

ON COMMON GROUND: VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS
AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF COMMUNITY
IN CENTRAL CANADA, 1840-1900

By

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ON COMMON GROUND

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ABSTRACT

“On Common Ground: Voluntary Associations and the Construction of Community in Central Canada, 1840-1900” examines the formulation of a clearly articulated ethos of community found in the Victorian voluntary association movement. Although forged in a crucible of intersecting value systems, beliefs and identities, certain ideological principles and assumptions about the meaning of “community” surfaced that were common to all social classes and interests in the nineteenth century. While at times a rather vague ideology, the community ethos enabled a rather convoluted and unclassifiable occupational structure of early to mid-Victorian Canada to resemble a unified and harmonious whole. On the surface, it was the promotion of this community ethos within such organizations as Mechanics’ Institutes, agricultural societies, fraternal orders and temperance societies that enabled a colonial society in a state of flux to achieve a sense of cultural identity. While largely successful in creating this aura of community within voluntary associations, in many respects the inclusive nature of these societies were simply illusory as they only camouflaged social, economic and political conflicts simmering just under the surface. Due to the proliferation of these associations in both the urban and the rural environment, the intersection of class, religious, political and gender issues made complete cultural consent over the nature of “community” simply impossible. Exposing the fissures in a society that had always barely concealed the class, gender and racial dissonance lurking underneath a consensual exterior, the resulting chaos in turn of the century Canada illustrates just how fragile was the “constructed” social order of the community in the Victorian age.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANQ	<i>Archives Nationales de Québec à Montreal</i>
AO	<i>Archives of Ontario</i>
DCA	<i>Dufferin County Archives</i>
GPL	<i>Guelph Public Library Archives</i>
MTL	<i>Baldwin Room, Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library</i>
NAC	<i>National Archives of Canada</i>
PCMA	<i>Centennial Museum and Archives, Peterborough</i>
RCL	<i>J.J. Talman Regional Collection, University of Western Ontario</i>
SCA	<i>Simcoe County Archives</i>
WCA	<i>Wellington County Archives</i>

INTRODUCTION

In the late nineteenth century, the exploits of an organization called the Lime Juice Club appeared in the pages of a Peterborough, Ontario weekly newspaper. A satirical look at the voluntary association movement, the published reports of the Lime Juice Club's activities parodied the most salient features of voluntarism. Meeting in the "Hall of Wisdom," the Club lampooned learned scientific and literary societies by advertising lectures on subjects entitled "Is Water Wet?" and "Has the World Advanced Enough?" The "Honourable" Darkness Watson, a crackpot inventor of medicines that was soon kicked out of the Club for selling his ineffectual wares, delivered the latter lecture to a Club meeting. The Lime Juice Club also poked fun at temperance societies by expelling any member who partook of temperance beverages or favoured the prohibition of alcohol. Many of the Club's barbs aimed at mutual benefit or charitable societies, with applicants for the benefits of the Lime Juice Club being either fakers or incompetent. Examples exist in the case of Jamfeld Jones, who was refused compensation when he fell drunk off a mule.¹ The creators of the Lime Juice Club also ridiculed hallowed philosophies of voluntary associations such as the importance of sociability, with some of the more memorable excursions of the Club taking place on freight trains with liberal doses of alcohol, featuring dog fighting and bareknuckle prizefighting as the main attractions. Club members mocked the tenets of industry, production and the Protestant work ethic as well, offering lectures on "The Evil of Wealth," "Is it a Crime to be Poor?" and overturning a constitutional amendment on honesty, by saying that honest industry was the "highway to the poorhouse." Club meetings even caricatured the strong nineteenth-century strictures of morality, soliciting members on the premise that

¹ On the parodies of mutual benefit societies, see the scrapbook of the Lime Juice Club, PCMA, Acc. 67-004, folder 1, clipping of 28 April 1894, 118; 8 June 1895, 198 and 18 April 1896 284. On temperance societies, see 16 June 1886, 1; 26 June 1886, 4 and 1 June 1895, 198. On science and literary pursuits, see the clippings of 19 January 1887, 42; 4 March 1894, 108 and 5 May 1894, 120.

the President had run away with a strange woman, the treasurer skipped town with members' funds and that the Secretary was in the county jail. Lauding hypocrisy and deception as the cardinal virtues of membership, one announcement stated, "in case a circus comes to town, and a member of the Lime Juice Club in good standing cannot raise the necessary wealth to buy a ticket, it is not derogatory to his character to crawl under the canvas."²

Despite the satirical adventures of the Lime Juice Club, its reports expose in some way Canadians' fascination with and enthusiasm for voluntary associations in the nineteenth century. In many ways the Canadian experience mirrored that of the United States, a country that Alexis de Tocqueville described as a "nation of joiners" due to the proliferation of voluntary associations discovered on his voyage to America. Generally, voluntary associations can be utilized as useful analytical tools for historians as they often reflect tendencies of the larger society, particularly in the North American context with burgeoning ideas of participatory democracy.³ The study of these associations is also an extremely intriguing approach in evaluating various processes and problems of class, state, and gender formation. In early British historiography, voluntarism has for the most part been a description of working class efforts at self-help, association and the development of a working-class consciousness. With the recent growth of studies in middle-class formation, voluntary associations are equally viewed as either a means for the capitalist-industrial order to suppress their workers culturally or as a method for professional elites to dictate the pace of state formation and respectability for all the classes in the community.⁴ In the United States, the

² See the scrapbook of the Lime Juice Club, PCMA, Acc. 67-004, folder 1, clipping of 22 September 1886, 21; 30 March 1887, 50; 21 January 1888, 70; 2 March 1895, 180; 18 May 1895, 194; 30 May 1896, 296 and 8 August 1896, 310.

³ See Theda Skocpol, "The Tocqueville Problem: Civic Engagement in American Democracy," *Social Science History*, 21, no. 4, (Winter, 1997), 455-80.

⁴ For initial working class efforts at voluntarism, see E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, (London, 1968), 441-468; P.H.J.H. Gosden, *Self-Help: Voluntary Associations in the Nineteenth Century*, (London, 1973); and Neville Kirk, *The Growth of*

voluntary principle has likewise found a historiographical home among the middle classes as a vehicle for social control, hegemony and upward mobility. And yet more recent work on voluntary associations discovered that Americans of all classes joined these various societies as a form of civic engagement. Thus voluntary associations exemplified the search for “social capital,” the ordinary citizen’s pursuit of both the individualistic democratic ideal and collective mutual aid.⁵

In many respects, voluntarism in the eyes of Canadian historians closely emulates the work done both in the United States and Britain, albeit with some very subtle differences. Once again the historiographical predominance of associational life shifted from the rise of a nascent working class to the formation of the middling sort. More current work on voluntary associations focuses on them as vehicles not only for middle-class identity, but also how they account for the rise of public opinion and participatory democracy in early nineteenth-century

Working Class Reformism in Mid-Victorian England, (London, 1985), 132-73. For voluntarism as a mode of middle-class hegemony, see Catherine Hall and Leonore Davidoff, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, (Chicago, 1987), 416-49; many of the articles in John Seed and Janet Wolff, editors, *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class*, (London, 1988); Theodore Koditschek, *Class Formation and Urban Industrial Society: Bradford, 1750-1850*, (New York, 1990), 293-319; R.J. Morris, *Class, Sect and Party: The Making of the British Middle Class: Leeds, 1820-50*, (Manchester, 1990) and Brian Lewis, *The Middlemost and the Milltowns: Bourgeois Culture and Politics in Early Industrial England*, (Stanford, 2001), 248-86. On voluntary associations and structural power, see Simon Dentith, *Society and Cultural Forms in Nineteenth Century England*, (London, 1998), 39-63; Martin Gorsky, *Patterns of Philanthropy: Charity and Society in Nineteenth-Century Bristol*, (Suffolk, 1999) and for the middle-class origins of voluntarism, see Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World*, (London, 2000). See also the work of Carol Harrison, *The Bourgeois Citizen in Nineteenth-Century France: Gender, Sociability and the Uses of Emulation*, (New York, 1999).

⁵ For voluntary associations as vehicles for middle-class hegemony, see Dan Doyle, *The Social Order of a Frontier Community: Jacksonville, Illinois, 1825-1870*, (Chicago, 1978), 119-93; Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865*, (New York, 1981), 105-44; John Gilkeson, *Middle-Class Providence, 1820-1940*, (Princeton, 1986), 136-74 and Stuart Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900*, (New York, 1989), 192-229. On the ideas of voluntary associations as expressions of civic engagement and social capital, see the revised work of Mary Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City During the Nineteenth Century*, (Berkeley, 1997), 58-93; Theda Skocpol, “The Tocqueville Problem,” 455-80 and Gerald Gamm and Robert Putnam, “The Growth of Voluntary Associations in America, 1840-1940,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 29, no. 4, (Spring, 1999), 511-57.

Canada. In the colonial context, Canadian associations have also displayed a tendency to assume a larger role in state formation, with historians concluding that successive governments in nineteenth-century Canada have simply been unwilling – or unable – to provide the services supplied by voluntary organizations. As a result, voluntary associations have also actively participated in the larger project of nation building undertaken by both the industrial and professional middle classes.⁶ However, the key to the success and proliferation of voluntary associations in the North Atlantic triangle lies in how they endeavoured to embrace all groups within the community. In attempting to encompass and incorporate all the diverse elements of class, gender and assorted philosophies within the larger society, voluntary associations endeavoured to unite and provide services to all their members.

The study of voluntary associations in some measure explains the absence of revolutionary behaviour during the antebellum period in the United States, or after the violence of the Chartist interlude in Britain or the post-rebellion periods in

⁶ On working class associational life see Gregory Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892*, (Toronto, 1980), 98-153 and Bryan Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991*, (Toronto, 1992), 95-100. On voluntary associations and the formation of a middle-class identity, see David Sutherland, "Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle Class Formation in Early Victorian Halifax, Nova Scotia," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 5, (1994), 237-64; Robert McDonald, *Making Vancouver: Class, Status and Social Boundaries*, (Vancouver, 1996) and Andrew Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2000), 105-29. For voluntary associations as vehicles of state formation see Jean Marie Fecteau, "État et associationnisme au XIXe siècle québécois: éléments pour une problématique des Rapports État/société dans la transition au capitalisme," Allan Greer and Ian Radforth, editors, *Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Canada*, (Toronto, 1992), 134-62 and J.I. Little, *State and Society in Transition: The Politics of Institutional Reform in the Eastern Townships, 1838-1852*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1997), 83-118. Following in the tradition of Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 2nd edition, (London, 1991), Elsbeth Heaman in *The Inglorious Arts of Peace: Exhibitions in Canadian Society During the Nineteenth Century*, (Toronto, 1999) argues that the cultural roots of a burgeoning Canadian nationalism fuelled voluntary associations. On voluntary associations as the first stirrings of inter-class participatory democracy in Canada see Jeffrey McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge: Public Opinion and Deliberative Democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854*, (Toronto, 2000), 63-115. The following work focuses primarily on central Canada, using the French *société* in Quebec as a counterpoint to the Upper Canadian/Ontario voluntary association. While not dismissing the significance of regional differences contained in Western Canada and the Maritimes, the cultural identities of "French" and "English" provided more of a contrast for this particular study.

Canada. In the United States, the “consensual” nature of nineteenth-century Americans – broken of course by the events of the Civil War – has largely been explained through the intellectual currents inherent in republican principles of political economy and the discourses of the democratic ideal. These ideologies not only cemented the relationship between the classes, they also tended to restrain any expressions of class-consciousness, stifling any intellectual dissent that might arise. To the historians of the American experience, this continuity was only broken by the increased class awareness of workers by the end of the century, as organizations such as the Knights of Labor and the Populists managed to popularize the plight of the labouring masses. The heightened “search for order” in the Progressive era came as result of the often-masked social and economic uncertainty of the late antebellum years.⁷

With a more elaborate class system inherent in Britain, debates over the new workers of the industrial revolution and their relative lack of class awareness was far more protracted among English scholars than in America. Of course the publication in 1963 of E.P. Thompson’s Marxist opus, *The Making of the English*

⁷ Some American historians have taken to task this “American exceptionalism,” noting that the American working class have always demonstrated class-consciousness. See the work of Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850*, (New York, 1984) and David Montgomery, *Citizen Worker: The Experience of Workers in the United States with Democracy and the Free Market During the Nineteenth Century*, (New York, 1993). For examples of American intellectual consensus, see Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War*, (New York, 1970); Daniel Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, (Chicago, 1978); Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846*, (New York, 1991); James Livingston, *Pragmatism and the Political Economy of Cultural Revolution, 1850-1940*, (Chapel Hill and London, 1994); Paula Baker, *The Moral Frameworks of Public Life: Gender, Politics and the State in Rural New York, 1870-1930*, (New York, 1997) and Daniel Walker Howe, *Making the American Self*, (Cambridge, 1997). Not all consensus-building activities lacked conflict, however, as noted in the work of Ken Cmiel, *Democratic Eloquence: The Fight Over Popular Speech in Nineteenth-Century America*, (New York, 1990) and Martin Burke, *The Conundrum of Class: Public Discourse on the Social Order of America*, (Chicago, 1995). On the changes in late nineteenth-century American society, see particularly the replacement of the “island community” of family and voluntarism with the state is argued by Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*, (New York, 1967). See also Leon Fink, *Workingmen’s Democracy: The Knights of Labor in American Politics*, (Urbana and Chicago, 1983); Kim Voss, *The Making of American Exceptionalism: The Knights of Labor and Class Formation in the Nineteenth Century*, (Ithaca and London, 1993) and Elizabeth Sanders, *Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers and the American State, 1877-1914*, (Chicago, 1999).

Working Class marked the origins of this discussion as he noted firmly that the working classes participated actively in their own formation. While Thompson's explanations of class conflict during the years of Luddism and the pre-Chartist period resonated with fellow historians of the working class, the relative harmony and peace of the mid-Victorian epoch frustrated those of a Marxist bent who could not appreciate the discontinuity of class-consciousness in waged industrial workers. Attempts by these scholars to clarify this social phenomenon in Britain range from explanations of a labour aristocracy more worried about keeping its occupational position and the growth of a particularly submissive form of working-class reformism. Descriptions from more recent historians challenge the apparent deficiency of class-consciousness amongst the working classes, claiming that middle-class hegemony tempered the enthusiasm of the industrial workers for radical reform. Margot Finn claimed that nationalistic causes tempered the radicalism of nineteenth-century workers through a protracted discussion with bourgeois reformers on the meaning of the British "nation."⁸ Many of these arguments fostered a continuing analysis of class as the most essential tool to understand the social formation of nineteenth-century Britain.

In 1983, the publication of Gareth Stedman Jones' path-breaking collection of essays entitled *Languages of Class*, opened up new explorations of social history, avenues that would not necessarily rely on class analysis to explain the social behaviour of working people in nineteenth-century Britain. To Jones, the appearance of Chartism was not the apogee of industrial workers' class-consciousness, but rather the flowering of an inclusive but radical political

⁸ See E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* and the even more orthodox Marxism of John Foster, *Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution: Early Industrial Capitalism in Three English Towns*, (London, 1974). On the labour aristocracy, see Robert Gray, *The Labour Aristocracy in Victorian Edinburgh*, (London, 1976); Geoffrey Crossick, *An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society: Kentish London, 1840-1880*, (London, 1978) and Kirk, *The Growth of Working Class Reformism*. On middle-class paternalism and hegemony see Patrick Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in Later Victorian England*, (Sussex, 1980) and Koditschek, *Class Formation and Urban Industrial Society*. For a discussion of the class significance of working-class and labour nationalism, see Margot Finn, *After Chartism: Class and Nation in English Radical Politics, 1848-1874*, (Cambridge, 1993).

tradition that created an awareness of the need to reform the greater society.⁹ From this auspicious beginning, a succession of British scholars challenged the orthodoxy of the historians of class by questioning the discontinuity of English radicalism from early socialist intellectuals to the “class consensus” of the post-Chartist period. The anti-machinery diatribes and moral economy of Owenite socialism simply followed Luddism and the utilitarian philosophies of Bentham, thus providing a continuity of radical ideas up to the Chartist period. Similarly, historians argued that the principal adherents of later Gladstonian liberalism managed to patch together a loose alliance of labour leaders, intellectuals and free traders that continued the plebeian traditions of religious liberty, retrenchment, free trade and the reform of the electorate. Still other historians contend that the languages of class were mere smokescreens in masking the construction of a republican middle-class identity or attempts to achieve radical Parliamentary reforms along Chartist lines.¹⁰

While many of these authors followed the “Cambridge” school of Stedman Jones, a new “Manchester” school arose in the early 1990s that utilized poststructuralist thinking in analyzing the post-Chartist period in Britain. Led by Patrick Joyce, these historians argued that “class” itself was an illusive construction of the nineteenth century that engendered an elusive conflict between

⁹ See Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History, 1832-1982*, (Cambridge, 1982), particularly the article “Rethinking Chartism.”

¹⁰ William Reddy pioneered much of this new way of visualizing the interaction of classes in society in his *Money and Liberty in Modern Europe*, (Cambridge, 1987). On Owenite socialism, see the work of Gregory Claeys, *Machinery, Money and the Millennium: From Moral Economy to Socialism*, (Princeton, 1987) and *Citizens and Saints: Politics and Anti-Politics in Early British Socialism*, (Cambridge, 1989). On the connection of plebeian traditions and Gladstonian Liberalism, see the work of Eugenio Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform: Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone, 1860-1880*, (Cambridge, 1992). For Biagini’s edited collection of articles regarding the continuation of the radical tradition in Britain with Alastair Reid, see *Currents of Radicalism: Popular Radicalism, Organized Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850-1914*, (Cambridge, 1991) and another edited collection, *Citizenship and Community: Liberals, Radicals and Collective Identities in the British Isles, 1865-1931*, (Cambridge, 1996). On this latter view of a republican middle-class identity, see Dror Wharman, *Imagining the Middle Class: The Political Representation of Class in Britain, 1780-1840*, (Cambridge, 1995) and on the granting of various Chartist reform measures in the mid-Victorian Parliament see Miles Taylor, *The Decline of British Radicalism, 1847-1860*, (London, 1995).

the classes. To Joyce and his acolytes, the discourse of popular politics was an all-inclusive “vision of the people,” a populism that dictated the tenets of liberalism throughout the Victorian era. Not restricted to an economic dialogue, politics became a popular cultural language all its own with ceremonies and rituals, ensuring that all members of the community could participate.¹¹ The cumulative work of these historians even assisted historians of class to reformulate their ideas regarding radicalism and class identity in the nineteenth century. Refocusing on “occupational identities,” class historians avoided societal descriptions of an overly simplistic three-class model composed of workers, the “middling sort” and aristocratic professionals. Instead, scholars simply widened their vision of the classes, noting that the Victorians themselves held rather wide-ranging views of occupational categories. Historians of this stripe conclude that considerations of class were more about “awareness” than consciousness, as the “emergence of stability” in this period came from a shared intellectual matrix or societal vision of co-operation, harmony and goodwill between the classes.¹²

¹¹ See the work of Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, 1848-1914*, (Cambridge, 1991) and his *Democratic Subjects: The Self and the Social in Nineteenth-Century England*, (Cambridge, 1994). See also James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture, 1815-1867*, (Cambridge, 1993). While not exactly members of the Manchester “school,” other historians appropriated the use of post structuralism and the theories of Michel Foucault in their work. See Mary Poovey, *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830-1864*, (Chicago, 1995) and Simon Dentith, *Society and Cultural Forms*. Jon Lawrence in his *Speaking for the People: Party, Language and Popular Politics in England, 1867-1914*, (Cambridge, 1998) attempts to straddle a middle position, introducing empirical methodology into his study of the language of politics in late Victorian England.

¹² In many ways, W.L. Burn pioneered this pattern of thinking with his *The Age Of Equipoise*, (London, 1964); see also the collection of essays in Martin Hewitt, *An Age of Equipoise? Reassessing Mid-Victorian Britain*, (Aldershot, 2000). See also Geoffrey Crossick, “From Gentlemen to the Residuum: Languages of Social Description in Victorian Britain,” in Penelope Corfield, ed., *Language, History and Class*, (Oxford, 1991), 150-78; John Seed, “From Middling Sort to the Middle Class in Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century England,” in M.L. Bush, ed., *Social Orders and Social Classes in Europe Since 1500: Studies in Social Stratification*, (Essex, 1992), 114-35; Martin Hewitt, *The Emergence of Stability in the Industrial City: Manchester, 1832-1867*, (Aldershot, 1996) and especially David Cannadine, *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain*, (New York, 1999).

Despite the variety of methodological and ideological approaches, the realization of societal concord is plainly enunciated by historians of the American and British Victorian period, and a description of the colonial society of Canada is no different. Yet in strong contrast to explanations in the United States and Britain, the “consensus” of the post-rebellion period in Canada, as interpreted by most Canadian historians, has few political, social or intellectual overtones. Historians such as Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer argued that the persistence of a “producer ideology” in the post-Confederation period exposed the lack of class-consciousness and political radicalism in Canadian workers generally, despite skilled workers’ best efforts at association. The obsession of many Canadians with nation building and the shoring up of a weak state also explains the political normalization and class harmony after the rebellions. Only recently have the reforming impulse of popular politics and the phenomenon of clientelism become alternative rationales for a lack of working-class radicalism in Canada.¹³

After the rebellions and the conclusion of the debates over loyalty between church and state that divided Tories and Reformers, Canadians cast about for new means to stabilize a society in a state of flux. The end of the rebellions also saw the end of the more virulent aspects of sectarian and political violence, of which

¹³ On the reformist tendencies of the producer ideology and the overall absence of class-consciousness in Canadian workers, see Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism* and Bryan Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1979), especially chapter four. On nation building, see Doug Owsram, *The Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900*, (Toronto, 1980); Suzanne Zeller, *Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation*, (Toronto, 1987) and Elsbeth Heaman, *The Inglorious Arts of Peace*. On the predominance of supporting a weak state apparatus as the main consideration of the nineteenth-century Canadian governing order, see Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871*, (London, 1988); Jean-Marie Fecteau, *Un nouvel ordre des choses: La pauvreté, le crime, l'Etat au Québec, de la fin du XVIIIe siècle à 1840*, (Montreal, 1989) and many of the articles in Greer and Radforth, *Colonial Leviathan*. On popular politics and the phenomenon of clientelism, see S. J. R. Noel, *Patrons, Clients, Brokers: Ontario Society and Politics, 1791-1896*, (Toronto, 1990) and “Early Populist Tendencies in Ontario Political Culture,” *Ontario History*, 90, no. 2, (September, 1998), 173-87; Allan Greer, *The Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada*, (Toronto, 1993); McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge* and Carol Wilton, *Popular Politics and Political Culture in Upper Canada, 1800-1850*, (Toronto, 2000).

the less contested nature of the voluntary association helped ease.¹⁴ Despite the seemingly harmonious nature of these early to mid-Victorian class relations, by contrast the later nineteenth-century era in Canada has often been described as one seething with irreconcilable class, racial and intellectual tensions. The materialization of such class-conscious groups as the Knights of Labor and the Patrons of Industry disturbed the precarious balance of the classes, while creeping urbanization created discord among the agriculturalists. Similarly, debates over secularization, new ideas of political economy and social science threatened to overwhelm Canadian society from the Victorian norms.¹⁵ The existence of these difficulties suggests that harmonious relations among the classes seemingly inherent in the post-rebellion era were simply an illusion, particularly if that consensus broke apart by the closing stages of the century.

¹⁴ Of course, this work recognizes that “less contested” is fairly subjective, as underlying tensions within various voluntary associations often came to the forefront. See Jane Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle and Upper Canada: A Developing Colonial Ideology*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1987); David Mills, *The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada, 1784-1850*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1988); William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth Century Ontario*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1989); Cecilia Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850*, (Toronto, 1996); McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge* and Wilton, *Popular Politics and Political Culture*.

¹⁵ On the appearance of class-consciousness and the crisis of class in the latter half of the century, see Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism* and Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict* as well as their seminal work *Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900*, (Cambridge, 1982); Ramsay Cook, “Tillers and Toilers: The Rise and Fall of Populism in Canada in the 1890s,” *CHA Historical Papers*, (Guelph, 1984), 5-20; Macdonald, *The Making of Vancouver* and Christina Burr, *Spreading the Light: Work and Labour Reform in Late-Nineteenth-Century Toronto*, (Toronto, 1998). On creeping secularization, see A.B. McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in Victorian Era*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1979); Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada*, (Toronto, 1985); David Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940*, (Toronto, 1992) and for the arguments against secularization see Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full Orbed-Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900-1940*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1996). On the new political economy and social science, see Paul Craven, *“An Impartial Umpire”: Industrial Relations and the Canadian State, 1900-1911*, (Toronto, 1980); Barry Ferguson, *Remaking Liberalism: The Intellectual Legacy of Adam Shortt, O.D. Skelton, W.C. Clark and W.A. Mackintosh, 1890-1925*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1993); Sara Burke, *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto, 1887-1937*, (Toronto, 1996) and Christie/Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*.

The evidence contained within the voluntary association movement suggests that in nineteenth-century Canada, the formulation of a clearly articulated ethos of community emerged from the disarray and confused ideologies of the rebellion period. With Victorian historians' fascination with questions of class, state and gender, the concept of what made a "community" has largely been lost in any discussions of the social or cultural history of the nineteenth-century North Atlantic triangle. More recent historiography, particularly the work of historians of rural America, undertook the onerous task of revisiting the bonds and boundaries of community in the Victorian era. Much of the work done in discovering the "social sphere" focused on the rural family, and how the interaction of individuals in the private and public spheres created an ideology of the social self. In attempting to deal with both the meanings and the practice of community in the nineteenth century, voluntary associations appear frequently in these discussions of "community formation." In the Canadian historical experience, recent work on community and culture tends to shy away from secular voluntary associations, although a great deal of scholarly insight focuses on religious associations as a means of forging a community culture in nineteenth-century Canada.¹⁶

¹⁶ For the contours of this debate, see John Walsh and Steven High, "Rethinking the Concept of Community," *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 32, no. 63, (November, 1999), 255-74. For the American context, see Nancy Grey Osterud, *Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth-Century New York*, (Ithaca and London, 1991); Jane Pederson, *Between Memory and Reality: Family and Community in Rural Wisconsin, 1870-1970*, (Madison, 1992) and Karen Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994). For Canada, see particularly the pioneering work of Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure and Identity in Late Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario*, (Toronto, 1996) and her article, "Railing, Tattling and General Rumour: Gossip, Gender and Church Regulation in Upper Canada," *Canadian Historical Review*, 81, no. 3, (September, 2000), 380-402. See also Brian Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-1895*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1993). Of even more significance is the work of Catherine Wilson, "Reciprocal Work Bees and the Meaning of Neighbourhood," *Canadian Historical Review*, 82, no. 3, (September, 2001), 431-64 and many of the articles in Nancy Christie, editor, *Households of Faith: Family, Gender and Community in Canada, 1760-1969*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2002). Other colonial societies also "constructed" their communities on the basis of social order, yet devoid of the class antagonisms of the Old World; see Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and Its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New*

And what exactly was this “community ethos” that permeated throughout voluntary associations in Victorian Canada? Although forged in a crucible of intersecting value systems, beliefs and identities, certain ideological principles and assumptions about the meaning of “community” surfaced that were common to all social classes, interests and associations throughout the nineteenth century. These shared values and practices regarding the salient features of the larger society were not only multifaceted and complex, they were also heavily promoted within both the informal civic polity and burgeoning structures of a nascent colonial state throughout the Victorian period. More importantly, the voluntary association movement attempted to establish solidarity and societal unity within both a national and localized community, among individuals with a multitude of interconnecting ideals, identities and philosophies. Accomplishing this rather difficult task required the dissemination of an ideology of community that recognized the veracity of an accepted social order despite the ambiguous nature of class relations in nineteenth-century Canada.¹⁷

Although on the surface this discursive “ideal society” or community appeared to be a monolithic cultural construction stemming from governing elites, in actuality such ideals held very different connotations for different individuals and associations in varying points in space and time. From the outset, these cultural standards and doctrines became highly contested, with various groups attempting to commandeer the core values of community preached in these societies for use in their own constituency. In other words, despite accepting the “reality” of the community ethos by many organizations and voluntary associations, it was also a social and cultural construction that merely glossed over the political, social and economic tensions inherent in Victorian Canada. By

Zealand Society, 1850-1900, (Auckland, 1989) and Geoff Raby, *Making Rural Australia: An Economic History of Technical and Institutional Creativity, 1788-1860*, (Melbourne, 1996).

¹⁷ On the use of community as a conceptual device, see David Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community in Paris, 1740-1790*, (Cambridge, 1986); Walsh and High, “Rethinking the Concept of Community”; Wilson, “Reciprocal Work Bees” and Christie, “Family, Community, and the Rise of Liberal Society,” *Households of Faith*, 3-5.

the end of the century, the contravention of this community ethos so carefully constructed over the course of this era would further expose and highlight the fissures of cultural contestation lurking just beneath the surface of this “consensual” century. In many ways, the concept of “community” held by enthusiasts in the voluntary association movement created an illusion of societal unity while veiling the material exclusion of those on the outside.¹⁸ This study therefore recognizes that while voluntary associations clearly disseminated values of community inclusion, individuals within these various organizations could also utilize the ideology of community to further their own agendas.

In the rhetoric contained in various voluntary associations, four primary doctrines and practices emerged that enabled various associational directors and members to communicate an ideology of community. The first of these core beliefs about the nature of community was the conscious prescription for each voluntary association to be inclusive of class and occupation. Despite accepting nineteenth-century liberal notions of individual agency, equality and respectability, the ideology preached in voluntary organizations emphasized *interdependence* upon the various social orders inherent in the larger community. Opening the doors of voluntary associations to all ranks and orders within the larger society did tend to alleviate forms of class conflict, maintaining an appreciation of how the “community” fit together into a harmonious whole. And yet the language of class interdependence inherent in voluntary associations created more tension than it managed to solve. Often a discourse of class superiority erupted in voluntary associations as various interests attempted to delineate which class contributed more to the larger society. Similarly, the language of class inclusion could also be highly exclusionary, as some

¹⁸ On the problematic use of community as a cultural construction of identity, see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Tina Loo, *Making Law, Order and Authority in British Columbia, 1821-1871*, (Toronto, 1994); Bryan Palmer, “Mutuality and the Masking/Making of Difference: Mutual Benefit Societies in Canada, 1850-1950,” in Marcel van der Linden, ed., *Social Security Mutualism: The Comparative History of Mutual Benefit Societies*, (New York, 1996), 111-38; McDonald, *Making Vancouver* and Heaman, *The Inglorious Arts of Peace*.

organizations attempted to proscribe certain occupations from the community ethos entirely.¹⁹

A more troubling aspect for the community-orientated voluntary associations in Victorian Canada came as they attempted to integrate women and race into their organizations. The need to include all gendered and ethnic participants within the community generated more discussion and debate on the nature of the public and private spheres, and between individuality and society than any other. Initial attempts to incorporate women and race within voluntary associations were extremely problematic, for despite encouraging indirect participation women, blacks and natives were clearly segregated and marginalized by voluntary associations at mid-century.²⁰ And yet efforts towards the conscious inclusion of women into the voluntary association movement in the late nineteenth century did bear fruit in terms of membership and increased participation, as women were tentatively offered more direct roles within these organizations. While the enthusiasm of voluntary association directors for the incorporation of women remained a strong feature of late Victorian associations, it was tempered by a continuing discourse of domesticity and adherence to women's involvement along strict gendered lines. Similarly, attempts to integrate other races within voluntary

¹⁹ The discourse of class superiority arose most frequently in agrarian voluntary associations, while the exclusion of certain occupations from the community ethos occurred in the Grange, the Patrons of Industry and in temperance societies; see chapters three, four and six, below. Similarly, both skilled workers and the middle-class *in the same voluntary organization*, could utilize the discourse of inclusion for their own purposes. For the labour employment of the ideology of interdependence in integrating non-skilled and skilled workers, see Kealey/Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be*; Cook, "Tillers and Toilers" and Burr, *Spreading the Light*. On the bourgeois use of class inclusion to formulate their own cultural identity, see Sutherland, "Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle Class Formation"; Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*; Heaman, *The Inglorious Arts of Peace* and Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*.

²⁰ See Sutherland, "Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle Class Formation," 243-50; Palmer, "Mutuality and the Masking/Making of Difference" and McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge*, 63-115. Cecilia Morgan in *Public Men and Virtuous Women*, 198-218 postulates that despite women's participation in associational life at mid-century, it was merely symbolic of their gender and restricted to charity and benevolent work.

associations resulted in attitudes ranging from overt segregation of the races to selective intolerance, rather than genuine inclusion.²¹

A second facet of the “community ethos” would manifest itself in the religious and political sphere, and entailed ending the sectarian and political turmoil of the pre-rebellion era. Accomplishing this task required the expulsion of sectarian and party politics from the activities, discussions and discourses of various organizations. Banning such discussions from voluntary associations would guarantee fraternity and societal concord between individuals of varying political and religious opinions, ensuring a favourable response from the larger community. While such a position was not often associated in mid-Victorian Canada with an ethos of community, it did contribute to the process of political and sectarian normalization after the rebellions. As the century progressed, some voluntary associations found it increasingly difficult to remain aloof from political processes and the effects of partyism, despite maintaining the façade of political neutrality. While attempting to enforce these standards of political objectivity, the effects of urbanization and industrialization forced some associations – the Grange, the Patrons of Industry and temperance societies in particular – to become more involved in the political sphere.²²

²¹ On the more symbolic yet crucial inclusion of women in late nineteenth-century voluntary associations see Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks* and particularly Nancy Christie, “Family, Community, and the Rise of Liberal Society,” *Households of Faith*, 3-15. On the completely exclusive nature of fraternalism in reference to non-white races see Palmer, “Mutuality and the Masking/Making of Difference”; George and J.C. Herbert Emery, *A Young Man's Benefit: The Independent Order of Oddfellows and Sickness Insurance in the United States and Canada, 1860-1929*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1999), 26-30 and Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 105-29. David Beito argues convincingly that fraternalism in the late decades of the nineteenth century practiced selective intolerance; see his *From Mutual Aid to the Welfare State: Fraternal Societies and Social Services, 1890-1967*, (Chapel Hill and London, 2000), 17-40.

²² Political normalization has most often been associated with mid-century state formation and the post-rebellion system of education; see Ian Radforth and Allan Greer, editors, *Colonial Leviathan* and Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871*, (London, 1988). Cecilia Morgan in *Public Men and Virtuous Women* briefly acknowledges the tension of antipartyism and sectarianism in her work, although Carol Wilton in *Popular Politics and Political Culture*, 10-15 associates antipartyism with reactionary conservatism. On the involvement of the Grange, Patrons of Industry and temperance societies in politics, see chapters four and six, below.

A third component of the community ethos expressed by the promoters of the post-rebellion voluntary association movement in Victorian Canada came in the advocacy of the philosophy of honest industry and the political economy of hard work. The intellectual underpinnings of this aspect of the community ethos again focused on the seemingly irreconcilable conditions of creating economic and commercial *interdependence* between the classes, while emphasizing the importance of individual diligence and hard work. Many historians have portrayed this as a producer alliance, whereby the defeat of entrenched mercantile elites in the early 1840s was arranged through a partnership of artisans and middle class producers.²³ After mid-century, while voluntary associations continued to boast of an interdependent producer alliance, the development of industrial capitalism in the latter decades of the nineteenth century revealed the tensions intrinsic to these cross-class voluntary movements. The unmasking of a producer *ideology* employed by both small producers and industrial capital to promote their own economic agendas forced voluntary associations to grapple with the question of class cleavages as never before. Even though the success of the producer ideology in creating economic consensus is fairly tenuous given the debates over free trade and protectionism as well as the conflict engendered by the labour movement, it was incumbent on voluntary associations throughout the Victorian epoch to limit the conflicts over economic science and create a sense of community in the name of industrial progress.²⁴

²³ Of course, the mid-century producer alliance characterized the “non-producing” and entrenched privileged mercantile elites of the early nineteenth-century as outside the community of independent yeomen, artisans and manufacturers. See L.R. MacDonald, “Merchants Against Industry: An Idea and its Origins,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 56, (1975), 266-80; T.W. Acheson, *Saint John: The Making of a Colonial Urban Community*, (Toronto, 1985) and Martin Hewitt, “Science, Popular Culture and the Producer Alliance in Saint John, N.B.,” in Paul A Bogaard, editor, *Profiles of Science and Society in the Maritimes Prior to 1914*, (Victoria, 1990), 243-75. Tina Loo makes an interesting argument that classical liberalism and state intervention in the economy were not exclusive concepts; see her *Making Law, Order and Authority in British Columbia, 1821-1871*, (Toronto, 1994).

²⁴ On the producer ideology and industrial capitalism, see Bryan Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict*, 97-122; Gregory Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond*, 124-50; Craig Heron, “Factory Workers” in Paul Craven, editor, *Labouring Lives: Work and Workers in Nineteenth Century*

A last glimpse of this ideology of community appears in the realm of leisure, as voluntary associations utilized their entertainment and various other activities in constructing and maintaining a spirit of camaraderie within the larger community. As Lynne Marks suggests in her pioneering work on small-town Ontario, leisure is an effective prism from which to view how nineteenth-century Canadians identified themselves and the community around them. As with the concepts of non-sectarianism, antipartyism and the theory of honest industry, the tensions surrounding the interpretation of “proper and respectable” leisure was highly perceptible in voluntary societies.²⁵ However, the leisure activities promoted by voluntary societies within the community not only defined the identity of its participants, in a very real sense associations simply could not exist without these entertainment options. The revenues and interest generated by leisure activities within the larger national or localized community frequently determined either the success or the failure of its voluntary associations.

As to the theoretical framework contained in this study, in many respects its methodology reflects the complexities of Canadian society itself in the Victorian age. As voluntary associations were highly responsive to the needs of their varying constituencies, any study of these organizations by design must be theoretically eclectic, amalgamating both the construction of meaning through discourse and weighing the empirical evidence of associational activity. The

Ontario, (Toronto, 1995), 480-515 and Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*. Both David Burley, *A Particular Condition in Life: Self-Employment and Social Mobility in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1994) and Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty* argue that small producers and self-employed entrepreneurs formed the backbone of the late Victorian economy, utilizing the producer ideology for their own purposes.

²⁵ There is a fine literature on the importance of leisure in constructing the identity of its patrons, as well as the tensions inherent in competing visions of proper and respectable entertainment. For Britain, see Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, (London, 1978). For some American examples see Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920*, (New York, 1983) and Hansen, *A Very Social Time*. For the Canadian context, see Nancy Bouchier, “For the Love of the Game and the Honour of the Town: Organized Sport, Local Culture, and Middle Class Hegemony in Two Ontario Towns, 1838-1895,” PhD Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1990 and particularly Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*.

initial “construction” of the community ethos itself is informed by the work of Jürgen Habermas and his conception of the liberal and democratic public sphere. According to Habermas, the basic blueprint of the enlightened public sphere was the open and inclusive nature of participatory democracy, and how the rise of public opinion established the parameters of an emerging bourgeois social order. Although the concept of the liberal public sphere was forged in the crucible of the European Enlightenment, in the work of Jeffery McNairn it merged into the politics of Upper Canada. Conceding that the Upper Canadian political scene was an anomaly to Habermas’ construction of the public sphere due to the “missing Enlightenment” inherent in this colonial society, McNairn argues that the constitutional discussions in early Upper Canada to 1854 assisted the colony in becoming governed by informed and rational public discourse. McNairn also contends that voluntary associations exhibited a similar political significance, as an exercise in self-education and democratic sociability.²⁶

Clearly the inclusive nature of both the dialogues of constitutionalism and the democratic practices of the voluntary movement do fall under the auspices of a theoretical “community ethos,” as even McNairn interchanges the use of “public” and “community” throughout his work. While accepting the construction of a “public sphere,” the organization of consent centred on the rational political discourse of constitutionalism and notions of self-government frame only part of the story. Even though politics and religion were significant concerns to nineteenth-century Canadians, negative reactions to sectarianism and the prevalence of antiparty sentiment within the larger community suggest that political and religious processes were by no means the essential agency of

²⁶ See the theories of Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Berger, (Cambridge, 1989). To a great extent, Cecilia Morgan uses the concept of the public sphere in her *Public Men and Virtuous Women*. See particularly McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge*, 6-10 and 63-115. One of the difficulties for McNairn is the use of Freemasonry as an example of “democratic sociability,” as Masons are almost exclusively comprised of the upper middle-class by the middle of the century. See Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 110-18.

constructing a viable public sphere.²⁷ Similarly, the difficulty in grafting Habermas' model of the enlightened public sphere into the colonial system requires a democratic revolution of sorts, whereby a professional and intellectual elite defeats an autocratic monarchical regime. While the rebellions against the Family Compact and the *Chateau Clique* do have these political overtones and undertones, the “enlightened elites” for the most part were in favour of retaining the monarchical connection; it was largely the “independent yeomen” who favoured Mackenzie and constitutional reform. Likewise, the nebulous and ambiguous nature of the class structure throughout nineteenth-century Canada ensured that the colonial civic polity was already fairly inclusive and open.²⁸

However, the proliferation of the community ethos in voluntary associations during the Victorian period could not come solely as a result of a politically constructed public sphere. The cultural mediation inherent in the various aspects of the voluntary movement in nineteenth-century Canada demonstrated both the contestation and the construction of cultural identity and the meaning of community. The exclusion of sectarian and political turmoil, the political economy of honest industry and respectable leisure – uniform principles that cut across class lines – were standards that required constant negotiation and re-negotiation in various voluntary associations throughout the nineteenth century. In the Canadian context, the ideology of community joins sport, leisure, fraternalism and religion as a bulwark of cultural hegemony.²⁹ While the levels of

²⁷ The dismissal of antiparty and antisectarian sentiment is not restricted to McNairn's vision of politics in Upper Canada; see Wilton, *Popular Politics and Political Culture*, 10-15.

²⁸ Despite McNairn's accurate assertion that these independent yeomen were invited to participate in the functions of deliberative democracy, most of the newspapers, voluntary associations and political debates examined in his work focused on the burgeoning “urban” centres of Toronto and Kingston. Those “yeomen” living in the rural countryside surely were not engaged in these constitutional discussions as professions contained in the more “urban” environment, apart from involvement with Mackenzie's revolt; see Colin Read, *The Rising in Western Upper Canada, 1837-8: The Duncombe Revolt and After*, (Toronto, 1982). On the fluidity of the Canadian social structure in the nineteenth century, see notes 22 and 23, above.

²⁹ Of course, Antonio Gramsci believed that hegemony was not only economic, but a reciprocal, culturally based phenomenon; see Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, editors

hegemonic influence amongst voluntary associations would vary from organization to organization, promoters of these societies would actively preach the gospel of the community ethos. In urban Mechanics' Institutes and agricultural societies, an almost conscious effort in accomplishing a bourgeois hegemony occurred, while fraternalism and agricultural fraternal groups such as the Grange and Patrons of Industry utilized the community ideology in order to contest urban agents of hegemony. Temperance societies are an excellent example of hegemonic transformation over time, as early temperance movements aggressively resisted the social order at mid-century while passively accepting social change by the end of the Victorian age.

However, in “contesting” the theory of cultural hegemony itself, one of the dangers in embracing the concept of hegemony comes in the oversimplification of class relations and the structures of power. In delineating the boundaries of order and disorder as well as the categories of “rough” and “respectable,” Canadian historians who accept the concept of cultural hegemony have presented a rather two-dimensional picture of the Victorian social order. While not discounting the importance of the definition of respectability in this period, by focusing “exclusively” on the respectability paradigm many historians have ignored the intersecting values of community inherent in the cultural identity of Victorian Canadians. Moreover, the social order itself throughout nineteenth-century Canada was not a monolithic hegemonic creation, as the ruling elites were constantly shifting and changing. From the commercial and religious elites of the

and translators, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, (New York, 1971), 5-23. For an excellent article on the application of cultural hegemony in the nineteenth century, see T. Jackson Lears, “The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities,” *American Historical Review*, 90, no. 3, (June, 1985), 567-93. For Canadian examples of cultural hegemony see Bouchier, “For the Love of the Game and the Honour of the Town”: Christopher Anstead, “Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario: Secret Societies and Cultural Hegemony,” Ph.D. Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1992 and Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*. While voluntary associations indeed assisted in the process of middle-class formation, other classes such as agriculturalists and skilled workers also utilized voluntary organizations to further their own agendas of identity and community; see chapters three to five in this study, and also Sutherland, “Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle Class Formation”; Palmer, “Mutuality and the Masking/Making of Difference” and also Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 105-29. To some extent this is the view of Heaman, *The Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 21-27.

Family Compact and *Chateau Clique*, the great industrialists and manufacturers of mid-century to the authority of professional “experts” and civil servants of the late Victorian period, the ruling middle class also experienced great upheaval and modification.³⁰ By employing the community ethos as a theoretical device within voluntary associations, a more comprehensive vision of the interconnecting cultural belief systems in the Victorian age is possible.

In navigating through the cultural contestation intrinsic to voluntary associations in nineteenth-century Canada, a further theoretical construct is required to analyze even further the meaning of the community ethos. As various promoters of voluntary associations attempted to appropriate the cultural motif of the community ethos for their own cultural identity, the necessity to probe even deeper into the meaning of the community ethos is essential. While written as an intellectual history regarding the concept of “community,” the present work is therefore highly influenced by the cultural interpretation of meaning and discourse, attempting to extract societal beliefs from the processes and dynamics of popular culture. Despite the fact that those outside the social power structure challenged the discursive construction of community, often the community ethos was little more than a linguistically defined ideology. Thus the inherent meaning of the community ethos often was cultural perception and representation, and not the “reality” of the strict imposition of a bourgeois social order.³¹ This work

³⁰ Lears cautions that in creating an oversimplified model of class relations, one runs the risk of reverting back to a theory of social control. See Lears, “The Concept of Cultural Hegemony.” By examining such groups as the Salvation Army and the Knights of Labor, Lynne Marks has indeed attempted to broaden an examination of cultural hegemony, although the categories of rough and respectable are also very strong paradigms in her work; see her *Revivals and Roller Rinks*. On the transformation over time of the middle class, see notes 15, 19 and 21, above.

³¹ In many ways, Michel Foucault pioneered this way of thinking in his *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan, (New York, 1979). On the new “cultural history,” see the work of Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, (London, 1978); many of the essays in Roger Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, (New York, 1985) and particularly the essays in Roger Chartier, *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations*, (Cambridge, 1988). For British examples of the linguistic turn, see the work of Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People and Democratic Subjects*; James Vernon, *Politics and the People*; Mary Poovey, *Making a Social Body* and Simon Dentith, *Society and Cultural Forms*. For some Canadian examples, see Mariana

therefore takes quite seriously the changing and shared rhetoric of community, and the situation of its discursive ideology through a myriad of associations throughout the Victorian era.

However, in pursuing a strict cultural approach to the community ethos the use of an empirical framework of historical context is necessary to avoid the excesses of cultural theory, which at times can be overly subjective. In many ways, the overall framework of this present study adheres to the admonition of Roger Chartier in regards to cultural history, that in returning to the centrality of the text, both discourse *and* the “practice” of history requires examination. In recognizing the importance of the language of perception, Chartier called on historians to focus on the interdependency of historical actors, in describing the various struggles for cultural identity. In other words, despite these cultural negotiations intrinsic to discourse, the success or failure of a social identity comes through collective representation, a sense of belonging that is recognized and promoted within the cultural community. The sense of community, therefore, is a social reality that remains without a fixed meaning, but not entirely open to a completely objective reconstruction.³² In the overall sense of voluntary associations and the construction of the community ethos, this study recognizes at once that the community ethos is a linguistic construction, yet reflective of the reality of the larger Canadian social order that both shared and contested its principles throughout the nineteenth century.

Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*, (Toronto, 1991); Kay Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980*, (Kingston and Montreal, 1991) and particularly the work of Keith Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto: The Industrial Exhibition and the Shaping of a Late Victorian Culture*, (Toronto, 1997).

³² See Roger Chartier, *On the Edge of the Cliff: History, Language and Practices*, translated by Lydia Cochrane, (Baltimore and London, 1997), 2-27. Critics of Chartier claim that by accepting the reality of community, he underestimates the complexities in societal processes; see Jonathan Dewald, “Roger Chartier and the Fate of Cultural History,” *French Historical Studies*, 21, no. 2, (Spring, 1998), 221-40. However, some historians have attempted to bridge the gap between empiricism and discourse, particularly the excellent work of Jon Lawrence in his *Speaking for the People*. For some Canadian examples of this middle ground, see Tina Loo, *Making Law, Order and Authority* and Christina Burr, *Spreading the Light*.

In 1894, the annual report of the Lime Juice Club noted that a distinguished man of science visited the Club to offer a lecture on the beauties of science and art. After his lecture, the learned professor boasted, “I trust that the words I have spoken will do much to elevate the hemisphere and usefulness of this great and noble institution, which I trust will continue to grow and flourish until it will control the destinies of mankind.” As such useless flattery was anathema to the attitudes of the Lime Juice Club, the President ordered the kicker of the Club, Pile Driver Riley, to “escort” the man outside.³³ While mocking the inflated attitude of voluntary associations, in many respects these institutions did hold such a view of themselves, and for good reason. The history and function of voluntary associations in Victorian Canada were far ranging and essential to the development of the community ideology. As key institutions forging a new nation in the colonial wilderness, these voluntary organizations managed to construct a vision of community that crossed ambiguous class lines. By the end of the nineteenth century, attempts to adhere to or conceptualize new philosophies of community exposed the conflicts that were always under the surface in the social order. Rivalries between rural and urban visions of community, the crisis between capital and labour, racial tensions as well as competing associations, philosophies, and visions simply could not be reconciled to the community ethos by the end of the Victorian era. While the commonsense worldview shared by these voluntary associations enabled its promoters to engineer some form of hegemonic consent amongst its constituency between 1840 and the 1870s, the breakdown of the community ethos in the latter two decades of the nineteenth century exposed a society that had always demanded constant cultural mediation and negotiation.

³³ The scrapbook of the Lime Juice Club, PCMA, Acc. 67-004, folder 1, clipping of 5 May 1894, 120.

CHAPTER ONE - The Construction of an Industrial Community: The Urban Mechanics' Institute Movement in Victorian Canada

One of the more intriguing examples of the utilization of the community ethos in Victorian Canada can be found in the Mechanics' Institute. Originally created to assist working class adults in their quest for education, early Institutes offered scientific and practical lectures, night classes and a small library. With the expansion of urban areas in the latter half of the century, Mechanics' Institutes extended their services to include popular lectures, gymnasias and other forms of recreation. As a result, in many Canadian cities, towns and villages the neighbourhood Institute became the first community centre. Many of the Institutes promoted an inclusive ideology that called for harmony and co-operation between the classes in a co-operative venture of self-improvement and education. Unfortunately, by the late nineteenth century, promoters of urban Mechanics' Institutes were exposed as hegemonic agents of an outmoded industrial order. While skilled workers continued to attend the night classes and reading rooms of urban Institutes, many did not renew their memberships in the institution. More importantly, the rising professional middle class – the late Victorian agents of the urban social order – completely abandoned the Mechanics' Institutes in Canadian cities, preferring the more “professionalized” associations such as the Canadian Institute, the *Institut Canadien* and Natural History Societies. The popularity of Mechanics' Institutes in the early portion of the century and the rapid decline of the movement by the 1880s is a function of the withdrawal of the professional *and* the skilled working class from the Institutes in the cities, as well as the growth of mass recreation, government sponsored adult education and the free library movement. Despite clinging to the rhetoric of the community ethos, in representing the hegemony of the industrial order urban Mechanics' Institutes simply became irrelevant by the end of the century.

The history of the Mechanics' Institute movement began in early nineteenth century Glasgow, as education pioneer George Birkbeck set up the Institutes for the diffusion of scientific knowledge and the industrial arts amongst the artisan classes. In 1824 a Mechanics' Institute was established in London under the patronage of Henry Brougham, who introduced lectures, a library and night classes to the artisan community. Placing an emphasis on mutual instruction, the introduction of a small fee kept the workers independent, notwithstanding calls for liberal financial support from the merchant classes to aid the Institute.¹ As the Mechanics' Institute movement in Britain quickly lost momentum after 1851, many scholars have debated both the purpose and effectiveness of the Institutes as an instrument in educating the industrial classes. Centring on the dominance of the middle classes over the ideology and the function of the Institutes, historical disagreements abound over the motivations behind bourgeois ascendancy. With the rise of industrialization, Mechanics' Institutes became a focal point for the spread of such middle-class values as utility, morality and thrift, and the practical use of science for mercantile interests. As a result, some middle-class tradesmen and professionals enforced a strict social control over the operation of the Institutes to preserve the industrial order. More often than not, industrial workers interested in the "pursuit of knowledge under difficulties" managed to preserve their independence while utilizing the Mechanics' Institute to further their educational needs.² Mechanics' Institutes also allowed middle-class radicals

¹ Mabel Tylecote, *The Mechanics' Institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire Before 1851* (Manchester, 1957), chapters 1 and 2.

² See Edward Royle, "Mechanics' Institutes and the Working Class," *Historical Journal*, 14, no. 2 (1971), 305-21 and John Laurent, "Science, Society and Politics in Late Nineteenth Century England: A Further Look at Mechanics' Institutes," *Social Studies of Science* 14, no. 4, (November, 1984), 585-600. See also Steven Shapin and Barry Barnes, "Science, Nature and Control: Interpreting Mechanics' Institutes," *Studies in Social Science* 7, (1977), 31-74 and A.D. Garner and EW Jenkins, "The English Mechanics' Institutes: The Case of Leeds, 1824-1842," *History of Education* 13, no. 2, (April, 1984), 139-52. Conversely, working class historians have argued that radical artisans ignored the Mechanics Institutes when its officers were usurped by the middle class; see E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, (Harmondsworth, 1968), 817-20 and Richard Johnson, " 'Really Useful Knowledge': Radical Education and

access to new scientific theories, which elite scientists attempted to monopolize through the growth of professional science associations and the universities. Thus “marginal men” could participate in the technological revolution, while at the same time revolting against the traditional scientific method. This popularization of science permitted the middle classes to carve out a cultural niche within a society caught in a state of social flux. Similarly, other historians contend that Mechanics’ Institutes were simply a consequence of middle-class formation. Combined with literary societies and mutual improvement associations, Mechanics’ Institutes became centres of cultural activity for bourgeois citizens.³

Canadian historiography regarding Mechanics’ Institutes closely mirrors these assertions, as historians emphasize a middle-class hegemony in both ideology and function. Speculation on middle-class intentions range from the social control thesis to the retention of working-class agency, with more recent scholarship focusing on the Mechanics’ Institutes as a vehicle for both class and state formation.⁴ Canadian scholars are unique in their depiction of the

Working Class Culture, 1790-1848,” in J. Clarke, C. Critcher and A Johnson, editors, *Working Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory*, (New York, 1979), 75-102.

³ Ian Inkster has pioneered the work in this field. See Ian Inkster, “Aspects of the History of Science and Culture in Britain, 1780-1850 and Beyond,” in Ian Inkster and Jack Morrell, editors, *Metropolis and Province: Science in British Culture, 1780-1850*, (London, 1983), 3-14 and the edited collection of his own articles in *Scientific Culture and Urbanization in Industrializing Britain* (Aldershot, 1997). See also Roger Cooter, *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science: Phrenology and the Organization of Consent in Nineteenth Century Britain*, (Cambridge, 1984); Howard Wach, “Culture and the Middle Classes: Popular Knowledge in Industrial Manchester,” *Journal of British Studies* 27, no. 4, (October, 1988), 375-404 and R. J. Morris, *Class, Sect and Party: Leeds 1820-1850*, (Manchester, 1990), 161-203.

⁴ For the social control thesis, see Patrick Keane, “A Study in Early Problems and Policies in Early Adult Education: The Halifax Mechanics’ Institute,” *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 8, no. 16, (November, 1975), 255-74; and also Nora Robins, “Useful Education for the Workingman: The Montreal Mechanics’ Institute, 1828-1870,” in Michael Welton, editor, *Knowledge for the People: The Struggle for Adult Learning in English Speaking Canada, 1828-1973*, (Toronto, 1987), 20-34. Working class independence in the Mechanics’ Institutes is explored in Bryan Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1979), 49-52 and Ellen Ramsay, “Art and Industrial Society: The Role of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute in the Promotion of Art, 1831-1883,” *Labour/Le Travail* 43, (Spring, 1999), 71-103. Mechanics’ Institutes as a vehicle for middle class hegemony and state formation is covered in Martin Hewitt, “Science as Spectacle: Popular Scientific Culture in St. John, New Brunswick, 1830-1850,” *Acadiensis*, 18, no. 1, (Autumn, 1988), 91-119 and

Mechanics' Institutes, as they have a tendency of studying the Institute movement by degrees, rather than examining the movement as a whole. Much of the literature on Mechanics' Institutes either analyzed the Institutes as pioneers in adult education, or as the precursors of the public library movement. What these historians are united in is their dismissal of the Mechanics' Institute as a constructive force, focusing on the failure of the Institutes to provide access to education for the working classes. This perception of failure of the Mechanics' Institute movement in both Britain and Canada is one of high educational expectations not being met by the reality of limited resources and competing agendas.⁵ And yet Mechanics' Institutes in Canada addressed the needs of a fledgling colonial society, creating a strong mandate for cultural consensus among the various classes. For a society without the more rigid class structures of the Old World, such harmonization would generate common values and a sense of identity. Initial middle-class involvement in the Institutes therefore constituted a desire on their part to establish cultural stability and to construct an inclusive community centre, which would connect the community as a whole.⁶ While it

Elsbeth Heaman, *The Inglorious Arts of Peace: Exhibitions in Canadian Society During the Nineteenth Century*, (Toronto, 1999), 3-20.

⁵ On the adult education side, see the work of Patrick Keane, "Priorities and Resources in Adult Education: The Montreal Mechanics' Institute 1828-1843," *McGill Journal of Education*, 23, no. 2 (Spring, 1988), 171-87. For Mechanics' Institutes as the first public libraries, see James Eadie, "The Napanee Mechanics' Institute: The Nineteenth Century Mechanics' Institute Movement in Microcosm," *Ontario History* 68, no. 4, (December, 1976), 209-21; Jim Blanchard, "Anatomy of Failure: Ontario Mechanics' Institutes, 1835-95," *Canadian Library Journal* 38, no. 6, (December, 1981), 393-98 and Lorne Bruce, *Free Books for All: The Public Library Movement in Ontario, 1850-1930*, (Toronto, 1994), 3-70. For failure as a result of unrealistic expectations, see Ian Inkster, "Social Context of an Educational Movement", *Scientific Culture*, 277-307 and Bruce Curtis, "'Littery Meritt', Useful Knowledge, and the Organization of Township Libraries in Canada West, 1840-60," *Ontario History* 78, no. 4, (December, 1986), 285-311.

⁶ See Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871*, (London, 1988). Curtis sees middle-class hegemony as a governing process through educational reform, and this is also true for Mechanics' Institute promoters. For a view of the Mechanics' Institutes from the colonial context of Australia, see Philip Candy, "The Light of Heaven Itself: Contributions of Mechanics' Institutes to Australian Cultural History" and Marc Askew, "Conflict, Consensus and Culture: The Geelong Mechanic Institute to 1900" in Philip Candy and John Laurent, editors, *Pioneering Culture: Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts in Australia*, (Adelaide, 1994), 1-28, 102-25.

was the establishment of such communal values as co-operation, mutual instruction and inter-class harmony that appealed to the founders of Mechanics' Institutes in Victorian Canada, they also utilized the community ethos in engineering consent to an emerging industrial order.

The first Mechanics' Institutes in Canada emerged in the early half of the nineteenth century, with the pioneer Institute founded in 1828 in the city of Montreal. These early Institutes focused their efforts on providing scientific and mechanical education for the working classes. The Montreal Mechanics' Institute incorporated this sentiment into their rules of association, legislating that two-thirds of the committee of management needed to be comprised of the operative classes. Chief Justice Thomas Aylwin explained the reasoning behind the glorification of the mechanic in his inaugural address before an audience in the newly built Mechanics' Hall in 1854. Aylwin noted, "the mechanic is alike useful and necessary; he is the backbone of society, and its best interests are linked with him and his prosperity...whatever tends, then, to improve and elevate mechanics as a class, directly contributes to our best interests, and urges on all the other classes to make similar efforts towards progress and advancement." Of course, an appeal from one of the leading members of Montreal society to elevate the mechanic underscores bourgeois concerns over working-class violence and discontent in Montreal.⁷

Even with the creation of the Board of Arts and Manufactures of Lower Canada in 1857, its close affiliation with the Montreal Mechanics' Institute ensured that the main emphasis of the Board's work would remain the technical

⁷ Thomas Aylwin, *Inaugural Address Delivered on Occasion of the Opening of the New Mechanics' Hall*, (Montreal, 1855), 6-11; *Report of the General Committee of the Mechanics' Institute of Montreal*, (Montreal, 1855) and *Constitution and Laws of the Montreal Mechanics Institution*, (Montreal, 1833), 3-7. Between the years 1856-68, artisanal membership of the Institute fluctuated year to year between 44% and 68%, but sharply declined after 1870. See Harry Kuntz, "The Educational Work of the Two Montreal Mechanics' Institutes," MA Thesis, Concordia University, 1993, 222-29 and Robins, "Useful Education for the Workingman," 31-34. Aylwin most likely wanted to avoid expressions of Irish worker discontent such as the Lachine Canal strike a decade earlier; see Raymond Boily, *Les Irlandais et Le Canal de Lachine: La Grève de 1843*, (Montreal, 1980).

instruction of mechanics. When the Board took over the teaching of technical education from the Montreal Mechanics' Institute in 1871, they counselled the provincial government to restrict the grant for adult education to Mechanics' Institutes and *Institut des Artisans* in Quebec.⁸ Alarmed that the march of progress was leaving them behind and condemning the seeming indifference of the Canadian artisan community, the Montreal *Institut des Artisans* offered a library, museum and classes to instruct masters and apprentices on practical mechanical knowledge. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Montreal openly approved of this sentiment as three prelates gave the principal lectures in the first five years of the *Institut's* existence. As l'abbé Desmazures noted in similar language to Justice Aylwin, "vous avez fondé cette Société pour répandre l'instruction et en particulier l'étude des Beaux Arts parmi les Ouvriers. C'est ainsi que vous les rendrez dignes de se titre si noble d'Artisans, qui veut dire Artistes de l'industrie."⁹

From its inception in 1831, the Toronto Mechanics' Institute likewise gave a great deal of consideration to the participation of the artisan population in the course of its operations. In one of the first recorded meetings of the Institute the directors noted the objects of the society were to diffuse useful knowledge, and by so doing would "introduce to the notice of the Mechanics of this town a means by which their happiness and interest would be greatly promoted."¹⁰ Education for

⁸ See the records of the *Conseil des Arts*, ANQ, P543, Microfilm #1640, minute book, 1857-69, 18 February 1859, 33 and minute book, 1870-81, 4 November 1873, 27 and 17 November 1873, 35.

⁹ See Adam Charles Gustave Desmazures, *Entretien sur les Arts Industriels*, (Montreal, 1870), 2-4 and the *Constitution et Règlements de L'Institut des Artisans Canadiens de Montreal*, (Montreal, 1871), 3-6. See also Frédéric Louis de Gonzague Colin, *Discours sur L'Ouvrier, Prononcé Devant L'Institut des Artisans Canadiens*, (Montreal, 1869), 2-6 and Pascal Joseph Verbist, *Projet D'Organization d'une Academie des Beaux Arts à Montreal*, (Montreal, 1873), 3-5. These various clergymen probably wanted to keep some form of religious control over the *Institut*, to avoid the conflictual model of Ignace Bourget and the *Institut Canadien*; see J.P. Bernard, *Les rouges: libéralisme, nationalisme et anticléricalisme au milieu du XIXe siècle*, (Montreal, 1971).

the operative classes would remain a fundamental concern for the Toronto Mechanics' Institute well into the 1850s, as the directors declared that members of the Institute should be found in every factory and workshop of the city. During one board meeting a member of the executive observed that the entire work of the Institute, from the Lectures, Classes, and Library to the Exhibitions should be “adapted to promote the advancement and proficiency of the Mechanics of this city.” Evidently the operative classes in Toronto heard this message, as thirty-three percent of the ordinary membership of the Institute in the 1850s was from the operative classes of the community (See Table 1.1). Similarly, the creation of the Board of Arts and Manufactures of Upper Canada in 1857 would both educate and encourage the manufacturing sector of the Upper Canadian economy. This would occur through stimulating “the ingenuity of Mechanics and Artizans by means of prizes and distinctions,” in turn elevating the artisan and enriching the manufacturer. The periodical of the Board likewise lauded the end of “class” education, one kind of knowledge for the rich and another for the poor, as “the inevitable tendency of social and political power to the masses, the confusion and intermixture of ranks, in which the ‘privileged few’ are being pushed aside, and the bold and resolute of every rank take precedence.”¹¹

The importance of mechanical instruction and self-improvement continued to be preached by concerned Institute promoters well into the 1860s. By 1862, the executive suggested that a special class be held to discuss matters of practical interest to mechanics. These “mechanics’ meetings” ran until 1865, the same year

¹⁰ See the records of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute, AO, MU 2020, vol. 1, minute book, 1831-36, 5 March 1832 and 19 Feb 1836, and also William Tiger Dunlop, *An Address to the York Mechanics' Institution*, (Toronto, 1832), 11-14.

¹¹ Board of Arts and Manufacturers of Upper Canada fonds, AO, MU 280, vol. 3, Letterbook of the Secretary, 1 April 1860, 33-4; and *Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufacturers of Upper Canada*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1861), 1-7 and vol. 6, no. 11 (November, 1867), 289-90. See also the records of the Toronto Mechanics Institute, AO, MU 2020, vol. 8, 1848 and 1851 annual reports, and the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series B, vol. 1, Board Meeting minute book, 1840-48, 13 November 1848. An identical ideology emerged in the London Mechanics' Institute; see the London Mechanics' Institute records, London Public Library, vol. 1, minute book, 1841-50, Constitution and bylaws, and meeting of 8 March 1842.

the secretary of the Institute polled the members according to occupation. George Longman recorded that of 969 members of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute, only 151 were either mechanics or involved in the manufacturing arts.¹² As the membership rolls in the latter 1870s and early 1880s would indicate, uneasiness over the lack of participation from the operative classes was well founded, as the clerking population in Toronto overwhelmed the Institute's membership rolls (see Table 1.2). Unlike earlier years of the Institute, the skilled workers and the artisan populace avoided becoming members in droves, although attendance of apprentices and other young workers in the night classes remained fairly stable. However, J.E. Pell, a past president of the Toronto Institute, wrote a letter in 1876 to the Board of Directors concerning the lack of interest exhibited by the industrial classes in the Institute. Pell observed that the night classes were useful, but wanted further efforts to bring young mechanics in the city to the Institute. Noting that by this time only forty mechanics were members, Pell suggested a return to promoting industrial exhibitions and the prize system to bring them back.¹³ Anxiety over the lack of participation from industrial workers revealed not only frustration as to why more did not take advantage of all that the Institute

¹² This represented a meagre sixteen percent of the total membership. See the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, Misc. file #6, list compiled by George Longman, and also the Toronto Mechanics Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series M, Folder 1862, unbound papers, letter of J. Pearson, 12 May 1862. The directors also attempted to provide a free reading room for the improvement of the working classes; see the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series D, vol. 24, Library minute book, 1866-77, 6 July 1866.

¹³ In an 1880 Board meeting, it was alleged that only 49 members out of 1050, or one half of one percent, were mechanics; see the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series B, vol. 6, Board Meetings 1878-83, 30 July 1880 and *Annual Report of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute for 1880*, (Toronto, 1880), 6-7. See also the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series B, vol. 7, Special Meetings 1854-83, Letter of JE Pell to the Institute, 14 Feb 1876. For the continuing attendance of apprentices and workers in the education efforts of Mechanics' Institutes, see O.P. Rafferty, "Apprenticeship's Legacy: The Social and Educational Goals of Technical Education in Ontario, 1860-1911," Ph.D. Thesis, McMaster University, 1995, 148-60. In the late Victorian period, clerks reflected their employers in embracing a similar ideology of respectability; see Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 75-96 and Geoff Spurr, "Those Who are Obligated to Pretend that They are Gentlefolk: The Construction of a Clerking Identity in Victorian and Edwardian London," Ph.D. Thesis, McMaster University, 2001.

offered, but an awareness that the hold of the mid-century industrial order was slipping away.

Upon closer inspection, while much has been made of the desire – and failure – of the organizers of Mechanics' Institutes in urban Canada to bring education to the operative classes, from the outset the benefits of the Institutes were to be brought before the industrial community at large. When the Quebec Mechanics' Institute was formed in 1830, the directors were quite clear that the Institute was to bestow its advantages to the community, and to all "who were interested in so laudable an object." Even with such a "mechanic conscious" Institute as the Montreal Mechanics' Institute, efforts were made to ensure that other members of society were not excluded from its proceedings. Justice Aylwin's discourse to a mixed audience at the inauguration of the Mechanics' Hall in 1854 managed to convey this impression, as he declared that the spirit of association was the spirit of humanity, and when "difference of creed, of origin, of language, when even national antipathies came to be mastered and overcome, the combined power of men acting together for good could hardly fail of success."¹⁴ During the 1870s the decline of artisan membership in the Institute reached what the executive perceived to be critical proportions, and dramatically changed their tactics in recruiting new members. Reports of the Institute after 1878 often mentioned that the Institute was open to people of all classes, races, colours and religion. The name Mechanics' Institute would therefore be kept as being distinctive and worthy of remembrance, while recollecting that the original appellation included mechanics in the widest sense possible.¹⁵

¹⁴ See Aylwin, *Inaugural Address*, 3-5; J.M. Cramp, *1800 and 1850: A Lecture Delivered Before the Montreal Mechanics' Institute*, (Montreal, 1850), 12-13 and also the *Catalogue and Rules of the Library and Reading Room of the Quebec Mechanics' Institute*, (Quebec, 1841), 1-2. As with the Toronto Institute, later Victorian clerks embraced the ideology of respectability inherent in the Mechanics' Institute; see Kuntz, "The Educational Work," 222-29.

¹⁵ See the *Thirty-Ninth Annual Report of the Montreal Mechanics' Institute*, (Montreal, 1878), 3-6; *Forty-Second Annual Report*, (Montreal, 1881), 3-4 and *Forty-Third Annual Report*, (Montreal, 1882), 3-6.

From its inauguration, the Hamilton Mechanics' Institute considered itself one of the more open and inclusive associations in the city. In 1852 the management erected a Mechanics' Hall, envisioning that such a structure would be of utility to the citizens generally whenever townspeople required a concert or assembly hall. While raising the alarms over the lack of participation from the operative classes in the 1860s, a positive spin was put on the fact that other classes were now receiving the benefits of the Institute. As the Hamilton directors proclaimed, "the professed object, as the name implies, is the improvement of our artisans and working classes of every grade; but there is reason to fear that this design has in many instances been lost sight of, or perhaps we should say, *the original idea has been considerably amplified*, as other classes of the community rather than operatives constitute not unfrequently [sic] the majority of subscribers and attendants." While on the surface this pronouncement conformed to the inclusive nature of the community ethos, in reality the Hamilton Institute was more in tune with the needs of the burgeoning industrial middle class. Not only were the promoters more concerned with self-education as a means of keeping the working classes from crime, a scant nine years after the incorporation of the Institute directors attempted to change the name of the Mechanics' Institute to the more bourgeois "Gore Literary and Scientific Institution."¹⁶

Both the London and the Ottawa Mechanics' Institutes strongly adhered to this ideology as they endeavoured to serve all members of the community. Right from its incorporation in 1841, the London Institute boasted that the dissemination of knowledge would not only strengthen the operative population, it would also prove to be of great benefit for the general good of all. Even as the directors of the London Institute bemoaned the fact that men of leisure, businessmen and

¹⁶ See the report of the Hamilton Mechanics' Institute, *Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufacturers of Upper Canada*, vol. 1, no. 4, (April, 1861), 106-7; see also the records of the Hamilton Mechanics' Institute, Hamilton Public Library, Special Collections, minute book, 1839-51, 24 February 1840; 28 February 1844; 28 February 1845; 5 April 1848 and annual meeting, 22 February 1850. On education as a vehicle to control working-class propensities to crime, see Alison Prentice, *The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada*, (Toronto, 1977).

clerks had hijacked the Institute by the 1870s, “class institutes” benefiting only the operatives of the community were not in order. Renewed efforts to recruit more mechanics, in whose name the Institute was built, should be connected with an association whose object was the benefit and improvement of skilled workers. The management of the Ottawa Mechanics’ Institute likewise saluted the fact that while the origins of the Institute rested with the mechanical class, they were now “extensively patronized by all classes, the most wealthy as well as the poorest.” This was a condition much to be admired; for if the Institute were to prosper as it should, the donations of the mercantile, professional men and the master mechanics were desperately needed. Extolling the virtues of their open library, any member of the public could walk through its doors and acquire the specific volume to assist in the various labours of the industrial community.¹⁷

In the early days of the York Mechanics’ Institute, the directors understood that success would come only if the public at large generously supported it. Collaboration between the classes was not only vital for an association like the Mechanics’ Institute, but also for society as a whole. In a lecture to the Institute in 1832, William (Tiger) Dunlop described how the middle classes formed a communicating link between the propertied orders and the working classes, disseminating harmony throughout society. This interclass cooperation manifested itself in the Mechanics’ Institute, where “the combination of all classes in a great object of public good, which cannot fail, in the end, to enhance the power of the nation, and add to the happiness of individuals composing it.”¹⁸

¹⁷ See the Ottawa Mechanics’ Institute and Athenaeum fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 1, vol. 2, meetings of trustees and members, reorganization meeting, January 1853, and annual reports, 19 March 1861. See also the records of the London Mechanics’ Institute, London Public Library, vol. 4, minute book, 1871-76, clipping pasted on the front; see also vol. 1, minute book, 1841-50, annual report of 1841 and vol. 2, minute book, 1851-65, library committee minutes, 13 January 1851 and annual report of 1857.

¹⁸ Dunlop, *An Address Delivered to the York Mechanics’ Institution*, 6-7; 14-15. See also the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series M, folder n.d.-1851, unbound papers, annual report, 4 Jan 1833 and Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, AO, MU 2020, vol. 1, minute book 1831-36, 19 Feb 1836.

By mid-century, the direction of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute would continue in this path of incorporating all classes into its operations. From an examination of the early membership lists, clearly the Toronto Mechanics' Institute was an association proportionally open to all ranks and orders, and the executive of the Institute took great pride in trumpeting this fact (see Table 1.1). As Richard Lewis, a future president of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute noted in a lecture on education, society would progress only if "a noble fraternity of all classes, high and low, aristocratic and plebeian" worked together in harmony.¹⁹ The opening of the Mechanics' Hall at mid-century was an event of great significance to the whole community, providing for the education and refinement of the entire populace, and inciting every branch of industry into "laudable amelioration" and "generous emulation." Even during the canvassing of subscriptions for the erection of the Hall, many businesses such as the firm of H. Rogers and Sons were only too glad to contribute to an Institution that was inclusive of all classes. Although known by the title of Mechanics' Institute, the firm observed that not only mechanics but merchants, professional men and clerks were to be found within its ranks and therefore worthy of the support requested. Pronouncements along these lines also highlighted the presence of the industrial elites in the Toronto Mechanics' Institute.²⁰

On the surface, industrial exhibitions sponsored by the Toronto Mechanics' Institute likewise became less about the display of skilled craftsmanship and more about pandering to the tastes of the larger community. Not only did Exhibitions demonstrate to the public how talented the artisan population was in Toronto, to make the Exhibition a success required a generous attendance and the

¹⁹ It went without comment that the leaders of this "interclass movement" would be the industrial middle classes. See Richard Lewis, "Lecture on Education," in the *Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufacturers of Upper Canada*, vol. 2, no. 11, (November 1862), 338-39. See also the *Annual Report of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute for 1855*, (Toronto, 1855), 7-8, 11; *Annual Report for 1856*, (Toronto, 1856), 12 and *Annual Report for 1860*, (Toronto, 1860), 10-11.

²⁰ Toronto Mechanics Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series M, unbound papers, 1852-63, letter of H Rogers to the Institute, 20 November 1852 and the report on the laying of the cornerstone on the Mechanics' Hall, 17 April 1854.

participation of all citizens. By the latter half of the 1860s, the Exhibition ceased to be merely an industrial exposition of manufactures and implements, and became more of an open and inclusive display with such categories as “Free and Decorative Arts” and ladies’ work.²¹ Even in the day-to-day operations of the Institute, efforts to reach out to all constituents within society continued throughout the 1860s and 1870s. The management of the Institute envisioned the night classes as a People’s College, an institution available to those who either had deficiencies in their own early education, or for the professional, to add “elegant accomplishments” leading to greater refinement. Even the reading room and the library needed to be receptive to visitors from every quarter of the city with books reflecting the views, opinions and tastes of every class of the community. In an 1873 meeting of the reading room committee it was moved that the name of the Institute be changed to the Mechanics’ Institute and Library Association, in order not to confuse the citizens of Toronto into believing the Institute was for the special benefit of the working classes, to the exclusion of the mercantile and professional people.²²

In 1869 the provincial government in Ontario attempted to centralize the Mechanics’ Institute movement by creating the Association of Mechanics’ Institutes. Heralded as people’s institutes and amenable to the desires of the public irrespective of creed, nationality or occupation, President James Young in

²¹ Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series D, vol. 26, Exhibition Committee minutes, 1859-68, general meeting on 14 July 1868; series B, vol. 3, Board minutes, 1848-54, 11 August 1851 and series B, vol. 7, Special meetings, 1854-83, meeting of 1 May 1854. The importance of exhibitions in forging cultural consent and consensus among an industrial people is examined in Robert Rydell, *All the World’s A Fair: Vision of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916*, (Chicago, 1984); Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Exposition Universelles, Great Exhibitions and Worlds’ Fairs 1851-1939*, (Manchester, 1988); Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 3-27; Ramsay, “Art and Industrial Society,” 88-95 and Keith Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto: The Industrial Exhibition and the Shaping of a Late Victorian Culture*, (Toronto, 1997).

²² Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, MTL, L1, Board meetings, 1873-78, series B, vol. 5, committee of the Reading Room, 17 April 1873; and series B, vol. 7, Special Meetings, 1854-83, the 1866, 1867 and 1868 annual reports; See also the *Annual Report of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute for 1860*, (Toronto, 1860), 5-6 and *Annual Report for 1868*, (Toronto, 1868), 4-7.

1880 claimed “it is a mistake to suppose that the Institutes were created and Legislative grants given to one class of the community alone; and in the interest of these institutions, and even of the mechanical classes themselves...Mechanics’ Institutes should continue to be open to all classes on terms of perfect equality.”²³ In 1876 the Association sponsored a topical essay contest, on the best means of improving Mechanics’ Institutes. Many of the essayists concurred with the idea that Mechanics’ Institutes needed to be a fully public and popular institution, accessible to members of every class of the community. Suggesting that the name Mechanics’ Institute was itself a misnomer, one author suggested that the name be changed to “an Institution for promoting knowledge amongst all classes” to avoid the appearance of pandering only to one group. David Boyle, Elora’s famed learned artisan, wrote that while the Institutes still assisted the labouring classes, attention also needed to be paid to the clerks, bookkeepers, business men and professionals. Boyle remarked that when members of sundry classes such as farmers, clerks or others comprised the majority of attendants of a Mechanics’ Institute, their interests and tastes ought to be considered first. Richard Lewis, a past President of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute, also observed that it was essential for Mechanics’ Institutes to embrace all classes of the community, yet was more forthright in recognizing the hegemonic nature of the undertaking:

It would be the worst policy to place the entire management of the Mechanics’ Institutes in the hands of any one class. The influence, the sympathy, and the assistance of an educated and moneyed class are necessary to its success, especially in its higher educational objects. But it would be quite practicable and the best policy to associate *bona fide* working men and women in the management of any department especially introduced for their benefit and pleasure.²⁴

²³ Association of Mechanics’ Institutes fonds, AO, MU 2021, copy of sessional paper no. 5, 6 October 1869; seventh annual report, 23 September 1875 and twelfth annual report, 22 September 1880, 8-11.

²⁴ This latter essay took home second prize; see *Mechanics’ Institutes and the Best Means of Improving Them: Prize Essays*, (Toronto, 1877), 2-18. See also the Association of Mechanics’ Institute fonds, AO, MU 2021, prize essays contest folder, David Boyle, “Arole,” 1-2; 13 and E.F.

Despite the attempted inclusive nature of early Mechanics' Institutes, there was one occupational group that tended to patronize the Institutes while at the same time organizing societies to promote their own particular interests. Although membership from the professional classes in the early years of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute was fairly limited, officers and directors of Mechanics' Institutes and the more "professionalized" societies as the Montreal History Society and the Royal Canadian Institute often worked intimately together at mid-century. The dichotomy between the Natural History Society of Montreal's desire to operate "under the most liberal basis, being open to all ranks of the community" and the reality of limited funds ensuring a "small list of members" from the scientific elite became a hallmark of the Society's history. However, the Natural History Society also required unity with the rising commercial classes, and therefore attempted further collaboration with the Montreal Mechanics' Institute. As one mid-century lecturer to the Society proclaimed, "though men of learning may be required to lead the way in the more unfrequented paths of research, so intimately are science and philosophy in one way or another united and interwoven with the ordinary pursuits and occupations of life, that, in a society aiming at mutual instruction, as ours is designed to be, it is in the power of almost every reflecting, moderately educated man to bear a part in the practical illustration of some subject."²⁵ The creation of the Canadian

Hutchinson, "Non sine labore," 1-3. See also J.P. Donald, "Perseverance is better than talent," 1-2; F. Dickson, "Rex," 4-5 and Thomas Davison, "To Make the Mechanic a Better Man; the Man, a Better Mechanic," 1 and 4. Boyle's essay marks the continuation of an older tradition of artisan self-improvement, while Lewis followed a newer "hegemonic" element of bureaucratized state education. See Gerald Killan, *David Boyle: From Artisan to Archaeologist*, (Toronto, 1983) and Bruce Curtis, *True Government by Choice Men? Inspection, Education and State Formation in Canada West*, (Toronto, 1992).

²⁵ See Major Lachlan, *A Retrospective Glance at the Progressive State of the Natural History Society of Montreal*, (Montreal, 1852), 6-7 and 11. See also the Montreal Natural History Society fonds, Blacker-Wood Library, QHI N273, vol. 1, minute book, 1827-29, 26 May 1828, 65; 25 August 1828, 179 and 24 November 1828, 213; vol. 4, minute book, 1845-57, annual report of 1852, 134 and 29 July 1856, 365. The dichotomy of "popular" and "professional" science would

Institute in 1852 reflected a co-operative effort between the industrial classes and the new society, as both the Board of Arts and Manufactures and the Institute met in the same building. Likewise, the purposes of the Canadian Institute became the promotion of commerce, agriculture and the industrial arts in the “general interests of society.” And yet the Canadian Institute also stated as their main objects the dissemination of knowledge connected with the professional fields of surveying, engineering and architecture, as well as literature and science. Aping the *Canadian Naturalist*, the *Canadian Journal of Industry, Science and Art* pandered to the “active minds of the community,” or the intellectual elite.²⁶

The separation of the professional classes from Mechanics’ Institutes became even more pronounced in the latter decades of the century, as “professional” societies grew and expanded their influence. Even though skilled workers avoided becoming members of the Institute, the professional classes continued to shun the hallowed halls of urban Mechanics’ Institutes, as members in both occupational categories remained fairly insignificant (see Table 1.2). By the latter half of the century, Mechanics’ Institutes no longer had the vigorous support of either the Montreal Natural History Society or the Canadian Institute. In Montreal, the separation of the more professional Natural History Society from the Mechanics’ Institute was a gradual process, as the Society continued “to render services of the greatest value to the whole community.” As Sir William Dawson, a one-time president of the Natural History society remarked, “our philosophy is not of that kind which shuts itself up in pedantic exclusiveness. We

be debated throughout the nineteenth century, particularly as it pertained to scientific utility; see Stanley Frost, “Science Education in the Nineteenth Century: The Natural History Society of Montreal, 1827-1925,” *McGill Journal of Education*, 17, no. 1, (Winter, 1982), 31-43; Suzanne Zeller, *Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Ideal of a Transcontinental Nation*, (Toronto, 1987) and Nancy Christie, “Sir William Logan’s Geological Empire and the Humbug of Economic Utility,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 75, no. 2, (June, 1994), 161-204.

²⁶ See the *Royal Charter of Incorporation of the Canadian Institute*, (Toronto, 1852), 3-4 and the *Regulations of the Canadian Institute*, (Toronto, 1852), 2-3. See also the *Canadian Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1, (August, 1852), 1-4 and the *Canadian Journal of Industry, Science and Art*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1856), 1-2 and vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1856), 99-100 as well as the Board of Arts and Manufactures fonds, AO, MU 280, vol. 2, minute book, 1857-68, 26 October 1865.

regard the study of nature as the common heritage of all.” Even as late as 1894, the directors asked authors of scientific papers to use language as free from technicalities as possible, in order to give a more popular character to the meetings of the Society.²⁷

The increased participation of professional university personnel with their “expert opinions” in the Montreal Natural History Society by the end of the century also moved the institution even further away from the “amateur” naturalist residing in the Mechanics’ Institute. The dependence of the Natural History Society on eminent and learned individuals “of high reputation” enabled the Society to command the respect needed to give weight to its proceedings. While such learned men concurred with Principal Dawson that the general Society was open to every member of the community, its publications such as the *Canadian Record of Science* needed to remain fairly technical and professional. The directorship of the Society needed to remain with “professional” scientists, as there was indeed an “aristocracy of brains and personal culture, the exclusiveness of which is based upon its inherent nature.” Similarly, during a debate in the Canadian Institute on government, one member of the Institute boldly proclaimed that “the objects of government are to give the greatest power and influence to the most intelligent, the most progressive, the most industrious, the most enterprising and the best elements in the community.”²⁸

²⁷ See the Montreal Natural History Society fonds, Blacker-Wood Library, QHI N273, vol. 5, minute book, 3 February 1863 and 21 February 1868, and vol. 6, minute book, 1888-1925, 5 March 1894; see also Frost, “Science Education in the Nineteenth Century” and Carl Berger, *Science, God and Nature in Victorian Canada*, (Toronto, 1983), 3-29.

²⁸ See the *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, vol. 3, no. 5, part one, (December, 1892), 21-3 and the Sherry Hunt fonds, McGill University Archives, MG 2045, box #1, file 1 (b), folder R-Z, letter from W. Leconte Stevens, 3 September 1882 and the Montreal Natural History Society fonds, Blacker-Wood Library, QHI N273, vol. 5, minute book, 1858-88, 19 May 1862 and 3 February 1864. Other Canadian learned societies shared a similar view of the community due to their patronage from the professional classes, the “new” hegemony in late Victorian Canada; see Yvan Lamonde, *Gens de Parole: Conférences Publiques, essais et débats à L’Institut Canadien de Montréal, 1845-71*, (Quebec, 1990) and Carl Berger, *Honour and the Search for Influence: A History of the Royal Society of Canada*, (Toronto, 1996).

Mid-century urban Mechanics' Institutes in Victorian Canada attempted to welcome women to further the development of the Institute in the larger community. The community ethos inherent in the early vision of the Institutes extended across gender lines as women were strongly encouraged to become members and indirectly participate in its activities, despite the continual preaching of the doctrine of domesticity. This dichotomy would prove to be rather problematical for Institute promoters as they attempted to broaden women's participation along strict gendered lines.²⁹ In the Montreal Mechanics' Institute, women were permitted to join as members as early as 1843, and placed under the same category of privileges as apprentices and sons of members. Women were also admitted free to lectures in the Toronto Mechanics' Institute as early as 1835, although there are no records of women members in the Institute at this period. By 1845 there was at least one female on the rolls of ordinary members, the confectioner Elisabeth Dunlop, which seems to indicate that there were no restrictions on membership based on gender.³⁰

While encouraging women to attend "public" lectures, those who attended Mechanics' Halls listened to a reinforcement of the domestic ideology. When Thomas Keefer gave his lecture on manufacturing in the Montreal Institute, he rather condescendingly noted that the prosperity of Montreal did concern women, as it was "the annual balance sheet which determines the concerts and pianos, the

²⁹ Mechanics' Institutes in Britain were particularly restrictive to women; see C.J. Radcliffe, "Mutual Improvement Societies in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1835-1900," *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 18, no. 2, (July, 1986), 1-16 and especially June Purvis, *Hard Lessons: Lives and Education of Working Class Women in Nineteenth Century England*, (Minneapolis, 1989). More recent historiography illustrates that women did have a role to play in adult education in Britain; see Janet Cunliffe Jones, "A Rare Phenomenon: A Woman's Contribution to Nineteenth Century Adult Education," *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 24, no. 1, (January, 1992), 1-17; Ramsay, "Art and Industrial Society," 87-89 and E.A. Heaman, "Taking the World by Show: Canadian Women as Exhibitors to 1900," *Canadian Historical Review*, 78, no. 4, (December, 1997), 599-631.

³⁰ Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series E, vol. 1, membership list, 1833-48 and Kuntz, *Educational Work*, 229-30, 447-8. In the London Institute, women were permitted to join as full members and at a reduced initiation fee; see the records of the London Mechanics' Institute, London Public Library, vol. 2, minute book, 1851-70, 27 January 1851.

summer jaunt and the seaside baths, the furs and the velvets, the silks and the satins, the parasols and the scent bottles, and all the innumerable and comprehensive elements which form a material basis for what is called domestic bliss.” Walter Eales in his lecture to the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute described women as a “valuable class of the community,” yet envisioned women taking a more confining role. To Eales, the only necessary recruitment efforts for women members would be to include vocal music in the programme of the Institute, excluding them from the more functional portion of the Institute’s work. And yet their presence was crucial for the extension of the Institute into the community, for “without their courtesy and cheerful countenances at our Soirees, Tea Meetings, Pleasure Excursions and Lectures, we would be out of our element.”³¹

After mid-century, the participation of women in the activities of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute became even more prominent. Ladies’ work and art creations were prominent categories in the exhibitions, and women also provided refreshments and much of the entertainment during the celebration. The women did such a superior job that the Exhibition Committee invited various wives and daughters of Institute directors in 1868 to form a ladies auxiliary exhibition committee.³² By the 1870s, the promoters of the Mechanics’ Institute movement recognized that they needed to reach out to the female segment of the community if Institutes were to remain in a thriving condition. Many of the essays written on

³¹ See Walter Eales, *The Benefits to be Derived from Mechanics’ Institutes*, (Toronto, 1851), 9-12, 15-16 and Thomas Keefer, *Montreal and the Ottawa: Two Lectures Delivered Before the Mechanics’ Institute of Montreal*, (Montreal, 1854), 3. Members of the Ottawa Mechanics’ Institute heard two lectures on the “Rights of Women” and “Domestic Affections” describing an identical ideology. See the records of the Ottawa Mechanics’ Institute, NAC, MG 28 I 1, vol. 3, managing committee minutes, 23 November 1855. Such activities no doubt reinforced the emerging hegemony of the industrial patriarchy; see Catherine Hall and Leonore Davidoff, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, (London, 1987).

³² Exhibitions illustrated the dichotomy of women in both the public and the domestic sphere more than any other Institute activity; see Heaman, “Taking the World by Show” and the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series D, vol. 26, Exhibition minutes 1847-49, meetings of the Exhibition committee and series D, vol. 26, Building and Reunion minutes, 1859-68, ladies’ committee meeting of 14 July 1868. Women were also permitted to join the reunions, and often participated in recitations and musical presentations, although they did not appear to be involved in the debates; see series D, vol. 28, Reunion Committee minutes, 1862-66.

the improvement Mechanics' Institutes during the contest sponsored by the Association of Mechanics' Institutes pleaded for an increase of women members. David Boyle not only desired the inclusion middle-class women, he also called for provisions to aid young sewing girls and servant maids in furthering their education. Considering their low rates of remuneration, Boyle claimed that working women should be admitted to Mechanics' Institutes at reduced rates. He went even further and called for the creation of subcommittees "consisting wholly of women, to present the advantages of the Institutes to others of their own sex, state terms, show catalogues, give information regarding classes and lectures, and procure names for membership." John Davy, the Secretary of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute, offered the suggestion that while women members be allowed to elect two lady subscribers to seats on the general board of management, with reading rooms provided for their specific use. By the same token, while E.F. Dickson desired the encouragement of young women to attend Mechanics' Institutes, he did not picture them learning anything but domestic economy, music or drawing and other subjects "pertaining to their position in the world and society."³³ Even as Institute promoters desired an influx of women members, often such efforts produced segregation, rather than complete inclusion.

Both the Toronto and Montreal Mechanics' Institutes would attempt to put many of these proposals into practice as they witnessed the erosion of their bases of support. In 1875 the Library committee appropriated the boardroom in the Institute for a Ladies Conversation room as an additional inducement to members of the opposite sex, as such a room did not exist in the entire city. Six years later the experiment ended as they encountered the same problem with women as they did with mechanics; female members simply did not utilize the room for the purposes afforded and it was closed down. The management of the Institute also adopted the idea of creating female directors to work in concert with other

³³ Association of Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MU 2021, prize essay contest folder, E.F. Dickson, "Rex," 7-8; Richard Lewis, "To Make the Man a Better Mechanic," 8-9; David Boyle, "Arole," 13-14 and John Davy, "Suum Cuique," 3.

committees. Women members soon realized that such an assignment did not admit their gender into the corridors of power in the Institute, as female directors were simply segregated and advised to confine their labours to matters pertaining to other members of their sex.³⁴ The evening classes were an entirely different matter, and proved to be the most effective in affording young women educational opportunities. As early as 1865, the Board of Arts and Manufactures for Upper Canada presented women with the opportunity to enrol in its classes and art schools. The Toronto Mechanics' Institute followed suit by the 1870s, but offered only music, drawing and wax flower making for women, an obvious throwback to the domestic ideology. By the latter half of the decade, a concerted attempt was made to enlist women in the industrial and commercial education classes, proposing prizes for the top female students and targeting women in their advertising. By doing so, the attendance of women grew considerably, as they comprised nearly thirteen percent of the total student body in the peak year of 1879. Attempts to rein in a female audience seemed to have some effect, as by 1881 female yearly subscribers to the Institute comprised over ten percent of the total membership.³⁵

With the transfer of the labours of the Mechanics' Institute of Montreal to the *Conseil des Arts* in 1870, educational opportunities for women began to open up, although women were marginalized in Quebec Institutes far more than they were in Ontario. In 1878 the *Conseil des Arts* offered an afternoon art class to ladies in Montreal, upon securing the services of an "exceptionally good teacher" and the

³⁴ Many women simply refused to become directors under these conditions. See the *Annual Report of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute for 1876*, (Toronto, 1876), 3-4; *Annual Report for 1879*, (Toronto, 1879), 9. See also the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series D, vol. 24, Finance, Library and Lecture Committee minutes, Library committee, 9 June 1875.

³⁵ Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to discover the class backgrounds of many of these students, although the median age in the night classes from 1877-81 is seventeen years of age, suggesting that young workingwomen did manage to utilize the educational opportunities of the Institute. For these statistics, see the *Annual Report of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute for 1881*, (Toronto, 1881), 4-5. In 1877 women comprised 11%, and in 1878, 9% of the student body; see the statistics in the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series D, vol. 13, 14 and 15, Evening classes membership lists. See also the Board of Arts and Manufacturers fonds, AO, MU 279, general committee minutes, 1857-67, annual report of 1865.

payment of a small fee. The directors made it clear that this was merely an experiment, as they did not want to establish classes in other locales. Simply put, the *raison d'être* for the art schools was the education of artisans, not women. By 1880 the women's classes were all but dead, as they had to lower the fee to three dollars to entice the women back.³⁶ Directors of the Board were simply not concerned with the education of women, as noted in a petition of the Montreal Women's Club to the Board in 1895. In bringing the Board's attention to the fact that unmarried young women – through no fault of their own – were compelled to enter the workforce, the Women's Club hoped that a Government institution would not discriminate against any class of the community. The Board conceded that women had both the ability and capacity for industrial arts, but stated that not only was the demand limited but it was also undesirable that men and women learn together. The Board also declared that domestic economy was a far more important subject for women to learn, as "a serious danger arises from the fact that women show an aversion to house and home duties and wish to work in factories. The greatest safeguard of a nation is to protect the home, and the happiest homes are those in which women excel in the domestic virtues." Under pressure from the Women's Club, the Board soon after relented and offered women the opportunity to join the schools. Unfortunately the only classes offered women were dress cutting, needlework and millinery, occupations fitting for their gender.³⁷

One of the fundamental approaches in fostering a truly classless society and ensuring that the relations in the Mechanics' Institute remained harmonious was to remove sectarianism and political partyism, practices that separated an

³⁶ See the records of the *Conseil des Arts*, ANQ, P543, Microfilm #1640, minute book 1869-1881, annual report for 1878; 12 May 1879, 201-4 and the annual report for 1880, 370-72.

³⁷ See the *Conseil des Arts* fonds, ANQ, P543, Microfilm #1640, minute book 1887-1904, petition of Women's Club, 376-78, 395 and the Board's response, 10 June 1895, 396-98 and 15 November 1895, 423-25. Contesting the gendered hegemonic order often occurred near the turn of the century and beyond; see Sara Burke, *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto, 1887-1937*, (Toronto, 1996), 28-40 and especially the work of Nancy Christie, *Engendering the State: Family, Work, and Welfare*, (Toronto, 2000).

individual from the larger community. Eliminating these discussions not only ensured the triumph of the industrial hegemonic order, it was also an attempt at an inclusive citizenship that transcended otherwise apparent social divisions that had marred relations in the pre-rebellion Canadas. In this sense, Mechanics' Institutes reflected the desire for political "normalization" so prevalent in political and educational discourse after the Rebellions.³⁸ This was not accurate in the case of the first Montreal Mechanics' Institute, whose early history reflected a great deal of sectarian conflict between the members of the Church of Scotland and those of the Anglican faith, as well as Reform and Tory discord. When the Institute was reorganized in 1840, the abolition of such quarrels was paramount in the thinking of Institute administrators and lecturers. Political and religious questions in and of themselves were not detrimental to harmonious relationships within the community, yet William Bristow asserted in his lecture to the Montreal Mechanics' Institute that the spirit of party politics and a public spirit were easily distinguishable. The party spirit sought to further private or individual advancement and an ascendancy of one part of the population over the remainder, while a publicly minded individual promoted the general welfare. The thirty-ninth annual report of the Montreal Mechanics' Institute noted that the latest and best works of Political Economy were on the shelves in the Library for the guidance of both Free Trade and Protectionist members of both parties. Similarly, the rules of the *Institut des Artisans* forbade religious and political questions, yet it did not prevent prominent Catholic priests from extending their support, and

³⁸ An examination of the state as a vehicle for middle class hegemony in the political sphere occurred in many of the essays in Ian Radforth and Allan Greer, editors, *Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Canada*, (Toronto, 1992). A similar view taken in education is in the work of Alison Prentice and Susan Houston, *Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario*, (Toronto, 1988), and Curtis, *Building the Educational State*. Jeffrey McNairn argued that Mechanics' Institutes exhibited the first stirrings of democracy and a public spirit in its members, and removal of conflicts was paramount. See McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge: Public Opinion and Deliberative Democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854*, (Toronto, 2000), 92-105.

encouraging the members of the Institut never to turn their backs on the Mother church.³⁹

Mechanics' Institutes in the urban and industrializing areas of Ontario also required the elimination of potential conflicts by eradicating sectarian and political turmoil. To avoid sectarian conflict the directors of the London Mechanics' Institute not only outlawed religious discussions in the Institute, they also decreed that no religious denomination be allowed to congregate in the new Mechanics' Hall. Unfortunately such a ban could not always conceal the simmering sectarian battles for long. When the High Anglican William Bettridge lectured to the Institute in 1853, he denounced as a "dangerous influence the religious opinions of a certain class of the community was assuming." The Institute board, concerned that many members of the Institute were members of this unnamed religious body stated that the lecture introduced "Religious Animosities among us, and that therefore this Institute disclaims being identified with the promulgation of any such sentiments as destructive to its best interest and general advancement." The London Mechanics' Institute also frowned upon political discussions, although a number of debates before the London Literary society – an offshoot branch of the Institute – were often politically charged. Debates on such controversial subjects as the nine-hour day, universal suffrage, labour unions, prohibition, free trade and annexation were freely admitted. Unfortunately this did not prevent tempers and controversies from arising in the Society. During one meeting of the society the members condemned "unmerited

³⁹ See William Bristow, *The Commercial Prospects of Canada: A Lecture Delivered Before the Montreal Mechanics' Institute*, (Montreal, 1850), 24-5 and also James Bovell, *A Lecture on the Future of Canada*, (Montreal, 1849), 1-2 and Keefer, *Montreal and the Ottawa*, 23, 31-2. The sectarian disagreements of the early Montreal Institute are mapped out in Kuntz, *The Educational Work*, 79-90; see also the *Constitution of the Montreal Mechanics' Institution*, 12. Of course, such assertions by the French Catholic clergy would ensure that the religious order would not be disturbed; see the *Constitution de l'Institut des Artisans*, 16; Desmazes, *Entretien sur les Arts*, 5-6 and Colin, *Discours sur l'Ouvrier*, 7-9

criticism” as being injurious to the design of the club, as “carried to excess could not but be attended by evil.”⁴⁰

The Toronto Mechanics’ Institute likewise implemented the guiding principle of no political or religious discussions in their assemblies, despite the participation of members from every political faction. The very first membership list of the Institute reflects the diversity of political opinion, as prominent Tories W.B. Jarvis, George Denison, John Strachan and John Macaulay met side by side with Reformers – and some future rebels – such as Charles Duncombe, John Rolph, William Dunlop, William Baldwin and James Lesslie. The patron of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute, Lord Sydenham, stated firmly in 1840 that the contentions of party politics had no place in an institution of self-improvement. Demonstrating his love for the philosophy of utilitarianism, Thomson noted that Mechanics’ Institutes were essential to the political process, as they refined minds, elevated characters, and made better citizens. Walter Eales, a painter by occupation, echoed this sentiment in claiming that knowledge as taught in the Mechanics Institutes purified the political process while simultaneously supporting principles of Christianity.⁴¹ Many of the subjects for discussion in the Toronto Institute reunions centred on political issues, such as the purpose of the European Congress and even the merits of establishing an independent monarchy in Canada under the sovereignty of a British Prince. And yet the reunion

⁴⁰ See the records of the London Literary Society, London Public Library, minute book, 1872-74, meeting of 24 March 1873. The Rev. Bettridge picked an unusual location to lecture against voluntarism, although accusations like this were typical of the sectarian battles of the time; see Curtis Fahey, *In His Name: The Anglican Experience in Upper Canada, 1791-1854*, (Ottawa, 1991), 202-5. See also the record of the London Mechanics’ Institute, London Public Library, vol. 1, minute book, 1841-50, 4 March 1843 and the 1850 annual meeting, as well as vol. 2, minute book, 1851-70, 24 Jan 1853.

⁴¹ Walter Eales, *The Benefits to be Derived from Mechanics’ Institutes*, (Toronto, 1851), 12-13; Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, MTL, L1, Board minutes, 1840-48, series B, vol. 1, 10 September 1841 and Special meetings, 1854-83, series B, vol. 7, 4 October 1854. See also the records of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute, AO, MU 2020, vol. 1, minute book 1831-36, membership lists. See also Ian Radforth, “Sydenham and Utilitarian Reform,” in Radforth and Greer, *Colonial Leviathan*, 64-102.

committee also quickly moved to quash a debate on the Confederation question, as they saw how such a discussion could degenerate into partyism and political conflict. Religious toleration was also elemental to the harmony of the Toronto Institute, as the library committee in 1852 ordered several works on religious subjects. Requesting books by Episcopalians, non-conformists, and authors of other denominations, the committee charged the purchasers with the caveat to “guard against works of a sectarian or polemical character.” Similarly, the executive had to root out irreligion in the Institute and to protect the Christian faith. A member of the Institute wrote the Library Committee asking for the removal of a book on Christ that only offered “half-praise” and denied the divinity of scripture. The complainant then asked for the work to be excluded from the library in order to protect members from the influence of pernicious “freethinking” material.⁴²

A perfect example of the desire of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute to keep strife and political discord at bay came in the non-delivered lecture of the printer A.A. Riddell in 1848. In November of that year, Riddell requested that he be given permission to lecture on “The Rights of Labour,” paving the way for other mechanics to give addresses to the Institute. The Board procrastinated on its decision whether or not to allow Riddell to lecture for two weeks, and then allowed the Lecture Committee to cast the determining vote. The Committee resolved to allow Riddell to give his lecture, if he would alter certain parts that were considered objectionable. It is assumed that Riddell refused, as the lecture was never given to the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute. In refusing to alter his lecture and “negotiate” certain standards, Riddell no doubt cemented the opinion of some middle-class Board members on the argumentative nature of the working classes.⁴³ However, even Riddell himself acknowledged that he was on

⁴² Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, MTL, L1, Board meetings, 1848-54, series B, vol. 2, report of the Library Committee, 9 February 1852; series M, folder 1864-77, letter of W.T. Withrow to the Institute, 1864 and Reunion meeting minutes, 1862-64, series D, vol. 28, 11 August 1862, 7 February 1863, 15 October 1863, 3 January 1864, and 5 December 1864.

dangerous ground, as he noted that in several countries the notion of Labour and its rights was entirely a political question. To Riddell, the elevation of the artisan did not mean the degradation of the other members of the community, as all classes in society were co-dependent upon one another. In recognizing the potential pitfalls of class dissonance inherent in his lecture, Riddell offered an introduction appealing to the community ethos that he hoped would defuse possible objections to his address:

The subject I have chosen being considered by some persons a political one, and political observations being wisely excluded from this Institute, lest during and subsequent to the reading of any lecture bearing upon politics the passions of some get aroused and the prejudices of others become excited...I have been constrained to confine my discourse within much narrower limits than I should have felt inclined to do had this been originally intended for anywhere else in order that I might not, in the slightest degree, violate the well determined regulations of the Institute – a place where men of all opinions have united together for the attainment of laudable objects, and where men of all creeds have met, and still continue to meet – in harmony and in love.⁴⁴

Despite his protestations, Riddell's lecture was heavily political, studded with references to natural rights, liberty and the discourse of popular politics utilized by mid-century Upper Canadian radical reformers. It is also readily understandable that even Riddell realized that some portions of the lecture would not escape the committee censor's scrutiny. A reference to the famous reform agitator William Cobbett showed Riddell's true colours, and unwillingness to completely remove his radical political references when he noted in the margin "I'd have seen them d_d before I'd left this out." On the surface, Riddell's radical

⁴³ On one level, Riddell's lecture simply disturbed the codes of conduct inherent in the lecture system, while on a deeper level the lecture managed to question the entire industrial order. See Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 20, 330. For the details of this episode see the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series B, vol. 1, Board minutes 1840-48, 15 November, 21 November and 5 December 1848; series M, folder n.d.-1851, letter of A.A. Riddell, 13 November 1848.

⁴⁴ A. A. Riddell, "The Rights of Labour," in the MTL, unpublished lecture, 1848, 1-6, 16-18.

politics of confrontation conflicted with the ideal of harmony and brotherhood, forcing the committee's hand in preventing the lecture from being presented. However, the simmering political undercurrents in Upper Canada led conservative Reformers and Tories alike on the Board of the Institute to censure Riddell's lecture.⁴⁵ Even with seemingly like-minded Board members, innocent confrontations could explode into potential conflicts. In an 1845 board meeting the Vice President of the Institute, Rev. David Rintoul, accused the President of being governed by nabobs and men of wealth in the country, while he spent his days in furthering the education of the operative classes. As the cashier of the Bank of Upper Canada and a staunch Reformer, Thomas Ridout rejected this claim as much as he supported Rintoul in the Riddell episode. Rintoul illustrated the true rationale behind this remark when he demanded that Ridout step down on account of his inactivity in the Presidency, and allow a truly concerned and professional educator to assist those desperate for self-improvement.⁴⁶

Another approach guaranteed to increase harmony and cooperation between the classes in Mechanics' Institutes was the advocacy of the philosophy of honest industry and the political economy of hard work. This not only entailed the ideological facets of individual diligence and productiveness, but also the encouraging of commerce and industry. Several themes were recurrent in lectures and essays in Mechanics' Institutes, including the significance of competing classes labouring together, the importance of work, and the progress of Canada as an emerging manufacturing nation. It was incumbent on associations like

⁴⁵ Riddell was a staunch friend of noted radical Charles Clarke, who shared this philosophy; see Ken Dewar, "Charles Clarke's *Reformer*: Early Victorian Radicalism in Upper Canada," in *Ontario History*, 78, no. 3 (September 1986), 233-52. Prentice and Houston discovered that Riddell followed in the artisan tradition of self-improvement, becoming first a school inspector and then a doctor after his printing days were over; see their *Schooling and Scholars*, 231 and Riddell, "The Rights of Labour," 4-8, 18.

⁴⁶ See the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series B, vol. 1, Board meetings, 1840-48, 15 May 1845. For Rintoul's view on education, and how this fit into the prevalent educational theories of the day, see his *Lectures on Rhetoric to the Toronto Mechanics' Institute*, (Toronto, 1844), 43-48 and Alison Prentice, *The School Promoters*, 102-9. See also Carol Wilton, *Popular Politics and Political Culture in Upper Canada, 1800-1850*, (Kingston and Montreal, 2000), 194-230.

Mechanics' Institutes to limit the conflicts over economic science, to create consensus and a sense of community in the name of industrial progress. Thus Mechanics' Institutes would not only support the mid-century producer alliance of independent yeomen, artisans and manufacturers, through the community ethos they would also create a cultural identity for an emerging industrial order in need of consent. And yet urban Mechanics' Institutes and their ties to the state through Boards of Arts and Manufactures ensured that such a bond was not only hegemonic in nature, it would also promote a producer *ideology* of an emerging industrial order.⁴⁷

Leading industrialists such as Thomas Keefer and William Bristow gave prominent addresses with themes on economic science to the Montreal Mechanics' Institute at mid-century. The key to building Canada as a nation lay in her ability to unite all classes of the community in a common objective. The source of communal wealth was personal hard work by every member of society, as it was by "honesty, by industry, by prudence, by frugality, and by perseverance that individuals thrive. The aggregate of these qualities in a people, joined to public spirit, form the basis of national prosperity."⁴⁸ Despite the fact that there was agreement on the means to achieve national prominence, members of Mechanics' Institutes were free to select the economic *policy* they imagined would best facilitate this process. William Bristow claimed that only free trade

⁴⁷ On the producer alliance, see L.R. MacDonald, "Merchants Against Industry: An Idea and its Origins," *Canadian Historical Review*, 56, (1975), 266-80 and especially Martin Hewitt, "Science, Popular Culture and the Producer Alliance in Saint John, N.B.," in Paul A Bogaard, editor, *Profiles of Science and Society in the Maritimes Prior to 1914*, (Victoria, 1990), 243-75. The notion of a producer ideology is explored in Gregory Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892*, (Toronto, 1980), 124-50; Bryan Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1979), 97-122; Ramsay, "Art and Industrial Society," 74-95 and Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 21-27.

⁴⁸ Bristow, *Commercial Prospects of Canada*, 10-11 and 25. See also Brown Chamberlain, *Our Country and our Duty to It*, (Montreal, 1854), 13-14 and Keefer, *Montreal and Ottawa*, 5-6. Ottawa similarly viewed itself as a commercial power, so often lectures were given on economic subjects in the Ottawa Mechanics' Institute. See Edward Van Cortlandt, *An Epitome of a Lecture on Ottawa Productions*, (Ottawa, 1853) and George Perry, *The Staple Trade of Canada*, (Ottawa, 1862).

and reciprocity with the United States would increase productiveness. In breaking down the artificial barriers of commerce free trade would allow individual enterprise to thrive, as “the good to the community is effected solely through self-interest, the most powerful stimulus that can be employed to excite the industry, and sharpen the intellect and ingenuity of man.” Thomas Keefer stated that neither Free Trade nor Protectionism without modification was desirable, as both partook of the character of class legislation. As Canadians were “a practical people” in a practical age, Keefer’s advice was to simply encourage the rapid development of the Commerce and the Arts, to increase the moral elevation of the people. While Keefer remained rather vague on how this was to be accomplished, clearly the alliance of producers as well as the cooperation of capital and labour was essential in overcoming national animosities to further the economic advancement of the nation.⁴⁹

The political economy of work and the ideology of the producer alliance were particularly strong in the urban Institutes of mid-century Ontario. Peppered with references to honest ambition and industry, Tiger Dunlop’s address to the York Mechanics’ Institute in 1832 illustrated how these ideas, coupled with the growth of commerce and manufactures would achieve national greatness. This discourse led to even more lectures on political economy, the difference between productive and unproductive labour and the benefits derived from life assurance and mutual benefit societies.⁵⁰ The prominent politician Robert Baldwin Sullivan gave two very influential lectures between 1847-48, one in the Hamilton and the

⁴⁹ See Bristow, *Commercial Prospects of Canada*, 5-9 and Keefer, *Montreal and Ottawa*, 6-8, 23-32. It is not surprising that the uttering of these economic theories arose from the leading industrialists of Montreal, yet other members of the governing elite spouted doctrines favourable to the cause of honest industry and the gospel of hard work. See Bovell, *A Lecture on the Future of Canada*, 1-4; Aylwin, *Inaugural Address*, 9-15; Rev. John Cook, *The Advantages of Life Assurance to the Working Classes*, (Montreal, 1848), 3-6 and also Rev. J.M. Cramp, *1800 and 1850*, 12-15.

⁵⁰ The latter was even a subject for a lecture in the Hamilton Mechanics’ Institute; see Hugh Baker, *A Lecture on Life Assurance*, (Hamilton, 1848). See also William Dunlop, *An Address*, 3-6, 12-14 and the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series B, vol. 1, Board minutes, 1840-1848, 2 December 1842, 22; 7 April 1843, 32 and 3 Jan 1844, 40.

other in the Toronto Mechanics' Institute, which touched heavily on the values of "earnestness, energy and industry." Unlike his counterparts in Montreal, Sullivan believed that the correct approach to accomplish these objectives lay in the creation of home markets, and the protection of the manufacturing sector. Walter Arnold in his lecture on banking to the Toronto Institute explored parallel concepts of the labour theory of value and the importance of man to employ both his industry and his talents to accumulate wealth. In contrast to Sullivan, Arnold explained that the stimulation of industry in Canada would occur through the establishment of a domestic currency and direct taxation. The barrister Arnold also concluded that a free exchange of goods would be more efficacious than protectionism, a barrier to the natural course of trade and commerce. Arnold even went so far as to label protection a refined system of fraud and a "law which seeks to despoil one class of the community of the fruits of their industry and give them to another, an intolerable violation of natural justice."⁵¹ Mechanics' Institutes therefore offered a variety of economic options on how exactly to achieve national prosperity, but ones that were highly in tune with the emerging industrial order. Adherence to the doctrine of honest industry would also overshadow competing agendas within the urban Mechanics' Institute movement.

The manufacturing sector would reinforce both honest industry and the work ethic with the creation of the Board of Arts and Manufactures and the establishment of its *Journal*. From its first volume, the periodical stated as its main objective the encouragement of industry and home manufactures in Upper Canada. The staple doctrines of hard work and honest industry, along with the impact of cooperation between the agricultural, manufacturing and commercial sectors highlighted many of the articles in the *Journal*. Honest industry would not

⁵¹ Walter Arnold, *Money and Banking: A Lecture Delivered to the Mechanics' Institute, Toronto*, (Toronto, 1862), 1-4, 30-34, 45-48. See also Robert Baldwin Sullivan, *Address on Emigration and Colonization, Delivered in the Mechanics' Institute Hall*, (Toronto, 1847), 3-8; and Sullivan, *The Connection between Agriculture and Manufactures of Canada*, (Hamilton, 1848), 4-12, 32-36. See also the lecture of Rev. Adam Lillie, *Canada, Its Growth and Prospects*, (Brockville, 1852), 12-16, 37-39.

only provide independence and security in the new land for all classes, the nation as a whole would receive the benefits as the “wealth and progress of the community is in proportion to the well-directed industry of its individuals.”⁵² The values and morality of honest industry when applied to economics and business would indeed highlight a new industrial commercial class flexing its economic capabilities in mid-Victorian Canada, although the discourse of hard work would remain inclusive of the entire community. In an article on education in the *Journal*, Richard Lewis outlined how honest industry when applied to commerce could become completely open and democratic:

There is nothing so democratical as trade and commerce. Its ways are countless, and are open to the whole world, and its successes are dependant upon laws, simple and clear and practicable to all....As a general rule, it is the fruit and reward of industry and skill; and because industry and skill lie more or less within the reach of all – because all can labour and all can cultivate to the necessary degree the faculties common to all men, and yet the chief ones needed for the acquisition of wealth – the power which wealth exercises is a just power.

Any “self-made man” who followed the principles of honest industry, economy and thrift therefore could “outstrip” in opportunity those who were technically superior in education and capital, through hard work and business acumen.⁵³

With the involvement of the state in the encouragement of commerce and industry, it was summarily noted that Canada’s progress, prosperity and improvement required the co-operation of all classes in the community. In an

⁵² See the Board of Arts and Manufactures fonds, AO, MU 279, minute book, 1857-67, 1861 annual report and the *Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufactures of Upper Canada*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1861), 1-9; vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1861), 60-1 and 74; vol. 2, no. 10, (October, 1862), 289-90; vol. 2, no. 12, (December, 1862), 359; vol. 5, no. 8, (August, 1865), 199-202 and vol. 6, no. 1, (January, 1866), 25-27.

⁵³ See the *Journal of Arts and Manufactures of Upper Canada*, vol. 2, no. 11, (November, 1862), 338-39; vol. 4, no. 3, (March, 1864), 94-5; vol. 5, no. 11, (November, 1865), 284 and vol. 6, no. 1, (January, 1866), 25-7. See also Hewitt, “Science, Popular Culture and the Producer Alliance,” 245-58; Ramsay, “Art and Industrial Society,” 74-81 and Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 21-27.

article entitled “Hard Times, the Cause and Cure,” the editors of the *Journal* called on the agricultural sector to improve agriculture, the mechanics to become better educated and the government to assist more with the creation of home manufacturing. Despite individual efforts from these various classes of the community, the editors were quite forthcoming that no improvements would be made unless the “agriculturalist, the manufacturer and the merchant look upon their respective interests as identical.”⁵⁴ Similarly, it was imperative for the editors of the *Journal* that society understood the interests of capital and labour were likewise indistinguishable, and complete harmony could not be restored until this realization occurred. As the editors noted, “it is a great pity that some means cannot be devised to do away with this continual conflict between capital and labour, the employer and his employee, on principles that will be just to both parties – especially as their interests are really identical, although to so many of them apparently the reverse.” One of the more interesting and crucial tactics to achieve harmony and cooperation in society through the gospel of honest industry came with the launching of the cooperative movement in England. Many articles dedicated to this cause in the *Journal* lauded co-operatives as a corrective to the recurring conflict of labour and capital, where the workmen in the factory represented both sides equally.⁵⁵

Skilled workers also had a vested interest in the continuance of these ideas, as noted in the non-lecture “The Rights of Labour” by the printer A.A. Riddell to the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute in 1848. Many of the suggestions and economic proposals outlined by Riddell mirrored the lecturers of the “industrialist” stripe. The necessity of honest industry and labour was a recurrent theme in the address, as Riddell claimed that labour itself was not degrading, but “enobling to those

⁵⁴ See the *Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufactures of Upper Canada*, vol. 1, no. 7, (July, 1861), 184-5; vol. 1, no. 10, (October, 1861), 253, 257-59; vol. 3, no. 1, (January, 1863), 13-15 and especially vol. 5, no. 3, (March, 1865), 57-9.

⁵⁵ See the *Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufactures of Upper Canada*, vol. 4, no. 10, (October 1864), 305; vol. 7, no. 1, (January 1867), 27-28; vol. 7, no. 3, (March 1867), 57-58 and vol. 7, no. 5, (May 1867), 117-18, 123-25.

engaged in it, of great advantage to society, and highly acceptable to God, and requires no strainings on the many faculties of common men.” If the minister and lawyer, the doctor and the merchant enjoyed these rights, Riddell asked rhetorically why the mechanic and others who laboured with their hands be denied them?⁵⁶ Riddell concurred with the labour theory of value, that only labour was the true measure of wealth. Far from demanding that other classes be forced to transfer their rewards of industry to the mechanic, Riddell insisted that the operative classes needed to elevate themselves and acquire independence by being attentive to business, sober at all times, and “to read and to think; to be upright and candid; to be at home when not at work, and last, but not least, to enrol his name among the members of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute.” To Riddell, the artisan must likewise obey the principles of political economy outlined by Adam Smith and others:

The manufacturer, workman or labourer, is far from being a recipient of charity when he receives his wages...it is nothing more than an exchange between two parties, calculated to be for the benefit of both. The labourer receives, in the place of the actual produce of his labour, its value in money or some other exchangeable article – the improvement in value of the master’s material being his recompense for the outlay in wages. From this, it may be inferred, that both should be equally independent of each other, for both are dependent upon one another. No man can subsist without labour.

If each class and occupation in society were self-sufficient and independent, yet aware of its duties towards the other members of the community, harmony and cooperation throughout the nation would be the happy result. And yet Riddell’s insistence on the gospel of honest industry concealed his political radicalism in

⁵⁶ Riddell, “The Rights of Labour,” 5-8, 19-22. The painter Walter Eales in Eales, *The Benefits to be Derived from Mechanics’ Institutes*, 4-7, echoes many of these arguments, illustrating that many skilled workers accepted this ideology, although Riddell is more forthcoming with his reservations regarding the new industrial order. See also Hewitt, “Science, Popular Culture and the Producer Alliance,” 243-75.

elevating the mechanic to partake “plentifully of the fruits which their hands had earned.”⁵⁷

The producer ideology of the nascent urban industrial order was resilient enough to survive well into the latter half of the century, as evidenced by the essay contest sponsored by the Association of Mechanics’ Institutes. Many of the papers submitted touched on the work ethic theme, and how Institutes could assist the self-made man in improving himself to prosper in an industrial Canada. One of the essays authored by W.A. Walls spent nearly twenty-five pages declaring that the method of improving Mechanics’ Institutes would be to discourage indolence and to teach the significance of self-reliance. Richard Lewis wrote in his paper that the operative classes needed to labour diligently to improve their station, but noted that employers also had an interest in “getting skilled, educated and honest employees” by supporting Mechanics’ Institutes. Lewis further stated that employers themselves needed a vision of self-interest in the education of workers, as the boss “who thinks it possible to make the whole mind of his servant slave to his interests and wishes, will sometimes have to suffer from fraud and dishonour, because he expected dullness to be honest than intelligence.”⁵⁸

While many of these papers described the bourgeois vision of honest industry, one essay penned by Alexander Gunn, a blacksmith from London, criticized the prevalence of the literature of the self-made man in Institute libraries. In making the Institutes more attractive to the working classes, Gunn called for the elevation of skilled workers in “the mechanical world,” as all the improvements from libraries, museums and “remodlin furniture” would be of

⁵⁷ As noted, this philosophy borrowed heavily from Canadian forms of mid-Victorian radicalism; so despite his adherence to the community ethos, Riddell’s lecture was rejected. See Riddell, “The Rights of Labour,” 10-13, 18-23 and 35-36; Prentice and Houston, *Schooling and Scholars*, 231; Dewar, “Charles Clarke’s *Reformer*,” 243-52 and Wilton, *Popular Politics and Political Culture*.

⁵⁸ See the Association of Mechanics’ Institute fonds, AO, MU 2021, prize essay contest folder, Richard Lewis, “To Make the Man a Better Mechanic,” 16-18; W.A. Walls, “Tell me not in mournful numbers, Life is but an empty dream,” 1-5, 12-24; Rev. John Butler, “Union is Strength,” 1-2, 7-8; and W.D. Stark, “Labor omnia vincit,” 6-11.

little effect until Institutes removed the idle character of the books from off their shelves. In poor English, Gunn remarked that “the literature they read for the most part is light blue green and yellow but this is more the fault of the character of the age it demands...for little or no labour and when it ascends into a spiritual province it readily mirrors such dogmas as to offer the riches of heaven without noticing the ordley laws that leads thereto thus mandkind for the most part finds more delight in a story which brings some idler into great possessions without giving the equivelent labour than one who came possessed in a heavenly and orderly way.”⁵⁹ In utilizing the community ethos of honest industry to contest Institute standards, Gunn exposed the producer ideology preached in the Institutes as more attuned to the needs of the industrial middle class.

Mechanics’ Institutes in urban Canada during the nineteenth century also served the vital function of a community centre for the emerging industrial city. As often the Mechanics’ Hall was the first community building erected for entertainment and educational purposes, many different associations utilized the Hall for their own meetings and community events. By mid-century, the Montreal, Toronto and Hamilton Mechanics’ Halls were the prominent social centres of their respective cities, providing leisure activities as a form of cultural identity. By the 1880s and beyond, the expansion of commercial recreation and the erection of similar structures in urban areas rendered the Mechanics’ Hall redundant. Similarly, both the Educational Department in Ontario and groups like the Industrial Arts Association took over the reins of adult education, while the agitation for free public libraries led to the creation of the Hamilton and Toronto Public Libraries in 1883. Another contributing factor to the demise of Mechanics’ Institutes in urban areas were the competitive nature of differing clubs, societies

⁵⁹ See the Association of Mechanics’ Institute fonds, AO, MU 2021, prize essay contest, Alexander Gunn, “Progression, extermination and repudiation,” 1-3. On the widespread use of “Horatio Alger” self-made man literature, where the working class hero seems to achieve his fortune rather providentially, see Daniel Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, (Chicago, 1978) and Stuart Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900*, (New York, 1989).

and free library adherents for rather limited municipal funds. Thus a myriad of interests realized that the Institutes were at once outdated and outmoded.⁶⁰

Mechanics' Institutes at the dawn of a new century appeared to be a stumbling block to community progress in the eyes of civic bureaucrats and the rising professional urban elite.

At mid-century, the Ottawa Mechanics' Institute recognized that its success in drawing an audience from the community depended upon fundraising activities and rational entertainment. Less than a month after the incorporation of the Institute in Ottawa, the directors planned a soiree to raise funds. The organization of similar events, from bazaars, exhibitions, to mechanics' festivals served to reduce the debt of the Mechanics' Institute after the erection of the Ottawa Mechanics' Hall. Lectures were initially set up to be the main attraction of the Institute, yet the directors soon discovered that added attractions were necessary and included music, readings and recitations with each lecture programme. Supplemental amusements were critical in fostering the correct spirit in the Institute, as instruction in the higher branches of science could be a time of friendly association instead of sitting in the lecture hall "sour and sulky like old philosophicums."⁶¹ Notwithstanding such efforts, the Institute in Ottawa never really achieved a strong foothold in the hearts of the people in the Ottawa valley. In 1868, the Institute experienced such apathy from the public that in frustration the directors stated in their last report that "they regret most sincerely that an institution of so valuable a character receives so little support from the citizens

⁶⁰ On the growth of a larger community vision of grand entertainments, see Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920*, (New York, 1983); Keith Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, especially chapter six, "Entertainment," 247-91 and Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, chapter five, "Exhibition Culture," 106-40. For changes in education and in the library system, see Bruce, *Free Books for All*, chapter four, "Days of Advance," 70-93 and Prentice and Houston, *Schooling and Scholars*, 310-44.

⁶¹ See H.J. Friel, *Inaugural Address at the Opening of the Winter Course of Lectures Before the Ottawa Mechanics' Institute*, (Ottawa, 1855), 8-9; Ottawa Mechanics' Institute fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 1, vol. 1, minutes of general meetings, 17 February 1847 and vol. 2, meetings of trustees and members, 25 August 1853, 7 February 1855, and 28 February 1855. The professional middle classes in Ottawa managed to keep their Natural History Society afloat well into the next century.

generally, that its existence can be described only as a constant struggle with difficulties.” Unfortunately, the Literary and Scientific Society founded a year later did not attract any further interest. By 1879 the naturalists in the Society broke away to form the Ottawa Field Naturalists’ Club, and those who resisted change reverted back into the Mechanics’ Institute. The Institute limped along into the 1890s, attempting to procure municipal grants for their reading room until the turn of the century. Unfortunately they were so unsuccessful that they unceremoniously disbanded after the passing of the Free Library Act. The situation was so chaotic that when a group of carpenters endeavoured to form the Ottawa Technical library in 1901, the whereabouts of the books of the library were simply not known.⁶²

The London Mechanics’ Institute likewise expanded its entertainment repertoire during the zenith of its influence at mid-century. The executive of the Institute organized a debating society, a mutual improvement society, a chess club and even purchased a pianoforte for musical presentations. Nonetheless, the directors of the Institute drew the line at theatre productions and a dancing school, proscribing them as useless to “the advancement of literary and scientific pursuits.” It is small wonder then that the London Mechanics’ Institute went moribund in 1865, and was forced into reorganization in 1870.⁶³ The new administrators of the Mechanics’ Institute appeared to be determined not to fall into the same trap as its predecessors, and opened up the Institute for a variety of entertainment options. In 1871, a concert and recitation committee was introduced to coordinate this entertainment, while in the next year the formation of the London Literary Society occurred. This allowed the directors in the annual

⁶² See the Department of Education Special Files, AO, MS 5635, RG 2-42-0-2287, 16 October 1901, and RG 2-42-0-2369, 29 August 1895; the Ottawa Mechanics’ Institute fonds, vol. 2, meetings of trustees and members, 1868 annual report and the Ottawa Natural History Society fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 31, vol. 1, minute book, 1879-85, 25 March 1879.

⁶³ See the London Mechanics’ Institute fonds, London Public Library, vol. 2, minute book, 1851-65, 12 January 1852, 8 July 1852, 2 May 1853, 2 February 1857, and 3 March 1859 and also William Judd, ed., *Minutes of the London Mechanics’ Institute 1841-95*, Occasional paper #23, (London, 1976), 110.

report to “congratulate its members on the steady increasing patronage it had received from all classes of citizens, when it is borne in mind the many sources of amusement and entertainments offered to its citizens the past winter.” Apparently the London public required even newer and more exiting entertainments later in the decade, as the entertainment committee of the Institute debated the merits of placing a billiard table and a gymnasium in the Mechanics’ Hall. By the 1880s, the management of the Institute realized that they were fighting a losing battle for the hearts and minds of the people of London. Competition from other associations and commercial recreations were blamed for a dwindling membership base and the raising of membership fees, an action taken as a result of shrinking funds. The London Institute tried to emulate the example of other urban Institutes by passing a free library bylaw in 1884, but the debts of the institution were so great that it was not until 1893 that the citizens of London had a free public library.⁶⁴

The directors of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute discovered the need to expand its leisure activities in their desire to be inclusive of all classes. In the 1866 annual report, the directors maintained that these new attractions were strictly for the recreation of the public, yet ensured that they were of a “beneficial influence by guiding the tastes and elevating the sympathies of their supporters into legitimate and refining channels.” Thus the Institute supported rational recreation such as conversaciones, bazaars and even a Mechanics’ Institute chess club. One of the more interesting methods of attracting the community to the Mechanics’ Institute came in 1862 with the organization of reunions. The objects of the reunions were fourfold; to introduce culture, elocution, musical practice and improvement to the citizens at large. The directors further envisioned that the meetings would not only have a beneficial influence on the members of the Mechanics’ Institute, but also on Toronto society as a whole. And yet the limits of

⁶⁴ For this episode, see Bruce, *Free Books For All*, 90-91 and the London Mechanics’ Institute fonds, London Public Library, vol. 4, minute book, 1871-76, 9 September 1871 and 1872 annual report; vol. 5, minute book, 1876-95, 6 November 1877; annual report of 1879; 8 May 1882 and annual report of 1884.

good taste were stretched thin with the advertisement of Negro minstrel shows in the Mechanics' Hall, as Board members complained that such entertainments made the character of the Institute suffer.⁶⁵ By the 1870s, the impact of alternative forms of recreation led many Institute promoters to discuss the need for Institutes to broaden their appeal to the community. John Davy, the secretary of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute, claimed that the only effective method of improving the Institutes would be to combine their social attractions with educational work. Davy noted that "the success of societies for amusement, such as singing, skating, curling and many others, notwithstanding their great cost when compared with Mechanics' Institutes and the many amusements now very properly provided in private families, all converge to one point; the necessity for relaxation to the overworked brain of man." In order to compete with these groups, as well as the tavern keeper and the bowling alley, Davy and others advocated the establishment of conversation and smoking rooms, recreation rooms with checkerboards, chessboards and billiard tables, as well as the creation of gymnasiums and facilities for archery and cricket.⁶⁶

The Toronto Mechanics' Institute took up the challenge of constructing a complete community centre with the creation of the Recreation committee in 1876. Initial forays into the realm of entertainment saw the construction of a recreation room with chess, checker, quoits and a billiard table. These simple changes to the room were not without their detractors, as bourgeois agents of the older industrial order such as clergymen and former directors of the Institute condemned the existence of such amusements as being conducive to gambling and other vices. A major skirmish took place in the recreation room over those

⁶⁵ See the Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series B, vol. 4, Board meetings, 1862-72, 6 March 1863; series D, vol. 28, reunion committee minutes, 11 August 1862; the *Annual Report of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute for 1866*, (Toronto, 1866), 7-8, 8-12, and the *Annual Report for 1862*, (Toronto, 1862), 11-12.

⁶⁶ See the Association of Mechanics' Institutes fonds, AO, MU 2021, prize essay contest, John Davy, "Suum Cuique," 1-3. See also J.P. Donald, "Perseverance is better than talent," 5-9; J. Pennington Macpherson, "Perserverantia omnia vincit," 14-17, and Thomas Davison, "To Make the Mechanic a Better Man," 2-3.

members who viewed billiards as “an innocent amusement when disassociated with gambling dens and saloons” and those who believed billiards interfered with the educational pursuits of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute. Even though such debates were a moot point by 1883, it was noted that when the pool tables were set up, young men poured into the Institute.⁶⁷ Two directors, Thomas Maclean and Matthew Sweetnam, resigned from the Board of Directors as a result of the political manipulation of the Recreation Room committee, which in their eyes was equivalent to partyism at its worst. Maclean couched his objections in class language, as he noted that this party made the real use of the Institute subservient to a “very common branch.” Yet Sweetnam presented his protest in the name of the general members, as the “hole and corner proceedings” of the committee were injurious to the harmony and well being of the Institute. He objected to the selfishness of “a few of the frequenters of the Recreation room, and their special friends” who banded together in setting aside the interests of the majority who were more interested in the true educational objects of the Institute as opposed to the Billiard Tables.⁶⁸

During the heyday of the Montreal Mechanics’ Institute at mid-century, it was the hallmark community centre as numerous civic lectures, exhibitions and other community events were held in the Mechanics’ Hall. Even though the primary function of the Institute, adult education, had been adopted by the *Conseil des Arts* in 1870 – an event which did result in a brief re-examining of priorities within the executive – the Institute was healthy enough to open a branch of operations at Point St. Charles in 1887. From the published reports of the

⁶⁷ See the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series D, vol. 24, Lecture and Recreation room minutes, 1876-78; series M, unbound papers, folder 1879-192--, letter from the Alymer Mechanics’ Institute, 11 March 1878; letter of John Langrell, 22 January 1879, and the unpublished manuscript of E.S. Caswell, “History of the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute.”

⁶⁸ Those older members accustomed to rational recreation had a difficult time in making the adjustment. See the Toronto Mechanics’ Institute fonds, MTL, L1, series M, unbound papers, letter of M. Sweetnam to the Board of Directors, 10 July 1878, and letter of Thomas Maclean, 15 July 1878. Table 1.2 illustrates that forty percent of the membership at this juncture were clerks, who emulated their employers’ clearly enunciated views of respectability. See Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 75-96 and Spurr, “Those Who are Obligated to Pretend that They are Gentlefolk.”

Institute in the latter decades of the century, a clearer picture emerges as to why this was so. Evidently the Montreal Institute was not immune to the debates regarding the need to expand its community base. By 1878 the Institute had increased its attractiveness by introducing debating and literary societies, a ladies reading room, and renting its Hall to other community organizations. Endeavours such as these allowed the Institute to peak at 907 members in 1889, well after other urban Institutes succumbed to the Free Library movement.⁶⁹ Despite these activities, clearly the foundation of the Institute's success lay in acknowledging just who its constituents were. While conceding the fact that the Institute was open to all regardless of race, colour or religion, the directors discerned that the Montreal Mechanics' Institute was "principally supported by the English speaking Protestant population." In pandering to this group, the Institute rose to great heights by the 1890s. Emboldened by their success, the directors soon lost their focus and began to compete with the free government night classes, drastically cutting the fees for the reading room and membership. These were desperate measures that fell short, as by 1897 the Institute had barely 500 members on its rolls.⁷⁰ By abandoning their winning formula of community access, the Montreal Mechanics' Institute quickly faded into oblivion.

Even though the Free Library movement wreaked havoc with the objectives of Mechanics' Institutes by the late nineteenth century, clearly their days were numbered in urban regions. Skilled workers embraced both mass entertainment and state-run education, which simply made the Institute obsolete. Despite the fact that the working classes made great use of the night classes in the Mechanics' Institutes for their own education, not enough skilled workers became actual members to sustain growth. The defection of the professional classes for such

⁶⁹ See the *Thirty-Ninth Annual Report of the Montreal Mechanics' Institute*, (Montreal, 1878), 6-8, 15; *Forty-Seventh Annual Report*, (Montreal, 1886), 4-6 and *Fiftieth Annual Report*, (Montreal, 1889), 3-7.

⁷⁰ *Thirty-Ninth Annual Report of the Montreal Mechanics' Institute*, (Montreal, 1878), 3-4; *Fifty-First Annual Report*, (Montreal, 1890), 10-12 and *Fifty-Eighth Annual Report*, (Montreal, 1897).

organizations as the Canadian Institute, the *Institut Canadien* and the various Natural History Societies completed the process by the end of the century. The flourishing of the industrial order, with its notions of self-improvement, industrial education and the “amateur” philosopher lecturing in urban Mechanics’ Halls had run its course by the late Victorian era. The Janus face of the industrial elites had been exposed in the Institutes, which in turn led to its abandonment by both the working classes and the agents of the new bourgeois urban hegemony, the professional middle classes.

CHAPTER TWO – “A Project for the Benefit of All”: Rural Mechanics’ Institutes and the Development of the Community Centre Ideal

Rural Mechanics’ Institutes in nineteenth century central Canada were quite similar in scope to their urban counterparts, with some significant distinctions. Class relationships in the countryside were far more fluid and complex, given the fact that the agricultural community often interacted more frequently with the professional, commercial, manufacturing and operative classes in small towns than in the urban environment. This rural class diversity produced an even greater enthusiasm for directors of Institutes in small villages and towns to create an atmosphere of inclusiveness. The community centre ideal fostered by the Mechanics’ Institute movement struck a responsive chord in the less inhabited regions, as the Association of Mechanics’ Institutes in Ontario reported a dramatic increase in the chartering of rural Institutes after the disappearance of many of their urban counterparts in 1883.¹ Although rural Mechanics’ Institutes remained faithful to the community ethos forged during the nineteenth century, in many ways they reproduced the experience of their urban counterparts by establishing a rural hegemonic cultural identity. As with the urban Mechanics’ Institutes, skilled workers largely declined membership in these institutions, and along with agricultural labourers continued to be marginalized to some degree by rural Institute directors. However, this social order was more susceptible to cultural negotiation than the urban industrial environment, as the presence of agriculturalists produced an even stronger discourse of class co-operation and inclusiveness. In this sense, Mechanics’ Institutes in the rural countryside carved out a stronger sense of community and identity in the formulation of a community centre ideal.

¹ In 1876 only 54 Mechanics’ Institutes affiliated with the Association, and by 1884 over 104 joined, with the notation that there were over 140 working Mechanics’ Institutes in the province of Ontario. See the Association of Mechanics’ Institute fonds, AO, MU 2021, Annual reports, 1876-84. For the purposes of this particular study, the rubric “rural” was utilized for small towns, villages and rural areas in order to provide a stronger contrast to the urban Institute environment.

Most of the rather limited historiography of rural Mechanics' Institutes examines the predominance of middle-class leadership and values, with many historians concluding that a bourgeois hegemony occurred in small-town Mechanics' Halls.² And yet the plight of the uneducated mechanic did not escape the attention of Mechanics' Institutes in the countryside, particularly in the early years of the movement. Mirroring the urban Institute concern for the operative classes, several Institutes devised strategies to entice skilled workers into undertaking the onerous process of self-improvement. Initiating bylaws ensuring that half the management of Institutes were working mechanics and establishing exhibitions demonstrating the capabilities of artisans were all attempts to place "Mechanics'" Institutes on a proper foundation. Even after mid-century, directors of rural Mechanics' Institutes were well aware of the need to reach out to the working classes, particularly in educational efforts. The Reverend Walter Inglis, speaking to the Kincardine Mechanics' Institute lauded the labours of such associations as the village Institute, as it was "no longer permitted or satisfactory to pick out a few sons of genius and educate them, leaving the dull mass alone." The Orillia Mechanics' Institute at the end of the century advertised the benefits of their reading room to the operative classes in the town, stating boldly that their elevation as a class would occur if they took a serviceable interest in the Institute.³

² See Michael Watson, "The Origins of Mechanics' Institutes of North Yorkshire," *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 19, no. 2, (July 1987), 12-25; Wendy Brinan, Peter Rose and Mike White, "Respectable and Useful: The Institute Movement in West Australia," in Philip Candy and John Laurent, editors, *Pioneering Culture: Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts in Australia*, (Adelaide, 1994), 126-59; James Eadie, "The Napanee Mechanics' Institute: The Nineteenth Century Mechanics' Institute Movement in Microcosm," *Ontario History* 68, no. 4, (December, 1976), 209-21 and Andrew Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle Class Formation in Victorian Ontario*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2000), 121-29. See also Donald Akenson's study of the Gananoque Mechanics' Institute in *The Irish in Ontario: A Study in Rural History*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1984), 218-22 and Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion and Leisure in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario*, (Toronto, 1996), 125-6.

³ See the Wallace family collection, SCA, Acc. 993-13, annual reports of the Orillia Mechanics' Institute, 1886 annual report and the *Declaration and Bylaws and Catalogue of Books in the Owen Sound Mechanics' Institute*, (Owen Sound, 1855), 10-14. See also Walter Inglis, *Our Village and Mechanics' Institute*, (Kincardine, 1867), 5-8; the Barrie Mechanics' Institute fonds,

However, the difficulty in securing involvement from the working classes was never more evident than the attempt of rural Mechanics' Institutes to introduce adult education in various villages. While such classes were easily arranged in urban Institutes, early attempts in the countryside were not widely successful. Many of these early associations simply did not even undertake the tortuous prospect of tackling night classes in their towns. Other Institutes, lacking sufficient funds to appoint a qualified instructor, relied on classes of loosely organized mutual instruction rather than formalized tutoring.⁴ Under the aegis of the Agriculture and Arts Association of Ontario and the education department, a more concerted effort was made to foster adult education in all Institutes by offering grants based on the existence of functioning night classes. In the introduction to the special report on Mechanics' Institutes in 1881, Adam Crooks, the Minister for Education, noted that the majority of Institutes were still rural and thus proved to be less efficacious in the education of the operative classes. Crooks stated that these classes could still be constructive, if the "sons of farmers and others with opportunities for obtaining such practical knowledge of agriculture, chemistry and mechanics as would enable them to better understand the properties and capabilities of the soil and improved modes of cultivation." Even a staunch opponent of the report as Otto Klotz recognized that while the night classes were key to the success of the Institutes, small villages were ill equipped to handle the assignment because of a limited and roving population. What occurred as a result of the new grant system was a rather cynical and half-hearted effort to create night classes for limited numbers of industrial workers. Many Institutes repeated the experience of the Erin Mechanics' Institute, an association that had no interest in setting up night classes. When the directors

SCA, Acc. 981-31, minute book, 1854-56, 21 March 1855 and the Mitchell Mechanics' Institute fonds, Stratford-Perth Archives, minute book, 1854-70, 21 January 1861.

⁴ See the Mitchell Mechanics' Institute fonds, Stratford-Perth Archives, minute book, 1854-70, 11 March 1854 and the records of the Paris Mechanics' Institute, AO, MS 359, reel 2, minute book, 1843-62, 9 January 1846 and 6 December 1847.

realized that the grant was incumbent on adult education, classes commenced soon after.⁵

Perhaps the best example of these educational misfortunes is the experience of the Elora Mechanics' Institute with the night classes. In 1858, the directors opened a mutual instruction class whereby members could present papers and essays to their colleagues, and then discuss the subject brought forward. This would be more effective than a mere debating society, and "likely to enlist more in the cause of mutual improvement than the class system." By the 1870s, the Elora Institute structured its night classes along more "proper" lines, introducing lessons in English, math and bookkeeping. Financial difficulties put the scheme on hold for some years, and when the classes did begin, the directors were forced because of poor attendance to enlist the aid of several ministers to trumpet the virtues of the Institute from their pulpits.⁶ The directors of the Elora Mechanics' Institute did not concern themselves with adult education again until Dr. May personally visited them in 1881. Noting that the grant was now dependent on having functioning night classes, the executive put the word out that the classes would commence in 1882. Such endeavours were obviously unappreciated by those in the town, as only one youth offered to join the classes. Elora's encounter with adult education soon came full circle when in 1884, in the face of complete failure with its night classes the administrators called for the creation of a Literary club or circle, whose object would be mutual improvement of its members through mutual instruction.⁷ In spite of the fluctuating nature of the rural social

⁵ See the Erin Public Library fonds, WCA, A1996.56, MU 308, minute book 1891-1945, 30 November 1892, 8. The Kincardine Mechanics' Institute classes folded after only six months because of poor attendance; see the records in the Kincardine Public Library, minute book, 1866-89, 10 October 1881 and 13 March 1882. See also Otto Klotz, *A Review of the Special Report of the Minister of Education on the Mechanics' Institutes of Ontario*, (Toronto, 1881), 3-7 and *Special Report of the Minister of Education on the Mechanics' Institutes in Ontario*, (Toronto, 1881), x-xii.

⁶ See the Elora Mechanics' Institute fonds, WCA, MU 60, minute book, 1857-70, 21 and 30 April 1858; Elora Public Library fonds, A1984.5, series 1, subseries 1, file 1, minute book, 1871-78, 27 November 1871, 7 November 1873, 5 December 1873, and 3 November 1876.

order, it appears as though small town skilled workers could also detect the hegemonic nature of rural Mechanics' Institutes.

Despite these overtures to the operative classes, the directors of Mechanics' Institutes in the countryside clearly identified their constituents and the vast majority were not industrial workers. The economy of nineteenth-century Canada was still highly agrarian, with only pockets of manufacturing concentrated in relatively few urban centres. While some studies conclude that the emergence of a rural middle class was due to an increased industrial presence in rural Ontario, evidence taken from mid-century census records tell a different tale. Middle-class formation in rural areas occurred as a result of a settled and stable class of independent farmers. Viewed in this light, it is no small wonder that the Mechanics' Institute movement flourished in rural areas.⁸ Even from the beginnings of the Mechanics' Institute movement, directors of small town Institutes recognized that appealing solely to the industrial population would be a grave mistake. In accordance with this, the Guelph, Streetsville, Fergus, Drayton and Caledon Institutes were all given the appellation "Mechanics' and Farmers' Institutes." The Fergus Farmers' and Mechanics' Institute went so far as to request that two-thirds of the management of the Institute to be either working

⁷ Elora Mechanics' Institute fonds, MU 60, minute book 1878-1887, 16 September 1881, 113; 8 May 1882, 133-34, 14 May 1883, 166 and 12 May 1884, 210. Some rural Institutes did meet with limited success with their classes; see the Ingersoll Mechanics' Institute fonds, RCL, M-581, minute book, 1880-90, 26 June 1883. Contrast this with the lack of educational success among young workers in the neighbouring towns of Campbellford and Thorold as outlined in Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 125-6.

⁸ Douglas McCalla argued that economic development in rural Ontario was fuelled by the complex nature of markets in rural areas; see his *Planting the Province*, (Toronto, 1993). Gordon Darroch has maintained that middle class formation cannot be viewed solely as an urban phenomenon founded on non-manual work, as in rural areas independent yeomen formed the middle class. See his "Scanty Fortunes and Rural Middle Class Formation in Nineteenth Century Rural Ontario," *Canadian Historical Review*, 79, no. 4, (December, 1998), 621-59. For the wide-ranging nature of the rural middle-class, see Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty* and David Burley, *A Particular Condition in Life: Self-Employment and Social Mobility in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston, 1994). Whatever its composition, due to heightened interaction between the various classes, the rural social order was indeed different from its urban industrial counterpart.

mechanics *or* farmers.⁹ The files of newly created Mechanics' Institutes held by the Ontario Ministry of Education, reveals an inclusive pattern of middle-class participation in rural Institutes. As with the urban situation in the latter half of the century, limited participation from the operative classes was also a staple of rural Mechanics' Institutes (see Table 2.1). What these statistics do illustrate is the diversity of the rural social order, as middle-class farmers and manufacturers, commercial representatives and professionals laboured side by side in rural Mechanics' Institutes.

As a result, rural Mechanics' Institutes were even more obsessed with the community ethos and the elimination of exclusivity in its operations. Incorporating the entire community took on even stronger meaning in small villages, as community leaders often utilized associations like the Institutes to promote the advantages of the town. Unlike members of urban Mechanics' Institutes whose participation in large-scale industry made them consider the needs of the nation as a whole, many of the rural associations viewed the community ethos largely as an ideology confined to their locality. Even James Dallas in his lecture to the Orillia Mechanics' Institute claimed that knowledge would only permeate throughout the nation if the local community nurtured their Institutes, as he noted "you cannot raise the standard of education, of knowledge, of intelligence among them, without powerfully affecting those with whom such members associate."¹⁰ Local pride also influenced the organization and management of the Institutes in a more open and "community friendly" manner.

⁹ See the Fergus Public Library fonds, WCA, A993.36, MU 281, series 2, subseries 2, minute book, 1857-96, meeting of 21 August 1857 and Association of Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MU 2021, Annual reports, 1876-89.

¹⁰ James Dallas, *A Lecture on the Aims and Usefulness of Mechanics' Institutes*, (Barrie, 1865), 3-7 and J. Travers Lewis, *Lecture Delivered before the Brockville Library Association and Mechanics' Institute*, (Brockville, 1855), 3-5, 16-17. Rural Mechanics' Institutes also followed the "familialist" model of other organizations like church congregations; see Nancy Christie's introduction, "Family, Community and the Rise of Liberal Society" in her edited collection *Households of Faith: Family, Gender and Community in Canada, 1760-1969*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2002), 3-20.

In advertising the library of the Niagra Mechanics' Institute, the executive claimed that townspeople could discover volumes "complete with instruction and information for all classes." The Paris Mechanics' Institute went even further, declaring that the Institute was for the benefit of all classes in the community. The plainly frustrated directors could not understand why those in the community so sparsely attended such a valuable institution as their Mechanics' Institute. Summoning the last vestiges of civic pride, the executive boldly claimed that "the eyes are upon Paris, when they see or hear Paris people carry off the palm of victory from their neighbours at curling, cricketing and music, they actually think that seeing we excel so well at these, that the field of the mind will not be left a moral waste, overrun with the rank weeds of ignorance."¹¹

Even up to the latter end of the century, rural Mechanics' Institutes initiated programs in village Institutes to promote a sense of civic integration. The administrators of the Elora Mechanics' Institute requested aid for the erection of a new Mechanics' Hall in 1884 from the whole community, "since the project is for the benefit of all who care to be regarded as intelligent and sensible people." When the Napanee Mechanics' Institute introduced debates as part of their curriculum, they were open to all members of the town on an equal basis:

Whereas many intelligent and well informed men are often in public meetings unable to express their views on important subjects and from their ignorance in conducting public business are often put to great inconvenience, and often public business suffers in consequence. Therefore be it resolved that the members of this association use every effort to try while attending the meetings to so fit themselves by taking part in debates, and observe how business is conducted and try in every possible way so to improve ourselves both in knowledge of public affairs generally and publickly[sic] expressing

¹¹ Paris Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MS 359, reel 2, minute book, 1843-62, fifth annual meeting, 7 April 1846 and eighth annual report, 7 January 1857. See also the Niagra Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MU 2022, MS 566, vol. 1, minute book, 1848-62, 11 November 1857, 14 November 1857. Comparable frustrations occurred in Guelph, where the directors often berated the agricultural portion of the community for not appreciating the efforts of the town Institute. In 1859, the directors removed the moniker "Farmers" from the Institute. See the Guelph Public Library fonds, GPL, Mechanics' Institute minute book, 1850-72, 14 January 1852, 17 January 1854 and 11 January 1859.

our views that if ever we are called upon to fill places of trust we can do so with credit to ourselves.¹²

In 1883 the managing executive of the Peterborough Mechanics' Institute stressed the amount of fiction contained in the shelves of the Library. The board realized that purchasing fictional works assisted in the retention of the membership, for "while the taste of the public calls for fiction, it must be supplied or we should lose our members." The directors consoled themselves over adopting such a course of action, by claiming that youth reading literature "for the story" soon acquired a taste for reading and a thirst for knowledge. Class inclusiveness coupled with an intellectual town boosterism also encouraged debates on the merits of changing the name of Mechanics' Institutes. The Clinton Mechanics' Institute claimed that the name was not "sufficiently comprehensive, and is to some extent misleading" and thus changed their name to a "Public Institute," illustrating that they were of benefit to the whole community.¹³

The experience of the Drummond County *Institut des Artisans* in the province of Quebec is a perfect example of the need to incorporate all members of the community into the Mechanics' Institute. An ideology of co-operation and harmony was critical to the success of the *Institut*, as it comprised both English and French members. Even though the origins of the *Institut* were from the English community in Drummond County, steps were taken to ensure the continued participation of French members. When a prominent French member, Dr. Vallée, spoke in the French language, an objection was raised that one ought not to address the meeting in both languages. President J.B. Eric Dorion, the noted Rouge supporter, decided "there was nothing to prevent the same speaker

¹² See the Lennox and Addington Historical Society fonds, NAC, MG 9 D8/18, M-229, Napanee Mechanics' Institute records, annual report of 1877, 34517-18. See also the Elora Mechanics' Institute fonds, MU 60, minute book, 1878-87, annual report, 12 May 1884, 210-11.

¹³ See the *Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Clinton Mechanics' Institute*, (Clinton, 1880), 1-2 and the Peterborough Mechanics' Institute fonds, National Library of Canada, MSS 1995-05, series C2, folder 11, committee and board reports, report of the library committee, April 1883.

from speaking in two, or more, languages on the same question,” the said decision sustained on a vote of seven to five. This set the tone for future meetings of the *Institut*, as often there was four English and four French members in the executive committee after this episode. Correspondingly, the minutes alternated in the French or English language depending on the mother tongue of the secretary, and provisions were made to purchase 50 English and 50 French books to commence the functions of the *Institut* library. By 1861, the conduct of a racially sensitive directorate ensured a great deal of success among the French population, as members of French origin reached a high of sixty percent.¹⁴ The *Institut* also demonstrated that it could adjust quickly to the needs of the community, when the circumstances warranted. When the *Institut* was reorganized in 1878, the representation of the French element in Drummond County was reflected in the increased number of French members, up to seventy-three percent in 1881. Likewise, in determining occupations of these same members, it was revealed that eighty percent of the members were farmers, agricultural workers or journalists for agricultural periodicals. It would come as no surprise that in 1880 the *Institut* was renamed “l’association litteraire et agricole” of Drummond County, promoting several lectures on agricultural subjects.¹⁵

Mechanics’ Institutes in the countryside were even more willing to extend their privileges to women, in opening up the Institute to the larger community. Given the limited number of male participants in small villages and towns, women were made particularly welcome in the reading rooms of rural Mechanics’ Institutes. A sizeable portion of the recent literature regarding women and rural

¹⁴ See Johanne Menard, “L’Institut des Artisans Du Comté du Drummond 1856-90,” *Recherches Sociographiques*, 16, no. 2, (1975), 207-18 and *Institut des Artisans* fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 142, vol. 1, minute book, 1856-58, 26 December 1856, 10 September 1857 and 3 December 1857. The *Société Litteraire de Laprairie* followed a similar “debate society” model although functioning more as a true *Institut des Artisans*, celebrating the fact that out of a membership base of 65, thirty members were working mechanics. See their records, Elisee Choquet fonds, ANQ, P60, boîte 20, file 4.186, 15 March 1858.

¹⁵ See the *Institut des Artisans* fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 142, vol. 2, minute book, 1858-82, 4 November 1880 and 12 November 1880 as well as Menard, “L’Institut des Artisans,” 211-16.

life concludes that social events held in towns and villages did offer opportunities for women to become more prominent in the public sphere, as the shared nature of agricultural work led to more mutual activities in these areas. And yet these historians insist for the most part that women's participation in associations were limited to religious and temperance organizations, with gender restrictions placed heavily upon them.¹⁶ Right from the beginning of the rural Mechanics' Institute movement, invitations extended to the female portion of the community for lectures, concerts and festivals illustrated the seriousness of Institute directors to incorporate women into Institute functions. In the Orillia Mechanics' Institute, women were eagerly encouraged to attend any public meeting of the Institute, quite often free of charge. The initial inclination of the management of the Paris Mechanics' Institute' was to allow women to join the reading room for free, but strained financial circumstances compelled them to charge the ladies five shillings per year as members. Policies such as this allowed women to take the initiative and join the rural Institutes in respectable numbers. The Niagara Mechanics' Institute welcomed its first female member in 1852, while a respectable twenty percent of new members in 1856 were women. Similarly, out of ninety-four members tallied in the Mitchell Institute in 1866, three local women were prominently featured. And yet mirroring the experience of women in urban Mechanics' Institutes, early participation of the female gender in rural Institutes was limited to indirect involvement, rather than active membership.¹⁷

¹⁶ See Nancy Osterud, *Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth Century New York*, (Ithaca and London, 1991), 247-74 and Karen Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994). Some Canadian examples include Cecilia Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850*, (Toronto, 1996), 183-218; Marguerite Van Die, "The Marks of Genuine Revival: Religion, Social Change, Gender and Community in mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario," *Canadian Historical Review*, 79, no. 3, (September, 1998), 524-63; Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks* and in particular, Catherine Wilson, "Reciprocal Work Bees and the Meaning of Neighbourhood," *Canadian Historical Review*, 82, no. 3, (September, 2001), 431-64. Of course, just permitting women to join Mechanics' Institutes did not overly disturb the rural social order.

¹⁷ See the Niagara Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MU 2022, MS 566, vol.1, 19 November 1852, 20 November 1856; Mitchell Mechanics' Institute records, Stratford-Perth Archives, minute

In the rural Institute experience, female participation accelerated by the end of the century, as many of the Institutes in the countryside realized that the courting of female members would entail extensive changes. Both the Peterborough and the Elora Mechanics' Institute were willing to produce the necessary modifications to entice women to come to their Institutes. Even with the inadequate space available, the directors of both Institutes were willing to create ladies' reading rooms to increase membership and support. The Orillia Mechanics' Institute envisioned a different scenario, whereby strict observance of the rules of courtesy would permit lady members to cooperatively enjoy the benefits of association in the Mechanics' Institute:

Your committee still anxious for further improvement, would request that the Board prohibit smoking and loud talking during reading hours...as long as the reading room laws are being trampled with impunity, we cannot expect the attendance of lady members in the evenings. This your committee much regret, and consider it a serious loss to the growth and prosperity of the Institute. It is usual in other Institute towns to see ladies and gentlemen members reading together and discuss literary and other questions of the day. We were much pleased to notice this in other towns, and regret that in Orillia should be an exception. Moreover, the influence which the presence of ladies exert, and the deference paid them by gentlemen, would we think, place our Institute on a much higher plane, and relieve it of the monotony which now exists.¹⁸

In encouraging a community ethos that included women, directors of rural Mechanics' Institutes were not shy in playing upon the civic pride of its citizens.

book, 1854-70, 15 October 1866. See also the Paris Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MS 359, reel 2, minute book, 19 January 1856, 14 February 1856; J.E. Curran papers, NAC, MG 30 C85, vol. 4, Orillia Mechanics' Institute minute book, 1864-72, bylaws of 1864 and John Ardagh, *An Address Delivered before the County of Simcoe Mechanics' Institute*, (Barrie, 1858), 2.

¹⁸ See the Wallace family collection, SCA, Acc. 993-13, reading room committee report, 1889; see also Peterborough Mechanics' Institute fonds, National Library of Canada, MSS 1995-05, series C2, folder five, board and committee reports, 16 May 1881 report, and Elora Mechanics' Institute fonds, MU 60, minute book 1878-1887, 11 June 1885. The Ingersoll Institute shared funds and facilities for a reading and recreation room with the local Women's Christian Temperance Union. See the Ingersoll Mechanics' Institute fonds, RCL, M-581, minute book, 1880-90, 25 October 1886, 14 December 1887.

The augmentation of women's roles in rural Mechanics' Institutes occurred in direct proportion to the limited participation offered them. In the Guelph Mechanics' Institute, female participation was not significant until 1878, when the women of the town were asked to hold a strawberry festival to raise funds for the Institute, whose financial situation was so precarious that they suspended payment to creditors. When the strawberry festival committee – composed entirely of women – handed over one hundred and forty dollars in profit to the directors of the Institute, the board suggested “that besides the appointment of officers and directors, that a few ladies be appointed Patronesses of the Institute.” The Barrie Mechanics' Institute correspondingly altered the bylaws of the Institute to allocate four positions in the board of management to female members when the female-dominated Philharmonic Class aided the Institute in their fundraising entertainments. The Niagara Institute likewise had no women in prominent positions until they appointed a ladies' subscription committee to solicit members for the Institute. Obviously the ladies were very successful, as shortly thereafter a Miss Cavansham was elected Secretary of the Institute, with a paid salary, along with three other officers including the president of the entertainment committee.¹⁹ Several of the Institutes followed the advice given by Dr. May in his report and appointed young single women as librarians and custodians of the library. Arrangements were also made for female teachers to come and tutor students in the Institute, although such instructors were restricted to the more “womanly pursuits” such as Music and Drawing. Women were also encouraged to join the classes themselves, as in the night classes of the Peterborough Mechanics' Institute. The board members of this Institute wanted to end the neglect of the

¹⁹ Niagara Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MU 2022, MS 566, vol. 2, minute book, 1866-95, 2 September 1880, 4 May 1883, 5 May 1890 and 1 October 1891. See also Barrie Mechanics' Institute fonds, SCA, Acc. 981-31, minute book, 1871-84, 25 November 1880, 22 May 1884 and 10 July 1884 and the Guelph Public Library fonds, GPL, Guelph Mechanics' Institute minute book, 1872-85, 28 May 1878, 5 July 1878, 22 May 1879 and 6 June 1879.

mechanics' wife in education, as she "is to a great extent the businessman for the family; she deserves a good rudimentary English and business education."²⁰

In the fourth annual report of the Peterborough Institute, the directors noted that some of the "lady readers have complained that many of the Books added have been of a class of reading for which they care little." The directors bluntly remarked that the government grants were incumbent on the purchasing of scientific works, and not those of novels. However, this touch of condescension mellowed out considerably when the managers of the Institute discovered that the general public, and not only women became members when the library shelves were stocked with novels. The auxiliary organization to the Barrie Mechanics' Institute, the Barrie Literary Society, discussed at length whether or not to admit females to the society in the early 1880s. The directors decided on sending a disputation to "secure the attendance of as many ladies as might be conveniently be persuaded to come." The biggest drawback in inviting female members, according to the management of the society, was the absence of the "normal" male members when several women of the town did come to the meeting. Perhaps the presence of women was not indispensable to the society, as the very next debate held by the society was on the subject of women's mental inferiority to men, where it was concluded that women were decidedly less intelligent than men.²¹ A short while later the Society held a debate on whether women should receive the electoral franchise. Only male members participated in the debate, where one member argued that women should have the vote, based on property rights and that women had a higher sense of honour and morality than their male

²⁰ By 1895, the Orillia, Orangeville, Drayton, Fergus, Niagara and Peterborough Institutes had female librarians, while female teachers were hired in Barrie, Elora and Fergus in the early 1880s. See also the Peterborough Mechanics' Institute fonds, National Library of Canada, MSS 1995-05, series C, folder four, correspondence of the board, WH Trout to George Shaw, 28 December 1878 and *Special Report on the Mechanics' Institutes in Ontario*, 74-6.

²¹ See the records of the Barrie Literary Society, in the Barrie Mechanics' Institute fonds, SCA, Acc. 981-31, minute book, 1881-89, 23 February 1882, 16 March 1882 and also the Peterborough Mechanics' Institute fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-028/1, minute book, 1868-86, annual report of 1872, and 27 April 1873.

counterparts. Similarly, their “presence at election contests would banish all the rougher features which at present characterize them.” James Hunter, a later president of the Mechanics’ Institute and an admirer of Goldwin Smith, pointed out that men and women were designed to occupy separate spheres and such a change would destroy the sacredness in the homes of the nation. Hunter concluded that “women would necessarily be placed in opposition to men and consequently all the deference and respect paid to them would forever vanish....Enfranchisement of women shouldered them with responsibilities and duties which they were not able to endure.” Hunter won this particular debate with such arguments, but in 1893 an identical debate was decided in favour of allowing women the vote, reflecting the coming changes in Canadian society.²²

Mechanics’ Institutes in the countryside also enforced a strict injunction against sectarianism and party politics, as these subjects could equally create disharmony in a rural setting. In virtually all of the early Mechanics’ Institutes, their bylaws reflected the need to keep partyism and “polemical divinity” from the conversations of Institute members. The Paris Mechanics’ Institute levied a fine of sixpence for introducing political or religious subjects in any discussions occurring in the Institute. If the offending member dared to attempt further discussions of this nature, expulsion was the final punishment affixed.²³ Particularly in the context of small villages where dependence on neighbourly

²² Barrie Literary Society records, Barrie Mechanics’ Institute fonds, SCA, Acc. 981-31, minute book, 1881-89, 26 October 1883, and minute book of the Mechanics’ Institute, 1890-93, 21 February 1893. For further reading on the domestication of politics see Mary Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880*, (Baltimore, 1990); Nancy Isenberg, *Sex and Citizenship in Antebellum America*, (Chapel Hill, 1998) and for its rural perspective see Paula Baker, *The Moral Frameworks of Public Life: Gender, Politics and the State in Rural New York, 1870-1930*, (New York, 1997), especially chapter 3, “Feminine Virtues and the Public Life, 1870-1900,” 56-89.

²³ Paris Mechanics’ Institute papers, AO, MS 359, reel 2, minute book, 1843-62, bylaws pasted on the inside of the book. The following is just a sample of how many Institutes incorporated similar rules; see the *Bylaws of the Owen Sound Mechanics’ Institute*, 14; Mitchell Mechanics’ Institute fonds, Stratford-Perth archives, minute book, 1854-70, 9 January 1854 and the Ennotville Public Library fonds, WCA, MU 106, series 1, subseries 1, file 1, Mechanics’ Institute minute book, 1856-96, 2 November 1859.

benevolence was paramount, disagreements between religionists and political opponents could ruin the progress of an Institute. This lesson was reinforced in the Carleton Place Mechanics' Institute, when President John Gemmill wrote the Governor-General to dismiss an earlier letter inviting him to become patron, as a "society of Scotchmen could exist without patronage." The other executives expelled Gemmill without delay, noting that "by such improper conduct has made himself wholly unworthy of remaining a member of this society constituted for the express purpose of improving the intellectual and moral condition of the community." John Ardagh similarly taught this principle before the Barrie Mechanics' Institute:

Our very constitution prohibits the introduction and discussion of those subjects which most speedily enlist the passions and disturb the harmony of mutual intercourse. To my mind it constitutes no small recommendation that we here possess a neutral ground, on which men of all parties may contend without rancour and bear away palms which do not cost their opponents one embittered or unhallowed feeling. We have common subjects on which all may agree, without being taxed with any interested compromise of opinion, and concerning which they may differ, without alteration in mutual feelings, or diminution of mutual esteem. A bond of fellowship is thus frequently formed between those whom circumstances would otherwise have kept for ever asunder; and if men come at all into collision, they are actuated by feelings of generous rivalry, not so closely interwoven with the absorbing interests of life as to arouse the meaner passions of jealousy.²⁴

It was critical for Mechanics' Institutes in the countryside to guarantee harmony and unity in their associations if they were to become the lifeblood of the community.

²⁴ Ardagh, *An Address Delivered Before the County of Simcoe Mechanics' Institute*, 19-20 and the Carleton Place Mechanics' Institute fonds, NAC, MG 9, D8/4, minute book, 1846-49, 7 May 1849, 32 and 12 May 1849, 33. It seems more than likely that President Gemmill was caught up in the political and religious controversies between the Free Kirk and the Old Kirk; see John S. Moir, *Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada*, (Toronto, 1974), especially chapters 5 and 6. Soon after this sectarian episode, the Carleton Place Institute disbanded.

Managing committees of rural Mechanics' Institutes equally attempted to safeguard the ideas mentioned in lectures, and police the shelves of the library to eradicate partyism and sectarianism. Naturally the executive committee of the Paris Mechanics' Institute went to the extreme of creating a censorship committee for the library, and in 1858 the committee removed two issues of the *Westminster Review* for articles leaning to infidelity. While directors of Mechanics' Institutes worried about freethinkers, the necessity of religion itself was often preached. Even though the Guelph Mechanics' Institute likewise banned religious and political controversies from their meetings, they also ordered members that in "all the instructions delivered, whether by lectures or classes, under its sanction, shall be based on the direct recognition of the authority of Divine Revelation."²⁵ Many Mechanics' Institutes that began as either lyceums or debating clubs often kept these features when they commenced operations. Even though political or religious topics were habitually introduced in such a setting, it was obvious that controversy was not permitted. The Barrie Debating Society established bylaws ordering no improper, obscene or personally offensive remarks during their debates. Often politically charged topics were chosen for discussion, ranging from the merits of capital punishment, universal suffrage, whether or not the 1837 rebellion was justified, the secularization of the clergy reserves and the best means to achieve Canadian independence. Obviously some problems occurred with the debates, as topics guaranteed to divide adherents of political parties like the Rebellion Losses Bill "are in all cases to be avoided as likely to be productive of ill-feelings among members of the club." Perhaps maintaining decorum was too difficult, as a flurry of members resigned seven months after the formation of the Society, with a Mechanics' Institute chartered soon after.²⁶

²⁵ See the *Constitution, Rules and Regulations of the Guelph Farmers' and Mechanics' Institute*, (Guelph, 1855), 4. See the Paris Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MS 359, reel 2, minute book, 1843-62, 15 May 1858 and the Niagara Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MU 2022, MS 566, vol. 1, 18 December 1855.

²⁶ See the Barrie Debating Club and Mechanics' Institute fonds, SCA, B3 R4A S1 Sh5, minute book, 1854-56, bylaws of the debating club, 23 February 1854 and 27 September 1854; on

The desire to establish a strong community ethos became even more intense during the escalation of the rural Mechanics' Institute movement by the late nineteenth century. Not only did Institutes maintain the same standards in outlawing party politics and sectarianism from their institutions, they also attempted to monitor controversies in their reading rooms, debates and even in their amusements. Both the Fergus and the Elora Mechanics' Institutes dealt with disputes over the material in their libraries. The Fergus Institute banned *Creeds of Christendom* on the grounds of it being a pernicious book, while the Elora directors had a running battle with Rev. James Middlemass in the pages of the *Elora Express* over what he considered to be scandalous material in the library of the Institute. Of course the Elora Institute was duty bound to restore honour and place in the community by forcefully contradicting the clergyman's allegations.²⁷ With the establishment of the Barrie Literary Society as an auxiliary to the Mechanics' Institute in 1881, bylaws against political debates were non-existent. However, the Society posted strong injunctions against "theological questions of a sectarian nature" and the avoidance of "personalities and indecorous language." While debates took place on such controversial subjects as Commercial Union, women's rights and even the invention of a mock Parliament, it can be assumed that many of the debates and speeches presented to the Society appeared as a debate on the National Policy, lauded for its "non-political character."²⁸

December 7th 1854 the first meeting of the Barrie Mechanics' Institute occurred. See also the Kincardine Mechanics' Institute records, Kincardine Public Library, minute book, 1866-89, list of debates from 1866-70 and Drummond County *Institut des Artisans* fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 142, vol. 1, minute book, 1856-58, list of meetings and debates held.

²⁷ See the Elora Mechanics' Institute fonds, WCA, MU 60, minute book, 1878-87, 10 February 1883 and the Fergus Public Library fonds, WCA, A993.36, MU 281, series 2, subseries 2, minute book, 1857-96, 31 October 1879. Religious regulation of this sort from both clergy and congregation often took place in rural towns; see Lynne Marks, "Railing, Tattling and General Rumour: Gossip, Gender and Church Regulation in Upper Canada," *Canadian Historical Review*, 81, no. 3, (September, 2000), 380-402.

²⁸ See the records of the Barrie Literary Society, Barrie Mechanics' Institute fonds, SCA, Acc. 981-31, minute book, 1881-89, Constitution of the society; 22 October 1881, 27 April 1883 and list of debates from 1881-89.

However, rural Mechanics' Institute promoters not only desired the abolition of party politics and sectarianism, they also wanted to ensure that all activities in the Institute were open to all members of the community, and free from "rough culture." In accomplishing this, various rural Mechanics' Institute promoters indeed attempted to delineate what was "rough" from what was "respectable." The supervision of amusement rooms and public concerts guaranteed that nothing untoward occurred, to protect the Mechanics' Institute as an open and harmonious institution. In the Ingersoll amusement room, betting, gambling, profanity, smoking, spitting, whistling, boisterous and improper conduct were strictly prohibited. The Elora Mechanics' Institute not only hired the local constable to "keep good order" for its concert, but comically advertised that "it is not seemlie for Big Men or Littell boys to whistle inside a house, nor to make greate noyses like unto ye yells of Wilde Indians, but it does not seem necessary to tell this to ye people of Elora, because thai alwaies behave themselves well in publicke places."²⁹

Despite efforts to limit potential conflicts in rural Mechanics' Institutes, in many ways variance of opinion occurred more frequently in the countryside than in the urban environment, reflecting the diverse nature of the rural social order. The directors of the Fergus and Elora Institute squabbled for months over the payment of the Fergus Concert band during a joint excursion. Some years later the President of the Fergus Institute called a meeting to order when a "long and fiery discussion" took place between members over a proposition to substitute the *Daily Globe* for the evening edition. Not to be outdone, the Ennotville Mechanics' Institute board of management argued amongst themselves in a series of meetings in June whether or not to sanction dancing during the annual picnic.³⁰

²⁹ For an excellent discussion on the regulation of leisure, see Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*. See also the Elora Mechanics' Institute fonds, A993.33, MU 279, Circular of the Old Folks Concert, 13 November 1879 and Ingersoll Mechanics' Institute fonds, RCL, M-581, minute book, 1880-90, annual report of 13 May 1889.

³⁰ Ennotville Public Library fonds, WCA, MU 106, series 1, subseries 1, file 1, minute book, 1859-1896, June of 1892; see also Fergus Public Library fonds, WCA, A993.36, MU 281, series

Nowhere was the conflict over mere personalities more apparent than in the Drayton Farmers' and Mechanics' Institute in the 1890s. The board of the Institute held a meeting for the expressed purpose of moving the Reading Room and the Library to another location. Apparently this motion caused some rancour in the executive, as Secretary Isaac Brown noted that the discussion "degenerated in some instances to mere insolent personalities against the Secretary." When others tried to smooth over the difficulties, Brown smugly wrote in the minutes "some feeble effort was also made to thank the Secretary but as thanks were neither merited or appreciated this was promptly suffocated." One month later the directors objected to these scandalous minutes, claiming that some of the phraseology recorded too much detail. Both Brown and the President of the Institute then tendered their resignations, and the work of the Institute moved forward with scarcely a ripple.³¹ In spite of prohibitions on religious and political controversy in Mechanics' Institutes, neighbourly quarrels could not be outlawed.

The gospel of honest industry was a doctrine advocated in the halls of rural Mechanics' Institutes as vigorously as they had been in the urban Institutes. The value of honest industry was a theme that recurred throughout lectures and debates, and members of Mechanics' Institutes often deliberated principles of political economy amongst themselves. Even though Institutes in the countryside were often a far distance from the hub of manufacturing, there was a fairly strong correlation between industry and the need to boost the economic advantages of the village or town.³² From the outset, the political economy of honest labour was

2, subseries 2, minute book, 1857-96, 3 February 1893, and Elora Mechanics' Institute fonds, MU 60, minute book, 1878-87, 2 October 1878.

³¹ See the Drayton Farmers' and Mechanics' Institute fonds, WCA, A987.36, series 1, subseries 1, minute book, 1884-1905, 9 February 1891, 9 March 1891, 16 March 1891. A similar episode took place in the Orillia Mechanics' Institute; see their records, Wallace family collection, SCA, Acc. 993-13, annual report of the Institute, 1887.

³² Even though the industrial order so prevalent in the urban Mechanics' Institute was not as evident in small town Institutes, the producer ideology still held full sway. See Burley, *A Particular Condition in Life*, particularly chapter five, "The Making of the Self-Made Man," 170-197; Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 3-104 and McCalla, *Planting the Province*, 217-39.

a critical philosophy for rural inhabitants, as many lecturers maintained that self-improvement amongst the citizenry was a dependable method of economic progress. John Lynch, lecturing to the Brampton Mechanics' Institute, claimed that Canada was a nation full of "spirited, industrious and enterprising people." To Lynch, the future prosperity or privation of the colony was dependant solely on how the people utilized the resources "Divine Providence" gave them. In a lecture on labour addressed to the Hemmingford Mechanics' Institute, Francis Fulford counselled the members of the Institute that honest labour occurred through individual effort, adding to the achievements of the community as a whole:

But with regard to labour, what I want to point out to you is, that every man's labour belongs to the community, because as the community is befitted by the general wealth, they have by the same rule an equal interest in that which produces the wealth, viz., labour. So by the same showing society are losers when labour is misapplied....But there is one great fact which should be ever present in our minds, that in whatever way we may apply our labour, unless we are actuated by a strict principle of honour and integrity, we can never hope to see our operation successful. And as with the wealth so with the character of nations, it of necessity takes its tone from individuals.³³

Reliance on this type of resilient work ethic would not only lead to economic opulence, it would also lead to a more moral community dependent upon one another.

Lecturers addressing rural Mechanics' Institutes outlined the importance for the commercial, manufacturing and agricultural sectors to work together in the producer alliance. William Merritt in his lecture to the St. Catherines Mechanics' Institute summarized his vision of interclass collaboration that was crucial to the improvement of industry. Merritt rather bluntly stated that it was the petty

³³ Francis Drummond Fulford, *The Misapplication of Labour*, (Montreal, 1859), 8, 25-26. See also John Lynch, *Canada, Its Progress and Prospects*, (Brampton, 1876), 16, 20-21; A.D. Ferrier, *Reminiscences of Canada, and the Early Days of Fergus*, (Guelph, 1866), 12; Dallas, *Lecture on Aims*, 3-7; Ardagh, *An Address Delivered before the County of Simcoe*, 2-6 and Lewis, *Lecture Delivered before the Brockville Library Association*, 3-5.

jealousies and rivalries existing between Quebec, Montreal and Toronto that ruined trade. To this Reformer, if the competing commercial interests in Canada would unite in one common effort they would surpass the United States in prosperity. This united endeavour would benefit every class in society; the farmer and manufacturer would enjoy cheaper transport rates, and the merchant would be able to seek a larger market for his goods. In spite of the restrictions placed on political discussion in the Institute, clearly such a proponent of free trade as Merritt could not resist stating that protection of industry was not needed, as seasonal work often left manufacturers with a steady supply of willing workers. Reciprocity would soon follow, which would place the industrial sector on the same flourishing condition as their American rivals. Francis Fulford asserted that all classes of society should be focused on the improvement of agriculture as “the interests of the manufacturer and the farmer are not conflicting, but that they are mutually interested in developing their respective trades; for it is only by bringing about a higher state of farming that we can hope to see machinery more generally used in cultivation.” John Lynch stretched the analogy even further, claiming that cooperation between the three sources of wealth in a country – agriculture, commerce and manufactures – was essential for both the prosperity of Brampton and the nation.³⁴

Many of the libraries in rural Institutes by the end of the century had entire sections devoted to political economy on their shelves. Like urban Institutes, most of the literature in rural reading rooms were the standard works of political economy written in the nineteenth century. From the works of John Stuart Mill, Adam Smith and Samuel Smiles, these later Institutes also housed tomes written by more “current” political economists as Henry George, Herbert Spencer, Henry Fawcett and Arnold Toynbee. While scanty records exist in rural Institutes of who

³⁴ For the most part, these lectures took place when lectures were the only entertainment available in Mechanics’ Institutes, when attendance was not as sparse; see Lynch, *Canada, Its Progress*, 11-12; Fulford, *Misapplication of Labour*, iii-iv and also William Merritt, *A Lecture Delivered by the Hon. William Hamilton Merritt before the Mechanics’ Institute of St. Catherines*, (St Catherines, 1857), 11-12, 17-18.

actually read these works, the Peterborough Mechanics' Institute offers a glimpse that such books were fairly popular with the reading public. The Institute created a request book, whereby members could petition the library committee to purchase particular volumes for the library. A large segment of the books requested were indeed fiction, although members solicited a rather eclectic collection of works on political economy from Smiles' *Life and Labour*, Fawcett's *Lessons in Political Economy*, Rogers' *Political Economy*, Charles Paisley's *Chronicles of Political Economy* as well as Ashley's *English Economic History* and Henry George's *Perplexed Philosopher*.³⁵

Debates in Mechanics' Institutes also demonstrated that many rural members appreciated the science of political economy, and the relation of such principles to the community in which they lived. In the Napanee Mechanics' Institute, members debated the question "were Trades Unions injurious to the country and the members themselves," and how "the credit system of doing business adopted by business men generally in this country is advantageous for the larger part of the community." Papers presented to the Napanee Institute likewise contemplated the merits of tariffs, protection and free trade. Parallel debates on the science of political economy were held in the Barrie Literary Society on the virtues of Henry George's single tax, trade unions, reciprocity and the eight-hour day. With an admirer of Goldwin Smith such as James Hunter in the Presidency of the society, debates and papers also appeared on the subjects of capital and labour, annexation, reciprocity and the importance of Commercial Union.³⁶ Even though

³⁵ This reading list suggests that in rural Mechanics' Institutes, the influences of a hegemonic industrial order is fairly limited with works critiquing classical political economy such as those from Henry George and Toynbee. See the Peterborough Mechanics' Institute fonds, PCMA, 59-028/2, request book, 1872-84. See also the *Catalogue of the Elora Mechanics' Institute Library*, (Elora, 1881), Political and Social Science section; *Catalogue of Books and Magazines in the Barrie Mechanics' Institute Library*, (Barrie, 1891), Economics section and the *Catalogue of Books in the Library of the Mechanics' Institute of Orillia*, (Orillia, 1891), Social Science section.

³⁶ See the records of the Barrie Literary Society, Barrie Mechanics' Institute fonds, SCA, Acc. 981-31, minute books, 1881-89 and 1890-93, list of debate topics. See also the Lennox and Addington Historical Society fonds, NAC, MG 9 D8/18, Napanee Mechanics' Institute fonds, M-

rural Institutes were somewhat disconnected with the heart of industrial enterprise in Victorian Canada, a love of political economy and an understanding of the gospel of hard work were no strangers to members of the Mechanics' Institutes in the countryside.

In small villages and towns, the importance of the Mechanics' Institute as a community centre cannot be underestimated. Unlike their urban counterparts, the most profitable and flourishing Institutes by the end of the century were those who did not adhere strictly to the class, library and lecture system of operation. While amusements did not guarantee success for individual Institutes, they did provide unity and identity for a small towns and rural villages through community-building activities.³⁷ Despite limited grants from government funds, mid-century rural Mechanics' Institutes were able to function fairly well with the lecture, class and library configuration. When even these partial grants were revoked by the retrenchment methods of the John A. Macdonald government in 1859, this "mistaken economy" proved to be a great burden for Institutes in the Ontario countryside. Many Institutes were either forced to suspend operations for several years, or operate simply on a shoestring budget. The Paris Mechanics' Institute found itself in such a prosperous condition through the government grant and lecture system that the management erected a Mechanics' Hall in 1858. Less than a year later the government rescinded the grant, and the directors strained to restore the missing income. A series of canvassing drives, a mechanics' festival and concerts soon appeared in the minutes as suggestions to help ease the financial burdens. Unfortunately, due to the "unrivalled depression, effecting equally the mercantile and operative portions of the community" these plans soon

229, minute book, 1877-80, 12 April 1877, 34527; 25 September 1877, 34548-49 and list of debates held, 34557-82.

³⁷ This was all part of the community building process in small towns examined by Hansen, *A Very Social Time*, and in the Canadian context, Nancy Bouchier, "For the Love of the Game and the Honour of the Town: Organized Sport, Local Culture, and Middle Class Hegemony in Two Ontario Towns, 1838-1895," PhD Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1990 and Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*.

went awry and the Hall was sold soon after.³⁸ Both the Niagara and the Mitchell Mechanics' Institutes suffered from the loss of the grant, and struggled to find means to replace their revenues. Initially their efforts were rather meagre attempts to shore up a flagging membership base, with canvassing drives, the harassment of former members and the raising of membership fees. The directors of the Mitchell Institute half-heartedly gave their approval to hold a series of concerts, but these performances reflected the attitude of the directors and were dismally attended by the citizens of Mitchell. The Institute continued its precarious existence, with the directors of the Institute debating almost each year until 1870 whether or not to shut the doors of the reading room.³⁹

By the 1870s, the removal of the government grant enabled rural Mechanics' Institutes to realize the importance of opening the institution to the larger community. In changing their lecture, class and library mindset, the management of Institutes in the countryside began to search for new solutions to an old predicament; how to increase the finances of the community Mechanics' Institute. Despite the difficulties of the previous decade, the Niagara Mechanics' Institute boldly initiated a plan in the 1870s to improve the revenue stream of the Institute. In the 1871 annual report, the directors noted the financial position of the association was stronger than ever, thanks in large part to "keeping its claims constantly before the public by promoting lectures, concerts, excursions and readings."⁴⁰ In 1876, the Kincardine Mechanics' Institute closed its doors after

³⁸ See the Paris Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MS 366, reel 2, minute book, 1841-62, 6 January 1859, 19 March 1859, 13 December 1859, 28 January 1860, 23 January 1861, and 21 March 1861; the Guelph Public Library fonds, GPL, Mechanics' Institute minute book, 1850-72, annual report, 1860.

³⁹ See the Mitchell Mechanics' Institute fonds, Stratford-Perth Archives, minute book, 1854-70, 20 February 1860, 9 October 1865, 15 October 1866, 1 April 1867, 17 May 1867, and 11 October 1869, as well as the Niagara Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MU 2022, MS 566, vol. 1, minute book, 1848-62, 9 November 1858, and 21 April 1859.

⁴⁰ See the Niagara Mechanics' Institute fonds, AO, MU 2022, MS 566, vol. 2, minute book, 1866-95, 14 November 1871 and 5 January 1881. The Barrie Mechanics' Institute initiated "popular entertainments" and incorporated concert, musical, chess and entertainment committees, while the Ennotville Institute instituted a Ball and a Picnic committee. See Barrie Mechanics'

the failure of its free evening classes. Five years later the Institute commenced operations yet again, and the grand reopening consisted of short addresses, readings and recitations along with vocal and instrumental music. The retreat from lectures as the primary source of entertainment was complete by 1884 when the Institute lost twenty dollars in inviting a Rev. Wilds to lecture, claiming that while the weather was indeed poor, there was “a decided lack of interest in lectures of any description.” The directors of the Institute went on to conclude that “lectures as a means of raising funds must be regarded as things of the past” as they believed “concerts and excursions might possibly prove more successful.” Evidently they were, as the entertainment committee of the Institute regularly showed a profit from its amusements. The Windmere Mechanics’ Institute coupled its need for patrons with promoting the tourist possibilities of the Muskoka district. Before the directors even discussed the Mechanics’ Institute itself in its advertising circular, the promotion of the “first rate” fishing, bathing and the surrounding scenery was front and centre. When the discussion turned to the benefits of the Mechanics’ Institute itself, the entertainments listed were dominoes, chess and finally literary recreation. When the library itself came to be mentioned, the directors took great pains in outlining the sportsmen collection. Books “relating to hunting, angling and camping out in Muskoka will be procured for the benefit of those of sporting proclivities, who may visit us in summer,” would cement the relationship between town boosterism, tourism and the village Mechanics’ Institute.⁴¹

With the reorganization of the Ingersoll Mechanics’ Institute in 1880, the committee of management likewise recognized the significance in providing the

Institute fonds, SCA, Acc. 981-31, minute book, 1871-84, 12 November 1873, 14 October 1882, and 5 May 1884; Ennotville Public Library fonds, WCA, MU 106, series 1, subseries 1, file 1, minute book, 1856-1900, 16 October 1882 and 2 May 1889.

⁴¹ See the circular *To the Friends of Literature and Mental Culture and Recreation, who Frequent the Muskoka Lakes in Summer*, (Windmere, 1885) and the Kincardine Mechanics’ Institute fonds, Kincardine Public Library, minute book, 1866-89, 25 February 1881, 6 May 1884 and 20 January 1885.

community with recreation options. During one of the early meetings of the board, a general discussion took place on the best means to “awaken a greater interest, and secure a larger patronage and support of the Institute.” What is significant is that the matter was left in the hands of the Entertainment committee to handle the recruitment drive. This committee planned a Jubilee concert, a Strawberry festival and several musical presentations that proved fairly successful and promoted the image of the town, although it was not reflected through an increase of membership. To further encourage the citizens of the town, the directors fashioned an amusement committee in preparation for the opening of a gymnasium and amusement room with checkers, chess, dominoes, quoits, an air gun and croquet. Unfortunately these campaigns came to naught, as the Ingersoll Public Library became a reality in 1890.⁴² The Peterborough Mechanics’ Institute took an old formula of raising funds – the lecture circuit – and repackaged it for the citizens of the town. The directors fashioned an even more popular entertainment scheme by inviting famous speakers such as Matthew Arnold, Mrs. Charles Watson and Horatio Parker to give readings and recitations rather than lectures. When these proved to be very rewarding to the coffers of the Institute, the directors expanded the range of their entertainments by sponsoring a public museum and allowing billiard tables and a chess room into the Institute. Nonetheless, the Institute soon suffered from the problems of the urban Institutes, when the directors noted that “our fair town is now rapidly approaching the dimensions of a city, and in consequence counter attractions are much more numerous than formerly, the result being that the membership has slightly decreased during the year.” Unlike urban Institutes, the directors merely stepped

⁴² See the Ingersoll Mechanics’ Institute fonds, RCL, M-581, minute book, 1880-90, 5 March 1883, 7 June 1883, 23 May 1884, 26 June 1885, 3 June 1889 and 21 October 1889. Offering “unmanly” entertainments such as Strawberry Festivals and Jubilee Concerts seems to contradict the gender-exclusive ideal of Mechanics’ Institutes as penned by Lynne Marks in *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 125-7.

up their efforts to bring entertainment to the public, rather than agitating for the free library.⁴³

Conversely, the expansion of recreation in Mechanics' Institutes did not guarantee either financial success or effectiveness as a community centre. The Guelph Mechanics' Institute was never well received by the populace in Guelph, and the addition of sundry entertainments likewise did not attract their attention. With the removal of the government grant in 1859, the directors of the Institute understood the importance of utilizing fundraising activities to improve their revenue and correspondingly held Shakespeare festivals, art exhibitions, excursions and musical performances. These did not meet with the pecuniary success expected of them, so the directors attempted to hold a strawberry festival. This was an extremely profitable exercise, and thus the Institute purchased a billiard table as well as creating a smoking and chess room for the advantage of its members. Despite the effectiveness of this one event, the public did not respond to these further entertainment options and the Institute became a Free Public Library in 1883, the same year as many of the urban Institutes.⁴⁴ This was more the exception than the rule, and the failure of Mechanics' Institutes in the rural countryside occurred more often when directors refused to allow entertainments, concentrating solely on the library segment of the Institutes' mandate. Mechanics' Institutes in this circumstance often became free libraries with little fuss, as this was already their primary function for the village or town. A good example of this is the Lakeshore Subscription library, an association that attempted to combine the salient features of the Mechanics' Institute. By concentrating exclusively on the library, meetings were seldom held by the board and entertainments were sparsely attended. Indeed, the vice president of the

⁴³ See the Peterborough Mechanics' Institute fonds, National Library of Canada, MSS 1995-05, series E, folder 13, special events and Peterborough Mechanics' Institute fonds, PCMA, 59-028/1, minute book, 1868-86, 16 May 1881, 290 and 18 May 1885, 363-5.

⁴⁴ Guelph Public Library fonds, GPL, Guelph Mechanics' Institute minute book, 1850-72, 30 April 1864, 25 October 1865 and 3 April 1866; and minute book, 1872-83, 28 March 1878, 22 May 1879, 3 October 1879, 4 December 1879, 9 August 1881 and 16 May 1882.

society noted that he had “entirely forgotten” to attend the meetings, and the Secretary – the lone representative at the meeting – wrote that “it is probable that had there been any thing of consequence to transact, such inattention would not have occurred; however, such carelessness is evidently culpable, since such a course, if persisted in, cannot but ultimately prove injurious to the success of the library.” Even the entertainment provided by the library was ineffectual, “since all proceeds of this kind go for church affairs.” The society managed to survive a few more years, but eventually had to relinquish their books to the Temperance society library.⁴⁵

Perhaps the best example of how the basis of either success or failure of rural Institutes utilizing the community centre formula can be seen in a comparison between the Elora and the Fergus Mechanics’ Institutes. Only scant kilometres away from each other, these Institutes could not be more different in their methods of operation during the nineteenth century. The Elora Institute followed the community centre programme to perfection, allowing the community ethos to thrive in the Halls of the Institute. The success enjoyed by the Institute was considerable, although one historian wrote that this was primarily due to the willingness of the people of Elora to embrace self-improvement, and the leadership of such men as David Boyle.⁴⁶ And yet even the Elora Institute fell on hard times with the elimination of the provincial grant in 1859, and grappled with how to replace the lost funds. The directors of this Institute were more creative than most, organizing a debating society, reunions, a Shakespeare festival and a

⁴⁵ Lakeshore Subscription library fonds, MTL, minute book, 1850-77, 19 March 1850, 25 August 1850, 4 August 1856, 11 January 1859, 8 February 1877. A similar fate occurred in the Caledon and Orangeville Mechanics’ Institutes; see the Caledon Mechanics’ Institute fonds, AO, MU 2018, minute book, 1884-96, 1 May 1888 and 30 April 1891 as well as the Orangeville Mechanics Institute fonds, DCA, minute book, 1888-96, 5 April 1890 and 4 March 1897.

⁴⁶ See Gerald Killian, *David Boyle: From Artisan to Archaeologist*, (Toronto, 1983), especially chapter 3, “Elora’s Intellectual Awakening,” 40-69. This tradition indeed was a strong one, followed by such individuals as Elora’s radical politician Charles Clarke; see Ken Dewar, “Charles Clarke’s *Reformer*: Early Victorian Radicalism in Upper Canada,” in *Ontario History*, 78, no. 3 (September 1986), 233-52 and Alison Prentice and Susan Houston, *Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario*, (Toronto, 1988), 230-35.

conversazione. Even a well-directed Institute such as Elora suffered the indignity of having to close its doors for two years, due to the “consequence of the small support which the public has given to the Institute.”⁴⁷ With the reorganization of the new Elora Mechanics’ Institute, the board of management quickly appreciated the fact that members of the community were drawn to the Institute by entertainment and recreational activities. By 1874, the annual report applauded the board for its efforts, and observed that the Institute was flourishing due in large measure to the entertainments provided for the community. Several arts exhibitions, musical performances, excursions, picnics, tea meetings, and an old folks concert were just some of the presentations offered by the amusement committee during the latter portion of the century. The amusement committee furthermore understood the needs of their own community, and did not hold events during the skating and curling seasons. They were likewise under no illusion as to the purpose of these community events, as witnessed in the annual report of 1885: “The Amusement committee has provided for the public ample means of intellectual and social improvement and has thereby been enabled to assist materially in keeping the Treasury supplied with funds.”⁴⁸

Just down the road in Fergus, the exact opposite approach was taken with very divergent results for the population of that town. As with other rural Institutes, the Fergus Mechanics’ Institute was left scrambling when the government grants were cut in 1859. From the outset the directors of the Institute did not comprehend the necessity of shifting priorities towards community recreation. When the board of directors staged a concert for the Queen’s birthday, a large portion of the community attended. When one member of the executive

⁴⁷ See the Elora Mechanics’ Institute fonds, WCA, MU 60, minute book, 1857-70, 12 February 1858, 21 April 1858, 10 December 1860, 27 March 1867, 19 March 1868, and last meeting 2 April 1869.

⁴⁸ Elora Public Library fonds, WCA, A1984.5, series 1, subseries 1, file 1, minute book, 1871-77, 5 October 1874 and 18 March 1875; Elora Mechanics’ Institute fonds, WCA, MU 60, minute book, 1878-87, 12 May 1879, 32-33; 8 October 1880, 71-72; 9 May 1881, 98; 14 May 1883, 166 and 11 May 1885, 252.

desired to present another concert during the year, the remaining members of the board rather condescendingly stated “the committee think it derogatory to the respectable standing of a Mechanics’ Institute, to aid its funds by a second concert within Twelve months.” Subsequently, the next mention of a soiree to assist the treasury of the Institute did not occur again for four more years, which caused much pecuniary hardship on the executive.⁴⁹ When the grants were restored in the 1870s, the Fergus Institute completely abandoned any thoughts of providing entertainment for the community, and simply focused on petitioning both the provincial and municipal governments for funds. The directors were very proficient in obtaining grants from both levels of government, as witnessed in the annual report of 1887 where the Institute received \$50 from entertainments, \$85 from membership fees, \$300 from the provincial grants and \$100 from the village council. The transition from a Mechanics’ Institute to a free public library was relatively smooth, as the municipality was already one of the strongest supporters of the Institute.⁵⁰

As a result of a very diverse class base, the rural Mechanics’ Institute movement in Victorian Canada was fairly inclusive, reflecting the cultural identity of the social order in the Canadian countryside. During the heyday of the movement at mid-century, Mechanics’ Institutes provided a sense of belonging and a centre for community events for all classes and interest groups. By the end of the century, the Mechanics’ Institute movement took on even more significance after their demise in the cities. As often a centre for community events, the rural

⁴⁹ See the Fergus Mechanics’ Institute fonds, WCA, A993.36, MU 281, series 2, subseries 2, minute book, 1857-96, 3 April 1860, 16 April 1860 and 18 January 1864.

⁵⁰ Fergus Mechanics’ Institute fonds, WCA, A993.36, MU 281, series 2, subseries 2, minute book, 1857-96, 18 November 1881, 26 May 1882, 6 February 1886, and 1887 annual report. Before the passage of the first Free Library Act in 1883, many town governments understood the value of aiding the Institute library with funds, without resorting to establishing a town library. Gifts from town councils ranged from \$25 to \$130, but this was relatively cheap in comparison to maintaining their own civic library. See the Orangeville Mechanics’ Institute fonds, DCA, AR 2096-994, treasurer’s book, 1879-91; the Highland Creek Public library fonds, AO, MU 2121, miscellaneous collection, 1889 #6 and the records of the Caledon Mechanics’ Institute, AO, MU 2018, minute book, 1882-94.

Institutes provided a necessary service for its citizens, to promote the virtues of the town or village not only for outsiders, but also for the inhabitants themselves. And yet Institutes in the countryside reflected a hegemonic rural social order, for despite experiencing difficulties in reaching the operative classes in the function of rural Mechanics' Institutes, they would manage to attract professional men, agriculturalists, commercial men and self-employed businessmen to the cause of self-improvement. In employing the community ethos to the environment of the rural Mechanics' Institute, their promoters would buttress a rural social order that was nevertheless more inclusive than its urban counterpart. In constructing a community centre ideal for an often-isolated town, rural Mechanics' Institutes managed to persist in the efforts of self-improvement and rational recreation until they were legislated completely out of existence by the Free Library Act in 1895.

CHAPTER THREE – Constructing and Contesting an Agricultural Identity: Agrarian Associational Life in Nineteenth-Century Canada

The resulting isolation from establishing a homestead in the countryside often strengthened the resolve of the agricultural community to promote association and create opportunities for social interaction. Farmer's clubs, agricultural societies and the agricultural press not only provided forums for farmers to air their views, but also allowed agriculturalists the means to stimulate their sociability through fairs, exhibitions and public gatherings. Farmers often perceived themselves as a breed apart from the rest of society, as the primacy of agriculture in this period would ensure their survival as a class. This conviction at times produced a rather striking discourse of exclusivity in agricultural associations, with a strong sense of class superiority. And yet their dependence on the land also cultivated an acute awareness in the agricultural population of their interdependence on the rest of society as a whole, producing a counter-discourse of community solidarity. The combination of these various attitudes fostered a rather contested community consciousness in Canadian agriculturalists throughout the nineteenth century. Even when government involvement in agriculture increased from mere financial support for agriculture societies to the actual establishment of associations such as the Farmers' Institutes in Ontario and the *cercles agricoles* in Quebec, conflicting visions of community remained constant well into the twentieth century.

The history of agriculture in the North American triangle is one of changing market conditions from subsistence to commercial farming, and how the subsequent transition affected agriculturalists as a class. The focusing of attention on the conflicts arising from farmers reacting to nascent forms of capitalism and a new industrial order is a hallmark of this historical writing.¹ The rise of the

¹ A great deal of scholarly work on the economics of changing agricultural markets has been done in the United States, as witnessed in Jeremy Atack and Fred Bateman, *To Their Own Soil: Agriculture in the Antebellum North*, (Ames, 1987); Winnifred Rothenberg, "The Emergence of

agricultural society, farmers' clubs, colleges and the agricultural press is therefore the response of leading agriculturalists to the threat of mechanized development and the destruction of a rural way of life. The doctrine preached in these societies became one of agricultural improvement and emulation, as the progressive farmer would utilize new scientific techniques and methods to further the cause of agriculture. Viewed in this light, many historians conclude that such movements were highly elitist, generating clashes between the "landed gentry" and the independent yeomen and tenant farmers. Such disputes would also linger into the later portion of the century, as agriculturalists faced governmental intrusions into what they perceived as their own sphere of influence.² However, the agricultural community also held rather complex pastoral visions of rural culture, from the idyllic and romantic image of the independent yeoman depicted in art and architecture to the stabilizing influence of communal interaction through various social activities and networks.³ These multifaceted impressions of the farming

Farm Labour Markets and the Transformation of the Rural Economy: Massachusetts, 1750-1855," *Journal of Economic History*, 48 (1988), 537-66; Christopher Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860*, (Ithaca and London, 1990); with much of the debate being summarized in Allan Kulikoff, "The Transition to Capitalism in Rural America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 46, no. 1, (January, 1989), 120-44. On the transformation of the countryside due to industrial pressures see Hal Barron, *Those Who Stayed Behind: Rural Society in Nineteenth-Century New England*, (New York, 1984); many of the essays in Jonathan Prude and Steven Hahn, editors, *The Countryside in the Age of Capitalist Transformation: Essays in the Social History of Rural America*, (Chapel Hill, 1985) and David Thelan, *Paths of Resistance: Tradition and Dignity in Industrializing Missouri*, (New York, 1986).

² For the British example, see Kenneth Hudson, *Patriotism with Profit: British Agricultural Societies in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, (London, 1972); Nicholas Goddard, *Harvests of Change: The Royal Agricultural Society of England, 1838-1988*, (London, 1988) and Sarah Wilmot, "The Business of Improvement: Agriculture and Scientific Culture in Britain, 1770-1870," *Historical Geography Research Series*, 24, (November, 1990), 1-81. See also Donald Marti, *To Improve the Soil and Mind: Agricultural Societies, Journals and Schools in the Northeastern States, 1791-1865*, (Ann Arbor, 1979); Tamara Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen: The Meaning of Country Life Among the Boston Elite, 1785-1860*, (New Haven, 1989); Alan Marcus, "The Ivory Silo: Farmer-Agricultural Tensions in the 1870's to 1880's," *Agricultural History*, 60, no. 2, (Spring, 1986), 22-36 and David Danbom, "The Agricultural Experiment Stations and Professionalization: The Scientists' Goals for Agriculture," *Agricultural History*, 60, no. 2, (Spring, 1986), 246-55.

³ For the image of the independent yeoman, see Sarah Burns, *Pastoral Inventions: Rural Life in Nineteenth-Century American Art and Culture*, (Philadelphia, 1989). For the construction of a

population are crucial in understanding the emergence of a contested community ethos as part of rural culture.

The colonial experience with agriculture in Canada has also received significant interest, although the focus of consideration and debate surrounds the economics of farming and the structure of home markets. The pre-eminence of agriculture in the economic development of Upper Canada is unquestioned, although the discussion on how this occurred has ranged from the importance of the wheat staple for export to the formation of strong internal markets. In Quebec, explanations over the apparent lack of agricultural production of the French-Canadian *habitants* varied from the lack of a staple crop, the refusal of the *habitants* to adapt to modern farming methods, the weaknesses of the seigneurial system and a lack of rural capital to improve active internal markets.⁴ More recent historiography tends to mirror themes explored in the United States, visualizing the Canadian countryside as one wrought with tension and conflict over industrialization. And yet in the colonial context the meagre financial resources of the government were desperately needed to improve the condition of

farming community, see Barron, *Those Who Stayed Behind*, 112-31; Alun Howkins, *Reshaping Rural England: A Social History, 1850-1925*, (London, 1991), especially chapter 3, "Sources of Stability and Harmony," 61-92 and Jane Pederson, *Between Memory and Reality: Family and Community in Rural Wisconsin, 1870-1970*, (Madison, 1992), 25-85. Pederson makes an important point, stating that one cannot always equate "rural" with "agriculture." While she does not always make a strong division between the two in her work, the point is well taken. See also Catherine Kelly, "The Consummation of Rural Prosperity and Happiness: New England Agricultural Fairs and the Construction of Class and Gender, 1810-60," *American Quarterly*, 49, no. 3, (September, 1997), 574-602.

⁴ For agriculture in Upper Canada, see John McCallum, *Unequal Beginnings: Agriculture and Economic Development in Quebec and Ontario until 1870*, (Toronto, 1980), chapter 2, "The Rise and Fall of the Ontario Wheat Staple," 9-24; R. M. McInnis, "The Early Ontario Wheat Staple Reconsidered," *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, 8, (Gananoque, 1992), 17-48 and Douglas McCalla, *Planting the Province: The Economic History of Upper Canada, 1784-1870*, (Toronto, 1992). On the "farming crisis" in Quebec, see McCallum, *Unequal Beginnings*, chapter 3, "The Agricultural Crisis in Quebec," 25-44; Fernand Ouellet, *Lower Canada 1791-1840: Social Change and Nationalism*, (Toronto, 1980), 117-57; R.M. McInnis, "A Reconsideration of the State of Agriculture in Lower Canada in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, 3, (Gananoque, 1982), 9-49; Allan Greer, *Peasant, Lord and Merchant: Rural Society in Three Quebec Parishes, 1740-1840*, (Toronto, 1985) and Serge Courville, "Un monde rural en mutation: le Bas-Canada dans la première moitié du xxi^e siècle," *Social History/Histoire Sociale*, 20, no. 40, (November, 1987), 237-58.

agriculture in the Canadas. The perception therefore of associations such as agricultural societies, farmers' clubs, Farmers' Institutes and the exhibitions they sponsored is that of a public/private sphere hybrid, capable of community access but limited in scope as a result of state funding.⁵ The centralization of farmers' organizations ensured that not only would the leadership be the focal point of these societies, but also that ordinary or "practical" farmers would avoid them in droves.

As a result, many historians view supposedly open and inclusive agricultural associations in nineteenth century as an elite group of gentlemen farmers banded together to foster their own interests. The early agricultural societies created by Lord Simcoe in Upper Canada and by Lord Dalhousie in Lower Canada in the 1790s were modeled along those in Britain, gentlemen's clubs organized to solidify a code of gentility and to modify tensions between the agriculturalist and merchant elites. When these private clubs became more public institutions, despite governmental accountability the assurance of their privileged character continued. State formation simply usurped the authoritative role of the pre-rebellion economic elite, sculpting a rudimentary social structure through the medium of government-supported agricultural associations. According to this historiography the effects were largely hegemonic, as a new commercial and politically active class at mid-century conspired to create a commonality of interest based on economic prosperity in agriculture. Given that nearly twenty percent of farmers were active members of agricultural societies by 1871 in Ontario, independent yeomen indeed were the central component in rural middle

⁵ On tensions in the rural countryside, see the collection of essays in Daniel Samson, editor, *Contested Countryside: Rural Workers and Modern Society in Atlantic Canada, 1800-1950*, (Fredericton, 1994) and Terry Crowley, "Rural Labour," in Paul Craven, editor, *Labouring Lives: Work and Workers in Nineteenth Century Ontario*, (Toronto, 1995), 13-104. For governmental intervention in agriculture, see Tom Nesmith, "The Philosophy of Agriculture: The Promise of the Intellect in Ontario Farming," Ph.D. Thesis, Carleton University, 1988; Thomas Irwin, "Government Funding of Agricultural Associations in the Late Nineteenth Century," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1997 and Elsbeth Heaman, *The Inglorious Arts of Peace: Exhibitions in Canadian Society During the Nineteenth Century*, (Toronto, 1999).

class formation.⁶ And yet the community ethos embraced by agriculturalists of all stripes recognized the complexities of a farmers' life, refusing to recognize that the public/private spheres of agriculture were to be compartmentalized at all. This vision, coupled with a resilient ideology of community, dominated the philosophy of nineteenth-century Canadian agriculturalists.

Although the bonds of community were fairly durable among the agricultural population, many farmers did envision themselves as *the* fundamental and productive class in nineteenth-century Canada. The reasoning behind these rather exclusive assertions were multifaceted and intricate, yet farmers' confidence in the art of husbandry framed their belief that agriculture was the cornerstone of prosperity for an emerging nation, an understanding that was not far from the truth. Directors of agricultural societies often promoted this impression in their annual reports, to magnify the significance of their labours. In the reports of the Peterborough agricultural society, the description of agriculture as the earliest, the most interesting and necessary of pursuits highlighted a belief that “a profitable agriculture is considered the basis of national prosperity and as such the success of every organization which in any measure tends to improve the husbandry of a country must be viewed with interest to every true patriot.” Employing parallel language, the management of the Lower Canada Agricultural society maintained that agriculture was the first and principal means of production, setting the whole machinery of national wealth in active and prosperous motion. With the creation

⁶ This is a convincing argument offered by Gordon Darroch, “Scanty Fortunes and Rural Middle Class Formation in Nineteenth-Century Rural Ontario,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 79, no. 4, (December, 1997), 621-59; see also Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 52-60. See also D. Ross Fair, “Gentlemen, Farmers and Gentlemen Half-Farmers: The Development of Agricultural Societies in Upper Canada, 1792-1846,” Ph.D. Thesis, Queen’s University, 1998; Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 3-28; Jeffrey McNair, *The Capacity to Judge: Public Opinion and Deliberative Democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854*, (Toronto, 2000), 92-105 and J. David Wood, *Making Ontario: Agricultural Colonization and Landscape Re-creation Before the Railway*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2000), especially chapter four, “Building a Social Structure,” 50-83. For this example in colonial Australia see Geoff Raby, *Making Rural Australia: An Economic History of Technical and Institutional Creativity, 1788-1860*, (Melbourne, 1996), 114-33. The evidence of the producer alliance among agriculturalists breaking down with the rise of industrialism in the latter half of the century is examined in the following chapter on the Grange and Patrons of Industry.

of the Agricultural and Arts Association in 1869, the presidential address by Edward Mallory likewise advocated the superiority of the agrarian economy, remarking that a pursuit that engaged four-fifths of the population was also one that commerce, manufactures and the arts depended upon for their very existence.⁷ Another crucial consideration in the mentality of agriculturalists was the necessity to unite together for mutual improvement and protection, seemingly rather exclusive practices. The 1858 annual report of the Oro agricultural society stated that they were effectively a “Farmers’ Society,” instituted solely for the encouragement of Agriculture in the region. Similarly, the *Transactions* of the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society proclaimed boldly on its letterhead that the journal was for the sole interest and prosperity of farmers, and the promotion of scientific husbandry among rural inhabitants.⁸

By far the most important voice of rural nineteenth-century Canada is that of the agricultural periodical, as often the farming press solicited advice and contributions from practical farmers as well as offering special rates to agricultural societies and farmers’ clubs. Recent work on the agricultural press concludes that many working farmers subscribed to and read these publications despite some of the rather dubious scientific advice offered in their columns, and the petty bickering that often occurred between publications.⁹ These agricultural

⁷ See the *Transactions of the Agricultural and Arts Association*, vol. 7, (Toronto, 1871), 45 and the *Agricultural Journal and Transactions of the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society*, vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1848), 80; vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1848), 19 and vol. 2, no. 4, (April 1849), 97-8. See also the Peterborough Agricultural Society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-004, minute book, 1855-1866, annual report for 1855, February 9 1856, and Acc. 99-004, minute book 1868-1875, January 30 1869.

⁸ See the *Agricultural Journal and Transactions*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1848), 1 and the Oro Agricultural Society fonds, SCA, Acc. 970-77, minute book 1859-1886, annual report for 1858.

⁹ Both Richard Farrell, “Advice to Farmers: The Context of Agricultural Newspapers, 1860-1910,” *Agricultural History*, 51, no. 1 (January, 1977), 209-17 and Nicholas Goddard, “Development and Influence of Agricultural Periodicals and Newspapers,” *Agricultural History Review*, 31, part 2, (1983), 116-31 conclude that the farming press had a limited audience, while Marti, *To Improve the Soil and Mind*, 124-162 and Sally McMurry, “Who Read the Agricultural Journals? Evidence from Chenango County, New York, 1839-1865,” *Agricultural History*, 63, no. 4, (Fall, 1989), 1-18 state that agricultural journals reached a wider group of practical farmers.

papers were extremely influential, and united in their exalted estimation of the importance of farming. Many of the early periodicals emulated the stand taken by William Evans' paper, the *British American Cultivator*, in proclaiming that the duty of the agricultural press was to "improve the soil and the mind, and to elevate the character and standing of the cultivators of Canadian soil." It was requisite for farmers to comprehend their social standing in the community, as the producers of wealth for the nation. And yet it would be impossible, according to Evans, for the interests of agriculture to be promoted without the development of every individual in the community. According to William Weld, the proprietor of the *Farmer's Advocate*, agriculture was an ancient and honourable occupation, "the back bone and sinew of every country; it has made nations, caused them to become mighty, and when neglected they have collapsed; it must take the lead of all employments; it is the impetus that sets everything in motion."¹⁰ Added to this image of nineteenth-century agriculture is the resulting consequence of the producing class bonding together for their own protection. Whether combining to combat the low rate of remuneration given the farmer for his produce, or to avoid being made "the stalking horse of less important by more active classes," farmers needed to organize into clubs or societies to further the cause of agriculture. As William Weld noted, the class enemies of the agriculturalist managed to isolate the farmers from each other, ensuring that while the farmer had been born a king, he had been made a slave.¹¹

See also Sean Gouglas, "Settlement and Agriculture in Saltfleet Township, 1790-1890," Ph.D. Thesis, McMaster University, 2001, especially chapter six, "Science Without Progress: The Pseudo Science of Agriculture in Ontario to the 1870's," 238-91.

¹⁰ See the *British American Cultivator*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1842), 1; vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1842), 20-2; vol. 1, no. 9, (September, 1842), 129 and the *Farmer's Advocate*, vol. 3, no. 11, (November, 1868), 164 and vol. 5, no. 8, (August, 1870), 116. These arguments are repeated in the *Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1849), 1; vol. 3, no. 1, (January, 1851), 15 and the *Canadian Agricultural Journal*, vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1844), 17; vol. 2, no. 4, (April, 1845), 50 and vol. 3, no. 4, (April, 1856), 52-6.

¹¹ See the *Farmer's Advocate*, vol. 23, no. 265, (January, 1888), 6-7; vol. 8, no. 7, (July, 1873), 112-14 and vol. 9, no. 4, (April, 1874), 49-52. See also the *Canadian Agricultural Journal*, vol. 1, no. 5, (May, 1844), 72 and vol. 1, no. 6, (June, 1844), 81-2 and see also the *Agriculturalist*

These views became institutionalized in the Farmer's Institutes, as farmers began to realize the potential of combining together for mutual improvement and protection. As part of the Liberal government of Oliver Mowat's overtures to Ontario farmers in the late nineteenth century, the Institutes were centralized in 1887 and became even more overtly concerned with the rights of agriculturalists. The first objects of the Central Institute were to further the material interests of farmers, by encouraging their education and affording protection from encroachments coming from other interests in the commonwealth. The Central Board also claimed that they would conserve and secure farmers' rights in relation to "legislators, corporations and individual industries." It is no surprise that unlike the membership of agricultural societies at the same period in time, farmers comprised well over ninety-eight percent of the total executive of Farmers' Institutes in Ontario.¹² Successive presidents of the Central Institute took pains to illustrate to late nineteenth-century agriculturalists that it was their skill and industry that made Ontario prosperous. In 1889 the motto of the Central Institute became "justice to the farmer," claiming that the interests of agriculture were the most neglected in the community, whereas in reality their welfare was critical to that of society at large.¹³ Increased government involvement in the lives of Ontario farmers, it seems, created even more exclusivity than the limited grant system of the early years.

and Canadian Journal, vol. 1, no. 4, (1 March, 1848), 39-40 and vol. 1, no. 5, (15 March, 1848), 50.

¹² In 1886, farmers comprised 98.75% of the executive, and in 1887 98% of the executive listed their occupation as agriculturalists. See the Farmers' Institute records, AO, RG 16-85, container 1, files 1 to 4 and the *Annual Report of the Central Farmers' Institute*, (Hamilton, 1888), 5-6. Thomas Irwin, in "Government Funding of Agricultural Associations," 47-70, rightly concludes that the leaders did the bulk of the Institutes' work, as practical farmers often just rode the coattails of Institute directors.

¹³ See the *Annual Report of the Central Farmers' Institute*, (Hamilton, 1888), 7-8 and *Annual Report of the Central Farmers' Institute*, (Grimsby, 1889), 5-7. For Oliver Mowat's "politics of husbandry," see S.J. R. Noel, *Patrons, Clients, Brokers: Ontario Society and Politics, 1791-1896*, (Toronto, 1990), 232-48.

Agriculturalists offered a powerful caveat to their convictions regarding the primacy of farming in Canada, consistent with their acceptance of the harmonious relations between the classes necessary for the expansion of the community ethos. Members of the agricultural community did consider themselves to be a vital component of the social order, yet implicit in this vision was an understanding that society could not function without other producers labouring together in a co-operative fashion. This would be the mantra of agricultural society promoters, that to be successful as an association required the participation of all. Submitting its bylaws to the Canadian community of all classes, the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society proclaimed itself to be a “Society of the People,” open to all rural inhabitants. Even though the Oro Agricultural Society noted that they were a Farmers’ society interested in the encouragement of agriculture, they “would rejoice to see the whole community co-operate heartily in the work, then we might see greater results.” Similarly, when the directors of the Peterborough agricultural society noted that only 67 members were on the rolls in 1863, it suggested the necessity of doing something to awaken the interest of the farmer, mechanic and the community in general in the society.¹⁴ In the course of agricultural society reports, executives of these societies would herald the advent of a prosperous crop, as well as disparaging the arrival of pests, drought or economic depression. Whatever the condition, agriculturalists were convinced that every downturn in farming or general trade affected all of society, not only themselves. Poor wheat crop yields in Wellington County at mid-century caused the Guelph agricultural society to lament that not only the farmer, but also “every class in the community” experienced the effects. A comparable depression in agriculture appeared in Peterborough around the same time, and society directors concluded that such economic upheavals facilitated an awareness of

¹⁴ Peterborough Agricultural Society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-004, minute book, 1855-66, annual report of 1863, 23 January 1864. See also the *Bylaws of the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society*, (Montreal, 1847), 8-9 and the *Agricultural Journal and Transactions of the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society*, vol. 2, no. 4, (April, 1849), 112-14. See also the Oro Agricultural fonds, SCA, Acc. 970-77, minute book, 1859-86, annual report for 1858.

interdependence between the farming class and other members of the community. The farmer tilling the soil therefore should “particularly see that his prosperity depends in a great measure upon that of the rest of the community...if one member suffers, all suffer.”¹⁵

The importance of supporting class inclusiveness in agricultural societies became even more crucial by the late nineteenth-century, as rural villages began to expand and embrace some of the new industrializing classes. In 1870, large towns such as Peterborough appreciated the need for a comprehensive agricultural association and opened the society to anyone, “no matter how humble his circumstances,” adding that such an individual would have a full voice in the management of the society. The Elora Agricultural Society likewise sponsored an essay contest on the benefits to be derived by the community from agricultural society exhibitions. The membership base of agricultural societies in the later half of the century reflected these changes, with many subscription lists reproducing the results of the Missisquoi Agricultural society. Society directors recorded that between twenty-nine and forty-eight percent of the paying members of the society during the years 1884 and 1896 were not agriculturalists (see Table 3.1.)¹⁶ Even a specialized agricultural association like the Guelph Fat Stock Club recognized the importance of remaining accessible to the entire community. With the city of Guelph’s ability to provide financial support, the rural hinterland was well provided for as the President of the Club noted, “the country had the hearty co-operation of the city in any undertaking. Their interests were pretty much

¹⁵ See the Peterborough Agricultural Society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-004, minute book, 1855-66, 6 February 1858, and the Guelph Agricultural Society fonds, WCA, A1969.10.2, MU 3, ms 14, minute book, 1857-71, 8 January 1859.

¹⁶ The Missisquoi society in fact categorized other occupations with the appellation “non-farmers,” as they noted 39% of members were non-farmers in 1884, 29% in 1886, 31 % in 1893, 48% in 1894, 32% in 1895 and 29% in 1896, for an average of 35% over these years. See the Missisquoi Agricultural society fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 227, M-3791, Document 6, minute book, 1883-89, 282 and M-3792, Document 16, subscription book, 1893-96. See also the Elora Agricultural Society fonds, WCA, A1982.70, series 9, subseries 1, file 1, minute book 1896-1907, 22 January 1898 and Peterborough Agricultural Society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 99-004, minute book, 1868-75, annual report for 1870.

identical and they should work together for mutual benefit.” In 1893, the Middlesex agricultural society decried an executive election which saw “boys, hotel keepers and a mixed crowd” voting for the board, instead of respectable farmers. The dichotomy of providing inclusive agricultural services with an exclusive vision of the farming community proved to be a difficult one for some agriculturalists, as this illustrates that not every agricultural society was pleased with the merger of agriculture and urban interests.¹⁷

The amalgamation of agricultural societies with other class interests in the latter half of the century seems to contradict the rather exclusive nature of the Farmers’ Institute in the same time period. While the executive of the Institutes themselves were by and large taken from the agricultural portion of the community, often meetings were advertised like those of the Wellington Institute. Circulars were distributed to each blacksmith, postmaster, schoolmaster and miller to invite one and all to the evening’s festivities. The directors of the Oshawa Institute publicized their debate on Commercial Union as “fair and open,” inviting members of the entire community to participate. A few over-exuberant farmers tested this resolve when a Mr. Larke, a regional manufacturer, attempted to defend the National Policy. One farmer proclaimed that Larke was not a farmer, and had no interest in farming, and protested his right to speak to the assembly. However, the Chairman of the Institute insisted that he “had a great respect for Mr. Larke and was glad to have him address the meeting. He hoped he would be given a hearing, especially as he was a member of the Institute.”¹⁸ Despite an overwhelming majority of agriculturalists at Institute meetings, it was necessary to include the whole community in its affairs and deliberations.

¹⁷ See the Middlesex Agricultural society fonds, RCL, box 5289-1, minute book, 1873-1893, annual report for 1892 and also the Guelph Fat Stock Club fonds, WCA, A1969.10.1, MU 3, minute book, 1881-1900, 13 October 1888, 155 and 3 March 1895, 245.

¹⁸ Farmers’ Institute records, AO, RG 16-85, container 1, file 2, report of the Oshawa Institute and Centre Wellington Farmers’ Institute fonds, WCA, A1981.47, MU 43, minute book, 1896-1905, 20 January 1896, 4. To see how the executive was dominated by agriculturalists, see note 13, above.

Agricultural exhibitions in the rural hinterland during the early portion of the nineteenth century were not only crucial to local commerce, they also provided sporadic opportunities for social interaction. As one of the few marketplaces in early rural Canada, many agricultural societies welcomed interclass participation so that the increasing interest of the farmer, mechanic and the whole community in the exhibitions would prove to be financially prosperous. Likewise, in advertising the sociability of fairs to the municipality, associations such as the Guelph Agricultural society often noted the significance of attending patrons who were not agriculturalists.¹⁹ With the agricultural fairs becoming more of a community attraction in the later half of the century, and as increasing urbanization placed the farmers more in contact with the industrializing classes than before, co-operation between the various groups was mandatory to the success of the exhibition. The directors of the Middlesex Agricultural society assured the municipality that the Western Fair would display a public spirit, and include both the agricultural and business elements of the region. The exhibition would therefore showcase the “ingenuity of our inventors, the skill of our manufactures and the results of the patience and experiments of our leading agriculturalists...thrown into our common fund for the benefit of all.” The South Wellington Agricultural society thanked the unselfish efforts of merchants, manufacturers and others for their share in contributing to the success of its fair in 1893. A year later, the executive of the society saluted the citizens of Guelph for their generous support, “the public in their coming in such large numbers as visitors,” the railway companies for their special transportation rates and all the exhibitors for their co-operation.²⁰ Even as the exhibition moved away from

¹⁹ See the Guelph Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1969.10.2, MU 3, ms 14, minute book, 1857-1871, 8 January 1859, 12 January 1861 and 10 January 1863; Peterborough Agricultural society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-004, minute book, 1855-66, 19 January 1861, annual report for 1860. The importance of fairs as early markets and later in the century as a community event is argued by Brian Osborne, “Trading on a Frontier: The Function of Peddlers, Markets and Fairs in Nineteenth-Century Ontario,” *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, 2, (Gananoque, 1980), 59-82.

being the central marketplace of rural areas, interclass co-operation was essential for the continued success of the agricultural fair.

The agricultural press strongly articulated the obligation of farmers to construct and adhere to the ethos of community in the pages of their various periodicals. Of course this began with the understanding that while agriculture was key to the prosperity of the nation, the united and harmonious co-operation of all classes ensured the continuation of civilized society. The co-dependency of one class upon another was essential to the prosperity of the community, as well as the necessity of all classes labouring for the common good of all. Many agricultural papers joined with the *British American Cultivator* in saluting the producer alliance of agriculture, commerce and manufacturing. As the *Canadian Agriculturalist* noted, the tendency of one class to exaggerate its importance over the others was inappropriate, for “in this respect, all the great pursuits of life in a civilized community may be deemed of equal importance, because they have each and all for their object to supply some one of the great wants of our nature; because each is necessary, to some extent at least, to the prosperity of every other; and because they are all brought by the natural sympathies of our being into a harmonious system, and form that noble and beautiful whole which we call civilized society.”²¹ The promotion of agriculture was indeed a function of agricultural newspapers, yet they also assured their audience that this would not occur at the expense of other members of the community. William Evans claimed that not only would agriculture through his paper be advanced without “injustice” to any other class, the agricultural population would in fact rejoice to see the other

²⁰ See the South Wellington Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123, series 2, subseries 1, MU 101, minute book, 1878-97, 17 January 1894, 328 and 16 January 1895, 366. See also the Middlesex Agricultural society fonds, RCL, box 5289-1, minute book, 1873-92, annual report of 1872, 1877 and 1883.

²¹ See the *Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 10, no. 1, (January, 1858), 5-6 and vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1849), 9. See also the *British American Cultivator*, new series, vol. 2, no. 11, (November, 1846), 328 and new series, vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1845) 78-9; *Canadian Agricultural Journal*, vol. 2, no. 1, (January, 1845), 1 and vol. 2, no. 4, (April 1845), 49-50. See the *Ontario Farmer*, vol. 1, no. 10, (October 1869), 294-5.

classes in a prosperous condition, provided that “their own interests were protected and put on an equal footing with that of other classes.” Interdependence and harmonious relations among the classes would become a theme prevalent in the work of William Weld, the editor of the *Farmers’ Advocate*. Demanding “fair play and fair treatment” for the agriculturalist in relations with other classes, Weld also acknowledged that there should be no clashing of interests between farmers and manufacturers. Stating that it was not judicious policy to array class against class, Weld noted that in the pages of his paper “we, at all times, uphold the rights and just claims of farmers, we do not wage war upon others.”²²

In the rural hinterland, it would prove even more crucial to include women in any discussion of community values or beliefs. The paradox between observing the cult of domesticity and allowing women to participate in the rural public sphere become even more pronounced in Victorian Canada. The intricacy of ensuring that gender boundaries remained intact, while recognizing women’s economic contributions and interdependence in agriculture by permitting them access to masculine-dominated agricultural associations became an elaborate balancing act for agricultural society promoters. Gender negotiation in both the household and in the community at large was therefore a crucial aspect of nineteenth-century rural life.²³ Unlike other voluntary associations, the participation of the female gender in agricultural societies did not immediately

²² See the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 10, no. 1, (January, 1875), 35; vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1867), 9-10; vol. 6, no. 7, (July, 1871), 103 and vol. 7, no. 2, (February, 1872), 21. See also the *British American Cultivator*, vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1842), 20; vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1842), 41; vol. 1, no. 10, (October, 1842), 160 and the *Canadian Agricultural Journal*, vol. 3, no. 4, (April, 1846), 49-55.

²³ This is especially true in the United States, as witnessed in the work of Nancy Osterud, *Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth Century New York*, (Ithaca and London, 1991); Pederson, *Between Memory and Reality*, 140-60; Kelly, “The Consummation of Rural Prosperity” and Sally McMurry, *Transforming Rural Life: Dairying Families and Agricultural Change*, (Baltimore and London, 1995). For the Canadian context, see Marjorie Griffin Cohen, *Women’s Work, Markets, and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century Ontario*, (Toronto, 1988) and Terry Crowley, “Experience and Representation: Southern Ontario Farm Women and Agricultural Change, 1870-1914,” *Agricultural History*, 73, no. 2, (Spring, 1999), 238-51.

translate into significant statistics of membership. In reality women did not even appear on most membership lists of agricultural societies until the 1870s, and even then such statistics did not indicate the strength of agricultural women in the community. Most societies reflected the fluctuating presence of women as did the Guelph Agricultural society, recording membership percentages as low as three percent in 1873 to a high of 27% in 1896.²⁴ These statistics are to some extent rather misleading, as they cannot accurately gauge women's participation in agricultural associations.

Agricultural exhibitions became a focal point for the gendered participation of women in agricultural societies by mid-century in Canada. The gradual acceptance of women's labour both inside and outside the domestic sphere permitted even greater involvement for women at these events, while at the same time reinforcing the domestic ideology so prevalent in the nineteenth century. By the end of the century, female participation in agricultural exhibitions imbued women with greater assertiveness in making greater claims for representation in other public spheres.²⁵ Early exhibitions in Canada invited the contributions of women by establishing Ladies' Departments of artwork, domestic manufactures and dairying, with many societies offering to waive the usual entrance fee to encourage female entrants. The inclusion of women in the community exhibition was entirely deliberate, although many societies mirrored the Oro Agricultural

²⁴ In the Guelph society, 3% of the members were women in 1873, 5% in 1881, 15% in 1883, 9% in 1894, 27% in 1896 and 13% in 1899, indeed illustrating a rather fluctuating female membership. See the Guelph Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123, series 1, subseries 1, MU 101, minute book, 1873-1905, membership lists from 1873-1905. The Elora Agricultural society had only 3% of female members in 1899; see the Elora Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1982.70, series 9, subseries 1, file 1, minute book, 1896-1907, January 1899. The Metcalfe society recorded 3 women out of a membership of 57 in 1893; see the Township of Metcalfe fonds, NAC, MG 9 D8/52, minute book, 1889-97, membership list posted on the back of the minute book.

²⁵ See Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Exposition Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939*, (Manchester, 1988), 174-97; E.A. Heaman, "Taking the World by Show: Canadian Women as Exhibitioners to 1900," *Canadian Historical Review*, 78, no. 4, (December, 1997), 599-631 and Keith Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto: The Industrial Exhibition and the Shaping of a Late Victorian Culture*, (Toronto, 1997), 167-89.

society's vision of women's work as simple utility, as "very dry would be our bread, though made with the finest of wheat, without the good wife's butter; and cold would be our hands and feet, at this inclement season of the year without our daughters' mitts and socks." Other agricultural societies valued female entries in the category of fine and fancy artwork, noting that such work demonstrated great taste and skill, comparing them favourably to the fine arts in more urban exhibitions. Such displays illustrated to the community that women's talents were not restricted to the "wash-tub and the spinning wheel."²⁶

Female participation in agricultural exhibitions rose to even more prominence when the society directors realized that to "properly classify" the articles in ladies' departments required the enticement of female judges. Not only were they requested to be the judges for the ladies' department work and domestic manufactures, but also well into the latter decades of the century women were still the judges for the dairying category. The judging done by women in agricultural exhibitions ranged from the wives of agricultural society directors to the appointment of female superintendents in charge of ladies' departments. Even though females were not permitted to judge the more "manly" exhibits of stockbreeding, coarse grains and agricultural implements, women could and did have entries in the stock and grains categories, and on occasion even won.²⁷ Women were also placed on the same footing as other members of the community in regards to protests in agricultural exhibitions. Many of the protests were from

²⁶ See the Donald Kennedy scrapbook, NAC, MG 24 I 90, annual report of the Carleton Agricultural society for 1865 and the Oro Agricultural society fonds, SCA, Acc. 970-77, A S3 Sh5, minute book, 1859-86, annual report for 1858. See also the Peterborough Agricultural society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-004, minute book, 1855-66, 7 February 1857 and 12 March 1859; Addington County Agricultural society fonds, AO, MU 2086, minute book, 1853-67, 26 April 1862 and Darlington Agricultural society fonds, AO, MU 2092 #24, minute book, 1858-62, 15 January 1858 and 9 March 1860.

²⁷ See Heaman, "Taking the World by Show," 607-8. For evidence of female judges, see the Peterborough Agricultural society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-004, minute book, 1855-66, 18 September 1857; Darlington Agricultural society fonds, AO, MU 2092 #24, minute book, 1858-62, 9 March 1860; Glengarry Agricultural society fonds, NAC, MG 24 I 3, vol. 20, minute book, 1866-85, 9 June 1880 and South Wellington Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123, series 2, subseries 1, MU 101, minute book, 1878-97, 31 March 1887, 163.

women entrants who observed irregularities from other female exhibitors, and each case was decided on the merits of the protest. In many protests the agricultural society attempted to redress the grievance quietly, such as the donation of one dollar to two ladies who had their cheese stolen at the Cardwell exhibition, or ignoring a protest against a prominent teacher who was uninformed regarding the rules of competition in the Erin agricultural fair. Negligence on the part of male agricultural society directors to deal with protests also caused female exhibitors to flex their representative muscles. The executive of the South Wellington agricultural society received letters from two incensed women, one suing for damages to her taxidermy specimen and another going to an extraordinary length of hiring a lawyer to collect her eighteen dollar prize.²⁸

The paradigm of female domesticity and their participation in the public sphere became even more apparent in the editorials of the agricultural press. Even though agricultural periodicals in many ways initiated “feminist” forums in the pages of their domestic departments, they also reinforced gender stereotypes and divisions of labour.²⁹ Many of the early agricultural papers such as the *Canada Farmer*, *British American Cultivator* and the *Canadian Agriculturalist* had domestic and ladies’ departments, and offered women a public forum through soliciting articles from farmers’ wives and daughters regarding their views of agriculture. Many of the articles contained in these ladies’ departments indeed highlighted the domestic sphere as the place where women could wield the majority of their influence as mothers and homemakers. Many mid-century

²⁸ South Wellington Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123 series 2, subseries, 1, MU 101, minute book, 1878-98, 12 December 1878, 13 and 22 April 1879, 23. See also Erin Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1989.97, reel 1, minute book 1862-82, 30 October 1879 and minute book 1882-98, 30 October 1885; Cardwell Agricultural society fonds, SCA, Acc. 988-3, minute book, 1868-1902, 8 October 1869 and Bolton Agricultural society fonds, Peel Region Archives, Acc. 85.0160, minute book, 1858-85, 27 November 1875.

²⁹ See Frances Kaye, “The Ladies Department of the Ohio Cultivator, 1845-55: A Feminist Forum,” *Agricultural History*, 50, no. 2, (April, 1976), 414-23; McMurry, “Who Read the Agricultural Journals,” 5-13 and Martine Tremblay, “La division sexuelle du travail et la modernization de l’agriculture à travers la presse agricole, 1840-1900,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française*, 42, (1993), 221-42.

journals mirrored the sentiments expressed by the *Lower Canadian Agriculturalist*, when the editors stated that “the highest, noblest lot of woman is her home mission, and the most superior place for the exercise of her power is the quiet home in the country.” Similar views were expressed by the foremost agricultural periodical of the latter half of the century, the *Farmers’ Advocate*. The measure of a woman’s effectiveness in the home, according to “Minnie May’s” advice column came in the cultivation of the finer art of sociability, economy and fashion in dress, keeping the family home neat and attractive, and ensuring that love and order prevailed.³⁰

And yet the editors of agricultural periodicals also acknowledged both the economic and social contributions that agricultural women made both on the individual farm and in the community. Often articles depicted women’s *equal* involvement with agricultural chores on the farm, describing such activities as being the farmer’s helpmeet in encouragement and co-operation. The requirement of agriculturalist wives to be “well-posted” upon the business and conditions of the farms and farming operations also extended to assisting with agricultural labour. While the agricultural press did consider women as practical farmers in noting that “plowing, dragging, sowing, rolling, planting, hoeing and harvesting will become the pleasant, healthful and remunerative occupation of women as well as men,” a balance needed to be struck between female participation in the agricultural sphere and requiring too much labour of the gentler sex. As the *Farmers’ Advocate* suggested, outdoor work for the female gender needed to be as light as possible, for “weak is the pulse of a nation where they are regarded as slaves, instead of companions.”³¹

³⁰ See the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 12, no. 3, (March, 1877), 39-40; vol. 12, no. 11, (November, 1877), 67-8; vol. 18, no. 2, (February, 1883), 59-60; vol. 19, no. 3, (March, 1884), 82 and vol. 19, no. 11, (November, 1884), 332-3. See also the *British American Cultivator*, vol. 2, no. 12, (December, 1843), 186-7 and new series, vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1846), 63-4; *Lower Canadian Agriculturalist*, (October, 1862), 15-16 and (November, 1862), 44.

³¹ See the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 21, no. 247, (July, 1886), 205-6; vol. 3, no. 7, (July, 1868), 106-7; vol. 3, no. 2, (February, 1868), 19-20 and vol. 19, no. 9, (September, 1884), 260.

The inclusion of women into the Farmers' Institute movement in the late nineteenth century followed the identical pattern as other examples of governmental involvement in agriculture, as the community ethos received a rather lukewarm response from Institute directors. On the surface, Farmers' Institutes actively attempted to incorporate women through entertainment and lectures on domestic subjects. Many Institutes called on local women to provide recitations, singing and other instrumental music for revenue-raising concerts. Institutes also provided lectures on gender-friendly topics such as domestic economy, fruit growing in the garden, happy homes and domestic requirements. Institute work among women really took off in the latter half of the 1890s, when concerted efforts were made to secure special ladies' meetings with female lecturers.³² One of the major complications in expanding female participation in Farmers' Institutes was the absence of women in the executive of individual Institutes, and the limited numbers of female members. This situation would lead Adelaide Hoodless in 1897 to explore the possibility of creating a separate Institute experience for women. The Women's Institutes of Ontario would meet the needs of rural women by providing education, social inclusiveness in an affordable manner, while at the same time allowing agricultural women the opportunity to construct their own identity and run their own programs.³³

See also *British American Cultivator*, new series, vol. 10, no. 10, (October, 1847), 302-3; *Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 14, no. 23, (December 1, 1862), 731-2; *Lower Canadian Agriculturalist*, (August, 1862), 278-9 and *Miller's Canadian Farmers' Almanac*, (1883), 35-6. Appreciation for women working on the farm would lead to increased calls for female participation in other trades to secure independence; see the *Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 13, no. 14, (July 16, 1861), 443-4 and *Farmers' Advocate*, vol. 26, no. 307, (July, 1891), 265-6; vol. 28, no. 330, (March 15, 1893), 113-4.

³² See Farmers' Institute Records, AO, RG 16-85, container 3, Letterbook, letter of 1 March 1894, Superintendent Hodson to the *Farmers' Advocate*; container 1, file 1886, report of South Huron Institute and file 1888, report of the North Lanark Institute. See also Centre Wellington Farmers' Institute fonds, WCA, A1981.47, MU 43, minute book, 1896-1903, annual meeting, 1898; and also the lecture list of 25 January 1896, 10 January 1898 and 29 January 1903.

³³ This would be the explanation behind the popularity of the Women's Institutes, and the parallel growth of "maternal feminism" during this period. See Linda Ambrose, "What are the Good of these Meetings Anyways? Early Popularity of the Ontario Women's Institutes," *Ontario*

According to many farmers, the great divide in society was the sectarian and political turmoil that faced the united Canadas in the aftermath of the failed Rebellions. Directors of agricultural societies and farmers' clubs in nineteenth-century Canada therefore required its members to lay aside all distinctions of "party, sect and country." United for the general advancement of agriculture and the nation in general, agricultural society assemblies constituted "a time when men of every religious denomination, of every nationality and colour, can meet together upon one common ground, freed from every political or religious bias and opinion, for mutual benefit, for exchanging views and comparing opinions upon the leading and important interests whereby we are mutually improved."³⁴ Debates in farmers' clubs were similarly guarded against indecorous discussion, such as those encountered in the Colchester Agricultural Club where members were encouraged to confine their remarks to purely agricultural topics, and to not stray from the subject under consideration. The Puslinch Farmers' Club expanded this vision in the 1870s, stating that any question bearing directly on the agricultural interests of the whole community was a discussion permissible for exploration. Clearly this did not extend to the sectarian or political sphere, as these topics were simply outlawed by the directors.³⁵ Unfortunately for many agricultural society directors, rhetoric could not mask the reality of simmering political discord that was rippling just beneath the surface in many agricultural associations.

History, 87, (March, 1995), 1-20 and Linda Ambrose and Margaret Kechnie, "Social Control or Social Feminism? Two Views of the Ontario Women's Institutes," *Agricultural History*, 73, no. 2, (Spring, 1999), 222-32.

³⁴ See the *Transactions of the Board of Agriculture and of the Agricultural Association of Upper Canada*, vol. 6, (Toronto, 1868), 138-9 and vol. 3, (Toronto, 1859), 84 and 163. For the attempt and failure of early agricultural societies to end this kind of turmoil in Upper Canada, see McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge*, 92-100 and Fair, "Gentleman, Farmers and Gentlemen Half-Farmers," 169-96.

³⁵ Puslinch Farmers' Club fonds, AO, MU 2086 #6, minute book, 1874-96, 16 May 1874, 2-5 and Colchester Agricultural Club fonds, Hiram Walker Collection, AO, 20-51, microfiche F387, secretary book, 1844-60, 9 May 1844, 6-7.

The elimination of political and religious discord appeared to be a constant source of frustration for those labouring in agricultural societies in Quebec, although on the surface political harmony appeared to be a *fait accompli*. At the executive level, the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society was very successful in excluding political discussions and all debates that were “not of a useful character,” especially eradicating those questions pending in the Provincial legislature. One of the key political questions regarding agriculture at mid-century was the abolition of seigneurial tenure, and the board of directors of the Lower Canadian society was remarkably in concord with supporting its removal. Given the domination of the executive by Reform politicians Thomas Aylwin, Thomas Boutiller, and P.J.O. Chauveau, along with members of the Anti-Seigneurial Tenure League such as Jacob De Witt, A.N. Morin, and L.H. Lafontaine, uniformity on the issue was to be expected. Even with the four seigneurs on the board, two favoured the abolition of seigneurial tenure and one, Pierre de Boucherville, managed to get arrested during the Rebellions and charged with sedition. Once agricultural meetings on the subject reached the level of the ordinary membership, it was then that the executive called on members of the agricultural community to “extend their views beyond their own direct and personal interest, and the interest of parties with whom they may be connected” and stay focused on topics of general interest to the human family. One can conclude from this episode that not all the ordinary members of the agricultural society were in complete harmony with advocating the removal of seigneurial tenure.³⁶ This would prove to be only one of many failures experienced by Quebec agricultural societies in the nineteenth century.

³⁶ See the *Agricultural Journal and Transactions of the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society*, vol. 2, no. 12, (December, 1849), 369-70 and vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1848), 1-2, and also *Bylaws of the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society*, 7. The seigneurs Robert Harwood and Lewis Thomas Drummond wanted an end to seigneurial tenure; see their entries in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, (Toronto, 1976), 373-4 and vol. 11, (Toronto, 1982), 282-3 as well as Allan Greer, *The Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada*, (Toronto, 1993), 292-3 and Jean-Pierre Wallot, “Le regime seigneurial et son abolition au

Agricultural associations did experience success with the struggle against sectarianism, as they were very conscious of the need – particularly in Quebec – to avoid interfering with religious opinions. While religious turmoil was severely castigated, Lower Canadian Agricultural society directors welcomed the assistance of the Roman Catholic clergy in promoting the improvement and prosperity of Canadian agriculture. Far from retreating from their sponsorship and patronage, the executive lauded the fact that the Catholic clergy were more supportive of the society “than any class in the community,” encouraging priests from other denominations to emulate their example.³⁷ A comparable appreciation for religion and Christianity appeared in Ontario agricultural societies, as witnessed in a lecture by the Rev. Cooper to the Toronto District Agricultural Society. While concurring that agricultural societies were laudable and worthy of support, Cooper also lectured his audience on the magnitude of God’s contribution to the cause of agriculture. The farmers’ dependence on divine Providence was not something to take lightly if prosperity were to continue. And yet when the Oro Agricultural society debated the merits of selling land for a Presbyterian church, they withdrew their offer in order not to offend any other denomination.³⁸ There was a fine balancing act between the eradication of sectarian conflicts and the preservation of Christian ethics in agricultural associations.

Canada,” in his *Un Québec qui bougait: trame socio-politique au tournant du XIXe siècle*, (Montreal, 1973), 225-51.

³⁷ See the *Agricultural Journal and Transactions of the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society*, vol. 1, no. 7, (July, 1848), 211; vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1849), 33-4 and vol. 2, no. 11, (November, 1849), 321 and 336-7. With so many liberals on the board of directors, clearly the executive needed to curry favour with the Catholic clergy to avoid censure like the more radical *rouge* element. See J.P. Bernard, *Les rouges: libéralisme, nationalisme et anticléricalisme au milieu du XIXe siècle*, (Montreal, 1971).

³⁸ See the Oro Agricultural Society fonds, SCA, Acc. 970-77, minute book, 1886-1908, 4 June 1888, 16-17. For the agriculturalists’ dependence on God and Christianity, see H.C. Cooper, *The Husbandman’s Dependence on Almighty God*, (Toronto, 1853), 8-10; Guelph Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1969.10.2, MU 3, ms 14, minute book, 1857-71, 10 January 1863 and Erin Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1989.97, reel 1, minute book, 1862-81, 13 January 1870.

The agricultural press also advocated the eradication of party strife and polemical religion in the post-rebellion climate of both Upper and Lower Canada, although in many respects agricultural periodicals reflected the disunity of partyism more than any type of press in nineteenth-century Canada. In Quebec, the *Canadian Agricultural Journal* noted from its first editorial that it would avoid offending either political party, and eliminate political discussion from the pages of its periodical. Calling on agriculturalists to display a more public spirit by ignoring the selfish demands of party and sectarian religion, the *Journal* expected agricultural improvement to be the result of a neutral course in politics.³⁹ The exploration of similar themes occurred in Upper Canadian agricultural papers, where the *Canada Farmer* appealed for more “noble, generous and patriotic impulses” to abolish party feeling and religious animosity. Their first editorial also noted that the climate had indeed changed after the rebellions, noting “the lines of demarcation between sections and parties, which have hitherto been so plain to every eye, so offensive to, and so regretted by every generous well wisher of his country, are becoming shadowy and indistinct.” Unfortunately, agricultural newspapers could not escape charges of political meddling, as frequently different governments subsidized friendly periodicals and offered discounts through the agricultural societies themselves. The *Canada Farmer* accused the *British American Cultivator* of maintaining just such a “church and state connexion” with various agricultural societies, which led to a rather protracted newspaper controversy between the two agricultural papers.⁴⁰

³⁹ See the *Canadian Agricultural Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1844), 1-2; vol. 1, no. 4, (April, 1844), 72; vol. 1, no. 9, (September, 1844), 129; vol. 1, no. 11, (November, 1844), 161, 168 and vol. 2, no. 1, (January, 1845), 1. Of course, the uniformity of the Reform element in the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society accounted for a great deal of this sentiment.

⁴⁰ See the *Canada Farmer*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1847), 2; vol. 1, no. 9, (May, 1847), 62-3; vol. 1, no. 11, (June, 1847), 80 and vol. 1, no. 24, (December, 1847), 176-8 and the *British American Cultivator*, vol. 3, no. 2, (February, 1847), 35 and vol. 3, no. 5, (May, 1847), 131-33. As with other newspapers, the ruling party often favoured their own agricultural organs; see Douglas Fetherling, *The Rise of the Canadian Newspaper*, (Toronto, 1990) and Nesmith, “Philosophy of Agriculture,” 19-30.

The *Canadian Agriculturalist*, an agricultural periodical sponsored by well-known farming advocates George Buckland and William Macdougall, began its prospectus by stating its intentions were to keep its pages clear from party politics and polemical theology, knowing no distinctions as to “colour, party, race or creed.” Admitting that the pages of the *Canadian Agriculturalist* would be filled with political questions important to the farmer, the editors enforced strict neutrality on party allegiances, with Macdougall admitting that he was unaware of Buckland’s political preferences. One could not ignore Macdougall’s political affiliation as a Clear Grit, although to some extent he succeeded in keeping a great deal of the Clear Grit platform – other than advocating free trade – out of the periodical. However, the anti-political rhetoric of the paper’s origins was further blunted after 1858 when the *Canadian Agriculturalist* won the right to publish the *Transactions* of the Board of Agriculture and Agricultural Association of Upper Canada. Presumably this transpired as a result of Buckland’s political connections with Robert Baldwin and his successor Francis Hincks, rather than Macdougall’s radical Clear Grit cronies who had a more difficult time keeping office.⁴¹ Competing agendas in agricultural papers would tend to overshadow the rhetoric of all-encompassing ideologies and calls for political harmony from the agricultural population.

The image of the independent yeoman, liberated from party and sectarian constraints was a vision fostered and protected well into the late nineteenth century with William Weld’s agricultural paper, the *Farmers’ Advocate*. Boasting that no paper “has ever existed for such a length of time without being the tool to some sect, body or party of politicians,” Weld claimed that readers of his periodical would not have their religious or political creeds interfered with, as they would only be infused with the desire to see agriculture improved in Canada.

⁴¹ See the *Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1849), 2-3; vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1849), 55; vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1849), 64-5; vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1850), 50 and vol. 7, no. 11, (November, 1855), 323. For the political situation in the agricultural press, see Nesmith, “Philosophy of Agriculture,” 27-36; Irwin, “Government Funding of Agricultural Associations,” 175-81 and also Fair, “Gentlemen, Farmers and Gentlemen Half-Farmers,” 263-89.

Of course, such political neutrality would come with a price, as Weld noted that both George Brown's *Canada Farmer* and William Clarke's *Ontario Farmer* were in receipt of government aid and "bound to the political system."⁴² Weld was sceptical about the entire political process, whereby men voted for political entities, rather than individuals. Weld encouraged agriculturalists to ignore the two principal political parties and vote for a "free, untrammelled and independent man" in their riding, particularly if he "has common sense, and real, unencumbered property, prefer him to any fettered slave." One method to guarantee autonomous members in Parliament would be to send more farmers to Ottawa, a theme recurring in Weld's editorials. Barring such an extreme step, farmers needed to concentrate on those political matters that affected agriculture, rather than simple party questions.⁴³ Weld's tirades against party politicians illustrate both the lack of political cohesion and a considerable Liberal/Toryism amongst agriculturalists in nineteenth-century Canada.

Notwithstanding these strictures against sectarianism and partyism, agricultural societies, clubs and the press were far more welded to the state than other voluntary associations. This dichotomy of being dependent on the state for financial support while at the same time eliminating religious and political conflict did lead to a toning down somewhat of anti-sectarian and anti-political rhetoric. The blurring of the public and private spheres with the grant system for agricultural societies, and the creation of Boards of Agriculture and experimental

⁴² See the *Farmers' Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 1, (January, 1867), 1; vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1867), 10; vol. 2, no. 7, (July, 1867), 51; vol. 4, no. 12, (December, 1869), 182-3; vol. 5, no. 6, (June, 1870), 83; vol. 5, no. 12, (December, 1870), 179 and vol. 6, no. 12, (December, 1871), 179-80. Weld's denunciation of Brown of course was more heated, given Brown's leadership of the Reform faction in Upper Canada and the use of the *Canada Farmer* as a Clear Grit/Liberal party newspaper. Weld also was highly sympathetic to London Tory John Carling, another reason for his problems with the Liberals. See William Weld's entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 12, (Toronto, 1990), 1093-94 and J.M.S. Careless, "The Toronto *Globe* and Agrarian Radicalism, 1850-67," *Canadian Historical Review*, 29, no. 1, (March, 1948), 14-39.

⁴³ The *Farmers' Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 3, (March, 1867), 17-18; vol. 2, no. 4, (April, 1867), 25-7; vol. 2, no. 8, (August, 1867), 60-1; vol. 6, no. 1, (January, 1871), 1; vol. 9, no. 2, (February, 1874), 18-19; vol. 10, no. 1, (January, 1875), 17; vol. 14, no. 5, (May, 1879), 74-5 and vol. 15, no. 2, (February, 1880), 28.

farms were far more pronounced in the realm of agriculture than elsewhere. This situation has led many to conclude that agricultural associations were agents of state hegemony and participated actively in the construction of middle-class values.⁴⁴ Increased government involvement in agriculture by the end of the century in fact led to even greater appeals for the removal of politicking from agricultural associations. When the government became more involved with the Agriculture and Arts Association in 1869, President David Christie decried the move as one of “political necessity.” Calling on the government to keep the association free of partyism, Christie lauded what the association had previously accomplished, as “in the management of this institution we have steadily abjured politics; if we had not done so we would never had accomplished anything. This is common ground, on which we can all meet; and it is refreshing to have such a rendezvous. Let us say to every political meddler, no matter who he may be, ‘This is sacred ground.’” While Christie indeed placed agricultural matters first in his list of concerns, such discourse masked simmering political tensions as well. As a conscientious Clear Grit, Christie simply could not tolerate the politics inherent in Sandfield Macdonald’s Liberal Tory administration.⁴⁵

Of course the most outspoken opponent of government involvement in agricultural matters was William Weld, the editor of the *Farmers’ Advocate*. Foreshadowing the problems that David Christie envisioned, Weld accused the President of the Agricultural and Arts Association of Ontario, James Johnson, of trying to interfere with the Middlesex Agricultural Emporium in an overbearing and tyrannical manner. To Weld, Johnson’s difficulties with the Emporium arose

⁴⁴ See Irwin, “Government Funding of Agricultural Associations,” 270-85; Fair, “Gentlemen, Farmers, and Gentlemen Half-Farmers,” 263-71; Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 52-78 and Jean Marie Fecteau, “État et associationnisme au XIXe siècle québécois: éléments pour une problématique des Rapports État/société dans la transition au capitalisme,” in Allan Greer and Ian Radforth, editors, *Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Canada*, (Toronto, 1992), 134-62.

⁴⁵ See the *Transactions of the Agricultural and Arts Association of Ontario*, vol. 7, (Toronto, 1871), 225-6 and Christie’s entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, (Toronto, 1972), 168-71.

from looking at the project from a “political point of view, and aiming at higher offices.” Government involvement in other projects, such as the Experimental Farms and the Agricultural College in Guelph gave Weld further consternation as he noted the haphazard methods employed by their directors. Convinced that practical farmers could not only manage the Experimental Farms more efficiently, Weld asked the Mowat government to turf the “political hangers-on” and partisan hacks who administered the affairs of the model farms. Not only would this end the incompetence at the bureaucratic level, but also would return government agencies to their proper sphere of encouraging and protecting private enterprise, not fostering state run projects. Weld was also very critical of Farmers’ Institutes for the same reasons, that governmental patronage of agricultural associations was dangerous to the independence of the Canadian farmer. Much of Weld’s discontent seemed to stem from his opposition to Commercial Union, which he claimed was a policy of conflict and disharmony. However, Weld also blamed the Liberal government’s patronage for the fact that such policies even had a forum in agricultural associations.⁴⁶

Despite William Weld’s assertions to the contrary, directors of Farmers’ Institutes took great pains in distancing themselves from the party squabbles of the day. Even though Commercial Union was a hotly debated topic in the late 1880s, various directors of the Institutes recognized that the correct policy in discussing reciprocity would be to lay aside party differences and be united either for or against Commercial Union. As the executive of the East Peterborough Farmers’ Institute noted, while any discussion on politics was important to farmers, debates on Commercial Union were useless “as the electors of today were too set in their party lines to change easily.” Discord and disharmony

⁴⁶ Weld’s concerns with government-run agricultural projects also were a function of his lukewarm appreciation for the Tories. However, this episode also illustrated his “independent” status, as James Johnson was also a Tory and an opponent of free trade. See the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1867), 9-10; vol. 7, no. 7, (July, 1872), 98; vol. 8, no. 6, (June, 1873); vol. 18, no. 1, (January, 1883), 2-3 and vol. 18, no. 11, (November, 1883), 327; vol. 21, no. 242, (February, 1886), 39-40; vol. 22, no. 259, (July, 1887), 193-4; vol. 23, no. 265, (January, 1888), 1-2 and vol. 23, no. 267, (March, 1888), 65.

became too much a part of Commercial Union debates, and thus the Central Institute President forbade further discussion on the topic:

I am bound in all honour and all conscience and anxiety for the future of the Institutes throughout the country, to say that I believe that in those Institutes that have passed and put on record, after due deliberation, their convictions with reference especially to this question, its further discussion will lead to discord, and on anything relating to the farmers' interests we should be united. The result of keeping politics or a quasi-political matter under discussion in a collective body would bring about discord. This country is cursed with politics...I say it is the duty of the farmers of this country to look to the welfare of the country first, and look to the welfare of political parties afterwards. You have been a tool in their hands.⁴⁷

In learning this valuable lesson, bylaws of Farmers' Institutes after the Commercial Union debacle insisted that every Institute organized had to be "strictly non-partizan and non-sectarian in every phase of their work, and no Institute shall be operated in the direct interest of any party, sect or society, but for the equal good of all citizens and the farming community." Furthermore, every discussion in the Institute needed to be free from a political or sectarian nature, and to avoid the advertisement of wares or schemes in which someone would receive direct or indirect pecuniary interest.⁴⁸ In spite of direct financial assistance from the state for agricultural associations, the community ethos inherent in such organizations ensured a minimizing of political and religious conflict, although in context the struggle for political control over these same associations often led to contested ground between men of different political stripes.

⁴⁷ See the *Annual Report of the Central Farmers' Institute*, (Hamilton, 1888), 10. See also the Farmers' Institute records, AO, RG 16-85, container 1, file 1887, reports of the West Kent and Oshawa Institute meetings; file 1888, reports of the South Wellington, East Peterborough, South Oxford and Northumberland Institute meetings.

⁴⁸ See the Centre Wellington Farmers' Institute fonds, WCA, A1981.47, MU 43, minute book, 1896-1905, bylaws pasted on front of book, 3-4.

The celebrated independent yeoman was a popular rural image, and it reinforced the gospel of honest industry and the necessity of the producer alliance amongst agriculturalists. And yet to some historians, the glorification of the hardworking and independent farmer was a method used by bourgeois apologists to foster social cohesion and state hegemony. Instead of a producer alliance to bolster the community in general, emulation of middle-class values would create a society of self-interested producers who would maximize their own production for material profit.⁴⁹ Early agricultural societies endorsed the industrious farmer motif by lauding the intelligent, enterprising and energetic agriculturalist who exerted both physical and mental energy to furnish material plenty and abounding wealth. Other classes in the community could even visualize the efforts of the hardworking farmer in the landscape, where “now instead of one unbroken forest may be seen the comfortable homesteads, with barns respectably filled.”⁵⁰ To the directors of agricultural societies, this illustration would provide a stimulus for further exertion and diligence among members of the community. The necessity of honest labour among the farming population would prove to be a resilient ideology in agricultural societies by the latter half of the century. As Walter Riddell noted in his history sketch of the Northumberland Agricultural society, it was not enough for the farmer to give only financial support to the society, his contribution also required the donation of time and labour. To Riddell, the “mere possession of capital” or even the ownership of a good farm did not qualify anyone to be a good farmer; there must be “diligence, integrity and a thorough knowledge of the business.” Philippe Landry, the president of the Montmigny

⁴⁹ See Kelly, “The Consummation of Rural Prosperity and Happiness,” 575-89 and Heaman, *The Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 3-28. For the independent yeoman motif in rural culture, see Beverly Seaton, “Idylls of Agriculture: Nineteenth Century Success Stories of Farming and Gardening,” *Agricultural History*, 55, no. 1, (January, 1981), 21-30 and Burns, *Pastoral Inventions*, 32-49.

⁵⁰ See the Oro Agricultural society fonds, SCA, Acc. 970-77, minute book, 1859-86, annual report for 1860. See also the Peterborough Agricultural society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-004, minute book, 1855-66, 3 February 1855 and *Journal and Transactions of the Board of Agriculture of Upper Canada*, vol. 2, (Toronto, 1858), 314-16.

Agricultural society, also called on the members of his society to contribute “leurs forces et de leur patriotisme,” commenting that “le mérite et le travail, et non la fortune, assureront le succès.”⁵¹

The diffusion of a greater spirit of emulation was also a significant endeavour of early agricultural societies, as society directors visualized no other method of teaching practical farming to young agriculturalists. Ploughing matches and exhibitions were not about the indirect benefit of securing prizes, but also to stimulate a man of little ambition to a higher station. Membership in an agricultural society was therefore not a profitable speculation, but all about “exciting an innocent emulation in a community.” Although a practical farmer could not imitate his rich neighbour by purchasing livestock, “if he has a little tact, take the hint, and by indefatigable exertions may make a gradual improvement and very soon it will be perceptible in his stock, and in his farm, and in a little time the man’s style of farming will be raised several degrees.”⁵² The Guelph Fat Stock Club noted that “healthy emulation” would prove a source of life and vigour to the encouragement and improvement of livestock. According to Thomas McCrae, the purpose of agricultural exhibitions was to emphasize hard work and emulation in the community, as he cautioned “let the unsuccessful try again as those who manfully persevere are sure of ultimate success. Let those who have only been onlookers say ‘Here are lessons for me to go and do likewise’ and may we all be ready and willing to do our best for our own and our country’s good.”⁵³

⁵¹ See the Landry Family fonds, NAC, MG II E4, vol. 19, correspondence, open letter from Philippe Landry to the Montmigny Agricultural society, 1891, 1-2. See also Walter Riddell papers, AO, MU 2388, series A-3, lecture to Northumberland Agricultural society, n.d. and Guelph Fat Stock Club fonds, WCA, A1969.10.1, MU 3, minute book, 1881-1900, 21 November 1891, 192.

⁵² See the Oro Agricultural society fonds, SCA, Acc. 970-77, minute book, 1859-86, annual report for 1859, 1861 and 1870. See also *Transactions of the Board of Agriculture and Agricultural Association of Upper Canada*, vol. 4, (Toronto, 1860), 169-70 and *Agricultural Journal and Transactions of the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society*, vol. 1, no. 4, (April, 1848), 102-3.

The communality of all classes was particularly significant to the political economy of the producer alliance, as farmers recognized the importance of maintaining the triangular prosperity of agriculture, commerce and manufactures. Agriculturalists were also required to educate themselves on the operations of the business aspect of farming, to familiarize themselves with “social and other economies.” The rural population would take this to heart, and many reports of agricultural societies would reflect at least a rudimentary knowledge of political economy and the free trade/protectionist debates of mid-century. Farmers understood that the business of agriculture did not depend solely on the harvest and their individual work ethic, as a scarcity of labour, want of capital and a lack of economy could impinge on the scanty fortunes of the tillers of the soil. As the directors of the Oro Agricultural society noted, agriculturalists needed to better balance the machinery of supply and demand as the commercial and manufacturing sectors did. It would be more to the advantage of the farmer to raise dear wool and flax to clothe the community, for example, than to focus all their energies on the cultivation of inexpensive wheat and thus beggar themselves.⁵⁴ Promoters of agricultural societies also waded into the various debates regarding free trade or protection in the nineteenth century. Careful not to upset the balance between competing visions of political economy and partyism, many directors simply invited the government and the manufacturing sector to improve and develop home markets for their produce. Even when the rules were bent, as with the pro-reciprocity lecture of Walter Riddell to the Northumberland Agricultural society, it was done in the interests of equality and the community

⁵³ Thomas McCrae papers, WCA, A998.38, series 10, file 6. See also Guelph Fat Stock Club fonds, WCA, A1969.10.1, MU 3, minute book, 1881-1900, 6 February 1895, 223-4 and Missiquoi Agricultural society fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 227, M-3790, document 3, minute book 1869-75, 9 April 1870.

⁵⁴ See the Oro Agricultural society fonds, SCA, Acc. 970-77, minute book, 1859-86, annual report for 1865; Guelph Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1969.10.2, MU 3, ms 14, minute book, 1857-71, 16 January 1865; Middlesex Agricultural society fonds, RCL, box 5289-1, minute book, 1873-92, annual report for 1873 and 1883 and *Transactions of the Board of Agriculture and Agricultural Association of Upper Canada*, vol. 6, (Toronto, 1868), 485-6.

ethos of hard work. Protectionism created a “forced tribute” from the farmers to the manufacturers, and it also enforced the impression that Ontarians were “less skilful, less industrious, and less energetic” than their American counterparts. Many comments on political economy echoed those of the South Wellington society, which noted that the real National Policy for agriculturalists should consist of improved husbandry, and not a reliance on “fluctuating and uncertain markets.”⁵⁵

The mid-Victorian agricultural press as the voice of the farmer likewise advanced the value of honest industry and the community ethos of hard work. Praising the “benefits of industry” in the new world, the *British American Cultivator* proclaimed that every truehearted Canadian should be proud that it was a nation where “labour is respected and richly and liberally rewarded.” The *Canadian Agriculturalist* similarly expressed the notion that exertions in agriculture resulted in the lawful fruits of one’s own diligence and toil. Even though the profits of the farm were small, skill and industry “moderately exercised” would ensure happiness in a rural people. In applying this vision to the entire community, the editors of the *Canadian Agriculturalist* noted in an article entitled “Vice vs. Labour” that “virtue, industry and wealth, whether viewed in an individual or in a collective or national light, have always been considered synonymous terms; and so have immorality, idleness and poverty. Such is Nature’s irrevocable fiat, pronounced against every race and against every social rank of the human family.” Honest industry was the great divider of the community, separating those who were prosperous from those who were not.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ South Wellington Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123, series 2, subseries 1, MU 101, minute book, 1878-97, annual report for 1883. See also Peterborough Agricultural society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-004, minute book, 1855-66, 28 January 1859 and Walter Riddell papers, AO, MU 2388, series A-3, file #3, *The Hindrances in Canadian Agriculture with a view to their removal*, n.d., 7-8. Agriculturalists mirrored society as a whole in this debate, as unity on the issues of protection and free trade were nigh impossible; see Ben Forster, *A Conjunction of Interests: Business, Politics, and Tariffs, 1825-1879*, (Toronto, 1986).

⁵⁶ See the *Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 14, no. 22, (16 November 1862), 674-5; and also vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1849), 9; vol. 9, no. 12, (December, 1857), 332 and vol. 10, no. 1, (January,

These convictions would linger in the hearts of agriculturalists well into the latter decades of the century, although the gospel of hard work in relation to agriculture was tempered by recognition that honest industry alone was inadequate. William Clarke in the *Ontario Farmer* counselled farmers to utilize their intelligence and machinery as well as mechanical and agricultural science in concert with “strength, sobriety and industry” to achieve prosperity. William Weld agreed with this assessment, and added the notion that the successful cultivator of the soil regarded husbandry as both an art and as a business. This approach to agriculture would manifest itself in the community, as “the general prosperity, the rapid increase of population, the accumulation of wealth, the enterprise and activity everywhere seen throughout the country, where bodily labour, so far from being considered degrading and the badge of slavery, is honoured and respected.”⁵⁷

Another important facet of the gospel of honest industry was thrift and economy, and how farmers needed to safeguard their resources and not get caught up in the accumulation of wealth. Confirming that parsimony was a component of honest industry, the *Lower Canadian Agriculturalist* noted that “economy, combined with perseverance, energy and industry” would improve agriculture in the region. Distrust for those who did not practice economy and thrift, such as the financial opportunist and the speculator spilled into many agricultural periodicals. While not condemning this group as a commercial class, agriculturalists believed that only the labour practiced on the farm would bring peace and contentment while speculation only brought avarice and oppression.⁵⁸ The importance of

1858), 1. See also the *British American Cultivator*, vol. 2, no. 11, (November, 1843), 173-5 and new series, vol. 3, no. 9, (September, 1847), 268-9.

⁵⁷ See the *Ontario Farmer*, vol. 1, no. 10, (October, 1869), 295-6; vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1869), 27; vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1869), 58-9 and vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1869), 66. See also the *Farmers' Advocate*, vol. 3, no. 5, (May 1868), 70; vol. 3, no. 6, (June, 1868), 86-7 and vol. 8, no. 7, (July, 1873), 104.

⁵⁸ On the subject of speculation, see *Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 4, no. 5, (May, 1846), 129-30 and vol. 13, no. 9, (1 May 1861), 260; *Ontario Farmer*, vol. 1, no. 9, (September, 1869), 265. On the importance of thrift and economy, see the *Lower Canadian Agriculturalist*, (April, 1863), 263; *British American Cultivator*, vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1842), 24; *Canadian*

being prudent and frugal encompassed the community ideology, as editors of the agricultural press stressed the value of being thrifty began on the individual farm and then extended into society. A recurring motif in agricultural papers is that of the prosperous thrifty and the poverty-stricken unthrifty farmer, and the contrasts between the two. The thrifty husbandman diligently followed a three-step program; do everything in its proper time, convert everything to its proper use, and put everything in its proper place. The idle tiller of the soil was lazy, often inebriated, bought all his equipment on credit, and blamed all his troubles on ill fortune instead of his own misdeeds. And yet the major differences concerning “Mr. Thrifty” and “Mr. Unthrifty” were not based on wealth, but on their standing in the community. The former “lives respected, and dies regretted as a useful man and a good Christian” while the latter “is a poor farmer, a poor husband, a poor father, and a poor Christian.”⁵⁹ All in all, a thrifty farmer was an excellent citizen who contributed much to the community, while the disorderly farmer was a blight on the society in which he lived.

Agriculturalists also respected the apparently finite laws of political economy, and many editors of agricultural periodicals counselled their readers to study this science in order to further their profession. In order to make agriculture more profitable, farmers needed to understand the laws of business and capital, supply and demand, and other principles of economy that would insure the prosperity of his farm. At mid-century, such discussions invariably turned to the debates surrounding reciprocity and protection. With the strictures surrounding political deliberations, often farming journals would not overtly favour one policy over the other. On the contrary, many of these early journals called for either state encouragement and protection, *or* full, free and unrestricted trade, as equality

Agriculturalist, vol. 1, no. 5, (May, 1849), 136 and vol. 1, no. 9, (September, 1849), 275; *Farmers' Advocate*, vol. 3, no. 5, (May, 1868), 70; vol. 5, no. 1, (January, 1870), 10 and vol. 28, no. 330, (15 March 1893), 102-3.

⁵⁹ *Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 6, no. 3, (March, 1854), 76-77; see also vol. 2, no. 6, (June, 1850), 138-40; *British American Cultivator*, new series, vol. 1, no. 7, (July, 1845), 208-9 and *Agriculturalist and Canadian Journal*, vol. 1, no. 4, (1 March 1848), 34.

demanded that no industry be favoured above another. As the *Canadian Agricultural Journal*, a paper that strongly favoured reciprocity, stated:

We never did advocate, and do not wish that any one class should be protected, or favoured at the expense, or the injury of any other. We would rejoice to see all restrictions on trade removed, and the productions of the earth, and of man's industry allowed to circulate as freely as the wind; but we have always been opposed, and ever shall be, to partial, or one-sided free trade, that will allow freedom only in agricultural productions, while there is ample protection and encouragement to all other productions.⁶⁰

Obviously the editors of agricultural newspapers knew the divided nature of their clientele, and refused to alienate any part of their agricultural constituency.

Dancing around the issue of free trade and protectionism would remain in force through the latter half of the century with William Weld and the *Farmers' Advocate*. As with earlier periodicals, Weld shied away from forcefully advocating a favoured economic policy, mindful not to upset any paying customer of the *Advocate*. And yet Weld also claimed that an unfettered and “unjobbered” reciprocity with the United States would benefit the nation as a whole, and Weld did lean towards free trade as an accepted economic solution for the agriculturalist. Weld was therefore judicious enough to blame the failures of the National Policy on the political parties themselves, rather than on the economic policy of protection. A correspondent to the *Ontario Farmer* agreed with this assessment, claiming that he was no friend to protection, yet since the United States imposed it on Canada many positive changes occurred. Not only did protection result in the construction of the railway, it contributed to honest industry by “developing in a thousand ways the means of self-help.” If reciprocity were to occur between Canada and the U.S., the terms needed to be

⁶⁰ See the *Canadian Agricultural Journal*, vol. 3, no. 2, (February, 1846), 17; see also vol. 2, no. 4, (April, 1845), 56; vol. 3, no. 6, (June, 1846), 82 and vol. 3, no. 11, (November, 1846), 161. See also the *British American Cultivator*, vol. 1, no. 7, (July, 1842), 98; vol. 1, no. 10, (October, 1842), 160 and vol. 2, no. 9, (September, 1843), 132 and the *Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 2, no. 4, (April, 1850), 93-4.

just and fair as it was “a question of mutual advantage, not of mendacity on the one side, and generosity on the other.”⁶¹

The concepts and principles inherent in the creed of honest industry would be stressed even when the government became more involved in agricultural associations such as the *cercles agricoles* in Quebec. Promoters of the *cercles agricoles* were vociferous in their defence of this ideology, as they encouraged their members to improve their farms through vigorous and intelligent labour, the avoidance of credit and strict economy. Agriculturalists were also counselled to hold an “exam of conscience” at the end of the year, to ensure that they have made a good use of their time, their resources, and particularly that their expenses were less than their revenue as this principle was the only doctrine of political economy needed.⁶² And yet the pages of the *Almanach* reflected an acute comprehension of how the philosophy of honest industry could enhance the prosperity of the community. Convinced that the rural family was the foundation of the French-Canadian nation, supporters of the *cercles agricoles* noted that a rural life would prove a barrier against disorder and would guarantee social peace. Even though many of these arguments were indeed propaganda for the Quebec government’s colonization drive, the advantages offered by agriculture and the *cercles agricoles* would eventually trickle down to the whole community. Noting that agriculture was free from the disastrous fluctuations of commerce and industry, rural life would also “rend l’homme meilleur, en lui conservant des mœurs simples, un coeur droit, des habitudes d’économie, le goût de travail, l’amour de la justice...richesse de joie, d’union, d’affection de famille, richesse

⁶¹ See the *Ontario Farmer*, vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1869), 87 and vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1869), 2. See also *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 4, no. 1, (January, 1869), 3; vol. 8, no. 1, (January, 1873), 2-3; vol. 9, no. 3, (March, 1874), 41 and vol. 16, no. 1, (January, 1881), 4.

⁶² See the *Almanach des Cercles Agricoles de la Province de Quebec pour L’année 1894*, (Montreal, 1894), 9, 29 and 31-42 and the *Almanach des Cercles Agricoles L’année 1895*, (Montreal, 1895), 21.

dans la modération des desires.”⁶³ The promotion of agriculture coupled with the gospel of honest industry would have a positive effect not only on farmers, as its influence was bound to spread to the community at large.

Social interaction amongst agriculturalists through inclusive and open activities was a major component of the community ethos, as the promoters of agricultural associations recognized the importance of combating isolationism in a rural populace. Many historians conclude that conflicts arising over agricultural events occurred as a result of public opinion superseding the agents of hegemonic influence – otherwise known as agricultural association directors – in maintaining control over the activities of agricultural societies and clubs. And yet some acknowledgment is also given to the fact that agricultural exhibitions, ploughing matches, soirees and concerts were also community-based events bringing a rural people together for mutual improvement and camaraderie.⁶⁴ While it is true that agricultural fairs and events had deeper economic and utilitarian meanings such as emulation and the celebration of commercialism, clearly the crafting of community through spectacle and amusement cannot be ignored in any discussion of agricultural exhibitions, fairs and attractions.

While early efforts at community involvement through agricultural activities was somewhat limited, the ideology of social interaction amongst farmers began as early as the post-rebellion climate of Victorian Canada. Social intercourse between members of the agricultural population required the unity of farmers’ associations, for the development of social, mental and moral culture within its membership. As Major Lachlan, a “gentleman farmer” and the President of the Western District Agricultural society noted, “the increased and expanded

⁶³ *Almanach des Cercles Agricoles de la Province de Quebec pour L’année 1895*, (Montreal, 1895), 48; see also *Almanach des Cercles Agricoles pour L’année 1896*, (Montreal, 1896), 36-7 and *Almanach des Cercles Agricoles pour L’année 1899*, (Montreal, 1899), 7.

⁶⁴ This latter view is expressed by Donald Marti, *To Improve the Soil and Mind*, 80-95 and Osborne, “Trading on a Frontier,” 70-75. For agricultural fairs as promotion of middle-class economic hegemony, see Kelly, “The Consummation of Rural Prosperity and Happiness,” 574-90; Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 247-91 and Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 79-105.

congenial feeling produced by such institutions, naturally tend to draw closer the bonds of social intercourse among the inhabitants of a neighbourhood, and to lay the foundation of valuable friendships and endearing associations and connexions.”⁶⁵ The first attempts to provide social events and activities to the agricultural community occurred when directors of agricultural societies procured lecturers, organized discussions on agricultural subjects, and provided an annual dinner during exhibitions. The pre-eminent means for agricultural societies to provide a community-based event was the ploughing match. Attended in large numbers by neighbouring agriculturalists and others, many agricultural societies appreciated the large revenues brought in by such an event, and often charged fees not only for participants but also for spectators. When the match was enlarged into a spectacle, the gate increased; however, when directors of both the Carleton and Peterborough Agricultural societies just provided a simple ploughing match, both the crowd and contestants were sparse. The President of the Carleton society found it difficult to comprehend the apathy of the ploughmen, as the economic rewards found in the prize list had been upgraded.⁶⁶ Remuneration and emulation were indeed motivations for some of these events, but success would ultimately depend on a vision of rational recreation.

Providing entertainment to the public became a focal point for agricultural association directors by the end of the nineteenth century, although the conflicts over providing “vulgar entertainments” and pandering to public opinion in constructing the community ethos often strained relations within an executive. Descriptions of this change from the education to the entertainment of the farmer

⁶⁵ See the *Address of the Directing President of the Western District Agricultural Society*, (Sandwich, 1838), 14. See also the *British American Cultivator*, vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1842), 19-20 and *Agriculturalist and Canadian Journal*, vol. 1, no. 4, (1 March 1848), 40.

⁶⁶ See the Donald Kennedy scrapbook, NAC, MG 24 I 90, annual report of the Carleton Agricultural society, 1865 and the Peterborough Agricultural society fonds, PCMA, Acc. 59-004, minute book, 1855-66, 3 February 1855 and 7 February 1857. See also the Addington County Agricultural society fonds, AO, MU 2086, minute book, 1853-71, 18 February 1854 and 20 April 1867; Erin Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1989.97, reel 1, minute book, 1862-82, 1 July 1865, 27 June 1868 and Oro Agricultural society fonds, SCA, Acc. 970-77, minute book, 1859-86, annual report for 1870.

range from a simple struggle for hegemonic control between agricultural associations and the weight of public opinion, or the carving of space between the order of the mainstream and the “transgression” of alternate forms of amusement.⁶⁷ Simply put, promoters of agricultural societies and clubs amplified their exertions in the amusement sphere as a result of the demands from the community. This gradual change can best be perceived through the medium of the agricultural press, who recognized the need for farmers to set aside some time for leisure, whether it be for family, social or public gatherings. Expanding the social network to include picnics, excursions, and circuses as well as exhibitions, editors of agricultural periodicals recognized the importance of relaxation to the rural population in a community setting. And yet these editorials also stressed the importance of *rational* recreation, cautioning farmers not to carry on their revelry to excess. As the *Farmers’ Advocate* observed, “light amusements when taken in moderation, have a tendency to relieve, lighten and cheer the mind after being busily engaged from day to day in the active and monotonous pursuits of life.”⁶⁸ Unfortunately for William Weld, by the 1880s the escalation of amusements and entertainment in agricultural associations would be inclined to take the rational out of the recreation.

Despite rather generous government grants awarded to agricultural societies, many directors promoted amusements in exhibitions and fairs as a method of generating even more financial security. This is particularly true for smaller rural exhibitions, as entertainment was less about the business of amusement than augmenting attendance by providing what the community wanted. The Niagara

⁶⁷ The former view is taken from Irwin, “Government Funding of Agricultural Associations,” 213-20 and Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 106-31; the latter is expressed in Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 281-91. Their arguments are tempered by the fact that all three of these historians focus exclusively on the larger urban exhibitions, while ignoring the more localized rural fairs.

⁶⁸ See the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 8, (August, 1867), 62; see also vol. 3, no. 4, (April, 1868), 50; vol. 5, no. 6, (June, 1870), 82; vol. 15, no. 7, (July, 1880), 146 and vol. 20, no. 237, (September, 1885), 262-3. *Ontario Farmer*, vol. 2, no. 5, (May, 1870), 130-1 and vol. 2, no. 12, (December, 1870), 376.

Agricultural society recognized this successful formula when over the space of five years, revenues increased dramatically when they introduced a horseracing track, bicycle races, high jump competitions, concerts and a skating rink to their agricultural fairground. Other agricultural societies offered attractions such as wire walking, trapeze and balancing acts, comic singing and dancing at their fairs. The Ottawa Agricultural society rented out their fairgrounds for purposes of public recreation and amusement, noting that with the erection of swings, “the attractions of the grounds and their surroundings, will doubtless secure in the future a considerable revenue as their popularity as a health giving summer resort is now fully established.”⁶⁹ The rural population seemed to welcome these attractions as many agricultural societies debated the merits of having 2-day fairs, restricting the first day to agricultural competition and the next day reserved for amusements and entertainment. Many directors noted from this experiment that the “educational” portion of the agricultural fair was sparsely attended, while the public visited the fairgrounds in droves with the announcements of the entertainment portion.⁷⁰

Some agricultural associations insisted that amusements and attractions be left out of the exhibition or show programme, and often these societies complained about the lack of patronage to their events. The history of the Guelph Fat Stock club is replete with grievances from the executive that the agricultural community refused to sustain the efforts made by the club in improving the livestock of the region. Overtures to the public remained rather superficial, as the

⁶⁹ See the Ottawa Agricultural society fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 27, vol. 1, minute book from 1868-77, annual report of 1877. See also the Niagara District Agricultural society fonds, AO, FIII 1, MS 193, reel 13, minute book 1891-1910, 11 March 1892, 21 to 2 September 1896, 64; West Nissouri Agricultural society fonds, RCL, box 5103, minute book, 1876-1906, 16 March 1891 and Oro Agricultural society fonds, SCA, Acc. 970-77, minute book, 1859-86, 31 March 1880.

⁷⁰ See the South Wellington Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123, series 2, subseries 1, MU 101, minute book, 1878-97, 16 January, 1889, 200 and 26 May 1891. See also the North Walshingham Agricultural society fonds, AO, MU 2093 #29, minute book, 1889-1925, 14 January 1892, 33 and McGillivray Family papers, NAC, MG 24 I 3, vol. 21(2), records of the Glengarry Agricultural society, letter from the President of the Prescott Agricultural society, 12 August 1891, 203.

promoters of the club insisted that the erection of attractive pens and stalls, and a fuller explanation of the judging rendered would ensure that “the trouble will not be from the want of interest, but space enough to accommodate the people.” Unfortunately the Guelph Fat Stock club would only reach out to the agricultural population and not the public at large, when as late as 1894 the directors proclaimed “the encouragement to the improvement of the livestock of our community and country is, we may say, the sole object of the Club.”⁷¹ The Middlesex Agricultural society – no doubt influenced by William Weld – insisted in 1880 that while they had “no balloon ascensions, races or regattas” to amuse the crowd during the Western fair, the solid yeomanry of the district appreciated the instructive and useful character of the exhibition and attended in decent numbers. The directors insisted that when entertainment became the chief purpose of an agricultural fair, “people soon come to look upon it something like a circus, and a real circus can beat them on that line in spite of all they can do.” In two short years, however, the desires of the community forced the promoters of the society to change their vision of the exhibition:

From the greatly increased attendance at our Western Fair last fall, in consequence of those extra attractions, and from the eagerness of the crowds to see the sports in the horse-ring, we are convinced that the great majority are in favour of combining pleasure with profit, and while we acknowledge the paramount importance of the agricultural and industrial departments, we see that it is necessary to the financial success of the Society that a variety of attractions should be provided to meet the public taste. Such being, as we believe, the opinions of the great majority of the people, it becomes the duty of your directors to carry their wishes into effect, as we recognize the fact that your officers are not placed in their position as rulers or censors of public opinion, but merely as representatives and servants of the public, and their highest merit is implicit obedience to the voice of the people when clearly expressed.⁷²

⁷¹ Guelph Fat Stock Club fonds, WCA, A1969.10.1, MU 3, minute book, 1881-1900, annual report for 1881, 22; 18 November 1882, 36; annual report for 1882, 38; 23 February 1884, 61; 7 February 1894, 214 and annual report for 1894, 223.

When the desires of the farmers conflicted with the larger community – and in particular with the wishes of other agriculturalists – the agricultural society directors were duty bound to serve the rural society as a whole.

Not every agriculturalist was pleased with this state of affairs, and for opponents of agricultural attractions their spokesman was William Weld. Weld believed amusements were to educate and edify its audience, and the combination of the racecourse and other “demoralizing influences” was a pernicious and growing evil. The Industrial Exhibition in Toronto was a prime example of exhibition managers “stooping to the demands of the masses” who expected “amusements and pleasures without stint” if they were to attend. Weld couched his opposition in language that simply formulated the idea that such fairs were inimical to the interest of the agriculturalist, as the emulation of agriculture was far more important than money and popularity. Even Weld’s successors to the editorship of the *Farmers’ Advocate* agreed, criticizing attractions at agricultural fairs as worthless to the education of young farmers, and a waste of both time and money. Despite the seeming exclusivity of this position through the questioning of mass opinion, the difficulties experienced in various agricultural fairs led many directors to examine the worth of frivolous entertainment to the community. Some agricultural societies went so far as to petition the municipal government to remove gaming licences for the duration of the exhibition, and coming down hard on dishonest scalpers.⁷³

⁷² Middlesex Agricultural society fonds, RCL, box 5289-1, minute book, 1873-93, annual report for 1880 and annual report for 1882. This seems to have been a facet of the larger and more urban exhibitions; see Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 247-91 and Heaman, *Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 106-31.

⁷³ See the South Wellington Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123, series 2, subseries 1, MU 101, minute book, 1878-97, 10 June 1893, 302; Ottawa Agricultural society fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 27, vol. 1, minute book, 1868-77, 2 October 1869 and Erin Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1989.97, reel 1, minute book, 1882-1898, 19 March 1886, 14 January 1888 and 14 January 1890. See also the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 20, no. 238, (October, 1885), 290-1; vol. 26,

Even in the more rural areas, agricultural society directors wrestled with the entertainment question as a means of welcoming the entire community. In 1889, the directors of the South Wellington society held a special meeting to debate the merits of amusements as part of their annual agricultural fair. Many directors agreed with Thomas Laidlaw who saw nothing immoral or wrong with attractions, as they simply were not in keeping with the aims of an agricultural show. And yet the majority opinion among the members of the executive was similar to the position of Thomas McCrae, who stated with certainty that they “had either two alternatives, to supply the demand or not keep up the show...a purely agricultural exhibition could not be run without outside attractions, [as] they brought out the city people, and the country people as well.”⁷⁴ Increased interaction with other classes of people compelled agricultural societies to reach out to the larger community, although uneasiness over the attractions would continue. Indeed, the Guelph Ministerial Association would protest the “brutality, frivolity and vice” of some of the attractions while one farmer complained, “it was impossible to imagine any connection existing between circus performances and the interests of agriculture.” And yet an article in the *Guelph Mercury* reminded the community that it was through universal consent that the exhibitions were seen as part of the holiday season, and thus “multitudes gather for business, no doubt, but for relaxation and pleasure as well, and if the business were only thought of, not one in ten of those who assemble would come, and nothing like the same amount of good would be accomplished.”⁷⁵

The amusement aspect of agricultural exhibitions proved to be so lucrative that some agricultural societies established entertainment committees to handle

no. 311, (November, 1891), 422 and vol. 28, no. 354, (15 October 1893), 394 and also Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 282-7

⁷⁴ See the South Wellington Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123, series 2, subseries 1, MU 101, minute book, 1878-97, 16 January 1889, 200.

⁷⁵ South Wellington Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123, series 2, subseries 1, MU 101, minute book, 1878-97, 20 January 1897, 425; see also the newspaper articles pasted on the back.

the workload. The Elora Agricultural society created such a body when financial setbacks forced them into merging with both the Centre Riding and the Peel Agricultural societies. The committee took matters into their own hands, and held annual concerts with a dinner, lectures, recitations and music. They also increased revenue by spicing up the exhibition with driving and riding contests, so that the executive crowed simply at one exhibition, “good weather, good crowd, good sport, good show.”⁷⁶ Of course, the main thrust of these events was a concerted effort for agriculturalists and others to bring their entire families to the exhibition. Many societies charged a special rate for families, while the Elora Agricultural society asked town ministers and teachers to provide a special class for the children on fair day. The entire point of the exercise was the building of community spirit and feeling:

Not only should the farmer go to the exhibition, but he ought to take his family with him....The farmer that has a real pride in the farm will take great interest in the local exhibition, and will exhibit the best products of farm life in the boys and girls, who are interested exhibitors. The day at the exhibition should be a social one, everyone making it a point to meet many neighbours and others with a pleasant word.⁷⁷

Social interaction itself would be the most successful lure for the increased attraction of late nineteenth century agricultural exhibitions and fairs, and it would be the impetus for enhanced community participation.

The focus of Quebec agricultural societies on economic utility and the practical nature of farming did not allow them to contribute fully to the leisure

⁷⁶ Elora Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1982.70, series 9, subseries 1, file 1, minute book, 1896-1907, 8 January 1896, 15 May 1896, 25 August 1896, 13 January 1897, 22 January 1898 and 27 September 1898. See also Cardwell Agricultural society fonds, SCA, Acc. 988-3, minute book, 1868-1902, 8 July 1882 and 30 July 1896.

⁷⁷ *Miller's Canadian Farmers' Almanac for the Year 1883*, (Montreal, 1883), 3. See also South Wellington Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1988.123, series 2, subseries 1, MU 101, minute book, 1878-97, 28 October 1885, 142 and 8 August 1891, 259 and Elora Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1982.70, series 9, subseries 1, file 1, minute book, 1896-1907, 19 February 1898 and 30 July 1898.

aspect of the community ethos. Even from mid-century and beyond, Quebec agricultural societies refused to provide the kind of community events that would attract a larger audience. Many agricultural societies concentrated on improving the agricultural schools, model farms, agricultural libraries and increasing the prize lists for agricultural exhibitions. One of the important innovations of Quebec agricultural associations was that of giving prizes to the most progressive and cultivated farms of a district, in an attempt to stimulate emulation among farmers. Such contests involved the taking of prizes to the community, rather than creating a community event.⁷⁸ The endorsement of practical farming would persist well into the latter portion of the nineteenth century, as the Montmigny Agricultural society organized premiums for the most cultivated farm. The society also established a county model farm to introduce enhanced methods of agriculture, such as improved crop rotation, better implements and livestock. Of course the stated aims of these efforts was to “promoter la cause agricoles dans ce comté,” through the practical improvement of agriculture. The Missisquoi Agricultural society followed an identical pattern, as they offered premiums for cultivated farms, the purchase of livestock for stud and flax seed for their distribution to society members. Apparently this was adequate for the needs of the community, as society directors rejected a plan to hold a two-day agricultural fair with a ploughing match as “exceedingly unwise” in 1869. It was not until 1887, well after Ontario societies began to experiment with community

⁷⁸ See the *Agricultural Journal and Transactions of the Lower Canadian Agricultural Society*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1848), 16-17; vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1848), 40-1; vol. 1, no. 8, (August, 1848), 242 and vol. 3, no. 8, (August, 1850), 240-1. See also the *Lower Canadian Agriculturalist*, vol. 1, (October, 1861), 3-4; vol. 1, (December, 1861), 50-2 and vol. 1, (January, 1862), 76-7. Heaman, in *The Inglorious Arts of Peace*, 60-78 and 85-96 argues that the neglect of successive nineteenth-century Quebec governments to appreciate the exhibition movement was the major cause of failure of societies to provide significant change and improvement to provincial agriculture. The bureaucracy simply was not partial to exhibitions, while conflicts between English and French members in the Board of Agriculture and the *Conseil Des Arts* were too hard to overcome.

entertainment, that driving competitions and other amusements were offered to the public.⁷⁹

While the conversion to public events might have taken longer in Quebec, the construction and contestation of the community ethos among agricultural associations in Victorian Canada became an accomplished fact. Despite the rather contested and divided nature of agriculturalists over political, economic and even social issues, they also fostered a formidable agricultural identity in relation to the community at large. The strength of state involvement in agriculture during this period also provided an impetus not only for a renewed defence of the community ethos, it also managed to create further conflicts and disharmony among farmers. By the latter half of the century, state-sponsored agricultural associations such as Farmers' Institutes became even more exclusive, even as agricultural societies were increasing their availability to all classes in the rural setting. Recognizing the divided state of the agricultural class, promoters of farming interests in the latter half of the nineteenth century turned to a new agricultural association to further the cause of agriculture in Canada. While attempting to unite the agriculturalists as a class, the executive of the both the Grange and Patrons of Industry utilized methods that would lean towards exclusivity and the further contravention of the community ethos.

⁷⁹ Missisquoi Agricultural society fonds, NAC, MG 28 I 227, M-3790, document 2, minute book, 1863-68, annual report of 1865, 19 September 1868; document 3, minute book, 1869-75, 22 December 1869, 28 January 1871; document 5, minute book, 1879-83, 5 August 1882 and M-3791, document 6, minute book, 1883-9, 18 September 1886, annual report for 1887. See also Montmigny Agricultural society records, Philippe Landry papers, NAC, MG II E4, vol. 18, cahier des délibérations, 1856-78, 5 January 1867, 111; 14 January 1867, 114-19 and 18 December 1878, 259; Montmigny model farm records, vol. 20, cahier des délibérations, 26 December 1867, 2 and 6 September 1874, 17-18.

CHAPTER FOUR – “Severing the Connections in a Complex Community”: The Evolution of Agrarian Fraternal Orders in Victorian Canada

While the vision of community was a vibrant ethos amongst agriculturalists well into the nineteenth century, the spectre of creeping urbanization and industrialization also led many farmers to band together in ways that appeared to fragment the producer alliance by the latter half of the century. Dissatisfaction over perceived or real slights from other classes and the political system helped to stimulate farmers towards even stronger associational ties and the formation of an agricultural brotherhood. The rapid rise of the Dominion Grange – the Patrons of Husbandry – and the Patrons of Industry in the last two and a half decades of the nineteenth century is a testament to the enduring bonds of community forged among rural inhabitants, and the importance of sociability and association in the Canadian countryside. And yet the equally rapid decline of both the Dominion Grange and the Patrons of Industry illustrates not only the potential consequences inherent in the contravention of the community ethos, but also how other forces superseded the ideology of community in the late nineteenth century. Despite the meteoric rise of each organization, by lashing out in frustration against the forces seemingly bent on the destruction of the agricultural population both the Grange and the Patrons of Industry fashioned an aura of exclusivity in their associations, which in turn alienated many of their supporters and allies. Turning their backs on the community ideology carefully constructed over the nineteenth century by agriculturalists and others, the Dominion Grange and the Patrons of Industry imploded, while at the same time falling victim to the new urban power.

As the rise of both the Grange and the Patrons of Industry occurred during the period of Canada’s rapid industrialization in the nineteenth century, a great deal of the historiography surrounding these two agrarian movements focused on the dynamics of the relationship between farmers and urban labourers.

Particularly in the Canadian context, historians have easily relegated the Patrons and the Grange to mere footnotes in the history of class discontent in the latter decades of the century. While more recent historiography concedes that the internal development of a radical agrarian ideology amongst farmers was also crucial to this reform impulse, the contributions of agrarian associations to new and radical visions of society independent of labour reformers have largely been ignored.¹ As witnessed in the previous chapter, farmers wrestled with their cultural and social identity long before the advent of the Grange and Patrons of Industry in the late-Victorian development of a particular agrarian ideology. While in agricultural societies any discourse of exclusivity among farmers was forcefully checked by the community ethos, the Grange and the Patrons of Industry permitted a vision of an agrarian utopia that contravened both the producer alliance and the community ethos.

In the late 1860s, a rather minor civil servant in the U.S. Department of Agriculture named Oliver Kelley initiated a new agricultural association to unite farmers, called the Patrons of Husbandry. Drawing on his experiences as the president of an agricultural society and director of an experimental farm, Kelley believed that he had created an ideal association to improve agriculture and provide sociability and education to rural inhabitants. Establishing a strong foothold in the United States, the Patrons of Husbandry invaded Canada in 1872 by establishing a Grange in Missisquoi, Quebec. By 1875, the Dominion Grange proudly noted that there were 500 subordinate Granges and well over 20,000

¹ An exception to this rule is Russell Hann, *Farmers Confront Industrialism: Perspectives on Ontario Agrarian Movements*, (Toronto, 1975). See also Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labour in Ontario, 1880-1900*, (Toronto, 1983), 388-91. A focus on labour organizations also informs the work of Ramsay Cook, "Tillers and Toilers: The Rise and Fall of Populism in Canada in the 1890s," *CHA Historical Papers*, (Guelph, 1984), 5-20 and even to a large extent Elizabeth Sanders, *Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers and the American State, 1877-1914*, (Chicago, 1999). On the Grange as the forerunners of both the Patrons of Industry and the United Farmers of Ontario, see Kerry Badgely, *Bringing in the Common Love of Good: The UFO, 1914-26*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2000), 3-20.

members of the Patrons of Husbandry in Canada.² The significance of the Grange both in Canada and in the United States has been largely ignored, as historians have concluded that farmers only joined the Grange for social purposes and to construct a bridge between industrialization and the agrarian world. Only recently has the historiography of the Grange examined the movement in a much larger context, as a continuity of agricultural movements throughout the nineteenth century. In the United States, the Grange is viewed as the culmination of the republican ideology of virtue and liberty, and the direct antecedent of the People's Party and the Farmers' Alliance. In Canada, the Dominion Grange has not only been linked to the Patrons of Industry and the Farmers' Institute movement, the United Farmers of Ontario in the 1920s have also been pinpointed as following in the Grange tradition.³ What is certain is that the Dominion Grange was an organization committed to the unification of agriculturalists by providing commercial, educational and social opportunities.

The initial thrust of the Dominion Grange was to provide occasions for farmers to end their isolation by uniting in "friendly intercourse" with other agriculturalists, and to promote their combined interests. Noting that agriculture was the first and most noble of all the occupations of man, directors of the Dominion Grange realized that for their organization to be successful required not only the sympathy but also the assistance of the entire farming community. Comparing the Grange to trades unions, guilds, boards of trade and law societies, the promoters of the Patrons of Husbandry claimed that their association was to

² See Louis Aubrey Wood, *A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada*, (Toronto, 1975), 25-35 and *History of The Grange in Canada, With a List of Division and Subordinate Granges and their Executive Officers*, (Toronto, 1876), 22-32.

³ For examination of the tensions between the Grange and modernity, see D. Sven Nordin, *Rich Harvest: A History of the Grange, 1867-1900*, (Jackson, 1974); Hann, *Farmers Confront Industrialism*, 1-6 and Warren Gates, "Modernization as a Function of an Agricultural Fair: The Great Grangers' Picnic Exhibition at Williams Grove, Pennsylvania, 1873-1916," *Agricultural History*, 58, no. 3, (July, 1984), 262-79. For the Grange as a continuity of agrarian radicalism, see Thomas Woods, *Knights of the Plow: Oliver Kelley and the Origins of the Grange in Republican Ideology*, (Ames, 1991); Sanders, *Roots of Reform*, 33-52; L.A. Wood, *A History of Farmers' Movements*, 13-155 and Badgely, *Bringing in the Common Love of Good*, 5-12.

advance the calling and fortune of the agricultural population. Observing that their interests conflicted less than any other business, the Dominion Grange executive realized that farmers “rarely make their plans in unison, but each man lays out and executes his work by his own light, without advice or council from his neighbours.” While recognizing that the establishment of Farmers’ clubs and agricultural societies helped remedy this evil, they were only partially successful as they omitted the elements of “union and secrecy” needed to hold such bodies together.⁴ This discourse of exclusivity would become a rather prominent feature of the Patrons of Husbandry and their supporters, particularly William Weld and the *Farmers’ Advocate*. Weld was initially very enthusiastic over the prospects of this new farmers’ association, assisting with the creation of one of the first Granges just outside of London and serving as one of the Dominion Grange’s first officers. To Weld, the principle of secrecy and selectiveness inherent in the rituals and function of the Dominion Grange was entirely necessary to create a “bond of honour” among different parties of farmers. Comparing the Grange to other voluntary associations such as the Oddfellows, Masons, and Orangemen, Weld argued that each had their private bonds and secrets, and through these associational ties came unity, harmony and strength.⁵

Despite a discourse of class exclusivity among the Patrons of Husbandry, clearly they envisioned an identical ethos of community and class interdependence that agriculturalists displayed in agricultural societies. Once again the vision of equal rights and privileges became the watchword for Grange directors, as they laboured for the general good and not for the advancement of their own interests or “without any regard to the welfare of other classes.”

⁴ *History of the Grange in Canada*, 3; *Circular to the Deputies of Dominion Granges*, 22 June, (Toronto, 1877) and *Manual of Subordinate Granges of the Patrons of Husbandry, Adopted and Issued by the Dominion Grange*, 3rd ed., (Welland, 1876), 16.

⁵ See the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 9, no. 2, (February, 1874), 18-19; vol. 8, no. 7, (July, 1873), 98 and vol. 9, no. 4, (April, 1874), 57-8. This was particularly true with fraternal societies; see Mary Ann Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood: Class, Gender and Fraternalism*, (Princeton, 1989); Mark Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America*, (New Haven and London, 1989) and chapter five, below.

Calling on Grangers not to laud their occupation above others, the Dominion Grange noted that their platform was based on “broad and liberal” principles that treated with respect and acknowledged the necessity of every legitimate profession.⁶ The great task of the Granger movement was to eliminate the jealousy, envy and discontent caused by class warfare, and this was to be accomplished through a “proper readjustment” of the classes. Accordingly, Grangers desired the respect and consideration from the other members of the community, to escape the “odium of being considered mere workers, the ‘mud-sills.’” Respect apparently was a reciprocal virtue, as Patrons of Husbandry were soundly encouraged to remember that all legitimate trade, the arts and sciences, and various other professions were all parts of a great whole, “weak when taken alone, strong when united in bonds of social brotherhood.” The Grand Master address of the Fifteenth annual meeting of the Dominion Grange emphasized this point by noting that the “highway of advancement is broad enough for all to run, and our hope of ultimate success depends more on our own progress than the retarding of others.”⁷ Determining just which occupations and professions were

⁶ The position taken by the Grange would also buttress the cultural formation of the rural hegemonic social order, divided between increasingly commercial agriculturalists, self-employed businessmen, professionals and commercial men. However, both the Grange and the Patrons of Industry would illustrate that conflict could arise from within the rural social order, as well as from without. See David Burley, *A Particular Condition in Life: Self-Employment and Social Mobility in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1994) and Andrew Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2000). Gordon Darroch argues that agriculturalists formed a large majority of the rural middle class; see his “Scanty Fortunes and Rural Middle Class Formation in Nineteenth-Century Rural Ontario,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 79, no. 4, (December, 1997), 621-59. See the *History of the Grange*, 18-19 and also *The Granger*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1875), 1 and *Proceedings of the Dominion Grange, Second Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1875), 2-3.

⁷ In distancing themselves from being “mere workers,” it appears that agriculturalists not only felt part of the rural middle class, they also accepted scientific husbandry. See Tom Nesmith, “The Philosophy of Agriculture: The Promise of the Intellect in Ontario Farming,” Ph.D. Thesis, Carleton University, 1988 and Darroch, “Scanty Fortunes and Rural Middle Class Formation.” See the *Proceedings of the Dominion Grange, Fifteenth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1890), 7. See also the *Proceedings of the Dominion Grange, Sixth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1879), 9-10; *The Granger*, vol. 1, no. 2, (December, 1875), 3 and the P.J. Van Wagoner fonds, DCA, Acc. 3456-998, speech of Van Wagoner to the Acadia Grange, n.d.

legitimate from those that were not would later prove to be the undoing of the Patrons of Husbandry as a force in the community.

The participation of women was a significant factor in the rise of the Dominion Grange, as the Patrons of Husbandry attempted to create both a higher manhood and womanhood within society. The alliance of the Grange with early American suffrage movements and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union as part of an increased presence of women in the public sphere is well-noted by many historians. However, the Grange also reinforced women's domestic roles within society, which tempered the quest for mutuality and sisterhood within the Patrons of Husbandry.⁸ One of the more notable achievements of the Grange was to incorporate women into its rituals, necessitating the presence of women at Grange meetings. Creating the offices of Pomona, Flora and Ceres to represent Faith, Hope and Charity – the hallmarks of the Patron creed – would remind women of the high position assigned to them and to walk worthily of it. The inclusion of women into the community of the Grange was no accident, as the “interest, the social relations and the destiny of man and woman are identical. She was intended by her Creator to be the helpmeet, companion and equal of man.” The editors of the *Canadian Granger* bemoaned the fact that woman's instinctive perceptions of righteousness and purity were lost to society, and determined that the Grange was the organization to re-introduce rural women to the entire community. While the Grange would assign women equal powers and privileges it was noteworthy that in the public sphere, the Grange acknowledged that man “generally improves in knowledge and business ability after he enters active life, [and] woman too frequently retrogrades.” Ending the seclusion of women from society would not only liberate females from confining pursuits but would allow men and women to universally elevate their social selves.⁹

⁸ The position of the Grange in regards to women would prove to be fairly consistent with agriculturalists in general; see chapter three on agricultural societies, 111-16, above. See Nordin, *Rich Harvest*, 110-30; Woods, *Knights of the Plow*, 165-78 and especially Donald Marti, *Women of the Grange: Mutuality and Sisterhood in Rural America, 1866-1920*, (New York, 1991).

However, the Grange would also reflect the coming changes to agriculture in the late Victorian period, as a more gendered realignment of farm work occurred. Even though the rituals of the Grange recognized that women were still required to labour “side by side” with their producer husbands, the nature of female agricultural work had been altered substantially. Christina Moffat, in her pamphlet outlining the female Granger offices of Flora, Ceres and Pomona, surprisingly utilized the masculine language of the husbandman in her description of Ceres, the “protectress of agriculture.” And yet in her portrayal of Flora, the goddess of flowers and Pomona, the goddess of fruit gardens, Moffat emphasized that these branches of agriculture were for the prerogative of women alone. Reinforcing a domestic ideology, Moffat noted in her essay on the decorative importance of flowers “how pure and refreshing plants appear in a room watched and waited on as they generally are by the gentler sex; they are links in many pleasant associations, they are cherished favourites of mothers, wives, sisters, and friends not less dear, and connect themselves in our minds, with their feminine delicacy, loveliness, and affectionate habits and sentiments.”¹⁰

Notwithstanding the inclusive nature of Granger rhetoric, in practice the Patrons of Husbandry disregarded the community ethos constructed over the course of the nineteenth century. Although the Grange did not overtly launch an offensive against other classes in society, by attempting to “re-adjust” the position of the classes the perception of blatant exclusivity in the doctrines and activities of the Dominion Grange easily surfaced. The Dominion Grange did endeavour to

⁹ See the *Canadian Granger*, vol. 1, no. 12, (October, 1876), 2. See also the *Manual of Subordinate Granges*, 24-6 and *Constitution and Bylaws of the Dominion Grange*, 4th edition, (Toronto, 1878), 3.

¹⁰ See Christina Moffat, *To the Members of the Dominion Grange, Patrons of Husbandry of Canada, Three Essays, Called Flora, Ceres and Pomona*, (Sunderland, 1886), 4-6; 15-17 and 26-27. On the evolution of agriculture work pertaining to women, see Nancy Osterud, *Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth Century New York*, (Ithaca and London, 1991) and Sally McMurry, *Transforming Rural Life: Dairying Families and Agricultural Change*, (Baltimore and London, 1995). For the Canadian context, see Marjorie Griffin Cohen, *Women's Work, Markets, and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century Ontario*, (Toronto, 1988) and Terry Crowley, “Experience and Representation: Southern Ontario Farm Women and Agricultural Change, 1870-1914,” *Agricultural History*, 73, no. 2, (Spring, 1999), 238-51.

moderate the stance taken by the National Grange in the United States, which ensured that all their members engaged in farming pursuits “because it is not safe to open the Grange to any others, as it is emphatically a Farmers’ Institution, and the base must rest on the farmers alone.” The resulting confusion of these edicts from the National Grange caused local Patrons of Husbandry to question the rudimentary producer alliance of labour and agriculture. The Knock Grange suspended the initiation of labourers and labourers’ wives in 1875 until the Dominion Grange ruled on the possibility of allowing non-farmers equal privileges as members. More than likely similar requests caused the Dominion Grange to temper its initiation rules to include not only those directly interested in agricultural pursuits, but also those having no commercial interests conflicting with Granger purposes.¹¹

Difficulties arose when the Grange endeavoured to discern just which occupations deserved censure, from the commercial activities and service providers beneficial to society. While politicians were not new targets for agricultural critics, Grangers consolidated an adversarial “professional coalition” of politicians, lawyers and doctors as the prime assassins of their community ethos. Noting that farmers had been the prey to cunning professionals for years, the Dominion Grange demanded the equality of remuneration for “hard work” as was secured for “brain work.” Of course *The Granger* was quick to point out that while lawyers, doctors and professionals were requisite to the welfare of society, the surplus of professionals – that portion which was not “necessary to the well-being of the community” – caused great distress to agriculturalists.¹² According to the Patrons of Husbandry, the greatest disruption to the producer alliance by the

¹¹ These difficulties would underscore the later problems of the Patrons of Industry in establishing a link between agriculturalists and urban industrial workers. See the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Dominion Grange*, 9; A.B. Smedley, *The Patrons Monitor*, (Des Moines, 1874), 2-3 and also the Knock Grange fonds, SCA, Acc. 987-16, minute book, 1875-77, 16 June 1875.

¹² See *The Granger*, vol. 1, no. 2, (December, 1875), 1; *Proceedings of the Dominion Grange, Twelfth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1886), 44 and the Knock Grange fonds, SCA, Acc. 987-16, E7, miscellaneous papers, Dominion Grange circular, 13 June 1884.

end of the nineteenth century was the commercial class. The problem itself was not merchants or commercial activities *per se*; what angered the Grange was the “tyranny of monopolies” or big capital. Corporations and large-scale industries oppressed the people by robbing them of their just profit, and ruined the honest farmer while the system “built up Princes, men in idleness, who do nothing, who won’t do anything and who never have done anything...they have never done a hand’s turn, they never plowed or sowed, reaped or mowed, nor even teamed a load of produce into any market.” With the opening of the Ontario People’s Salt Company in 1883 near Kincardine, the Grange refused to sell stock to commercial dealers and businessmen, allowing only Granges and farmers to purchase salt as individuals who suffered the most from monopoly and tyranny.¹³

Even though the antagonism of the Grange for unwieldy capital and large retailers appeared on the surface to uphold the community agenda, in reality much of Granger ideology expressed strong reservations about the commercial class as a whole. One of the primary functions of the Grange was to bring producers and consumers, as well as farmers and manufacturers into more direct working relationships. Unfortunately, to accomplish this task required the elimination of the middleman as a class, despite rather animated protests to the contrary by Granger supporters that they sought only the eradication of the *surplus* commercial retailers. *The Granger* attempted to reassure merchants and manufacturers that agriculturalists did not want to usurp established rules of trade, or make all other interests subservient to their own. This was no declared war on middlemen, as Grangers recognized the necessity of the commercial class by

¹³ See the Knock Grange fonds, SCA, Acc. 987-16, E4, miscellaneous papers, Ontario People’s Salt Co. circular, 1883. See also Robert Bradford, *Address Delivered by Robert Bradford to the Grange at Agincourt: An able exposition of the cause of the hard times, the Banks, Loan Companies and Importing merchants chiefly to blame*, (Toronto, 1878), 5 and 10; Moffat, *Flora, Ceres and Pomona*, 16-17 and *Constitution and Bylaws of the Dominion Grange*, 4. In many ways, this discourse mirrored the original producer alliance’s concern with speculative merchants; see L.R. MacDonald, “Merchants Against Industry: An Idea and its Origins,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 56, (1975), 266-80; Bryan Palmer, *Working Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian Labour*, (Toronto, 1983), 25-58 and T.W. Acheson, *Saint John: The Making of a Colonial Urban Community*, (Toronto, 1985).

assisting the creation of their businesses and helping mercantile retailers succeed. However, Grangers also slammed the majority of retailers for their excessive salaries, high rates of credit and interest, and elevated rates of profit. If the commercial class proved unable to enact the changes required by farmers in Canada, then agriculturalists needed to unite and attempt to control the reins of government, rail monopolies, the courts, banks, and the entire mercantile system of capital.¹⁴ Concentrated wealth contained in the hands of an “unproductive class” was the ruination of the producer alliance, as Grangers only redressed the inequities experienced by farmers in society.

Supporters and allies of the early Grange movement soon recognized that this ideology was rather exclusive, and left unrefined would erode further the community bonds forged through interclass co-operation. William Weld offered a word of caution to the Grange as early as 1875, stating that it was not a “judicious policy” to array class against class in the business activities of the Grange, or to attack manufacturers or merchants for making a living. Weld lauded the manufacturers for aiding the farmers in their labours, while conceding that it was the dishonest agents from the commercial class that led to the deterioration of the producer alliance. By 1880, convinced that the Grange not only singled out the “patent right men, tree agents, notion agents and shoddy agents” for censure but the mercantile sector as a whole, Weld began to distance himself from the Dominion Grange. In calling for the Patrons of Husbandry to end their crusade against the retailers, Weld was not only upholding the community/producer coalition but also safeguarding his own business and the

¹⁴ See Bradford, *Address to the Grange at Agincourt*, 20-2; *The Granger*, vol. 1, no. 1, (November, 1875), 1-2; vol. 1, no. 3, (January, 1876), 1 and vol. 1, no. 6, (April, 1876), 2. See also *Constitution and Bylaws of the Dominion Grange*, 4-5. These were not new arguments that appeared suddenly among agriculturalists in the 1870s, as noted in chapter three, above. See also J.M.S. Careless, “The Toronto *Globe* and Agrarian Radicalism, 1850-67,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 29, no. 1, (March, 1948), 14-39 and Ken Dewar, “Charles Clarke’s *Reformer*: Early Victorian Radicalism in Upper Canada,” *Ontario History*, 78, no. 3, (September, 1986), 233-52.

advertising revenue received from commercial ventures.¹⁵ In a remarkably candid retrospective on the Patrons of Husbandry offered by the Grand Secretary during the 23rd annual meeting of the Dominion Grange in 1898, many of the outlined mistakes of the early Grangers resulted from the exclusivity of its business practices. Noting that the whole country was aroused in opposition to the new movement out of surprise and alarm for its power and influence among agriculturalists, class antagonism also transpired when early Grangers attracted “a class so sordid and selfish that money was all they looked for.” These individuals were plainly uninterested in the pleasures of social intercourse or the advantages of meeting together to discuss their noble calling, focusing exclusively on furthering their own pecuniary interests.¹⁶ Even though the Patrons of Husbandry proclaimed the importance of mutuality and interclass harmony, many others sensed the ultimate objective of the Grange was to eliminate merchants and retailers from the entire mercantile system.

Initially the Dominion Grange adhered strongly to the notion of purging their association from the effects of sectarianism and partyism. Indeed, one of the central tenets of their ideology was that no Granger “in keeping true to his obligations” could discuss political or religious questions, call political conventions, nominate candidates or discuss the merits of any political contestant. Prohibiting party politics from the Grange would unify farmers divided along party lines, yet whose overall interests were identical. It was no crime to have a variance of beliefs among Grangers, for the “progress of truth is made by difference of opinion,” while disharmony resulted through the bitterness of

¹⁵ Weld clearly appreciated the diversity of the bourgeois social order in the countryside, while the Grange consciously attempted to alter these cultural relationships. The majority of Granger sentiment on this issue came from how agriculturalists continued to view themselves as vital to the Canadian economy; see chapter three, above. See also the *Farmers' Advocate*, vol. 10, no. 2, (February, 1875), 23; vol. 10, no. 3, (March, 1875), 35-7 and vol. 15, no. 3, (March, 1880), 62. And also see Kerry Badgely, “‘Then I Saw that I had Been Swindled’: Frauds and Swindles Perpetrated on Farmers in Late Nineteenth Century Ontario,” *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, 9, (Gananoque, 1994), 350-54.

¹⁶ See the *Proceedings of the Dominion Grange, Twenty-Third Annual Session*, (Blenheim, 1898), 16-17 and Badgely, “‘Then I Saw that I had Been Swindled,’” 354.

controversy. By the end of the century, the executive of the Dominion Grange bemoaned the “utter extinction” of independence from the political parties while at the same time lauding the stability of the Grange, which came from the exclusion of sectarian and political turmoil.¹⁷ Far more than agricultural societies, the Dominion Grange advocated the purification of politics in Canada and the increased presence of their organization in the political process. As the Grange established a tentative hold on the imaginations of Canadian farmers, William Weld and the *Farmers’ Advocate* trumpeted the need for a Farmers’ party to listen to the concerns of agriculturalists. The Dominion Grange agreed with this assessment, and while they did not form a “Farmers’ Party” they encouraged members to take an active role in the politics of the country:

The principles we teach underlie all true politics, all true statesmanship, and, if properly carried out, will tend to purify the whole political atmosphere of our country....It is his duty [the Granger] to do all he can in his own party to put down bribery, corruption and trickery; and see that none but competent, faithful and honest men, who will unflinchingly stand by our interests, are nominated for all positions of trust; and to have carried out the principle which should always characterize every Grange member, that THE OFFICE SHOULD SEEK THE MAN, AND NOT THE MAN THE OFFICE.¹⁸

Complications arose when the Grange attempted to purify the political process with political methods, rather than following the community ideology of party independence. Initial forays by the Dominion Grange into the political

¹⁷ *Proceedings of the Dominion Grange, Twenty-Third Annual Session*, (Blenheim, 1898), 10; see also the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Dominion Grange*, 5-6; *History of the Grange*, 21-2; *Manual of the Grange*, 69-70; *The Granger*, vol. 1, no. 1, (November, 1875), 2-4 and the *Canadian Granger*, vol. 1, no. 11, (September, 1876), 3.

¹⁸ See the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Dominion Grange*, 5 and also the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 9, no. 1, (January, 1874), 17-18 and 20; vol. 9, no. 3, (March, 1874), 35 and vol. 9, no. 4, (April, 1874), 49-50. Repeated demands for popular representation in politics have been a “populist” tendency throughout the history of Ontario political culture, as witnessed in Sid Noel, “Early Populist Tendencies in Ontario Political Culture,” *Ontario History*, 90, no. 2, (September, 1998), 173-87; Carol Wilton, *Popular Politics and Political Culture in Upper Canada, 1800-1850*, (Toronto, 2000) and Jeffrey McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge: Public Opinion and Deliberative Democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854*, (Toronto, 2000).

realm occurred as early as 1875, when the Canadian Parliament consulted the Grange on the possibility of raising duties on agricultural productions. Experiences such as this led several prominent Grangers such as Worthy Grand Master Squire Hill, W.M. Blair and Charles Drury to join the Mowat Liberals.¹⁹ The impact of the more politicized Patrons of Industry on the Dominion Grange by the 1890s can also be witnessed through the proceedings of the Grange during this period. Offering the Patrons of Industry the “right hand of fellowship and goodwill,” the Grange debated the merits of joint action between the two associations on several political issues, noting that partyism would be abolished with the implementation of the Patron platform. Political manoeuvring also occurred on the local level, as the Knock Grange contemplated the necessity of taking up the political banner. Debating the merits of cumulative voting and referenda, the Knock Grange’s desire to be more involved in the political sphere became more acute when they shared their lodgings with a local chapter of the Patrons of Industry.²⁰

Granger ideology regarding the science of political economy was a popular version of classic liberalism that worshipped the ethos of honest industry and individual hard work, adhering strongly to the philosophy of the producer alliance. In many ways, the Patrons of Husbandry supported a similar philosophy found in agricultural societies and Farmers’ Institutes examined in the preceding chapter, yet the experiences of farmers in the latter half of the century tempered their views somewhat. While some historians view Granger disdain for monopoly and capital as a radical departure from established ideas of nineteenth-century

¹⁹ *The Granger*, vol. 1, no. 6, (April, 1876), 1 and Wood, *A History of Farmers’ Movements in Canada*, 90-99. S.J.R. Noel postulates that a solid constituency of farmers – and Grangers – in Ontario followed the Mowat Liberals as a result of his masterful clientelism, which is a compelling argument; see his *Patrons, Clients, Brokers: Ontario Society and Politics*, (Toronto, 1990), 232-48.

²⁰ See the Knock Grange fonds, SCA, Acc. 987-16, minute book, 1887-1901, 30 June 1891; 17 February 1894 and 5 October 1896. See also *Proceedings of the Dominion Grange*, 17th Session, (Toronto, 1892), 10; *Proceedings of the Grange*, 18th Session, (Toronto, 1893), 6-9 and *Proceedings of the Dominion Grange*, 19th Session, (Toronto, 1894), 10.

popular political economy, others see the Grange's political economy as a logical extension of republican appreciation for the producer class.²¹ And yet the manifestation of increasing urbanization and industrialism perplexed the Patrons of Husbandry to such a degree that once again they turned their backs on the community ethos. The Dominion Grange did appreciate the importance of individual diligence, honest industry and self-reliance, as evidenced by their motto "Put your shoulder to the wheel; fortune helps those who help themselves." The vast majority of Granger songs from *God Speed the Plow, Work, and Sowing and Reaping* underscored the significance of honest labour for the husbandman, as a liberal harvest would only be secured through toil and exertion. As the Granger song *Dignity of Labor* chorused:

'Tis toil that over nature, gives man his proud control;
 And purifies and hallows, the temple of his soul.
 It startles foul diseases, with all their ghastly train;
 Puts iron in the muscle, and crystal in the brain.
 The Grand Almighty Builder, who fashioned out the earth,
 Hath stamped his seal of honor on labor from her birth.²²

The Victorian virtues of individual hard work, thrift and self-help would match well with Granger ideology regarding political economy well into the latter decades of the nineteenth century.

The Grange anticipated the removal of antagonism between capital and labour through "common consent," a fostering of mutual understanding and co-operation between employers and workers. Granger political economy likewise included the classic liberalism staple of cash purchases as opposed to credit, and

²¹ See Hann, *Farmers Confront Industrialism*; Palmer and Kealey, *Dreaming of What Might Be* and Christina Burr, *Spreading the Light: Work and Labour Reform in Late Nineteenth-Century Toronto*, (Toronto, 1999), 14-55. An expression of the latter view can be found in Woods, *Knights of the Plow*, 38-50 and Sanders, *Roots of Reform*, 101-47.

²² See the *Songs of the Grange, Patrons of Husbandry*, (London, 1874), 20-24, 44-46. See also *Constitution and Bylaws of the Dominion Grange*, 1 and *Manual of the Grange*, 6-13, 46-8.

the importance of personal, commercial and political retrenchment.²³ Another fundamental expression of popular political economy in Canada appears in the many debates over protectionism and free trade. While some historians conclude that the majority of Grangers favoured protection, many Grange publications were either ambivalent or – mirroring the experience of the later Farmers’ Institutes and *cercles agricoles* – fully supportive of freer trade. Patrons of Husbandry were far more concerned with ensuring equality of opportunity within the community when it came to trade practices, than in advocating a particular economic position. To the editors of *The Granger*, the tenor of the Granger petition on the tariff question in 1875 was not about support for a nascent National Policy. Their congress on tariffs before the Canadian Parliament was all about equal rights for farmers, and the encouragement of protection for agricultural products *or* free trade. A subtle defence of free trade was then offered in *The Granger*, as they noted that “all any government can do for the farmer, as a class, is to merely let them alone, and to give no undue advantage to other classes...not that we believe that any such assumed advantages by protection or taxation can, in the end, benefit any class of the community, as has been pretty conclusively shown by the experience of the late depression.” The *Canadian Granger* echoed these sentiments by proclaiming that protection, or any “trade or commerce that prevents the continuance of the demand for labour” injured every class in the community, from the workers and the farmers to the commercial sector.²⁴

²³ See *The Granger*, vol. 1, no. 1, (November, 1875), 1-4 and *Constitution and Bylaws of the Dominion Grange*, 3-4. In the Canadian context of the producer ideology, see Bryan Palmer, *Working Class Experience*, 25-58. American manifestations of this ideology can be found in Daniel Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, (Chicago, 1978); Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846*, (New York, 1991) and James Livingston, *Pragmatism and the Political Economy of Cultural Revolution, 1850-1940*, (Chapel Hill and London, 1994).

²⁴ See the *Canadian Granger*, vol. 1, no. 11, (September, 1876), 1 and vol. 2, no. 1, (November, 1876), 1; *The Granger*, vol. 1, no. 5, (March, 1876), 1 and vol. 1, no. 6, (April, 1876); *Proceedings of the Dominion Grange, First Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1874), 8 and the *Sixth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1879), 9-10. See also Wood, *A History of Farmers’ Movements in Canada*, 91-95 and for a discussion on the free trade position see Ben Forster, *A Conjunction of Interests: Business, Politics and Tariffs, 1825-1879*, (Toronto, 1986), 30-67.

Another essential component of Granger political economy was the establishment of the co-operative principle in every facet of their operations. If monopoly and big capital shattered the community ethos, then a “reworking” of commercial values required co-operation to restore the balance. To the Patrons of Husbandry, mutual aid in the commercial sphere merely enhanced the dependence of capital upon labour and ensured “harmony and confidence” between both labourers and employers. The systematic application of commercial association would promote the well-being of the community, as the truest principles of co-operation included brotherly kindness and the inculcation of peace between nations, the answer to most of the “practical problems appertaining to human life.” As these commercial principles would tend to protect and succour the weak and keep the strong in check, co-operation was a logical extension of Victorian popular liberalism, which eschewed commercial conflict and lauded independence, self-help and individual industriousness:

It [co-operation] touches no man’s fortune; seeks no plunder; causes no disturbance in society; gives no trouble to statesmen; needs no trade union to protect its interests; contemplates no violence; subverts no order; accepts no gifts, nor asks any favour; keeps no terms with the idle, and breaks no faith with the industrious; it means self-help, self-independence, and such share in the common competence as labour can earn, and thought can win.²⁵

To the members of the Dominion Grange, a solution to the problems plaguing the community would be found through mutual aid and the co-operative system.

And yet agricultural critics and even supposed allies found the principles of co-operation to be a perilous foundation for the Grange to build upon. By 1880, William Weld came to believe that the business ventures of the Grange were “petty and selfish,” and based more on pecuniary gain and the elimination of the

²⁵ *The Granger*, vol. 1, no. 2, (December, 1875), 2 and vol. 1, no. 1, (November, 1875), 4. See also the *Canadian Co-operator and Patron*, vol. 5, no. 58, (July, 1886), 1-2 and *Circular of the Dominion Grange*, 22 June 1877.

commercial class than in fostering mutual understanding. While agreeing that co-operation indeed was the foundation of society, Weld was fairly clear that the Grange misapplied the principle as mutuality between various classes should occur only in social relations. To Weld, the Patrons of Husbandry violated a well known law in political economy, that civilized society had to exist through a division of labour. By trying to “sever the connection that should exist in a complex community, and make the farmer storekeeper, shipper, speculator and everything else” the Grange failed in their mandate to protect the community ethos.²⁶ These prophecies of Weld often came true in the organization of Grange commercial ventures, as conflict often erupted between Grangers and the officers of co-operative institutions. Commenting upon his relations with the Grange, D.S. McKinnon of the Co-op Sewing Machine Company noted that he should receive “thanks instead of abuse” for selling his machine to the Grange at a lower price. Calling on the Grange to remember their principles of bringing manufacturers and farmers into more direct contact, McKinnon asked the Grange to send in their orders to “show the Dominion Grange is a reality, and not a myth.” Similarly, the Grange Wholesale Company demanded prompt payment from the Secretaries of individual Granges, as cash payments were a “plank in the Grange platform.” The problems of debt amongst various Granges was so great, that unless they agreed to payments in advance the Grange Wholesale Company would decline filling orders as it would “surely be disastrous to yourselves as well as us to continue under the present system.”²⁷ These conflicts would epitomize the Grange’s concerns with the entire commercial system.

²⁶ *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 15, no. 1, (January, 1880), 7; see also vol. 15, no. 3, (March, 1880), 62 and vol. 15, no. 7, (July, 1880), 147. Weld also accused the Grange of not fostering enough independence within their membership as the “shirker” could receive equal benefits as hardworking members, another contravention of popular political economy; see the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 15, no. 1, (January, 1880), 1.

²⁷ See the Knock Grange fonds, SCA, Acc. 987-16, file E2, circulars of the Co-op Sewing Machine Co., 1882 and 1884 and file E6, circulars of the Grange Wholesale Company, 1882.

And yet the Dominion Grange experienced an early surge in membership growth due in large measure to their sociability and the recreational activities offered to rural inhabitants. Even a hardened critic such as William Weld recognized the potential of Grange social events in promoting brotherly feeling, allaying local animosities and bringing together entire neighbourhoods through Grange picnics and other events. By abandoning the solid structure of sociability for economic prosperity with the extension of the co-operative principle the Grange was doomed to failure.²⁸ The importance of social intercourse to end the isolation of agriculturalists undoubtedly became a major selling point for the Patrons of Husbandry. Noting that the Grange was primarily a social institution, Grangers fully believed that the “old, selfish system of isolation” was giving way to this new “invigorating sociality” whereby the agricultural community could develop themselves as social beings. The majority of the Grange’s ritual and music would emphasize this feature, as one opening song proclaimed:

We have come to the Grange, where ‘tis joyful to meet,
Our friends and companions in unity sweet;
Now our labour is done, and to rest and repose
We bid a fond welcome at day’s weary close.

Then Patrons, in joy, come gather around,
Concord and harmony with us be found!
Down with the spite and the hate that estrange,
And long live the peace that we find at the Grange.²⁹

Local Granges quickly understood the importance of this doctrine of sociability, and provided members with a number of entertainment options. Many

²⁸ See the *Farmers’ Advocate*, vol. 9, no. 4, (April, 1874), 57; vol. 11, no. 1, (January, 1876), 19; vol. 13, no. 7, (July, 1878), 167 and vol. 15, no. 7, (July, 1880), 146-7.

²⁹ The corresponding closing ode went as follows: “Bless be the tie that binds/Our hearts in social love; The fellowship of kindred minds/Is like to that above. When we asunder part/It gives us inward pain; But we shall still be joined in heart/And hope to meet again.” See the *Songs of the Grange*, 50, and 3-4, 7-10 and 19-20; *Manual of the Grange*, 67-9 and the *Canadian Granger*, vol. 2, no. 5, (March, 1877), 3.

of these activities emulated the social functions inherent in agricultural societies, such as ploughing matches, agricultural debates and discussions along with musical interludes, recitations, conversaciones and literary readings. Many culinary events such as oyster suppers and tea excursions were highly successful, as one such event in the Knock Grange led the executive to declare “all enjoyed themselves, with the good things provided, and social chat flowed freely round.”³⁰ As with other voluntary societies during this period, Granges that focused on entertainment as a means of increasing their revenue streams were far more successful than their counterparts. Both the Minesing and the Knock Granges sold tickets to their tea parties and oyster suppers, while the Knock Grange held a concert for the villagers that resulted in a sizeable profit. As a result, both of these assemblies managed to remain intact well into the twentieth century. Conversely, the Brougham Grange left the entertainment in the hands of its female members with limited support, while providing agricultural lectures as the only supplementary amusement to Grange meetings. The Royal Oak Grange likewise made only half-hearted attempts in arranging a festival to raise funds, focusing exclusively on the merits of the co-operative functions of the Patrons of Husbandry. Each Grange only lasted four years in operation as the Brougham Grange was forced to return over three hundred dollars to its members, funds earmarked for the construction of their Granger Hall. The last entry of the Royal Oak minute book proclaimed sadly that “this was the last of the Royal Oak Grange; it died a natural death just like all.”³¹

³⁰ See the Knock Grange fonds, SCA, Acc. 987-16, minute book, 1875-77, 16 February and 18 March 1876; minute book, 1886, 24 February 1886; minute book, 1887-1901, 2 January 1889 and 23 March 1893. See also the Minesing Grange records, in the Harold Parker fonds, SCA, Acc. 979-100, minute book, 1879-1906, 28 July 1879 and 28 March 1881.

³¹ See the Royal Oak Grange fonds, RCL, vertical file #2, minutes 1874-78, 22 December 1874, 11 January 1876, 13 February 1877 and 12 April 1878; Brougham Grange fonds, AO, MU 7778 #2, minute book, 1880-84, 10 December 1880, 28 December 1881 and 12 January 1884. See also the Knock Grange fonds, SCA, Acc. 987-16, minute book, 1875-77, 5 September 1877; minute book, 1887-1901, 23 March 1893. See also the Minesing Grange records, in the Harold Parker fonds, SCA, Acc. 979-100, minute book, 1879-1906, 13 February 1882, 11 February 1883, and 10 March 1884.

Another contributing factor to the decline of the Patrons of Husbandry in late nineteenth-century Canada was the appearance of the Patrons of Industry in the early 1890s. In many ways, the Patrons of Industry emulated the Populist movement and the Farmers' Alliance in the United States, associations that have recently received a great deal of scholarly attention. Descriptions of the Populist "moment" range from radical agrarian responses to industrial capitalism, to agricultural class-consciousness finding political expression in the Farmers' Alliance. Current studies on the Populists conclude that the movement merely attempted to redress old agrarian grievances associated with capitalism and the ever-present isolation of the agricultural community.³² The Patrons of Industry in Canadian historiography are viewed either as an agrarian retreat into classic economic liberalism, or the harbinger of radical social change as farmers confronted industrialism with collectivized solutions to the problems of modern capitalism. More recent treatments of the Patrons of Industry presume that the Patrons shared in the tradition of Clear Grit agrarian radicalism, providing a continuity of farmers' movements of agrarian protest well into the twentieth century.³³ In reality, the Patrons of Industry did attempt to promote the

³² For Populism as a radical agrarian solution to capitalism, see Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America*, (New York, 1976) and Bruce Palmer, *Man Over Money: The Southern Populist Critique of American Capitalism*, (Chapel Hill, 1980). Descriptions of Populism as a reaction to social change can be found in Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890*, (New York, 1983) and Scott McNall, *The Road to Rebellion: Class Formation and Kansas Populism, 1865-1900*, (Chicago, 1988). Other historians argue that Populism was a movement of small producers, and accordingly critiqued capitalism from a republican ideology; see William Holmes, "Populism: In Search of Context," *Agricultural History*, 64, no. 4, (Fall, 1990), 26-58. See also Sanders, *Roots of Reform*, 30-52 and 102-47 to see how the Farmers' Alliance was a successor to Greenbackism in republican lore. Robert McMath Jr. argued that Populism strove simply to create an agricultural community based on producerism and education; see McMath, *American Populism: A Social History, 1877-1898*, (New York, 1993).

³³ For the Patrons' retreat into classic economic liberalism, see S.E.D. Shortt, "Social Change and Political Crisis in Rural Ontario: The Patrons of Industry, 1889-1896," in Donald Swainson, editor, *Oliver Mowat's Ontario*, (Toronto, 1972), 211-35. A more Marxist view of the Patrons as heralds of collectivist solutions to the problems of capitalism can be found in Hann, *Farmers Confront Industrialism*. See also Cook, "Tillers and Toilers," 5-20. For the Patrons as a link with the radical agrarianism of the nineteenth century, see Wood, *Farmers' Movements in*

community ideology constructed over the course of the nineteenth century by generating stronger ties with the industrial labourers, and adhering to the doctrines of popular political economy. At the same time the Patrons contravened a constructed community ethos by falling into the same trap as the Dominion Grange in criticizing the professional and the commercial classes.

Founded in Port Huron, Michigan, the Patrons of Industry began as a politico-economical association of farmers with tentative overtures to the emerging industrial class. By the time the American chapter of the Patrons of Industry faltered in 1892, the independent Canadian version was flourishing in Ontario and Manitoba. With a rapidity that even outstripped the Dominion Grange, the movement took hold on the hearts of agriculturalists in Canada. Within a scant few months of the initial meeting in 1891 of Patrons in Sarnia, the Grand Association of the Patrons of Industry of Ontario established their headquarters in Strathroy. By 1893, the Patrons had nearly 100,000 members in Ontario, with over two thousand active associations.³⁴ Clearly the success of the Patrons of Industry can be attributed to rectifying the approach of the Dominion Grange as it pertained to the community ethos. Right from the outset, the directors of the Patrons of Industry desired to re-establish the producer alliance of “tillers and toilers,” of industry and husbandry. Promoting the interests of both industrial employees and farmers, the Patrons’ main aspiration was to “advance the interest of the suffering masses.” In doing so, the Patrons of Industry understood that all members would enter a mutual agreement to elevate the moral, intellectual, social, political and financial position of the toiling workers. In aiding these individuals who provided the subsistence to all life and the

Canada, 109-55; Noel, *Patrons, Clients, Brokers*, chapter 16, “The Anti-Party Reaction,” 294-309 and Badgely, *Bringing in the Common Love of Good*, 2-13.

³⁴ See Wood, *Farmers’ Movements in Canada*, 109-12; Shortt, “Social Change and Political Crisis,” 212-13 and Brian McCutcheon, “The Patrons of Industry in Manitoba,” in Donald Swainson, ed., *Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces*, (Toronto, 1970), 142-65.

advancement of the prosperity of all nations, the Patrons were summarily convinced that the community as a whole would benefit.³⁵

The Patron discourse of inclusion would not only cement the alliance of artisan and husbandman, it would also embrace other classes in the carefully crafted ethos of community. The directors of the Patrons of Industry took great pains to explain that their association was for the protection of members, not to unfairly curtail the rights or privileges of other groups and classes. Even though the Patrons boldly decreed that agriculturalists were essential to the community as they provided both food and rent, society was interdependent on each occupation to provide the necessities of life:

...be they manufactural [*sic*] to prepare fabric from his cotton fields or the back of his animals, or implements and utensils from his forests and mines; commercial, with its monetary medium of convenience, to effect the desired exchange of productions of the various departments and the different parts of his extended realm; educational to develop and mould the character and accumulate knowledge for the more successful prosecution of his labours; or governmental, to formulate and administer his will in prudence and justice.³⁶

As the Patrons moved steadily towards becoming a more political protest movement, many of the biographies of prominent Patrons lauded their vision of a comprehensive and all-encompassing organization of all classes. A biographical sketch of George Wrigley, the editor of the *Canada Farmers' Sun* and the official organ of the Patrons, noted that his influence was successful in preventing the Patrons from becoming a class movement in receiving the honest recognition of

³⁵ See the miscellaneous records of the Gainsborough Patrons, AO, MU 7185, pamphlet, *Ritual and Installation Service of the Patrons of Industry*, (n.p., n.d.), 4. See also *Constitution and Rules of Order of the Patrons of Industry of North America*, (Strathroy, 1892), preamble and 3-4; *Minutes of the 3rd Annual Meeting of the Grand Association of Ontario Patrons of Industry*, (Strathroy, 1894), 2 and *Canada Farmers' Sun*, 7 March 1893, 1-2 and 21 March 1893, 3.

³⁶ See the miscellaneous records of the Gainsborough Patrons, AO, MU 7185, pamphlet, *Principles and Rules of the Patrons of Industry Industrial Co-operation for the Province of Ontario*, (Strathroy, n.d.), 1-2. See also the *Canada Farmers' Sun*, 10 May 1892, 7; 7 June 1892, 1 and 27 September 1892, 1.

the claims of other classes and professions. Likewise, the President of the Grand Association of the Patrons of Industry of Ontario, C.A. Mallory, reviewed with satisfaction that they had received the political support of all classes, races and creeds, stating “our platform is so broad that all may stand upon it.”³⁷

The extent of women’s participation in the Patrons of Industry movement rivalled the Dominion Grange in scope, as they incorporated women in their rituals with the creation of the Demeter and Minerva degrees. The pages of the *Canada Farmers’ Sun* were often replete with editorials advocating the increased presence of women in colleges and universities, or lauding the Council on Women and the work done by women factory inspectors. The connection of the Patrons of Industry and the WCTU was also very intense, as the Patrons not only became leaders in the temperance cause, they also agreed to make female suffrage a plank on the Patron platform if the subordinate associations were in agreement. Despite these calls for an escalation of women in the public sphere, columns in the *Canada Farmers’ Sun* entitled “With the Fair Sex,” “Just for the Ladies,” “Sunlight for Women” and “Facts for Housewives” continued to affirm the domestic ideal for women witnessed in other agricultural associations.³⁸ Women obviously felt comfortable joining their men folk at Patron meetings, as the Galetta, Victoria and Willow Vale lodges reported that between thirty-three and twenty-three percent of the membership were women. And yet the contribution of women in the Willow Vale Lodge was severely limited to a committee of ladies authorized “to buy blines [*sic*] for the house.” Under these conditions the wife and daughter of John Strumm refused their appointments as Minerva and

³⁷ See the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 27 March 1894, 1 and 7 November 1894, 1, as well as Hann, *Farmers Confront Industrialism*, and Cook, “Tillers and Toilers,” 7-10.

³⁸ See the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 14 July 1892, 1; 28 February 1893, 2; 5 December 1893, 7 and 24 July 1895, 6. For the Patron position on women’s suffrage see *Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the Patrons of Industry*, (Strathroy, 1895), 20; *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 1 November 1892, 6; 11 July 1893, 1; 12 December 1893, 7 and 10 October 1894, 4. On the Patrons and domesticity see *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 16 August 1892, 6-7; 4 October 1892, 6; 1 November 1892, 6; 18 January 1893, 7 and 4 July 1894, 7. Similar attitudes were experienced in agricultural societies, as witnessed in E.A. Heaman, “Taking the World by Show: Canadian Women as Exhibitors to 1900,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 78, no. 4, (December, 1997), 599-631.

Demeter, and thus a few months later the Patrons slashed fees for women to join from ten cents a quarter to five. The Victoria Lodge had the highest concentration of female members, and consequently two women received an invitation to sit on the committee on bylaws. Gender conflicts soon erupted, as a motion was put forward to restrict the rights of ladies to vote on Lodge business. Given the lofty percentage of lady members the motion was summarily quashed, and the two males who put forward the motion forced to apologize in writing for “depriving the ladies of their right to vote.”³⁹

Despite the rather contradictory nature of this discourse of inclusion, in practice the Patrons of Industry experienced the same difficulties in promoting their version of the community ethos that befell the Grange. The Patrons of Industry were even more unequivocal in their denunciation of other classes, as they excluded all of an immoral character, as well as lawyers, doctors, merchants, liquor dealers, manufactures, party politicians, and “minor members of families of persons as above mentioned.”⁴⁰ And yet the Patrons recognized far more quickly than did the Grange that the commercial class itself should not come under condemnation. One year after the creation of the Patron Constitution, President C.A. Mallory insisted that while understandable antagonism between Patrons and the merchant/manufacturer class existed, that prejudice was just as quickly being eroded. Editorials in the *Canada Farmers' Sun* confirmed this sentiment, as once again farmers attempted to absolve all “legitimate” merchants and manufacturers from derision. Unscrupulous travelling sales agents, who extorted high profits from hardworking farmers earned the wrath of the Patrons, not hardworking

³⁹ Notebooks of the Galetta Lodge, in A.L. Riddell fonds, NAC, MG 55/30 no. 184, membership book. See also Willow Vale Patron fonds, AO, MU 7185, minute book, 1891-95, 2-13; 27 October 1891, 39, 28 June 1892, 68, 28 December 1892, 19 and 4 April 1892, 29. See also the Victoria Patrons records in the F.D. McLennan collection, AO, MU 7915, series F, minute book, 1892-93, initiation pledges; 22 April 1892, and 29 April 1892.

⁴⁰ See the *Constitution and Rules of Order*, 14 and *Canada Farmers' Sun*, 26 December 1893, 4 and 2 January 1894, 3. On how this view of the non-producing classes was a staple of the producer alliance, see notes 13 and 14, above.

businessmen. An article written by Phillips Thompson conceded that the original concept of the Patrons of Industry was fairly exclusive, yet experience illustrated that the middleman was necessary to the community. Apparently the message trickled down to the local level, for when the Victoria Lodge expelled a merchant from its ranks, it was not for commercial activities *per se*, but for being a travelling peddler.⁴¹

By the mid-1890s, the resentment of the Patrons kindled far more against the professional class of doctors, lawyers and politicians than the commercial classes. Patrons of Industry complaints against the medical profession are well documented, as they viewed the practices of the Canadian Medical Association as being restricted to an educated elite. To Patrons, the fees charged by medical colleges were akin to tariff walls, ensuring that the special privileges of medical doctors would remain intact.⁴² A concerted effort was similarly made to curtail the entrance amount charged by the Law Society, to do away with the monopoly of lawyers and the “laws made for the few at the expense of the many.” Even though railing at the professional classes became great sport to Patrons, the president of the Bronson Lodge, J.P. Mullett, took things a little too far when he suggested that all residents of villages and towns be excluded from the order. Noting that such a practice was “antagonistic to the spirit and principles” of the Patrons of Industry, an editorial in the *Canada Farmers’ Sun* underscored that the Patrons’ object was to “secure justice and improve social conditions for all; to abolish rather than emphasize and intensify class and caste distinctions. Injustice

⁴¹ Records of the Victoria Patrons, in the F.D. McLennan collection, AO, MU 7195, series F, minute book, 1892-93, 1 April 1893. See also the *Minutes of the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Patrons of Industry*, 1-2, and also the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 27 September 1892, 1; 11 April 1893, 1; 1 August 1893, 2 and 22 August 1894, 1. Many farmers detested the travelling peddler selling his often useless wares; see Badgely, “‘Then I Saw that I had Been Swindled.’”

⁴² See the Patron Committee minute book in the AO, MU 2087 #8, 26 March 1895 and especially C. David Naylor, “Rural Protest and Medical Professionalism in Turn of the Century Ontario,” *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 21, no. 1, (Spring, 1986), 5-20.

suffered by one class always reacts upon a community.”⁴³ The Patrons always ensured the public understood its salvos against the professional and commercial class were fired in self-defence.

Perhaps the ultimate cause of the downfall of the Patrons of Industry came in the flouting of the associational staple of remaining aloof from sectarianism and partyism. Initial proclamations from the Patrons condemned the practice of introducing partisan and sectarian discourse in the subordinate associations, and in fact reinforced the edict by fining, suspending or expelling any repeat offender. Many prominent Patrons such as Grand Association of Ontario President C.A. Mallory traced all the evils of the age back to partyism, as the modern age required “free men” to break the shackles of the party whip. To J.J. Cassidy, president of the Alisa Craig Lodge, politics was not about party any more than religion was sect.⁴⁴ To relieve the pressures of party conflict, the Patrons proposed a solution that was fairly radical, yet keeping with the traditions of nineteenth-century popular politics. Recognizing that partyism introduced class legislation and influence, Patrons demanded that the people – the source of all political power – be afforded the opportunity to make their own laws and to initiate legislation in Parliament. Accomplishing this task required the elimination of election spending and the injection of referenda into the political process. Limiting the spending of political parties would ensure that independent men free from party ties would be elected, who would “serve the whole community” rather than class interests. In supporting the referendum movement, Patron leaders argued that frequent decisions left to the electorate would result in “no party, no elections, no political enmity or strife, yet a thoroughly responsible and popular government.” Independence was key even at the local level, as the

⁴³ See the *Canada Farmers' Sun*, 18 August 1892, 1; 20 June 1894, 7; 29 August 1894, 1; 3 October 1894, 4-6 and 31 October 1893, 4.

⁴⁴ See the *Constitution and Rules of Order*, 3-4, 17 and also the *Canada Farmers' Sun*, 6 September 1892, 2; 27 September 1892, 1-2 and 18 October 1892, 1.

Willow Vale Lodge of the Patrons of Industry encouraged its members to run as candidates in the local municipal election.⁴⁵

Despite Patron strictures against partyism and the corruption of the Canadian political system, prominent Patrons recognized that the movement was intensely political. By the latter end of 1891 the Patrons of Industry launched the London platform, which contained such political platitudes as the maintenance of the British connection, the independence of Parliament, rigid economy in every branch of the public service, civil service reform and the abolition of the Senate. With the perceived sluggish pace of reform, the Patrons decided to test the waters on independent political action by fielding a candidate in the riding of North Bruce in an 1893 bye-election. When the “People’s candidate” was successful in the election, the Grand Association determined to field other candidates in the 1894 Ontario election, all using the London platform as a guide.⁴⁶ Oliver Mowat “exposed” the Patrons as an exclusively agricultural political party in the name of the community ethos, as he proclaimed in the North Bruce bye-election that “the Reform party has always been specially a farmers’ party, *while faithful to every other class as well*; and that the Reform Party is the true farmers’ party.” Similarly, when Liberal critics accused the Patrons of Industry of acting like any other political party, Patron claims of political independence soon gave way when executives made voting for the Patron candidate an obligation for lodge members. Perceived Patron hypocrisy over the party system came full circle one year after Phillips Thompson lauded the Patrons for an absence of party hierarchy, when the

⁴⁵ See the Willow Vale Lodge records, AO, MU 7185, minute book, 1891-95, 1 December 1891, 43. See also the *Minutes of the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Patrons of Industry*, 9; see also the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 20 September 1892, 1 and 4; 23 October 1892, 1; 13 March 1894, 1 and 4, and 15 June 1894, 2. Of course, “power to the people” was a mantra throughout the history of nineteenth-century Canadian popular politics; see Noel, “Early Populist Tendencies in Ontario Political Culture”; Wilton, *Popular Politics and Political Culture* and McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge*.

⁴⁶ *The Patrons: An Answer to the Annexationist Campaign Writer in the Canada Farmers’ Sun*, (n.p., 1894), 1; see also the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 30 August 1892, 1; 20 September 1892, 1; 4 July 1893, 1 and 3; 28 November 1893, 4; 5 December 1893, 1 and 23 May 1894, 1 and 6.

Patrons of Industry in the Ontario legislature organized both a party secretary and whip.⁴⁷

Even though the Patrons of Industry were non-sectarian as well as non-partisan, Patrons still advocated the “elevating influence” of Christianity and the need for Christian education within the community. As with other nineteenth-century associations, the Patrons of Industry recognized the importance of the Christian religion to its members, stating “we, the farmers and employees of the Province of Ontario, believing that Almighty God, as the source of all power and the ruler of nations, should be acknowledged in all constitutions of societies, do hereby with due reverence to Him, associate ourselves together...”⁴⁸

Notwithstanding Patron insistence on religious toleration and neutrality, one of the greatest difficulties they experienced during the 1894 election came as the Liberal Tories attempted to paint them as closet supporters of the Protestant Protective Association, a conservative anti-Catholic pressure group. Denying any affiliation with an organization concerned solely with racial and religious questions, Patron directors insisted that Roman Catholics were “quite as loyal members and good subjects as those of other creeds. We believe in equal rights for all.” Despite claims that only the partisan press desired to see a Patron/P.P.A. connection, confusion over party positions within the Patron movement not only

⁴⁷ See *The Patrons of Industry: From the Speech of Oliver Mowat Delivered in North Bruce*, (North Bruce, 1893), 10 and *The Patrons: An Answer to the Annexationist*, 8. See also the *Canada Farmers' Sun*, 23 May 1894, 1 and 10 August 1894, 5 as well as the Patron Committee minute book of 1895, AO, MU 2087 #8, 11 April. S.E.D. Shortt argued that the Patrons failed as a result of political immaturity, while S.J.R. Noel stated the Mowat Liberals deliberately blurred the line between Liberal and Patron policies, leading to a Liberal triumph. Ramsay Cook sees the Patron failure as more a lack of political identity. See Shortt, “Social Change and Political Crisis,” 230-35; Noel, *Patrons, Clients, Brokers*, 302-5 and Cook, “Tillers and Toilers,” 17-20.

⁴⁸ *Constitution and Rules of Order of the Patrons of Industry*, preamble and the miscellaneous records of the Gainsborough Patrons, AO, MU 7185, pamphlet, *Ritual and Installation Service*, 4. In using loaded terms such as “equal rights,” the Patrons exposed themselves to uncertainty as to their ultimate motives; see J.R. Miller, *Equal Rights: The Jesuits' Estate Act Controversy*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1979).

contributed to their defeat at the polls, but a loss of credibility as a group devoted to social, moral and intellectual improvement.⁴⁹

The Patrons of Industry often confronted head-on the economic difficulties facing both farmers and industrial workers at the turn of the century. Both the history of the Patrons of Industry and the Populist “moment” in the United States have debated these points of political economy, concluding either that these rural protesters suggested collectivized or “socialist” responses to industrial capitalism, or were simply a part of nineteenth-century popular radicalism that often challenged the hegemony of the marketplace.⁵⁰ In many ways, both visions of the Patrons of Industry are fairly accurate. While offering economic critiques consistent with the popular liberalism of the times, the Patrons of Industry also went against the producer alliance by proposing radical new solutions to age-old agrarian concerns. One of the doctrinaire staples of nineteenth-century popular liberalism was the gospel of honest industry and the importance of the work ethic. Noting that the prosperity of Canada was due to the “untiring industry of the toiling masses,” the Patrons envisioned that the hardy work ethic of the stout Canadian yeoman was the panacea that would solve all of society’s ills. The true aims of the Patron movement was to “build, not palaces, but men; to exalt, not titled stations, but general humanity; to dignify, not idle repose, but assiduous industry; to elevate not the few, but the many.” Agreeing with the venerable principle that agriculture and industry created the wealth of a nation, the Patrons also discussed a new collectivized scenario whereby toilers in agriculture and

⁴⁹ See the *Minutes of the 3rd Annual Meeting of the Patrons of Industry*, 26 and *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 14 August 1895, 1. See also Shortt, “Social Change and Political Crisis,” 224-6; Noel, *Patrons, Clients, Brokers*, 303-6 and Cook, “Tillers and Toilers,” 12-15.

⁵⁰ The former view of Populism can be found in Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise* and Palmer, *Man Over Money*, while the latter in *The Roots of Southern Populism*, 3-10; Holmes, “Populism: In Search of Context,” 50-58 and Sanders, *Roots of Reform*, 30-52. In the Canadian context, both Hann, *Farmers Against Industrialism* and Cook, “Tillers and Toilers,” argue that along with the Knights of Labor, the Patrons offered new collectivist solutions to late nineteenth-century economic concerns. Of course, S.E.D. Shortt concludes in “Social Change and Political Crisis” that the Patrons committed themselves to a more traditional liberal “anti-protection” economic strategy.

industry would receive a proper share of the wealth that they themselves created. While this suggestion required the Patrons of Industry to combat charges of being “anarchists and socialists,” by receiving “more of the leisure that rightfully belongs to them; more society advantages; more of the benefits, privileges and emoluments of the world” Patrons were simply demanding “those rights and privileges necessary to make them capable of enjoying, appreciating, defending and perpetuating the blessings of good government.”⁵¹ Radical Patron solutions to the economic problems plaguing late nineteenth-century Canada were always supported with a popular, yet at times a highly exclusive discourse of agrarian discontent.

Patrons were even more stringent in their support of the producer alliance, by cementing the artisan/husbandman bond forged throughout the nineteenth century. Even as late as the 1890s, Patron supporters reminisced about the time-honoured farmer/mechanic coalition and called upon the Patrons to ensure its longevity.⁵² However, as discussed in the previous chapter, the manufacturing and commercial sectors were a large part of this producer alliance throughout the course of the nineteenth century. By forging new bonds with the Knights of Labor and the Trades and Labour Council, the Patrons of Industry eliminated these other divisions of the producer alliance. In early 1893, the TLC and the Patrons assembled as a “conference of workers in city and country” to construct a community of “field and factory.” Even though this was a short-lived partnership – in 1895 the TLC banned Patrons from joining their organization – the temporary coalition did produce agreement on such issues as monopoly and direct political

⁵¹ See the miscellaneous records of the Gainsborough Patrons, AO, MU 7185, pamphlet, *Ritual and Installation Service*, 4-6; *Minutes of the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Patrons of Industry*, 1; *Minutes of the 3rd Annual Meeting of the Patrons of Industry*, 2 and *Minutes of the 4th Annual Meeting of the Patrons of Industry*, 2.

⁵² The varied economic conditions between a group that traditionally formed the rural middle-class and an increasingly “class-conscious” group of industrial workers simply could not sustain unifying interests; see Palmer and Kealey, *Dreaming of What Might Be*; Burr, *Spreading the Light* and Darroch, “Scanty Fortunes and Rural Middle Class Formation.” See also the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 27 September 1892, 2; 21 March 1893, 3 and 6 June 1893, 1.

action. In 1895 when the Patrons formed a political committee in the Ontario Legislature, the TLC sent representatives to encourage the Patrons to vote for “laws fully protecting the public interest and those of employees in the charters asked for by electric railway companies.”⁵³ Whether or not the views of agriculturalists were incompatible with a new urban industrial class or exhibited a lack of political direction, this new vision of community held by the Patrons of Industry evidently did not include all classes.

Unlike the Grange, who furthered mid-Victorian agrarian diatribes that pinpointed bankers and speculators as *the* cause of depression and economic hardship, the Patrons kept this discourse at a minimum. They did recognize that bankers were part of the “privileged class” that favoured large monopoly over the small producer, and that the usury practiced by the large banks was a “direct tax on the community.” Similarly, the Patrons threatened to expel any member who purchased goods at a reduced price to sell in speculation. Oddly enough, neither bankers nor speculators were mentioned by name as occupations barred from membership in the Patrons of Industry.⁵⁴ Even more than the Grange, however, the Patrons of Industry recognized that the new industrial capitalist with his monopoly and combines was the new threat to the community ethos. It was the duty of the community, led by the agricultural and industrial classes, to correct the imbalance that monopoly and big capitalism created. As one opening ode of the Patrons, *Labour’s Tribute*, confidently proclaimed:

Ye noble sons of labor, and daughters fair and true,
Truth’s bright and gleaming sabre at last is drawn for you.
The minions of aggression, monopoly and trust,
Dread bulwarks of oppression, we’ll trample in the dust.

⁵³ See the Patron Committee minute book, AO, MU 2087 #8, 26 March 1895 and *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 7 March 1893, 1-2 and 12 September 1894, 2. See also Shortt, “Social Change and Political Crisis,” 226-29 and Cook, “Tillers and Toilers,” 15-20.

⁵⁴ See the *Constitution and Rules of Order of the Patrons of Industry*, 14-16; the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 15 November 1892, 1 and 17 October 1893, 2; and the *Brotherhood Era*, 16 October 1895, 3.

Our fathers met to battle with this tyrant's proud array,
 And 'mid the din and rattle they nobly won the day.
 They hurled the proud oppressor from off his lofty throne,
 And made themselves possessors of rights they'd justly won.

Now generations later, this haughty grasping lord,
 By effort even greater, with power of his hoard;
 Is gathering up each valley and riverside and plain,
 Oh sons of freedom rally and drive him back again.

The tillers of the soil for many ages past,
 Have bent the knee in toil before the tyrant's mast;
 Then rally 'round your standard and by your colors stand,
 And paint upon your banner the equal rights of man.⁵⁵

While many of these sentiments echo those of agriculturalists in Canada throughout the nineteenth century, the Patrons introduced solutions that were unique. Stating that the interests of the Patrons were for the “suffering masses,” President C.A. Mallory noted that the real menace of society was the personal opulence of the capitalist. An editorial in the *Canada Farmers' Sun* suggested that combines and trusts be made “criminal,” and that monopolies be placed under public control. Indeed this was a “collectivized” solution, but it was also more in keeping with the tenets of populism than socialism, as the editor concluded that all laws needed to be made in the interests of the People.⁵⁶

Patron political economy regarding trade practices pursued a nineteenth-century agriculturalist course of only tentatively agreeing with free trade. While there is some disagreement over whether or not the Patrons under the guidance of C.A. Mallory or the *Canada Farmers' Sun* under the editorship of George Wrigley agreed with the doctrines of reciprocity, the tone of Patron

⁵⁵ See the miscellaneous records of the Gainsborough Patrons, AO, loose papers, *Odes to Patrons*, (n.p., n.d.), 3 and *Canada Farmers' Sun*, 2 August 1892, 2; 11 October 1892, 12 September 1894, 2 and the *Brotherhood Era*, 16 October 1895, 7.

⁵⁶ See the *Minutes of the 3rd Annual Meeting of the Patrons of Industry*, 2-3 and *Canada Farmers' Sun*, 23 October 1892, 1. See also Noel, “Early Populist Tendencies in Ontario Political Culture”; Wilton, *Popular Politics and Political Culture* and McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge*.

pronouncements throughout its history approved at least in principle of free trade.⁵⁷ What is certain is that the Patrons disapproved specifically of the National Policy and tariffs in general, calling them a “direct tax” on the community. Patrons blamed the National Policy for almost everything wrong with the economic outlook of Canada, from the proliferation of monopolies and combines to the reality of young men leaving Canada to seek their fortunes in the United States. Perhaps the most damning indictment of tariffs was based on both the community ideology and the gospel of honest industry when it was noted, “the average Canadian gets no Government aid to enable him to live. He would be ashamed to have his neighbours taxed for his benefit.”⁵⁸ Several other articles in the *Canada Farmers’ Sun* under the editorship of George Wrigley came out strongly in favour of reciprocity with the United States. In July of 1893 the Patron periodical reprinted a lecture by Nathaniel Burwash on political economy, where he roundly denounced protection as a detriment to the economy and helpful only to the manufacturing sector, concluding that free trade was the only economic principle guaranteed to bring about prosperity for all classes. It is also very interesting to note that the paper edited by a socialist sympathizer contained not only platitudes on Henry George’s Single Tax, but also articles on free trade by one of George’s harshest critics, Goldwin Smith.⁵⁹

Upon closer inspection the Patrons of Industry were fairly ambivalent on the question of free trade, sharing with agriculturalists throughout the nineteenth

⁵⁷ Both C. David Naylor in “Rural Protest and Medical Professionalism” and Shortt, “Social Change and Political Crisis” agree that the Patrons was a movement of small producers, and therefore adhered to a more liberal economic outlook. Russell Hann in *Farmers Confront Industrialism* and Cook, “Tillers and Toilers” conclude that the Patrons were more collectivist and harboured a nascent socialist outlook, and only favoured free trade when noted liberal Goldwin Smith purchased the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*.

⁵⁸ See the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 7 June 1892, 1; 9 August 1892, 4; 13 February 1893, 3; 4 July 1893, 3; 16 August 1893, 1 and 18 September 1895, 3.

⁵⁹ The *Canada Farmers’ Sun* also contained such articles as “How Britain’s Free Trade Policy the Secret of Enormous Growth in Trade and Increased Wealth.” See the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 31 May 1892, 1; 28 June 1892, 1; 4 October 1892, 4; 11 October 1892, 1; 29 November 1892, 1; 5 September 1893, 2 and 5 December 1894, 2-3.

century a simple concern over receiving equitable treatment in trade practices. Noting that the rights of the agriculturalist were “determined largely by the equal rights of others,” Patrons appeared to disparage protection only when inaccessible to farmers, and reserved for the infant manufactures of Canada. Patrons therefore insisted that reciprocity with the United States was the most impartial economic policy as it ensured justice and fair play among all occupations and classes. The Patrons also insisted that free trade should become the preferred economic policy of organized Labour for similar reasons.⁶⁰ In objecting to the favoured status that protection placed upon manufacturers and the commercial sector, the London platform of the Patrons nevertheless called for tariffs as a means to increase revenue for the government coffers. C.A. Mallory attempted to justify the tariff under the banner of equal rights, stating that this was to increase the revenue not only of the Canadian government but for other countries as well. Mallory also claimed that the majority of small producers, farmers and industrial workers preferred a reasonable tariff, and as the Patrons of Industry were the “people’s party” such a stance on a controversial issue like the tariff was fully defensible.⁶¹

Another significant facet of Patron popular political economy regarded capital and labour, and the need to reconcile the two seemingly opposing forces. As with the Grange, the Patrons of Industry maintained that the principle of co-operation would be the solution to economic malaise. Not only would co-operation bridge the gulf between capital and labour, it would address the imbalance of trade between the commercial class and the labour/farmer alliance. The Patrons of Industry followed stringent co-operative doctrines at the local level, buying livestock, dairy products, grains, and seeds on a strict co-operative basis. Local Patrons even established a co-operative store in Bismarck with like-

⁶⁰ Throughout the Victorian period, the main economic policy held by agriculturalists was of equality in trade practices; see chapter three, 131-3, above. See the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 10 May 1892, 7; 9 August 1892, 4; 14 February 1893, 4 and 16 August 1894, 1. For articles on free trade and labour, see the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 13 February 1895, 1.

⁶¹ See the pamphlet *The Patrons, An Answer to the Annexation Writer*, 1 and 4 and the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 3 October 1893, 1.

minded merchants of the town.⁶² Once again the aura of exclusivity reared its ugly head, as conflicts often erupted over the co-operative system and the hazards it presented. Although William Weld had passed away by the time the Patrons of Industry rose in force, the *Farmers' Advocate* under the direction of his son John Weld initially found much to praise with the Patron platform, as his father had done with the Grange. The junior Weld entreated agriculturalists to forsake party politics and join with this “national organization” of farmers and workers dedicated to combat the double evil of monopoly and class legislation. However, John Weld also recognized that the Patrons went against the community ethos with the co-operative system, as the only remedy to economic depression was retrenchment and thrift, not co-operation. Co-operation also severed the community link, as “the farmer cannot do without the merchant and the middle man, any more than the merchant can do without the farmer. The one is dependent on the other.” The Willow Vale lodge focused so much on the co-operative question that they sent a delegation to their township trade association to “bring up the market question” with other commercial representatives.⁶³ Not unlike the Grange, by offering a modification of the accepted popular political economy of economic liberalism, the Patrons risked alienating both supporters and agriculturalists in general.

As with other agricultural associations, a large measure of the function of the Patrons of Industry was to halt community isolation by providing social interaction for rural inhabitants. The Grand Association of the Patrons in Ontario sponsored many events from picnics, excursions, baseball matches,

⁶² See the records of the Arthur Lodge, WCA, A1980.26, treasurer’s book, 1891-1897, and Willow Vale Lodge records, AO, MU 7185, minute book, 1891-95, 15 November 1892, 15; 6 December 1892, 17; 21 February 1893, 25 and 25 April 1893, 32. See also the records of the Gainsborough Patrons, AO, MU 7185, pamphlet, *Principles and Rules of the Patrons of Industry*, 2 and *Canada Farmers' Sun*, 10 May 1892, 1; 4 October 1892, 1 and 28 March 1893, 1.

⁶³ See the Willow Vale Lodge records, AO, MU 7185, minute book, 1891-95, 22 November 1892, 22. See also the *Farmers' Advocate*, vol. 26, no. 305, (May, 1891), 169; no. 306, (June, 1891), 224; no. 311, (November, 1891), 448; vol. 28, no. 330, (15 March, 1893), 102 and vol. 29, no. 349, (1 January, 1894), 4.

conversazioni, literary entertainments, to shooting matches and garden parties in elevating the sociability of agriculturalists. John Miller, the travelling lecturer and Vice President of the Grand Association, noted that the main object of the Patrons of Industry was to “develop our social relations by meeting as brethren and visitors on a common level and to cultivate and improve the talents with which we have been endowed.” Often Patron picnics and gatherings were advertised with the slogan, “Open to the World,” and many reported the kind of success of a Brantford picnic, proclaiming enthusiastically “another Patron event makes rural life enjoyable.” Even the *Canada Farmers’ Sun* attempted to imitate the style of the most thriving agricultural periodical, the *Farmers’ Advocate*, by appealing to a larger readership than just agriculturalists. By the end of 1892, the *Sun* not only contained serial novels and other prose, the editors also created a children’s section with short stories, puzzles, games and attractive homilies. Pandering to a youthful audience would be a mainstay for the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, with the establishment of “For the Young People” and “Chat for Children” sections as late as 1895.⁶⁴ However, it would be at the local lodge level that the Patrons of Industry would prove to be most beneficial as a source of sociability for rural villages and towns.

Patron lodges quickly learned that in order to draw and maintain members, entertainments needed to be offered to keep lodge meetings attractive for new recruits. In the Victoria Lodge the directors decided to hold debates, singing and mouth organ selections for amusement purposes, only when the “normal business was concluded,” corresponding perfectly to canvassing drives in the neighbouring village. When the executive offered only lukewarm support for a union picnic with the nearby Grove Lodge, to little fanfare the Victoria Lodge closed after a

⁶⁴ See the *Constitution and Rules of Order of the Patrons of Industry*, 3-4; and also the sections entitled “Rays from Patrons” and “From Patron pens” in the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, 7 June 1892, 1; 14 June 1892, 1; 5 July 1892, 1; 27 September 1892, 1; 1 November 1892, 6-7; 2 May 1893, 3; 11 July 1893, 3; 2 January 1894, 6; 3 October 1894, 1; 26 June 1895, 1 and 14 August 1895, 7.

scant nine months in operation.⁶⁵ The Willow Vale Lodge of the Patrons of Industry lasted much longer, and a healthy dependence on entertainment as part of the functions of the lodge aided in this process immeasurably. Readings, instrumental and vocal music, recitations, speeches, and debates were all part of the “literary part” of the lodge meetings, while a picnic was held with the Bismarck Lodge for fundraising purposes. While a motion was lost to purchase some literature for the lodge as part of a Patron library, it was one of the few decisions against entertainment made by Willow Vale Lodge directors. Indeed, when a debate was held on whether or not to purchase an organ for musical programmes in the Lodge, a Brother John Strumm argued against the purchase, stating “business was more important than pleasure, and thought business took up all our time.” Although the Willow Vale Patrons were heavily involved in the co-operative system, obviously the amusement portion of lodge activities was equally important and the organ was purchased.⁶⁶

Both the Grange and the Patrons of Industry attempted to adhere both to the community ethos and the ideology of honest industry. Unlike the rural press and agricultural societies that became far more inclusive by the latter end of the nineteenth century, the Patron movement proved to be the exact opposite. By fostering an aura of exclusivity within their agricultural associations and contesting the legitimacy both of the commercial and the professional classes, the Patrons of Husbandry and the Patrons of Industry shattered the community ethos of class interdependence carefully constructed over the course of the century. Although both groups rightly pinpointed the new urban industrialized power as the break in societal continuity, in reality these rural fraternal orders also perpetuated the kind of conflicts that they valiantly strove to eliminate. While

⁶⁵ See the records of the Victoria Patrons of Industry, in the F.D. McLennan collection, AO, MU 7915, series F, minute book, 1892-93, 28 March, 8 May, 13 May, 10 June and 22 July 1893.

⁶⁶ Willow Vale Lodge records, AO, MU 7185, minute book, 1891-95, 3 November 1891, 39; 1 December 1891, 42; 12 January 1892, 49; 30 March 1892, 54; 17 May 1892, 60-1; 7 June 1892, 65; 6 December 1892, 17 and 17 January 1893, 22.

industrial workers likewise fostered a new and radical political economy through associations like the Knights of Labor, both the Patrons of Industry and the Grange attempted to impose *agrarian* solutions to the problems of the “new society.” As one of the older bastions of the rural hegemonic social order, agriculturalists were ill prepared for the discourse of the “underdog” presented by both the Grange and the Patrons of Industry, and an alliance with a new industrial working class. The internal tensions of the agricultural community itself provided the impetus for a more militant agrarian reform, rather than merely following the lead of urban labour reform movements. Although the rural countryside in many ways remained the bastion of the community ideology during this period, the aggressive nature of the Granger and Patron movements limited their effectiveness as transmitters of the community ethos.

CHAPTER FIVE – “Initiated into the Mysteries and Miseries of the Order”: Fraternalism and Mutual Benefit Societies in Nineteenth-Century Canada

The proliferation of fraternal orders and mutual benefit associations proved to be one of the more enduring legacies to the community ethos to be found in nineteenth-century Canada. The popularity of fraternalism throughout this period partly was a function of providing security against sickness, accident and death, but it also included the forging of bonds of unity and brotherhood in offering stylized ritual and a myriad of lodge activities. More than any other voluntary association, fraternal orders remained fairly constant throughout the nineteenth century in terms of embracing a skilled working class membership base, illustrating that the construction of community was indeed a task that crossed all class lines. Tainted with a brush of elitism for its strictures along colour, gender and nationalistic lines, fraternal orders such as the Orange Order, the Sons of England and the *Société St. Jean-Baptiste* are the historical models of the exclusivity of fraternalism rather than exemplary purveyors of the community ideology. While to some extent this vision of fraternalism is justified, associations such as the Oddfellows, Foresters and the Ancient Order of United Workmen did attempt to provide an inclusive environment that would welcome all citizens into its confines. By the end of the nineteenth century, the mutual benefit society managed largely to evade the competing disputations surrounding the rural and urban visions of community that engulfed other voluntary associations. By refusing to abandon the community ethos so carefully developed over the course of the nineteenth century, fraternalism remained a potent force well into the twentieth.

Fraternalism and mutual benefit societies clearly are contested territory for historians who have hotly debated both the merits and the meanings of fraternal orders and the social services they provided. Most of the early work on mutual

benefit fraternalism concluded that these societies were essential to the forging of skilled working class bonds of brotherhood, self-help and the culture of mutuality. Working class membership of fraternal orders therefore constituted a construction of working class culture that would exhibit stronger class-conscious behaviour by the turn of the century.¹ Despite a considerable working class presence within fraternalism, others have argued that while working class bonds were reinforced through mutualism, the undermining of class-consciousness occurred by focusing on differences of gender, race and nation. Reinforcing the hegemonic order of industrial capitalism, fraternalism accepted only those “respectable” workers who adhered to the commercial values of thrift, self-help and independence.² Similarly, still others contest the preponderance of working class members within fraternal orders, claiming that the lower middle class and the commercial business class held equal proportion in membership of mutual benefit societies. Cross-class membership in fraternalism thus ensured a muting of class-consciousness within the skilled working class, furthering instead the ideology of the middle class. Historians such as Andrew Holman have taken this analysis still further, claiming that fraternalism became a chief component in middle class formation itself.³

¹ This was the conclusion of the noted Marxist historians Gregory Kealey, “The Orange Order in Toronto,” *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-92*, (Toronto, 1980), 98-123 and Bryan Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian Labour, 1800-1980*, (Toronto, 1983), 78-80. To some extent, this is also the inference of P.H.J.H. Gosden, *Self-Help: Voluntary Associations in the Nineteenth Century*, (London, 1973).

² For Britain, see Simon Cordery, “Friendly Societies and the Discourse of Respectability in Britain, 1825-75,” *Journal of British Studies*, 34, no. 1, (January, 1995), 35-58 and Eric Hopkins, *Working Class Self-Help in Nineteenth-Century England*, (New York, 1995), 8-30. For Canada, see Christopher Anstead, “Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario: Secret Societies and Cultural Hegemony,” Ph.D. Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1992; Darryl Newbury, “No Atheist, Eunuch or Woman: Male Associational Culture and Working-Class Identity in Industrializing Ontario, 1840-80,” MA Thesis, Queen’s University, 1992, 51-71 and especially the more recent work of Bryan Palmer, “Mutuality and the Masking/Making of Difference: Mutual Benefit Societies in Canada, 1850-1950,” in Marcel van der Linden, ed., *Social Security Mutualism: The Comparative History of Mutual Benefit Societies*, (New York, 1996), 111-38.

³ On cross-class membership, see Brian Greenberg, “Worker and Community: Fraternal Orders in Albany, New York, 1845-1885,” in Charles Stephenson and Robert Asher, editors, *Life*

No disagreement on the issue of gender and fraternalism exists, as historians by and large tend to agree that mutual benefit associations organized themselves strictly along masculine lines. Focusing on the male preserve of protecting home and hearth, fraternal orders cultivated a ritualized sense of brotherhood within the lodge, which allowed members to define themselves through the values of bravery, independence and self-reliance inherent in respectable manhood.⁴ One of the more recent strains of fraternal historiography explores the relationship between mutual benefit societies and the nascent welfare state. Many of these historians question the class and gender bias of many of the aforementioned works, noting the importance of collective self-help to members of mutual benefit societies. While not discounting the importance of cultural factors within fraternalism, historians such as George and J.C. Herbert Emery and David Beito conclude that the most critical function of mutual benefit orders came in providing sickness, accident and life insurance for those who desperately required it. The dread of dependence, coupled with a strong ethic of thrift enabled the “young man’s benefit” societies to become universally popular with a young working class constituency by the turn of the century, and pave the way for the expansion of the welfare state.⁵

and Labor: Dimensions of American Working Class History, (New York, 1986); Mary Ann Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood: Class, Gender and Fraternalism*, (Princeton, 1989) and Shani D’Cruze and Jean Turnbull, “Fellowship and Family: Oddfellow Lodges in Preston and Lancaster, 1830-90,” *Urban History*, 22, no. 1, (May, 1995), 25-47. See also John Gilkeson, *Middle-Class Providence, 1820-1940*, (Princeton, 1986), 4-35; David Sutherland, “Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle Class Formation in Early Victorian Halifax, Nova Scotia,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 5, (1994), 237-64 and Andrew Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2000), 105-29.

⁴ See Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood*; Mark Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America*, (New Haven and London, 1989); Anstead, “Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario,” 161-90; Newbury, “No Atheist, Eunuch or Woman,” 75-87; Cordery, “Friendly Societies and the Discourse of Respectability,” 41-8; Lynne Marks, “Mostly Male Worlds” in *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario*, (Toronto, 1996), 108-16 and Palmer, “Mutuality and the Making/Masking of Difference,” 133-6.

One of the major difficulties in examining the fraternal order or the mutual benefit society comes in the variations of fraternalism offered to members in nineteenth-century Canada. Ritual societies, sick benefit and insurance groups, as well as nationalistic societies all competed fiercely for clients throughout this period. As a result, many historians conclude that all fraternal orders practiced some form of exclusion, whether it was along class, gender, religious or nationalistic lines. This is particularly accurate with mutual benefit orders such as the Sons of Scotland, St. George's or St. Andrews' Societies, or the *Société St. Jean-Baptiste*, groups that utilized tests of ethnicity as requirements for membership. The Orange Order is an exceptionally useful example of this category of fraternal order, as its propensity to sectarian violence and exclusiveness is well documented.⁶ Erecting mutual benefit societies on the basis of ethnicity, culture and religion fostered an adversarial mentality that was contrary to the community ethos in nineteenth-century Canada. Two other "exclusions" can be made in a study of fraternalism during this period, the Masons and the Knights of Labor. Despite their more egalitarian beginnings, Freemasonry by mid-century and beyond became elite institutions, pandering exclusively to the commercial bourgeoisie and industrial elites. The Knights of

⁵ David Green and Lawrence Cromwell, *Mutual Aid or Welfare State: Australia's Friendly Societies*, (Sydney, 1984); all of the essays in Marcel van der Linden, *Social Security Mutualism*; George and J.C. Herbert Emery, *A Young Man's Benefit: The Independent Order of Oddfellows and Sickness Insurance in the United States and Canada, 1860-1929*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1999) and David Beito, *From Mutual Aid to the Welfare State: Fraternal Societies and Social Services, 1890-1967*, (Chapel Hill and London, 2000), 17-40. David Neave argues that rural mutual benefit societies have largely been neglected in studies regarding fraternalism; see his *Mutual Aid in the Victorian Countryside, 1830-1914*, (Hull, 1991).

⁶ See Cecil Houston and William Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore: A Historical Geography of the Orange Order in Canada*, (Toronto, 1980); Donald Harmon Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario: A Study in Rural History*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1984), 170-201 and Scott See, *Riots in New Brunswick: Orange Nativism and Social Violence in the 1840s*, (Toronto, 1993). Not to be outdone, Green Irishmen did not escape nationalism in their lay associations either; see Brian Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-95*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1993), 152-223. While it is difficult to assess the relative effectiveness of the mutual benefit services offered by the "national" societies, Bryan Palmer provides evidence that by the turn of the century, mutualism within the Orange Order simply could not be sustained; see Palmer, "Mutuality and the Making/Masking of Difference," 124-6.

Labor are more complex, given that their proclivity to support the producer ideology, fraternal rituals and co-operative ventures fall much more in line with the community ethos. However, the Knights also promoted a strong craft-worker identity and plebeian culture in spite of opening the movement to workers of all stripes, leading to episodes of class conflict and an antagonistic relationship with industrial capital.⁷

The fraternal orders that remain after this exclusivity assessment were in fact the most popular in nineteenth-century Canada, ritualized insurance societies such as the Independent and Canadian Order of Oddfellows, the Independent, Ancient and Canadian Order of Foresters and the Ancient Order of United Workmen. All of these groups preached the necessity of opening their associations to all classes in society. In many ways the Oddfellows represent this strain of fraternalism very well, as they grew to prominence at mid-century and grew progressively stronger towards the end of the century. While the birthplace of Oddfellowship in Canada is disputed, clearly Montreal represented the area where the Oddfellow movement put down its strongest roots in the 1840s. Both the Independent Order of Oddfellows based on the Baltimore rituals and the Manchester Unity settled in the Montreal area, setting up lodges all around the island. A few years later, the British North American Lodge established the *Odd Fellows Record*, the official organ of the IOOF in Canada. Numerous articles in the *Record* outlined the importance of ending the diversities of rank and the artificial demarcations of class within the lodge room. To the majority of Oddfellows, social fraternity was the ultimate goal of the movement, and this could only occur with the eradication of “honours and distinctions, [except] such as are based on merit.” Albert Case,

⁷ For Freemasonry and middle-class elitism, see Anstead, “Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario,” 184-94; Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 109, 249-50 and Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 111-23. For the more egalitarianism of early Masonry, see Jeffrey McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge: Public Opinion and Deliberative Democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854*, (Toronto, 2000), 70-82. For the Knights of Labor, see Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900*, (Cambridge, 1982); Kim Voss, *The Making of American Exceptionalism: The Knights of Labor and Class Formation in the Nineteenth Century*, (Ithaca and London, 1993) and Robert Weir, *Beyond Labor's Veil: The Culture of the Knights of Labor*, (Pennsylvania, 1996).

the Grand Sire of the IOOF claimed that the classlessness inherent in Oddfellowship ensured that all men were consolidated into a union efficient in “banishing discord and contention from the community.”⁸ Soon after the establishment of the Canadian charter of the IOOF in Montreal, Oddfellow “missionaries” were sent to Canada West with hopes of creating additional lodges. Similar concerns were expressed in these early Ontario lodges regarding the necessity of interclass harmony within the lodge. The Phoenix lodge in Oshawa convened a disciplinary council for a Brother Clark, overheard in conversation complaining of the many mechanics joining the lodge. Clark, a doctor by profession, was duly charged with sowing discord and wounding the feelings of certain brothers in the lodge.⁹ Even though Clark was later exonerated of this accusation, evidently these early Oddfellows were quite sensitive to any allegations of class intolerance within the lodge.

When the British North American chapter of the IOOF collapsed from neglect both in Canada West and East, a resuscitation of sorts occurred in 1853 when Dr. Thomas Reynolds attempted to revive the order with the help of the Grand Lodge of the IOOF in the United States. The success of this Canadian Oddfellow resurrection was largely attributed to the fact that all groups in the community could engage in its benevolent purpose, regardless of station or position. To the officers of the Grand Lodge of Canada West, the sooner Oddfellow lodges took root in the province the sooner all distinctions in society and all differences of “blood and class” would be eradicated.¹⁰ During the heyday

⁸ Albert Case, *Address Delivered Before Oriental Lodge #7 of the IOOF, On Their First Anniversary in Stanstead*, (Stanstead, 1846), 15. See also the *Odd Fellows Record*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1846), 2; vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1846), 39; vol. 1, no. 7, (July, 1846), 108; vol. 2, no. 1, (January, 1847), 15 and vol. 2, no. 5, (May, 1847), 129-30.

⁹ John Martin, an axe maker, forwarded the accusation against Clark. See the records of the Phoenix lodge #22, IOOF, in the MTL, L36, minute book, 1847-49, 18 and 28 December 1848, and membership list of the lodge, 1847-49.

¹⁰ See the records of the Grand Lodge of Canada West, AO, MU 221, file A-II-2, minute book of the Grand Lodge, annual report, 4 August 1858. See also the *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Eleventh Annual Session*, (London, 1865), 314.

of Oddfellow influence in Canada after mid-century, interclass co-operation and harmony would become their axiom. As Oddfellowship was a movement dedicated to the moral improvement and elevation of the human character, it commended itself to the high, the low, the rich and the poor of society. The sociability of the lodge would also ensure its unanimity, as those standing higher in the social scale would mingle with the lower strata in perfect harmony. As the directors of the Grand Lodge of Ontario proclaimed, “On the floor of the lodge room social distinctions are unrecognized. No man’s wealth entitles him to particular privileges; no man’s poverty debars him from attaining the highest offices.”¹¹ Rhetoric after this fashion would prove to be the greatest selling point of mutual benefit societies to the members of the working class.

The Oddfellows were not alone in attempting to ensure class concord, as the various manifestations of the Foresters all agreed in principle to interclass co-operation. The official organ of the Canadian Order of Foresters, the *Canadian Forester*, observed that the war in Forester courts waged against prejudice and intolerance and the removal of the fictitious and factitious distinctions of society was necessary in bringing men into closer relations with each other in a fraternal brotherhood. The *Canadian Forester* also counselled that Forester courts should meet in interclass harmony and unity, a place where all could enjoy social intercourse upon a “common level.” Accomplishing such a feat required courts to downplay the initiations of prominent individuals along social, business or political lines, as elevating such men was “contrary to that feeling of equality which is the true basis upon which all fraternal Orders rest.”¹² The constitution of

¹¹ *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Second Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1886), 4090; *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, vol. 1, no. 5, (May, 1875), 143-4 and vol. 1, no. 6, (June, 1875), 175; *Dominion Oddfellow*, vol. 15, no. 29, (12 December, 1895), 13 and *Constitution, Bylaws and Rules of Order of the Sycamore Lodge*, (Arkona, 1879), preface, ii.

¹² *Canadian Forester*, vol. 10, no. 7, (February, 1891), 6 and 15; vol. 11, no. 4, (November, 1891), 11 and vol. 12, no. 2, (September, 1892), 11. The Knights of Pythias and the Independent Order of Foresters expressed a similar love of classlessness within their associations. See the

the Ancient Order of United Workmen stipulated that their association embraced and gave equal consideration to all classes and categories of labour, both mental and physical. The ritual of the Canadian Order of Foresters was likewise instituted so that “no dissensions mar our joy, no distinctions here employ, and oppression here destroy” the classless nature of the Forester court. Even more specifically, the stated aims of the Canadian Order of Foresters included the notion of fostering a spirit of co-operation in all departments of labour and commerce, to unite all good men regardless of their condition in life and to protect the professional man, labourer, artisan, tradesman or farmer, and all engaged in industrial pursuits from the miseries of want. Unfortunately, these explicit references to occupation could also lead to exclusionary practices in the insurance aspect of mutual benefit societies. The Independent Order of Foresters introduced a proscribed list of occupations that included alcohol dealers, miners and workers in explosives, while the Oddfellows disqualified saloonkeepers, bartenders and professional gamblers from the benefits of membership.¹³

Initially the composition of the Oddfellows centred in Montreal was essentially from the middle-class elements in the city. Even the institutional *History of Oddfellowship* called these early Oddfellows “aristocratic,” as they were all leading statesmen, members of Parliament, prominent merchants and manufactures, the “very *elite* of Canadian society.” The failure of Oddfellowship in Canada East was directly attributed to this middle-class membership base, as they dismissed the mutual benefit system so integral to the working class in favour of the more fashionable elitism of Freemasonry.¹⁴ Many of the articles

Independent Forester, vol. 16, no. 12, (June, 1895), 376-7 and John S. King, *Knights of Pythias: An Exposition of the Origin, Progress, Principles and Benefits of the Society*, (Chatham, 1890), 7.

¹³ *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Forty-Fourth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1899), 75-6 and *Constitution and General Laws of the Supreme Court of the IOF*, (Toronto, 1898), 144-45. See the *Constitution, General Laws and Rules of Order of the Grand Lodge of the AOOW*, (St. Thomas, 1892), 2-3 and *Ritual of the Canadian Order of Foresters*, (Peterborough, 1896), 5 and 55-6.

contained in the *Odd Fellows Record* confirm a rather middle-class bias inherent in the ideology of the early Oddfellows in Montreal. Claiming that their mutual benefit system buttressed the needs of both the middle and lower classes of the community, nevertheless the *Record* was fairly condescending to the labouring classes in the tone of its editorials. The economic improvement of the working classes, according to one article, could only be accomplished through increased education, moral and religious training, and increased industry of a commercial nature. Despite the fact that Oddfellows were social equals, and that “no diversity of rank impresses awe on weaker members,” the *Record* called for an increased recruitment drive among the commercial classes, as the “humble and poor look up to rank and wealth.” Such individuals could also add more to the Widows and Orphans fund than could be found among the less elevated in societal status.¹⁵

When the Grand Lodge of British North America dispatched its three missionaries to Canada West to establish new lodges, many of these bourgeois attitudes travelled with them. Setting up a lodge in Peterborough, the Montreal deputation was glad to witness that their membership reflected those of “the first standing” in society. After visiting the lodge in Kingston they were conversely dismayed to see that a lodge of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows “having for its objects the absorbing of the most respectable portion of the community” encroached on their territory. Safeguarding Oddfellowship for the most respectable – and financially well off – members of the community became an axiom for these early Oddfellows, as both the Port Hope Lodge and the Phoenix Lodge in Oshawa set up committees to examine an applicant’s standing in society

¹⁴ The membership list of the Commercial Lodge in Montreal indeed reads like a “who’s who” list of the elite of Montreal, from commercial heavyweights as Molson, Keefer and Beckett, as well as political figures as Sandfield Macdonald, Draper, Dunkin and Boulton. See *History of Oddfellowship in Canada Under the Old Regime*, (Brantford, 1876), 15 and 71-3, as well as *Constitution, Bylaws and Rules of Order of the Commercial Lodge #5, IOOF, of the Province of Canada*, (Montreal, 1846), 66-9.

¹⁵ *The Odd Fellows Record*, vol. 2, no. 1, (January, 1847), 15; vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1847), 38-42; vol. 2, no. 3, (March, 1847), 55 and vol. 2, no. 4, (April, 1847), 80.

before approving him for membership.¹⁶ With the reorganization of IOOF lodges in Canada West came a new constituency, as more skilled workers began to join lodges to complement a sizeable business, clerical and professional class membership. These changes can be measured not only through ideology but empirically as well, through a comparison of membership lists at mid-century in the Coburg Lodge, and those a decade later in the Forest City Lodge of London. Even though half the members in both lodges came from the middle classes, ten years later the working class component in the London area had increased by ten percent over Coburg (see Table 5.1).

What caused this sudden resurgence in working class interest in mutual benefit fraternalism after mid-century? Clearly the financial benefits and protection accrued through the assurance system intrinsic to Oddfellowship encouraged the working class to join lodges by the late nineteenth century. It is also no coincidence that working class membership in the IOOF intensified after the Sons of Temperance in Canada West discontinued their benefits system.¹⁷ What is evident by the 1870s and beyond is that the skilled working class became the most visible group within fraternal orders. By the latter decades of the century, the Oddfellows viewed themselves extensively as a working class institution. The *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship* conveyed its sense of gratitude that the middle classes now viewed the Oddfellows as a worthwhile institution, something that the workingmen had known for years. When the Grand Sire of the IOOF came to Toronto and visited the Industrial Exhibition, his speech was plainly aimed at his own constituency when he declared that the power, prosperity and happiness of a nation rested on its skilled workers. As these skilled workers also joined the Oddfellows in droves, the correlation

¹⁶ One can read the Journal of Deputation of the BNA Grand Lodge of the IOOF in the AO, MU 2211, file A-II-1, 12 March 1846, 17 and 28 March 1846, 39. See also the records of the Hope Lodge #14, MTL, L36, minute book, 1846-9, 2 November 1846 and the Phoenix Lodge #22, MTL, L36, minute book, 1847-9, 5 July 1847.

¹⁷ See chapter six on temperance society mutualism, 246-49, below.

between a strong working class and the rise of the Order was unmistakable. When the Grand Master of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows toured Canada a year earlier, he expressed similar sentiments regarding the working classes. To Henry Outram, the greatest priority of the Oddfellow movement was to provide skilled labourers with the opportunity to help themselves and provide protection for their “helpless families” against sickness and death.¹⁸

Further evidence suggests that the skilled labourer comprised the vast majority of members in Oddfellow lodges, particularly in large towns and villages in Ontario. Research conducted in Thorold, Campbellford, Ingersoll and Point Edward by various scholars confirms that skilled workers not only joined Oddfellow lodges in great numbers, but managed to secure executive positions in the lodges as well.¹⁹ Even in towns with a large working-class population, the membership often would reflect some of the largest employers in that town. No better example exists than that of the St. Clair lodge in Point Edward, a railway town, where over sixty percent of Oddfellows were railway employees. Similarly, if an Oddfellow lodge established roots in a rural area such as Kerwood or Fergus, farmers and other occupations housed in a small village would become Oddfellows (see Table 5.2). Whatever the lodge composition, Oddfellows were always among the “producer” portion of the community requiring the pecuniary benefits of these societies for the protection of their families. As a result, many lodges throughout the latter half of the century teetered on the edge of insolvency, as they regularly depended on the contributions of members with rather scanty means. Financial secretaries employed several strategies to overcome deficits in lodge funds, from separating the various benefit funds and placing the monies in

¹⁸ See the *Tour of the Grand Master of the IOOF, Manchester Unity, Henry Outram in Canada and the United States*, (Durham, 1879), 13-14; *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, vol. 1, no. 5, (May, 1875), 143-4; *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, Twenty-Sixth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1880), 2019-20 and *Dominion Oddfellow*, vol. 15, no. 28, (5 December, 1895), 5.

¹⁹ See Anstead, “Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario,” 182-88; Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 109, 249-50 and Emery and Emery, *Young Man’s Benefit*, 31-8.

savings banks, to other practices that often constituted fraud. Thus financial secretaries could also prove to be the downfall of a lodge, through embezzlement and poor accounting.²⁰ Often the first fund to go bankrupt was the Widows and Orphans Fund, as executives wrestled with providing benefits to those unable to reciprocally contribute anything into the fund. The St. Clair lodge in Point Edward implemented a lump sum payment to widows instead of monthly instalments to ease the financial burdens on the lodge. The Wardsville lodge actually named the widows Murphy and Frickelton as the individuals responsible for the bankruptcy of the Widows and Orphans fund.²¹

Other fraternal orders also encouraged working-class members to join their associations, a case in point being the Ancient Order of United Workmen. Recruitment appeals made by the AOUIW in their literature focused on low waged individuals, to whom the spectre of leaving poverty-stricken family members upon their passing was a very real threat. Members of AOUIW lodges mirrored this ideology, as the AOUIW lodge in Madoc initiated skilled or semiskilled workers to the tune of thirty-six percent of the membership, with thirty-two percent of members being either farmers or agricultural workers.²² Both the Canadian and Independent Order of Foresters publicized in their periodicals a strong impression that their associations were entirely established on a working class foundation. The *Canadian Forester* believed that fraternal orders in general reached the “energetic, industrious, influential citizens, who constitute what Lincoln called the ‘plain people.’” The *Independent Forester* lauded the IOF’s

²⁰ See the records of Capital lodge #141, MTL, L36, minute book, 1874-6, 2 March 1876; Ark lodge #181, minute book, 13 February 1880, 235; Acton lodge #204, minute book, 1877-84, 2 April 1879 and Hanover lodge #233, minute book, 1882-97, 18 February 1885.

²¹ See the records of the Wardsville lodge #60, MTL, L36, minute book, 1875-82, 22 July 1877, 99 and 10 April 1882, 134 and Palmerston lodge #123, minute book, 1883-4, 21 August 1884. See also the records of the St. Clair lodge #106, RCL, box 4319, minute book, 1883-6, 6 September 1883, 20 and 11 October 1883, 43.

²² See the records of the Madoc lodge, AO, MU 9, petitions for membership, 1891-98, and *Ritual of the Ancient Order of United Workmen*, (Hamilton, 1905), 34-5. For membership in a larger town setting, and therefore a larger working class base, see Anstead, “Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario,” 182-88 and Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 249-50.

participation in the 1896 Labour Day parade in Toronto, noting that the workingman was essential to the success of the order. In spite of these protestations from Forester periodicals, historians view the Foresters as far more middle class than the Oddfellows or the Workmen. In reality, the Foresters, as with the Oddfellows, imitated the larger community fairly consistently, both in a rural setting such as Listowel and in a more urban environment as Peterborough (see Table 5.3).²³

Even though fraternalism limited the conflict between the urban and rural visions of community that plagued institutions such as temperance societies and Mechanics' Institutes, some subtle shifts towards urban middle-class fraternalism did occur. A middle-class urban fraternalism based more on the refinement and manners of its members than on occupation, the values of civility and sophistication would take the place of charity and unity as the chief characteristics of urban fraternalism. Fraternalism came full circle to early bourgeois Oddfellowship, as the *Canadian Forester* noted that the order increased in favour with the "best classes of the community." Even as the *Dominion Oddfellow* praised the lodge as a place where all classes could meet on the basis of social equality, such association tended to level upwards as "it gives men of ordinary calibre and position an opportunity of mixing with the most refined, intelligent and illustrious in the community."²⁴ As the bureaucracy of the mutual benefit society became more centralized and run more like an insurance business by the latter portion of the century, the urban offices of the Foresters and Oddfellows developed into large-scale operations. After the IOOF erected their spacious Oddfellows Hall in Toronto, complete with corporate offices, the Independent Order of Foresters constructed a sizeable edifice of their own, the new Foresters

²³ See the *Independent Forester*, vol. 17, no. 4, (October, 1896), 100-1 and the *Canadian Forester*, vol. 10, no. 2, (September, 1890), 11 and vol. 10, no. 7, (February, 1891), 15. For the Foresters as a more middle-class institution, see Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 249-50.

²⁴ See the *Dominion Oddfellow*, vol. 15, no. 29, (12 December, 1895), 13 and *Canadian Forester*, vol. 9, no. 6, (January, 1890), 1 and vol. 10, no. 7, (February, 1891), 15.

Temple that was “equal in completeness of any public building in Toronto.” Added to this was the new Foresters’ Island Park, a place where Foresters could go for recreation and entertainment.²⁵ Despite these expressions of business competition between large companies, fraternal orders also formed associations not unlike Boards of Trade or Chambers of Commerce to promote their own interests. Centralization through the Association of Fraternal Orders provided co-operation and assistance between the Foresters, Oddfellows, Workmen and other societies on such matters as government legislation and medical practices, tending to “professionalize” the mutual benefit society field. Although the strength of the fraternal order remained in the various lodges scattered across the nation at the turn of the century, fraternalism in the twentieth century would turn to its insurance divisions to guarantee survival in a highly competitive market. Until this period fraternalism would remain popular with the working class, as the Independent Order of Foresters and Ancient Order of United Workmen each would report a membership of over 30,000 members in Ontario alone, and the Oddfellows close to 24,000 in 1899.²⁶

Of course the community ethos in nineteenth-century Canada included women, although fraternalism with its masculine culture experienced a greater difficulty in complying with gender inclusive ideals. The values of “respectable manhood” inherent in fraternalism during the nineteenth century are unambiguous and direct, insomuch that all historians of mutual benefit societies concur that women had no place in the lodge rooms of the nation.²⁷ While this is a fairly

²⁵ See the *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Ninth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1893), 5475-6 and the *Independent Forester*, vol. 16, no. 1, (July, 1895), 5, 14-15.

²⁶ See Palmer, “Mutuality and the Masking/Making of Difference,” 130-32; Emery and Emery, *A Young Man’s Benefit*, 86-101 and Beito, *From Mutual Aid to the Welfare State*, 110-35. See also *Journal of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Eighth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1892), 5241-2; *Journal of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Forty-Fourth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1899), 7014 and *Independent Forester*, vol. 16, no. 6, (December, 1895), 186 and vol. 19, no. 8, (February, 1899), 234-5.

accurate assessment of fraternalism in the nineteenth century, many fraternal orders were not only aware of their duties to the female gender, they attempted to devise means to incorporate them into the lodge room. Early fraternalism had no such qualms, however, in banishing females from associational life, inviting the spouses of male members only periodically to lodge activities and socials. The original Canadian Oddfellows in Montreal justified their exclusion of women on the grounds that women had more “appropriate and important duties” than attending lodge events. As one article in the *Oddfellows Record* entitled “The Beauty of Woman’s Helplessness” explained, females required not only the financial benefits Oddfellowship afforded them, but the moral respectability inherent in the doctrines of the movement would help their male family members learn to become better protectors, companions and guardians of the female members of the household. To make this philosophy more palatable to women, Albert Case counselled the female members of his audience that they were virtuous already, and that “we do not close our lodge doors against your sex because we distrust your faithfulness or your truth; but we do so because we wish to cultivate our moral natures, and arise to the standards of your own.”²⁸

Initial IOOF lodges in Ontario fostered an identical ideal, as they recognized the importance of protecting female family members at home, while restricting their privileges in the lodge room. However, these lodges at mid-century also understood the importance of including women in their social outings, as the executive of the Hope lodge in Port Hope did when they instructed their members to invite as many female friends as possible to an open meeting broadening the interest in the lodge. The Industry lodge in Haldimand invited a brother visiting

²⁷ See Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood*; Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood*; Anstead, “Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario,” 161-90; Newbury, “No Atheist, Eunuch or Woman,” 75-87; Cordery, “Friendly Societies and the Discourse of Respectability,” 41-8; Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 108-16 and Palmer, “Mutuality and the Making/Masking of Difference,” 133-6.

²⁸ See Albert Case, *The Principles of Oddfellowship: An Address Delivered Before the IOOF at Montreal*, (Montreal, 1845), 13-14 and his *Address Delivered Before Oriental Lodge #7*, 14. See also the *Oddfellows Record*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1846), 1 and 5; vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1846), 28; vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1846), 47 and vol. 1, no. 4, (April, 1846), 55.

from Wisconsin to speak, and he advised his Canadian brethren that in his experience, “the admission of females tended very much to increase the interest in the Order.”²⁹ As the century progressed, the visibility of women in lodge events became even more apparent, and their participation even more pronounced. The St. Clair lodge in Point Edward had a strong history of incorporating females into the activities of the lodge, despite prohibition on their actual membership. Holding a joint entertainment with the Ladies Aid Society of the Methodist church, the lodge found that female administered social events were far more successful. A few years later, despite the exclusion of female members, eight women formed the very first entertainment committee of the lodge. Even though the committee comprised only the spouses of prominent members, the number and quality of social events held in the lodge increased dramatically as a result of their presence.³⁰

Even the Grand Lodge of the IOOF in the United States recognized the necessity of establishing a female auxiliary to the Oddfellows, creating the Rebekah degree for women at mid-century. The Oddfellows in Canada were not apathetic to the possibilities of the degree, as Thomas Reynolds wrote the Grand Sire about establishing Rebekah lodges in Canada West as one of the first steps of reorganizing the Oddfellows in Canada. The first mention of an attempted Rebekah lodge in Canada West was in St. Thomas, where the Grand Lodge lauded the fact in 1857 that “wherever the influence of women is exerted in a labor of love, good is exerted.” Unfortunately, the history of the Rebekah degree is marred by the refusal of the Grand Lodge to allow Rebekah lodges autonomy from local male lodges or to permit female members other than the wife or daughter of a male Oddfellow. To the *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, these

²⁹ See the records of the Hope lodge #14, in MTL, L36, minute book, 1846-9, 30 August 1847 and records of the Industry lodge #25, MTL, L36, minute book, 1854-59, 31 May 1855.

³⁰ See the records of the St. Clair lodge #106, RCL, box 4319, minute book, 1874-78, 3 January 1878, 268; minute book, 1883-86, 17 July 1884, 99; 2 July 1885, 188 and 6 August 1885, 199 and minute book, 1890-94, 22 January 1891, 109. See also the records of the Egremont lodge in Kerwood, RCL, recent acquisition, vol. 1, minute book, 1877-92, 6 July 1878, 70.

constraints guaranteed failure of the Rebekah degree, suggesting that Oddfellow lodges offer women more general membership privileges instead of segregating them.³¹

By the late nineteenth century, enough changes occurred in Canadian society that Rebekah lodges became completely autonomous by 1886, with lodges accepting any unmarried women into the Rebekah degree in 1891.

Acknowledging that it was “narrow-minded men with deep seated prejudices” that halted the development of the Rebekah degree, the executive of the Grand Rebekah lodge expressed their gratitude when the Grand Lodge of Ontario returned the relief work of Oddfellowship back to the women’s sphere, in permitting the Rebekah sisters to open an orphan’s home in 1895. As Emily Bowden, the first President of the Grand Rebekah Lodge proclaimed in 1892, “It is only within the last decade since the Degree was placed entirely under our control, that its success has been so marked. It only requires that the sisters should have the opportunity given them to ensure the success of the Degree of Rebekah.”³² In spite of this rhetoric, the Ontario Grand Rebekah lodge only recruited 1800 sisters by the turn of the century, and the Grand Lodge in Quebec reported just over three hundred. Obviously these numbers could not match those of a completely self-sufficient organization such as the WCTU, and the tone of Oddfellow publications are an indication of why this was so. While extolling the virtues of Frances Willard, the sisters of the Rebekah degree were strongly cautioned to remember the advantages of the order, rather than woman’s suffrage. Even as the Grand Rebekah Lodge appreciated the notion that women need not be

³¹ *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, vol. 1, no. 12, (December, 1875), 362-3. See also Beito, *Mutual Aid or the Welfare State*, 32-37; Reorganization of the IOOF in Canada West records, AO, MU 2210, file A-1-2, Letters from Thomas Reynolds to the Grand Sire, 7 April 1854 and *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Canada West, IOOF, Third Annual Session*, (Brantford, 1857), 7-8.

³² *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Eighth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1892), appendix, xxxviii-x; *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Ninth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1893), appendix, xxxvii-xliii and *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Forty-First Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1895), 6013 and 6239.

confined to their domestic chores, it was also unseemly for women to do labour “of the keenest masculine intellect.”³³

Gender issues became a highly contested sphere in the competition for female clients in the latter half of the century. The Independent Order of Foresters called their female auxiliary the Companion Court, complete with their own benefits. The creation of the female Independent Forester auxiliary can be directly attributed to the work of the editor of the *Independent Forester*, the Mohawk doctor Oronhyatekha, who noted as early as 1885 that “in this enlightened and progressive country we shall be fearfully handicapped until we shall remove the defect in this respect from an otherwise perfect organization.” With the establishment of the Companion auxiliary soon after, the ideology of the fraternal women’s auxiliary shifted from not only a parallel ritual degree, but corresponding benefits as well. As the *Independent Forester* stated, insurance benefited a family upon the death of the mother, as well as the father.³⁴ By far the most gender-inclusive fraternal order in late nineteenth-century Canada was the Canadian Order of Chosen Friends, as they permitted women to join their association on terms of “perfect equality” with their male brethren. Women could equally participate in the council rituals, and could also receive the benefits offered by the order. And yet if the records of the Antrim Council #245 are any indication, the Chosen Friends continued to marginalize women to some degree. The only mention of female involvement in the affairs of the order came in the

³³ The *Dominion Oddfellow* contained a column entitled “the Fair Rebekah’s Page,” yet this section only contained recipes and fashion tips, not exultations towards relief efforts. See also the *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Eighth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1892), appendix, xxxvix; *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Fortieth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1894), xxxv and *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Quebec, IOOF, Eighteenth Annual Session*, (Montreal, 1897), 1577.

³⁴ See the *Independent Forester*, vol. 6, no. 5, (September, 1885), 3; vol. 12, no. 8, (February, 1892), 226-9 and vol. 19, no. 10, (April, 1899), 299. See also the *Constitution of the IOF*, 16-20 and the *Canadian Forester*, vol. 9, no. 3, (October, 1889), 10.

preparation of council refreshments, by “young ladies from around our vicinity who are always rejoiced to be able to help on such occasions.”³⁵

Exclusivity and fraternalism went hand in hand according to most historians, particularly in matters of race and religion. Barring blacks, natives and Chinese, as well as Roman Catholics and Jews, the description of most fraternal orders is one of racism and intolerance to those who were not white Protestants. This historical assault on the community ethos is not without merit, although David Beito’s portrayal of fraternalism as being selectively intolerant rather than exclusively racist is a fairly convincing argument.³⁶ While some elements of racial and religious restrictions occurred within non-nationalistic fraternal and mutual benefit orders, attempted compliance with the community ideology transpired in many lodge rooms across the nation. Initial racial issues in Canada of course involved English Canada’s relationship with French speaking individuals in Quebec. Although the characterization of these early Oddfellows is one of distrust and disapproval of Roman Catholic members, in fact the IOOF in Montreal actively recruited French Catholics for membership. Translating their lectures and addresses into French, and inviting the St. Patrick’s Society and the *Société St. Jean Baptiste* to social functions, the Oddfellows endeavoured to provide a welcome environment for potential French Catholic members. As Christopher Dunkin explained, Oddfellows united all men separated by “artificial demarcations” such as race, religion, and “unfortunately even by language.” Even when the Bishop of Montreal, Ignace Bourget, forbade Roman Catholics from entering “secret societies,” the Oddfellows in the British American Lodge were summarily convinced that such a policy did not include them, as they took no

³⁵ See the records of the Antrim Council #245, NAC, MG 28 I 302, vol. 1, minute book, 1894-1921, 20 November 1895, 35 and 18 October 1896, 64. See also the *Constitution and Laws of the Canadian Order of Chosen Friends*, (Hamilton, 1899), iv-v and 69, and *Ritual of the Canadian Order of Chosen Friends*, (Hamilton, 1899), 14-15.

³⁶ See Beito, *Mutual Aid or the Welfare State*, 44-63. For fraternalism as a vehicle of white Protestantism, see Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood*, 125-33; Palmer, “Mutuality and the Making/Masking of Difference,” 128-30; Emery and Emery, *Young Man’s Benefit*, 26-30 and Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 110-118.

oaths. Indeed, Oddfellow appeals for a French Catholic lodge in Montreal merely intensified after Bourget's pronouncements.³⁷

The failure of Oddfellows to attract French Catholics in Quebec in the early years did not bode well for further attempts to enrol Catholics in the ranks of Oddfellowship. The difficulties were not entirely one-sided, for as witnessed the Catholic hierarchy often put the Oddfellows and other fraternal orders on the proscribed list of secret societies. Despite this uneasy relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, by the late nineteenth century a large French Catholic market for fraternal benefits and insurance was ready to be exploited. Many historians view the formation of the Catholic Order of Foresters as a group of disgruntled Catholics upset with the second-class status afforded them in the Independent Order of Foresters. Segregating themselves ensured that their members did not associate with any group condemned by the Catholic Church. What is apparent is that the Catholic Order of Foresters filled a void created by the absence of fraternalism in Quebec, as they amassed a total of eighty-five lodges in the province by 1892.³⁸ Such remarkable growth of fraternalism among the French Canadian populace did not go unnoticed by the parent association, the Independent Order of Foresters. In the highly competitive atmosphere of late nineteenth-century mutual benefit fraternalism, the IOF did not hesitate in their attempts to attract French clients. By translating their Constitution and the *Independent Forester* into the French language, and inviting the *Société St. Jean Baptiste* and well-known Catholic clergymen as Paul Bruchesi to their social functions, the IOF were able to welcome prominent French Catholic members such as Wilfrid Laurier to their band. By 1897, the success of this approach could

³⁷ See the *Oddfellows Record*, vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1846), 27-30; vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1846), 41; vol. 1, no. 8, (August, 1846), 126-7; vol. 2, no. 5, (May, 1847), 105-6 and vol. 2, no. 11, (November, 1847), 225-6.

³⁸ See the *Constitutions et Règlements de L'Ordre Des Forestiers Catholiques*, (Chicago, 1889), 5-6, 32-33 and *COF Montreal Souvenir 1892*, (Montreal, 1892), 1. See also Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood*, 130-5 and Emery and Emery, *A Young Man's Benefit*, 27-29.

be measured in the thirty-three subordinate courts established in Quebec, with nearly half of them in the French language.³⁹

The description of the “coloured question” for fraternalism during the nineteenth century is largely one of complete exclusivity, as most fraternal lodges and mutual benefit societies permitted only “free white males” as members. And yet the restriction placed upon blacks, Chinese and native men by the IOOF and other fraternal orders is far more complex and problematic than historians would like to admit, particularly in the central Canadian context. Clearly the constraints upon non-white membership in Oddfellow lodges at mid-century was an American concern, reflecting the racial struggles in the United States. During the reorganization of the Grand Lodge in Canada West, Canadian disdain for racial restrictions attracted the attention of the Grand Sire in the United States, when he wrote Thomas Reynolds and counselled him to “be careful not to overlook the all important question whether there be any colored members in these lodges.”⁴⁰ In reality, publicized strictures placed on black membership did not appear in Canadian lodge constitutions until well into the 1870s. By 1875, the debate over black Oddfellows in the General Board of the IOOF in the United States reached a critical juncture, as segregation into coloured lodges in the United States became strict IOOF policy. It therefore comes as no surprise that the first mention of the “free white males” clause in the Grand Lodge of Ontario’s constitution materialized only in 1876.⁴¹

³⁹ The IOF also utilized this approach with those of a Jewish background, with the formation of two Jewish courts in Toronto. See the *Independent Forester*, vol. 17, no. 5, (November, 1896), 133; vol. 18, no. 5, (November, 1897), 130; vol. 18, no. 9, (March, 1898), 267 and vol. 19, no. 1, (July, 1898), 2.

⁴⁰ It had probably come to the attention of the IOOF in the U.S. that none of the British American Lodge’s constitutions contained the “free white male” clause. See *Constitution of the Commercial Lodge*, 2; *Introduction, Bylaws and Rules of Prince of Wales Lodge of the IOOF*, (Montreal, 1843), 19 and *Constitution, Bylaws and Rules of Order of the Albion Lodge of the IOOF*, (Montreal, 1845), 4. See also Reorganization of the IOOF in Canada West records, AO, MU 2210, file A-1-2, Letters to Thomas Reynolds from the Grand Sire, 30 July 1853.

⁴¹ The Grand Lodge of Ontario reprinted the GLUS debate over black membership in *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Twenty-First Annual Session*, (Brantford,

Not all Oddfellows professed satisfaction over this state of affairs, often using the tenets of the community ethos to express their disillusionment with the decision to bar natives and people of colour from IOOF lodges. The *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship* printed a letter from a Canadian Oddfellow who lamented the disbaring of men of colour from its ranks: “Is it not uncharitable for us to put our foot on the head of those who are different from us in color? Why not grant them the same privileges that we enjoy? Why not let them work with us side by side? Why not give them our hand and clasp them as brother grasps brother’s?” An American Oddfellow periodical noted and took exception to this tirade, and printed a response justifying the exclusion of Native Americans and blacks. Ironically, the *Heart and Hand* employed similar language of community in explaining the prohibition of non-white Oddfellows:

While civil, political and religious equality may be, and are extended to the black or red man, it is a well established fact that, save in rare instances, social equality is not. And in the white race, even, those of different nationalities and religions, select their associates and friends from their own. The Day may come when all men of every race shall be equal socially, as well as otherwise, but one thing is certain and positive; **THEY ARE NOT SO NOW**, and we would be introducing dissention, discord and trouble, to endeavor to precede public opinion and custom upon this point.

What irritated the editors of the *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship* was the high-handed manner in which the American paper attempted to prevent discussion on the “coloured question.” As the editor stated unequivocally, “is it because he thinks that we foreigners in Canada should be sufficiently thankful for our connection with an Order whose headquarters are in the U.S., without presuming to criticize any of its enactments?”⁴² Even those Oddfellows who accepted the

1875), 1495-1520. See also the *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Twenty-Second Annual Session*, (Brantford, 1876), 1774.

⁴² For this entire discussion, see the *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, vol. 2, no. 3, (March, 1876), 84-5 and vol. 2, no. 5, (May, 1876), 143-6. On black associational life in Canada,

decree of the IOOF regarding the segregation of black lodges came to appreciate these associations, such as the Worthy Grand of the Zephyr lodge, who was excited to discover in Nipissing “gentlemen of coloured persuasion in rapport with principles of Oddfellowship.” Henry Outram, the Grand Master of the Manchester Unity visited a lodge of black Oddfellows in Toronto, finding it “as well conducted, as respectable and in every way equal to the Lodges of their paler brethren.”⁴³

The recurring theme as to the exclusivity of non-whites in fraternal orders therefore comes in those mutual benefit societies originating in the United States. The Canadian Grand Lodges and Councils of the Ancient Order of United Workmen, Knights of Pythias and the Order of Chosen Friends all barred non-whites from joining. However, the Independent and Canadian Order of Foresters were quite unique in the Canadian experience, as they removed all references to race in the constitutions and bylaws of their orders.⁴⁴ This became quite a selling point for the Foresters in a highly competitive insurance market, particularly after Oronhyatekha became the Chief Ranger of the IOF. A living memorial to the racial inclusiveness of the Foresters, the Mohawk physician from Brantford appeared more and more in the pages of the *Independent Forester* to illustrate what true fraternalism was all about. Festivals held in his honour, with Mohawk children singing hymns in their native language demonstrate how the IOF utilized the selection of Oronhyatekha as Chief Ranger to construct an identity that integrated the entire community. Advertising ethnic diversity in the Forester court came full circle with the publication of a biography in the *Independent*

see Peggy Bristow, “Black Women in Buxton and Chatham, 1850-65,” in Bristow, editor, *We’re Rooted Here and They Can’t Pull Us Up: Essays in African Canadian Women’s History*, (Toronto, 1994), 117-24.

⁴³ See *Tour of the Grand Master, Henry Outram*, 26-7 and the records of the Zephyr lodge #213, MTL, L36, minute book, 1870-81, 21 May 1870, 41.

⁴⁴ See the *Constitution for Subordinate Lodges of the Knights of Pythias*, (Toronto, 1875), 21; *Constitution of the AOUW*, 2; *Constitution of the Order of Chosen Friends*, iv; *Constitution of the IOF*, 5-6 and *Constitution and Rules of Order of the Canadian Order of Foresters*, (Brantford, 1887), 15-16.

Forester of the first Chinese Forester, a Brother Moy Loy. A transparent capitalization on the restrictive policies of the Knights of Labor, Oddfellows and AOUW, the Foresters managed to uncover a niche in the insurance market – at least in Ontario and Quebec – that secured a significant membership for the IOF.⁴⁵

More so than any other voluntary association, fraternal orders and mutual benefit societies understood the correlation of ensuring harmony through the eradication of sectarian and political discord. Early Oddfellowship in Montreal during the post-rebellion era was fertile ground for such discourse, in attempting to avoid the religious and political violence of the previous decade. Several articles and editorials in the *Oddfellows Record* extolled the virtues of leaving aside “all causes of discord and ill-will” that ruled the hearts of men outside the lodge room. As Albert Case noted, Oddfellowship came to fruition as a result of individuals who “saw that men were divided in feeling, alienated by party prejudices and sectarian animosities, and saw the necessity of an Institution where they could meet as brothers, where at the door of entrance they should lay down all sect and party, and enter as into a safe retreat from temptation, pollution and schism.” The only political feeling Oddfellows experienced was love of country, the desire to be true to the Government and obedient to its laws, while the only religious impulses acted upon was a love of God, morality and charity.⁴⁶ Even with the reorganization of the Independent Order of Oddfellows in Canada West, the Grand Lodge understood the importance of eliminating sectarian and political debates. Religious and political animosities, not economic status or class, created the false distinctions within society that in turn produced contention and discord

⁴⁵ Ironically, the American historian David Beito memorializes the selection of Oronhyatekha as Chief Ranger of the IOF, while Canadian historians are strangely silent on this highly significant individual in Canadian fraternalism. See Beito, *Mutual Aid or the Welfare State*, 50-59 and the *Independent Forester*, vol. 16, no. 1, (July, 1895), 12-15; vol. 16, no. 9, (March, 1896), 285 and vol. 19, no. 2, (August, 1898), 37. In contrast to this “selective intolerance” found in central Canada, the treatment of Asians by mutual benefit societies on the west coast of Canada were overtly racist; see Palmer, “Mutuality and the Making/Masking of Difference,” 128-9.

⁴⁶ See Albert Case, *The Principles of Oddfellowship*, 11-12 and *Address Delivered Before Oriental Lodge*, 3 and 15. See also the *Oddfellows Record*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1846), 3-4, 7-8; vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1846), 30 and vol. 1, no. 7, (July, 1846), 108.

within the larger community. To the Grand Lodge of Canada West, such friction would disappear once the non-sectarian and non-political views of the Oddfellows took root.⁴⁷

Ensuring harmony through the removal of sectarian and political conflict would not prove an easy task for these early Oddfellows, particularly with their relations with the Oddfellows of the Manchester Unity. On the surface, both the U.S. based IOOF and the Manchester Unity secured a fair amount of co-operation between their organizations. The introduction of both the IOOF and the Manchester Unity in Montreal came as a result of John Hardie, a Baltimore painter who laboured to establish both lodges in the city. Unfortunately what is more remembered about these early Oddfellows is the competition between the two groups during the missionary visit to Canada West of the British North American lodge of the IOOF. What escapes notice is the desire of the Ontario lodge in Coburg to share rooms with its Manchester Unity counterpart, or the *Oddfellows Record* pleading with the executive on both sides to patch up their “little differences.”⁴⁸ The reorganization of the IOOF’s Grand Lodge in Canada West posed new problems for the two groups, as they struggled to co-exist with one another. At the heart of the dispute was the politicized nature of loyalty, as the Montreal, Toronto and London lodges of the Manchester Unity proclaimed themselves to be “Loyal” Oddfellow lodges after the British model. When the Loyal London lodge decided to accept the U.S. Grand Lodge charter the last entry in the minutes, “God Save the Queen and preserve the MU, for man can’t do it in this Canada,” epitomized the disposition of loyalty skirmishes. The Grand Sire in Baltimore demonstrated his guilt in the affair when he counselled Thomas Reynolds to keep the affair quiet in the interests of harmony, yet crowed about the

⁴⁷ See the records of the Grand Lodge, Canada West, AO, MU 221, file A-II-2, minute book, 1855-61, annual reports, 6 August 1856 and 4 August 1858.

⁴⁸ See the record of the Ontario Lodge #12, MTL, L36, minute book, 1847-57, 21 October 1847; *Oddfellows Record*, vol. 2, no. 8, (August, 1847), 167-8; *History of Oddfellowship*, 2 and Journal of Deputation, BNA Grand Lodge of the IOOF, AO, MU 2211, file A-II-1, 28 March 1846, 39.

zeal in which IOOF representatives rolled up the Manchester Unity organization in Canada West.⁴⁹ Relations with the Manchester Unity and the IOOF did improve shortly after these events, when the Manchester Unity met in Toronto to discuss the possibility of reciprocal relations with the U.S. Oddfellows. In spite of these efforts, as late as 1863 the Grand Lodge of Canada wrote the Grand Master of the Manchester Unity outlining a plan for union, but noting “I may be mistaken, but can conceive of no hindrance to union, aside from petty national prejudice on the part of a few.” The termination of such sentiments allowed the two groups to construct a more formal reconciliation in 1865.⁵⁰

With the “political” troubles of the Manchester Unity behind them, the IOOF in the 1870s became even firmer in their determination to eradicate sectarianism and party politics from the lodge room. Fraternalism in this endeavour became the most successful voluntary association in removing sources of discord by the turn of the century as a result. Edwin Lander in his *Exposé of Oddfellowship* equated strife and discord with party and sect, as they “create heart-burnings and divisions among men.” The banishment of these emotions from the Oddfellow lodge room controlled these elements, presenting a “sacred tolerance” that “directs in harmony man’s united efforts to fraternize the world.” As the *Dominion Oddfellow* recorded, the lodge offered a retreat from the “wild waves of party spirit and the zealot’s controversy,” as the principles and doctrines taught

⁴⁹ See the records of the London Loyal Lodge of the Manchester Unity, AO, MU 2224, minute book, 1852-3, 4 August and 8 September, 1853; *Bylaws Of the Loyal City of Toronto Lodge, Manchester Unity*, (Toronto, 1853) and Reorganization of the IOOF in Canada West records, AO, MU 2110, file A-1-2, Letters to Thomas Reynolds from the Grand Sire, 30 July 1853. On the political nature of loyalty, see David Mills, *The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada, 1784-1850*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1988).

⁵⁰ See the *Report of the Special Meeting of Delegates and Grand Annual Conference of the Manchester Unity*, (Hamilton, 1852), 4-6 and 11; records of the Grand Lodge of Canada West, AO, MU 2210, file A-I-3, H.C. Bingham to Thomas Tindill, 2 March 1863 and *Journal of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Canada West, IOOF, Eleventh Annual Session*, (London, 1865), 311-12.

therein were more about life and conduct, rather than dogma and creed.⁵¹ Both at the Grand Lodge and at the local level, Oddfellows diligently practiced what they preached in ending religious and political controversy in their association. During the Grand Sire's visit to London a large crowd gathered to hear his address, illustrating the truth that politics had no place in Oddfellow assemblies, since they met as brothers and co-labourers in a glorious cause. Attentiveness to the absence of politics extended to the Charity lodge in Sunderland, who expressed their disapproval over a recent circular by a group of Oddfellows "using our order in a political way" during the previous year's election.⁵² By the end of the century, one of the greatest sectarian controversies to the Oddfellows was that of irreligion, agnosticism and atheism. Justifying their exclusion of the "infidel," the *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship* acknowledged that the Oddfellows followed the universal religion of nature, the "cement which unites in one band, men of the most discordant opinions." While sectarianism divided men, Christianity would bring them even closer together in an integrated brotherhood. This edict and philosophy would remain in force right up to 1899, when the Grand Lodge of Ontario proclaimed "no man should offer himself for membership in our Order who has not this belief; no one should be accepted without it; and no member who loses faith in such a supreme being can honestly and consistently remain with us."⁵³

⁵¹ Edwin Lander, *Exposé of Oddfellowship*, (Toronto, 187-), 23-4 and *Dominion Oddfellow*, vol. 15, no. 28, (5 December, 1895), 13. See also the *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Twenty-Sixth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1880), 2017.

⁵² See the records of the Charity lodge #129, MTL, L36, minute book, 1874-78, 18 July 1876, 166 and the *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Twenty-First Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1875), 1314-15.

⁵³ This would extend to the local lodge, as a visitor from the Whitby noted during a visit to Point Edward that he "had never seen a lodge opened or closed without prayer and urged it strongly as part of our duty. The noble grand acknowledged our neglect and said we had no excuse to offer but supposed it was never too late to mend." See the records of the St. Clair lodge #106, RCL, box 4319, minute book, 1878-82, 7 November 1880, 171; *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, vol. 1, no. 6, (June, 1875), 169 and vol. 2, no. 12, (December, 1876), 364 and the *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Forty-Fourth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1899), appendix, 63. The Oddfellows worried that materialistic socialism and

Other fraternal orders similarly stressed the importance of ending sectarian and political turmoil amongst the membership. The rituals of both the Canadian and Independent Order of Foresters emphasized the significance of remaining politically and religiously neutral. Not only would this policy ensure true peace and a united brotherhood, members could act for the benefit of mankind without fear of political or religious reprisal. As John King, an executive with the Knights of Pythias observed, while nothing of a political or sectarian character could enter the portals of its lodge room Knights needed to enforce toleration in religion, obedience to law and loyalty to government.⁵⁴ Similar to the predicament faced by the early IOOF and the Manchester Unity, the Canadian Order of Foresters separated from the Independent Order in 1883 to secure a stronger national autonomy. Unlike the Oddfellow debates decades earlier these disputes were not as politically charged, reflecting more of the competitive nature of the fraternal insurance business. Instead of questioning each other's loyalty, both the COF and the IOF cast doubt on the business practices of their rival, from suspicions regarding the actual figures of financial surpluses to reports on embezzlement. The rancour between the two groups therefore was not as insurmountable, and by the latter portion of the 1880s the restoration of co-operation between the two groups occurred.⁵⁵

As with many other voluntary associations, fraternal orders effectively preached the gospel of honest industry and the ethos of hard work as a means of promoting the producer ideology in the larger community. Self-reliance, the necessity of labour, and the avoidance of idleness was the creed of honest

organizations such as the Knights of Labor were usurping the traditional role of Christianity and more importantly, stealing their constituents; see Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*, 108-10.

⁵⁴ King, *Knights of Pythias*, 7; *Constitution of the Knights of Pythias*, 8-9 and *Constitution of the AOUW*, 2. See also *The Ritual of the Independent Order of Foresters*, (Toronto, 1899), 10; *Independent Forester*, vol. 16, no. 12, (June, 1896), 376; *Ritual of the COF*, 32-33 and 56 and the *Canadian Forester*, vol. 9, no. 2, (September, 1889), 3 and vol. 9, no. 8, (March, 1890), 6.

⁵⁵ See the *Independent Forester*, vol. 4, no. 5, (March, 1884), 1 and vol. 7, no. 11, (March, 1887), 3-5; Oronhyatekha, *History of the Independent Order of Foresters*, (Toronto, 1894), 102-31, 156-89 and *Constitution of the COF*, 3-4.

industry, and the Oddfellows attempted to abide by its precepts throughout its history. The early Oddfellows in Montreal promoted this notion of honest industry, embracing the virtues of honesty, frugality and temperance as well as hard work. Not only were prospective members required to accept these core values, they needed to actively pursue them by securing some form of livelihood. The lodges themselves observed the values of frugality, economy and retrenchment in the conducting of Oddfellow business. The Thames Lodge in Mitchell not only bought a cord of wood for the members to saw to save money, they also printed their bylaws as “quickly as possible and as cheap.” The Phoenix lodge in Oshawa refused to notify rejected candidates of their standing as it caused a “heavy expenditure in the shape of postage and stationary.”⁵⁶ Similar to temperance societies, Oddfellows associated sobriety and temperance with industriousness, and thus encouraged their lodges to be temperate. Many lodges of the IOOF and the Manchester Unity fined or expelled members for habitual drunkenness, along with including temperance regulations in their bylaws. To Albert Case, Oddfellows needed to confine their revenues to charity and mutual benefit work, for “we do not squander them in convivial parties at the festive board; we allow no part or tittle of them to be expended to furnish the Lodge with indulgencies such as bacchanalians use.”⁵⁷

If these early bourgeois Oddfellows conformed to the gospel of honest industry, when the working classes joined the IOOF *en masse* by the latter half of

⁵⁶ See the records of the Phoenix Lodge #43, MTL, L36, minute book, 1847-49, 18 October 1847 and Thames Lodge #43, MTL, L36, minute book, 1862-64, 6 November 1862 and 3 September 1863; Case, *The Principles of Oddfellowship*, 10; *Constitution of the Albion Lodge*, 26-7 and the *Oddfellows Record*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1846), 7; vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1847), 46 and vol. 2, no. 4, (April, 1847), 80-1.

⁵⁷ Case, *The Principles of Oddfellowship*, 9-10; *Oddfellows Record*, vol. 2, no. 3, (March, 1847), 55; *Constitution of the Albion Lodge*, 26; *General Laws for the Government of the Canadian Order of Oddfellows in Connexion with the Manchester Unity*, (Toronto, 1854), 9, 30-1; the records of the Loyal London Lodge, Manchester Unity, AO, MU 2224, minute book, 1852-53, 13 January 1852 and the records of the Imperial Lodge #37, MTL, L36, minute book, 1850-60, 8 March 1852 and 9 January 1860. These temperance ideals coupled with the benefit system soon helped win Sons of Temperance to the Oddfellow standard, when the Sons abandoned mutual benefits; see chapter six, 246-49, below.

the century, did they likewise assume the doctrines and principles of self-reliance and hard work? In a resounding fashion, the later ideology of the Oddfellows fully accepted the mandate to preach honest industry and further the ideals of hard work. Counselling Oddfellows to remember their economic responsibilities to the general community, Edwin Lander invited members to be considerate of their duty to the common weal, to strive to promote the general prosperity, and to remember that in all labour was profit and that an idle soul was an encumbrance to the earth. This philosophy would find its way into the character books of the order, as the interrogation of each prospective membership candidate included asking him if he possessed both a reputable means of support and industrious habits. Even by the mid-1890s, the producer ideology with its distinctions of productive and non-productive labour managed to sneak into the discourse of the official organ of the IOOF, the *Dominion Oddfellow*:

When all are educated to understand the true effect of idlers in a community, all will see that it is a matter of self-interest that not only those who desire work should be given it, but that those who are engaged in useless occupations, or who are making their living in dishonest or vicious ways, should join the ranks of true labourers – that is, the ranks of those who, by their hands or brains, or both, are doing their share of the legitimate work of the community.⁵⁸

As with the early Oddfellows, later Victorian members of the order debated the merits of temperance as a means of abiding by the precepts of honest industry. As the most pernicious of all vices, alcohol taken intemperately caused an individual to neglect his business and his property, as well as inducing idleness and crime. Unlike the prohibition fever that gripped temperance societies by the latter decades of the century, Oddfellows did not accept the doctrine of total abstinence. What they did consent to was the voice of public opinion, and

⁵⁸ See the *Dominion Oddfellow*, vol. 15, no. 25, (14 November, 1895), 8 and vol. 15, no. 28, (5 December, 1895), 13. See also Lander, *Exposé of Oddfellowship*, 53 and records of the St. Clair lodge #106, RCL, box 4318, character report book, preamble.

fulfilling the mission of the order “by warring against vice in all its forms, we must adhere closely to the wise and wholesome restrictions which have been thrown around us in regard to the use of intoxicating liquors.” Even at the local lodge level, when a Dr. Gilles proposed a Mr. Stewart for membership, his only failing was an occasional glass of liquor “occasionally, but nothing to hurt, and thought he had quite stopped it too.” Stewart passed his examination and became an Oddfellow. However, a Bro. Currie some years later was denied his benefits when it was discovered that he did not conduct himself as a proper Oddfellow, “his disability proceeding [sic] from Drunkenness and Debauchery his insanity immediately following the same.”⁵⁹

Other fraternal orders by the later Victorian period likewise followed the doctrines of honest industry, requiring their members to possess steady, industrious habits as well as a “reputable calling.” The *Canadian Forester* moralized that success depended upon one’s labour, and that there was always work for all those who required it. One editorial also took the gospel of honest industry inherent in the community and applied it to the nation at large. It was “men who work, not politicians who talk, [who] are the builders of our national fortunes. The problem over which deep thinkers are pondering is being solved by active Canadians who plough, sow, reap and gather in the harvest, and whose toil is the architect of our destiny.” Fraternal orders such as the Foresters not only taught the importance of toil and labour, they also encouraged frugality and thrift by instructing their members to acquire provident habits.⁶⁰ The latter portion of

⁵⁹ See the records of the St. Clair lodge #106, RCL, box 4319, minute book, 1873-74, 30 July and 13 August 1874 and minute book, 1894-1900, 8 November 1894, 44-5; *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Third Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1887), 4087-88; *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1876), 47-9 and Lander, *Exposé of Oddfellowship*, 30. Unfortunately, fraternal orders often honoured temperance more in the breach than the observance; see Anstead, “Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario,” 172-5 and Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 109-110.

⁶⁰ See the *Canadian Forester*, vol. 9, no. 2, (September, 1889), 5; vol. 10, no. 4, (November, 1890), 2; vol. 10, no. 10, (May, 1891), 1 and vol. 11, no. 4, (November, 1891), 2; *Constitution, Insurance Law, Sick and Funeral Benefit Law and Rules of Order of the Canadian Order of*

the century also witnessed a shift in attitudes towards the unemployed, from blaming the “victims” to an understanding of the duty of fraternal orders to aid brothers in distress from lack of employment. The Independent and Canadian Order of Foresters, as well as the Canadian Order of Chosen Friends all counselled their members to assist brothers in finding gainful employment, particularly those afflicted by “adverse fate.” Even as the *Canadian Forester* differentiated between luck and labour – the latter with keen eyes and a strong will would turn up something – they also recognized that the day of individualism was over, with mutual aid and co-operation replacing it. The Foresters therefore made it an order of business to enquire after the employment needs of any member of the court.⁶¹

While advocating the gospel of hard work, fraternal orders more than any other voluntary association managed to escape any deliberations over the merits of economic policies such as free trade or protectionism. The financial benefit system intrinsic to fraternalism in the nineteenth century certainly is one major reason for the lack of concern over the economic strategies of the larger community or nation. By promoting the values of self-help, self-reliance, industry and toil through the assurance system, fraternalism in both its early “bourgeois” phase and in its later manifestation as a vehicle for the skilled working class embodied the ideals of honest industry so that trepidation over economic approaches simply did not exist.⁶² And yet the establishment of the mutual benefit system imitated the political economy of mid-century, focusing on

Foresters, (Peterborough, 1896), 4 and *Constitution and Laws of the Order of Canadian Home Circles*, (Welland, 1885), 3.

⁶¹ See the *Ritual of the IOF*, 7; *Independent Forester*, vol. 16, no. 10, (April, 1896), 312-3; *Canadian Forester*, vol. 9, no. 5, (December, 1889), 3 and vol. 10, no. 1, (August, 1890), 3 and *Constitution of the Canadian Order of Chosen Friends*, iv.

⁶² Oddly enough, historians outlining fraternalism as a vehicle of middle-class formation and those who identify fraternalism as adhering to working-class mutualism claim the ideology of collective and individual self-help, hard work and mutual aid equally for their constituencies. See Anstead, “Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario,” 128-35; Palmer, “Mutuality and the Making/Masking of Difference,” 126-33 and Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 110-15.

an individual's economic protection, rights and support. Early Oddfellowship considered life and sickness insurance the wisest political economy, offering security and stability in times of want. The financial benefits would thereby offer the Oddfellow amelioration of his condition, and to lessen "the ills and miseries incident on human life." When a brother in the Hope lodge in Port Hope fell seriously ill, the lodge only stepped in when a discovery committee found he was "destitute of means wherewith to help himself with." This same economic philosophy would be in effect upon the death of an Oddfellow, as one could die happy knowing that his wife and helpless children would receive assistance and support that was no longer his to bestow.⁶³

Even though these early Oddfellows expressed genuine benevolence, they also took great pains to explain that financial benefits were not about charity. The mutual aid programme was entirely inclusive, as it was "given to all considered worthy, rich or poor, as a *right*, not as a *gratuity*." Unfortunately this kind of discourse also led to charges of exclusivity from critics of fraternal orders, that Oddfellows were only concerned with helping their own instead of the larger community. Oddfellows countered this accusation by explaining that while they could not save everyone in their poverty, they would go about it "a little at a time." Albert Case attempted to vindicate Oddfellowship from charges of this nature, when he admitted that the order indeed first and foremost looked after its own members. And yet Case hastened to add "Oddfellows are generally as charitable and public spirited as any members of the community, and give as much for relief to every object of charity as their neighbours do."⁶⁴ Even though the creed of honest industry deemed that benefits were to be utilized by those

⁶³ See the records of the Hope lodge #14, MTL, L36, minute book, 1846-49, 10 April 1848; *Oddfellows Record*, vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1846), 32; *Bylaws of the Prince of Wales lodge*, 3, 5-6 and *Report of the Grand Annual Committee of the Toronto District, Manchester Unity*, (Hamilton, 1849), 5.

⁶⁴ See Case, *The Principles of Oddfellowship*, 9-10; the *Oddfellows Record*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1846), 5 and vol. 2, no. 11, (November, 1847), 220 and also *Bylaws of the Loyal Montreal Lodge, Manchester Unity*, (Montreal, 1843), 3.

unable to help themselves, the widows and orphans fund was particularly sacrosanct. Perhaps the reason so many early bylaws of both the IOOF and the Manchester Unity outlined expulsion of those members caught making fraudulent claims comes in the deprivation of those least likely to afford it. An early meeting of the Grand Lodge of Ontario condemned the “unprincipled men in our Order” who contravened the ethos of honest industry through embezzlement and deception. Charlatans such as this “stole into our lodges, intent upon nothing by the pecuniary advantage that gleamed in the future, and if Providence blessed them with health, that they could not obtain the funds under the false pretence of sickness, would conspire with a kindred spirit, and regardless of bringing ruin upon a lodge, and mocking the hopes of the widows and orphans, would rob it.”⁶⁵

This philosophy relating to the benefits system remained an unfaltering ideology of the Oddfellows well into the late Victorian period. The notion that mutual aid relieved the suffering of those in distress, and providing economic protection for family members was essential in recruiting the working class. As late as 1895, the *Dominion Oddfellow* proclaimed that the financial benefits accumulated by members was not a charity, it was a right that one received by paying in to the fraternal insurance scheme. As a Brother Ayers noted in the room of the St. Clair lodge, such a policy was entirely inclusive, as “being an Oddfellow over 30 years and the benefits accrued from this [were] the same for all members.”⁶⁶ By the late nineteenth century, incorporation for fraternal orders became a necessity, as the government attempted to regulate the fraternal insurance industry. Both the Oddfellows and the Foresters welcomed the new

⁶⁵ See the *Journal of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Canada West, IOOF, Fifth Annual Session*, (Brantford, 1859), 13-14; *Oddfellows Record*, vol. 2, no. 3, (March, 1847), 65; *Constitution of the Albion Lodge*, 44 and *General Laws of the Canadian Order of Oddfellows*, 30-1.

⁶⁶ See the records of the St. Clair lodge #106, RCL, box 4319, minute book, 1894-1900, 13 January 1898, 242; *Dominion Oddfellow*, vol. 15, no. 31, (26 December, 1895), 1; *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1846), 11-12 and vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1875), 79-80 and *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Third Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1887), 4060.

Insurance act, mimicking the kind of populist language employed by early reformers in their condemnation of speculative banking and other enterprises. To the special committee commissioned by the Grand Lodge of Ontario to investigate the new act, the legislation would prove an effective restraint on the “paper societies and fraternities, that duped the people with worthless certificates of life and accident insurance.”⁶⁷ Establishing fraternalism on sound business principles also followed the precepts of honest industry.

Other fraternal orders quickly picked up on the success of the IOOF’s mutual benefit system as it pertained to the gospel of hard work and the economic protection of hearth and home, utilizing identical rhetoric in the incessant demand for new clientele. The constitution of the Ancient Order of United Workmen stated unequivocally that the order was formed primarily for the protection of family members dependent on the Workman’s income. The obligation of Workmen was to provide for his family, as “he who provideth not for his family is worse than an infidel. See the result of the careless life, in which there was no love, no prudence, no foresight. A heritage of poverty is the gift of such a man to his children.” The Canadian Order of Foresters employed a similar rhetoric, as the motto of the *Canadian Forester* was “a good man leaveth an inheritance to his children.”⁶⁸ As another doctrine of honest industry was mutual aid, the COF recognized by the end of the century that man could not prosper on his own, as he required the assistance of a united fraternal brotherhood. Even a man of limited means could lay up a store not only for himself, but also for his immediate family. As a result, a man could ensure his family adhered to the principles of honest

⁶⁷ See the records of the Grand lodge of Ontario, AO, MU 2210, file A-1-8, report of the special committee, 1892; *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Eighth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1892), 5357-65 and also the *Report of the High Court of the Dominion of Canada, Ancient Order of Foresters*, (Toronto, 1899), 14-16. To illustrate how this language was identical to early radical reformers, see Ken Dewar, “Charles Clarke’s Reformer: Early Victorian Radicalism in Upper Canada,” in *Ontario History*, 78, no. 3 (September 1986), 233-52.

⁶⁸ See the *Canadian Forester*, vol. 9, no. 1, (August, 1889), crest; *Constitution of the AOOW*, preamble and the *Ritual of the AOOW*, 14-15, 34.

industry from beyond the grave, for one could choose “whether you will leave your family in partly independent circumstances or in poverty.”⁶⁹

Fraternal lodges in nineteenth-century Canada generated a strong sense of sociability through elaborate rituals and lodge activities. While the mutual benefit system kept fraternal orders such as the Oddfellows and Foresters well stocked with working-class clients, members required more than lodge business, initiation rituals and the monthly paying of dues to keep them coming to lodge meetings. To these early Oddfellows, attending lodge gatherings should guarantee social improvement, where men could unite in friendship, harmony and peace. Under early middle-class management, mid-century Oddfellowship required members to not only be possessed of sobriety, moral character and industriousness, they also needed to have “prudence and self-command, which are indispensably necessary to social intercourse.” To ensure respectability, subordinate lodges could not plan activities such as balls or other forms of public entertainment without the expressed permission of the British North American Grand Lodge.⁷⁰ During the period of reorganization in Canada West, recreation was of the rational variety, consisting of lectures, recitations, speeches and music, and particularly the establishment of Oddfellow reading rooms. Imitating the philosophy of institutions such as Mechanics’ Institutes regarding self-improvement, reading rooms not only helped to educate members, they also promoted the objects of Oddfellowship. Entertainment also fulfilled the sociability requirements of the order, as evidenced in the request of the Grand Sire of the Ontario lodge in

⁶⁹ See the *Ritual of the Canadian Order of Foresters*, 30-33 and 56, and the *Canadian Forester*, vol. 9, no. 1, (August, 1889), 10; vol. 9, no. 2, (September, 1889), 1-6 and vol. 9, no. 4, (November, 1889), 3-5.

⁷⁰ See the *Constitution of the Albion Lodge*, 20-26 and Case, *Address Before Oriental Lodge*, 11. The Manchester Unity also accepted the doctrine of sociability in their lodges. See the *Bylaws of the Loyal Montreal Lodge*, 5-6 and records of the Loyal London lodge, AO, MU 2224, minute book, 1852-3, 17 February, 16 June and 4 August 1853.

Coburg that the “committee on social enjoyment to invite Industry lodge to participate in Brotherly love” through a joint entertainment venture.⁷¹

Public entertainments and recreation also held a dual purpose, to educate the community on the benefits of Oddfellowship and also to raise funds for the order. Most of the early Oddfellow lodges in the city of Montreal held anniversary socials not only to celebrate the existence and publicize the benefits of the order, but also to financially assist with the construction of the Montreal Oddfellows’ Hall. In this manner, inviting other nationalist societies such as the St. Patrick, St. Andrew and St. Georges’ Societies and the *Société St. Jean Baptiste* to Oddfellow anniversaries not only promoted fraternal union, it added more revenue to the coffers.⁷² Oddfellow lodges in Canada West used both rationales as they held lodge functions completely open to the town, village or city. The social committee of the Ontario Lodge in Coburg organized open lodge meetings simply to introduce the town and neighbourhood to the advantages of Oddfellowship, while the Phoenix lodge in Oshawa held a community ball and concert to raise funds for the erection of an Oddfellows Hall. As a more burgeoning urban centre, the Loyal London Lodge of the Manchester Unity held an anniversary parade, as well as a ball concert, picnic and a musical soiree for the inhabitants of London. While the objects of these public amusements were to publicize the work of the Oddfellows in London, the lodge also held an oyster supper to increase the Widows and Orphans fund.⁷³

⁷¹ See the records of the Ontario Lodge #12, MTL, L36, minute book, 1858-61, 2 July 1858 and 1 February 1861; Industry Lodge #25, MTL, L36, minute book, 1850-52, 27 March 1851 and Imperial Lodge #37, MTL, L36, minute book, 1850-60, 5 March 1855. On Oddfellow reading rooms, see the records of the Ontario Lodge #12, MTL, L36, minute book, 1847-57, 3 and 31 October 1849 and 30 August 1850, and Hope Lodge #14, MTL, L36, minute book, 1846-9, 10 May 1847.

⁷² See the *Oddfellows’ Record*, vol. 1, no. 1, (January, 1846), 1-2 and 8; vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1846), 27-8 and vol. 1, no. 3, (March, 1846), 39-40.

⁷³ See the records of the Loyal London Lodge, AO, MU 2224, minute book, 1852-3, 22 January, 1 April, 27 June 1852 and 17 February and 16 June 1853. See also the records of Ontario Lodge #12, MTL, L36, minute book, 1858-61, 1 February 1861 and Phoenix Lodge #22, MTL, L36, minute book, 1847-49, 31 January 1848.

The ideology of sociability continued to be preached in Oddfellow lodge rooms throughout the course of the nineteenth century. According to the *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, sociability ensured that the Oddfellows would become an influential source for good among all men, instead of a mere Life Assurance company. This doctrine would remain a staple of Oddfellows until the end of the century, as the *Dominion Oddfellow* lauded the fact that the order taught men to enjoy relaxation and social outings without excess. Unfortunately, by the end of the century, the more urban publications of the Montreal IOOF came full circle to earlier bourgeois pronouncements on sociability, as they encouraged the brethren to “cultivate their social graces.”⁷⁴ Thus entertainment and sociability remained a fairly consistent endeavour in Oddfellow lodges throughout the nineteenth century, as the working class element inherent in fraternalism demanded both rational recreation and lodge socials. As to the former, Oddfellow lodges continued to sponsor reading rooms and museums in their Halls for the self-improvement of its members. Even as late as 1891, the *Digest of the Laws of the IOOF* in Ontario approved of both libraries and reading rooms as an acceptable expense for Oddfellow lodges. The lodge in Wardsville even attempted to combine entertainment with the establishment of an Oddfellow library, as they held a ball and concert to raise funds for the purchasing of books.⁷⁵

Unfortunately, these entertainments simply were not enough to hold the attention of members for long, as lodges searched for new and appropriate ways to entertain Oddfellows over the long haul. The evolution of entertainment in the

⁷⁴ See the *Oddfellows Gazette* out of Montreal, vol. 3, no. 5, (15 February, 1897), 2-3. See also the *Dominion Oddfellow*, vol. 15, no. 29, (12 December, 1895), 13; *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, vol. 1, no. 2, (February, 1875), 45 and 52, vol. 1, no. 6, (June, 1875), 175 and *Journal of Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Thirty-Third Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1887), 4059.

⁷⁵ See the records of the Wardsville Lodge #60, MTL, L36, minute book, 1872-75, 13 January 1873; *Journal of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Twenty-Third Annual Session*, (Brantford, 1877), 1856-7; *Catalogue of Oddfellows Art Loan Museum Held in the Oddfellows Hall*, (London, 1885) and *A Digest of the Laws of the IOOF of the Province of Ontario*, (Toronto, 1891), 110-11.

Egremont lodge in Kerwood, for example, began with the standard fare of music, recitations, speeches and readings, but graduated slowly to debates and paid lectures, to fruit soirees, strawberry socials and turkey suppers as the membership increased accordingly. The lodge in Zephyr found that not all entertainment was met with enthusiasm, for when the Worthy Grand proclaimed his pleasure at seeing a visitor in the open lodge meeting, it was mournfully recorded that he “was counting chickens before they were hatched, thought they might turn out ducks.”⁷⁶ Public meetings raised much needed revenue, with lodges offering public excursions, oyster suppers, concerts, balls and festivals. Many lodges created different entertainment, concert or ball committees within their executive to handle the workload, and those who did were much more successful in promoting the benefits of Oddfellowship. Initially the directors of the St. Clair lodge in Point Edward did not understand the importance of providing public entertainments in censuring the entertainment committee, particularly when the “NG wished members to express their opinion on the question before putting it to the Lodge, which request caused some of the Brothers to cast off their usual artificial humanity and give their faces their more natural appearance namely that of a very long and pale appearance.” By the 1880s, the lodge formed an entertainment committee to handle the picnics, moonlight excursions, balls and concerts, neatly coinciding with increased membership for the order. Conversely, even though the Cypress lodge in Bradford wanted members to invite their friends to lodge meetings, they barred 3 individuals from coming, for “if we admit such as these we would soon have their friends and associates, some of which are of a very low order, socially and morally speaking.” Four months later, the directors

⁷⁶ See the records of the Zephyr Lodge #213, MTL, L36, minute book, 1878-81, 12 March 1878, 22 and 7 May 1878, 38 and the records of the Egremont lodge, RCL, recent acquisition, vol. 1, minute book, 1877-92, 4 January 1879, 93, 5 May 1879, 105 and 30 August 1879, 116; 25 June 1885, 271 and vol. 2, minute book, 1892-1917, 27 December 1895, 103. Official and unofficial publications also counselled Oddfellows to hold entertainments; see the *Canadian Journal of Oddfellowship*, vol. 1, no. 5, (May, 1875), 148 and *Journal of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ontario, IOOF, Twenty-Sixth Annual Session*, (Toronto, 1880), 1955.

of the lodge forced the entertainment committee to resign, and the lodge limped along a few more years before suspending operations.⁷⁷

Other fraternal organizations came to understand the necessity of including social activities in their courts and lodges. Both the Independent and Canadian Order of Foresters advocated principles of sociability within Forester courts, in order to bring men into closer relations with one another, and to replace bitterness and hatred with affection and friendly intercourse. In permitting “neither wrangling nor dissention to mar our harmony,” Forester courts encouraged the “moderate enjoyment of social intercourse and for the temperate exchange of social feeling.”⁷⁸ The Juvenile Canadian Forester court in Peterborough followed this formula to perfection, in providing readings, singing spelling matches and refreshments for these young men, to “help make their meetings more interesting.” The Independent Foresters in Shelburne enjoyed paid entertainment in their court, as they hired elocutionists and lecturers, and even paid for an oyster supper out of the funds of the court. It appears as if the Foresters did not mind, as they accepted an additional fee in taking upon themselves a portion of the amusement expenses. However, not all courts appreciated the exhortations to social intercourse, as the Listowel court of the IOF did not hold any for the first four years of their existence. Even as the directors recognized the importance of entertainment to relieve the monotony of court meetings, it took them a further

⁷⁷ See the records of the Cypress Lodge #187, MTL, L36, minute book, 1879-83, 4 April 1881, 28 August 1882 and 22 January 1883, as well as the records of the St. Clair lodge, RCL, box 4319, minute book, 1873-74, 5 and 12 February 1874; minute book, 1883-86, 17 July 1884, 99 and 2 July 1885, 188 and minute book, 1886-89, 3 March 1887, 34 and 21 July 1887, 52. As noted, successful lodges had entertainment committees; see the records of the Palmerston Lodge #123, minute book, 1878-83, 26 December 1878, 18 and 28 October 1881, 191 and 21 June 1883, 380; Mystic lodge #128, MTL, L36, minute book, 1883-92, 3 November 1884, 70 and 25 June 1888, 108.

⁷⁸ *Ritual of the COF*, 32-3 and 56; *Canadian Forester*, vol. 12, no. 2, (September, 1892), 11; *Independent Forester*, vol. 9, no. 5, (November, 1888), 136-9 and *Ritual of the IOF*, 55 and 78-80.

two years to decide on a court entertainment. Unfortunately by the time a picnic was decided upon, the Court folded from lack of funds.⁷⁹

In bringing entertainment to the larger community, Foresters offered open courts, excursions, concerts, balls, picnics and festivals. The purpose of such public entertainments of course was twofold, to promote the Forester order in the town, and to raise much needed revenue. The Canadian Order of Foresters in Peterborough hoped that their annual excursion would “be looked to with interest by a large portion of our citizens,” and combined that activity with raising funds for the erection of a new Forester Hall. The Shelburne IOF became so proficient at providing public amusements for the inhabitants of the town that they created in short order an excursion, concert and a general entertainment committee.⁸⁰ In the urban areas, as a result of the increased business aspect of mutual benefit fraternalism, the great entertainments of the Independent Foresters were more elaborate spectacles than mere amusements. Advertising these events in the *Independent Forester* under the caption “Foresters in a Social Sense,” many of these urban events included comedy sketches, dancing, and grand concerts for public consumption. The dedication of Foresters’ Island Park at the end of the century marked this new phase of urban fraternal entertainment, as members could bring their families into a carnival-like atmosphere at the park.⁸¹

⁷⁹ See the records of the Listowel IOF, AO, MU 7175 #23, minute book, 1891-98, 8 October 1895, 11 May and 25 May 1897. See also the records of the Shelburne IOF, DCA, AR 2464.995, minute book, 1885-95, 14 February 1887, 26; 11 November 1889, 88 and 10 October 1892, 153 and records of the Peterborough Juvenile Foresters, PCMA, Acc. 96-065, box 1, series 1, minute book, 1890-99, 12 August, 25 November 1891, 8 February 1893 and 12 January 1898. Descriptions of social activities in the Antrim Council of the Canadian Order of Chosen Friends went like this: “A programme of music, addresses, singing &tc. were rendered in good style, after which a sumptuous repast was partaken of.” See their records, NAC, MG 28 I 302, vol. 1, minute book, 1894-1921, 17 July 1895, 24 and 1 January 1896, 42.

⁸⁰ Records of the Shelburne IOF, DCA, AR 2464.995, minute book, 1885-95, 31 January 1885, 2-3; 22 November 1885, 23; 29 January 1889, 69 and 11 February 1889, 70 and the records of the Peterborough COF, PCMA, Acc. 96-065, box 1, series 1, minute book, 1883-86, 17 August 1883, 55; 7 September 1883, 66-8; 4 July 1884, 152 and 15 January 1886, 287.

⁸¹ See the *Independent Forester*, vol. 8, no. 10, (April, 1888), 9-10; vol. 9, no. 8, (February, 1889), 249-52; vol. 10, no. 10, (April, 1890), 284-5 and vol. 16, no. 1, (July, 1895), 14-15.

The ethos of community therefore crossed all class boundaries, as the skilled working class so prevalent in nineteenth-century fraternalism promoted the principles and doctrines of the community ideology within their organizations. Fraternalism did not suffocate working-class consciousness as some suggest; rather it cemented the bonds of mutual aid through the active participation of workers in fraternal orders. Despite the “national” mutual benefit societies’ propensity towards exclusion through ethnicity tests, on the whole fraternal orders such as the Oddfellows, Foresters and the Ancient Order of United Workmen attempted to create their own modest communities constructed on mutuality and openness. By promoting the gospel of honest industry and hard work through the mutual benefit system and offering a community-inclusive philosophy as well as events and activities, fraternalism more than any other voluntary association in Canada remained a bastion of the community ideology forged over the course of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER SIX – The Changing Concept of Community: The Evolution of Temperance Societies in Victorian Canada

The evolution of temperance societies and temperance fraternal orders over the course of the nineteenth century is an excellent example not only of the politicization of Canadian culture, but the complete separation of the rural and urban concept of community during the latter portion of the century. Temperance as a moral, political and social issue has often overshadowed the temperance society itself as a harbinger of cultural change, yet these societies had remarkable resiliency over the course of the 1800s. Pre-Confederation temperance orders focused on the question of temperance as a simple matter of moral agency, and applied “moral suasion” in their attempt to reclaim the drunkard into the natural order of the community. The rise of temperance fraternal orders such as the Sons of Temperance and the Independent Order of Good Templars appealed to both the working class and a nascent middle class in towns, villages and cities throughout the Canadian countryside. Although temperance societies wilted after their heyday in mid-century, by the 1870s temperance orders enjoyed a great renaissance once again in both rural and urban settings. A divergence in the approach taken by temperance groups arose by the latter half of the century, as rural temperance remained the domain of the fraternal order. However, in the cities, temperance became more exclusively under the influence of the professional middle class through the alliance movement, a succession of temperance unions and leagues attempting to centralize the temperance community in the search for a legalized solution to the liquor problem. Culminating in the creation of the Dominion Alliance for the Total Suppression of the Liquor Traffic in 1877, temperance and prohibition advocates abandoned the libertarian approach of moral platitudes against alcohol with complete “legal suasion.” The differences between the two approaches in the war against the

liquor traffic would reflect the conflicts over competing visions of community held by rural and urban inhabitants.

Temperance movements in general throughout the North Atlantic triangle in the nineteenth century mirrored what historian Jack Blocker described as “cycles of reform.” An international movement, temperance supporters progressed from a vision of moderation in the consumption of alcohol in the early 1800s to teetotalism in mid-century, to complete prohibition by the end of the nineteenth century. Temperance societies therefore represented a noticeable shift in attitudes and social values emulating in large measure those held by society at large.¹ Originating in the earliest temperance societies from the 1820s to the growth of the temperance fraternal orders, initial temperance groups focused largely on individual efforts in rescuing drunkards and the promotion of moral agency. Coinciding with other middle-class ideologies such as evangelicalism, the rationale behind the outpouring of temperance sentiment in the early half of the century has often been explained as the desire of the early bourgeoisie to impose capitalistic discipline, social order and respectability upon a working class that was difficult to control. And yet temperance similarly became a vehicle for the master artisans, the lower middle class and a burgeoning labour force to express their dissatisfaction with a backwoods commercial aristocracy.² Reconciling

¹ For the evolution of temperance from moderation to prohibition in the United States, see Ian Tyrell, *Sobering Up: From Temperance to Prohibition in Antebellum America, 1800-1860*, (Westport, 1979); John Rumberger, *Profits, Power and Prohibition: Alcohol Reform and the Industrializing of America, 1800-1930*, (New York, 1989); Jack Blocker, *American Temperance Movements: Cycles of Reform*, (Boston, 1989) and Thomas Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America, 1800-1933*, (Chicago, 1998). In Britain, see the classic by Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*, (London, 1971) and Lillian Shiman, *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England*, (New York, 1988). For the Canadian context, see James Clemens, “Taste Not, Touch Not, Handle Not: A Study of the Social Assumptions of the Temperance Literature and Supporters in Canada West, 1839-59,” *Ontario History*, 64, (1972), 142-60; Ernest Dick, “From Temperance to Prohibition in Nineteenth Century Nova Scotia,” *Dalhousie Review*, 61, no. 3, (Autumn, 1981), 530-52; T. W. Acheson, *Saint John: The Making of a Colonial Urban Community*, (Toronto, 1985), 138-59; Janet Noel, *Canada Dry: Temperance Crusades Before Confederation*, (Toronto, 1995) and Andrew Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle Class Formation in Victorian Ontario*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2000), 130-50.

these two seemingly opposing positions would be difficult without an understanding of the community ethos constructed throughout the century.

Members of both classes utilized the ideology of community within temperance organizations to further their own interests and agendas.

The earliest temperance societies clearly envisioned an open membership composed of all members of society willing to abide by the temperance pledge. One of the first temperance societies formed in Canada was the Montreal Temperance society, which also ran a temperance newspaper, the *Canada Temperance Advocate* from 1835 to 1849. Membership in the society was all-inclusive as the Society claimed that no one, whatever his nation, creed, colour or character was ever excluded from the ranks of the Montreal Temperance Society. Noting that the vice of intemperance was highly detrimental to every class in the community, the *Advocate* called on everyone, “whatever may be his opinions, prejudices, profession, occupation or pursuit; whether he be religious or irreligious, temperate or intemperate, old or young, rich or poor” to awaken to the danger of alcohol.³ In Upper Canada, the Toronto Temperance Reformation

² That early temperance was led by a evangelical commercial aristocracy bent on social control and creating a capitalistic hegemony in the United States see Tyrell, *Sobering Up*, 34-70; Jed Dannenbaum, *Drink and Disorder: Temperance Reform in Cincinnati from the Washingtonian Revival to the WCTU*, (Urbana and Chicago, 1984), 32-62; and Rumberger, *Profits, Power and Prohibition*, 21-41. For Britain, see Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*, 25-30, 115-78 and for Canada, see F.L. Barron, “American Origins of the Temperance Movement in Ontario, 1828-1850,” *Canadian Review of American Studies*, 11, no. 2, (Fall, 1980), 131-50 and Dick, “From Temperance to Prohibition,” 530-35. Others have argued that the labour aristocracy and master artisans in the early half of the century led temperance societies. See W.R. Lambert, *Drink and Society in Victorian Wales, 1820-1895*, (Cardiff, 1983), 32-40 and 87-113; Acheson, *Saint John*, 138-59 and Holman, *Sense of Their Duty*, 130-37. A more recent and compelling argument is that both the commercial bourgeoisie and the labour aristocracy used temperance in different periods of time towards their own ends. See Shiman, *Crusade Against Drink*, 15-40; Blocker, *American Temperance Movements*, 3-60 and Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, 25-41. In Canada, see Clemens, “Taste Not, Touch Not, Handle Not,” 142-60; F.L. Barron, “Damned Cold Water Drinking Societies: Oligarchic Opposition to the Temperance Movement in Upper Canada,” *Upper Midwest History*, 4, (1984), 11-28; Glenn Lockwood, “Temperance in Upper Canada as Ethnic Subterfuge,” in Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1993), 43-69 and Noel, *Canada Dry*, 20-40, 105-40.

³ The *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 7, (November, 1836), 49-50; vol. 9, no. 2, (15 May, 1843), 23 and vol. 17, no. 11, (15 May, 1851), 157. A similar point was argued by

Society similarly declared that membership in the Society required only the signing of the pledge, without distinction of sex, religious creed, political party or condition of life. As a result, the Society proudly proclaimed that individuals of all occupations, classes, ranks and orders of the community were to be found in attendance. Conversely, opponents of temperance societies utilized the same ethos in condemning the malicious influence of such orders. Robert Murray, a Presbyterian minister and later the Assistant Superintendent of Education for Canada West, objected to temperance orders on behalf of the minister of religion, the merchant, the mechanic and other classes who resisted the temptation to join temperance societies. Murray argued that even the pillars of the community were therefore ostracized through “public persecution” which tended to sap the foundations of civilized society.⁴

Pre-fraternal temperance orders recognized the necessity in targeting specific portions of the community in their membership drives, as both the workingman and the wealthy elites could influence the cause of temperance in their own fashion. One of the opening appeals of the Montreal Temperance Society in 1828 was to “the conscience and interest of the great mass of the community” in the temperance cause. Leafing through the *Canada Temperance Advocate* likewise reveals an avid interest in workingmen’s temperance societies such as the Washingtonian movement, an organization founded by six pledge-taking artisans in Baltimore with a very substantial membership from the skilled working classes. And yet early temperance societies understood that the workingmen themselves

James Byrne, *The Claims of Temperance Societies: A Lecture Delivered to the Young Men’s Literary Society*, (Montreal, 1841), 20.

⁴ Robert Murray, *A Course of Lectures on Absolute Abstinence: Containing a Refutation of the Doctrines of the Temperance Society Advanced in the Temperance Volume*, (Toronto, 1839), preface and 65-66. As an establishment church of Scotland preacher educated in Glasgow, Murray surely came under the influence of Thomas Chalmers who believed in an institutionally-led reform movement rather than laity-dominated voluntarism. See R.D. Gidney, “The Rev. Robert Murray: Ontario’s First Superintendent of Schools,” *Ontario History*, 63, no. 4, (December, 1971), 195-204 and Stanley Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth in Scotland*, (London, 1982), 152-95. See also the *Eighth Report of the Toronto Temperance Reformation Society*, (Toronto, 1847), v and 8.

were the cause of a great deal of intemperance. Articles such as “The Ruined Artizan” exhibited the dangers of workmen frequenting the public house.⁵ The Montreal Temperance Society took a parallel approach to the wealthy merchant classes, calling on the city’s elite to provide pecuniary support and a good example to other inhabitants by becoming more moderate in their drinking habits. One of their earliest resolutions included the provision that the continued use of alcohol by the “higher classes” promoted the greatest evil in the community. The *Advocate* also carried an article on the aborted formation of a young workingmen’s temperance society in the city, and how a noted clergyman, lawyer and judge refused to aid the fledgling society with either financial or moral support, citing peer pressure as the lack of motivation.⁶ Using both the carrot and the stick proved to be quite beneficial when drawing upon temperance support from the entire community.

By the late 1840s, in the eyes of many temperance supporters, the pledge societies had lost their effectiveness in encouraging temperance within Canadian society. Working-class temperance supporters in particular stressed the need for an enhanced assault on the liquor traffic, and coupled with an appreciation for fraternalism they joined with enthusiasm new temperance orders such as the Sons of Temperance and the International Order of Rechabites and the Good Templars. The skilled working class therefore embraced temperance fraternalism in order to expand their own vision of respectability in adhering to the doctrine of self-help and also to facilitate working class reforms.⁷ While it is fairly difficult to

⁵ *An Appeal to the Inhabitants of Lower Canada on the Use of Ardent Spirits by the Committee of the Montreal Society for the Promotion of Temperance*, (Montreal, 1828), 11-12. See also the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 2, (July, 1836), 9; vol. 7, no. 3, (June, 1841), 40; vol. 7, no. 12, (April, 1842), 182; vol. 8, no. 8, (15 August, 1842), 118; vol. 8, no. 11, (1 October, 1842), 172 and vol. 14, no. 16, (15 August, 1848), 241-2. On the Washington movement, see Tyrell, *Sobering Up*, 135-44.

⁶ See the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 8, (December, 1836), extra supplement on the Montreal Temperance convention, 3. See also vol. 9, no. 4, (15 June, 1843), 50; vol. 12, no. 22, (16 November, 1846), 344 and vol. 16, no. 6, (15 March, 1850), 90.

determine many of the occupations of early temperance fraternalism, evidently a strong skilled working-class component existed in what was essentially cross class organizations. Indeed, the traditional producer alliance of artisans and yeoman farmers comprised over sixty percent of the initial membership of three rural divisions of the Sons of Temperance (see Table 6.1). Farmers and workers also managed to have strong participation in the executive of these temperance fraternal orders.⁸ As a result, some measure of working-class reformist dialogue did in fact take place in early temperance fraternalism. A lecture by reformer and member of the International Order of Rechabites T.S. Brown focused exclusively on the drinking of the “*snoobs* of society” and called on the temperance order to “let all our batteries of reproach, derision and exposure be directed against the liquor loaded tables of the rich, and the drinking usages of so-called fashionable society.” The Sons of Temperance, particularly in Canada West did partake liberally of working-class radical culture to some extent, and blamed a “SELFISH GENTEEL CLASS” for increased intemperance in the community. To the Sons, it was the respectable classes that proved to be the greatest stumbling block to temperance reform in Canada. If the working classes had a better example of moderation placed before them from the influential members of society, the use of alcohol in society would be eradicated.⁹

⁷ That the skilled working class held their own visions of “respectability” that temperance movements summarily exploited rather than having them culturally imposed see Peter Bailey, “Will the Real Bill Banks Please Stand Up? Towards a Role Analysis of Mid-Victorian Working Class Respectability,” *Journal of Social History*, 12, (Spring, 1979), 336-53 and Blocker, *American Temperance Movements*, 45-52. Jan Noel argues that the Sons of Temperance formed part of a radical working-class subculture in Canada West, formulating their own concepts of respectability; see her *Canada Dry*, 105-119 and 141-50.

⁸ In the Ameliasburgh Division of the Sons of Temperance from 1850-54, nine yeomen, five carpenters, 2 blacksmiths, a tailor and a cooper became directors during these years. See the records of the Ameliasburgh division, AO, MU 2085 #1, minute book, 1850-54, preamble.

⁹ See T.S. Brown, *Speech of T.S. Brown at the Union Tent, International Order of Rechabites*, (Montreal, 1848), 2-3. See also the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 1, no. 6, (13 May, 1851), 90; vol. 1, no. 12, (12 August), 191-2 and vol. 3, no. 27, (5 July, 1853), 212.

Despite the thinly veiled accusations in such proclamations, both the Sons of Temperance and the Independent Order of Good Templars attempted to construct interclass unity within the temperance fraternal order. The Sons of Temperance believed themselves to be proselytizing missionaries for the cause of temperance, not restricted to any particular locality, sect, creed or race, but for “the world, for suffering humanity...we must move the high, the low, the rich, the poor.” Becoming members of a division of the Sons would also produce a levelling effect on the community, as in the division room all nationalities ceased and the high born stood on the same level as the base born peasant. In this context, the consternation of the ruling body of the Sons of Temperance over the refusal of the commercial elite to join their fraternal order is understandable and defensible.¹⁰ By the early 1860s, the competition for lodge or division members became fairly strong, and thus accessibility of temperance fraternal orders to all members of the community was a key selling point. To the Good Templars, the lodge represented the family unit on a much more extended scale, united in their efforts to promote the welfare of society. Lodges of the IOGT therefore included of all “grades and conditions of society – the minister of the gospel, the cultivated man of letters, educated and refined ladies, mingling as equals with the weather bronzed tiller of the soil, the toiling mechanic, the working girl and the bashful apprentice.”¹¹ Although this rhetoric of inclusion was indeed strong, there was one class of the community that received fervent censure from temperance supporters. Thus

¹⁰ *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 1, no. 5, (22 April, 1851), 74; vol. 1, no. 12, (12 August, 1851), 195 and vol. 1, no. 13, (26 August, 1851), 214. See also *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Canada East*, Annual session, (June, 1856), 21-2 and *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Canada West*, Semi-annual session, (June, 1862), 8.

¹¹ See the *Good Templar*, vol. 1, no. 1, (6 January, 1863), 2 and vol. 1, no. 6, (10 February, 1863), 2. See also the *Ritual of the British American Order of Good Templars*, (London, 1860), 13-14. Temperance societies therefore operated on a “familialist” model of society not unlike church congregations, where the local group acted as an extended family for members. See Nancy Christie’s introduction, “Family, Community and the Rise of Liberal Society” in her edited collection *Households of Faith: Family, Gender and Community in Canada, 1760-1969*, (Montreal and Kingston, 2002), 3-20 and Lynne Marks, “Railing, Tattling and General Rumour: Gossip, Gender and Church Regulation in Upper Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 81, no. 3, (September, 2000), 380-402.

temperance societies called on the legislators of the land to put a halt to the liquor traffic as a threat to the public welfare, and to wage war against the private interests of alcohol dealers. Likening society to a body, each member of the community was essential to its welfare and protection except for “the man who attempts to fasten himself upon the community, and who, through indolence or some other cause, refuses to contribute something to the common stock.” That man of course was the rumseller, who contributed absolutely nothing to the community and deserved no protection in return.¹²

Distinctions of colour and nationality were also a concern for temperance societies in attempting to construct an interracial method of combating intemperance. As the *Canada Temperance Advocate* was a periodical edited by English Protestants in Montreal, initially this equality is difficult to detect as strong prejudices against the drinking habits of the French Canadian *habitants* is evident. English evangelicals also were highly disappointed over the misapprehension of the Catholic clergy for secret societies like the Sons of Temperance. However, supporters of the cause in Canada East lauded Father Charles Chiniquy and his temperance crusade, translating and reprinting his works in the *Canada Temperance Advocate*. Calling this Father Matthew of Canada “a real blessing to the community” enthusiastic English temperance groups heralded the future of a temperate French Canada in the national community.¹³ Similar to the predicament faced by the Independent Order of

¹² See the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 8, no. 8, (15 July, 1842), 88; vol. 20, no. 4, (15 February, 1854), 56-7 and vol. 20, no. 11, (1 June, 1854), 172. See also the *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada West*, Semi-annual session, (May, 1852), 44 and Semi-annual session, (May, 1854), 10.

¹³ For French Canadians as an non-sober people led by clerical fanatics, see the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 4, no. 8, (December, 1838), 60-1 and vol. 6, no. 9, (January, 1841), 77-8. Although denounced by the Catholic clergy, Sons of Temperance supporters seemed resigned to their fate when they noted that the “French were temperate in habit” anyways. Thus the closing of French divisions was not an issue in the larger temperance picture; see the *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada East*, Annual session, (June, 1859), 10-11. Of course, this latter opinion was only possible due to the work of the Chiniquy crusade. On Father Chiniquy, see Jan Noel, “Dry Patriotism: The Chiniquy Crusade,” in Warsh,

Oddfellows in Canada, Sons of Temperance members tempered their fervour for community with American National Division strictures against membership for people of colour. As temperance was a reform that went hand-in-hand with antislavery in both the United States and Britain, Canadian Sons' discomfiture with prohibiting the most respectable portion of the community from joining their order followed this reform impulse. Even a noted supporter of the Sons such as the *Canada Temperance Advocate* was somewhat disconcerted that in Kingston a coloured gentleman was denied membership in the Sons. Offending the Montreal Temperance Society's sense of community, the *Advocate* stormed that "we cannot believe that in a free country, any association would dare to offend public opinion so grievously, as to introduce sentiments or distinctions peculiar to slave territories; and we are confident that Temperance men would be among the last to tolerate them for a single moment." When even the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem* traced their lack of membership to "inconsistencies in the order by the exclusion of men of colour," the Grand Division in Canada West wrote the National Division in Baltimore requesting the ban on people of colour be rescinded, as it denied the claims of humanity and religion, and was at variance with the spirit and letter of their own Constitution.¹⁴

More than any other voluntary association in Canada, temperance societies required the presence of women to endorse temperance within the community. Much of the debate surrounding women's participation in temperance societies by mid-century centres around the notion of domesticity and how temperance issues

Drink in Canada, 27-42; see also the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 6, no. 3, (July, 1840), 22-3; vol. 14, no. 16, (15 August, 1848), 250 and vol. 15, no. 8, (16 April, 1849), 121.

¹⁴ A parallel difficulty existed in the United States; see David Fahey, "Blacks, Good Templars and Universal Membership," in Cheryl Warsh and Jack Blocker, eds., *The Changing Face of Drink: Substance, Imagery and Behavior*, (Ottawa, 1997), 133-61. See also the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 15, no. 15, (1 August, 1849), 233-4; *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 3, no. 28, (12 July, 1853), 220-1 and vol. 3, no. 32, (16 August, 1853), 260; *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada West*, Annual session, (October, 1854), 19. The *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem* also reported a native Canadian division, with the chief of the tribe acting as the Worthy Patriarch; see vol. 2, no. 20, (9 August, 1852), 238. On the anti-slavery impulse in Canada, see Allan Stouffer, *The Light of Nature and the Law of God: Antislavery in Ontario, 1833-1877*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1992).

allowed women access to the public sphere. Indeed, many scholars conclude that female involvement in temperance even at this early stage framed the impetus for women's rights.¹⁵ What was essential about the contribution of temperance women in nineteenth-century Canada came in their ability to increase the visibility of temperance concerns within the larger community. Pre-fraternal temperance societies not only welcomed women as full members in their association, they also encouraged their petitions for membership at every opportunity. It comes therefore as no surprise that the first annual Toronto Temperance Reformation Society meeting recorded a female membership of forty-five percent.¹⁶ Temperance soirees and picnics were similarly lauded as highly inclusive of females, unlike the dram shop where "they would even exclude their own mothers, sisters, wives and children, or in other words, three-fourths of the community from their enjoyments." While females were not a part of early temperance society executive positions, and with participation limited to a more supporting role of giving temperance bazaars and tea parties, temperance supporters envisioned a greater role for women in their associations. In a report of a Ladies Soiree of the Montreal Temperance Society, directors contrasted their dinner with other public functions, where "the ladies were kept away, they must

¹⁵ See Barbara Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelicalism and Temperance in Nineteenth Century America*, (Middleton, 1981) and Lori Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics and Class in the Nineteenth Century United States*, (New Haven and London, 1990). More recent historiography focuses more on the emergence of women in the public sphere as a result of temperance agitation, despite a rather public vision of domesticity; see Blocker, *American Temperance Movements*, 61-94; Carol Mattingly, *Well Tempered Women: Nineteenth-Century Temperance Rhetoric*, (Carbondale, 1998) and for the Canadian context see Noel, *Canada Dry*, 89-102 and Nancy Christie, "Family, Community and the Rise of Liberal Society," *Households of Faith*, 3-20.

¹⁶ *The Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 6, no. 3, (July, 1840), 20; see also vol. 1, no. 12, (April, 1836), 91 for a plea to increase female participation in the Montreal Temperance Society. The Vaughn Anti-Bacchanalian Society recorded 23 women out of a membership of 58; see their records in the AO, Miscellaneous collection, MU #2111, 1852 #5, minute book, 1852-3, April 1852.

be domestic...we propose another plan; we want the ladies with us; we count them as stars to ray out on the gloom of the world.”¹⁷

Fraternal temperance orders were not as cogent in their vision of the role of women within their associations. Initially the Sons of Temperance refused to allow women members, instead sponsoring a branch order called the Daughters of Temperance. While women were patronizingly permitted to form the executive of various unions, much of their work came under the direction of nearby male-dominated divisions.¹⁸ When the Sons attempted to breathe more life in the order by becoming a more genderless body, initial attempts to bridge the gap fell short when they did not offer full membership to female members. Called “lady visitors,” women were not allowed to vote, hold executive positions, or participate in the benefits system other than as widows. Sons of Temperance divisions such as the one in Nithburg were perfectly satisfied with this arrangement, as these visitors often provided the entertainment and refreshments for division meetings, as well as participating in relief and visitation committees. Encouraging women’s social contributions in Nithburg increased the membership of “lady visitors” to nearly forty percent of the total attending division functions.¹⁹

When the Grand Division of Canada West agreed “generally” with the principle of allowing women as full members in 1856, debates in the Orono division over allowing female membership began a scant month later. When the directors of the Orono division reinforced their decision to not allow female members, a disgruntled Brother held a “conversation with a lady who thought about joining the division [and said] that he could not conscientiously recommend

¹⁷ See *The Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 9, no. 7, (1 August, 1943), 104-5 and vol. 13, no. 20, (16 October, 1847), 314-15. See also the *Eighth Report of the Toronto Temperance Reformation Society*, (Toronto, 1847), v and 18-19.

¹⁸ See the *Constitution, Bylaws and Rules of Order of the Leading Star Union #33, Daughters of Temperance*, (Quebec, 1854), 3-25 and Anonymous, *The Sons of Temperance; Its Origins, History, Secrets, Objections, Designs and Influence, Comprising a Full and Authentic History of this Deservedly Popular Institution*, (Oshawa, 1851), 16-17.

¹⁹ See the Nithburg Division records, AO, MU 4734 #6, minute book, 1857-60, 7 April, 14 April, 21 July, 1858; 12 January, 9 February and 2 March 1859.

a lady to join the Sons.” When directors contrasted the state of their order to that of the Good Templars, they attributed the success of the former to the admission of women as full members while the Sons had excluded them.²⁰ The Independent Order of Good Templars thus understood the importance of women to the temperance movement, and made great strides in recruiting the female gender to the cause. From its commencement, the IOGT not only allowed females to join in full fellowship, but also permitted women to fulfill executive positions. Of course, the IOGT highlighted the fact that their society was inclusive of women unlike the discriminatory policies of other fraternal temperance orders like the Sons.²¹

The construction of the community ethos also entailed the eradication of political and sectarian conflicts within the temperance movement. More so than any other voluntary association in Victorian Canada, the connection of temperance societies with evangelical religion produced more sectarianism, and the endorsement of legal sanctions to alcohol led to more political discord than similar groups. Even with the early pledge temperance societies, the elimination of religious and political disputes was paramount in creating harmony within a community. At the inaugural meeting of the Kemptville Temperance Society in 1830 the right Rev. Patton called on all men without distinction of party or sect to aid in the common cause of temperance. Only when temperance orders were spread over the land, and when men of all denominations and religions offered their united exertions would demon alcohol be defeated. However, as a High Churchman, Patton envisioned temperance being led by the institutional Church

²⁰ See the Orono Sons of Temperance fonds, AO, MU 2879, minute book #2, 1854-9, 6 January, 1 June, 1 October, 8 October 1856 and 1 September 1858. See also Orono minute book #3, 1863-4, 23 September 1863. And also Orono minute book #4, 1866-70, 16 June 1869, 263; 21 July 1869, 271; 20 March 1870, 320 and 13 July 1870, 349. This is a great local example of the kind of debates at the Grand Division level about female membership; see the *Proceedings of the Grand Division of the Sons of Temperance, Canada East*, Annual session, (June, 1864), 5; Annual session, (June, 1867), 14-15 and Annual session, (June, 1868), 6 and 18.

²¹ See the *Proceedings of the Grand Temple, IOGT*, Annual meeting, (April, 1861), 12-13; *The Good Templar*, vol. 1, no. 1, (6 January, 1863), 2 and vol. 1, no. 14, (7 April, 1863), 2. See also the *Ritual of the British American Order of Good Templars*, 13-14.

of England, and therefore this discourse was naturally couched in the language of sectarianism.²² Neutrality over political and sectarian issues likewise became a creed for the country's leading temperance paper, the *Canada Temperance Advocate*. Claiming that the Montreal Temperance Society aimed at higher and nobler objects than "mere political feeling," the directors would disclaim all connections with political parties. Similarly, in an article lauding the unsectional nature of temperance entitled "The Temperance Movement is Unsectarian" supporters extolled the virtues of a movement that united men of all religious persuasions in a common cause.²³

The veil over sectarian and political harmony within the temperance movement was exceedingly thin, and the neutral ground over which it stood became increasingly more contested. Indeed, the battle over the issue of temperance itself became one over which the established Churches often pinpointed dissenting ministers as causing rifts within ordered society. The Rev. Abbott of the Church of England in Montreal bemoaned the fact that "innovation and Heresy in Religion" was starting to establish a strong foothold in the community of believers. Abbott also likened the good Christian men of the temperance movement to comparable men who erred on points of vital importance to the Church such as Wesley and Watts.²⁴ In a response to Church of

²² Despite his enthusiasm for increased participation by the laity, Patton believed in voluntarism from like-minded Church of England men, not dissenters. See his *Address Delivered in the Village of Kemptville for the Purpose of Forming a Temperance Society*, (Brockville, 1830), 11-13 and Curtis Fahey, *In His Name: The Anglican Experience in Upper Canada, 1791-1854*, (Ottawa, 1991), 183, 243-7 and 273-4. Similarly, the constitution of the Vaughn Anti-Bacchanalian society stipulated, "the society will be neutral in religion and politics." See their records, Miscellaneous collection, AO, MU 2111, 1852 #5, minute book, 1852-3, preamble.

²³ Unfortunately, parallel sectarian difficulties quickly arose in Montreal; see Noel, *Canada Dry*, 64-88. See also the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 1, no. 6, (October, 1835), 43; vol. 1, no. 9, (January, 1836), 65; vol. 6, no. 10, (February, 1841), 86 and vol. 17, no. 11 (15 May, 1851), 157.

²⁴ The Rev. Joseph Abbott was a High Churchman who held a virulent hatred for dissenters; see his *Strictures on the Remarks of the Rev. J Reid in his Pamphlet in Favour of the Temperance Society*, (Montreal, 1836), 3 and 25 and his entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, (Toronto, 1976), 3-4. For the connection of temperance with evangelical religion in this period,

Scotland clergyman Robert Murray's refutation of temperance societies, John Knowlson, a local Cavan merchant and former rumseller, took umbrage with Murray's assertion that only the church could be regarded as a temperance society. In a typical response of a dissenting church member, Knowlson argued that the laity should work in concert with the clergy to suppress vice and promote virtue. And yet the *Canada Temperance Advocate* warned against reacting violently against churches refusing to sponsor the temperance cause when individuals falsified claims of drunkenness, played impious music, and put forward poor champions of the cause "without character, and through his address, hurls at Christianity darts poisoned with infidelity."²⁵

Impartiality in politics also was a mandate of the Montreal Temperance Society, yet oblique political statements offered in the *Canada Temperance Advocate* testify to the difficulty for temperance supporters in strictly adhering to political objectivity. During the rebellions in Lower Canada, the editors of the *Advocate* equated the rising political passions of the people with mounting intemperance in the countryside. Evidently the more "evil and turbulent" individuals in the community were highly attracted to the public house, as supporters of the rebellion offered free liquor for those attending seditious meetings. To the editors of the *Advocate*, the free use of alcohol in a family caused domestic strife, and the same in a community led to faction and rebellion.²⁶ As temperance increasingly became an issue for the differing political parties, the *Advocate* warned supporters that "no great moral cause has ever yet been able to withstand party spirit, that political maelstrom which engulfs all that

see Clemens, "Taste Not, Touch Not, Handle Not," 144-50; Acheson, *Saint John*, 138-45 and Noel, *Canada Dry*, 80-89 and 110-21.

²⁵ This exchange between Knowlson and Murray illustrate that not even the bourgeois social order was in agreement over the appearance of temperance societies. See John Knowlson, *An Address on Total Abstinence, Delivered at a Meeting of the Cavan Temperance Society*, (Toronto, 1840), 12-14 and *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 11, no. 7, (1 April, 1845), 101.

²⁶ See the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 3, no. 8, (December, 1837), 70-71; vol. 3, no. 9, (January, 1838), 78; vol. 2, no. 10, (February, 1838), 86-7 and vol. 4, no. 8, (December, 1838), 60-61.

come within its reach. The Temperance cause, in the violent commotions of the two great political parties, had well nigh been swallowed up, and that too, by the party zeal of its friends – and had it been any other than the temperance cause, we should despair of a resuscitation.” Even when the *Advocate* delved into political matters in their displeasure over the election of John Molson, the city’s most notorious brewer, the paper pleaded self-defence in thrusting temperance principles into politics. In that instance, claimed the temperance paper, politics were rudely pushed against temperance principles.²⁷ What irritated the *Advocate* the most came in the hypocritical fact that distillers were enthusiastically welcomed into the political fold, while temperance men were left on the outside.

The political and sectarian tensions simmering under the issue of temperance became even more pronounced with the growth of the temperance fraternal order at mid-century, despite the surface proclamations of political and religious detachment. Sons of Temperance divisions strictly enforced political and sectarian neutrality, noting that in the division room men of all political parties and religious creeds could unite as brothers in the great moral enterprise of temperance. While the Sons were not a political or religious movement, they did request their members to be more “individually active in the field of general usefulness” by becoming better citizens and Christians. The Grand Division of the Sons in Canada East likened sectarianism to the temperance movement itself, declaring that the demarcations between Templars and Sons needed to end, with more fraternity and friendship between temperance organizations.²⁸ The Independent Order of Good Templars held similar strictures against sectarianism and partyism, it being foreign to the principles of the Order to interfere with the

²⁷ On the Molson election episode, see the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 10, no. 5, (1 March, 1844), 71; vol. 10, no. 6, (15 March, 1844), 88 and vol. 10, no. 7, (1 April, 1844), 106. The *Advocate* also noted that a temperance meeting in Toronto ended in turmoil with “political differences standing a good deal in the way of united action.” See vol. 3, no. 12, (April, 1838), 99 and vol. 7, no. 2, (June, 1841), 24.

²⁸ *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada East*, Annual session, (July, 1863), 5-6; Anonymous, *The Sons of Temperance, Its Origins, Its History*, 16-17 and *Constitution and Bylaws of the St. Lawrence Division, Sons of Temperance*, (Quebec, 1860), 3-4.

political or religious preferences of any member. Uniting against the common enemy of intemperance, the cultivation of a spirit of toleration and harmony was essential to the promotion of the temperance ideal. As one director of the IOGT supposed, “while we may differ in our opinions, let us bear and forbear with each other, suppressing all undue strife and contention – debating only to make our varied presentations acceptable, having in view, in all we do, the best interests of our noble fraternity.”²⁹ In observing toleration and harmony, temperance fraternal orders often came up rather short.

As Canadian temperance historian Jan Noel discovered, the Sons of Temperance found themselves on the fringe of a radical political subculture in Canada West. No greater example of this exists than that of Charles Durand, the editor of the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*. A lawyer and supporter of the original Reform party of Mackenzie, suspicious of the Liberal/Tory alliance and no friend to the Clear Grits, Durand often used the supposedly neutral ground of his temperance newspaper to stir up political and religious controversy. Originally Durand echoed the sentiments of the Order in general, claiming that his paper would brook no religious or political controversies, as in the division room one ceased to be a member of a political party and should meet not as Catholics or Protestants, but as brothers in the temperance cause. When a division petitioned the Grand Division to censure dancing as entertainment, Durand responded by claiming “the order was based upon a wider foundation than a mean and beggarly sectarianism, which would establish a censorship over every man’s private judgement, in religious and social conduct. The moment we narrow ourselves to that limit, we are not a world order, but one of isolation. We were established to promote temperance and humanity, not religious creeds.”³⁰

²⁹ *Proceedings of the Grand Temple, IOGT*, Semi-annual meeting, (October, 1860), 9; see also the *Good Templar*, vol. 1, no. 21, (26 May, 1863), 2 and vol. 1, no. 30, (28 July, 1863), 2, as well as the *Degree Book of the IOGT*, (Hamilton, 1858), 6-7 and 15.

Despite a veneer of non-sectarianism, Durand attacked the Clergy Reserve question with Reformer enthusiasm, and made rather unprovoked attacks on Catholics. In an article on the Know-Nothing party in the United States, Durand declared unequivocally that “we would say to all Roman Catholics, we hate not you but it is your system, your errors, your delusions...give us the reign of the French Goddess of Reason, bad as it was, before the blackness of minds enslaved by Popish priestcraft.”³¹ Durand further rationalized the political nature of his paper by observing that if there were not such a great disposition in the Canadian press to truckle to class interests, he would be less inclined to comment upon political matters. As it was, Durand clearly associated temperance issues with the older Reform party, slamming temperance Reform/Tories such as Malcolm Cameron with the same vehemence as High Church Conservatives. Of course, Durand always qualified his attacks by saying that he respected an honest Tory as much as a Reformer; it was just the “double faced Tories, temperance and political trimmers” that he heartily detested. The predilection of Charles Durand for Reform issues over temperance came to a head by 1855, when he announced that he would replace the *Canadian Son of Temperance* with a paper entitled *The Crisis*, an emphatic Reform paper, of a fearless independent kind.³²

³⁰ See the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 1, no. 2, (11 March, 1851), 28; vol. 1, no. 17, (18 October, 1851), 275; vol. 2, no. 1, (5 January, 1852), 20 and vol. 2, no. 11, (17 April, 1852), 123.

³¹ See the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 3, no. 3, (18 January, 1853), 22; vol. 4, no. 1, (7 January, 1854), 5; vol. 4, no. 22, (22 April, 1854), 97 and vol. 4, no. 35, (2 September, 1854), 211-12.

³² See the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 1, no. 14, (9 September, 1851), 230; vol. 4, no. 18, (6 May, 1854), 108; vol. 4, no. 19, (13 May, 1854), 115 and the prospective of *The Crisis*, 13 Jan 1855. From July to September of 1853, Durand held a running battle with “traitors” to the reform cause such as William Macdougall and Cameron, whom Durand accused of selling out to Hincks for “a mess of patron pottage.” Macdougall responded in kind, reproving Durand for making the Sons too political, and therefore less popular with the masses. The editor of the *Canada Temperance Advocate* made similar claims; see the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 19, no. 17, (1 September, 1853), 267. See also the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 3, no. 30, (26 July, 1853), 235; vol. 3, no. 31, (2 August, 1853), 244; vol. 3, no. 32, (16 August, 1853), 260 and vol. 3, no. 37, (13 September, 1853), 292-3.

While the Good Templars avoided this kind of political controversy, in 1858 they became embroiled in a far more serious sectarian debate, which led to the creation of the British American Order of Good Templars. One of the hallmarks of this new order was the fact that all members could salute one another as brother and sister, and in the temple “is to be found some of all loyal parties, and of all orthodox denominations, all standing hand in hand, willing to sacrifice all private views, and to work for the public weal.” And yet the origins of the British American Order were patently grounded in a lengthy sectarian debate in London, Ontario. When Rev. James Scott objected to the removal of the Son and Holy Ghost from IOGT rituals to suit the Unitarians of America, he attempted to forge a National Temple independent from the United States, bounded by no geographical distinctions, and bowing to no theological dogma.³³ The IOGT understandably held quite a different view of the whole affair, very concerned that their acts were thoroughly misrepresented in the press. In the end, the Grand Temple wished the British Templars well in their temperance crusade but denying membership in the IOGT to members of the British Order. However, when N.C. Gowan attempted to aggressively recruit in IOGT Temples, the *Good Templar* went on the offensive. Answering the worn-out charge of disloyalty for following the creed of an American temperance order, the editors stated, “we do not boast of loyalty, we allow deeds to speak for themselves. Loyalty is something like religion, the genuine possessor of either of them boasts not of them. Show us a loudmouthed religionist and loyalist, and we will show you a hypocrite and a coward.” The discord between the two groups died out swiftly when the IOGT simply adopted the motion in 1865 to allow members of the British Order back into the Good Templar fold.³⁴

³³ See the *British American Order of Good Templars, The Documents, Reasons and Proceedings Connected with the Formation of Said Order*, (London, 1858), 6-8, 10-14; *Ritual of the British American Order of Good Templars*, 10 and N.C. Gowan, *The Advantages of Membership in the Order of British Templars*, (London, 186-), 4-5.

The politicization of temperance became even more manifest in the early 1850s, when the Maine Laws came into effect in the United States, effectively creating prohibition in some American states. The fraternal temperance orders were particularly active in their quest for legal suasion in nineteenth-century Canada. Convinced that moral suasion was no longer effective, the Sons of Temperance called on the government to protect the community from the “immense pecuniary sacrifices, the mental and physical maladies, the outrages of life and property, and the moral contamination” of the liquor traffic. In appealing to Parliament to provide prohibition legislation for Canada, both Grand Divisions in Canada West and East encouraged their members to agitate for this reform. Underscoring the shift to temperance politics, the Most Worthy Patriarch of Canada West proclaimed:

Should it be urged that, in so doing [agitating for Prohibition] we would transcend our appropriate limits, and be interfering with politics, I answer that the subject of Temperance is one of vast *political* importance. I use the term “political” not in the narrow, contracted sense, which would bring the work of great moral reformation into the arena of party strife, or array a class of men, whose object is, or should be, to elevate their fellow men, and purify society, from a desolating and corrupting evil, into a political party, to strive with others for the loaves and fishes of office; but in that higher and nobler meaning in which politics is the science of government – a science which teaches to advance the general welfare and the aggrandizement of the whole community.³⁵

³⁴ *Proceedings of the Grand Temple, IOGT*, Annual meeting, (April, 1860), 10-11, 27 and Semi-annual session, (November, 1865), 47-8; see also the *Good Templar*, vol. 2, no. 18, (3 May, 1864), 2 and vol. 2, no. 20, (17 May, 1864), 2.

³⁵ See the *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada East*, Annual session, (June, 1854), 8-10; Annual session, (June, 1855), 7-8 and Annual session, (July, 1864), 7; *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada West*, Semi-annual session, (May, 1852), 9 and 44; Semi-annual session, (May, 1853), 9-10 and Semi-annual session, (May, 1857), 3-4. See also the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 17, no. 25, (15 November, 1851), 378-80; vol. 18, no. 8, (1 April, 1852), 112 and vol. 18, no. 11, (15 May, 1852), 160; and the *Good Templar*, vol. 1, no. 3, (20 January, 1863), 2.

Similar to the voting pattern exhorted by farmer politicians, temperance supporters did not advocate a separate political party but the voting of solid “temperance men” regardless of their party affiliation. Sons of Temperance and Good Templars were thus encouraged to assume their political duty by voting for temperance candidates at every election, instead of allowing their principles to be sacrificed on the altar of party expediency. Such a shift to political prohibition seems to be one of the subtle factors inherent in the removal of cross-class collaboration in temperance societies. Even the Reformer Charles Durand noted that if temperance became a political question, the labouring classes needed to be included in the political process for prohibition, as their natural desires for liberty would be offended by legal suasion.³⁶ However, working class withdrawal from temperance societies would involve more than just the increasing political presence of temperance within society.

As with many voluntary associations in nineteenth-century Canada, temperance societies preached to their members the gospel of honest industry and the political economy of individual labour. Early pledge temperance societies focused on how loafers and spendthrifts contributed nothing to the community, while those who laboured for their own support became the foundations of society. Temperance groups also accepted the labour theory of value, as “labour levels all distinctions, and gives the poor man an inheritance in this world, more certain, though not so extensive as the rich, in his own talents, faculties and capacities. By making all welfare and acquisition depend on labour, all mankind is provided for, and monopolies, in effect, done away.”³⁷ Of more concern to

³⁶ See the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 1, no. 22, (6 December, 1851), 357; vol. 1, no. 23, (16 December, 1851), 372-3; vol. 2, no. 7, (3 March, 1852), 79 and vol. 3, no. 46, (15 November, 1853), 360. See also *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada West*, Semi-annual session, (June, 1861), 10-11 and the *Good Templar*, vol. 1, no. 30, (28 July, 1863), 2.

³⁷ Of course, such pronouncements mirrored the initial formulations of the producer ideology itself in relation to the commercial elites; see L.R. MacDonald, “Merchants Against Industry: An Idea and its Origins,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 56, (1975), 266-80; Bryan Palmer, *Working Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian Labour*, (Toronto, 1983), 25-58 and

temperance men than the curse of idleness was the blight of intemperance, and how drunkenness halted the spread of honest industry. One of the first pamphlets issued by the Montreal Temperance Society painted the dismal picture of ruined artisans, farms sold to pay debts to the tavern and the loss of private property. Even during the rebellions, the Montreal Society feared for the industrious young men who left their farms and workshops to take up arms for their country and instead fell into habits of dissipation and idleness, which would effectively unfit them from useful industry after the conflict. Taking the analogy one step further, the Montreal Temperance Society produced “evidence” that concluded beyond doubt that the majority of inhabitants in the Montreal House of Industry were suffering from the adverse effects of alcohol. In calculating the costs of the liquor traffic to the inhabitants of Toronto, the Toronto Temperance Reformation Society noted the huge costs of the Toronto House of Industry not only in a financial sense, but how hundreds of families lived in a condition where industry, respectability and morality was simply impossible.³⁸

Temperance supporters also utilized the increasingly more important science of political economy to justify their opposition to the liquor traffic. The drink trade itself was an aberration to normal laws of political economy and a hindrance to national prosperity, as it wasted financial reserves and other resources, and killed the labour incentive. With the introduction of the license system to control the sale of alcohol, temperance advocates emphasized that such a scheme would weaken the foundation of political economy and absorb the wealth of a nation. In other words, since the principal sources of wealth in a nation were labour, capital and land, whatever diminished their usefulness – like the liquor trade – assailed

T.W. Acheson, *Saint John*. See the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 8, no. 8, (15 July, 1842), 96; vol. 8, no. 17, (1 January, 1843), 271; vol. 13, no. 15, (2 August, 1847), 238 and vol. 15, no. 11, (1 June, 1849), 166.

³⁸ See *An Appeal to the Inhabitants of Lower Canada on the Use of Ardent Spirits*, 6-7 and the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 9, (January, 1837), 69-70; vol. 3, no. 12, (April, 1838), 99; vol. 10, no. 3, (1 February, 1844), 40 and *Facts and Figures for the People*, (Toronto, 1864), 4-5.

the wealth of Canada.³⁹ To those involved with the Montreal Temperance Society, political economy meant much more than the laws of supply and demand. An article in the January 1847 issue of the *Canada Temperance Advocate* entitled simply “Political Economy” defined it as the laws guaranteed to provide the wants, guard the rights, secure the interests and promote the prosperity and happiness of a nation. By 1853, the editors of the *Advocate* expanded this vision into a new field of social economy, characterized as the political economy of the community. Viewing the public as an aggregate body, social economy included the development of industry, the proper rewards of labour, the diffusion of property, the mediation of conflicting claims and measures integral to the protection of society against those evils bent on destroying the peace and prosperity of a nation.⁴⁰ The fundamental evil and vice of the community was of course demon alcohol, a threat both to the economic prosperity and morality of Canada.

Temperance fraternal orders similarly grasped the concept of honest industry as essential not only to national prosperity, but also to the success of the temperance enterprise. As many early members of the Sons and IOGT were also working class, much of the ideology inherent in their temperance publications emphasized the dignity of labour, the labour theory of value and how the “labouring men are the props and sinews of all communities.” Likewise, the values of thrift and economy, as well as the importance of savings banks began to be accentuated along with the importance of emulating the economy of one’s employer:

The journal proposes to advocate the right of the producer to an equitable share of what they produce, and discuss the various social questions in which

³⁹ See the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 9, no. 5, (1 July, 1843), 71-2; vol. 11, no. 2, (15 January, 1845), 24-5; vol. 11, no. 22, (16 November, 1845), 344.

⁴⁰ See the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 13, no. 1, (2 January, 1847), 11-12; vol. 15, no. 9, (1 May, 1849), 133; vol. 18, no. 23, (15 November, 1852), 348-9 and vol. 19, no. 1, (1 January, 1853), 1-2.

working men are directly interested. This is much needed, and we trust it will also live to succeed in convincing the laborious portion of the community that they have more to do than work, eat and sleep, in order to enjoy that happiness, social enjoyment and domestic comfort, which constitute the great end of their mundane existence. To do this effectually the working man must be convinced that to procure happiness, he must not only get his proper share of the production, but take care of, and put to proper use what he gets.⁴¹

The extension of this philosophy on a national scale would utilize the tenets of political economy in opposition to the liquor traffic. To fraternal temperance members, political economy was the science of national wealth, involving three great elements of industry, education and virtue. The trade in alcohol of course was anathema to the laws of political economy as the liquor traffic not only wasted national resources, it was also the enemy of respectability, the opponent of industry and the adversary of every man's prosperity.⁴²

The expansion of the benefits system by fraternal temperance orders aided in spreading the gospel of honest industry even more, through the mutual assistance programme offered by various groups. The International Order of Rechabites and Knights of Temperance offered sickness benefits to members by mid-century, but it was the Sons of Temperance that presented a more comprehensive package of benefits for its members, including a widows and orphans fund. In doing so the Sons received the bulk of working-class temperance support. The ideology of assistance remained fairly constant in all of these groups, the notion that one

⁴¹ See *The Good Templar*, vol. 1, no. 44, (3 November, 1863), 4 and vol. 2, no. 15, (12 April, 1864), 2. The Sons of Temperance enforced a requirement that each member needed to have a visible means of support; see *Constitution of the National, Grand and Subordinate Divisions of the Sons of Temperance of North America*, (Brockville, 1850), 20. See also the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 1, no. 1, (26 February, 1851), 12-13 and vol. 1, no. 13, (26 August, 1851), 211-13.

⁴² See the *Proceedings of the Grand Division of the Sons of Temperance, Canada West*, Semi-annual session, (May, 1853), 9-11 and Semi-annual session, (May, 1854), 31. See also the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 2, no. 24, (4 October, 1852), 279. The working classes used this type of respectability for their own ends; see Bailey, "Will the Real Bill Banks Please Stand Up," 336-53.

needed to be communally active in mutual benevolence, to succour the sick and aid those in pecuniary distress. Not only would such compassionate service help the donor cultivate the moral virtue of charity, it served the community ethos of helping those unable to help themselves. The summation of the relationship between mutual benefit systems and honest industry appeared in an article by Worthy Secretary of the Canada West Sons Charles Durand who stated, “poverty cannot exist amongst us, for with us all must be sober, industrious and honest, and the really deserving – the sick, the orphan, the widows of our order – have hearts of love, upon which they can always depend.”⁴³

While the system of benefits maintained by the Sons of Temperance and the Rechabites fulfilled the mandate of the individual work ethic and mutual aid, the mid-Victorian industrial and working classes found paying for mutual assurance to be more difficult. Much of the history of the Sons of Temperance and other early fraternal temperance orders is one of financial insolvency and hardship as lodges and divisions attempted to carry on the benefit programmes. Not only were lodges and divisions susceptible to over claiming on the benevolent funds, often rather creative bookkeeping and outright embezzlement of division monies created periodic funding crises. Delegates to the 1853 annual meeting of the Sons of Temperance of Canada West held in Kingston recognized that the order had fallen inward through the introduction of the benefit system, as those interested only in pecuniary rewards left as quickly as they joined.⁴⁴ Clearly what eradicated working class support for the temperance movement by the 1850s was not only a political shift to prohibition, but also the removal of financial mutual

⁴³ See the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 1, no. 9, (24 June, 1851), 142 and *Constitution of the National, Grand and Subordinate Divisions of the Sons of Temperance*, 16, 21-23. See also Rev. W.T. Leach, *An Address on Rechabitism*, (Montreal, 1845), 6-9; *Revised Constitution, General Laws and Bylaws of the Knights of Temperance*, (Quebec, 1854), 3-4 and Gowan, *The Advantages of Membership in the Order of British Templars*, 2-3.

⁴⁴ See the *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada West*, Annual session, (October, 1853), 6-7 and 16. For examples of treasurers absconding with lodge or division funds, see the records of the Ameliasburgh Sons, AO, MU 2085 #1, minute book, 1850-54, 4 October 1851 to 21 February, 1852 and the Gananoque Lodge of the British American Order of Good Templars, MTL, minute book, 1860-1, 23 November to 28 December, 1860.

aid as a function of temperance societies. In the Orono division of the Sons of Temperance, a bylaw committee in 1856 argued that the benefits system was “injurious to the extension and more universal adaptation of the order to the feelings of a vast majority of the Temperance people.” Despite appealing to the community ethos as the overriding justification for the suppression of the benefits system, the division’s support from the village working class vanished almost overnight. From that point onward, directors of the Orono division realized that they needed to secure a more regular attendance, and therefore took such steps as slashing fees, increased entertainment, and frequently revisiting plans to initiate women as full and equal members.⁴⁵

While Orono is a great local example of the defection of the working class from the ranks of temperance, it is merely a mirror to what occurred in the Sons of Temperance on a more grand scale in central Canada. From 1854 to 1857, the Grand Division of Canada West experimented with a measured withdrawal from the benefits system. During the 1854 semi-annual session it was suggested to poorer divisions to discontinue mutual assurance, as their monies were “entirely exhausted by incessant drafts for benefits.” When delegates floated the notion that non-benefit and benefit members were equal in the division room in 1856, the Grand Worthy Secretary reported in the 1857 annual session that those divisions dropping the benefits were the most successful. This advantage did not stand the test of time, however, as the number of Sons of Temperance divisions in all of Canada went from a high of 400 in 1852 to less than 300 in 1862, and from 18,000 contributing members to less than 7000.⁴⁶ Thus the meteoric rise and fall

⁴⁵ For these debates, see Orono Sons of Temperance fonds, AO, MU 2879, minute book #2, 1854-59, 21 March 1855 to 9 April 1856. For debates on decreased attendance and what to do about it, see minute book #2, 1854-59, 1 October 1856 to 1 September 1858. The membership book, AO, MU 2879, 1850-58 illustrates that nearly half (48.8%) of the membership of the Orono Sons from 1850-58 were unskilled, semiskilled or skilled workers. By 1860 the secretaries of the Orono Sons of Temperance did not record membership figures with occupations, they simply noted the drop in attendance of members in the division room. See the minute book #3, 1863-4, 20 May 1863 to 30 September 1863.

of the Sons of Temperance in Canada coincided with the re-emergence of the Oddfellows over the same period of time. Many prominent Sons and their supporters viewed the Oddfellows, Masons and Orangemen as viable threats and competitors to their association. Noting that Odd fellowship cost nearly two to three times as much as membership in the Sons, Charles Durand found it particularly galling that the Orange order, based simply on the protection of Protestantism and consumed with vice and intemperance, claimed more adherents than either. Durand could not understand that if the Orange order was “partly a political movement, why should not the Order of the Sons, which is not political, and has only the test of strict temperance superadded, succeed equally well? Does the fact of this last test injure it with the masses? It would really seem so, as society is now constituted.”⁴⁷ Temperance itself was not the culprit for the loss of working-class support from the movement; rather it was the mismanagement of the benefits system, beloved and required by many working class families, which caused its downfall with skilled workers.

As with other voluntary associations, sociability played a rather significant role in the construction of a community ethos within the temperance movement. While early pledge societies certainly held an element of rational entertainment within their associations, amusements largely assisted former tipplers in turning from their degraded former lives by providing a social diversion from the public house. And yet the Montreal Temperance Society envisioned that its social events, anniversaries and demonstrations would put them at the forefront of the public eye. Such activities would also ensure that the oft-made charge of

⁴⁶ *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada West*, Annual session, (October, 1852), 19 and 53; Semi-annual session, (May, 1854), 11-12; Semi-annual session, (May 1856), 6-7; Annual session, (December, 1857), 37-8 and Semi-annual session, (June, 1862), 12-13.

⁴⁷ See the *Canadian Son of Temperance and Literary Gem*, vol. 3, no. 42, (18 October, 1853), 332 and the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 16, no. 2, (15 January, 1850), 22. The International Order of Rechabites made similar comments about non-temperance fraternalism; see the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 15, no. 9, (1 May, 1849), 132. See chapter five, above, on how fraternalism managed to capture a working-class constituency.

diminishing social pleasure through temperance would end, and teetotallers would be viewed as the most joyous portion of the community.⁴⁸ While the larger urban societies like the Montreal Temperance Society became involved in large-scale entertainments such as soirees, temperance picnics and suppers, the smaller rural society had to be contented with simpler fare. Similar to Mechanics' Institutes, often amusements were of the rational variety, with temperance lectures and essays, singing, recitations, debates and spelling matches being the most common. Public lectures and presentations of temperance papers were often delivered by local clergymen, to ensure their acceptability with principles of morality and also because of their low cost. In fact, the Toronto Temperance Reformation Society insisted that its Temperance Hall be utilized solely for public meetings of a moral and useful purpose, regardless of which organization rented the Hall.⁴⁹

Fraternal temperance lodges and divisions grasped even more strongly the significance of sociability to the construction of their associational ties. Early temperance fraternalism understood the importance of rational recreation to their members, sanctioning temperance lectures, essays, and recitations while establishing libraries and debating societies for mental and social improvement. In announcing their peak membership of 11,000 members during the annual session of the Grand Division in 1855, the executive of the Sons of Temperance in Canada West observed that success in recruitment could be attributed to the introduction of the social feature in temperance work.⁵⁰ Division and lodge social

⁴⁸ See the *Canada Temperance Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 8, (December, 1836), 61-2; vol. 7, no. 1, (May, 1841), 4; vol. 9, no. 7, (1 August, 1843), 104-5 and vol. 17, no. 18, (16 August, 1851), 267.

⁴⁹ See the records of the Vaughn Anti-Bacchanalian Society, AO, MU 2111, #5, minute book, 1852-53, 20 April 1852 to 7 June 1853 and records of the Toronto Temperance Reformation Society, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7280, series A, file #14, act of incorporation for the society, 30 August 1851, 1-2.

⁵⁰ *Proceedings of the Grand Division, Sons of Temperance, Canada West*, Annual session, (October, 1855), 6-7. For the formation of temperance libraries and debate societies, see records of the Norfolk Division, Sons of Temperance, Norfolk Historical Society fonds, NAC, MG D8/24, M-282, reel 9, minute book, 1850-54, 12 October 1853, 12538; Nithburg Sons of Temperance fonds, AO, MU 4734 #6, minute book, 1857-60, 12 January 1859; record of the Ameliasburgh

activities also held a far more practical purpose, to raise much needed funds for the actual temperance crusade. Tea meetings, soirees, excursions and other diversions not only entailed an entrance fee, but also required the presence of the entire town or village to be successful. The latter was much more difficult to obtain, and often divisions and lodges found the social aspect of the work a much more daunting task. The Orono division of the Sons of Temperance recognized that the prosperity of the Order rested upon the principle of sociability, and therefore pushed for the admittance of women in the division room as “the society of females has a tendency to improve this feature of our order.” When repeated requests for an equal female presence in Orono failed, attendance dropped dramatically and the entertainment portion of bi-weekly meetings remained extremely weak. After a series of cancelled tea meetings, the Gananoque lodge of the British American Order of Good Templars perceived that weak turnouts were the result of nothing instructional or interesting in lodge meetings, and so organized debates, lectures and an anniversary soiree to bring the cause of temperance to the community. Impediments to the accomplishment of this design became manifest when the last meeting of the Gananoque lodge contained a debate on whether the lodge had been of any benefit to its members or the public.⁵¹

Even in the realm of sociability, the seeds of discord in temperance societies were sprightlier sown than in other voluntary associations in the nineteenth century. The role of mid-century evangelical religion and the sectarian turmoil associated with it often raised concerns with the tenor of amusements in temperance societies. One of the first meetings of the Norfolk division of the

Sons, AO, MU 2085 #1, minute book, 1850-54, 18 January 1851 and *Constitution and Bylaws of the St. Lawrence Division*, 27-28.

⁵¹ See the records of the Gananoque lodge, British American Order of Good Templars, MTL, minute book, 1860-61, 12 April 1860, 24 August 1860, 18 January 1861 and 19 April 1861. See also the Orono Division, Sons of Temperance fonds, AO, 2879, minute book #2, 1854-9, 1 October 1857 to 1 September 1858, and minute book #3, 1863-4, 15 April 1863 to 18 November 1863.

Sons of Temperance determined that no meeting of the division would be succeeded by a public dance, in order not to give offence to “serious minds.” The perils of dancing also became an issue before the Grand Temple of the IOGT in the early 1860s, when the Warpath lodge suspended some individuals for participating in a social that permitted dancing. While the executive of the Grand Temple condemned dancing as entertainment, they also reinstated these members and censured the Warpath temple instead, for creating disharmony over such a question.⁵² Temperance societies also had to ensure that their activities promoted the temperance ideal. The directors of the Gananoque lodge concluded that excursions were not conducive to the welfare of the order after the lodge chartered a boat to view the neighbouring islands had to share their accommodations with drunken revellers. Temperance societies also had to temper the community ethos of inclusion with excluding those activities not deemed proper or respectable. The Norfolk division of the Sons of Temperance did not want to place strenuous constrictions on the bylaws which would interfere with or control the private rights of its members, yet stated that it “would at the same time strongly and feelingly recommend to the membership the propriety of wholly abstaining from practices calculated even remotely to bring the noble order with which we are connected into disrepute, among which practices this Division include the frequenting of the Ball Alley at present in operation in this place.”⁵³ Recreation and entertainment required the participation of the entire community, and it needed to be both rational and respectable in order to escape the censure of most temperance societies in nineteenth-century Canada.

⁵² *Proceedings of the Grand Temple, International Order of Good Templars*, Semi-annual session, (April, 1860), 25-6 and Norfolk Division, Sons of Temperance, Norfolk Historical Society fonds, NAC, MG D8/24, M-282, reel 9, minute book, 1850-54, 20 May 1850, 12344.

⁵³ Thus, concerns over rational recreation infused the world of skilled workers as well as the industrial social order. See the Norfolk Division, Sons of Temperance, Norfolk Historical Society fonds, NAC, MG D8/24, M-282, reel 9, minute book, 1850-54, 6 November 1850, 12374 and the Gananoque lodge, British American Order of Good Templars, MTL, minute book, 1860-61, 15 May 1860 and 29 June 1860.

After Confederation the tone of temperance societies changed dramatically, as they shifted their emphasis from the promotion of moral suasion to the totality of prohibition. This in turn would lead to an influx of lower middle-class and middle-class members in both rural and urban fraternal temperance orders, although strong representation from the skilled working class remained. Explanations for this phenomenon range from the development of a middle-class consensus on achieving prohibition to the augmented presence of middle-class women in temperance societies.⁵⁴ The complexities involved in examining temperance societies in the latter decades of the nineteenth century are a result of increasing industrialization and urbanization during this period. Even as the prohibition movement achieved consensus among the middle class in urban areas as the main solution to society's ills by the 1880s, the internal dynamics of urban prohibition created discord among the major players by the turn of the century. Conflicts between evangelicals and social gospellers, social reformers and conservatives, economic liberals and radicals, and even political partisanship served to fracture the urban prohibition alliance. Conversely, the breakdown of rural temperance divisions and lodges are either attributed to the struggles of reconstructing a rural society along temperance lines, or a failure to align properly with the hegemonic forces of an urban commercial environment.⁵⁵ The dismissal

⁵⁴ Most historians have identified middle-class involvement with temperance as a result of increased interest in political prohibition. See Blocker, *American Temperance Movements*, 51-56; Dannenbaum, *Drink and Disorder*, 172-8; Tyrell, *Sobering Up*, 223-40 and Dick, "From Temperance to Prohibition," 548-52. Brian Harrison, John Rumbager and M.P. Sendbueler view the commercial classes as highly concerned with legal suasion to enforce capitalistic discipline, and thus prohibition transforms into an issue of economic class. See Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*, 220-29; Rumbager, *Profits, Power and Prohibition*, 50-57, 71-80 and M.P. Sendbueler, "Batling the Bane of Our Cities: Class, Territory and the Prohibition Debate in Toronto, 1877," *Urban History Review*, 22, no. 1, (October, 1993), 30-48. Feminist historians have viewed this shift as a result of amplified participation of middle-class women in organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union. See Ruth Bordin, *Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900*, (Philadelphia, 1981); Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity*, 116-40; and Sharon Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow: The WCTU, Evangelicalism and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1995).

⁵⁵ On the convoluted atmosphere of urban prohibition associations in the United States, see Jack Blocker, *Retreat from Reform: The Prohibition Movement in the United States, 1890-1913*,

of temperance societies and the issue of prohibition as a resilient influence in late nineteenth-century Canada plainly is a function of the failure of prohibition forces to completely achieve their goals both in the rural countryside and in the city. While temperance associations remained vital to Canadian society well into the twentieth century, the issue of prohibition did have a propensity to expose the fissures inherent in that society, delineating the visions of community held by rural and urban inhabitants.

Another difficulty in analyzing temperance societies by the end of the century comes in the transferral of temperance support from the skilled working class to the middling sort. The evidence illustrates an ideological swing to middle class temperance rather than a literal shift, as recent studies demonstrate a continuing presence of skilled workers in fraternal temperance orders in small towns and in the rural countryside.⁵⁶ Conventional cross-class membership in fraternal temperance societies reveals a lingering community ethos among traditional orders such as the Sons of Temperance and the Good Templars. Prohibition supporters believed that theirs was an issue of importance to the entire community, and therefore the construction of the community ethos within divisions and lodges persisted well into the 1890s. In 1898, an article in the *Sons of Temperance Record and Prohibition Advocate* recalled the history of the Order,

(Westport, 1976) and K. Austin Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League*, (New Haven and London, 1985). In Canada, support for prohibition came mostly from the rural areas, although Graeme Decarie noted the complexity of urban prohibition movements; see Decarie, "Something Old, Something New: Aspects of Prohibitionism in Ontario in the 1890s," in Donald Swainson, editor, *Oliver Mowat's Ontario*, (Toronto, 1972), 154-71. For discussions on rural temperance societies, see Christopher Anstead, "Hegemony and Failure: Orange Lodges, Temperance Lodges and Respectability in Victorian Ontario," in Blocker and Warsh, *The Changing Face of Drink*, 163-88; Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure and Identity in Late Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario*, (Toronto, 1996), 85-89 and Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 138-50.

⁵⁶ Several studies on small-town Ontario fraternal temperance societies confirm a diverse membership base, including a healthy portion from skilled workers. See Christopher Anstead, "Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario: Secret Societies and Cultural Hegemony," PhD Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1992, 325-40 and Sharon Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow*, 22-29. See particularly Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 85-95 and 246-49 who sensibly argues that temperance orders reflected the cultural identity of the rural social order.

candidly recounting the various controversies over coloured and female membership. The battle clearly won, the Sons now contained “no privileged classes; it enrolls under its tricoloured banner all ranks in society....It recognizes no distinction on account of race, sex, colour, or former condition, but all are alike equal, and all join in the common purpose of promoting the public weal and overthrowing the wrongs of intemperance from which the world suffers.” The official organ of the Independent Order of Good Templars, the *Camp Fire*, believed that the lodge was an aggressive force for good, and nothing would be as effective in uniting all classes in a community for warfare against the liquor traffic.⁵⁷ Even though the boundaries of class were often crossed during these appeals, evidence of an ideological shift to the middle class appears in some of the condescending discourse of the traditional fraternal temperance order. Instead of embracing the radical worker subculture of their mid-century forbearers, both the Sons and the IOGT engaged in a more exclusionary dialogue by the end of the century despite a strong presence of skilled workers. While lauding the honest and noble workingman, the IOGT periodical the *Camp Fire* condemned the “drones in the hives of industry, the loungers in the street, whose useless hands are stretched to take.” A far cry from the censorship of the genteel upper class for their drinking habits a few decades earlier, fraternal temperance orders instead focused on how workingmen became idle wastrels as a result of drinking. In a lecture to the Grand Division of the Sons in Canada East gathered in Montreal, L.M. Sherlocke called on the working class to be more temperate in gaining the world’s respect and a greater portion of their own productions. Conceding that the working class had suffered more wrongs than any other class in existence, Mrs Sherlocke invited workers to concentrate on the real enemy, as King Capital

⁵⁷ Much of this discourse also masked a highly concentrated sense of competition between the Sons, the Good Templars and new temperance orders such as the Royal Templars of Temperance, as they all attempted to advertise the advantages of their various societies. See the *Camp Fire*, vol. 1, no. 8, (February, 1895), 4 and vol. 4, no. 5, (November, 1897), 3. See also the *Sons of Temperance Record and Prohibition Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1898), 2; vol. 2, no. 7, (July, 1898), 3 and L.M. Sherlocke, *Present Aspect of the Temperance Movement*, (Montreal, 1872), 4-7.

indeed chastened them with whips, but King Alcohol chastened them with scorpions.⁵⁸

While conventional fraternal temperance orders embraced a more middle-class ideology in promoting prohibition, a new temperance society appeared in the 1870s that attempted to render prohibition more accessible to the skilled workers, both in the urban and rural settings. As with many of the fraternal temperance orders appearing in Canada, the origins of the Royal Templars of Temperance were both American and ritual based, although Canadian Council ceremonies received some degree of autonomy by the 1880s. Following the traditions of fraternal temperance societies the Royal Templars strictly adhered to values of inclusion, proclaiming as their objectives the promotion of temperance, morality and industry among all classes. In a throwback to the producer alliance, a Royal Templar temperance recital declared that labouring men not only were artisans, sailors and mechanics, but this diverse group also included merchants, manufacturers and professionals. Echoing the exclusionary discussion of early temperance societies, labouring men did not include

They who creep in drives and lanes,
To rob their betters of honest gains;
The rich that stoop to devour the poor,
The tramp that begs from door to door;
The rogues that love the darkened sky,
And steal and rob and cheat and lie;
The loafing wights and senseless bloats,
Who drain their pockets to wet their throats!⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Sherlocke, *Present Aspect of the Temperance Movement*, 16-17. See also the *Camp Fire*, vol. 1, no. 5, (November, 1895), 2-3; vol. 4, no. 6, (December, 1897), 2; vol. 4, no. 8, (February, 1898), 3 and records of the Orono Division of the Sons of Temperance, AO, MU 2880, minute book #6, 1877-81, 4 September 1878, 98.

⁵⁹ See the *Royal Templar Platform: A Collection of Readings and Recitations for Council and Lodge, Social Entertainments and Public Meetings*, (Hamilton, 1892), 63-6 and the description of the Royal Templars in the *Dominion Alliance Yearbook for 1884*, (Toronto, 1884), 43-5.

Not only did the Royal Templars return to a denunciation of both upper and lower class drinking patterns, by the 1890s they also supported the newfound alliance of urban workers and rural farmers through the Patrons of Industry. Undoubtedly the Royal Templars knew their audience – the “horny handed workmen and the ploughmen from the farms” – as many local councils supported Patron candidates during elections. The official organ of the Royal Templars run out of Hamilton, *The Templar*, likewise lauded the Trades and Labour Council for supporting prohibition in the cities. With shades of the community ethos, *The Templar* praised the TLC for recognizing that the saloon was the enemy of the workingman, and that some steps must be taken to protect themselves from its machinations.⁶⁰

And yet the popularity of the Royal Templars with both the rural and urban working classes is more a function of providing assurance and sick benefits to members rather than sustaining a new political economy. In order to improve the moral, intellectual, social and physical condition of its members, the Royal Templars instituted a “magnificent system” of protecting them from sickness and the hardships associated with the passing of a relative. Fraternal temperance orders could offer a more comprehensive and economical benefits package, as “total abstainers are less liable to sickness and accident, live longer than non-abstainers, and suffer injustice when classified with such inferior risks in insurance companies or benefit societies.”⁶¹ Underscoring the intense competition for customers in the insurance and benefits field by the latter half of the century, the Royal Templars managed to capture its share of working-class

⁶⁰ *The Templar*, vol. 4, no. 8, (21 June, 1895), 3-4 and vol. 4, no. 32, (6 December, 1895), 3 and *Trumpet Notes of the Temperance Battlefield, Royal Templars of Temperance*, (Hamilton, 1889), 19. For local councils supporting Patron candidates, see records of the Williamstown Royal Templars in the F.D. McLeman fonds, AO, MU 7914, file #9, minute book, 1893-94, 26 May 1893; Plantagenet Royal Templars, AO, MU 7793, #2, minute book, 1892-94, 28 May 1893 and Cherry Valley Royal Templars, AO, MU 7793 #3, minute book, 1892-1900, 1 June and 15 June 1897.

⁶¹ See the records of the North Toronto council of the Royal Templars, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7276, file #2, petitions of membership, back page, and *Trumpet Notes of the Royal Templars*, back page.

members in both rural and urban areas. After subtracting occupations not listed and female members, workers and farmers made up fifty-eight percent of one rural council, while fifty-six percent of the membership in north Toronto came from skilled workers (see Table 6.2). Traditional fraternal temperance orders were not slow to take advantage, as by the 1880s the IOGT established a fund for mutual assistance in case of disability, sickness or death. Evidently this feature served to lure many skilled workers back into the old-line fraternal temperance fold, at least in the rural countryside.⁶²

All three fraternal temperance orders recognized the necessity of opening up lodges, divisions and councils to women by the end of the nineteenth century as a way of expanding their influence within the community. Of course by this period female participation in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the prohibition movement and with temperance orders in general meant so much more than just the issue of achieving prohibition. Women's suffrage, the social purity movement, moral reform and scientific temperance would be the hallmarks of female contributions – and additions – to the temperance movement.⁶³ Although many statistics illustrate the strength of women's participation in fraternal

⁶² See *Constitutions of the Grand, District and Subordinate Order of Good Templars*, (Toronto, 1889), 13-15 and the *Camp Fire*, vol. 1, no. 3, (September, 1895), 3. The statistics compiled by Lynne Marks and Christopher Anstead in the towns of Ingersoll, Campbellford and Thorold are invaluable in this regard, although neither focus on the benefits offered by the IOGT and the Royal Templars as an explanation for their popularity among skilled workers. See Anstead, "Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario," 325-40; Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow*, 22-29 and Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 85-95 and 246-49.

⁶³ On women's increased involvement in temperance after the American Civil War and Confederation, see Blocker, *American Temperance Movements*, 61-94; Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*, 44-70 and Carol Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918*, (Toronto, 1983), especially chapter five, "Temperate Beginnings," 69-85. That the WCTU was an exercise in proto-feminism, see Bordin, *Women and Temperance*; Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity*, 116-40; Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred?*, 72-84 and Mattingly, *Well-Tempered Women*. For the WCTU, scientific temperance and the moral purity movement, see Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*, (Toronto, 1991); Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow* and Jonathan Zimmerman, *Distilling Democracy: Alcohol Education in America's Public Schools, 1880-1925*, (Lawrence, 1999). Daniel Malleck makes a very compelling argument that the WCTU focused on education, moral purity, evangelicalism and prohibition as the local context warranted. See Malleck, "Priorities in Development in Four WCTU's in Ontario, 1877-95," in Warsh and Blocker, *The Changing Face of Drink*, 189-208.

temperance orders, anything done to augment a female presence in fraternal temperance societies came as a response to the threat posed by groups such as the WCTU to their membership. The Sons of Temperance followed the lead established more than a decade earlier by the IOGT, which allowed women to become officers in their lodges, although the highest office women could hold was Vice Worthy Chief. By the end of the nineteenth century, some of the more traditional fraternal temperance societies upped the ante as did two rural divisions of the Sons of Temperance, which ironically appointed women to their highest office, the Worthy Patriarch. All temperance lodges, divisions and councils similarly attempted to advance the enlistment of female members through reduced fees and other inducements. Although some local lodges rebelled against this practice and just as quickly hiked female initiation fees, appointing women as debate leaders and as chairmen of various entertainment committees aided in some measure the cause of female recruitment.⁶⁴

Many fraternal temperance societies also united with the WCTU in advancing reform objectives such as the realization of female suffrage and other women's rights. Not only did the pro-Patrons of Industry temperance organ of the Royal Templars expectedly approve of women's suffrage, the more pro-Liberal paper of the IOGT edited by Frank Spence, the *Camp Fire*, came out in favour of votes for women. Of course espousal of female suffrage by most prohibition supporters was simply a desire to unleash the potential power of temperance women into the electorate to achieve prohibition. And yet on a local level, the changing attitudes of many members of fraternal temperance orders towards female suffrage mirrors the debate over the issue throughout late nineteenth-century society in general.⁶⁵ Whatever the ideological bent towards the question

⁶⁴ Lowering fees caused a rather cantankerous debate in the Hampton lodge of the IOGT; see the Henry Elliot fonds, NAC, MG 28 III 41, vol. 13, financial secretary's record, 1871-73 and minute book, 1873-76, 26 April 1875, 75 and the *Constitution of the Grand Temple*, 21-22. For women as Worthy Patriarchs, see the records of the Summerville Sons, Peel Region Archives, M78.0006, minute book, 1890-91, 2 January 1891 and minute book, 1891-94, 6 January 1893; records of the Hobart Sons, SCA, Acc. 975-92, minute book, 1897-1900, 27 September 1899.

of women's rights held by fraternal temperance supporters, women were desperately needed within the societies to endorse the ideology of community.

As a result, fraternal temperance orders became quite sensitive to the needs of its female constituency. In the Williamstown Council of the Royal Templars, the executive censured some brothers for unruly behaviour, ostensibly for the affront given to some of the sisters in the council. Similarly, in the Orono division of the Sons of Temperance, the secretary recorded on one occasion "a general giggle broke out among the sisters" which disturbed the meeting. The secretary was not as inclined to reprimand the sisters and viewed the incident with more tolerance when he reported, "shame on them, the Brothers chimed in, and for a few minutes a social time was royally enjoyed. These are bright spots in our gatherings which make our work more enjoyable." And yet some vestiges of condescension to women continued in fraternal temperance, as the female secretary in the Plantagenet council of the Royal Templars outlined a discussion on the lack of women in the entertainment committee, which did not meet with the approval of one of the Brothers who justly thought the fair sex should have better representation. With some disdain at the lack of progressive thinking in the council, the secretary tersely wrote, "evidently the Council did not approve of the suggestion of the upholder of woman rights as the amendment was carried with the proportion 4:1 in favour of mankind." Efforts to include women in fraternal temperance would eventually come to naught, as the WCTU could offer its female members complete autonomy in the function of its operations.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ A debate held in the council room of the Cherry Valley Royal Templars of Temperance came out in favour of votes for women; apparently the sisters managed to persuade their male colleagues. See the records of the Cherry Valley council, Royal Templars, AO, MU 7793 #3, minute book, 1892-1900, 22 March 1893, 11. See also Sherlocke, *Present Aspect of the Temperance Movement*, 18-22; the *Camp Fire*, vol. 1, no. 9, (March, 1895), 2 and 4; the *Quebec Good Templar*, vol. 4, no. 8, (May, 1892), 125-26 and *The Templar*, vol. 4, no. 29, (8 November, 1895), 5.

⁶⁶ This was also the conclusion of Sharon Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow*, 24-29. See the Orono Division, Sons of Temperance fonds, AO, MU 2880, minute book #7, 1881-91, 30 May 1888, 428; records of the Williamstown Royal Templars, F.D. McLennan papers, AO, MU 7914,

Although not overtly exclusive to the middle class, the prohibition union movement centred in urban Canada became far more attuned to bourgeois sentiments than the traditional fraternal temperance order. Originating as early as the 1850s with the Canadian Prohibitory Liquor Law League, the union movement took on many forms until its most successful manifestation, the Dominion Alliance for the Total Suppression of the Liquor Traffic in 1877. Patterned after the United Kingdom Alliance in Great Britain, the development of temperance union associations came simply as a desire to amalgamate support for prohibition amongst a diverse group consisting of fraternal temperance orders, churches, and others willing to invest in so great a cause. Remaining autonomous voluntary associations, temperance union societies would assist the staunch temperance men scattered throughout a community to work in concert with other prohibition supporters.⁶⁷ The Ontario Branch of the Dominion Alliance believed they had entered into no competition with existing temperance organizations but rather relieved them of the work of legislation, so they could “prosecute their reformatory work with unremitting vigour.” As the rival of none and the helper of all, the Dominion Alliance simply combined temperance forces for political action, being both a bond of union and a centre of action in uniting the temperance community. While the success of the Alliance movement as a cohesive force for prohibition in the urban areas is debatable, even Frank Spence, the secretary of the Dominion Alliance believed that the work required more effort. Utilizing the editorship of the *Camp Fire* as his platform, Spence argued that the separation of temperance associations was an extravagant waste, demonstrating weakness, division and dilution of purpose. Pleading for a more

file #8, minute book, 1891-92, 29 May 1891 and file #9, minute book, 1893-94, 7 April 1893; Plantagenet Royal Templar records, AO, MU 7793 #2, minute book, 1892-94, 11 November 1892.

⁶⁷ This would be the credo of many temperance union societies; see *Canadian Prohibitory Liquor Law League Containing Proceedings of the Convention of the League*, (Toronto, 1853), 2-3; *Proceedings of the Second Session of the Canada Temperance Union*, (Napanee, 1869), 4-5; *Proceedings at the Third Annual Meeting of the Ontario Temperance and Prohibitory League*, (Toronto, 1873), 3 and *Third Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League*, (Montreal, 1873), 4-5.

centralized apparatus for political prohibition, Spence noted with frustration that there were too many temperance societies, as “knights and leagues, circles, unions and lodges crowd upon us with bewilderment.”⁶⁸

On the surface, temperance union associations closely abided by the precepts of the community ethos and opened their doors to all classes. To the Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League, the only way to affect the temperance revolution would be the unanimous support of all classes within the community. The League understood the importance of recruiting both the commercial middle classes and their workers, by instructing agents of total abstinence societies to approach both groups in establishing their associations. It would also prove beneficial to raise the leading members of society to a higher standard of rectitude, as they wielded a most powerful influence on the rest of the community. The Dominion Alliance embraced middle class groups such as the WCTU and various church synods, yet also made overtures to the Canadian Trades and Labour Council. As Council member and labour reformer Daniel O’Donoghue noted, since the TLC and the Alliance held the same goals of the moral and social elevation of the community, if the “temperance workers and the workingmen joined hands for a common object, no liquor power would be able to resist them.”⁶⁹

Inclusion of all parties in the temperance union movement would equally extend to the questions of race and gender, in conforming to the ethos of community. As the Dominion Alliance professed to be an organization over all of the Canadian provinces, the ability to connect with French Canada would be an

⁶⁸ See the *Camp Fire*, vol. 2, no. 3, (September, 1895), 2 and vol. 2, no. 10, (April, 1896), 2. See also the records of the Dominion Alliance, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7270, file #13, miscellaneous Ontario Branch records, letter from WH Howland, no date, 1 and *Second Annual Meeting of the Ontario Branch of the Dominion Alliance for the Total Suppression of the Liquor Traffic*, (Toronto, 1880), 3-4.

⁶⁹ Dominion Alliance records, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7269, file #10, minute book, 1877-99, 2 June 1886. See also the *Third Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance League*, 13 and 28-29, and *Fourth Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League*, (Montreal, 1874), 3-4.

invaluable asset. As early as 1881, it was recognized that the circumstances within Quebec required an exceptional action in order to secure the co-operation of the majority of the inhabitants. Evidently the alliance between French and English Canada thrived during a string of successful Scott Act challenges in Quebec. As the *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald*, the official organ of the Alliance triumphantly proclaimed, “Let Protestant Ontario know, for the encouragement of her moral community, and a warning for the liquor advocates, that Catholic Quebec has suffered from intemperance to the limits of endurance, and she, too, may be counted upon to do her part in the hard conflict upon us.”⁷⁰ During the 1898 plebiscite on prohibition, clearly Quebec was out of step with the rest of the country in defeating the motion by a wide margin. However, the Dominion Alliance refused to impugn French Canadians and their drinking habits, rather attributing the failure of the prohibition cause to political considerations peculiar to Quebec. Prohibition advocates claimed that nine out of 10 parishes in Quebec used the Dunkin Act effectively as only 330 licenses were given in some 933 municipalities, so the province was essentially dry to begin with.⁷¹

Opening prohibition work within the community also required the presence of women, and by working in tandem with such organizations as the WCTU, Dominion Alliance executives such as Frank Spence, William Burgess and J.W. Bengough caught the suffragist fervour through association. As early as 1887 the administration considered the propriety of having female suffrage as a plank in the Alliance platform. Although female suffrage only became part of the Alliance

⁷⁰ The Alliance not only set up a successful French Branch, a few years later the Ontario Branch of the Alliance requested a French lecturer from the Quebec Branch to assist in the recruitment of Franco-Ontarians. See the Dominion Alliance records, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7269, file #10, minute book, 1877-99, 1881 annual meeting, 141, and also MU 7270, file #19, minute book of the Ontario Campaign Executive committee, 27 October 1893 and 10 November 1893. See also the *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald*, vol. 5, no. 4, (25 July 1884), 40; vol. 5, no. 42, (17 April, 1885), 494 and the *Third Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance League*, 13-14.

⁷¹ This pattern mirrored rural Ontario, as many of these were rural parishes in Quebec. See the Dominion Alliance records, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7269, file #5, council meetings, 14 July 1897.

agenda by 1890, the 1894 plebiscite in Ontario convinced many prohibition labourers to endorse votes for women. The first vote given to Ontario women of property resulted in nearly eighty-five percent support in favour of prohibition, converting promoters to the potential strength of women to the movement. The Dominion Alliance would later mourn the fact that temperance women were not permitted to vote in the national plebiscite on prohibition in 1897.⁷²

Notwithstanding these efforts at inclusion, the urban temperance union movement was far more consciously a middle-class movement than its fraternal temperance order counterparts. Even at its earliest materialization in the form of the Canadian Prohibitory Liquor Law League in 1853, temperance union promoters recognized that such movements would not be very popular, or attuned to the value system of the masses. The directors of the League – formed rapidly after the passage of the Maine Laws in the United States – predicted that any union of temperance workers would be predisposed to exclusivity. John Dougall, the noted temperance figure from Montreal stated emphatically that the League would rest solely on the zeal, energy, perseverance and *money* of a small minority.⁷³ The Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League was even more audacious in its conscription of members from the middle classes in Quebec. As the directors of the League proclaimed, “the middle classes of the community are those from whom we must expect the largest support; not from the highest or lowest. The middle classes, strong and stalwart in their views of right and wrong, are the exponents of public opinion. They are such as no Governor, or body of rulers, dare for any length of time to set at defiance; for these reasons the efforts

⁷² See the records of the Dominion Alliance, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7269, file #10, minute book, 1877-99, 19 September 1887 and *Yearbook of the Dominion Alliance 1884*, (Toronto, 1884), 12. See also the *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald*, vol. 5, no. 24, (12 December, 1884), 278-9 and vol. 9, no. 19, (4 November, 1887), 4. See also Decarie, “Aspects of Prohibitionism,” 169-71; Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred?*, 72-75 and Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow*, 64-66.

⁷³ See the *Canadian Prohibitory Liquor Law League*, 18 and 30, and also *What Does It Cost? Statistical Report Presented to the Convention of the Canada Temperance Union*, (Napanee, 1869), 4-5.

of the League should be directed at the middle classes.”⁷⁴ The *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald* mimicked the stance taken by Frank Spence’s later editorial handiwork, the *Camp Fire*, in focusing more on the drinking habits of the working class than of the rich upper crust. Denying that temperance was a movement designed by the rich to crush the poor, the *Canada Citizen* did clarify their position that prohibition would end the cycle of perpetual poverty caused by intemperance. Editorials in the official organ of the Dominion Alliance also censured the big business of alcohol in the name of the middle class, noting that hotelkeepers neglected to fund Scott Act challenges “for the benefit of metropolitan capitalists who are building up large fortunes and palatial residences, regardless of the indisputable fact that their enrichment must mean the impoverishment of the community at large.”⁷⁵

The creation of joint stock temperance businesses in urban Canada is another example of the influence of urban middle class temperance supporters on the prohibition movement. The *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald* included in its pages a strong endorsement of the Temperance and General Life Assurance Company for members of the Dominion Alliance, and advertisements for a variety of other temperance insurance companies. A comparable joint stock venture, the Temperance Colonization Society, offered shares in a landholding company with objects to colonizing tracts of land where liquor could not be manufactured, sold or imported. This company was unmistakably a middle-class enterprise, as out of thirty-six original investors thirty-five listed their occupation as a merchant, lawyer, clerk or minister of religion.⁷⁶ The Canadian Temperance

⁷⁴ See the *Second Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League*, (Montreal, 1872), 3 and *Third Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance League*, 13-14.

⁷⁵ See the *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald*, vol. 5, no. 9, (29 August, 1884), 98; vol. 5, no. 13, (26 September, 1884), 121 and vol. 9, no. 21, (18 November, 1887), 2.

⁷⁶ See the *Charter and Bylaws of the Temperance Colonization Society*, (Toronto, 1882), 4-5 and 9 as well as the *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald*, vol. 5, no. 11, (12 September, 1884), 121 and vol. 5, no. 18, (31 October, 1884), 206.

League, an urban federation of many temperance groups showed its colours by embracing the coffee house movement begun by the Toronto Coffee House Association in 1882. In order to offset the influence of the urban workingman's tavern, coffee house advocates wanted the poor and unemployed to frequent their establishments to avoid the consumption of liquor. And yet the coffee house was not only a philanthropic venture, but also a bourgeois business proposition, as the objects of the Toronto Coffee House Association were to provide "a check upon the use of intoxicating drinks as well as being financially viable to the shareholders."⁷⁷

Despite the increasing realization that prohibition was indeed a political issue by the late 1860s, temperance fraternal orders and the temperance union societies acknowledged their obligations to the community ethos in rejecting party politics and sectarianism. Of course, much of this discourse was a straightforward restriction on these subjects in temperance societies, such as the refusal of the Dalston Temperance and Literary Society to discuss "controverted points in religion or Canadian party politics." As with many other voluntary associations, late nineteenth-century temperance societies not only declined to interfere with the political or religious opinions of their members, they also were highly concerned with their effects upon the general community. Even as various fraternal temperance orders considered the option of forming a prohibition political party to end the fetters of party bondage, apprehension over making temperance societies mere political institutions stayed the hand of many an executive. As the Grand Temple of the IOGT decreed in 1875, fraternal temperance orders needed to concentrate their energies in obtaining adherents from all parties, irrespective of their creed in religion or politics.⁷⁸ This stricture

⁷⁷ See the Toronto Coffee House Association fonds, AO, MU 2120, #10, miscellaneous papers, 1882-99, first annual report, November 1882 and ninth annual report, November 1890. See also the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Canadian Temperance League*, (Toronto, 1890), 3 and 6-7.

⁷⁸ See the 22nd *Annual Session of the Grand Lodge, International Order of Good Templars*, (Napanea, 1875), 9-11 and Thomas Lawless, *The Canada Digest, International Order of Good*

against sectarianism would lead many historians to conclude that later manifestations of fraternal temperance orders espoused a “vague Christianity” rather than the forthright evangelicalism of organizations such as the WCTU. While denunciations of sectarianism did indeed dilute any dialogues of theology and doctrine, theirs was no lightweight Christian fellowship. The Royal Templars of Temperance militantly proclaimed themselves to be an aggressive Christian order, thoroughly devoted to Gospel temperance and prohibition, installing as their banner the Golden Rule. Calling on its members to use their moral, social and religious influence towards the attainment of prohibition, Royal Templars were reminded of their initiation oaths to Almighty God in forwarding the temperance work. Religious militancy required some restraint, for when Royal Templars in Riceville attempted to postpone their meetings for a Baptist revival, it prompted one member of the order to recall the constraints on sectarianism to the consternation of the other members.⁷⁹

Prohibition supporters within temperance fraternal orders believed that the surest means to achieve prohibition was for temperance men to act politically, and carry the subject immediately before the voters. As with such organizations as the Patrons of Husbandry, fraternal temperance orders appreciated the fact that prohibition involved the election of good, honest men to make and administer the laws for the general good of the community, not political parties:

While we are not a political party, and leave every man free to vote with his

Templars, (Hamilton, 1872), 11. See also the Dalston Temperance and Literary Society, Laura Young fonds, SCA, Acc. 972-83, minute book, 1888-89, constitution of the society pasted at the front; the *Camp Fire*, vol. 1, no. 7, (January, 1895), 2; vol. 1, no. 11, (May, 1895), 2; vol. 2, no. 8, (February, 1896), 1 and the *Sons of Temperance Record and Prohibition Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1898), 1.

⁷⁹ Both Sharon Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow*, 22 and Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 92-3 claim that an indeterminate Christianity found a home in fraternal temperance societies. See the records of the Plantagenet Royal Templars, AO, MU 7793 #2, minute book, 1892-94, 28 July 1893; *Ritual of the Royal Degree Including the Ceremony of Installation and Burial Service of the Order of the Royal Templars of Temperance*, (Hamilton, 1889), 4, 13 and 17 and *Trumpet Notes*, back page.

party and for such men and principles as he may prefer, we do protest against men being nominated for office who are not known, beyond question, to be competent and reliable moral men, who will not disgrace the country by habits of personal intemperance, or debauch the public conscience and corrupt public morals by favouring measures unfriendly to temperance reform, or defeat our cause by refusing to support and enforce such laws as are calculated to protect society against the evils of the liquor traffic. That if political parties will persist in putting forward men who are unworthy of our confidence, they must take the responsibility of any divisions or defeats that may result in our refusing to support them.⁸⁰

By the time the IOGT advocated political agitation to attain the desired goal of prohibition in the 1870s, voting for proclaimed temperance men became an accepted practice for all fraternal temperance orders interested in prohibition. Regardless of this politicization of prohibition, promoters of the cause believed that those who marked their ballots for the measure did so for the benefit of others, and for the good of the community rather than for the endorsement of political parties.

Enthusiasm for the cause of prohibition would be manifested most productively in the rural areas of Canada, particularly in the late 1890s in Ontario. While local fraternal temperance orders were indeed attracted to prohibition on a national scale, they plainly placed more relevance on neighbouring efforts to control the liquor traffic. And yet many local temperance lodges, divisions and councils supported collaborative efforts with the Dominion Alliance to achieve prohibition. Acknowledging that the temperance question was of necessity a political one, local temperance societies offered financial and moral support to the Alliance, with many responses equalling the poorly worded reply from the Cherry Valley Royal Templars, “acknowledging our councils cooperation with all truly temperance sentiment and work with zeal to gain such a majority for Proabition as

⁸⁰ Lawless, *The Canada Digest*, 10-12; *Constitution of the Grand, District and Subordinate Temples, IOGT*, back page; the *Camp Fire*, vol. 2, no. 9, (March, 1896), 2; vol. 3, no. 12, (June, 1896), 2; vol. 5, no. 5, (November, 1898), 2 and the *Sons of Temperance Record and Prohibition Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 2, (February, 1898), 1-3.

will maik Politions stand agast.” The Williamstown and Fergus councils established a plebiscite committee to handle all the campaign work, while the Fergus Royal Templars took the direct route by protesting to their MP over a treaty to admit French wines.⁸¹ On a local level, fraternal temperance orders often attempted to enforce first the Dunkin Act, and consequently the Scott Act within their municipalities. Often divisions of the Sons of Temperance and councils of the Royal Templars petitioned local municipal councils and license inspectors to curtail the amount of drinking establishments in the town or village. The Fergus council of the Royal Templars went even so far as to request the village constable to pay special attention to the Sabbath closing of barrooms, selling alcohol to minors and other infractions. The Orono division of the Sons of Temperance often had complaints about the way inspectors handled the license acts, offering first to pay for the prosecution of taverns under the Dunkin Act and concluding by the end of the century that the most effective means of securing a dry Orono was to have a Son appointed to the office of Tavern inspector.⁸² The effectiveness of “gentle agitation” in rural fraternal temperance societies not only assisted in the general cause of restricting the liquor traffic, it also provided the impetus for municipal consensus and harmony within the community.

While the community ethos was prevalent in various groups within the temperance union movement, neutral ground on the issue of prohibition was often

⁸¹ Graeme Decarie in “The Prohibition Movement in Ontario, 1894-1916,” PhD Thesis, Queen’s University, 1972, illustrates that prohibition sentiment was strongest in rural Ontario. See also the records of the Cherry Valley Royal Templars, AO, MU 7793 #3, minute book, 1892-1900, 1 August 1894 and 16 May 1898; Williamstown Royal Templars, in the F.D. McLennan collection, AO, MU 7915, file #1, minute book, 1894-1903, 17 December 1896, 69 and 9 May 1898, 131; Fergus Royal Templar records, Templin Family collection, AO, MU 2957, minute book, 1892-96, 4 September 1893, 103 and 19 March 1894, 131.

⁸² See the Orono Division, Sons of Temperance fonds, AO, MU 2879, minute book #4, 1866-70, 14 April 1869, 251 and 28 April 1869, 254; minute book #8, 1891-96, 4 July 1894 and records of the Forest Home Temple, IOGT, SCA, Acc. 968-15, minute book, 1870-76, 20 March 1874, 199-200. For a Quebec example, see Lachute Sons of Temperance records, Thomas Barron fonds, NAC, MG 24 I 128, vol. 5, minute book, 1891-92, 15 October 1891, 6-7 and 22 October 1891, 8. See also the records of the Fergus Royal Templars, Templin family collection, AO, MU 2957, minute book, 1892-96, 8 August 1892, 10; 3 April 1893, 73 and 19 June 1893, 90.

difficult to uncover. And yet some semblance of political and religious objectivity was essential to launch temperance unionism, with the diversity of religious and temperance groups associated with it. The Canada Temperance Union not only toiled in unison with other temperance groups to stimulate prohibition sentiment, it triumphantly proclaimed its avoidance of both sectional and national feuds or jealousies. The Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League of necessity had to labour co-operatively with the Roman Catholic segment of the population, stating firmly that religious differences should not prevent unanimous support of the great social question of temperance reform.⁸³ Initial Dominion Alliance declarations on the subject of political and religious neutrality mirrored this discourse in an attempt to shelter various church synods, fraternal temperance orders and other groups from destructive disputes immaterial to prohibition. To the editor of the *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald*, the evidence of non-partyism in the Dominion Alliance could be witnessed through the President of the Alliance, a Conservative Senator, and the President of the Ontario Branch, S.H. Blake, a noted Reformer.⁸⁴

By the latter half of the century prohibition had become a hotly contested political issue, and it was difficult for temperance union societies to completely eradicate the influence of politics from its operations. Of course the first step in the politicization of temperance union and urban temperance societies came in the acceptance of political solutions to the liquor problem. The Canada Temperance Union documented this shift in ideology as they maintained the significance of assisting both the drunkard and moderate drinker with moral suasion, while driving the rumseller “from his entrenchments by the avenging power of righteous

⁸³ *Second Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League*, 14-15 and *Third Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance League*, 12-13. See also *What Does it Cost? Canada Temperance Union*, 5-6 and *Proceedings of the Second Session of the Canada Temperance Union*, 20.

⁸⁴ See the *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald*, vol. 5, no. 20, (11 November, 1884), 241-42 and the records of the Dominion Alliance, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7269, file #10, minute book, 1877-99, September 1877 and 2 June 1886. See also the records of the Young Men’s Prohibition Club, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7281, file #18, constitution and bylaws, 1886.

legislation.” To the Dominion Alliance, prohibition was the principal politico-moral question of the age, which explains the enthusiasm of the Alliance for its plebiscite work in the 1890s. It would take the Young Men’s Prohibition Club of Toronto to clarify a new urban sense of community for temperance societies, which would include utilizing the political process to achieve their overall objectives:

That it is neither right nor politic for the State to afford legal protection and sanction to any traffic or system that tends to increase crime, to waste national resources, to corrupt the social habits and to destroy the health and the lives the people. That the traffic in intoxicating beverages is hostile to the true interests of individuals, and destructive of the order and welfare of society, and ought therefore be prohibited. That the total prohibition of the liquor traffic is in perfect harmony with the principles of justice and liberty, is not restrictive of legitimate commerce, and is essential to the integrity and stability of government and welfare of the community.⁸⁵

Subsequent strides in politicizing the temperance movement came through the ballot box, as prohibition advocates wrestled with the thorny problem of electing temperance men into office. Early temperance union societies such as the Canada Temperance Union dismissed the concept of a third temperance political party, electing instead to vote for temperance men within the existing political system. Unfortunately the results of this strategy was a both a division and a weakening of the temperance power, coupled with party rivalry and private speculation. Even when such associations as the Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League espoused the ideology of an independent temperance political party, it was more for the failure of temperance men to throw off the shackles of party bondage than anticipation of victory. Philip Carpenter, a member of the Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League, also noted that a third temperance

⁸⁵ See the records of the Young Men’s Prohibition Club, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7281, file # 18, constitution and bylaws, 1886; *What Does It Cost? Canada Temperance Union*, 16; *Fourth Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance League*, (Montreal, 1874), 8 and *Dominion Alliance Yearbook for the Year 1882*, 13-14.

party's creed would be honesty first, and prohibition second. This was a direct criticism of the ruling Conservatives, who as a result of the Pacific scandal "have been deprived of power, not so much because the policy of the party was distasteful to the community, as because its leaders were involved in corrupt practices."⁸⁶

The executive of the Dominion Alliance grappled with the issue of an independent and political prohibition party for several years. Pronouncements by the Alliance on the Prohibition Party in the United States were initially employed as a "wake-up call" to both the Conservatives and Liberals, that if the politicians could not legislate prohibition the Dominion Alliance *could* correspondingly take matters in their own political hands. This argument plainly vexed the temperance politicians in Ottawa, who trembled at the thought of another political party. While conceding the problem that many Conservative temperance men would vote for their party every time and vice versa, the vast majority of responses from temperance men of both parties concurred with the notion to avoid a third party with a prohibition platform, for it would be "defeated beyond all redemption" and create unwanted party divisions.⁸⁷ Frank Spence, editor of the *Canada Citizen* and secretary of the Dominion Alliance, envisioned that the threat of a new party was enough to alarm the politicians, as he was obviously not in favour of such a move. Concerning temperance politicians, Spence wrote, "these men are wise enough to see that the better class of the community is beginning to get impatient of the indifference shown towards a matter of the most intense and vital importance to our country's welfare, and they see, in the near future, unless something is speedily done to avert this awful catastrophe, the disturbing political

⁸⁶ See the *Fifth Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory League*, (Montreal, 1875), 69-73 and *Proceedings of the Second Session of the Canada Temperance Union*, 27 and 49-50.

⁸⁷ *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald*, vol. 5, no. 6, (8 August, 1884), 61; vol. 5, no. 51, (6 June, 1885), 607 and vol. 9, no. 21, (28 November, 1887), 4. See also the records of the Dominion Alliance, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7269, file #9, responses from temperance politicians to Frank Spence, 1888, from P Macdonald, 27 June 1888; from James Innes, 28 June 1888 and from E Holton, 28 June 1888.

element of a CANADIAN PROHIBITION PARTY.” Spence’s true colours were even more revealed when he was highly critical of the New Party, a prohibition party created by the one-time editor of the *Canada Citizen*, William Burgess and Dr. A.H. Sutherland. Stating categorically that building a political party around a single platform was simply nonsensical, Spence proceeded to condemn the procedures of the party’s formation as inharmonious to the general temperance community.⁸⁸

Maintaining independence in relation to political parties became even more of a burden to the Dominion Alliance during the late 1880s and beyond. As early as the 1886 annual meeting of the Alliance, the discussion surrounding the possibility of creating an independent political party based on principles of prohibition degenerated into a partisan debate over the merits of the Liberal platform. Many delegates accused Spence and others of conducting a Reformer convention instead of a prohibition meeting, particularly after Robert Maclean stated categorically that there was no need of a third option, as the Liberals clearly were the party of prohibition.⁸⁹ Allegations such as this would haunt Spence throughout his tenure with the Dominion Alliance, particularly in his dealings with the executive of the Royal Templars of Temperance. The Royal Templar leadership evidently was not enthralled with Spence’s ties to the Liberal party, and utilized the pages of *The Templar* to express its dissatisfaction. Complaining that the Dominion Alliance criticized the Patrons for adopting prohibition as a political ploy while avoiding the obvious parallel with Liberal plebiscites, *The Templar* reported eagerly the establishment of a new prohibition party in Toronto, free from the Reform ties of the Alliance. Of course this new organization was

⁸⁸ As with the agricultural community, even the new urban hegemonic force of the professional middle classes experienced dissension in the ranks. See the *Canada Citizen and Temperance Herald*, vol. 5, no. 3, (18 July, 1884) and vol. 9, no. 39, (23 March 1888), 5 and vol. 9, no. 40, (30 March, 1888), 4.

⁸⁹ See the records of the Dominion Alliance, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7269, file #10, minute book, 1877-99, 2 June 1886.

the Patron Prohibition Alliance, to which *The Templar* called on Royal Templars to support, and “publicly proclaim your protest against the present unholy alliance between Toryism-Grittism and liquordom, and refuse to belong to either camp, as long as both lack the courage to raise the Prohibition standard.” An obvious endorsement of the Patron platform entered into the pages of *The Templar*, as they echoed the *Canada Farmers’ Sun* in opposing the liquor traffic, class legislation, monopolies, taxes on labour, corrupt politics, hidebound partyism and cowardly politicians, while at the same time advocating co-operation, tax reform, proportional representation, nationalization of transportation and currency, Canadian patriotism and clean politics.⁹⁰ After these articles appeared in *The Templar*, Frank Spence angrily denied the charges of political favouritism in a council meeting of the Dominion Alliance held in Montreal. Despite Spence’s denunciation of *The Templar* he refused an investigation of the affair, which some council members took as a confession that he feared the truth, and these members reaffirmed their confidence in the temperance paper. The council also questioned Spence’s motivations when he and G.W. Ross opposed the nomination of W.W. Buchanan, an independent prohibition candidate in Wentworth, as the election eventually went to the Liberal candidate. The Montreal chapter of the Royal Templars withdrew their support from the Alliance as a result, “until such time as its officers are prepared to carry out its platform” by rising above party considerations.⁹¹

Notwithstanding the divergent views of political economy held in the latter decades of the century by various groups, in many ways fraternal temperance orders continued to hearken to the precepts of honest industry and the Victorian

⁹⁰ See *The Templar*, vol. 4, no. 8, (21 June, 1895), 4; vol. 4, no. 29, (8 November, 1895), 1, 4 and 7; vol. 4, no. 30, (22 November, 1895), 2 and 6; vol. 4, no. 31, (29 November, 1895), 1 and vol. 4, no. 32, (6 December, 1895), 1 and 3.

⁹¹ Spence would also receive censure for his lukewarm condemnation of the Liberals after the failed plebiscite of 1898. See the records of the Dominion Alliance, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7269, file #5, Dominion Alliance council meetings, 24 July 1896 and the *Annual Council Meeting of the Dominion Alliance, Held at Toronto*, (Toronto, 1897), 16-17.

work ethic. An important virtue practiced both individually and collectively, temperance supporters persistently targeted alcohol as the impediment to honest industry. Individually, intemperance led to idleness, profligacy and vice; in a community, the liquor traffic damaged legitimate business interests, placing unwanted financial burdens upon society:

Drinking habits mean idleness and unthrift. Drunkenness [sic] seriously impairs the ability of the people to indulge in the luxuries, sometimes even in the necessities, of life. The drink waste is a serious interference with the purchasing power of the people, and therefore, an impediment to wealth production....All poverty, crime, and suffering impose additional financial burdens upon the community. As a whole, we are taxed heavily, we suffer keenly, as the outcome of a system under which some gratify their appetites and a few others grow rich at the general expense.⁹²

Respecting the “accepted” genre of political economy adhered to by advocates of the producer alliance, fraternal temperance orders expected more work, stronger prices, higher wages, greater comfort and better times with the abolition of the drink traffic. Not only did temperance orders reproduce statistics illustrating the devastating impact of the liquor trade, many fraternal temperance lodges, divisions and councils held debates and discussions on the relationship between temperance and political economy. Whether debating the merits of Commercial Union, freer trade or commercial trade versus agriculture, the one thing held in common by all fraternal temperance societies was the detrimental effect of alcohol upon society.⁹³

⁹² See the *Camp Fire*, vol. 2, no. 4, (October, 1895), 2; vol. 3, no. 10, (April, 1895), 2; vol. 4, no. 12, (June, 1898), 4 and vol. 5, no. 2, (September, 1898), 2. See also the *Quebec Good Templar*, vol. 5, no. 9, (June, 1893), 144 and S.T. Hammond, *A Collection of Temperance Dialogues*, (Ottawa, 1869), 39 and 60.

⁹³ See W. Bradley, *Facts and Figures Dedicated to the People of Canada*, (Toronto, 1872) and the *Camp Fire*, vol. 5, no. 2, (August, 1898), 2. See also the records of the Williamstown Royal Templars, in the F.D. McLennan collection, AO, MU 7915, file #1, minute book, 1894–1903, 24 March 1893; Orono Division of the Sons of Temperance, AO, MU 2879, minute book

Even the more urban temperance union movement where diversity often brought quite contrary views on many subjects, managed to encounter some degree of concord in its scrutiny of the liquor traffic and political economy. Many temperance union societies wondered where the advocates of retrenchment could be found in any discussion of the liquor traffic, when there was not a single principle of either political or social economy that was not undermined by the rumseller. The liquor trade not only destroyed the national economy and contravened legitimate commerce, it failed to execute the primary function of capitalization. As the executive of the Canada Temperance Union pointed out, the greater the investment in the liquor traffic, the greater the injury, the less employment of skilled and unskilled labour, and the utter loss of any profit whatsoever.⁹⁴ The Dominion Alliance concurred with this response, reiterating the age-old argument of temperance societies that the liquor traffic interfered with legitimate commerce and the economy of the nation. In one plebiscite circular, the Alliance insisted that the trade in alcohol disrupted normal political economy, as the great amount of capital invested in the liquor traffic employed comparatively few men, kept out other investments that would in turn employ more people, pay higher wages, and benefit the people instead of making them poor.⁹⁵ Persisting in the philosophy of honest industry, some urban temperance societies in the latter half of the century would also align themselves with new and innovative principles of political economy.

William Burgess, former editor of the *Canada Citizen*, Congregationalist minister, member of the Dominion Alliance and co-creator of the New Party, employed this new political economy in his book entitled *Land, Labor and*

#5, 1870-77, 11 January 1871 and the Eugene Sons of Temperance fonds, SCA, Acc. 978-35, minute book, 1893-1907, 18 May 1898, 245.

⁹⁴ *What Does it Cost? The Canada Temperance Union*, 4 and 13-14. See also the *Second Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance League*, 42 and records of the Young Men's Prohibition Club, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7281, file # 18, constitution and bylaws, 1886.

⁹⁵ *Circular of the Dominion Alliance*, (Toronto, 1898), 1 and the records of the Dominion Alliance, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7269, file #10, minute book, 1877-99, September 1877.

Liquor: A Chapter in the Political Economy of the Present Day. In many ways, this tome remained faithful to the tenets of honest industry and the political economy of hard work. Discussing the differences between productive and unproductive labour, the labour theory of value and the evils of idleness, Burgess also taught the important principle of mutual co-operation between labour and capital, as “the gain of either the capitalist or the workman is not necessarily the loss of the other.” And yet lauding the Knights of Labor for abolishing class distinctions, the co-operative system, profit sharing, trade unionism and Henry George’s nationalization schemes, Burgess also was a portent for change in political economy.⁹⁶ When it came to the liquor traffic, Burgess simply reproduced identical arguments as other prohibition advocates in his views of the destructive nature of the drink trade. Calling on his working class audience to recognize the real enemy of the distillery, brewery and the saloon, Burgess utilized a typical temperance argument that if the suppression of the liquor traffic occurred, the stimulus for honest industry would be assured. Labour would come at a premium, wages would be fair and no willing hands would be idle. To Burgess, the responsibility of the liquor traffic for pauperism, disorder, accidents and the subsequent financial ruination of society was clear, but “social reformers and political economists who recognize the terrible burdens and afflictions under which the masses groan and suffer, and yet ignore the intimate relation of the liquor traffic to every form of social depression and woe, are simply baling out water from a leaky ship while its timbers are being rotted and scuttled.”⁹⁷

One temperance society that pursued this line of reasoning in an urban setting was the Royal Templars of Temperance, particularly the Grand Council of

⁹⁶ William Burgess, *Land, Labor and Liquor: A Chapter in the Political Economy of the Present Day*, (Toronto, 1886), 21-26; 30-32; 51-55; 82-95; 102-111 and 114-118.

⁹⁷ See Burgess, *Land, Labor and Liquor*, viii; 41-3; 122-26; 174-82 and 228-40. Burgess also argued against compensation for the liquor traffic with the introduction of prohibition, as “they have rendered no service to the country, nor placed the public under any obligation or indebtedness...the whole community is placed under tax to meet the ravages of the unholy business.” See William Burgess, *The Liquor Traffic and Compensation: A Chapter of the Prohibition Controversy*, (Toronto, 1885), 4-6 and 20-21.

Ontario out of Hamilton. The official organ of the Royal Templars, *The Templar*, attempted to fulfill the mandate of an “aggressive Christian temperance order” by claiming that applied Christianity in the community would purify politics, destroy monopoly, wipe out class privileges, and establish the brotherhood of man. Inviting all friends of social reform to co-operate with the paper, *The Templar* published articles on Henry George’s single tax, J.W. Bengough’s views on tax reform, social purity issues, and a Christian Socialist viewpoint that competition was cruel and anti-christian, forcing businessmen to grind the poor. To the Grand Council such enquiries were the foundation of political economy, a “science which often traces want and misery, enforced idleness and brutalizing conditions to monopoly and privilege is not likely to make progress till it has become popularized. How shall we be fed? Wherewithal shall we be clothed? These are the questions with which political economy attempts to deal, and since food and clothing are the first requisites of life, political economy is the basis of social science.”⁹⁸ Despite the seeming plagiarism of material from the *Canada Farmers’ Sun*, in many ways the Royal Templars returned to the older political economy of the producer alliance by restoring the benefit system of fraternal temperance. Not only did the benefit system teach members to be provident and acquire habits of thrift and industry, fraternal temperance would provide pecuniary assistance to a departed member’s loved ones. As the *Camp Fire* noted, temperance societies not only helped the individual to reform, but helped ease poverty in the community as “the increased facilities for insurance and the growing sense of the duty of providing for such contingencies make the occurrence of acute cases of unforeseen distress tend continually to diminish.”⁹⁹

⁹⁸ See *The Templar*, vol. 4, no. 8, (21 June 1895), 4-8; vol. 4, no. 29, (8 November, 1895), 4-5; vol. 4, no. 33, (13 December, 1895), 1 and *Trumpet Notes of the Royal Templars*, back page. On the Patrons’ view of political economy, see chapter four, 192-200, above.

⁹⁹ See the *Camp Fire*, vol. 3, no. 6, (December, 1896), 3. See also the records of North Toronto council of the Royal Templars, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7276, file #2, petitions of membership, back page, and *Manual of the Select Degree and Ceremony of Installation*, (Hamilton, 1889), 10-11.

The dissimilarity between rural temperance societies and the urban temperance union movement becomes even more apparent in the sphere of entertainment and leisure. Rural fraternal temperance orders plainly appreciated the value of entertainment in lodge, division and council rooms as a function of bringing the prohibition message to the entire community. One of the recurring themes in describing the social function of the rural fraternal temperance order is that of overcoming the dull monotony of society meetings. As the *Canada Digest*, the handbook of the Independent Order of Good Templars proclaimed, once the rigid rules necessary for the business portion of the meeting were over, with the observance of order and decorum the members could be invited to seek relaxation in social intercourse and intellectual repasts.¹⁰⁰ The Sons of Temperance were also concerned with relieving the tedium of division meetings, noting that entertainments were crucial to the success of the order. The Eugene division not only worried about the attractiveness of their amusements to outsiders, they also knew that leisure would secure a greater attendance. The Worthy Patriarch of the Orono division of the Sons called members' attention to the arrival of a disease in Orono, which he termed the "dry rot." Recognizing that this disease was anathema to a rural community, as it manifested itself through indifference and lack of interest, the Patriarch noted the only way to avoid it was to "keep the divisions interesting through short addresses, singing, recitations, etc."¹⁰¹ Unfortunately, amusement and leisure would not guarantee a healthy temperance society, or always prevent ennui within the membership. Despite the

¹⁰⁰ Lawless, *The Canada Digest*, 108. The Forest Home lodge of the IOGT solicited ideas to make their meetings more interesting; see their records, SCA, Acc. 968-15, minute book, 1870-78, 19 June 1874, 204. For the importance of entertainment in rural temperance societies as a means of community building, see Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 94-5 and Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow*, 22-3.

¹⁰¹ See the records of the Orono Division of the Sons of Temperance, AO, MU 2879, minute book #4, 1866-70, 8 June 1870, 338; records of the Eugene Sons of Temperance, SCA, Acc. 978-35, minute book, 1893-1907, 21 May 1894 and 11 January 1897; Lachute Sons of Temperance records, Thomas Barron fonds, NAC, MG 24 I 128, vol. 5, minute book, 1891-92, 26 November 1891, 11 and *Sons of Temperance Record and Prohibition Advocate*, vol. 2, no. 9, (September, 1898), 3.

best efforts of the Greensboro Temple in Caledon to provide quality “intertainments” such as singing, recitations, spelling matches and debates, sarcastic commentaries by the secretary William McLaren in the minute book illustrated the true nature of the troubles within the lodge. Recognizing that disturbances during lodge meetings was due more to the fact that the initiation ceremonies were “dry as parched beams,” McLaren dryly commented that one of the officers left the ceremony to check his pulse before coming back in. A later commentary echoed these sentiments through a poem entered into the minutes, “The Lodge then closed in prayer. And all went home to those most dear; and also glad to get away from here.” Leisure could also disrupt the meeting schedule of rural temperance orders, as a speech by a Mrs. Manners in the Eugene division of the Sons on the subject of croquet delved into it as a means of keeping members from attending their meetings.¹⁰²

Most of the entertainments offered in rural fraternal temperance societies were of the rational variety, consisting of speeches, recitations, songs and music, and debates as well as mathematics or spelling matches. By the end of the century, temperance lodges, divisions and councils established entertainment committees in an attempt to devise new and interesting ways to organize their social gatherings. Many of these innovative amusements included contests, such as those in the Summerville division of the Sons of Temperance in Peel County who initiated a points system of recruiting new members. Choosing two teams from among their membership, points were awarded on a sliding scale, from a low of two points for simple attendance to a high of fifteen for recruiting members and composing temperance essays, with the loser treating the winner to an oyster supper. These contests also aided various temperance societies in their construction of the community ethos, as other towns or villages were often the ones challenged to various competitions in order to preserve the dignity and

¹⁰² See the records of the Eugene Sons of Temperance, SCA, Acc. 978-35, minute book, 1893-1907, 20 July 1896 and the records of the Greensboro Temple of the IOGT, WCA, MU 238, A1992.130, minute book, 1875-77, 18 May 1876 and 15 June 1876.

honour of the town. The Summerville division of the Sons of Temperance offered to duel the Cooksville division of the Sons in a tug of war, while the Cherry Valley Royal Templars challenged a neighbouring council to a debate.¹⁰³

Successful lodges, divisions and councils not only approved of amusements as a way of avoiding boredom, but also utilized them as a means of raising revenue for their society. Concerts, strawberry festivals, oyster suppers and picnics opened to the entire village or town also assisted in the construction of the community ethos, through the participation of all in the activities of the temperance society. The longevity of a fraternal temperance order in a community came in direct proportion to the quantity – and the quality – of entertainment offered to its inhabitants. The Orono division of the Sons of Temperance continually managed to stave off elimination for several decades as a society as a result of their activities for the community, including union picnics, soirees, anniversary celebrations and tea parties.¹⁰⁴ The Williamstown council of Royal Templars managed only an erratic membership base that often dipped into single figures from its establishment in 1892 to a brief explosion in 1895. As the council invited neighbouring councils to visit, as well as holding taffy parties and reunions, the resulting enthusiasm for entertainment spread into the executive. From January to August 1898, the Williamstown council formed music, entertainment, picnic, excursion and concert committees to handle the amusement workload. The Eugene Sons of Temperance also became overloaded with

¹⁰³ Nancy Bouchier has argued that sporting events between villages often came about as a means of defending the honour of a town. See Bouchier, “For the Love of the Game and the Honour of the Town: Organized Sport, Local Culture, and Middle Class Hegemony in Two Ontario Towns, 1838-1895,” PhD Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1990. See also the records of the Cherry Valley Royal Templars, AO, MU 7793 #3, minute book, 1892-1900, 2 March 1896, 96 and the records of the Summerville division of the Sons of Temperance, Peel Region Archives, Acc. M78.0006, minute book, 1890-91, 17 October 1890 and minute book, 1891-94, 6 May 1892 and 18 July 1892.

¹⁰⁴ For just a few of these examples, see the records of the Orono Division of the Sons of Temperance, AO, MU 2879, minute book #4, 1866-70, 1 May 1867, 119; 8 May 1867, 121 and 24 May 1867 126; minute book #5, 1870-77, 18 January 1871, 11; MU 2880, minute book, #6, 1877-81, 8 May 1877, 60 and 11 February 1880, 253; minute book #8, 1891-96, 5 August 1891 and 23 December 1891.

entertainment related committees, and these were so lucrative to the society that they carried a motion to do away with the majority of the initiation ceremony as it took up too much time from the entertainment portion of the meeting.¹⁰⁵

Conversely, discounting the significance of community related social activities could prove the ruination of a rural temperance society in the latter half of the century. This affliction occurred most often to lodges of the IOGT during the 1870s, as they struggled to maintain their enthusiasm for temperance on a shoestring budget. The executive of the Hampton lodge did not hold any public entertainments from 1873 to 1876, prompting some of the members in 1875 to discuss “money and other matters” in the lodge meeting, which “amounted to nothing.” Less than a year later the lodge met to consider the advisability of surrendering their charter, as their membership dropped from a high of nearly eighty in 1870 to a low of under forty. The Forest Home lodge of the IOGT initially found much success in their public entertainments, as they considered the possibility of erecting a temperance house in Barrie with accumulated funds. The enthusiasm for tea meetings, excursions and concerts waned in their excitement for more prohibition work, as the lodge executive pondered the feasibility of supporting a Temperance Hotel and offering support for various temperance demonstrations. The imprudent nature of ignoring public amusements readily became apparent to the board, however, when attendance fell from seventy members to nine.¹⁰⁶ Even the Royal Templars of Temperance experienced

¹⁰⁵ Not surprisingly, these latter two fraternal temperance societies endured well into the twentieth century. See the records of the Eugene Sons of Temperance, SCA, Acc. 978-35, minute book, 1893-1907, 21 May 1894; 4 November 1895; 2 December 1895; 12 January 1896; 24 May 1897 and 13 August 1897. See also the records of the Williamstown Royal Templars, F.D. McLennan papers, AO, MU 7914, file #9, minute book, 1893-94, 16 March 1894 and 13 April 1894; MU 7915, file #1, minute book 1894-1903, 19 October 1894, 15; 20 August 1897, 100; 24 January 1898, 115; 30 May 1898, 134; 18 July 1898, 141 and 29 August 1898, 149.

¹⁰⁶ The Midhurst lodge held only one public concert, and planned no other public entertainments as their membership dropped from sixty members to eight in just three years. See their records, SCA, Acc. 981-96, minute book, 1878-84, 26 February 1879, 27 and 26 April 1882, 51-2. See also the Hampton IOGT records, Henry Elliot fonds, NAC, MG 28 III 41, vol. 13, financial secretary's record, 1871-73 and minute book, 1873-76, 18 January 1875, 63 and 17 January, 91; and the records of the Forest Home Temple, IOGT, SCA, Acc. 968-15, minute book,

complications of this nature in some of their rural councils. The Fergus Royal Templars originally offered a wide array of entertainment options to their membership and the village in general, ranging from balls, picnics and concerts to open meetings and excursions. With such a programme, the attendance in Royal Templar meetings often fluctuated from a low of forty to a high of ninety-one. As the council began focusing more exclusively on the issue of prohibition and ignoring public amusements, attendance quickly plummeted to single digits. The last straw for the Fergus Royal Templar executive came when an open meeting in 1895 had to be postponed due to conflicting schedules, a poorly outlined programme and especially a lack of interest. With responses from the community such as this, the Fergus council simply closed down operations one year later.¹⁰⁷

While the urban temperance union movement did not entirely frown on the uses of entertainment as a device to further the cause of prohibition, clearly amusements were not a high priority to the directors of these societies. The promotion of rational entertainment in early temperance union associations simply consisted of prize essays and lectures on temperance subjects. This would continue with the philosophy of the Dominion Alliance, who offered only political assistance in the fight for prohibition, allowing temperance societies to provide their own entertainment. Similarly, the Canadian Temperance League's only concession in extending the work of mental and mutual improvement was to establish a literary society and reading room in collaboration with the work of the League.¹⁰⁸ Some urban temperance societies, like the Young Man's Prohibition Club, apparently realized the necessity of offering entertainments as the directors

1870-76, 2 February 1872, 78; 22 November 1872, 132; 11 April 1873, 154 and 24 June 1874, 222.

¹⁰⁷ See the records of the Fergus Royal Templars, Templin Family collection, AO, MU 2957, minute book, 1892-96, 4 July 1892, 4 to 28 November, 41 and 1 April 1895, 184 to 18 May 1896, 251.

¹⁰⁸ See the *Constitution of the Canadian Temperance League*, 1 and 25. See also the *Canadian Prohibitory Liquor Law League*, 33; *Proceedings of the Canada Temperance Union*, 9-11 and the *First Annual Meeting of the Quebec Temperance League*, 8-12 and 18-25.

established a reception, concert and musical committee to assist in raising funds for the work of the Club. These various committees arranged on paper some highly elaborate activities, from a slide presentation of J.W. Bengough to excursions and concerts. When the expenses for Bengough's presentation ran too high, and the concert committee reneged on a promise to hold a summer concert, the directors began to hold rather fruitless meetings on the financial state of the Club. The Hall committee of the Toronto Temperance Reformation Society published an entertainment report in 1886, and instead of visualizing new activities reported how they refused to allow dancing parties, theatrical companies, Negro minstrels, immodest exhibitions, infidel lectures and electioneering meetings within the hallowed walls of the Temperance Hall.¹⁰⁹

Urban spokesmen for fraternal temperance societies recognized the difficulty in initiating entertainments within the urban lodge, division or council. An editorial in the *Camp Fire* bewailed the fact that temperance societies in the more populous cities and towns of Canada "were crowded out by the pressure of other institutions" while they retained their hold over the rural community. While this was undeniable, by focusing too much on the prohibition question and disregarding public amusements urban fraternal temperance orders participated in their own irrelevance. In another *Camp Fire* editorial, Frank Spence urged that every division, every lodge, and every Prohibition club should have a picnic or outdoor party in bringing temperance to the community. However, Spence was also quick to point out that every such gathering required "short, pointed addresses on our political position and duty." The politicization of entertainment in urban societies came full circle as Spence declared, "What shall we do to save the lodge? This is the wrong question. What shall the lodge do to save the people? If the lodge does nothing in this direction it isn't worth saving. If it goes

¹⁰⁹ Miscellaneous files, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7280, file #14, Bylaws of the Toronto Temperance Reformation Society, 1886. See also the records of the Young Man's Prohibition club, John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7281, file #19, minute book, 1889-90, 16 February 1889; 6 and 18 April 1889; 16 July 1889 and 26 September 1889.

actively to work it will save itself.”¹¹⁰ The urban executive of the Royal Templars of Temperance proclaimed boldly that their order would give no quarter to frivolity or mere entertainment in their quest for prohibition legislation. Indeed, the entertainment presented before urban councils of the Royal Templars attempted to present the new political economy in a better light. The most popular entertainment was known as the pauper party, where participants could either dress in rags, or be fined for wearing expensive items. Charging five cents for a watch and chain, pearl necklaces and diamond tiaras, and two cents for rings and other light jewellery, all the proceeds would either be given to the poor or be used by the various councils to advance the cause of prohibition.¹¹¹

Temperance societies in nineteenth-century Canada present the most complete picture of the evolution of the community ethos, and the demarcation of this ideology held by rural and urban inhabitants. Early temperance orders in both the rural countryside and in the burgeoning urban areas utilized the temperance ideal to construct a community not only free from alcohol, but one that on the surface would be inclusive and open to all classes and creeds. Unquestionably the erosion of this ideal in temperance societies can be measured with the unconditional acceptance of legislative prohibition. Despite protestations to the contrary, by injecting political discussions into the question of temperance – as it did with agricultural issues – ensured that the conflicting philosophies held by rural and urban ideologues created lasting fissures in Canadian society that would not end with the coming of the twentieth century. The political utopia envisioned by temperance supporters of all classes in the latter half of the century would not only fall short of the ideal, the endeavour to fashion such an idyllic world would hasten the demise of the community ethos so carefully constructed throughout the nineteenth century.

¹¹⁰ The *Camp Fire*, vol. 1, no. 11, (May 1895), 2; vol. 4, no. 3, (September, 1897), 2; vol. 4, no. 4, (October, 1897), 1 and vol. 4, no. 5, (November, 1897), 3.

¹¹¹ See *The Templar*, vol. 4, no. 29, (8 November, 1895), 7; vol. 4, no. 33, (13 December, 1895), 6 and *Trumpet Notes for the Royal Templars*, back page.

CONCLUSION

The publication of William Lyon Mackenzie King's *Industry and Humanity* in 1918 demarcated the new boundaries of community held by leading intellectuals and politicians of the twentieth century. In many ways, King remained an adherent to the previous century's vision of community, with references to society as the "organic whole" and the interdependence of classes and groups making up the Canadian nation. King also believed strongly in the need for individualistic moral regeneration as the essential means in bringing about the "secular" Paradise envisioned in *Industry and Humanity*. Most unlike the ideology of the community held by nineteenth century visionaries that praised voluntarism and the interchanging activities that crossed the public and private spheres, King's vision of community was founded upon a fairly limited political, economic and social expression of the state apparatus, rather than the preceding century's all-encompassing ideology of community. To King, "it is the Community, organized in various ways, which maintains government and foreign relations, secures law and order, fosters the arts and inventions, aids education, breeds opinion, and promotes, through concession and otherwise, the agencies of transportation, communication, credit, banking and the like, without any production, save the most primitive, would be impossible."¹ While indeed a very broad communal mandate, many of the activities provided by the "community" were indeed handled by the state at the time King wrote this passage. Forged by his experiences as a young activist in the Laurier's new Department of Labour, his visualization of "Christian sociology" and anticipating the kind of labour agitation of the Winnipeg General Strike, King's description of the community leaned heavily towards the principles of corporate statism and industrial government. In reality, King could not conceive of the "public" without the state machinery

¹ See William Lyon Mackenzie King, *Industry and Humanity*, Introduction by David Bercuson, (Toronto, 1973), xiv-xvi and 95-100.

required to bring about the co-operation and harmony necessary for the formation of his utopia.²

With advocates such as this, it is no surprise that by the beginning of the twentieth century voluntary associations remained very much in a state of flux. Many Canadians continued to embrace aspects of voluntarism well into the twentieth century, although not with the enthusiasm exhibited a few decades before. Associations such as mutual benefit and insurance institutions and some temperance societies as the WCTU and the Dominion Alliance continued to be extremely popular with Canadians. However, reflecting the coming changes in Canadian society, institutions like Mechanics' Institutes – co-opted by the state and the free library movement – as well as the Grange, Patrons of Industry and the Sons of Temperance simply disappeared from the landscape of turn of the century Canada. Clearly Canadians were not only fastidious when it came to supporting voluntary associations by the twentieth century, renewed state involvement in social services and a renewed vision of the community took its toll on the voluntary movement that thrived in the nineteenth century. The definition of what made a "community" became radically different by the twentieth century, as the intersecting visions of nation, province and municipality competed for attention from a citizenry divided in its loyalties.

The growth of corporatism more than any other event sealed the fate of voluntary associations by the twentieth century. To many intellectuals, the contested divide of class, race, belief and institution created an aura of instability within the body politic that only a reconstituted and inclusive nation-state could provide. Instead of the enlightened amateur social philosopher sermonizing his way into the Athenaeums and lecture halls of nineteenth-century Canada, the

² For the eclectic nature of King's pronouncements on economics and the community, see Paul Craven, *An Impartial Umpire: Industrial Relations and the Canadian State, 1900-1911*, (Toronto, 1980), 31-89; Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian Canada*, (Toronto, 1985), 197-213 and Douglas O'ram, *The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State, 1900-1945*, (Toronto, 1986), 36-40 and 102-5. For some context on labour relations in the immediate post-WWI Canada see the essays in Craig Heron, editor, *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925*, (Toronto, 1998).

salvation of the citizenry would be found in the paths of “professional” sociology and social service. A cadre of experienced and enlightened civil servants, university professors and other intellectuals would replace the inefficiency of voluntarism with social planning and state welfare. Even traditional nineteenth-century institutions such as the Christian church and the family could not escape this reordering of society, although such groups managed to propose new solutions to social reform utilizing familiar ideologies and perspectives.³

Focusing on these issues also brought a modification of the economic thinking of twentieth century reformers. Moving away from the previous century’s ideology of honest industry, self-help and the producer alliance, more Canadians began to accept increasing government involvement in non-traditional spheres.

Particularly in the realms of transportation, public utilities and communications, government sponsored monopoly and big business replaced the small producer economy of the previous century. The grassroots political economy of the nineteenth century preached in Mechanics’ Institutes and agricultural societies throughout the nation also suffered the indignity of being co-opted by the “modern” intelligentsia. As these twentieth century reformers established chairs of political economy in such universities as the University of Toronto and Queen’s, this new “collectivized liberalism” also found its way into the civil service in Ottawa.⁴

³ The “professionalization” of society was not a unique situation to Canada; in the United States see Thomas Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science: The American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth Century Crisis of Authority*, (Chicago, 1977) and Samuel Haber, *The Quest for Authority in the American Professions, 1750-1900*, (Chicago, 1991). For Britain see Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880*, (London, 1990). See also James Struthers, *No Fault of Their Own: Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State, 1914-1941*, (Toronto, 1983); Owram, *The Government Generation*; Marlene Shore, *The Science of Social Redemption: McGill, the Chicago School and the Origins of Social Research in Canada*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1987) and Sara Burke, *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto, 1888-1937*, (Toronto, 1996). On the influence of “social evangelism” and the family on the welfare state and social planning, see the work of Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900-1940*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1996) and Nancy Christie, *Engendering the State: Family, Work, and Welfare*, (Toronto, 2000).

Clearly the “age of transition” of the late Victorian period is no misnomer, as these statist changes of the early twentieth century could not have arrived unheralded and unforeseen. And yet for the nineteenth century, the importance of the voluntary association in providing services such as mutual aid and sickness insurance, libraries and agricultural markets and fairs to the general community simply cannot be underestimated. These services were invaluable not only to buttress an emerging social order in the aftermath of the rebellions; in many cases they were the only ones available in a weakened colonial state. Along with these benefits, voluntary associations also expounded a viable community ethos that permeated through every society or association established in Victorian Canada. While at times a rather vague ideology, the community ethos enabled a rather convoluted and unclassifiable occupational structure of early to mid-Victorian Canada to resemble a unified and harmonious whole. On the surface, it was the promotion of the community ethos within voluntary associations that enabled a Victorian society in a state of flux to achieve a sense of cultural identity.

Was the community ethos entirely successful in creating societal harmony and lessening discord in Victorian Canada? The answer provided in this present study is as complicated and complex as the cultural relationships outlined in the various voluntary organizations themselves. On one level, the principles intrinsic to the construction of an ethos of “community” within voluntary associations in the nineteenth century did in fact validate the larger society, and provide cultural consensus. By fostering an aura of inclusiveness within the various organizations,

⁴ On this new “expert” political economy, see the chapter on James Mavor in S.E.D. Shortt, *The Search for an Ideal: Six Canadian Intellectuals and Their Convictions in an Age of Transition, 1890-1930*, (Toronto, 1976), 119-35; Ian Drummond, *Political Economy at the University of Toronto: A History of the Department, 1888-1982*, (Toronto, 1983), 2-41; A.B. McKillop, *Matters of Mind: The University in Ontario, 1791-1951*, (Toronto, 1994), 177-203; Burke, *Serving the Highest Good* and especially Barry Ferguson, *Remaking Liberalism: The Intellectual Legacy of Adam Shortt, O.D. Skelton, W.C. Clark and W.A. Mackintosh, 1890-1925*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1993). On industry and the state, see Tom Traves, *The State and Enterprise: Canadian Manufacturers and the Federal Government, 1917-1931*, (Toronto, 1977); Craven, *An Impartial Umpire*; Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, *Monopoly's Moment: The Organization and Regulation of Canadian Utilities, 1830-1930*, (Philadelphia, 1986) and Ken Cruikshank, *Close Ties: Railways, Government and the Board of Railway Commissioners, 1850-1933*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1992).

voluntary associations crossed both class and gender lines, involving the entire community regardless of sectarian origin or political preference. By adhering to the gospel of honest industry and the importance of the individual work ethic, voluntary associations forged a sense of occupational interdependence in engineering consent over economic and social issues. Furthermore, in providing leisure activities to the larger community, voluntary associations displayed a “public spirit” and a sense of camaraderie that brought together the larger community.

On a deeper cultural level, however, while the principles and doctrines of the community ethos were all shared cultural assumptions within almost every voluntary association, each standard was highly contested by every conceivable interest group. Due to the proliferation of these associations in both the urban and the rural environment, the intersection of class, religion, politics and gender made complete cultural consent over the nature of “community” simply impossible. While embracing the concept of inclusiveness in regards to class and gender, voluntary associations could also be highly exclusive, as witnessed in the class tensions inherent in the agricultural community, the “selective racial intolerance” of fraternal orders and the tensions over gender issues in temperance societies. Debates over the election of “agricultural men” or “temperance men” also underscored the political tensions in this society, and the interference of evangelical religion in the temperance movement played havoc with pronouncements of antisectionalism. Similarly, discussions over the merits of free trade and protectionism, the centrality of agriculture over an emerging industrial order and the advent of a “collectivized political economy” exposed the friction in conflicting views of the gospel of honest industry. Likewise, disputes over the importance of rational recreation and the importance of bringing “respectable” leisure to the larger community often surfaced in voluntary associations.

Thus in many respects the inclusive nature of these societies was simply illusory as it only camouflaged the conflicts simmering just under the surface. Particularly by the late nineteenth century, voluntary associations were unable to contain both class and occupational discord as well as sectarian and political turmoil. Moreover, the selective racial and gender intolerance practiced by voluntary organizations at mid-century could not overcome the difficulties of increased immigration and the more latent anti-French sentiment of English Canadians by the late nineteenth century.⁵ Exposing the fissures in a society that had always barely concealed the class, gender and racial dissonance lurking underneath a consensual exterior, the resulting chaos in turn of the century Canada illustrates just how fragile was the “constructed” social order of the community. The increasing spectre of urbanization, industrialization and professionalization in the urban environment led to an outpouring of ideologies that destroyed the ideology of community held by most Victorian Canadians. The increasingly dissimilar visions of the community held by both urban and rural Canadians merely added to the conflicts of the late Victorian period.⁶

Voluntary associations bridged the gap between a burgeoning backwoods nation of the nineteenth century, and the origins of the Canadian welfare state one hundred years later. These associations also functioned as a method of defining what “community” was in Victorian Canada, and they often were held as models of what an inclusive, open and harmonious society should be. When the cracks in

⁵ On anti-French and Catholic sentiment, see J.R. Miller, *Equal Rights: The Jesuits' Estate Act Controversy*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1979) and on nativist attitudes in general see Donald Avery, *Dangerous Foreigners: European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932*, (Toronto, 1979); Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Towards Orientals in British Columbia*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1978); Howard Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta*, (Toronto, 1982) and Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada*, (Toronto, 1991), 104-28. On gender issues, see Linda Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour and the Left in Canada, 1890-1925*, (Toronto, 1998).

⁶ For an interesting article on the nature of “liberal governance” and the constructed meanings of liberalism over the course of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century, see Ian McKay, “The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Renaissance of Canadian History,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 81, no. 4, (December, 2000), 617-45.

the community armour began to appear in the late nineteenth century, the community ethos so carefully constructed in voluntary associations could not sustain the penetrating gaze of a new urban professional elite, skilled workers and agriculturalists. Even though the community ethos remained viable and strong in the rural areas of Canada well into the twentieth century, the influx of new ideas regarding the role of the state apparatus and social planning spelled the end of “amateur” voluntary organizations in urban Canada. The ideology of an all-inclusive, interdependent and genderless society secured through the removal of political and religious strife and the gospel of small producerism preached through associational life simply was not functional by the turn of the century. While the construction and contestation of community would not end by the dawn of a new century, the principal players and philosophies changed dramatically. And yet the strong influence of voluntary associations and the community ethos during the turbulent years of a fledgling colonial society to the “forging of a nation” through the welfare state and increased industrial production of the early twentieth century cannot be denied.

APPENDIX: STATISTICAL TABLES

NOTE ON STATISTICAL TABLES

With some minor deviations, the ranking of occupational categories are fairly consistent with those compiled in Peter Goheen, *Victorian Toronto, 1850 to 1900: Pattern and Process of Growth*. The most significant change to Goheen's methodology in the text was the elimination of the semiskilled worker as an occupational grouping. The lack of a substantial Industrial Revolution in Canada until the latter portion of the nineteenth century precludes the differentiation between skilled and semiskilled workers. Similarly, the distinction between unskilled and skilled workers became far more pronounced in nineteenth-century Canada than any gradation of skill amongst the working classes. As David Burley has rightly pointed out, a more noteworthy occupational designation in the Victorian era is that of the self-employed businessman, artisan or manufacturer. Therefore class fluidity is more pronounced in nineteenth-century Canada than captured here in this statistical analysis. Goheen also labelled farmers as unskilled workers, whereas Gordon Darroch illustrates that the agricultural population in fact participated readily in rural middle class formation throughout the nineteenth century.¹ Agriculturalists are therefore afforded their own occupational identity in many of the following statistical tables.

¹ See Peter Goheen, *Victorian Toronto, 1850 to 1900: Pattern and Process of Growth*, (Chicago, 1970), 229-30. That the Canadian economy only held its "industrial revolution" after Confederation see Ian Drummond, *Progress Without Planning: The Economic History of Ontario From Confederation to the Second World War*, (Toronto, 1987), 103-33 and Craig Heron, "Factory Workers" in Paul Craven, editor, *Labouring Lives: Work and Workers in Nineteenth Century Ontario*, (Toronto, 1995), 480-515. See also David Burley, *A Particular Condition in Life: Self-Employment and Social Mobility in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario*, (Montreal and Kingston, 1994) and Gordon Darroch, "Scanty Fortunes and Rural Middle Class Formation in Nineteenth-Century Rural Ontario," *Canadian Historical Review*, 79, no. 4, (December, 1997), 621-59.

TABLE 1.1
 Ordinary Membership by Occupation, Toronto Mechanics' Institute, Selected Years, 1855-1865

Occupation	Total	Percentage	Occupation	Total	Percentage
Carter	5		Clerks	190	
Others*	5		Accountant/ Bookkeeper	42	
Total Unskilled	10	1%	Others+	32	
Carpenter	63		Total Clerical	264	27%
Printer	36		Merchants	55	
Cabinet Maker	18		Dry Goods/Grocer	36	
Painter	16		Chemist/Druggist	15	
Baker	13		Agent/Broker	13	
Tailor	13		Bookseller/ Stationer	12	
Bookbinder	12		Jeweller	11	
Founder	12		Others++	31	
Surveyor	12		Total Business	173	18%
Marble/Stonecutter	12		Student	38	
Boot/Shoemaker	11		Teacher	20	
Others**	97		Barrister	13	
Total Skilled	315	33%	Architect	10	
			Engineer	10	
			Others+++	17	
Total Unrecorded	97	10%	Total Professional	108	11%

* Other occupations in the unskilled category include: farmer, labourer, waiter and porter.

** Other occupations in the skilled category include: blacksmith, butcher, cooper, carriage/coach maker, mechanic, millwright, wire worker, boiler maker, joiner, turner, upholsterer, trunk/baggage maker, steward, hall keeper, dyer, watchmaker, mason, coppersmith, candle maker, soap maker, engraver, gas fitter, guilder, gunsmith, telegrapher, lithographer, moulder, paper hanger, piano maker, pattern maker, plumber, slater, decorator, saddler, tinsmith, artist, boat maker, bellhanger, brewer, bricklayer, machinist, builder, typographer, brass worker and brass finisher.

+ Other occupations in the clerical category include: bailiff, teller, cashier, collector, photographer, civil service, reporter, editor, postmaster, salesman, notary and librarian.

++ Other occupations in the business category include: auctioneer, boarder, clothier, furrier, contractor, confectioner, lumber dealer, wool dealer, flour dealer, hatter, pawnbroker, manufacturer, and storekeeper.

+++ Other occupations in the professional category include: choir master, clergy, dentist, doctor, professor, and school superintendent.

SOURCE: Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, (L1), series E, vol. 2, membership lists, 1855-65, cross-referenced with Toronto city directories from the same years to ensure accuracy.

TABLE 1.2
 Ordinary Membership by Occupation, Toronto Mechanics' Institute, Selected Years, 1876-1883

Occupation	Total	Percentage	Occupation	Total	Percentage
Builder	17		Merchant	138	
Carpenter	16		Grocer	21	
Printer	10		Agent	20	
Machinist	12		Manufacturer	17	
Watchmaker	7		Stationer	17	
Boot/Shoemaker	7		Jeweler	8	
Surveyor	6		Others+	20	
Baker	6		Total Business	241	25%
Engraver	6		Barrister	60	
Painter	5		Law Student	27	
Founder	5		Chemist/Druggist	19	
Stonecutter	5		Teacher	16	
Others*	60		Architect	12	
Total Skilled	162	17%	Engineer	8	
Clerks	278		Surgeon	7	
Bookkeeper	34		Others++	19	
Traveller	17		Total Professional	168	17.5%
Salesman	15		Gentlemen	16	
Manager	14		Total Private Means	16	1.5%
Others**	19				
Total Clerical	377	39%			

NOTES: Unlike Table 1.1, cross-referencing did not take place with city directories, as the volume of names provided in the membership list precluded such a search; only occupations recorded were utilized as data.

* Other occupations in the skilled category include: apprentice, mechanic, signmaker, steam fitter, turner, fisherman, boiler maker, trunk maker, carriage maker, pressman, mason, butcher, bricklayer, brewer, millener, bookbinder, cabinet maker, soap maker, gas fitter, tailor, moulder, coach maker, draper, pattern maker, plumber, plasterer, draftsman, coppersmith, gunsmith, and artist.

** Other occupations in the clerical category include: bartender, operator, photographer, sheriff, police chief, collector, secretary, and inspector.

+ Other occupations in the business category include: bookseller, broker, hatter, storekeeper, hotelkeeper, clothier, auctioneer and confectioner.

++ Other occupations in the professional category include: homeopath, doctor, dentist, professor, writing master, headmaster, clergy and judges.

SOURCE: Toronto Mechanics' Institute fonds, MTL, (L1), series E, vol. 13, membership list with occupations, 1876 and vol. 15, membership list with occupations, 1883.

TABLE 2.1

Occupations of Petitioners to Establish Mechanics' Institutes in Rural Ontario Towns, 1887-91

Occupation	Total	Percentage	Occupation	Total	Percentage
Labourer	9		Merchant	121	
Others*	9		Agent	18	
Total Unskilled	18	3%	Hotel keeper	11	
Blacksmith	15		Druggist/Chemist	10	
Butcher	12		Manufacturer	7	
Carriage maker	10		Publisher	6	
Shoe maker	10		Banker	5	
Carpenter	9		Jeweller	5	
Builder	9		Others++	25	
Harness maker	7		Total Business	208	31%
Tailor	6		Teacher	33	
Others**	53		Doctor	27	
Total Skilled	131	19.5%	Clergy	17	
Clerk	41		Barrister	10	
Bookkeeper	9		Student	9	
Postmaster	8		Others+++	7	
Others+	11		Total Professional	103	15%
Total Clerical	69	10%	Farmers	82	
Gentleman	16		Miller	11	
Total Private Means	16	2.5%	Others^	17	
Total Women ^^	15	2.5%	Total Agricultural	110	16.5%

NOTES: The petitioners of the Camden East, Baden, Cornwall, Dundalk, Highland Creek, Fronthill, Eastner, Alliston, Bothwell, Erin, Glen Morris, Highgate, Grand Valley, North Gower, Oil Springs, Pickering, Russell, Shedden, Sparta, Thamesville, Thessalon, Tisbury, Tilsbury East, Liverton, Tweed, Victoria, Walpole and Woodville Mechanics' Institutes. Many of the Institutes not chosen for this sample had either unreadable listed occupations or simply did not include them in the petition to the Ministry of Education.

* Other occupations in the unskilled category include: seaman, lumberman, operator, gardener, milkman and carter.

** Other occupations in the skilled category include: wagon maker, joiner, steam fitter, baker, bricklayer, cook, printer, baggage man, barber, cooper, saw maker, mason, undertaker, tinsmith, saddler, surveyor, founder, mechanic, machinist, telegraph operator, cabinet maker, oil operator, plasterer, watchmaker, cutter, conductor and foreman.

+ Other occupations in the clerical category include: newsman, bailiff, policeman, commissioner, traveller, notary, salesman, scribe and registrar.

++ Other occupations in the business category include: manager, grocer, clothier, confectioner, contractor, and dealer.

+++ Other occupations in the professional category include: editor, engineer, and dentist.

^ Other occupations in the agricultural category include: farmers' son, flax dresser, starch maker, livery, stockbreeder, teamster and cheese maker.

^^ Women's "occupations" included: married, young woman, spinster, wife, music teacher, seamstress and housekeeper.

SOURCE: Ministry of Education files, AO, MS 5635, RG 2-42-0-2313 to RG 2-42-0-2366.

TABLE 3.1
 Ordinary Members by Occupation of the Metcalfe, Glengarry and Elora Agricultural Societies, 1892-9

GLENGARRY (1892)

Occupation	Total	Percentage
Fanner	268	
Others*	4	
Total Agricultural	272	81%
Carriage Maker	3	
Blacksmith	2	
Others**	10	
Total Skilled	15	4%
Total Clerical	3	1%
Merchant	15	
Hotel Keeper	12	
Others^	7	
Total Business	34	10%
Doctor	5	
Others^^	7	
Total Professional	12	4%

METCALFE (1893)

Occupation	Total	Percentage
Farmer	40	
Others*	3	
Total Agricultural	43	74%
Printer	2	
Others**	2	
Total Skilled	4	7%
Merchant	5	
Hotelkeeper	3	
Others^	2	
Total Business	10	17%
Total Professional	1	2%

ELORA (1899)

Occupation	Total	Percentage
Farmer	91	
Others*	25	
Total Agricultural	116	47%
Blacksmith	6	
Others**	16	
Total Skilled	22	9%
Total Women	7	3%

Occupation	Total	Percentage
Merchant	28	
Hotelkeeper	15	
Others^	28	
Total Business	71	29%
Clerk	8	
Total Clerical	8	3%
Barrister	5	
Others^^	16	
Total Professional	21	9%

* Other occupations in the agricultural category include: horseman, florist, gardener, beeman, teamster, saw miller, seeds man, miller, cheesemaker, and livery man.

** Other occupations in the skilled category include: carter, founder, labourer, lumberman, carriage maker, brewer, plasterer, carpenter, weaver, marble cutter, barber, butcher, shoemaker, harness maker, printer, tinsmith and bartender.

^ Other occupations in the business category include: agent, traveller, manager, undertaker, hostler, banker, manufacturer, jeweller and grain buyer.

^^ Other occupations in the professional category include: barrister, politician, teacher, editor, postmaster, and dentist.

SOURCE: Glengarry Agricultural society papers, in the McGillivray Family fonds, NAC, MG 24 I 3, vol. 21, file 2, subscription list, 220-29; Metcalfe Agricultural society papers, Township of Metcalfe fonds, NAC, MG 9 D8/52, minute book, 1889-1902, membership list at the back; and Elora Agricultural society fonds, WCA, A1982.70, series 9, subseries 1, file 1, minute book, 1896-1907, list of members 1899.

TABLE 5.1
Occupations of Initial Members in Two Independent Order of Oddfellow Lodges, 1846-65

Ontario Lodge #12, Coburg, 1846-60			Forest City Lodge #38, London, 1857-65		
Occupation	Total	Percentage	Occupation	Total	Percentage
Gatekeeper	2		Waiter	2	
Labourer	1		Porter	1	
Total Unskilled	3	2%	Total Unskilled	3	2%
Carpenter	7		Carpenter	8	
Machinist	4		Shoemaker	7	
Saddler	3		Tailor	7	
Painter	3		Painter	6	
Others**	39		Others**	38	
Total Skilled	56	33%	Total Skilled	56	30.5%
Clerk	12		Clerk	26	
Others***	4		Others***	11	
Total Clerical	16	10%	Total Clerical	37	22.5%
Merchant	19		Merchant	19	
Others^	30		Others^	12	
Total Business	49	30%	Total Business	31	19%
Gentlemen	4		Schoolteacher	4	
Total Private Means	4	2%	Doctor	4	
Engineer	5		Others^^	11	
Others^^	10		Total Professional	19	11%
Total Professional	15	9%	Farmers	3	
Farmers	19		Miller	2	
Others^^^	3		Others^^^	3	
Total Agricultural	22	14%	Total Agricultural	8	5%

* Other occupations in the skilled category include: blacksmith, coachmaker, builder, printer, joiner, baker, fireman, fitter, mason, butcher, millright, upholsterer, roofer, cigar maker, mechanic, cordwainer, dyer, tinsmith, bricklayer, founder, watchmaker, plasterer, artist, cabinet maker, cooper, shoemaker, marble cutter, brewer, musician, gunsmith, conductor and wagon maker.

*** Other occupations in the clerical category include: bailiff, bookkeeper, sheriff, collector, notary, accountant, bartender and photographer.

^ Other occupations in the business category include: agent, bookseller, distiller, manufacturer, tailor, hotel keeper, grocer, tobacconist, saloon/tavern keeper, auctioneer, jeweller, hatter, confectioner, stationer, chemist and furrier.

^^ Other occupations in the professional category include: clergyman, engineer, student, barrister, dentist, schoolmaster, editor, architect, and surveyor.

^^^ Other occupations in the agricultural category include: miller, tanner, yeoman and groom.

SOURCE: Occupations of the Initial membership of the Coburg Lodge #12, Coburg, International Order of Oddfellows, MTL, L36, Proposition book of new members, 1846-60 and of the Forest City Lodge #38, London, RCL, Box 4150, membership list, 1857-65.

TABLE 5.2
Ordinary Membership by Occupation in Three Oddfellow lodges, Selected Years, 1871-1899

Egremont Lodge #207, Kerwood (Rural)			Fergus Lodge #73, Fergus (Rural)		
Occupation	Total	Percentage	Occupation	Total	Percentage
Boot/Shoemaker	5		Carpenter	8	
Carpenter	4		Machinist	3	
Others	9		Others	21	
Total Skilled	18	20%	Total Skilled	32	24%
Clerk	1		Clerk	4	
Total Clerical	1	1%	Others	3	
Merchant	6		Total Clerical	7	5%
Others	3		Merchant	5	
Total Business	9	10%	Others	11	
Teachers	5		Total Business	16	12%
Others	4		Teacher	5	
Total Professional	9	10%	Others	18	
Farmer	49		Total Professional	23	17%
Others	3		Farmer	48	
Total Agricultural	52	59%	Others	8	
			Total Agricultural	56	42%

St. Clair Lodge #106, Point Edward (Town)					
Occupation	Total	Percentage	Occupation	Total	Percentage
Fireman	29		Merchant	6	
Brakeman	19		Others	7	
Rail Engineer	18		Total Business	13	8%
Others	60		Others	5	
Total Skilled	126	80%	Total Professional	5	3%
Clerk	8		Farmer	2	
Others	4		Total Agricultural	2	1.5%
Total Clerical	12	7.5%			

NOTE: These statistics largely confirm those compiled by Emery and Emery in *Young Man's Benefit*, 35-38.

SOURCE: Records of the St. Clair Lodge #106, Point Edward, RCL, box 4318, question book, 1873-98; Fergus Lodge #73, Fergus, WCA, A.996.24, series 3, subseries 2, file 1, membership book, 1871-99 and Egremont Lodge #207, Kerwood, RCL, recent acquisition, membership book, 1877-92.

TABLE 5.3
Occupations of Proposed Members, Canadian and Independent Order of Forester Lodges, 1883-98

COF Court Peterborough #29, 1883-86			IOF Court Listowel, 1891-98		
Occupation	Total	Percentage	Occupation	Total	Percentage
Labourer	7		Labourer	1	
Others*	3		Total Unskilled	1	3%
Total Unskilled	10	16%	Carpenter	4	
Carpenter	7		Printer	2	
Printer	4		Harness Maker	2	
Machinist	2		Others**	6	
Foreman	2		Total Skilled	14	38%
Others**	14		Clerk	4	
Total Skilled	29	46%	Others^	2	
Clerk	6		Total Clerical	6	16%
Others^	2		Agent	3	
Total Clerical	8	12.5%	Others^^	4	
Agent	2		Total Business	7	19%
Others^^	6		Doctor	2	
Total Business	8	12.5%	Total Professional	2	5%
Barrister	1		Farmers	5	
Total Professional	1	2%	Others^^^	2	
Farmers	4		Total Agricultural	7	19%
Others^^^	3				
Total Agricultural	7	11%			

* Other occupations in the unskilled category include: carter and nightwatchman.

** Other occupations in the skilled category include: brickmaker, barber, butcher, roofer, tinsmith, shoemaker, canoe builder, carriage maker, cabinet maker, harness maker, engraver, plasterer, tailor and framer.

^ Other occupations in the clerical category include: bookkeeper, accountant, and customs official.

^^ Other occupations in the business category include: bookbinder, grocer, druggist, chemist, merchant, restaurant owner, confectioner and piano dealer.

^^^ Other occupations in the agricultural category include: tanner, miller, and teamster.

SOURCE: Proposed candidates for membership of the Canadian Order of Foresters, Peterborough Court #29, PCMA, Acc. 96-065, box 1, series 1, minute book, 1883-86 and Listowel Court # AO, MU 7175 #23, minute book, 1891-98, membership list at the back.

TABLE 6.1
Occupations of Initial Members of Three Rural Sons of Temperance Divisions, 1850-58

Occupation	Total	Percentage	Occupation	Total	Percentage
Labourer	29		Merchant	14	
Others*	5		Clothier	7	
Total Unskilled	34	10%	Druggist	2	
Blacksmith	26		Hatter	1	
Carpenter	20		Bookseller	1	
Wagon maker	12		Total Business	25	7%
Tailor	12		Clergy	8	
Cooper	11		Doctor	5	
Shoemaker	8		Student	5	
Cabinet maker	7		Teacher	4	
Tinsmith	5		Barrister	2	
Others**	33		Total Professional	24	7%
Total Skilled	134	39%	Farmers	92	
Clerk	6		Yeomen	16	
Bookkeeper	1		Others^	10	
Total Clerical	7	2%	Total Agricultural	118	35%

* Other occupations in the unskilled category include: carter, operative and peddler.

** Other occupations in the skilled category include: joiner, baker, brickmaker, printer, painter, mason, chairmaker, pumpmaker, butcher, millright, tinsmith, saddler, founder, watchmaker, moulder, artist, cabinet maker, saddler, sawyer and harnessmaker.

^ Other occupations in the agricultural category include: miller, millermaker, teamster and tanner.

SOURCE: Occupations of the Initial membership of the Norfolk Division, Sons of Temperance, NAC, MG 29 D8/24, M-282, reel 9, minute book, 1850-54, 12340-12538; Norwich Division, AO, Harold Williams Collection, MS 301, item 4, minute book, 1851-60, pasted at the end and the Orono Division, AO, MU 2879, membership list, 1850-58.

TABLE 6.2
 Ordinary Membership by Occupation, Royal Templars of Temperance, Selected Years, 1886-1906

Brooklin Council #102			North Toronto Council #104		
Occupation	Total	Percentage	Occupation	Total	Percentage
Labourer	2		Carpenter	8	
Total Unskilled	2	2%	Plumber	3	
Trackmen	5		Shoemaker	2	
Mason	3		Painter	2	
Tinsmith	3		Printer	2	
Boot/Shoemaker	2		Others**	13	
Others**	7		Total Skilled	30	25.5%
Total Skilled	20	19%	Bookkeeper	3	
Clerk	4		Clerk	2	
Total Clerical	4	3.5%	Total Clerical	5	4%
Agent	4		Merchant	2	
Merchant	3		Others^^^	7	
Total Business	7	6.5%	Total Business	9	7.5%
Minister	11		Student	18	
Teacher	3		Doctor	3	
Others***	3		Lawyer	2	
Total Professional	17	16%	Total Professional	23	19%
Farmers	18		Total Unrecorded	20	16.5%
Total Agricultural	18	16.5%	Total Women^^	33	27.5%
Total Unrecorded	10	9.5%			
Total Women^	29	27%			

* Other occupations in the skilled category include: baker, blacksmith, builder, carpenter, tanner, artist, bricklayer, conductor, driver, guildier, harness maker, telegraph operator, pump maker and watchmaker.

*** Other occupations in the professional category include: doctor, student, and veterinarian.

^ Female occupations listed in the Brooklin Templars include: twelve teachers.

^^ Female occupations listed in the North Toronto Templars include: bookkeeper, domestic, dressmaker, student, housekeeper and tailoress.

^^^ Other occupations in the business category include: druggist, florist, grocer and real estate agent.

SOURCE: Records of the Brooklin Council, Royal Templars of Temperance, in the John Whitford papers, AO, MU 7825, membership list, 1895-1906 and records of the North Toronto Council, Royal Templars of Temperance, in the John Linton fonds, AO, MU 7276, file #2, petitions for membership, 1889-1900.

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