

Representative Church Body Library, Dublin

GC/

The papers of the General Convention and its related committees, being the forerunners of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland, including minute books, resolutions, correspondence, petitions printed and other materials.

1868-1874

From Church of Ireland Church House, Dublin,

1998

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Introduction to the collection

By the Irish Church Act (32&33 Vic. c. 42 sect. 2) - enacted on the 26 July 1869, and which passed into law in 1870 - the union between Church and State in Ireland that had existed since the Reformation was dissolved, and the Church of Ireland ceased to be established by law. This left the Church of Ireland 'free to shape her future course, independent of state control', as the early strategists of the dis-Established church put it (*Journal of the General Convention of the Church of Ireland, 1870 with Statutes Passed*, edited by Revd Alfred Lee, Dublin 1871), pp v-vi (this source is also digitized and available here: <www.ireland.anglican.org/journal>).

The collection of papers created in the immediate periods both before and after enactment of 32&33 Vic. c. 42 sect. 2 were stored securely in a metal trunk labelled 'General Convention Box', in the Representative Church Body (initially at its headquarters at number 52 St Stephen's Green, and more recently at Church of Ireland House in Rathmines) document this period of transition from state-run Church to an independent, largely voluntary and minority denominational Church, from the perspective of those tasked with safeguarding its future in the aftermath of dis-Establishment. The contents of this box have now been extensively catalogued as "GC/", and are available for consultation at the RCB Library, the Church's principal repository for its written heritage. These documents tell the story of how the Church of Ireland was reorganised (with the general and diocesan synodical structures we have inherited today) and thus survived the biggest challenge of its history.

There are minutes, resolutions and other working papers documenting the work of an initial Consulting Committee (section 1/) which began the task of transition, hosting an initial Church Conference of archbishops, bishops, clergy and laity in April 1869 (section 3/), gradually evolving thereafter through the creation of a Standing Committee, and related General Committee or Church Committee (see section 6). This committee organised

the General Convention of 1870, and it, together with its various ancillary committees (see sections /7 &/8) was tasked to draft the Church of Ireland constitution, producing standing orders, and completely overhauling the financial structures of the Church. Every diocese and parish of the church was represented by clerical and lay delegates at the General Convention, which was held in open session from the 15 February (following divine service and administration of Holy Communion in St Patrick's Cathedral) at the Ancient Concert Rooms, Great Brunswick Street, until the 4 November 1870, when the final entry in the minute book states: 'here ends the minutes of the Convention'. Thereafter, the honorary secretaries provided continuous administrative support between annual representative diocesan and general synods at local and central Church levels.

A particularly valuable aspect of this collection is a voluminous amount of material documenting the role of the laity, most particularly in the working papers, minutes and resolutions of the Committee of Laymen which met separately but fed into the general deliberations for the re-structuring of the Church until the Convention was constituted, from March 1869 until February 1870 (see section /2).

The collection also includes a significant run of correspondence consisting of 46 letters and enclosures mostly addressed to the honorary secretaries of the main committees, from the archbishops of Armagh and Dublin (Marcus Gervais de la Poer Beresford and Richard Chevenix Trench), other bishops as well as prominent laity in the period both before and after the passage of the Act, from January 1869 to January 1870, when the Convention got going. These letters which are catalogued in detail here provide a particularly graphic, sometimes colourful insight, to the personal views of the various episcopal, clerical and lay correspondents on Gladstone's radical legislation, but also convey a sense of a realistic acceptance of the inevitable that legislative change would bring, and the determined strategy adopted by those

trying to safeguard the Church. The correspondence reveals the growing influence of the laity and the careful path the hierarchy had to tread to keep all parties together, and the wise decisions that were made to ensure the Church survived.

Another section (9/) includes 11 petitions addressed to either the Church of Ireland as a whole, or specifically to the Convention in the course of its work. Some of the early petitions convey the widespread dismay and empathy that existed within the Church of England at the passage of the Irish Church Act, 1869, from Church of England sources - specifically in the form of an enormous roll signed by the clergy and laity of the diocese of Norwich, and supportive letters from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. But several petitions also relate to the early internal battles that the Church would face, with regard to fair lay representation at the Convention in particular, and the necessary, if controversial, doctrinal and ritual revisions of the *Book of Common Prayer* that the changed legal position of the Church required, and which with other matters fuelled a heated and protracted 'Revision debate'.

Various printed papers (10/) received by the various committees and the Convention during the course of its work, together with a couple of miscellaneous items (11) complete the collection. For clarity, and given the plethora of committees at work during a relatively short period, the papers are arranged loosely in chronological order as many of the forerunning committees merged or evolved into later committees, and ultimately the General Convention proper.

It is significant that such an important record of the thinking and decision-making that occurred during this period of transition has survived at all. One item of correspondence reveals that there was a determined effort to preserve the material by the Revd C.P. Reichel [Vicar of Mullingar 1864-75, Meath, and later Bishop of Meath], Birarage, Mullingar, who (shortly after the Irish

Church Act was passed in August 1869 and when the Church Conference was concluding its business, paying the way for the Standing Committee to evolve the process of holding general synods) wrote to Thomas Greene Esq., one of the honorary secretaries, to emphasise the importance of record-keeping and ensuring the collection would be made safe for future generations. Reichel's advice may have had a bearing on the survival of the collection. 'With regard to the documents' he wrote, 'to ensure that at a future time a report of proceedings of the Standing Committee' would be 'kept for the record', he urged that 'the memoranda of the meetings are it seems to me the property of the secretaries on behalf of the whole committee, and they will have no right to give them to the Archbishops, should they require them to' (GC5.1/25).

Hoping that the archbishops would not seek to have custody of them after 'the Conference is disposed', Reichel warned that should any future attempt be made to take possession of the documents, 'it ought to be resisted given the importance that the documents may have at some future time ... I therefore write to protest, as a member of the Committee, against these documents being either destroyed or allowed out of the possession of the secretaries. Only another Church Conference, or its committee, or the future government body can have any right to dispose of these documents'.

It seems that Reichel's sensible advice was acted upon, with the result that this collection, safely stored in its metal trunk which passed into the hands of the Representative Body has survived the test of time.

1/ Working papers and minutes of the Consulting Committee

1. Minute book of the Consulting Committee, established to administer the Church of Ireland both before and the immediate aftermath of disestablishment, including references to the new Scheme for Lay Cooperation. Meetings chaired alternatively by the Bishop of Meath, the Bishop of Limerick and the Archbishop of Dublin.
11 November 1868 - 6 April 1869

2/ Working papers and minutes of the Committee of Laymen

1. Loose minutes of the Committee of Laymen, for the following meetings: 26 February and 2 March 1869 [together]; 6 March 1869; and 9 March 1869, to which a resolution is annexed concerning the Scheme for Lay Representation, 9 March 1869. The Earl of Courtown was chairman.
5 items
March 1869
2. Proofs and various drafts of the Scheme for Lay Cooperation in Diocesan Synods or Conferences, as agreed upon by the Committee of Laymen, with a draft of a letter sent to the Archbishops that appears to have accompanied the final wording of the Scheme for Lay Representation, with various changes made, signed off by Lord Courtown, chairman.
2 March 1869
3. Resolution that was circulated as a notice 'for prompt and united action on the part of the laity of the Irish Church with a view to their representation in the Irish Church' as adopted at a meeting of the chairman and honorary secretaries of the Lay Committee, Molesworth Hall, Dublin.
[undated, presume 31 August 1869]
4. Printed requisition to the archbishops of Armagh and Dublin with original signatures of lay members requesting 'that a lay conference be held on 5 October [1869], for the purpose of considering the mode and extent of lay

representation under the Irish Church Act', with the signed endorsement of both archbishops attached.

6 September 1869

5. Minute book of the meetings of the honorary secretaries of the committee appointed in accordance with resolution 9 of the Lay Conference held on the 12,13 & 14 October 1869, to deal with lay representation. Tankerville Chamberlain appointed to the chair, with John Norwood and William Digges La Touche Esqs. members. The volume includes their accounts.

16 October 1869-5 February 1870

6. Two printed items related directly to lay representation (see also section 10/ below for further printed materials), as follows:

1. Ecklin Moylencux, *Address to the lay representatives of the Church of Ireland, aiming to tackle the skilful manoeuvre by which a self-constituted body of gentlemen [assume] to act on behalf of the laity at large.* 8pp.

[undated]

2. William McMechan [member of St Mary's Parish Dublin], *'Fuimus', Proposed association of the lay members of the Dublin Diocesan Conference to provide for the worst, and so probably prevent it* (Dublin, Steam Packet Co., 1869). 16pp.
-see section /4 below relating to Dublin, Glendalough and Kildare dioceses.

3/ Working papers and minutes related to the Church Conference, April 1869.

[Note that the Conference thereafter appears to have evolved into the Standing Committee, run by honorary secretaries].

1. Loose original resolutions passed at the meeting of the sub-committee to make arrangements for the Conference of the Irish Church (attended by archbishops, bishops, clergy and laity), with further draft resolutions passed in preparation for the Conference, including one that 'all press to be admitted [to the proceedings] from both Protestant and RC papers'.

22 items

6-14 April 1869

2. Printed report of the conference of the archbishops, bishops, clergy and laity of the Irish branch of the united Church of England and Ireland, held in April 1869.
13 & 14 April 1869
3. Printed list of diocesan representatives (clerical and lay) at the Conference of the archbishops, bishops, clergy and laity of the Church, commencing 13 April 1869, with handwritten details of the subscriptions paid by each representative to the Standing Committee.
April 1869
4. Minute book of the Standing Committee of the Church Conference, which met daily following the initial Conference, held at the Ancient Concert Rooms. Includes an insert of the draft resolutions of the 'Provost's motion' regarding lay representation. The Provost of Trinity College, Prof. Humphrey Lloyd [provost 1867-81] was elected into the chair of this committee, with Messrs. Greene and Sherlock appointed honorary secretaries and Sir Edward Grogan to act as secretary.
16 April - 30 July 1869
5. Volume of original resolutions of the Standing Committee of the Church Conference.
16 April - 30 July 1869

For continuation of the work of this committee see section 5/ below relating to the workings of the General Committee which prepared for the General Convention.

4/ Working papers and resolutions of the diocesan synod of the united dioceses of Dublin, Glendalough and Kildare

1. One file containing various materials all relative to a united diocesan synod held on the 30 November and 1 December at Molesworth Street, and again on the 16 December 1869 at the Ancient Concert Hall, with the Earl of Meath in the chair, including papers documenting an elaborate division of Dublin city parishes for the purposes of fair representation and voting at the Convention; a list of parishes constituting the diocese of Glendalough and related memorial of 35 clergy, 30 laity and 40 churchwardens in those parishes appealing for distinct representation at the Convention; a programme of business proposed by the secretaries of the Lay

Conference for the diocesan meeting; resolutions passed with a note that the Most Revd R.C. Trench, archbishop of Dublin 'felt compelled to decline' to attend the meeting; an extensive list of those present at the meeting on Wednesday 1 December 1869; draft minutes and notes. [It would appear from one letter from Sir Edward Grogan to the Honorary Secretaries of the Standing Committee, that these secretaries were requested to serve the diocesan meeting to 'prevent difficulties and delays' that might 'arise in getting the delegates together'.

10 items

30 November - 18 December 1869

(See also items GC5/36- below for further correspondence in relation to representation at the diocesan synod).

5/ Correspondence

1. Extensive run of correspondence mostly communicated to Thomas Greene, honorary secretary of the Committee of Organisation, from specific archbishops, bishops and other prominent lay members of the Church detailing their deliberations in the light of Gladstone's Irish Church Bill, and in the immediate aftermath of dis-Establishment. [A detailed list of these letters is available here].

46 items

21 January 1869-6 January 1870

2. Letters from Mr James Charles, editor of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*, 51 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin, and various receipts from same all addressed to honorary secretaries, concerning the printing and distribution of various literature items for the and specifically copies of the Church Conference report. Some of the correspondence is quite detailed about the numbers of copies printed, style of binding etc. and demonstrates in spite of the Church's plight there were profits to be made for service-providers such as the *Gazette*.

8 items

10 April - 7 July 1869

3. Three cover notes that were subsequently attached to various bundles of the correspondence above when assembled in the Convention chest in Church House. These archival arrangements appear to have been imposed after the creation of the documentation, and thus for this listing have been undone, to provide a complete and single run of letters. However, the cover notes are retained for information, and read as follows:

1. 'Letters from the Primate and Archbishop of Dublin to the Vice Chancellor and Plunket.'
2. 'Important and interesting letters written before the passing of the Irish Church Act, 26 July 1869, by the archbishops, bishops and others including Mr Pilkington, Hon and Rev W.C. Plunket, Dr Traill, and Mr G. Hardy, etc.'
3. 'Letters written by archbishops, bishops and others after the passing of the Irish Church Act, with a note 'examined by me for letters from Archbishop Trench for his biog., C. McCready, 7/7/[18]86.'
4. Letter from M.W. Jellett [Canon Morgan Woodward Jellett, editor of the early *Journals of the General Synod*], 69 Palmerston Road, to 'some Miss Trench', that accompanied items loaned to the same Miss Trench for the purposes of writing a memoir of Archbishop Trench. Among the items loaned appear to be letters of the archbishop. A note on the top of the letter apparently in Miss Trench's hand records that the items were 'returned as desired with many thanks, on the 1 May 1888]. A further note formerly annexed to the borrowed papers records the same information.
1887-88

6/ Working papers and minutes of the General Committee, variously also known as the 'Church Committee' and the 'Committee of Organisation'

1. Original loose minutes of the proceedings at the first meeting of the Committee, with some resolutions annexed.
5 January 1870
2. Volume containing 'originals of the proceedings of the Organising Committee'.
January 1870
3. Rough minute book, all hand written, of the proceedings, compiled by Christopher T. [Teeling] McCready, MA, clk. Assistant Secretary. [Teeling was curate at St Audoen's in Dublin 1866-1913, and became the Assistant Secretary of the RCB following the initial work of the Convention, in which capacity he continued until his death in 1913. He was also a minor canon of St Patrick's Cathedral from 1881].
5-28 January 1870
4. Minute book of the General Committee [minutes either recorded in very neat handwriting or printed] to draft the Constitution,

standing orders and financial restructuring. Includes printed lists of delegates and members. Meetings chaired by the Primate, Most Revd Marcus G. Beresford.

5-28 January 1870

5. Notice book of motions
Compiled by Christopher T. [Teeling] McCready, MA, clk. Assistant Secretary.
January 1870
6. Loose miscellaneous resolutions including detail for the draft Constitution as later copied into minute book [item 4 above], 28 January 1870 relating to delegates and returns of same from diocesan synods.
Undated

7/ Working papers and minutes of the General Convention

1. Rough minute book of the proceedings of the General Convention which met in continuous session from 15 February to 4 November 1870. Compiled by Christopher T. [Teeling] McCready, MA, clk. Assistant Secretary.
15 February - 4 November 1870
2. Final minute book of the General Convention compiled Christopher T. [Teeling] McCready, MA, clk. Assistant Secretary. Mostly printed.
15 February - 4 November 1870
3. Volume of original resolutions containing evidence of the main decision-making processes, containing the names of proposers and seconders of motions, whether motions were won or lost, and including the early draft arrangements for the creation of the General Synod (see also 7/2 below). The following note lies loosely annexed in the volume, signed by the Hon. Revd William C. Plunket (Dublin) which contains a particularly warm tribute to the Primate, as follows:

'Before the Convention is adjourned I intend to move the following resolution: That we, the members of this Convention cannot separate without joining in a solemn expression of our thankfulness to the Great Head of our Church, who as we humbly believe, has watched over and guided our labours - manifestly promoting amongst us the spirit of love and, we trust, of a sound mind, and preserving us from many dangers and difficulties which seemed at the first to beset our hitherto untarried path. And that we earnestly pray that if spared again to meet we may be assisted by the same heavenly

guardianship and guidance in the completion of the great work which has been entrusted to our charge’.

4. Handwritten returns of the representatives to serve on the Convention, returned March 1870, by diocese.
13 items with cover note.
March 1870
5. Two printed lists of delegates at the Convention and the dioceses they represented (clergy given in italics). Undated.
6. Other printed items as follows:
 1. *Diocesan synods of the Irish Church General Convention: Parishes and Parochial Organisation* (undated). 14pp
 2. *Statutes passed in the General Convention of the Church of Ireland of 1870* (printed for the General Synod, 1874, by Edward Purdon). 38pp

8/ Minute books of miscellaneous Convention committees

1. Minute book of the Judicature Committee, charged to draft the Constitution, and which continued to meet to brief the incoming General Synod. The volume lists the names and addresses of all 24 members including the two archbishops, the bishops of Meath, Ossory & Killaloe, as well as the Archdeacon of Meath, Revds J. Gwynn, Dr. Reeves, George Salmon, and 13 laymen, all of them lawyers.
2 April 1870-12 April 1874
2. Minute book of the Committee of Arrangements of the General Convention, charged with making the ‘necessary adjustments for the reassembling of the Convention until such time as the General Synod [would meet]’.
Various letters are appended to the front of the volume revealing that a new meeting venue was provided. Whereas the Convention proper met continuously at the Ancient Concert Rooms, at a cost of £25 per week, it was decided for the Committee of Arrangements that meetings would take place instead at the Metropolitan Hall, Lwr. Abbey Street, which would cost only £10. The volume also includes a printed copy of the mandate of the Lord Primate convening the first General Synod in April 1871 and a blank sample attendance

confirmation card, and a letter addressed to him on the headed paper of the Representative Church Body, St Stephen's Green, Dublin, with the following notice: 'Thursday the 4th of April is the day fixed for the assembling of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland', 8 February 1872.

31 March 1871-10 April 1873

9/ Petitions addressed to the Convention

1. Statement concerning fears about 'the special injustice to which beneficed clergymen with small incomes would be exposed once the provisions of Mr Gladstone's Irish Church Bill be passed'. Hundreds of signatures are annexed, from all over the country, although there seems a high number from the northern dioceses. It concludes with the following note, signed by Henry Seddall, vicar of Dunany (Armagh): 'I hereby certify the clergymen whose names and addresses are written above have authorised me to append their signatures'.
[Undated, presume pre-July 1869]
2. Petition with accompanying letter addressed to the clergy and delegates in the General Convention from the rector, curate and diocesan lay delegate from the parish of Moira, County Down, Revds William Henry Wynne, James Charles Gausson, and Mr John Murray, protesting about poor lay representation and in particular the fact that delegates at the Convention might not be members of a diocesan synod, which they argued was a dangerous precedent, which might leave the Church of Ireland open to the election of men who 'may not have the confidence of the electoral body'.
February 1870
3. Address to the General Convention from the archbishops, bishops, clergy and laity of the Church of England, with accompanying letters signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, to 'express sympathy the Irish branch of our Church in the struggle through which she is now passing', to which over 400 signatures are attached [although a slip of paper indicated that there were 3780 signatories but this may be connected to item 4. below]. Also, a petition signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and bishops of Devon and Rutland, to the effect:

'Although the Church of Ireland is no longer recognised by the State as a part of our national establishment, we desire to record with thankfulness our belief that in Christ we are still one, and it is our earnest desire than we may be more closely united in advancing that pure and reformed religion in the faith of which we have been so long bound together'.

The draft of the General Convention's reply of thanks is also included in the file.

21 February 1870

4. Address from the bishop, clergy and laity of the diocese of Norwich, expressing their 'deep sympathy and regret' on the passage of the Irish Church Act. This document is enormous, containing several large folios gummed together around a wooden roll, containing hundreds, if not thousands of signatures, from every parish of this English diocese, with separate columns diving clergy and laity. The first clerical signature is that of the Rt. Revd John T. Pelham, Bishop of Norwich, while the Marquess of Lothian is the first clerical signatory.

The full text of their petition reads as follows:-

'We, the bishop, clergy and laity of the Church of England in the diocese of Norwich, whose names are hereunder signed to the archbishops, bishops, the clergy and the laity of the Church of Ireland, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ send heartfelt greeting...

We gratefully believe of your Church and of our own, that they are living branches of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church, of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the Divine Head, and in the bonds of this Holy fellowship we further recognise our unity, in holding the same Articles of Faith, in use in divine worship of the same liturgy in the possession of an episcopally-ordained ministry and in the maintenance of a common protest against the errors and usurped authority of the Church of Rome.

We desire hereby to express our deep sympathy with you in the severe trial through which you have lately passed and in the difficulty of the position in which you are now placed. We earnestly pray to God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would by his Holy Spirit, given you a right judgement in all the counsels which you may entertain for the preservation of the faith in your Church, for the edifying of the body in love, for raising up amongst you a faithful ministry, and for the provision of adequate means for their support, and that He would enable you so to hold fast and to hold forth the Word of Life in the unity of the Spirit, in holiness of life, and in labours of love, that you may commend the Truth to the hearts and consciences of all classes of people in your land.

We further would express our readiness to be fellow-helpers with you in every good work, and should the necessity of the case require it, to bear with you the burdens so suddenly cast upon you by the recent measure for the disestablishment and disendowment of your Church.'

[Undated, but must be connected to item 3. above]

5. Address and accompanying letter to the General Convention from the Northern Church Defence Association [Manchester] to the General Convention, expressing sympathy to their fellow churchmen and Protestants in Ireland.
March 1870

6. Three petitions [originally rolled and presumably sent together] addressed to the General Convention from the parishes of Killurin, Kilpatrick and Wexford (Ferns), protesting that the laity of the Church of Ireland would not possess sufficient influence in the new administrative framework of the Church as proposed by the amended constitution concerning the General Synod, the right of the bishops to veto decisions of other orders etc. [c. 150 signatories].
March 1870

7. Petition to the General Convention from the inhabitants of Dublin and its neighbourhood, to protect and improve the influence of the laity in the new administrative framework.
24 March 1870

8. Memorial to the General Convention from the bishop, clergy and laity of the diocese of Cork, protesting against any proposed change to the *Book of Common Prayer* or any other changes to the doctrines or formularies of the Church of Ireland [171 signatories].
November 1870

9. Various hand-written and printed drafts of memorials concerning proposed alterations to the *Book of Common Prayer*. One of these is labelled on the back 'Master Brooke's memo - being a petition proposed by Master Brooke QC, Master in Chancery, and also a leading evangelical who was supported by many clergy and registered vestrymen of the Church of Ireland so these papers may represent his personal campaign. There are hundreds of signatures on the accompanying roll. Particular focus is caution about two issues to be considered before the General Synod, 1871, against revision of the canons and laws of the Church of Ireland, about which the petitioners state they have 'no desire to alter the comprehensive character of our church', and the *Book of Common Prayer*.
October 1870-1871

10/ Printed materials

1. Bound volume entitled 'Printed papers arranged as far as practicable in chronological order relating to Church Organisation, both before and after the Irish Church Act, 1869'. Commencing with item entitled 'Mr Mason Jones and the Irish Church', being a copy of an open letter from William C[onyngnam]. Plunket [4th Lord Plunket], Treasurer of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, to Mason Jones, in reference to a recent lecture he had given on the Irish Church, 1868, and concluding with various copies of the Irish Church Bill, and detailed report on same, 1869
54 items bound gummed into spine.
February 1868 - March 1869
2. File containing copies of printed parliamentary *Votes and Proceedings* (blue papers) on the Irish Church Bill, April 1869, the *Amendments to the Irish Church Bill*, and *Report on the Details of the Irish Church Bill*.
5 items
1869
3. Loose printed items as follows:
 1. John Hodgson, *Observations in Reference to Duration of Life Amongst the Clergy of England and Wales, and (in an appendix) Amongst the Children of Clergymen* (London, 1865).
 2. *Report of the Church Institution* (London, 1868).
 3. *Proceedings at the Great Presbyterian Demonstration in Belfast in Favour of Protestant Endowments in Ireland* (Belfast, 1869).
 4. Richard Travers Smith and Morgan Jellett (curates of St Peter's, Dublin), *The Irish Church Bill Objections to the Clauses Which Concern Curates with Suggestions and Estimates* (London, 1869).
 5. *The House of Lords and the Irish Church Bill* (London, 1869).
 6. John B. Doyle, *Glebe Land Estates and the Irish Land Question: A Letter to William Fowler Esq.* (Newry, 1869). 2 copies.
 7. William Valentine, *Commutation: Its Safety and Advantages* (Dublin, 1869).
 8. *Report on Commutation Submitted by the Standing Committee of the United Diocese of Down, Connor and Dromore to the Diocesan Synod* 10 January 1870
 9. *A Guide to Reform in the Irish Church for 1871.* (1871)
 10. *Lay and Clerical Association Occasional Paper No. 1: On Compensation for Vested Interests* (undated).
 11. *Notes on the Figures of the Irish Church Bill by a London Actuary Concerning Mr Gladstone's Proposed Commutation* (undated).
 12. Minutes No. II: The Irish Church Act: *The General Assembly of the Protestant People of the City and Diocese of Belfast.* (undated)

11/ Miscellaneous items

1. Typescript entitled 'Contents of General Convention Box', being an incomplete list of the contents of the trunk labelled thus. Probably created soon after the materials were assembled in the metal trunk at Church of Ireland House.
Undated [late 19th century?]

5/1 Detailed list of correspondence

1. Robert Down [Rt. Revd Robert Bent Knox, Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore 1849-86, Palace Holywood, Belfast, to 'Dear ? Edward'. This letter appears to be a prelude to a diocesan meeting at which the Bishop of Down advocated compromise and opening negotiations with Gladstone about the Bill. In it he refers to having 'long advocated a council of clk and laity to discuss the position of the Church in Ireland', which was considered rash and injudicious' at the time, but now 'the Reform I advocated long ago has been adopted'. The letter goes on to mention various resolutions concerning a proposed conference including a resolution 'that the bishops be ex officio members and as such I do not require any special invitation'.
21 Jan. 1868 [but has been corrected later to 69, which seems more likely date]
2. Robert Cashel [Rt. Revd Robert Daly, Bishop of Cashel, Waterford and Lismore 1842-72], Waterford to Thomas G. Greene Esq. 49 Stephen's Green, Dublin, saying that he got a letter from the Consulting Committee on Irish Church affairs, but as he found 'objectionable names on the committee', he cannot feel any confidence in their consultations.
20 Feb. 1869
3. M.E. Smyth, Barbavilla House [Dublin], To Thomas Greene, Esq. 49 Stephen's Green North, Hon. Sec. Layman Consulting Committee, regretting he is unable to 'attend at the Provost's tomorrow' the meeting of the Committee of Laymen, and being anxious to send the result of his considerations 'on the subject of how a lay representation in the Church can be most fitly produced' having been informed that every incumbent and churchwarden in Ireland has received a circular informing them that each incumbent is to make 'a special selection of churchwardens and synodsmen at the ensuing Easter vestries', he then proposes an elaborate and detailed procedure for representation at a synodical conference and then from the synodical conference for representatives 'to attend a future national church conference, delegating to such representatives the power to add to their numbers a certain number of laymen of admitted eminence and worth who had been omitted in the original elections...whose presence would be of much importance'.
A note records the letter was read to the committee by Courtown, chairman.
25 Feb. 1869
4. M.G. Armagh [Most Revd Marcus Gervais de la Poer Beresford, Archbishop of Armagh and Lord Primate of Ireland], The Atheneum, London, to 'Dear Vice Chancellor'.
Reports that the Archbishop of Dublin [Most Revd Richard Chevenix Trench, 1864-84] has shown him the 'scheme forwarded to him by the Committee of lay members appointed by the consulting committee' and the answer to it. Archbishop Beresford reveals that he agrees with the answer and that with regards to the scheme he also has some objections, shared by Archbishop Trench. He explains that in proposing that the Consulting Committee appoint a lay committee he had 'the view that such committee might be able to suggest to us the names of a sufficient number of the laity, whom we could invite to our conference without the violation of any law'. He thought 'the laity would have more confidence in a body assembled by their suggestion than one nominated and [enac?]ted by ourselves [presumably the archbishops and bishops]'. He continues: 'the object of the conference will I trust be to adopt all possible means to avert the calamity impending over us and to preserve to the Protestants of Ireland so far as in us lies, their dearest privileges and blessing as citizens and the

Lords freemen'. He warns any depreciation from the publication of 'the scheme as forwarded to us...would look like a surrender of the citadel and thus encourage our adversaries and dishearten our friends'. He continues with a possible way forward to select representatives from various parts of the Church by province. While emphasising that it is for the Committee to 'suggest a rough and ready way by which an influential conference might be assembled', he warns against lingering 'over preliminaries' for the 'invading army will be in preparation before we assemble our forces'.

3 March 1869

5. Joseph Napier, 4 Merrion Square [Dublin] to Thomas Greene Esq., Lay Committee, Provost's House, Grafton Street, enclosing his 'reasons for dissenting from the line taken by the Committee of Laymen', and regretting he cannot attend the meeting. The letter concludes: 'we must hope against hope'. This seems to be on the same theme as the Primate's letter above but from the opposite perspective that the proposed Conference would be unlawful.

Enclosure is addressed: 'To the members of the Committee of Laymen' in which Napier outlines in detail his objections to the proposed Act of disestablishment, and related proposal for representation of the Church, and that he could not concur with the 'use of the principle of representation which the Committee has adopted...cannot think that it can be used lawfully in any way, at all adequate to the occasion when we are threatened with a gigantic scheme of spoliation and sacrifice'. The document details Napier's opinions about the nature of representation, especially the lawful nature of the diocesan synods and a possible diocesan conference, but the unlawfulness of the proposals before the committee. Letter concludes in strident language against the Bill: 'every true hearted Protestant in Ireland, in communion with our Church, regards the assault upon her rights and privileges, which a political party has made as a violation of international treaty and of still more solemn obligations and as such as we should with one heart and one firm resolve resist to the uttermost. Any other course...should be unworthy of the Protestants of Ireland and a failure of duty at so trying a crisis'.

Undated, but marked 'read at Committee of Laymen, at the Provost's House, 2 March 1869

[See also item 45 below]

6. M.G. Armagh [Most Revd Marcus Gervais de la Poer Beresford, Archbishop of Armagh and Lord Primate of Ireland], The Atheneum, London, to 'My dear Lord' [presumably Lord Courtown, Chairman of the Committee of Laymen].

He is sorry to see by a letter of the vice chancellor and also Mr Plunkett [Revd William Conyngham. Plunket, Treasurer of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin] to the Archbishop [of Dublin] that his letter and mine 'not altogether agreeable to the views of lay committee of which your lordship is chairman'. He sternly writes: 'Our object is the same to support and uphold the Church and maintain to the Protestants of Ireland the blessings which they have hitherto enjoyed', and that if the publication of the paper submitted to us goes ahead 'It would here be regarded by Friend and Foe as an acceptance of Mr Gladstone's policy and the formation of the "Church body" which he speaks of, as necessary to carrying out his scheme of demolition. Any thing of this kind would be to us most fatal'. He urges the holding of a General Synod so that 'we might present a united front to the adversary and pass condemnatory of the confiscating and revolutionary measurers proposed', and the right people should speak for us and 'have time to prepare for so great an occasion'. In a clear signal for the lay committee to get back into line, he continues: 'it is confined strictly to the exigencies...of the best means of obtaining such a representation of the laity in our synod as may commend the confidence of the people of Ireland as well as England'. He again

goes into some detail about how delegates might be selected, and adds that he 'has been advised by every lawyer I have consulted that the safe as well as recognised way of assembling a synod (provincial) is by invitation. There should be no risk or divergence from the prescribed course'.

5 March 1869

7. [Sir] Joseph Napier, University Club, to Thomas Greene, 49 Stephen's Green, alluding to 'what occurred on Tuesday' [decision on lay representation] after which 'he could no expect to be of any use to you'. He 'cannot appreciate the moral effect' of the decision, as the Bishop of Ossory has alluded because he 'could not suppose that an unlawful assembly could have a moral effect upon loyal men'. He 'cannot think that the use of the representative element is either wise or lawful

5 March 1869 and read at the Committee of Laymen, 6 March 1869

8. M.G. Armagh, 42 Princes Gardens, Kensington, to 'Dear Sir' [possibly Joseph Napier above?] in response to a letter referring to the meeting of the lay committee today. He again is quite firm to the unknown recipient explaining that it was he would 'seeing that the laity were taking no steps to my knowledge in reference to the resolutions of the bishops I suggested as a mode of setting them in motion that the consulting committee should...appoint a sub-committee of its members to consider how we could best constitute a lay element in the proposed synod'. He did not see the sub-committee formed in its own right but appointed. With regards to detail of the scheme to select delegates for the synod, he urges that the word 'vestry' be replaced by 'parish meeting' because 'in a vestry Roman Catholics and Presbyterians can vote and nullify or overrule the proceedings. Tis true they most probably will not but there is no use in running any risk'. He then alludes to the difficulty of convening a national meeting of the whole church: 'In Armagh there are 133 clergymen, so we may expect 133 gentlemen to arrive from all parts of the diocese at the chapter room or wherever we meet. Out of these 13 are to be chosen and 120 are to go home rejected, with their journey for nothing'. So he urges good sense and for the meeting to 'take the form of an amicable arrangement more than an election'. Reminding the correspondence that the proposal to have a synod or conference composed of laity and clergy came from the bishops, thus departing from the practices of the past when 'the regular form of synod known to the Church' was of bishops only. He urges that 'only in rare instances...do [the bishops] 'not seek by an upright exercise of their office to commend themselves to the good opinion of those over whom God has appointed their ministries'. Again he appeals for unity and to work together: 'All novel machines work a little harshly at first, but the various parts soon grow into harmony & then all becomes smooth'.

6 March 1869

9. Robert Cashel [Rt. Revd Robert Daly, Bishop of Cashel, Waterford and Lismore 1842-72], Waterford to Thomas G. Greene Esq. 49 Stephen's Green, Dublin, marked on envelope 'Bishop of Cashel consenting'. In the letter the bishop explains why he originally was opposed to the consenting committee membership, because it included 'advocates for disestablishment' and acknowledging receipt of the scheme for lay cooperation sanctioned by the Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, stating he will implement it in his diocese. He requests copies of the various versions of the scheme for his records.

13 March 1869

10. J.D. Fitzgerald [John David, Baron Fitzgerald, justice], 50 Stephen's Green, to Thomas Green Esquire, 49 Stephen's Green, declining to become a 'member of the Consulting Committee on Irish Church Affairs', with the comment that 'if there

be any doubts or difficulties as to the course to be adopted by the Ecclesiastical state in Ireland at the present crisis, they are doubts and difficulties to the solution of which I am conscious I could give no useful aid
15 March 1869

11. W. Killaloe [Rt. Revd William Fitzgerald, Bishop of Killaloe, Kilfenora, Clonfert & Kilmacduagh, 1862-83] to Thomas Green Esquire, 49 Stephen's Green, consenting to the lay scheme, but pointing out 'that he is afraid the scheme you have enclosed is but little suited to the circumstances of several parts of my dioceses' where groupings of parishes rather than single parishes exist. However, as it has been approved by the archbishops he has 'no objection to your circulating it among my people & to their acting upon it if they find it feasible'. He does however go on to raise concerns that the Church is prepared to call a synod while it is 'established' and thus has 'no right to create new kinds of synods', adding: 'it seems not wise now to determine beforehand that the Church will be disestablished tho' it may be a very proper thing for the proposed conference to consider what they would recommend as the frame of C. government in case of disestablishment'. In his own dioceses, he has already requested the clergy among themselves to select some of their own number to attend the archbishops in Dublin, and he is now willing 'that the laity should...have an equal number of their own body for that purpose'. He concludes the letter by advising 'it would be better to speak of our meetings as conferences for counsel and advice'
13 March 1869

12. Note marked 'P.S.' from M.G.A. Most Revd Marcus Gervais de la Poer Beresford, Archbishop of Armagh and Lord Primate of Ireland], The Atheneum, London to unknown recipient enclosing original letter [even though it says copy] addressed 'Dear Sir' from Gathorne Hardy warning 'if the Irish Church Bill pass there can be no succession to benefices'. The original letter to which this is a P.S. does not appear to be in the file. In his note, the Primate reveals ongoing discussions and communication with the Archbishop [of Dublin] and that he has received the resolutions of the clergy of Armagh of which he approves and has indicated in a reply to the Archdeacon that he intends to 'call at once a Diocesan Synod'. Following 'a great deal of conversations', he reveals they have agreed the no. of clergy at 'one in ten' and thus 'small difference' from Dublin. Referring to a letter from a Mr Brewer published in Saturday's *Mail*, he comments that such a letter 'shews very clearly the great danger of giving Mr Gladstone any help in the organising of his "Church Body", or giving him any basis on which he could construct his fabric and therefore I think the less methodized and formal our plan appears to be the better. It should not look in any way a perfect structure'.
Letter is dated 16 April 1869

13. H.M. Pilkington [Chancellor of the diocese of Meath, described as one of the ablest ecclesiastical lawyers of his time, John Healy, *History of the Diocese of Meath*, Dublin 1908, vol. 2, p. 209] 72 Sloane Street, London S.W., to My Dear Mr Greene, 49 St Stephen's Green, Dublin.
[This is the first in a series of letters from Pilkington who would appear to have represented the Church with various political figures as the heads of the Bill for Irish Church disestablishment went through and who fed back the outcomes of his discussions from London to the Honorary Secretaries in Dublin.]
In this detailed letter he comments on the difficulty of getting amendments to resolutions proposed and adopted at short notice; on a meeting with Lord Cairns 'at his request' at which he went through 'the amendments with him. Some of them he will adopt - some not' [various heads of amendments discussed and reported on here include commutation, discipline of clergy]; a meeting of the Association [Defence Association?], 'with which Mr Reynell is connected'; a

meeting at the National Club, 'where three or four bodies alluded who had been settling amendments that they might act in unison. At this later meeting, the Archbishop of Dublin was in the chair, and Lord Harrowby [Dudley Francis Stuart, 3rd Earl of Harrowby and M.P. for Liverpool] and many other members of both also attended, and Pilkington details some of the thinking and decision-making arising.

24 June 1869

14. M.G. Armagh, 42 Princes Gardens [London] to 'My dear Archdeacon of Dublin' [Venerable William Lee, Archdeacon 1864-83], reporting his approval of an unspecified resolution to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The resolution appears to do with finance as the Primate comments: 'All money saved out of former income is the undoubted property of the Church - the money might be well and properly expended on finishing buildings in progress and perhaps some other Church works, such as supplying chancels where such are in contemplation and partly subscribed for'.

24 June 1869

15. H.M. Pilkington, 72 Sloane Street, London S.W., to My Dear Mr Greene, 49 St Stephen's Green, Dublin

Another very detailed letter 'for the information of the Committee' in which Pilkington reports that 'today most of the amendments have been adopted' and then details under the following main heads: commutation 'our commutation scheme has been set aside' for one proposed by the Archbishop of Canterbury which appears more lucrative and beneficial; amendment as to 'no alteration in doctrine and rites'; discipline; the Charter of the Representative Body and the date on which it is to come into force; lands in actual occupation by the Church including school lands; dilapidation of buildings; glebe lands; economy estates. The letter concludes urging that the Committee now has four days to give their opinions before the whole matter 'moves to the Lords so there is no time to lose', and he finally observes without intervention of the Committee and various amendment presented heretofore 'I believe the Bill would have passed thro the Lords without any save two or perhaps three of the principal matters being attempted'.

A note at the end refers to Master Brooke [Master Brooke QC, Master in Chancery] and if he does not attend the next meeting of the Committee, would Green 'kindly send him this letter as I know he will be anxious to hear and I have not time to write [to him]'.

25 June 1869

16. H.M. Pilkington, 72 Sloane Street, London S.W., to My Dear Mr Greene, 49 St Stephen's Green, Dublin

Outlining that he has mentioned the 1st and 2nd resolutions of the Consulting Committee to various parliamentary committees, 'but they met with little acceptance'. Again emphasising how time is of the essence he states: 'If I had had them three days ago I might have done something with them but now it is hopeless', but he assures that he will 'try again'. He is to attend Lambeth on Monday with the Primate and Lord Bandon 'to try to induce the Archbishop of Canterbury to extend his amendment as to glebe lands and royal grants...of tythes'. There is discussion about the date on which the Act is to come into operation - and a hope to extend it to 1872 and much detail about who will move various other amendments through the parliamentary process, revealing individual roles and views as the bill got nearer enactment.

26 June 1869 [but written the Saturday night before]

17. H.M. Pilkington, 72 Sloane Street, London S.W., to My Dear Mr Greene, 49 St Stephen's Green, Dublin
Revealing how the situation is changing by the moment, and the pace with which the legal guidance had to move, Pilkington's next letter opens that whilst he wrote at length by this morning's post, he has just received Greene's letter of the 25th 'enclosing three resolutions of the committee'. He goes on to outline these again in detail, and expresses some views on how successful he may be in persuading those in executive power to favourably consider them. He concludes that 'it would be most satisfactory to me to have had Lefroy here. I am sure he could have accomplished much that I could not. I feel the responsibility on my shoulders very greatly' but feels things are getting near to conclusion: 'I understand that next week will decide everything'.
26 June 1869
18. Samuel Meath [Most Revd Samuel Butcher, Bishop of Meath 1866-76], Ardracran House, Navan, to 'My dear Archdeacon' [Archdeacon of Dublin?]
He reports he 'had some conversation with Dr Gayer...on the subject of the Insurance Fund', who 'feels so strongly the risk of the commissioners applying this fund to other purposes on the eve of the probable passing of the Bill' is such that 'he has written to Lord Cairns to consult him as to the advisability of getting a clause introduced into the Bill reserving this sum to the new Church Body for the same purposes that for which it was set apart'.
28 June 1869
19. H.M. Pilkington, 72 Sloane Street, London S.W., to My Dear Mr Greene, 49 St Stephen's Green, Dublin
This letter on a foolscap size page opens 'I take a long page of paper to write at length'. He has been 'unable to get support of amendment on the constitution of the Court or our System of Appeal'. He again details the input of the Archbishop of Dublin and other MPs and peers on various heads including disabled incumbents, permanent curates; the difference between income and salary; lands in actual occupation of incumbents; the Archbishop of York's commutation scheme and what to replace it should it fail. On the issue of land in occupation, Pilkington refers to putting the issue 'in the charge of the Bishop of Tuam', commenting that he should 'either move it himself or to get some one else to move it', for 'it is very difficult to get men to act together and this I fear will be the rock on which we shall split.
29 June 1869
20. H.M. Pilkington, 72 Sloane Street, London S.W., to My Dear Mr Greene, 49 St Stephen's Green, Dublin
Another foolscap letter commenting on 'last night's results' (which he presumes Greene will have seen 'when you receive this') that the Bill is passed to clause 10 and that the 'date is carried changing it from 1871 to 1872'. He then goes into detail about Lord Bandon's amendment about the act coming into operation and mistakes in the parliamentary record of this, so he hopes to see today and 'beg him to set I right'. Other detail about various amendments by Lord Gough, Lord Carnarvon, the Archbishop of Dublin, Bishop of Peterborough, and Lord Courtown. Finally there is comment on the detail of creditor account to be opened between the Church Body and the Commission.
30 June 1869
21. Four letters in one envelope and marked 'read' [to the Committee of Organisation] again from H.M. Pilkington, 72 Sloane Street, London S.W., to My Dear Mr Greene, 49 St Stephen's Green, Dublin

The passage through the Lords is now coming to the crunch, and Pilkington painstakingly goes through various clauses and who proposed them in the Lords; and also reports on a meeting with the Archbishop of Dublin; his efforts to find Lord Courtown at home; and concludes with amusing reference to Lord Cleavland's comments that 'the priests in Ireland...live in wretched hovels'. Pilkington dryly comments: 'I have never seen a priest's hovel - "The best house of its class in the parish" on the contrary would be the true description of the Priest's house!' He hopes he may return home next week. He 'regretted much' Lord Cairns giving up 'the amendment on burial grounds'.

Four items

1-3 July 1869

22. William C.[onyingham] Plunket [4th Lord Plunket], National Club, Whitehall Gardens, London S.W. to 'My Dear Tom', Thomas Greene Esq., 49 St Stephen's Green, Dublin

A particularly graphic letter from one of the most vocal opponents of the changing status of the Church, and clearly a conservative who does not hide his antipathy towards Gladstone, believes the Church of Ireland the victim of political rivalries, and a 'battlefield of faction'. Plunket originally enclosed copies of his paper [not present] with this letter which he tells Greene he has also 'put into the hands of some of the more influential friends of the Church during the interval which occurred between the amendment of the Bill, the Lords and its passage through the House of Commons', so as to give Greene and 'any friends into whose hands you may put them' an impression that he has been 'trying to do something for our own poor Church and those members of it whose fair claims have been so cruelly neglected'.

He believes that the Government have 'refused to concede anything worth the acceptance', but then adds 'our Defenders have not made a good fight of it'. Whilst many including the English archbishops, the Archbishop of Dublin and our other bishops, Lord Cairns, Lord Carnarvon, Lord Salisbury and a few others have done their best', there have been other divisions in the ranks: 'owing to rivalries and differences of opinion within conservative ranks', with the result that 'there has been no approach to anything like unity of council or of action - many who ought to be our friends are wholly indifferent - others who mean well will not apply themselves to master the really difficult intricacies of the Bill - others look on the Bill merely with a view to the furtherance of their own hobbies, or their own party interests and in the meantime in the wild confusion of all these competing elements the poor Church has had to face the united front of the Government led by a powerful leader who is thoroughly master of the subject, and who can with the most consummate skill and plausibility persuade his followers to do exactly what he likes.

In Plunket's opinion the question of 'Concurrent Endowment' has 'worked most fatally for our cause'. He continues the letter with further remorseful and negative thinking.

19 July 1869

23. Draft resolution recording the thanks of the Standing Committee to the National Club for its 'hospitality, kindness and sympathy' to members of the Conference during the 'present session of parliament, especially for the 'assistance of the chairman to those who were engaged in bringing the views of the conference before the friends of the Church in the House of Lords'. Proposed by Dr Salmon, seconded by Mr Pilkinton, carried by acclamation, signed J.W.B. Ck. It is written on the back of a printed invitation from the Archbishop of Dublin to the clergy of the united dioceses to attend a meeting in the Palace, sent out by William Lee, archdeacon.

The resolution is not dated, but the printed item is dated 27 July 1869

24. Letter from Anthony Traill [Fellow of Trinity College Dublin, later Provost, and founding member of the Representative Church Body], Ballydivity, Dervock, Co. Antrim to 'My dear Greene', 29 July [1869]
A Tory like Plunket [see letter 22 above], and a member of the Conference, Traill is despairing of the situation: 'we have been grossly betrayed by Lord Cairns and his party, which in fact I foresaw from that day's interview with him at Sir J. Napier's. Our Church Committee has been completely ignored, as the small matter of the year '71 or '72 shows'. He reveals that whilst the Committee wished for 1872 to be the cut off date, and that both Lord Granville and Lord Cairns know this to be the case, they went for 1871. Of Cairns, Traill is particularly scathing: 'I hope he may never get into place again, for his pains to secure that object'.
29 July 1869
25. [Revd] C.P. Reichel [Vicar of Mullingar 1864-75, Meath, later Bishop of Meath], Birarage, Mullingar, to Dear Mr Greene, Thos. Greene Esq., 49 Stephen's Green Dublin
Reporting 'the letter from the Archbishop is what I expected' although he does not 'like the paragraph...about the certainty etc'. The main purpose of his letter however is 'with regard to the documents' and to ensure that at a future time a report of proceedings of the Standing Committee is kept for the record. He continues: 'The memoranda of the meetings are it seems to me the property of the secretaries on behalf of the whole committee, and they will have no right to give them to the Archbishops, should they require them to'. He hopes they will not urge that after the Conference is disposed, should any future attempt be made to take possession of the documents that it will be resisted given the importance that the documents may have at some future time: 'I therefore write to protest, as a member of the Committee, against these documents being either destroyed or allowed out of the possession of the secretaries. Only another Church Conference, or its committee, or the future government body can have any right to dispose of these documents'.
12 August 1869
26. Longford [William Lygon Pakenham, 4th Earl of Longford], Pakenham Hall [Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath] to 'Dear Sirs', the Honorary Secretaries, Molesworth Hall
Explaining he has not signed requisitions for the promotion of lay meetings for church organisation because he believes that the necessary business can be 'transacted at diocesan synods constituted by parochial representatives, lay and clerical, by whom a general synod can be elected with authority to act in the matter of naming the future "representative body of the said Church". He thus concludes if no legal objection exists 'the General Synod shall itself be the Representative Body' and does not see that 'a General Lay meeting can usefully be assembled'.
9 September 1869
27. R.C. Dublin [Most Revd R.C. Trench, Archbishop of Dublin], Bromefield, to Dear Mr Greene
A letter devoted to lay representation, the archbishop warns the honorary secretary that there may be 'a considerable number of returns' coming in the post. He hopes that Molesworth Hall has been secured for next Monday's meeting. He warns of an effort by the delegates from Wicklow 'to vote by themselves' not by joint voting, which he has decided to allow to be decided by the meeting, and so Greene may 'require a considerably larger number of voting papers'.
22 September 1869

28. Anthony Traill, Ballylough, Bushmills, Co. Antrim to 'My dear Greene'
 In this letter Traill reveals his important connecting role between members of the Church in the North and South of the island. He requests a copy of 'any programme which your central committee may draw up for the meeting of lay delegates on the 12th October, or any resolutions likely to be proposed', because 'unity of action is most important and I am a sort of connecting link between North and South'. Prior to the meeting of lay delegates in Belfast on the 8th of October, it would thus be useful to know 'how you stand in Dublin'. He believes that 'matters seem to be gradually shaking themselves into shape, and I hope some order may come out of the present chaos of opinions.
 28 September 1869
29. Thomas Greene, 49 St. Stephen's Green to 'My dear Chamberlain' [Tankville Chamberlain, chair of the committee of laymen. [This letter accompanied item 28 above]
 Suffering from illness, Greene is forwarding Traill's letter, and advising his colleague to 'put yourself in communication with Traill by this post' and send him the information he requires, advising 'he is a very influential man among Northern Delegates, and if properly taken, may be of great use in bringing them into an entente cordiale with us'.
 6 October 1869
30. Robert Cashel [Rt. Revd Robert Daly, Bishop of Cashel, Waterford and Lismore 1842-72], N.T. Mt. Kennedy to 'to the secretaries of the lay committee'
 Acknowledges receipt of letter and has had no time to reply but now authorizes them to 'address the churchwardens and incumbents [which ever you prefer] in order to carry out the elections [presumably to the Convention]. The letter reveals the bishop's concerns about fair representation and he cites previous election in Trinity parish Waterford 'where they should have elected 2 representatives [but] elected 5 and in the diocese of Waterford twice as many laymen as clergymen'. He gives some suggestions as to how to insure fair and reasonable numbers of laymen, while observing there 'have been no steps taken for electing one in ten of the clergy as representatives in the general convention as there has been no assent given by the clergy to the proposal of the laymen to be [of] the proportion of 2 to 1'. He hopes they will 'declare themselves satisfied as they have the security of voting by orders'.
 He will cooperate with the 9th Resolution of the Committee [of laity] and will attend where possible.
 The bishop signs the letter 'I am dear sirs faithfully yr unworthy fellow labourer'
 20 October 1869
31. Charles Limerick [Rt. Revd Charles Graves, Bishop of Limerick] to The Hon. Secretaries of the Lay Conference
 Is less cooperative than his colleague and begs to say that 'I have no occasion for the holding of parochial or congregational meetings in either Limerick or Ardfert'. Elections of parochial lay representatives were held 'in a regular manner' in accordance with resolutions adopted at diocesan synods and it was provided they should continue in office until Easter Monday 1870. Thus, a 'constituency competent to elect lay delegates to the General Synod is in existence in both parts of my diocese. As the diocesan synod is a meeting necessarily convened and presided over by the Bishop, I presume that your inquiry and offer of assistance has no relation to it'.
 Regarding the question relative to the 9th Resolution of the Lay Conference he does not 'feel at liberty to return an immediate answer. I see much in the Resolution to object to. I could not therefore undertake to sanction it or promise

to help in giving it effect unless I found that the other bishops were disposed to do likewise’.

21 October 1869

32. Robert Down & Connor [Rt. Revd Robert Bent Knox, Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore 1849-86, Palace Holywood, Belfast, to Hon. Secs. of Lay Conference of Church of Ireland

He has received their letter of the 19th and its succession and in accordance with the resolution of the Lay Conference has called a meeting of the Synod of my diocese ‘to appoint clk and lay delegates to the Gen. Convention’. As his synod is already in existence he shall not ‘trouble you to communicate’ with churchwardens or incumbents in my diocese.

21 October 1869

33. M.G. Armagh [Most Revd Marcus Gervais de la Poer Beresford, Archbishop of Armagh and Lord Primate of Ireland], Armagh, to ‘Gentlemen’ [honorary secretaries], with a draft of their reply

Again on lay representative business, the Primate responds that he has received their letter and resolutions and with regard to the 7th Resolution would prefer to send out notices [to the delegates of his own diocese] himself after the vote has taken place. [The draft reply reveals that the secretaries request that the Primate will send on the names of those elected and ‘note that you prefer to send out all the necessary notices and make the other arrangements’].

The Primate then emphasises the importance of communication: ‘The importance of communication demands an answer from the bench of bishops rather than the individual members of it. I shall therefore issue instructions to meet on the earliest day that we can have a meeting of the whole body’.

21 October 1869

34. M.G. Armagh [Most Revd Marcus Gervais de la Poer Beresford, Archbishop of Armagh and Lord Primate of Ireland], Palace, Armagh, to ‘Gentlemen’, the Hon. Secretaries, Molesworth Hall

The Primate has received their letter ‘enclosing the paper of suggestions relative to the election of lay representatives and delegates’ sent to each of his clergy, and appears to reprimand the secretaries in relation to lay authority over the authority of the diocesan synods. He requests an explanation to the 4th suggestion ‘that each benefice or congregation should elect as many lay representatives as clergy...but that in no case should the number of lay representatives be more than double the number of the officiating clergymen’. He enquires ‘upon what authority you have thus very plainly indicated to the several congregations that it is open to them, if they choose, to elect two lay representatives for each clerical to the diocesan synod’, an instruction that ‘is not only contrary to the constitution of those synods but in direct opposition to the 4th resolution of the late lay conference which states that “it is inexpedient for this meeting to dictate to or interfere with the action of the Diocesan Synods’.

1 November 1869

35. M.G. Armagh [Most Revd Marcus Gervais de la Poer Beresford, Archbishop of Armagh and Lord Primate of Ireland], Bilton Hotel, to ‘Gentlemen’, the Hon. Secretaries

The primate reports that ‘At a meeting of the prelates of the Church of Ireland held here this day’ two resolutions in reference to the resolutions of the Lay Conference were passed, which he encloses, together with ‘another resolution’ [concerning the right of the bishops to vote as a separate order and with a right of conference and discussion in common] a copy of which he sends for their information.

The resolutions are as follows:

1. 'Resolved unanimously: In reference to the 7th Resolution of the Lay Conference, the Bishops have taken, or will take, the steps necessary for the carrying out [of] the suggestions therein contained, by convening meetings for the electing of Delegates, Clerical and Lay, to attend the General Synod, or Convention of the Church'.
2. 'Resolved unanimously: That with reference to the 9th resolution of the Lay conference the Archbishops and Bishops are prepared to cooperate in the formation of such a committee as is therein suggested'.
3. 'At the same meeting the following resolution was also unanimously adopted: That the Bishops shall sit and vote as a separate Order; with a right of Conference and discussion in common, whenever desired by themselves or either of the other Orders'.

4 items

5 November 1869

36. Robert Cashel [Rt. Revd Robert Daly, Bishop of Cashel, Waterford and Lismore 1842-72], to 'to the secretaries of the Committee of Laymen, Molesworth Hall' Continues his argument about representation, and again cites irregular return of delegates by the parish of Trinity, Waterford, and his intention to hold a diocesan synod for the diocese of Waterford and Lismore 'when the proper time arises'.

6 November 1869

37. [Revd] Henry Joy Tombe, Ballyfree, Glenealy [Co. Wicklow] [Rector of Glenealy 1855-80] to the Secretaries of Lay Conference, Molesworth Hall

Whilst he is much obliged for their courteous answer to his recent letter, Tombe regrets 'to say that [he] cannot see that it at all answers the objection that without any authority from the late conference you know not a suggestion that the number elected of lay delegates should not be more than double that of clergy'. He indicates he will 'send a formal protest to the Archbishop' [of Dublin], and whilst he respects 'you gentlemen' believes they 'have exceeded the powers the conference entrusted' to them in relation to laity representation at the diocesan synod.

6 November 1869

38. R.C. Dublin [Most Revd R.C. Trench, Archbishop of Dublin], Palace, Dublin to Mr Brownrigg, 6 November 1869

Acknowledges memorial placed in his hands signed by '35 clergymen, 30 lay representatives and 40 churchwardens of the Diocese of Glendalough ... expressing a desire that on the grounds of all uncertainty as to the exact limits of the diocese being now removed its right to severalty for electoral purposes might be recognised'. [This relates to the diocesan clergy and laity for distinctive recognition to send delegates to the Convention as outlined in section /4 above].

The Archbishop indicates his support for the memorial: 'Such an arrangement thus fortunately made to our hands commends itself to me as just and fair; and indeed as experience has shown, as the only one which will give to remote districts their equitable share of the representation'. He thus indicates he will be prepared to carry it out 'at the approaching election of the clergy for the General Convention' and thinks it 'very probable that the same arrangement will commend itself to the laity as well'.

Annexed to this letter is a further letter on the subject, dated 8 November, from Henry Irwin Clk, Hon. Secretary [of the clergy of Glendalough?] to the Hon. Secretaries enclosing 'a list of the parishes now admitted to constitute the diocese of Glendalough and to request they be 'placed in a separate division of the list of

votes to be prepared for the approaching election'. The list of parishes is also enclosed.

3 items

6 & 8 November 1869

39. J.H. [Wharton?], Conway and Dobbs, to 'Dear Sirs'
Letter concerning election of six gentlemen 'at the meeting' [not specified] and whether or not they were formally declared elected by the chairman.
19 November 1869
40. [Revds] Alfred Hamilton and Morgan W. Jellett, to E. W. Verner MP, W. D. La Touche and Thomas Greene [acting as honorary secretaries of Dublin diocesan synod]
Enquiring if it is the intention of the Archbishop of Dublin to attend the meeting to be held tomorrow.
14 December 1869
41. R.C. Dublin [Archbishop of Dublin] to the Hon. Secretaries
Replying to item 40 above to say he regrets 'it will not be in my power to attend'.
15 December 1869
42. Edward Grogan, Harcourt Street [Dublin] to the Honorary Secretaries
Calling their attention to the resolution of the last diocesan meeting at which '59 delegates were constituted a General Committee for the united dioceses of Dublin, Kildare and Glendalough'. The purposes for which they were elected are 'of great importance to the future of our Church' and so he urges them to convene a meeting of the 59 delegates at an early day in January at 45 Molesworth Street. He addresses the honorary secretaries because they have 'so kindly acted as secretaries in all the past meetings connected with our Church' and hopes that they will do so for this forthcoming meeting with the delegates, and especially 'as the cooperation of the clergy will be of great importance towards the successful working of the Committee, we request you to assist us in obtaining the attendance of the clerical delegates on this occasion'.
[undated, marked 'received on 20 December '69']
43. M.G. Armagh, Armagh, to 'Gentlemen' with a note 'inserted in the minutes, 4 Jan. 1870'
Wishes to make a few observations which he hopes 'will help to serve to prevent any confusion'. The Lay Conference held on 12 October last 'for the purpose of settling lay representation in our general synod' recommended in resolution 9 'the formation of a committee "in order to make preparations for the General Synod"'. The bishops approved and adopted the resolution and 'in all their diocesan synods forwarded the election of lay and clerical members for this committee, and have notified their names to the archbishops of their provinces'. Thus he points out that the authority to summon 'members synodically elected rests unto the archbishops', but calls on the services of the honorary secretaries for assistance in 'summoning the meeting' of the committee of organisation, hoping this will 'evidence our wish of cordial cooperation with our lay brethren'. He indicates that the 5 January [1870] would suit us for the meeting, and that '12 oc' would be 'a good hour allowing time for the morning trains to arrive'. At the last meeting of the prelates it was thought that a room at the Ancient Concert rooms 'to be most private and convenient for the committee meetings' which he predicts 'will last some time'.
22 December 1869

44. Thos. Greene, 49 St Stephen's Green, to 'My dear La Touche' [W.D. La Touche] stating he is forbidden to leave the house and but encloses letter from the Archbishop of Dublin and draws his attention to the requests for '2 rooms, fires, stationary' etc. He hopes to be 'right tomorrow'. The enclosed letter from the Archbishop marked 'Bilton Hotel, Tuesday' requesting assistance of the secretaries of Lay Conference for arranging the room/s of the meeting.
4 January 1870
- 45, Joseph Napier to the Hon. Sec. of the Church Conference, continues his protest by returning a blank voting paper as lay delegate for the Cathedral of St Patrick: 'I return the blank voting papers [Organization of the Church of Ireland] with my signature attached. The names you have sent as set forth on the printed list seem to be unacceptable and fairly selective. You may therefore insert them in the appropriate places in the blank list which I have signed'. Napier declares he is too busy to insert the names with his own hand. [The voting paper remains blank]
Undated [early 1870?]
46. Honorary Secretaries of the General Committee [Robert Gregg, Edward Norman, Robert Cassidy W.E. Scott], Ancient Concert Rooms, Great Brunswick Street, Dublin, to the Honorary Secretaries of the Lay Conference
This last item in the run of correspondence indicates that in main a positive spirit prevailed for the new organisation to go forward together, being a letter of thanks from the General Committee which formally resolved at the meeting of 5 January, proposed by the Archbishop of Dublin and seconded by the Earl of Clancarty and carried unanimously:
'That the best thanks of this committee be returned to the secretaries of the Lay Conference for the pains and trouble which they have taken in making the requisite arrangements for the meeting of this committee'.
6 January 1870