

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND DISCOURSES IN LONDON ON 1870-90

**RELIGION WORTHY OF A
FREE PEOPLE**

*RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND DISCOURSES IN LONDON,
ONTARIO, 1870-1890*

BY

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A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (2000)
(History)

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Religion Worthy of a Free People

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NUMBER OF PAGES: x, 357

ABSTRACT

Employing the concept of “governmentality” developed by French poststructuralist Michel Foucault, this study investigates religious practices in congregational life and in interdenominational associations as well as the religious discourse of the local clergy and newspaper editors. It works at the local level to place religion in the public and private spaces of late nineteenth-century London Ontario. Methodologically it departs from many important local studies of religion in society by adopting a cultural rather than demographic approach. This approach allows attention to the diversities and ambiguities of religious practices and discourses as the churches negotiated their place in liberal society.

The argument suggests that religion was called upon to produce self-governing citizens to ensure the efficiency of the liberal society coming into being in London. The arts of government this liberal society required centred on disciplines of freedom which religion could provide to the degree it conformed to the liberal imperatives of rationality, universality, and harmony across traditional sectional divides. Thus religion had public place in ensuring social stability just as it had in its traditional establishment role. However the governmentality of freedom had changed the spaces in which religion could work. Individual freedom of conscience in matters religious was essential to liberal society and thus religion had to fulfil its public role without public authority. Moreover, the power of religion to provide an alternative construction of reality to that of liberal society required that religion itself be carefully controlled and disciplined by liberal values. In this situation local congregations and local clergy were inspired to contribute to the spiritual and material project of constructing a religion worthy of a free people, but, in doing so, found the practices that grounded their identity in a particular way of being Christian challenged and eroded.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

McMaster University and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council generously funded the research for this study. The opportunity to finally write what I had been working on for almost a decade was provided by a sabbatical leave from Canadian Bible College. I am most grateful for the financial support these institutions have provided.

The original idea and the early encouragement to pursue a local study of religion in Victorian Ontario came from a graduate seminar and subsequent interactions with Dr. David Gagan who guided this project through the proposal and early research stage. Professor Gagan's insights were essential to defining the problem and the scope of the study. With Professor Gagan's move to the University of Winnipeg, Dr. Michael Gauvreau graciously agreed to supervise the completion of the project. Professor Gauvreau has been most patient through long delays in promised production and has throughout provided the encouragement so needed to bring this project to its present stage. In this last year particularly, I have benefited from Professor Gauvreau's wide erudition, appreciated his thorough reading of chapter fragments, and enjoyed some extended conversations which helped to place this work within current debates.

A number of colleagues have, at different points in the struggle, helped me to think more deeply and express myself more clearly than is my wont. In particular I am grateful to Andy Holman, Doug Wiebe, Ken Nickel, Andy Reimer, and Nancy Christie who listened to me experiment with these ideas of their own free will; and to the students in my seminars at Canadian Bible College and Canadian Theological Seminary who listened because I set the exam. My sabbatical required a redistribution of duties among very cooperative colleagues, and I thank them all for their support. The load fell particularly heavily upon Edna Nordin and Paul Spilsbury, to whom I am most grateful. Gordon Smith, Mark Boda, and Ken Nickel formed themselves into a dissertation completion triumvirate, effectively marshalling gentle encouragement, friendly support, and veiled threats to promote the desired result.

Writing this dissertation took a great deal of solitary effort, much of it locked in a room away from children and students with only Blue Rodeo, the Cowboy Junkies and the Holly Cole Trio to keep me at it. But finishing the project and making sure that most of it was in English and conformed to all relevant standards took help. My sincere thanks to Irene Draper who has been the first reader of much of my work all my life and continues to take an active interest, and to Sandy Ayer who miraculously turned tortured bits of prose into something which actually advanced the argument. Lesley Perry has read this thing with great care too many times, has served as my unfailing guide to proper formatting, and has revealed her true calling as master of the comma. All remaining infelicities are my own doing.

My family deserves mention as a cause of constant distraction. Our oldest son was born as I was writing the first draft of the proposal for this study; we now have four children. Without them this work would have been completed much earlier, but life would lack the strange joy and persistent worry that comes with learning to parent. My commitment to them has informed the way I think about religion and identity and freedom, all themes central to narrative that follows. This study is for my children and for Carla, without whom I'd be someone else doing something else entirely.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Ad London Daily Advertiser
- BAM The Canadian Baptist Archives,
McMaster Divinity College, McMaster University
- DCB Dictionary of Canadian Biography
- DHA Diocese of Huron Archives, Huron College,
University of Western Ontario
- FP London Free Press
- TRC J.J. Talman Regional Collection, D.B. Weldon Library
University of Western Ontario
- UCA United Church of Canada/Victoria University Archives
Emmanuel College, University of Toronto

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Placing Religion in Nineteenth-Century London, Ontario

The indignation meeting was one of the distinctive forms of public discourse in late nineteenth-century Ontario. In the spring and summer of 1889, meetings of this type were held throughout the province in an attempt to influence the Dominion government to disallow the Jesuits' Estates Act. This Act, passed by the Quebec Provincial legislature, provided \$450,000 from provincial coffers to compensate the Jesuit order for land confiscated in 1800. On 3 June 1889, a meeting was held in the Grand Opera House in London, Ontario, to pass resolutions condemning the Act and to appoint representatives to an even larger convocation in Toronto for the same purpose. The conduct of the meeting and the speeches presented revealed much about the changing relationships among religion, government, and society, and the public and private spaces they cohabit and contest.

About 800 men and women attended the meeting. The platform party was comprised of prominent male citizens; in this case the Mayor, some local clergy, officers of the Orange Order, and the star attraction of the evening, Member of Parliament John Charlton, one of the heroic few who had voted for the disallowance of the Jesuits' Estates Act. The meeting provided an opportunity to participate in the public life of the community, to express opposition to government policy, and to rehearse a particular narrative of national aspirations. The "public" meeting, even one that obviously represented only one section of the community, observed the conventions which in the late nineteenth century created public space. The Mayor of London was appointed chair to maintain order and fairness in debate. Resolutions were presented and seconded with impressive speeches and votes were taken to ensure that the voice of the people was

heard. Although women were present, only men spoke and then only men of some social rank. Those who did speak seemed to have been selected, whether formally or informally is not clear, to represent various interest groups within the community. Not only did these conventions ensure the public nature of this convocation, but they also guaranteed that the content and rhetorical shape of what was said conformed to contemporary constructions of the public sphere.

Each speaker made it clear that comments made in this public space were not of a religious nature, even though the purpose of the meeting was to discuss a payment made to a religious order. The first speaker, Rev. J.A. Murray of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, offered a blessing on the pioneering missionary efforts of the Jesuit Order, for he did not object to the Roman Catholic Church, but to "the attempt of the Jesuits to place His Holiness upon the throne of our beloved Queen."¹ Each of the speakers warned that the Act upset the proper relationship between church and state and usurped the legitimate sovereignty of Victoria with the religious claims of the Roman Pontiff. Memories of the blood of forefathers shed to preserve the liberty of British institutions from Latin despotism were repeatedly evoked to enthusiastic applause. The Protestant virtues of integrity and tolerance presented the great hope for the nation. These virtues were exemplified in the thirteen Members of Parliament who had courageously voted against their parties for the disallowance of the Act. Such actions, the speakers claimed, upheld civil and religious rights and liberties for all. These liberties were what allowed Protestant and Roman Catholic citizens to live together in peace and harmony. The meeting called for action motivated by principle and setting aside particular and private interests. Only separation of the public and the private could preserve the nation from the political machination of the Jesuits, who wished to corrupt the religious freedoms enjoyed by Canadians, and from the spineless politicians, like Sir John A. Macdonald, who cared only for political advantage and not the public good.²

The public space, constructed by the practices and rhetorical conventions of the indignation meeting, disavowed private interests to allow citizens to enter a public "sphere" as

¹ "Disallowance! Meeting of Citizens Last Night," *Free Press (FP)*, 4 June 1889, p. 1, 5

equals and to discover the common good by consensus. Rev. Murray put aside his Protestantism to commend the Jesuits in their religious work thereby asserting a public authority to condemn their alleged political claims. Mr. Charlton's claim to disinterest was authorised by voting against his party. This gave credence to his contention that his subsequent ridicule of Sir John was championing the public good rather than being motivated by party interest. The careful observance of the conventions of the public ensured that the consensus reached and the resolutions passed were above the particular interests of sect or party and in the interests of the nation.³ The simple fact that no opponents of the resolutions were present did not seem to unsettle the conviction of those assembled that their position represented "public opinion," which the cowardly politicians would ignore at their peril.

The focus of this study is to place religion within the social context of London, Ontario, in the late nineteenth century. The indignation meeting raises some questions about the ways religion was conceptualised in society during this period. Despite the importance of religion both to society in general and to the particular issue under discussion at this meeting in June of 1889, religious content is strangely submerged in the discussion. Care was taken to portray the conflict over the Jesuits' Estates Act as one of nation and race; the split was a result of language and political culture and not religion. Religion was only an issue in so far as it claimed political sovereignty and thus challenged British liberties which were understood to have been grounded in the separation of church and state established by the Glorious Revolution and the Battle of the Boyne. Rev. Murray's status in the community and the authority he had to speak on a wide range of issues derived from the social prominence of religion in the late nineteenth century and his position as pastor of a large and influential local church. Yet Murray's remarks on this occasion were in no way theological and had they been, his effectiveness as a champion of the cause would

² Ibid.

³ The portrayal of "public" here is informed by Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere. An Encyclopedia Article," in *Critical Theory and Society: A Reader*, eds. Stephen Bonner and Douglas Kellner (New York: Routledge, 1989). His perspective is developed more fully in Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural*

have been undermined. His status as clergy gave him authority as long as he said nothing religious. This illustrates the essential fragility of religious authority at this time; it could wield considerable social power in public as long as it was not religious. This study will look closely at how the Christian churches in London, Ontario lived and thrived in this context. The purpose of this introduction is to attempt to provide some conceptual tools with which the contours of both the authority and the fragility of religion can be uncovered.

Religion in Nineteenth-Century Ontario

Over the last two decades scholarly interest in religion in nineteenth-century Canada has flourished. As a result, historians have come to regard Christian religion as an essential factor in the shaping of Canadian life during this period.⁴ If one were to simplify the current historiographical debates, one could distinguish two broad lines of interpretation of the fortunes of Christian religion in nineteenth-century Ontario. On the one side are scholars who might take as their slogan the title of John Webster Grant's study, "a profusion of spires"⁵ for they portray the period as a high point in the influence of the Christian churches on society. As evidence for this contention, they point to the construction of churches and the growth of Christian voluntary associations that were active in a wide range of social and religious causes. They also point to census reports that document the increasing tendency to identify with major Christian

Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).

⁴ Review articles analysing this scholarship have suggested that new approaches and greater confidence reflect Canadian religious history maturing as discipline see, for example Brian Clarke, "Writing the History of Canadian Christianity: Retrospect and Prospect," Canadian Catholic Historical Association, *Historical Studies* 63 (1997); Mark G McGowan, "Coming Out of the Cloister: Some Reflections on Developments in the Study of Religion in Canada, 1980-1990," *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 1-2 (1990), Chad Reimer, "Religion and Culture in Nineteenth-Century English Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 25 (1990); and Michael Gauvreau, "Beyond the Half-Way House: Evangelicalism and the Shaping of English Canadian Culture," *Acadiensis* 20 (1991). Ruth Compton Brouwer tells a similar story regarding the place of religion in women's history, "Transcending the 'Unacknowledged Quarantine': Putting Religion into English-Canadian Women's History," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 27 (1992). The work of the late George Rawlyk and the McGill-Queen's *Studies in the History of Religion* which he edited played a key role in this surge of scholarship.

⁵ John Webster Grant, *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

denominations.⁶ Much of the attention of this perspective has been focused on popular religious forms and associations; however, studies by Michael Gauvreau and Marguerite Van Die illustrate a “reverent criticism” which reconciled orthodox belief with scholarship among Canadian intellectuals. These scholars deny that religious faith naturally and inevitably gave way before biblical criticism and evolution arguing that these forces, usually assumed to be corrosive, were digested with little discomfort.⁷ The other approach is articulated in influential studies by A.B. McKillop, Ramsay Cook, and David Marshall who posit a “crisis of faith” as a result of the effects of evolutionary thought and the influence of German higher criticism. The outcome of this crisis was that intellectuals, reformers, and clergy were led toward the secular city rather than the Kingdom of God.⁸

Both lines of interpretation contribute to a better understanding of the discourse and practice of the churches in London. The growth of churches and religiously motivated voluntary associations is evidence of a remarkable level of public visibility for religion. Moreover, a variety of writers and speakers gave their arguments authority by using the thought forms of Christian faith and biblical allusions were a common source of rhetorical power. However, it is clear that these thought forms were being transformed in use and increasingly uprooted from their grounding in faith and congregational life. For example, Rev. Murray had authority as long as he steered clear of denominational thought or practices. This change, which may well be characterised as

⁶ Ibid., 224.

⁷ Michael Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada From the Great Revival to the Great Depression* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1991) and Marguerite Van Die, *An Evangelical Mind: Nathaniel Burwash and the Methodist Tradition in Canada, 1839-1918* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1990). George Rawlyk provides an overview of Canadian religious history from this perspective in *Is Jesus Your Personal Saviour? In Search of Canadian Evangelicalism in the 1990s* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996).

⁸ A.B. McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Period* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1979); Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985); and David B. Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). Marshall has provided a review of this debate in which he argues for the cogency of secularisation for understanding the nineteenth century in, “Canadian Historians, Secularization and the Problem of the Nineteenth Century,” *Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Historical Studies* 60 (1993-94)

secularisation, seemed driven less by external challenges than by an internal transformation as the churches strove to come to terms with the ambiguity of their place in society. A way of capturing this transformation is suggested by a passage in the introduction to Hugh McLeod's *Religion and the People of Western Europe*.

The nineteenth century was both the archetypal period of secularisation, and a great age of religious revival: as large numbers were alienated from the official church, religion ceased to provide a focus of social unity; but it became instead a major basis for the distinctive identity of specific communities, classes, factions in a divided society. Many people found their loyalty to their churches intensified in the process.⁹

McLeod's insight regards alienation from the established state churches as one important aspect of secularisation. As western societies underwent major political and cultural change in the late eighteenth century, symbolised for McLeod in the American and French Revolutions, a major realignment was taking place that affected the relationship among the people, the state, and the churches. This realignment undermined the status of Christian intellectuals and clergy as the official voice of civic and religious virtue and broke the identification of the state with the divine. Thus, by this criterion, society became more secular. However, running parallel to this was a new and often more active identification with a religion of choice which gave a different kind of influence to the clergy and Christian activities. Religion became less a matter of civic duty and more a matter of personal identity. This phenomenon was experienced by many as a significant revival of religion.

William Westfall's *Two Worlds* recounts the decline of the authority of the established church in Ontario and the rise of competing denominational groups offering a distinctive identity.¹⁰ In Westfall's account, a metaphorical organisation of reality into a religion of order underwrote the justification for an established church while the religion of experience built distinctive communities around a particular encounter with the grace of God. The major

⁹ Hugh McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789-1970* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), v

¹⁰ William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989).

turning point in the religious history of Upper Canada. Westfall argues, was the reception of Lord Durham's *Report*. The reforms recommended in the *Report* and implemented over the succeeding years grounded the stability of colonial society in material prosperity rather than spiritual unity. Westfall suggests that the *Report* was not a blueprint for responsible government so much as the limitation of government interference in economic matters by the "Family Compact" in Upper Canada and the French majority in Lower Canada.¹¹ Durham's prescription for peace in the colony was to liberalise the economy, to stimulate growth and prosperity by the invisible hand of the market economy. In this context, Westfall suggests, the Protestant churches made their peace in an effort to jointly combat this materialist, secular threat. The result was the formation of Ontario's "Protestant Consensus."¹²

Durham's liberal blueprint for colonial development not only limited the role of government in economic matters, but also dissolved the connection between church and state. In her analysis of Durham's political thought, Janet Ajzenstat presents Durham as a prototypical nineteenth-century liberal for whom religious demands were to be excluded from politics in a liberal society. Yet Ajzenstat suggests that Durham's view of religion had another face "not easily reconciled" to this position.¹³ His *Report* advised that the "wise government" providing for the "comfort and prosperity" of its citizens should "aid in every possible way the diffusion of their means of religious instruction."¹⁴ Durham regarded religion as having no official status in a liberal state, although he considered the religious instruction of the populace to be socially beneficial and thus something to which the government should attend. These two faces are

¹¹ Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 108-9.

¹² As early as 1959, John Moir remarked upon the formation "of a sort of omnibus Protestant denomination, which was not an organization but an attitude" out of the conflict over the clergy reserves in *The Church and State in Canada West: Three Studies in the Relationship of Denominationalism and Nationalism, 1841-1867* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959). Grant, *A Profusion of Spires*, and Westfall, *Two Worlds*, confirm this evaluation in their recent studies

¹³ Janet Ajzenstat, *The Political Thought of Lord Durham* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 38-40

¹⁴ Gerald M. Craig, ed., *Lord Durham's Report: an Abridgement of Report on the Affairs of British North America by Lord Durham* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), 73.

reconciled in Ajzenstat's argument that Durham shared with Tocqueville a belief that without the "habits and suppositions inculcated by religious dogma, self-government will prove impossible."¹⁵

Durham's "two faced" attitude to religion exhibits the same ambiguity for placing religion as the public indignation meeting. Both Durham and those involved in the meeting valued religion in some vague way as a moral precondition for self-government and yet they could not accord it any officially recognised position from which to accomplish this. Modern approaches to religion in society have typically neglected to articulate the basis on which the Christian churches claimed authority to shape society beyond the curious obstinence of less enlightened ideas. An example of this is found in John Moir's apparent need to justify writing the history of a religious denomination in his Preface to *Enduring Witness*.

Religion has played a central role in shaping the Canadian character and making the Canadian experience.... Religion has been such a vital life-force in created present-day Canada that no apologies are needed for our attempts to examine and explain its influence on ourselves.¹⁶

Moir claims that religion is of interest to the historian just because it is there. In spite of the gains that have been made in legitimating a Canadian religious history within Canadian historiography, an inordinate amount of time is spent in these works justifying the attention given to religion.¹⁷ This professional self-consciousness arises because religion finds little place in the grand narratives that have provided employment to nineteenth-century Canadian history. Political constitutional histories, borrowing the categories of liberal thought, have dismissed religion as a premodern residue to be overcome in the building of a modern progressive state. Once the religious "problem" was resolved with the secularisation of the clergy reserves in 1854, religion dropped out of the story of nation building, except where it occasionally re-emerged, particularly

¹⁵ Ajzenstat, *The Political Thought of Lord Durham*, 38-40.

¹⁶ John S. Moir, *Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Eagle Press, 1987), xi.

¹⁷ Two recent examples of this tendency include Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 6-7 and Cecilia Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 8-9.

in Quebec, to frustrate the growth of the liberal ideal.¹⁸ This soft whiggism also finds its way into intellectual history where the progress of reason and academic freedom successively liberate Canadian minds from the dogmatism of religious faith and church colleges.¹⁹ The same plot is played out in much of Canadian church history where the religious energies of revivalism and religious sectarianism are rationalised into social service and that great monument to Canadian religious tolerance, the United Church of Canada.²⁰

Social historians have given religion attention in their efforts to write history from the bottom up. As a central preoccupation of the people, religion could not be as easily written out of the story.²¹ However, following Marx and E.P. Thompson, the religious experience of the people has been considered something to be liberated from, at least to the degree that it instilled the “habits and suppositions” which Durham felt were needful.²² Much social history retains a

¹⁸ John Webster Grant notes the prevalence of references to religion during the French and British colonial periods but these gave way to the big story of nation-building and “drop off markedly just about the time of confederation,” in “The Impact of Christianity on Canadian Culture and Society, 1867-1967,” *Theological Bulletin*, No. 23 (McMaster Divinity College, January 1968), 40. Popular single volume histories which illustrate this emplotment include Kenneth McNaught, *The Pelican History of Canada* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976) and Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada* (Edmonton: Hurtig, n.d.).

¹⁹ McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence* and John S. Moir, *A History of Biblical Studies in Canada: A Sense of Proportion* (Chuco [CA]: Scholar Press, 1982)

²⁰ John Webster Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, updated (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1972, Welch, 1988) and William Magney, “The Methodist Church and the National Gospel, 1884-1914,” *The Bulletin* (United Church of Canada/Victoria University Archives [UCA], 1969). For a recent corrective see Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900-1940* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996).

²¹ For studies which take this approach to religion see James Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society: South Lindsey, 1825-1875* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976); James Obelkevich, Lyndal Roper, and Raphael Samuel, eds., *Disciples of Faith: Studies in Religion, Politics and Patriarchy* (London: Routledge and Keagan Paul, 1987); Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper’s Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York: Wang and Hill, 1978), and in the Canadian context, Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*. For a history “from below” which virtually ignores the religious experience of the people see Bryan Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992).

²² Marx dismissed religion as the “opium of the people,” in Loyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat, trans. and ed., *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society* (Garden City [N.Y.] Anchor Books, 1967), 250. E.P. Thompson continued in this tradition interpreting Methodism as transforming peasants to the imperatives of the machine in *The Making of the English Working Class* (Harmondsworth. Penguin Books, 1963), especially chapter 11. For a well-argued critique of this perspective see Lois Banner, “Religious Benevolence as Social Control: A Critique of an Interpretation,” *Journal of American History* 60

liberationist political agenda derived from Marxist analysis. The potential of religion to provide a locus of identity for workers apart from a conflictual class consciousness subverted the revolutionary potential of the working class and thus constituted a form of hegemony or social control.²³ A slightly different plot also emerges within the Marxist tradition. Christopher Hill and E.J. Hobsbawm have assigned radical religious experience a role as a source of class expression.²⁴ However, this interpretation is most convincing when an established church rendered religious and political dissent roughly equivalent. Like social history, women's history has found religion to be essential to the understanding of the experience and agency of women. Religion has been criticised for its complicity in the subjugation of women in patriarchy and "domestic captivity," but it has also provided the conditions for a protofeminism in the myriad of women's benevolent associations.²⁵ While social history, and more recently, women's history have deemed the religion of the people worthy of study, the real story is the conflict of classes and/or genders. Religion may illuminate certain details, but it remains outside the main narrative flow. Thus, studies which take religion as their focus often begin with a justification indicating how the work fits into what is really going on.

(1973) and Alan Gilbert, "Methodism, Dissent, and Political Stability in Early Industrial England," *Journal of Religious History* 10(1979), 381-99

²³ For recent critiques of this approach from within social history see Christopher Kent, "Victorian Social History: Post-Thompson, Post-Foucault, Postmodern," *Victorian Studies* 40 (1996); James Vernon, "Who's afraid of the 'Linguistic Turn'? The politics of social history and its discontents," *Social History* 19 (1994); and Patrick Joyce, "The End of Social History?" *Social History* 20 (1995).

²⁴ See the use made of radical religious dissent in Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972) and E.J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movements in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971)

²⁵ Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-60," *American Quarterly* 18 (1966); Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: 'Women's Sphere' in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), Barbara Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism and Temperance in Nineteenth Century America* (Middleton, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1981), Nancy Hardesty, *Women Called to Witness: Evangelical Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984); and Sharon Anne Cook, "Through Sunshine and Shadow:" *The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995).

To re-conceptualise the place of religion in the liberal society of late nineteenth-century Ontario it is necessary to step outside the liberal narrative's construction of reality. Social history's valuable critique of the central myths of liberal society has allowed this to some extent; however, the place of religion in this discourse is problematised only as an adjunct to conflicts grounded more materially in production or in bodies. The present study will explore the potential of approaches to problematisation for the historical study of religion which borrow from poststructuralist or postmodern analysis.²⁶ The metanarratives underlying the placement of religion in society in liberal and Marxist analysis are de-centred by these approaches. The secularist teleology of the liberal narrative and the liberationist teleology of Marxist analysis have overdetermined religion's place. Because the outcome of change in religion's role is assigned *a priori* by these grand narratives little attention has been paid to the details and ambiguities of religious practices and discourses. Deconstruction of these metanarratives has opened space for a renarration of religion's place in society that focuses on the local practices and discourses without necessarily framing them in reference to secularisation or to class/gender conflict. To place religion within the society of late nineteenth-century London some conceptual and methodological direction will be taken from Michel Foucault's concept of "governmentality."²⁷

²⁶ The application of poststructuralist methods to history is a subject of much debate. Vernon, "Who's Afraid of the 'Linguistic Turn?'" and John E. Toews, "Intellectual History After the Linguistic Turn: The Autonomy of Meaning and the Irreducibility of Experience," *American Historical Review* 92 (1987). In Canada, Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991) and Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women* have employed the insights of the "linguistic turn" to good effect. For a dissenting Canadian voice see Bryan Palmer, *Descent into Discourse* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990).

²⁷ C. G. Prado has written a very accessible introduction to Foucault's thought, *Starting with Foucault: An Introduction to Genealogy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995). Useful introductions to Foucault's concept of governmentality include: Graham Burchell, "Peculiar Interests: Civil Society and Governing 'The System of Natural Liberty,'" in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) and John S. Ransom, *Foucault's Discipline: The Politics of Subjectivity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997). Proposals and critiques of Foucault's thought for history are beginning to appear see Jan Goldstein, ed., *Foucault and the Writing of History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), Mitchell Dean, *Critical and Effective Histories: Foucault's Methods and Historical Sociology* (London: Routledge, 1994), Christopher Kent, "Michel Foucault: Doing History or Undoing It?" *Canadian Journal of History* 21 (1986); and Gerard Noiriel, "Foucault and History: The Lessons of a Disillusion," *Journal of Modern History* 66 (1994).

Transformation to Liberal Society

Foucault locates a major transition in the arts of government in the late eighteenth century which produced liberal society. The theoretical focus of Foucault's work is to uncover how individuals are constructed, by what he terms "disciplines," to be citizen-subjects of states. The terms "government rationality" or "governmentality" are used to denote this interest in how government actually works on subjects. Foucault eschews debates at the level of political theory.²⁸ Foucault located a disruption in the techniques of government in the eighteenth century which fundamentally changed the ways power was deployed. The early modern sovereign provided a central focus of political power, and governance was highly visible in the acts and dictates of the ruler. This technique of government was replaced by a "civil society" of self-governing individuals as power was dispersed and disappeared into disciplines or government rationality which provided political stability. The problem of governing a civil society moved from ensuring the security of a territory or domain to ensuring the improvement, health, and prosperity of an entire population.²⁹ This required new and far more complex strategies and techniques for governing. At the centre of these Foucault located Adam Smith's concept of the "invisible hand." It provided a mechanism of security for the population while limiting state competence in matters of private interest. Smith believed that the economic agent "intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention."³⁰ This end, achieved by the inscrutable working of the invisible hand, is a public good. Because, as Smith argues, only individuals can know their own interest, and because the good end is beyond the intention of the agent, the collective good

²⁸ Colin Gordon, "Governmental Rationality: An Introduction," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 7-8. The themes which surround Foucault's thinking on governmentality, many of which are unpublished, were discussed primarily in lectures and seminars toward the end of his life, see pp 1-8.

²⁹ Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 98-100

³⁰ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. Edwin Cannan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 477.

becomes, in principle, unknowable by any sovereign or government. The population of the liberal state is thereby constituted as isolated centres of rational interest whose pursuit of productivity leads to relations of interdependence. Thus the power that provides security is no longer centred in the sovereign but dispersed through the social, political, and economic relations of citizens. Smith presents his account of the “wealth of nations” as the providentially established laws of nature that describe how efficient economic and political relations actually work.³¹ These relationships were desacralised. Economics was no longer the prerogative of the gods, but was naturalised into laws which could be understood by careful observation and used to maximise return. A similar naturalisation was accomplished for politics in the various renderings of social contract. Power to govern and to create wealth were no longer vested in the sovereign but dispersed through natural laws among the interest-centred individuals who populate civil societies.

The civil society which emerges exists as a “transactional reality,” a public space, mediating between the administrative state and the world of private interests. Liberal society, in Foucault’s account, is neither a natural manifestation of providence as suggested by Smith nor the embodiment of a primitive social contract as suggested by Locke. The naturalisation that was accomplished in the eighteenth century is challenged and made visible in his analysis. Foucault’s concept of discipline is deployed to uncover the submerged vectors of power functioning in human relationships.³² This view has much in common with the Marxist idea of false consciousness and Gramsci’s concept of hegemony. Like these perspectives Foucault’s considers the disciplines to be working on the inside to control individuals for the benefit of some outside

³¹ Boyd Hilton argues the language of providence was a key component of social and economic thought in Britain during this period and that evangelical categories of thought were essential to the popularisation of liberal ideals. Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

³² This approach is developed in Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1977). For a helpful commentary see Ransom, *Foucault’s Discipline*, especially chapter 2

power.³³ This is evident in Foucault's understanding of the contrast between power exerted by a sovereign and that exerted by the disciplines.

In short, to substitute for a power that is manifested through the brilliance of those who exercise it, a power that insidiously objectifies those on whom it is applied: to form a body of knowledge about these individuals, rather than to deploy the ostentatious signs of sovereignty. In a word, the disciplines are the ensemble of minute technical innovations that made it possible to increase the useful size of multiplicities by decreasing the inconveniences of the power which, in order to make them useful, must control them.³⁴

Foucault's departure from views of false consciousness and hegemony comes with his scepticism regarding large scale programs of liberation. Releasing individuals from some repressive dominance is not the primary focus of Foucault's work. Rather he is intent on uncovering the vectors of power which operate on all human agents and of which they are also the bearers. Liberation from a repressive regime is of no benefit if it results only in further entrapment. Foucault expresses discomfort with programs of freedom which do not give sufficient attention to what he calls the practices of freedom.

I have always been somewhat suspicious of the notion of liberation, because if it is not treated with precautions and within certain limits, one runs the risk of falling back on the idea that there exists a human nature or base that, as a consequence of certain historical, economic, and social processes, has been concealed, alienated or imprisoned in and by mechanisms of repression. According to this hypothesis, all that is required is to break these repressive deadlocks and man will be reconciled with himself, rediscover his nature or regain contact with his origin, and reestablish a full and positive relationship with himself. I think this idea should not be accepted without scrutiny. I am not trying to say that liberation as such, or this or that form of liberation, does not exist: when a colonized people attempts to liberate itself from its colonizers, this is indeed a practice of liberation in the strict sense. But we know very well... that this practice of liberation is not in itself sufficient to define the practices of freedom that will still be needed if this people, this society, and these individuals are to be able to define admissible and acceptable forms of existence or political society. This is why I emphasize practices of freedom over processes of liberation... they do not seem to me to be capable by themselves of defining all the practical forms of freedom.³⁵

³³ For an excellent comparison of Foucault and Marxist perspectives see Barry Smart, "The Politics of Truth and the Problem of Hegemony," in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Couzens Hoy (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

³⁴ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 220.

³⁵ Michel Foucault, "The Ethics of the Concern of the Self as a Practice of Freedom," in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 1997), 282-3.

What follows from this is that the uncovering of deployments of power in human relations does not automatically indict the practices involved, as it has tended to do in Marxist and structuralist analysis. From Foucault's perspective, discovering such depolyments of power is trivial. The critique that Foucault allows must focus on the degree to which power relationships sanction practices of freedom or, conversely, reinforce discipline. In Foucault's critique of liberal society, disciplines are made invisible and enforced by the pursuit of individual freedom. What promises freedom results in deeper regulation by the disciplines.³⁶ The political rationality of western societies constitutes its subjects as both members of the self-governing political community and members of governed populations, as citizen-subjects. The assertion of individual rights and freedoms paradoxically moves one more fully into the grip of this governmentality. It is by freedom and in support of freedom that liberal governments govern. This is the distinctiveness of liberalism according to Nikolas Rose.

The importance of liberalism is not that it first recognized, defined or defended freedom as a right of all citizens. Rather, its significance is that for the first time the arts of government were systematically linked to the practice of freedom.... Individuals, that is to say, must come to recognise and act upon themselves as both free and responsible, both beings of liberty and members of society, if liberal government is to be possible.³⁷

Liberal government in this analysis emerges as a variety of disciplines and techniques constituting citizen-subjects in a dynamic intersection of society, state, and private interest. Graham Burchell summarises this interaction as follows.

It is in the name of society and of the capacity of its members to 'manage their own affairs' that government is both demanded and criticized. Government is demanded as a function of the security and order necessary for society's continued existence and for its capacity to develop according to its intrinsic, natural dynamic. But the state's competence and entitlement to govern is at the same time placed under strict critical supervision in the name of this same society.³⁸

³⁶ Michel Foucault, "The Political Technology of Individuals," in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, eds. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), 162.

³⁷ Nikolas Rose, "Towards a Critical Sociology of Freedom," in *Class*, ed. Patrick Joyce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 215.

³⁸ Graham Burchell, "Peculiar Interests," 143.

The economy and the private interests of the individual, according to this new governmentality, are no longer appropriate arenas for direct state action. The influence of the state, and even civil society, must be from a distance. This action at a distance is limited to providing the legislative and social context for productivity to flourish.

Much of the analytical strength of this account lies in its recognition of modern society as a transactional reality. For Foucault the liberal societies of the West are not a destiny to be achieved but a set of relationships and techniques to be uncovered. Rejecting a teleology either of continual progress (Whiggism) or inevitable decline (Marxism), he presents liberal societies, such as the one Lord Durham intended for Canada, as subjects for careful analysis, as “a vector of agonistic contention over the governmental relation.”³⁹ This requires a different problematisation than has typically accompanied the place of religion in liberal societies.⁴⁰ Rather than being written out as incidental to the real action, religion receives attention as one of a multiplicity of power vectors which compete and co-opt and contest their authority and influence over interest-centred subject-citizens.

Religion and liberal society

Foucault and his followers have paid little attention to religion in the nineteenth century, perhaps because they believe that the “history of the present” does not require its problematisation.⁴¹ However, religion did undergo major transition in the eighteenth century paralleling that described by Foucault. The patriarchal model of sovereignty in the *ancien regime* required all inhabitants of the territorial state to adhere to the religion of the sovereign for reasons of state. Church and state cooperated and competed in early modern Europe, but according to the

³⁹ Colin Gordon, “Governmental Rationality,” 23.

⁴⁰ Robert Castel, “‘Problematization’ as a Mode of Reading History,” in *Foucault and the Writing of History*, ed. Jan Goldstein (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), discusses the value as well as the perils of using Foucault’s approach to identifying subjects for historical analysis.

⁴¹ Recently Foucault’s writing on religion has been anthologised, see Michel Foucault, *Religion and Culture*, ed. Jeremy Carrette (New York: Routledge, 1999). He concentrates on early Christian and medieval sources and does not address the transitions of the nineteenth century. Foucault regarded his *Discipline and Punish*, 30-1, as a history of the present. Also see Dean, *Critical and Effective Histories*, chapter 2 on Foucault’s presentism.

familial model of governance; praying together was deemed essential to staying together. Established churches had the task of legitimating the rule of the sovereign and of disciplining the citizenry to obedience for both their spiritual and temporal prosperity. The disruption Foucault locates in the practice of sovereignty and government is felt as profoundly in the church. Techniques of subjectification must now address the isolated interest-centred individual. If the material interest of the individual economic agent was beyond the ken of the sovereign, the spiritual interest must certainly be beyond the state's competence. Like the economy, religion was privatised, made the concern of the individual alone, and the modern version of religious tolerance was born. However, Durham's concern with the wise government's provision of religious education demonstrates the continuing power of this model of religion's role in the tactics and techniques of government.

Durham's position that religion was both necessary and dangerous to society reveals a dialectic tension between the two narratives placing religion in the nineteenth century. The older model regarded religion as essential to the making of good citizens because it instilled the virtues required to fulfil one's public duties. Thus, the sovereign, as patriarch, oversaw the religious formation of his subjects to ensure peace and prosperity in the realm. Political authority was understood to flow from its divine source to the sovereign and down through the hierarchically arranged orders in society. Good citizens knew their place and fulfilled their duties and benefited from the bounty of the realm. Likewise, the grace of God to bring salvation flowed from the divine through the highly visible and centrally organised religious hierarchy to those who were faithful in their religious duties. This narrative, which places religion in society as the source of dutiful subjects, will be designated the establishment model, in light of its enduring cogency even after formal establishment had been abandoned.

Another emplotment of religion began to gain prominence in the eighteenth century at the time when the disruption of political sovereignty was underway. This competing narrative regarded religious establishment as detrimental to true religion. Religion was renarrated as a matter of individual interest and personal conviction. Any attempt to impose the beliefs and

practices of the patriarchal sovereign would lead to a religion consisting only of form, ritual, and duty. True religion depended on a personal encounter and voluntary response to the offer of God's grace and was all the more authentic for its private interior focus.⁴² Thus religious life was not experienced as an imposition from the outside but as a personal transformation on the inside. Religious activity was represented not as a duty but as the outward evidence of an inner change and as the manifestation of intense personal conviction. This voluntary model found a historical expression among Protestants in the eighteenth century revivals of Whitfield and the Wesleys as well as in the international evangelical networks of the nineteenth century.⁴³ However, this model was not exclusively Protestant. Historians of the Catholic experience have noted similar themes in the Catholic revivals and devotional revolutions of the same period.⁴⁴ As McLeod suggests, the voluntary model of religion in society actually intensified religion's claim on the faithful as external religious demands eroded and commitments came to more forcefully create and sustain individual identities.

The desacralisation of political and economic processes accomplished by Smith and Locke and others undermined the authority of the established church. If the truth by which governments carry out their prerogatives was to be scientific rather than divine, a new caste of priests would be required. The religious establishment was cut loose to make its own way in the world. Certain of the clergy discovered that the pastoral care of individuals in a context where

⁴² Richard Rabinowitz, *The Spiritual Self in Everyday Life: The Transformation of Personal Religious Experience in Nineteenth-Century New England* (Boston: 1989), see chapter 13 in particular

⁴³ Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington, and George A. Rawlyk, eds., *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) and George A. Rawlyk and Mark A. Noll, eds., *Amazing Grace: Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993).

⁴⁴ Jay P. Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience, 1830-1900* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978); Emmet Larkin, "The Devotional Revolution in Ireland, 1850-75," *American Historical Review* 77 (1972), and John Sharp, "Juvenile Holiness: Catholic Revivalism among Children in Victorian Britain," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 35 (1984). For a Canadian study of similar themes see Brian P. Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-1895* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), especially chapter 4.

individuals were freed to pursue private interests accorded them new sources of authority.⁴⁵ New techniques for conversion and growth in piety were required to manage the spiritual lives of interest-centred citizen-subjects. Changes in church government, distinctive forms of revivalism, social and moral campaigns, prescriptive literature on the family, and the organisation of an interdenominational Christianity were all responses to a new governmentality.

An awareness of the establishment and voluntary narratives and the interaction between them is essential to an analysis of the place of religion in society in nineteenth-century London, Ontario. The shared outcome of these stories was to be a Christian society; the difference between them was their conception of the means by which the common end was to be accomplished. The establishment narrative continued to require that society give authority to religion (though not the religion of the ruler) for its role in forming virtuous people able to inhabit the public sphere. The state had given up the task of moral formation, but Durham expected the wise government to ensure the provision of religious instruction as an essential component in the constitution of a society of self-governing individuals. Just as the state's intervention in the economy was now indirect, so character development was given to the private sphere where the family and the church (of your choice) would create the (male) citizens required for Canada to flourish. These two stories, which were sometimes in conflict but also comfortably coexisted, plotted a continuing public role for religion while assigning it to the sphere of private interest. Placing religion in this context requires attention to the establishment and voluntary narratives and careful attention to the various constructions of the public and private space that these stories inhabited.

⁴⁵ Donald M. Scott, *From Office to Profession: the New England Ministry, 1750-1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978).

*Public and private space*⁴⁶

The distinction between the public and private sphere came into historical writing primarily through the discipline of women's history.⁴⁷ An investigation of the division between the two spheres provided an analytical tool that brought the experience of women into historical consideration. This dichotomous division of the world not only uncovered ways in which women's lives had been hidden and captive in domesticity, but it also revealed a world of activity and meaning by which women resisted and reshaped gender definitions.⁴⁸ The central focus of this dichotomy was the home and family. From a perspective determined by the rhythms and concerns of the domestic, the world of the market and political life was outside and public. Gender characteristics were assigned to correspond to this division. Women, according to the "cult of true womanhood," were to be dependent, sensitive, and (of particular interest for this study) essentially religious. To prepare them for a harsh life in public, men were defined as independent and rational but lacking the innate moral and religious sensibilities of women.

Feminist historians are now discovering the limits of this dichotomous construction of the public and private sphere, and it has been suggested that its continued use obscures rather than illuminates the varied lives of women.⁴⁹ If understood as rigid categories confining women

⁴⁶ The four varieties of the public/private distinction explored in this section are developed in Jeff Weintraub, "The Theory and Politics of the Public/Private Distinction," in *Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy*, eds. Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997)

⁴⁷ For an early example see Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-60" In Canadian historiography this approach was reflected in a reading anthology compiled by Ramsay Cook and Wendy Mitchinson, eds., *The Proper Sphere: Women's Place in Canadian Society* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976).

⁴⁸ Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood*; Barbara Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity*; Caroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: 1985); and Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987). For Canadian examples of this scholarship see Wayne Roberts, "Rocking the Cradle for the World: The New Woman and Maternal Feminism, Toronto, 1877-1914" and Wendy Mitchinson, "The WCTU: 'For God, Home and Native Land': A Study in Nineteenth-Century Feminism," in *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s*, ed. Linda Kealey (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1979).

⁴⁹ Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place. The Rhetoric of Women's History," *Journal of American History* 75 (1988); Kathy Peiss, "Going Public: Women in Nineteenth Century Cultural History," *American Literary History* 3 (1991); and Dror Wahrman, "Middle-

to home and hearth and assigning men paid labour and political power, this public/private ordering cannot make sense of the many public activities of women. Recent feminist criticism of the public/private distinction has been that it was primarily based on prescriptive literature rather than on real experience.⁵⁰ It was as a widely accepted ideal of the well-ordered life that this distinction wielded rhetorical power. Its usefulness in the analysis of this period remains to the degree that it provides entrance into the rhetorical shape of the world within which life as male and female was experienced.

This construction of public and private is quite different from that suggested by Adam Smith and the advocates of *laissez faire* markets for which the worlds of the market and work outside the home were the space for pursuit of private interest. Smith and his followers define “public” rather narrowly as the activities of the administrative state. Thus competing discourses, shaping both thought and practice in the late nineteenth century, could place economic activity in opposing “spheres.” *Domestic* language defined the exchange-value production in the market economy as public because this kind of work was increasingly distinct from home and family. At the same time *economic* language designated exchange-value production as a private concern with relation to government regulation. In the discourse of economic relations religion was defined as private because it did not fall under direct government administration.

A third powerful use of “public” was encountered in the indignation meeting described above. This usage of public underlies the view of civil society as conceptualised in Jürgen Habermas’s bourgeois public sphere.⁵¹ According to Habermas the public sphere was where citizens could meet as equals to discuss matters of common concern and find consensus. In this discourse, the public sphere of the disinterested citizen was set in contrast to the private sphere

Class’ Domesticity Goes Public: Gender, Class and Politics from Queen Caroline to Queen Victoria,” *Journal of British Studies* 32 (1993).

⁵⁰ Amanda Vickery, “Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women’s History,” *Historical Journal* 36 (1993).

⁵¹ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public*. See also Craig Calhoun, “Civil Society and the Public Sphere,” *Public Culture* 5 (1993).

of interests that would include family and economic activity. Of equal importance, this sense of public was opposed to the administrative state, which the “public” could influence by bringing public opinion or public pressure to bear. In this *civic* discourse a morally sound, independently thinking “public” was essential to a self-governing society; hence, Durham’s concern that the wise government ensure the provision of religious instruction. If this civic discourse is combined with the domestic perspective discussed initially, the gendered nature of the civic public sphere that legitimated the exclusion of women is seen with greater clarity. In the construction of the civic public sphere a clear and visible separation must be made from private interests, paradigmatically family and religion. Woman’s essential nature, according to the prescriptions of the domestic division of public and private, was concern for family, moral, and religious interests. It was inconceivable that woman’s nature could be set aside to allow her to engage in neutral public debate, because her private interests would inevitably be in conflict with the public good. Masculine gendering assumed, for some reason, that men could and would set aside the private in public as witnessed by Rev. Murray’s and Mr. Charlton’s impressive shows of disinterest at the indignation meeting.

Perhaps the most complex of the uses of “public” in this period is explored in the work of Phillippe Ariès.⁵² Ariès uncovers the less formal, but very important, public space of sociability and public spectacle. His researches indicate that the informal relations between persons which occur in public spaces constitute important social relations. If the indignation meeting illustrates the civic public sphere, the Salvation Army street meeting or temperance parade might illustrate this use of public. Ariès suggests that sociability has fallen victim, in the modern era, to increasing privatisation, and that it is really part of an older social organisation that is passing away. The loss of the skills and spaces for sociability is paralleled by an intensification of the private life as defined in and by domestic and family relationships. The nature of the

⁵² Phillippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 1962), see especially the conclusion, “Family and Sociability.” Phillippe Ariès, “Introduction,” in *A History of Private Life: Passions of the Renaissance*, ed. Roger Chartier (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1989), 1-11

distinction between public and private in this discourse is less binary. The public is what is shared with others in open exchange; the private has more the sense of that which is hidden or kept to oneself and tended to be regarded as more real and authentic for its privacy. It is possible that only this discourse can give meaning to the description of churches as places of “public” worship. The decline of sociability and an intensification of the private sphere is particularly suggestive for the study of religion. The respectable and well-managed revival meeting of the late nineteenth century was a public spectacle and space for sociability, but it also was profoundly private in the revival’s call to personal choice and transformation. The applicability of this discourse to religion is suggested in the nuanced analysis of public and private in Cecilia Morgan’s recent study of *religion and politics in Upper Canada*.⁵³

A desacralised language of public and private underwrote the removal of religious authority from government and the economy. Naturalising political relations in some version of a primitive social contract and economic relations in the concept of the invisible hand accomplished this desacralisation. These moves marked the displacement of religious justifications for the inequitable distribution of power and wealth by the sciences of politics and economics. Locke and Smith deconstructed the divine as the foundation of these primary social relationships in the West and reconstructed the churches as interest groups. The languages of public and private and the established and voluntary conceptions of religion were the resources available to the faithful, clergy and lay, to process this change. During the nineteenth century, the churches of the West fell from their official status as the voice of God in a nation-state to being one among a number of interest groups who were promoting their particular ends to the public. The challenge for the faithful was to locate the place of religion to transcend the particular and be seen to serve the public good.

Placing religion in nineteenth-century London requires careful attention to two narratives organising religious influence in society. The establishment narrative assigned religion

⁵³ Cecilia Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women*.

the task of the moral formation of subject-citizens and of calling for some variety of state support to ensure that this task was carried out. The voluntary narrative cut religion off from direct state intervention and assigned to it the task of intensifying domestic relationships and personal convictions, rendering it private and seemingly oriented to women.⁵⁴ The meanings of public and private and the languages which supported them were rich and often in conflict. Indeed, the malleability of these terms confuses attempts to describe religion in this period. In the battles over Sabbath closing laws, critics used the civic and economic meanings of “public” to insist that a religious concept such as Sabbath should not restrict market and individual activities. Advocates of the laws used “public” as defined in the discourse of sociability (illustrating a continued cogency for the establishment narrative) to claim that public worship and a day of “common pause” were essential to society. At the same time, advocates expressed fear that dismantling the Sabbath laws would allow the harsh realities of the public (in the economic sense of work away from home) to intrude upon the sanctity of the domestic.⁵⁵ Placing religion requires a mapping of the establishment and voluntary narratives onto the rather hazardous terrain of the competing and overlapping discourses of the public and private (See Figure 1 for a summary).

In doing so, this study is concerned to avoid the assumption that the voluntary narrative was the new and progressive and, therefore, the inevitable victor in the competition. Such a reading is possible, and indeed common, but the plot in these readings is reduced to charting the declining influence of religion. The hopes and fears, the attempts at leadership and resistance of historical agents is too easily trivialised if religious change is swept into the grand narrative of secularisation. The task of retelling the story of religious change in the nineteenth century needs to address the overlap between the old and the new placement of religion. It also needs to uncover the truths that justified the new and caused the old to be abandoned. As different

⁵⁴ Anne Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Anchor Press, 1988)

⁵⁵ These debates, as they worked themselves out in London, are treated in chapters 6 and 7 below. Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, *The Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company: Sunday Streetcars and Municipal Reform in Toronto, 1888-1897* (Toronto: P. Martin, 1977), investigate the various

religious groups resolved these issues in different ways space was opened to a variety of strategies for placing religion. The place of religion in society was continually renegotiated in the nineteenth century through the uses made of these languages and practices by particular religious communities.

Figure 1: Rhetorical dichotomies of languages of public and private

Public	Private
I. Domestic (feminist scholarship)	
Men	Women
Exchange value	Use value
Production	Reproduction
Society	Family
Reason	Sentiment
Objective	Subjective
Market system	Wealth/poverty
II. Economic (Adam Smith, laissez faire)	
Administrative state	Market
III. Civic (Habermas)	
Common good	Individual interest
Equality	Ranks/classes
Democracy	Party
VI. Sociability (Ariès)	
Open/shared	Hidden
Artificial	Authentic

Identity and agency

One of the transformations of religion in the nineteenth century, according to McLeod's suggestion referred to earlier, was the internalisation and intensification of religious identities. Some account of human identity and agency is required if we are to explore this transformation. As work on the present project progressed, the contention that action and identity can be attributed to historical agents on the basis of static categories such as class and gender became less and less convincing. Religious activity, as located historically, moved in so many directions and for such different reasons that it could not serve as another such category to be used in large-scale historical explanation. Foucault argues that explanations which attempt "totality"

and conflicting discourses. Here the attempts of religious leaders to find a voice are paralleled by workers'

actually hinder understanding. He advocates local work to produce an “autonomous, non-centralised kind of theoretical production.”⁵⁶ This study attempts to take up this challenge to theorise about the place of religion in the context of London, Ontario. It must, however, depart from the methodology established by a number of excellent and groundbreaking local studies of religion in supposing that “religious activity” is a simple and coherent unit of analysis. Local studies of religion have made clear connections between religious activity and class division⁵⁷ and the intricate interplay of class, gender, and economic changes.⁵⁸ This was accomplished by linking historical data sources indicating religious activity such as church membership records with other identifiers. These studies gained much from the work of historical demographers and their ambitious attempts to rebuild the demographic profiles of whole communities.⁵⁹ Local studies of religion have demonstrated the usefulness of this approach to Canadian history.⁶⁰ The effectiveness of this approach requires the construction of a category of religious activity to be counted and compared and correlated with other categories. Attempts to define “religious activity” for London repeatedly turned up incommensurabilities in local concepts of religious practice which obscured the very thing this study hoped to investigate. It became increasingly clear that religious belonging was something quite different for a member of a Baptist church and an Anglican parishioner. The religious activity of the revival convert, the trustee of the Orphans’ Home and the Presbyterian pewholder were equally diverse in the meaning and the kind of identity being constructed. Throwing these very particular sets of practices into the same category

groups marshalling similar rhetoric against the logic of the market.

⁵⁶ “Two Lectures,” in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writing, 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 81.

⁵⁷ Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society* and Johnson, *A Shopkeeper’s Millennium*.

⁵⁸ Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

⁵⁹ In Canada important demographic work has been done by Michael B. Katz, *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth-Century City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975) and David Gagan, *Hopeful Travellers: Families, Land, and Social Change in Mid-Victorian Peel County, Canada West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).

⁶⁰ Doris O’Dell, “The Class Character of Church Participation in Late Nineteenth-Century Belleville, Ontario” (Ph.D. diss., Queen’s University, 1990) and Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*.

presupposed a flatness of meaning for which there was little evidence at the local level. Much of the allure of historical demography has been the introduction of scientific rigour into the notoriously methodologically loose world of historical investigation. However, the data sets assembled for this study, although they compared favourably with other locations considered, included such significant gaps and required such leaps of intuition that the scientific rigour was largely illusory.

The evidence that emerged from this study of religion in London could not categorise religious activity into predetermined motivations or attitudes. What was needed was an approach that remained open to the practices and vocabularies of religion in the often surprising ways particular persons marshalled them. A study of the way religion shaped identity seemed contrived when mapped across pre-existing categories which gave theoretical precedence to conflictual identifiers such as men/women and middle class/working class. A more nuanced way of conceiving historical identity and agency was needed and it seemed to require scepticism regarding the universal application of such categories.⁶¹

The search for a way of conceptualising religious change led to the work of a number of thinkers who were challenging received categories. Historians of class and gender were expressing similar conceptual frustrations. Studies focusing on class and gender initially emerged to tell the story of those marginalised by or written out of the plot of mainstream history. This type of historiography began with the rise of social and working class history, which rejected the elitist representation of the past, constructed by political and intellectual historians. The category of class seemed an effective analytical tool for giving shape and substance to the faceless mass of historical agents whose individual lives were more difficult to reconstruct than the traditional

⁶¹ Margaret R. Somers, "Narrativity, Narrative Identity, and Social Action: Rethinking English Working-Class Formation," *Social Science History* 16 (1992), 601. The subjugation of identity to class is the primary methodology in Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society* and Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*. Marks has moved this approach forward in adding gender to class in her analysis, but the range of both is predetermined in *Revivals and Roller Rinks*. Curtis D. Johnson argues against a simplistically conflictual rendering of class and religion and urges more careful attention to local contexts in *Islands of Holiness: Rural Religion in Upstate New York, 1790-1860* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989).

subjects of history. However, recent studies have questioned the cogency of class as a focus of identity among the working class.⁶² Women's and gender historians have argued persuasively that class taken by itself is a rather blunt instrument that often ignores that class is experienced historically in gendered ways.⁶³ Constructions of "women" and gender difference by historians have been critiqued as emerging out of essentialist conceptions which themselves occlude possibilities of women's experience.⁶⁴ Contributions attentive to race and post-colonial perspectives have further fractured the analytical range of class.⁶⁵ At the same time, post-structuralist theories and the "linguistic turn" have historicised the nature of experience, agency, gender, and class themselves.⁶⁶ On a number of fronts, rigid categories are being upset by multiple identities that function as competing sites of subjectivity.

Foucault's approach to the critique of modern societies avoided such categories because they directed attention toward centralised and visible accretions of power and dominance whereas he believed it was the dispersed, often invisible, power relationships that required attention.⁶⁷ Liberal evaluations of modern society uncover illegitimate uses of power by highly visible institutions, like churches or the state, and champion the cause of the individual against

⁶² Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, 1840-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture c. 1815-1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), and Dror Wahrman, *Imagining the Middle Class: The Political Representation of Class in Britain c. 1780-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁶³ Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class* and Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) have clearly demonstrated that class experience is clearly gendered. Lori D Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, politics, and class in the 19th-Century United States* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990) and Stansell, *City of Women*, argue that gender is intersected by class.

⁶⁴ Denise Riley, "Am I That Name?" *Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History* (London: Macmillan, 1988); Mariana Valverde, "Poststructuralist Gender Historians: Are We Those Names?," *Labour/Le Travail* 25 (Spring 1990); and Joan W. Scott, "On Language, Gender, and Working-Class History," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 31 (Spring 1987).

⁶⁵ Craig Calhoun, "Social Theory and the Politics of Identity," in *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

⁶⁶ James Vernon, "Who's afraid of the 'Linguistic Turn?';" Christopher Kent, "Victorian Social History"; and Patrick Joyce, *Democratic Subjects: The Self and the Social in Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁶⁷ Ransom, *Foucault's Discipline*, chapter 1.

such dominance. However, Foucault and his followers have convincingly argued that it is by the struggle to be free of such “repressions” that liberal societies govern, or discipline, their subjects⁶⁸ Instead of identifying macro-level oppressive institutions, Foucault advised paying attention to the micro-level techniques by which power is exercised invisibly in the arts of government. This perspective is illustrated in Foucault’s rejection of the Marxist tendency to simplistically attribute all domination to the bourgeois class.

I believe that anything can be deduced from the general phenomenon of the domination of the bourgeois class. What needs to be done is something quite different. One needs to investigate historically, and beginning on the lowest level, how mechanisms of power have been able to operate.... We need to see how these mechanisms of power, at a given moment, in a precise conjuncture and by means of a certain number of transformations, have begun to become economically and politically useful.⁶⁹

Rather than beginning with categories which explain everything, Foucault prescribed careful attention to specifics and local contexts because he believed that these would be more likely to reveal the mechanisms of power which discipline human relationships. His approach provides space for the human agency that is lost in structuralist accounts of the totalising state. Foucault sees power everywhere, dispersed in all human interactions, so that we are never free from acting with power or being acted upon. But the pervasiveness of power requires that it be fragile. Instead of being restricted to all-powerful classes or institutions that exercise dominance over individuals, power is dispersed in all encounters, thereby weakening its valence and making room for specific and local reversals.⁷⁰

Patrick Joyce argues that historians should abandon the belief that categories such as class, religion, gender, nation, and race provide a stable and coherent identity. Following

⁶⁸ This is a central theme of Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1, An Introduction* (New York: Random House, 1978). For similar arguments from scholars working from a Foucauldian perspective see Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) and Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self* (London: Routledge, 1990)

⁶⁹ Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 100-1.

⁷⁰ Ransom argues that Foucault’s most important contribution to the critique of modern societies is his contention that the fragility of power makes possible a range of opportunities for reversals and resistance, *Foucault’s Discipline*, especially chapter 5.

Foucault's de-centring of the subject, Joyce calls for historians to search for "how meanings have been historically produced by relations of power rather than for 'external', or 'objective', class 'structures'." These meanings are to emerge by paying attention to the complexity of multivalent identities rather by piling up rigid categorical descriptors. This view sees identities as volatile and multilayered since "many 'identities' press in and conflict with one another."⁷¹ Particular subjectifiers, such as class, gender or race are not automatically privileged in this view. These various identifiers merge and conflict and are formed in particular power relations to reflect the complexity that constantly characterises human agents.⁷² One of the persistent vectors of identity in historical agents has been religion. Religion has served to ground experience, in the acceptance and the rejection of its precepts, by bringing a particular definition to a range of power relationships. The internalisation of these relationships has provided identity and, in often creative ways, has given rise to a reframing of both personal identity and religious faith. What follows attempts to make use of these insights to investigate the placement of religion by looking at religious practices and discourses at the local level. It hopes to contribute to the discussion by paying careful attention to the many ways of acting and speaking that are typically categorised as "religious activity."

To this point the discussion has suggested that placing religion in society in the late nineteenth century requires a more complex conceptualisation than has often been the case. Agency and the construction of identity are to be located in the public and private spaces they inhabit as narrated by both the establishment and the voluntary approaches to religion. This study will focus on the ways in which the churches in London negotiated their authority in the public sphere and shaped the identities of their adherents in the private from 1870 to 1890. To determine the issues at stake and the position of the churches in the late nineteenth century will require some

⁷¹ Patrick Joyce, ed., *Class* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 7-8. For a more extended discussion of these issues see the "Introduction" in Patrick Joyce, *Democratic Subjects*, 1-20.

⁷² Margaret Somers and Gloria D. Gibson, "Reclaiming the Epistemological 'Other': Narrative and the Social Constitution of Identity," in *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 79.

understanding of the major events shaping the place of religion during the colonial period. To that end, a brief overview of these events follows.

Transformations of Religion in early Nineteenth-Century Ontario

Church-State relations in what is now Ontario were originally defined by the Constitutional Act of 1791. This Act was framed with the aftermath of the American Revolution clearly in view and sought to establish stability and security in British North America by providing it with the very image of the British Constitution. Eighteenth-century British political thinking sought a balance of interests, and the Act included provisions which would encourage the formation of a landed gentry supported by an established church. The framers of the Act gave the Anglican clergy the sole right to perform marriages in the colony.⁷³ The Church of England in Upper Canada also had the support of both the local colonial administration and the great British missionary societies.⁷⁴ All of this was to ensure that the Church of England would develop as the established church of the colony.⁷⁵ One-seventh of the land of Upper Canada was set aside for the “maintenance of a Protestant clergy,” which was clearly intended to ensure the steady growth and financial viability of the Church. Early agitation against the clergy reserves and the privileges of the Anglican clergy did not come primarily from advocates of the voluntary model of religion so much as from other claimants to establishment status. The Presbyterians claimed consideration on the basis of their role as the established church in Scotland, and Wesleyan Methodists appealed to their connection with the Church of England and their growing influence in the colony.⁷⁶ Until the compromise in 1841, which divided the Reserves among the major denominations, it was too

⁷³ Gerald Craig, *Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 1784-1841* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), 14-6.

⁷⁴ See Curtis Fahey, *The Anglican Experience in Upper Canada, 1791-1854* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1991).

⁷⁵ Richard Ruggle attributes the origin of this Anglican vision of Upper Canada to Governor Simcoe in “The Anglican National Dream,” in *Some Men and Some Controversies*, ed. Richard Ruggle (Erin, Ontario: Press Porcenic, 1974).

⁷⁶ John S. Moir, *Enduring Witness*, 86-95; Goldwin French, *Parsons and Politics: The Role of the Wesleyan Methodists in Upper Canada and the Maritimes From 1850 to 1855* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1962).

many claimants to establishment rather than any strong commitment to voluntarism that worked to undermine the attempt to establish the Church of England.

The growing influence of voluntary religion was not to be discovered in negotiations between church and state, but in the experience of grace in churches and camp meetings. Here religion was upsetting the balance sought by eighteenth-century constitutional thought, not by direct assault on the state but by an unmediated encounter with the divine. In separate studies, George Rawlyk and Nancy Christie describe the popular religious movements prior to the War of 1812 as challenges to the established order because of their use of a religious discourse that emphasised the primacy of individual conscience.⁷⁷ This sermonic appeal for individual choice and individual commitment in religion was understood by colonial officials and by the clergy of the Church of England to undermine the hierarchical political and religious construction of the establishment model. Popular religious movements had a corrosive effect on the discursive cogency of hierarchy and duty and, on the other hand, had the powerful effect of reconstituting communities in terms of individual choice and shared experience.⁷⁸ In religious revival, subjects of a sovereign were resubjected as citizen-subjects of a self-governing population through a religious shift from the public to the private. The transformation of governmentality, which Foucault identified as occurring in the late eighteenth century, came to British North America in part through the exertions of evangelical religionists advocating personal salvation. Michael Gauvreau writes

It was the ... success of evangelicals, in the four decades after 1815, in establishing the "voluntary" model of social relations in British North America that marks the

⁷⁷ G.A. Rawlyk, *The Canada Fire: Radical Evangelicalism in British North America, 1775-1812* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994) and Nancy Christie, "'In These Times of Democratic Rage and Delusion: Popular Religion and the Challenge to the Established Order, 1760-1815,'" in *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, ed. George A. Rawlyk (Burlington: Welch, 1990). Similar themes are explored in an American context by Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

⁷⁸ Michael Gauvreau, "Protestantism Transformed: Personal Piety and the Evangelical Social Vision, 1815-1867," in *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, ed. George Rawlyk (Burlington: Welch, 1990) and Rawlyk, *The Canada Fire*.

decisive moment of transition from the culture of the eighteenth century to the Victorian mental climate.⁷⁹

This transition required that people with radically different expectations of self and others learn to live together. The religious rhetoric of the voluntary model made the individual responsible before God not only for conversion but also for a life of personal righteousness. Timothy Smith interprets the wide popularity of holiness sects in nineteenth-century North America as reflecting a concern for security on the part of a self-governing population.⁸⁰ The removal of religion to private space did not mean that religion had abandoned its establishment role of ensuring a compliant citizenry. If anything, this public expectation was increased as religion moved inside. Gauvreau suggests that, in the Canadian context, the language of responsible government, which dominated political discourse in the 1830s and 40s, had religious roots in this voluntary concept of individual responsibility before God.⁸¹ The establishment model of religious and political integration centred on fulfilling religious and civic duty. Good Christians and good citizens were measured by external compliance. Voluntary “responsibility” internalised religious motivation. It deemed external compliance to be insufficient and required righteous living as an essential component of personal identity. At least one of the many meanings of the call for responsible government required of the government the same level of transparency and sensitivity to the will of the people as the individual Christian endeavoured to manifest before God.

The logic of the voluntary model of religion suggests that there was no official contact between religion and the state. Yet the historical evidence reveals a more complex relationship. Both establishment and voluntary themes shaped the discourse and practice of

⁷⁹ Gauvreau, “Protestantism Transformed,” 57.

⁸⁰ Timothy L. Smith, “Righteousness and Hope: Christian Holiness and the Millennial Vision in America, 1800-1900,” *American Quarterly* 31 (1979).

⁸¹ Michael Gauvreau, “The Empire of Evangelicalism: Varieties of Common Sense in Scotland, Canada, and the United States,” in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700-1990*, eds Mark Noll, David Bebbington, and George Rawlyk (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 228.

religion throughout the nineteenth century. Methodist revivalists who proclaimed private, individual engagement with God as the only true religion could, with great facility, muster establishment language in arguing for government support of their educational institutions.⁸² Even so staunch an advocate of establishment as Bishop John Strachan could devise organisational and financial measures to help the Church of England make the transition to the status of a denomination.⁸³ The history of religion in nineteenth-century Ontario is characterised by the intertwining of the establishment and voluntary narratives in public and private spaces.

The well-known controversy between John Strachan and Egerton Ryerson is, in this reading, primarily about how best to bring the Kingdom of God to Upper Canada. Strachan believed it could only come as an adjunct of and companion to state power. Anglican clergy would ensure loyalty and Christian virtue by continuing to play a public role. Ryerson did not dispute the outcome Strachan intended. Ryerson regarded the status and deference demanded by the Anglican parsons as being unlikely to aid the Kingdom. In his opinion, Methodist itinerants, who were of and among the people, together with the spiritual introspection and communal shaping of the private in the class meeting, had a much better chance of building a truly Christian society. The Canada envisioned by Ryerson was to be no less Christian than that conceived of in 1791. However, his strategy for achieving it was to be voluntary rather than regulative.

The secularisation of the clergy reserves in 1854 brought about the relationship between the church and state that existed well into the twentieth century. As religion gave up its public status, other institutions moved into the public space vacated.⁸⁴ Gauvreau points out it was

⁸² Goldwin French, "Egerton Ryerson and the Methodist Model for Upper Canada," in *Egerton Ryerson and His Times: Essays on the History of Education*, eds. Neil McDonald and Alf Chanton (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978), 53-4.

⁸³ Curtis Fahey, *In His Name*, chapter 7

⁸⁴ For an exploration of this development see Allan Greer and Ian Radforth, eds., *Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

no coincidence that the revenues from the secularised clergy reserves went to fund a state run compulsory common school system.⁸⁵

The social authority of the Christian religion in late nineteenth-century Ontario derived from an interpenetration of the establishment and voluntary narratives. Christianity, particularly Protestantism, was considered to serve the public good and to ensure the success of the social⁸⁶ by overseeing the production of moral character in the private sphere. The political and economic structures of society were considered natural developments and thus inaccessible to critique. The invisible hand of the market ensured balance in the economy, and political harmony was maintained by democratic institutions developed on the basis of a social contract. The economic and political problems, which were so evident at the time, were regarded as being the result of the corrupt and immoral actions of individual agents. The solution was to ensure that people (men) of high moral character inhabit these morally neutral and natural social structures. In their move to voluntarism, the churches embraced an establishment mandate by claiming that they could produce the good people to ensure justice and prosperity in political and economic life. Economic inequality and political corruption were seen as the result of the insufficient moral formation and the sinful obstinacy of particular individuals. The churches' claim to public authority in the late nineteenth century was not based on their unique claim to theological truth (although they did make this claim in personal and private life). In public, the churches learned to speak on the authority of the social. Their claim might be summarised as follows: if the churches were provided with the legislative framework they required (on Sabbath laws and temperance, for example) by the state, they would work in the private sphere to produce citizens able to act with integrity in the public and thereby achieve the public good. The society produced was not secular for it regarded the Christian (particularly Protestant) churches as being the best instrument for

⁸⁵ Gauvreau, "Protestantism Transformed," 91.

⁸⁶ This use of the phrase "the social" follows the useage of Jacques Donzelot who defines the social sector as the space where the public interpenetrates the private in *The Policing of Families*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979), 88. Gilles Deleuze's foreword, "The Rise of the Social," to Donzelot's work is also helpful in defining "the social."

producing the conditions necessary for the good society. Moreover, the churches accepted this as their source of authority to act in public and used it to wield enormous social influence.

Outline of the Argument

The analysis that follows will attempt to understand this period of transition and conflicting narratives in a local context by examining the practices and discourses which defined religion in late nineteenth-century London. The chapters are arranged in complementary pairs: the first four investigate religious practices while the final two are concerned with discourses. Chapters two and three focus on the practices of congregational life that were grounded in community and provided a particular expression of the Christian tradition. They describe the churches struggling to come to terms with fundamental changes to their public role. While the separation of church and state had been accomplished a generation earlier, establishment assumptions continued to dominate the churches' attitudes and practices. As older authority patterns faded, new attempts were made to more fully integrate the faithful, now as interest-centred individuals, into church life. This was accomplished through the intersection of the building of churches, the rehearsal of identifying narratives, participation in worship, financial contributions, and activist programming for all ages and both genders. Attempts to maintain a public authority in liberal society enforced a "harmony" upon the churches which resisted their distinctive "sectarian" claims.

Chapters four and five argue that this enforced harmony limited the direct intervention of churches in public life and gave rise to a "Protestant public" through lay-inspired and lay-led interdenominational religious activity. Important religious practices for saving the social and bringing sinners to repentance moved outside of the churches. Because these practices did not arise out of a particular denominational tradition they were free from the taint of sectarianism and successfully claimed authority to work directly in the social on behalf of the public. The Protestant public fulfilled "at a distance" the establishment mandate to instill public morality and order. However, the religious practices of the Protestant public were distinct from

and, in important ways, in competition with the life of congregations as described in chapters two and three.

Chapters six and seven attempt to identify the ways in which the newspaper editors and the local clergy differed in their deployments of religious discourse. A remarkably similar vocabulary was put to different uses as the clergy worked to define their public voice and the editors worked to limit the range of religious influence to a narrow de-theologised morality. In its differing dialects this discourse became the native language of the Protestant public and the only language in which it was legitimate to speak religion in public.

CHAPTER 2

PUBLIC WORSHIP

Religious Practice I: Sunday in London

In late Victorian London church bells framed Sundays. Morning and evening church bells summoned the faithful, the dutiful, the reluctant, and the curious to divine service. The Saturday, 3 February 1870, edition of the London *Free Press* announced forty-two services in twenty-one locations representing thirteen distinct denominational groups. The bells represented a shared practice which united, at some level, a large proportion of London's population. However, the shared practice of public worship held a wide variety of meanings. Powerful currents of particularity called worshippers to construct their experience in complex ways which cannot be easily subsumed under a general category of religious activity. The services of 4 February would look and sound very different at the Roman Catholic St. Peter's Cathedral and the evangelically oriented Anglican St. Paul's Cathedral. But the sights, sounds, and even the smells would vary even more if one were to move east to the wood frame Primitive Methodist Church on Hamilton Road or downtown to the even smaller Second Baptist, the Black church on Horton Street.

The work of this chapter will be to examine the practises of church life in London in the 1870s and 1880s. Church activity, and particularly attendance at public worship on Sunday, represented the heart of the religious life of the community. The similarities of activity, time, and place were striking and have led some to interpret these similarities as the constituent parts of a homogeneous religious culture.¹ However, the differences that underlie these similarities are

¹ Westfall, *Two Worlds*; Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*; and Marguerite Van Die, "The Marks of a Genuine Revival": Religion, Social Change, Gender and Community in Mid-Victorian Brantford, Ontario," *Canadian Historical Review* 79, 3 (1998), 559-60. This is Mark Noll's assessment of Canadian religion in Mark Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 546-7.

equally striking and have led other interpreters to view religious practice as a source of disunity and an expression of cultural and class difference.² There is evidence to support that both of these understandings explain important aspects of the place of the churches in this period. Given these contradictory interpretations, this exploration of religion in London will attempt to give both the differences and the continuities their due and to understand them within the wider complex of changing life in London, in Ontario, and indeed in the new nation of Canada.

The church bells were a call to public worship, but in what sense was this public? On what was this claim to public notice based? How did the public nature of religion shape the social? Consideration of these questions requires attention to the organising discourses of religious life and in particular, to the practices that can reveal something of the nature of religious life. A number of practices helped to define this particular period and have left the kinds of records that open them to scholarly view. Church building has left physical evidence in the London streetscape as well as contemporary reflections that invested the individual churches with meaning. Worship, church funding, and the increase in church-sponsored associations and societies were practices which converged to define the nature of religious life. The churches were redefining themselves and their place in society by using venerable resources such as Gothic architecture, while employing new financial arrangements and new ways of making claims on adherents and involving them in church work. This process of definition was part of the long term interaction of the establishment and voluntary narrative conceptions of religion in public and private space.

Building for the Millennium

Perhaps the most visible and lasting of the late Victorian churches' attempts to articulate their public authority was with brick and stone. The number of congregations in London grew from 18 in 1870 to 40 in 1890 and almost all of these congregations generated work for builders and architects. From the late 1860s through to the mid-1890s London churches

² Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks* and Brian P. Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*.

constructed 36 new buildings for ecclesiastical purposes ranging in scale from the massive awe-inspiring St. Peter's Cathedral costing over \$150,000 to Grosvenor Street Baptist's modest frame chapel costing \$600. In addition to this new building, no fewer than 14 major renovation projects were undertaken to enlarge and update existing buildings (see Appendix A for a summary of building projects). All of this construction, and indeed all church construction in the city since the Baptist chapel of 1850, made some reference to the Gothic style.³ There was a vast range of quality in the rendering of Gothic. Anglican churches were more likely to work from authentic English models of Gothic and stayed true to the form.⁴ Methodist churches were less concerned with authenticity and tended to adapt the form to ensure an interior space in which everyone could see and hear the preacher.⁵ However, even small frame buildings like Grosvenor Street Baptist, built as mission churches in the suburbs, featured steeply pitched roofs and pointed windows and entrances.⁶

William Westfall has argued that ecclesiastical Gothic developed in Ontario as a distinctive architectural style expressive of the cultural needs and transformation of Protestant Ontario. Much of this is borne out by an examination of church building in London in this period. Too close a connection between Protestant culture and Gothic does not explain the Catholic use of

³ Talbot Street Baptist (1850) seems to be the only substantial example of the dissenting meeting-house built in London, see William Sherwood Fox, *A Century of Service: A History of the Talbot Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario, 1845-1945* (London: Talbot St Baptist Church, 1945), facing page 12. For a description of the architectural form see Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Watts and Wesley to Martineau, 1690-1900* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996 [originally 1961-2]), 44-5.

⁴ See Cronyn Memorial Church (1873) designed by Henry Langley and described as an example of pure Gothic architecture. Also the church of St. John the Evangelist and the St. Paul's Cathedral complexes

⁵ For a discussion of architectural adaptations made to Gothic see William Westfall and Malcolm Thurlby, "Church Architecture and Urban Space: The Development of Urban Space in Nineteenth-Century Ontario," in *Old Ontario: Essays in Honour of J.M.S. Careless*, David Keane and Colin Reade (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1990), 128-32.

⁶ For illustrations of "Carpenter's Gothic" see Grosvenor Street Baptist in "Fifty Footsteps, 1887-1937 in the life of Maitland Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario" (J.J. Talman Regional Collection [TRC]); Hamilton Road Methodist in Bremner, *City of London*, 95; St. Mary's Roman Catholic Methodist in Bremner, *City of London*, 99; and Askin Street Methodist (1875) in "Wesley United Church, 1874-1864" (TRC).

Gothic, particularly when anti-Catholicism was central to the definition of this culture.⁷ Gothic seems to have been versatile enough to speak to both Protestants and Catholics of the authority of the sacred. During this period for Protestant and Catholic alike, Gothic meant church. The origins of Gothic revival in England were directly linked to the Oxford movement and the Cambridge Camden Society's attempts to reclaim the Catholic medieval heritage for Anglicanism.⁸ Its adoption by evangelicals, both in England and Ontario is thus somewhat surprising. Gothic was designed to speak the language of the ineffable, to represent the mysteries of the Trinity, and to symbolically create the sacred space of the altar in the chancel separate from the people.⁹ Little of this symbolic vocabulary corresponded to the unmediated experience, benign anti-clericism and fear of ritualism characteristic of Ontario Protestants. As Westfall and Thurlby suggest, Ontario Protestants and their architects taught Gothic to speak a language different from the Camden Society's expectation.¹⁰

The symbolic break in London, Ontario, which Gothic came to represent was not with the classically inspired churches and rational religious culture of eighteenth-century Britain. Religion in Ontario had little interest in calling on the Middle Ages for inspiration for the period evoked pejorative connotations. The focus in London was on the future and not the past. The future required that religion assert its authority to guide the moral life of the new Dominion independently from the patronage of the state. Church building moved the churches into public as part of the cityscape, the places and spaces through which people moved and interacted. Gothic architecture provided an immediately identifiable and, in the best cases, a physical dominance which claimed a prominent place for religion in the life of the city. Westfall has expressed this particularly well: "The ability of Gothic to proclaim the power of the sacred by dominating its

⁷ J.R. Miller, "Anti-Catholic Thought in Victorian Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 66, 4 (1985), 474-94

⁸ Harold Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture*, vol. 1 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994), 279-80.

⁹ Davies, *Worship and Theology in England*, 45.

¹⁰ Westfall, "Church Architecture and Urban Space."

surroundings ... reinforced the moral authority of these churches. Like a sermon in stone, the Gothic church preached in a language of moral symbols to the society surrounding it.”¹¹ The architectural contrast, which Gothic evoked, was with factories, mills, warehouses, and commercial buildings.¹² The churches were architecturally distinct and constituted the physical environment of the city alongside office buildings and commercial blocks, which were the monuments to economic progress and prosperity. Protestants, especially those of the evangelical variety, predominated in London and were not particularly attuned to the visual. As a result, speakers at cornerstone layings and dedications often made the meanings of these buildings explicit for their audiences. Working from Westfall’s suggestions that Gothic provided the churches with a symbolic language for imagining religious authority in public spaces, we will look at the explicit meanings given to church buildings and extensions in London during this period.

The contrast between sacred and secular space was not always clear. The size, number, and magnificence of London’s churches was not taken by contemporaries as a sign of other-worldliness, but as a thoroughly consistent connection with the rising material progress and the industry, as much as the piety, of her citizens. The local newspapers covered church building projects from the initial announcement to the laying of the cornerstone through to the opening, dedication, and subsequent renovation with great interest and as significant civic events. These occasions were not of importance only for the congregations directly involved but for all citizens. This was part of the public life of the city. The *Free Press* reported with enthusiasm the decision of St Paul’s Vestry to donate \$4,000 toward Anglican Bishop Isaac Hellmuth’s plan to erect a new

¹¹ Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 151.

¹² Commercial buildings varied a great deal; however, the dominant style was Victorian Italianate, see Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture*, 566. For illustrations of commercial buildings in London at this time see especially Archie Bremner, *City of London, Ontario, Canada: The Pioneer Period and the London of Today*, 2nd (London: London Printing and Lithography Co., 1900; London Public Library Board, 1967), illustrations accompanying chapter 3 and Fred Landon, “London in Later Times,” in *The Province of Ontario: A History, 1615-1927*, eds. Jesse Edgar Middleton and Fred Landon (Toronto: Dominion Publishing Co., 1927), facing 1066 and 1072.

Cathedral in memory of the late Bishop Benjamin Cronyn.¹³ This was taken as a particularly magnanimous offer in that it would result in St Paul's losing its status as the Diocesan seat. Yet the *Free Press* viewed this as the civic duty of the parishioners of St Paul's.

The congregation at St. Paul's sustains the Bishop of Huron in his public spirited undertaking by a donation of \$4,000. This is as it should be. We [live] in an era of public improvement, and if we would keep pace as a community with it, we must all be prepared to do our share toward helping it along.¹⁴

Reading this, one might suspect the Bishop's public spirited undertaking to be some public amenity (the Western University,¹⁵ for instance) rather than the construction of an Anglican Cathedral. The *Free Press* believed that monies expended on a church were in the public interest, but that church buildings should not be financed from the public purse.

In a similar vein, promotional literature on London, which was published to enhance civic pride and to attract both citizens and investment, featured the Gothic churches as evidence of the progressive and prosperous environment the city provided.¹⁶ The link between spiritual virtues and material progress was imaged in stone and brick (and in the poorer suburbs, clapboard). Improved church buildings were connected with other signs of progress. At church dedications and annual meetings it was standard practice to recall the days when services were held in log houses or in the open air. London's church growth was part of a wider and larger narrative of national progress.¹⁷ At the annual meeting of Queen's Avenue Methodist in 1879 Rev. Rice of Brantford "rejoiced in the growing culture of the country, and the great advantage of the present time for the education of the young, both spiritually and mentally." The evidence of this was

¹³ On Hellmuth's ambitious building plans, see Alfred H. Crowfoot, *This Dreamer: Life of Isaac Hellmuth, Second Bishop of Huron* (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1963), 50-3 and Orlo Miller, *Gargoyles and Gentlemen: A History of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1966), 81-9.

¹⁴ "The Proposed Cathedral," *FP*, 7 November 1871, p. 3.

¹⁵ Another of Hellmuth's ambitions, see Crowfoot, *This Dreamer*, chapter 9.

¹⁶ See *London, Ontario, Its Advantages and Attractions: As a place of Residence, Business, Investment and Manufacturing*, (London, H.C. Allison, 1892) and *A Souvenir of London, the Beautiful Forest City of the Canadian Dominion* (London: Cooper and Sanders, 1893).

material advancement accompanied by spiritual development – Rice referred to “a great spiritual growth in the church, as well as a great advancement in the substantial buildings and comfortable furnishings.”¹⁸

Church dedications, and the celebrations that surrounded them, were not only religious occasions but civic ones. Local politicians typically participated in these ceremonies. They represented the blessing of the community on the proceedings along side the clergy who invoked the blessing of God. A social meeting, held at Town Hall, conducted a mock election for Reeve as a fund-raiser for the new Anglican mission in London East. The current Reeve, Mr. A.M. Ross, was in attendance and was prevailed upon to stand for election. Ross won handily and the entertainment provided an interesting mix of religious and political symbols and languages. In his acceptance speech, Mr. Ross expressed his pleasure that the “cause of the church was prospering in the village” as he shared the conviction, so often repeated, “that wherever churches were placed and prosperity attended them, the community did well.” Thus, the founding of St. Luke’s was a sign that “better days would yet dawn in their municipality.” Mr. Ross then donated the cake, which was his prize, to St. Luke’s Sunday School for their Christmas party. The proceeds of the voting earned \$30.50 in cash, and St. Luke’s was launched with civic and ecclesiastical honours.¹⁹

The public nature of religious ceremonies extended beyond the participation of politicians. In June 1875 the Congregational Church laid the cornerstone for their new building. Mayor Benjamin Cronyn, prominent Anglican and son of the first Bishop of Huron, was given the honour of pronouncing the stone “well and truly laid, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.” There was an ecumenical feel to the whole event as clergy representing the Wesleyans,

¹⁷ See G.M. Innes, “History of the Parish of St. Paul’s” (TRC) and “Good-bye to the Old Church,” *FP*, 5 August 1889, p. 5 and “History of the Oldest Methodist Church in Western Ontario bearing the Grand Historic Name, “Queen’s Avenue,” London, 30 July 1895 (TRC).

¹⁸ “Queen’s Avenue Methodist, Anniversary Services and Organ Recital,” *Advertiser (Ad)*, 4 February 1879, p. 1.

¹⁹ “St. Luke’s Church, London East,” *FP*, 4 December 1875, p. 4.

Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, and New Connexion confessions all brought greetings and fraternal blessings on the new work of the Congregationalists. The Mayor spoke for the community and echoed the words of the clergy in stating that his “deep interest in the welfare” of the project they were launching was “in common with all good citizens.”²⁰ Furthermore, he expressed his “delight in being present at the commencement of an edifice devoted to Christian work which would be an ornament to the city and a monument of the liberality and progressiveness of the congregation.”²¹ The advance of the city of London, this occasion proclaimed, would be enhanced by the Christian work of local congregations and the fraternal unity represented by the clergy, led on the political front by prominent Christian laymen such as Mayor Cronyn.

In 1875 Rev. John Kay was stationed by the London conference to the declining former New Connexion church on Clarence Street. The union of the New Connexion with the Wesleyans in the previous year had been disastrous for the congregation. New Connexion loyalists, who had travelled from all over the city to worship at Clarence Street, now found it more convenient to worship at the newly united church closest to their homes. To make matters worse, the somewhat outdated “out of repair” building had now to compete for adherents with nearby Queen’s Avenue, the largest and most prosperous of the Methodist churches in the city. In May of 1875 the Quarterly Board decided to sell the current building and move to a new location to the south and east. Upon taking up the pastorate Kay organised a joint meeting of the Queen’s Avenue, Dundas Street, and Clarence Street boards to chart a course for the future. On 7 September 1875, it was jointly agreed that a new building be located on a lot at the corner of

²⁰ “The New Congregational Church,” *FP*, 15 June 1875, p. 4. For an account of preparations for this event see “Congregationalism: A Brief Retrospect of Thirty-eight Years’ Work,” *FP*, 14 June 1875, p. 4.

²¹ “Beginning the New Church,” *Ad*, 15 June 1875, p. 1. The *FP* reporter’s version of the speech quoted here runs as follows: “when the object was to disseminate the Gospel, and promote the work of Christianity, he entertained a hearty sympathy in such designs as was now before them in laying the foundation stone of an edifice whose beauty and proportions would be a credit to the congregation and an honour to the city. (Hear, hear)” “The New Congregational Church,” *FP*, 15 June 1875, p. 4.

Wellington and Grey Streets.²² This relocation, and the significant events and the meanings attributed to the project along the way, revealed some of the interweaving of the spiritual and the material in church building.

The building of a new church was not undertaken simply as a building project, it was to be a source of spiritual recommitment and renewal. This was stated in the “Intentions and Purpose” signed by Rev. John Kay on behalf of “each and everyone who may ... be connected with the earnest promotion of this undertaking” to guide their efforts in building a new church.

It is hereby recorded that the intentions and purpose of the promotion of this Church enterprise is solely the glory of God in the extension of his cause, by the conversion and salvation of men. For this we solemnly dedicate to Him our time, energy, means, and whatever we have and are, and for the furtherance of this purpose we look for the guidance of an all-wise providence, and for the baptism of the Holy Spirit to prosecute it, to the completion of the buildings, and through all time, in promoting the glorious work of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ...²³

The new church was to provide a focus and venue for the work of Christ. It was to be an outpost of the Kingdom by which the rule of God would be extended. Thus, it was essential for church members to dedicate themselves anew to the work of Christ.

At the laying of the cornerstone for the new church on 26 May 1876, the themes of spiritual and material advance were linked in a speech by Toronto Member of Parliament John Macdonald. It was Mr. Macdonald’s conviction that the building being constructed was to be God’s house, set aside for religious ordinances. In his view, the sacred nature of this space should be preserved from desecration in the form of soirees, lectures, and, presumably, election cakes. Churches, embodying this sacred separation from the mundane, were increasingly obvious in cityscapes. Mr. Macdonald suggested that the nineteenth century had seen four eras of Canadian church architecture: first the log churches, then plain clapboard buildings, then the brick meeting houses with circular windows, and now the “more pretentious” Gothic structures “fitted out with [their] uprearing spires and internal accommodation.” This change was all for the good.

²² The reasons for the move and the new building from the Quarterly Board Minutes, May 1875, reprinted in “The History of Wellington St. United Church” (TRC), 1-2

Macdonald continued: “And it is well worthy of notice that, as church architecture improved, so has church membership improved.”²⁴ The causal relationship between improved architecture and the quality of church members was not made clear, but the public, here represented by a public official, measured spiritual progress in terms of the material change represented in the growing dominance of Gothic-inspired churches. While Macdonald regarded lectures and soirees as too “secular” for the house of God, the “pretentious” quality of church buildings was evidence of an improved church membership.

On 17 December 1876, the Wellington Street building was ready for dedication to the work outlined in the “Intention.” The building would seat between 700 and 800. Conference reports put the membership at 200 and numbered the congregation at 600. The purchase of the land, construction, and furnishings had cost approximately \$15,000, which put it at about the average in terms of capital expenditure among London’s churches at this time (see Appendix A). From the sale of the former building on Clarence Street to the YMCA, along with early subscriptions, some \$6,500 had been raised by the date set for dedication. Rev. Kay and the Board of Wellington Street Methodist broke with the tradition of inviting a Conference luminary to address the congregation and invited instead Rev. Dr. Ives of Auburn, New York, who had assisted nearly 1,000 churches in clearing their debt under similar circumstances. His “excellent sermon” on Sunday morning was followed by a remarkably successful fund-raising drive that, by the evening service, had accumulated subscriptions totalling \$10,390. Wellington Street Methodist Church was dedicated debt free that evening and both the *Advertiser* and the *Free Press* published the names of the subscribers in Monday’s edition (see Table 1). The content of Dr. Ives’ sermon bears some consideration since it gives some indication as to how he motivated people to support the church building fund. Granted much of the success of this fund-raising

²³ Quoted from the Minutes in Wellington Street United Church, London, Ontario, Bulletin Insert, 1967 (TRC).

²⁴ “Methodism: The New Church on Wellington Street,” *Ad*, 27 May 1876, p. 1. The theme of the progress of Methodism is a popular one. Another reflection on the theme see the comments of Rev. Dr. Rice, “Queen’s Avenue Methodist,” *Ad*, 4 February 1879, p. 1.

venture must be credited to the careful preparation of Rev. John Kay who ensured that large donors, who were not members of Wellington Street, would be present and prepared to give. Nevertheless, the contribution of Dr. Ives's motivational sermon cannot be discounted. He urged the London congregation to see their work and their giving to the church as part of God's postmillennial plan for the future in which "all things seemed possible" if everyone was willing to do their part.

Table 1. Subscriptions to Wellington Street Methodist – 17 December 1876

NUMBER	AMOUNT	TOTAL
7	500	\$ 3500
5	300	1500
5	200	1000
2	150	300
18	100	1800
20	50	1000
3	30	90
28	25	700
Many more	Small amounts	500
88	Totals	\$ 10390

Source: "Church Opening: New Methodist Church, Wellington Street," *FP*, 18 December 1876, p. 4

The sermon sought to explore "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ."²⁵ The common evangelical theme of salvation overcoming human depravity through Christ was at the centre of Ives's message. Salvation, conceived in individualistic terms, was what everyone in the world needed. Echoing Augustine and Pascal, Ives presented human need as a private interior void to be filled. "There is a faith want in all human hearts and none but the gospel can fill it." The means of meeting this need (not surprisingly given the occasion) was by building churches dedicated to "the preaching of the Word," the primary means of bringing the world to God. Although this task was large and difficult, Ives assured his audience that its ultimate success was sure, for "an open Bible will break...down" all obstacles. However, Christians must respond to this need actively. It was incumbent upon the "true Christian" to "do something to send abroad

the glad tiding of great joy to all the earth.” This work of presenting the gospel of salvation, Ives reminded them, was “what the churches are formed for.”

The evidence Ives provided that this glorious gospel of Christ was what the world needed was all around his hearers. Canada itself served as a striking example of the near triumph of the Kingdom. Ives appealed to patriotic pride in a Christian nation: “This country would be no better than any other, but for its free institutions, both religious and political, incident on the establishing of Christianity.” This suggestion that Canadian freedoms were incident on the “establishing of Christianity” mixed voluntary and establishment vocabularies and made the widely accepted point that democratic freedoms were founded on religious principles. But the evidence of the advance of the gospel was not limited to abstract freedoms. Economic and technological developments also provided evidence of Christ’s saving work in the world. Commenting on the Centennial Exhibition recently concluded in Philadelphia, Ives reported the clear superiority of exhibits from Christian nations. Those nations in which “Christianity was comparatively unknown” displayed “goods of a comparatively worthless character.” However, “articles that were useful and scientific, and machinery that required intellect and development of mind” were to be found at the exhibits of the “Christian nations.” Western science and technology were evidence of the economic and intellectual benefits of the advance of the gospel.²⁶

Once it filled the interior void in individual human persons, the spiritual message of the gospel would give rise to political and economic progress. Ives thus presented a very material vision of the victory of God’s Kingdom, but one that found its meaning within the biblical narrative of sin and salvation. He attributed progress in Canada and around the world to the glory of Christ’s gospel. However, Ives warned his London audience not to presume upon the benefits without giving due attention to their spiritual responsibilities.

²⁵ 2 Corinthians 4:4

²⁶ Ives recognised that not all science served this purpose. He referred to “some men” who link human origins to the baboon or monkey but considered this view not even worthy of a reply given the testimony of Scripture. Evolutionary science and higher criticism were minor irritants but did not present a challenge to viewing scientific advance within a narrative grounded in an authoritative Bible.

This gospel unfolds to us the future, and but for it the future would have been dark indeed. But time is short. Whatsoever our hand findeth to do, therefore, let us do it with all our might. The gospel reveals to the Christian soldier a glorious reward; but we must fight the battle if we would gain the crown.²⁷

Building a church on Wellington Street in London, Ontario, was what their hand needed to be doing on this Sunday morning in 1876. By taking up the challenge and subscribing to the debt on this building “Christian soldiers” were participants in this glorious future which was local, but world-wide; which was personal, but issued in social, political, and economic advance. The enthusiasm generated by this vision of what could be done motivated 88 people to pledge amounts from \$25.00 to \$500.00 and many more to contribute smaller amounts to God’s future.

The appeal to the future was not just a device of professional fund-raisers. The cogency of Ives’s presentation arose from his use of themes and language which had currency with his London audience. Millennial expectation provided a chronological perspective from which to evaluate the past and work toward the future.²⁸ A local exponent of this teleological perspective was the much-loved Methodist preacher who had retired to London, Rev. D.G. Sutherland. He was a regular at special occasions of churches, even those outside his own denomination. At the Annual Tea Meeting of the Queen’s Avenue Methodist Church in 1885, Sutherland reviewed the present and future significance of large and well appointed church buildings. With Wesley, Sutherland believed that “Christian religion tended to temporal prosperity” and because of this suggested it was appropriate that “ religion should be supported with temporal resources.” The size and luxury of this “House of God” indicated to all who saw it that the Methodists of London took their religious duties seriously. Church building could not be focused only on current requirements. The narrative of eschatological advance required building

²⁷ “Church Opening: New Methodist Church, Wellington Street,” *FP*, 18 December 1876, p 4. Also see the much briefer *Ad* account. “Methodism: Formal Dedication of the Wellington Street Church,” *Ad*, 18 December 1876, p 1.

²⁸ Westfall, *Two Worlds*, chapter 6; Timothy L. Smith, “Righteousness and Hope: Christian Holiness and the Millennial Vision in America, 1800-1900,” *American Quarterly* 31 (1979); and Richard Allen, “Providence to Progress: The Migration of an Idea in English Canadian Thought,” in *Religion/Culture: Comparative Canadian Studies*, ed. William Westfall, Louis Rousseau, Fernand Harvey, and John Simpson (Ottawa: Association for Canadian Studies/Association des études canadiennes, 1985)

for the future. With eyes focused on the expectation of the full conversion of all persons in the city, Rev. Sutherland predicted, "There would be more churches required for the millennium, and more room if the people of this city all attended."²⁹ The seating capacity of the churches needed to accommodate not only current congregants, but the whole civic population. The claim to public authority grew out of the sure conviction that the "faith want" of all Londoners would soon be met with the gospel. The advance of this gospel was visually evident in Gothic churches. But the millennial expectation also subsumed scientific and economic progress, which were visually represented with architectural reference to Italian Renaissance forms, into this narrative as evidence of the coming Kingdom. The claim of the churches was not to displace the secular visually or culturally, but to anchor material advance within a spiritual vision. The millennial vision integrated the spiritual and material in a future yet to be realised.

Church buildings as the evidence of spiritual progress was one major theme at church dedications. The physicality of the buildings represented the presence of the Kingdom and showed that spiritual advance was keeping pace with commercial advance. However, an equally popular integrating theme down-played and, at points, denied the significance of the physical building. This view of the relationship between the physical and spiritual relied upon the Biblical imagery of Jesus Christ as the foundation of the new and spiritual temple, the Church. Foundation imagery was, quite appropriately, popular at church dedications. Preaching at the dedication of Adelaide Street Baptist Church in London East, Dr. J.H. Castle, Principal of McMaster Hall, took as his text: "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."³⁰ Dr. Castle reviewed the focus of Israel's worship of God in the tabernacle and then the temple, indicating that these physical edifices looked forward to the perfect temple, which was Jesus Christ. No longer does God's presence dwell in buildings, but "the church of Christ and the individuals composing it are represented as the temple and habitation

²⁹ "Queen's Avenue Church," *FP*, 27 January 1885, p. 8.

³⁰ Ephesians 2:20,22; "Dedicated. Opening of the Adelaide Street Baptist Church," *Ad*, 2 March 1885, p. 5.

of God, consecrated to His service.” The true church built on Jesus was not bricks or stone but the people themselves. The holiness and consecration which characterised the holy buildings in the scriptures was to characterise all the people of God. God’s work in building the church was not finished, but Dr. Castle assured his listeners that its completion was certain. However Dr. Castle’s sermon demonstrated quite a different sense of eschatological movement than did those of the two preachers cited above. The progress to which Dr. Castle referred was internal and spiritualised: political and economic structures would not accompany the development of the church but would be superseded by it.

[T]he church of God is being built upon the plan of salvation. It is true the church is not yet finished, but it is daily growing in strength and power. The Divine Architect is now executing His own grand plans through His church; and although it might be a 100 years hence, the church was sure to become perfect and complete without spot, wrinkle or blemish, because it is God’s temple, and He will not leave it unfinished. Nations, governments and earthly powers have passed away; the only institution which is intended to be perfect and everlasting is the church of the living God.³¹

This spiritualised theology of the church was not limited to Baptists. Anglican Bishop Maurice Baldwin also drew on this form of discourse in a sermon on Jesus’s challenge to his opponents: “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”³² In this text, Baldwin explained, Jesus was referring to his body as the temple and to his resurrection three days after the crucifixion. The sacred role of the physical temple in Jerusalem as the focus of worship was transferred to Jesus and, after his ascension, to the church. Baldwin, like Castle, argued that the death and resurrection of Jesus, key elements in the evangelical understanding of the Atonement, transfer the ancient significance of sacred space to the sanctified lives of the followers of Jesus. Church dedication, as Baldwin preached it, was not primarily the celebration of a building set apart for religious purposes. It was a reminder to Christians that they were a living temple. From this theological point, Baldwin moved to a typically evangelical call to commitment.

[The] temple was raised by Christ Himself, eternal and unchanging. He was the corner stone, and the temple was built of living stones, men and women, redeemed

³¹ Ibid.

³² John 2:13; “St. George’s Church, London West,” *FP*, 24 November 1890, p. 5.

by His blood and sanctified by God for the builder's use. Let them ask themselves if they were a part of this holy structure; unless they were sanctified and consecrated by the power of God's spirit they had neither part nor lot in it. The way to it was by blood, ... the blessed blood of the Saviour, which cleanseth from all sin.... [T]he men and women who would be built into this temple of our Lord and Saviour, [must] be consecrated to His service, holding everything even life itself, as at His service. He asked them to examine their lives and see if they were His in all things.³³

This theology of the church rejected the view that some buildings and places were more sacred than others. It was the lives of the women and men who made up the congregations that were holy and set apart to God's service. The implication of this view should have been that the appearance of the church building was irrelevant. Yet the churches being dedicated by Castle and Baldwin used the same conventions to indicate their purpose as Wellington Street and the Congregational church. The vocabulary of the Gothic style served to identify a church, but the meaning of the building varied among Protestants and, one suspects, even among adherents of the same churches. The large and beautifully finished late Victorian churches were at once evidence of the material prosperity that had been brought to the city by religious faith, of the Christian commitment of Londoners, of centres for Christian service and evangelism, and of the real church, the individuals sanctified by the grace of God, whose meeting places they were. Yet a building could be none of these. Dr. William McLaren, Professor of Systematic Theology at Knox College in Toronto, celebrated the building of Knox Presbyterian Church, London South, as a service for God. However, he warned that having a beautiful building was not enough. He had witnessed "beautiful churches with large congregations which were spiritually weak and spiritually poor, and really did almost nothing to advance the work of God." His hope for this church was that it "might be the means of inducing many people to give their hearts to God."³⁴ For most of London's Protestants, the purpose of building churches was to induce people to give their hearts of God. The resources expended on new and larger church buildings could not guarantee spiritual

³³ Ibid For Baldwin on a similar theme see "God's Foundation, An eloquent sermon by the Bishop of Huron," *FP*, 12 November 1888, p. 5.

³⁴ "Dedication: Opening of Knox Church London South," *Ad*, 15 September 1884, p. 3

strength. However, it is clear that in building the new Dominion of Canada, late Victorian Londoners imprinted the emblems of the Kingdom of God on their cityscape.

Building St. Peter's

The most impressive and expensive church building to be erected in London during this period was the Roman Catholic St. Peter's Cathedral. Begun in 1880, the building was designed by Irish-Canadian architect Joseph Connolly in the French Gothic style, and it continues to have a significant place in the Canadian variant of the Victorian Gothic revival.³⁵ St. Peter's represented a significantly different use of resources than was the case in Protestant church building practice. In 1881 there were 32 churches of the five major Protestant denominations providing a church for every 502 persons identified with these groups in that year's census. The ratio varied by denomination with the Methodists and Baptists providing a building for every 310 and 295 religionist respectively, and the Anglicans and Presbyterians lagging behind significantly with 929 and 814. The perception that there was a Protestant church on every street corner held a measure of truth.³⁶ On the other hand, the Catholics had only two churches, the small frame mission church of St. Mary's and St. Peter's serving London's 3,200 Catholics. However, the new Cathedral, costing more than \$150,000 exclusive of the furnishings or the organ, defined the sacred visually and materially in a way the Protestant efforts merely hinted at. If the Protestant strategy was to extend the presence of the sacred throughout the city as it expanded, the Catholics relied on one great monument to point the whole city, indeed the whole diocese, to the divine.

The building of St. Peter's was a major accomplishment for the Catholics of London. They celebrated each milestone in the church's construction, beginning with the laying of the cornerstone in May 1881 and culminating in the dedication of the Cathedral and the installation of the \$15,000 organ in 1885. In May of 1886, five years after the laying of the

³⁵ Malcolm Thurlby, "The Irish-Canadian Pugin: Joseph Connolly," *Irish Arts Review* 3 (1986)

³⁶ By 1891 the ratio of church buildings to religionists had dropped to 1:476 for the five major Protestant denominations.

cornerstone, the new altar stone was laid and consecrated. These events and the celebrations which accompanied them provided local Catholics occasions to celebrate their growing strength and for their leaders to invest the building of St. Peter's with meaning. The ceremonies of dedication – for the cornerstone, the building, and of the altar – visually and physically set apart this space as sacred and as the embodiment of Catholicism. The long and carefully reported sermons preached on these occasions gave cognitive content to the ceremony and interpreted the building for Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

The dedication of the Cathedral in June 1885 captured the attention of the entire city as special trains brought Catholics from every part of the diocese to London. Visiting dignitaries representing North American Catholicism, and processions through the streets of the city by a variety of Catholic associations and benevolent societies, proclaimed the strength, the respectability, and the importance of Catholics to London, and indeed all of southwestern Ontario.³⁷ Although politicians and other civic leaders were present, particularly at the dedication service and the banquet which followed, they took no public part as was typical on Protestant occasions. This was a public celebration shared with the whole city, but a profoundly religious one. The only speakers at any of the events marking the building of St. Peter's were Catholic clergy. However, care was taken to acknowledge the presence of non-Catholics and particularly those who had contributed financially to the building. Bishop Walsh emphasised that St. Peter's was a tribute not only to Catholics but also to the spirit of good will and religious harmony that characterised the city.

There are also here today several of our esteemed Protestant fellow-citizens, whose liberality and kindness are beyond all praise, and whose good will and friendship have never been wanting to me during the many years I have spent in this city. There is not a city with which I am acquainted whose citizens are more distinguished for tolerance, liberality, good neighborliness, and for the gracious kindness and sweet charities of life, than are the citizens of London, and I am glad

³⁷ On the public importance of the parade see Mary Ryan, "The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth-Century Social Order," in *The New Cultural History*, ed Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989)

of this opportunity to bear my public testimony of this fact, so creditable to this city and its people, irrespective of creed or race.³⁸

The beauty and grandeur of St. Peter's represented, the Bishop suggested, not only the strength of Catholic faith, but also the civic virtue which allowed Catholics and Protestants to flourish as fellow citizens (if not as fellow Christians). St. Peter's had not been built to overshadow the Protestant houses of worship, but to compete with what was, perhaps, a shared enemy, the temples of mammon. The Bishop was convinced that the need for a building like St. Peter's would be understood by Christians "in a material age, when great and colossal structures are raised for the purposes of commerce and the worship of Mammon." St. Peter's was not built for material purposes, but "for the glory of God and of His Christ, the honor of Holy Church and sanctification of immortal souls." However, "this beautiful and stately temple" would overshadow every structure built for a lesser purpose, materially imaging God's glory above the worship of mammon.³⁹

In the sermon that he preached at the laying of St Peter's cornerstone, Archbishop Lynch of Toronto was not primarily concerned to contrast church architecture with secular, but to focus on the theological purpose of church buildings. Lynch reminded those assembled of the grandeur of Solomon's temple where God dwelt with his people. Solomon's temple, in all its ancient glory, represented the old covenant, while in St. Peter's "the greater mercies and more graces" of the new covenant were available.⁴⁰ These mercies and graces were embodied in the sacraments. The sacraments linked the current congregation to the historic life of the church and to future generations who would celebrate God's grace in this building. Most importantly, it was the celebration of the Eucharist as the sacrifice of the new covenant that would give St. Peter's its significance in the lives of the faithful. Lynch believed St. Peter's would be worthy to bare

³⁸ "A Noble Edifice: Crowning Work of Bishop Walsh's Life," *FP*, 29 June 1885, p. 4.

³⁹ "A Noble Edifice: Crowning Work of Bishop Walsh's Life," *FP*, 29 June 1885, p. 5.

⁴⁰ "A New Cathedral," *FP*, 23 May 1881, p. 3.

witness of this sacred event and the “the indwelling of Christ in the Holy Sacrament will make this temple greater than that of Solomon’s.”⁴¹

St. Peter’s was a monument to civic harmony and the respectability attained by London’s Catholic population. It was a worthy temple for the glory of God and the administration of the sacraments, and all of this had been accomplished by the faith of a poor and beleaguered minority. The first and the last of these meanings invested in the stones of St. Peter’s were somewhat at odds; however, few speakers on these occasions could resist reference to the great accomplishment made by people without social power or material wealth. Speaking at the dedication service, Bishop McQuaid of Rochester, New York, reviewed the difficulties encountered by the Catholics in North America. They had entered without position or power. The faith of the ordinary people, without state support or the contributions of the wealthy, accomplished the construction of great Cathedrals such as St. Peter’s.⁴² This theme was taken up by Archbishop Lynch at the consecration of the altar in 1886. The Bishop “rejoiced in the mercy of God and in the progress of the church, especially when the cost was defrayed by the savings of those who worked by the sweat of their brow.”⁴³

The importance of St. Peter’s was directly connected to the faith of the people and this theme, perhaps, had the greatest rhetorical force for the audience. The leaders of North American Catholicism commended the Catholics of the diocese for their faith and religious zeal. According to Bishop Walsh, the “Cathedral is the expression in stone of the great zeal and love for religion of the whole diocese.”⁴⁴ Bishop McQuaid reminded the congregation that “God ... does

⁴¹ “A New Cathedral,” *FP*, 23 May 1881, p. 3. Also see Bishop O’Mahoney’s sermon on the “Sacrifice of the Mass” on the occasion of the consecration of the new altar in May 1886, “St. Peter’s Cathedral: Consecrating the New Altar,” *FP*, 24 May 1886, p. 3. Brian Clarke emphasises the significance of the sacraments to the renewal of Irish Catholic devotion in Toronto, Brian P. Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*, 55-8.

⁴² “A Noble Edifice: Crowning Work of Bishop Walsh’s Life,” *FP*, 29 June 1885, p. 4

⁴³ “St. Peter’s Cathedral: Consecrating the New Altar,” *FP*, 24 May 1886, p. 3.

⁴⁴ “A Noble Edifice: Crowning Work of Bishop Walsh’s Life,” *FP*, 29 June 1885, p. 4 This same theme was taken up by Rev. Dr. Kilroy of Stratford at special services blessing the new organ installed at St. Peter’s, “Blessing the New Organ,” *FP*, 9 November 1885, p. 3.

not need this temple.” The benefits of this work offered as a gift to God would come back to them. St. Peter’s not only reflected the religious zeal of Catholics but would strengthen their faith as well. As McQuaid expressed it, “the people’s faith need[s] this solid and enduring testimony to show their love for God and their trust in Him.”⁴⁵ The Cathedral was not only a reminder to Catholics of their faith but it also stood as a witness to the Faith. Like William Westfall’s Protestants, Archbishop Lynch considered the Cathedral a “sermon in stone.” “The cross will be placed on the lofty pinnacles of the towers of this church, to preach to all who pass this way the glad tidings of redemption by Him who died on the cross.”⁴⁶

The Protestant and Catholic reflections on the significance of church buildings varied in interesting ways. Protestant interpreted the growing number and increasing grandeur of their churches as a sign of God’s blessing. Protestant advance was evidence that the Kingdom of God was soon to be revealed. In contrast, St. Peter’s was presented as a gift of faith from the people to the glory of God. These differences also manifested themselves in the dedication ceremonies of the two groups. In the Protestant services many of the references to God’s blessing focused on raising money to pay for the building. The Catholic service did not allow such appeals to intrude; its focus was on the glory of God and the gift of faith. The Protestant belief in the coming of the Kingdom was closely linked to the technological and commercial changes in society as illustrated in the sermon of Dr. Ives. These were woven together into a Protestant triumphalism in which Victorian Gothic churches stood along beside Neoclassical banks and Italianate commercial buildings as evidence of the influence of Christian virtue. The Catholic rhetoric was more introspective, interpreting St. Peter’s as evidence of their growing respectability and assured place in the society of London and southwestern Ontario.

All the churches built in London during this period were Gothic, but it is clear from listening to the meanings articulated at public celebrations that “Gothic” carried a variety of meanings. In St. Peter’s, the Gothic style created a distinctively Christian sacred space in which

⁴⁵ Ibid.

the new covenant of God's grace was represented in the sacrifice of the Eucharist. The great Cathedral, like Solomon's Temple, set this space aside as sacred unto God. However, few Protestants would regard their churches in this way. Many, particularly the evangelically inclined, rejected the idea that some places were more sacred than others. Under the new covenant, as they understood it, God did not dwell in temples but in his people. The sacred reality of the church was not the building, but the sanctified lives of the members. Churches were understood to be places for getting things done rather than sanctuaries for sacramental mysteries. Protestants considered church buildings to be dedicated to the work of the Lord, and the utilitarian needs of his Kingdom. The space required for the Sunday schools, social meetings, and an array of church-based societies taxed the ingenuity of architects who were expected to adapt the form to function.⁴⁷ The Gothic form seemed somewhat at odds both with the ecclesiology and the practical needs of Protestants. The Protestants of London were less intent on using Gothic architecture to dominate the cityscape than were the Catholics. Protestant churches were dedicated to the sacred activity by which God's sanctified people served him. This activity was not centralised but was dispersed throughout the city as new churches were built in the suburbs. Gothic references in a building identified it as a church rather than a bank, a store, or a warehouse. Many churches, especially those in residential areas, blended in with their surroundings, representing faith as an element of everyday life.⁴⁸ Gothic architecture successfully imaged Christian faith in the public space of the streetscape, both to dominate and compete with the temples of mammon and integrate sacred action with the mundane activities of working, raising children, and interacting with neighbours. The evidence from London bears out Westfall's suggestion that the Ontario Protestants' turn to Gothic forms was related to their rejection of church establishment as the best way of making the province

⁴⁶ Quoted in John Coffey, *The City and Diocese of London* (London, 1885), 47.

⁴⁷ Westfall, "Church Architecture and Urban Space."

⁴⁸ Gothic and Romanesque forms were common in residential construction, especially in the homes of the wealthy, see John Talbot Jackson, "The House as a Visual Indicator of Social Status Change: The Example of London, Ontario, 1861 to 1915," (M.A. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1973).

Christian.⁴⁹ Their lack of official status did not quell the establishment impulse to shape the public life of society. This claim was made in stone and brick (and clapboard) and was shaped in pointed windows, towers, and spires that spoke, albeit in many voices, of the guiding presence of Christian religion.

Worship, Music, and Liturgy

While the size and elegance of London's churches varied from church to church, the shape and architectural appointments of each place of worship were remarkably similar. From the outside, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church could be mistaken for one of the wood frame Methodist mission churches. Nothing obvious distinguished Talbot Street Baptist from the brick Anglican churches. It was, rather, what happened inside each church that indicated denominational particularity. The purpose of the shared practice of public worship was to bring people into the presence of God, but the ways the various groups saw fit to accomplish this goal reflected the theological and liturgical differences among them.

The clearest and most definite division was between Catholic and Protestant approaches to worship. In London there was none of the Anglo-Catholic tradition which represented a medial position and had caused dissension in the Diocese of Toronto.⁵⁰ Bishop Cronyn fought hard and successfully to establish his diocese on firmly Evangelical ground, and his successors through the 1890s followed the path he set. Thus, the division was fairly clear between Catholics who regarded the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice to be the primary vehicle for worship and the experience of God's presence and Protestants who believed access to God was primarily through preaching of the Word of God. The interior design of the various churches clearly illustrated this fundamental difference. In Catholic churches the altar was featured

⁴⁹ But Gothic spoke more than the language of dominance. Westfall's interest in the larger and more authentic Gothic monuments caused him to miss the meaning of the less imposing examples.

⁵⁰ H.E. Turner, "Protestantism and Progress: the Church Association of the Diocese of Toronto," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 22 (1980) and Frank Peake, "Unity and Discord: A Study of Anglican Tensions in 19th Century Ontario," in *Some Men and Some Controversies*, ed. Richard Ruggle (Erin, Ontario: Press Porcenic, 1974)

prominently in the front and centre. The sacred mystery of the Mass was removed physically from the worshippers to illustrate the significance of the priestly role in administering the sacrament. Protestant churches had a pulpit or lectern front and centre, and this provided the focus of attention for worshippers. Typically the communion table or holy table (not designated as the altar) was situated immediately below the pulpit and held a Bible, often open.

Attention to the physical layout of this interior space reflected differing liturgical traditions. The Catholic service built toward the celebration of the Eucharist. Protestant liturgies, on the other hand, led toward the sermon and the congregational response to the call of God that the sermon represented. Liturgies varied widely from the highly structured Pontifical Mass to the seeming chaos of the Salvation Army Hallelujah Drill. Even the Salvation Army, which considered formal “liturgy” as dry ritual, structured its worship clearly enough that adherents knew what to expect and how to act. The procession of the band through the streets drawing the curious to the “barracks” was followed by singing punctuated by brief testimonials initiated by the leaders but soon taken up by the rank and file, that told of lives of wickedness and dissolution that had been transformed by Jesus. Although a formal sermon was rarely preached, an officer would offer some reflections on scripture and then call for those who were still outside the fold to join in experiencing the joy and renewal testified to by so many. This was followed by more singing and then dispersal.⁵¹ The liturgy of the Mass, based on hundreds of years of Christian practice, carefully led worshippers through confession, absolution, and adoration to participation in the holy meal and dedication to Christian living. The Salvation Army drill was worlds apart in sophistication and gravity, but it also invited those assembled to gather in God’s name. Its singing focused on the glory of God and its testimonies told of the sin that separated humanity from God’s

⁵¹ For early reports of Salvation Army services see “Major Moore, Grand Rally of the Salvation Army on Wellington Street,” *Ad*, 18 July 1882, p. 2; “Saving Souls, What the Salvation Army is Doing,” *FP*, 31 July 1882, p. 4, “Salvation Soldiers’ Spree, Grand Rally of the Corps at the Hallelujah Mess Last Night,” *FP*, 10 October 1882, p. 1 and “The Salvation Army: Hallelujah Jack’s Farewell Address at the City Hall,” *FP*, 16 October 1882, p. 3.

will and offered participation in the grace of God through conversion to a new life and membership in a new community.

Worship in London's Protestant churches generally rejected the formality of the Catholic Mass and the chaos and emotionalism of the Salvation Army service.⁵² All of London's Protestant churches would include music, scripture reading, and prayers (the majority extempore) leading up to a sermon which would typically call for some response or change in the lives of congregants. Liturgical differences would include such things as the dress of clergy and choirs, use of instrumental music and the length and formality of sermons. During the late nineteenth century lay involvement in the service was still common in the mission churches of the Baptists, Methodists, and Anglicans, but rare in the larger downtown congregations. In every case, the authority to which the Protestants would appeal was the Bible. Sermons were to be applications of the scriptures to daily life. This was the most sacred activity of Protestant worship for through it the Word of God spoke directly to those assembled in his name.

Despite the importance of liturgies to the worship of Londoners, there exist few local descriptions of how worship was conducted. In the primary sources for this study, local church records and newspaper reports, little is said about worship. Although reporting on church services was routine in both London's daily newspapers, it typically came under a heading such as "Yesterday's Sermons" or "London's Pulpits". The reporting typically began with a comment on the favourable size of the crowd given the weather,⁵³ and any special characteristics of the occasion which might be of interest. Then the speaker was described with special attention to the quality of his (or, on a handful of occasions, her) voice, and finally the real purpose of the report, a summary or full text of the sermon was given. Reporters took the Protestant perspective that everything leading up to sermon was simply preliminary to the real event. This practice was

⁵² A correspondent to the *Ad* claimed doctrinal sympathy with the Salvation Army but "differed widely with them in their mode of conducting public worship." "'Happy Bill' Cooper's Little Jokes," (let) *Ad*, 18 July 1884, p. 6. Also see the range of clergy response to the Salvation Army, "The Question of the Day, The Clergymen of London and Surroundings," *Ad*, 17 July 1884, pp. 3, 6.

followed even in the reports on Catholic services. The account would give a careful description of the processions, make mention of the celebrant and his assistants, and then dedicate the bulk of the report to recounting the homily. An exception to this rule of moving quickly through everything but the sermon came in the early reports on the Salvation Army, because in this case all of the proceedings seemed so novel that they were worthy of note. Recorders of worship services assumed that those elements which were repeated week after week were not worthy of reporting in newspapers or church records. The exceptions to this silence regarding the elements of worship came when controversies arose.

Fears of ritualism

Perhaps the major recurring issue among Protestants regarding worship was a fear of the encroachment of “ritualism.” Since they desired to preserve the integrity and purity of the Reformation in the face of what they considered to be “papal aggression,” they regarded with suspicion any liturgical practices that even remotely resembled those of the Catholics. London’s Anglicans were particularly vigilant, and any such incursions were quickly labelled ritualism, Tractarianism, and Puseyism.⁵⁴ Many of the issues addressed seem trivial, but the underlying concern serves to illustrate the central values of evangelical Protestant worship.⁵⁵

A letter to the *Advertiser* in June of 1874 from “A Member of St. Paul’s” brought fears of ritualism into the public forum. “A Member of St. Paul’s” was concerned that by intoned responses to the commandments “the choir assumes the liberty of depriving the congregation of following the minister as they would wish.” The choir’s responses took the initiative away from the worshippers “for it is a well known fact that one-half of the music introduced is such that the

⁵³ Inclement weather was worthy of note because it made getting to church more difficult and good weather because of other distractions.

⁵⁴ Brad Fraught, “John Charles Roper and the Oxford Movement in Toronto,” *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 36 (1994) and Christopher F. Headon, “Developments in Canadian Anglican Worship in the Diocese of Toronto, 1850-1879,” *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 17 (1975).

⁵⁵ A member of the Congregational Church raised a concern in February 1877 with singing an “Amen” at the end of hymns. *Congregational Minute Book*, 1 February 1877 (UCA).

congregation can take no part in it whatever.” This resulted in a mediated rather than an immediate experience of worshipping God; the congregation listened while the choir performed. “A Member of St. Paul’s” charged that this practice had nothing to do with worship but was “simply intended for effect and to some extent exhibit the vocal powers of the choir, with but little sincerity appertaining thereto.”⁵⁶ Unwilling to let this criticism stand unchallenged, “A Member of the Choir” responded. First disputing the facts of the original letter, “A Member of the Choir” asserted that the tunes being used were familiar and were intended to assist the congregation, not to discourage response. A defence was made of the importance of music to worship (along with some disparaging remarks about the quality of the organ). More telling was the suggestion that “A Member of St. Paul’s” impugning the sincerity and worshipful intent of the members of the choir was unfair at best and unchristian at worst.⁵⁷

Members of the Anglican Church in London often represented themselves as champions of the Reformation doing battle against those within their own confession who were edging toward a Catholicised approach to worship.⁵⁸ “A Member of St. Paul’s” was not alone in suggesting that “empty pews Sunday after Sunday” indicated something was wrong and that “ritualism” was the culprit. The solution was strict adherence to the rubrics of the Prayer Book which would “guard the church in its purity, and abide by the faith as handed down to us from the reformation by our fathers.”⁵⁹ Although charges of ritualism indicate sensitivity and defensiveness on the part of the Evangelical members, there is no evidence of genuine attempts to establish High Church or Tractarian forms of worship in London during this period.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ A Member of St. Paul’s, “St. Paul’s Church,” (let) *Ad*, 25 June 1874, p. 2.

⁵⁷ A Member of the Choir, “St. Paul’s Cathedral,” (let) *Ad*, 26 June 1874, p. 3.

⁵⁸ J. D. Purdy, *Bright the Vision: The History of the Church of St. John the Evangelist London, Ontario*, 1988, (London: n.p.), 18-20. Purdy characterizes the Anglican concept of Protestantism in the Diocese as follows: “Protestantism, in their minds, was equated with progress, hard work, moral earnestness, manliness, sobriety and all those solid virtues associated with the rise and development of the British people and their immense empire. The Bible, the Prayer Book, sermons, and hymns, were the primary sources of the spirituality of the majority of Anglicans in the late nineteenth century.”

⁵⁹ A Member of St. Paul’s, “St. Paul’s Church,” *Ad*, 25 June 1874, p. 2.

⁶⁰ Purdy, *Bright the Vision*, 21

Fears of ritualism were most prevalent within the Anglican communion due to the internal struggles within that communion, but an approach to worship which encouraged congregational participation was common to Protestants. This bias toward participation was grounded in a theology of the "priesthood of all believers." Speaking at the opening of the new Dundas Street Wesleyan Methodist Church, Rev. J. Gemley reviewed the standard Protestant conviction: "that here we lived in free communion with the Lord. There was no priest to come between the soul and its Redeemer, no mediator but Jesus Christ."⁶¹ Each worshipper was to be ushered into the holy presence of God by full and unmediated participation, at least in the musical parts of the service. The church was portrayed by Dr. Cooper of Talbot Street Baptist as a "building of living stones; a company of men and women united together for the worship of the Saviour, and the observance of His ordinances." This church was "to give light; not only by her teachings but by the life of her members." The service of worship was to bring life and power directly to the lives of the worshippers. Cooper and other evangelical preachers regarded ritual and symbolic acts as inadequate to this task. He argued, "Mere ritual has no shining qualities, and a church service may be severely orderly, while it has no power whatever on the conscience. Living truth in living souls is the only true indication of an Apostolic church."⁶² Preaching was the primary vehicle in the view of London's Protestants for bringing the living truth to living souls. Central to evangelical worship was the conviction that true religion arises out of a deep, immediate, and life changing contact with the divine. Anything in which worshippers could not participate smacked of ritual and Rome. This led to suspicion of any aesthetic element in worship and of anything that evoked mystery or ambiguity. As a result, Protestant worship tended to be flattened into a cognitive experience. However, this tendency was resisted by the expectation, articulated by Cooper, that worship brings life. The tension in Protestant worship was to find ways of overcoming Puritan asceticism while avoiding anything that could be construed as ritualism.

⁶¹ "New Wesleyan Church, Opening Services Yesterday," *FP*, 4 April 1870, p. 3

Catholic worship

The Catholic approach to worship was fundamentally different from its Protestant counterpart. Rather than the sermon, the avenue into the presence of God was the sacrifice of the Mass. For Catholics, the Mass was the “first and most necessary act of religion where by we acknowledge God’s supreme dominion over us and our total dependence on him.”⁶³ It was the duty of every Catholic to attend Mass regularly and to participate thereby in the means of grace. Much effort was expended in encouraging Catholics to participate. The sacred quality of Catholic worship derived from its nature as a sacrifice. Bishop Lynch reminded London’s Catholics that their worship was “no other than the renewal of the great sacrifice which our Lord once offered up on the cross, but continued in an unbloody and mystic manner, with Jesus Christ himself the high priest and the victim.”⁶⁴ The mystery and miracle of the Mass was the real presence of Jesus Christ sacrificed in an “unbloody and mystic manner.” It was by the Mass that merits of the atonement brought by Jesus’ death were applied to the individual soul.⁶⁵ The ritual, which accompanied the Mass, was directed God-ward and conducted by the priests in Latin. The congregation observed and did not actively participate until they received the host at the altar rail. The homily was something of an anticlimax. It provided a time for teaching Catholic doctrine rather than an encounter with the divine as the Protestants would have it.

Protestants rejected the mystery of the continuing sacrifice of Jesus as a superstitious carry-over from the Middle Ages. Bishop O’Mahoney of Toronto maintained that sacrifice was the essence of true worship. Clearly taking aim at the Protestant view of Holy Communion, O’Mahoney argued that where “there is no sacrifice there can be no true worship.” The Protestant rejection of sacrifice undermined the priesthood “for without sacrifice priesthood

⁶² “The Churches Yesterday,” *Ad*, 18 May 1874, p. 3.

⁶³ “The New Altar. Its Consecration Yesterday,” *Ad*, 4 February 1878, p. 1

⁶⁴ “A New Cathedral,” *FP*, 23 May 1881, p. 3.

⁶⁵ The nature of the Mass is the focus of Bishop Walsh’s sermon in farewell to the old St. Peter’s building in 1885. Walsh states “The holy Mass is most certainly the most and august mystery of our holy religion.” Coffey, *The City and Diocese of London*, 55-6.

would be but an empty name.” Thus O’Mahoney portrayed Protestants, quite correctly, as “without sacrifice, priest or altar.” From this perspective, Protestant worship lacked an object. In Catholic worship, on the other hand, human persons were brought into contact with the divine by this sacrifice which “was in itself so sublime, great and perfect that it imposed a great obligation on all, and required concentration of thought and attention.”⁶⁶ It was participation in the Eucharist that ushered the faithful into the presence of God, strengthened faith in Christ and gave rise to Christian living.

Catholics also differed from Protestants in their understanding of how God’s grace was received. Protestants insisted on an unmediated encounter between the individual and the divine. In Catholic practise the priest functioned as mediator between the human and divine. In a sermon on the sacrament of penance, Bishop Walsh retold the parable of the ten lepers:⁶⁷ in healing them “the Blessed Saviour” sent the lepers to the priests, “for God always works through secondary agents.” In applying this truth to the doctrine of penance, Walsh argued that the “only thing which could restore a soul dead in mortal sin was to go to the priest, and if the soul were penitent it would be restored to the grace of God and become again an heir to heaven.”⁶⁸ The grace of God was freely available to all who sought it, Walsh concluded, but grace could only be received from the (Catholic) church and its priests to whom Christ had given the power to bind and loose while he was still on earth.

Music

All of London’s churches used music in worship and many sponsored music and literary societies. These regularly provided musical entertainment, often in support of some work of the church. There was, however, great variety in how music was used in worship. St. Peter’s used a full orchestra in celebrating Mass on special occasions,⁶⁹ while throughout the 1870s St.

⁶⁶ “St. Peter’s Cathedral: Consecrating the New Altar,” *FP*, 24 May 1886, p. 3.

⁶⁷ Luke 17:12ff.

⁶⁸ “St. Mary’s Parish, London, Ontario, 1872-1942” (Diocese of Huron Archives [DHA]), 13

⁶⁹ “The New Altar,” *Ad*, 4 February 1878, p. 1.

Andrew's refused to use instruments even at weekday social meetings.⁷⁰ St. Andrew's position was very much against the grain, for organs were becoming standard in churches as a means of supporting both the choir and congregational singing. The Salvation Army became notorious in the 1880s for its use of brass instruments and the bass drum both in the streets and in the barracks and a number of drummers were jailed for creating a public disturbance with their "music."⁷¹

The Catholics articulated a fairly well-developed theology of music and aesthetics, although they used it in a somewhat defensive manner. Four months after the celebration dedicating St. Peter's, the Cathedral dedicated its organ which had cost \$15,000, more than it had cost to build many of the Protestant churches in the city. On this occasion, Bishop Carberry of Hamilton preached on Jesus' anointing at Bethany.⁷² In the biblical account the disciples protested that the costly perfume should have been sold and the proceeds given to help the poor. In his homily, the Bishop recognised that the disciples' response, particularly that of Judas, was "one of the favorite attacks made on the Christian church in this utilitarian age." Even in London the Bishop suggested,

supporters of the church were surrounded by false reasoning and worldly minded men who would measure the very bounty of God. Such men might say after looking at what the Catholics of this city had done, and looking at the magnificent church which they had erected, that they might have done much better with their money, that there were poor people amongst them, and many other ways in which their money might have been better spent."⁷³

But this was not the true Christian response. Jesus defended the woman who had anointed him, saying she had done a beautiful thing in preparing him for the suffering he must soon endure.

⁷⁰ The congregation voted on the organ issue in 1873 and the majority backed the position of the pastor. "Instrumental Music: The Vote of St. Andrew's Congregation," *FP*, 11 March 1873, p. 3. This, however, did not stop the controversy and in 1875 Scott resigned to take a rural charge in North Bruce

⁷¹ During the summers of 1883 and 1884 the Salvation Army was the subject of local controversy due to their use of the drum. See for example "Six Hundred Drummers' Music on the March—'Dr' Hall Committed for Trial," "Salvation Army's Daughters of Music" (let); and "Law versus Religion," (let) *Ad*, 7 July 1884, p. 1, and "Still Sustained: Aldermen and Citizens Discuss the Army Bylaw," *Ad*, 8 July 1884, p. 4.

⁷² Matthew 26.6-13

⁷³ This view persists in historical scholarship. Lynne Marks' evaluation of the late Victorian church building "craze" echoes these sentiments, Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 56-60.

Only a “utilitarian” perspective that rejected the reality of God could view a gift given to God as a waste. The gift of St. Peter’s that London’s Catholics had given to God was yet not complete as there “remained a few things to be done in the way of beautifying their temple and making it still more fit for the worship of God.” Chief among these was the provision of music, which had now been attended to with the addition of the organ. Music, the bishop argued, “cheered the spirits of mankind under almost all circumstances, and why those who engaged in the salvation of men on earth, whose spirits required to be braced for the great conflict, why should they not strengthen, renew, and justify their hearts with the divine art of harmony, which was heard in the courts of heaven, and was one of the delights of the angels.”⁷⁴ It was worship, prayer, and meditation that empowered all activity in the world. Thus attention to the aesthetic which enriched these experiences was not a diversion of resources but was central to the task of charity and effective service for God. The proliferation of Catholic charitable institutions in this period provides evidence that the Bishop’s defence of the aesthetic had some merit. The widespread revival of Catholic piety included action to relieve the plight of the poor.⁷⁵

Congregational singing had become an increasingly important aspect of Protestant worship during the nineteenth century, and it was well suited to the evangelical approach to worship and spirituality because it encouraged participation.⁷⁶ It is, therefore, not surprising that the late nineteenth century produced a bounty of new hymns that expressed the unmediated experience of the grace of God in the work of Jesus which was so characteristic of

⁷⁴ “Blessing the New Organ,” *FP*, 9 November 1885, p. 3.

⁷⁵ A similar point about church building going hand in hand with support of Catholic charities is made by Bishop McQuaid at the dedication of St. Peter’s, “A Noble Edifice: Crowning Work of Bishop Walsh’s Life,” *FP*, 29 June 1885, pp. 4ff and a decade earlier “Works of Charity, As Viewed by Bishop McQuade Last Night,” *FP*, 7 June 1875, p. 3. Brian P. Clarke, “‘To Bribe the Porters of Heaven’: Poverty, Salvation and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society in Victorian Toronto, 1850-1890,” *CSCH Papers* (1983).

⁷⁶ Margaret A. Filshie, “Sacred Harmonies: The Congregational Voice in Canadian Protestant Worship, 1750-1850,” in *Religion/Culture: Comparative Canadian Studies*, ed. William Westfall, Louis Rousseau, Fernand Harvey, and John Simpson (Ottawa: Association for Canadian Studies/Association des études canadiennes, 1985)

evangelicalism.⁷⁷ In 1870, Congregational divine and liturgical reformer Henry Allon gave a lecture in London, illustrated with a choir, on the importance of congregational song to Protestant worship. The ensuing report in the *Advertiser* mentioned that luminaries from various denominations had been in attendance and it made special note of the presence John Scott, the pastor of St. Andrew's, who would not allow instrumental music in his church. Allon argued for a rehabilitation of the full resources of church music for the present age. "Superstitious" suspicions of beauty in worship, he maintained, had led both ministers and congregations to be "slovenly" with regard to the quality of church music. The Puritan forefathers had "fought an arduous battle" against the degradation of worship, but "they rushed to the extreme of thinking that the opposite of misuse was disuse." Worship could only benefit from the use of hymns "full of devotional feeling and marked by strength and beauty of poetical expression." True worship, Allon believed, was "beautiful as well as holy." This balance could be maintained by careful preparation by musicians and a clear understanding that music was to serve the worshippers. "One thing ought to be insisted upon," Allon concluded, "the subordination of choir to congregational singing."⁷⁸

In 1873 the Synod of the Diocese of Huron sought to promote congregational singing throughout the diocese. Believing that "in the interests of our church, it is very desirable to promote amongst its members a knowledge of the science and practice of sacred music," the Synod called for the Diocese to establish a committee to "recommend to the clergy of the Diocese, such competent teachers of vocal music, being Episcopalians and of good character, as they may be able to procure as teachers for congregational singing classes."⁷⁹ The following year the Anglican synod called for a "Hymnal for the Church of the Dominion."⁸⁰ The use of standard

⁷⁷ Sandra S. Sizer, *Gospel Hymns and Social Religion: The Rhetoric of Nineteenth Century Revivalism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978).

⁷⁸ "Church Song," *Ad*, 21 October 1870, p. 2. For Allon's role in liturgical reform among the "free churches" in England see Davies, *Worship and Theology in England*, 70. This perspective was not limited to Congregationalists. Bishop Arthur Sweatman of Toronto expressed similar conviction at St. Paul's in 1882. "The Beauties of Church Music," *FP*, 17 October 1882, p. 2.

⁷⁹ "Diocese of Huron," *FP*, 9 June 1873, p. 3

⁸⁰ "Diocese of Huron," *FP*, 6 June 1874, p. 4.

hymnbooks available to all participants was becoming increasingly important to the practice of worship, as can be seen from the decision of the trustees of Queen's Avenue Methodist in January of 1888 to purchase 200 hymnbooks for the use of visitors to the church.⁸¹ Congregational song, particularly hymns focusing on the believer's direct encounter with God through Christ, added an element of emotional engagement to a tradition of worship that had been heavily weighted to the cognitive.

The Protestant approach to music in worship was most evident in the numerous disputes which arose in various churches over the proper conduct of church music. Often these disputes revolved around the appeal to immediacy and sincerity in worship, for music was commonly regarded as a means of stirring the heart or emotions of the congregation. It was exactly this that led Rev. John Scott, pastor of St. Andrew's Presbyterian in the early 1870s, to reject appeals to introduce instrumental music. Scott believed that the arguments in favour of the organ appealed to the worst aspects of human nature, the sensual passions, which were more likely to lead worshippers astray than to enhance worship.⁸² Scott's opponents, who eventually were successful in forcing him to resign, argued that the youth of the church were being drawn to other churches where the worship, and particularly the music, was livelier.⁸³

Queen's Avenue Methodist was no doubt uppermost in the minds of Presbyterian parents who were afraid of losing their children to other denominations. In 1881 Queen's Avenue installed an impressive organ and the *Advertiser* reporter who attended the event felt sure that this move would improve attendance, that the beauty of sacred music would bring more people into the church. In something of a flight of fancy the reporter imagined that as "notes are borne on the

⁸¹ Queen's Avenue Trustees Minutes, 17 January 1888 (TRC)

⁸² "The Organ Question: What the Rev. John Scott Thinks of It," *FP*, 24 February 1873, p. 3; "Sermon by the Rev. John Scott, Explanatory of his views on the subject of instrumental music in connection with the public worship of God," *Ad*, 27 February 1873, p. 2. For a discussion of this issue within the wider Presbyterian communion see Moir, *Enduring Witness*, 131-4

⁸³ Letters to the Editor of the *FP* and *Ad* were printed on both sides of the issue almost daily in February and early March of 1873. For a typical example of the concern for the younger generation see "The Organ Controversy: A Plain Account of the Music Trouble in the Presbyterian Church, London, by an Old Member and Father," *Ad*, 3 March 1873, p. 2.

morning or evening air out, in, through and among the boulevards of Park and Queen's Avenue on a Sabbath day, the undecided church-going pedestrian will feel irresistibly drawn towards the source of melodies so rapturous."⁸⁴ It is not clear that Queen's Avenue considered its organ a draw, but all of the large well attended churches had, by the 1890s, installed expensive instruments, including (in 1887) St. Andrew's.⁸⁵

While the participatory nature of congregational singing recommended it to evangelical sensibilities the role of the choir in worship, as already illustrated by the controversy at St. Paul's, was a source of controversy in some congregations. The quality of church music remained an important value; however quality must not interfere with the integrity of worship. This tension lay behind a dispute that arose at London's Talbot Street Baptist Church, and due to its congregational form of government, illustrations of the range of parishoners' attitudes have been preserved in the church minutes. At the congregational meeting of 1 September 1879, it is recorded that: "Several brethren expressed themselves that more members of the church or at any rate Christians should lead in the Praises of our God at our public services."⁸⁶ Those present expressed an interest in enhancing the experience of worship by having the choir lead the singing of praises. However, the congregation had difficulty deciding whether those qualified to lead worship must be members of the church or merely Christians. This issue re-emerged at the next meeting on 15 September when, after considerable discussion, the proposal that Christians who were not members of the church be deemed eligible to sing in the choir was sustained by a majority of one.⁸⁷ Those who supported the motion felt that the church would need to look beyond the membership to find sufficient talent to ensure musical quality. However, many in the congregation regarded this decision as a concession to performance over sincerity.

⁸⁴ "1828 to 1881, Rise and Progress of Methodism in This City," *Ad*, 6 August 1881, p. 2.

⁸⁵ "St Andrew's Church: Organ Opening Services Yesterday," *FP*, 7 November 1887, p. 5

⁸⁶ Talbot Street Baptist Congregational Meeting Minutes, Typescript, 1 September 1879 (TRC).

⁸⁷ Talbot Street Baptist Congregational Meeting Minutes, Typescript, 15 September 1879 (TRC).

Approaches to worship

Different styles of worship were evident among London's Protestant churches. The unaccompanied precentor-led psalmody at St. Andrew's differed considerably from the organ anthems emanating from Queen's Avenue. Despite its different expressions Protestant worship focused on bringing worshippers into the presence of God and on preparing them to receive the word of God in the sermon. This required the participation of all, and was accomplished increasingly through congregational singing led by choirs and organs. Protestants did not welcome anything in worship that smacked of mystery because they associated mystery with ritualism and superstition which in turn led to Catholicism. For them it was the rational that led to the divine. This Protestant understanding of God was well expressed by the General Superintendent of the Methodist Church, Rev. Dr. Carman, in a sermon at Dundas Street Centre. Dr. Carman argued that there were some things God could do and some things God could not. His own character and the reality he had created limited God's action. God could not lie or contravene the laws he had established: "God cannot make two and two make twenty." Thus God acted consistently and according to the laws of the universe as apprehended by human reason. Worship focuses on this God; thus it would be unreasonable and contradictory to the empirically inclined Protestant for bread to really be anything but what human senses perceived it to be. Carman rejected the doctrine of the "real presence" because it implied that God was lying, and he dismissed this understanding of communion as an unworthy superstition. God could, of course, perform miracles. These occurred when "a moral law steps in to contravene a lower law."⁸⁸ Miracles were to be expected in bringing sinners to repentance or in providing conditions auspicious for the advance of the Kingdom. These occurrences did not undermine confidence in human reason, but reinforced it by providing a broader moral context in which to see the rationality of miraculous events. The Protestant approach to worship had thus thoroughly

⁸⁸ "Dundas Street Centre," *FP*, 5 September 1887, p. 7.

domesticated the individualism and faith in human reason of the Enlightenment by ignoring its atheistic streams.⁸⁹

Catholic worship focused on the sacrifice of the Mass and the mystery of the real presence. These mysteries were beyond human understanding, and gave rise to contemplation and adoration rather than explanation. Catholics insisted that God's grace was mediated through the sacraments properly administered by the clergy. This belief sustained a strong theology of the church, for an individual could not encounter saving grace apart from the church. Catholic worship rejected Enlightenment rationalism and individualism with almost as much enthusiasm as the Protestants embraced it.

Church Finances and Giving

The late Victorian period was one of intense religious activity and extensive church building. The traditional methods of fund raising involved pew rents and subscriptions to a variety of funds for clergy salaries, new buildings, mission funds, and denominational initiatives. By the 1880s these sources were proving inadequate and finance committees and treasurers in all of the churches were compelled to send out constant appeals to the faithful to be more involved financially in the work of the Kingdom.⁹⁰ Most of the time moral and religious suasion was used to induce contributions;⁹¹ however, on occasion treasurers and boards of managers threatened to move people out of their pews and even take legal action for the non-payment of pew rents and subscriptions.⁹² There was also a movement during this time to develop new and better ways of paying for the increased level of religious activity. "Systematic giving" encouraged voluntary gifts to a general fund out of which all the needs of the church would be paid. This strategy was

⁸⁹ Gauvreau argues that the full force of this atheistic element of the Enlightenment was "missed" in Canadian cultural history, Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century*, 15

⁹⁰ "St. Andrews' Church," *Ad*, 31 January 1884, p. 3.

⁹¹ Adelaide Street Baptist Minutes, 5 July 1887 (The Canadian Baptist Archives [BAM])

⁹² "Adjourned Vestry Meetings," *FP*, 17 April 1877, p. 4. An epilogue to the fund-raising triumph of 1876 comes in the Minutes for 1880 when the Trustees Board considers taking legal action for non-payment of subscriptions to the building. "The History of Wellington St. United Church, 1876-1967 (TRC), 5.

intended to broaden the number of people giving to church activity and provide more control over the use of funds for church purposes.⁹³

Pew rents were the accepted way to pay for religious services in London at this time. The householders who attended church regularly (and many who did not) bought sittings for their household. Rents varied depending on the location of the sitting; the more favourable locations being more expensive, those at the back and in the galleries the least expensive.⁹⁴ A number of churches used a “bonus system” in which pew holders bid for more desirable sittings by offering a bonus above the annual rent. The bonus was a one-time payment, although when pews changed hands the bonus was required of the new pew holder.⁹⁵ All churches made some provision for those unable to afford sittings. At St. Paul’s Anglican two pews were available at the back on each aisle. St. Andrews allowed those unable to pay to apply for a free sitting to the Management Committee through the Pew Secretary.⁹⁶ This arrangement for seating in church reinforced the privilege of those parishioners who were better off, as one’s social status was evident by where one sat in church. However, the increasing cogency of a voluntary understanding of the place of religion had already begun to undermine the symbolic parallel between social position and spiritual standing that pew rents seemed to reinforce. When the Cronyn family built a church as a memorial to Benjamin Cronyn, the first Bishop of Huron, they pointedly rejected pew rents as a legitimate means of funding church activity. Memorial Church was deeded without encumbrance to the congregation on the condition that “the pews and sittings in this Church be free to all attending the Church, without charge or assessment of any kind.”⁹⁷

⁹³ In 1886 Adelaide Street Baptist established a Finance Committee to keep better control of the various church funds, Adelaide Street Baptist Minutes, 4 February 1886 (BAM).

⁹⁴ “St. Paul’s Cathedral,” *FP*, 3 May 1870, p. 3.

⁹⁵ Queen’s Avenue Methodist, Board of Trustees Minutes, 2 April 1872, 11 July 1881, 17 January 1888 (TRC).

⁹⁶ “St. Andrew’s Church,” *Ad*, 31 January 1874, p. 3.

⁹⁷ Francis B. Ware, *History of Cronyn Memorial Church, London, Ontario, 1873-1949* (London, Ont.: Cronyn Memorial Church, 1949), 25.

In an age when it was assumed that anything could be improved by systematisation, it was also assumed that the financial needs of churches could be met more adequately by systematic giving. Systematic giving meant that all members of the congregation were to give some amount, in proportion to their income, toward the work of the church. Churches often distributed envelopes to contributors when they instituted this new approach to giving. Parishioners were expected to set aside a certain amount from their income during each pay period, place it in the envelope, and then return the envelope to the church each week. Some churches provided boxes toward the rear of the church for the collection of envelopes; others passed collection plates into which envelopes and other offerings could be placed. Most denominations commended the spiritual and material benefits of systematic giving for both regular church expenses and the various denominational funds to which local churches contributed. Delegates to the Presbyterian Conference in 1890 were told that giving to the church and to missions was an essential measure of a local church's religious life, and that faithfulness in contributing to the church would strengthen the spirituality of individual members. Denominational leaders chastised pastors for insufficient teaching regarding giving.

The ministry are to blame for not instructing the people with regard to the wants and ways of the church's work. Who should contribute? Everybody. The poor as well as the rich, according to ability. The children as well as the parents. How should we give? Systematically. Lay aside a set proportion—a tenth, or more or less, as we may choose—but yet with system.⁹⁸

By making it clear that it was the responsibility of all of God's children to give to the church as God prospered them, church leaders expected that the amount of money available for church work would increase. Dr. Cooper of Talbot Street Baptist made this point on the occasion of the twelfth anniversary of his ministry. Cooper claimed that careful investigation had confirmed that "those Churches that had a system of collecting and were regular in the collection of small sums from the many, were the greatest blessings to the treasury." He implied that London's Baptist churches, which were comparatively smaller and less well off than those of other

⁹⁸ "Presbyterian Conference," *FP*, 11 March 1890, p. 3.

denominations, did not need to be left behind in the work of the Kingdom. The Talbot Street congregation was assured by their Pastor that “comparatively small churches and no rich members were found to have done far more than larger churches with more wealth but no system of collecting.”⁹⁹ Despite these inducements, not all churches were interested in systematising giving. For example, comprehensive schemes for systematic giving were presented to the Board of Trustees of Queen’s Avenue Methodist on at least two occasions.¹⁰⁰ But this congregation considered itself “the centre of wealth, influence, and enterprise” among London’s Methodists and were not at all interested in changing their methods of raising money.¹⁰¹ Rather than encouraging everyone to give a little, their preferred means of increasing income was “to go to ‘public competition’” for sittings in the church and collect subscriptions from wealthy supporters.¹⁰²

Systematic giving was a reorganisation of religious practice that accompanied the change in religion’s place in the social. Christian religion was extricating itself from its place as something provided by the state and the wealthy for the “people” and was finding its place as an expression of the piety of the people. Financial contributions were to be a voluntary gift of material resources for the purposes of the church. This approach was increasingly to replace reliance upon patrons and pew rents, which were more consistent with the establishment view of the church. According to the advocates of the envelope system, giving to the church was to be a private, voluntary matter between the contributor and their God. The formerly accepted practice of publishing records of contributions was becoming less common in churches as the twentieth century approached. Publishing financial records, like charging pew rents, tended to reinforce the establishment connection between religion and social order. In the establishment model church

⁹⁹ First Baptist Minutes, “Baptist Church, 1877” inserted after minutes of meeting 3 March 1879 (TRC)

¹⁰⁰ Queen’s Avenue Methodist, Quarterly Board Minutes, (TRC) 3 June 1884 and Queen’s Avenue Methodist, Board of Trustees Minutes, (TRC) 15 April 1887.

¹⁰¹ “History of the Oldest Methodist Church...,” 1895 (TRC).

¹⁰² Queen’s Avenue Methodist, Board of Trustees Minutes, 2 April 1872, 11 July, 1881, 17 January 1888 (TRC). Donald B. Marti, “Rich Methodists: The rise and consequences of lay philanthropy in the mid-19th Century,” in *Rethinking Methodist History -- A Bicentennial Historical Consultation*, eds. Russell Richey and Kenneth Rowe (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1985).

finance was like a form of taxation for a public service: those most likely to benefit should bear the greater burden. By contrast the voluntary model emphasised personal and private commitment and equality in Christ, and therefore rejected preference on the basis of social status or wealth.

By 1890 most of London's Protestant churches had implemented some version of systematic giving, using it to supplement, rather than replace, the income received by pew rents. The transition from one cultural paradigm to another is rarely as neat or pure as descriptions such as the one above would make them seem. Systematic giving, even when introduced as scriptural and scientific, was implemented slowly and only after many setbacks.

Dr. Cooper has already been introduced as a hearty advocate of the spiritual and material benefits of systematic giving. He was opposed to the exclusivism which could attend pew rents and wanted his church to be free and open to all who needed the gospel. He was among the first in London to attempt this transition when, in 1868, he led Talbot Street Baptist to abolish pew rents in favour of "systematic voluntary giving on the part of each member."¹⁰³ Cooper's ideal of a church open to strangers did not end concern over who could sit where. At a meeting of the congregation in April 1873, there arose a complaint over assignment of seats in the church. This was countered with the official stance that all seats in the building were free because the church was intended to be a place of worship where no one should be kept from the Gospel ministry for financial reasons. The complainant conceded this principle, but pressed the issue feeling "regular attendants to have a right of preference." To resolve this issue amicably it was agreed that regular attenders would have their choice of seats until "the close of the first hymn, any then unoccupied seats might be offered to all comers."¹⁰⁴ This compromise undermined the ideal of a free and open church. Visitors would feel less than welcome being held outside until the regulars assumed their "right of preference." The establishment assumptions reflected here were

¹⁰³ William Sherwood Fox, *A Century of Service*, 33.

¹⁰⁴ First Baptist Minutes, 10 April 1873 (BAM).

given a further lift in the early 1880s when, under the pastorate of Rev. Alexander Grant, pew rents were reinstated to help pay for the new church building.¹⁰⁵

At St. Andrew's Presbyterian an aggressive subscription campaign that began in 1883 resulted in the church building being free from debt by 1886.¹⁰⁶ This inspired the Board of Managers to bring forward a radical new financial approach to the 1886 Annual Meeting. It was explained that pew rents and Sunday collections would be done away with after 1 April 1886. Under the new system "persons applying for pews or sittings would get them, and also be supplied with envelopes. No pledges would be required, but each one would be asked to give as the Lord prospered him. There would be no plates passed for the offerings, but a box kept in the vestibule to receive the gifts." It was maintained that this "new method for the maintenance of Gospel ordinances" was the "most equitable and in accord with divine directions and Scriptural teaching."¹⁰⁷ The congregation passed this scheme but not without suggestions that passing the plate might be a good idea, especially since it would allow strangers to contribute.

A year later the Managers reported with great enthusiasm on the success of their initiative. This was attributed to their obedience to Scripture and the congregation's willing acceptance of the principle of voluntary offerings. The Managers offered their experience as an example to other churches that still held to an outmoded system.

It is really a matter for most hearty thanksgiving to Almighty God, the Great Head of the Church, and we trust it may be said of us as Paul wrote of the Church at Corinth (2 Cor. 9:2) "Your zeal hath provoked very many to like liberality," for the plan of Weekly Voluntary Offerings is not only Scriptural (1 Cor. 16:2),¹⁰⁸ but, if rightly gone into and heartily carried out—and because it is Scriptural—the result will undoubtedly be satisfactory.

The Managers have never before been able to meet the financial engagements of the Church so promptly as during the past year, and the Board desire to express its thanks to the Congregation for the hearty and liberal support which has been accorded to the new plan.

¹⁰⁵ Fox, *A Century of Service*, 45

¹⁰⁶ This plan was introduced at the Annual Meeting in February 1883 and proposed to raise \$9,600 by subscription payable over a two-year period. "Presbyterian Progress," *Ad*, 1 February 1883, p. 4

¹⁰⁷ "St. Andrew's Church," *FP*, 28 January 1886, p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ 1 Corinthians 16:2: Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

It is especially noteworthy that this result has been attained without any appeal for an open collection, and by the relinquishment of all pew rents throughout the entire period of nine months since the new system was inaugurated; and also the fact that no "pledges" were either asked or given by the members and adherents—the weekly offerings being wholly voluntary.¹⁰⁹

This ringing endorsement of the principle of voluntary offerings was repeated at the next Annual Meeting despite a slight drop in overall giving. Making gifts to the storehouse of the Lord voluntary had restored giving to the act of worship it was originally intended to be. As the Managers claimed: "The matter of offering for the Lord's work being a voluntary one, and now entirely between the individual's conscience and his God, it becomes, as it is designed to be, an act of worship."¹¹⁰ However, the Managers needed to somehow address the drop in income and suggested, as a measure to "save the Secretary the trouble of making out monthly receipts" that "a list of contributors be published quarterly." This resolution was met with immediate hostility; its opponents claimed that it would be unscriptural and in violation of the voluntary principle just reaffirmed. In the Managers' defence, this procedure had been common just a few years before; however, it now seemed incongruent with the new understanding of giving. This point was strongly stated by one of the members of the church. "[A] few years ago when the new scheme of financing was introduced it was stated to be the only Scriptural method. If the Board were right then, they were wrong now. There was a commercial spirit mixing with their church methods. The strength and wealth of this congregation was becoming their weakness." Another member added the charge that the wealthy were still getting the better sittings. He complained that "there was a tendency on the part of the Board to give up the pews and places of some very desirable members to make room for those who could pay better."¹¹¹ This was flatly denied by a number of the Managers, but it brought into question the degree to which the voluntary system was in fact being applied.

¹⁰⁹ "St. Andrew's Church," *FP*, 20 January 1887, p. 6

¹¹⁰ "St. Andrew's Church," *FP*, 26 January 1888, p. 7.

¹¹¹ "St. Andrew's Church," *FP*, 6 January 1888, p. 7.

At the 1889 Annual meeting the charge that a connection remained, in the minds of the Managers, between sittings and the level of contribution was substantiated by their own report. This read in part: “a considerable number ... were not only remiss in their contributions, but the amount of their givings were found to be inadequate for the number of sittings they hold in the Church.” The report also recommended the quarterly publication of the names of contributors together with the amount of their contributions, and this time the proposal was passed without objection.¹¹² St. Andrew’s had undergone a major transition in its practice of church finance. Giving was a matter of private conscience and concerned only God and the giver. However, it was clear that many of the attitudes and practices of the former system continued to operate. Publishing the names of contributors and the amounts of contributions could hardly be justified only as a means of saving time for the treasurer. The continuing valence of the establishment link between public status and religious duty helped the Managers ensure that their new systematic and privatised model did not result in a loss of income.

The somewhat unsystematic transition to systematic giving practices reflects the changing placement of religion across the various public and private mappings. Parishioners began increasingly to regard money and finances as private matters that ought to be hidden from public view. In the 1870s the publication of one’s name in connection with a substantial subscription to a church building project was considered a badge of religious and civic honour. As the voluntary approach to giving gained credence offerings to the church came to be seen as a reflection of personal piety. In this context, the publication of a subscription list was regarded as a hypocritical flaunting of private commitments rather than an expression of public virtue. As religion moved away from its associations with state power it mattered less that religious practice mirror social relations in public.¹¹³ Attitudes toward sittings reflected at both Talbot Street Baptist and St. Andrew’s Presbyterian indicate that this change did not easily break down visible

¹¹² “St. Andrew’s Church,” *FP*, 30 January 1889, p. 5.

manifestations of social rank within the churches. However, the voluntary model at least suggested that it might be possible to do so symbolically. The churches were actively involved in combating deeply rooted establishment assumption that religious services should be provided by the state or the wealthy. The voluntary approach required all members to be actively involved in the support of the church, thus encouraging personal piety and religious commitment as well as increasing the resources available for religious purposes.

Conclusion

Public worship had a very concrete meaning to Londoners in the 1880s and 1890s. It was experienced in the public spaces where religion was inscribed upon the cityscape. As Dr. Ives expressed it, the building of churches was establishing Christianity in Canadian society, and economic and intellectual progress was evidence of its benefits. But the voluntary and private increasingly challenged and intersected the language of establishment and public. Sunday in London was a common day of worship to the degree that those who were not in churches were consciously absent. However, worship and religion were experienced in markedly different ways throughout the city and reflected various theological and liturgical traditions. All of London's churches were concerned about tying their adherents more closely to their particular programs just at the time when the language of harmony was de-emphasising religious difference. Worship provided a means of intensifying religious experience and thereby of deepening one's identification with a particular religious community. New methods of financing churches also contributed to deepening particular commitments by promoting a monetary as well as spiritual commitment to congregational life. These practices tended to move religious identity inside, into the private and away from public scrutiny. The public and private nature of religion in the social was being defined as the churches asserted their claims on the faithful in the vocabularies of both

¹¹³ This observation is at odds with Van Die's suggestion that it was the intensity of calls for the integration of public and private that discouraged masculine involvement in church life, Van Die, "The Marks of a Genuine Revival," 540.

establishment and voluntary narratives. The nature of these claims and the programs churches introduced to integrate their adherents is the focus of investigation in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

CHURCH LIFE

Religious Practice II: Churches and Church Activity

The Nature of the Church

The faithful of London had much in common since Christianity, both Protestant and Catholic, showed a remarkably consistent public face. Yet, as can be seen from the foregoing analysis, differences also emerged as divergent denominational traditions worked to become the voluntary choice of a democratic people. Even the concept of “denomination” took some getting used to for Catholics and Anglicans whose historic positions had resisted the idea that there were other legitimate ways of being Christian. Protestants placed great emphasis on transcending denominational divisions during this period, which gave rise to successful union movements among both the Presbyterians and Methodists and calls for a wider union of Canadian Protestants.¹ The approaches taken by the major denominations to the transitions of the nineteenth century reflected differing traditions and resources. Central to these were the various conceptions of the nature of the church and of the source of the church’s authority to speak to those within and those outside. This chapter attempts to reconstruct in some detail the narratives and practices which defined the identity of London’s Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Congregationalists, and Baptists. Catholics and Anglicans shared an episcopal form of church government, and the Congregationalists and Baptists a congregational form. The Methodists and Presbyterians had

¹ For accounts of the movements for Methodist and Presbyterian union see Neil Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism*, McGill-Queen’s Studies in the History of Religion, ed. G. A. Rawlyk (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996), chapter 8; Moir, *Enduring Witness*, chapter 7; J. Warren Caldwell, “The Unification of Methodism in Canada, 1865-1884,” *The Bulletin* (UCA, 1967); and Burkhard Kiesekamp, “Presbyterian and Methodist Divines: Their Case for a National Church in Canada, 1875-1900,” *Sciences Religieuses / Studies in Religion* 4 (1973)

forms of church government which mediated between the episcopal and congregational forms. They will be considered more briefly.

Each denomination understood the nature of the church, the authority of the clergy, and the duties and responsibilities of the faithful in distinctive ways. These aspects of church life fit into different narratives that constructed persons as subjects within particular traditions. Hence, this study will not focus primarily on doctrine, but on how the denominational groups presented themselves in public and, where possible, enforced their practices privately. Religious identity was only one of multiple vectors of subjectification, and the churches sought to intensify their particular religious identity by practices that reinforced it. What follows describes some of the practices and narratives that competed to construct identity for the major religious options in late nineteenth-century London.

Methodists

The Methodists were the second largest of the Protestant denominations in London, and they were the fastest growing. Methodists comprised thirty percent of non-Catholics in 1871 and grew to thirty-four percent in 1891, while the Church in England, their nearest competitor, slipped from forty percent to thirty-six percent. This gave credence to the popular narrative of Methodist ascendancy which figured prominently at denominational events. Dr. Sanderson retold this story for the benefit of the Askin Street Ladies Aid in 1878. His account began with a description of the sorry state of the Established Church in the eighteenth century, which was “a mere worldly institution,” and, as a result, “the land was deluged with iniquity, which almost swept away true piety from the world.” Revival attended the efforts of John Wesley and the Methodists with their commitment to the “salvation of man” and to preaching conversion. Their success contrasted with the “philosophical indifference” of Established Church clergy and resulted in the expulsion of the Methodists from Anglican pulpits. Methodists took to preaching in the commons, and the message spread more quickly. These Methodist preachers were the “true successors to the apostles,” for their authority was *not* the result of some ritual of succession, but

was evident in the multitudes that found salvation. Sanderson credited Methodism with winning the religious freedom enjoyed in North America where adherents to the churches that traced their origins to the Methodist revivals made up one quarter of the Protestants, and their numbers continued to grow.²

The numerical strength of Methodism, particularly in Ontario, gave its leaders a sense of national destiny. The unions of 1874 and 1884 brought all of the forces of Methodism together for the purpose of providing moral and spiritual guidance to the young Dominion.³ Methodist aspirations to be a national church had some demographic basis. Through the 1870s and 1880s the Methodists in London boasted the highest number of Canadian born adherents of any denomination and their commitment to building educational institutions resulted in their having the highest proportion of Canadian born and educated clergy.⁴ The effects of union strengthened and consolidated Methodist resources for the conquest of Canadian society. There were fewer Methodist Churches in London in 1890 than in 1884 but the remaining churches, especially those in the suburbs, were larger and able to join the downtown churches in building for the future.

Continuity with the early “apostolic” preachers of Methodism was maintained by the system of itinerancy. In his inaugural sermon in London South Rev. Alex Langford reflected on the missionary travels of the Apostle Paul. This and other biblical examples provided “strong proof,” Langford argued, that “the Methodist itineracy was in the line of Apostolic succession.”⁵ Every two or three years a Conference Stationing Committee moved pastors from one circuit to another. The primary motive of Methodism continued to be calling sinners to repentance, and Methodists believed that a regular change of voices and techniques occasioned by regular pastoral changes were the most effective way of accomplishing this goal. In his farewell sermon at Dundas

² “Methodism: Its Rise and Progress,” *FP*, 19 February 1878, p. 3

³ Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 179-210. William Magney, “The Methodist Church and the National Gospel.”

⁴ See this study chapter 6, table 6.1, 257.

Street Centre. Rev. J.S. Ross commended the itinerant system for “one pastor could reach a certain class where he could not touch another,” yet he acknowledged the personal pain that accompanied the severing of pastoral relations.⁶ The larger Methodist churches in London were less convinced of the advantages than Rev. Ross, especially because congregations had no say in pastoral selection. The Trustees of Queen’s Avenue Methodist attempted to subvert the process on a number of occasions by exerting influence on the Stationing Committee given the size and importance of the church. In one case they requested that a pastor of their choice be stationed, and in another they requested the extension of the tenure of a particularly successful pastor.⁷ Neither of these requests was granted. Methodist laity were slow to organise demands for more representation in church governance. However a strong movement developed locally in 1889 calling on Quarterly Boards to express their frustration regarding the lack of lay influence in the affairs of the church.⁸ While the influence of traditional Methodist distinctives, including mass evangelism and the class meeting, was waning, stationing practices held firm.⁹ Itinerancy tied Methodism to its roots and it was deemed an essential means of enabling Methodism to stay true to its goal of bringing the gospel of salvation to the world.¹⁰ Stationing Committees also served to

⁶ “Christian Duty,” *FP*, 11 July 1887, p. 3.

⁶ “Farewell Words,” *FP*, 18 June 1883, p. 3.

⁷ Queen’s Avenue Quarterly Board Minutes, 6 March 1877, 15 March 1878, 10 May 1878. The Board petitioned General Conference to provide for lay membership on Stationing Committees, 19 November 1880.

⁸ “The Methodist Laymen,” *FP*, 18 May 1889, p. 3.

⁹ Local concern regarding the place of revival and class meetings resulted in a convention held by the London District in 1888. Attendance was much lower than expected and the discussion reflected a view that these means of grace were no longer effective but too important to the heritage to be dispensed with, “The Class Meeting,” *FP*, 16 October 1888, p. 3. Revival meetings continued to be held by London’s Methodists, although these were increasingly conducted interdenominationally with evangelists who were often suspect from a Methodist perspective. See the Methodist response to Henry Varley in this study chapter 6, 223. Class meetings also continued to exist, although with memberships between 50 and 80, see membership rolls for Queen’s Park Methodist and Wellington Street Methodist (UCA). Groups of this size were unlikely to be able to fulfil the role given to class meetings in the *Discipline*, see John A. Williams, ed., *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1884* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1884), 31-2.

¹⁰ Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion*, 232-8 and E. Dale Dunlap, “The United Methodist System of Itinerant Ministry,” in *Rethinking Methodist History – A Bicentennial Historical Consultation*, eds. Russell Richey and Kenneth Rowe (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1985).

keep pastoral relations firmly in the grasp of the clergy, although individual pastors were given as little voice as congregations in the process.

The themes of apostolic succession and national destiny both have establishment valence. Apostolic succession, as claimed by the Methodists, was not an appeal to Rome or even a pure episcopacy, but rather an appeal to action in evangelism and church extension. The use of this language revealed that the discourse in which authority was framed referenced Anglican and Catholic narratives as well as voluntarist ones. Methodism's claim to constitute the national church for Canada was in direct competition with the Church of England. These claims to authority promised to shape the course for a future of political, economic, and moral progress. Methodists retained many of the attitudes and assumptions of the established church from their Anglican roots while preaching an essentially voluntarist call to conversion.

Presbyterians

London newspapers typically portrayed Presbyterians as stodgy and dogmatic. Such portrayals often accompanied reports of heresy trials in Scotland or the United States, and included editorial hopes that local Presbyterians were more progressive than their co-religionists. A concern for principle and a certainty that their principles were right, united and, as often, divided London's Presbyterians. It is hard to imagine James Munro as anything other than a Presbyterian. Described as a religious monomaniac, Munro combined the Protestant principles of independent thought and suspicion of clerical authority with millenarian speculations typical of the Plymouth Brethren. These were held together with a dogmatic and out-spoken certainty that was distinctively Presbyterian. Munro took it upon himself to ensure the purity of Christianity in the city and particularly among Presbyterians. He interrupted sermons which, in his opinion, lacked evidence of the guidance of the Holy Spirit; he confronted the pastor of St. Andrew's for wearing too expensive an overcoat; he shouted down a famous evangelist; and remonstrated against Salvation Army meetings led by women. For his efforts Munro, a blacksmith by trade, was physically ejected from a number of churches and meetings which, given his size and

strength, created considerable excitement.¹¹ Munro was not a typical Presbyterian, given his concern with the imminent end of the world. However, his firm convictions were characteristic of Presbyterian practice.

Firm convictions often led to conflict, and most dramatically conflict manifested itself over the proposed union of the Presbyterian denominations. Tension among sections of the Presbyterian communion had a venerable history. In the 1830s, and again in the 1850s, the adherents of the Church of Scotland had made legal claims against other Presbyterian congregations that sought control of their buildings. In both of these cases they lost, and in compensation were deeded land on which they built a church of their own.¹² As the Presbyterian union of 1875 approached, the congregation of St. James' voted twice against union, despite the strong support for union voiced by their pastor Rev. Camelon. The Presbytery declared both votes invalid due to voting irregularities, and St. James was declared in the union very much against the will of the majority.¹³ Anti-union members of the session then revoked the membership of the pastor and the unionist members of the church and called on the Hamilton Presbytery of the Church of Scotland to provide them with a pastor. This led to an extraordinary service in which both Rev. Mr. Burnet, who had been sent by the Hamilton Presbytery, and Rev. Camelon attempted to occupy the pulpit in December 1875. Camelon gave way to Burnet, allowing him to conduct the service. After the service Burnet declared the pulpit vacant and offered to moderate a call, whereupon Camelon, who had been present on the platform throughout the service, protested that he was the legitimate minister of the church.¹⁴ Following this, two of the anti-union managers arranged to have the locks of the church changed, effectively barring the pastor and the trustees

¹¹ "Munro's Mania," *FP*, 18 December 1879, p. 4, "Forty and Two Months," *Ad*, 12 April 1881, p. 4; "Munro, The Religio-Maniac," *FP*, 15 March 1883, p. 3; and "The Troubler of St. Andrew's," *Ad*, 5 July 1883, p. 2.

¹² Leslie Robb Gray, *Proudfoot to Pepperbox to Posterity, 1833-1983: The 150-Year History of New St. James Presbyterian Church* (London, Ont.: New St. James Presbyterian Church, 1983), 9-10

¹³ "Out of the Union," *FP*, 2 November 1875, p. 4 and "London Presbytery St. James' Church Declared in the Union," *FP* 16 December 1875, p. 3.

¹⁴ "A Church 'Lock-Out,'" *Ad*, 20 December 1875, p. 1 and "Dispute over Union," *FP*, 27 December 1875, p. 4

from the building. This brought a court action led by trustee Mr. James Cowan against his partner in the hardware firm of Cowan and Wright, elder Mr. James Wright of the Church of Scotland group. The decision in Court of Chancery deeded the building to the Presbyterian Church of Canada, and the adherents of the Church of Scotland were once again without a home.¹⁵ This group separated from St. James and formed St. Stephen's Presbyterian, which met in the former Congregational church until its dissolution in 1881.

Presbyterians typically found occasion to express their convictions about the conduct of church life more constructively at annual congregational meetings. It is instructive to compare reports of Presbyterian and Methodist annual meetings. Methodists conducted social gatherings at which reports from various committees and associations were read, and speeches were given about the wonderful progress of Methodism. Presbyterian meetings often involved considerable debate during which the congregation made it clear that it was not willing to give responsibility to the session, the managers or the trustees without holding them accountable. Lay representatives served at every level of ecclesiastical authority and, if the evidence from London is characteristic, seem to have exercised their rights with little deference to the position of the clergy.

Presbyterians assumed that clergy appointments to a particular pastoral charge would be for life, or at least for a long term. This practice developed deep intergenerational relationships between pastor and people, and at its best, provided stability to church life and spiritual development. Twice, during the period under consideration here, congregations effectively fired long-serving pastors. In both cases this action was prompted by fears that wider developments in religious practice, which challenged some traditional Presbyterian practice, were threatening the continued vitality of the church. In both cases an ageing clergyman was pressed to accept a younger assistant, and in both cases the pastor believed a church could only be served by one clergyman and therefore declined. In both cases strong opinions were aired at public meetings, in the press, and finally in the church courts, where the congregations succeeded in

¹⁵ Leslie Robb Gray, *Proudfoot to Pepperbox to Posterity*, 31-6.

forcing a resignation. These incidents, one of which will be analysed in more detail later, reveal an important balance between lay and clerical authority. The assumption of a long tenure gave the pastor the time to develop a ministry without constant pressure from the congregation, but it also demonstrated that the views of the congregation could not be ignored indefinitely.¹⁶

The congregation played a particularly important role in the choosing of a new pastor. If the relation was to be long and happy, it was essential that the congregation give careful attention to the call. The call extended to a Mr. James Ballantyne demonstrated the interest Presbyterians were wont to take in these proceedings. The congregation of Knox Church in London South had been recently organised with the assistance of Rev. Murray and the congregation of St. Andrews. A meeting to call their first pastor was convened in the newly acquired church in January 1885. Rev. Murray served as moderator, and ninety women and men of the congregation were present. Four candidates for the position were proposed, and it was agreed to make this decision by means of a vote. After the vote it was announced that Mr. Ballantyne had received a very large majority. Rev. Murray congratulated the congregation on their choice and hoped Ballantyne would “labour long and successfully among them.” A motion was then made that the vote be made unanimous in favour of Mr. Ballantyne, as was routinely done before a request was sent to Presbytery to sustain a call. The congregation was unwilling to do so, and instead pressed a clearly uneasy Murray to announce the actual numbers received by each candidate. Murray conceded that of the ninety votes cast sixty-one had been for Ballantyne and that the rest had been distributed among the other candidates.¹⁷ This seemed to satisfy the congregation, which duly forwarded a request, signed by forty communicants and one hundred ten adherents, to the Presbytery in favour of Ballantyne.¹⁸

¹⁶ The case of Rev. John Scott of St. Andrew,s, an opponent of instrumental music in church, was referred to in this study chapter 2, 77. The case of Dr. Proudfoot will receive extended treatment toward the end of this chapter, 150-2.

¹⁷ “Knox Presbyterian Church,” *FP*, 24 January 1885, p. 5.

¹⁸ F.B , “Knox Church, London South,” *Histories of Middlesex County Churches*, Typescript, 1923 (TRC), 173

Presbyterians were highly ethnically homogenous.¹⁹ In 1871, seventy-seven percent of Presbyterians were Scots and eighty percent of those Londoners who had been born in Scotland identified themselves as Presbyterians. Thus the church continued to provide ethnic as well as religious identity, despite the misfortunes of the group that formally identified itself as the Kirk. The Church of Scotland group's refusal to adapt to a Canadian narrative of national destiny may explain its decline and ultimate demise. The Canada Presbyterian Church maintained continuity with the Scots Presbyterian heritage, but it was open to the practices and the adaptation necessary to thrive in transplantation.²⁰ Change came slowly as clergy and laity negotiated the kinds of change appropriate, and Presbyterianism continued to prosper in London.

Roman Catholics

Catholics experienced what John Moir perceptively characterised as double minority status for eighty-three percent of London's Catholics were Irish and were thus an ethnic as well as religious minority.²¹ The Protestant majority considered Irish Catholics to be both unenlightened and politically dangerous to Canada as a liberal society.²² The pronouncements of the Catholic Church in the late nineteenth century, particularly those arising out of Vatican I, seemed to confirm these suspicions. In this context public events, such as the celebration of the opening of St. Peter's and the consecration of the new Bishop, were used to place the Catholic faith within a North American context. Much of the teaching and preaching that accompanied these occasions was formulated to answer objections from ill-informed Protestants but a primary purpose was to assure Catholics of the relevance and strength of their faith in the New World.

¹⁹ For the relationship between ethnicity and religious affiliation in London see Appendix B

²⁰ Mark G. McGowan, "'We are all Canadians': A Social, Religious and Cultural Portrait of Toronto's English-Speaking Roman Catholics, 1890-1920" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1988) and Brian P. Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*, tell a similar story of identity and integration with reference to Irish Catholics in Toronto.

²¹ John S. Moir, "The Problem of a Double Minority: Some Reflections on the Development of the English-Speaking Catholic Church in Canada in the Nineteenth Century" *Histoire sociale / Social History* 7:53-67, 1971. For the relationship between ethnicity and religious affiliation in London see Appendix B

²² This perception is addressed in detail in this study in chapter 7, 337-44.

On such occasions Catholics appealed to the unity of the Church throughout history and to its world-wide extent as evidence of its authority. Catholics from anywhere in the world could participate in the Latin service conducted in London, Ontario.²³ The unity and purity of the Church over space and time was assured by apostolic succession. This doctrine was reviewed and reaffirmed in the ritual as well as in the homilies and memorials that accompanied the consecration of Bishop O'Connor as the new Bishop of London in 1890. Bishop Foley, of Detroit, underscored the divine source of apostolic authority in his consecration address.

[Jesus] gave the Apostles a participation of his one Apostolate; He gave them a power equal to the power He Himself had received from on high. He gave it to them for the saving of immortal souls as long as there is one single soul to be saved. He poured upon them on the day of Pentecost the spirit of God, that they might fill their high commissions.²⁴

This power was passed along to men chosen and commissioned by the original Apostles and was on this occasion bestowed upon the new Bishop of London. The consecration of Bishop O'Connor connected London's Catholics to the centre of religious authority in Rome and ultimately to Christ himself.²⁵ According to the Roman Catholic narrative of religious authority, unity of belief and practise was essential evidence of the divine nature of Catholicism.²⁶ This contrasted with Protestant disunity, which was a result of their having cast aside the rightful authority of the church and replaced it with the "principle of private judgement." The breakdown of civil and religious authority across the Protestant world was clear evidence in the Catholic apologetic that Protestants were not heirs of the gospel of peace.²⁷

²³ "St. Peter's Cathedral," *FP*, 24 May 1886, p. 3.

²⁴ "Consecrated, Rt. Rev. Dr. O'Connor, Bishop of London," *FP*, 20 October 1890, p. 5

²⁵ John Walsh, *The Doctrine of Papal Infallibility Stated and Vindicated; with an appendix on the Question of Civil Allegiance* (London, 1875).

²⁶ While Catholics continually returned to this theme of Catholic unity contrasting to Protestant dissension for its rhetorical power, Roberto Perin finds considerable evidence of lack of unity and agreement among Bishops in Canada. Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada: The Vatican and Canadian Affairs in the Late Victorian Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

²⁷ Walsh, *The Doctrine of Papal Infallibility Stated and Vindicated*, 62-3.

The narrative underlying Catholic authority presented by Bishop Foley was of a unified Church monolithic in belief and practice, world-wide in scope and under the headship of a single infallible leader in Rome. This was exactly the narrative, supplied with a very different significance, that Protestant antagonists constantly retold. Protestant fears of “Papal aggression” would not be eased by Foley’s claim that the salvation offered by the Church was not for the soul alone, but made claims on the whole person, body and soul. Catholics were invited to find their primary identity within the Church’s web of meaning, and to understand themselves as true participants in the grace of God, despite their minority status locally.²⁸ The great occasion of Bishop O’Connor’s consecration celebrated the unity, power, and primitive purity of the Church. Catholics in the Diocese of London were part of a larger story of Catholicism which interpreted the local in the universal extension of the true Church.

A very different recounting of the history of the Catholic church was provided by Bishop McQuaid during the consecration of the new Cathedral. In this story the essential nature of the Church was not located in the authority of Rome or the Bishops; the Roman Catholic Church was the church of the people. McQuaid’s narration did not emphasise the authority of the apostles but their humble origins. It was among the common people that Jesus chose his disciples.

[Jesus] might have entered in the halls of the governors and Caesars and ordered warriors and statesmen to do his bidding in the founding of His church, but such a church would not have been the people’s church. The church of the son of God had to be based on a true brotherhood and equality of men.²⁹

The theme of equality was essential to the plot of the story as told by McQuaid. The gospel of Jesus placed the slave on a level with the master. As this gospel was preached, it was “among the uneducated, among slaves and dependants, and among the lowest classes of society [that] were found the first adherents of the Church.” These common and uneducated people were true to their faith and their mission. As a result, the church expanded from its base among the lowly to the highest levels of society and was accepted by Kings and Emperors. These leaders, claiming high

²⁸ “Consecrated, Rt. Rev. Dr. O’Connor, Bishop of London,” *FP*, 20 October 1890, p. 5.

²⁹ “Noble Edifice,” *FP*, 29 June 1885, p. 5.

social rank, the story continues, have not always been trustworthy guardians of the truth and “the Church has met with heavy losses in some countries.” However, “these losses have not been occasioned primarily by the people” since they have remained true to the church. McQuaid charged the leaders with betrayal; the people “have been betrayed, deceived and led astray by those over them.” Thus he renarrated the history of Catholicism in England and Ireland. In England, the “King was lustful, and the Bishops were timid;” as a result, England fell away from “Christ’s religion.” In Ireland, political antagonism and the courage of the Bishops combined to rescue Ireland “from the slavery of state control and thus saved the faith of the people.” McQuaid affirmed the righteousness of his largely Irish audience who, despite suffering and degradation, “have never lost that sense of individual conscience which characterises the true freedom and dignity of the children of God.”³⁰

This narrative placed freedom and individual conscience as the fundamental posture of Christianity as experienced in the Catholic Church. McQuaid concluded that these characteristics made Catholicism the natural religion of North America where democracy gives people freedom to rule themselves.³¹ The great advance of the Church in North America was evidence of this.

In these countries of Canada and the United States the freedom of the people, which does not mean exemption from law and authority, has a large scope for development. Religion reaches out her hand to this free people as to brothers who work together in common for a common end, though in different fields. The forms of government proceed from the people, and are built upon their will, subordinated to all those just limitations which, in giving the individual man the largest liberty, restrict his desire within the bound set by Him from whom all good flows, and to whom all good returns. The Church does not lose by this wise entrusting of governmental ruling to the people. She cannot lose by walking in the steps of her founder and by imbibing the spirit of love for the people. The world cannot show in its long story of the last 1,800 years any thing to compare with the marvellous accomplishment of the Catholic Church in free America during the last fifty years.³²

³⁰ “Noble Edifice,” *FP*, 29 June 1885, p. 5.

³¹ This discourse could be effectively deployed by the laity against the clergy and church hierarchy see Brian P. Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*, 215, 218-23.

³² “Noble Edifice,” *FP*, 29 June 1885, p. 5.

The rhetorical use of “the people” in this narrative reversed the anti-Catholic portrayals of Catholicism as a foreign religion out of step with the New World and its freedoms. Patrick Joyce and James Vernon have argued persuasively that appeals to “the people” were central to the popular movements for democratic freedoms and far outweighed appeals to class in the late nineteenth century.³³ This linking of the narrative of the rise of the people with the narrative of the religiously oppressed finding freedom in the New World placed London’s Catholic minority firmly within the founding myths of North American exceptionalism. Catholics had arrived in North America poor and despised, but their faithfulness to the Catholic Church became the source of their individual freedom and dignity. McQuaid’s message to Catholics in the Protestant sea of southwestern Ontario was that their success, respectability, and fitness for New World conditions was represented materially in the magnificent stone Cathedral of St. Peter’s.

McQuaid and Foley, both prominent American bishops invited to add gravity to diocesan celebrations, invited London’s Catholics to interpret their experience within vastly different narrative structures. Foley presented Catholicism as a united and powerful divine force. Its focus was in Rome, but from there the authority of the Church spread across the globe guiding the lives of the faithful. McQuaid placed Catholicism within the great New World myth of freedom and prosperity for the diligent and made its claim to authority in the powerful name of “the people.” Catholicism promised the disciplined freedom required if democracy was to thrive. The mission of the church was to bring the light of freedom to all nations.

Each of these narratives, however contradictory, performed essential tasks in placing Catholics within their Canadian context. The Church, presented as the champion of liberal democracy and the freedoms of the New World, located Catholics as full members and even leaders within the Canadian socio-political narrative of nation building and the creation of an

³³ In Canadian historiography this populist rhetoric has been captured by working class and labour historians as evidence of a conflictual working class culture in Gregory S. Kealey and Bryan D. Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might be: the Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982) and Bryan Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*. Recent work in Britain has uncovered a much broader deployment of this language of people that resists so narrow an application Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People* and James Vernon, *Politics and the People*.

exemplary society. At the same time, the Church was presented as an authoritative community of reference which stretched back through the ages and encompassed the globe.³⁴ This narrative provided the community with a distinctive way of being Canadian and of participating in this new national project. These two versions of the Catholic story were able to reinforce rather than contradict one another. In his even-tempered and considered defence of Catholicism Bishop Walsh was able to weave the two narratives together. The divine authority of Rome and the Episcopate was used by Walsh to establish that Catholicism was more thoroughly grounded in Christian tradition than Protestantism. Where Protestants had been seduced by the “spirit of the age.” Catholics stood firm in ancient verities by submitting to the authority of the Church, signalled in the head of the Church, the Pontiff.³⁵ At the same time Walsh could make the legitimate claim for Catholics to the powerful narrative of the rise of the people. The bishop regarded Canadian Catholics as a “happy people” who had a religious responsibility to fulfil the “duties of good citizens, living in the profession and practice of the Christian religion,” which at once guaranteed “individual happiness” and provided the “secure basis of society.”³⁶ This discourse effectively deconstructed Protestant claims to be the sole purveyors of civil virtue.

It was not only the bishops who were able to call upon both the authority of Rome and the authority of the people. Thomas Coffey, publisher of the *Catholic Record*, symbolically represented the interweaving of these discourses in the consecration service of Bishop O’Connor. Much of the editorial content of the *Record* was to assure Catholics of their legitimate place as contributors to Canadian social and political life. After Bishop O’Connor had been invested with office and had received the greeting of the clergy Thomas Coffey presented a greeting on behalf of the laity of the Cathedral parish signed by thirty-four prominent laymen. The greeting reviewed

³⁴ Clarke provides concrete illustration of alliances between Church authorities and “moderate nationalists” that provided effective points of integration for Catholics into the narratives of liberal society, Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*, chapter 9

³⁵ Walsh, *The Doctrine of Papal Infallibility Stated and Vindicated* and “The One Catholic and Apostolic Church,” *FP*, 28 March 1887, p. 5.

³⁶ Coffey, *The City and Diocese of London*, 49.

the work of Bishop Walsh in establishing the diocese on a firm foundation and extolled the virtues of O'Connor as a priest and teacher in the diocese. The climax came with the words "Rome has spoken; and we are given one more illustration of her foresight and prudence."³⁷ Coffey and the other signatories to the greeting were the embodiment of McQuaid's "people" who had remained true to their faith and flourished in the freedom of the New World. Yet these New World Catholics understood the events unfolding in the appointment of O'Connor in the vocabulary of Ultramontane doctrine. Obedience to the pronouncements of Rome was part of the religion freely accepted and faithfully lived by the people.

The structure of the Roman Catholic Church and its ancient attitudes thoroughly embraced the establishment placement of religion. The flow of grace through the Pope and bishops to the clergy, and only then to the faithful, revealed a hierarchical understanding which sustained the parallel between political and religious power. However, the longstanding connections between the Church and the states of Europe had long since ceased to be sources of authority. Ultramontanism and Vatican I attempted to define authentically Christian forms of authority. While the piety of Rome resonated with Catholics in London, much of the rhetoric failed to accord with the dominant narratives that oriented their everyday lives. Interwoven with Roman authority was a narrative which borrowed much from the voluntarist narratives of liberal freedom. The language drawn on in constructing Catholicism as the religion of the people made a virtue of their double minority status. This liability became a strength and a badge of honour. McQuaid called upon Catholics to understand St. Peter's Cathedral as a symbol of what they could accomplish in the face of great odds. At the intersection of these competing narratives the community gained stature and confidence. Speaking the language of Rome assured the community of its position as the true Church within a worldwide and ancient tradition. Speaking the language

³⁷ "Consecrated, Rt. Rev. Dr. O'Connor, Bishop of London," *FP*, 20 October 1890, p. 5.

of the people assured the community that in becoming more Catholic it was becoming thoroughly North American.³⁸

Church of England

The Anglican Church was constantly aware and constantly reminded of its heritage as a national church. The 1791 attempt to establish the Church of England in Upper Canada continued to have repercussions in the 1880s. For example, the rectory lands provided an ongoing subsidy to the older parishes in London.³⁹ The Church of England remained the largest denomination in London and this, together with lingering establishment attitudes, placed Anglican life more prominently in the public eye than the other churches. As was discussed above the concept of the public is problematic, and in this context it meant that Anglican debates and events were assumed to be of general interest and concern to people of all denominations. Reports of Anglican vestry meetings and church societies received great attention in the press, and the letters to the editorial columns often featured debates among Anglicans. A particularly large number of such letters appeared during the two episcopal elections during this period. The extent of public campaigning on these occasions approached that which was typical of political contests, if public interest can be gauged by the quantity of space given to the issue in the local newspapers.⁴⁰ This public profile was evident but the authority by which the Church of England held its place in public was not at all clear. An early claim to established status had to be abandoned, and a new

³⁸ Mark McGowan and Murray Nicolson debate how Irish Catholicism makes Toronto's Irish Catholics. McGowan's de-greening thesis emphasises the "religion of the people" discourse. Nicolson's persistence of ethnicity argument tends to give emphasis to a language that binds them to international Catholicism. Both of these languages gave meaning and direction to London's Catholic community. Mark G. McGowan, "The De-Greening of the Irish: Toronto's Irish Catholic Press, Imperialism, and the Forging of the New Identity, 1887-1914," *Historical Paper* (1989) and Murray W. Nicolson, "Irish Tridentine Catholicism in Victorian Toronto: Vessel for Ethno-Religious Persistence," *Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Study Sessions* 50 (1983).

³⁹ This became a point of some contention and threatened legal action in the late 1880s as the newer suburban parishes requested and were refused a share in the bounty, see "Adjourned Easter Vestries," *FP*, 11 May 1886, p. 3; "The Easter Vestries," *FP*, 12 April 1887, p. 3; and "The Easter Vestries," *FP*, 23 April 1889, p. 5

⁴⁰ See *FP* coverage of the election of a coadjutor Bishop and the Synod which elected Isaac Hellmuth, 19-20 July 1971. Much more extensive coverage was given to the speculations attending the

basis for authority was still under negotiation. Much of the status of the Church of England was merely a result of the transplantation of British practices and assumptions to Canada. During the period under consideration, seventy-one percent of the clergy and sixty-nine percent of adult adherents in London's Anglican churches had been born outside of Canada.⁴¹ The governmental structures and residual assumptions of the Church reflected the establishment narrative. A voluntary discourse, which was particularly evident in the Evangelical party, subverted traditional postures, but it was not clear at this point how the Church would frame its voice as the disestablished church of choice for the new Dominion.

Bishop Strachan had begun positioning the Church of England for this transition, and the first episcopal election in Canada had made Benjamin Cronyn Bishop of Huron in 1857. In 1871 Bishop Cronyn's health began to fail and another election was to be held in St. Paul's to elect a coadjutor bishop. The lay delegates to Synod were to vote; however, the rules of election stipulated that there would be no nominations and no discussion of the merits of the candidates. These provisions were to protect the dignity of the Church from electioneering; however, the lay delegates were at a loss to know how to vote. Judge Hughes, a prominent churchman from Brantford, seized the initiative and called a meeting of lay delegates in the billiard room of the Tecumseh Hotel the evening before the election. A sense of felt need and curiosity filled the room, but once a chair and secretary were appointed, those assembled seemed uncertain as to how to proceed. Judge Hughes explained that the meeting was "for mutual conference to discuss: – 1st. How best to conduct the election in consistence with our duty as Churchmen and Christian gentlemen? And 2nd. Who is the most fit clergyman to be promoted to the dignity?" The ensuing discussion indicated that these Christian gentlemen were not at all clear as to their legitimate role in the governance of the Church. Several suggested that nominations take place to select a lay delegates' candidate to ensure that lay delegates would vote as a block. Others argued

election of Hellmuth's successor. The *FP* covered this daily with reports and letters from 24 September to 20 October 1883

⁴¹ For the relationship between ethnicity and religious affiliation in London see Appendix B.

that the meeting should be used to discuss the merits of the various clergy under consideration, because the laity knew far less about them than the clerical delegates. Still others asserted the “absurdity of speaking of the merits or demerits of any persons in their absence.” One delegate accused Hughes of using the meeting to rig the vote, an accusation he hotly denied. At length it was apparent that a course of action could not be agreed upon, and it was resolved that “it would be better to depart in friendly terms with a brotherly Christian feeling, and let the ballot box decide” and the meeting adjourned.⁴² The billiard room meeting illustrated that the laity of the diocese were convinced that they had some contribution to make to its governance, but the mechanism to give them a voice was absent. This was neither the beginning nor the end of lay expressions of frustration regarding their role in a Church they were increasingly being called upon to support. The next day Rev. Isaac Hellmuth, Dean of Huron, was elected with a majority of both clergy and lay ballots.⁴³

The Church of England in London sought authority by appealing to its primitive purity as well as to its evangelical earnestness. Against the Catholic pretension to be the true church, the Church of England claimed to be “a branch of Christ's Holy Apostolic Church; her doctrines are evangelical; her creed is comprehensive; her liturgy is scriptural; her polity is primitive.”⁴⁴ The reference to primitive polity was an appeal to the New Testament episcopal form of church government and a peculiarly Anglican version of apostolic succession. Anglican divines sought to connect the origins of the early British church directly to the twelve Apostles before the great Roman Catholic mission to Britain by Augustine.⁴⁵ Thus the English bishops, and by extension the Canadian, participated in an apostolic line which by-passed Rome. This

⁴² “The Coadjutor Bishop, Meeting of the Lay Delegates Last Night,” *FP*, 19 July 1871, p. 3

⁴³ Hellmuth received 52 of the 84 clergy and 78 of the 130 lay ballots. “The Anglican Synod of Huron,” *FP*, 20 July 1871, p. 3.

⁴⁴ “The English Church—The Great Revival in it,” *FP*, 6 December 1876, p. 4.

⁴⁵ For a taste of this position as presented in London at this time see H.D. Steele, “The Early British Church,” (let) *FP*, 9 November 1887, p. 3 and H.D. Steele, “The Early British Church,” (let) *FP*, 30 November 1887, p. 7. For a Roman Catholic rebuttal see William Flannery, “The Early British Church,” (let) *FP*, 30 November 1887, p. 7.

succession did not recognise the ascendancy of the Roman See and had the merit of providing the British with divine authorisation for a British national church. The Reformation, in this view, was a return to the purity of pre-Roman British Christianity and thus it had more the quality of a restoration than a protest.

The Evangelical character of the Diocese of Huron made such an appeal to ancient sources, even those that avoided reference to Rome, suspect, as is evident from the sermon Rev. Michael Boomer preached on the occasion of Isaac Hellmuth's elevation to coadjutor Bishop. The theme of the address was the characteristics necessary for a minister. These, Rev. Boomer argued, were personal faithfulness and faithfulness in preaching and teaching the scriptures. The primacy of the scripture to the work of the clergy was illustrated ritually in the service of ordination. The "Bishop delivers into the hands of the person to be ordained the Bible, and says, 'Take the authority to present the word of God, and to minister the holy sacraments in the congregation where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto.'"⁴⁶ The authority of the clergy and the Bishop, Boomer wished to underscore, came not from their office but their role as those who handled the word of God. Bishop Hellmuth would be effective in his role as he taught and upheld the witness of the Bible. Boomer was typical of the Anglican clergy of the Diocese in appealing to scripture as the only true authority.

Our Church constantly makes her appeals to the Word of God. Even the Creeds, the most solemn and weighty statements of our Faith, are to be received and believed, not from their antiquity, not because framed and set forth by Councils, not because widely accepted, but because they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Writ.... We assert that the Apostles, the only unerring guides and governors of the Church, live as perpetual witnesses of the truth – they speak now as they spake of old, with decision and clearness. This is our Rock, from which nothing can move us.⁴⁷

The heritage of an established church did not always fit well with the strong Evangelical emphasis among Anglicans in London. This tension arose in the early 1870s over the issue of lay prerogative in clergy patronage. An episcopal form of church government would

⁴⁶ "The Diocese of Huron: Imposing Ceremony in St. Paul's," *FP*, 23 August 1871, p. 3.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

authorise the Bishop to make such decisions, and this was indeed the practice. There was no official mechanism by which the wishes of the congregation could be represented to the Bishop, a practice that seemed increasingly at odds with the growing influence of the laity. This issue was discussed at some length in the columns of the *Free Press*. “A Layman” called for change by sketching the great transformations underway in the church and in secular affairs. This was another version of the narrative of the rise of the people, but in this version the Anglican laity played the lead role. Within the church the two transformations underway were disestablishment and the introduction of ritualism.⁴⁸ The first of these changes was represented as being driven by the laity and as being fully in line with “the true principles of Protestantism, viz., Civil and Religious Liberty.” The clergy, on the other hand, drove the second, which tended toward “priestcraft, sacerdotalism, the destruction of liberty of conscience.” This narrative of transformation cast the laity as the faithful guardians of the Reformation and liberty, and the clergy as spoilers who wanted to augment priestly authority against liberty of conscience. If the laity were to fulfil their assigned role as “the people,” they would require prerogative in the selection of their ministers to keep the “priestcraft” and “sacerdotalism” of the clergy in check.

In Layman’s narrative the rejection of establishment by the laity was not intended to undermine the effectiveness of the church but to increase it. The connection with the state provided no involvement (or authority) for the laity. As a result, the majority of adherents took little interest in the affairs of the church, a condition Layman referred to as “indifferentism.” The move to disestablishment in Canada was tied to the controversy over the Clergy Reserves, the secularisation of which Layman narrated as a victory of Church of England laity against the clergy. The new “free” church context was characterised by tolerance and openness, characteristics that Layman expected to generate popular interest in religion in a way that the church’s alliance with the state never could. The subtext here was that the free church Layman advocated required a major shift in the relationship of the clergy to their parish. The Church was

⁴⁸ A Layman, “Lay Prerogative in Ministerial Election,” (let) *FP*, 27 January 1870, p. 3

free from state inference, but it was now dependent upon the support of its congregations. Behind the demand for prerogative was a fundamental shift in the authority structures of the Church. The laity were becoming more active in church affairs with the encouragement of the clergy, but with this involvement came lay demands for real authority.⁴⁹

This subtext was clear to Rev. Adam Townley, the diocese's lonely advocate of a higher church in Huron. His response dismissed the common sense of the age in favour of the wisdom of ages as taught by the Church of England. Townley's explanation affirmed clergy privilege and concluded rather condescendingly that it was in the interest of congregations to be removed from selecting their clergy because lay people were neither spiritually perceptive nor theologically sound and would gravitate to superficiality over substance in clergy appointments. His argument reversed Layman's valuation and cast the clergy as the guardians of the mysteries of grace against the unlearned horde bent on refashioning the church in their own image. This conclusion only served to confirm Layman's view that the clergy could not be trusted with the future of the Church.⁵⁰ Underlying this debate were fundamental differences of conviction regarding the nature of the church. For Layman the role of church was to guarantee private judgement in support of civil and religious freedoms. Townley disputed this, declaring private judgement to be a mistaken modern rage, and demanding that the church be grounded in distinctly Christian theological reflection rather than attempting to reflect contemporary intellectual fashion. Layman gave authority to his analysis by an unstudied proof-texting from the scriptures, which served to illustrate Townley's charge of lay superficiality. Townley waded into the debate with the full range of historical and theological scholarship, confirming Layman's charge of priestly

⁴⁹ A correspondent to *Evangelical Churchman* in 1888 captured this dynamic in his comment: "The minute a man begins to put his hand in his pocket he consciously or unconsciously claims the right of a voice in the disposal of his money." Quoted in R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar, *Professional Gentlemen: The Professions in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 270-1.

⁵⁰ Adam Townley, "The Church of the Prayer Book," (1st) *FP*, 11 March 1870, p. 3.

mystification.⁵¹ The battle being fought was over who should lead the church in the age of disestablishment. Townley and Layman were wielding different discourses in setting the direction for the future. Working these conflicting accounts into church structures was a slow and tenuous process.

The synodical structure of diocesan governance was part of the church's response to its status as a denomination.⁵² The synod provided lay representation in recognition of the important role of the laity in support of the diocese. During the 1870 Synod, Bishop Benjamin Cronyn introduced a new canon to provide for lay involvement in ministerial appointments. It is not clear that the exchange in the *Free Press* between Adam Townley and Layman influenced this action, although the bishop suggested that "discontent in one or two parishes" occasioned bringing the issue forward.⁵³ The bishop initiated this change in procedure, and members of clergy moved and seconded it. However, before the discussion was really underway lay delegates presented a motion that the proposal be withdrawn. These lay delegates expressed full confidence in the present system and the wisdom of the bishop and discounted calls for reform as not really representing the wishes of the majority of the people.

That the Synod, whilst gratefully acknowledging the consideration for the supposed wishes of the members of the Church in the Diocese, by the submission to the Synod for approval of the Canon on Patronage, desires to record its entire satisfaction with the manner in which his Lordship has exercised his powers in this respect hitherto, and its wishes that his Lordship would kindly withdraw the Canon, and allow the patronage to remain as hitherto in the hands of the Bishop.⁵⁴

This action settled the matter until the Synod of 1879 when, once again, a canon was introduced to provide for lay representation in ministerial appointments. The proposal was again initiated by the Bishop and gave the church wardens and lay delegates to Synod the power of veto over ministerial

⁵¹ See other contributions from Layman in *FP*, 4 February 1870; 5 March 1870; 13 April 1870, p. 3

⁵² Curtis Fahey, *In His Name* and T.R. Millman, "Beginnings of the Synodical Movement in Colonial Anglican Churches with Special Reference to Canada," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 21 (1979). The story of Church Societies, the precursors to the Synods is told by Maurice R. Kingsford, "Church Societies," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 7 (1965).

⁵³ "The Diocese of Huron," *FP*, 10 June 1870, p. 2.

appointments. The Bishop would forward the name of one clergyman to this committee, and, if approved, the appointment would be made. If a majority of the committee rejected the proposal, another candidate would be forwarded.⁵⁵ On this occasion the discussion was much more lively and the proposal passed. Adam Townley once again expressed his lack of confidence in congregations being able to choose a clergyman to serve them arguing that “the most unsuitable men to choose a clergyman for any parish were the very residents of the parish themselves.” This was because “congregations were generally pleased with what appealed to popular ideas,” as his 1870 debate with Layman had claimed. He hoped that appointments would be left to the Bishop “who was the competent party to make the appointment.”⁵⁶ A number of other clergy spoke against the proposal, fearing that it would prejudice the chance for advancement of the older clergy and was out of step with an episcopal form of church government.

The influence of the laity in the Church was on the rise, but the relationship between the laity and clergy was far from settled. While Dean of Huron and rector of St. Paul’s, Isaac Hellmuth remarked upon the “happy union subsisting among the Vestry.” This happy union was based on a division of responsibilities which would “leave temporalities to the laity and reserve the spirituality of the Church to himself.”⁵⁷ This division allowed the laity to raise money for the church, but left the direction of church affairs to the clergy. This approach did not meet the aspirations of the laity who, like Layman, believed their leadership should extend beyond “temporalities.” Charges were made at the 1870 Synod that the clergy were directing how lay delegates should vote. The bishop, and the synod as a whole, discountenanced such action.⁵⁸ In their unfamiliarity with their new role, lay leaders seemed to require regular assurances by the clergy that their contributions were important. Hellmuth recognised the involvement of the laity

⁵⁴ “The Diocese of Huron,” *FP*, 10 June 1870, p. 2.

⁵⁵ “Synod of Huron,” *FP*, 19 June 1879, p. 3.

⁵⁶ “Diocese of Huron,” *FP*, 18 June 1879, p. 3

⁵⁷ “St. Paul’s Cathedral,” *FP*, 3 May 1870, p. 3

⁵⁸ “Synod of Huron,” *FP*, 11 June 1870, p. 3.

in his 1879 address to Synod but in his over-enthusiasm he seems to be attempting to construct the harmony he describes.

Never, perhaps, was there a time when as a rule the Laity have taken a deeper interest in the Church and exercised a wider influence in all the concerns. Your very presence here today is an evidence of this... You know well there should be no antagonism between the Ministry and members of the Church of Christ but a loving inter-dependence and generous sympathy and hearty co-operation.⁵⁹

This affirmation seems to give the laity a wider range of interests and powers than Hellmuth's statement to St. Paul's vestry allowed. However, comments by clergy at this same Synod indicated a level of resentment at the influence of the laity. One member of the clergy commented: "It was well known that the Laity held the purse strings, and the church could not afford to offend or trifle with them."⁶⁰ However it was the clergy who, as another expressed it, "were the active members of the church" and thus should have their rights. In Catholic polity at this time, the "religion of the people" as articulated by Bishop McQuaid was safely abstracted, while Bishop Foley's religion of Rome continued to express the official approach to governance. In the Church of England the laity were pressing the democratic rhetoric of individual judgement onto the governing structures of the Church. This undermined the traditional deferential relationship between clergy and people and threatened to devolve the role of priest into that of a religious professional providing service at the call of a paying clientele. Layman considered such a development essential to the future orthodoxy of the church, and Townley was convinced that it would undermine its theological foundations.⁶¹

In this period there were multiple understandings of what constituted the church and provided the centre of Anglican identity. The appeals to antiquity and Apostolic succession were still available and were occasionally brought out in conflicts with Roman Catholics, or when lay members attempted to undermine the position of the clergy in the church. At the same time, there was a concern to be as Protestant as possible. The Bishops of Huron during this period, Cronyn,

⁵⁹ "Diocese of Huron," *FP*, 18 June 1879, p. 3

⁶⁰ "Synod of Huron," *FP*, 19 June 1879, p. 3.

⁶¹ Gidney, *Professional Gentlemen*, 28-30, 107. Also see Scott, *From Office to Profession*.

Hellmuth, and Baldwin, all placed the church firmly in the Evangelical camp by promoting the authority of scripture and calls to conversion. The older establishment model still continued to resonate among some of the clergy however, particularly with respect to the method of clerical appointments. They found the prospect of congregations having a hand in appointing them to their charges far less palatable than voting alongside the laity in episcopal elections or working with them in synod. The church was moving from the assumptions of an established church whose role it was to ensure a Christian society, to those of a free church charged with preserving “civil and religious freedoms” in a liberal democratic Dominion. The task was fundamentally similar to the old establishment role but the challenge was to accomplish the task using the *discursive forms of voluntarism*. The established church heritage provided material resources but, more importantly, produced the habit of mind that assumed events in the Church of England were of public concern and not inherently denominational. These resources tended to strengthen the status quo and slowed the application of voluntarist assumptions to church structures even while the evangelical language of voluntarism dominated pulpits in the diocese.

Congregationalists

The voluntarist ordering of church government, which the Church of England was beginning to wrestle with, had long been the defining characteristic of Congregationalism. London’s Congregationalists were a small minority comprising only two percent of the population. Their minority status seemed to give rise to a self-conscious rehearsal of their distinct polity. Perhaps they were also confident that if outsiders really understood the principles of congregationalism they could be enticed to join. A manifestation of this urge to explain and promote was Rev. H.D. Hunter’s determination, in the first months of his pastorate, to produce a manual “explaining what Congregationalism is and what it is not and wherein it differs from other denominations.”⁶² The *Manual* that resulted clearly distinguished the congregational form of governance from the others, albeit in terms not particularly flattering to the alternatives.

⁶² Congregational Meeting Minutes, First Congregational Church, London, Ontario, 3 March 1881 (UCA), 113.

All Church government reduces itself to three pure forms: (1) That which lodges its power in the hands of one supreme sovereign or pontiff; (2) That which vests its authority in the hands of a privileged order, composed of a greater or smaller number of principal persons; and (3) that which vests its supreme power (under God) in the hands of ALL WHO ARE INCLUDED IN THE ASSOCIATION.

The first of these is the Monarchic, or Episcopal; the second, the Aristocratic or Presbyterian; and the third, the Democratic, or Congregational form of Government.⁶³

Beyond the self-promoting rhetoric was a different understanding of what constitutes the church. In contrast to a parish system, which claimed all adherents within a geographical area, Congregationalists believed that “each local Church should be composed exclusively of those who have been made ‘new creatures in Christ Jesus.’”⁶⁴ The Congregationalists viewed every local church as independently constituting the church of Christ. It was out of this conviction that the independence of the local church was founded. Each local body constituted a legitimate expression of the church of Jesus Christ, “it is complete in itself—independent of all ecclesiastical authority—that it should receive its own members, maintain its own discipline, and appoint all its own officers, in harmony only with the principles of the New Testament.”⁶⁵ In a democratic age, which had rejected in principle monarchy and oligarchy, the rhetorical construction of congregationalism within the narratives of democracy placed it in a privileged position.

The expression of congregational independence was the monthly business meeting held in London on the third Thursday evening of the month. All members were encouraged to participate in the meeting of the church, although it is evident from the minutes that the primary participants in discussion and the conduct of business were male. All matters related to the well being of the church and its members came before these meetings. Concerns were raised about matters relating to worship and the role of the choir.⁶⁶ A resolution was passed commending total

⁶³ *Manual of the First Congregational Church*, London, 1882, pp. 3-4. Emphasis and capitalisation follows the original

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Congregational Meeting Minutes, First Congregational Church, London, Ontario, 3 February 1876 (UCA), p. 17 and 2 February 1877 (UCA), p. 30.

abstinence⁶⁷ and accordingly, alternatives to the “fermented” wine used in the communion service were explored.⁶⁸ Those assembled at meetings of the congregation expressed their views on the nature and quality of preaching,⁶⁹ worked to resolve disputes with pastors,⁷⁰ and extended calls to new pastors when required.⁷¹ The business meeting organised and assigned various ministry functions: a poor committee and missions committee in 1875, an invitation committee to be involved in evangelism in 1877, and a visitation committee to regularly visit members of the congregation in 1879.⁷² New members were presented for approval at the congregational meeting and from time to time action was required in cases of “serious deflection ... from Christian duty” to recall members to their commitments.⁷³ This practice of meeting as a congregation to consider matters of mutual concern created and sustained a participation in and commitment to the life of the Church. The distance between clergy and laity was removed because the meeting created a public sphere which all (male) members entered, according to the construct, as equals. Women were included in the meeting, and their silence mirrored the liberal conventions of public propriety.

A fraternal union in a loosely structured denomination balanced the fundamental principle of the independence of local churches. The nature of the union was difficult to express coherently. Congregationalists understood Christian polity to be the model of a free and democratic society in which each member was able to determine their course, in spiritual as in political matters, based on reason and the authority of scripture. As the individual members pursued their own interests, the community life of the church was enhanced. The First

⁶⁷ Ibid., 1 March 1877, p. 31 and 29 March 1877, p. 41

⁶⁸ Ibid., 31 July 1879, p. 80 and 11 December 1879.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 31 January 1878.

⁷⁰ Ibid., meeting throughout August 1879.

⁷¹ Ibid., 7 December 1880.

⁷² Ibid. See 2 July 1875; 9, 16 August 1877; and 11 December 1879.

⁷³ Ibid., 5 August 1875, p. 10. Other reference to Church discipline can be found 2 September 1875, p. 11.

Congregational Manual attempted to define the relationship between the principle of independence in such a way that it did not conflict with the legitimate role of the fraternal union. The difficulty of expressing this connection is illustrated in the following extended quotation.

Although every ... Church is equal with all others in essential rights and powers, and by its very constitution independent of all exterior control, yet a most cordial fraternal fellowship should ever be maintained amongst them – each affectionately caring for the other’s soundness in doctrine, purity in communion and general welfare. Hence, when difficulties arise, or especially important matters claim attention and decision, as in the settlement or dismissal of a pastor, the formulation of articles of general belief, or contemplated changes in its organic life, it is not only competent but highly desirable that such Churches should, in a fraternal and friendly manner, advise and help each other in all proper ways. But such advice should be tendered only as one friend counsels another, and subject in all cases to the final decision of the party seeking it. If any such Church should seem to its sister Churches wilfully and wrongly to disregard their advice by adopting erroneous beliefs, or choosing an unsound pastor, or making itself guilty in any flagrant way of unchristian things, sister Churches would be in conscience bound to withdraw themselves from all complicity with and responsibility for such action by the formal revocation of fellowship with the offending church until it should return to what seems to them the path of duty. Such action, however, can in no-wise aspire to the place of authority over the Church to which it refers. It will be simply a labour of moral suasion and self-justification.⁷⁴

The model for community in this polity was the autonomous rational individual. No authoritative claim could undermine the freedom of the individual Christian, and this same understanding of independence was extended to local churches. Unity could not be enforced, for community was constituted in mutual commitment to shared principles. In welcoming the clergy of the Congregational Union to London in 1878, then pastor Rev. R.W. Wallace commended them for their orthodoxy in a time of theological confusion. Continued belief in and defence of “the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ” and other Christian verities were in no way incompatible with congregationalism’s central commitment to independent judgement. The orthodoxy of Congregationalists was not the result of saddling the “individual mind with creeds which may be respectable as to age, but sadly inexpressive of advancing thought.” Indeed the visiting divines welcomed new ideas from “whatever point of the theological compass.” The centrality of Christian freedom found expression in Wallace’s characterisation of London’s

⁷⁴ *Manual of the First Congregational Church*, London, 1882 (UCA), p. 6.

Congregational church as a “temple to freedom of thought under Christ’s direction.”⁷⁵ The only limit on human freedom of thought was to be found in the scripture. The creeds and governmental structures of other denominations could be dispensed with because of a confidence that reasonable people free from prejudice would discover the truth of Congregationalist beliefs and practices by study of the Scripture alone.⁷⁶ This assurance was reiterated in the form of service for receiving new members.

This Church ... holds in common with its sister Churches ... that human formulations of dogma, whether in the form of written creeds or articles of religion, are neither conducive to the unity of faith nor preventive of error, and that the Holy Scriptures alone are the true standard of religious belief and rule of Christian practice.

As a Church we decline to accept the theology of any man, or class of men, as necessarily authoritative; nevertheless, on all material points we are in substantial accord with the doctrines held by the fathers of Congregationalism in England and America holding such views, not because they held them, but because we find them in the Word of God.

Whilst we claim, we also most heartily concede the free exercise of private judgement on all matters that come within the legitimate range of human reason, hence, beyond the doctrines hereinafter stated, each member must be held responsible for his own distinctive opinions without any way compromising those of his brethren.⁷⁷

The service then went on to rehearse the defining doctrines of congregationalism in a form very much like the Nicene Creed, with minor modifications to suit the congregational approach to church government. The authority to require conformity in doctrine and practice was founded on “the free exercise of private judgement.” Confidence in the truth of congregational principles, according to this discourse, depended on a reading of scripture that was free from the influences of traditions and human authority. The fact that Congregationalists were a small minority of all who recognised the authority of Scripture and reason did not seem to concern them unduly. The construction of authority they appealed to would require London’s Congregationalists to consider those who disagreed with their polity as being unwilling to divest themselves of dead tradition or

⁷⁵ “Congregational Union, The Twenty-fifth Annual Session,” *Ad*, 6 June 1878, p. 4.

⁷⁶ George M. Marsden, “Everyone One’s Own Interpreter? The Bible, Science, and Authority in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America,” in *The Bible in America: Essays in Cultural History*, eds. Nathan O. Hatch and Mark A. Noll (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

⁷⁷ *Manual of the First Congregational Church*, London, 1882 (UCA), pp 8-9.

pernicious error in approaching the scriptures. The appeal to human reason did not make Congregationalists less dogmatic about the truth of their principles, rather, it forced them to consider other Christians irrational and tradition bound.

This emphasis on independence and freedom (under God) of thought and actions was also expected to characterise the relationship between pastor and the people. The remarks of Rev. Aylward at his induction as pastor in 1890 set out the nature of this relationship.

I believe that I stand in this pulpit upon the only footing that can be permanently healthy and strong and acceptable. I have not been put here by a Bishop or a Conference, but I am here simply because I believe God has sent me here, and has made His will plain to me through the attitude of the church towards me to-day, and I come to you, friends, in the Lord's name, and my heart's desire is that my coming may be a blessing to every man and every woman and child connected with this church.⁷⁸

The pastoral connection did not depend on any earthly authority but upon the pastor's sense of the will of God as evidenced in the reception received. The role of the pastor so authorised was to be a friend and a blessing in spiritual matters among those connected with the church. There was reason to question whether this "footing" actually resulted in permanent and strong relationships between pastors and congregations. This construction of the pastoral relation rejected the priestly model that created clear distinctions between the clergy and laity. Among Evangelical Anglicans, an acceptance of the "priesthood of all believers" and the immediate reception of saving grace in conversion had begun to subvert this distinction; however, a tradition of deference ensured a continuing social distance and authority for Anglican clergy. Neither theology nor tradition elevated Congregationalist pastors above their flocks. Their position was to be a friend and spiritual guide when, and to the degree, such friendship was desired.⁷⁹ Successful pastors were effective in providing this professional religious friendship, and as they did the church prospered. A perceptive *Free Press* reporter commented that the fortunes of the Congregational Church rose

⁷⁸ "A Christian Minister, Rev. R. Aylward's First Discourse as a City Pastor," *FP*, 8 December 1890, p. 3.

⁷⁹ This was part of a wider transition within all of the older professions which increasingly defined professionals as purveyors of expert services without the cultural authority of learned "gentlemen," Gidney, *Professional Gentlemen*, 379-84.

and fell with the quality of its pastor.⁸⁰ Of all denominations in London the Congregationalists gave their pastors the least religious authority but were, ironically, very dependent upon their pastors for prosperity.

For most of the period under consideration here remarkably able pastors served London's Congregationalists. Rev. R. W. Wallace, pastor from 1872 to 1880, was a man of great energy and ability. He achieved prominence with the local press and was often the source the newspapers cited for a religious response to current issues. His references to the priority of private judgement and his non-dogmatic moral wisdom made him an ideal public religious figure. However, Rev. Wallace was frustrated with what he described as a lack of cooperation from his congregation. This led him to submit a letter of resignation in August 1879. From the subsequent series of events it appears that Wallace had little intention of leaving his charge. Most probably he was hoping that the prospect of the congregation being without a pastor would provide him leverage to lead as something more than a friend. At a meeting called to explore the reasons for the resignation, Wallace emphasised what he perceived to be a lack of sympathy for his pastoral efforts. In the statement he gave to the meeting, he particularly charged the "young men and ladies" with a lack of cooperation. This was evidenced in low attendance at the extra meetings of the church particularly the prayer meeting, congregational meetings, and the Lord's Supper. This he felt did not reflect the Congregationalist commitment to the active involvement of all members. He made it clear that this resignation did not mean he wanted to leave, was headed somewhere else, or was unhappy with the church. He simply needed more cooperation if progress was going to be made.⁸¹

An official meeting of the Church was convened to consider Wallace's resignation. Many of the good qualities exhibited by their pastor were rehearsed; however, there was an

⁸⁰ "Congregationalism," *FP*, 14 June 1875, p. 4.

⁸¹ "Congregational Church, Rev. R. W. Wallace's Reason for Resigning," *FP*, 15 August 1879, p. 4.

undercurrent of discontent, and some members seemed prepared to accept the resignation.⁸² The main source of dissatisfaction was lack of visitation; apparently Wallace was not being friendly enough. If his intention in submitting his resignation was to coerce greater sympathy for his ministry, Wallace's strategy was in serious danger of backfiring. This impression was reinforced by a letter from Wallace withdrawing his resignation that was read to the Congregation on 24 August 1879. The letter promised steps to improve visitation, but it did not indicate that the congregation had done anything concrete to meet Wallace's demands for cooperation.⁸³ Whatever his intention, this incident did not seem to resolve the problem, and in August 1880 Wallace resigned again, this time with a new charge already secured.⁸⁴

Rev. H.D. Hunter succeeded Wallace in early 1881. Hunter had a less public profile than Wallace and seemed content to focus on his assigned role of religious friend and guide. Congregational Union reports show a steady gain in membership attending Hunter's ministry until 1888, when there was a dramatic drop. Nonetheless, his resignation and move to Sycamore, Illinois, in January 1890 was accompanied by gifts, memorials, and many kind words.⁸⁵ By July, however, a large section of the Church had left to form a new congregation, blaming Hunter's "autocratic" subversion of congregational practices and principles. The evidence, which emerged during the disputes later in the year, suggested that during the latter years of his ministry the church was increasingly divided between Hunter's friends and his opponents. At the final meeting over which he presided in January 1890, the membership roll was revised, to exclude many who had indicated their disapproval of Hunter by absenting themselves from divine service. This

⁸² Congregational Church, London, Ontario, Minutes of Congregational Meetings, 14 August and 21 August 1879 (UCA).

⁸³ "Congregational Church," *Ad*, 25 August 1879, p. 4.

⁸⁴ Congregational Church, London, Ontario, Minutes of Congregational Meetings, 21 August 1880 (UCA).

⁸⁵ "Saying Farewell," *FP*, 18 February 18, 1890, p. 5 and "Rev. H.D. Hunter," *Ad*, 18 February 1890, p. 5.

action, and the response of those excluded, precipitated the July split.⁸⁶ The Hunter legacy was further brought into question when the candidate he proposed to succeed him, Rev. Robert Neale, was accused of an unsavoury past. Neale vehemently denied such charges, producing a bevy of letters attesting his virtues, but he resigned his pastorate in October and left town.⁸⁷ By the time Rev. Aylward arrived, the third pastor within a year, the fortunes of Congregationalism were considerably diminished. The right of private judgement and the difficulty of sustaining pastoral relations on the model of spiritual friendship seem to have conspired to give Congregationalism the dubious distinction of being the only major religious group to have fewer London adherents in 1891 than in 1871 according to the census reports.

The congregational discourse of independence and free thought closely paralleled the liberal values upon which Canadian society in the late nineteenth century was to be based. This was a kind of Christianity that found liberal notions of freedom of thought and self-determination productive of Christian zeal. One might have expected that the clear fit with the public narrative would advantage Congregationalism in the early years of the new Dominion. However, in London, the practices of congregationalism could not sustain a community which could turn its rhetorical advantage into numerical growth.

Baptists

The Baptists, like the Congregationalists were committed to a congregational form of government. The Baptist churches in London were formed as autonomous congregations around a confession of faith and a covenant. These founding documents shared a basic structure but were modified by each congregation to provide a unique expression of its theological and spiritual commitments. Talbot Street and Adelaide Street, the two oldest churches, based their confession and covenant on that of the Long Point Baptist Association. Grosvenor Street, a congregation that grew out of these churches, chose to model its confession after that of the New

⁸⁶ "The Congregational Church," *Ad*, 14 July 1890, p. 5 and "Money at its Root: How London Congregationalists Fell Out," *Ad*, 31 July 1890, p. 1.

⁸⁷ "First Congregational Church," *FP*, 18 October 1890, p. 9.

Hampshire Baptist Association.⁸⁸ Even the Talbot Street and Adelaide Street documents have significant differences, despite their common reference.⁸⁹ The individual congregation had the power to rule for itself even on matters as central as the wording of the covenant, which was also open to review and amendment by the membership.⁹⁰ The principle of congregational independence was rigorously guarded. A motion was introduced at a congregational meeting at Adelaide Street to limit the manner in which business came before the meeting. The matter was presented in a form which made it seem entirely innocuous.

Whereas certain matters that might be calculated to cause unpleasantness are likely to be sprung upon the meetings and realizing that in all our deliberations we should be mindful of the Golden Rule: "To do unto others as we would have others do to us" BIRT we will not from this time forward bring into our business meetings any matters that the pastor and deacons in committee may deem unwise or inexpedient.⁹¹

The motion suggested a move toward a presbyterial form of governance by giving the pastor and deacons power over the agenda at meetings of the church. The informal history of Adelaide Street briefly recounts this as a particularly important juncture in their collective history indicating the "members were not at this point ready to surrender their indisputable right of freedom of speech and action as Baptists."⁹² Congregational independence was valued and heartily defended; however, congregational autonomy was not the defining principle for Baptists it was for Congregationalists.

It was rather the practice of believers' baptism that formed Baptists as a unique expression of Christian community. The Talbot Street Confession of Faith defined the ordinance of baptism as follows.

⁸⁸ Grosvenor Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario, Minutes of Congregational Meeting, 13 July 1887 (BAM)

⁸⁹ Compare "Covenant," Adelaide Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario (BAM) with William Sherwood Fox, *A Century of Service*, 87-90

⁹⁰ Adelaide Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario, Minute book, 14 January 1881 (BAM), "In accordance with a desire previously expressed the Church covenant was read - concerning which remarks pro and con were made."

⁹¹ Adelaide Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario, Minute book, 5 February 1885 (BAM). "BIRT" was the secretary's abbreviation for "be it resolved that."

We also believe that *nothing but immersion is Baptism*; that professed believers in Christ are the only proper subject of this ordinance; and that it is their duty to submit to it as well as to all other commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ.⁹³

The baptism of only “professed believers” was to ensure a “believers’ church,” a group sharing a definite conversion from a life of disobedience and a commitment to live by biblical standards. Baptists considered themselves to be above all else a gathered community living in obedience to Christ and his teaching. This view arose out of a primitivist assumption that church life should, as much as possible, resemble that of the early church as described in the New Testament.⁹⁴ Small autonomous groups of recent converts without elaborate governmental or liturgical structures seemed to Baptists to be the purest form of Christianity. Baptist heritage constructed itself through the religious disabilities imposed on them in Britain and the persecutions of the Anabaptists in Europe. The Baptist’s minority status in London served to confirm and intensify their identity as the righteous few in the face of the hostility of religious and political elites. To maintain this identity in a context in which the liabilities were removed and in which religious and political elites were using the language of voluntarism in support of their own projects required Baptists to be particularly vigilant in defence of their unique identity.

The covenant defined the disciplines and practices which constructed Baptist identity. While each covenant was distinct, Adelaide Street’s illustrates the community-forming nature of these documents.⁹⁵ The first paragraph indicates the divine nature of the community, which “having been led ... by the Spirit of God,” forms itself into “one Body in Christ.” The members committed themselves to the practices required for Baptist life to be sustained and to thrive. They were to “walk together in Christian love,” to be involved in worship and the life of the church, to give toward its work, and to spread the Gospel. In domestic life members pledged

⁹² Adelaide Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario, History (BAM), 12.

⁹³ William Sherwood Fox, *A Century of Service*, 88.

⁹⁴ See contributions to Richard T. Hughes, ed., *The American Quest for the Primitive Church* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

⁹⁵ “Covenant,” Adelaide Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario (BAM). The full text is reprinted in Appendix C.

themselves to “family and secret devotions, to religiously educate [their] children; to seek the salvation of [their] kindred and acquaintances.” These private practices were to empower life “in the world.” In “public” members promised to “be just in [their] dealings, faithful in [their] engagements, and exemplary in [their] deportment” and further to “avoid all battling and backbiting and excessive anger.” The commitments expressed in the covenant were not expressions of individual will but that of a community in which members held one another accountable to the pledges they had made. What really distinguished the Baptist churches in London was their assumption that the Christian life could only be sustained by community support. The pledge to “watch over one another in brotherly love” was central to their lives together as a covenant community.

This commitment to community life was first expressed in the practices for the admission of new members. Baptism symbolised not only the internal reception of God’s grace but also the external embrace of a new way of life centred on the practices defined in the covenant. Candidates presented for baptism were required to show evidence of a true conversion that could be ratified by vote of the whole congregation signifying acceptance of the candidate as a new member of the community. Article 12 of the Talbot Street Confession of Faith defined the nature of this evidence.

We believe that the children of God are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that a renewed heart will evince itself in the various acts and duties enjoined by our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, leading them to assist according to their ability in supporting the Gospel and its institutions, to be active in works of benevolence and to improve their time and talents for the glory of God and the good of their fellow-men.⁹⁶

Prospective members were required to provide evidence appropriate to these requirements, that they had received Jesus Christ as saviour, and that the kind of transformation here described was on-going. The congregation, for their part, would commit themselves to the care of the new members.

⁹⁶ Fox, *A Century of Service*, 87-90.

The minute books of London's Baptist churches contain records of those applying for membership. Many of those considered for membership had certificates of baptism from other places, but the congregation still gave their Christian experience careful scrutiny. The case of a Mr. Smith, who had applied for membership at Adelaide Street in 1881, was typical.

Mr. Smith was heard as to his Christian experience and after his retiring brethren H. Edwards and McBride who had been appointed to confer with him gave the *substance of their conversation with him*. It was to the effect that he had been converted when forty years of age, had been in the army had been drawn into worldliness by the temptations of commercial life, that he now regretted his backsliding and felt it a Christian duty to seek after admission and its privileges and responsibilities.⁹⁷

When someone was presented for membership in a Baptist church, a committee was appointed to confer with them and bring a recommendation back to the congregation. The composition of such examining committees varied. At Talbot Street they were usually composed of men, although there were a number of exceptions to this rule.⁹⁸ At Adelaide Street the common practice was that two men would be appointed to confer with a male candidate and two women with a female candidate.

Receiving members was not a mere formality, and applicants were quite regularly turned down for membership when the examining committee could not make a positive recommendation. Often this led to further action on the part of the congregation to ensure that outstanding concerns had been met. In such cases the congregation made it clear that their intention was not to exclude but to ensure that each member was able to embrace their responsibilities. This was the case with a Mr. and Mrs. Robert Angus who applied for membership at Talbot Street in the spring of 1876. A committee was appointed to meet with them, and at the congregational meeting of 3 April it recommended Mr. Angus for membership, but not his wife.⁹⁹ The committee was requested to meet further with Mrs. Angus, and at the next monthly meeting a letter was read from Mrs. Angus

⁹⁷ Adelaide Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario, Minute book, 5 April 1881 (BAM).

⁹⁸ First Baptist Church, London, Ontario, Minutes of Congregational Meeting, 19 June 1873 (TRC), Mrs. Cooper and Mrs. Rowland were to call on Brother and Sister Beares, and 12 July 1874, Miss Ruth Pratt was to see Miss Trotman.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, April 1876

explaining “the state of her mind with regard to her spiritual conviction,” which was acceptable to the committee. She was then received for baptism and into membership.¹⁰⁰ On another occasion Talbot Street received a letter from a Baptist church in Brantford recommending a brother to their fellowship. Typically, cases like this were dealt with without further examination of the candidate. However, in this case an objection was raised about his “being engaged in the Liquor Traffic.” A rather large committee of seven, chaired by the pastor, was commissioned to meet with him and report. The committee overrode the recommendation of the other Baptist church and refused the applicant membership.¹⁰¹

Baptism and membership provided entry to the community, but it was the exercise of church discipline that ensured that Baptist churches of this period remained believers’ churches. Once admitted, members took responsibility for one another, recognising that mutual support and accountability sustained their way of life. This was reflected in the Talbot Street Covenant’s article on discipline.

We believe it to be highly necessary for our peace and prosperity, and for the honor of God, to be careful in keeping a strict Gospel discipline among us, and not to receive any member but such as make a good confession of repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to cut off, or reject and put away any one member from our communion, fellowship, watch and care whose conduct is such that the Word of God requires us to do it, but in no case to be heedless, slothful, or rash, but in all matters endeavor to act in the fear of the Lord, with a Christ-like temper of mind, that God in all things may be glorified in the Church, and particularly to pray for one another and for the spread of the Gospel, the increase of Christian knowledge and the prosperity of Zion universally.¹⁰²

The practice of church discipline, as reflected in the minutes of all of London’s Baptist churches, indicates that congregations tried to implement this statement of intent. Membership records of Adelaide Street show that twenty-five persons were excluded from the “watch and care” of the Church between 1877 and 1890. This represents ten percent of those who left for any reason. These numbers do not reflect the extent of church discipline at Adelaide Street, for exclusion

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 1 May 1876.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 25 May 1876.

¹⁰² Fox, *Century of Service*, 87-90.

followed only when discipline failed. Its purpose was to bring reconciliation and restoration, and in many instances this was the result.¹⁰³

At times matters referred for discipline were petty, such as when a brother reported that two sisters had twice seen a sister dancing.¹⁰⁴ There were occasions when the conduct of discipline seemed to lack proportion and process, as in the case of a member who was expelled from the church for not paying the three dollars he allegedly owed another member.¹⁰⁵ These types of abuses were rare, given the number of cases dealt with. Perhaps the most common reason for disciplinary action was extended absence. The membership roll was reviewed annually in preparation for the report to the Baptist Association. This review typically identified a number of those that persistently “neglect the privileges of the church.” Periodically these investigations brought counter-charges against either the congregation or the pastor in explanation for a prolonged absence. This would lead to further investigation in an attempt to bring peace and reconciliation. The membership was reluctant to take final action in any of these cases until it was clear that no return to the church was possible.¹⁰⁶

Much more serious matters were dealt with as well. A case of adultery involving two members of the church shook the Talbot Street congregation in 1876.¹⁰⁷ A number of cases involving doctrinal irregularity were also investigated. Among these was a rejection of believers’

¹⁰³ For an analysis of church discipline as a phase in the passage from sacred-secular dichotomies to private-public and as a site of gender contestation, see Lynne Marks, “Christian Harmony: Family, Neighbours, and Community in Upper Canadian Church Discipline Records,” in *On the Case: Explorations in Social History*, eds. Franca Iacovetta and Wendy Mitchinson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

¹⁰⁴ Adelaide Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario, Minutes of Congregational Meeting, 13 August 1880 (BAM).

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 10 January 1882.

¹⁰⁶ First Baptist Church, London, Ontario, Minutes of Congregational Meetings, 14 December 1871 and 14 March 1882 (TRC).

¹⁰⁷ This story emerged slowly in the summer of 1876. First Baptist Church, London, Ontario, Minutes of Congregational Meetings, 5 June 1876, 3 July 1876, and 30 August 1876 (TRC).

baptism and a repudiation of the Baptists in favour of another religious movement.¹⁰⁸ Not only moral and religious matters came before the church as matters for discipline. Business affairs were a means of Christian life and witness “in the world,” and so Talbot Street investigated the insolvency of Brother Dart in 1870. The committee reported favourably, expressing their confidence in the Brother’s honesty even in the face of misfortunes, and wished him to reunite with the church. However, the committee indicated that Brother Dart had “not taken a thoroughly straight forward course.” Dart considered this too severe a reprimand and reconciliation did not take place.¹⁰⁹ Another case of questionable business practice was raised when a member pled guilty to a charge of larceny involving theft from his employees. The member maintained to the committee appointed to investigate the matter that he was completely innocent of the charge and that he had pled guilty to avoid inconvenience. The committee reported that it considered this defence only to have added the sin of lying to that of theft. The member in question was excluded, and a committee was appointed to determine if his wife was involved as well.¹¹⁰ She was cleared and remained a member of the church.¹¹¹ Church discipline, at its best, sustained community life by enforcing, through mutual authority, the practices required by the covenant. It was susceptible to abuse, but in London its practice provided stability and integration within the Baptist congregations thereby balancing the emphasis on independence.

Pastoral transitions, consistent preaching, and the availability of the ordinances when there was no pastor were constant matters of concern for churches with a congregational form of government.¹¹² Finding a pastor was even more difficult for the small churches that were

¹⁰⁸ Grosvenor Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario, Minutes of Congregational Meeting, 4 May 1888 (BAM); First Baptist Church, Minutes, 18 July 1871 (TRC); and Adelaide Street Baptist Church Minutes, 28 June 1888 (BAM).

¹⁰⁹ First Baptist Church, Minutes, 10 April, 28 April, and 26 May 1870 (TRC).

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 8 January 1878.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4 February 1878.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 10 May 1877.

only able to pay a meagre salary.¹¹³ With the resignation of its pastor in December of 1882, Adelaide Street embarked upon a pastoral search. The Adelaide Street chronicler commented that at this time the "church was in danger of splitting up over the choice of a pastor."¹¹⁴ After much work trying to find an appropriate candidate, the church agreed upon a Rev. Rock, to whom it was reported that the call was "unanimous, except for three or four." He declined the call.¹¹⁵ In July 1883 a number of potential candidates were being considered, and the congregation decided to conduct a vote to decide among them. Before the balloting rumours spread regarding the character of one of the candidates under consideration, those present adjourned and initiated an investigation.¹¹⁶ When the meeting reconvened, the investigators reported that the rumours had no basis; however, the candidate now refused to be considered further. At this point Rev. Alexander Grant, pastor of Talbot Street, intervened to recommend that a committee be appointed to bring one name at a time to the congregation.¹¹⁷ This course was accepted, and the committee recommended T.S. Johnson who declined to come for the salary offered but finally accepted at a salary of \$800.¹¹⁸ This procedure, which took the initiative, at least to some degree, away from the congregation, was less open to abuse and finally procured the desired result. Pastors among the Baptists shared many of the same frustrations with the limitations of congregationalism as their Congregationalists brethren; however, the priority of community life over independence in Baptist polity provided flexibility in some procedures.

Baptists attempted to exercise considerable authority over one another. Their identity included a strong element of independence and individual responsibility in spiritual and material matters. The authority of the congregational meeting in governance constructed identity

¹¹³ Grosvenor Street Baptist Church, Minutes (BAM). The minutes for 1888 and 1889 chronicle the difficulty this little church, which paid \$500-600 per year, had in finding and holding a pastor

¹¹⁴ Adelaide Street Baptist Church, History (BAM), p. 11

¹¹⁵ Adelaide Street Baptist Church, Minutes, 16 May 1883 (BAM).

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 25 July 1883.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 1 August 1888 and Adelaide Street Baptist Church, History (BAM), p. 11.

¹¹⁸ Adelaide Street Baptist Church, Minutes, 5 August and 14 August 1883 (BAM)

in terms of an equality and autonomy that extended to all members of the congregation. Women voted, spoke, and were given responsibility by the church meeting. Although this freedom did not approach real equality with men, women had greater ability to participate in this context than was accorded them in other public spaces. The autonomy of Baptist polity was balanced by the countervailing practice of discipline. Community life opened autonomous individuals to the authority of the church to discipline, reprove, and when necessary, exclude. These two opposing subjectifications, one emphasising independence and the other discipline, resulted in a vital, if small, religious community.

The diversities of church life

The above attempt to describe the major denominational groups in London has focused on the practices and discourses constituting religious life at the level of the congregation. Common themes have often disguised the underlying narratives and tensions which constructed religious identity. The churches had a wide variety of resources at their disposal for making claims in the public and private worlds of the late nineteenth century. The source of these claims emerged from narratives that derived their authority from apostolic succession, the primacy of the scriptures, the rise of “the people,” the heritage of a national church, the nation-building project, the autonomous use of reason, and the primitive righteousness of a remnant of true believers. These conflicting narratives defined identity as they were accepted and rejected as legitimate sources of religious authority. London’s Anglican and Methodist churches made claims to public authority based on an establishment vocabulary of social utility and nation building. However, their claims to authority over their own adherents were more likely to find a grounding in voluntarist calls to individual conversion. Baptists made few claims on the public, but practised a rigorous discipline on insiders. Congregationalists based their authority on a freedom of thought that was disciplined only by a plain reading of the scriptures.

The diversity of narratives apparent at the local level allowed identity to be internalised in vastly different ways even within the same denominational group. Some

Methodists could internalise the nation-building project as their central commitment to the church, while others found the meaning of Methodism in the heritage of revivals and the preaching of salvation. Not all the languages of authority had equal public cogency. Catholic appeals to Rome and the Pope were defiantly opposed to Protestant understandings of legitimate authority. These appeals served to unite Catholics as the members of the true faith, but they also confirmed an anti-Catholic prejudice that served to unite Protestants.¹¹⁹ However, the Catholic appropriation of the language of the people provided a discourse in which Catholics could construct a religiously inspired common purpose with Protestant fellow citizens.

A category of religious experience cannot be constructed out of these countervailing sources of subjectification. Religion was experienced differently, and carried different meanings, as individuals and communities constructed particular identities out of these resources. To be a Catholic or a Baptist or a Methodist would mean that certain of these narratives would have been internalised, while others would be adamantly rejected, and still others would have no hold at all. Fluency in the discourses that constructed religious identities does not allow the historian to define the nature of nineteenth century religious experience, but it does open a window into the exertions by which the churches sought to define their place in the social.

Organising Kingdom Work

Beyond Sunday morning

The Sunday morning church bells called Londoners to worship, but the use of church buildings extended beyond Sunday morning. Indeed the number and variety of church societies grew rapidly during this period. The reader of late nineteenth-century newspapers could not help but be struck with the number of activities sponsored by churches throughout the week – missions services, Sunday school anniversaries, tea meetings in aid of any number of fine causes, special lectures, protracted or revival meetings, literary societies, and temperance groups (See

¹¹⁹ Donald H. Akenson, *Small Differences: Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 133.

Appendix D). By 1890, activities were provided for all ages and both genders and served to provide public space for sociability and, at the same time, sought to intensify individual religious commitments.¹²⁰

The *Methodist* praised such meetings and considered them essential to the life of the church: churches had not fulfilled their duty to the congregation if they offered only worship and teaching. Religion was not a private undertaking, but required sociability. The *Methodist* regarded the creation of social space in church parlours to be a thoroughly commendable development among Methodists.

Some of our churches, we are glad to notice, are now built with "Church Parlors," a phrase which need not convey the idea of stiffness and ornamentation; for these parlors are meant to be used, and, if used aright, may be made of great service to the church. Here the ladies may meet to sew for the poor; here the church "sociable" may be held, where young and old, rich and poor, may meet together and cultivate Christian friendship. We have known churches where members have never become acquainted with each other, though engaging in the same religious services every Sunday for years. They enter by different doors, and sit on opposite sides of a large building, and do not recognize each other when passing in the streets. Any church ought to be ashamed of such a state of affairs as this, and ought to welcome any plan which produces a healthy change. A church parlor, where all can meet and get acquainted, would obviate the difficulty.¹²¹

A church parlour provided a public space for a particular kind of social activity. The ideal church behind the *Methodist's* view provided Christian friendship and activities for all ages. The concept of a church parlour moved the reception room of the Victorian middle class home into the church. It was not to have the stiff respectability of a domestic space set aside for the reception of outsiders, but was rather intended to place something of home in the church. The increase in the level of church activity extended this intersection of the church and the home. However, the kind of Christian friendship encouraged here seems very distant from the intimacy of the Methodist class meeting where, by mutual surveillance and supervision, Christians pressed one another to

¹²⁰ For an analysis of this tendency within Methodism see William McGuire King, "The role of auxiliary ministries in late Nineteenth-Century Methodism," in *Rethinking Methodist History – A Bicentennial Historical Consultation*, eds. Russell Richey and Kenneth Rowe (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1985)

¹²¹ "The Social Element in Churches," *FP*, 16 May 1870, p. 3.

greater piety. Churches seemed to be responding to the increasing privatisation of religion by providing more activities through which adherents could identify with the church.

Sunday schools were among the first activities that Protestant churches undertook. Originally Sunday schools had been founded to bring basic literacy and conversion to the poor, especially to those who had no opportunity of attending day schools.¹²² In late nineteenth century London the focus was less on the poor and more on the conversion of the youngest members of the congregation.¹²³ This revised purpose is reflected in the goals set out in the Methodist Church in Canada's Sunday School constitution. The duties of the Sunday school teacher, in part, were to "inculcate upon their minds the necessity of loving God and being obedient to their parents and other superiors, to point out to them the way of salvation as revealed in the Gospel of Christ and endeavour to make them acquainted with all that Christians ought to know and practice."¹²⁴ Despite this refocusing of the program there is some evidence that it reached the poor. In 1878, the trustees of Queen's Avenue Methodist voted to provide twenty-five dollars to help clothe children attending the Sunday School.¹²⁵

The churches provided Sunday schools in support of the efforts of parents to bring their children to an early conversion. However, Sunday school teachers and superintendents often chastised parents for not being sufficiently supportive of their efforts. Inconsistent attendance and lack of care in preparing lessons would certainly impede the desired result. In his report for 1880-81 Congregational Church Sunday school superintendent Mr. A.T.H. Johnson made an impassioned plea for parents to send their boys, which revealed something of the sense of danger that boys in particular were perceived to face.

¹²² Thomas Walter Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780-1859* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 19-20.

¹²³ "Anniversary," *Ad*, 22 October 1879, p. 4. Anne M. Boylan, *Sunday School: The Formation of an American Institution, 1790-1880* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), chapter 5.

¹²⁴ "The History of Wellington Street United Church, 1876-1967" (TRC), p. 15. On Methodist Sunday schools see Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 367-82.

¹²⁵ Queen's Avenue Methodist Church, Trustee Minutes, 19 April 1878 (TRC).

Our Intermediate classes have very much improved this last year, but the boys are not as numerous as we think they should be. We are very glad to have the girls but parents we want the boys too. If you wish (and we know you do) to have your boys grow up to be a blessing, and a comfort to you and those around you, become Christian men and at last when you are called to give an account of your responsibility as parents what a joy it will be that they are with you in that blood washed thron, but Oh! the untold grief if otherwise. I do most affectionately urge you to send them to school, that we may supplement your efforts in this all important matter. See that they come, as you know that there are many counter influences at work to draw them away—*especially the boys*.¹²⁶

The reported behaviour of the scholars makes it clear that obedience to superiors was difficult to inculcate. At Wellington Street the superintendent had to threaten to “wait upon the parents” of some boys who could not otherwise be brought to order. After some unfortunate incident in 1876, the Queen’s Avenue Board of Trustees felt obliged to ban the magic lantern.¹²⁷

Methodists were particularly committed to providing spiritual nurture to children through Sunday schools and developed strong programs early.¹²⁸ In 1881 eight Methodist Church in Canada Sunday schools enrolled 2,303 scholars. Every Protestant church in London had at least one Sunday school associated with it, and several ran mission schools that developed into separate congregations. London’s Anglican churches were comparatively late in giving emphasis to Sunday school work. They reported 364 scholars and 38 teachers in 1875, approximately one-third of the number reported by the various Methodist groups. By 1891 the Anglicans were reporting 214 teachers and 2,466 scholars, numbers comparable to those of the Methodist schools. This growth indicates the increasing importance Sunday schools had among the activities of the church.

¹²⁶ Congregational Church, London, Ontario, Minutes of Congregational Meeting, 17 March 1881 (UCA), emphasis follows the original.

¹²⁷ Queen’s Avenue Methodist Church, Trustee Minutes, 1 November 1876 (TRC), “be it resolved that hereafter no meeting be held in the church or lecture Hall or any other part of these premises in which Magic Lantern or anything of that nature form any part of the programme except by special vote of the Trustees and that the leaders of said meetings in future be held strictly responsible for good order during any meeting which might be held.”

¹²⁸ For the heightened Methodist concern for children see Neil Semple, “‘The Nurture and Admonition of the Lord’: Nineteenth-Century Methodism’s Response to ‘Childhood,’” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 14 (1981) and Van Die, *An Evangelical Mind*, chapter 1.

Sunday schools were becoming a major program of Protestant churches, but their governance, organisation, and curriculum were left almost entirely to the laity signalling that in the early years the schools were deemed somewhat peripheral to church work. Through the 1880s, between 600 and 700 lay teachers and officers were involved each week in teaching and administering schools. The position of the superintendent of the Sunday school conferred the same kind of status as that of other officers of the church and the superintendent had more scope for independent action than those who served on bodies chaired by the pastor. There is little evidence of overt tension between clergy and the Sabbath school. Annual meetings typically recognised the labours of the Sunday school along with those of the choir and the Ladies Aid. The Christian home and the Sunday school were understood to be the foundation of the church and, indeed, the nation. The church was to reinforce the values of the home, and the home those of the church. In this way the choice to voluntarily enter into ones duties as a Christian and a citizen would be natural.

Every Protestant church had both a Sunday school and a Ladies Aid. While the role and function of the Sunday school was clearly defined the same could not be said of the Ladies Aid. The sociability, which the *Methodist* described as an essential part of church life in the late nineteenth century, would have been inconceivable without the Ladies Aid. However, the role of these societies went far beyond providing food at church gatherings. The objectives of Cronyn Memorial Women's Aid Society were typical in that they claimed a wide competence in church work. "The objects," according to the Society's constitution, were "to raise money for church purposes, to assist the clergyman in visiting the sick, the infirm, the needy and afflicted, to promote missionary interests and Christian work generally."¹²⁹ Fund-raising, particularly for special projects, was an ongoing task of the Ladies Aid. The Women's Aid of Cronyn Memorial raised \$1,000 in 1885 for renovations to the church building, the Ladies Aid of Knox Presbyterian

¹²⁹ "Easter Vestries," *Ad*, 13 April 1884, p. 4. Also see "Meeting of Ladies Aid," *FP*, 7 May 1879, p. 1. The wide range of activities engaged in by Ladies Aids is explored in Marilyn Fardig Whitely, "Doing Just About What They Please: Ladies' Aid in Ontario Methodism" *Ontario History* 82 (1990).

contributed the organ to the new building, and the Adelaide Baptist Ladies Aid collected funds for carpeting the aisles and building sheds.¹³⁰ Visiting the sick and providing for the needy were regarded as the particular province of women. Distributing aid and sewing for the poor were typically the responsibility of the Ladies Aid or specialised sub-committees of these societies.¹³¹ The Ladies Aid of St. Andrew's Presbyterian reported to the Annual Meeting in January 1888 that they had made between 2,500 and 3,000 visits during the year. The next year the society was renamed the Women's Visiting and Aid Society to reflect the importance of this activity.

The explosion of church activities

Church activities in the 1870s were focused, as the *Methodist* advised, on Christian sociability. Although bazaars, socials, and tea meetings were occasionally criticised as unworthy activities, there was growing acceptance of these as legitimate church programs.¹³² The moral and intellectual improvement promised in Literary and Temperance Societies provided them with an even greater level of acceptability. "Improvement" provided a consistent theme at social meetings and lectures, where it was presented as the primary claim on leisure time.¹³³ Many of the mid-week programs of the church sought to provide Christian, and distinctively denominational, sources of improvement.

The discourse of improvement was thought to be particularly important in attracting young men to the churches. All of the churches in London lamented the lack of interest shown by

¹³⁰ "Memorial Church, Annual Report of Women's Aid," *FP*, 8 May 1885, p. 8; "Knox Church Through Fifty Years, 1883-1933;" and Adelaide Street Baptist Church, Minutes, 10 August 1885 (BAM).

¹³¹ Queen's Avenue Methodist Church, Trustee Minutes, 19 March 1878 and "W.M. Ladies' Benevolent Society," *FP*, 26 April 1873, p. 3. Talbot Street Baptist Church had a Dorcas Society, Beth Emmanuel BME and St. Stephen's (Church of Scotland) had a Sewing Circle and St. Paul's had a Dorcas and Relief Committee all dedicated to sewing clothes for distribution to the poor (see Appendix C).

¹³² A variety of arguments for and against are presented by Congregational clergy, "The Congregational Association," *FP*, 26 March 1884, p. 5. The Baptists in London were most consistent in their disapproval of "socials;" however, Talbot Street Baptist Church's Literary Society provided sociability with a heavy dose of improvement. Talbot Street Baptist Church, Minutes, 7 October 1875 (TRC).

¹³³ "Business, Culture and Recreation," *FP*, 15 February 1877, p. 4. Patrick Joyce identifies the discourse of "improvement" as essential to identities constructed in democratic societies, *Democratic Subjects*, especially 161-75.

young men in Christianity. Lynne Marks has demonstrated that the gender imbalance in favour of women in the rural communities she studied was largely due to the absence of young men from the churches.¹³⁴ This led to exertions by the churches to entice men, who, it was assumed, were interested in finding their way in the world, to look to the churches for direction. The Church of England was most persistent in offering improving evenings to interest men and tie them into an organisation. In the early 1870s, the Church of England Young Men's Association (CEYMA) provided a reading room and a series of events, often with a scientific focus. A typical evening in January 1870 was devoted to "Fine collections of insects, chromo-lithographs, stereoscopes, photographic views, and other objects of interest."¹³⁵ The *Free Press* reporter described something of the tone of the evening.

It was made up of every class of the community, enlightened workmen and mechanics, with their wives and families, as well as scientific and literary men of distinction in the city and their families... The *Conversazione* was formally opened by a short address from Dean Hellmuth, in which he congratulated the Church of England Young Men's Association on having provided such a source of amusement and instruction. Though they should never forget the primary object for which the Association was established, namely, the promotion of general instruction upon the basis of sound Protestant principles.... He believed that much good could be done by assemblies of this kind, the tendency of which was to promote the spread of science and literature. A look into the microscope should remind them of the Deity, and cause them to reflect that the works of His hand were capable of the minutest examination.¹³⁶

This series of occasions to appeal to men of all classes must surely have reached its apogee in Dr. A.T. Mchattie's "admirable and exhaustive discourse on the subject of coal and its products."¹³⁷ The CEYMA formalised "improvement" into an organisation that would be in direct competition with the Young Men's Christian Association which was founded in 1873. The attempt to integrate church life into everyday life, illustrated here in the early 1870s, became the major motif of church activity into the 1880s. The church-based societies of the 1880s and 90s had less of the inclusive

¹³⁴ Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 36-7.

¹³⁵ "CEYMA *Conversazione*," *FP*, 1 January 1870, p. 3.

¹³⁶ "Conversazione," *FP*, 5 January 1870, p. 3.

¹³⁷ "Lecture Last Night," *FP*, 26 April 1870, p. 3

nature of the literary and temperance organisations of the 1870s and began to organise by age and sex to appeal to more specialised constituencies.

Women's societies abounded, and the language of service, rather than improvement, tended to predominate. The charitable activities of the Ladies Aid continued, although in new forms like the Church of England Flower and Christmas Letter Mission and the Knox Presbyterian Women's Association. One of the new thrusts of organisational activity was to promote prayer, financial support, and recruitment for home and foreign missions. In the late 1870s and early 1880s women's missionary societies were organised among all the denominational groups.¹³⁸ The St. Andrews Women's Foreign Missionary Society was formed in February 1878 in conjunction with the commissioning of Rev. Kenneth Junor, who had grown up in St. Andrews, to missionary work in China. The local connection to the work heightened interest and the women of the church were challenged to "do something to raise the women of Formosa to the place where God had placed her—side by side with man." These women could uplift their Chinese sisters, the speaker contended, by sending Rev. Junor to them with the Gospel. It was assumed that the message would be easily embraced for the "Chinese are civilized, and all they want is the Bible to make them the greatest nation in the world."¹³⁹ This call to uplift and to service was common and provided both motivation and empowerment for their activities.

Men were also called to serve in a variety of ways. Various posts within church governance from which women were excluded were open to men. Men served as deacons, elders, vestry men, wardens, ushers, trustees, managers. They also served on denominational committees and boards of various kinds.¹⁴⁰ Baptist and Methodist men were eligible for lay vocations as local

¹³⁸ Ruth Compton Brouwer, *New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and India Missions, 1876-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) and Rosemary Gagan, *A Sensitive Independence: Canadian Methodist Women Missionaries in Canada and the Orient, 1881-1925* (Kingston and Montreal McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

¹³⁹ "Meeting Last Night, Interesting Address in St. Andrew's Church," *FP*, 7 March 1878, p. 1. For the founding of the St. Andrew's Women's Foreign Missionary Society see, "China: designation of a Missionary Thereto," *Ad*, 28 February 1878, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ Van Die suggests that such roles were one of attractions integrating men into church life, "The Marks of a Genuine Revival," 540.

or lay preachers. With the increasing number of qualified ministerial candidates graduating from church colleges this office began to decline in importance, but church minutes continue to show young men requesting and receiving this designation.¹⁴¹ It was not uncommon for lay preachers to test their vocation and then move on to formal training for the ordained ministry. One of the roles in which laymen and lay preachers were active was the founding of missions, particularly in the suburbs. Some missions came under the direction of the clergy from the beginning. This was the case with Rev. Cooper's initiative to found Adelaide Street Baptist, and with Rev. J.A. Murray's suggestion that St. Andrew's begin the mission in London South which led to the founding of Knox church. However, a number of churches had their start primarily through lay initiative. Cronyn Memorial began as a Sunday school in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Dampier on Adelaide Street and grew into a separate parish. Dundas Street East Methodist Church began as a mission organised by three young men: David A. Moir, John Bowman, and William Penhall. They began running a Sunday school and holding services in the summer of 1875, and the Dundas Street Methodist organised as a separate congregation in early 1876.¹⁴² Maitland Street Baptist Church began in a farmhouse with a Sunday school "for young and old" by Gordon Rickert, R. W. Sharpe, and John Jepson.¹⁴³ The minutes of Adelaide Street Baptist indicate that there was considerable concern about the lay leadership in the conduct of their South Street mission, and it was brought slowly under the direction of the pastor and the elders.¹⁴⁴

Clergy attitudes toward these auxiliary ministries changed throughout this period.

The case of Rev. George Innes, rector of St. Paul's, provides a case in point. At the 1870 Easter

¹⁴¹ The Adelaide Street Baptist Church chronicler lamented that lay preaching was on the decline, Adelaide Street Baptist Church, History (BAM), 21. It seems also to have been on the decline among the Methodists, Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 237. However, in London local congregations were still setting aside to this office. Queen's Avenue Methodist Church, Quarterly Board Minutes, 7 April 1877 (TRC), and 18 May 1888. Adelaide Street Baptist Church, Minutes of Congregational Meetings, 14 April 1877 and 22 January 1890.

¹⁴² "Centennial United Church, 1875" (TRC).

¹⁴³ "Fifty Footsteps, 1887-1937, In the Life of Maitland Street Baptist Church, London, Ontario" (TRC), 1.

¹⁴⁴ The discussion regarding the mission is found in the Adelaide Street Baptist Church, Minutes, 21 April 1887, 2 June 1887, 4 June 1887, 4 October 1887, 10 January 1888, 29 March 1888 (BAM).

vestry meeting it was suggested that church funds be used to support the work of the Sunday school. Rev. Innes made it quite clear that this could not be contemplated. Church funds were specifically designated for the work of the church, and the lay-directed Sunday school would have to raise the money it needed to carry out this program on its own.¹⁴⁵ By 1886 the Reports to Vestry show not only an annual grant, but also a reorganisation and centralisation of all church ministries. The St. Paul's Church Workers' Association was established "to organise the work of the Church among the poor." The Church Workers' organised the efforts of the Dorcas and Relief Committee, the Mother's Meeting and Provident Society, and the Children's Sewing Circle. A branch of the Girl's Friendly Society was also added to the St. Paul's program during this year.

Innes began his report with a call to action in the work of the church beyond Sunday. Christ's commands required more than "occupying a pew on the Lord's day; it means work every day; engagement in some definite field of usefulness for the benefit of others; the improvement of 'the talents' which He committed to our trust."¹⁴⁶ Rather than being a distraction from the true work of the Church these auxiliary ministries more fully integrated spiritual life into the everyday. By the late 1880s, Innes had come to believe that these works of service were essential sources of spiritual benefit.

It should be remembered that Church work is not for the benefit of others only, but also for the personal benefit of those who do the work. Each member of the Congregation requires for spiritual growth to take in hand some definite work for the Lord Jesus Christ; this is an absolute necessity—a Divine ordinance.¹⁴⁷

The churches sought to provide more opportunities for their members to be involved in church activities. An increasing number of youth and children's programs attempted to instil patterns of religious devotion and church activity into parishioners when they were at their most receptive age. Queen's Avenue had a functioning Young People's Helping Society as early as 1879. Other local groups developed in London congregations throughout the 1890s. International

¹⁴⁵ "St. Paul's Cathedral," *FP*, 3 May 1870, p. 3.

¹⁴⁶ "Easter Reports, 1886," St. Paul's Church, London, Ontario (DHA), 1.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*

youth organisations began to appear in London in 1886. King Street and Knox Presbyterian founded branches of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour that year. The next year the Methodist youth organisation, the Epworth League, first appeared at Hamilton Road and Dundas Street East churches. In December 1889 a mass meeting of Methodists was held to encourage the formation of Epworth Leagues in all churches in the area. Promoters of the league suggested that its primary purpose was to "supply the missing link between the [Sunday] school and the church." The concern to not lose young men and women who were no longer involved in the Sunday school and not tied into full church membership was the common motivation for youth ministries. Personal piety and religious activity, captured in the League's motto—"Look Up; Lift Up"—joined moral and intellectual improvement as the central concerns of the various programs aimed at youth. Methodist establishment aspirations required the participation of the next generation. A lay advocate of the League believed it to be the key to Methodists fulfilling their mission. Together with the youth of the League, "the time would not be far distant when the Methodist church would be majestically marching onward and ruling the spiritual destinies of this Protestant Province of Ontario."¹⁴⁸

The heightened level of church activity included a variety of special meetings to bring religious concerns before the people. These meetings focused on an intensification of religious identity and had many of the characteristics of revival. Revival was central to the Methodist heritage as a supplement to the regular ministrations of the pastor. Such meetings continued to be an important way of passing the heritage on to a new generation, and they were held with increasing frequency.¹⁴⁹ A course of special meetings at Wellington Street Methodist

¹⁴⁸ "The Epworth League, Endorsed by the Methodists of this City," *FP*, 10 December 1889, p. 8. Also see J. Warren Smith, "Youth Ministry in American Methodism's Mission," *Methodist History* 19 (1981) and Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 385-7

¹⁴⁹ Phyllis D. Airhart charts a falling off of the traditional Methodist model of revival which gave way in the twentieth century to the new evangelism of social service. *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992). Louise A. Mussio argues that the Methodist concern for holiness and revival did not abate so much as move outside official channels into the holiness movement, "The Origins and Nature of the Holiness Movement Church: A Study in Religious Populism," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Society* n.s., 7 (1996). In London during the 1880s the traditional methods of revivalism and protracted meetings

resulted in 60 people being added to the membership in February 1876.¹⁵⁰ Grace Methodist Episcopal attempted to recapture the Methodist heritage by mounting a full-fledged camp meeting at Queen's Park in London East. For ten days in September 1880 preachers called assemblies of three or four thousand people to repentance and the repentant to holiness, in a large Tabernacle erected for the occasion.¹⁵¹ A camp meeting was something of a novelty and somewhat out of place in a suburban park, but the report indicated that those involved believed it had accomplished its goals.¹⁵²

Special meetings were not limited to the Methodists. All of the other denominations held versions of revival meetings for their own congregations. The Congregationalists aimed these particularly at the youth. Adelaide Baptist held two to three weeks of special meetings each fall during the mid-1880s. The minutes of the congregational meeting accepting candidates for baptism reveal the effectiveness of these meetings in promoting identification with the church.¹⁵³ Although revival meetings were typically associated with evangelical denominations the Anglicans and the Catholics held parish missions and employed many of the conventions of the revivalist.¹⁵⁴

Rev. W.S. Rainsford conducted services at St Paul's Church each afternoon and evening from 4 to 18 February 1877.¹⁵⁵ His purpose was to call Christians to greater usefulness to the Kingdom of God and in particular, to the Anglican churches in London. An *Advertiser* reporter described Rainsford's preaching using the vocabulary of revival. The themes pursued

were alive and well, although the "union revival" was beginning to displace denominationally sponsored efforts. See below, chapter 5.

¹⁵⁰ Wellington Street Methodist Church, Membership records (UCA)

¹⁵¹ "Spending the Sunday," *Ad*, 13 September 1880, p. 1.

¹⁵² "Camp Meeting Ended," *Ad*, 30 September 1880, p. 1.

¹⁵³ Adelaide Street Baptist Church, Minutes, November 1884, November 1885, January and October 1886, November 1887 (BAM).

¹⁵⁴ "Revival in the English Church," *Ad*, 6 December 1876, p. 1.

¹⁵⁵ Rainsford's autobiography places his career as a "missioner" to Canada in the context of a career which included a classical "crisis of faith" and an embrace of theological modernism. William

during the mission revealed a belief “in a present condemnation resting on men, in the insufficiency of morality to meet the Divine claims, in the possibility of an immediate conversion, and in the consciousness of a present salvation by Jesus Christ.”¹⁵⁶ Rainsford drew large crowds to St. Paul’s for two weeks and, on his departure, encouraged all to show the benefit of the meetings by becoming active in some good work of the church.¹⁵⁷ Activity in church work, such as that advocated by Rev. Innes, would yield spiritual benefit. Likewise, the spiritual benefit which came from the Rainsford mission was to issue in church work. Taken together special services and calls to greater levels of activity served to tie the identity of adherents more closely with their churches.

The Catholic missions, which were held annually at St. Peter’s throughout the 1870s, had many of the characteristics of their Protestant counterparts. The mission was conducted by preaching fathers of the Jesuit order and later by the Fathers of the Holy Cross. Services were held throughout the day and culminated in a large public meeting in the evening. The goal of the mission was not primarily to inspire conversion, but to make Catholics more attentive to the means of grace and particularly the sacrament of Holy Communion. Reports of the success of these missions indicated that 3,000 had received Communion during the two-week period.¹⁵⁸ The mission had the wider goal of promoting the temperance and charitable societies associated with the church, of promoting the renewal of baptismal vows and of providing the “separated brethren” with an opportunity of “hearing Catholic doctrines expressed as the Catholic

Stephen Rainsford, *The Story of a Varied Life: An Autobiography*, reprint of 1922 edition (Freeport NY: Books for Libraries, 1970)

¹⁵⁶ “Evangelistic,” *Ad*, 10 February 1877, p. 1 A number of Rainsford’s sermons from the London and Toronto missions were collected in *Rainsford’s Sermons and Bible Readings* (Toronto: Rose Belford Publishing Company, 1879)

¹⁵⁷ “The Evangelistic Mission,” *FP*, 19 February 1877, p. 4.

¹⁵⁸ “St. Peter’s Cathedral,” *Ad*, 14 April 1873, p. 3 and “The Mission in St. Peter’s,” *Ad*, 6 April 1879, p. 2. Census returns show the number of Catholics in the City of London, 2,700 in 1871 and 3,284 in 1881.

Church teaches them.”¹⁵⁹ Apparently, some of the “separated brethren” were in attendance for the report for 1873 records eight conversions.¹⁶⁰

As the churches worked to find their place as voluntary organisations the number and variety of programs increased markedly. There were special services and societies for men and women, and particularly the young. However, it seems that the strategy of inviting people to church was not enough to achieve their goals. A number of churches devised fairly elaborate schemes to organise regular visits to people associated with the church. In the case of Askin Street Methodist the scheme was directly related to fund-raising. The Ladies’ Aid sent collectors to all church members asking for “free-will offerings, and prayers for the success of the work.”¹⁶¹ The visitation system at the Congregational church was implemented to encourage lay people to provide pastoral care to sick and absentee parishioners. Two women and one man were appointed for each city ward to carry out these responsibilities.¹⁶² Similar plans, which involved deacons or elders but excluded women, were put in place by Adelaide Street Baptist and St. Andrews and Knox Presbyterian churches.¹⁶³ Visitations carried out by the St. Paul’s Church Worker’s Association and the Talbot Street Baptist Visiting Committee were particularly focused on meeting the needs of the poor.¹⁶⁴ These visits served a variety of purposes, but in each case lay people were encouraged to take on a role that had traditionally been the primary responsibility of the clergy: visiting the poor, the sick, and the neglectful. This lay mobilisation may be related to increased pressures on the clergy as a result of the broadening of church programming and the increase in the size of congregations. Where these schemes were effective they increased the

¹⁵⁹ “The Mission in St. Peter’s,” *Ad*, 6 April 1879, p. 2.

¹⁶⁰ “St Peter’s Cathedral,” *Ad*, 14 April 1873, p. 3.

¹⁶¹ A. Westman, “Ladies’ Aid Later Women’s Association, Historical Sketch,” in “Wesley United Church 1874-1964,” ed. by O. W. Poast (TRC), p. 10.

¹⁶² Congregational Church, Minutes, 11 December 1879 (UCA).

¹⁶³ Adelaide Street Baptist Church, History (BAM), p. 13, and Adelaide Street Baptist Church, Minutes, 2 July 1885 (BAM), “St. Andrew’s Church,” *FP*, 20 January 1887, p. 6; and “Knox Presbyterian Church,” *FP*, 12 February 1891, p. 5.

¹⁶⁴ Easter Reports, 1886, St. Paul’s Church, London, Ontario (DHA), 10-11; Talbot Street Baptist Church, Minutes, 15 September 1879 (TRC).

involvement of lay people in significant roles, moved the influence of the church into the homes of the community, and increased the connection between religion and everyday tasks and concerns.

Resisting beyond Sunday morning: the humbling of the Rev. Dr. J.J.A. Proudfoot

A thorough program that offered something to connect each member of the family to the church was considered requisite by the late 1880s. This new reality called for a change in attitude among pastors. Many pastors were actively engaged in leading the charge toward new programs and associations. The proliferation of new organisations at St. Paul's, all with the support and encouragement of Canon George Innes, indicated a remarkable change from his earlier suspicion that the Sunday school would undermine the integrity of the church. The image of the pastor as scholarly divine delivering the Word twice on Sunday and baptising, marrying, and burying as called upon was already out-of-date. The voluntarist church demanded an activist clergy involved in ministering to the poor, supporting missionaries, providing uplifting lectures and entertainment, and perhaps most importantly, retaining the interest of the young. It was this concern that preoccupied church adherents more than any of the others.¹⁶⁵

It was this preoccupation that long time pastor and Knox College professor, the Rev. Dr. John J.A. Proudfoot, fell afoul of in the spring of 1889. The Rev. Doctor's father, the pioneer missionary Rev. William Proudfoot, had established first Presbyterian Church in London in 1833. Upon his father's death in 1851, J.J.A. Proudfoot had been called to the pulpit and had fulfilled his duties for 38 years to everyone's evident satisfaction. However, in early 1889 a decided change in the congregation's evaluation of their pastor's efforts on their behalf was made public. The chief concern centred on the availability of Dr. Proudfoot for church work beyond Sunday.

Some of the members of the congregation are not slow in expressing the opinion that under Dr. Proudfoot the church presents no attraction to the young people; that

¹⁶⁵ Van Die argues that the vibrant evangelical culture she describes in the 1850s, 60s and 70s, underwent a decline in the 1880s due to an inability of the older generation to get their children to follow in their footsteps, "The Marks of a Genuine Revival," 561-2. The evidence from London indicates that this possibility was constantly on the minds of the faithful and that the many programs that came into being in the 1880s and 90s were intended to attract the young.

the minister neglects the social duties of his office, and the distance he lives from the city renders his oversight of the flock almost impossible. They also say that the Church is losing ground through the alienation of the younger members and children, and charge this to the pastor's neglect, occasioned in part by the preoccupation of other duties, and in part to constitutional qualities and advancing age.¹⁶⁶

Since 1867 Dr. Proudfoot had been lecturer in homiletics and church government at Knox College, and he had divided his time between Toronto and London. Typically weekdays were spent in Toronto, with Proudfoot returning to London on Friday night for prayer meeting and preaching twice on Sunday.¹⁶⁷ Both Proudfoot and his congregation had for many years understood these activities, together with the occasional public lecture, to comprise his pastoral duties. The combination of Proudfoot's advancing age (he was 68), absence and his lack of interest in anything beyond the task of preaching, convinced many in the congregation that they needed a younger, more energetic man to maintain the interest of their children. The expectations connected with pastoral ministry had changed during his extended pastorate, and Proudfoot had not moved with the times. This was particularly evident when his ministry was compared to that of other clergy in the city. One of Proudfoot's critics made the point that "the church was situated in a city where there were lots of churches, and that it was necessary to provide all attraction possible with a consistent observance of Christian laws." Even Proudfoot's preaching, the skill he imparted to aspiring ministers studying at Knox, was regarded as endangering the future of the church. The same critic relentlessly continued, "that the very large proportion of the young people were dissatisfied with the Doctor's preaching was no secret, and many of them had gone to other churches, and still others had signified their intention of following the same course if Dr. Proudfoot remained."¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ "First Presbyterian Church," *FP*, 21 May 1889, p. 2.

¹⁶⁷ Fred Landon, "A History of the First Hundred Years of the First United Church, London, Ontario (formerly the First Presbyterian Church) 1832 – 1932 (London, Ontario: n.p., 1932), 20. The writer of this history explains how the work of the church was accomplished in the absence of Proudfoot. "The work of the church would probably have been seriously handicapped by the pastor's absence but for the fact that the women of the church organised and did much of the visiting, a faithful group serving in this way for many years "

¹⁶⁸ "Pastor and People," *FP*, 5 July 1889, p. 1.

The charges against Proudfoot were maintained with frankness and tenacity from May, when they were first raised publicly, through to December when the situation was finally resolved. It seemed to many adherents of First Presbyterian that the only way to save the church was to force Proudfoot out. They stuck to this position even against the displeasure of the presbytery and in the face of a more than sixty-year Proudfoot legacy. Finally the presbytery intervened, negotiating Proudfoot's resignation and the Church's payment of a \$2,000 gift in recognition of his long service. The congregation's hard line was vindicated in the rapid success of Rev. W.J. Clark, a recent graduate of Knox College. Mr. Clark preached his first sermon on the need for enthusiasm in the ministry and soon implemented a full slate of church activities.¹⁶⁹

Conclusion

The religious practices and activities described in these two chapters investigating the churches, illustrate practices by which they made claims in public. The Gothic punctuation in an Italianate commercial streetscape must be considered a public statement, particularly when all Christian groups, whatever their differences, marked their physical presence in the city in the same voice. Gothic learned many dialects in both exterior and interior adaptation; however, Gothic architectural references created the physical spaces in which religion dominated, integrated, and blended with the other activities of city life. The centrality of Christian faith to the life of the city was as evident in stone, brick, and wood as were the commercial, industrial, political, and residential buildings that created the public spaces which were London.

London's churches were considered houses of public worship. The concept of public worship was something of a carryover of an older establishment language. With no established church, the "public" did not worship together as a public. In late nineteenth-century London the requirement of adhering to the same doctrines and rituals was no longer deemed requisite to the formation of a social entity. However, it was assumed that some version of Christianity was still essential. Baptists and Methodists were given the same status as

¹⁶⁹ "Ordained and Inducted," *FP*, 3 July 1890, p. 8 and Fred Landon, "A History of the First

Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Catholics; and these together formed religious publics. Religious conformity was not enforced, but something typically referred to as “harmony” was. Londoners worshipped together—at a church of their choice—and this constituted a “public” act and an expression of the freedoms of the citizen of the new Dominion of Canada.

The nation building project was clearly a matter of public concern, and the churches offered their particular narratives to lead, or at least participate in, the cause. Much has been written about the aspirations of various churches to be the national church, and these attempts continued into the twentieth century providing at least some of the motivation for the United Church of Canada.¹⁷⁰ Protestants and Catholics alike used the rhetoric of national prosperity founded upon Christian virtue to lay claim to the leadership of the Canadian public. The failure of the attempt to provide Canada with an established church did not eliminate establishment assumptions on the part of the churches. They held in common the view that it was the responsibility of the churches to ensure that society worked. However, the society they had to make work was a liberal one, and each of the churches sought to find ways of asserting their claims in the vocabulary of voluntarism.

Perhaps the clearest claim the churches made to status as public institutions was as sponsors of sociability. Churches were considered to be facilitators of the social interaction which constituted much of the public life of the city. Many people went to church to see and to be seen. Pastors seemed to think that this was a less than pious motivation and that it took the attention of the faithful away from the real business at hand, but this informal construction of the public grounded its formal constitution. The increase of societies and associations drew more people into this informal public more often. Forms of democratic interaction were practised in the meetings of the Ladies’ Aid, the literary societies, the young people’s societies, and women’s missionary

Hundred Years of the First United Church,” 25-9.

¹⁷⁰ Phyllis D. Airhart, “Ordering a New Nation and Reordering Protestantism, 1867-1914,” in *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, ed. George A. Rawlyk (Burlington: Welch, 1990); Magney, “The Methodist Church and the National Gospel;” Richard Ruggle, “The Anglican National Dream;” and Burkhard Kieseckamp, “Presbyterian and Methodist Divines.”

associations, along with the social interaction. Narrowed to political and economic activity, the concept “public” misses much of the public life of the period.

Although religion cannot be limited to the private, it is clear that the churches gave particular attention to the private lives of their adherents. Understood as an individual choice, religion required inner cultivation. The churches’ attention to music and worship and the serious consideration they gave to fears of ritualism indicated their concern for *managing the external vehicles* which guided the inner experience of the soul. The democratisation and spiritualisation of financial giving provided a means by which the giving of material resources could cultivate heightened interior commitments. Increased levels of church activity provided not only sociability, but also broadened adherents’ ways of identifying with the church and being involved in Christian service. All of these practices encouraged an intensification of religious identity. In public and in private, religion produced the subjectification of individuals as Christian citizens.

What it meant to be a Christian citizen varied in important ways.

Congregationalists, Methodists, and Catholics constructed Christian citizenship according to differing narratives. Even within denominational traditions powerful discourses competed and converged. The various rhetorical constructions of the church worked to orient adherents toward the transcendent and the particularly Christian while, at the same time, integrating Christian life into the dominant narratives of liberal society. Congregationalists, valuing free thought and autonomy as central to *Christian identity*, brought the Christian and liberal discourses closest together than any other denomination. The Church of England drew on its heritage as an established church for authority, yet it integrated democratic practices into its governing structures and effectively used the conversionist language of voluntarism from its pulpits. Catholics and Baptists tilted the balance more in favour of Christian particularity than liberal narratives. Their minority status provided for a firmer identification with distinctively Christian sources of authority. However, the Catholic narrative of the religion of the people and the Baptist commitment to democratic structures provided points of integration with the wider society. The Presbyterian blacksmith James Munro and Anglican apologist Adam Townley provided distinctly

Christian positions, but they were considered insane, in the one case, and “priestly” in the other, for their rejection of liberal narratives of integration. These “eccentrics” aside, all the major denominations participated to some degree in a democratic narrative which valued harmony and feared “sectional” differences. As a result, in “public” such differences were downplayed and, for the most part, religion presented a consistent and harmonious face.

This harmonious public discourse has been read as the hegemonic privileging of a dominant middle class. The interpretation presented here reads religious consensus as a narrative strategy by which the churches integrated their particularity into the dominant discourses of liberal society. The particular interests of the churches were often at odds with economic and political forces that marginalised religion. The voices of the churches could provide countervailing narrative identities which provided resistances to the subjectification of liberal society. This is not to say that the churches were not making totalising claims; however, the fragility of these, given the ambiguities created in the churches’ attempts to adjust to religious voluntarism, renders suspect claims to hegemonic power, even those made by the churches themselves. Rev. Wallace’s advocacy of free thought and Bishop Foley’s assertion that the church wanted body and soul, indicated different but equally totalising narratives. However, the Roman totalising claims made by Foley offset those of the Protestant majority, providing Catholics with a transcendent narrative of location that empowered them for action as Catholic citizens. Likewise, the Congregational appeal to free thought disciplined by the scriptures resisted the secularist “free thinkers.” The Presbyterian practice of extended pastoral tenure gave authority to ministers, but Presbyterian polity also allowed congregations to act in what they perceived to be their own interest. The totalising narratives of the churches brought conformity, but they also grounded identity and purpose in transcendent values that directed action in the present. Often these actions challenged the very narratives by which they were authorised. As establishment assumptions faded, the churches used the voluntarist strategies described in this chapter to intensify particular commitments to their beliefs and practices. It was by these practices, and the narratives

accompanying them, that individuals located identity, constructed meaning, and were empowered to act.

CHAPTER 4

REDEMPTIVE HOMES:

Religious Practice IV: Women's Interdenominational Associations

The preponderance of interdenominational religious activity in late Victorian Ontario, much of which focused on social action, has been taken to represent a high point of religious influence. The meaning of this religiously motivated social action continues to be argued having been variously interpreted as the root of social democracy¹ and the tentacles of middle class hegemony;² as the foundation of the secular city³ and evidence of the persistence of religious faith.⁴ However, in these debates little attention has been paid to the source of religious influence. Social transformations incident upon the rise of liberal society in Ontario had removed religion from its place as the spiritual arm of the state. This was a period of some vulnerability, as old habits of thought regarding the legitimacy of religion were being undermined. The last two chapters have focused on how the local churches negotiated these changes. The next two will describe interdenominational religious activity to uncover the social authority by which religion addressed public issues. This analysis finds Protestant Christians gaining public authority by orienting their social ministrations to the governing imperatives and narratives of an emerging liberal society. Interdenominational religious practices had no traditions to safeguard and thus were more susceptible to transformation by liberal narratives than the churches.

¹ Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-28* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971)

² Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water* and Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*.

³ Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators* and David B. Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith*.

⁴ Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*.

Following Foucault's account of the rise of liberal societies as the transformation of governmentality from territorial security to the management of populations by techniques of freedom, Jacques Donzelot argues that modern families provide a primary site for governing in the name of freedom.⁵ The offer of economic autonomy to the nuclear family was a strategy for managing the freedom of populations. When pursued by male initiative, autonomy broke down traditional communities and obligations to maximise economic efficiency. But the freedom offered by liberal social organisation was not unlimited. Masculine independence was disciplined in the family by the economic dependence of women and children. Thus the improvement, health, and prosperity of the population required by liberal governmentality were premised upon independent nuclear families in which economic incentive would stimulate male autonomy for the benefit of his dependants.⁶ Action in the social sphere was focused on ensuring this outcome. Where economic incentives were insufficient, philanthropic associations stepped in to provide instruction on proper family organisation and gender responsibilities. Donzelot defines the social sector as the space where the imperatives of liberal society meet the objectives of the family, where the public interpenetrates the private.⁷

The social provided a new venue for the redemptive action of religious groups. Christian charity had long motivated action among the poor. However, traditional charity did not endeavour to uplift those it assisted. The governmentality of liberal society now required action in the social that promised the improvement and efficiency of the population.⁸ This demanded a new

⁵ Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 53-4

⁶ This definition of the objectives of government is from Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," 100.

⁷ Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 88. Gilles Deleuze's foreword, "The Rise of the Social," to Donzelot's work is also helpful in defining "the social."

⁸ Donna Andrew is very helpful in charting the changing attitudes to charity in the Eighteenth Century, contrasting a concern for character of the giver and the welfare of the recipient to the later concern for the character of the recipient and the welfare of society. Donna T. Andrew, *Philanthropy and Police: London Charity in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 3-4. Similar themes are explored for the late Nineteenth Century in Garth Stedman Jones early work, *Outcast London: A Study in the Relationship between Classes in Victorian Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), especially chapters 13, 14 and 15. Contemporary analysis argued, according to Stedman Jones, that it was the "indiscriminate almsgiver" motivated by Christian charity that was the cause of the "demoralisation" of the poor and thus the

objective for religiously motivated action in the social. Donzelot contrasts charity, which merely relieves distress, with philanthropy, which uplifts and promotes social efficiency.⁹ In accord with the new government rationality, action in the social must improve the recipient and not merely sustain existence. Saving the social gave a variety of Protestant associations a public authority to form and preserve “households of faith.” The activity of late Victorian London’s women’s (described in the present chapter) and men’s associations (described in the next) supported the formation and preservation of Christian households. Households and individuals that seriously diverged from the norm were subject to ameliorative action to improve or uplift.¹⁰

Fighting for the Orphans: Founding the Protestant Orphans’ Home

The Women’s Christian Association (WCA) came into being in March 1874. With Mrs. Ellen Gregsten as president, nine women incorporated as a society whose objects included: “the distribution of charity, and the care of the poor and sick.”¹¹ The attitudes of Victorian Ontario toward the poor required visits to the homes of those who applied for relief to distinguish the deserving poor from “impostors.”¹² In the course of these visits the women “found many persons, aged and infirm, depending upon the cold charity of the world, and many orphans running riot through the streets, there gaining a vicious education.” In response, they proposed an institution which would provide the benefits and care of the Christian home for those in need. The

perpetuation of poverty. The solution was organise philanthropy to produce desired behaviours in the recipient. This gave rise to founding in 1869 of the Society for Organising Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicity, *Outcast London*, 245-56

⁹ Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 66-7.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 92-4.

¹¹ The story of the founding of the WCA is told in Margaret Johnson, “Women’s Christian Association: The First One Hundred Years, 1874-1974” (TRC), 1974. The early work of the WCA is recounted in the first annual report, “The Women’s Christian Association,” *Ad*, 27 May 1875, p. 1; “Women’s Christian Association,” *FP*, 7 May 1875, p. 4; and in “The City Charities: The Origins and Work of the Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 1 March 1890, p. 3.

¹² “The Women’s Christian Association,” *Ad*, 27 May 1875, p. 1. The term “impostors” was used of those who applied to the charitable institutions of the community but were not deemed by the common wisdom as deserving. An article published in the late fall of 1880 canvassed the various charities on their means of ensuring the charitable public were not imposed upon, “The City Poor!” *Ad*, 25 November 1880, p. 3. Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 69. Such visits were essential if assistance was to “teach” its recipients the path to uplift.

WCA volunteered to take on the management of such a “home or refuge” on behalf of the community.¹³ To this end the Association spent a number of weeks canvassing and garnering support. These efforts culminated in a public meeting chaired by Mayor Benjamin Cronyn at City Hall on the evening of 16 October 1874. It was put before the very receptive assembly “to locate in this place a Protestant Orphans’ Home and Refuge for the Aged.” Although the meeting had been called by the WCA to address their proposal, only men, mostly clergy, populated the platform and only the men on the platform spoke. Mr. Flock, the WCA solicitor and husband of one of the members, presented their case.

All of the speeches supported the proposal and enlarged upon both the necessity and the desirability of the undertaking. The Rev. Dr. Cooper, pastor of Talbot Street Baptist, opened the discussion on a religious note reminding the audience that the care of orphans and the aged was the essence of the “religion of Jesus.” He hoped the result of the evening’s deliberations would be “a home where its inmates would feel at home.” Anglican Dean Boomer felt that London had lagged behind other Canadian cities in establishing benevolent institutions, while setting the pace in religious and educational ones. His speech ended with the first tangible support for the enterprise when Boomer offered, on behalf of the Bishop of Huron, fifty dollars toward the refuge. Canon George Innes of St. Paul’s expressed his pleasure that the “ladies” had undertaken this work, and he went on to contrast the effectiveness of women and men in voluntary undertakings. “Gentlemen would appoint their committees and sub-committees, and oftentimes do nothing, but the ladies never failed to accomplish their work.”¹⁴ Rev. Camelon of St. James Presbyterian sounded a note of caution, wondering aloud if a private institution would suffer from inconsistent support and if it might not be more effectively carried out under the direction of the City Council. Rev. Hannon of Queen’s Avenue Methodist seconded the opinion of Canon Innes

¹³ This account follows the fuller account, “Aged and Orphans,” *Ad*, 17 October 1874, p. 2. Also see “The Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 17 October 1874, p. 4.

¹⁴ Canon Innes’ evaluation of the suitability of women for charitable is shared by a number of historians. See for example Wayne Roberts, “Rocking the Cradle for the World” and John T. Cumbler,

regarding the effectiveness of Christian women. He congratulated London for having so few Protestant poor, suggesting that those few deserved assistance. To conclude, he expressed his pleasure that no one had been so crass as to raise the question "will it pay?" Having thus raised it, Rev. Hannon proceeded to respond. First, there would be the large dividend on resurrection day; however, Hannon also suggested a more material reward. "[E]very dollar given toward this institution would be a dollar saved, for every person trained and developed in the Home there would be one less to support in the jail."¹⁵ One of two laymen to speak to the issue, Major John Walker, Member of Parliament for London, expressed his pleasure in seeing members of "all Protestant creeds" and "all shades of politics" coming together for the sake of rendering assistance to the orphan and the aged.¹⁶ He followed with a strong endorsement of this institution depending on voluntary effort. Walker moved the following resolution:

Resolved – That in the opinion of this meeting it is desirable that immediate steps be taken to obtain in this city a home for the aged, the infirm, the helpless, and the orphans under the auspices and management of the Women's Christian Association.

This was readily passed, and another motion followed appointing a committee of gentlemen, including many prominent men "and the several ministers of the city" to work in cooperation with the WCA. This also passed and a collection was taken providing twenty-eight dollars toward the project. The meeting was adjourned with a benediction pronounced by Rev. Andrew Kennedy.

The committee appointed at the public meeting met with the WCA on 22 October and pushed the matter forward by agreeing to look for a suitable lot to purchase and, in the meantime, to arrange for the rental of a house until more permanent arrangements could be made. At this meeting, thirty-one women were added to the ranks of the WCA bringing its membership

"The Politics of Charity: Gender and Class in Late Nineteenth Century Charity Policy," *Journal of Social History* 14 (1980).

¹⁵ Jails were supported by government at a much higher subsidy than orphanages giving Hannon's argument the force of social efficiency as well as moral sense. Mariana Valverde, "The Mixed Social Economy as a Canadian Tradition," *Studies in Political Economy* 47 (1995), 46.

¹⁶ Major Walker was elected for London in the federal election of 1874 against the perennial Member of Parliament, Hon. John Carling. However, Walker's election was contested on the grounds that Walker's supporters had engaged in fraudulent election practices. An investigation substantiated these charges and Walker was unseated. Neither Walker nor Carling contested the resulting by-election.

to about eighty. This increase must be attributed, at least in part, to their new undertaking having strengthened their standing in the community.¹⁷ Another meeting of the committee with the WCA was held on 29 October to prepare a report for a second public meeting on 10 November. About one hundred women as well as numerous clergy and prominent laymen attended this meeting.¹⁸ It was expected to bring to fruition the establishment of the Protestant Orphans' Home and Refuge for the Aged. Not long into the meeting these expectations began to unravel and the Protestant Orphans' Home almost died before it was born. Mr. Flock again spoke on behalf of the WCA and the committee appointed to confer with them. To the apparent surprise of the meeting, and in opposition to the earlier resolution, the management of the Protestant Orphan's Home had been taken away from the WCA and given to a new society. Mrs. Hellmuth, wife of the Anglican Bishop of Huron, was to be president of this new society and Mrs. Ellen Gregsten, the president of the WCA, was given the office of first vice-president. These changes brought an immediate negative response from the non-Anglican clergy. Revs. Hannon (Methodist), Cooper (Baptist), and Wallace (Congregational) each argued that the Home could not enjoy the full support of the public if the women of the WCA were treated so "ungenerously." A separate society would only be acceptable if "a lady of the Women's Christian Association, who originated and brought the movement to its present position" was appointed president. Canon Innes and Rev. John Gemley, of the Church of England, argued that the meeting should not deviate from the consensus reached in committee, and that to do so was only to throw in an "apple of discord" which could jeopardise the enterprise. Against the objections of Canon Innes, Rev. Hannon provided the background to the current dispute, as he understood it. The 16 October public meeting had clearly indicated that the home should be under the management of the WCA, and Rev. Innes had raised no objection and had spoken in favour of the undertaking at the time. However, in committee and away from public scrutiny, Innes proposed a separate society to manage the Protestant Orphans' Home "on

¹⁷ "Home for the Aged and Orphans," *FP*, 23 October 1874, p. 4.

behalf of a few ladies who had not taken any part with the Women's Christian Association." Moreover, Hannon claimed, both Innes and Gemley had previously agreed that "the present officers of the Association should be the office bearers of the Home."

At this juncture Mayor Cronyn, son and namesake of the first Bishop of Huron, intervened in an attempt to pull the meeting back from the brink of disaster. He explained that the Act under which the Home was to be incorporated required this separation from the WCA. He suggested that the membership of the Protestant Home include all who were already members of the WCA and expressed his regret that it was the "ministers of the Gospel" who were causing this dispute. Cronyn quoted Mrs. Gregsten with approval to the effect that the selection of officers should not be a matter for contention—"It is workers we want, not officers."¹⁹ Thomas McCormick, a prominent Methodist layman, did not accept the Mayor's attempt to attribute the difficulty to a legal technicality. To him it was clearly a matter of denominational prejudice. The women of the Church of England would not join with the women of other denominations in the WCA, and yet felt it was their right to lead a "Protestant Home." McCormick turned Mrs. Gregsten's comment against the Mayor, taking it to mean that Mrs. Hellmuth, having done no work, had no claim to office. With considerable less delicacy than had characterised the debate among the clergy, McCormick contended that he "did not consider it right that ladies who would not join the Association should be placed over the heads of those who had worked earnestly.... Mrs. Hellmuth had done nothing so far to advance the interests of the Society. If she had, no one would for a moment object."

Major Walker waded into the dispute offering the meeting a compromise. Clearly the "dissenters" were not going to accept anyone but a member of the WCA as president of the Home. However, the resources, both human and material, of the Church of England were

¹⁸ The account of this meeting is reconstructed from extensive reports in both daily newspapers: "Home for the Needy," *Ad*, 11 November 1874, p. 2 and "The Protestant Home," *FP*, 11 November 1874, p. 4.

¹⁹ Cronyn's intervention taken from the *FP* report, "The Protestant Home," *FP*, 11 November 1874, p. 4.

essential to the viability of the undertaking. Walker proposed that “considering Mrs. Hellmuth’s position, she be made Lady Patroness of the Home” opening the position of president for Mrs. Gregsten. This had the desired effect of “pouring oil on troubled waters,” and at the Mayor’s suggestion Mrs. Murray Anderson and Mrs. John Birrell were included with Mrs. Hellmuth as Lady Patronesses. This matter resolved, the meeting was able to unanimously pass the objects of the new Society and its amended slate of officers. Things moved quickly with papers of incorporation being signed by the officers of the Home two days later, after which a house on Ridout Street was rented and furnished, a steward and matron engaged. The Home opened with five children in residence on 1 December 1874.²⁰

The Protestant Orphans’ Home came into being as a monument to Protestant social benevolence and religious harmony. The circumstances surrounding its founding are revealing of late Victorian practices of interdenominational Christianity. Action on behalf of the poor and the weak provided, as Dr. Cooper observed, a non-controversial point of contact for all denominations.²¹ Doctrinal distinctions and ecclesiastical practices were unlikely to intrude upon care for orphans and the aged. Thus, interdenominational benevolence emerged as a primary site for constructing Protestant harmony. Despite this, the organisation of the Home did not go as smoothly as expected. This would suggest that the evidence of a wide Protestant consensus, which has been so much a part of the religious historiography of the nineteenth century, might need to be re-examined. Recent scholarship inspired by Marxist analysis has assumed this portrait of a strong and unified Protestant culture and equated it with a hegemonic middle class. Marxist historians then portray this dominant Protestant consensus as being in conflict with the socially and economically marginalised.²² The conflict which almost undid the Protestant Orphans’ Home took place between two powerful and well to do factions over the issue of whether the

²⁰ “The Protestant Home,” *FP*, 10 November 1875, p. 4

²¹ “Aged and Orphans,” *Ad*, 17 October 1874, p. 2.

²² Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks* and Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper’s Millennium*.

“establishment” or the “dissenters” were the natural leaders of Protestantism. The solution suggests that “consensus” may not be the best descriptor of Protestant London.

There is no doubt that a variety of concerns conspired to convince the religiously motivated that conditions in late Victorian London required organised efforts outside the confines of the denominational churches. Care for the poor, reclamation of the fallen, protection of the youth, and the salvation of the unchurched all represented needs that called for united action in the social, action that lay beyond the capacity of individual congregations or even denominations. Thus, a whole new category of lay-inspired and led religious activity developed. Through public meetings, associational life, union revivals—with the aid of the liberal conventions of the public sphere—Protestants in London formed themselves into a distinctive “public.” It is the construction of this public to which this chapter and the next are devoted. It is common to assume that those who spoke for Protestantism actually represented something concrete. The founding of the Protestant Orphans’ Home illustrates a more complex reality. It is important not to conflate the Protestant public with the whole of civil society.²³

It should also be noted that interdenominational activity, by definition, excluded Catholics, who were not, and did not wish to be, included among the denominations. Other publics, some Protestant and middle class, contested the pronouncements of the Protestant public. Moreover, interdenominational activity should not be taken to describe Protestantism despite its prevalence in the period.²⁴ The religious life of particular congregations was distinct from and at points threatened by the growing influence of this interdenominational Protestant public. Religious interventions in public were increasingly the province of the associations and not the churches. The common social interests expressed by the Protestant public, therefore, need to be

²³ The importance of distinguishing carefully between “publics” and civil society is argued in Craig Calhoun, “Civil Society and the Public Sphere.”

²⁴ Grant seems to identify the two in *A Profusion of Spires*, chapter 11, “The Activist Temper.” Sharon Anne Cook commends the interdenominational activity of the WCTU as a window on a distinctly women’s experience of religion, “Beyond the Congregation: Women and Canadian Evangelicalism Reconsidered,” in *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*, ed. G.A. Rawlyk (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997). This is a helpful corrective to assumptions that there was one evangelical or even Protestant experience which all shared.

distinguished from both society at large, which spoke in a variety of voices, and the Protestant churches. The fractured nature of the Protestant consensus at the local level makes it an unlikely candidate for exercising hegemony.

Associational Personnel

Mrs. Ellen Gregsten was a forty-one year old Methodist widow in 1874 when she became the founding president of the London Women's Christian Association. Although she continued to be active in the WCA, her presidency lasted only one year as she was elected the founding president of the Protestant Orphans' Home at the acrimonious public meeting which established the Home. During her tenure, the Home grew from a rented house with five resident children to a large complex, including an infirmary, accommodating about eighty residents. In 1883 with the Home on a firm financial footing, Gregsten retired from the presidency and was, somewhat ironically, appointed Lady Patroness. In 1884 Gregsten was elected president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), a post she held until her retirement due to ill health in 1890. Ellen Gregsten was unique in having served as president of all three of London's interdenominational women's associations, but multiple involvements were not uncommon. Of the 192 women who served as officers of these associations between 1874 and 1890, forty-two held posts in two and five held posts in all three.²⁵

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) was the only interdenominational men's association in London, although men also served on the advisory committee of the Protestant Orphans' Home. Throughout this period, 219 men served as officers of the YMCA and thirty-four on the Protestant Orphans' Home Advisory Committee. Thirteen served both associations. These men were community leaders in business and industry as well as in the Protestant public.²⁶ Thomas Muir, William Glass, Samuel Peters, and Thomas McCormick feature

²⁵ These numbers are compiled from reports of Annual Meetings printed in the local newspapers.

²⁶ The names and occupations (where available) follow: William Bowman, merchant; John Elliot, engineer; William Glass, Sheriff; Samuel Glass, Deputy Sheriff; Joseph Jeffery, banker; Oliver

prominently in the public meetings and fund-raising enterprises of both the men's and the women's associations. The close connections among personnel at the heart of the Protestant public is further illustrated in that in forty-one families both husband and wife served in associational leadership roles.

Methodists clearly dominated the Protestant public. Of the thirteen most active men, eight were Methodist, and Methodists were over-represented as officers of all the associations under study.²⁷ Adherents of the Church of England came close to their proportion of the Protestant population in associational leadership only on the Protestant Orphans' Home Trustee and Advisory Boards. Significantly, the Protestant Orphans' Home was created in deference to Anglican unwillingness to work within the WCA. Presbyterians were most likely to be involved in the YMCA and the WCTU and were less active in the Protestant Orphans' Home. Denominational affiliation can be determined for forty-seven of the fifty-five women and men who served in two associations or more. Of these most active leaders of the Protestant public, forty-seven percent were Methodists, thirty percent Anglicans, thirteen percent Baptists, six percent Presbyterians and four percent were from other denominations.²⁸ While representing itself as guardian of the public good, the Protestant public was led by a fairly small and closely-knit group. It comprised approximately 400 persons, only a handful of whom were clergy.

The Women's Christian Association

The WCA was the mother of all the interdenominational women's associations in late nineteenth-century London. The Protestant Orphans' Home had been lost to the Association, but there was still much for these women to do. The range of activities that occupied the WCA was impressive. Temperance agitation led to the formation of a local chapter of the Women's

McClary, founder; Thomas McCormick, manufacturer; John Moffat; Thomas Muir, manufacturer; George Robinson, merchant; JB Sutherland; and Andrew Thompson, livery proprietor.

²⁷ Methodists made up 30% of London's Protestant population in the 1871 census. Methodists held 44% of the leadership roles in the YMCA, 41% of the Protestant Orphans' Home Advisory Board, 46% of the WCA, 33% of the Protestant Orphans' Home and 39% of the WCTU.

Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) out of the Temperance committee of the WCA. In due course the WCTU gave rise to the Young Women's Christian Temperance Union, which in turn formed the Young Women's Christian Association.²⁹ A WCA Visiting and Relief Committee "systematically" carried out the provision of relief to the poor.³⁰ Concern for the poor continued at the core of the WCA's activities and their more elaborate schemes grew out of this contact. Eventually a soup kitchen, a women's refuge, regular visits to the hospital and jail, and homes for aged men and women would take shape as the Women's Christian Association's response to social needs.³¹

The soup kitchen made its first appearance in answer to severe unemployment in the winter of 1875. It provided an efficient means of providing food when large numbers required assistance. Operating from 1 February to 31 March, the kitchen provided 10,000 meals of soup, bread, and meat in its first winter. Some were fed at the kitchen itself but the majority received a quart of soup and a portion of bread and meat packed into a pail to take home to feed a family. In the winter of 1876 the kitchen had a longer operating season during which it dispensed 18,286 meals of soup. The WCA reported that many families looked to the kitchen as their only means of support. Donated clothing, wood for fuel, and other necessities were also available at the kitchen. The kitchen continued to provide these forms of relief during the winter of 1877. However, an improvement in economic circumstances convinced the women that the kitchen would not be required in the winter of 1878. A peak in the WCA's provision of relief occurred in 1879-80 when the Committee reported 730 visits, involving 75 families consisting of 360 persons. A total of \$510 was expended leaving the relief fund with a sizeable deficit. Relief was available to

²⁸ This compares to the following percentages of London's Protestants in 1871: Church of England, 40%; Methodist, 30%, Presbyterian, 21%; Baptist, 5%; and other 4%.

²⁹ Mark Greenberg and Edward Phelps, "The Young Women's Christian Association of London, Ontario, Canada: A Century of Faith, Hope and Good Works, 1889 - 1951 (YMCA-YWCA) - 1989," (London, 1989), 1-2, 6.

³⁰ Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 69. System was essential to the tutelage liberal society required of the provision of relief

³¹ "The City Charities," *FP*, 19 March 1890, p. 3.

anyone in need without regard to religious affiliation. Annual reports in 1876 and 1877 included a breakdown by denomination of the recipients. Over the two years 165 families were provided relief. Of these 79 (50%) were Church of England; 37 (24%) Roman Catholic; 18 (11%) Bible Christian; 14 (9%) Methodist; 5 (3%) Baptist; 3 (2%) Presbyterian; 2 (1%) Congregational.³² During the 1880s, the work received little mention in the annual reports, although other sources indicate that it continued in operation.³³

The relief work of the WCA was not without its critics. The soup kitchen drew fire in November 1877 from a correspondent to the *Advertiser*, self-styled as “A Well-Wisher of the Poor.” “Well-Wisher” portrayed the Association as “kind-hearted women,” naïve to the evil schemes of the poor. The letter suggested that “thinking people believe that such institutions as soup kitchens do more harm than good for they tend to destroy the *self-dependence* in the poor, which is so needful to them as a means of success.... They will *sponge* a living rather than *earn* a living.”³⁴ The response on behalf of the WCA was indignant, charging Well-Wisher, quite legitimately, with insulting their intelligence. It was argued that the WCA was fully aware of the problems associated with “promiscuous charity” and that, while taking “sufficient precautions to guard against fraud,” they were determined to do what they could for the “relief of the deserving poor.”³⁵ The indignation expressed was no doubt related to the great effort they expended on identifying the “deserving poor.” Moreover, they were convinced that the “liberality” of the charitable public was based upon the Association’s assurances that relief only went to those who

³² This compares to the following distribution of denominational affiliation according to the 1871 census data: Church of England, 33%; Roman Catholic, 17%; all Methodists, 25%; Baptists, 5%; and Congregationalists, 2%.

³³ Reports of work at the Soup Kitchen appear in the first four Annual Reports. “The Women’s Christian Association,” *Ad*, 27 May 1875, p. 1; “The W.C.A.: Proceedings of the Anniversary,” *Ad*, 10 May 1876, p. 1; “W.C.A.,” *Ad*, 12 May 1877, p. 1; and “WCA: the Annual Business Session Yesterday Afternoon,” *Ad*, 3 May 1878, p. 4. For later reports on the Kitchen see “Soup Kitchen Incident,” *Ad*, 12 February 1884, pp. 3, 4, and “The City Charities,” *FP*, 19 March 1890, p. 3.

³⁴ “Hints for the WCA,” (let) *Ad*, 14 November 1877, p. 4. Emphasis reflects the original. Well-Wisher was expressing attitudes and arguments reflecting the new approach of scientific philanthropy common in the period, Stedman Jones, *Outcast London*, 245-7 and Cumbler, “Politics of Charity,” 98

³⁵ “Hints for the WCA,” (let) *Ad*, 16 November 1877, p. 1.

really needed it, and that values such as “self-dependence” and “earning a living” were not in any way infringed upon.³⁶ At the third anniversary meeting in 1877, supporters of WCA were assured that to “prevent imposition, the applicants for soup were frequently visited, and the most searching inquiries made.”³⁷ Despite Well-Wisher’s misgivings the WCA developed an enviable reputation as a discriminating dispenser of relief. In an 1890 series on “City Charities,” the *Free Press* recommended that the charitable individuals channel their giving through the WCA rather than give aid directly.

It is easily seen that indiscriminate almsgiving does quite as much harm as good and in these days of clever fraud it is necessary that great care and judgment be exercised to prevent charity being obtained by unworthy people under false pretenses. This is where the organization and system of the W.C.A. prove useful. It offers a splendid medium through which the charitably disposed can dispose their alms, with the comfortable feeling that it is being applied to the best advantage. This system appeals to the charitably disposed with great force. If a contributor to the funds of the association is applied to for aid, by simply referring the case to some member of the Visiting and Relief Committee it will be reported on, and the best form in which the help should be given determined by the active and experienced ladies who perform this branch of the association work.³⁸

The WCA could itself complain about “a great deal of ill-bestowed charity” which “would do twice as much good with half as much layout” had it been dispensed through the auspices of their Visiting and Relief Committee rather than being “promiscuously” distributed by those without the appropriate system.³⁹ The old charity, which aimed at meeting an immediate need, was not the model of benevolence the public demanded, and not the model the WCA practised. Relief distributed through the soup kitchen or by the Visiting Committee was to ensure the integrity of the families assisted. Contrary to “Well-Wishers” charges, the work of the WCA ensured the stability and long-term independence of families made temporarily dependent by some crisis.⁴⁰ In

³⁶ According to Boyd Hilton this attitude was widespread, particularly among evangelicals. Individual responsibility in economic matters paralleled the emphasis on individual responsibility for one’s spiritual destiny. Hilton, *The Age of Atonement*, 16.

³⁷ “W.C.A.,” *Ad*, 12 May 1877, p. 1. Here the women of the WCA were in line with the charitable of London, England, Stedman Jones, *Outcast London*, 256-7.

³⁸ “The City Charities,” *FP*, 19 March 1890, p. 3.

³⁹ “Women’s Christian Association,” *FP*, 3 May 1889, p. 6.

⁴⁰ Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 59-60.

a recent study of unemployment in Victorian Canada, Peter Baskerville and Eric Sager contend that unemployment and the poverty that came with it was not only the experience of the marginalised. One in every four workers in Canada's urban centres experienced unemployment sometime during the year.⁴¹ The work of the Visiting Committee was to distinguish between those who sought relief to enable them to move toward independence and those who were illegitimately dependent.

While guarding against "imposition," in general the reports of the WCA spoke with respect of those they were committed to help. The distress with which they dealt was understood to derive from a variety of causes. For many, poverty came through "circumstances over which they have no control" such as sickness. In other cases, a "depression in trade" was responsible for a "scarcity of work, and caused many a heart to suffer which had never felt the pangs of want before." These constituted the deserving poor. Social efficiency was served in ensuring the integrity of these family units through such measures as the soup kitchen until the temporary distress had passed.⁴² There were those, however, who had "no higher ambition than to be paupers." It was the evaluation of the WCA that the main cause of this kind of poverty and want was "the love for strong drink."⁴³ It was this conviction that led the WCA to an enthusiastic embrace of the temperance cause in November 1875.

During the fall and winter of 1875 and 1876, while still carrying on their program of relief, the WCA entered the temperance fray with great energy. Wishing to relieve the "unmitigated anguish [in] the hearts of the wives and mothers of the land," the women devised a rather remarkable strategy. They set about to eradicate the evil of drink and to relieve the anguish

⁴¹ Peter Baskerville, and Eric W. Sager, *Unwilling Idlers: The Urban Unemployed and Their Families in Late Victorian Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 185-6.

⁴² In her study of women and benevolence in small town Ontario, Lynne Marks notes the concern of benevolent women for efficiency, a characteristic out-of-step with the feminine gender construct which supposedly fitted women for such work. The women of the WCA rejected Well-Wisher's characterisation of "well-meaning but naive," asserting their efficiency and rational approach to relief. Lynne Marks, "Indigent Committees and Ladies Benevolent Societies: Intersections of Public and Private Poor Relief in Late Nineteenth Century Small Town Ontario," *Studies in Political Economy* 47 (1995), 72-4.

of women by “visiting the homes of the poor drunkard with a view to their reformation.”⁴⁴

Visiting the homes of those requesting relief had long been a practice of the WCA. . The “poor drunkard’s” moral failure, together with the WCA’s sense of responsibility to the family, authorised their intervention. Women, who were unable to engage in debate in public meetings, took it upon themselves to lecture drunkards in their own homes. In this case, gender construction sanctioned women to take direct action in the interests of the public upon the private sphere of the home, providing moral tutelage for those ignorant of or resistant to the social norm.⁴⁵

The constitution of the WCA, written in 1874, set, as its object, the “temporal, moral, and religious welfare of women, particularly of young women who are dependent upon their own exertions for support.” Members of the WCA would pursue this by seeking first “the advancement of active piety in their own hearts” and, thus empowered, “to labor for the spiritual and social benefit of their own sex.” Among the “Duties of Members” was to “seek out women taking up their residence in this city to aid them in securing suitable boarding and employment, and endeavor to bring them under moral and religious influence, secure their attendance at some place of worship on the Sabbath, and by every means in their power surround them with Christian associates.”⁴⁶ This object initially took second place to relief work and the attempt to found the Protestant Orphans’ Home. With the Home in other hands, the women of the WCA looked about for a project worthy of their energies. Following Toronto’s lead, the WCA proposed a boarding house for young working women. Four hundred dollars had been raised for this project by May 1875. A boarding house fit the direction of their constitution far more consistently than many of their other worthy endeavours.⁴⁷

⁴³ “The Sixth Anniversary,” *FP*, 19 May 1880, p. 3 and “The W.C.A.: Proceedings of the Anniversary,” *Ad*, 10 May 1876, p. 1.

⁴⁴ “The W.C.A. Proceedings of the Anniversary,” *Ad*, 10 May 1876, p. 1.

⁴⁵ Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, chapter 4, “The Tutelary Complex.”

⁴⁶ “Women’s Christian Association,” *Ad*, 15 June 1874, p. 3.

⁴⁷ Not that anyone suggested they were bound by the direction their constitution set. London’s WCA seemed to have adopted Frances Willard’s “do everything” approach to being a Christian women’s association.

The concern that suggested this initiative was the increasing number of young women moving to the city to take up employment in the schools, shops, and factories, who left behind the influence of Christian homes and were “suddenly freed from all oversight, and subject to the dangers which surround the path of an unprotected girl.” The WCA expected their supporters to recognise the danger that this lack of supervision might represent, as transition to the city had “been the beginning of a downward course” in “many young women's lives.”⁴⁸ Christian women were called to assist WCA efforts “to welcome them to a home, where they may find, not only comfortable board, but kind Christian counsel and oversight as well.” The attitude of the proposed home was to be “Prevention is better than cure.” The features of this Christian home were clearly spelled out. It was to be centrally located, comfortably furnished, supplied with good reading and “innocent amusements;” and it was to maintain “as much as possible the characteristics of a Christian home—morning and evening worship, Bible class on Sunday afternoons, and a weekly prayer meeting.”⁴⁹

Redemption through the virtues of the home was the method of social reform preferred by the WCA. Although they carried out their work on a number of fronts, it was the narrative of the transforming Christian home that centred their activity. This boarding house was to be a place of protection for women who were strangers to the city. To make this a reality, the WCA issued a call to “Christian ladies in this city who might join with us, not only strengthening our hands but our purse strings also.” It was the well-to-do who were being appealed to, particularly those “on whom the duties of the household do not fall very heavily.” In exchange, the lives of these women might be improved through exerting themselves “on the broad platform of Christian love, for the moral and spiritual elevation of their less fortunate sisters.” The Visiting and Relief and the Temperance Committees were already hard at work “trying to elevate the moral

⁴⁸ For the Toronto experience see Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 57-61.

⁴⁹ “Women’s Christian Association,” *FP*, 9 October 1875, p. 4.

tone and domestic habits of the lower classes of the community.”⁵⁰ The redemptive capacity of the well-ordered Christian home, and the support of the women who managed them was the London WCA’s prescription for the social ills of the day. As the guardians of the home, the WCA and activist women throughout the Dominion claimed a large measure of social authority.⁵¹

At some point between October 1875 and March 1876, a change of direction occurred in the Association, and the application of the redemptive home changed from prevention to cure. At the WCA meeting of 2 March 1876, a resolution was passed which rescinded the earlier action to establish a boarding home. In its place would be “a Refuge for fallen and repentant women.” The funds raised earlier for the boarding home would now be applied to the new undertaking. The report of the meeting did not provide the rationale for this change, but the WCA had been convinced that this new endeavour was more needful. The resolution passed easily, and the discussion moved to the name of the new institution. “Magdalen Asylum” had strong support, and with its biblical allusion would convey the message of “fallen and repentant.” However, there was concern that this name “conveyed a knowledge which the inmates would prefer not to have paraded.” And so, with remarkable discretion, the new home was christened “The Women’s Refuge.”⁵² This discretion was maintained even with the challenge of ensuring donations to an enterprise about which the WCA was not “confident of gaining the sympathy of the public.” Many in the community believed that such an institution “encourages crime” and not everyone agreed that “fallen women” were deserving of charity. In defending and promoting the work of the Refuge, constant reference was made to Jesus’ words to the woman accused of adultery: “Neither do I condemn thee....”⁵³ This undertaking was somewhat unique in being

⁵⁰ Ibid, and E.H. Gregsten, “A Plea for the Refuge,” (let) *Ad*, 28 February 1877, p. 1.

⁵¹ A large and varied literature on “maternal feminism” which has emerged over the last two decades has established this point. See Wayne Roberts, “Rocking the Cradle for the World.” Denise Riley, “*Am I That Name?*” 50, argues that the space created by the social was peculiarly feminised given its primary concern with familial standards.

⁵² “Women’s Refuge,” *Ad*, 3 March 1876, p. 1.

⁵³ John 8:11.

justified exclusively in religious terms: the rhetoric of social efficiency was not applied to the work of the Refuge.

A small house was purchased on Grey Street for \$700, and the Women's Refuge began its work in September 1876. The furnishing committee had given the Refuge "a cozy and home-like appearance." Religious services followed the pattern envisioned for the boarding home, with morning and evening devotions, biweekly services conducted in the Refuge by local ministers, and a Bible class conducted by one of the members. Early requests for support assured supporters that "it is not our intention to indulge them in luxury or idleness: but, on the other hand, our food is plain and nourishing. Our industries consist of washing, ironing, sewing, quilting, knitting, etc. By continuing in this way, it is believed the institution will in time be almost if not wholly self-sustaining."⁵⁴ After the initial statements of intention there was no further mention of the Refuge becoming self-sustaining. Annual reports indicated that providing funds for the maintenance of the Refuge was a constant struggle and that refreshment tables at the exhibition and the proceeds of lectures were the source of operating funds. The report for 1877 indicated that producing these events presented too much of a strain on WCA resources and a call was issued for subscriptions to stabilise the financial base of the Refuge.⁵⁵ Canvassing for this work caused some difficulties given their commitment to carry on the Refuge in "seclusion from the public eye." Lists of donors were not published in annual reports and local papers as was common for the Protestant Orphans' Home. There is no doubt, however, the WCA made good on its claim to avoid luxury and provide plain food. The operating cost of the Refuge in the first year was \$170 including the wages of the matron and the support of the nine residents who spent some portion of the year there.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ "W.C.A.," *Ad*, 12 May 1877, p. 1. On the intention for the Refuge to be self-sustaining also see E.H. Gregsten, "A Plea for the Refuge," (let) *Ad*, 28 February 1877, p. 1.

⁵⁵ "WCA: the Annual Business Session Yesterday Afternoon," *Ad*, 3 May 1878, p. 4.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*

The women the WCA was dedicated to help were regarded both as victims of male lust and dangers to the purity of the community.⁵⁷ “A Member of the WCA” wrote to the editor of the *Advertiser* inveighing against the immorality of a society in which the penalty for sexual misconduct fell heavily upon women but men suffered little. Her analysis of this problem and its solution underscored the WCA’s faith in the saving efficacy of the Christian home. “A Member” was motivated to write “from a sense of justice and protection to some of our sex.” She unfolded a narrative of sin, its consequences, the offer of redemption, and the narrow road to salvation expressed with the indignation of the righteous against those who would lead the innocent astray. The problem, according to the writer, did not originate with the young women who applied to the refuge. The problem was that many girls were “not blessed with happy surroundings” during their formative years. These young women came from homes headed by “unkind parents devoid of the grace of God in their hearts, and having no altar in their homes to the Lord for the proper training of their children, abuse and ill-treatment become the portion of many daughters.” With this inauspicious upbringing, women were easy prey for unscrupulous men.

The lewd find ways and means of drawing such from their homes causing deep sorrow to many hearts, and heaping heavy burdens on the community. The awful sin of seduction has attained to such an alarming extent throughout our cities that we long for the time to arrive when an Act will be passed in Parliament, severely punishing men for this widespread, too lightly dealt with crime.

This account allowed “A Member” to isolate her own world, and her own daughter or those of her peers, from the world she entered in her charitable endeavours. It was the daughter of the Other that was subject to seduction, while the Christian home of women like her provided an effective prophylactic against the advances of “the lewd.” Against this background, “A Member” recounted the circumstances of the previous fall when “three seduced females presented themselves” within a few days. She could find no boarding house willing to admit them, nor would the City Relief Officer provide assistance. She told of bringing one of these young women into her own home when no other options were available. This was the redemptive moment in the narrative. The

⁵⁷ Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem*, 53-4.

young woman's response to this act of grace was described in the language of evangelical conversion: "with tears she thanked God that she had the care of a Christian family."⁵⁸

Because there was no room in the Refuge, the WCA contracted with a Mrs. Hughes to accommodate these women; however, having them in her home brought the respectability of Mrs. Hughes' household into question. At least part of the reason "A Member" wrote this letter to the editor was to publicly attest to the respectability and Christian character of Mrs. Hughes. This incident demonstrated the necessity of the Refuge and the urgent need for a larger facility. "A Member" ultimately appealed to God to exonerate the work: "He will open up a way whereby the hearts and hands of those engaged in the work of rescuing the fallen and pointing them to Jesus may be sustained, and more universal sympathy be exhibited in work so difficult and slow in its progress." The letter ended with a warning to the true villains, those who led susceptible women into sin and then abandoned them to the consequences.

I may state that members of our Association intend to be *vigilant*, and should the crime continue, will disclose the names of those who, on the other side of the case, go unpunished, and are received into respectable homes on the same equality with the virtuous.⁵⁹

Perhaps this last phrase captures the indignity of the "double standard" most poignantly. The "seduced females" lost their reputation and social position for their part in this sin. The consequences continued to widen spilling over to damage the reputation of the respectable Mrs. Hughes and the women of the WCA. Meanwhile, the male perpetrator of the crime continued to move in respectable society, invading the sacred domestic space under false pretences.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ "Need of a Woman's Refuge," (let) *Ad*, 15 March 1878, p. 4.

⁵⁹ The emphasis is that of the original. It is clearly men of her social rank "A Member" is charging with misconduct. There is no evidence that this threat was carried out, at least through the two daily newspapers. Since the continued existence of the Refuge would indicate that the "crime" did continue, either the women found it impossible to carry out their threat, or they used informal methods of protecting "respectable homes."

⁶⁰ This theme emerges consistently as members of the WCA reflected on their work. In defending the work of the Refuge a WCA speaker from Toronto gave the following directive: "Some said that showing kindness and extending the comforts of a home to those erring sisters was only making the life which they lead easy. This was a manifest error. No Christian woman would spurn from her door a fallen woman, and welcome to her parlor an immoral man." "Christian Work," *FP*, 15 April 1880, p. 4.

As this narrative indicated, the work of the Refuge was hindered by its small size. The lack of space did not allow the Refuge to admit babies, and many applicants had to be turned away. In August 1878, a new three-storey building was opened and the work was extended to include an infants' home. The new arrangement allowed infants and their mothers to stay together, and several births occurred in the Refuge each year after this. By May 1880 the WCA reported that the government inspector had approved the Infant's Home for a grant and the Association to arrange adoptions.⁶¹ The same report indicated the enlarged scale of the new operation, which now employed a full-time matron and a nurse: thirty-three women had sought refuge and fifty-nine infants had been cared for at a cost of \$1195. It would seem that the facility was seriously overextended and the WCA was forced to limit services to women from the city and its suburbs.⁶² Overcrowding and inadequate sanitary appliances led to infant mortality rates of thirty-three percent in 1878-9 and thirty-four percent in 1879-80. Improvements resulted in a dramatic drop to eighteen percent in 1880-1 and thirteen percent in 1881-2, which brought the congratulations of the medical examiner as it was the lowest infant mortality rate of any such institution in the province.⁶³

The women of the WCA recognised that working to "raise up those who have fallen on the social scale" would not be easy. Their task was a spiritual and social one of returning "many of the fallen of our sex" to their place in respectable society. The first year did not provide much encouragement. Of the nine women admitted to the Refuge, the "wandering habits" of three made them dissatisfied "with the quiet life the Refuge afforded," and they left of their own accord. Two of the women were dismissed for insubordination, leaving four who continued in the

⁶¹ See Valverde, "The Mixed Social Economy as a Canadian Tradition," for the rationale upon which such grants were made.

⁶² "The Sixth Anniversary," *FP*, 19 May 1880, p. 3.

⁶³ During the reporting years 1878-80, none of the babies which were "hand fed" survived. "Women's Christian Association," *FP*, 6 May 1881, p. 3 and "Annual Meeting of the Women's Christian Association," *FP*, 4 May 1882, p. 4.

Refuge.⁶⁴ In the second year, there were some more encouraging developments. Four of the nine women admitted were “furnished with homes in good families,” and the trustees were eager to report that one had married and settled down in Michigan.⁶⁵ Of the thirty-three women who were resident in the refuge for some portion of 1879-80, one was discharged for bad conduct and two left dissatisfied. Some women were willing to use the Refuge for short term material support, but had little patience with the moral uplift program of the redemptive home. On the other hand, sixteen women were reported as “endeavoring to do what is right.” Spiritual reformation was not being overlooked either; two conversions were effected and “several others [were] enquiring the way of the ‘new life.’”⁶⁶ These marks of success seemed to sustain the motivation of the WCA as its members continued their quiet efforts “to rescue those fallen ones from shame and degradation.”⁶⁷

Providing the moral influence of the Christian home to those who were separated from their family, or whose family did not meet its standard, provided a unifying theme to the seemingly disparate efforts of the WCA. Newsboys and bootblacks, who made their living working on the streets, were treated to an Easter dinner in 1876 and 1877 that was co-sponsored by the WCA and YMCA. The program included Christian devotions, which the newsboys endured in anticipation of the ample meal which followed. Visitors to the hospital provided flowers, fruit, hymn singing, and Bible readings to patients. The WCA also visited women prisoners in the jail. This resulted in a project to improve the ambience in the cells: “Scripture texts were framed and hung in the prisoners’ gloomy cells, thereby diffusing the rays of truth to

⁶⁴ “W.C.A.,” *Ad*, 12 May 1877, p. 1. The women of the WCA seemed intent on taking encouragement at the slightest provocation. After thirteen months in operation they were able to report one success. “The number of admissions have been ten, one of them has been fully and satisfactorily reclaimed, and is now in a good situation and bears evidence of a Christian character. Having saved one, the ladies feel that their work has not been in vain and that the Refuge is indispensable.” “Women Christian Association,” *FP*, 9 November 1877, p. 1.

⁶⁵ “WCA: the Annual Business Session Yesterday Afternoon,” *Ad*, 3 May 1878, p. 4

⁶⁶ “The Sixth Anniversary,” *FP*, 19 May 1880, p. 3.

⁶⁷ Mrs. Thos. Kent, “A Deserving Charity,” (let) *FP*, 21 March 1884, p. 6.

these unfortunates.”⁶⁸ While this action seems overly sentimental and condescending, the conditions in which women were incarcerated shocked the women of the WCA. Particularly appalling was the plight of women held as “dangerous lunatics.” The lack of treatment for a condition categorised as medical rather than criminal inspired political agitation to have these women moved to the Lunatic Asylum.⁶⁹

The WCA found a new outlet for its ministry to the marginalised in the late 1880s when developments at the Protestant Orphans’ Home resulted in the elderly men and women being removed. In response to this, the WCA took up the concerns they had first raised publicly in 1874 and opened an Aged Women’s Home in 1886. In 1889 they also agreed to assume the management of an Aged Men’s Home. Redemptive homes and the virtues they instilled were the Women’s Christian Association’s method of saving the social.

The Protestant Orphans’ Home

As the WCA moved on to its work of relief and refuge, the Protestant Orphans’ Home and Refuge for the Aged began a period of rapid growth. Many of the principles of “home” applied by the WCA in their work were evident at the Protestant Orphans’ Home. Its purpose was to surround the destitute and the children “with moral, material and educational influences” that would set them on their way in life. This was accomplished through showing residents the “greatest kindness” and enforcing “strict discipline.”⁷⁰ The object of these exertions was that the orphans would re-integrate into the community either through adoption or placement with a “good family.” The Home prided itself on fact that those placed by “adoption and otherwise” were “giving satisfaction.”⁷¹ This success was attributed to the “supervision of the Visiting Committee” and the “motherly care of the Matron.” The Visiting Committees were groups of trustees who had

⁶⁸ “The W.C.A.: Proceedings of the Anniversary,” *Ad*, 10 May 1876, p. 1.

⁶⁹ “Women’s Christian Association,” *FP*, 7 May 1886, p. 5 and “W.C.A.,” *FP*, 6 May 1887, p. 7

⁷⁰ “The Protestant Home,” *FP*, 9 November 1877, p. 1.

⁷¹ “Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 3 November 1882, p. 3.

been designated to oversee the management of the Home for a week at a time. The careful supervision of these women resulted in the children being “so well trained that they rarely give dissatisfaction to those who adopt them.”⁷² The language employed here betrays an underlying conception of the care of orphans as a commercial exchange. Support of the home by the charitable public was exchanged for assurances that those supported would “give satisfaction” rather than, as suggested at the founding of the Home, inhabit the jails and represent a drain on the body politic and thus social efficiencies were to be achieved. The emphasis on social efficiency figured far more prominently, particularly in public pronouncements, than anything suggesting the individual well-being of each child was of primary concern. Through visits and correspondence, the president attempted to ensure that adoptions were working out for both parties, although the trustees seemed inclined to discount any report of the mistreatment of adopted children until long after intervention would seem to have been warranted.⁷³

The Protestant Home was a thoroughly respectable charitable undertaking. When fear ran high that the poor were somehow manipulating the meagre resources of relief, the trustees carefully justified their benevolence as contributing to social well-being while providing no refuge for the indolent.⁷⁴ However, as Dean Boomer assured the annual public meeting in November 1879, helping children and the elderly had always been considered virtuous.

No one for a moment could doubt the necessity of such an institution for poverty and helplessness is always with us, even in this prosperous Dominion. Some may say it is due to vice. Still, it is here, and there are at least two portions of the suffering many in whose case we do not have much difficulty in deciding. There can be little doubt of the propriety of helping those who are aged, infirm and poverty-stricken, and certainly there can be none in the case of the little ones.⁷⁵

⁷² “The Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *Ad*, 5 November 1880, p. 2. The Protestant Orphans’ Home Visiting Committee were the women who made daily visits to the Home to ensure that its objects were being carried out. Initially at least, two women were appointed visitors for a week at a time and they were responsible for supervising staff and representing the interests of the trustees.

⁷³ A report of mistreatment was investigated and dismissed as not being credible, “The Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 19 August 1882, p. 4. Another case was not investigated and mistreatment continued until a local clergyman intervened to protect a mistreated boy. In this case it is clear neighbours had been aware of the situation for sometime, “A Well-Ordered Institution,” *Ad*, 5 September 1885, p. 6.

⁷⁴ Stedman Jones, *Outcast London*, 251.

⁷⁵ “The Protestant Home,” *FP*, 18 November 1879, p. 3.

The Protestant Orphans' Home was a charity of much greater social acceptability than the WCA's Refuge.

Although the worthiness of the residents of the Home was not in doubt, it was important that conditions in the Home remain austere. A *Free Press* report noted with approval that "the ladies vie with each other in keeping the weekly expenses down." At that time, the cost to maintain each resident was about fifty dollars per year, although the reporter assured the public that the trustees of the home were working "to still further reduce the annual cost per capita."⁷⁶ Cost cutting and attempts to make maximum use of the facility were not always in the best interest of the residents. A new home was constructed in 1877 to meet the high demand. The building opened in June, and by November of 1878 the Home already had eighty-three residents and there were enthusiastic predictions that it would accommodate one hundred.⁷⁷ The population of the Home, including employees, children, and the aged, ranged in the middle eighties until 1882. A serious outbreak of fever occurred in that year which "resulted in almost crippling the institution."⁷⁸ This led to immediate action on a number of fronts. Dr. Brown, the medical examiner, called for the cesspools located adjacent to the Home to be drained, and all the drains in the building to be cleaned and flushed. He also recommended that city water be brought to the Home and a drain be constructed to take waste directly to the river.⁷⁹ Concern to avoid further outbreaks also resulted in construction of an infirmary, an undertaking which had been suggested by the government inspector as early as 1880.⁸⁰ The infirmary began operation by November of

⁷⁶ "The Protestant Home," *FP*, 9 November 1877, p. 1.

⁷⁷ "Protestant Home," *Ad*, 8 November 1878, p. 4. For suggestions as to the Home's capacity see, "The Orphans," *Ad*, 17 November 1880, p. 4.

⁷⁸ "The City Charities: The Origins and Work of the Protestant Orphans' Home," *FP*, 1 March 1890, p. 3.

⁷⁹ The work to bring water to the Home is completed by August 1882, "The Protestant Orphans' Home," *FP*, 19 August 1882, p. 4. The drain was considerably more expensive, estimated at \$500, and took considerably longer to complete. The Annual Report of 1885 indicates that this work had been completed during the year.

⁸⁰ Mr. Langmuir's recommendation is noted in the Annual Report for 1880 see "The Protestant Orphans' Home," *Ad*, 5 November 1880, p. 2. Cost estimates and building designs for the

1882.⁸¹ Another consequence of the fever scare was an immediate reduction in the number of residents. In 1883, the population was reduced from over eighty to fifty-four. Moving all of the elderly men out of the facility effected this quick reduction.⁸²

From its inception the supporters of the Home had concentrated their efforts on providing moral and material aid to destitute children. The addition of a home for the aged seemed to be included to ensure the space was filled. Early reports of the government inspector recommended restricting the Home to children and in July 1881, Mr. James Wright gave notice that he would bring a motion to the next meeting to no longer admit the elderly.⁸³ Old men tended to pose particular discipline problems and were frequently discharged for improper conduct.⁸⁴ In the early 1880s discussion centred on the incorrigibility of the aged poor and the impressionability of the young. Having the young mix with the old undermined the objective of the Home to prepare children to “give satisfaction” as they took their places in the world. “A Friend of the Young” laid out this case graphically in a letter to the *Free Press*.

During the period that the Home was turned into a House of Refuge for the aged some most discouraging and disgraceful scenes were enacted there. The children whose minds as well as bodies should be kept pure were brought into injurious contact with dissolute old sinners whose only claim upon society was that they were old. Many of these had graduated in vice, and their habits clung to them.... As for the children, neither their health nor their morals can be maintained when brought in contact with such people.⁸⁵

In February 1883 plans were being set to move the elderly residents out, but it was not yet clear where they would go. Eventually the men were settled in the county poor house in Strathroy and the seven women residents were allowed to stay. The managing corporation passed a bylaw

infirmary were matters for discussion at a number of meetings, see for example, “Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 14 May 1881, p. 4.

⁸¹ “Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 3 November 1882, p. 3.

⁸² “Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 3 November 1883, p. 2.

⁸³ “The Protestant Home,” *FP*, 9 July 1881, p. 3.

⁸⁴ “The Protestant Home,” *FP*, 8 November 1879, p. 3.

⁸⁵ “Unwise Association,” *FP*, 15 November 1883, p. 3.

prohibiting the admission of further adults, expecting that in time the Home would be exclusively for children.

The women serving on the executive of the Protestant Home never fully reconciled themselves to limiting the population. In the very year the bylaw restricting admission to children was passed Dr. Brown complained that three new residents of the Home were admitted by the executive as employees only to circumvent the rules. These “employees” received no wages and one, being over eighty years of age, was physically unable to do any work.⁸⁶ In February 1884 members of the executive suggested that older women again be admitted since the infirmary was then being underutilised. At this suggestion, Dr. Brown somewhat impatiently reminded the trustees that “the Prime object of the home was to care for the morals of the youth, who had a future.”⁸⁷

The women of the Protestant Orphans’ Home also disagreed with their medical advisor’s intention to limit the number of children resident. In August 1882, with the fever just under control, Dr. Brown gave strict orders that no more children be admitted. He wanted to reduce the number of residents from eighty to what he considered a much healthier number: forty-five. Mrs. Hyman, the Home’s vice president, argued that “the children had at present more room per head than half the private families in the city.” If reductions were made, she was convinced that the “citizens would cease to support the Home.”⁸⁸ The doctor won a temporary victory on the strength of a medical emergency, but he was never successful in lowering the number of residents to his target of forty-five. During the later years of the decade, the number of residents was again approaching eighty. Dr. Brown’s concerns were heard and weighed and often disregarded, as in the case of the children of a Mrs. Ridden who was ill and needed rest. Against the advice of Dr. Brown her children were admitted for a four-month period because “the mother was particularly

⁸⁶ “Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 3 November 1883, p. 2.

⁸⁷ “Young vs. Old,” *Ad*, 2 February 1884, p. 4

⁸⁸ “The Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 19 August 1882, p. 4.

deserving.”⁸⁹ The relational networks and community connections of the socially and economically prominent trustees received greater consideration than the opinion of the medical officer. Feminine virtue had more authority than male expertise in the governance of the Protestant Orphans’ Home through the 1880s.⁹⁰

The financial condition of the Protestant Home distinguished it from other charitable institutions in the city. While economy of operation and reluctance to spend money on anything that might be deemed unnecessary always governed decision-making, the Home was comparatively stable financially, indicating its status as London’s charity of choice for the well-to-do. When the new building opened in June of 1877, \$7,000 was owed on construction costs of \$15,000. The annual public meeting in November 1877 featured the professional fundraiser Dr. Ives, who a year earlier had raised \$10,000 in single day for Wellington Street Methodist. He repeated the feat, raising subscriptions of \$10,150 at this meeting. The large contributors were out in force, with 12 subscribers promising \$500 and 25 signing on for \$200 or more. Local canvassers continued to take subscriptions even after the cost of construction had already been covered. Sheriff William Glass and Thomas McCormick proposed that the additional money raised be used to endow the Home, thus making annual subscriptions unnecessary.⁹¹ At the annual public meeting of 1878 Sheriff Glass announced that \$24,000 had been pledged and, of that, \$8,000 had been collected and used to clear the debt on the building.⁹² In 1882 Glass reported that the endowment had risen to \$29,583.91 and had contributed \$900 to the operating costs for the year.⁹³ The Home also received a subsidy from the Provincial Government based on the number

⁸⁹ “The Protestant Home,” *FP*, 17 November 1888, p. 9.

⁹⁰ These women were resisting the movement away from a religiously inspired benevolent institution toward a social work model. For this process at work in Toronto see John R. Graham, “The Haven, 1878-1930—A Toronto Charity’s Transition From a Religious to a Professional Ethos,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 25 (1992).

⁹¹ “The Orphans’ Home,” *Ad*, 16 November 1877, p. 1.

⁹² “The Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 13 November 1878, p. 4.

⁹³ “Protestant Orphans’ Home,” *FP*, 3 November 1882, p. 3.

of residents. The amount fluctuated but in 1883, a year of reduced numbers due to fever, it amounted to \$1,000.

Those involved in the running of the Protestant Orphans' Home were less an evangelical women's group than the WCA and more of a community charity. In fact, it was the women of the WCA who were called upon to conduct the Bible instruction offered at the Home. The Home's religious significance derived from its status as the symbolic intersection of the Protestant community's prosperity and Christian virtue. The Home's location directly across from the Catholic Mount Hope Orphanage made for continuing comparison. In a speech congratulating the Protestant Home on the construction of its new building Rev. John Gemley made a particular point of expressing his lack of envy for the Catholic institution across the street.⁹⁴ Rev. Murray commended the good work of the Catholic sisters, but considered the work of the Protestant women even more worthy of praise for they were "mothers and daughters, who, leaving home, fireside and children, went out to assist the poor and friendless; to succor the sick and dying and help those who were unable to help themselves."⁹⁵ That the women who managed the Home did none of this, at least in connection with the Home, did nothing to undermine the self-congratulatory warmth of the comparison. The Protestant Orphans' Home reassured the Protestant public of its social responsibility and Christian benevolence.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union

As a result of beginning its life within the WCA, the London WCTU shared many of the convictions, and indeed many of the personnel, of the older association. The activities of the WCTU, however, were less focused on specific institutions, and ranged widely wherever the temperance message or womanly influence seemed required. Often the WCTU occupied itself with particular issues which consumed considerable energy for a time, and then set them aside in favour of another pressing campaign. It was always involved on several fronts including the

⁹⁴ "The Orphans' Home," *Ad*, 27 June 1877, p. 1.

⁹⁵ "The Protestant Home," *FP*, 11 November 1876, p. 4.

political, educational, and evangelistic. While the image of “home” dominated the discourse of the WCTU less than the WCA, the image of woman as redeemer of society nevertheless motivated a wide variety of activities.

In November of 1875 three city clergymen called on the WCA to enlist their cooperation in the temperance movement. The new Temperance Committee of the WCA moved quickly into the political realm, collecting in short order some 1,650 signatures on a petition to the Provincial Legislature calling for a reduction in the number of tavern licenses. Feeling that insufficient time had resulted in too few signatures to sufficiently represent community opinion, the Temperance Committee “resolved to send a deputation to Toronto to visit the Hon. Oliver Mowat.” In company with some clergymen from London’s Prohibitory League, the women presented their case directly to the Premier at Queen’s Park. While there, they were shown around the Legislature by their M.P.P. Robert W. Meredith and later in the day met with representatives of the Toronto Temperance Union. Upon returning to London they discovered that the local licensed victuallers were petitioning City Council for a reduction in license fees. This brought a deputation of the WCA Temperance Committee to City Council and, whether as a result of the women’s efforts or not, the victuallers were refused the requested reduction.⁹⁶ In 1879, the very active Temperance Committee became the London branch of the WCTU after a visit from Mrs. Leitia Youmans. The annual meeting in May 1879 reported that the temperance committee had become an independent society.

The Temperance Committee, which was in connection with the Association at the beginning of the year formed into a distinct organization called the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. In June [1878] we were favored with two lectures by Mrs. Youmans. At the close of the second, in St. Andrew’s church; the above formation was made with a membership of twenty-seven. We wish this young society success.⁹⁷

The heady days of trips to Toronto to meet with the Premier were never repeated, but occasions for political action continued to present themselves. In conjunction with the city

⁹⁶ “The W.C.A.: Proceedings of the Anniversary,” *Ad*, 10 May 1876, p. 1.

⁹⁷ “Women’s Christian Association,” *FP*, 7 May 1879, p. 4.

and county Scott Act committees, political action dominated much of the WCTU's activities during 1885. In January and February, its members petitioned to force a vote under the provisions of the Canada Temperance Act (Scott Act). Although a vote was not held in the city of London, Middlesex county and many of the counties of the western peninsula voted in favour of prohibition. This victory was followed by a new threat when in May the Senate passed amendments to the Scott Act allowing for the sale of beer and native wines in the jurisdictions where the Act was in force. This, again, brought the circulation of petitions against the amendments.⁹⁸ Curiously, there is no record of WCTU involvement in the 1889 campaign which led to the vote rescinding the Scott Act in the surrounding counties.⁹⁹

In 1886 the WCTU took up a local cause on behalf of retail clerks demanding that stores close early on Saturday nights. WCTU president Mrs. Ellen Gregsten brought this matter forward in May of that year. Clerks were required to work Saturday nights as late as midnight, and then had to walk home. Consequently, Mrs. Gregsten informed the Union, they "were...too tired to attend the morning service on the Sabbath day, and too tired to enjoy the evening one."¹⁰⁰ A clerk writing to the *Free Press* accused the merchants of shaking "off their Christianity with the Sunday's dust."¹⁰¹ Clearly this was a situation which required the intervention of Christian women to alert merchants to their duty and ensure the attendance of clerks at service on Sunday. The women of the WCTU circulated a petition and a public meeting was called on June 24. The meeting was strongly in favour of early closing and with little debate passed motions 1) that business close at seven p.m. on Saturday night and 2) that employees be paid on Friday to allow shopping to be done early on Saturday to eliminate the need for late opening. It was pointed out at the meeting that few merchants were present, and none had spoken or signed the petition.¹⁰² The

⁹⁸ "Seventh Anniversary of the W.C.T.U.," *Ad*, 23 September 1885, p. 8.

⁹⁹ "Killed! Three More Ontario Counties Repeal the Scott Act," *FP*, 10 May 1889, p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ "Early Closing on Saturday," *FP*, 12 May 1886, p. 7.

¹⁰¹ "The Clerk's Tale," *FP*, 9 May 1887, p. 7.

¹⁰² "Earlier Closing Hours," *FP*, 25 June 1886, p. 3.

public who responded to the WCTU's call were those sympathetic to the cause and the merchants, who ignored the meeting, also ignored its action. At the regular July meeting, the general lack of compliance with their resolutions was noted along with "various legitimate issues raised by merchants." It was decided to attempt a less confrontational approach in the future and the women of the WCTU pledged "themselves to do their utmost to influence their friends and acquaintances to make their purchases early on Saturday and thus endeavor to educate the public in this matter."¹⁰³ Political agitation resulted in neither enforcing the Scott Act or early closing. The campaign for early closing illustrated the limitations of the indignation meeting on an issue that divided loyalties at the local level. WCTU families included merchants, and to push the issue further may have compromised the good relations with local merchants and businesses which the women, for other reasons, would have wished to preserve. WCTU reports indicate a lack of political action in later years of the decade.¹⁰⁴

Education was a constant emphasis of the WCTU. They distributed temperance tracts, especially in the jail and the Women's Refuge, and provided the local newspapers with temperance literature for publication. They also cooperated with the Board of Education in providing a night school for both boys and girls. A boys' night school was organised in October 1883; classes were held in the Central school building, and the Board of Education supplied a teacher. The school taught such subjects as reading, writing, dictation, and arithmetic.¹⁰⁵ A similar school was inaugurated for girls in November of 1884. The Board of Education supplied a room with heat and light but no teacher. In October, the members of the Union were asked to volunteer as teachers since: "it would be fulfilling one of the highest and best aims of the Union to carry on this school, not so much for the simple education of the girls, but for exerting a good

¹⁰³ "The W.C.T.U.," *FP*, 14 July 1886, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ Sharon Cook finds this decline of interest in political activity at the local level to be widespread. Sharon Anne Cook, *"Through Sunshine and Shadow: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930"* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 114.

¹⁰⁵ "The W.C.T.U.," *FP*, 10 September 1884, p. 8

influence over them.”¹⁰⁶ The number of girls attending the night school was never very high; it stood at eight in March 1885. An effort was made to increase attendance by promoting the school among the young women working in the local cigar factories and confectioneries.¹⁰⁷ These efforts seem not to have been effective for the Board of Education moved to close both the boys’ and the girls’ schools after the 1884-5 year because of the low attendance.¹⁰⁸ The Girls’ Industrial School was an educational initiative that had a longer life. It was intended to teach girls “industry,” and responded to an impression that many girls “lounged around their home indifferent to education of any nature.” Begun in 1884, the school met on Saturdays and taught children “to make and mend their clothes, knitting, darning etc.” During its first season, the school enrolled sixty-five with an average attendance of thirty. The fourth Saturday of each month featured a lunch provided by the school’s president.¹⁰⁹ The WCTU’s educational efforts were focused on reaching the coming generation with the message of temperance in hope of creating a world that would never taste alcohol. The disappointing level of attendance at these educational initiatives indicated that other strategies would be needed to achieve their goal.

WCTU energies were also devoted to relief work. Members of the Union, like their counterparts in the WCA, visited women in the hospital and in jail. In the later 1880s the WCTU annually provided a dry refreshment booth at both the Western Ontario fair and the military volunteers’ camp. They also took up the WCA interest in children who worked on the streets and instituted a “Newsboys” boarding home for the benefit of adolescent boys living on their own. Its primary objective was to provide the benefits of home, including a strict Christian regime, to those who were living without such support. Residents paid for their board based on their weekly income making the home self-sustaining. The boys were also required to abide by an impressive

¹⁰⁶ “W.C.T.U.,” *FP*, 8 October 1884, p. 8.

¹⁰⁷ “W.C.T.U.,” *FP*, 25 March 1885, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ “Temperance Talk,” *FP*, 23 September 1885, p. 7.

¹⁰⁹ On the founding and functioning of the Girls’ Industrial School see “W.C.T.U.,” *FP*, 5 March 1884, p. 6; “The W.C.T.U.,” *FP*, 10 September 1884, p. 8; and “Women’s Temperance Work,” *FP*, 8

list of rules. Perhaps this was the reason the Home was closed after less than a year of operation.¹¹⁰

London's WCTU consistently emphasised evangelism. The Union's first evangelistic initiative was a mission school, originally referred to as a "ragged school." It resembled the churches' Sabbath schools, including the appointment of a male superintendent. One of the unique features of the mission school was that it provided breakfast to the children attending. This resulted in a "marked improvement in the attendance," and it was decided to continue offering this as an incentive.¹¹¹

Much of the work of the Union was intended to have an evangelistic effect. Committees that offered relief and visited the hospital and the jail understood themselves to be obeying Christ's teaching that in feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, and visiting the prisoners they were ministering to Christ.¹¹² In so doing, they hoped that those they helped would receive their ministrations as being from Christ. The Annual Report for 1890 recorded that "conversions had resulted from the Committees' labors." Not all the evangelistic zeal of the WCTU could be contained in this kind of indirect witness. Returning to a strategy used in those first days of temperance work in the WCA, an Evangelistic Department was inaugurated. The evangelistic method used by this group was "to visit the homes of drunkards and seek their improvement and the reclamation of erring ones."¹¹³ Although this is described as "an important branch of the Union's endeavors," there is no record of how successful this strategy proved to be.

The WCTU gave birth to the YWCTU in April of 1889 after a lecture by Miss Tilley, daughter of Sir Leonard Tilley, on "Women's Work." Her lecture made particular

September 1886, p. 6. Although the number of students seems to have dropped off the school was still functioning in 1890, "The W.C.T.U.," *FP*, 28 November 1890, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ "The Boys at Home," *Ad*, 5 January 1882, p. 4 and "Women's Temperance Union," *FP*, 18 November 1882, p. 3

¹¹¹ "W.C.T.U.," *FP*, 14 June 1881, p. 3 and "W.C.T.U.," *FP*, 21 June 1881, p. 4.

¹¹² Matthew 25:34-36.

¹¹³ "The Year's Work," *FP*, 10 September 1890, p. 2.

reference to the “Kitchen Garden” work being carried on by the YWCTU in Toronto. She concluded her lecture by appealing to the WCTU to form a “Y” in London for a similar purpose. Thirty-one young women met after the lecture to found a YWCTU.¹¹⁴ Their initial focus was “Kitchen Garden” work which involved young middle class women teaching the basics of operating a middle class household. The object of this endeavour was to show “that household work was not degrading” and that “the home was safer than the factory.” In many ways it paralleled, with considerably more zest, the Industrial School work of the senior Union.

By 1889, two distinct departments had developed within the YWCTU. The Kitchen Garden department carried on their work, while a Young Women’s department focused on the young working women in the city. These women were typically referred to as “friendless” and as “driven by necessity to labor for their living.”¹¹⁵ In November 1889 the YWCTU opened rooms where such young women could drop in for conversation, play parlour games, and join in singing around the piano in the evenings. Classes were also offered taught by members of the Y. Tuesday nights were devoted to a writing class which was followed by medical talks; Thursdays were devoted to arithmetic, reading, dictation and spelling; while Saturdays were given to club swinging and callisthenics.¹¹⁶ The Young Women’s Department developed into the YWCA.¹¹⁷ The YWCA grew out of an effort of the women of the YWCTU to throw a “shield of protection” around young working women and to find a wider “field of work for the young women of our city” than was provided by the kitchen garden program. The London YWCTU concentrated on

¹¹⁴ Mark Greenberg and Edward Phelps, “The Young Women’s Christian Association of London, Ontario, Canada,” 1-2, 6.

¹¹⁵ “Work for Young Women,” *FP*, 5 November 1889, p. 5.

¹¹⁶ “The Y W.C.T.U.,” *FP*, 10 October 1890, p. 3.

¹¹⁷ Mrs. S.E.G. Allen, “Mrs. Allen Remembers: The Origins and Career of the YWCA in London, 1889-1912” in *“The Young Women’s Christian Association of London, Ontario, Canada: A Century of Faith, Hope and Good Works, 1889 - 1951 (YMCA-YWCA) - 1989,”* eds. Mark Greenberg and Edward Phelps (London, 1989), 6-10.

socialising with their peers and had less evangelistic zeal than their seniors. This was not typical of the Y's described by Sharon Cook in her study of the youth division of the WCTU.¹¹⁸

The women of the WCTU often expressed frustration that there was not more general participation in their efforts. In their view the Union was not a special interest or lobby group. They were convinced that their concerns reflected widely shared beliefs and that their activities modelled what was required of a Christian woman, wife, and mother. Membership in the 1880s held steady at about sixty, and attendance at meetings was usually around fifteen. In 1890 to increase involvement among women in the churches, the wives of all the clergy in support of the Union were made vice-presidents, and a concerted effort was made to draw them into active involvement. The Union believed that it served the public good as an interdenominational Christian women's group supporting Christian virtue and making the world safe for the family.

Conclusion

Christian women's associations were the primary social welfare agencies in London during the 1870s and 1880s. The care they extended to the poor, the sick, those in prison, to the young and old, and to the victims of drink and sexual misconduct was inspired by the Christian virtue of charity. Their primary concern was to express love to those in need; however, their expressions of charity were so intersected by constructions of gender and social rank that the interpretation of their actions requires care. The complexity of these contested meanings is underscored by historians who have interpreted the action of benevolent women's groups as social control and social redemption, as proto-feminist and antifeminist.¹¹⁹ The "public" meetings which

¹¹⁸ Sharon Anne Cook, "The Ontario Young Women's Christian Temperance Union: A Study in Female Evangelicalism, 1874-1930" in *Changing Roles of Women within the Christian Church in Canada*, eds. Elizabeth Muir and Marilyn Färdig Whiteley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 303

¹¹⁹ Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water* and Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, place the emphasis of women's benevolence on control. Alternatively Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow*, and the contributors on benevolence in Elizabeth Muir and Marilyn Färdig Whiteley, eds., *Changing Roles of Women within the Christian Church in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995) emphasise social transformation. Wendy Mitchinson, "The WCTU: 'For God, Home and Native Land'" and Barbara Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity, 1877-1918* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) suggests the work of Christian women's groups was antifeminist.

have been under review here, and hundred others like them, constructed a Protestant public by adapting the conventions of the liberal public sphere to the needs of the Christian community. Called by Christian women, led by prominent men in public spaces, these meetings represented the response of the Protestant community to perceived social problems in the rhetoric of Christian charity. The results were not merely private philanthropy, but publicly constructed action by a loosely knit interdenominational network defined by a shared Protestantism. The public nature of this response is underscored by the state support, modest though it was, that they were eligible to receive.¹²⁰

While the liberal conventions of public space required men to do the talking on behalf of women in public meetings, the gender, class, and religious discourses that constructed this deference also provided authority for women to act. Women were considered to be the agents, on the public's behalf, of nurture and social reform. While men were appointed to assist with business and legal matters, they were given no role in the actual management of the homes women founded. In determining what was best for those in their care, the Protestant public granted full authority to women. Even the allure of Dr. Brown's scientific credentials could not override the authority of the benevolent women of the Protestant Orphans' Home. Religious practices in the social provided a rationale for the activity of women in public in a culture which denied them full political citizenship.

Gender roles were clear but were conflicted by social rank and behavioural expectations. The "drunkard" seemed to lose his status as "man" on a number of counts. In victimisation of his wife and children and his inability to provide for the needs of his family he failed to live up to the construction of Christian manhood. Thus, the drunkard was not a man in the relevant sense and by his own actions became the object of associational ministrations of love. The manhood of the "seducer" was also brought into question. The protector of feminine virtue

¹²⁰ Valverde, "The Mixed Social Economy as a Canadian Tradition," helpfully points out that these agencies and their Catholic counterparts, had some measure of state subsidy and so represent a "mixed economy" in the provision of welfare

had become the victimiser. However, the suspicion that many seducers shared the same social status as their accusers reduced the authority of associational women. In such cases, the women threatened to wield the conventions of respectability against seducers by disclosing their names in hopes of turning them out of respectable society. Working within the social constructs of the period, women's benevolent activities both sustained and challenged conventions as they worked to protect and extend the redeeming virtues of the Christian home.

Just as men were accorded the status of their sex only as they fulfilled its obligations, so a home was redemptive only as it lived up to specific criteria. The problem of "fallen women" was the result not only of the seducer, but also of homes that did not provide children with adequate religious and moral training. The homes operated by the women's associations did what they could to contribute to saving the social by integrating all the requisite features of the Christian home. The visiting committees not only provided relief but also worked to uplift those they served by elevating "the moral tone and domestic habits" of those in need.¹²¹ The educational efforts of the WCTU focused on similar outcomes, particularly in the "Industrial School." Attempts to remake the homes of the lower classes on the model of their social betters were an expression of both charity and condescension. To reduce benevolent activity to either one or the other fails to account for the complexity of power relations. Nor was the recipient of aid wholly without power. Women made use of the Refuge when its facilities were required, but left when its transforming program became overbearing. While perhaps resenting the intrusion of the visiting committee, applicants for relief accepted their assistance and could ignore the moralising which accompanied it.¹²² The mechanism at work here cannot be represented simply as the domination of one group by another. The approach taken here does not deny that the middle-class were intent on remaking the objects of their benevolence in their own image. However, the suggestion is that this was not a ruthless matter of class interest, but sincere Christian concern,

¹²¹ "Women's Christian Association," *FP*, 9 October 1875, p. 4.

albeit thoroughly penetrated by the governing assumption of liberal society.¹²³ Power was dispersed into the social by the governing techniques of freedom to produce the social efficiency requiring that the poor and the erring be not just fed but also remade and uplifted. The freedoms of the market and individual moral responsibility brought the fallen woman, the drunkard, and the unemployed under the supervision and moral regime of the social. Religious women's associations were authorised through the metaphor of the redemptive home to save the social on behalf of the Protestant public. In the process the neat lines constructing public and private, class and gender interpenetrate and blur. The "munificent parson" had become the WCA, as this function of service and discipline passed from the churches to the Protestant public through the redemptive home.¹²⁴

The Protestant public reflected in the women's associations remained somewhat fragile and reflected historic battles. The underlying tension among the clergy, and the unpleasant use of Mrs. Hellmuth and Mrs. Gregsten in their struggle, was an ongoing negotiation for the leadership of the Protestant community. The Church of England assumed its "establishment" right of precedence in interdenominational activities and tended to participate only where its priority was recognised.¹²⁵ This attitude characterised Church of England women as well who shunned the Methodist dominated WCA.¹²⁶ Canon Innes claimed the leadership of the proposed Protestant

¹²² Ann R. Higginbotham, "Respectable Sinners: Salvation Army Rescue Work with Unmarried Mothers, 1884-1914," in *Religion in the Lives of English Women, 1760-1930*, ed. Gail Malmgreen (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 226-7.

¹²³ Ginzburg presents the work of benevolent middle-class women as harsh and controlling in *Women and the Work of Benevolence*. Banner, "Religious Benevolence as Social Control" and the contributions of Eileen and Stephen Yeo in Eileen Yeo and Stephen Yeo, eds, *Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590-1914: Explorations in the History of Labour and Leisure* (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1981), warn against interpreting benevolence simply as a means of social control.

¹²⁴ The reference to "munificent parsons" alludes to Stephen Speisman, "Munificent Parsons and Municipal Parsimony: Voluntary vs. Public Poor Relief in Nineteenth Century Toronto," *A History of Ontario: Selected Readings*, ed. Michael J. Piva (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1988).

¹²⁵ No Church of England clergy participated in the Ministerial Association although they were very active in the Western Ontario Bible Society, where it was assumed that the Bishop of Huron would serve as President. See "The Bible Society," *FP*, 16 November 1883, p. 3.

¹²⁶ At the end of its first year the WCA had a membership of seventy, only six of whom were Church of England. Fully seventy per cent of WCA members were Methodist and the organisation seemed to

Orphans' Home for Mrs. Hellmuth, the wife of the Bishop in consideration of her "position." In response, Thomas McCormick disregarded position and made his claim for Mrs. Gregsten's work. Innes' proposal was suspect because it seemed to be self-interested. However the Anglican claim to social leadership did have sufficient power to remove the Protestant Home from the control of the WCA.¹²⁷ The Protestant harmony associational life and Christian benevolence was to embody showed clear stress lines.

Central to the redemptive vision of the Protestant public was the metaphor of "home." The action taken on behalf of those in peril, whether poor or independent, young or old, male or female, would take the form of providing the missing benefits of home. The Victorian home was the basis of character formation, and character determined one's place and prospects in life. Whenever an individual was without some character forming and sustaining "home," danger to the social was anticipated.¹²⁸ Thus, philanthropy most often took the form of providing a surrogate home or instruction on the proper management of a Christian home. London's women's associations had the authority of the Protestant public to work on behalf of the public to address material and moral needs in the social. This they did with conviction, sensitivity, and condescension, empowered and constrained by the constructions of gender, rank, and Christian charity with which they worked.

hold little attraction for women of the "establishment." "The Women's Christian Association," *Ad*, 27 May 1875, p. 1.

¹²⁷ The first annual report of the Protestant Orphans' Home describes the founding meeting of 10 November 1874 as "large, influential and representative" approving of the declaration of incorporation "most unanimously." In contrast, the first annual report of the Women's Christian Association indicated their sense that Canon Innes was responsible for stealing their initiative, "The Women's Christian Association," *Ad*, 27 May 1875, p. 1.

¹²⁸ This view was expressed annually in various ways at anniversary meeting of the Protestant Orphan's Home. See for example Rev. Graham's speech at the first anniversary, "The Protestant Home," *FP*, 10 November 1875, p. 4.

CHAPTER 5

REDEEMING CHOICES

Religious Practice IV: Men, the YMCA and Union Revivals

The Protestant public and its concerns in the social were introduced in the last chapter and will be examined further in this. The interdenominational religious activity of women tended to be expressed through associations providing social nurture and regulation. Men's interdenominational activity found an outlet in the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and in the organisation and promotion of union revivals. While certain important themes, like the priority of evangelism, were shared by both men's and women's associations, there were important differences. The governing rationality of liberal society required the free initiative of individuals to efficiently govern populations.¹ Early liberal social organisation assigned this free initiative to men who were to use it to provide for their dependants. Men's religious activity reflected this and worked to encourage choice which, once freed from evil influence and mitigating circumstances, would unfailingly choose the social good.

The YMCA

London's Young Men's Christian Association was organised in 1873. The Constitution committed the new Association to "the promotion of Evangelical religion among the young men of our city." The objects of the Association were "the improvement of the spiritual, mental, and social condition of young men, the cultivation of Christian sympathy, and the union of young men of the various churches for the promotion of Christian work in our city." The means by which these objects were carried out included "efforts of the membership in the spheres of their daily life, devotional meetings, Bible classes, mission work, tract distribution, lectures, reading

¹ Graham Burchell, "Peculiar Interests," 142-3.

room, and other means in accordance with the teaching and spirit of the scriptures.” Members of the Association were to be male members in good standing at an evangelical church. Associate members could be any young man of good character, fourteen years of age or older. The membership fee was set at one dollar annually.² The first public meeting of the Association was held in September 1873 and featured Rev. Richard Morse, the General Secretary of the YMCA in New York. According to Morse, the first objective of the “Y” was to help young Christian men reach out to their fellows, especially “young men coming from the country [who] found the city lonely and filled with Satanic influences.” The second objective was to provide young men from all of the evangelical denominations an opportunity to work together enabling them to “do much more than... a single church, or several separated churches.”³ The themes of evangelical churches rising above traditional prejudices to work together for the protection and salvation of young men identify the central preoccupations of London’s YMCA.

Constructing masculine danger

The *Free Press* was profuse in its encouragement of the work of the Y. In the view of a *Free Press* writer, many young men were being lured into places providing “companionship and amusement, which are prejudicial to their healthy future position and character, and spiritually ruinous.” In defence of the young men, the writer suggested that leisure time spent in such places was “not so much from choice as necessity,” for London provided no alternatives. Like Rev. Morse, the *Free Press* was especially concerned about strangers to the city without “Christian associates.” Other speakers on this theme threw their net wider to include all the young men of the city in a rhetorical web of danger. During a visit to London, the American evangelist A.T. Pierson described the work of the Association as “self-protective,” in that it intended to “save husbands, sons, brothers or fathers from destruction.” The YMCA was in open combat against the “attractions of the devil” for the social, intellectual, and spiritual well-being of men.⁴ The

² “Y.M.C.A.,” *FP*, 19 March 1873, p. 3

³ “Young Men’s Christian Association,” *Ad*, 8 September 1873, p. 3.

⁴ “Y.M.C.A.,” *Ad*, 22 April 1874, p. 1.

attractions of the devil were clearly identified as bar rooms, billiard halls, and theatres. At the Y's public meeting in 1882, the General Secretary of the London Association found 84 "places for bad influence" right in London. Against this onslaught, the forces of righteousness had only the YMCA to provide alternatives. The Y reading rooms, lectures, classes, and other programs were to entice young men away from the attractions of the devil. The great service of the YMCA to all right-thinking citizens was that it provided the "great necessity of having a place in the city where their sons can spend an evening without fear of being contaminated, but rather ennobled."⁵

As reviewed in the last chapter, the WCA and WCTU worked to protect women who, for a variety of reasons, no longer benefited from the natural protection of the home and the domestic sphere. The women they deemed most at risk, and who therefore absorbed the majority of their energies, were women who had been seduced by unscrupulous men and women whose husbands were given to drink. The WCA plan to establish a home in support of young women "dependent on their own exertions for support" was abandoned for the more immediate need of a Women's Refuge. It is significant that these women were not considered "independent," a term which signified a desirable state for a young man. Young women were still considered dependent, but through some necessity, on themselves. In the gendered construction of the experience of young women, "independence" was not an option in the minds of the women of the WCA and WCTU. Despite the relatively high number of single young women working in London, the sense of danger Carolyn Strange finds in discourse attempting to place "women dependent on their own exertions," was not evident in London.⁶ The home building efforts of the WCA indicated that reclaiming the fallen was more needful than attempting to reduce the risks to single working women. The alarmist language about the perils of the city was reserved for the young men and used consistently by promoters of the YMCA. While young women were expected to remain dependent, young men were to become independent. The passage to adulthood required young

⁵ "Y M.C.A.," *FP*, 22 October 1885, p. 5.

men to remove themselves from the protection of the domestic sphere into the public. The construction of masculinity required some familiarity with the “attractions of the devil.”⁷ The “rough culture” frequented by young men and feared by YMCA promoters provided a means of asserting masculinity against the feminine domestic world and offered an exciting phase in the transition to manhood.⁸ This transition represented a period of inevitable vulnerability when the young man became independent from his family of origin until a wife redomesticated him.⁹ It was in this period of transition and risk that the YMCA sought to preserve young Christian men for the Kingdom.

Despite the very strong case that was made for the dangers faced by young men in London, the Association grew slowly and suffered significant setbacks, indicating perhaps that the dangers were not so apparent to potential supporters. A reading room was opened on Richmond Street shortly after the founding of the Association. The first Annual Meeting sounded an optimistic note, but reported the need for more “hearty recognition from the pastors and Christian brethren in the Churches” and more active cooperation on the part of members. Such calls to cooperation indicate that the executive’s expectation that the public would join the Y in a concerted effort to protect men had not been achieved in the first year.¹⁰ In March 1875 the Y moved to larger rooms in the Oddfellows’ Hall. These became the centre of vigorous activity including lectures, debates, and socials. The increased activity also prompted the formation of a Ladies Auxiliary, no doubt to help with the arrangement of social events. Mr. W.J. Freeland was

⁶ The 1891 census records 794 single women under 30 working in enterprises other than domestic service. This is a significant increase from the 296 in 1871. Strange, *Toronto’s Girl Problem*, chapter 2.

⁷ Tosh argues that male culture was one of vectors of masculine identity, John Tosh, “What Should Historians do with Masculinity: Reflections on Nineteenth-Century Britain,” *History Workshop Journal* 39 (1994), 186

⁸ Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, chapter 4.

⁹ E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity From the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 172-4. Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 36, suggests that dependent women provided an effective means of curbing masculine independence, particularly among the working classes in France.

¹⁰ “Y.M.C.A.,” *Ad*, 22 April 1874, p. 1.

engaged as general secretary, and the Association seemed to be thriving, showing a modest growth in membership through the late 1870s (see Table 2). With expectations rising, when the New Connexion Methodist congregation vacated their Clarence Street church and moved to Wellington Street, the YMCA made an offer to purchase the building. However, in so doing, the Association seriously overextended itself. The Annual Meeting in January 1878 reported a financial crisis. In response, the position of the general secretary was cut, and because the Association carried an \$800 debt, the executive was not convinced they could meet payments on the building they had hoped to make their home.¹¹ This crisis prompted a major reorganisation of the Association leadership and aggressive efforts to clear the debt and hold on to the building. By September these efforts had met with success, and the building was renovated and opened as “Victoria Hall.”¹²

Table 2. London YMCA Membership

Year	YMCA Membership
1874	118
1876	205
1879	286
1880	249
1881	73
1882	181
1883	356
1884	515
1885	411

The opening of Victoria Hall inspired a new flurry of activity that included the reengagement of Mr. Freeland and an impressive roster of events. However, the Y was still not on a steady course and a new crisis ensued. The costs of purchasing and renovating the Hall put major financial pressure on the Association, and the trustees were convinced that their only solution was to sell the building. In the summer of 1880 Talbot Street Baptist Church was looking

¹¹ “Annual Meeting,” *Ad*, 8 January 1878, p. 1.

¹² A report of the reorganisation, “Y.M.C.A.,” *FP*, 24 April 1878, p. 1. For the opening of Victoria Hall, “Y.M.C.A.: Opening of Victoria Hall,” *Ad*, 21 September 1878, p. 1.

for larger accommodations and offered to buy the newly renovated Hall. The trustees interpreted the lack of financial resources, including a substantial operating debt, as a general lack of sympathy for the Association on the part of the public. The rhetoric of danger seemed not to have caught the imagination of the Protestant public. A committee of clergy and lay Y enthusiasts was unwilling to accept such an interpretation and help was called in from Toronto. YMCA organisers encouraged the London group to carry on the Lord's work for the glory of God as there were "many young men in this city whose salvation depended largely on" the continued existence of the Y. The experience of Associations in Montreal, Toronto, and other places indicated that such challenges could be successfully met.¹³ The committee requested that they be given time to canvass the community to determine the true level of support. The trustees agreed but warned that even \$4,000 or \$5,000 would not be enough to make any difference. The committee found considerable public interest and was able to raise the money required to save the Hall and the Association. However, in the meantime, all regular activities had been suspended, Mr. Freeland had resigned, and Mr. Ware from Toronto had been brought in, initially to help in the fundraising drive and then to rebuild the organisation. Reports to the annual meetings show that the membership bottomed out at forty-five in August 1881. Having weathered this crisis and come near to disbanding, the YMCA began to build a vigorous association with a growing membership and range of activities through the 1880s.¹⁴

Y Activities

The focus of Y activities, in keeping with their objectives, was to protect men from the inducements to evil and bring them, instead, to Christ for salvation. The first reading room, which opened in July 1873, offered a regular meeting on Friday evening, usually featuring a speaker on some uplifting topic and a prayer meeting on Saturday evening. Otherwise, the rooms were open from nine a.m. to nine-thirty p.m. each day for conversation and use of the library and

¹³ "Victoria Hall," *FP*, 5 August 1880, p. 3.

¹⁴ "Y.M.C.A. Work," *FP*, 27 February 1884, p. 1.

periodical collection.¹⁵ This was the foundation of all Y work and it was primarily the reading room and the lectures, debates, and social interaction which were to provide improvement as a constructive alternative to the destructive uses of leisure time. The Y, like the churches, used the popular language of self-improvement to convince young men of the relevance of their programs.¹⁶

While the YMCA was a male organisation reaching out to young men, it was soon apparent that the presence of young women markedly increased the attraction of Y activities. At least part of the devil's attraction to young men was the opportunity to be in the company of the wrong kind of young women. Women's auxiliaries became a key component of Y social events. A report in the *Advertiser* commended the work of the London Ladies Auxiliary for the attractiveness they added to the work of the Y.

The ladies have in their power to render moral and material aid to the young men in their work, by undertaking and giving patronage to a series of conversaciones in the new rooms. Young men would thus be introduced to the rooms, Christian intercourse would be enjoyed, pleasant and profitable entertainment would be provided, and financial aid rendered. The ladies of this society have in this and other ways contributed greatly to the popularity of the Y.M.C.A.¹⁷

No doubt the opportunity for respectable courtship encounters added to the appeal of the Y and helped draw young men (and young women) away from the lures of the devil. At the Western Division YMCA Conference in 1885, Y organisers were urged to get the ladies involved to fulfil their Christian obligation of hospitality. Hospitality, in the gender construction of the day, was the special province of women. It was suggested that "one clever woman could do more in this way than half a dozen men with the best intentions in the world." And to ensure that the social aspect of the work was not neglected organisers were to "get the ladies to spend one night a week at the

¹⁵ "Y.M.C.A.," (let) *FP*, 18 July 1873, p. 3.

¹⁶ Patrick Joyce, *Democratic Subjects*, 161-76.

¹⁷ "Y.M.C.A.," *Ad*, 24 March 1875, p. 1.

rooms.”¹⁸ Young women had an essential role to play in the protection and redemption of young men.¹⁹

The Christian work carried on by women’s associations to feed the hungry, and care for the sick and imprisoned was a continuing part of the work of the YMCA. Members made weekly visits to the hospital and the Protestant Orphans’ Home and less frequent visits to the jail to conduct services. In some cases they provided material aid, but the primary role of the YMCA Relief Committee was to assist young men, new to the city, to find accommodation and to provide letters of reference to those leaving to seek their fortune elsewhere. This service was particularly important given the high levels of transience characteristic of the period.²⁰ Members of the Y also organised a men’s Bible study on Sunday afternoons, and a Sunday evening service that was held after the churches were dismissed. They also conducted gospel meetings preferring in the early years to hold these outdoors. Local clergy typically addressed the Sunday evening meetings, but members of the Y conducted the other meetings.²¹

Improvement

The rhetoric of self-improvement was particularly evident as the Association grew in strength in the 1880s. The Literary Society, which had fallen on hard times, was reorganised and renamed the "Lyceum" in 1884. The Lyceum, which was devoted to elevating the interest of the public in literary and musical culture, organised debates, and encouraged young men to develop speaking and communication skills for which an outlet was found in a variety of Y causes.²² In addition to the Lyceum the Y offered classes for improvement in such diverse areas as arithmetic, writing, shorthand, bookkeeping, and vocal music. A “Workers’ Bible Training

¹⁸ “Y.M.C.A. Work,” *FP*, 3 November 1885, p. 3.

¹⁹ Patrick Joyce, *Democratic Subjects*, 167

²⁰ Katz, *The People of Hamilton*, 19-21 and Baskerville, *Unwilling Idlers*, 79-81.

²¹ See for example. “Y.M.C.A.,” *Ad*, 29 April 1876, p. 1; “Young Men’s Christian Association,” *FP*, 27 May 1880, p. 3; and “Y.M.C.A Work,” *FP*, 11 October 1882, p. 4. It is worthy of note that after 1882, when the Salvation Army came to London, no more outdoor Gospel meetings are mentioned.

²² “Y.M.C.A. Work,” *FP*, 27 February 1884, p. 1; “Y.M.C.A.,” *Ad*, 26 July 1884, p. 1; and “Our Young Men,” *Ad*, 15 October 1884, p. 3.

Class” was particularly important to the Y program for it sought to develop Christian workers by “critical study of the Word to fit them for its use as the Sword of the Spirit.”²³ The physical side of healthy male development was an area of some frustration for Y organisers. They recognised the need for a gymnasium; however, their present hall did not lend itself to this kind of use.²⁴ In 1883, some measures were taken in this direction as hot and cold baths were installed and Indian clubs, dumbbells, and horizontal bars were purchased. The baths proved to be very popular, and this addition prompted the *Free Press* to conclude that Victoria Hall was now approaching “what is intended, viz:—a home for young men.”²⁵

Two new departments of the Y were initiated in the early 1880s as part of the revitalisation of the Association. The 1883 annual report commented on the beginning of a work with boys aged 11 to 17 and of another with railway men. Members of the Y who worked on the railways conducted the railway work. It consisted primarily of “cottage prayer meetings” in the homes of the members. Rail workers who joined included labourers, mechanics, engineers, conductors, and baggagemen. This work was intended, at least in part, to provide religious services for men who often had to miss church because of their work.²⁶ The boys’ work grew rapidly, and by 1885 they had their own rooms in Victoria Hall with a library of 300 volumes and boasted baseball, cricket, and football clubs. One of the goals of this work was to attract future members to the Y.²⁷

Evangelism

Protecting young men by providing for their social, intellectual, and physical development did not exhaust the intentions of the YMCA. They worked in a variety of ways for

²³ “The Association’s Work,” *FP*, 16 October 1886, p. 5. Also see “Young Men’s Work,” *FP*, 10 October 1883, p. 2.

²⁴ “Y.M.C.A. Work,” *FP*, 11 October 1882, p. 4.

²⁵ “Y.M.C.A. Work,” *FP*, 27 February 1884, p. 1.

²⁶ “Our Young Men,” *Ad*, 15 October 1884, p. 3. Also see “Y.M.C.A. Public Meeting,” *Ad*, 21 October 1876, p. 1.

²⁷ “Y.M.C.A.,” *FP*, 22 October 1885, p. 5 and “The Association’s Work,” *FP*, 16 October 1886, p. 5.

spiritual conversions and nurture. The Annual Meeting of 1886 was held in the Princess Rink with over 2,500 in attendance and was part of the Y sponsored evangelistic campaign of Rev. H.W. Brown.²⁸ The Y was instrumental in bringing major revivalists to London, including the Canadian team of Crossley and Hunter, and well-known Americans E.P. Hammond and Dwight L. Moody. Gospel tracts were distributed in astonishing quantities. The Annual Report for 1882 records the distribution of 55,000 tracts and “over 100,000 Gospel invitations to sinners” at a time when the entire city population was under 20,000.²⁹ During the period 1880-1 when the Y was fighting for survival, Mr. Ware, the Y worker brought in from Toronto to rebuild the association, contended that “winning many souls for Christ” was to be the primary preoccupation of the Association.³⁰ The criterion of success for Y programs, and for the organisation as a whole, was their effectiveness as agents of evangelisation. In his 1887 report, the General Secretary reflected on this ultimate measure of success: “But above all the Master has his seal of approval on the work, and during the past year numbers of young men have professed to have accepted Christ as their Saviour. Some of these are to-day among the most zealous workers of the Association.”³¹

Excluding Women

The most important ongoing vehicle for evangelism was the Sunday evening service held in Victoria Hall. This was scheduled after the services of the churches had concluded so as not to conflict with member’s regular religious duties, and it was attended by 400 or so young women and men. In the spring of 1886 something of a crisis erupted in relation to these services. Mr. Heath, the local Y’s General Secretary, backed and seemingly prodded by Mr. Cole, the Provincial Secretary, proposed that women be excluded from these Sunday evening services because not enough men were being converted. At a public meeting to air the issue, Mr. Cole

²⁸ “The Association’s Work,” *FP*, 16 October 1886, p. 5.

²⁹ “Y.M.C.A. Work,” *FP*, 11 October 1882, p. 4.

³⁰ “Y.M.C.A.,” *FP*, 11 May 1881, p. 1.

³¹ “The YMCA,” *FP*, 29 October 1887, p. 6. Also see “Young Men’s Work,” *FP*, 10 October 1883, p. 2; the report of the Railway Committee, “Young Men’s Work,” *FP*, 10 October 1883, p. 2; and the report of the Boys’ work, “Y.M.C.A.,” *FP*, 22 October 1885, p. 5.

presented the case. The first matter for concern was that there had only been “a few young men and no young women converted” at the meetings of late. Mr. Cole argued that women might actually be a hindrance to the conversion of young men. By way of illustration, he recounted an incident in which a young man under conviction meant to stay for the inquiry meeting, but on hearing his female companion’s sarcastic response to this suggestion he left with her missing, in Mr. Cole’s telling, his chance for salvation. The case against women proceeded with the indisputable observation that nearly all young women were connected with the churches, while many young men were not; thus, men needed this opportunity to respond to the gospel while the women were already well serviced by the churches.³² Finally, there were things that needed to be said to young men which could not be said in mixed company. Somewhat obliquely, no doubt because of the mixed audience, Mr. Cole charged:

There was an evil even doing a great deal more harm in this city than the drinking habit, and yet it had to be almost ignored because in mixed audience the transgressions of the seventh commandment could not be properly dealt with, as we did not want our wives and daughters and sisters to know of the sins which were daily being committed in our midst.³³

Objections were raised that excluding women would reduce attendance dramatically. To this Mr. Cole replied that it would be preferable to have a small meeting and really deal with the issues than a large one which had no effect. The ensuing discussion indicated that the meeting was unconvinced by Mr. Cole’s arguments, and many spoke in favour of continuing to welcome women. When the matter came to a vote, a large majority, and nearly all the women, none of whom had participated in the debate, voted in favour of the exclusion. No record of the effectiveness of the measure was preserved; however, six months later, at the Annual

³² This lack of young men in association with the churches is a major finding of Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, chapter 2. Her analysis corresponds with the anecdotal evidence provided by clergy and YMCA organisers. The problem of the missing young men seems to have been a major preoccupation at the time.

³³ “Excluding the Women,” *FP*, 16 April 1886, p. 3. The seventh commandment is: “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

Meeting in October 1886, it was reported that the mixed meeting on Sunday evenings continued to prosper.³⁴

A concerned community used the venue of a public meeting to consider how best to ensure the salvation of young women and, more particularly, young men. The intricacies of gender construction in relation to religion can be observed in this incident. Women had been encouraged to participate in Y auxiliaries and to be present at the socials and, in general, were considered agents for the redemption of young men. Yet Mr. Cole considered the presence of women detrimental to the success of the meeting for at least two reasons. The construction of gender that rendered women innately religious expected young men to be unreceptive to religious appeals. Cole believed that mixed company hardened these conventions making the young men insensitive to the work of grace. Even the right kind of female company, he feared, was a hindrance to the kind of unencumbered choice required for conversion. The presence of women also hindered the Y in confronting men regarding sexual sin. Cole believed that at least some of the men attending the meetings were guilty of contravening the seventh commandment but he seemed to think that the women in attendance were completely without knowledge of such things. The salvation of women did not require any special measures, but saving men needed careful attention. The presence of women could both aid and hinder. Social interaction, especially that which would lead to marriage and the redomestication of young men, was beneficial. However, when serious spiritual introspection was required women were considered a distraction and encumbrance to the necessary redemptive choice. That Cole's proposal was adopted indicates the community, and seemingly the women, were willing to accept new evangelistic measures if the desired outcome of saved young men could be achieved.

The Y and the churches

Interdenominational cooperation was essential to the success of the YMCA and Y promoters were typically respectful in their statements about denominations.³⁵ Despite statements

³⁴ "The Association's Work," *FP*, 16 October 1886, p. 5.

of support for churches, the project of the Y undermined the authority of the churches in a number of ways. The most common case made for the interdenominational character of the Y was that the united resources of evangelical churches were required to meet the challenge of keeping young men for the Kingdom of God. Only together could the churches maintain a reading room and employ a general secretary to compete with the saloon and the pool hall.³⁶ This contention was premised on the churches' failure in meeting the religious needs of young men. Membership in the Y required prior membership in a denominational church, no doubt with the intention of encouraging young men to join a local church. However, when Y fortunes were at their lowest in 1881, some of the Y faithful suggested that this provision was having the opposite effect: the requirement for church membership was discouraging membership in the Y and a movement emerged to have the provision changed.³⁷ The churches and the Y both needed young men to carry on their programs but Y assertions of their common cause with the churches were often accompanied by claims that true religion transcended traditional denominational lines. The Y claimed to save and protect young men where the churches had failed and to represent a truer more inclusive Christianity. At the same time, Y promoters chided the clergy for their lack of sufficient sympathy with and support of Y causes, feeling that denominational prejudice was inhibiting the work of the Lord.³⁸ The most obvious lack of support came from the Church of England which continued to promote the denominational Church of England Young Men's Association. Membership was reported by denomination only in 1874 and 1876 and is summarised below in Table 3. The Church of England is noticeably under-represented and the Congregationalists were significantly over-represented.

³⁵ "Y.M.C.A.," *Ad*, 21 October 1876, p. 4.

³⁶ The following are examples of YMCA spokesmen, "Young Men's Christian Association," *Ad*, 8 September 1873, p. 3 and "Y.M.C.A.," *Ad*, 22 April 1874, p. 1.

³⁷ "Y.M.C.A.," *FP*, 11 May 1881, p. 1.

³⁸ "Y.M.C.A.," *FP*, 22 April 1874, p. 4.

Table 3. London YMCA Membership Distribution by Denomination
(1874 and 1876)

Denomination	Number	Percentage of YMCA members	Percentage of Protestants 1871 Census
Methodist	118	39	30
Presbyterians	64	21	21
Congregationalists	52	17	3
Baptists	33	11	5
Church of England	29	10	40
Other	6	2	1

Source: Annual Reports 1874 and 1876, "Y.M.C.A.," *Ad*, 22 April 1874, p. 1, "Y.M.C.A.," *Ad*, 29 April 1876, p. 1.

There was little overt criticism of the Y by the clergy in London and many statements intended as expressions of support. However, some underlying tensions emerged even in statements meant to support the Y. At the opening of the YMCA hall in London East, the pastor of Adelaide Street Baptist tried his best to come on board despite grave misgivings. Rev. Johnston made it clear that his understanding of God's work in the church as a gathered body of believers did not accord with the YMCA's methods. Johnston claimed that, although he disagreed with "the association's way of doing things he was going to do all he could to forward its interests."³⁹ Methodist Rev. Leonard Gaetz disagreed with the YMCA's contention that it was reaching people with the gospel that the churches could not, yet he still endorsed the Y as an offspring of the church and recommended cooperation.⁴⁰ Less equivocal evaluations were also common. Rev. H.D. Hunter, the Congregational pastor, espoused the view that the Y was essential for retaining the interests of young men who, after leaving the Sunday school, tended to lose touch with the church. Rev. Murray of St. Andrew's Presbyterian found that the best workers among the young men in his church were members of the YMCA.⁴¹ These positive comments still point to the source of friction between the Y and local churches: there just were not enough active Christian young men to support the increased level of religious activity. Those involved in the Y

³⁹ "London East," *Ad*, 23 June 1885, p. 8.

⁴⁰ "Y.M.C.A. Anniversary," *FP*, 12 June 1879, p. 1

were continually being offered new avenues for “usefulness,” which meant they were less available for the growing number of programs being developed in the churches. Annual meetings in London’s churches often heard pastors complain and plead for the young men to take a more active role. The same complaint could be heard from the general secretary of the YMCA. Even while Y organisers were careful to claim that allegiance to the church should be primary, allegiance was clearly the issue.⁴² As the network of interdenominational associations grew in the 1880s, the direction an active Christian’s energy should take was under negotiation. The churches made a variety of claims based on particular traditions and grounded in practices of worship and congregational life. The Y evoked a universal faith, transcending traditions and contributing to the spiritual, intellectual, and physical improvement of the nation’s young men. YMCA promoters framed their claims in the discourse of the universal over the particular, distancing their version of religious improvement from the tradition-bound discourse of the churches. Resistance to the pull of this language made reservations, such as those expressed by Rev. Johnston, sound narrow-minded. Rev. Johnson had no rhetorical resources with which to express persuasively his conviction that Christian work should be grounded in congregational life against the Protestant public’s evocation of progress, universality, and harmony. In calling Christians to labour for a faith that transcended the particulars of denominational traditions, the Protestant public held the rhetorical advantage. However, in constructing a faith divorced from the particular doctrines and practices of congregational life, there was a danger that the Y was calling young men to no faith in particular.

Union Revivals

Associations like the WCA, WCTU, and YMCA provided the main venue for ongoing interdenominational cooperation in London. Union revival meetings brought churches together with these associations to carry out religious work which transcended the reach of local

⁴¹ See “Young Men’s Work,” *FP*, 10 October 1883, p. 2 for Rev. Hunter’s comments and “Y.M.C.A. Work,” *FP*, 11 October 1882, p. 4 for Rev. Murray’s.

⁴² “Y.M.C.A.,” *FP*, 21 October 1876, p. 4.

congregations. The WCTU was responsible for inviting a number of temperance revivalists to London. The YMCA and the Ministerial Association sponsored the major union revivals involving internationally prominent evangelists such as E.P. Hammond and Dwight L. Moody. The scale of these revivals made them major community events. E.P. Hammond drew 4,000 to the underheated drill shed in December 1879. D.L. Moody preached to six packed crowds on the Sunday of his London appearance and by the final day the police were called upon to limit entrance to Queen's Avenue Methodist. The revivals were in part spectacle, in part a connection with a wider evangelical world, in part a call to individual introspection, and in part a rehearsal of and challenge to community standards of propriety.

The history of revival in Canada has received considerable attention in recent years. To some degree this is a tribute to the untiring efforts of the late George Rawlyk to study the cultural influences of revival movements such as that associated with Henry Alline in Nova Scotia within a broader historical context.⁴³ His ability to interpret the meaning of revival from the perspective of participants, illustrated masterfully in his reconstruction of the 1805 Hay Bay Camp Meeting, has informed the approach taken here.⁴⁴ Less convincing have been attempts to identify widespread cultural effects arising from revival cycles in Canadian history.⁴⁵ Equally unconvincing have been interpretations which have assigned primary inspiration for the success or failure of revival to economic conditions.⁴⁶ This discussion will focus on the effect of revival in its public and private meanings. The meanings offered by revivals will be approached as technologies of the self. Foucault defined technologies of the self as practices which "permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations

⁴³ George A. Rawlyk, "Writing about Canadian Religious Revivals," in *Modern Christian Revivals*, eds. Edith Blumhofer and Randall Balmer (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

⁴⁴ Rawlyk, "The Canada Fire," 143-61.

⁴⁵ Rawlyk, *Is Jesus Your Personal Saviour?*, chapter 1.

⁴⁶ This approach can be used to explain everything. Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 206, attributes the success of the Thorold revival to economic distress in the 1890s. Van Die, "The Marks of a Genuine Revival," 561-2, holds the same economic conditions responsible for the decline of the vital evangelical culture in Brantford which was born out of revival and economic prosperity in the 1860s and 70s.

on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and ways of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.”⁴⁷ It was by these transformations that the revival tradition was itself transformed from the radical and unsettling social phenomenon of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which Rawlyk describes, to a mechanism for producing citizen-subjects of liberal society. Neil Semple and Phyllis Airhart have argued that Methodist revivalism declined toward the end of the nineteenth century as Methodists urbanised and became increasingly involved in social Christianity.⁴⁸ In their recent work, *Full-Orbed Christianity*, Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau have found the persistence of revivalism at the local church level among those groups that were fully engaged in social Christianity.⁴⁹ The work of the Protestant public, as described in this study, fully integrated social concerns and the profound experiences of conversion sought in revival. However, the popular meaning of the term changed through this period. In the 1870s in London, “revival” was used in the local press and church records almost exclusively to describe meetings sponsored by a local congregation. These revivals drew on a variety of denominationally oriented preachers, often from the immediate area. Toward the end of the 1880s “revival” most often denoted a public event featuring a prominent speaker with a national or international reputation. This period may be witness to the death of nineteenth-century revivalism and the birth of its twentieth-century manifestation.

Union revivals were self-consciously interdenominational. Clergy of all denominations regarded union meetings as an effective, even essential, aspect of the religious nurture of their congregations. Rev. Porter, the pastor of Talbot Street Baptist, introduced the meetings, arranged by the YMCA with Mr. Brown, by suggesting that revival needed to break out

⁴⁷ Michel Foucault, “Technologies of the Self,” in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, eds. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), 18.

⁴⁸ Neil Semple, “The Quest for the Kingdom: Aspects of Protestant Revivalism in Nineteenth-Century Ontario,” in *Old Ontario: Essays in Honour of J.M.S. Careless*, eds. David Keane and Colin Reade (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1990) and Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*.

⁴⁹ Christie, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*.

of the “narrow circle” of religious interest. This could only take place as all the churches participated in the great work of “saving souls for Christ.” On the same occasion, Presbyterian Rev. Murray expressed his hope that every “unconverted man or woman in his church would come here tonight.” Murray had heard good reports of the effectiveness of such meetings in other parts of the country, particularly in regard to the conversion of young men. He also believed that long time church members could also benefit spiritually from the meetings, suggesting that “many of our church’s office bearers needed the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, and we want our professing Christians brought under the power of the Holy Ghost, and to be made to live it out to the glory of God.”⁵⁰ The Church of England took little part in union meetings until Maurice Baldwin assumed the episcopate in 1883. Despite Bishop Baldwin’s endorsement the Anglican clergy were less likely than those of other denominations to be found sharing the platform with revivalists.⁵¹

Revivals moved religion out of its regular space and routine making it for a time the major preoccupation of the community—both for those who endorsed and those who disapproved of the services. Revivalists both supported and criticised the regular conduct of religion and religious practice. As public community events revivals promised entry into an extraordinary encounter with the supernatural. The complaints of sceptics, and occasionally of the clergy, may have served to increase the interest. The criticism of the clergy seemed to indicate the possibility of a religious experience beyond the respectable variety available from the local professionals. One of the persistent features of revivals were stories of opponents being won over. Sceptics turned up at the meetings, perhaps to undermine or ridicule the proceedings, and underwent miraculous conversions. The revival meeting constructed its own reality in which the out-of-the-ordinary became the expected.

⁵⁰ “Union Revival,” *FP*, 27 September 1886, p. 5.

⁵¹ Bishop Baldwin makes the first platform appearance of an Anglican clergyman at the Brown revival in 1886, “Union Revival,” *FP*, 27 September 1886, p. 5. Upon D.L. Moody’s departure in 1890, Baldwin preached to the union meetings before turning them over to Crossley and Hunter, “Of One Mind,” *Ad*, 11 January 1890, p. 5 and “The Work Begun,” *Ad*, 13 January 1890, p. 3.

An epidemic?

The *Free Press* told of a sceptic's change of heart observed at the Moody meetings in 1890. Rather than giving the typical sermon summary, this report focused on the drama taking place at the meetings. The story was told of a middle-aged man who expressed the well tested criticisms of revival: that it disrupted regular routines, and did very little lasting good. The unique contribution of this sceptic was his representation of revivals as an epidemic invading an otherwise healthy community.

One thing that strikes me in connection with the present and all previous religious revival epidemics ... is the small number of cures effected compared with the number of cases reported. Anyone will admit that the interest in the present movement is widespread. Why, up my way, fully a dozen of my male neighbors tell me that since Mr. Moody's arrival in the city, they have been compelled to live on cold victuals; but I must say they don't complain very loudly for the men appear to be as deeply affected by the prevailing craze as their wives. I tell you it has been the same in all previous epidemics of a similar character no matter whether the bacteria be of the Moody, the Russell, the Hunter or the Crossley variety. You find thousands of men and women neglecting their business and household duties and coming here morning, noon and night, apparently deeply interested in all that is said, and yet I question whether fifty genuine conversions have been wrought.

An "aged man" in the next seat took all this in but recast the epidemic analogy to a typically evangelical narrative of sin and salvation. The aged man replied:

You have it all mixed up. It's sin that's the epidemic, and the bacteria is dishonesty, licentiousness, drunkenness and such like. These good men—Mr. Moody and the others—are the doctors and when they preach a sermon they diagnose the sinner's case. But I want to ask you this:—If people affected by this epidemic of sin were as anxious to be cured as if stricken by cholera and similar plagues, do you imagine a cure would not quickly follow? Most assuredly it would.

According to the report, this put the middle-aged man into thoughtful reflection as he reconsidered his analysis of the work of revivalists. The climax of the narrative was still to come: "when at the close of the meeting Mr. Moody asked those desirous of being prayed for to stand up, the middle-aged man was among the first to arise."⁵²

Many of the common characteristics of revivals are evident in this story. There was the man's assumption that women were most susceptible to the revival and some puzzlement over

⁵² "Mr. Moody Has Gone," *FP*, 10 January 1890, p. 3.

the fact that his otherwise reasonable peers were interested enough to put up with cold “victuals.” He also suggested that particular revivalists were not the primary ingredient but that the phenomenon had a dynamic of its own. The lack of results, measured in “genuine conversions,” undermined his perception of the effectiveness of revival as a representation of true religion. The “old man” in the report renarrates this critique placing sceptics, like the “middle-aged man,” inside the narrative rather than outside as objective observers. The sceptic was recast as sinner. Those unaffected, or whose conversions turned out not to be genuine, were patients who refused the offered cure. No longer immune to the epidemic of revival, sceptics were victims of the epidemic of sin who, through a detached sense of superiority, denied their illness and remained in peril. This recounting of events gave the middle-aged man entrance into the narrative world of the revival meeting and allowed him to respond to the message.

Revival variety

Defying the stereotypes so dear to their critics, the revivalists who visited London varied widely in their character and presentation. One of the early union revivalists, Henry Varley, ran a successful meat business in Australia and England. He began his evangelistic career as a lay preacher and built a nondenominational “tabernacle” in a suburb of London, England. As more invitations came, he abandoned the meat business and became a full-time preacher, although remaining a layman.⁵³ During his visit to London Ontario, he was described as “so homelike, so frank, so close up to his audience, that such a feeling as formality is never experienced.” He was particularly appreciated for his “clear understanding” and “simple speech” which had the effect of bringing a new freshness and power to biblical themes.⁵⁴ This ability to connect so quickly and intimately with his audience likely arose out of his business background and lay status. Varley was featured prominently in Methodist pulpits which allowed for the largest assemblies. His preaching of an immediate salvation lacked sufficient concern for evidence of real repentance

⁵³ Bernard R. DeRemer, “Henry Varley, Worldwide Evangelist,” *Fundamentalist Journal* 8 (1989), 31-2.

⁵⁴ “Varley,” *Ad*, 6 February 1875, p. 1.

according to traditional Methodists. Union revival required the sacrifice of particular denominational narratives of conversion so that all could participate together in the work. Those with a strong adherence to the language of Wesley warned of creeping Brethrenism.⁵⁵

Very different varieties of revivalist also passed through London. The Rev Dr. Sexton headlined the 1884 revival season. Sexton was a careful apologist and defender of the faith against its “cultured despisers.” His addresses bore titles such as “The Folly of Atheism” and “Science and the Scriptures,” and his delivery was described as “eloquent, forcible and logical.” Sexton’s style followed his fundamental understanding of religion. “Religion,” he declared in his first address, “is not noise, but order. Order is its distinguishing characteristic, and all disorder is of the devil.”⁵⁶ At the other end of the spectrum was Sam Jones, a flamboyant Southerner, who had something offensive to say about most respectable Church people, especially women and the clergy. His muscular version of Christianity, along with his outrageous pulpit antics, seemed to anticipate many of the elements which brought fame to Billy Sunday in the early twentieth century.⁵⁷ Rev. H.W. Brown used the expectation of physical healing to draw crowds as large as 2,500 to the Princess skating rink in the fall of 1886. His message was of salvation and of the healings that had accompanied his meetings in other places. There were reports of miraculous healings during Mr. Brown’s stay in London. The *Free Press* did not particularly approve of this sort of thing and had editorialised against the work of “faith curists” in the past.⁵⁸ When Mr. Brown’s meetings began to take this direction, *Free Press* reports were headed “Communicated” to distance the fine reputation of the paper as arbiter of public truth from charges of being taken in

⁵⁵ “A Word to Methodists,” (let) *Ad*, 10 February 1875, p. 1 and “A Wesleyan Minister on Mr Varley,” (let) *FP*, 19 February 1875, p. 4. Phyllis Airhart discusses the Methodist critique of “believe theory” revivalism in *Serving the Present Age*, 41-7.

⁵⁶ “Sunday Services,” *FP*, 6 October 1884, p. 6; “The Folly of Atheism,” *FP*, 7 October 1884, p. 3; “The Second of the Series,” *FP*, 8 October 1884, p. 2; and “Science and Scriptures,” *FP*, 9 October 1884, p. 8.

⁵⁷ See the following reports. “How to Win,” *FP*, 22 September 1887, p. 7; “Sam Jones Lectures,” *FP*, 23 September 1887, p. 7; and “Sam Jones ‘Getting Thar,’” *FP*, 24 September 1887, p. 9.

⁵⁸ “Faith Cure,” *FP*, 31 July 1885, p. 4

itself.⁵⁹ Miss Coates was one of a handful of female evangelists who visited London during these years. She came to London from England to visit friends and was invited to speak to some meetings at the Congregational Church. This invitation developed into a month of meetings at the YMCA's Victoria Hall and was followed by a number of invitations to outlying areas.⁶⁰

The longest revival in London during the period ran from 22 November to 27 December 1879, when American evangelist Edward Payson Hammond brought to London the finely tuned techniques of late nineteenth-century professional revivalism.⁶¹ A local organisation was created to help spread and sustain the meetings, and new elements and attractions were regularly added to keep interest high. The story began in late September 1879 when the Ministerial Association, together with the officers of the YMCA met to consider the news that Rev. Hammond was available to come to London. The meeting cheerfully and unanimously invited the evangelist and agreed to aid his efforts.⁶² The first meeting of the revival was held at Victoria Hall on Saturday evening, November 22, and was of a purely organisational nature. In attendance were local clergy, members of the YMCA, and other lay people interested in assisting the work, special mention being made of the number of ladies present. The Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists were out in force. Rev. Wallace sent a letter expressing his regrets; later he and the Congregational Church would take an active part. Hammond began his efforts by recruiting Christian workers. He explained that he needed Christian people to come to the meetings not as spectators but to be of assistance. It was his practice, after the message, to divide the church into sections and have a minister and several lay assistants available in each section to confer with those under conviction. He requested one hundred volunteers for this task and promptly eighty-four people rose, representing three quarters of the meeting. Hammond then

⁵⁹ "The Revival Services," *FP*, 11 October 1886, p. 5. See early reports which carry no subtle disclaimers: "Union Revival," *FP*, 27 September 1886, p. 5 and "The Union Revival," *FP*, 4 October 1886, p. 5.

⁶⁰ "The Good Work," *FP*, 16 August 1887, p. 8.

⁶¹ Marguerite Van Die analyses Hammond's 1879 appearance in the nearby city of Brantford in "The Marks of a Genuine Revival," 548-55.

described the schedule for the first week. The opening service would be held on Sunday afternoon for the children. Monday and Tuesday would also have afternoon meetings for children but no evening meetings for adults. Each morning of the week at 9:30 there was to be a meeting of the ministers and volunteers. This was to be a prayer meeting, a training seminar, and a testimony meeting for the benefit of the clergy and lay assistants. This gathering was strategic to the success of the meetings for it gave local participants a stake and sense of ownership in this major event. Here they exchanged needs and triumphs, prayed for one another, and praised God for victories won. A "General Revival Committee" was also formed consisting of five appointees of each of the pastors present. This Committee convened when the general meeting was adjourned and divided responsibilities for music, ushering, press relations, finance, and other critical functions among its members.⁶³ The revival was already on a sure footing and had yet to be launched.

The revival meeting

The launch of the Hammond revival was slow and deliberate, in stark contrast to the campaign of Moody who preached six times on the Sunday he began his meetings. Hammond was known for his effective use of child evangelism and had written a theological justification of the conversion of children.⁶⁴ The children's meetings held each afternoon made use of a simple pledge, which was signed and issued to children on their conversion.⁶⁵ Meetings for adults began on Wednesday evening, November 26, and the order of service for these meetings varied little. The service began with singing. Hammond, in common with many revivalists at the time, made

⁶² "Evangelistic," *Ad*, 22 September 1879, p. 4.

⁶³ "Hammond's Revival Work," *FP*, 24 November 1879, p. 4.

⁶⁴ Edward Payson Hammond, *The Conversion of Children*. Concern for the conversion of children was very common in this period, see Van Die, *An Evangelical Mind*, chapter 1 and Neil Semple, "The Nurture and Admonition of the Lord," 157-75.

⁶⁵ "The Gospel Ship," *FP*, 10 December 1879, p. 3. The pledge stated simply that: "I, the undersigned, hope I have found Jesus to be my precious Savior, and I promise, with His help, to live as His loving child and faithful servant all my life."

congregational singing of simple “gospel songs” a prominent part of the meetings’ appeal.⁶⁶

Three weeks into the meetings the *Free Press* commented:

The singing was most effectual. Led by Mr. Hiscott's coronet, a euphonium and two organs, the choir filled the entire building with melody and spirited song. Thousands in the audience also joined in the hymns with which they have by this time become thoroughly familiar, and sang with an earnestness that must have been encouraging to the promoters of the work. The singing is a great factor in the revival...⁶⁷

A “Bible reading,” in which Hammond read a passage of scripture, commenting briefly on it,

followed the singing. After this, a number of speakers were introduced and each given several minutes to address the audience. In the first week of the revival, these were typically local clergy who endorsed Mr. Hammond’s efforts, or clergy from other towns who had benefited from his ministry. These speakers provided an effective promotional interlude which assured those in attendance that what they were witnessing was authentic and that they could expect to benefit.⁶⁸

Toward the end of the second week of the meetings this part of the service was given over to the conversion narratives of those who had experienced revival.⁶⁹ Now endorsed by clergy authority or authenticated by the testimony of true conversions, Hammond preached for about half an hour and then presented a call for those interested to stay for the inquiry meeting. The inquiry meeting was the element toward which the whole service moved and where conversions were to be effected

⁶⁶ Hammond compiled his own collection of such hymns and songs for use in his meeting. Edward Payson Hammond, ed., *The Song Evangel: A Choice Collection of Hymns and Tunes (Old and New) for Sabbath Schools, Church Services, Prayer Meetings, and “Times of Refreshing”* (New York and Chicago: Biglow and Main, 1873).

⁶⁷ “The Story of the Cross,” *FP*, 14 December 1879, p. 4.

⁶⁸ Rev. J.A. Murray provided this function at the first evening meeting, “The Revival,” *Ad*, 28 November 1879, p. 4. Out-of-town endorsements came from Chatham, “The Revival Services,” *FP*, 2 December 1879, p. 1; “The Hum of the Revival,” *FP*, 6 December 1879, p. 4; and Guelph, “The Revival,” *Ad*, 9 December 1879, p. 4.

⁶⁹ The first instance of this came during the afternoon meeting on Friday, 5 December and it became a regular feature of the meetings thereafter, “The Hum of the Revival,” *FP*, 6 December 1879, p. 4.

The inquiry meeting

The key to a successful revival was the seeker's encounter with the power of the Almighty. This encounter most often occurred at the inquiry service and was then narrated both publicly and privately in the form of testimonies to confirm and solidify the commitment. As the meetings moved into their third week and into the cavernous Drill Shed, re-christened "The Tabernacle" for the occasion, crowds in excess of 1,000 began to attend the inquiry meetings. A *Free Press* reporter attempted to capture the nature of these meetings for the reading public. The reporter explained the procedure for the meeting:

As announced at the inaugural meeting, the church is divided into sections over which certain ministers and laymen have charge. It is their duty to see that each person seated in the section under their charge is spoken to. Almost every pew had two or more occupants who were waited on by these workers.⁷⁰

The workers are described as representing something of a cross section of London's Christian community. They included a "large number of Christians of both sexes." Particular attention was drawn to the participation of "many of London's most prominent men." The revival also managed to bring a good number of "young men from 14 to 20 years of age" into active Christian service.⁷¹ As the workers moved among the inquirers, the reporter described how the work was conducted.

Here, near the door which leads to the body of the church is a group of some half dozen, earnestly conversing. In the centre, seated in one of the pews, is a young man—the others are instructors. The conversation is kept up for some time, and, finally, we hear the exclamations "Praise God!" "Praise God!" and then the familiar hymn "I have found a precious Saviour" is wafted through the building. There, near the centre of the church, is seated an old lady, who beckons to a minister who is old in the work. With a smile he answers, and is soon in earnest conversation. The lady directs his attention to a youth sitting further forward, and the minister is soon seated at his side. As in the case of the young lady previously mentioned, the boy's head droops, and he is soon in tears. Again, not far from the latter, is a lad talking earnestly to a middle-aged man—perhaps it is his father. The conversation is continued and finally both are weeping. Down near the pulpit several ministers are to be observed, in earnest conversation with a number of persons. Several are in tears. One of the ministers offers up a fervent prayer, audible throughout the entire church, that the person with whom he has been conversing may be saved that night.

⁷⁰ "The Revival Wave," *FP*, 9 December 1879, p. 4.

⁷¹ "The Old, Old Story," *FP*, 8 December 1879, p. 1.

And so the meeting proceeds, the very hum of the workers being heard in all directions. It is a solemn scene to look upon and one cannot avoid being affected.⁷²

Several days later the reporter recounted similar scenes, speculating especially upon the family context in which these conversions were taking place.

Over a thousand remained to the inquiry meeting and in that immense building the scene was indeed affecting. It would be impossible to describe it. Many who remained were young men and they were visited by those who unselfishly wished to see them make the desired change. In one bench a mother knelt with her daughter and their voices mingled in a prayer of penitence and pleading. Near them two young ladies conversed in tones that told of their earnestness and the character of their conversation. Here a father spoke to a son, and a brother told of salvation to his sister. At another bench an old man with silvery hair was telling the "old, old, story" to a friend whose three score years and ten had evidently drawn near the end. Sobbing was heard in every quarter, although nearly inaudible above the voices of the busy, prayerful workers. Most of the inquirers were young people, and although many persons remained, at the western end of the building, their presence did not seem to detract in a noticeable degree from their earnestness. It was beyond doubt the largest inquiry meeting since the beginning of the revival, although it did not differ in its character from those that have preceded...⁷³

At the afternoon meeting, the reporter paid special attention to a young woman who seemed intent on leaving the hall after a brief period of reflection, but was met three times by workers before she could find her way out. One of these encounters brought her to tears. The reporter noticed her again at the inquiry meeting following the evening meeting. The next evening she was among the workers doing her part to bring sinners to the Kingdom. From this the reporter concluded that the revival was having a genuine effect and he issued this challenge to those still sceptical:

If any of our readers doubt that a change of some nature takes place in those who profess to be converted, all that is necessary for them to do is to fix upon some particular person whom the workers have been instructing and watch their conduct from evening to evening. In almost every instance where these inquirers attend regularly a change will be observed; from being inquirers they become workers. The most indefatigable workers at these meetings appear to be young men, many of whom, prior to the commencement of the revival, were not often to be found in any church.⁷⁴

⁷² Ibid

⁷³ "The Story of the Cross," *FP*, 14 December 1879, p. 4.

⁷⁴ "The Revival Wave," *FP*, 9 December 1879, p. 4.

Testimonies

The first to confess their new life in Christ were “a score of little girls and boys—some of them only 8 or 9 years of age” who testified to “how happy they were” after their conversion during Hammond’s early work among the children. Revival played a major role in transmitting the faith from one generation to another throughout the nineteenth century.⁷⁵ One of the particular qualities of revival mentioned in the reports of the meetings was its ability to bring the young, and especially young men, back into orbit of church and religious duty. The reports of the inquiry meetings recounted above emphasised the family and relational connections as of central import in conversions. Not only could parents lead their offspring to salvation, but the young could also lead the old and erring to the Kingdom. Hammond made this phenomenon the focus of a sermon, pointing out that it was a little slave girl who directed Namaan the leper to Elisha and thus to wholeness.⁷⁶ In a similar vein, one of the volunteer workers testified that it was the example of his fourteen-year-old son that had moved him to increase his commitment and begin to work “in the Lord’s vineyard.”⁷⁷

Women were welcomed as Christian workers at the inquiry meetings and were prominently featured among those who gave testimonies. In some cases, these victories for the Kingdom seemed somewhat hollow as the case of the young women whose resolve to “give up the fleeting pleasures of the world for those more enduring” meant she would stop reading novels.⁷⁸ Of more consequence was the contribution of a woman who spoke in Thorndale in an effort to spread the work of revival beyond London. Rev. Ross, who led the service, reported it was the “most marvellous meeting he had ever seen.” The response was beyond anything that had yet

⁷⁵ This aspect of revival has been commented upon by Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*, 98; George Rawlyk, “New Lights, Baptists and Religious Awakenings in Nova Scotia: A Preliminary Probe,” in *Prophets, Priests, and Prodigals: Readings in Canadian Religious History, 1608 to Present*, eds Mark G. McGowan and David B. Marshall (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1992), 53-5; and Van Die, “The Marks of a Genuine Revival,” 551.

⁷⁶ This story is told in 2 Kings 5.

⁷⁷ “The Tabernacle,” *FP*, 12 December 1879, p. 4.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

occurred in London. Ross continued: "Every one seemed to be under conviction. Hundreds were praying God to forgive their sins. The testimony of several young persons, especially that of one young woman, was so affecting that strong men wept like little children, and cried out for salvation."⁷⁹

Stories of God's intervention in particularly difficult cases were trophies of the revival. A dramatic story unfolded as a woman attending the meeting on Thursday, December 4, reported that her husband had threatened to break her bones for going to the meeting. At the Friday morning meeting prayer was offered for the salvation of the husband and it was reported that afternoon that the woman had come to no harm. A satisfactory conclusion to the story came the next week when the husband and wife attended a meeting together and the husband arose to testify that "he had been broken down into penitence and had given himself to Christ."⁸⁰ The revival had the power to reform an unbelieving violent husband and to bring him to the very meetings he had attempted to bar his wife from attending. The gospel message was able to restore relationships and bring new hope into even the worst of family situations. Another celebrity conversion was imported from Brantford. William Stevens was a self-confessed infidel who worked on the railway. He had given up religion and not even the preaching of Spurgeon, whom he went to hear in England, could touch his hardened heart. However, Stevens went to hear Hammond in Brantford and was saved. He gave up his former ways and went on to bring the good news to twenty-five of his railway companions.⁸¹ This success demonstrated that even rough, young infidels working for the railway were not immune from the power of the gospel.

The Hammond revival, like other special services, received extensive coverage in both newspapers and this has allowed a fairly careful reconstruction of events. However, the role of the newspapers went well beyond providing accounts of what happened. Reports like those

⁷⁹ "The Revival," *Ad*, 12 December 1879, p. 4

⁸⁰ "The Revival Wave," *FP*, 5 December 1879, p. 4; "The Hum of the Revival," *FP*, 6 December 1879, p. 4; and "The Tabernacle," *FP*, 12 December 1879, p. 4.

⁸¹ "The Revival Wave," *Ad*, 4 December 1879, p. 4 and "The Revival Wave," *FP*, 5 December 1879, p. 4.

quoted above constructed the revival as a public event and gave it significance for the city and beyond.⁸² The miraculous conversions and emotional encounters with the divine so meticulously reported moulded the revival into a community experience and point of reference even for those who were not in attendance. For those who regularly attended the meetings, these reports created expectations for what should and would happen and constructed appropriate behaviour through the various phases of the meetings. The public nature of the meetings subsisted both in the large congregations and in their subsequent digestion through the medium of public discourse in the newspapers.

The narrative thought world of revival

The revival meetings, for all of their differences of style and emphasis, shared some foundational elements. The narrative that animated revival understood the world to be entrapped in sin, a condition which separated people from God and from one another. Salvation from sin and reconciliation with God was available because of the atoning work of Jesus Christ. The way to conversion was to believe that this narrative of sin and salvation described the real world. God offered salvation to all, but each person must believe and enter in for themselves.⁸³ After conversion, the benefits of the Christian life would become available. These included peace and comfort and an ability to love as Christ loved, indeed all of the virtues of Christ were to characterise the Christian. The presence of the Holy Spirit brought these benefits into the life of the individual and provided power over sin and human frailties. The message of the revivalist was to obey and follow the example of Christ now, before it was too late.⁸⁴

Those attending revivals could expect to be called to a change grounded in belief and intellectual acceptance of the evangelical narrative. However, it was not the offer of new

⁸² Kathryn Teresa Long, *The Revival of 1857-58* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), chapter 2.

⁸³ See for example "Varley," *Ad*, 1 February 1875, p. 1; "The Tabernacle," *Ad*, 25 December 1879, p. 4; and "Mr Moody's Message," *FP*, 8 January 1890, p. 5.

⁸⁴ "Varley," *Ad*, 1 February 1875, p. 1; "The Tabernacle," *Ad*, 22 December 1879, p. 4; "Unabated Interest," *Ad*, 8 January 1890, p. 5, and "Evangelist Moody," *Ad*, 7 January 1890, p. 5.

knowledge that made the difference. Henry Varley urged his hearers “to seek the truth, not as a theory, but as a living truth.”⁸⁵ What revival offered was a “new birth,” a new quality of experience and meaning. The revival meeting was the place of decision, a symbolic space constructed between the old life and the new life where actions had ultimate, eternal import. Revivalists and pastors, as well as critics of revival, recognised that many who responded would not follow through. Hammond referred to these as “professors and not possessors of religion.”⁸⁶ Moody emphasised that conversion was not primarily changing one’s mind but changing one’s ways. *The first without the second would never endure.*⁸⁷ Revival dropouts were those unwilling to act in accordance with their convictions. Moody described their failure:

Some people profess conversion and go away in the light and come back the next day in the dark. Perhaps they go home and are ashamed to confess Christ at home. They may not be willing to be reconciled to some enemy. They have been dishonest and will not make restitution. It is always one of these things that brings darkness to the professing Christian.⁸⁸

The work of the revival was to construct the symbolic space within which fundamental spiritual and moral change was possible. The long history of evangelical revivals reaching back to Wesley and Whitefield was often evoked to remind those in attendance of the religious culture that had been created and perpetuated through this medium. Testimonies of hard cases brought plausibility to the revival as the place to make change. The stories of William Stevens, the Brantford “infidel,” and the violent husband now sharing the faith of his believing wife provided an empirical verification of the narrative of restoration. Women who were normally silenced by the conventions of public space, found their stories welcomed and honoured as evidence and vehicles of divine grace. Tears and weeping, which accompanied inquiry meetings, spoke of an extraordinary power at work, particularly when it broke through gender constructs allowing strong men to weep like little children. The private and hidden world of confession and reconciliation

⁸⁵ “Varley,” *Ad*, 1 February 1875, p. 1.

⁸⁶ “The Revival Wave,” *FP*, 9 December 1879, p. 4.

⁸⁷ “Mr Moody’s Message,” *FP*, 8 January 1890, p. 5.

⁸⁸ “Unabated Interest,” *Ad*, 8 January 1890, p. 5.

was, for a time, the focus of the city's public life. The actual message of salvation proclaimed at the revival was not markedly different from that preached regularly in the local churches. Revival meetings, however, could create a different reality which lifted people out of their regular religious duties and urged upon them a new, or a deeper, commitment. One of the express purposes of revivals was to reach a "different class" than was regularly to be found in the churches.⁸⁹ Revivals attempted to identify and break down the hindrances to the new life and to create among those who attended a shared sense of urgency to take their religious responsibilities more seriously.

Ironically, one of the hindrances most often cited by revival preachers was regular church involvement. Hammond warned against those who "talk of their respectability, but will not admit their sinfulness" as being in particular danger.⁹⁰ Moody argued that many considered themselves good Christians because they went to church, read the Bible, were baptised, or were "turning over new leaves." While they were good in themselves, Moody declaimed these as false religion and hindrances to the new birth if they were trusted for salvation.⁹¹ Evangelists proclaimed that external ceremonies and rituals did not bring the experience of the presence of God which alone was evidence of inner change. Upsetting respectable Christianity and rejecting denominational traditions and forms, revivals attempted to divest the faith of its incidental trappings and impress upon seekers the pure and simple reality of an individual, unmediated encounter with God. Having broken down denominational barriers revivals brought the individual at the altar before God without Christian history or identity. Groups numbering in the thousands were broken down to isolated individuals confronted by zealous Christian workers as the time of ultimate religious choice was upon them. The urgency and weight of the decision bore upon the individual human will, and in the narrative of evangelic encounter there was no one to help.

⁸⁹ The Hammond meetings were moved to the Drill Shed to attract those who would not be likely to attend a church, "The Revival Services," *FP*, 4 December 1879, p. 4. Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 205-6, discovered a high percentage of working class people among the converts at the Crossley and Hunter revival in Thorold in 1893. While recognising the complexity of identity construction she flattens her explanation of the phenomenon to economic distress.

⁹⁰ "The Revival Meetings," *FP*, 29 November 1879, p. 4.

⁹¹ "Evangelist Moody," *Ad*, 7 January 1890, p. 5.

Those clustered around the seeker could pray and encourage and cajole, but not even God could make this decision. The choice was to let go of an old identity, one that was marred by sin, and receive a new birth, a new life. Revivalists used few images of hell fire and brimstone. They expressed the consequences of sin in gender specific ways: unrepentant men were destined to intemperance and dissipation, and women to frivolousness and novel reading. Both sexes were warned against a wasted life and were offered instead a life of usefulness. Conversion would make men the independent and responsible subject-citizen and women the redeemers of the social. To reject the new birth was to leave with the old identity and its attendant problems unimproved by the offer of salvation. This narration gave the individual ultimate responsibility for their place in this world and the next. The exercise of this freedom of choice promised individual prosperity and social harmony.

The relationship of belief and emotion was contested in late nineteenth-century revivalism. Emotive excess had been a defining characteristic of the early revivals in Upper Canada. As the nineteenth century progressed, this emotionalism was toned down and, in some cases, repressed. Nonetheless, it was the public release of emotion that gave the revival, and particularly the inquiry meeting, its power. In classical revivalism, the new birth was accompanied by some empirical manifestation—Wesley’s heart was “strangely warmed.”⁹² Frequent reports of tears attest to the inner emotional stirring typical of responses to revival preaching in London during this period. However, Moody was among those who considered this empirical test of the new birth to be a hindrance to good results. A “rationalist” alternative assurance of the new birth gained popularity, first among the Plymouth Brethren, but by this period it was widely influential among the “union” revivalists.⁹³ The reasoning had a simple logic. God provided salvation for all of humanity through Christ; the scriptures taught that all of the truly repentant who asked for salvation, believing in Jesus, would receive it; one should not,

⁹² David Bebbington attributes the concern for evidence of salvation to Enlightenment empiricism, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History From the 1730s to the 1980s* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 50.

therefore, found one's assurance of salvation on any particular feeling but simply believe that what the Bible said was true. Thus, Moody taught: "You must not think that you must 'feel' to be saved.... Your duty is to believe."⁹⁴ Moody regarded the quest for some feeling as proof of salvation to be a lack of faith in the revelation of God. He told of a woman who sought for three years for salvation without result. Moody told her to trust, and she replied that she did but did not feel any better. In Moody's estimation, she was "seeking for feeling, not Jesus."⁹⁵ Despite this, Moody regularly used emotion to communicate the gospel message. Often reports of his meetings included a line such as, "There were but few dry eyes in the large audience that listened to Mr. Moody...." The heritage of classical revivalism persisted; however, emotional response was not the essential proof of new birth, but it legitimated the extraordinary nature of the proceedings and prepared hearers to respond. The rationalisation of assurance may have worked to defeminise religion, although the prevalence of male tears in reports indicates that it was the meaning of emotional response that had changed and not the expectation.

In his final sermon to the men of London, Moody focused on what he believed to be the greatest hindrance to the conversion of young men—fear of ridicule. Moody revealed sensitivity to the contemporary construction of maleness and religion. Courage was not only one of the cardinal virtues, it was to be the characteristic of the male of the race which would empower his role as protector and leader. A lack of courage was a lack of manliness—thus Moody called young men to have the courage of their convictions and to act as men in not being "ashamed to come to Christ."⁹⁶ But the same gender construction that assigned men courage assigned women religion. Thus Moody's observation that young men were "afraid of the jeers" of their companions was directly related to the fact that confession of wrong-doing, asking forgiveness, and submission to Christ in a life of obedience could hardly be construed as manly. Independence

⁹³ Phyllis D. Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*, 46-7.

⁹⁴ "Moody!" *Ad*, 6 January 1890, p. 3.

⁹⁵ "Words of Warning," *Ad*, 9 January 1890, p. 5.

⁹⁶ "Mr Moody Has Gone," *FP*, 10 January 1890, p. 3.

of thought and action were the hallmarks of masculinity. To the degree that revival involved the stripping away of the dominance of tradition and dogma, and reconstructing the self by a heroic act of the individual will, it was congruent with true manhood. However, the language of humility, submission, and self-giving love held little appeal. Moody's suggestion that standing up to ridicule for the sake of Christ revealed manliness attempted to extend the accepted constructs toward a distinctively Christian manhood.

Churches and revivalists

London's local clergy organised and promoted union revivals. They repeatedly endorsed revival meetings as an essential part of the religious culture of the city, and each course of meetings added new adherents to their churches.⁹⁷ Yet differences between the practices of church life and the practices of the revival meeting reflected underlying tensions. One of the surest techniques for moving religion from the routine to the extraordinary was to condemn the "religiosity" of respectable church members and mock preachers. Most revivalists had these techniques somewhere in their arsenal but Sam Jones developed ridicule of religion to an art form. He criticised fashionably attired charitable women for distributing second hand clothing; chided Christian wives for their lack of ability in the kitchen (which he suggested was the cause of the irreligion of husbands); and prescribed opiates to ministers to bring some life to their "one-legged sermons."⁹⁸ Such illustrations may have been intended to attract sceptics, affirm their judgements regarding the short-comings of the churches, and assure them these were not characteristic of a truly revived Christianity. Jones's caricatures may also have provided assurance to the faithful who regarded them as applying only to their spiritual enemies and never to themselves. In either case, the tendency of the revivalist to denigrate regular religious activity and to portray its inferiority to their own offerings undermined the local clergy and congregational life as sources of spiritual nurture and development. This was not the intention of the majority of revivalists, who

⁹⁷ Marguerite Van Die, "The Marks of a Genuine Revival," 550 and Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 258-9.

showed more reserve and respect than Jones. Moody suggested that the success of his work depended on the pastors who would follow through on the good that had been accomplished. However, it was not the intentions of revivalists but the power of their rhetoric that undermined local religious practices. The effect of their rhetoric of extraordinary religion was to construct religious experience as a product served up to individuals by professionals at large gatherings for a limited time. The weekly diet of worship, and the ongoing attempts by the community to live by particular beliefs and practices, were thereby devalued as sectarian and uninspiring.

The revivalists seemed to expect that their efforts would be criticised. In his opening remarks to the organisational meeting Hammond asked those present to attend three meetings before making any critical remarks.⁹⁹ Moody was impatient of that criticism of “modern revivals,” for he believed that his work was in continuity with the great religious movements of the past. Every denomination, and four-fifths of any congregation, Moody argued, represented the result of times of revival.¹⁰⁰ The revivalists made consistent use of the Christian belief in the essential unity of the faith and the need for harmony among the denominations. Brown hoped that during his meetings “sectarian differences would be forgotten.”¹⁰¹ Putting aside such differences had been a formative part of his own religious development. When young in the faith, Brown had been a Baptist and thought that if “the wicked were to be saved it must be through the Baptists” because “they had all the truth.” Greater maturity led to the conclusion that “God has a people among all the sects.” He invited others to join him in the inclusive space constructed by the revival meeting, where salvation was offered “only through faith in Christ,” without reference to sectarian considerations.¹⁰² The maintenance of this inclusive space required constant vigilance. Points of dispute, especially age-old theological disputes, could not be allowed to disrupt the work

⁹⁸ “How to Win,” *FP*, 22 September 1887, p. 7 and “Sam Jones—‘Getting Thar,’” *FP*, 24 September 1887, p. 9.

⁹⁹ “Hammond’s Revival Work,” *FP*, 24 November 1879, p. 4.

¹⁰⁰ “Words of Warning,” *Ad*, 9 January 1890, p. 5.

¹⁰¹ “Union Revival,” *FP*, 27 September 1886, p. 5.

¹⁰² “Mr Brown’s Revival,” *FP*, 29 September 1886, p. 4.

of revival. Moody would not allow questions to be put to him which “involved disputed points in theology, such as baptism by immersion or sprinkling.” The children of God were “bound to keep the peace” Moody argued, rather than concern themselves with matters as peripheral as the rite of initiation into the Christian faith.¹⁰³ Although the revivalists’ expected criticism, any public expression of disagreement by local clergy were mild and even apologetic. Typically, some clergyman would be reported to have said he could not endorse everything that occurred in conjunction with the meetings but encouraged attendance and participation.¹⁰⁴ When an article in the *Free Press* ascribed critical comments to Rev. G.N.A.F.T. Dickson and implied that his statements represented the general opinion of city clergy, Dickson immediately wrote a letter to the paper denying the statement and asserting his full sympathy and active participation.¹⁰⁵ Any criticism from the clergy of a successful revival could only be construed as arising from professional jealousy or sectarian narrowness. Clergy with genuine misgivings could find no appropriate way to publicly express their dissent, much as Rev. Johnson had been unable to articulate for public consumption his misgivings about the methods of the Y. These clergy discovered there was no discourse available by which to give authority to religious life within a particular community of faith.

Before the union revivals came into vogue in London, Rev. Dr. Cooper of Talbot Street Baptist presented a paper to the Baptist conference in which he referred, in a distinctly negative light, to the work of revivalists. Cooper was an untiring supporter of interdenominational causes in London and his objections did not arise from sectarian narrowness. He characterised revivalist preachers as “men belonging to no church, and glorying in their freedom from all sectarian trammels.” The irony of their claim was that they refused to extend to others the freedom they claimed for themselves. Cooper argued that “while professing in high sounding

¹⁰³ “Words of Warning,” *Ad*, 9 January 1890, p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ Talbot Street Baptist Church, Minutes, Typescript, 1 December 1879, p. 183; “The Revival Wave,” *FP*, 9 December 1879, p. 4; “The Story of the Cross,” *FP*, 14 December 1879, p. 4; and “Farewell,” *Ad*, 27 December 1879, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ “Rev. Dickson’s Explanation,” (let) *FP*, 15 December 1879, p. 4.

words their utter dislike of all sectarianism, we found them the most sectarian and the most uncharitable people with whom we have had anything to do.”¹⁰⁶ This captures the tension between the revivalists and the churches rather well. In breaking down the particular in favour of a universal experience of religion, the revivalists had constructed a new particularity that competed with the churches, even as it sought to support them. People who experienced a conversion at a revival meeting rather than in their churches were likely to continue seeking religious nurture in an abstract unmediated faith. As at the point of decision at the altar, this revival faith allowed no connection with a particular community, and it amplified the privatisation of faith. Revivalism increased church membership while at the same time aided in the transformation of religion from a corporate to a privatised experience. Rather than building a community of faith, revivalism encouraged a consumerist conception of religion as a means of meeting personal needs, and of achieving improvement and success in an often hostile world, through inner resolve and force of will.

Conclusion

A Protestant public in London was shaped in interactions among women and men of various denominations in public meetings, on committees, and at inquiry meetings, and through local press reports on these and other events. The discourses and practices that constructed the Protestant public were not primarily those of the churches. The familiar Protestant themes of sin and salvation, improvement and uplift, temperance and evangelism, were the constitutive vocabulary of the Protestant public. However, once these themes had been cut from their moorings in congregational life and relationship, they lost their particular signification and drifted about, often carrying meanings which undercut their theological import. As it emerged out of these practices and discourses, the Protestant public was not all inclusive. The narratives of evangelicalism and liberal society excluded Catholics, silenced women, and condescended to the poor and others who had been cast as objects of the public’s benevolence. Some of those eligible

¹⁰⁶ “Evangelists and Their Work,” *FP*, 17 October 1877, p. 4.

for inclusion, among whom many were Anglican, chose not to identify with this Protestant public. Still others identified with some parts of this public while remaining wary of others. The clergy were major promoters and often spokespersons for the Protestant public but were also critical as their values and concerns were compromised by some practices of associations and revivalists. Merchants and their wives were leaders and major contributors to the projects of the Protestant public; however, these same merchants came under fire by the WCTU in their agitation for early closing. Brewers John Labatt and the Hon. John Carling were wealthy Anglicans and contributors to the Protestant Orphans' Home and other popular religious causes; however, their livelihoods distanced them from the temperance orientation of the WCTU, the WCA, and the YMCA.¹⁰⁷

The Protestant public presented itself as the dominant culture of late nineteenth-century Ontario, although intersections of class, gender, and religious and denominational difference frustrated its ambitions. Other publics, including Catholic, working class, and commercial publics intersected and contested the program of the Protestant public. Notwithstanding the prominent role of the clergy on public occasions, the leadership of the Protestant public was in the hands of lay leaders, both male and female. This leadership group was relatively small and included many of the commercial and political elite. The Protestant consensus in London expressed the material and spiritual hopes and fears of this group in a vocabulary constructed of evangelical and liberal rhetoric. It was this group, and the associations and union revivals they sponsored, that increasingly took responsibility for the "establishment" role of religion. Thus, the character and concerns of the Protestant public were reflected in its conviction that religious activity was to ensure public morality and, thereby, social efficiency.

Gendered themes emerged from the discourses and practices of the Protestant public particularly with regard to the redemptive interventions in the social. The focus of the YMCA, the primary male association, was the improvement and protection of other males. Its activities were intended to provide constructive alternatives to the many temptations of the world resulting in

¹⁰⁷ Hon. John Carling was a member of Advisory Committee of the Protestant Orphans' Home and Mrs. John Labatt served as a Trustee.

independent, moral men ready to take on the responsibilities of family. The support of the Protestant public was urged to preserve and strengthen the virtue of its male leadership through the auspices of the Y. The rhetoric of improvement assumed that men of modest social standing benefited from the positive influences of associational life. The women's organisations, by contrast, sought to uplift rather than improve. The character of the young was shaped in the Protestant Orphans' Home to ensure that the children would give satisfaction in good homes. Relief work and the Women's Refuge were to lift up the fallen and the poor. The Soup Kitchen was to preserve the integrity of the family through sickness or unemployment. The rhetoric of uplift so prevalent among women's associations indicated that they conducted much of their work among those who would not be considered their social equals. The work of middle-class women was authorised by the Protestant public to provide for the social tutelage of the young, the old, the sick, and the poor. This arrangement preserved the conventions of male authority in that women's power extended only over those whose masculinity had been brought into question by some moral lack, most often signalled in a loss of independence. The WCA threat to expose seducers and the WCTU attempt to direct when merchants should pay their employees and close their establishments pushed the limits of these conventions, without evident success.

Both men's and women's associations were dedicated to saving the social, yet the soteriologies their practices embodied reflected and confirmed the contemporary construction of gender. The public authority of women was premised on the redemptive nature of the home. The institutions built by women's associations were invariably "homes" and their solution to the social problems they addressed was to provide the discipline and care of the Protestant middle-class household. This approach to salvation emphasised relationships and the provision of good influences over time to train up the young or raise up the fallen. The range of activities these women undertook reveals a complex response to conditions of poverty and want. They provided soup to the hungry, lectured drunkards as to their responsibilities as men, carried petitions to Toronto, gave shelter to the marginalised, operated Sunday schools which included breakfast, provided educational opportunities for girls and boys, and in everything worked for the salvation

of souls as well as bodies. They believed that the salvation of both the individual and the social would take place within networks of nurture and regulation.

In support of, as well as in contrast to this, was the soteriology of the male led YMCA and revival meetings. In these locations it was heroic individual choice that opened the way to salvation. Male Protestant practices regarded networks of relationships to be hindrances to salvation, because they could cause the seeker to resist or delay the moment of decision. Everything had to be peeled away as the individual came alone and unaided into a discursive space that constructed the encounter with the divine in conversion. Testimonies at revivals emphasised the moment of choice as the change that brought the new birth. However, accounts of inquiry meetings emphasised the presence and encouragement of family and friends in the drama leading to conversion.¹⁰⁸ While the rhetorics of the redemptive home and the redeeming choice were widely divergent, in practice they supported one another. Women used the authority of their relational networks to bring their households to the revival meeting to force or inspire a choice, particularly among their young men.

Both of these soteriologies locate salvation outside of the institutional church, a move that had far-reaching significance for nineteenth-century Protestantism. The soteriology of home required the church merely to support the family and its relational networks. The introduction of graded programs for children and adolescents during this period (as described in chapter 3) indicated the churches' initial attempts to fulfil this new role.¹⁰⁹ On the other hand, the soteriology of choice required the church to meet the spiritual needs of an assembly of religious individuals rather than to form them into a community. Both versions of saving the social called for Christians to abandon doctrinal and liturgical traditions to more adequately serve individuals and the family. By conforming to the orthodoxy of liberal society, the Protestant public devised a

¹⁰⁸ "The Story of the Cross," *FP*, 14 December 1879, p. 4.

¹⁰⁹ Marguerite Van Die, "A March of Victory and Triumph in Praise of 'The Beauty of Holiness: Laité and the Evangelical Impulse in Canadian Methodism, 1800-1884,'" in *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*, ed. G.A. Rawlyk (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 84-6.

way of speaking religion in public that claimed to transcend particularities, and in so doing they bleached the particular out of their faith. The themes of the redemptive home and the redeeming choice came to define the Protestant public to such a degree that it came to be identified with Protestantism. Late nineteenth-century Protestantism was far too complex and varied to be reduced to these prominent themes of public religious practice. Particular expressions of Protestantism continued to flourish in congregational life; however, this life became increasingly difficult to sustain as the totalising discourse of the Protestant public contested the legitimacy of Protestantism itself. The rhetorical power of the Protestant public silenced its critics who could only look sectarian, narrow, and anti-family and anti-choice in raising their objections. The churches could make no exclusive claim to be the place in which the divine was encountered, and thus congregations and their clergy were forced to question exactly what the church was for. Public claims for the authority of Christianity in the social had now to be cast in support of the family and individual choice.

CHAPTER 6

LISTENING TO THE PROTESTANT CLERGY

Public Religious Discourse I

The Challenge of “Fashionable Christianity”

The place of the church in society was under continuing negotiation in late Victorian Canada. Calls for disestablishment in Britain and the promotion of Canada as a liberal society were subverting the established place of Christianity. The churches and their clergy accepted this transition and worked to articulate new claims for leadership in the social. However, the place of the churches as voluntary institutions in public remained ambiguous. The editor of the London *Advertiser* highlighted this ambiguity in the fall of 1884 with a brief exploration entitled “Fashionable Christianity.”¹ This piece was occasioned by the appearance in a Toronto paper of an article on the reception received at several fashionable churches by a reporter dressed in “plain and poor attire.” Although in some cases the reporter was well received and “given a good seat by the ushers and courteous attention by the church members,” in most cases he was “put in a back corner and made to feel that the congregation did not care particularly for people of the class to which he seemed to belong.” One might have expected an indictment of “fashionable Christianity” at this point, along with some cutting remarks about how far the religion of the day had strayed from the principles of its founder, but this was not the case. Indeed, what followed presented a far deeper challenge to the place of religion in society for it defended rather than condemned class exclusivity in churches.

The editor applied the liberal assumption of freedom of association to churches, pointing out that the richly dressed and the poorly dressed naturally sought their own and were

¹ “Fashionable Christianity,” *Ad*, 16 October 1884, p. 2.

most comfortable among their peers. If the wealthy citizens of the community erected church buildings for their use and furnished them as well as they did their own homes; if they assembled together for worship for their own religious, social, and physical profit; where, the editor inquired, was the harm? Moreover, he added, these same citizens supported mission churches in less fashionable sections of town, thus “sending religious benefits to all classes of the community.” The central thrust of the editorial lay in its questioning the role of churches in the social: were churches clubhouses representing the interests of a middle class content with missionising the poor, or were they public edifices embracing and serving the whole community? The editor’s comments reflected an ambiguity central to the contemporary understanding of the place religion held in late Victorian Ontario. The Toronto reporter had tested the churches as agents of social integration and found them wanting, while the *Advertiser* defended social exclusivity in churches using the liberal vocabulary of freedom of association.

This ambiguity arose out of the fundamental transitions underway toward a liberal government rationality. As outlined in Chapter One, the church and the state were officially separated; however, habits of thought and action continued to provide underlying connections. The churches were widely viewed as being essential to the peace of the state and prosperity of the populace. Religion was accorded a place in the social, although the voluntarist discourse in which it was increasingly cast seriously undermined its claims to public authority. In 1839 Lord Durham observed that self-government would not be successful unless the religious welfare of the citizenry was attended to. The nature of that attention was still being worked out in the 1870s and 1880s. As chapter three has demonstrated, local congregations subscribed to distinct theological traditions regarding the nature of the church, and yet all these traditions were being pushed to adopt remarkably similar activities. As the churches responded to this transition, new programs, new governing structures, and new attitudes to church finance were devised. The traditional concern of the church for the poor and outcast was instrumental in the creation of an outspoken and socially prominent Protestant public. Grounded in a construction of Protestant harmony and good works, this lay-led “public” worked to establish and protect Protestant values as the definition of the

common good. The Protestant clergy were often the voice of the public and at the same time contested the hegemony of the “public” as the representatives of particular traditions. This chapter will concern itself with analysing the social pronouncements of the clergy to determine the nature of their claims to public authority. The next chapter parallels this one in listening to newspaper editors’ construction of religious authority.

Who were London’s Clergy?

Whatever the separation of church and state meant to London’s clergy, it is clear they did not take it to mean that they should leave the leadership of society to others. They persistently spoke in public and expected to be listened to, even by those outside their own congregations. Some years ago, S.F. Wise suggested that the clergy could provide the source of a distinctively Canadian intellectual history.² Wise argued that although Canadian intellectuals in the nineteenth century had not produced a philosophically distinct tradition, the great number of local clergy were applying a received tradition to the cultural conditions in which they worked. This observation affords a useful perspective from which to approach the contributions of London’s clergy. They were neither social nor religious innovators. Their pronouncements on religious and secular matters reflected the wider culture of late-Victorian Ontario and provided a vantage from which to observe the transition this study has been documenting. While there are important parallels in the concerns and the activities of Protestant and Catholic clergy, this study limits itself to the Protestant clergy as Catholic sermons were not often reported and the “public” meetings of Protestants, which provide such rich sources of Protestant rhetoric, have no Catholic equivalent. Nor are all of the Protestant clergy included: the pastors of the African-American Methodist and Baptist churches are not considered due to insufficient data; and the new religious groups, the Latter Day Saints and the Salvation Army, are ignored as well.³ These omissions are

² S.F. Wise, “Sermon Literature and Canadian Intellectual History,” in *Canadian History before Confederation*, ed. J.M. Bumsted (Georgetown: Irwin-Dorsey, 1972), 253-69.

³ For an overview of these groups see James Penton, “The Response to Two New Religions in Canada in the 1880s: The Latter-Day Saints and the Salvation Army,” *Proceedings of the Canadian Society of Church History* (1987).

significant because in each case they represent a religious alternative. One suspects that these clergy presented a cultural message and group identity quite distinct from those we will consider. In the 1871, 1881, and 1891 census years, the mainstream Protestant denominations accounted for just over eighty-one percent of the population. Of the remainder, just under seventeen percent were Roman Catholic, leaving between two and three percent for alternative forms of Protestantism, Jews, and others (see Table 4).

Table 4. The Religious Population of London, Ontario, 1871-1891

	1871		1881		1891	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Baptist	713	4.5	885	4.5	1036	4.6
Church of England	5282	33.4	6502	32.9	6720	30.2
Congregational	377	2.4	489	2.5	354	1.6
Methodist	3941	24.9	4952	25.1	6367	28.6
Presbyterian	2678	16.9	3257	16.5	3605	16.2
Roman Catholic	2700	17.0	3284	16.6	3450	15.5
Other Christian	70	.5	259	1.3	410	1.8
Non Christian	63	.4	51	.25	145	.65
Not Given	2	-	67	.35	195	.85
Total Population	15826	100	19746	100	22282	100

Source: Canada Census, 1871, 1881, and 1891.

The 165 clergy from the Church of England, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Congregational churches who ministered in London between 1870 and 1890 constitute the sources of clergy discourse for this study. A collection of over 500 sermons, lectures, speeches, pamphlets, memoirs or other pronouncements; along with biographical profiles of 120 of the clergy in the sample; provide the data for the discussion which follows. While the absent voices would add depth to an understanding of religion in the social, it was the discourse of mainstream Protestants which defined the parameters for how religion entered the public, even for the minority groups.

The position of the clergy was as contested as that of the church in the transition to liberal democracy. In the established church models, reflected in Anglican and Presbyterian practice, the clergy were “learned” gentlemen deriving status from their connection with local

ruling elites as well as the ministrations of the church.⁴ Ministers of the “dissenting” churches were among the most persistent critics of clergy privilege. They presented themselves as “of the people”—simple ministers of the Gospel against the state supported establishment.⁵ The rhetoric of liberalism and religious voluntarism undermined the traditional authority of the “established” clergy in their congregations and in public. However, the battles of the 1840s and 1850s were over and the perception of the “dissenting” clergy was in transition as well. By the 1870s and 1880s Methodism, a former leader in the fight against establishment in Upper Canada, considered itself a national church in waiting.⁶ The heroic days of circuit riding were happily in the past and Methodist ministers were aspiring to a status which befit their position as spiritual leaders of the community. Much the same could be said for the Congregationalists and Baptists who could now join with their ministerial brethren in regarding the ministers of the Salvation Army and Latter Day Saints with suspicion and contempt.⁷ Although the traditional accounts of clerical authority had largely been eroded, attention needs to be paid to the new basis of authority which empowered the activist clergy of this period.

There was some legitimacy in the claims of London’s clergy to be of the people. Virtually all of those for whom biographical data exists were British or Canadian by birth. The one exception during this entire period was Isaac Hellmuth, a Polish Jew who was converted to Christianity and emigrated first to England and then to Canada.⁸ Of the others, forty-two percent were born in Canada, thirty-three percent in England, fifteen percent in Ireland and nine percent in

⁴ R.D Gidney and W.P.J. Millar, *Professional Gentlemen*, 16-7.

⁵ Egerton Ryerson, *The Clergy Reserves Question* (Toronto: JH Lawrence, 1839, reprint Ann Arbor MI: UMI, 1981).

⁶ William Magney, “The Methodist Church and the National Gospel, 1884-1914,” and Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion*, chapter 8.

⁷ For a variety of attitudes regarding the coming of the Salvation Army to London see “The Question of the Day: The Clergymen of London and Surroundings,” *Ad*, 17 July 1884, p 3, 6. Clergy opinion on the Latter Day Saints was not as systematically solicited, however, see the letter to the editor by Rev. James Cooper, “The Latter Day Saints,” *Ad*, 29 March 1876, p. 1. Also see Penton, “The Response to Two New Religions.”

⁸ A.H. Crowfoot, *This Dreamer*.

Scotland (see Table 5).⁹ Not surprisingly, the older clergy were more likely to have been born outside of Canada. The year 1840 divides the sample in half, sixty clergy having been born before that year and sixty during or after it. Seventy-four percent of the older group were immigrants, while sixty percent of the younger group were native-born.

Table 5. London clergy by place of birth

	Canada	England	Ireland	Scotland	Other	Totals
Baptist	3	1	-	2	-	6
Church of England	6	6	7	1	1	21
Congregational	2	-	-	1	-	3
All Methodists	32	29	9	3	-	75
Wesleyan Methodist	3	1	4	2	-	10
New Connexion	1	-	2	-	-	3
Methodist	20	12	2	1	-	36
Methodist Episcopal	3	-	-	-	-	3
Primitive Methodist	2	9	-	-	-	11
Bible Christian	3	7	1	-	-	11
Presbyterian	3	-	-	3	-	6
Totals	46	36	17	10	1	110

These numbers probably underestimate the “Canadianisation” of the London clergy for a number of immigrants had come as infants or young children. In general the churches were successful in recruiting a Canadian clergy; however, some denominations were more successful than others. The Methodist Church in Canada was the most successful, over half of the clergy over the entire period were Canadian born, as were seventy-six percent of the younger group. The least successful were the small Methodist groups, the Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists, who remained strongly dependent upon their English parent until the union with the Canadian Methodists in 1883.¹⁰ The Baptist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist clergy stayed in their charges for relatively long periods of time and, therefore, few cases exist from which to

⁹ The biographical analysis is compiled from obituaries published in church or secular papers and from biographical files held by the UCA, the BAM, and Anglican Church of Canada, London Synod Office.

¹⁰ John Douglas Hoover, “The Primitive Methodist Church in Canada, 1829-1884” (M.A. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1970) and J. Warren Caldwell, “The Unification of Methodism in Canada, 1865-1884.”

generalise.¹¹ The Church of England, however, continued to look to Britain, especially England and Ireland, for the majority of their recruits. The Church of England clergy also tended to be somewhat older, two thirds of them having been born before 1840 as opposed to slightly under half (46%) of all Methodist groups combined.

Little can be confidently said about the social origins of London's clergy as this information was not systematically reported and only rarely appears in obituaries. There were some notable cases of working class origins. Stories of the "mine to the manse" or the "lumberyard to the pulpit" were given emphasis, indicating they were exceptional.¹² Several examples existed where the ministry seems to have become the family business with young men following in the footsteps of fathers or brothers.¹³ In other cases a change of career brought men from commercial pursuits into the ministry. William Briggs had been a printer and publisher before joining the ranks of the Methodist clergy. Briggs successfully merged his two vocations by operating the Methodist Book Room and acting for many years as the official publisher of the church.¹⁴ A more common pattern was a move from school teaching into the ministry.¹⁵ One suspects that such a change offered talented young men better hope of advancement than a profession which was becoming increasingly feminised.¹⁶ Remuneration varied widely. Small

¹¹ Methodists are over represented in the sample (68%) due to their practice of itinerancy.

¹² Both of these examples are taken from the ranks of the Primitive Methodists who had close ties to the working class in England. David Taylor entered the mines in England at the age of eight. After an injury he was employed as a messenger boy by the mine office and rose through a number of clerical positions to become Secretary of a colliery. His rise in business was accompanied by a fervent faith and role as a local preacher. In 1880 he emigrated to Canada and entered the ministry. Eli Middleton was also born in England and was appointed a local preacher at the age of 16. In 1866 he arrived in Toronto where he was casually employed. The writer of his obituary notice informs us that, "the Church had need of just such men and from the lumberyard he was sent to the pulpit ..." See biographical files on Taylor and Middleton in UCA.

¹³ J.J.A. Proudfoot succeeded his father at First Presbyterian; H.D. Hunter's two brothers, Samuel and W.J. Hunter, became famous Methodist preachers.

¹⁴ See biographical file on William Briggs in UCA.

¹⁵ See for example biographical files of George R. Richardson, Reuben W. Millyard, and Richard W. Williams in UCA.

¹⁶ Alison Prentice, "The Feminization of Teaching," in *The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian's Women's History*, eds. Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977); R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar, *Inventing Secondary Education: the Rise of the High School*

Baptist congregations struggled to find a pastor who would minister to them for the \$500 to 600 per year they were able to offer. At the other end of the spectrum, Rev. Murray was criticised for his \$2000 stipend.¹⁷ The size of the congregation and its parent denomination combined to determine the level of salary. Baptists and the small Methodist denominations typically paid between \$600 and \$1100. Congregational salaries edged slightly higher; and Presbyterian, Anglican, and the larger Methodist churches paid between \$1500 and \$2000. Ministerial salaries were matters for congregational discussion in Baptist and Congregational churches and raises were often provided when attendance and giving, the most measurable indicators of ministerial success, were rising. Rewarding good performance in this way made its way into the Church of England where, for the most part, an older attitude toward clergy livings predominated.¹⁸ For example, the vestry of the Chapter House of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity voted to increase the salary of their dynamic young pastor, Rev. Timothy O'Connell.¹⁹ Disputes also arose among the Anglican churches regarding the distribution of rectory funds, the ongoing legacy of the clergy reserves settlement. Suburban churches, often in poorer areas of town with less affluent parishioners, argued they had a right to some portion of these funds to equalise the salaries paid to Anglican clergy.²⁰

The educational attainments of the clergy serving London also depended upon denominational affiliation. With one exception, all of the Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian and Congregational clergy for whom educational information exists received formal theological

in *Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 299-300; and Nancy J. Christie, "Psychology, Sociology and the Secular Moment: The Ontario Educational Association's Quest for Authority, 1880-1900," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 25 (1990).

¹⁷ Minutes of Grosvenor Street Baptist Church throughout 1888 and 1889 reflect the difficulty of a small church attracting and holding a pastor it can only pay \$500-600 per year. At the other end of the spectrum Presbyterian Pastor Rev. J.A. Murray is confronted by a presbyter for his "exorbitant \$2,000 salary," see "Practice What You Preach," *FP*, 13 March 1889, p. 3.

¹⁸ Gidney, *Professional Gentlemen*, 15-6.

¹⁹ "Easter Vestries," *Ad*, 13 April 1884, p. 4.

²⁰ The distribution of funds from the St. Paul's Rectory surplus was eventually settled in the courts, see "Adjourned Easter Vestries," *FP*, 11 May 1886, p. 3; "The Easter Vestries," *FP*, 12 April 1887, p. 3; and "The Easter Vestries," *FP*, 23 April 1889, p. 5.

training before taking their pulpits.²¹ The Methodist ministry relied less on formal training and more on a form of apprenticeship. Of the sixty-eight Methodists for whom educational information exists, forty-five (66%) received no formal theological education (see Table 6). A definite pattern emerges in Methodist biographical accounts in which promising young men became Sabbath school teachers and class meeting leaders and then were placed on the “local preachers plan” before being officially accepted as probationers for the ministry.²² Probationers served a three to five year probation during which the candidate was given a charge and a prescribed course of study. If the probation and the course of study were successfully completed in the consideration of the Conference, the candidate was then ordained.²³ A striking change is evident between Methodist clergy born before and after 1840. Only five of the thirty-four in the older group received formal education, as compared to eighteen of the thirty-five in the younger group. The Primitive Methodist continued steadfastly in the older tradition; none of their clergy attended college or university. On the other hand, among the younger group of Wesleyan and Methodist Church in Canada ministers sixteen of twenty-four received formal training, most of them at Victoria College. The educational experience of the clergy illustrates not only an increased reliance on formal training but also the important role of Canadian church colleges in providing this training.²⁴ All of the major denominations had, by this time, established a theological college and some had several. The trend to a Canadian clergy is even more striking in regard to education than place of birth. Of the fifty-six men having received formal theological

²¹ The exception referred to, M.E. Siple, was ordained as a Quaker before becoming a Baptist. See “Memoir” biographical files BAM.

²² See for example biographical files on Joseph H. Robinson, Joseph Markham, Thomas Cobb, and William Hayhurst in UCA.

²³ Neil Semple describes the process of ministerial preparation in *The Lord's Dominion*, 255-7.

²⁴ On role of denominational colleges in the Canadianisation of the clergy see John S. Moir, “The Canadianization of the Protestant Churches,” *Canadian Historical Association Report*, 1966. Also see D.C. Masters, *Protestant Church Colleges in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966) and Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century*.

training, forty-seven (84%) attended a Canadian College. England and Ireland each contributed to the education of four and the United States one of London's clergy.

Table 6. Country of Theological Education of Clergy by Denomination

	Canada	England	Ireland	United States	No formal education	Total
Baptist	4	0	0	0	1	5
Church of England	11	4	4	0	0	19
Congregational	2	0	0	0	0	2
Methodist	22	0	0	1	45	68
Presbyterian	8	0	0	0	0	8
<i>Total</i>	47	4	4	1	46	102

The orientation of religious influences, at least in regard to recruiting clergy, was notably east toward Britain rather than south toward the United States. While the influence of American religion on London should not be discounted, it came in the form of visiting lecturers and evangelists, newspaper reports, and a flood of devotional literature rather than as resident clergy. Britain remained an important source of personnel, but this reality did not detract from the development of a Canadian-born clergy. This was particularly true of Methodist groups such as the Wesleyans and the Episcopalians, which broke ties with their parent bodies early. The Canadianisation of the clergy received a boost from the efforts of all denominations to provide Canadian theological colleges. Educational credentials were becoming increasingly important, and this trend was particularly evident among younger Methodists. The disparities in salaries point to an emerging tendency to rank clergy less by denomination and more by the size and affluence of the congregation served.²⁵ By the middle 1880s the making of a distinctively Canadian Protestant clergy was well underway. The religious context these ministers faced presented challenges due to the remarkable success of Protestant Christianity in gaining adherents.

²⁵ Gidney, *Professional Gentlemen*, 275-7.

Locating Clergy Authority

The governmentality that was transforming social, political, and economic relationships as Canada emerged as a liberal society had parallel effects on the authority of clergy. By accepting, and indeed celebrating, religious pluralism Canadian society had effectively enshrined a free trade in religion. The general religious character of the London population (illustrated in Table 4) provides evidence that religious voluntarism was delivering on its promise to make Canadian society Christian. Although many Londoners did not attend church regularly, few did not regard themselves as adherents of one of the major denominations. In each of the three census years under consideration, those who identified themselves to the census takers as Baptist, Anglican, Congregationalist, Methodist, or Presbyterian accounted for eighty-two percent of the population. The statistics for London closely resemble those compiled by John Webster Grant for Ontario as a whole, although London had a significantly higher proportion of Anglicans (33.4% as compared to 20.4% in 1871) and the other denominations were all somewhat lower.²⁶ The virtual absence of non-Christians in the population meant that growth within one denomination could only come at the expense of another. The dominance of Protestantism could have been considered a victory; however, along with the triumphalism came signs of tension.

The evangelical "creed"

With the failure of attempts at establishment, churches and their clergy did not have social authority by right.²⁷ The government rationality that rejected privilege and status as the basis of social position established merit in their place.²⁸ Growth and progress determined merit for individuals, businesses, and churches alike.²⁹ Methodists in particular considered their primary goal to be expansion, and all denominations built increasingly larger buildings to accommodate

²⁶ Grant, *A Profusion of Spires*, 224.

²⁷ Donald M. Scott describes this transition from an American perspective in *From Office to Profession*.

²⁸ Gidney, *Professional Gentlemen*, describes this transformation in the older professions and the process by which new vocations sought to construct themselves as "professions."

²⁹ Hilton, *The Age of Atonement*, 49-55.

the expected growth.³⁰ During this period, the number of Methodists and adherents of small Christian groups like the Salvation Army grew at the expense of other groups, in particular the Anglicans, who experienced slight declines. Religious progress, at least what could be measured numerically, was highly competitive.³¹

However, competition was not the only factor involved in the growing influence of Protestantism. The evangelical imperative to gain and keep adherents was mitigated by continued calls for Protestant harmony. The scriptures taught that a house divided against itself could not stand. If the guardians of public virtue were at odds with themselves, the forces of vice would have the advantage. Union revivals and interdenominational associations were the embodiment of this harmony that was maintained, at least in part, to ensure that religious competition did not become “ruinous.”³² Protestant harmony provided a public face and public voice to Protestant religion which disregarded the underlying differences and tensions essential to identity and continuity in congregational life. This public presentation expressed itself in what Goldwin French identified as the evangelical “creed.”³³ The most significant advantage of this “creed” was that it was not credal. It provided a powerful language of consensus that pointed toward broad areas of shared activity and concern without requiring unanimity. Thus, as good citizens of a liberal society, the clergy could work together toward common ends without having to agree on doctrine or ecclesial practice. The particularity of denominational traditions seemed to be transcended in the vocabulary of the evangelical creed, and thus a common voice was found in public despite very real underlying differences.

³⁰ Grant, *A Profusion of Spires*, 174-5.

³¹ Gidney, *Professional Gentlemen*, 268-9

³² Michael Bliss, “The Protective Impluse. An Approach to the Social History of Oliver Mowat’s Ontario,” in *Oliver Mowat’s Ontario*, ed. Donald Swainson (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1972), 175.

³³ Goldwin French, “The Evangelical Creed in Canada.” Much attention has been given to the influence of evangelicalism on Canadian history in recent years, see in particular George Rawlyk, ed., *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997).

Evangelical approaches were deeply rooted in the religious history and culture of the London area. The efforts of two pioneer missionaries, Presbyterian William Proudfoot and Anglican Benjamin Cronyn, introduced this distinct religious character to London in the early 1830s. Cronyn, an Irish Low Churchman, and Proudfoot, a minister of the United Secessionist Church, had both been influenced by British evangelicalism.³⁴ Cronyn's victory over A.N. Bethune, the High Church candidate, in the first Episcopal election in Canada underscored the firmly evangelical character of the new Diocese of Huron.³⁵ The founding of Huron College in 1863 ensured the Diocese a source of reliable evangelical clergy, untainted by the dangerous influences at work at Trinity College.³⁶ William Proudfoot introduced a voluntarist and evangelical Calvinist Presbyterianism to London.³⁷ In 1844, to provide a Canadian born clergy, Proudfoot established a Divinity Hall in London. Although the Hall was later moved to Toronto and eventually merged with Knox College, Proudfoot's influence was strongly felt. From 1832 to 1890, first he, and then his son, pastored the church he founded. Although Cronyn and Proudfoot shared evangelical convictions, they were pioneering missionaries for different representations of the Kingdom and personal, political, and religious differences led to deep animosity between them.³⁸ However, London's religious development was thoroughly evangelical, a characteristic which the advent of evangelical Methodist and Baptist works only served to intensify.

Shared evangelical precepts provided the basis for a pragmatic working relationship among London's clergy; however, such precepts did not, nor were they intended to, bring with them complete unanimity. There is considerable evidence that deeply held theological differences

³⁴ Alfred H. Crowfoot, *Benjamin Cronyn: First Bishop of Huron* (London: Synod of the Diocese of Huron, 1957). On Proudfoot see Moir, *Enduring Witness*, 84-5 and "The Proudfoot Papers," *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Historical Society*, Part VI, 1915.

³⁵ See Fahey, *In His Name*, 255.

³⁶ Crowfoot, *Benjamin Cronyn*. Also see Benjamin Cronyn, *Bishop of Huron's Objections to the Theological Teaching of Trinity College* (London, C.W., 1862) and *The Protest of the Minority of the Corporation of Trinity College, Against the Resolution Approving of the Theological Teaching of that Institution* (London, C.W., 1864).

³⁷ Moir, *Enduring Witness*, 84-5

simmered beneath the show of harmony and from time to time they erupted into public controversies. Such was the case in the debate that raged for a time in 1877 between Congregationalist Robert Wallace and Presbyterian Andrew Kennedy. Wallace preached a series of sermons on “Calvin and Geneva” in which the nature of Calvinism was described as “a system so gloomy and severe that even its friends have to receive it as an appalling mystery.” Wallace attributed this to Calvin’s ill health and (given the importance of “home” to social constructs of the period) his lack of family life. Such a characterisation could not be allowed to stand unchallenged by Kennedy who defended both Calvin and his doctrines, suggesting that Wallace’s account had been borrowed from “Papal traducers” of the great man.³⁹

Denominational loyalties remained strong: Baptists were convinced that they had recovered the primitive theology of baptism, and the Anglicans were secure in the knowledge that theirs was the primitive ecclesiology.⁴⁰ Even within denominational traditions significant sources of disagreement emerged. Although the Methodists were successful in bring about union in 1884, dissension about the place of local preachers and the role of the laity in the governance of the new church was acute. The local congregation of Bible Christians decided it could not, in good conscience, join the union over this very issue.⁴¹ However, cooperation in matters of common interest required a cultural consensus rather than a theological one. The evangelical creed provided a variety of religious harmony which corresponded to the liberal values of individualism

³⁸ William Proudfoot, “The Proudfoot Papers, Part XI,” *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Historical Society* (1922) 90-1 and Crowfoot, *Benjamin Cronyn*.

³⁹ For this exchange see the *Ad*, “Calvin and Geneva,” 12 November 1877; “Calvin - A Necessary Defence,” 17 November 1877; “Rev. Mr. Wallace Replies,” 19 November 1877; and “John Calvin,” 26 November 1877. With this defense of Calvin the editor gives notice that no more space will be made available for this controversy, indicating the limited tolerance for such a denominationally driven dispute in a public forum.

⁴⁰ Baptist James Cooper makes some cutting remarks on infant baptism and the episcopacy in “Mr Gladstone and Bishop Walsh on the Vatican Decrees,” *Ad*, 12 March 1875, p. 2 and disputes with J.J.A. Proudfoot over infant baptism in “An Apology,” *Ad*, 21 April 1879, p. 2.

⁴¹ “The B.C. Church Declines to Join the Union Scheme,” *Ad*, 17 September 1883, p. 4. Despite local resistance Horton Street Bible Christian Church became part of the United Methodist Church.

and progress and structured unity in the common pursuit of pragmatic objectives. The Ministerial Association provided a venue for the evangelical creed to function.

The Ministerial Association

The Ministerial Association was not quite the expression of a united Protestant community, for once again the Anglican clergy declined to participate. The absence of the Anglicans meant that the Association was dominated by Methodists. A superannuated Methodist was typically the president, a Presbyterian vice-president, and a Baptist the secretary. The Association undertook to speak on behalf of the Christian public, and the local press treated their pronouncements as authoritative.⁴² Membership was open to those who served Protestant congregations in London and area and to retired clergy and remained in the low twenties throughout the 1880s. Meetings typically revolved around discussion of a paper prepared by one of the members. It was through the Ministerial Association that annual days of prayer and union Thanksgiving services were organised. The WCA, the WCTU, and the YMCA all sent delegations to the Association requesting cooperation and support for various aspects of their programs. Action on issues such as Sabbath desecration and the posting of immodest bills by travelling entertainers was mobilised by the Association, although the absence of the Anglicans made it difficult to enlist the support of all Protestants on such issues.

Discussion at Ministerial Association meetings tended to focus on shared challenges. How and what one preached was an ongoing matter of concern. Means for increasing the involvement of parishioners, particularly young men, in religious duties provided interesting discussions as well. The ministerial reflection on popular amusements and the appropriate response to them reveals their own construction of their authority in their churches and society. This matter was taken up by default when the paper scheduled for their April 1881 meeting was unavailable. Methodist R.H. Robinson began by suggesting that such amusements were not much of a threat and argued that ministers should not undertake to judge “those who were without.”

⁴² “Ministerial Association,” *FP*, 16 March 1885, p. 3.

Robinson cautioned against overreaching their influence. “The Association could not undertake to be the censors of the public in a general way. The only thing they could really control was in the churches, but for his own part he knew of nothing objectionable there.”⁴³

Some of his colleagues believed Robinson overly optimistic in suggesting that ministers had control even over their own churches. Baptist Alexander Grant was far less confident, warning that the church had erred in putting “herself under the obligation of raising large sums of money.” This undercut the authority of ministers within their own congregations for, in endeavouring to attract the adherents and money required to pay off large debts, the clergy “sought to amuse the people.” Such worldly concerns distracted ministers from their true calling, and they failed the people by not challenging them to an arduous faith. There was further debate about how ministerial authority should be exercised. Robinson advocated a light hand in leading the congregation, particularly the young. He denied ever having seen dancing at any social in his church because “Whenever he believed they were going to commence he left.” His colleagues thought this was an abdication of spiritual responsibility. Fellow Methodist David Savage confessed that “he had been at a social and strong symptoms of dancing were manifested.” However, rather than conveniently absenting himself, “he kept sentry and prevented the carrying out of the scheme.” Most of those present advocated a more directive pastoral role in such situations.

Those assembled moved on to discuss activities at church socials, although the general theme of the appropriate level of clerical control continued to colour the discussion. Baptists Grant and Firth expressed concern that socials attracted the wrong kind of people, encouraged the wrong kinds of activities, and generally did harm.⁴⁴ The Methodists used socials as a key ingredient of church life and fund-raising and thus tended to take a more open approach. Methodist Rev. Collings argued against the austerity of the Baptists, that “Christianity was not

⁴³ “Popular Amusements,” *FP*, 18 April 1881, p. 4.

⁴⁴ On this same issue see the comments by Grant, “Ministerial Association,” *Ad*, 14 September 1880, p. 4

intended to shut out amusement, but sin.” Presbyterian Murray took a stance between Collings and the Baptists, believing that amusements and socials were harmless but had bad associations. At the next month’s meeting it was suggested that churches should provide something more uplifting than the objectionable amusements.⁴⁵ At the same time both meetings revealed a strong undercurrent of concern that the churches were not in the business of providing entertainment and that pressure to do so was undermining their true purpose.

Ultimately the solution to the provision of appropriate amusements was to fall to the home, and not to the churches, in the consideration of the Ministerial Association. The churches had power to effect change to the degree they cooperated with and supported the home and the family. Rev. Quance pointed out that clerical denunciations would not change things. However, he believed the church, as it acted through the family, could be a powerful shaping force. “The Christian Church should endeavour through the home to change the bent of the young mind by providing some less harmful recreations.”⁴⁶ Yet there were dangers even with this course of action. Rev. Murray cautioned against the churches providing too much activity for the various members of families. He objected to “the tendency of the religion of the day to empty the homes and draw people in great concourses.” The “tendency” Murray alluded to clearly describes the increasing number of activities that the churches, the YMCA, the YWCTU, and other agencies were making available in the 1880s. Religious activity itself could undermine character if it offered attractions which took members away from the family circle. Against this trend, Murray counselled that what was really “necessary was to make the home the brightest spot on earth.”⁴⁷ Murray and his colleagues were fully convinced that the attractions of home, fortified by the religious sanction of the churches, would outweigh the pull of a potentially harmful amusement.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ “Popular Amusements,” *FP*, 16 May 1881, p. 4.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*

⁴⁷ “Popular Amusements,” *FP*, 18 April 1881, p. 4.

⁴⁸ The home and family worship was primary location for Victorian religion, Colleen McDannell, *The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press,

The debates over the issue of amusements symbolised for members of the Ministerial Association the contested nature of their authority as arbiters of public standards. Shortly after extensive press reports of these debates were published the Association moved to exclude reporters from its meetings. The motion hinged on whether the Association was a public or a private body. The membership finally decided that their expressions of opinion should be considered professional deliberations and not official pronouncements. Thus after August 1881 the meetings of the Association were “deemed strictly private.”⁴⁹

The discussions that were reported reveal the strength of outside pressures brought to bear on the clergy, and which seemed to impell them to amuse and entertain to attract the members necessary to pay the large debts incurred in building. London’s church buildings spoke eloquently of the triumph of the Christian religion but at least some of the clergy experienced the victory as a great weight which transferred effective ecclesiastical authority toward those who could pay. As a result some pastors feared diverting their attention to doing what brought popularity and paid the bills rather than promoting the kind of arduous Christianity Grant regarded as so necessary to the spiritual well-being of the flock. These pressures weakened the authority of the clergy even within the churches. The strategy for reclaiming ministerial authority in the churches and in the social was to turn attention toward the home and family. The argument that follows suggests that the rhetorical location of the public authority of the clergy was as the protectors of the private sphere of the home and family.

The clergy in public and private

The evangelical discourse which provided the common language for clergy pronouncements in public insisted that true religion was a matter internal to the individual heart and mind. Spiritual life was at one remove from ordinary life. Underlying the mundane was a

1986) Also see Nancy Christie, ed., *Household of Faith: Family Religion and Social Change in Canada* (Forthcoming Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

⁴⁹ Initially the Association voted ten to eight against excluding the press, “Popular Amusements,” *FP*, 18 April 1881, p. 4. However, a successful motion to exclude the press was put in August, “Devotional,” *Ad*, 15 August 1881, p. 4.

deeper reality in communion with the divine and providing meaning and authenticity to thought and actions.⁵⁰ Access to this spiritual dimension came through conversion and inner change. In this sense religion was private, denoting some inner reality that could not be constrained or regulated from outside. Religious regulation, which was characteristic of established churches, was understood by the evangelical creed to be detrimental to this essentially inner religion. True religion was fostered in private, and home and family were believed to be the appropriate context in which spiritual life could mature.⁵¹ Too much public interaction, even activities offered by the church, could disrupt the interiority required. The religious responsibilities of the individual and the home were clear. But this form of spirituality created a problem for the clergy for they themselves were outsiders whose interference could undermine spiritual authenticity. Their entrance into the spiritual lives of their parishioners was legitimate only in support of the integrity of home and family and in defence of religion in some personal private space. Nevertheless, public space required the action and concern of the clergy, as the activities of the Ministerial Association illustrate. Clergy claims to authority in public were even more problematic than in private because religion had been removed from the public sphere and the “world” had been constructed as a place of danger and mission.

The contours of public and private in the late nineteenth century are difficult to chart. The move into the private was not an abandonment of claims in public but rather a recasting of the nature of those claims. With the end of the established church model, the public was no longer a space in which the clergy could act directly. Various renderings of public space in liberal societies had defined political and economic activity outside the purview of religion. When political and economic relationships were understood as direct interventions of divine

⁵⁰ Richard Rabinowitz, *The Spiritual Self in Everyday Life*, 237.

⁵¹ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 180-92. This has been a major finding of the work of Van Die, Marguerite, “‘A Woman's Awakening’: Evangelical Belief and Female Spirituality in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Canada,” in *Canadian Women: A Reader* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace, 1996).

activity, the authority of the clergy to speak on such matters was clear.⁵² Central to the transformation that created the modern world was the naturalisation of political and economic relationships. John Locke and other theorists of the social contract removed the origins, and hence the destinies, of nations from God's initiative, assigning these instead to the body politic itself. Adam Smith, in turn, desacralised the wealth of nations, renarrating economic welfare as the pursuit of individual interest governed by the invisible hand of the market. This naturalisation emptied politics and economics of theological import and transferred authority to speak on these matters to the new science, political economy, which would "discover" their governing laws.⁵³ The narratives which situated clergy authority had to adopt the naturalised vocabulary of the new governmentality if their claims were to carry weight. Hence the language of the clergy increasingly drew attention to spiritual and moral laws that governed behaviour as counter parts to the natural laws governing all of creation.⁵⁴ For example, ministers began to teach that the process of salvation followed a divine law as clearly as natural phenomena followed natural laws. This parallelism was pursued by Rev. M.A. Wright, pastor of Grace Methodist Episcopal, in a sermon he preached in 1875.

While salvation is secured by faith, this is not a lawless faith, but a faith in accordance with the divine order of things, recognizing obedience to the divine law as the ultimate end of human salvation. As wood or coal acts as fuel to keep the fire in existence, so are works of faith, and as the fire must die without fuel, so must faith without works.⁵⁵

Wright's call for his congregants to pursue the formation of Christian character was authorised by the unassailable reality of natural laws. Just as fire requires fuel, so faith requires Christian

⁵² Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Worldly Philosophers*, 5th (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980), 20-2.

⁵³ Denis Meuret, "A Political Genealogy of Political Economy," in *Foucault's New Domains*, eds Mike Gane and Terry Johnson (London: Routledge, 1993) and Heilbroner, *The Worldly Philosophers*, 51-3.

⁵⁴ Boyd Hilton has ably demonstrated the correspondence between evangelical vocabulary and economic discourse in this period, Hilton, *Age of Atonement*. My reading of the sermons by Wright and Tilley owes much to Hilton's analysis.

⁵⁵ "Evangelistic Efforts, Rev. Mr. Wright's Views on 'Christian Work,'" *FP*, 16 August 1875, p. 4.

character to be sustained. Faith was the beginning of salvation, but failure to obey the “divine order of things” through “works” was to lose what had been gained. In Wright’s view evangelical spirituality had to be born and nurtured in a private space but it required public activity if it was to bear fruit.⁵⁶ Wright used the vocabulary of economic relationships to describe the nature of works of faith for his congregation.⁵⁷

The work of salvation is the business of life, and there is danger of bankruptcy unless the ordinary laws governing a successful business are attended to.... [W]here there is no diligence, and where the work is carried on in a spasmodic manner, there is danger of loss; ... and where procrastination marks the life and action, there is probability of failure. Where there is no punctuality, and where enjoyments are entered into and [commitments] not met at the time arranged, want of confidence is produced, and insolvency is the result. Where there is indifference and want of exactness to moral honesty in the use of time, means, expenses or whatever pertains to the successful cultivation of the business, demoralization, disaster and bankruptcy must be the result. As in the mercantile, industrial and professional career, so it is in Christian life and prosperity of the Church of God. The Church of God is a brotherhood—a mighty company with capital supplied to each by the great head of the church. As there is no small interest at stake, and as we must give a strict account of service and property, we must work as one in earnest with the utmost diligence and exactness.⁵⁸

Christian life, like economic life was, in this view, essentially an individual pursuit of duties and responsibilities. The church as presented in this discourse was the invisible “brotherhood” whose prosperity resulted from the individual efforts of Christians. The communal claims of the church were deconstructed into the internal personally motivated pursuits of the faithful. The clergy could claim a role in aiding the production of character, here defined as diligence, punctuality, and honesty, in individuals that the invisible hand would mysteriously work to build the church of God. The call to character, and the claim that it was through the ministrations of the church that character was most successfully constructed, became the basis for the authority of the clergy in

⁵⁶ George Marsden and David Bebbington both link the internal change in conversion to an external activism as a defining characteristic of nineteenth-century evangelicalism. George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 4-5. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 10-2.

⁵⁷ The use of commercial metaphors in outlining the requirements of salvation was very popular see for example J.A. Murray, “Gospel Truths, Rev. Mr. Murray at St. Andrew’s,” *FP*, 6 December 1875, p. 4 and sermon by Dr. Albert Carman in “Trade and Get Rich,” *FP*, 31 January 1888, p. 8.

⁵⁸ “Evangelistic Efforts, Rev. Mr. Wright’s Views on ‘Christian Work,’” *FP*, 16 August 1875, p. 4.

late Victorian London. Fundamental to this authority was the clergy's ability to expound and interpret God's law as found in the scriptures, so that when Rev. James Graham told his Methodist congregation in 1876 that the scripture should provide the basis for Canadian law, he was not advocating a theocracy.⁵⁹ Like Wright, he was simply asserting his conviction that moral laws could be discovered by careful study of the Bible just as natural laws could be discovered by careful observation of nature. Following these moral laws would result in spiritual and material prosperity, while ignoring or disregarding them would lead to individual and collective disaster as surely as would disregarding the law of gravity. Thus, the clergy served the public good by making it clear how Londoners were to adhere to God's laws and thus prosper.

Christian character in public

The development of Christian character was a private responsibility; however, liberal society was constructed of private individuals, and thus personal integrity was considered to be the source of social well being. The social benefit of Christianity to liberal society was to lie in its promotion of nation-building and good citizenship. The blessings of God for which Londoners were to be thankful were enumerated by Rev. James Ballantyne of Knox Presbyterian in a Thanksgiving day sermon as "peace, laws made by ourselves, the choice of those who fill positions of authority, civil and religious liberty." These benefits were not bestowed promiscuously, but depended upon the state instilling Christian morality in "preparation for the duties of citizenship." Failure to pay adequate attention to this prerequisite for democracy was to "invite a reign of irresponsibility and immorality,"⁶⁰ or as Rev. W.R. Parker expressed the same message more positively: "a prosperous country must sustain a pure, vigorous and evangelical church."⁶¹ Rev. Lounsbury of Grace Methodist Episcopal considered that in purely financial terms, the churches more than paid their way; for as religion advanced, vice retreated, and the

⁵⁹"Law and Liquor, The Views of Rev. Mr. Graham," *Ad*, 13 March 1876, p. 1.

⁶⁰ See the sermon by James Ballantyne in "Thanksgiving Sermons," *FP*, 8 November 1889, p. 5.

⁶¹"Twelfth of July Sermons," *Ad*, 12 July 1875, p. 1

great costs to the state of courts, jails, and law enforcement declined.⁶² London's Protestant clergy were virtually unanimous in their support of prohibitory liquor laws and argued in favour of legislation to ensure a Sabbath day of rest.⁶³ Throughout this period, the clergy agitated for or against legislation, quite clearly using their position as ministers of the Gospel to rally support. In all of this activity, the desired outcome was causally connected with obedience to the clergy's version of God's requirements.

The clergy's claim to authority in public was premised on their claim to serve the public good. Both claims promised measurable and tangible results. In private the church and the home would produce Christian character, and in public Christian influence would ensure peace, prosperity, and good government. Thus what Canada needed was not less but more religion in its public life. This was the argument advanced by Rev. H.D. Hunter, pastor of the Congregationalist Church. He received an anonymous letter criticising his public statements regarding the Jesuits Estates Act as an inappropriate mix of religion and politics. Hunter's response was direct and unequivocal: he read the letter from the pulpit the next Sunday, and proceeded to expound upon the responsibilities of the Christian clergy to ensure social virtue. Hunter concluded that it was "the province of the Christian pulpit to preach about everything that concerned human life," and that far from being detrimental to the political process "Canada had no more pressing need...than the inculcation of Christian righteousness into her national affairs."⁶⁴ However, the clergy's claim to "preach about everything" was a very different construction of their public authority than that John Strachan and his generation had aspired to. With the separation of the church and state, the churches could not act directly in public. They set out to do by evangelical means what Strachan's advocacy of legislative establishment had failed to accomplish.⁶⁵ London's clergy were to create a Christian society by the action of individual Christians whose private character would ensure

⁶² "The Church of God Owes the World Nothing," *FP*, 17 February 1873, p. 3.

⁶³ James Cooper, "Sabbath Keeping by Compulsion: Church and State," *Ad*, 7 July 1878, p. 4

⁶⁴ Hunter's comments in "Question Drawer," *FP*, 2 November 1885, p. 3

⁶⁵ Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 119.

public morality. No claim to authority could be made by the clergy based on their status. Instead they appealed to their ability to inculcate Christian righteousness in individual citizens, and thereby to produce by indirect means a prosperous, secure and Christian Canadian public life.

The most elegant codification of the perspective from which the clergy seemed to act in public occurred in a sermon by Rev. W.H. Tilley, first Rector of Cronyn Memorial Church and son of New Brunswick politician Sir Leonard Tilley. On the occasion of the 38th anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession, Tilley took as his text Jesus' injunction to "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God, God's."⁶⁶ The coin of the Roman Empire was stamped with Caesar's image signifying his authority over those who used the coin. Jesus himself endorsed the civil authority of human governments by his words. However, Jesus also commanded that one render to God what was God's. Tilley reminded his parishioners that all of humanity was made in the image of God. The imprint of God is upon the very soul of the Christian, and thus God has a prior claim to them. The state could make legitimate claims on the Christian person. However, spiritual and moral convictions were private and could be ruled only by the laws of God. Tilley further explored the boundaries of this public and private space.

What is the nature of the request Caesar makes: Does it belong to matters of property in which he has a delegated authority? Does he ask for that which bears his image? Render it. Does he ask for some moral service which you feel is contrary to the requirement of God? Does he seek to govern your judgement, your conscience, your voice, your hand? Render it not.⁶⁷

His analysis takes a classical liberal line on the limits of legitimate government activity: the liberal state could make no moral claims on its citizens, yet it required honesty and diligence if self-government was to produce the stable and prosperous society all desired. Tilley's appropriation of liberal rhetoric claimed for the churches the territory the state had abandoned: all matters bearing on moral or intellectual judgement were matters in which the image of God had priority over the image of Caesar. Thus, in these essential areas the clergy and the churches claimed unchallenged

⁶⁶ See Sermon by W.H. Tilley, "The Churches," *Ad*, 21 June 1875, p. 1. The sermon is based on Mark 12:17

⁶⁷ "The Churches," *Ad*, 21 June 1875, p. 1

authority. At the same time, Tilley effectively relinquished authority over property and capital, and arguably, over the whole of economic and political relationships considering these domains to be best left to Caesar. Just as the government rationality of liberal societies was jettisoning the view that moral and religious harmony was essential to the control of populations, the churches claimed it. In winning this victory religion gave up its authority over economic motivations just as they emerged as the most potent means of government.⁶⁸ In freeing the church from state interference, Tilley had constructed a theological justification of nineteenth-century liberal ideology.

Tilley went on to develop this rhetoric to argue that religion was essential to public life and that Christians had a duty to God to regard their civil responsibilities as religious service.

Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, means that we must not separate between religion and politics, and imagine that the later is a field into which Christians must not enter—nothing could be more fatal than such a theory. Very much of our legislation affects moral questions, the restraint and punishment of vice, the sanctity of the Sabbath and such like.... Shall the Church stand by and not let its voice be heard? Shall Christian men lend themselves to baseness and wrong in defence of party?... Not if they remember that every vote they give, and every movement they support should be done as a religious act as part of the stewardship for which we must yield account.⁶⁹

Religion was separated from the state insofar as the state had no authority to interfere directly in matters religious, nor conversely, could the churches pass judgement on the naturalised political and economic structures. However, the religious convictions and character of individuals determined the social and political climate. In the degree that virtuous Christians inhabited the pristine structures governed by natural and moral laws constructed by liberal thought, the clergy were convinced the nation would prosper.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Denis Meuret, "A Political Genealogy of Political Economy," 65 and Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, "Governing Political Life," in *Foucault's New Domains*, eds. Mike Gane and Terry Johnson (London: Routledge, 1993).

⁶⁹ "The Churches," *Ad*, 21 June 1875, p. 1

⁷⁰ Hilton finds moderate evangelicals in Britain motivated by Christian commitments toward political activism and philanthropy but "uninterested in fundamental social and economic reforms," *The Age of Atonement*, 208.

To retain a place of public leadership within a liberal society the clergy endorsed the desacralisation of political and economic relationships, and this endorsement determined that no religious sanctions be brought to bear against the political and economic structures of Canadian society. This trade-off gave the clergy a significant measure of social authority that was premised on their claims to produce responsible, self governing (male) citizens. Liberal democracy required a morally disciplined citizenry, but had no authority to legislate morality. Into this void stepped the Protestant clergy with a voluntarist spirituality emphasising individual responsibility. This voluntarist religion played an establishment role because religion was called upon to indirectly secure social harmony.⁷¹ The clergy adopted the view that Canada's political and economic structures were part of both the natural and the divine order and, therefore, their governing laws could and should be scientifically determined. The problems that threatened the new nation's ability to fulfil its destiny were spiritual and moral, not structural; therefore, the solutions were spiritual and moral and the clergy were prepared to resolve them. Protestant Christianity would, the clergy argued, provide the spiritual and moral foundation essential to a flourishing liberal democracy.

The Clergy in Private: the Redemptive Home

As the cradle of Christian character, and thus of Christian society, the home and family bore enormous rhetorical weight in this clergy project. The connections between the intensification of private family life and evangelical forms of religion have received impressive historical treatments. Studies of the United States and Britain have related changes in family economic strategies to patterns of authority, religious life, and class formation.⁷² In these studies, religious language provided resources for redefining gender and sources of authority for a middle class identifying itself in contrast to the indigence of those below and the debauchery of those

⁷¹ See the concept developed in Miller and Nikolas of "action at a distance", "Governing Political Life," 88-9.

⁷² Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class*; Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity*; and Davidoff, *Family Fortunes*.

above.⁷³ Clergy appropriated the home and family by defining the nature of relationships among family members and by striving to ensure that all were fulfilling their God-assigned responsibilities. The home provided private space for the kind of internal contemplation and nurture so essential to evangelical spirituality.⁷⁴ The London clergy used lectures, sermons, and public speeches to construct an image of home as a refuge from the evils of modern life that could instil and reinforce Christian character. They also found a central role for the churches in support of the home. Chapter three told the story of the reorganisation of church programs in support of the family. For example, by the 1870s and 1880s, Sunday schools were primarily used by the churches to “teach their infant members,” rather than as agents of evangelisation and social reform.⁷⁵ Youth organisations provided opportunities for useful service and an improving use of leisure time. Women played a variety of roles ranging from sewing for the poor, to fund-raising, to political agitation. Men were given leadership roles in the churches, which reinforced their role as spiritual leaders at home. This institutional reorganisation reflected expectations for churches as the guardians of the moral integrity of the home and family, through which wider claims to social authority could be made. The discussion which follows outlines the London’s clergy’s construction of the ideal of the redemptive home.

Women

The general features of the late Victorian construct of womanhood are by now familiar. London’s clergy were deeply entrenched in the prevailing view, believing that in English speaking Protestant societies “woman” had finally risen above ancient prejudice to the exalted

⁷³ Davidoff, *Family Fortunes*, chapter 3. Dror Wahrman argues that this domesticity was not characteristic only of a middle class but represented a widely held social ideal, “‘Middle-Class’ Domesticity Goes Public.”

⁷⁴ Rabinowitz, *The Spiritual Self in Everyday Life*, chapter 15.

⁷⁵ Quote from Proudfoot, *Ad*, 13 March 1878, p. 4. On the earlier role of Sabbath schools as agents of social reform see Allan Greer, “The Sunday Schools of Upper Canada,” *Ontario History* 67 (1975) and Thomas Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability, Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780-1859* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976). On later developments within Methodism see W.L. Brown, “The Sunday School Movement in the Methodist Church in Canada, 1875-1925” (M.Th. thesis, University of Toronto, 1959).

place assigned her by the Creator.⁷⁶ This was not at the head of the home, but more significantly and more powerfully, at its heart.⁷⁷ A certain inherent religiosity attributed to women made them natural allies of the clergy in the quest for a Christian society.⁷⁸ This religiosity was particularly valued as an adornment of the home. The Christian mother was the primary source of the home's redemptive capacity. The father was responsible for the Christian education of the children, but it was recognised that in most cases this was the task of mothers.⁷⁹ Several of London's clergy claimed their early devotions at their mother's knee had both shaped their character and contributed to their sense of call to the ministry. William Briggs explored this in a sermon devoted to the nurture of children. Mothers were the first "guardian and teacher" of children and their "instruction and prayers would never be forgotten."⁸⁰ The portrayal of Rev. J.E. Lanceley's mother was typical of the tributes to the influence of pious mothers commonly depicted in biographies of the clergy.

His mother was one of those gentle home-makers who resign the outer world that they may devote all the worth of their hearts to that supreme responsibility which God entrusted to them alone, and from her he inherited the deep, tender sympathies, as well as the wonderful play of wit and fancy which made him so remarkable in after life.⁸¹

⁷⁶ For example see C. Loring Brace, *Gesta Christi: A History of Humane Progress under Christianity*, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1882).

⁷⁷ In a forthcoming article Nancy Christie argues that the clergy reformers deploy evangelical family relations as the foundation for early social welfare policies, Nancy Christie, "The Evangelical Morphology of the State and the Redefinition of the Patriarchal Family," in *Household of Faith: Family Religion and Social Change in Canada*, ed. Nancy Christie (Forthcoming Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000)

⁷⁸ Anne Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* and Davidoff, *Family Fortunes*, 107.

⁷⁹ Christie argues that by the 1890s and into the twentieth century, mothers were the preferred agents of moral instruction by the first generation of social engineers, Christie, "The Evangelical Morphology of the State."

⁸⁰ "Special Services in the Dundas Street Centre Methodist Church," *Ad*, 5 November 1877, p. 1.

⁸¹ Rev. Nathaniel Burwash, "Biographical Sketch" in *The Devil of Names and Other Lectures and Sermons by the Late John Ellis Lanceley* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1900), 21.

Significantly the feminine characteristics of sympathy, wit, and fancy inherited from his mother were regarded as central to Lanceley's success as a clergyman.⁸²

In sermons, the character of women was described in terms such as prudence, candour, devotion, and sympathy. Recurring examples of Christian womanliness, such as the widow with her mite and the woman anointing the feet of Jesus, stressed giving and service.⁸³ Memorial sermons of Christian women revealed the qualities which their clerical eulogizers considered worthy of memorializing. Rev. William Porter, pastor of Talbot Street Baptist, lost two female members of his congregation in a single week, and took occasion in the Sunday evening sermon to remember their virtues. Mrs. Humpidge, one of the oldest members of the congregation was remembered as "a consistent member of the church. A quiet, industrious, devoted mother, widowed for about forty years, she bore her part well in the sphere Providence assigned her." Mrs. Phair was a more recent convert, and the largest portion of Rev. Porter's remarks recounted her rather spectacular conversion experience. Her greatest concern during her illness was that her family follow her example and "all become lovingly interested in Christ." This appeared not to have occurred, but Porter was consoled by the thought that "her work was quiet but sincere and earnest, and her influence cannot but be felt."⁸⁴ These women were remembered for resigning themselves to their condition with quiet patience and serving well. However, to the theme of resignation must be added the complex relational context in which women's lives were evaluated. The influence and power of women in the family arose out of their role as its relational centre. They derived identity and authority from their active devotion to the family and from their concern for the salvation of its members. Men's lives were lived increasingly in the objectifying public space and this familial matrix of relationships decreased in

⁸² On feminine and masculine characteristics of clergy see Davidoff, *Family Fortunes*, 110-1

⁸³ See a sermon by Rev. J.V. Smith in which all the illustrations of godliness are women, "Fruits and Flowers, Anniversary of the Congregational Church and Sabbath School Harvest Home Celebration," *Ad*, 12 October 1885, p. 4.

⁸⁴ "Memorial Services, An Interesting Sermon in the Talbot Street Baptist Church Last Night," *FP*, 3 September 1888, p. 5.

significance as their roles of citizen, worker and the imperative of independence increasingly became the vectors of male identity.⁸⁵

The celebration of resignation and domestic relationships was not a call for Christian women to remain passive or confined to the home. The clergy were enthusiastic promoters of the great variety of associations formed by women devoted to helping the poor, fighting the evils of drink, and sending missionaries to foreign lands. The attributes assigned to women were deemed to have especially fitted them for such work. Bishop Maurice Baldwin commended the WCTU on their efforts, believing that the work of women visiting hospitals and teaching temperance was attended by success because of their gentle earnestness and ability to create sentiment.⁸⁶ At the annual meeting of the Women's Christian Association, Methodist Rev. James Graham recognised that the important social role played by women was based upon their power and influence in the homes, schools, and Sunday schools of the community.⁸⁷ The clergy blessed these efforts with the greatest accolade that could be bestowed upon a Victorian, male or female: they were "useful."

The most ambitious application of the peculiar attributes of women to Christian service came from Congregational pastor, Rev. Robert Wallace. Wallace believed that the great masses of the modern city were ill-served by the churches. Simply increasing the number of churches and preachers was doing nothing to attract the masses to the Gospel. At the same time Wallace regarded with dismay the frivolous concern with fashion and theatre-going exhibited by Christian women. This he explained not as a failure of women but a failure of the churches to give women a challenge worthy of their abilities. Both problems had the same solution. Women possessed the qualities required to reach the urban masses where it was felt they could do the most good, in their homes.

⁸⁵ Tosh, "What Should Historians do with Masculinity?" 195-6

⁸⁶ "A Year's Work, Seventh Anniversary of the WCTU," *Ad*, 23 September 1885, p. 8

⁸⁷ "The WCA, Proceeding at the Anniversary," *Ad*, 10 May 1876, p. 1.

They [i.e. the urban masses] must be reached by *a thorough system of religious kindness and effort touching their homes*. Here woman's agency is much superior to man's. Four qualifications were absolutely necessary to success. (1) Ready and spontaneous tact. (2) Generous sympathy. (3) Large faith. (4) Endurance. These are possessed by woman in a much higher degree than by man.⁸⁸

Evangelisation of the city was to be systematic, as women drawing upon their natural dispositions reached into the homes of the unchurched. Women were believed to be the source of religious sentiment and emotional stability in the family and, through their benevolent ministrations, for the wider community. As the public world became individualised and independence was increasingly designated as a key component of masculinity, private relationships grounded in feminine dependence were intensified. The privatisation of religion, focused on the roles of wife and mother, was an essential aspect of this intensification. Those women who understood the peculiar qualities of their nature and discharged their role, the clergy discourse promised, would be fulfilling their calling and serving both the private and public good.

Children

If women were popularly considered the redemptive heart of the home, children were the raw material. Most clergy willingly admitted that the home was the most important element in the development of Christian character in children; however, the Sabbath schools were given a vital supporting role. They recognised that the scholars in the Sabbath schools were essential to the future of the churches and to the prosperity of society. In 1879, at the Dundas Street Centre Methodist Sabbath school anniversary Rev. B.B. Keefer explained the role of the Sunday school in the program of the church.

The church can no more establish herself successfully without the aid of Sabbath Schools than you can build a house without a foundation. For the result of faithful Sabbath School labor see the class of exhorters, class leaders, superintendents and officials of the present, and very many of the most successful young men in the ministry come up from the efforts and influences of the Sabbath School. They also contribute largely to the membership of the church. They come up full of the love

⁸⁸ "Services Yesterday, Woman's Work in the Church," *Ad*, 7 September 1874, p. 3. Emphasis from the original report.

of God, and more than that, full of the knowledge of the scriptures, rooted and governed by the doctrines of the church.⁸⁹

On another Sabbath School Anniversary Rev. James Graham claimed that not only the work of the church but also the future of the nation rested with efforts put forth on behalf of children.

If this great Dominion of ours is to prosper—if on its shores freedom would reign, commerce prosper, and a glorious future be before us, let us take hold of the rising generation.... Let us then, labour in this cause whilst we can, and contribute to the promotion of it to such an extent as lies in our power, remembering that much of the future of the race depends upon the training of these little boys and girls in the Sabbath school.⁹⁰

The clergy considered the children in their Sunday schools to be the future of both the church and the nation. A society that held that spiritual and moral formation to be matters of private choice required cooperation between the home and the church to shape the character of its future citizens.

Youth

If the quantity of sermonising directed at young men, and to a lesser extent young women, is any indication, youth posed the greatest challenge to the attainment of a Christian society. Adolescence was a new stage of life, still not clearly defined in the late-Victorian period, and regarded by the clergy as a perilous time for Christian character.⁹¹ Young men were particularly at risk because their development required a move toward independence outside of the family. At a time when life-long habits and attitudes were being shaped, the “pitfalls of youth” were particularly alluring. The temptations of the young were many, and the content of special sermons regularly addressed to the young was predictable. Young men were warned against intemperance, sloth, gambling, and evil friendships. Young women were to avoid idleness and

⁸⁹ “Sabbath School Anniversary of the Dundas Street Centre Methodist Church,” *Ad*, 5 November 1879, p. 1.

⁹⁰ “The Pulpit, Rev. Jas. Graham on Canada’s Best Hope for Prosperity,” *FP*, 18 October 1875, p. 4.

⁹¹ A study by Harvey Graff attempts to provide some direction in understanding youth as a new and distinct stage of life in this period characterised not only by age but also by class and gender. See “Remaking Growing Up: Nineteenth-Century America,” *Histoire sociale/Social History*, vol. 24 (May 1991): 35-59. On the processes which served to create this new stage of life, see Michael B. Katz, Michael J. Doucet, and Mark J. Stern, *The Social Organization of Early Industrial Capitalism* (Cambridge [Mass.]: Harvard University Press, 1982).

novel reading.⁹² Both sexes were admonished to be wary of those amusements which were becoming respectable, but which were sure to undermine Christian character: dancing, card-playing, and theatre-going.⁹³

Clergy recognised that the young required something to fill their leisure hours and many churches together with the YMCA and YWCTU offered uplifting alternatives to destructive amusements.⁹⁴ Frequent lectures and sermons were aimed at youth and featured such alluring titles as Rev. Dr. Proudfoot's, "The improvement of spare time conducive to formation of character and success in life."⁹⁵ Such orations commended the improvement of time, an irreplaceable commodity, by such serious pursuits as study and Bible reading. Worthy examples were drawn from history and from scripture to illustrate the benefits of constancy, firmness of conviction, and a steadfast faith, characteristics which guard the character against deceitful pleasures.⁹⁶ London's clergy offered the young membership in the church as the surest source of true friendship, the productive use of time and advancement in life.⁹⁷ Only the concerted efforts of the home and church could ensure the young would not be lost in the transition to adulthood.

Men

The clergy's idealised construct of the family characterised women as the heart, children the raw material, and youth the challenge, and finally, men as the product. Manliness was a popular theme of pastoral admonitions particularly on Sundays reserved for the annual sermon of

⁹² See sermons by Rev. T. J. Reid and R. W. Wallace, "Sunday Sermons, Three Special Discourses Yesterday," *FP*, 16 March 1876, p. 4 and "The Churches," *Ad*, 6 March 1876, p. 4.

⁹³ See the paper given before the Ministerial Association by Rev. J. K. Wright, "Popular Amusements, as denounced by the City Ministers," *FP*, 16 May 1881.

⁹⁴ On the cultural response to youth in this period see David MacLeod, "A Live Vaccine: The YMCA and Male Adolescence," *Social History* 11(1978): 5-25.

⁹⁵ "Dr. Proudfoot's Lecture, Literary Society's Entertainment at Park Avenue Church," *FP*, 4 February 1887, p. 3.

⁹⁶ See for example Rev. W. H. Porter's lecture, "An Old Time Hero," *FP*, 25 February 1886, p. 3.

⁹⁷ See sermon entitled "Riches" by Rev. B. B. Keefer, "The Churches," *Ad*, 3 February 1873, p. 3 and "Yesterday's Church Notes, Rev. R. W. Wallace Discourses to Young Men," *FP*, 8 November 1875, p. 4.

London's many fraternal orders. Much gender history has concerned itself with the construction of women's roles; however, in London, the preponderance of attention given to gender construction by the clergy was focused on men.⁹⁸ Christian men were called to a wider range of roles and responsibilities than were open to women. In a sermon to the Foresters in 1885, Rev. J.V. Smith defined Christian manliness as integrity that finds expression in both private and public. He counselled the men he addressed to "go in the good way, right with the world, in the family showing patience and self-sacrifice, in society courteous and kind, in business show honesty and integrity, and in the sanctuary live as becomes a Christian."⁹⁹ Kindness and self-sacrifice were attributes to be celebrated in true manhood. These qualities were required at home, where the Christian man was to provide moral and spiritual leadership to the members of his household. The churches diligently provided teaching to young people and to children, but the clergy assigned to the home the primary responsibility for training the young in the way that they should go.¹⁰⁰ Children learned by example, for better or for worse. No better example could be offered impressionable children and adolescents than the pious Christian father. Rev. John Kay, pastor of the Methodist Church in the western suburb of Petersville, reminded fathers of this primary responsibility.

For there is an obligation falling on the Christian man—it is incumbent upon him to see to it that his children walk in his footsteps, and shall serve lovingly the God to whom he himself is so heartily and personally attached. This teaching should be diligently engaged in... A man must show to his family and to the whole household that he is indeed a Christian.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Nancy Christie draws attention to this imbalance in Nancy Christie, "Family Community and the Rise of Liberal Society," in *Household of Faith: Family Religion and Social Change in Canada*, ed. Nancy Christie (Forthcoming Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

⁹⁹ "A Forester's Sermon," *FP*, 12 January 1885, p. 3.

¹⁰⁰ See the discussion on the relation of the home and the church among Presbyterian clergy and laymen at their Sabbath School convention "Presbyterian S.S. Convention," *Ad*, 13 March 1878, p. 4. Also see "Children's Sunday," *FP*, 2 August 1886, p. 5, where Rev. Richardson of Cronyn Memorial Church explores similar themes.

¹⁰¹ "Sunday Sermons, The Necessity of Early Religious Training Illustrated by the Rev. J. Kay," *FP*, 21 February 1876, p. 4.

As important as these responsibilities were, the home was also a place of repose and refuge for the Christian man. It was here that his spirit could be renewed and his virtue strengthened, the better to face his obligations in the world. With this in mind, Rev. Smith spoke to the Oddfellows fraternity of the importance of practising Christianity at home. Given its capacity to facilitate reflection and encourage the internalisation of faith, the home provided the Christian man “the best opportunity of practically exemplifying his religion.” The practice of Christianity in private was essential to Christian manhood because it “gave a moral discipline to his life in public.”¹⁰² The home was the source of Christian virtue and the public the beneficiary.

Christian men were expected to apply the virtues cultivated at home to their public lives in the world of business, where hard work and integrity were the marks of the Christian.¹⁰³ Godliness, Rev. E. Roberts told his Bible Christian Congregation, was profitable in all areas of life and thus on purely utilitarian grounds it could be shown to provide the best in life.¹⁰⁴ However, God’s bounty was not given without human effort. Creation provided the resources necessary to prosperity provided that men worked diligently to utilise them. Rev. R.J. Treleaven explored the theme “God helps those that help themselves.”

It is incumbent on man to be diligent, to be active, to be faithful. God put the germ of life in the human soul and surrounded him with all that is beautiful, but the appropriating power is with man himself. He then must put forth his hand and avail himself of these good things. God provides for man through the exercise of man’s own powers.¹⁰⁵

Prosperity did not come easily but was the result of independent initiative and constant diligence. The essential mark of manhood was the shouldering of these heavy responsibilities in providing for a household.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² “Oddfellow’s Sermon, Practical Christianity,” *FP*, 30 April 1888, p. 1.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ “Bible Christian,” *Ad*, 10 February 1873, p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ “At Church, The Forester’s Listen to Rev. Dr. Treleaven,” *Ad*, 18 February 1884, p. 4.

¹⁰⁶ Unmarried men lacked the discipline of supporting a household which ensured stability and diligence and thus were suspect, Tosh, “What Should Historians do with Masculinity,” 185-6. From the other side Marilyn Lake discusses the experience of men who openly defy respectable conventions, “The

Although this expression of the work ethic and the coincidence of godliness and material prosperity was quite typical in sermons, pastors generally recognised that they should not press it too hard. They claimed that prosperity was evidence of God's blessing and poverty was, in general, viewed as a result of lack of diligence or vice. However, they were reluctant to apply the general principle in each specific case. When Alfred Rowland, a pillar of Talbot Street Baptist Church, failed in business, he acted on this principle and resigned his leadership roles in the church. The pastor and the congregation rejected his resignation and attributed his bankruptcy to economic conditions rather than his lack of Christian character.¹⁰⁷

In a similar vein, James Ballantyne cautioned against making too specific a connection between the spiritual and the commercial. In a sermon on prayer to his London South Presbyterian congregation, Ballantyne told of a businessman who set up an experiment in prayer. This gentleman had gone to his business on several occasions after having spent time in prayer and on other occasions without praying at all. Upon consideration, he found no noticeable difference in his profits and thus concluded that prayer served no useful purpose. Ballantyne argued that there could be no strictly utilitarian test of prayer, or indeed of religion, but that in general, the man given to diligence in spiritual matters would prosper.¹⁰⁸ The prosperity that resulted from the righteous action of Christian men was not for selfish gain but to serve others and the advance of the Gospel. The test of New Testament Christianity was the commandment to "love one another," which found expression in the variety of benevolent societies and institutions and the many church building projects which depended upon the financial support of religiously motivated individuals.¹⁰⁹

Politics of Respectability: Identifying the Masculinist Context," *Historical Studies* 22, 86 (April 1986), 118-9

¹⁰⁷ See Talbot Street Baptist Church, Minutes of Congregational Meetings, Typescript, 6 January 1879, 3 February 1879, and 3 March 1879 (TRC), pp. 174-6.

¹⁰⁸ "Sunday Sermons, Rev. J. Ballantyne on 'the Reality of Prayer,'" *FP*, 22 March 1886, p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ A typical sermon on this point was preached to the Foresters in 1888 by Rev. Canon Richardson at Cronyn Memorial Church. "The Forester's Sermon" *FP*, 23 July 1888, p. 5.

Masculine identities developed in relationship to work and fraternal associations, and these competed with home and churches as primary locations of identity.¹¹⁰ In sermon after sermon to men ministers declared that active church involvement was essential to manliness. Rev. J.V. Smith considered that true manhood would only reveal itself in the virtues of Christian service. “The aim of Christianity is to make noble men and perfect manhood in body, soul, and mind. There is no manliness without a dependence on God, and there is no true man outside the Christianity of the New Testament.” This Christianity expressed itself “in the way of individual helpfulness; in the form of practical moral and social virtues, for they could not attain to perfect manhood without these virtues.”¹¹¹ The disjuncture between the values of manly independence and the virtue of Christian dependence on God were not easily resolved in the clergy portraits of the ideal man.

The Christian home was centred on women, who were its relational core, and focused on producing and sustaining Christian citizens (men) for public action. The clergy built their case for authority on the promise of good citizens. This promise was not directed to the state, but to individual citizens themselves. The churches provided what Foucault has identified as “technologies of the self” which, under the government rationality of liberal democracy, permitted individuals to act on themselves “so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.”¹¹² The clergy and the churches acted at a distance, through support of the home which produced the virtues requisite for individual flourishing in a liberal society. The privatised devotion of evangelical religion, with its focus on individual choice in salvation and subsequent diligence in the pursuit of righteousness organised within the privatised family, defined the attributes of a self-governing (and self-governed) citizen. However, action on individuals alone would not ensure the Christian society the clergy project anticipated. Action was required on the public itself.

¹¹⁰ Tosh, “What Should Historians do with Masculinity,” 184.

¹¹¹ “Orange and Blue, Annual Church Parade of the Orange Orders,” *Ad*, 7 July 1884, p. 1.

¹¹² Michel Foucault, “Technologies of the Self,” 18.

The Clergy in Public: Fighting the Good Fight

Protestants in London believed that the creation of a Christian society would be accomplished in private, through the moral renovation of individuals. However, the Protestant public and even the administrative state had a responsibility to ensure that the citizenry was in a position to make rational choices and confirm moral commitments. Thus, action by the clergy in public tended to be directly related to matters of personal morality. The two issues that consistently spurred the evangelical clergy to public declamation were temperance and Sabbath desecration. How could the virtue required by citizens be instilled when alcohol was sold by the glass and Sunday excursions took the people away from the churches to the beaches Sunday morning? Calls for state action were framed in defence of the social against the corruptions of political and commercial interests and in support of the Canadian liberal society. Listening to the public utterances of the clergy illustrate how authority was derived in the production of private citizens and how this authority was wielded in public.

Temperance and prohibition

London was home to the Carling and the Labatt breweries, and for much of this period Londoners returned the Honourable John Carling to the House of Commons. Yet intemperance had few public supporters in late Victorian London. Advocates of temperance were convinced that the primary role of the churches should be in the areas of education and moral persuasion. Bands of Hope and temperance leagues sprang up among many of the London's congregations. Resolutions regarding temperance and total abstinence were regular fare at church business meetings from the congregational level on up to national governing bodies. Church attendees could expect temperance sermons at regular intervals especially as the Christmas/New Year festive season approached.¹¹³ Temperance sermons and literature were regularly spiced with heart-rending anecdotes about the pious being lured to destruction by liquor and evil

¹¹³ See for example the sermon by Rev. J. Kay, "Sunday in the City," *FP*, 20 December 1875, p. 4; the sermon by Rev. D.G. Sutherland, "Give up the Social Glass," *Ad*, 5 January 1885, p. 6; and the sermon by Rev W.J. Clark, "Lessons from Noah," *Ad*, 7 August 1890, p. 2.

acquaintances.¹¹⁴ Yet all of this effort seemed inadequate to protect against the “demon rum”. Where moral persuasion failed, compulsion was necessary and the clergy were ready to do their part.¹¹⁵

By the 1870s, the debate over the use of alcohol had moved past the promotion of temperance to the discussion of various forms of prohibition.¹¹⁶ The clergy in London, including the majority of the Anglicans, stood firmly with the prohibitionists. Prohibition was a clear case in which the clergy called for the power of the state to be exerted on their behalf to correct a social evil. Surprisingly, the call for prohibition was rarely argued in theological terms or from scriptural texts. In accordance with the evangelical consensus, public pronouncements were usually made on the basis of “scientific” evidence. The traffic in liquor, it was argued, had a deleterious effect on its victims; it wasted lives and destroyed families. The most telling propaganda against the liquor traffic, however, was not the danger to the pious, but the effects on the poor. A whole range of social statistics from Britain, the United States, and Canada was used to link poverty, crime, insanity, and early death to alcohol consumption. The victims of this great evil were not just drunkards but their families.¹¹⁷ This concern for the destruction of family life convinced many of the need for immediate and effective action. Bishop Maurice Baldwin declared that preservation of the home was the primary motive for the clergy’s appeals for legislative action. “If there was a sacred place on earth,” Baldwin argued, “it was a Christian home. Father and mother honored, and children in the fear of God.” This sacred space was in mortal danger from the evils of drink.

¹¹⁴ Cook describes sentimentalised stories as characteristic of temperance literature in, *Through Sunshine and Shadow*, 138-42.

¹¹⁵ So argues Rev. Robert Wallace, “A Note from Rev. Mr. Wallace,” *Ad*, 4 March 1876, p. 1.

¹¹⁶ Jan Noel, *Canada Dry: Temperance Crusades Before Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 151.

¹¹⁷ See the arguments advanced by Rev. W.H. Tilley on the positive side of a debate before the Church of England Young Men’s Association on “Whether is a Prohibitory Liquor Law Advantageous for Canada?” Despite a convincing performance by their Rector the young men voted for the negative side, indicating perhaps that they were not in full accord with his views. “Is Prohibition Advantageous?” *Ad*, 24 February 1874, p. 3

and prohibition was justified “because every principle of right and humanity demanded it.”¹¹⁸

Clergy demands for public action had authority as they advocated preservation of the integrity and sanctity of the private. But the home was not only under attack from the liquor traffic. Trains and boats operating on Sunday also threatened to undermine the family by providing its members with alternatives to church attendance.

Sabbath desecration

The maintenance of the Sabbath as a day of rest devoted to public worship was a matter of particular pride to the local clergy in London. The diligence with which Londoners kept the Sabbath was continually contrasted to its relative neglect in England and the unconscionable situation on the Continent.¹¹⁹ A public day of worship was considered evidence of the moral rectitude of Canadian society, clearly indicating that religious voluntarism had an entirely positive effect on the observance of religion. Minor incidents of Sabbath desecration were reported throughout the period, but it was the three occasions on which Sunday excursions threatened to become a regular part of the city’s life that brought the clergy and the Sabbath-observing public to the barricades. These occurred in 1873 and 1890 when steamboat companies offered Sabbath excursions on the Thames, and in 1877 when the Great Western Railway offered a seventy-five cent Sunday round trip to Port Stanley. These incidents brought forth remarkably similar arguments on both sides, and for brevity’s sake we will look only at the arguments advanced by the clergy in the 1877 campaign against the Great Western Railway.

Port Stanley was (and is) a resort town on Lake Erie 30 kilometres south of London and a favourite picnic site for Londoners. In offering Sunday excursion, which, as their advertising indicated, left in time for the morning service, the Great Western sought to provide a change of scene and some well deserved fresh air to honest workingmen at a reasonable price. The clergy regarded this as pure hypocrisy and saw the entering wedge that would destroy the

¹¹⁸ “Scott Act Convention,” *Ad*, 9 October 1884, p. 5

¹¹⁹ These contrasts are made by several speakers at a Public meeting held in the London City Hall on 18 June 1877, “Sunday Excursions, Arguments Against the Desecration,” *Ad*, 19 June 1877, p. 1.

moral fibre of the community.¹²⁰ Their arguments turned on natural, medical, and social points. Of the issues central to Victorian Christianity in London, the Sabbath was the one on which the scriptural injunction was unequivocal. However, London's ministers did not base their arguments primarily of the necessity of obeying a clear biblical commandment. Rather the argument was made that the Sabbath was an essential part of the created order and divine law governing the spiritual and physical well-being of humans.¹²¹ The divine command was interpreted as reflecting social utility. Attendant upon the end of Sabbath observance, they suggested, would be the decline of civilized society and its benefits. So argued Rev. J.A. Murray at an indignation meeting held at City Hall on June 18. "Were the Sabbath trampled out...our civilization would retrograde. Where the Sabbath is observed, crime does not abound as it does elsewhere, and moreover, the people are a better class morally, physically and intellectually."¹²²

The place of Sabbath in the divine order of things was also evident from science and medical practice. Human beings were not created for seven days of labour but for six, followed by a day of rest. The overworked were subject to mental and physical breakdown.¹²³ Physical breakdown attributed to overwork was not uncommon during this period providing anecdotal credibility the clergy's argument. To apply the medical evidence on overwork to a Sunday train ride to lake Erie, however, strained credibility, none more so than this contribution from Rev. W.R. Parker.

The men who work for the race and for Jesus wake up fresher on the Monday morning than do those who go to Port Stanley. People who go on Sabbath trains are

¹²⁰ James Cooper, "The Port Stanley Sabbath Excursions," *Ad*, 15 June 1877, p. 1.

¹²¹ See Andrew Kennedy, "The Perpetuity and Sanctity of the Sabbath Under Christianity," *Ad*, 7 July 1877, p. 2 and "The Sabbath and the Practical Purposes for Which it was Divinely Intended," *Ad*, 16 July 1877, p. 2. In the same vein see two sermons by J.A. Murray, "The Sabbath, Observe a Sacred Day in a Holy Manner," *Ad*, 3 July 1877, p. 1 and "Sabbath Observance, A Discourse upon the Subject Yesterday," *Ad*, 9 July 1877, p. 1.

¹²² "Sunday Excursions, Arguments Against the Desecration," *Ad*, 19 June 1877, p. 1.

¹²³ See Andrew Kennedy, "The Sabbath and the Practical Purposes for Which it was Divinely Intended," *Ad*, 16 July 1877, p. 2.

known to be haggard on their arrival home, and to make for the dram shop for a stimulant.¹²⁴

Sabbath excursionists were surely on the wide path to destruction, although perhaps only the clergy could be convinced that attendance at church two or three times on Sunday promoted rest and renewal more effectively than a day at the beach.

Both sides of the issue claimed to have the essential interests of the workingman at heart.¹²⁵ Mr. F. Broughton, manager of the Great Western, argued that the agitation against the trains united the clergy, who had a vested interest, along with men of wealth and influence depriving “their poorer fellow citizens of what they may consider a blessed enjoyment.”¹²⁶ On the other side, the clergy argued that only their unyielding defence of the principle of the Sabbath could ensure a day of rest against the power of capital. Rev. James Cooper argued the case for labour at the public meeting. “The tendency of capital is to oppress, and if a conscientious man says he cannot work on the Sabbath, capital says he may go about his business, and this meeting is to protest against any such oppression of labor by capital.”¹²⁷

Were the Sabbath to be appropriated by capital, or indeed by Sunday excursions, the first victim would be the family. Family worship would decline, and there would be no opportunity for the religious education so vital to the development of Christian character. The well-being of the family could not be assured apart from a careful observance of the Lord’s Day. James Cooper’s portrayal of a picnicking family clearly illustrates the perceived danger of Sunday excursions to the clerical construction of the Christian family.

¹²⁴ See statement by Rev. W.R. Parker, “Sunday Excursions, Arguments Against the Desecration,” *Ad*, 19 June 1877, p. 1

¹²⁵ H. V. Nelles and Christopher Armstrong uncover the improbable alliances which formed over the Sabbath question in Toronto in *The Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company*. The lines of class were not clearly drawn at this time and tensions continued to exist within the middle class over the definition of class boundaries. The social and moral structures of Victorian Ontario were very complex and defy easy generalisations.

¹²⁶ Mr. F. Broughton, “Sabbath Desecration, Manager Broughton’s Reply to the Mass Meeting Resolutions,” *Ad*, 24 July 1877, p. 4

¹²⁷ See statement by Rev. James Cooper, “Sunday Excursions, Arguments Against the Desecration,” *Ad*, 19 June 1877, p. 1.

The picture of a family returning from a picnic of a Sunday evening, the mother jaded, the children wearied and irritated, the money spent, and the father, if he has the spirit of a Christian or the instincts of a man, convicted and self-condemned for the poor example that he has exhibited, is surely not a state of things to be preferred to a household trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.¹²⁸

Sabbath excursions disrupted and contravened the roles and responsibilities of Christian men and women, caused exhaustion, and financial hardship and, most significantly, bespoke a failure on the part of the parents to provide the proper example to the household. It was this failure to live according to divinely established natural laws that would lead to the social breakdown Rev. Murray warned against.

The Great Western refused to be bullied by the clergy and their supporters, and the clergy refused to back down. The matter was resolved when the trains quietly stopped running due to lack of ridership. The clergy could claim a victory. However, as the *Free Press* observed: “There are in this city hundreds of men who do not lead Christian lives, but yet have too much regard for their respectability to be seen going to Port Stanley on Sunday.”¹²⁹ If the clergy were not completely convincing in their arguments for Sabbath observance, they were successful at least in this case in defining public standards of respectability.

Clergy carefully avoided grounding their arguments for state action to prohibit alcohol and public action to ensure a Sabbath rest in religious terms. Protection of society through preservation of home and family carried an authority that stopped the trains, even if it could not dry the taps. Public space was kept free of religion even as the fight was on to preserve Sunday as a day for public worship. But trains and licensed establishments were not the only dangers the Protestant clergy saw on the horizon. The Protestant public and Canadian democracy itself were perceived to be under attack from a more sinister foe, an aggressive Roman Catholic Church.

¹²⁸ James Cooper, “The Port Stanley Sabbath Excursions,” *Ad*, 15 June 1877, p. 1.

¹²⁹ “Between Ourselves, Rambles of Reporters and Results for Readers,” *FP*, 19 June 1877, p. 4.

Clergy Authority, Catholic Aggression and Canadian Democracy

Relations between Catholics and Protestants in London were generally amicable. In the early 1870s, the visits of Charles Chiniquy and concern over the doctrine of Papal infallibility created some friction and led to a reported incident of young men abusing a Catholic priest on a city street.¹³⁰ During these years, the predominant version of anti-Catholicism considered Catholics to be backward and ignorant and therefore easily dominated by unscrupulous priests.¹³¹ Protestants, in general, considered Catholicism a false religion and by some accounts, the Pope an anti-Christ. While vestiges of this view persisted, a new and more sophisticated anti-Catholicism was evident in the 1870s, which by 1880, had come to be the dominant lens through which the Protestant clergy viewed their Catholic fellows. This new view included Catholics in the religious pluralism that had replaced church establishment as the location of religion in society. Theological differences continued to divide Catholics and Protestants but the two could now readily coexist in a civil society no longer held together by religion. Protestant citizens accepted individual Catholics and even local priests as full members of the community. Religious pluralism demanded that Catholics be respected even by Protestants who considered their religious views to be clearly in error. This perspective required a renarration of some of the symbolic incidents in Protestant-Catholic relations. According to Rev. Evans Davis in a sermon to Orangemen for 1875 at St. James Anglican Church, the Battle of the Boyne was fought to protect religious tolerance and loyal Orangemen were called to ensure this legacy.

Remember...that your principles grant your Roman Catholic brethren the same liberty as yourselves, and that you hate what you believe to be errors of doctrine, and not the men who profess them. This freedom to act, to think, and to speak was all that William fought for, and this is all that you should seek to possess.¹³²

¹³⁰ The following lectures were printed in the *FP*, "Rome and Liberty of Conscience," 6 January 1870, p. 3; "Father Chiniquy's Lecture," 10 February 1870, p. 4; and "The Confessional, Pere Chiniquy," 11 February 1870, p. 4. The incident alluded to is reported in the *FP*, 12 February 1870, p. 4 and seemed to be related to the heightened Catholic-Protestant tensions occasioned by Chiniquy's visit.

¹³¹ J.R. Miller, "Anti-Catholic Thought in Victorian Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 66 (1985), 474-94.

¹³² "Gospel Truths," *FP*, 12 July 1875, p. 4 and "Twelfth of July Sermons," *Ad*, 11 July 1875, p. 1.

William of Orange may have been surprised by his sudden conversion to nineteenth century liberalism, but this view had the advantage of according Catholics full religious and civil rights while continuing to decry the errors of the “system of the Papacy”.¹³³

The events which prompted particular outpourings of Protestant indignation during this period, Quebec’s call for the pardon of Riel, the “Ross Bible,” and the Jesuits’ Estates Act, were all viewed as incidents of “Catholic Aggression.” In the new language of anti-Catholicism these kinds of incidents were represented as introducing a “sectarian” influence endangering the fragile religious equilibrium that protected religious freedoms. In the perception of London’s Protestant clergy, their action on prohibition and Sabbath observance were far different from the political exertions of the Catholics. Protestant interventions employed a carefully de-theologised rhetoric of moralised Christianity, which was nonsectarian because it did not arise out of the interests or beliefs of a particular church. Catholic aggression was understood to be quite another matter. Intervention on behalf of the rebel Riel was, from this perspective, based solely on race and religion and, hence, it disregarded justice.¹³⁴ No church could be accorded the right to protect her adherent from civil justice without doing damage to structures of liberal society to which the evangelical Protestant churches had now accommodated themselves.

The “Ross Bible” incident represented to the Protestant clergy a devious attempt to gain influence over another essential of liberal society, the common school system. During the tenure of George W. Ross as Minister of Education, an attempt was made to compile a standard set of Bible readings agreeable to both Protestants and Catholics for use in the public schools. Before the readings arrived in the schools, it was reported that Archbishop Lynch, the Catholic Archbishop of Ontario, had approved them. This created an immediate outcry among evangelically oriented Protestants, who believed only the complete Bible was worthy of study.

¹³³ See the sermon by Methodist Rev. W.R. Parker, “Twelfth of July Sermons,” *Ad*, 11 July 1875, p. 1.

¹³⁴ “Riel and Sir John, Rev. H.D. Hunter on the Rebellion and Riel’s Fate,” *Ad*, 7 September 1885, p. 3.

Accusations were made of political interference by the Catholic hierarchy.¹³⁵ The common school system had required Methodists, Baptists, and all other denominations to agree upon a nonsectarian religious curriculum based upon the Bible. The “mutilated” Bible threatened the religious consensus. If a Catholic perspective could find its way into the curriculum, why not a Methodist or Anglican? The price of a public place for Protestants had been the abandonment of “sectarian” distinctives in favour of a public Christianity. In the perception of the Protestant clergy, Catholic “aggression” threatened not only the common schools, but also the principle that theological particularity not be given public sanction. This “consensus” was the foundation of the voluntarist placement of religion.

Most offensive to the Protestant clergy was the Jesuits’ Estates Act by which the Quebec government paid public money to the Jesuit Order, one of the feared agents of Catholic aggression. The agitation against the Jesuits Estates and the many clergy endorsements of the Equal Rights Association carefully avoided making theological differences the focus of criticism. In a lecture at Wellington Street Methodist Church on the Jesuits’ Estates question, Rev. Dr. E.B. Ryckman upheld the rights of Catholics to “propagate their belief from the hilltops,” but found “fault with the Roman Catholic Church because she did not confine herself to spiritual matters,” but was “meddling in secular ones, and not only endeavoured to get power over our representatives in the legislature of the country, but also got their hands into the public treasury.”¹³⁶ Ryckman’s comments implied that the opposition of the Protestant clergy really had little to do with ancient disputes between Protestants and Catholics. A similar outcry would have been expected to follow a payment of public funds to Baptists or Presbyterians, or attempts by Methodists or Anglicans to subvert the legislative process to their advantage. The issue at stake

¹³⁵ For reaction in London see “‘The Mutilated Bible’, Two Well Known Clergymen Voice Public Opinion,” *FP*, 20 December 1886, p. 7 and “The Scripture Readings, Sermon by Rev. Canon Innes on the Bible,” *FP*, 21 December 1886, p. 7.

¹³⁶ “The Jesuits’ Estates Act,” *FP*, 22 March 1889, p. 4. In a similar vein see sermon by H.D. Hunter, “The Jesuits’ Estates,” *FP*, 18 March 1889, p. 5.

was the preservation of the balance which accorded all denominations an equal place in liberal society.¹³⁷

The foregoing examples illustrate the acute ambiguity of the place of religion in late nineteenth century society. The Protestant ministers of the gospel represented their efforts as the public voice of private citizens. They claimed that their views were disinterested because they did not speak on behalf of a particular denomination and did not found their position on doctrinal precepts. Thus, they could claim the authority of the public for what was clearly a Protestant perspective expressed in the rhetoric of the evangelical creed which had remarkable parallels to liberal discourse. Foucault's analysis of the governmentality of liberal societies illuminates this ambiguity. Subjectification in the name of individual freedom is the central technique of liberal governance. Paradoxically, it is in protection of individual freedom that the totality is reinforced.¹³⁸ The social authority of the clergy was grounded in the religious freedom guaranteed by liberal society. Because individuals chose their religious affiliation, Protestant churches met the criteria of a public, a free association of like-minded citizens. Thus, the clergy could derive their authority on the basis of their position as representatives of influential religious publics. However, to preserve this authority, the clergy could not transgress the conventions that constructed the public. Their public pronouncements carried authority insofar as they were grounded in a discourse of individual freedom, a requirement that resulted in a detheologised, moralising public Christianity that promoted liberal values. Catholics, on the other hand, were denied public status because they rejected the voluntarist discourse Protestants had adopted. The Protestant clergy represented Catholics as good people captive to outmoded ideas and under the sway of authoritarian leaders who deprived them of the freedom of conscience required of citizens. They treated the Catholic Church as an aggressive sect that promoted sectional interest

¹³⁷ J.R. Miller comments on the transition from a theologically to a politically focused anti-Catholicism in, "Bigotry in the North Atlantic Triangle: Irish, British, and American Influences on Canadian Anti-Catholicism, 1850-1900," *Sciences Religieuses / Studies in Religion* 13 (1987).

against the public good. Its actions were politicised as the efforts of a foreign sovereign (the Pope) working through a sinister hierarchy to undermine the freedoms of self-governing peoples.

The struggle against Catholic aggression, which London's clergy had feared and fought, was not regarded by them as a religious battle. They were fighting for the liberty of Canadian society and the freedom of religion. Catholicism was cast as advocating a religious domination of public life that would undermine individual freedoms, and religious equality, and ultimately subject Canadian society to the whims of Rome. The "ministers of the Gospel" were the champions of liberty, equality, and Canadian patriotism. During the agitation over the Jesuits' Estates Act, a layman, described in the *Free Press* as a "seedy looking stranger," attempted to denounce the Catholic Church as "a delusion and a lie." He was shouted down, clearly having broken the rules of enlightened public debate.¹³⁹ By 1889, the Catholic Church was not to be criticised in public as apostate but as a threat to political and religious liberty and Canada's destiny as a liberal society.

Conclusion

London's Protestant clergy have provided a point of contact in an ongoing realignment of Canadian cultural and intellectual life. This group was predominantly educated in Canada and increasingly Canadian born. They responded to this change out of the discursive resources of the evangelical creed, which through historical circumstance, had unusual cogency in the immediate area and echoes throughout the English speaking world.

The religious discourse of London's Protestant clergy ensured a continuing public role for the churches, even as religion was being defined as a private concern. The public and the private were interwoven in complex ways as religion, home, and choice converged to form individual character in the private to inhabit the naturalised, morally neutral political and

¹³⁸ Michel Foucault, "The Political Technology of Individuals," in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, eds. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), 162.

¹³⁹ "The Jesuits' Estates Act," *FP*, 22 March 1889, p. 5.

economic structures of liberal public life. Christian character entailed a commitment to hard work, self-control, and public duty. The cultivation of these virtues was forged by the churches in the private sphere to ensure harmony, prosperity, and progress in the public. Thus, the Protestant churches fulfilled the establishment role of promoting social integration from a voluntarist position. At the same time, the clergy represented an establishment position in calling the state to provide a particular kind of public order to ensure that the proper individual choices were made.

The deployment of religious freedom assisted in the production of subjects regulated by autonomy and self-fulfilment. Clergy pronouncements in public promoted the subjectification of interest-centred individuals. Private life was intensified spiritually, through calls to *Christian integrity*; and relationally, as the roles and responsibilities of men, women, and children were defined to produce a new generation of citizens. In public life, the promotion of conditions of choice and moral formation required the prohibition of alcohol, which led to bad choices, and the defence of Sabbath rest and worship to create space for the private. This voluntarist-establishment nexus was maintained against Catholic aggression which threatened to unsettle this accommodation with liberal society. In the face of Catholic aggression, the clergy defended the liberal compromise which deprived the churches of their independent voices.

The clergy's public rhetoric was not a function of unbelief. Rather the clergy used the de-theologised, moralised Christianity described in this chapter as a means of asserting their claims to influence in public space. This was different from the particularised Christianity which gave rise to theological disputes among clergy and which was practised in congregations. Many of the sermons used in constructing this portrait were preached on public occasions or addressed issues of public concern. The discourse they embodied was not Protestant Christianity speaking its native language, it was rather Protestant Christianity speaking in public in a language that could be heard and have influence. Nor was this discourse calculated to be manipulative and self-serving; from all indication the clergy were sincerely committed to this narrative of national destiny to be achieved as the churches provided the moral fibre and spiritual direction to a liberal, progressive society. The authority of the Protestant clergy was located in this narrative of national

destiny and the governance of freedom. It was secure so long as individual moral formation was understood to be essential to the proper functioning of liberal society, and so long as it was accepted that Christian moral precepts should be the source of that formation.

CHAPTER 7

LISTENING TO THE NEWSPAPER EDITORS

Public Religious Discourse II

The Gospel According to the *Free Press*

Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving and other “holy days” presented the editors of London’s self-consciously secular newspapers with the difficulty of recognising the season while maintaining appropriate journalistic distance. What they did say on these occasions reflected their understanding of the place of Christianity in liberal society. Both the *Free Press* and the *Advertiser* indulged in holiday editorialising; however, this analysis will take as representative the *Free Press* editor’s Christmas Eve greeting for 1878.¹ The editorial began by defending its incursion into this sacred subject matter by invoking the universal applicability of the message of Christmas.

We find in Christmas a depth and purity of happiness which no other holiday or holy day brings with it.

May we not fairly pursue this thought further, without transgressing the boundary lines of secular journalism? May we not, on the eve of another Christmas, join our readers in remembering that it is the essential fitness of the Christian religion to make men better and happier in their relations with each other, the broad universality of this teaching, which most strongly proves its truth?²

Jesus’ birth represented a pure happiness because his teaching brought “a new revelation, a new religion so broad and so universally applicable to life that, but for the misdeeds of its professed votaries, it must long ago have been accepted of all men.” Christianity had not made humans uniformly better and happier because churches and theologians had distorted its simple and

¹ Other holy day editorials of interest include: “A Lay Christmas Sermon,” *Ad*, 24 December 1880, p. 2; “Christmas – 1881,” *Ad*, 24 December 1881, p. 2; “How to spend Good Friday,” *FP*, 11 April 1873, p. 3; “Thanksgiving Day,” *FP*, 28 October 1875; and “Easter Sunday,” *FP*, 5 April 1890, p. 4

² “The Humanity of Christmas,” *FP*, 24 December 1878, p. 2.

compelling principles. “Men have fought fiercely and still fight ... over dogmas of interpretation; the wars of sects and churches have been many; theologians are as far apart as the poles in their opinions....” Despite these obstacles the truth represented by Christmas remained unchallenged. Jesus “taught of human brotherhood, of charity, forgiveness, forbearance and preferring of others to oneself.” The editor concluded that these truths were “divine and eternal and universal” no matter what complications were introduced in contemporary debates among theologians and church leaders.

Whatever the truth may be with respect to inspiration, incarnation, sin, atonement and the future life; whatever we may think of the Mosaic account of creation or of the authenticity of the synoptic gospels, we know certainly that for this present life, with which alone a secular journal may properly concern itself, the precepts which constitute the essence and spirit of the Christian religion are a perfect law of right conduct and happy living.... It is worth while thus to remember that the source of our joy at Christmas is our obedience to this law of right living, and that the meaning of Christmas is the brotherhood of man.³

The division of life between sacred and secular was becoming clearer in the late nineteenth century. But just as this division did not keep the clergy out of secular space, so London’s secular journals contributed to discussions of the sacred. What it meant to be secular, as illustrated in this Christmas meditation, was not to take sides in theological disputes, but remain committed to the universal principles which Christian religion represented. To be secular was to be Christian (and Protestant) not as a result of speculation on the divine but because Protestant Christianity had managed to distil the universal law of right living and “the brotherhood of man.” The proper role of religion was, thus, to promote human harmony and moral progress. Speculative debates that could not be empirically settled, such as those engaged in by theologians and ecclesiastics, were detrimental to true religion and, by extension, to society. Religion was important to society because it established universal moral principles, but it also introduced factionalisms that undermined its universality. How to benefit from the strengths of religion without falling victim to its abuse was the focus of the editorial’s holiday reflection.

³ Ibid.

London had two thriving daily newspapers during this period, the editorial pages of which will provide the focus for this analysis.⁴ The *Free Press* was staunchly Conservative, National Policy, and anti-prohibition. The *London Advertiser*, its esteemed contemporary and arch-rival, was Liberal, free trade, and solidly in favour of prohibition. Both gave considerable coverage to religion in their columns and editorial comment. Despite their considerable differences in political views and economic attitudes, the *Free Press* and the *Advertiser* had a remarkably similar understanding of the proper place of religion in society. Both papers deplored dogmatism and doctrinal strife. Both promoted union among Protestant denominations, often to allow them to better do battle with the Catholic Church. Both agreed that religion was a matter of private conscience but was in some way, when kept within proper limits, essential to a free society. This chapter attempts to outline the view of religion held by the newspapers, taking the high degree of coherence between them as indicative of an emerging discourse placing religion within the cultural world of late Victorian Ontario. The discourse constructed by the newspaper editors will also serve as a point of comparison with that of the clergy investigated in the last chapter. Although the newspaper editors and clergy held divergent opinions one can discern from the editorial writing and public pronouncements the rules which governed the conversation and the accepted relationships between religious ideas and practices.

Nineteenth-century newspapers assumed for themselves the role of speaking to and, in some respects for, the great inarticulate masses on the issues of the day. There is reason to question how much they actually reflected or influenced public opinion. Paul Rutherford suggests that journalism was more effective at confirming received opinion than in changing it.⁵ However, newspapers in Britain, the United States, and Canada were in the midst of a major reorientation,

⁴ The circulation of both papers was growing rapidly during this period. The *Ad* went from 10,600 in 1872 to 26,300 in 1880 to 28,500 in 1891. The *FP* grew from 2,540 in 1872 to 14,500 in 1880 and to 23,750 in 1891. Paul Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 236.

⁵ Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*, 8.

becoming popular in their appeal and attracting a wider audience.⁶ In 1872, the combined circulation of Canadian newspapers reached 670,000, matching the number of families in Canada. The number of newspapers and their circulation rose steadily throughout the period. Journalists, publishers, politicians, and others understood the burgeoning papers to be the guardians of Canadian nationhood and democracy.⁷ As such, their cultural role was not to dictate opinion. The “free press” ideal was an essential part of the freedom promised by liberal society. Social harmony would not come by dictating what people thought. However, the newspapers did provide a widely available source of public discussion which defined the parameters and the vocabulary of cultural discourse. If not successful in determining what people thought, the newspapers effectively directed how people thought and what they thought about. Rules of debate modelled on the exchange of opinion on the editorial pages helped to determine what was acceptable as evidence in public debate.

A careful analysis of editorial writing about religion provides a window into the place of religion in late nineteenth-century social discourse. The method of analysis here will be to pay as much attention to how arguments were constructed as to the conclusions drawn. The rhetorical weight of various authorities referred to in the arguments will provide indicators of what was culturally valued or devalued in discussions of religion. This procedure will provide further clarity regarding the place of religion in late Victorian Ontario, a time when the role of religion in a distinctively Canadian version of liberal democracy was being actively negotiated.

The *Free Press* and the *Advertiser*

The major characters in the ensuing discussion will be the *London Free Press* and the *London Advertiser*. The origin and development of these newspapers parallel the stories of many of Canada’s small urban dailies. The *Canadian Free Press* was founded as a weekly in

⁶ Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*, Joel H. Wiener, ed., *Papers for the Millions: the New Journalism in Britain, 1850s to 1914* (Westport [Conn.]: Greenwood Press, 1988); and Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: a Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).

⁷ Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*, 156-70.

January 1849 by William Sutherland. The prospectus, which had been issued the previous December made clear the intellectual commitments of the paper.

Its character, as its name implies, will be Liberal. It will advocate those principles and measures which aim at the safe progress of Legislation and Government towards their true end: "*The greatest possible good to the greatest possible number.*" This, it is assumed, can be gained only by maintaining the Provincial Constitution, which by bringing the increasing intelligence of the community to bear upon the administration by means of their representatives, constitutes Parliamentary or Responsible Government; by the independent and unfettered exercise of the elective franchise; by an enlightened system of popular education; by securing on all political and economical questions liberty and equality in opposition to all exclusive aims of parties, classes or religious denominations; and by setting free our commerce, enterprise and intelligence from all those obstructions by which their development has been hitherto retarded.⁸

Although the paper was sold to Josiah Blackburn and the name changed to the *London Free Press* in 1852, these principles, with some modifications to accommodate the National Policy, continued to characterise it throughout this period. Under Blackburn's management the *Free Press* went to a daily edition in 1855 and became extremely successful, circulating 3,000 copies by 1860 and 23,750 by 1891.⁹

The party allegiance of the *Free Press* underwent some changes in the 1850s and 1860s reflecting the volatile political climate of the period. In the late 1850s, Blackburn was solidly in the Reform camp and stood unsuccessfully for the Reformers in the 1857-8 election. During 1858-9, Blackburn began distancing himself from George Brown, leader of the Reformers, and by 1860 was increasingly supporting John Sandfield Macdonald in his dispute with Brown. Blackburn's ties with Sandfield Macdonald's brand of Baldwinite liberalism were strengthened when Sandfield formed a government in 1862. From 1862 to 1864 Blackburn also published the *Quebec Mercury* as a government organ. During the political impasse of 1864, Blackburn threw his support to the "Great Coalition" and the larger project of Confederation, despite Brown's

⁸ Goodspeed, *History of the County of Middlesex, Canada*, ed. Daniel Brock (Toronto and London: Goodspeed, 1889; Mika Studio, Belleville, Ont., 1972), 167-8, emphasis in the original.

⁹ History of the *FP* is based upon Goodspeed, *History of the County of Middlesex, Canada*, 167-9; Fred Landon, "Some Early Newspapers and Newspaper Men of London," London and Middlesex Historical Society, *Transactions*, 12 (1927), 26-34; H. Orlo Miller, "The History of the Newspaper Press in

involvement and the opposition of Sandfield Macdonald. Blackburn and the *Free Press* continued to support John A. Macdonald and the Liberal-Conservatives when Brown and the Grits left the coalition. John A.'s appointment of Sandfield Macdonald as the first Premier of Ontario and leader of a broadly liberal coalition also met with Blackburn's approval. Thus, the *Free Press* maintained its commitment of the 1840s to a liberal form of government but found itself supporting the Conservative Dominion and Ontario regimes as the clearest means of maintaining that commitment.

The *London Advertiser* made its appearance somewhat later. R.H. Robinson published the *Evangelical Witness*, a Methodist New Connexion weekly, in London on a press shared with the *Daily News*. When the *News* closed, the denominational weekly could not sustain the operation of the press. In 1863 Robinson came to an agreement with John Cameron, a former Londoner who had apprenticed at the *Free Press* before moving to Sarnia. Cameron would take over the printing office and continue to print the *Witness* in payment for the equipment. This arrangement worked well for over a decade when the union of the New Connexion with the larger Wesleyan body merged the *Witness* with the *Christian Guardian*. Shortly after taking over the press, Cameron began to produce an evening paper, the *London Evening Advertiser and Family Newspaper*. This enterprise was an instant success, because it put into the hands of the public the much sought after telegraphic reports of the American Civil War before the rival morning papers. Cameron and the *Advertiser* came on the scene just as Blackburn and the *Free Press* were reassessing their political loyalties, and Cameron took up a position to the left of the *Free Press* as a supporter of the Liberal cause.¹⁰

In 1874, Cameron joined a group within the Liberal party that supported the program of Edward Blake. Early in 1875, supported by Blake and Goldwin Smith, Cameron

London, 1830-1875," *Ontario History*, 32 (1937), 114-39; Elwood H. Jones, "Josiah Blackburn," *DCB* 11: 80-82; and "Our Chief is Dead," *FP* 12 November 1890, p. 4.

¹⁰ This history of the *Ad* is based upon Goodspeed, *History of the County of Middlesex, Canada*, 171-3; Miller, "The History of the Newspaper Press in London" and R. Neil Matheson, "John Cameron," *DCB* 13, pp. 148-50.

founded the *Liberal* in Toronto to promote Blake's ideas and compete with George Brown's *Globe*. The project quickly met with failure, and Cameron again turned his attention to the *Advertiser*, now having to fend off Brown's aggressive marketing of the *Globe* into southwestern Ontario. However, his allegiance to Blake was to pay off in 1882 when Blake, now Liberal leader, arranged to have Cameron appointed managing editor of the *Globe*.

With Cameron's Toronto involvements, editorial responsibilities at the *Advertiser* were left in the hands of another Blake Liberal, David Mills. Mills had been editorial writer since 1877 and was appointed editor-in-chief in 1882, when Cameron left for the *Globe*. Mills served as Liberal Member of Parliament for Bothwell from 1867 to 1896 with a brief break in 1882-83 over a disputed election, which was ultimately decided in his favour. Besides these journalistic and political attainments, Mills studied constitutional law at the University of Michigan Law School with an American expert on federalism, Thomas McIntyre Cooley. This encouraged him to present himself as a bit of a philosopher on constitutional matters, particularly defending the liberal principles of free trade, representative government, and provincial autonomy. Mills was able to use these credentials to earn the post of Justice Minister and, in 1902, an appointment to the Supreme Court. During the 1870s and 1880s the *Advertiser* was clearly in partisan hands.¹¹

Religious Content in the Newspapers

The analysis which follows treats the writing on religion in the editorial pages of the *Advertiser* and *Free Press* over a twenty year period as cultural artifacts rather than individual opinions or pronouncements. Indeed, by the 1870s, Blackburn and Cameron had distanced themselves from day to day operations and were engaged in other projects, and, because editorials were not signed, it would be impossible to determine their authorship with any accuracy. Nonetheless, the situation in London provides an excellent opportunity to listen in on a discussion of the proper role of religion in Canadian society during a particularly self-conscious phase of

¹¹ This portrait of Mills is from Robert C. Vipond, "David Mills," *DCB* 13, pp. 707-11.

nation-building.¹² Editorial writers were aware the current issues would have momentous implications for Canada's future as precedents were being set by legislative and community action. Religion was recognised as a powerful force in human history, but a force that had the potential to wreak great havoc on the young nation as well as do much good.

Separation of church and state

The subjects dealt with in editorials on religion and the churches during this period ranged widely from relatively trivial matters like church bazaars and the heating of churches with steam, to the length and quality of sermons, to central theological and ecclesiological issues such as the limits of orthodoxy and the benefits of church unions. The central principle underlying all of this discussion was the separation of the church and state. While the principle itself was simple enough, its application required careful vigilance. This separation did not require or receive justification by the editorial writers of the *Free Press* and the *Advertiser*. The separation of church and state was assumed to be among the fundamental values of Canadian society, one which made it more advanced even than British society which was still engaged in the battle for disestablishment. The very fact that the editors felt it their duty as purveyors of public truth to write so widely and insistently upon matters religious makes it clear that this separation did not reduce the significance of religion. Thus we must listen very carefully to the ways separation was accomplished and maintained in this discourse.

Progress

In 1870 a Committee was established to revise the King James Version of the Bible. It began its work with a service of communion which caught the attention of the *Advertiser* only because of the outrage expressed by "a section of the Established Church in England" it characterised as "too blind to discern the 'signs of the times'."¹³ The source of the outrage was the Bishop of Westminster's decision to admit to the Sacrament notable dissenting scholars and

¹² Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority*, 158-61.

¹³ "Ecclesiastical Progress," *Ad*, 1 August 1870, p. 2.

churchmen, which this “section” considered to be “heretics and schismatics.” After citing the material wealth and influence as well as the piety of these dissenters as evidence of their eligibility to receive the Sacrament, the editorial suggested that the end of establishment is really in the best interests of all concerned, church as well as state. However, the parting shot was reserved for the unenlightened arrogance of the established church party. “It is getting rather late in the day for any body of men to arrogate to itself a monopoly of all the legitimate religion in the country, and to declare to all who may have some little difference of opinion on that point, ‘Stand by, for I am holier than thou!’”¹⁴ The theme of religious harmony reminiscent of the *Free Press* Christmas editorial, emerges again here. The authority by which the *Advertiser* dismissed the “section” of the established Church was its backwardness in valuing liturgical practice over harmony. The appeal to progress in material as well as spiritual matters was a constant tactic of this discourse. Those who advocated the protection of liturgical practice or engaged in theological disputation were disdained as regrettable carryovers from a less enlightened time.

The separation of church and state in Canada was often applauded at the expense of continued church establishment in Britain. Nonetheless, it seemed clear to the editors that the time was near when even the Church in England must give up its pretensions. The *Advertiser* assessed the career of Edward Miall, a leader in the campaign for disestablishment, upon his retirement. The editor defended Miall against those who characterised his efforts as futile, arguing that the “drift” of ecclesiastical politics was now clearly toward disestablishment.

Mr. Miall has consolidated the scattered forces of Nonconformity, and thus rendered the cause of Liberation the greatest aid. Men were disconnectedly longing for the wrong of State and Church connection to cease; these disconnected wishes have given place to a consolidated demand which will never retreat until they be gratified. The Liberal Society, comprising among its numerous adherents some of Britain’s noblest men and minds, John Bright for example, is now a power which State-Churchmen can but despise at their peril. Its utterances are so truthful and so firm that yearly it gathers strength, until, if in the future it increases in the same ratio as in the past, it will be omnipotent to carry out its plans of disestablishment.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ “The Drift of Ecclesiastical Politics in England,” *Ad*, 22 December 1873, p. 2.

The appeal to progress and inevitable change based on the movement of history was supplemented with an appeal to empirically verifiable facts. Church establishment had been justified as the guarantee of a religiously and morally elevated populace. Miall's contribution had been to challenge this view. "Mr. Miall has exploded the fallacy that to secure purity of religion there must be an establishment. By a close appeal to facts he has shown that principles the most subversive of religious purity not only thrive under State patronage, but defy every effort at reformation."¹⁶ Given all of this, the *Advertiser* was convinced that England could not for long evade the spirit of the age and would soon join Canada among the more religiously and politically advanced nations. "We have always considered the wedlock between Church and State unhappy and unjust, and we cannot but think that England, urged by the free spirit of the age, will soon acknowledge the truth of the postulate."¹⁷

At stake in this discussion was not some abstract constitutional principle about the relationship between church and state. The editors believed that Canada's adherence to this principle would establish a national claim to leadership of the historic movement toward freedom and truth. It was in this light that the *Free Press* considered the parliamentary debate over the Jesuits' Estates Act. For the *Free Press*, this debate was not a sectarian battle between Protestants and Catholics; the real issue was Canada's claim to be a nation true to its own conscience and unencumbered by external authority. The question raised by the Jesuits' Estates Act challenged Canada's commitment to her own destiny.

We should be unworthy of the name of a "new nationality," of the aspirations in which so many indulge—that Canada is destined to occupy an important place amongst the nations on this continent—if we were found ready to permit the interference of any other power—civil or ecclesiastical—with our supreme rights. . . . It is not a question of Protestant versus Rome, but it comprises the idea that we are to enjoy the privileges incident to a free people.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ "A 'Nauseous' Position," *FP*, 28 March 1889, p. 4.

Progress, or the spirit of the age, was moving Canada toward a great destiny, and entrenched religious forces were seen to be impeding this progress. The editors called on Canadians to free themselves and claim their destiny as a new nationality and a free people.

Reason

The editors clearly distinguished matters of fact from matters of faith in their social constructs. Matters of fact could be insisted upon in public because they were verifiable. Religious matters were based upon belief, or opinion which could not be tested empirically. In these matters diversity of opinion was inevitable and should be accepted in the spirit of “free thought and free inquiry.” Such differences in religious matters were to be accepted with “a kindly, a charitable, a Christian toleration as a duty incumbent upon all.” However, tolerance and Christian charity were not required “in questions capable of scientific demonstration.” On these matters science spoke with authority, and the reasonable person would accept its conclusions. If theology was a matter of fact, the *Advertiser* proclaimed there would be no differences of opinion on theological issues, and thus one religious belief and one Church.¹⁹ The plurality of theological opinion precluded religion from the kind of authority in public affairs accorded science.²⁰ To do so would lead to an intolerable situation where one religious group dictated belief and practice to others. This, the *Advertiser* correctly observed, would not “be pleasing to the people of any denomination.”²¹

However, the editors were not always tolerant and charitable to those of differing religious views. Religious groups that passed the test of reason and accorded with the progressive spirit of the age were accepted as a benefit to the community. Other religious groups were not accorded the same respect. The *Advertiser* did not welcome the coming of the Latter Day Saints to London. In an account of a baptism of two recent converts in the river the leaders of the Latter

¹⁹ “Ultramontaniam,” *Ad*, 7 November 1872, p. 2.

²⁰ The same logic was not applied to politics. The fact that there was not one view of political life and one political party was evidence of the vitality of democratic institutions rather than their unworkability.

²¹ “Ultramontaniam,” *Ad*, 7 November 1872, p. 2.

Day Saints were charged with inculcating “pernicious doctrines,” “impious proceedings,” a blasphemous invocation, and making a “disgraceful exhibition” of themselves before two lady spectators.²² The report was more sensationalism than reasoned journalism, and those vilified wrote to the editor a reasoned and temperate letter of objection calling for substantiation of the outrageous charges. The extended editor’s note which followed the letter did not answer the charges but added to the earlier tone of derision.²³ A few weeks later the *Advertiser* followed up their story, somewhat smugly reporting that their exposé had resulted in the “Mormons” being turned out of the hall they had rented. The *Advertiser* felt it had done its public duty in attempting to rid the city of this pernicious cult. In a similar vein, the *Advertiser* treated Presbyterian blacksmith James Munro, christened by the *Free Press* as London’s “religious monomaniac,” with equal disdain reporting on his religious opinions without a trace of Christian charity.²⁴ The religious discourse constructed by the editors required that its opponents adopt its rationality to be given a hearing. Those who refused to conform to this discourse were defined as outcasts and labelled insane.²⁵

This exclusion was not only deployed against marginal characters such as James Munro and small groups like the Latter Day Saints; its principal target was Roman Catholicism. The *Free Press* was convinced it could win over Catholics, who were clearly intelligent, useful citizens, to the rationality of their position. Like the clergy, the editors attributed the aspects of Catholicism they deplored to powerful elements within the ecclesiastical hierarchy. On this basis, appeals were made directly to right-thinking Catholics to adopt the religious ideas of the editors. With stunning arrogance, a *Free Press* editorial defended Montreal Orangemen after a riot in 1877

²² “Mormonism: Joe Smith’s ‘Religion’ in London,” *Ad*, 9 April 1875, p. 1. For the reception of the Latter Day Saints in other locales see Penton, “The Response to Two New Religions in Canada.”

²³ “The Mormon Sensation,” *Ad*, 10 April 1875, p. 1.

²⁴ “Forty and Two Months: the Irrepressible Blacksmith at His Post Every Sunday,” *Ad*, 12 April 1881, p. 4. Also see *FP* reporting, “Munro’s Monomania,” *FP*, 2 May 1881, p. 4 and “Munro, the Religio-Maniac,” *FP*, 15 March 1882, p. 4. More detail on Munro is provided in chapter 3, 94.

²⁵ Michel Foucault, “The Dangerous Individual,” in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977-1984*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1988).

concluding that, "Almost every intelligent Roman Catholic who is at the same time a true patriot, will find as much cause to rejoice in the Revolution of '88 as any of his fellow citizens."²⁶ Like Rev. Eyans Davis, the editorial interpreted the Battle of the Boyne as establishing freedom of religion.²⁷ Unlike Rev. Davis, the *Free Press* intended its message as a justification of violence rather than as an appeal to Orangemen urging them to live in harmony with their fellow citizens. With similar assurance, a *Free Press* editorial opined that the actions of the Catholic clergy in Quebec during the elections of 1876 were such that "no sane man would attempt to justify."²⁸ The substance of the editorial dealt with Quebec Bishops explanation of their action, and thus the editorial declared the Catholic episcopate beyond the bounds of sanity.

Pragmatism

The fact that certain parties, whether the Church of England in England or the Catholic Bishops of Quebec, refused to accept their rationality did not deter London's editors, who dismissed their opponents as backward and obtuse. Thus, the *Advertiser* expressed puzzlement at the lack of sense exhibited by the Bishop of Rochester, who had recently argued that disestablishment would bring with it dire consequences.

Paganism would soon recover its ancient and sinister significance; the sick would be left to die without consolation; the poor and afflicted would no longer have the power of claiming or receiving the tender sympathy and personal instruction of their own authorized clergymen; the best and cheapest kind of police for the masses would suddenly be dismissed about their business, and the entire community would suffer.²⁹

Reasoning for the established church on these pragmatic grounds seemed completely disingenuous to the *Advertiser's* editorial writer; however, the intelligence of the Bishop was not brought into question, only his common sense.

It is difficult for us in this country to understand how an intelligent man can talk in this strain. It is to be hoped for the credit of the Bishop's honesty that he really

²⁶ "A Warning," *FP*, 18 July 1877, p. 2.

²⁷ See chapter 6 of this study, 297.

²⁸ "A Clerical Protest," *FP*, 10 April 1877, p. 2.

²⁹ "Disestablishment in Britain," *Ad*, 16 September 1885, p. 2.

believes what he says; but it certainly does not reflect any credit on his common sense or his knowledge of church history. There are many men in the Church, however, who are farther advanced than their Bishop; and when disestablishment comes it will be not only at the demand of the English people, but with the approval of the wisest and best in the Church itself.³⁰

The writer took comfort that the Bishop did not represent the best sense or the most advanced views of the Church. Progress and reason would eventually win out because church establishment could not deliver what it claimed. Although the advocates of establishment promised social stability and moral guidance, the editors found evidence of discord and moral decay where church establishment was still practiced.

Official recognition of religion in public life whatever form it might take was likely to lead to inefficiencies. This was the assumption underlying an 1875 *Advertiser* editorial on a proposed religious test for the civil service.³¹ After having some fun with the idea that professing Christians had more integrity than non-Christians, the argument proceeded to suggest that if church membership were required for civil servants it would have a detrimental effect on the churches.

If . . . the Government should adopt the rule that the civil service was open to church members only, an evil would quickly arise from which religion would suffer. A premium would be put upon church membership and the class who resort to it as a help to selfish advancement must be enormously increased. "Hypocrites" within the church would weaken the real strength of the religious element.³²

This argument requires that the qualities likely to bring advancement in the civil service were at odds with the essential characteristics of the Christian. This contradicted a more common tack characteristic of both the *Advertiser* and *Free Press* which regarded religious belief and involvement the moral foundation for public life. However, this undercurrent of incompatibility of true religious vitality and demands of modern political and economic life provided a recurring counter-current in much of the religious discourse. This counter-current, reflected in the *Advertiser* editorial, argued that certain teachings essential to Christianity were not practical in the

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "Selecting Professors of Religion for Public Offices," *Ad*, 10 August 1877, p. 2.

³² Ibid.

real situations of modern life.³³ In such cases, the editor concluded, the pragmatic criterion of truth must triumph over the theological.

A variation on this theme came with the *Advertiser* editor's comments on the Bishop of Peterborough's critique of Christian socialism.³⁴ The *Advertiser* was generally suspicious of socialism, for it put too much power in the hands of the state and, it was particularly suspicious of Christian socialism since it combined religious values with state power. The editorial began by favourably quoting two statements of the Bishop of Peterborough.

1. That it is not possible for the State to carry out, in all its relations, literally, all the precepts of Christ, and that a State which attempted this could not exist a week.
2. That if it were possible to do this the result would be a perfectly intolerable tyranny.³⁵

The Bishop's contentions were not only that the application of the precepts of Christ were impractical, but that they would also lead to tyranny. To avoid the tension, a separation was required between what the church does and what the state does. However, the reasoning of the Bishop, as reported by the *Advertiser*, takes the precepts of Christ as injunctions which should affect the behaviour of the state. To follow the *Advertiser's* report further:

He maintains that it is not possible for the State to carry out the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount—the precepts which inculcate non-resistance, inexhaustible forgiveness and unlimited benevolence. Can the State, he asks, disband its army, burn its ships of war, abolish its courts of justice, pull down its jails, dismiss its policemen, bestow its revenues upon all and sundry who ask for them, and yet still continue to exist as a State? The proper place of any person who maintains that these things can be done the Bishop says, is a lunatic asylum.

According to the Bishop, the *Advertiser*, and the *Free Press* the asylums were being filled with those who refused to conform to their discourse.

It cannot be done, he asserts, either in the letter or in the spirit; because the essential idea of a State always is that of sovereignty held in trust for the common weal, and to this trust for the sake of which it exists it is morally bound to be faithful. In order that it may be a faithful trustee the State is bound, first to preserve its own existence, and secondly "to resist, restrain, and if needs be to destroy whatever or whomever assails its authority or attacks the interests committed to its charge."

³³ "Ultramontanism," *Ad*, 7 November 1872, p. 2.

³⁴ "Christian Socialism," *Ad*, 1 February 1890, p. 4.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

This idea of protection of interests, maintenance of rights and resistance to all assaults on them is not the idea of the Sermon on the Mount which from beginning to end is the idea of self-sacrifice as opposed to self-preservation.³⁶

The Bishop's characterization of the modern state and its incompatibility with the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount was quite accurate. The curious thing is that he should have considered the "reason of state" of the nation state to have superior authority and be completely separate from the moral imperatives of Christ's teaching.³⁷ The Sermon represented an alternative to the version of political and economic life that was demanded by the liberal state, an alternative that could provide the basis for a religious critique of the state—a possibility upon which the Bishop's reading took pains to foreclose. According to his reading, which the *Advertiser* fully endorsed, the church must limit its purview to accommodate the prerogatives of the state rather than act as an independent platform from which to critique the state

Principles of religion for liberal societies

Religion was not permitted to critique the state on its reason of state because to do so would threaten fundamental commitments of liberal society. The editors gave priority to what they considered essential laws of human relations over religious teaching. The *Free Press* asserted that "no Church in this country can be permitted to claim consideration which is clearly in violation of individual liberty."³⁸ The *Advertiser* made clear that there "is something wrong with a principle which will not allow of *universal application*."³⁹ For religion to be compatible with liberal society it needed to recognise the absolute inviolability of individual liberty and universality. Once these principles were conceded, religion was awarded a legitimate place; however, the editor's gaze upon the religious landscape was vigilant of the slightest breach.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ On "reason of state" see Michel Foucault, "Politics and Reason," in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977-1984*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1988), 74-7.

³⁸ "The New Ecclesiastical Declaration," *FP*, 5 April 1877, p. 2, emphasis in the original.

³⁹ "Secular Education," *Ad*, 5 February 1872, p. 2.

That everyone should be treated equally before the law was one of the basic tenets of liberalism. The *Free Press* was convinced that this principle had been violated in the early years of the Mowat regime by what it constantly referred to as the Brown-O'Donohue Treaty. This "Treaty," the *Free Press* charged, brought Catholic support to the Liberals in exchange for greater political influence and patronage.⁴⁰ Recognition of a particular group in society as deserving of special attention as a group contravened the equality of all and endangered Canada. It was hoped that even the Liberals would see the dangers and repudiate this arrangement.

The means that have been taken to bring about this state of things are not without danger in such a country as ours. All are free here, all enjoy not only equal rights but the freedom of the subject is quite as extensive as is consistent with good government and the efficient and impartial administration of the laws. To go upon the assumption therefore, that one denomination or religious persuasion should have privileges to secure, objects to pursue, and rights to defend, that are not common to all, is a grand absurdity.

Canadian freedoms were dependent upon religious denominations giving up claims to special status. Without equal rights there could be no freedom. The price of freedom was to claim only those rights, even religious ones, which were common to all. In a similar vein, the *Advertiser* argued that liberty of conscience could only be preserved if the state was freed from all religious entanglements.

We heartily concede to all others the same privilege we claim for ourselves—to worship God according to our own views, or to abstain from worship entirely if such should be our belief. We claim liberty of conscience for every man—a liberty which cannot be enjoyed if the State is made subordinate in the slightest matter to any denomination. The State is the union and combination of all the people of a country for the protection of life and property; into the domain of conscience and religion its legislation has no right to enter. Its enactments can never make men virtuous; its laws are for the protection of the people, and are prostituted from their legitimate purpose whenever they are used to propagate any religious dogmas.⁴¹

The state has been given responsibility for the protection of life and property. Into this wide space religion may not intrude. However, religion is accorded rhetorical space in the domain of conscience where legislation has no right. To preserve universality, a normalised

⁴⁰ See for example "Mr. J. O'Connor and the Grits," *FP*, 8 July 1872, p. 2; "Sectarian Grants," *FP*, 14 December 1874, p. 2; "Roman Catholics in the Legislature," 29 January 1875, p. 2; and "Politics and Sectarianism," *FP*, 15 November 1875, p. 2.

public standard by which to measure equal treatment was required. If everyone is to be treated equally all differences must be effaced. Customs, beliefs, and superstitions that differentiated people could not be recognised in public without seeming to favour one group over another. The maintenance of individual liberty in matters of conscience, together with normalisation, was accomplished by the construction of separate domains for public concerns, which were related to life and property and the private concerns of conscience. What differentiated was classed as private; those things on which uniformity was demanded were public. Thus, a discourse was constructed which assigned objectivity, knowledge, men, and political and economic activity to the public sphere; and subjectivity, sentimentality, women, and religion to the private sphere where they could be legitimately enjoyed and indulged in without disruption to society at large.

Religion could not have authority in the public sphere where scientific law, reason, and progress now held sway. Contravention of these authorities could invoke the sanctions of the state, assign one to an asylum or the social fringe, or at the very least bring into question one's common sense. However, religious, and particularly theological, imperatives could be ignored with impunity if they seemed to interfere with individual liberty or equal rights. In a liberal society the principle of individual liberty must be given more authority than religious demands. The means of doing this without entirely dispensing with the benefits of religion, a position neither paper would have condoned, required a reassessment of religion.

True Religion: the Evangelical Creed⁴²

This separation of religion from public life was not an assault upon the religious character of the people or the nation. The religious discourse of the editors diligently policed attempts to move religion out of its assigned place, but they were convinced that religion was essential to Canada's future. The editors needed a religious vocabulary which was not bound to a

⁴¹ "Ultramontanism," *Ad*, 7 November 1872, p. 2.

⁴² "True" indicates a valuation of how likely an individual or institution is to meet a standard, in this case the achievement of a liberal society in Canada. See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 181 and John S. Ransom, *Foucault's Discipline*, 52-3.

particular theological or ecclesiastical tradition, but which had considerable resonance with the Christian public. The evangelical creed was a dynamic religious force in late Victorian Ontario and had developed a non-particularist religious discourse which the editors adopted to great effect.⁴³ Evangelicals, like the editors, were persistent critics of established churches, considering their religion little more than a civic duty tending to be lifeless and formalized. Their solution was to free religion from its duty to the state and place religious responsibility in the hands of the people. The parallel in rhetoric between the program of the liberal society and the program of evangelical revival was remarkable. Evangelicals fought to release religion from the political constraints by adopting a voluntarist position in church-state relations. They endeavoured to free individuals from the demands of creed and theological disputation by a democratic biblicism which maintained that any sincere Christian could find all the knowledge necessary for Christian faith and life directly from the Bible without the mediation of external ecclesiastical authority. They understood the core of religion to be an unmediated experience of salvation in conversion appropriated by an individual choice. This conversion was to be evidenced in moral character and active service for the Kingdom of God.⁴⁴ In the hands of the editors, the evangelical creed provided a religious legitimisation for the construction of a modern liberal state in Canada.

Individual freedom of choice, the centrepiece of liberalism, was also the central requirement for religious revival. In a commentary on the religious and social influence of revivals throughout church history the *Advertiser* adopted the evangelical connection of religious fervour to religious freedom. Between Peter at Pentecost and Wycliffe, Luther, and Wesley, the *Advertiser* found only a “long season of spiritual coldness.” The explanation for this was quite evident: “The element of religious freedom, so necessary for the maintenance of religious enthusiasm, found little opportunity for its exercise when Christianity became established by law,

⁴³ The use of “evangelical creed” is borrowed from French, “The Evangelical Creed in Canada.” A vast and growing literature is addressing the development and influence of a broad evangelicalism in nineteenth-century Ontario. See in particular Michael Gauvreau, “Protestantism Transformed” and Rawlyk, *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*.

and hampered by State regulation.”⁴⁵ By contrast, the nineteenth century had experienced numerous revivals of religion which “have left society better for their influence.” The greater the religious freedom the better the religious experience of individuals and thus the greater the social benefit. Efforts to retract this hard-earned freedom were met with impatience.

If the openness of the nineteenth century develops a stouter faith, concerted zeal in labor, and the golden splendor of successful toil, why in the name of common sense could men wish to envelope us again in the shadows and perils of the bitter sectarian former ages?⁴⁶

Editorial biblicism

The freedom necessary for a stouter faith required the free exercise of conscience as well as the freedom to make individual religious choices. The evangelical commitment to a democratic Bible paralleled the liberal view that an independent investigation of facts would lead to truth.⁴⁷ Both had faith in the ability of reason to free the individual from the oppression of tradition and external authority. In the hands of the editors, the Bible was a weapon to beat down theological prejudice and division, especially as represented by the orthodox creeds of the church. The Westminster Confession was regarded with particular odium as an outdated theological statement offensive to the more progressive elements among the faithful. Creeds and confessions provided easy marks for the editor of the *Advertiser* who pointed defenders of orthodoxy back to the Bible.⁴⁸

This undue adoration of human confessions and standards—this apparently nervous reliance on long and detailed creeds as the *palladia* of truth, and aversion to refer men to the simple word of God as the source without the aid of these ancient leading strings, can be nothing but a source of weakness to any branch of the Christian Church, and therefore to the Church as a whole.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ This characterisation of evangelicalism follows Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 4-5 and Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 3-17.

⁴⁵ “Religious Epidemics,” *Ad*, 22 October 1873, p. 2.

⁴⁶ “Theological Revulsions,” *Ad*, 27 November 1873, p. 2.

⁴⁷ George M. Marsden, “Everyone One’s Own Interpreter?”

⁴⁸ “Breadth and Bigotry,” *Ad*, 16 October 1875, p. 2 and “Preachers and Politics,” *Ad*, 29 January 1885, p. 2.

⁴⁹ “Breadth and Bigotry,” *Ad*, 16 October 1875, p. 2.

The scriptures were considered by the editors, at least for the purposes of this argument, to be inspired and authoritative, superior to all denominational statements. The *Advertiser* advised Presbyterians to jettison the Westminster Confession and rely solely on scripture if they hoped to be a church fit for Canadians striving for freedom and independence. "If [the Canada Presbyterian Church] is to be in any sense the church of a free and intelligent people, it cannot be by declaring its ancient traditions as perfect and unalterable as the inspired Scriptures, or by branding as 'heresy' the appeal to the Book of Books as the ultimate source of Christian belief."⁵⁰

Individual conscience

The *Free Press* and the *Advertiser* consistently defended clergy and professors accused by their denominations of heresy.⁵¹ They construed the conflict in such incidents as a contest between free and open investigation of the Scriptures and outmoded, divisive denominational standards. In 1870 the *Free Press* was heartened by the encouragement given by his Presbytery to Rev. George Gilfillan of Dundee Scotland. The *Free Press* represented Gilfillan as an independent thinker who "could no longer tolerate on his conscience" three issues upheld by the Confession of Faith. These were eternal reprobation, the damnation of non-elect infants, and the creation of the world in six days. The Dundee Presbytery concluded that these were of subordinate importance and could be deemed matters of doubtful disputation. This opinion seemed to the *Free Press* a major advance for religious freedom, particularly as it came from "a rigid Calvinistic Presbytery, in a rigid Calvinistic country."⁵²

In an 1881 heresy trial in the American Episcopal Methodist Church, Dr. Thomas was expelled for an inadequate theology of hell. This occasioned an opportunity for the *Free*

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹For some examples of the *Ad* handling of heresy cases see "Breadth and Bigotry," *Ad*, 16 October 1875, p. 2; "Everlasting Punishment," *Ad*, 20 April 1876, p. 2; "Professor Robertson Smith's Suspension," *Ad*, 30 November 1880, p. 2; and "Theological Battlefields," *Ad*, 15 October 1881, p. 2.

⁵² "The Rev. George Gilfillan before the Presbytery of Dundee," *FP*, 29 March 1870, p. 2. Also see "Dundee Once More," *FP*, 8 April 1870, p. 2 and "Scotland—Ecclesiastical Progress," *FP*, 15 July 1870, p. 2.

Press to expound at length, with the use of a rather heavy sarcasm, on the weakness of Christian communions which do not encourage independent thought.

It is felt to be necessary to hold a tight rein over those people of independent thought, whose consciences will not permit them to preach that which they have ceased to believe; which, upon maturer reflexion, they have concluded does not rest upon any sufficient ground of authority. . . . Liberty of opinion in a church that is tied down by dogmas contrived long ago, and patched up from time to time to suit the necessities of the passing day, is out of the question. Submission or expulsion! . . . This growing practice of expulsion may seem to be somewhat anomalous to those who look to churches for the evidences of brotherly love! But it should be borne in mind that though brotherly love is an excellent thing in its place, it cannot compare, it would seem, to a glowing belief in a materiality of fire and brimstone hereafter, and a firm conviction in the personality of the devil.⁵³

In these interventions into the affairs of Presbyterians and Methodists the editors did not consider that they were overstepping the bounds of a secular journal. Their purpose was to strengthen the churches by giving aid and encouragement to the better elements within those communions.

Aid and encouragement did not extend to those who opposed the religious values the editors considered to be compatible with liberal society. They did not defend freedom of conscience or extend brotherly love in the case of Bishop of Lincoln Dr. King's troubles with the church. The Bishop was charged with a number of abuses, including use of lights upon the altar, assuming the "eastward position" during the acts of consecration and making the sign of the cross. The editors shared with evangelicals a fear of ritualism which leaned toward Catholicism and away from the elements of "true religion." In this case the relationship between members of the clergy and their communion was presented in a quite different light than in the case of Dr.

Thomas. The *Free Press* now counselled as follows.

It would seem to the ordinary mind, which is not much entangled with sophistries and special pleas, that when a clergyman, be he Bishop or some less exalted servant of the Church, undertakes to eat her bread he should conform to her ritual. If he does not approve the ritual, or has ceased to believe in its efficacy, or authenticity, let him retire from the service of the Church, as a layman would retire from the occupation in which he had been engaged if he found that he could no longer pursue it with a due regard to conscientious convictions. But for a Bishop—above all clerical personages, to set the example of disregarding the ritual and usages [sic]

⁵³ "Expulsion of Dr. Thomas for Heresy," *FP*, 13 October 1881, p. 2. For a similar approach in the famous case of Dr. David Swing see "Citing a Divine," *FP*, 17 April 1874, p. 2.

of the Church to which he is sworn allegiance seems to the most of us, to use a cant phrase,—very bad form.⁵⁴

The logic which supported Dr. Thomas in his independent thought in opposition to his denominational standards, while enjoining obedience to the usages of the Church upon Dr. King is to be found in the editors unswerving belief in progress. As the forces of history propelled the separation of church and state forward, so knowledge was progressing and theological standards, like the Westminster Confession and the belief in hell could only stand in the way of a true biblical faith. Liturgy and ritual, which symbolised mystery and superstition, were to be discarded as everything came into the clear light of reason. Progress could not be resisted. According to this discourse, following the lead of whatever presented itself as progressive was the surest way to truth.

*Truth grows! Scientific problems, over which mystery flung its mantle for centuries, are to-day in the light of simplicity and certainty. Political difficulties which worried our forefathers are removed to-day by their dauntless descendants. The foundations of society are being laid deeper and firmer than ever. . . . Why should it be incredible that theological truth should invest itself with greater light and broader sympathies? Why chain the truths of Christianity to the monastic stake of old opinions and habits? Rather, like Lazarus, lose the grave clothes of the past, and let truth out into the liberty and charity of the present.*⁵⁵

The error of the Bishop of Lincoln was to be out of step with the movement of progress. It was his intention to recast the chain binding the Church of England to the old opinions and habits of Roman Catholicism. The truth had been let out in England with the Reformation and reflected in the Book of Common Prayer. Any attempt to return to the practices of the past must, the editors pronounced, be resisted.

Christian unity

Editorial writing was constructing its own civil religion by drawing upon an evangelical vocabulary valorising the authority of scripture over tradition and individual conscience in religious concerns. Another attraction of evangelical rhetoric for the editors was its

⁵⁴ “The Trial of the Bishop,” *FP*, 3 March 1889, p. 4.

⁵⁵ “Theological Revulsions,” *Ad*, 27 November 1873, p. 2. In a similar vein see “Scotland—Ecclesiastical Progress,” *FP*, 15 July 1870, p. 2.

conviction that a widespread Christian unity existed across denominational lines. Theological disputes and denominational bickering often masked this essential unity, but the editorial writers were convinced that it would win out. The *Advertiser* was predicting the union of the Canadian churches as early as 1870. "Theologically we are not half so much divided as we are ecclesiastically; and if all the proud, priestly pretensions that are so offensive alike to God and to all sensible men were out of the way, we should see the churches drawn together into a real, if not organic union, that would promote their influence and usefulness."⁵⁶

Denominational tradition and clerical turf wars were preventing Christian religion from fulfilling its social task, which was to build a broadly based moral consensus in support of the Canadian nation building project. The institutional structures to support this consensus were already largely in place. The churches had an important part to play to the degree they accepted and promoted the editors' version of true religion. However, an even more potent force had appeared on the religious horizon which was free of the denominational tensions the editors so deplored: the Christian voluntary association.⁵⁷ The *Advertiser* was convinced that associations were taking over from the revival as the most important source of religious vitality.

The enthusiasm of the various branches of Protestantism shows itself in a tendency to form temporary unions, and to hold conventions. Young Men's Christian Associations had the honor of setting the fashion in this direction; then came Sunday School Associations and Evangelical Alliances. . . . Religious enthusiasm in this form is certainly as deserving of notice as the older and more familiar "revival." . . . Conventions are not only the result of the operations of a great power; they are a power in themselves. They are the result of the same enthusiasm that caused the great revivals of other days.⁵⁸

Lay led, nondenominational associations would advance the cause of religion by setting aside the distractions of the past and promoting the advance of true religion. For the editors, this was a practical, activist Christianity which was primarily to be lived rather than argued about. This kind of religion would be of real service to the community.

⁵⁶ "Liberalizing Tendencies," *Ad*, 30 March 1870, p. 2.

⁵⁷ See chapters 4 and 5 of this study for an analysis of the significance of Christian voluntary associations to religion in London.

⁵⁸ "Religious Epidemics," *Ad*, 22 October 1873, p. 2.

The day of internecine faction-fighting between this and that body of Christians over quibbles and trifles is passing away . . . It ought never to be forgotten that denominations and denominational peculiarities are not ends, but merely means to ends. Religion is real only in so far as it shows itself in human character and conduct. The spinning-out and hammering in of the doctrines and maxims of the great theologians of the various schools are but as the fine dust of the balance in importance as compared with such teachings as shall help men and women to become better – make them more just, more genial, more polite, more generous, more truthful, more honest, more reliable.⁵⁹

Moral action

True religion, according to the newspapers, did not issue forth in theological dispute but in moral action. This was the key to understanding the editor's conception of the place of religion in society. Religion was no longer a player in the public world of facts. It had nothing to contribute to the discussion about the economic and political structures of society. These were being determined scientifically by the progress of knowledge in the new sciences of politics and economics. Once theological impediments were removed and politics and the market were freed to follow natural laws, political freedom and material wealth increased. Thus, the political and economic structures of liberal society were objectively set by scientific principles; they were in step with the movement of progress and ensured individual liberty. Yet the editors would never claim that liberal society was without its abuses. Indeed, injustice, corruption, and inequality were as evident to the editorial writers and were far more prominent in their columns than their ideals of freedom and prosperity. These social ills were not a failure of the structures of liberal society, which the editors never questioned, but were the product of the moral inadequacy of the people inhabiting them. At least part of the solution was religion, specifically the editors' version of the evangelical creed, which respected individual freedom of choice, distanced itself from state influence, and demanded a moral reformation of character.

If the churches were to have a place in liberal society it was to promote the moral advance of the people to make them worthy of their freedoms. Moral people provided with the moral disciplines required for the exercise of freedom of conscience could not but build a nation

⁵⁹ "A Lesson From Mr. Moody," *Ad*, 16 November 1875, p. 2.

that would be the envy of all. As the *Advertiser* explained, the development of moral character was the point of contact between the secular and the sacred. Thus, visits of American revivalist Dwight L. Moody and the Canadian evangelists Crossley and Hunter were welcomed with enthusiasm.

The *Advertiser* is a secular journal, but it frowns upon no honest endeavour to improve the condition of the people by whatsoever body of men and women undertaken—whether by resident clergy and their flocks, by visiting evangelists, or by philanthropic institutions of a cosmopolitan character. On the contrary we are always ready to give a helping hand to every work and worker which have for their object the elevation and advancement of the human race.⁶⁰

This point of intersection provided a legitimate role for religion in politics and economics: not to challenge the political and economic structures, but to improve the moral tone of society by influencing the character of participants. Now the establishment placement of religion as a civic duty was being replaced by the voluntarist idea that involvement in politics was a religious one. The church played a constructive role in society as it instilled this perspective.

The connection between Church and State has often corrupted Christianity, but it has never purified politics. The true remedy is to educate the people to the necessity of conscientious participation in public affairs; to regard the franchise as an important trust for the upright discharge of which they must give account not merely to an earthly tribunal; to refuse the devil's distinction between political and what some would call ordinary morality.⁶¹

This conclusion is remarkably close to that which Rev. W.H. Tilley had drawn in a sermon on religion and politics.⁶² The clergy and the editors assigned to the churches the role of inculcating moral character in private where family life and church combined their efforts.⁶³ The benefit to the community came as morally upright characters (men) were publicly active in business and politics.⁶⁴ Church attendance, literary societies, Sabbath schools, Young Men's Christian

⁶⁰ "Mr. Moody's Visit," *Ad*, 4 January 1890, p. 4.

⁶¹ "Professor Wilson on Canadian Politics," *Ad*, 10 November 1870, p. 2.

⁶² See chapter 6 of this study, 274.

⁶³ See especially chapters 4 and 6 of this study.

⁶⁴ "Preachers and Politics," *Ad*, 29 January 1885, p. 2. The editors applied the same understanding of the intersection of the secular and sacred to business. Religion is to exercise its influence by encouraging those in business to apply Christian standards of conduct in their dealings. However, religion cannot legitimately challenge economic structures. See "Religion and Business," *Ad*, 9 September 1884, p. 2.

Associations, Women's Christian Associations, missionary work, and the full range of religiously motivated activities so characteristic of evangelicalism were endorsed as agents of character formation.⁶⁵ In late Victorian London evangelical Christianity had an impressive institutional base from which to accomplish the task set for it. The prospects for success looked encouraging as well. An unshakable belief in moral and material progress was evident in the *Advertiser's* assessment of the situation in 1885. "With all the evils that surround us, religion never exercised so great an influence nor did public and private morals ever stand so high."⁶⁶

The social agenda

However, evil was still evident. If religion was to instil virtue into citizens of the state, the state had the responsibility to provide an environment conducive to these efforts. Real dangers lurked on the horizon, and these formed the political agenda of late nineteenth-century religious reformers. Moral character could not be ensured where the state allowed liquor to be sold by the glass and Sunday excursions to take people away from church. Prohibition campaigns and movements to maintain the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship were an attempt to convince the state of its responsibilities in the task of moral renovation. The churches would make moral citizens to make the structures of liberal society run smoothly; however, the state must, for its part, ensure an environment in which the churches could pursue their task. The *Advertiser* fully endorsed the agenda and the campaigns of the religious reformers. Although the *Free Press* agreed with this placement of religion their liberal principles prevented them from endorsing legislation on behalf of moral campaigns.

The editorial writers of the *Advertiser* and the *Free Press* fought an ongoing and often heated battle throughout this period over the issue of prohibition. Both agreed about the need to promote temperance in society and to do away with the evils caused by inebriation. The

⁶⁵ See for example, "Literary Associations," *Ad*, 12 January 1870, p. 2; "Women's Christian Associations," *Ad*, 11 May 1874, p. 2; "A Worthy Local Enterprise," *Ad*, 13 October 1875, p. 2; "An Appeal in Aid," *FP*, 19 October 1875, p. 2; "Missionaries and the Masses," *FP*, 5 June 1875, p. 2; "New Ideas of Missionary Work," *FP*, 14 November 1877, p. 2; and "Missionaries and Emigrants," *FP*, 6 September 1880, p. 2

question was how best to accomplish this. The *Free Press* adhered most consistently to its liberal convictions. Prohibition, the same columns that regularly defended the National Policy declared, represented an unwarranted interference with commerce and was an attempt to impose the convictions and beliefs of one segment of the community upon everyone. The principles of both free enterprise and freedom of conscience would be violated by prohibition. Moral suasion was the only means of attaining temperance in a free society. Legislation to prohibit the sale of alcohol was not only politically dangerous but practically unworkable. Indeed, the *Free Press* argued, "It will yet be found that the only reform which will remain as a permanent force in the community is that which has been brought about through conviction, and which results in producing voluntary abstinence."⁶⁷ The *Free Press* attitude to Sunday observance laws was similar. An editorial written in 1883 took offence on behalf of London's citizenry at the mere suggestion: "It is practically absurd for the State to be legislating what is or is not appropriate to the Sabbath and it is an offence to moral rectitude of the community to suggest that they need laws to restrict their Sunday activities."⁶⁸

In defending prohibition and Sabbath observance laws, the *Advertiser* had to admit that legislation in these areas were infringements of individual liberty. Moreover, the *Advertiser* had repeatedly proclaimed in its columns that morality could not be legislated and attempts to do so in the past led to abuse. In editorial exchanges on these issues of moral legislation, the *Free Press* ruthlessly reminded the *Advertiser* of its eloquently articulated liberal perspective and its advocacy of free trade. The *Advertiser* justified its stance, with the aid of a utilitarian calculus, by contending that the legislative action it advocated would provide a benefit to the community greater than the detriment of lost liberty to the individual.

⁶⁶ "Is the World Worse?" *Ad*, 14 October 1885, p. 2.

⁶⁷ "A New Temperance Campaign," *FP*, 24 January 1879, p. 2 and "'Red Ribbon' and the Dunkin Act," *FP*, 30 July 1877, p. 2.

⁶⁸ "Sabbath Day Keeping," *FP*, 2 May 1883, p. 2. Also see "The People can be Trusted," *FP*, 29 July 1890, p. 4.

The plea of unwarrantable interference with individual liberty, which is sometimes heard, deserves respectful treatment—especially in an age the tendencies of which are in the direction of democracy and individualism. Yet is not the individual liberty of each one of us every day justifiably interfered with in many ways by State and municipal enactments. . . . The mere opinions and preferences of the individual must often yield to the good of the State and the well-being of the community.

It is to be remarked that it is quite a different thing to trample on any man's conscience; that is something the State should never do, nor the individual submit to. Yet who can assert that it is with him *a matter of conscience to use intoxicating liquors*. The Bible does not command anyone to use intoxicating liquors.⁶⁹

The benefits to the community of the elimination of the evils of drink were familiar to readers of the *Advertiser*, or to the readers of any of the vast quantities of temperance literature available. The evils attendant upon a Sunday excursion were much more difficult to enumerate convincingly. However, the *Advertiser* was equally convinced of the great public benefit of a day of rest, even rating the benefits (unarticulated though they be) as being on the same order as those of compulsory education. In so doing it took even its utilitarian mentor, John Stuart Mill, to task.

John Stuart Mill justifies the law of compulsory education of children on the plea that the safety of the State requires it, and yet, with strange inconsistency, he holds that "Sabbatarian legislation is an illegitimate interference with the rightful liberty of the individual." The interference in the case of education is as clear as it is in the case of Sabbath observance and as easily justified. If then it can be shown that Sunday observance is of real benefit to the nation (as very few who have considered the question can doubt), there need be no hesitation on the part of the majority in insisting on universal observation of the Sabbath. *Salus populi suprema lex.*⁷⁰

The *Advertiser* regarded the dangers to individual morality represented by liquor sales and the "Continental" Sabbath to far outweigh the infringement upon individual liberty such legislation entailed. The state needed to provide a social environment conducive to virtue if the evangelical creed was to infuse society with the virtue required by a free people. The *Free Press* remained unconvinced that the benefits of such infringements would justify the dangers. However, the *Free*

⁶⁹ "Why We Believe in Prohibition," *Ad*, 16 December 1876, p. 2, emphasis in the original.

⁷⁰ "Sabbath Observance and Personal Liberty," *Ad*, 13 August 1890, p. 4.

Press argued that the State should continue to assist religious institutions through the vehicle of tax exemptions; a measure the *Advertiser* opposed vehemently.⁷¹

Dangerous Religion: Roman Catholicism⁷²

Like the Protestant clergy, the editorial columns were wary of the Roman Catholic Church and what they perceived to be its use of power against the principles essential to liberal society. The evangelical creed had provided the resources that enabled the editors to construct their version of true religion. Their writing about Catholicism served to illustrate the danger religion posed if not carefully kept within certain bounds. Anti-Catholic writing was standard fare in both the *Free Press* and the *Advertiser*. Again, like the clergy, the editorials did not attack Catholic individuals, in fact repeated calls were made for less tension and more understanding between Canada's Catholic and Protestant communities. The Roman Catholic Church, as represented by its hierarchy, and particularly by Quebec's Ultramontane clergy, was considered to be a major threat to the bright future of Canada as a liberal society. The anti-Catholic rhetoric of the late Victorian period was often dismissed as merely "an outburst of Protestant bigotry."⁷³ The *Free Press* contended that this was not so, and this denial may be worthy of further consideration. For the *Free Press*, the true source of anti-Catholic sentiment was "papal aggression" which it understood in political rather than religious terms. The actions and pronouncements labelled "papal aggression" appeared aggressive only within the cultural world constructed by religious/political discourse we have been investigating.⁷⁴

⁷¹ "Church Exemption," *FP*, 11 May 1875, p. 2. For *Ad* opposition see "Exemption from Taxes," *Ad*, 2 December 1870, p. 2; "Taxing Church Property," *Ad*, 12 March 1874, p. 2; "Shall Church Property be Taxed?" *Ad*, 19 August 1881, p. 2; and "Tax Exemptions," *Ad*, 22 July 1890, p. 4.

⁷² The use of dangerous here is informed by Foucault's usage to denote an individual or institutions whose very existence undermines the construction of social reality. See Foucault, "The Dangerous Individual."

⁷³ "The Attitude of the Public," *FP*, 11 April 1889, p. 4.

⁷⁴ Donald H. Akenson points out that Catholics indulged in this same blaming of leaders and encouragement of group difference vis-à-vis Protestants, *Small Differences*, 147.

Roberto Perin has effectively demonstrated that the Vatican, contrary to contemporary fears, was actually attentive to local sensibilities and, when it used its prerogatives it was to moderate the claims of Bishops, particularly in Quebec. Nor was the Catholic Church operating under a monolithic carefully orchestrated program. Bishops were often at odds with one another and reluctant to invest energy in issues not directly affecting their diocese.⁷⁵ The Anti-Catholic rhetoric in the *Free Press* and *Advertiser* during this period tells us little or nothing about the intentions or policies of the Roman Catholic in Canada or elsewhere. This rhetoric however, revealed the fears of nineteenth-century liberals about the possibility that religion could form subjects who would reject the reasonableness and inevitability of their project. The questions and issues posed by the newspapers were not theological or ecclesiastical, but political; and they underscored the liberal principles at the heart of the religious/political discourse we have been attending to. While the editors were able to cast the vocabulary of the evangelical creed into a language that justified the quest for individual autonomy, in their view Catholicism resisted such attempts. On important issues Catholics persisted in teaching that Christian religion had political and economic implications. French nationalism combined with ultramontane rhetoric presented a national vision antithetical to that of the editors. Thus the danger posed by Catholicism, as constructed by this discourse, was not primarily to religion but to the liberal state. There was some legitimacy then to the *Free Press* claim that their anti-Catholic perspective was not simply Protestant bigotry. It was the perceived danger of Catholic practises to political and religious liberty which, according to the *Advertiser*, lay behind the repugnance with which many regarded Catholicism.

The doctrine of Ultramontanism, as it is called—the extreme Church and State, or rather Church over State, views maintained by some sections of the Catholic body—are so very obnoxious to all our conceptions of civil and religious liberty that no one need be surprised at the repugnance with which they are listened to, or the alarm their advocacy creates.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Roberto Perin, *Rome in Canada*.

⁷⁶ “Ultramontanism,” *Ad*, 7 November 1872, p. 2.

Fear that Catholic action would threaten the existence of Canada as a liberal society was especially evident in the response of the papers to four issues that arose during the twenty year period under investigation. These incidents will be used to explore the rhetoric of Anti-Catholicism as a major cultural boundary necessary to uphold the integrity of the liberal vision of Canada. These issues were: 1) the proclamation of papal infallibility in 1870; 2) the controversy over the Charlevoix election in 1876; 3) agitation regarding the Jesuit's Estates Act; and 4) secular/ separate schooling which was particularly prevalent during 1889-90.

Infallibility

The editorial response to the Vatican Council and ultimately to the proclamation of infallibility combined a good deal of speculation with gleeful irony. The speculation centred on whether Pius IX would be able to establish this doctrine over the objections of what the *Free Press* regarded as "the talent of the Ecumenical," the Liberal Catholics. The opposition group exhibited the characteristics that the *Free Press* valued, independence of mind and the same vision of progress.⁷⁷ Once the doctrine had been accepted, speculation turned to irony. The *Free Press* considered infallibility to be a deliberate rejection of progress. The doctrine was criticised for concentrating too much power in the hands of one individual.⁷⁸ Most importantly, however, the doctrine of infallibility was interpreted as a rejection of the liberal principle that every individual had a responsibility to make up their own mind by an autonomous use of reason. The papacy was usurping this elemental aspect of human dignity and thereby insulting liberal constructs of individual liberty. The far-reaching political implications of the new doctrine were developed in an 1874 pamphlet by W.E. Gladstone entitled *Vatican Decrees and their Bearing on Civil Allegiance*. Gladstone's conclusions were quickly taken up by the *Advertiser*: "when the claim to infallibility as respects faith and morals, is conceded, and when absolute obedience is demanded besides, there is little that remains over which the authorities of the Church may not extend her

⁷⁷ "Papal Infallibility; or, the Situation at Rome," *FP*, 24 May 1870, p. 2 and "Progressive Indication," *Ad*, 28 June 1870, p. 2.

power.”⁷⁹ Gladstone argued that infallibility placed Catholic citizens in an untenable conflict of loyalties between civil and religious authorities.

Priests and elections

Further elaboration of Gladstone’s work for the Canadian context was provided by long-time defender of Protestant rights in Quebec, A.T. Galt. The appearance of his essay *Church and State* was the occasion for a long report and an editorial endorsing his views. Galt attempted to demonstrate that Papal infallibility had dangerous political consequences and that it was part of a larger effort of the Vatican to control the political life of Canada. Galt argued that Bourget’s pastoral of February 1876, which had been written in the context of the Quebec election, made the connection between infallibility and political interference plain. Bourget had written: “each one of you can and ought to say in the interior of his soul, “I hear my Curé; my Curé hears the Bishop; the Bishop hears the Pope, and the Pope hears our Lord Jesus Christ, who aids with his Holy Spirit to render them infallible on the teaching and government of the Church.”⁸⁰

Infallibility struck at the foundation of political liberty. Democratic government was premised on the idea that each elector was a free agent, and therefore responsible as an individual for making rational choices to benefit the nation. If the Catholic clergy were to intervene in this free exercise of electoral privilege democracy itself was in danger. The *Free Press* was convinced that protection of the electoral system from what it termed “clerical intimidation” was essential to the continued survival of the Canadian state. The threat of eternal damnation was the ultimate form of election fixing according to the *Free Press*, far worse than the practices of bribery or “treating” that electoral reform sought to eliminate.⁸¹ If, the logic went, an

⁷⁸ “Papal Infallibility,” *FP*, 18 July 1870, p. 2; “Infallibility,” *Ad*, 14 July 1870, p. 2; and “The End of Papal Sovereignty,” *Ad*, 17 September 1870, p. 2.

⁷⁹ “Mr. Gladstone’s Pamphlet,” *Ad*, 25 November 1874, p. 2.

⁸⁰ “Church and State,” *Ad*, 6 April 1876, p. 2. For Galt see Jean-Pierre Kesteman, *DCB* 12, pp. 348-56.

⁸¹ “The New Ecclesiastical Declaration,” *FP*, 5 April 1877, p. 2.

elector did not vote as ordered by the priest, they were disobeying the Pope and therefore Christ and in mortal danger of their souls.

Jesuits' Estates

The debates over infallibility and electoral inference in the 1870s were replaced in the late 1880s by concerns over the Jesuits' Estates legislation and separate schooling. While the issues were different, the rhetoric was similar. It was not questions of religion that were primarily at stake, but political matters which struck to the heart of the kind of society being built in Canada. The *Free Press* objected to the Jesuits' Estates Act because the Act recognised the authority of the Pope in such a way as "to set his Holiness the Pope above her Majesty the Queen." Thus, the Roman Catholic Church showed itself to be "the dictator not only in things spiritual, but the final and only arbiter in things mundane."⁸² While the editors made much of the reputation of the Jesuits—especially of the Papal suppression of the order in 1773—they did not present the Jesuits' Estates controversy as a debate about the place of religious orders in Canada, but rather as a debate about Canadian sovereignty. It was argued that this legislation set a precedent for the direct intervention of a religious body in the secular affairs of the nation.

Separate schools

Education held a prominent place in the liberal rhetoric of progress and national advance. It was the strategy that would finally bring unity out of the diversity of liberal society. While diversity of opinion was accepted as an intermediate stage the expectation was that advances in society, and particularly education would resolve even the religious differences that caused divisions.

However strong the variation of opinion may be on matters of a religious kind there is no reason why that variation should interfere with warm social intercourse, and the united action due to citizenship. If we can't all agree on such matters, to-day, a few short years will be all that is necessary to open our eyes to the truth as it exists, unclouded by dogmas or traditions. One has only to wait till then, in order that the scales may be removed from our sight, and all will see alike.⁸³

⁸² "With Whom Lies the Victory!" *FP*, 1 April 1889, p. 4.

⁸³ "Sir A.T. Galt's Letter," *FP*, 22 February 1876, p. 2.

If this great harmony was to be achieved, educational division would have to be removed. Separate schools contravened the liberal principle of universality and frustrated the *Free Press's* desire that "all youth should be educated in one common citizenship."⁸⁴ The political and cultural implications of this lack of common education were becoming apparent, and the *Free Press* supported Conservative Leader and London M.P.P. W.R. Meredith's contention that Ontario's 218 separate schools had become "so many centres of discord."⁸⁵ The aims of separate schooling were regarded as being completely at odds with those of society. Again, the *Free Press* warned that the effects of separate schools "on the minds of the children is singularly disadvantageous and warps them from the current citizenship."⁸⁶ Far from promoting liberal harmony, education of this variety tended to social fragmentation and misunderstanding.

Editorial writing on Catholicism found Catholic theological premises and institutional practices fundamentally at odds with the values that liberal imperatives prescribed for the young nation of Canada. The Catholic Church continued to assert its religious authority and to insist that where spiritual and secular matters came into conflict, the spiritual were to assume precedence. Advancing liberal values challenging these very assertions caused the Church to insist on them more vigorously. The doctrine of infallibility, clerical participation in electoral campaigns, and separate schooling were just some of the ways this conflict took institutional shape. The battle lines constructed by this discourse set the stakes very high. For the Catholic Church immortal souls were at stake; for London's newspaper editors, the future of Canada as a democratic society. The editors concluded that if Catholics were not free to think and to vote independently and to attend common schools they could not function as true citizens. Following

⁸⁴ "Ontario and Separate Schools," *FP*, 28 December 1889, p. 4.

⁸⁵ "Meredith at London," *FP*, 18 December 1889, p. 4. For a historical study which explores the roots of such attitudes see Chad Gaffield, *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict: The Origins of the French-Language Controversy in Ontario* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987). On the background of the Catholic schools in London see Michael F. Murphy, "The Formation of Roman Catholic Schools in London, Ontario, 1850-1871," *Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Historical Studies* 63 (1997).

⁸⁶ "Doomed in Manitoba," *FP*, 7 February 1890, p. 4.

Gladstone, the *Free Press* argued that “the decrees of the Vatican are inconsistent with the allegiance which the loyal subject owes to the Government under which he lives.”⁸⁷

At this point, it is important to note that Catholics did not consider their freedom as citizens to be infringed upon by the doctrine of infallibility, nor were their separate schools centres of political sedition.⁸⁸ The animosity reflected in the rhetoric levelled against Catholicism was in the abstract and directed against the Catholic hierarchy. It was not directed at individuals, and especially not at local citizens or Catholic clergy, unless they seemed to transgress the bounds of propriety this discourse drew so clearly. The editors intended their Anti-Catholic attacks as a defence of right-thinking Catholics, who indeed were good citizens.⁸⁹ After thoroughly berating the Quebec hierarchy of the Catholic Church and pointing out the clear danger of their position to Canadian institutions, the *Advertiser* concluded with this call to arms: “We trust all Canadians, no matter of what race or creed, who cherish civil and religious liberty, will set their faces against any such attempt to subordinate the State to a church.”⁹⁰ The issues as defined in this discourse were not religious and conscious effort was made to avoid any kind of theological discussion. This anti-Catholicism is best understood as a rhetorical drawing of cultural boundaries; as a ritual rehearsal of values which this discourse deemed should be fundamental. It was a means of constructing and maintaining cultural values by empowering liberal institutions and rhetoric in support of liberal society over against Catholic institutions and rhetoric which it construed as being detrimental to this society. The editors’ political and religious discourse defined a norm

⁸⁷ “Mr. Gladstone’s Pamphlet,” *FP*, 25 November 1874, p. 2.

⁸⁸ London’s Bishop John Walsh provided well-argued and thoughtful Catholic responses to Protestant agitation on infallibility and separate schooling. His arguments do not proceed from the same assumptions as the editors and illustrate that their conclusions were not the only rational one. See John Walsh, *Pastoral Letter to the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese on Catholic Education* (London, 1872) and *The Doctrine of Papal Infallibility Stated and Vindicated; with an appendix on the Question of Civil Allegiance* (London, 1875).

⁸⁹ There is a parallel between this and the way Soviet citizens were regarded in North America during the Cold War. They were fundamentally good people who were deceived and oppressed by a tyrannical system. Thus, actions taken against the Soviet State could be construed as benefiting the Soviet people.

⁹⁰ “Religion and Politics,” *Ad*, 26 May 1871, p. 2.

against which all religious comers were measured. It defined the truth toward which all human agents should be moving, measured individuals and institutions against this truth and laid out the path to be followed.⁹¹ It saw in the evangelical creed resources that liberal society needed to achieve this goal and deemed Roman Catholicism dangerous.

Placing Religion

The editors' religious discourse defined true religion as progressive, nondogmatic, and supportive of individual conscience. Dangerous religion was oppressive and contested the clear truth of liberal assumptions. In applying this discourse in specific situations, its contours become more clearly defined. Religion was understood to have something to contribute in politics and education, but placing that influence turned up some gaps and reversals within the editors' discourse.⁹²

Clergy and politics

The mark of true religion, according to the editors, was that it contributed to the moral uplift of the population. If politics was to be uplifted, and there was general agreement that it should be, religion and the clergy needed to exert some degree of influence. The *Advertiser* refuted University College Professor Daniel Wilson's declaration that "the Canadian political arena was no place for a Christian," declaring that this attitude was exactly the cause of the trouble. The solution was not for Christians to avoid the corrupted morass of political life, but to enter and reform it by the force of their moral influence. If this were to happen, electors would have to be more discerning about the representatives they sent to Parliament (or the Legislature). "It is the duty of true well-wishers of their country to aid in the election only of upright men—men of character and principle."⁹³ The *Advertiser* followed Rev. Henry Ward Beecher in 1885 in declaring that the clergy should actively assist their congregations to act in a politically

⁹¹ John S. Ransom, *Foucault's Discipline*, 51-2.

⁹² On reversals in discourse see Ransom, *Foucault's Discipline*, 82.

⁹³ "Professor Wilson on Canadian Politics," *Ad*, 10 November 1870, p. 2. On Wilson see Carl Berger, *DCB* 12:1109-14.

responsible manner. Practical morality of this sort was a great benefit to the community and, the *Advertiser* quoted Beecher with approval, “if clergymen are not qualified to discuss [political topics] they are not qualified to preach the Gospel.” The minister “should educate his people to conscience in political action [and] to the duties of patriotism.”⁹⁴

The *Advertiser*'s advocacy of clerical involvement in educating people to identify appropriate candidates for electoral office contrasted starkly with its consternation over Bourget's 1876 pastoral advice that Catholics should listen to the directives of their priest regarding candidates. This contradiction helps to clarify the editors' placement of religion. They did not consider Protestant and Catholic clergy as inhabiting the same category because they did not believe Protestant clergy possessed direct spiritual authority over their flocks. Borrowing from evangelicalism, the editors believed that true religion regarded individuals responsible only to God and not to any priestly caste for salvation. Catholicism, on the other hand, held that salvation came in and through the Church which gave its clergy authority to “bind and loose”. The rhetorical significance of the Guibord affair in their editorial writing was to illustrate this point.⁹⁵ Guibord's eternal spiritual destiny was contingent upon the clergy's evaluation of his political views.⁹⁶ Thus, the direction given in political and electoral matters by a Protestant as opposed to a Catholic clergyman was viewed as being quite different because the advice carried a different order of authority. The *Advertiser* defined the influence of the Protestant clergy in moral terms quite consistent with its own values.

They are moral teachers, whose influence depends upon their intellectual endowments, their education and their moral character. They are men of like

⁹⁴ “Preachers and Politics,” *Ad*, 29 January 1885, p. 2.

⁹⁵ Joseph Guibord was a member of the *Institut canadien* when the association was condemned by the Vatican for teaching pernicious doctrine in 1869. Although this decision was appealed, Guibord had the misfortune of dying before the matter was resolved and his membership in the *Institut* was used to deny him burial in consecrated ground.

⁹⁶ The Guibord case was interpreted in this way by Galt, see “Church and State,” *Ad*, 6 April 1876, p. 2. The view that Catholic's salvation is contingent on obedience to the Pope and the Church on political matters seems to have entered the discourse with Gladstone's pamphlet but appears repeatedly thereafter. See for example, “Mr. Gladstone's Pamphlet,” *FP*, 25 November 1874, p. 2; “The Gladstone Controversy,” *FP*, 2 December 1874, p. 2; “The New Ecclesiastical Declaration,” *FP*, 5 April 1877, p. 2; and “A Clerical Protest,” *FP*, 10 April 1877, p. 2.

passions with the rest of the people, and their moral influence is bounded by the actions of their lives and not by a position of divine prerogatives.⁹⁷

The last phrase captures the difference between acceptable and unacceptable clergy influence. It also effectively barred Catholic clergy, or any religious figure bearing “divine prerogatives,” from making any statement on politics. Thus, the editors’ religious discourse empowered Protestant clergy as men of moral influence and character essential to the functioning of society, while at the same time silencing Catholic clergy who might wish to make a similar contribution. Religion had a legitimate role only where it had no authority to challenge liberal values.

Religion in education

Access to education stood with equality before the law as a basic right of liberal society. All the editors’ hopes for social and individual progress were anchored to education, and anything that would threaten those hopes was not to be tolerated.

Every child, however humble its rank in life, can claim the right to be instructed, and thus the start is given by which a lad of any mental capacity may push his way as a merchant or manufacturer, or to the higher walks of life and through the paths of political preferment. This great invaluable boon of education [is] the sheet anchor of our liberties.⁹⁸

Both the *Free Press* and the *Advertiser* were effusive about the virtues of secular education.

“Secular” in this discourse meant that no particular religious tradition would be taught, and “religion” meant Christian, and “Christian” meant vaguely evangelical Protestant. Thus, religion was not to be completely banished from the schools, but the concern was the appropriate place of religion in secular education. University College President Daniel Wilson proposed to the Provincial Teacher’s Association a placement of religion in the schools consistent with liberal values. Wilson suggested religious teachings for inclusion in the curriculum in “the pure spirit of Christianity, free from dogmatic teaching or doctrinal differences.” Once this principle was rigorously applied, Wilson predicted, the curriculum “will be joyfully accepted by Protestant and

⁹⁷ “Preachers and Politics,” *Ad*, 29 January 1885, p. 2.

⁹⁸ “Our Public Schools,” *FP*, 18 January 1870, p. 2.

Roman Catholics alike.”⁹⁹ The public school system was to bear no mark of any particular denomination, Protestant or Catholic. The papers consistently resisted any call for denominational religious instruction in schools at anytime although this was regularly advocated by denominational conferences.¹⁰⁰ Religious instruction of the denominational kind was the prerogative of churches and their Sunday schools and in the home and had no place in the schools. The *Free Press* was convinced that, were Dr. Wilson’s suggestions followed, “separate schools would be found unnecessary,” a development it consistently advocated.¹⁰¹

To actually deliver the “pure spirit of Christianity” that Wilson advocated was very difficult. The rhetoric was powerful, but no Christianity existed other than that represented by denominational particularity. An attempt to develop a religious curriculum, which provided the kind of non-denominational instruction advocated by the editors, came in 1886 under the leadership of Education Minister W.R. Ross. A selection of Bible readings for use in schools was proposed and to ensure that this selection would not cause offence to Catholic students it was submitted to Archbishop Lynch of Toronto. The editors’ response to the “Ross Bible” seriously questioned their commitment to their own definition of secular schools. The *Free Press* was voluble in its indignation.

No Protestant authority, big or little, has ever attempted to interfere with the school books used or the religious instruction given in the Separate Schools. But the same line of conduct has not been reciprocated. Not only has it been contrived to exclude the Bible in its sanctified entirety from the public schools, but those portions of scripture that are permitted by his Grace of Toronto still to be read have been carefully doctored and dove-tailed so as to suit non-Protestant views. . . . It is not very comforting to know that a non-Protestant authority has been permitted to control the matter of school books to be used by Protestant children. The fact need but to be stated in order to secure its condemnation.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ “Religious Instruction in Public Schools,” *FP*, 15 August 1881, p. 2. For the *Ad* report see “Religion in Schools,” 17 August 1881, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ “Religious Education,” *Ad*, 22 October 1884, p. 2; “Overzealous,” *FP*, 14 June 1875, p. 2; “The Bible in the Public Schools,” *FP*, 16 April 1877, p. 2; and “Religious Instruction in our Public Schools,” *FP*, 29 April 1878, p. 2

¹⁰¹ “Religious Instruction in Public Schools,” *FP*, 15 August 1881, p. 2 and “Ontario and Separate Schools,” *FP*, 28 December 1889, p. 2.

¹⁰² “Non-Protestant School Books,” *FP*, 24 December 1886, p. 4.

Driven by its indignation the *Free Press* took the most extraordinary step of supporting the existence of separate schools. “Let the Separate Schools continue to enjoy the fullest liberty guaranteed to them; but at the same time it should not be possible for the Roman Catholic hierarchy to meddle in a mischievous way with the use of the Protestant Bible in the public schools.”¹⁰³ This statement indicates that the *Free Press* considered the public schools to be the preserve of Protestants and separate schools to be a means of ensuring the integrity of public education by granting the Catholics rights in their own system. However, this concession to separate schooling would disappear once tensions rose in the aftermath of the Jesuits’ Estates controversy. The editors’ retained their assumption that the public system was and must remain broadly Protestant, but regarded separate schools with increasing fear and hostility.

The problem with Catholic schools in the view of the papers was that one section of the community was given a privilege denied to others, in this case religiously-based schooling.¹⁰⁴ This concession violated the criterion of universality, as the *Free Press* indicated in its appeal for an end to separate schooling in Manitoba.¹⁰⁵ Although the papers readily pointed out the dangers that separate schooling posed to their liberal values, they were blind to the possibility of an alternative set of values which would cause Catholics to contest the virtues of “secular” education. The pure Christianity freed from traditions and dogma which was supposed to characterise the public schools could not have had much appeal to Catholics who grounded their spiritual authority in tradition and dogma. In designating their version of religion as the necessary moral prop to liberal society, the editors’ dismissed any alternative religious position.

Promoting union

Much editorial writing on religion attempted to contain inappropriate religious influence; however, both papers actively promoted Protestant union as the means of encouraging the best religious sentiments and of battling those they most feared. The movement for Protestant

¹⁰³ Ibid

¹⁰⁴ “Ontario and Separate Schools,” *FP*, 28 December 1889, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ “Doomed in Manitoba,” *FP*, 7 February 1890.

union met the essential criteria of the liberal discourse established by the papers: the promotion of a broadly-based harmony and moral improvement. The editors' support for denominational union was the natural outcome of the religious discourse they had constructed.

Church union turned its back on tradition. Advocating union meant rejecting, as the editors continually did, the theological and ecclesiastical distinctions that provided identity and cohesion to denominational groups. This dismissal of difference for a homogenising harmony was essential to liberal society. By rejecting the divisions of the past, the *Advertiser* maintained, Canada would be assured of new strength for the future. "The whole question of union now seems to turn upon this pivot, 'Shall the exclusiveness of denominationism live or die?' The spirit of the times is seeking for its decease, assured that, after its cremation, from the urn containing its ashes a stronger faith and broader success will certainly arise."¹⁰⁶ Canada was considered far more in tune with the "spirit of the times" than either Britain or the United States. Successful union movements had already united the various groups of Methodists and Presbyterians, and the time seemed ripe to bring all the Protestant groups together into an organic union.¹⁰⁷ Analogies were often drawn between the political success of Confederation and "ecclesiastical confederation."¹⁰⁸ The *Advertiser* supported the views of Principal Austin of Alma College that, because of this progressive spirit Canada's had been ordained by providence to lead a movement of world significance.¹⁰⁹

Providence designs that Canada should lead the movement for the unification of the Protestant Churches of the world. The unions already accomplished here, that of the various Presbyterian bodies and the later Methodist union, and the present

¹⁰⁶ "Methodist Union," *Ad*, 5 June 1874, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷ "The Triple Conference," *FP*, 12 June 1889, p. 4 and "Protestant Federation," *Ad*, 9 August 1890, p. 4. On Methodist and Presbyterian unions see Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, chapter 8; Moir, *Enduring Witness*, chapter 7; Caldwell, "The Unification of Methodism in Canada, 1865-1884;" and Burkhard Kiesekamp, "Presbyterian and Methodist Divines."

¹⁰⁸ "Methodist Union," *FP*, 1 June 1874, p. 2 and "Ecclesiastical Confederation," *FP*, 28 April 1875, p. 2.

¹⁰⁹ Richard Allen makes clear the close connection between the ideas of providence and progress in the religious discourse of late Victorian Canada. Allen suggests that progress took over from providence as the culture was secularized. While this may have been true in a later period, in the two decades under examination here the words are interchangeable. Richard Allen, "Providence to Progress."

friendly attitude of all the Canadian churches, show that union is in the Canadian air and the spirit of union very largely developed amongst our Christian people.¹¹⁰

The editors' promotion of Protestant union was important not only for the progress of the nation, but beyond that, for the progress of the world.

Canada's precedent-setting church unions would lead the world to new heights of faith and a clearer perception of the truth. It would triumph over doctrine, dogma, and creed, which were considered to be inimical to truth and reason. Signs of the coming union were also evident outside the churches in the growing influence of interdenominational associations. The *Advertiser* regarded the work of the Evangelical Alliance in particular as foundational to the expected transdenominational union movements in the Protestant churches.

We know of no movement more essential to the growth of intelligence than the Alliance of whose doings we now hear so much. Sectarian bitterness and uncharitable bigotry are the natural outcome of a narrow unformed mind, while liberal sentiments and moderate views are generally the attendants of an enlightened understanding and cultivated taste.¹¹¹

The Alliance and other similar associations embodied the very characteristics necessary to liberal society and, as these were cultivated, broad cooperation would emerge among Protestant churches leading ultimately to their union.

The results of union were eminently practical and included financial as well as personnel efficiencies.¹¹² However, the most important result would be a wider influence in society that would facilitate missions and evangelisation and improve the moral condition of individuals and communities.¹¹³ Church union would have the advantage "of giving unity of purpose to missionary efforts, of stemming the tide of infidelity, and perhaps of taking counsel among the churches how they may best meet the altered policy and aggressive spirit latterly

¹¹⁰ "A Live Subject," *Ad*, 4 August 1890, p. 1.

¹¹¹ "The Evangelical Alliance," *Ad*, 13 October 1873, p. 2.

¹¹² "Protestant Federation," *Ad*, 9 August 1890, p. 4 and "Movements Among the Churches," *FP*, 8 June 1874, p. 2.

¹¹³ "Evangelical Alliance," *Ad*, 13 October 1873, p. 2; "Significance of the Union Movement," *Ad*, 25 June 1875, p. 2; and "The Presbyterian Synod of London," *FP*, 7 May 1875, p. 2.

displayed by the Church of Rome.”¹¹⁴ Greater unity would not only strengthen the Protestant voice but would provide a more convincing apologetic in efforts to evangelise Catholics. “A Protestant federation would certainly present our faith in a much more acceptable light to the millions of our Roman Catholic fellow subjects.”¹¹⁵ The *Advertiser* was so convinced that Church union was essential to building Canadian society that it actively promoted the idea in a series of articles and editorials during the summer of 1890.¹¹⁶ It reprinted with pride an article from the *Canada Presbyterian* which credited it as one of the “leading Canadian journals” active in the effort to bring about a union of all the Protestant denominations in Canada.¹¹⁷ The de-theologised, harmonised, progressive religion that was to emerge from such a union would serve as a moralising adjunct to the liberal society the editors were working to build in Canada.

Conclusion

Editorials in the *Advertiser* and the *Free Press* represented themselves as guardians of the values of liberal society and thus of the public. The two papers supported different political parties, disagreed over programs and policy initiatives, and typically took very different perspectives on the issues of the day. However, they consistently defended liberal government by techniques of freedom. These techniques of governing promised liberation from oppressive institutions the most significant of which, for the purposes of this study, was represented historically by concentrations of power in Church-State unions. Liberalism rejected such visible power concentrations and developed strategies of governance by appearing to govern less.¹¹⁸ Legitimate political power was to reside in the obedience of citizen-subjects. To accomplish this, power was dispersed in society so that its characteristic result was not dominance but

¹¹⁴ “Presbyterian Union,” *FP*, 28 July 1875, p. 2.

¹¹⁵ “Protestant Federation,” *Ad*, 18 August 1890, p. 4.

¹¹⁶ “Church Union,” *Ad*, 11 July 1890, p. 4; “Grant on Church Union,” *Ad*, 28 July 1890, p. 4; “Organic Union of Protestantism,” *Ad*, 4 August 1890, p. 4; “A Live Subject,” *Ad*, 4 August 1890, p. 1; “Protestant Federation,” *Ad*, 9 August 1890, p. 4; and “Protestant Federation,” *Ad*, 18 August 1890, p. 4

¹¹⁷ “The Subject Attracting Attention,” *Ad*, 14 August 1890, p. 4.

normalisation.¹¹⁹ This was achieved by a naturalisation of political relationships in terms of the rights of individuals. London's newspapers were significant points of intersection with this governmental technique because they presented liberal patterns of thought and practice as natural, normal, and necessary for the thriving of London's citizens. Alternatives to the principles of liberal society were particularly dangerous as they deconstructed the naturalisation and necessity which enforced the willing obedience of citizen-subjects. The danger of religion lay in its ability to invest its power in alternative values. To preserve the freedom of the public, the editors carefully controlled the ability of religious traditions to speak in their own voice.

The religious discourse of the editors had two strategies for locating religion in society. At times religion was presented as an essential component in the construction of a morally upright society that deserved protection and promotion. On the other hand, religion was regarded as a dangerous carryover from less enlightened times and a direct challenge to liberal governmentality. The editorial discourse valorised their own version of the evangelical creed which focused on the unifying elements and the promotion of individual choice and moral development. The same discourse demonised Catholicism and High Church traditions that emphasised vectors of authority beyond the reach of the technologies of freedom.

Munro and the Latter Day Saints were threats to Canadian society, not because of any material power they could wield, but because they represented an alternative to a discourse to which the editors could admit no rational alternative. The presentation of alternative perspectives as irrational and backward allowed the opponents to be dismissed out-of-hand, at least to the degree readers accepted the future the editors promoted. The Catholic Church was a larger challenge and therefore gave rise to quite an elaborate discourse of danger. The threat posed by Catholicism was not limited to the supposed restrictions on the freedom of conscience of its

¹¹⁸ Michel Foucault, "Space, Knowledge and Power," in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 242.

¹¹⁹ Terry Johnson, "Expertise and the State," in *Foucault's New Domains*, eds. Mike Gane and Terry Johnson (London: Routledge, 1993), 142-3. Also see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 183-4.

adherents, for actions which the editors defined as papal aggression were believed to undermine political freedom and social harmony for all Canadians. The editors portrayed these actions as evidence of the resurgence of the old regime of centralised power and religious establishment. The heretics according to the editors' religious creed, were those who would not conform to the orthodoxy of progress, reason, and universal brotherhood.

One of the repeated weapons in the editors' fight against church-state power was the argument that morality could not be legislated. Because the state could not ensure morality, the liberal societies described by Tocqueville and Durham required some form of religious training. The editors considered Christianity to be a symbolic system with the moral power and institutional structures to instil the necessary social virtues. Their writing encouraged the churches to be the providers of moral discipline now that the state had privatised this function. Using the vocabulary and symbolic resources of the evangelical creed, the editors constructed their own religious establishment to provide religious sanction for the values of liberal society. Their active promotion of church union, and their assumption that true Christians would before long think and act reasonably and in the spirit of the times, indicated their preference for a single established church after all.

The religious discourse of the clergy resembled that of the editors in many ways. Both spoke in a de-theologised voice that diminished difference in the interests of harmony and both considered the formation of moral character to be the principle role for religion in society. The clergy used this discourse as a strategy to maintain their public influence through protection and cultivation of the private. The clergy's own public discourse limited their authority at the same time it empowered them. The experience of the clergy illustrates Foucault's insights into the multivalent nature of power dispersions in modern societies. Careful attention to the private cultivation of spirituality and to family relationships disciplined individuals for their roles as citizens-subjects. However, the ability of the clergy to police these disciplines was fractured by vectors, including the discourse of the editors, which brought into question the legitimacy of clerical authority and promoted individual conscience above all. Thus, clergy pronouncements

could not be considered hegemonic although their continued authority as agents of social integration should not be dismissed either. The editors were more assured than the clergy in their public pronouncements; however, their public religious discourse was cut off from its theological roots and its cultivation in a community dedicated to worship and service of God. Divorced from lived reality in congregational life this discourse became a vague morality which reduced Christianity to the liberalising and homogenising influence exemplified in the *Free Press* Christmas meditation.

CONCLUSION

Religion Worthy of a Free People

The faithful and the neglectful of London were producing, while being produced by, a religion worthy of a free people. The story of religion in London during this period reveals that religion's place in society was being transformed as it digested and accommodated the transformations to a liberal society. It was successful in this process to the degree that many citizens looked to religion for the skills and practices required to thrive in a changing environment. The various forms of religious practise and discourse assisted in producing people governed by the pursuit of individual freedoms, and in turn, the people demanded that religion change to support their needs for intergenerational continuity and social harmony in a society pursuing individual freedoms. The work of Michel Foucault has been used to deconstruct powerful narratives of the inevitable decline of religion and the inevitable oppression of people by religion. This deconstruction has opened the possibility of detailed attention to religious practices and discourses at the local level.

Religious life was strong at the level of the congregation where theological and national traditions continued to provide clear direction for practice. Worship was a public event in public places, even though the sermons typically called individuals to private commitments. Church buildings were considered evidence of material and civic prosperity as well as spiritual and moral progress, and gothic buildings spoke of a better future as well as the current piety and vitality of congregations. Significant differences were evident in the theology, liturgy, and ecclesiology. These differences constructed particular identities in diverse religious traditions and in varying degrees resisted the transformations underway. However, the governmentality of freedom created pressures that ranged from concerns to stabilise finances to the integration of the next generation. These, in turn, produced responses that were remarkably similar across all of

London's denominational groups. It was in congregational life, although not exclusively so, that most Londoners experienced religion. At this level denominational identities were far stronger than is apparent from public religious discourse, even that of the clergy. Thus, care needs to be taken not to read a decline in denominational identities from statements made for public consumption.

The growth of religiously motivated interdenominational associations contributed to and transcended the privatisation of religion in this period. Associations were able to rise above the particularities of denominational traditions that were regarded with suspicion by liberal society. Direct religious intervention in the social, where public and private intersected, was undertaken through associations as such action by the churches was increasingly seen as endangering the public good. The public role of religion was to shape the moral character of the self-governing citizens. The churches continued this work in private; however, direct action in public to reform the drunkard or care for orphans was now attended to by interdenominational cooperation. Social problems were diagnosed as the moral deficits of individuals that could be addressed by the concerted efforts of Christian women, the YMCA, and union revivals. Religion was given public authority to foster an environment which would support the efforts of redemptive homes and enable *redeeming choices*.

Public religious discourse, as practised both by the clergy and the newspaper editors, sought to play down theological differences, even where they clearly existed. The clergy spoke in this way to confirm their contribution to the public good. They had no state sanctioned status, but were making claims to public authority based on their ability to produce morally upright Christian citizens. Although churches were no longer established, the public role of the clergy was premised on an establishment function. The newspaper editors developed their own version of a religious establishment in a moralised, detheologised promotion of liberal values. The editors were vigilant in policing religion on behalf of the public to ensure it conformed to and promoted liberal notions of freedom. The Protestant harmony that emerged from this public

religious discourse constructed a social consensus in response to religious pluralism, but in so doing excluded Roman Catholicism as unworthy of liberal freedoms.

The foregoing description of religion in London has brought clarity to some aspects of the place of religion in late nineteenth-century Canadian society. It suggests that religious difference continued to be strong vectors of identity not only across the Protestant Catholic divide but even among different groups within the same tradition. Congregational life sustained religious commitments and was most creative in meeting the challenges of passing the tradition on intergenerationally. The Protestant consensus, in this narrative, was the recognition that sectional wrangling undermined the authority of religion in liberal society and that acceptance of religious pluralism was required if religion was to have a continued voice. The contemporary term for naming this was “harmony” and this usage is preferable to “consensus” which seems to connote a level of agreement not always evident. At times this public show of religious harmony was even extended to embrace Catholics.

Religion was understood to be essential to the proper functioning of society. The establishment model remained; however, the mechanism by which religion worked on society was now changed by the intersection of the voluntary model. The challenge for religion was preserving public authority in a society that considered religion a private matter. This study has identified the metaphors of redemptive homes and redeeming choices as essential to the public placement of religion; by these strategies religion moved into public by way of the private. In mapping the place of religion in society, it has been useful to separate a Protestant public, made up primarily of lay leaders, from the needs and imperatives of local congregations. The evidence suggests that the practices of the Protestant public were often in conflict with religion as practised and understood in congregational life. Although the Protestant public spoke and often acted on behalf of society and on behalf of Protestant religion, many social and religious forces contested its dominance.

The picture of religion presented here opens some questions and matters for speculation that go beyond the scope of the present study. Much as been made of the social action

of the churches in Canada in the twentieth century. With rare exceptions, the nineteenth century adoption of liberal values to promote spiritual and material growth has not been seriously questioned. Religious reform movements, including the social gospel, have focused on individuals and on removing impediments to moral development in liberal society. The embrace of a religiously oriented social science described by Christie and Gauvreau in *Full-Orbed Christianity* represents the twentieth century equivalent to redemptive homes and redeeming choices.¹

The focus on the family as the centre of religious life and of liberal techniques of governance is an interesting conjunction that deserves more sustained attention. As the state moved increasingly into areas of social intervention, its vehicle for promoting the well-being of the population was invariably the family. Material support for family independence migrated from the church to the religious association, and then to the state. Spiritual support for the family also moved out of the churches as salvation and spiritual nurture were found in other venues. This convergence of competing claims to ground family life may explain the continuing erosion of the authority of the churches in the twentieth century.

The newspaper editors' construction of dangerous religion that undermined society by providing alternative visions of society also raises intriguing questions. Was the danger real? Could religion have provided an alternative to the values of liberal society? The religion of the newspaper editors freed democratic citizens from doctrine, liturgy, and particular communities but in doing so freed them from any of the resources of tradition powerful enough to challenge the governing imperatives of liberal society. Thus, the invisible disciples of freedom remained invisible as dissenters struggled to voice objections in a discourse which submerged particularity and ensured that no "sectarian" rationalities or spiritualities could be taken seriously. Can religion, then or now, produce ways of living and speaking that truly challenge the naturalisation and normalisation of liberal rationality and provide the basis for alternatives?

¹ Christie, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*, chapter 3.

APPENDIX A

CHURCH EXTENSION IN LONDON ONTARIO

During the period 1868 to 1895, London congregations constructed 37 new buildings and undertook another 13 major renovation projects for a total of 50 construction projects. These are distributed fairly evenly throughout the period, although the early 1870s saw the most intense activity. The distribution is summarised in the following chart.

Year	Construction Projects
1868-70	5
1871-75	13
1876-80	9
1881-85	8
1886-90	8
1891-95	6

The number of church building grew dramatically in the 1870s but levelled off in the 1880s as is illustrated in Table A-1. Construction projects in the 1880s tended to replace existing building with larger more elaborate edifices. Table A-3 gives a brief description of the nature of the building projects and demonstrates the interest in larger, better-furnished churches.

Table A-1. Number of Church Buildings by Denomination

	1870	1875	1880	1885	1890
Anglican	2	7	7	7	8
Baptist	2	2	3	3	5
Methodist	9	12	16	14	13
Presbyterian	3	3	4	5	6
Roman Catholic	1	2	2	2	2
Other*	1	3	3	4	6
Total	18	29	35	35	40

*Congregational, Salvation Army, Latter Day Saints, Gospel Hall, Jews

The construction of new church buildings reduced the number of adherents per building in most denominations. The counter example is that of the Methodists where the effects of union actually led to fewer larger buildings.

Table A-2. Church Buildings per Adherent by Denomination

	1870	1880	1890
Anglican	2641	929	840
Baptist	357	295	208
Methodist	438	310	490
Presbyterian	893	814	600
Congregational	377	489	177
Roman Catholic	2700	1652	1725
Other	-	125	187

Table A-3. Church Construction and Major Renovation Projects.

Year	Church	Project
1868	St Andrew's Presbyterian	Large Gothic Church, \$30,000
	Horton St. Bible Christian	Brick Church
	St Paul's Anglican	Cronyn Hall
1869	St Paul's Anglican	Enlargement, new chancel, adding a vestry
1870	Christ Church Anglican	Extensive renovations
	Dundas St. Centre	Large Gothic Church, \$15,000
	London West Wesleyan	Frame building with Gothic touches
1872	First Presbyterian	Organ installed
	Queen's Ave Methodist	Wesley Hall built, \$13,000
1873	Cronyn Memorial Anglican	Gothic building donated by Cronyn family Architect, Henry Langely
	Cathedral of Holy Trinity (Chapter House) Anglican	Large Gothic building to be beginning of Cathedral complex (plan abandoned in 1880s)
	St. James (Westminster) Anglican	Frame building with Gothic decoration \$2,500
	St Paul's Anglican	Organ installed
	Horton St. Bible Christian	Enlarged and upgraded, \$3,500
1874	Hamilton Rd. Methodist	Frame building, on land donated by Ontario Car
	St Mary's Roman Catholic	Frame building
	Gospel Hall	"Building erected somewhat after the manner of a church," seats 350 and cost \$2,000
1875	Latter Day Saints' Temple	First LDS building in London
	Hamilton Rd. Primitive Methodist	Brick building, early English gothic style, \$3000, seats 250. Architect, George Craddock
	Askin St Methodist	Frame building
1876	St. James (Westminster) Anglican	Gothic structure, 12 roof turrets suggesting the 12 Apostles, \$10,000
	Congregational Church	Large Gothic church, \$25,818.63
	Dundas St. East Methodist	Frame building with Gothic decorations
	Wellington St.	Gothic building, \$15,000

	Elizabeth St Bible Christian	New building
	Grace Methodist Episcopal	New building, \$10,000
1877	King St Presbyterian	New building
	Cronyn Memorial Anglican	Transepts and schoolroom added, \$3,000
1880-1885	St Peter's Basilica Roman Catholic Cathedral	Gothic cathedral, \$150,000 Architect, Connolly
1881	Talbot St. Baptist	Gothic church
	St. Matthew's Anglican	Move and rebuild St. Paul's mortuary chapel for use as a parish church
	Askin St Methodist	Gothic Church, 1875 building used as Sunday School
	Queen's Ave. Methodist	Renovations, enlarged, \$9,000 organ added.
1884	Knox Presbyterian	Gothic Church, \$9,000
	Cronyn Memorial Anglican	New rectory and extended schoolroom
1885	Adelaide St Baptist	Gothic building, \$7,000
	Horton St. Bible Christian	Renovation and increased seating in back gallery
1886	Grosvenor St. Baptist	Frame building with pointed windows, \$700
1887	Dundas St. Centre	Renovations, transepts added, extending the north end and increasing the seating by one third
	St. Andrew's Presbyterian	Enlarge and install organ
1888	King St. Primitive Methodist	Renovations
	St. John the Evangelist Anglican	Gothic building, \$13,000
	Knox Presbyterian	Sabbath School built
1889	Colborne St. Methodist	Large Gothic church
1890	St. George's Presbyterian	Mission hall
	All Saints' Anglican	neat brick structure of Gothic built on land donated by the Imperial Oil Company
1891	Centennial Methodist	Gothic building accommodating congregations of former Dundas St E and Elizabeth St. Methodist
1894	St. Paul's Cathedral, Anglican	Extensive renovations to enlarge church, replace Cronyn Hall and join with cloister
	First Presbyterian	Extensive renovations to enlarge church
1895	Dundas St. Methodist	Rebuilt on a larger scale after burning in Feb. 1895
	First Methodist	Replaces Queen's Ave. Methodist lost to fire in Feb. 1895

Table B-1. Religion by ethnicity, 1871.

Ethnicity	Total	Baptist		Church of England		Congregational		Methodist		Presbyterian		Roman Catholics		Other Christian		Non Christian	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Britain	9056	329	83%	3131	97%	220	97%	2206	92%	1647	99%	1475	95%	31	84%	17	43%
(England)	3935	197	50%	1976	61%	129	57%	1395	58%	134	8%	73	5%	22	59%	9	23%
(Ireland)	3274	75	19%	986	31%	23	10%	655	27%	233	14%	1291	83%	3	8%	8	20%
(Scotland)	1786	48	12%	147	5%	60	26%	141	6%	1280	77%	109	7%	1	3%	-	-
Europe	269	13	3%	73	2%	7	3%	70	3%	10	-	67	4%	6	16%	23	58%
Other	194	54	14%	11	-	-	-	119	5%	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Total	9519	396	4%	3215	34%	227	2%	2395	25%	1662	17%	1547	16%	37	0.4%	40	0.4%

Persons 16 years and older. Religion not given: 14. Ethnicity not given: 83.

Table B-2. Religion by place of birth, 1871.

Birth	Total	Baptist		Church of England		Congregational		Methodist		Presbyterian		Roman Catholics		Other Christian		Non Christian	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Canada	3365	153	39%	1027	32%	83	36%	980	41%	608	36%	496	32%	9	24%	9	23%
(Ontario)	2988	142	36%	907	28%	76	33%	896	37%	542	32%	409	26%	8	22%	8	20%
Britain	6070	235	59%	2168	67%	142	62%	1413	59%	1058	63%	1018	66%	22	59%	14	35%
(England)	2619	118	30%	1391	43%	78	34%	867	36%	73	4%	71	5%	16	43%	5	13%
(Ireland)	1860	37	9%	591	18%	10	4%	238	10%	125	7%	857	55%	-	-	2	5%
(Scotland)	1014	17	4%	44	1%	24	10%	52	2%	816	49%	60	4%	1	3%	-	-
Europe	116	2	1%	32	1%	4	2%	16	1%	7	-	32	2%	6	16%	17	43%
Other	41	6	2%	17	1%	-	-	5	-	6	-	7	-	-	-	-	-
Total	9592	396	4%	3244	34%	229	2%	2414	25%	1679	18%	1553	16%	37	0.4%	40	0.4%

Persons 16 years and older. Religion not given: 14. Place of birth not given: 10.

Table B-3. Religion by place of father's birth, 1891.

Father's Birth	Total	Baptist		Church of England		Congregational		Methodist		Presbyterian		Roman Catholic		Other Christian		Non Christian	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Canada	2185	153	24%	563	14%	23	10%	882	22%	324	14%	208	10%	31	14%	1	1%
(Ontario)	1752	119	18%	447	11%	19	8%	745	19%	254	11%	144	7%	23	11%	1	1%
Britain	10554	372	58%	3392	82%	187	78%	2811	70%	1847	82%	1791	84%	143	66%	11	14%
(England)	4909	244	38%	2187	53%	118	49%	1814	45%	248	11%	192	9%	97	45%	9	12%
(Ireland)	3630	64	10%	1018	25%	23	10%	721	18%	320	14%	1457	68%	26	12%	1	1%
(Scotland)	1977	52	8%	172	4%	46	19%	269	7%	1275	56%	142	7%	20	9%	1	1%
Europe	352	6	1%	46	1%	13	5%	59	1%	26	1%	104	5%	35	16%	63	81%
USA	609	112	17%	126	3%	18	7%	253	6%	57	3%	34	2%	7	3%	2	3%
Other	21	3	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	1	1%
Totals	13721	646	5%	4137	30%	241	2%	4005	29%	2261	16%	2137	16%	216	2%	78	1%

Persons 16 years and older. Religion not given: 100. Place of Father's Birth not given: 189

Table B-4. Religion by place of birth, 1891.

Place of Birth	Total	Baptist		Church of England		Congregational		Methodist		Presbyterian		Roman Catholic		Other Christian		Non Christian	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Canada	8070	410	63%	2159	52%	118	49%	2665	66%	1414	62%	1196	56%	100	44%	8	10%
(Ontario)	7317	367	56%	1963	47%	103	43%	2446	60%	1274	56%	1068	50%	90	40%	6	7%
Britain	4964	169	26%	1832	44%	107	44%	1196	29%	783	34%	774	36%	91	40%	12	15%
(England)	2706	132	20%	1347	32%	71	29%	894	22%	94	4%	88	4%	69	31%	11	14%
(Ireland)	1419	19	3%	431	10%	13	5%	222	5%	107	5%	617	29%	10	4%	-	0%
(Scotland)	818	13	2%	45	1%	23	10%	78	2%	581	25%	65	3%	12	5%	1	1%
Europe	209	2	-	27	1%	5	2%	14	-	3	-	84	4%	20	9%	54	67%
USA	566	73	11%	133	3%	11	5%	177	4%	70	3%	82	4%	14	6%	6	7%
Other	57	2	-	23	1%	-	-	4	-	13	1%	14	1%	-	-	1	1%
Total	13866	656	5%	4174	30%	241	2%	4056	29%	2283	16%	2150	16%	225	2%	81	1%

Persons 16 years and older. Religion not given: 100. Place of birth not given: 30.

APPENDIX C

COVENANT

Adelaide Street Baptist Church, London, Canada,

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on profession of faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly, and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one Body in Christ.

- We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in christian love, to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality to sustain its worship; ordinances, disciple and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.
- We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions, to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all battling and backbiting and excessive anger, to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Saviour.
- We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember each other in our prayers, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offence, but always ready for reconciliation and mindfull of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay.
- We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the Spirit of this covenant and principle of God's Word.

Amen.

Source: The Canadian Baptist Archives, McMaster Divinity College, McMaster University

APPENDIX D

SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS CONNECTED TO LOCAL CHURCHES

London Ontario, 1870-90

Church Societies and Associations Arranged Alphabetically by Church

The year appears in bold to indicate when the society founded or when it first appears in the records.

Church	Denomination	Society	Year
Adelaide St.	Baptist	Ladies Aid	1885
Adelaide St.	Baptist	Mission Circles	1885
Adelaide St.	Baptist	Mission Band	1885
Adelaide St.	Baptist	Young People's Meeting	1886
Adelaide St.	Baptist	Literary Society	1888
Talbot St.	Baptist	Ladies Aid	1870
Talbot St.	Baptist	Baptist Literary Society	1875
Talbot St.	Baptist	Women's Baptist Missionary Society	1876
Talbot St.	Baptist	Mission's Circle	1878
Talbot St.	Baptist	Evangelistic Society	1879
Talbot St.	Baptist	Visiting Committee	1879
Talbot St.	Baptist	Dorcas Society	1879
Christ Church	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1878
Christ Church	Church of England	Temperance Society	1884
Christ Church	Church of England	Band of Hope	1887
Christ Church	Church of England	Temperance and Literary Society	1887
Christ Church	Church of England	District Visitors	1889
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Women's Missionary Society	1874
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1879
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Temperance Society	1880
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Total Abstinence Society	1881
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Band of Hope	1881
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Young Ladies Auxiliary Association	1881
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Girl's Havergal Mission	1885
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Musical and Literary Association	1887
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Ministering Children's League	1889
Holy Trinity	Church of England	Girl's Friendly Society	1884
Holy Trinity	Church of England	Chapter House Guild	1884
St. George's	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1881
St. George's	Church of England	St. George's Guild	1884
St. James (West)	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1878
St. James (West)	Church of England	Women's Auxillary Missionary Association	1886

St. James (West)	Church of England	Junior Branch, Mission Society	1887
St. James (West)	Church of England	Senior Branch, Mission Society	1887
St. James (West)	Church of England	The Stewardship	1889
St. James (West)	Church of England	Order of King's Daughters	1889
St. John the Evangelist	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1886
St. John the Evangelist	Church of England	Women's Auxiliary Missionary Association	1888
St. Matthew's	Church of England	Young Girl's Aid	1889
St. Matthew's	Church of England	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1889
St. Matthew's	Church of England	Women's Aid	1890
St. Paul's	Church of England	Ladies Benevolent Society	1870
St. Paul's	Church of England	Church of England Young Men's Assoc	1870
St. Paul's	Church of England	Lay Helpers	1872
St. Paul's	Church of England	Temperance Association	1873
St. Paul's	Church of England	Church of England Institute	1882
St. Paul's	Church of England	St. Paul's Guild	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	Church Workers Association	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	Dorcas and Relief Committee	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	Mothers' Meeting and Provident Society	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	Girl's Friendly Society	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	St. Paul's Sewing Class	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	Church of England Flower and Christmas Letter Mission	1887
Congregational	Congregational	Ladies Aid	1875
Congregational	Congregational	Invitation Committee	1877
Congregational	Congregational	Band of Hope	1880
Congregational	Congregational	Young People's Music and Literary Association	1883
Congregational	Congregational	Juvenile Temperance Association	1886
Congregational	Congregational	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1889
Askin St.	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1876
Askin St.	Methodist	Women's Missionary Society	1887
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1870
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Wesleyan Mutual Improvement Society	1871
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Wesleyan Literary Society	1872
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Christian Total Abstinence Society	1873
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Women's Missionary Society	1882
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Young Ladies Missionary Circle	1887
Dundas St. East	Methodist	Epworth League	1887
Dundas St. East	Methodist	Young People's Literary Society	1888
Hamilton Road	Methodist	Epworth League	1887
Pall Mall	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1854
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Band of Hope	1876
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1878
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Ladies Helping Society	1881
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Wesleyan Literary Society	1873
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Ladies' Benevolent Society	1873
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Young People's Helping Society	1879

Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Women Missionary Society	1883
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Young Ladies Missionary Circle	1886
Wellington St.	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1876
Wellington St.	Methodist	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1888
Wellington St.	Methodist	Women's Missionary Society	1889
Elizabeth St.	Methodist (BC)	Ladies Aid	1890
Horton St.	Methodist (BC)	Literary and Entertainment Society	1885
Horton St.	Methodist (BC)	Band of Hope	1870
Beth Emmanuel	Methodist (BME)	Sewing Circle	1873
Grace	Methodist (ME)	Ladies Aid	1876
St. Stephen's	Pres. Auld Kirke	Ladies Aid	1876
St. Stephen's	Pres. Auld Kirke	Sewing Society	1876
King St.	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1882
King St.	Presbyterian	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1886
Knox	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1884
Knox	Presbyterian	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1886
Knox	Presbyterian	Women's Foreign Missionary Society	1887
Knox	Presbyterian	Women's Association	1891
Park Ave.	Presbyterian	Literary Society	1887
Park Ave.	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1888
Park Ave.	Presbyterian	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1890
St. Andrew's	Presbyterian	Women's Foreign Missionary Society	1878
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1879
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Girl's Benevolent Society	1886
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	The Institute	1888
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Band of Hope	1888
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	King's Messengers (Mission Band)	1888
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	The Missionary Society	1888
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Young Men's Society of Christian Endeavour	1888
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Women's Visiting and Aid Society	1890
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1891
St. James'	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1884
St. James'	Presbyterian	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1890
St. James'	Presbyterian	Temperance Society	1890
St. Peter's	Roman Catholic	Father Mathew's Total Abstinence Soc	1873
St. Peter's	Roman Catholic	St. Vincent de Paul	1875

Church Societies and Associations Arranged Chronologically

Church	Denomination	Society	Year
Pall Mall	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1854
Horton St.	Methodist (BC)	Band of Hope	1870
St. Paul's	Church of England	Church of England Young Men's Assoc	1870
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1870

Talbot St.	Baptist	Ladies Aid	1870
St. Paul's	Church of England	Ladies Benevolent Society	1870
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Wesleyan Mutual Improvement Society	1871
St. Paul's	Church of England	Lay Helpers	1872
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Wesleyan Literary Society	1872
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Christian Total Abstinence Society	1873
St. Peter's	Roman Catholic	Father Mathew's Total Abstinence Soc	1873
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Ladies' Benevolent Society	1873
Beth Emmanuel	Methodist (BME)	Sewing Circle	1873
St. Paul's	Church of England	Temperance Association	1873
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Wesleyan Literary Society	1873
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Women's Missionary Society	1874
Talbot St.	Baptist	Baptist Literary Society	1875
Congregational	Congregational	Ladies Aid	1875
St. Peter's	Roman Catholic	St. Vincent de Paul	1875
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Band of Hope	1876
Askin St.	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1876
Grace	Methodist (ME)	Ladies Aid	1876
St. Stephen's	Pres. Auld Kirke	Ladies Aid	1876
Wellington St.	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1876
St. Stephen's	Pres. Auld Kirke	Sewing Society	1876
Talbot St.	Baptist	Women's Baptist Missionary Society	1876
Congregational	Congregational	Invitation Committee	1877
Christ Church	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1878
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Ladies Aid	1878
St. James (West)	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1878
Talbot St.	Baptist	Mission's Circle	1878
St. Andrew's	Presbyterian	Women's Foreign Missionary Society	1878
Talbot St.	Baptist	Dorcas Society	1879
Talbot St.	Baptist	Evangelistic Society	1879
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1879
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1879
Talbot St.	Baptist	Visiting Committee	1879
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Young People's Helping Society	1879
Congregational	Congregational	Band of Hope	1880
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Temperance Society	1880
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Band of Hope	1881
St. George's	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1881
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Ladies Helping Society	1881
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Total Abstinence Society	1881
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Young Ladies Auxiliary Association	1881
St. Paul's	Church of England	Church of England Institute	1882
King St.	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1882
Dundas St. Centre	Methodist	Women's Missionary Society	1882
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Women Missionary Society	1883
Congregational	Congregational	Young People's Music and Literary Association	1883
Holy Trinity	Church of England	Chapter House Guild	1884
Holy Trinity	Church of England	Girl's Friendly Society	1884
Knox	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1884
St. James'	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1884

St. George's	Church of England	St. George's Guild	1884
Christ Church	Church of England	Temperance Society	1884
St. Paul's	Church of England	Church Workers Association	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	Dorcas and Relief Committee	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	Girl's Friendly Society	1885
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Girl's Havergal Mission	1885
Adelaide St.	Baptist	Ladies Aid	1885
Horton St	Methodist (BC)	Literary and Entertainment Society	1885
Adelaide St.	Baptist	Mission Band	1885
Adelaide St.	Baptist	Mission Circles	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	Mothers' Meeting and Provident Society	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	St. Paul's Guild	1885
St. Paul's	Church of England	St. Paul's Sewing Class	1885
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Girl's Benevolent Society	1886
Congregational	Congregational	Juvenile Temperance Association	1886
St. John the Evangelist	Church of England	Ladies Aid	1886
St. James (West)	Church of England	Women's Auxiliary Missionary Association	1886
King St.	Presbyterian	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1886
Knox	Presbyterian	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1886
Christ Church	Church of England	Band of Hope	1887
St. Paul's	Church of England	Church of England Flower and Christmas Letter Mission	1887
Dundas St. East	Methodist	Epworth League	1887
Hamilton Road	Methodist	Epworth League	1887
St. James (West)	Church of England	Junior Branch. Mission Society	1887
Park Ave.	Presbyterian	Literary Society	1887
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Musical and Literary Association	1887
St. James (West)	Church of England	Senior Branch. Mission Society	1887
Christ Church	Church of England	Temperance and Literary Society	1887
Knox	Presbyterian	Women's Foreign Missionary Society	1887
Askin St.	Methodist	Women's Missionary Society	1887
Queen's Avenue	Methodist	Young People's Helping Society	1887
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Band of Hope	1888
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	King's Messengers (Mission Band)	1888
Park Ave.	Presbyterian	Ladies Aid	1888
Adelaide St.	Baptist	Literary Society	1888
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	The Institute	1888
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	The Missionary Society	1888
St. John the Evangelist	Church of England	Women's Auxiliary Missionary Association	1888
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Young Men's Society of Christian Endeavour	1888
Wellington St.	Methodist	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1888
Christ Church	Church of England	District Visitors	1889
Cronyn Memorial	Church of England	Ministering Children's League	1889
St. James (West)	Church of England	Order of King's Daughters	1889

St. James (West)	Church of England	The Stewardship	1889
Wellington St.	Methodist	Women's Missionary Society	1889
St. Matthew's	Church of England	Young Girl's Aid	1889
Congregational	Congregational	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1889
St. Matthew's	Church of England	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1889
Elizabeth St.	Methodist (BC)	Ladies Aid	1890
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Women's Visiting and Aid Society	1890
St. Matthew's	Church of England	Women's Aid	1890
Park Ave.	Presbyterian	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1890
Knox	Presbyterian	Women's Association	1891
St. Andrews	Presbyterian	Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour	1891

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