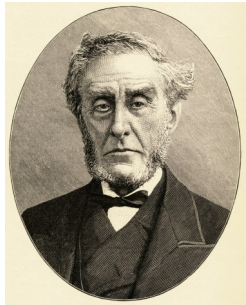


Anthony Ashley Cooper, 7th Earl of Shaftesbury (1801-1885)



was one of the most effective social and industrial reformers in 19th-century England.

Educated at Harrow and Christ Church College, Oxford,

he succeeded his father as earl in 1851.

An MP from 1826, Ashley attacked the Reform Bill of 1832 for widening the franchise, but he favoured the political emancipation of Roman Catholics and the repeal in 1846 of the Corn Laws (import duties on grain). Becoming a lunacy commissioner in 1828 and commission chairman in 1834, he secured passage of the Lunacy Act of 1845, the first British statute to treat the insane as "persons of unsound mind" rather than social outcasts. He was associated with the factory reform movement led by Richard Oastler and, in the House of Commons, by Michael Thomas Sadler.

In 1833, after Sadler's defeat in an election, Ashley replaced him as parliamentary leader of the movement for shortening the working day in textile mills to 10 hours. Although popularly known as Lord Ashley's Act, the Ten Hours Act of 1847 was passed while he was temporarily out of the House of Commons (January 1846–

July 1847). In his working for further factory reform legislation, he was accused by the radical reformer John Bright not only of ignorance of actual working conditions in factories but also of unconcern for rural labourers, including those on the Shaftesbury estates.

By his Mines Act of 1842, Ashley excluded all women and girls and all boys under the age of 10 from underground coal mine employment.

While serving as a member of the short-lived General Board of Health (1848–54) and afterward, Shaftesbury insisted that the government sponsor new low-cost housing projects for urban workers and carefully inspect housing that already existed. During his 39 years as president of the Ragged Schools Union, that organization enabled c300,000 destitute children to be educated free. He also served as president of the British and Foreign Bible Society, founded numerous Young Men's Christian associations and Workingmen's institutes, and financially supported missionary societies for Nonconformist faiths as well as for the Church of England.

As a staunch evangelical, he viewed with alarm the growing ritualism in the Church of England and materially aided Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli in the passage of the Public Worship Act (1874), which checked the extension of Anglo-Catholic practices.

He died on 1 October 1885

St Cross Newsletter

October 2025



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Our Vicar writes.....

Dear Friends

The month of October is associated with the traditional season of Harvest. The produce is gathered in, ere the winter storms begin. The gardens of the neighbourhood after a summer of heat are starting to look tired and need to be prepared for the winter ahead, before spring comes once again. I think the season of autumn is a wonderful season with the change in colours on the deciduous trees which have the capacity to bring tremendous displays of colour. And then comes the inevitable fall of leaves to herald the arrival of winter. It is also time to be thinking about planting our spring bulbs as well.

This year in the vicarage garden I had two attempts to nurture Rudbeckia seeds without any success. Sometimes we can experience gardening disappointment like this. We may recall Jesus' well-known Parable of the Sower in Mark Chapter 4 where Jesus explained in simple terms that spreading the word of God will land on different types of ground and yield different results ranging from complete failure to a wonderful bounty of harvest. The seed that flourished were the ones that were scattered on

fertile, well cared for ground.

No doubt many of you will be aware of the ideas for mission that are currently being spoken about in our church. We should not overlook the missional efforts that are already taking place. In the various conversations we may have about how to reach out to the community we should not neglect to attend to the needs of the plants that are already well established in our garden of faith. There's no point in continuously planting seed in the fields if the fields themselves are not being nurtured and watered. What I'm saying, friends, is that in addition to scattering seeds in the field in the hope of some harvest we must also continually attend to the field that is already well established, making sure the crops we have are sustained and cared for.

In all our deliberations the fellowship of the church and providing opportunities for personal growth in faith must not be neglected. Our missional activities should aim to address all aspects of the Church of England's five marks of mission. Namely, proclaiming the Good News; teaching and nurturing believers; responding to human need with loving service; transforming unjust structures and pursuing peace, and safeguarding the integrity of creation.

Yours, in
Christ
Paul



Diary for October

Mondays

2-4pm Monday Together in the Parish Room

Fellowship, refreshments and activities supporting the work of the church.

Sunday 5 October

10am All Age Harvest Thanksgiving

Tuesday 14 October

7.30pm Lectio Divina (on Teams)

Thursday 16 October

2pm Mothers' Union

Accessing Sermons

Most sermons at St Cross are either recorded as a Sound or Video Recording. These are available via our website.

If you go directly to YouTube for our Video Recordings (search on St Cross Knutsford), that helps to raise our online profile. If you SUBSCRIBE to the Channel (which costs nothing) or give a LIKE to a sermon, or give a COMMENT, that increases our online presence still further.

If someone asks you about the preaching here you can SHARE a link. It is Mission and Evangelism easily put into action.

Occasional Offices in September

Baptism

September 7

September 28

Cyan and Aurora Mills

Arabella Burke

