from morning dawn to evening sunset. When they rest, rest with them upon the haycock. Gather round you the listening group, and tell them magic stories that may allegorise heaven and pre-figure the Shepherd of salvation. . . . Talk to them and make them know and love you. Do all that, and . . . [in] fifteen earnest hours, you may have done more to have won their confidence, to have neared their hearts' affections, to have gained an influence over their sympathies and their wills than you did in . . . fifteen weeks of visiting from house to house.⁶²

For the sick and dying the priest should make special provision, for in times of illness "Christ is peculiarly with the soul." He suggested daily visits to people with terminal conditions, visits marked by a regular scheme of prayers and readings. Monro retained a lingering respect for the view that sickness was the issue of sin, and he warned that "care should be taken that the time . . . afforded by God for reflection should be used fully for repentance of any of the particular sins which had produced the chastise-

58. Keble, *Occasional Papers and Reviews*, pp. 368, 370.

59. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 158.

60. Monro, *Pastoral Life*, pp. 61-65.

61. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 160.

62. Monro, *Haymakers and Their Habits*, p. 31.

ment."⁶³ The prospect of death was the final dissuasive against irreligion. Just as pastoral visiting focussed on the dying, so Monro's tales concentrated heavily on the death-scene and on the inevitability of death in every life. In *Old Robert Gray*, death was an ever-present reality and sanction for young Charlie's conduct:

Old Robert's clock, when it struck the hours, reminded him [Charlie] how quickly eternity was coming on. When Charlie lay down to sleep in his little cot, he was reminded of its likeness to a grave, and his lying-down in it to a day when he should lie down in that last resting-place. How often Charlie used to kneel down by the bedside and think of dying.⁶⁴

Monro was among the many Victorian clergymen who still accepted the Church's responsibility for the education of the nation's children. Parish elementary schools were integral elements in the total pastoral strategy outlined by Monro; in his view the teaching function constituted one of the main activities of the parish priest. "When he [the parish clergyman] is not looked at as the educator of the children he has baptised," wrote Monro, he at once breaks up the unity of the parochial system."⁶⁵ By "educator" Monro meant "the actual manager and teacher of his school"; the schoolmaster was "but his temporary *locum tenens* and placed there as his assistant when he is absent."⁶⁶ By education, he meant something more than simple intellectual cultivation; for education was a moral and pastoral process, a part of the totality of pastoral work.⁶⁷ Like the other parts of that work, the education of children must be undertaken with sensitivity and understanding. He vigorously opposed the use of fear to impose discipline; "boys have too often been made to feel that they are mere machines, butts for the exercise of arbitrary power."⁶⁸ Children should be treated with the respect due to human beings, should be coerced as little as possible, should be regarded as individuals with individual destinies. "The importance need hardly be pointed out [wrote Monro] of studying carefully the particular turns of each boy for the pursuits of after-life; for manifestly that to which he has a direct tendency is the line by which he will probably most efficiently do his work as a member of the human society."⁶⁹

Monro disapproved the monitorial method of teaching, and he favoured regular public catechizing of children in church, a practice also adopted by John Keble at Hursley.⁷⁰ Remarking on "how often children from village schools are excluded from attendance at daily services," he deplored the dissociation of church and school, and he insisted that children should be "looked upon as an integral part of the congregation." Being a humane man, he thought that "it might be advisable that children . . . should leave

63. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 162.

64. Monro, *Old Robert Gray*, p. 8.

65. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 120.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 116 f.

67. *Ibid.*, pp. 222-24.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 241 f.

70. cf. Battiscombe, *John Keble*, p. 176.

church before the close of the full service, perhaps at the end of Morning Prayer or the Litany, whenever an additional service follows."⁷¹

Monro himself was evidently a successful manager of elementary schools.⁷² However, his greatest contemporary fame was derived from an educational experiment for teenage boys undertaken at Harrow Weald in 1846. St. Andrew's College, which was opened by Monro on the same day that the cornerstone was laid for the new church in 1846,⁷³ was both an educational and a pastoral experiment. Physically it was modest enough, consisting of "a double cottage with a single one (one room) adjoining . . . thrown into one." In this little establishment, between twenty and thirty boys lived and learned in an atmosphere of rigorous piety. Up at five o'clock in the morning, these sons of cottagers and farm labourers engaged in a round of praying and learning, serving at tables, working in the school garden and farmyard, until the last of many bells summoned them to the last prayers of the day at 8:30, one half-hour before bedtime.⁷⁴

This unusual establishment required a good deal of subsidy from Monro's friends, and it collapsed when Monro himself went to Leeds.⁷⁵ Yet while it flourished it attracted much attention in Tractarian circles. When it was opened, in 1846, Keble and Manning preached sermons;⁷⁶ lesser Tractarian divines like Charles Marriott, Henry Wilberforce, and William Dodsworth, as well as the bishops of Capetown and Toronto, and Dr. Vaughan, the headmaster of Harrow, all took part in various school celebrations.⁷⁷ W. E. Gladstone, Beresford Hope, and Keble donated annual prizes,⁷⁸ and the type of education provided was the subject of an enthusiastic lead article in *The Guardian* in 1851.⁷⁹

Monro himself regarded St. Andrew's as a pastoral experiment, part of an effort to maintain a link between the parish church and village adolescents. Monro regarded "youth from 12 to 20" as the pastor's greatest problem.⁸⁰ He was appalled at the high incidence of teenage "drop-out" from active churchmanship; after Confirmation, he wrote, forty-five out of fifty among the rural poor failed to become regular communicants.⁸¹ According to Monro the reasons for this were several. In the first place, the child of

71. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 118.

72. At St. John's, Leeds, he gathered 250 pupils within a few weeks of beginning new day-schools. In the same parish, the Sunday School increased by 250% during the first year of his incumbency (*The Leeds Intelligencer*, May 25, 1861).

73. cf. *The Guardian*, July 8, 1846.

74. cf. *The Guardian*, June 16, 1847. All but three of the boys were "sons of cottagers, agricultural labourers."

75. cf. T. Mozley, *Reminiscences Chiefly of Oriol College and the Oxford Movement* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1882), Vol. II, p. 23; *The Harrow Observer and Gazette*, March 29, 1940; and Druett, *The Stanmores of Harrow Weald*, p. 225.

76. cf. *The Guardian*, July 8, 1846; K. D. Peers, *Harrow Weald: A Paper Read Before the North Middlesex Literary and Scientific Society* (London: 1896), p. 10.

77. cf. *The Guardian*, July 7, 1847. See also the collection of undated newspaper clippings in the Wealdstone library.

78. cf. *The Guardian*, July 30, 1851.

79. *The Guardian*, November 3, 1851.

80. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 111.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

twelve escaped daily supervision by the clergyman in the parish elementary school.⁸² Furthermore, the physical development and emotional tribulations of adolescence made that period of life peculiarly difficult, opened the way to new (obviously sexual) sins, and resulted in a rebellious attitude.⁸³ During these trying years the youth was forced out of the family cottage, too small to accommodate him once he had emerged from early childhood;⁸⁴ he often found a room in a public house where he was exposed to immorality and irreligion.

While these two things exist [wrote Monro], the impossibility of the space of the ordinary English cottage holding the family grown up as it did in childhood, and the extreme danger attending the early exposure of the youth of the poor to undisciplined and unrestrained life in the world, there surely must, in the rule and regulations of society, be some remedy which would meet and correct the evil.⁸⁵

Monro's "remedy" was to provide "collegiate life" for the agricultural poor, similar in principle, although not in opulence, to that provided for the superior classes at Oxford and Cambridge.⁸⁶ Monro did not believe that this "collegiate life" need always have a directly educational purpose, as it did at his own St. Andrew's College. Indeed "the transmutation of raw ploughboys into sweet choristers and good scholars," as Tom Mozley put it,⁸⁷ seems to have been a minor element in his total plan. The main group of youths living together under the supervision of the parish priest was to consist of agricultural labourers engaged in full-time work for the farmers of the neighborhood.⁸⁸ By means of the discipline of collegiate life, regular exposure to religious observance and moral example, and innocent amusements such as music and cricket,⁸⁹ these youths would be spared the disasters to which they might otherwise succumb as they were cast out into the world.

Monro worked out a detailed plan for such an "agricultural college" in a pamphlet written in 1850. It is possible that he actually began such an establishment in Harrow Weald, alongside St. Andrew's College; but I have not been able to find any contemporary record of it.⁹⁰

82. cf. E. Monro, *Agricultural Colleges and Their Working: A Letter to A. J. B. Beresford Hope, Esq., M.P.* (Oxford and London: J. H. Parker, 1850), p. 9.

83. cf. *ibid.*, pp. 9 f; *Parochial Work*, pp. 184 ff.; *The Parish*, pp. 10-13.

84. cf. Monro, *Parochial Work*, p. 146.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

87. Mozley, *Reminiscences*, pp. 22 f.

88. cf. Monro, *Agricultural Colleges*, pp. 13 f.

89. cf. *ibid.*, p. 30.

90. cf. Druett, *The Stanmores of Harrow Weald*, pp. 224 f.

(To be concluded)