

**A LETTER TO THE LORD'S TEMPORAL  
AND SPIRITUAL OF HER MAJESTY'S  
REALM ON THE PRESENT RELATION  
OF CHURCH AND STATE, ITS PERILS  
AND SAFEGUARDS**

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A Letter to the Lord's Temporal and Spiritual of Her Majesty's Realm on the present relation of church and state, its perils and safeguards by Charles Voysey

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**CHARLES VOYSEY**

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A LETTER  
TO  
THE LORDS TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL  
OF HER MAJESTY'S REALM,  
ON THE  
Present Relation of Church and State,  
Its Perils and Safeguards.

BY  
REV. CHARLES VOYSEY, B.A.,  
ST. EDMUND HALL, OXFORD, FORMERLY VICAR OF HEALAUGH.

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THIS Letter is sent to every Peer of the Realm, without distinction, because the writer cannot be assumed to know for certain the religious opinions of each one. It may, therefore, fall into the hands of those to whom some portions of it will be necessarily distasteful; yet the writer earnestly disclaims all intention of giving pain to any individual. Roman Catholics and others having strong convictions opposed to those of the writer are respectfully urged to hold him excused for sending the Letter to them as well as to all the rest. This Letter will not be published within two full months of its being sent to the Peers.

*All replies will be held as strictly confidential.*

WOODLAWN HOUSE, DULWICH, S.E.

November, 1883.





[*Copy.*]

MY LORDS,

With all the respect due to your order I ask permission to address your Lordships on a subject not only of the deepest importance to us all as men, but of the highest interest to those who have the welfare of this Kingdom at heart, and to whom has been entrusted in the course of God's good Providence so large a share as yours in guiding and influencing the opinions and actions of society, and in the maintenance of true religion and virtue in our beloved land.

The great fact to which I desire to rivet attention, and to which it is impossible that your thoughts have not frequently reverted, is the steadily growing alienation of some of the most enlightened and upright minds of this generation from the doctrines hitherto known as popular Christianity, and which at present are by the law of the land prescribed to be believed and taught by the clergy.

I do not here attempt to assail the truth of these doctrines, nor would I abuse the hour of

intrusion upon your Lordships' notice by making offensive observations upon a creed which you may possibly still hold.

My first object is to bring before you, as prominently and forcibly as words can do so, the simple fact of this alienation.

Secondly, to show wherein it involves the gravest peril not only to the order and well-being of this Realm, not only to the safety of those institutions which are rightly regarded as the strength and glory of our country, but also—and still more peril—to the security and permanence of those principles of Religion, which all believers, of whatever creed, agree in regarding as essential and vital.

Thirdly, to suggest some practical safeguards whereby the dangers which threaten us may be averted.

It may be deemed by some an utter waste of time to offer proofs of a fact so patent as that of the alienation of which I speak. But I know by experience how the lives of some—especially Archbishops and Bishops—are hedged around with screens and barriers which shelter them from immediate contact with the rough work-a-day world; and how, in consequence, the real state of the popular mind is hidden from them, or reaches them through so many filtering channels as to be practically

useless. Chaplains and Archdeacons of kindly heart, even when they know, as they sometimes know, the unwelcome truth, are apt to soften down the asperities of the tidings they bear, or from mistaken kindness to withhold information altogether. So, too, they who live habitually in the charmed circle of their peers, and who are for the most part engrossed with the sacred, though unobtrusive, duties of their private station, are liable to remain uninformed or only scantily informed of what is going on in other *strata* of society, and cannot even derive from their weekly and daily newspaper a complete and adequate knowledge of the convulsive ferment which is now shaking the principles of faith and virtue to their very foundations. I do not, however, presume to possess a more accurate or extended knowledge of this great upheaval than your Lordships; but I may take it for granted that there are some amongst your order who have not had such opportunities as my own for learning the full truth, or for estimating the extent of our danger. Considering, further, the vast amount of Church patronage in your Lordships' hands, the clergy with whom you must inevitably come in contact are the last persons in the world to be expected to reveal their own misgivings—not to say their unbelief—or to hint