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The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History Papers 1975

Introductory Statement

In September, 1975, a number of persons interested in historical aspects of Presbyterianism met at Knox College, University of Toronto, to hear four papers on various historical topics. As a result of the success of that meeting an informal organization, the Canadian Society of Presbyterian History, was formed to promote public interest in this field of history through the holding of further meetings and the publication of papers when possible.

Membership in the Society is open to any persons or institutions interested in the objectives of the Society for an annual fee of $5.00, payable to the Editor-Treasurer pro tem, John Moir, 167 Main St. N., Markham, Ont., L3P 1Y2.

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A limited supply of copies of this volume is still available to any person or institution paying the prescribed annual fee for membership.

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John Calvin: In Search of a Just Society

by

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There are many caricatures abroad about John Calvin. Some caricatures have been sustained as much by friend as foe. Recent historical studies are doing much to destroy the caricatures, i.e. that Calvin was a cold, heartless, humourless and ultra-logical tyrant. In contradiction, he has been shown in a recent study, L'Humanite de Calvin by Richard Stauffer, to have been a compassionate friend, a devoted pastor, and a husband with a bit more romance in his soul than some of us!

One of the most exciting discoveries of recent years about John Calvin is that far from being an inflexible predestinarian, or a legalistic high churchman, he was a social revolutionary and one of the most advanced social thinkers of his time.

It strikes me that there are three major approaches to the thought of John Calvin:

(1) The Classic Interpretation. This dates back to the 17th Century and stresses Calvin's predestinarian thought to the point of distortion. The Dutch have contributed more than their share to this interpretation, although the English Westminster Confession of Faith runs a close second. On this continent this classic interpretation is best seen in the Princeton Theology which featured such stars as Charles Hodge and Benjamin Warfield.

(2) The second approach I call the Scottish interpretation. This view places stress on Calvin's view of Church, ministry and sacraments. This more recent view, somewhat coloured by the thought of Karl Barth, may be associated with Professor Thomas Torrance of Edinburgh, his brother-in-law Ronald Wallace, and his friend T.H.L. Parker. (An American equivalent which never gained much credence in America, and a bit earlier than the Scottish, may be seen in the Mercersburg Theology whose stars were the renowned church historian Philip Schaff, and John Nevin of the German Reformed Church.

(3) The third approach I call the Swiss-French interpretation. This is also of recent origin. This approach is concerned with Calvin's social, political and economic thought. In 1959 a young Geneva pastor, André Biéler, wrote a doctoral thesis entitled, La Pensée Économique et Sociale de Calvin. (Ironically enough it was written under the supervision of a Roman Catholic professor of Economics in the University of Geneva founded by Calvin.) This thesis underlined and documented the fact that Calvin's political and social thought was not only revolutionary and far-reaching but germane to his theological thought. Now significant studies based on this thesis are beginning to appear, i.e. Professor W. Fred Graham's, The Constructive Revolutionary: John Calvin and his Socio-Economic Impact. Again, we may find a slightly earlier American equivalent in the brothers Niebuhr. To discover the source of their socially oriented Calvinism I suspect one would have to examine the thought of certain professors in Eden Seminary, St. Louis. Now this is a broad analysis of schools of Calvinistic thought. There are probably exceptions, or those with feet in more than one camp, but I think the analysis holds true. I have introduced the analysis here to indicate the position taken by this paper and to indicate the source of my thinking.

I personally am indebted to the Swiss-French school for the position adopted in this paper, and in particular to André Biéler and, to a lesser extent, W. Fred Graham.

I. Calvin's Theological Undergirding of the Just Society

Calvin's theology, as Prof. Brian Gerrish has pointed out, is one of thankfulness.[1] Man was created by God for fellowship with Himself; to respond thankfully, joyfully and lovingly to the One in whom all his good consists. Man was made in God's image; that is, he was given the capacity to enter into personal relations with this Beneficent Father and to hold communion with Him as a rational, initiating, willing and responsive being. Since this image resides in all other persons as well, it follows that men are made for fellowship with one another, as well as with God. It is the image of God within us which permits us to enter into truly human and satisfying relationships

[1] Brian Gerrish: Reformers in Profile. Fortress Press (1967) p.153

with others. True humanity thus involves a triangular relationship involving God, my neighbour and myself.

But the Fall, argues Calvin, has ruptured that relationship. Love (which is the essential element in the imago dei relationship) instead of going out to God and to one's neighbour, turns in upon itself (incurvature) and in consequence both the vertical relationship with God and the horizontal relationship with the neighbour is disrupted, distorted and fractured. The human dilemma involving dissension, divisiveness, destructiveness and death takes its rise from this fundamental rupture in the created order.

The extraordinary intervention of God, as recorded in the history of salvation is, according to Calvin, calculated to remedy the disruptive effects of self love in which one is content to live without God and without neighbours; and to re-establish the joyful, thankful, responsible and loving relationships originally intended by God to be the fabric of a just society.

The image of God is restored, refurbished, (or better) rendered operative by the spirit of regeneration explicit in the hearing of the gospel. To hear the gospel is to be entered upon a new and true relationship with God through Christ, and at the same time to be entered upon a new and true relationship with one's neighbour. Responsibility towards one's neighbour is at once an imperative and a possibility through the regenerative powers inherent in faith in Christ. Not even moral turpitude on the part of one's neighbour relieves men of responsibility towards the neighbour.

> "Whatever man you meet who needs your aid, you have no reason to refuse to help him. Say, 'he is a stranger' but the Lord has given him a mark that ought to be familiar to you ... Say, 'he is contemptible and worthless' but the Lord shows him to be one to whom He has deigned to give the beauty of His image. Say that you owe nothing for any service of his, but God, as it were, has put him in His own place in order that you may recognize toward him the many and great benefits

> with which God has bound you to Himself. Say that he does not deserve even your least effort for his sake; but the image of God which recommends Him to you is worthy of your giving yourself and all your possessions." (Institutes III, vii; 6)

Here is the origin of Calvin's radical social ethic. Our neighbour bears the image of God; to use him, abuse him, or misuse him is to do violence to the person of God who images himself in every human soul, the Fall notwithstanding. We are, Calvin argues, responsible for each other and because of our common humanity grounded in the image of God, we are particularly responsible for the weak and indigent who have suffered in any way through the vicissitudes of life. The church for Calvin was a kind of "pilot project" of a restored and renewed community. That is why it was so important for the Christian church to engage in serious social service and be in the vanguard for the realization of social justice.

The demands of piety as expressed through religious exercises can never diminish this responsibility to honour God as he images himself in all men. Indeed, to engage in religious exercises without fulfilling responsibilities to one's neighbour is the worst form of hypocrisy. Listen to this comment:

> "I recognize that piety toward God comes before love of our brothers; therefore to observe the first table is more precious before God than to observe the second. But since God is invisible, our piety cannot be seen by our fellow men. It is true that religious ceremonials were established to give evidence of piety; but men's observance of them is no proof of their godliness; for it often happens that nobody is more diligent and zealous in going through ceremonies than the hypocrites. God, therefore, wanted to test our love for Him by enjoining us to love one another as brothers. For this reason, love is called the perfection of the law (not only here, but also in Romans 13:8) not because it is

> better than the worship of God, but because it is the convincing evidence of it. I have said we cannot see God; He therefore presents Himself to us in our brothers, and in their persons demands from us what we owe to Him. (Calvin Commentaries, LCC Vol.23)

It is clear from this that the "religious" man who is only interested in the salvation of his own soul is a selfish man and is as yet unredeemed. The test of true religion for Calvin is to be determined less by individual piety and more by social ethics. To claim to love God and to hate one's neighbour is a theological contradiction.

This brings us now to Calvin's concept of the solidarity of mankind. That solidarity is grounded in the fact that we all bear the image of God. "The Lord enjoins us to do good to all without exception, though the greater part, if estimated by their own merit, are unworthy of it. But Scripture enjoins a most excellent reason when it tells us that we are not to look to what men themselves deserve but to attend to the image of God which exists in all and to which we all owe honour and love." (Institutes III, vii; 6) God then is the substance and hence the motivation of all human community. Commenting on Matthew 5: 43-46, Calvin says:

> "Therefore God testifies that any man whoever he may be is our neighbour, in order to keep us in the bonds of brotherly love with which we are bound one to another by our common nature: for it is necessary that whenever I see another man, who is my flesh and bone, I see myself. Even though men, most often, break away from this holy society, their depravity does not remove the order of nature; for we must remember that God Himself is the Maker of this union. It follows that the precept of the law which commands us to love our neighbour applies to all men."

We are all responsible for each other, and we are particularly responsible for the weak, the indigent and those who have suffered

grievously through the trials and vicissitudes of life. The Church, as I have already intimated, must be a pilot project and point the way to a renewed and restored community. That is why it is so important for the Christian Church to engage in serious social service, to decry social inequities and to be in the vanguard of the quest for the just society. The Church is doubly responsible because within her has taken place and is taking place the work of re-creation and regeneration. Jesus Christ, the Head of, and Example to, the Church has in a very dramatic and costly way demonstrated what it means to love one's neighbour. This is one of the deeper meanings of the Cross. Thus the Christian who is predestined to conform his life to the perfect image of God in Christ cannot be unconcerned about any area of life where human welfare is at stake.

> "We must recognize that God has wanted to make us like members of a body. When we regard each other in this way, each will then conclude: I see my neighbour who has need of me and if I were in such extremity, I would wish to be helped; I must therefore do just that." (Sermon on I Tim. 6: 17-19)

II. Homiletical Implications of the Doctrine of the Imago Dei for Calvin.

Now this powerful teaching about the imago dei and human solidarity had radical implications for the content and thrust of Calvin's preaching. Never forget that Calvin was fundamentally a preacher of the word and it is the thrust of his insight into the nature of the imago dei that gives to his preaching a prophetic quality reminiscent of the Old Testament prophet Amos.

There has been much nonsense written about Calvin being a tyrant at Geneva, a dictator who imposed his iron will upon the lives of unwilling and unhappy citizens of Geneva. Calvin was not even a citizen of Geneva until 1555 -- nine years before his death -- and many of his cherished ecclesiastical reforms were never realized because of the opposition of the City Council. But Calvin nevertheless had a moral

authority. Directly across from his pulpit in La Cathedral de Saint Pierre were the seats of the syndics and councillors who, after hearing his powerful pulpit utterances and biblical expositions and applications, were often influenced to legislate during the week following in terms of the preacher's imperatives of equity and social justice.

Now in spite of his grand conception of a transformed and restored humanity, Calvin was nevertheless a realist. He knew that creeds and deeds were often at variance, and practice and principle frequently were far apart in the Christian community. His preaching then was geared to bring them into alignment. Seated in his congregation at Geneva were professing Christians who were not above exploiting their neighbours; living within Geneva, officially committed to the gospel, were persons whose pursuit of wealth was without compassion; whose desire for gain made them ride rough shod over the rights of individuals, and whose greed made them impervious to the rights of the poor and defenceless. Calvin did not spare them or gloss over their ugly covetousness.

Wealth to Calvin's mind possessed peculiar dangers and involved serious responsibilities. "Let us then that have riches . . . consider that their abundance was not intended to be laid out in intemperance or excess, but in relieving the necessities of the brethren." (Comm. II, Cor. 8:15) Those who sought monopoly control of staple items he publicly lambasted, for example those who stored up wheat in anticipation of shortages which would permit them to raise prices. "These people," he thundered, "entomb the grace of God, as if they warred against His bounty and against the paternal love which He displays towards everyone." (Sermon 96 on Deut. 15: 16-23)

On another occasion he called wheat cornering operators, "murderers, savage beasts, biting and eating up the poor, sucking up their blood." (Comm., Matt. 3:9-16) Another concern on which Calvin expressed himself was the charging of interest. Lending for risk capital was permitted provided one charged no more than 5% interest, but one must charge no interest when lending to the poor, indeed it would be better in the face of the

distress of the poor to give them the necessary money outright. Moreover, one must not neglect the responsibilities of charity in order to have money to lend to the business entrepreneur. Furthermore, what society permitted legally by way of lending rates if unjust was prohibited to the Christian.

III. The Outworking in the Life of the Church of Calvin's Radical Social Ethic.

The outworking of Calvin's understanding of responsibility for one's neighbour brought about a most exciting social welfare program in Geneva. In the Ecclesiastical Ordinances of 1541, Calvin called for four orders of ministry: pastors, doctors, elders and deacons. The office of the deacon was to have solicitude for the poor and to minister to their needs. In practice this required a division of the office of the diaconate into two parts, 'procurators' and 'hospitallers'. The procurators were the administrators who received funds and disbursed them, and generally supervised the operation of the institutions designated for the care of the unfortunates. The hospitallers were those who actually cared for the sick and the unfortunate. The procurators and hospitallers were to be elected to office in a manner similar to the elders.(Inst.IV,iii;9)

The main institution for the care of the unfortunates was the General Hospital (l'Hopital General). There were several departments in the hospital corresponding to the several social service needs of the community. Separate departments existed for the sick, for old people, for those unable to work; for widowed women, for orphaned and illegitimate children, and a special department in a separate building for those afflicted by the plague. In addition there was a kind of outpatients department, or a mobile nursing unit, to care for those not actually hospitalized. The hospital, in addition, provided the services of a physician and a surgeon who not only served those within the hospital institution but also those outside who were brought to their attention by the procurators or the hospitallers.

This far-reaching program of helpfulness was financed in the first instance from the sale of church lands or other properties no

longer needed by the new ecclesiastical regime. In addition, alms boxes were placed at all church doors; annual collections were also instituted, and citizens were encouraged to make provision for the upkeep of the enterprise in their wills. Calvin himself was a regular contributor to the fund although Jerome Bolsec, his uncomplimentary and undesired biographer, suggested he stole from the funds! Whatever was required to make up any deficit after all voluntary resources were exhausted was contributed by direct grant from the council.

Under the administration of the diaconate also was La Bourse Française and La Bourse Italienne. Both institutions came into being to assist in the rehabilitation of the refugees from the persecutions raging in France and the Piedmont respectively. Geneva's reputation as a city of refuge takes its rise from this situation forced upon it because of the presence in their midst of John Calvin, the acknowledged leader of the Reformation, and further, because of the willingness of the citizens to organize, administer and finance this significant ministry of helpfulness. The magnitude of the task can be seen when one realizes that Geneva at this time was a mere city of 13,500 and literally hundreds came to her gates for refuge. When the occasion for this kind of refugee service was past, the residue of funds was turned over to the l'Hôpital Général.

Although the ministers were tremendously interested in these projects of helpfulness, and were required to make a quarterly inspection in the company of the chief procurator to ascertain if all was in good order and the goals of the institutions were being achieved, yet it was primarily a lay movement of the Church, administered by the laity and functioning in terms of the imperatives of the gospel which required all Christians to be obedient servants, to emulate Christ's compassion and to love their neighbours as themselves. In their study, Les Diacres de la Ville de Genève, Heyer and Johannot observe, "in the sixteenth century the little nation of Geneva was organized like a large family, the heads of which did not abandon any of its members, small or great, sick or healthy, young or old. All were objects of a touching solicitude."

IV. Christian Vocations and the Realization of the Goal of the Just Society

Now social justice for Calvin was not just a matter of the Church raising a prophetic voice against injustice, and the establishment of programmes of social service. The Christian faith, according to Calvin, was meant to invade every avenue of life. Man's money, property and work, were all meant to be used, not to deprive the neighbour, but to serve him. Work, for example, through Calvin attained a new dignity. It was no longer to be considered a curse occasioned by sin: it was rather a means of serving God and one's neighbour. It was a means of reflecting the imago dei.

(1) Man's work, firstly, was derived from God's work. It involved in a true sense a participation in the Divine Creativity. Man's art, architecture, science, and agriculture, were made possible by the operation of God's creative powers within men.

(2) Work, secondly, was one of the ways in which the beneficent God in His Providence provided for the necessities of man's creaturely existence. The society which would not permit a man to work was depriving him of a basic human right. Through man's work, God provided for the needs of a man and those of his family. To deprive a man of the opportunity to work Calvin declared, dramatically, was tantamount to "slitting his throat". (Sermons on Deuteronomy 24:14-18, cf. Commentaries on Leviticus 19:11-13)

(3) Thirdly, work was a significant means of fulfilling one's responsibilities to one's neighbour. Calvin, as we have already seen, was impressed with the solidarity of human life. Men were not a collection of individuals; they were a community of mutually dependent people. For Calvin the personal ethics must be social ethics, and social ethics must have regard to one's neighbour. The end therefore to which a man devoted his work was of cardinal importance. Work could be an expression of a selfish and acquisitive spirit, or it could be a means of expressing one's new life in Christ, which required not only honour to God, but also love to one's neighbour in whom, however distorted, is reflected the image of God. By work a man was able in the most concrete fashion to show his love to his neighbour. Thus it is obvious that Calvin tied together inseparably the demands of the economic life and those of the ethical and religious life.

I have already mentioned that a man is to receive remuneration for his work. Wages for Calvin carry a spiritual significance. What a man receives by way of remuneration should be seen as a token of the graciousness of God. Wages, says Calvin, are tangible expressions of the gratuitous and unmerited salary with which God honours our labour. They are a concrete indication that God is at work providing for the needs of his children. (cf. Commentaries, Genesis 30:29)

Now this kind of thinking has profound implications for wage scales. When an employer pays an employee he is actually transmitting that which God gives to a man for his work, to meet his own needs and that of his neighbours. To withold any part of that by underpaying an employee is to dishonour God and to cheat one's neighbour, in this case the employee. Both employer and employee must realize God's part in this matter of income. The employer must realize that the fruit of his industry business or shop is a gift from God even as his employee must realize that his wages (paid by the employer) are also a gift from God. Bearing this in mind, employer and employee ought to be able to work out a suitable wage scale on the basis of common agreement.

This of course, Calvin realizes is a counsel of perfection. Men are not yet fully redeemed and self love does invade the structure of life to disrupt and distort. How does one then make actual wages correspond with the beneficence of God? Wages could be determined by market fluctuations or by government enactment. However mere human standards are never to be completely trusted. For example, the labour market might be oversupplied. Unscrupulous employers, Calvin feared, might use the occasion to drop wages below the amount required to sustain a labourer and his family. "For behold what the rich often do, they spy for occasions and opportunities to cut down by half the wages of poor people who need employment." (Sermons on Deuteronomy 24:14-18) Such action Calvin considered to be cruel and defrauding.

In actual practice Calvin put considerable confidence in the civic authorities in the matter of establishing a just wage. He favoured obviously wage and price controls. Here we can see how political science could be a means of serving the interests of one's neighbour by protecting

him from unscrupulous exploitation, as well as arranging a proper supply of goods and services.

If man's work is to find its true and proper meaning, indeed its original meaning, then man must consciously and personally relate himself to the work of God. In short, he must turn over the management of his work to God. In order to do this he must dispose himself to encounter God's work and be aware of its patterns and goals. To encounter God's work man must engage in Sunday Worship and by this means permit God to renew his life, shape and inform his ethics, and re-define his goals in life. "The Lord", wrote Calvin, "has not simply commanded men to set aside every seventh day as though he took pleasure in idlers. What pleases God is the fact that being freed from all other business, we now apply our minds to recognize and acknowledge the Creator of the world." (Commentaries, Genesis 2:3) Again he wrote, "The faithful must rest from their work in order to let God do His work in them." (Institutes II, viii; 28)

V. Government Action as a Means of Guaranteeing the Just and Free Society.

At this point we ought to speak briefly about the State or the role of civil government in the structure of Calvin's social thought. Unlike Luther who felt that if all men were thoroughly Christian there would be no need for the State, Calvin saw the State as a further expression of the Divine beneficence and the hope for a just society.

(1) Political action, in the first place, served to limit the activities of those whose self love would lead them to exploit the poor, take unfair advantage of the gullible, or profit from other's misfortunes. Interest rates were set by the State to limit the activities of greedy moneylenders; and restrictions were put on monopolists who sought to corner the market on staple goods like wheat and so demand inflated prices. Commenting on Psalm 82:3, (Give justice to the weak and the fatherless, maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute) Calvin observed that:

> "a just and well-regulated government will be distinguished for maintaining the rights of the poor

> and afflicted...." "It is rare that rich men resort to magistrates for help, except when they happen to fall out among themselves. From these remarks, it is obvious why the cause of the poor and needy is here chiefly commended to rulers; for those who are exposed an easy prey to cruelty and wrongs of the rich have no less need of the assistance and protection of the magistrates than the sick have need of the aid of a physician."

(2) Governments existed in the second place to regulate business and industry so that there might be an equitable distribution of this world's goods and an opportunity for gainful employment. The Geneva Government often under Calvin's probing and sometimes with his assistance set up new industries to help absorb the greatly increased work force occasioned by the influx of refugees.

Governments had the right to tax the people for "public necessity" but they did not have the right to squander the tax revenues or to take more than a fair wage for themselves from the tax revenues. Calvin wrote:

> "Princes themselves will ... remember that their revenues are not so much private chests as treasuries of the <u>entire</u> people - which cannot be squandered or spoiled without manifest injustice. Or rather, that these are almost the very blood of the people, which it would be the harshest inhumanity not to spare. Moreover, let them consider that their imposts and levies, and other kinds of tribute are nothing but supports of public necessity; but that to impose them upon the common folk without cause is tyrannical extortion." (<u>Institutes</u> IV, xx; 13)

(3) Government, in the third place, had a responsibility to help promote the Church and provide her with the freedom to carry on her work under mandate to the Word of God.

> "Holy kings are greatly praised in Scripture because they restored the worship of God when it was corrupted or destroyed, or took care of religion that under them it might flourish pure and unblemished.... This proves the folly of those who would neglect the concern for God and would give attention only to rendering justice among men." (Institutes IV, xx; 9)

The Church, in turn, served the best interests of the State by bringing to bear upon the citizen, through worship, teaching, and discipline, the Gospel of Christ which rendered operative the imago dei and underlined the nature of the equity that contributed to the goals of a just society.

However, what happens when the State becomes unjust and proceeds to:

a) turn its police power against the innocent?

b) protect and support monopolies?

c) persecute and destroy those who assemble to worship God and to seek direction for their lives by the clear testimony of Holy Scriptures?

Calvin in the face of an unjust government counselled prayer and patience. God was undoubtedly punishing his people by permitting tyranny and they should seek to ascertain His will in the face of adversity. Calvin feared anarchy. It was a sign of ultimate evil. Tyranny, indeed was to be preferred to anarchy because at least in tyranny there was a modicum of order. Thus Christians were counselled to wait for some intervention, perhaps through a foreign power. Meanwhile they were to examine themselves, and their lives in community, to ascertain where the fault lay. At the same time they were to pray to God for forgiveness, expect deliverance and anticipate the vindication of His cause and that He would show compassion on His poor children.

However Calvin left the door open to more active rebellion.[1] There was in every State a second line of authority subject in obedience to the first line of authority (Prince, King, Queen). If the first line of authority became oppressive, tyrannical and required an obedience that was clearly at variance with God's will then the second line of authority could take action to overthrow the tyrants. John Knox in Scotland, for example, encouraged the nobility of the realm to take up arms against the Queen Regent, Mary of Guise. Théodore Bèze, Calvin's colleague and successor, after the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in which the flower of the French Hugenots was cruelly slaughtered upon order of the King, thereafter urged the people to take up arms against their King because he had simply dethroned himself by using legitimate power in an illegitimate way to destroy those whom he was required under God to protect.[2] Historians have observed the connection between this outlook and that of the French Revolution, and also between it and the Puritan Revolution in England.

However quiescent Calvin himself may have seemed to be with reference to the right of revolution, this fact cannot be gainsaid, "Calvinism taught previously passive men the styles and methods of political activity and enabled them successfully to claim the right of participation in that on-going system of political action that is the modern state."[3]

Let me say in conclusion that as Calvin saw it, the Christians, reconstructed by the grace of God, empowered by the Spirit of God, guided and goaded by the commandments of God, and functioning fully within Church, State, and the diverse useful vocations of society, were the hope of the new day and the possibility of experiencing here and now the thrust of the Kingdom of God whose outlines would become visible in a just and equitable society.

[1] Cf. Hans Baron, Calvinist Republicanism and its Historical Roots, Church History. Vol. VIII, p.41

[2] Théodore Bèze, Concerning the Rights of Rulers over their Subjects and the Duty of Subjects toward their Rulers. Translated into English by Henri-Louis Gonin with an introduction by A.A. Van Schelven. Cape Town, Pretoria (1956) p.63

[3] W.F. Graham, The Constructive Revolutionary. John Knox Press (1971) p.172

J. Gresham Machen, Presbyterian Fundamentalist

by

C. Allyn Russell

Students of the modernist-fundamentalist struggle in American religious life during the early decades of this century have long recognized J. Gresham Machen, the multi-talented Presbyterian clergyman-professor as one of fundamentalism's most important leaders.[1] Machen has deserved this acknowledgment, not because of showmanship or rhetoric, as frequently was the case with several of his noisy contemporaries, but rather because of his erudition, the depth of the controversy which he precipitated, the nature of his apology for an ultraconservative Christianity, and the manner in which he declined to be crowded into previously established molds - even fundamentalist ones. Despite Machen's significance, only one major book-length work has appeared dealing with his life, and that by an enthusiastic and contemporary disciple who wrote nearly twenty years ago.[2] It is fitting, therefore, with the greater perspective brought by time, as conservative theology is constantly reevaluated, and as Presbyterians continue to face important doctrinal and ecumenical decisions, to take another look at this staunch heir of the Hodge-Warfield tradition at Princeton Theological Seminary.[3] Machen stood lonely

but undaunted in the midst of doctrinal change and church conflict. He lost both battles and the war, but he remains an apologetical and an ecclesiastical figure who still may have something to say to both contemporary churchmen and secular scholars.

Like many fundamentalists, Machen came from southern backgrounds, but unlike many fundamentalists, Machen's family tradition was characterized by wealth, culture, marked intellectual ability and pronounced social influence. John Gresham Machen was born in Baltimore, Maryland, July 28, 1881, the second of the three sons of Arthur Webster and Mary (Minnie) Gresham Machen.[4] His parents were of English ancestry by way of Virginia and Georgia. Machen's father became a prominent lawyer who read five languages, including Italian, which he learned after the age of eighty.[5] His mother, to whom Machen was especially attached throughout his lifetime, possessed many interests, namely, religion, poetry, nature, botany, and astronomy. She wrote a book entitled The Bible in Browning and kept a close personal friendship with Gertrude Lanier, sister of the famous poet Sidney Lanier.[6] Machen's maternal grandfather, John Jones Gresham, illustrates the interest which members of the Machen family took in political and educational matters. Twice he served as mayor of Macon, Georgia, in addition to being a member of the state legislature and holding various terms as a trustee of the University of Georgia, Oglethorpe University, and Columbia Theological Seminary.[7] The father of Woodrow Wilson taught at the latter institution and, in his older years, was a frequent visitor to the Machen home in Baltimore.[8]

In such a cultured atmosphere Machen's early religious training took place, consisting primarily of a knowledge of the Scriptures and the Shorter Catechism and the Westminster Confession of Faith. Recalling the nature of his spiritual upbringing, Machen wrote near the end of his life: "I had acquired a better knowledge of the contents of the Bible at twelve years of age than is possessed by many theological students today."[9] After instruction in a private school, the future fundamentalist entered Johns Hopkins University at the age of seventeen. There he majored in the classics, especially Greek and Latin, and was graduated as valedictorian and elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 1901. He lingered at Johns Hopkins for a year of graduate study before beginning his long relation with Princeton Theological Seminary by enrolling as a student in the fall of 1902. His study at Princeton brought him into contact with Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, theological successor to Charles Hodge, defender of mainline Calvinism and a leader whom Machen called, on the occasion of Warfield's death in 1921, "...the greatest man I have known."[10] Machen earned his B.D. degree from the seminary in 1905, and also added an M.A. degree from Princeton University along the way (1904).[11] Continuing his theological education, Machen traveled to Germany for further study at Marburg and Göttingen. There he worked with several of the world's leading biblical scholars - among them Adolph Jülicher, Johannes Weiss, Walter Bauer, William Bousset, and, above all others, the brilliant Ritschlian theologian, Wilhelm Herrmann. Machen came

to believe there was a moral contradiction in the "reconstructed Jesus" of Herrmann, yet was greatly moved by the depth of Herrmann's personal fervor and moral earnestness.[12]

When he returned from Germany in 1906, Machen accepted an appointment at Princeton Seminary, the first of twenty-three years he would spend there as a member of the faculty.

During his professorial years, Machen's erudition was manifested, through his prolific writings. His New Testament Greek for Beginners (1924), eventually published in some forty editions, came to be widely used in both colleges and seminaries. His classic, The Virgin Birth of Christ (1930) is considered the ablest treatment of that subject, from an orthodox standpoint, in the field of New Testament studies.[13] Other prominent books which he wrote included The Origin of Paul's Religion (1921); Christianity and Liberalism (1923); What Is Faith? (1927); The Christian Faith in the Modern World (1938); and, The Christian View of Man (1937).

The theological convictions of Machen (the supernatural nature of Jesus' personality and the infallibility of the Scriptures) joined with his acceptance of biblical miracles seemingly placed the conservative from Princeton in the camp of the fundamentalists, yet Machen was deeply reluctant to accept such a designation. If it were a choice between liberalism and fundamentalism, then, of course, he classified himself with the latter, but he disliked the way fundamentalists summarized Christianity in a few neatly defined doctrines. He was not the

Scofield dispensationalist nor the premillennialist, as many of his conservative colleagues were; and, he lacked the piety which characterized most of his orthodox brethren.

Machen declared that if one accepted the annotations in the Scofield Bible "he is seriously out of accord with the Reformed Faith and has no right to be a minister or elder or deacon in the Presbyterian Church of America" [the denomination he founded]. Even more specifically, he wrote that "dispensationalism of the Scofield Bible seems to us to be quite contrary to the system of doctrine taught in the Westminster Standards."[14]

On the important subject of premillennialism, Machen was convinced that the Scriptures did not speak so precisely as to warrant the premillennialist conclusion:

> A large number of Christian people believe that when evil has reached its climax in the world, the Lord Jesus will return to this earth in bodily presence to bring about a reign of righteousness that will last a thousand years, and that only after that period the end of the world will come. This belief...is an error arrived at by a false interpretation of the Word of God; we do not think that the prophecies of the Bible permit so definite a mapping out of future events. The Lord will come again, and it will be no mere 'spiritual' coming in the modern sense - so much is clear - but that so little will be accomplished by the present dispensation of the Holy Spirit and so much will be left to be accomplished by the Lord in bodily presence - such a view we cannot find to be justified by the words of Scripture.[15]

In addition to these significant doctrinal differences, Machen, in his personal life, did not reflect traditional fundamentalist piety. True, he was a strict Sabbatarian, due more to his Presbyterian training than fundamentalist influence, but on such matters as the drinking of alcoholic beverages and the use

of tobacco he differed markedly from the fundamentalists. He believed that intemperance was wrong, assuredly, but he declined to accept total abstinence as the only alternative. The social practices of his family, dictated in part by the circles in which they moved, linked with his knowledge of the Scriptures (did not Paul teach that a little wine was good for the stomach and one's frequent ailments?) undoubtedly contributed to this conclusion.[16] And when it came to tobacco, Machen was even more precise. "My idea of delight is a Princeton room full of fellows smoking. When I think what a wonderful aid tobacco is to friendship and Christian patience I have sometimes regretted that I never began to smoke."[17]

In summary, Machen was a Calvinist Christian who felt that the Christian religion could and should be defended. While holding many views in common with the fundamentalists, he was reluctant at best to accept the label. His doctrinal position was stated forcefully and succinctly when writing to a lawyer-friend in 1927:

> ...thoroughly consistent Christianity, to my mind, is found only in the Reformed or Calvinistic faith; and consistent Christianity, I think, is the Christianity easiest to defend. Hence I never call myself a 'Fundamentalist.' There is, indeed, no inherent objection to the term; and if, the designation is between 'Fundamentalism' and 'Modernism', then I am willing to call myself a Fundamentalist of the most pronounced type. But, after all, what I prefer to call myself is not a Fundamentalist but a Calvinist - that is, an adherent of the Reformed Faith. As such, I regard myself as standing in the great central current of the church's life - the current which flows down from the Word of God through Augustine and Calvin, and which has found noteworthy expression in America in the great tradition represented by Charles Hodge and Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield, and the other representatives of the 'Princeton School.'[18]

Machen's positive description of the Christian faith comprised one side of his apologetic coin; the other side was an unrelenting and perennial attack upon naturalism, in the form of Protestant liberalism, which he considered the chief rival to Christianity. It was Machen's thesis that Christianity and liberalism were essentially two distinct and mutually exclusive religions, not two varieties of the same faith.[19] He argued that they proceeded from altogether different roots despite the use of traditional phraseology by the liberals. In assaulting liberalism as a non-Christian religion, Machen declared that the liberal attempt to reconcile Christianity with modern science had relinquished everything distinctive of Christanity. What remained was the same type of religious aspiration which was in the world before the coming of the Christian faith.[20]

Machen took a wide interest in the social issues of his day - in fact, a wider interest than most fundamentalist leaders. While mentioning his social concerns occasionally in his sermons and books, the normal channels for his pronouncements were personal correspondence, denominational and secular journals, and, above all, the press - especially through constant letters to The New York Herald Tribune and The New York Times.

Four convictions characterized his views on social issues: (1) Machen was a firm civil libertarian who fought restrictions and regulations placed upon the individual. He was particularly adamant in opposing trends of centralization in government, declaring that the great American principle of liberty was being

threatened.[21] (2) Machen believed that the church itself, as a body (whether denomination, presbytery, or local congregation) should not take a stand upon social and political issues about which there was no specific scriptural guidance, but individuals might express themselves.[22] (There is some doubt whether or not this conviction was consistent with historic Calvinism). (3) The church of his day was giving too much attention to the physical distresses of mankind and insufficient regard to the spiritual needs of men and the intellectual basis of the Christian faith.[23] (4) The true hope for social progress lay not in a modern "paganism," characterized by a profound satisfaction with human goodness, but rather in Christian fundamentalism (supernaturalism) with its emphasis upon human sinfulness and the regenerating power of the Spirit of God.[24]

On all social issues, Machen stood unalterably against standardization, centralization of governmental powers, and what he termed "soul-killing" collectivism. In a generation marked by increasing centripetal forces this normally placed him in a defensive and negative position. On the "positive" side he favored the rights of the individual over those of the states. This pronounced individualism - already seen in his theology - reflected the nineteenth century more than the twentieth; made Machen more sympathetic to the Jeffersonian concept of liberty than it did to the Social Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch and, later, to the political stance of Franklin D. Roosevelt. It also left him seeking the religious conversion of all men as the crucial ingredient of true liberty in a society which, in the gospel

according to Machen, was giving more attention to the superstructure than to the foundation.[25] Furthermore, one may suggest that the identity so often noted between right wing politics and right wing religion is partially foreshadowed in Machen's social views.

Opposed to centralization in government, Machen was equally set against administrative centralization and theological inclusiveness in religion. This leads us quite naturally to the ecclesiastical struggle in which Machen played the central role.

Eight years after Machen began his responsibilities at Princeton as an instructor, Dr. J. Ross Stevenson was elected president of the seminary (1914) to succeed Dr. Francis L. Patton. This event was an important watershed in the life of the institution because it marked the beginning of the end of the old "historic Princeton position." Dr. Stevenson, whom Norman F. Furniss referred to as "a man of less eminence in public life and less orthodoxy in theology" than Dr. Patton, openly declared that he desired the seminary to represent the whole Presbyterian Church and not a particular theological faction.[26] This immediately set against him a majority of the faculty, including Machen, who wished the seminary to reflect only the traditional Old School, Calvinistic theology. Actually, both Stevenson and Machen had their particular fears. Stevenson believed that loyalty to Princeton's traditional theological position would lead to religious isolation. He feared the institution becoming "an interdenominational Seminary for Bible School-premillennial-secession fundamentalism." Machen, on the other hand, dreaded the prospect of Princeton becoming a "cheap,

Christian Endeavor" kind of school and then a modernist institution.[27] The real point of issue at Princeton came to be "whether orthodoxy and tolerance were compatible."[28]

A built-in administrative factor added further fuel to a potentially explosive situation. The president of the seminary possessed broad powers which some of the faculty resented; furthermore, there was the awkwardness of two boards governing the same institution. A Board of Directors was responsible for the educational life of the school while a Board of Trustees governed its financial operations. The majority of the directors came to side with a majority of the faculty in supporting the conservative cause while the president, a minority of the directors, a minority of the faculty, and a majority of the trustees favored the more inclusive policy in both denomination and seminary.[29]

Specific events in the 1920's polarized the two sides almost completely. In 1920, Dr. Stevenson backed by Dr. Charles R. Erdman, Professor of Practical Theology at the seminary, publicly supported a Plan of Union designed to unite organically nineteen evangelical denominations.[30] Machen, the opponent of centralization, set himself against the plan declaring that the language of the preamble was theologically vague and colorless and arguing that while the proposed plan had a creed it was not one to which the clergy were required to subscribe.[31] Machen rejoiced when the plan, which he called "the most serious attack upon the character of the Presbyterian Church which has ever been made," was defeated in the presbyteries 150 to 100.[32] Machen had been an instrumental force

in bringing about the defeat but the gulf between him and the president of the seminary had widened even further.

Machen's book Christianity and Liberalism, with its plea for a separation of the "Christians" and the liberals appeared in 1923. In the fall of the same year Machen accepted an appointment as Stated Supply of the First Presbyterian Church at Princeton. This too was a source of conflict. Dr. Henry van Dyke, Professor of English Literature at the University and an ordained Presbyterian clergyman, gave up his pew in the church to protest what he termed "the schismatic and unscriptural preaching of Dr. J. Gresham Machen."[33] Van Dyke claimed that Machen had devoted his sermons to a dismal discussion of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy rather than setting forth the claims of the Gospel. Van Dyke stayed away until Machen resigned his preaching responsibility in July of 1924 giving as he reasons the pressure of his work at the seminary and his desire to be free to accept speaking opportunities away from Princeton.[34] The Session "reluctantly and with the highest respect" accepted Machen's resignation.[35] Ironically, Dr. Charles R. Erdman succeeded Machen as Stated Supply. Erdman, a colleague of Machen's, while personally conservative in his theology, was a strong supporter of the president and an outspoken proponent of the inclusivist policy. This same Erdman, endorsed by Stevenson, became a candidate for moderator of the General Assembly in 1924 and 1925. In both years he was opposed by a majority of the faculty. He lost to Clarence E. Macartney, a conservative, in 1924, but won the office of moderator in 1925.

Machen's firm public opposition to Erdman further intensified the strains within a relatively small faculty of seventeen members.

Not unexpectedly the continuing controversy engulfed members of the student body. In 1925 an organization called The League of Evangelical Students was formed after delegates from Princeton had come to question the doctrinal orthodoxy of an interseminary conference sponsored by the Middle Atlantic Association of Theological Seminaries. Stevenson and Erdman (the latter had served as faculty adviser to the students for twenty years) both opposed the new League believing that its spirit was divisive, although the conservative majority of the faculty heartily endorsed the organization.[36] When the students differed among themselves as to the selection of a faculty adviser for another year (some did not wish Erdman because of his attitude toward the League) the matter was finally referred to the faculty. With the conservatives in control, and upon Machen's motion, they selected as adviser one of their own kind, Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, rather than Dr. Erdman. The blame for the change was laid squarely at Machen's feet. Machen responded that the faculty acted upon the matter only when requested to do so by the students and that it had been a simple democratic choice.[37]

With a majority of the faculty and student body holding to religious conservatism at a time when the denomination was moving simultaneously toward "administrative centralization and theological decentralization," Stevenson took specific action in 1926.[38] He recommended to the General Assembly that Machen's appointment as Professor of Apologetics and Ethics (which both boards had approved)

be held up until the Seminary could be investigated about conditions "subversive of Christian fellowship."[39] Speaking to the General Assembly, Stevenson said: "What I want is to have the light thrown on me, on the members of the Faculty and the whole institution. If there is to be judgment, let it fall where it will, and let the seminary go forward in the traditions of its founders."[40]

A committee to delve into the situation was duly appointed. After lengthy considerations which included personal interviews with faculty, students, alumni, and members of the two boards, the committee reached the carefully weighed conclusion that the only solution to the existing problems was the reorganization of the seminary.[41] Machen, reflecting the urgent concern of his conservative colleagues, declared that such reorganization would have the result of "putting the present conservative majority out of control of the institution and putting into power a minority that represents, with regard to the fundamental questions of policy, a radically different point of view."[42] Having allowed ample time for reflection and measured judgment, the General Assembly in 1929 approved the plan of reorganization. The two boards gave way to a single Board of Trustees comprised of thirty-three members (eighteen ministers and fifteen elders) one-third chosen from the Board of Directors, one-third from the Board of Trustees, and one-third from the church-at-large.[43] Very significantly, the approval of the seminary's reorganization by the General Assembly was made possible by the vote of a third "party" within the denomination, one neither extremely liberal nor extremely conservative but comprised of theological evangelicals

who despite their doctrinal orthodoxy were not opposed to an inclusive policy within the church and at Princeton.[44] Machen reserved his greatest ire for these individuals calling them "indifferentists" and "theological pacifists."

Feeling that he could not be a part of the reorganized inclusive seminary, and desiring an institution which would preserve the witness of traditional Calvinism, Machen led in the formation of Westminster Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, also in 1929. Three other faculty members and twenty students made the break from Princeton with him.[45] A total of fifty students registered for the first semester, a majority of whom came from Pennsylvania and New York with undergraduate preparation at such evangelical institutions as Wheaton and Asbury colleges and Taylor University.[46] Carl McIntire and Harold John Ockenga, both of whom were to become prominent in conservative circles, were members of the original student body. Five full-time professors and three full-time instructors supplemented by six part-time teachers comprised the new faculty.[47] At the first exercises of the nascent, independent seminary, Westminster was heralded as "the beginning of a great movement to resist, and, if possible, overcome the tendency toward Modernism, and one which would be a reformation like that of the sixteenth century, with a return to common honesty and common sense.[48]

With Machen, however, division was to become a process not an event, undercutting the enthusiasm of the early days at the seminary. Shortly after the founding of Westminster, Machen disturbed by the influence of liberalism on the foreign mission

fields and especially within the administrative leaders of his own denomination, organized the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.[49] The General Assembly declared this board to be schismatic and ordered all members who were Presbyterians to withdraw from it or stand trial. As one would expect, Machen refused to obey the mandate, was duly tried, and in 1935 was put out of the church.[50] Whereupon, in the endeavor to maintain a "true church" he led in the establishment of the Presbyterian Church of America (1936) and was elected its first moderator. When the parent denomination, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., successfully brought suit against the new denomination because of the confusion created by the similarity of names, Machen's faction changed its title to "The Orthodox Presbyterian Church" (1939).[51] Some who had agreed with the move from Princeton to Westminster declined to support the fledgling denomination thereby further weakening the struggling seminary and making more difficult the growth of the new church. One of these was Clarence E. Macartney, Machen's close friend and a member of the governing board at Westminster. He referred to the new denomination as a "cloud on the horizon" and an abortive attempt which was followed by "only a handful of sincere and courageous men."[52] By this time Machen had separated himself not only from all liberals, many conservatives, but a few ultra-conservatives as well. The "true" fellowship was to become even more select, this time the result of a division from Machen rather than by him.

The Reverend Carl McIntire of Collingswood, New Jersey, joined by Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, President of Wheaton College and

Dr. Allen MacRae, a professor at Westminster, led a break during the last month of Machen's life against his denomination, eventually founding the Bible Presbyterian Synod (1937). The issues involved concerned doctrine, Christian liberty, and church polity. McIntire and his group claimed that attacks were being made upon premillennialism, advocated complete abstinence rather than moderation toward the use of alcoholic beverages, and, in some instances (support of the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions), permitted independency rather than the Presbyterian form of church government.[53] When he left the Presbyterian Church of America to form his own fellowship, McIntire took with him thirteen ministers and three elders.[54] The Synod immediately announced its intention to revise the Westminster Confession of Faith "in any particulars in which the premillennial teaching of the Scriptures may be held to be obscured."[55]

Amid these winnowing events where strangely enough he found himself separated from a portion of the movement he had virtually created singlehandedly [control of the Independent Board], Machen struggled manfully to defend the faith as he understood it.[56] He spoke of Gideon's three hundred and the remnant of Israel - and labored feverishly to equate his "true church," already deeply divided, with these ideals. In such a context - exhausted and spent - he journeyed to North Dakota to speak to and to hold together a few churches of his own denomination. There he contracted his fatal illness.[57] The body of the lifelong champion of orthodox Presbyterianism was returned to Philadelphia where ironically his funeral service was held not in a church of his own

but in the Spruce Street Baptist Church, a congregation whose pastor shared Machen's views.

In perspective, several conclusions may be drawn from this study of the life of J. Gresham Machen. Initially, and partially over his own objections, Machen must still be considered a fundamentalist. Despite some differences in piety and doctrinal belief as have been pointed out, the nature of his protest against liberalism, the attention he gave to the five "essentials" of 1910 (seemingly as much consideration as to the five points of Calvinism), and his constant intransigent mood and spirit - these combined to place Machen within the fundamentalist camp. And, certainly against his will, he may be considered the indirect founder of ultrafundamentalism through the separatist action and thought of Carl McIntire.

Machen also illustrates another contribution of the South to the indigenous American movement known as fundamentalism. His family roots were entwined in southern soil. His relatives were openly sympathetic to the cause of the Confederacy. His most influential instructor at Johns Hopkins reflected southern mores and thought (Prof. Gildersleeve, a native of Charleston, South Carolina, had taught twenty years at the University of Virginia before assuming his responsibilities at Johns Hopkins). The city in which the Machens lived, Baltimore, preserved southern culture. The church the Machens attended was known as a congregation with southern affinities, in fact, later became officially affiliated with the Southern Presbyterian Church. Machen's social views, nurtured as they were in his own aristocratic, elitist background, also echoed southern judgments. This is not to claim a southern

origin for fundamentalism; rather, it is to point out that fundamentalism, which had its birth and early expression in the metropolitan areas of the Northeast was markedly influenced in the early decades of this century by several prominent leaders whose training had been cultivated in the religiously conservative South.

Theologically, it would appear that Machen, the last great defender of the Hodge-Warfield tradition, should be remembered for the role he played as a critic of liberalism. Long before Harry Emerson Fosdick's sermon of 1935, "The Church Must Go Beyond Modernism,"Machen was warning of an easy-going optimism and stressing the danger of humanizing God and over-adjusting to modern culture. With an emphasis upon the transcendence of God and the sinfulness of man, Machen appeared to foreshadow the coming of the more "realistic" theological forces of the mid-twentieth century. And just as history appeared to discipline theological liberalism and vindicate neo-orthodoxy (through the failure of the League of Nations, the depression, two world wars, the Korean conflict, the insights of depth psychology and the ever-present threat of World War III) so one might make a case that history also vindicated Machen - especially in his concept of man. Furthermore, as a critic of liberalism, Machen early cautioned against the impossibility of "reconstructing" Jesus so as to harmonize him with preconceived rationalistic notions. He reminded religious leaders of the difficulty of separating the natural from the supernatural in Jesus, particularly when a super-natural belief such as the resurrection of Jesus was woven so

deeply into the fabric of the Christian message. He also admonished those who were overly subjective in their approach to religion, sometimes creating thereby as many religions as there were subjective judgments. If the foregoing illustrations are reflective of Machen's theological "strength," his doctrinal weaknesses may also be suggested. His contemporary opponents believed that his theological assumptions, especially those dealing with the existence of God, were greater than the evidence he provided. In addition, his concept of the Church as a voluntary society (one may join or not join, similar to a political club) has been criticized as being more Anabaptist in nature than Presbyterian.[58] But greater than disagreement with any particular belief, is the deserved judgment that Machen doggedly made theology an "either-or" proposition.[59] Truth was found only on his side - apparently to be buried in his tomb, or, at least, the tombs of his disciples. The facts of Christianity could be interpreted only his way. Such dogmatism appeared almost as exclusive as the aristocracy from which Machen sprang and caused more than a few to believe that while his orthodoxy may have possessed its rational aspects it was neither flexible, warm, nor evangelical.

As a theologian, Machen has been evaluated differently by different men.[60] There is no such disagreement in interpreting Machen as a religious politician. The verdict is nearly unanimous that he was a failure and for a simple reason. The heart of politics is to know when to compromise but the word "compromise" was foreign to Machen's vocabulary.[61] Because of this "practical" rigidity Machen became the major catalyst which divided the

Presbyterians leading to the Independent Board of Missions and eventually to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Such complete unyieldingness placed the ultraconservative Presbyterian in an ever-diminishing group of allies while simultaneously adding to the number of his theological opponents. Ernest R. Sandeen has effectively described such a man of loneliness.

> Machen could be understood by other intellectuals, though they might not agree with him....But when he stepped out of his role as the intellectual into that of the denominational politician, he proved hopelessly inept....What he called faithful militant witnessing for the truth was often nothing more than perverse obstinacy and a fatal lack of openness to the truth that might (however dimly) glow in some other heart. When crossed, Machen typically cut off the former friend or ally with an irreversible anathema and proceeded on his way uncompromised but more than ever the hermit saint. The medieval authorities may have been honored in some Christian communities, but few were ever elected pope.[62]

Even Machen's sympathetic biographer, Ned B. Stonehouse, while referring to the subject's absence of political expediency and craft as a sign of strength, nevertheless, admits that there was in Machen a kind of generalship which was satisfied to state and expound principles and objectives and then simply appealed to men to follow them.[63] Little or no time was devoted to persuading his comrades of the necessity of taking the measures which he believed were required. In a classic understatement, Stonehouse concludes: "It is possible therefore that Machen contributed somewhat to the lack of harmony among the other Presbyterian leaders."[64]

Lefferts A. Loetscher implies that part of the problem of Machen's leadership - indeed, that of the conservative majority at

Princeton - was the lack of pastoral experience.[65] That is a possibility although one may also argue that men such as John Roach Straton, J. Frank Norris, and W. B. Riley were life-long pastors whose contact with people at the grass roots level failed to deliver them from the same kind of stubbornness as Machen exhibited. What is known is that Machen's independent seminary grew to only moderate size and that "the true church" of which he was the founder has remained a small, factional group at best.[66]

A final look at Machen's contribution to American religious culture indicates that his unquestioned integrity, courage, and perseverance were balanced by an individualistic, dogmatic outlook on societal and theological issues, and an over-absorption with the dangers of Protestant liberalism. This dogmatism and lack of balance prevented a many-talented man from exerting a wider influence in Christian circles. His life might have been saved from such a melancholy interpretation had he recognized the importance of the judgment of the group as a check against extreme individualism, the insights of the religious experiences of others, and the fact that tolerance still remains one of the greatest of the scholarly virtues.

* This paper is based on C. A. Russell's longer article, "J. Gresham Machen, Scholarly Fundamentalist," Journal of Presbyterian History, LI (1), Spring, 1973, 41-69.

1. The standard works on fundamentalism, in which there are numerous references to Machen include the following: Stewart G. Cole, The History of Fundamentalism (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1931); Norman F. Furniss, The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1918-1931 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954); Louis Gaspar, The Fundamentalist Movement (Paris: Mouton and Co., 1963); Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); and, Erling Jorstad, The Politics of Doomsday (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970).

2. The major work is Ned B. Stonehouse, J. Gresham Machen, A Biographical Memoir (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdman's Publishing Co., 1955). Stonehouse studied under Machen at Princeton Seminary and was one of the original faculty members at Westminster. When Machen died, Stonehouse succeeded him as Professor of New Testament. Other helpful secondary sources are: Lefferts A. Loetscher, The Broadening Church: A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church Since 1869 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvanie Press, 1957); Lefferts A. Loetscher, "Machen, John Gresham," Dictionary of American Biography, XI, Supplement Two, R.L. Schuyler, ed., (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958) 411-412; and, Edwin H. Rian, The Presbyterian Conflict (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdman's Publishing Co., 1940). Two doctoral dissertations have centered on Machen's thought: Dallas Roark, "J. Gresham Machen and His Desire to Maintain a Doctrinally True Presbyterian Church," State University of Iowa, 1963: and, William D. Livingstone, "The Princeton Apologetic as Exemplified by the work of Benjamin B. Warfield and J. Gresham Machen: A study in American Theology, 1880-1930," Yale University, 1948. A portion of Roark's study was published as a two-part article in the Journal of Presbyterian History, June, September, 1965, 124-38, 174-81.

   Primary sources dealing with Machen's life are found in special abundance at Westminster Theological Seminary, Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania, where Machen's personal papers are kept. They include his books, articles, sermons, vast personal and business correspondence and five scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, the latter compiled assiduously by Machen's mother. Also among the finer primary sources is an article by Machen, "Christianity in Conflict," Contemporary American Theology: Theological Autobiographies, Virgilius Ferm, ed., (New York: Round Table Press, Inc., 1932) 245-72.

3. Charles Hodge (1797-1878) was the chief theologian of the Old School Presbyterian Church. He believed in a federal theology, the verbal inspiration of the Bible, the salvation of infants, and a covenant of grace which is universal but becomes efficacious only in the elect who are given by the Father to the Son. C.E. Olmstead, History of Religion in the United States (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice Hall, Inc., 1960), 314.

4. Machen was concerned that his name be pronounced correctly. It was "May-chen" with the accent on the first syllable, the "May" being pronounced like the fifth month of the year and the "ch" like the "ch" in "chin." The division of syllables in his Christian name came between the "s" and the "h", thereby being pronounced "Gres-ham," not "Gresh-am." Machen to Braman B. Adams, July 7, 1925, Machen Papers. At the time of his birth, Machen's mother was twenty-three years of age, his father, forty-five.

5. Machen, "Christianity in Conflict," 246.

6. Stonehouse, Memoir, 33.

7. Ibid., 29.

8. Ibid., 72.

9. Machen, "Christianity in Conflict," 249.

10. Machen to his mother, February 16, 1921, as quoted in Stonehouse, Memoir, 305. While Machen called Warfield the greatest man he ever knew, he reserved the title, "the best and wisest person," for his mother at the time of her death. The depth of the bond between Machen and his mother is reflected in the fact that she wrote him 1,000 letters over a period of thirty years. Ibid., 465.

11. Machen's doctoral degrees were honorary ones from Hampden-Sydney College in 1921 and Wheaton College in 1928.

12. Machen, "Christianity in Conflict," 256.

13. In his tome on the Virgin Birth, Machen argued that there was a firm and well-formulated belief in that birth which dated from the early years of the second century and that the denials of the Virgin Birth which appeared in the same century were probably based more upon philosophical or dogmatic presuppositions than upon genuine historical tradition. J. Gresham Machen, The Virgin Birth of Christ (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1930), 43.

14. The Presbyterian Guardian, November 14, 1936, 42.

15. Machen, Christianity and Liberalism, 48-9. In 1930, Machen declined an invitation to a meeting of the executive committee for the Philadelphia district of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association because the invitation was conditional upon the acceptance of their Confession of Faith which included a belief in the "personal, premillennial, and imminent return" of Jesus. Machen replied, in part: "... I do not think that the Scripture warrants us to be so precise in

our knowledge of the order of future events as implied in your Confession of Faith. The Scriptures, I think, in accordance with the purpose of God, keep certain details in that sphere hidden from us in His wise and mysterious counsels." Machen to Peter Stam, Jr., November 28, 1930, Machen Papers. Despite differing eschatalogical interpretations, Machen believed the premillennialists could be true Calvinists.

16. The Pauline reference is I Timothy 5:23. Machen's theological and ecclesiastical enemies used his stand on alcohol in an endeavor to discredit him during the later days of church conflict. Machen went to the extent of verifying that the Machen family had no stock holdings in the beverage companies.

17. Stonehouse, Memoir, 85.

18. Machen to F. E. Robinson, Esq., June 25, 1927, Machen Papers. Also found in The Presbyterian, July 7, 1927, 8.

19. Machen, Christianity and Liberalism, 6-7; J. Gresham Machen, "Is Christianity True?" The Bible Today, May, 1923, 197. Machen consistently referred to the liberals as "the alienists."

20. Machen, Christianity and Liberalism, 7.

21. Gresham Machen, "Does Christianity Obstruct Social Progress?" Survey Graphic, July, 1924, 425; Machen, Christianity and Liberalism, 11.

22. J. Gresham Machen, "The So-Called Child Labor Amendment," The Presbyterian, January 22, 1925, 6; Interview with Dr. Paul Woolley, May 26, 1972.

23. Machen, "Does Christianity Obstruct Social Progress?," 426.

24. Ibid,; J. Gresham Machen, "The Church in the War," The Presbyterian, May 29, 1919, 10.

25. Machen, who was a contemporary of Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918), for thirty-seven years, placed no hope whatsoever in the Golden Rule for the improvement of society because he believed that rule was not of universal application but addressed only to the disciples of Jesus. "Help a drunkard to get rid of his evil habit, and you will soon come to distrust the modern interpretation of the Golden Rule. The trouble is that the drunkard's companions apply the rule only too well; they do unto him exactly what they would have him do unto them - by buying him a drink. The Golden Rule becomes a powerful obstacle in the way of moral advance." Machen, Christianity and Liberalism, 37.

26. Furniss, Fundamentalist Controversy, 189; Loetscher, Broadening Church, 138; The Presbyterian, June 10, 1926.

27. Machen to Rev. Reid Dickson, March 10, 1925, Machen Papers.

28. Loetscher, Broadening Church, 142.

29. The faculty "minority" according to Lefferts A. Loetscher during the years of controversy consisted of Dr. J. Ross Stevenson, Charles R. Erdman, F. W. Loetscher, and J. Ritchie Smith, Loetscher, Broadening Church, 139. Machen wrote a friend that "the real anti-evangelical machine at the Seminary consists of Dr. Stevenson, Dr. Davis [John D. Davis, Professor of Hebrew], Mr. Martin, and Dr. Erdman." He indicated that Dr. Ritchie Smith and Dr. Loetscher voted the same way although adding "I do not quite put Dr. Loetscher in all respects in the same category." Machen to Rev. Reid Dickson, March 10, 1925, Machen Papers. The conflict between Machen and Erdman, Professor of Practical Theology, was a natural one since Machen looked disparagingly upon the "practical" studies as reflecting a "drab utilitarianism."

30. Ruth Rouse and Stephen C. Neill, A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948 (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), 445f.

31. The Presbyterian, June 10, 1920, 7f.; The Presbyterian, March 17, 1921, 26. Machen to Rev. Robert Atkinson, June 5, 1925, Machen Papers.

32. Stonehouse, Memoir, 313; Machen to Rev. Reid Dickson, March 30, 1925, Machen Papers.

33. The New York Herald, January 7, 1924.

34. The Packet, July 12, 1924.

35. Ibid. For correspondence on the Machen-Van Dyke fiasco, see The New York Times, January 5, 1924; The Newark Evening News, January 5, 1924; The Presbyterian, February 12, 1925.

36. Loetscher, Broadening Church, 140.

37. Machen to Rev. Reid S. Dickson, April 10, 1925, Machen Papers; The Presbyterian, April 23, 1925, 16; Pamphlet (undated) Joseph A. Schofield, Jr., "A Misapprehension Corrected," Machen Papers; The Presbyterian, October 20, 1927; Christian Work, May 16, 1925.

38. Loetscher, Broadening Church, 151.

39. The holding up of Machen's appointment was a most unusual step and indicated the depth of the division at Princeton. Stevenson declared that Machen was "not tempermentally fitted for the position." The Baltimore Sun, November 22, 1926; The Presbyterian, August 19, 1926.

40. The Presbyterian, June 10, 1926.

41. Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1927, Part I, 131-33.

42. The New York Sun, September 30, 1927.

43. Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1928, Part I, 246. By the new arrangement, the hiring, promotion, and dismissal of faculty members was left entirely to the judgment of the Board of Trustees. The approval of the General Assembly was no longer required.

44. Machen to Rev. Theron Lee, May 29, 1925, Machen Papers; Loetscher, Broadening Church, 119; Christian Work, May 16, 1925, 628.

45. The other faculty members who left Princeton for Westminster with Machen were Robert Dick Wilson, Oswald T. Allis, and Cornelius VanTil. Perhaps more significant than those who left Princeton for Westminster were those who did not. One of these, William Park Armstrong, Professor of New Testament, a staunch conservative, had been Machen's long-time personal friend.

46. Catalogue of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, 1929-1930, 10f.

47. The faculty was constituted as follows: Robert Dick Wilson, Professor of Semitic Philology and Old Testament Criticism; J. Gresham Machen, Professor of New Testament; Oswald T. Allis, Professor of Old Testament History and Exegesis; Cornelius VanTil, Professor of Apologetics; R.B. Kuiper, Professor of Systematic Theology; Ned B. Stonehouse, Instructor in Church History; and Allen B. MacRae, Instructor in Semitic Philology.

48. The New York Times, September 26, 1929.

49. Machen wrote to his fundamentalist colleague W.B. Riley in 1934 that "the primary evidence against the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. seems to me to lie not among the missionaries, but right here at home at 156 Fifth Avenue," Machen to W.B. Riley, December 17, 1934, Machen Papers. Ironically, the Independent Board which Machen had founded was taken over by Independents rather than Presbyterians. Machen was ousted as moderator. This

was a hard blow to Machen, the shock of which may have lessened his will to live. Roark, "J. Gresham Machen," Presbyterian History, June, 1965, 137f.

50. Clarence E. Macartney, Making of a Minister (New York: Channel Press, Inc., 1961), 188. Rian, Presbyterian Conflict, chs. VI-VIII.

51. Rian, Presbyterian Conflict, 234.

52. Macartney, Making of a Minister, 188.

53. Interview with Dr. Paul Woolley, May 26, 1972; Rian, Presbyterian Conflict, 235-43. Machen's devotion to Presbyterianism cannot be over-stressed. In 1927 he declined to accept the presidency of Bryan Memorial University because, in part, he was loath to relinquish distinctively Presbyterian work. Machen to F.E. Robinson, Esq., The Presbyterian, July 7, 1927.

54. Rian, Presbyterian Conflict, 243.

55. The Presbyterian Guardian, June 26, 1937, as quoted in Rian, Presbyterian Conflict, 243.

56. Jorstad, Politics of Doomsday, 33.

57. Clarence E. Macartney believed that Machen's death was not as untimely as it may have appeared. "Had he lived, he would have seen the seminary which he founded split with faction, and the Board of Missions and the Orthodox Church... falling far short of what he had planned and expected. His true monument is not in these institutions or societies, but in the inspiration he left behind him of his courageous, devout, and highly intellectual witness to the 'grand particularities' of the Christian faith," Macartney, Making of a Minister, 189.

58. Loetscher, Broadening Church, 117.

59. An example of Machen's extremism as well as an illustration of his false caricature of liberalism is found in a letter to a friend: "...every sermon of his [Harry Emerson Fosdick] and every book is passionately opposed to the Christian religion root and branch, I do not think that any one...would be deceived by the Christian terminology which Dr. Fosdick uses...Dr. Fosdick is passionately opposed to the whole notion of the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man, the authority of the Bible, the deity of our Lord, and the redeeming significance of the Cross," Machen to Dr. Joseph H. Barton, January 1, 1925. Even so, Furniss believed that Machen's invectives were not as "savage" as those of other fundamentalists, Furniss, Fundamentalist Controversy, 128.

60. Illustrative of such varying interpreters are Caspar Wistar Hodge, Machen's colleague at Princeton; Stewart G. Cole, early historian of fundamentalism; and Dallas. M. Roark, Professor of Religion at Wayland Baptist College, Plainview, Texas. Hodge referred to Machen as "the greatest theologian in the English speaking world." Cole viewed Machen as "a demagogue of temperamental idiosyncrasies." Roark concludes that "Machen's doctrine of the church went beyond the [Calvinistic] norms that he accepted and treasured." Stonehouse, Memoir, preface; Cole, History of Fundamentalism, 126; Roark, "J. Gresham Machen," Presbyterian History, September 1965, 181.

61. Sandeen, Roots of Fundamentalism, 257.

62. Ibid.

63. Stonehouse, Memoir, 498f.

64. Ibid., Stonehouse, obviously partial to Machen, declared that he was a man of profound humility and of rare sympathy and fair-mindedness. His statement that "Machen received on the whole an astonishingly poor press" seems naive and simplistic, Stonehouse, Memoir, preface.

65. Loetscher, Broadening Church, 139.

66. About 160 students attend Westminster Seminary today, a majority of whom come from Presbyterian, Reform, and Baptist backgrounds. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is comprised of 116 churches with a total membership of 14,300 including 190 ordained clergymen. Yearbook of American Churches, 1972, Constant H. Jacquet, Jr., editor (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972), 75.

Puritanism in Canadian Literature: The Artist as Immoral Moralist

by

Patricia Morley

The first part of my title may be more self-evident than the second. As for puritanism in Canadian literature, there is a great deal of it: so much so, according to critics such as E.K. Brown, that it has retarded the development of our literature. In 1943, Brown described the grave effects of puritanism upon the arts, not merely because of its demand for a strict morality but, worse, because of its disbelief in the importance of art:

> It allows to the artist no function except watering down moral ideas of an orthodox kind into a solution attractive to minds not keen enough to study the ideas in more abstract presentations. At its most liberal Puritanism will tolerate, a little uneasily, the provision through the arts of an innocent passing amusement which is expected to leave no deep trace on character. To popularize orthodox morality and to provide light, clean fun--that is the very limit of what the arts can be allowed to do without alarming the Puritan mind. For the Puritan a life devoted to one of the arts is a life misused: the aesthetic life is not a form of the good life.[1]

It is true that a puritan morality has affected the themes and the language of our writers. But not always, I would argue, to the detriment of their work. Puritanism has fostered a <u>different</u> rather than an inferior type of literature. I suspect, for example, that it has contributed to a distinctive type of ironic humour. And to a type of religious mysticism, evidenced in nineteenth-century poets such as Roberts and Lampman and Scott, which sees the divine as immanent within the natural world around them. Furthermore, puritanism has been the matrix for many

Canadian writers who have been formed both by it and in reaction against it. Without the values and attitudes represented by this religious tradition, writers such as Hugh MacLennan, Sinclair Ross, and Margaret Laurence simply would not have written as they have.

In the last twenty-five or thirty years, the cultural attitudes of the permissive society in which we now live have naturally affected the attitudes reflected by our artists. Brown spoke of the imagination boggling at the thought of a Canadian Whitman or Dos Passos. But in comparison with a book like Leonard Cohen's Beautiful Losers (1966), the work of Whitman or Dos Passos begins to look like something you could lend your elderly maiden aunt with impunity. And in Return of the Sphinx (1967), the latest novel by Hugh MacLennan, characters meet with the author's condemnation not for having extra-marital sex but for shunning it. Marielle, a wise and loving woman who has seen death and destruction in North Africa, tells the young Quebec separatist Daniel Ainslie that he is "afraid of loving a woman, and if a man fears that, then it is very natural for him to talk and dream about bombs and war." Puritan? How we've changed!

In my comparative study of the fiction of Hugh MacLennan and Leonard Cohen, two things interested me in particular. One was the relation between the artist and his society, and the way in which a change in cultural attitudes affected what could be conceived, written, and published. The other was the paradox

expressed in my title, The Immoral Moralists. The immorality is the surface phenomenon, lodged largely in the eye of the beholder. For the latter, read 'conventional social attitudes.' The morality belongs to the essential artistic vision and its spiritual affinity with the ideals of love for the self, the neighbour, and the divine. Traditionally, artists have been immoral moralists. A writer such as D.H. Lawrence, whose fiction caused such a furor when it was first published, is seen to be deeply moral when the dust is allowed to settle. Socrates likened himself to a gadfly. Similarly, artists sting their readers into an uncomfortable self-knowledge, revealing the distance between the generally accepted moral ideals and the actual behaviour of those who are paying lip service to these ideals. Religion and art are closely allied, and may be seen as "different ways of taking a man out of himself, bringing him to the emotional pitch that we call ecstasy or rapture. They're both a rejection of the material, common-sense world for one that's illusory, yet somehow important."[2]

The words are Philip Bentley's. Bentley is the fictional protagonist of Sinclair Ross's magnificent short novel, As For Me and My House (1941). Bentley is a Protestant minister and a frustrated artist. The novel is set in a Canadian prairie town in the thirties. Ross's Horizon is all the little towns of a frontier puritan community. Its inhabitants call themselves Christians and believe themselves so to be. Ross reveals their hardness, their terrible lack of compassion and understanding

and humour; their total insensitivity to beauty; their hypocrisy. The story comes to us as the journal of the minister's wife. The little false-fronted towns have taught her and her husband to erect their own false fronts. The parsonage is set so close to the street that the passerby can hear what is going on inside: privacy is a luxury denied to the minister and his wife. The parsonage has been painted gray, although white would have been just as cheap. It smells of repression and decay. Philip has a short-lived affair with a lonely girl, and his wife draws strength from the friendship of a schoolteacher whose attraction to her she refuses to acknowledge, even to herself. Ross's handling of the emotional pattern between husband and wife is very fine. Philip's jealousy (he, remember, is the unfaithful one) is part projected guilt, part genuine perception of a situation to which his wife is blind. The emotional repression which prevails in Horizon is not necessarily inherent in the Puritan value system but is part of the prevailing interpretation of it which artists like Ross and Laurence and MacLennan have attacked. Ross's hero Philip attempts to escape through a sexual affair, and through his drawings of the little town. His wife finds relief in playing the piano, and in saving money towards their anticipated escape from Horizon into a new beginning in a larger town. At the end of this novel there are hints of beginning, of rebirth. But in many of Ross's short stories, such as "The Painted Door," the sense of entrapment is almost claustrophopic.

The only options for his characters appear to be a state of repression amounting to a living death, a crippling burden of guilt, or physical death.

This brings me to Hugh MacLennan's definition of puritanism as a negative and pernicious and materialistic set of attitudes. In MacLennan's fiction, the puritan is a person ridden with feelings of guilt, driven to work compulsively, and severed from the enjoyment of beauty and pleasure. Pleasure, of course, includes sexual pleasure, the foremost puritan taboo in the popular understanding of the term. It also includes art, the point raised by E.K. Brown. MacLennan, as you may know, is a Cape Breton Scot, born into a Presbyterian family in 1907. It is interesting that the rapid cultural changes of the last quarter-century centre in attitudes towards work, sexual relationships, and the pursuit of pleasure, the very areas involved in MacLennan's definition of puritanism. Obviously, he is defining a degraded form, almost a caricature, of the original Puritan ideals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But it is the degraded and pejorative connotations which are generally intended when the word comes into contemporary usage.

A further emphasis, in MacLennan's definition, is that puritanism has no necessary connection with Protestantism, or even with Christianity. Some of the ideas generated by the Protestant Reformation were embodied in Roman Catholicism through the Counter-Reformation. In his novel Two Solitudes, MacLennan depicts the Roman Catholic priest as puritan. In the essay "Cross Country," he emphasizes that puritans need not belong

to any Christian denomination or indeed any religious tradition: "Whether midwesterners go to church on Sundays or stay at home to read the comics in steam-heated apartments makes no difference for puritanism is a state of mind no more fundamental to religion than a coat of barnacles is fundamental to the keel of a ship." Historically, the narrow puritanism of MacLennan's definition had its origin partly in Calvinism and partly in Catholic Jansenism. The followers of Cornelius Jansen preached a Caivinistic doctrine based on predestination, a doctrine bitterly opposed by the Jesuits who were pre-eminent in the province of Quebec. In The Oxford Companion to Canadian History and Literature, Norah Story writes that Jansenism "introduced a strong puritan note that influenced clergy who remained untouched by Jansenist doctrines. This type of puritanism became a characteristic of French-Canadian Catholicism." Monasticism, clerical celibacy, and various forms of the Manichean heresy have also played a part in Christianity's ascetic tradition. What MacLennan calls puritanism is not synonymous with the historic phenomenon of Puritanism nor with the Canadian heritage, but many Canadians, whether their origins be Scottish, United Empire Loyalist, or French Catholic, have emerged from this Puritan tradition, in either its strict or more liberal versions; and all have felt its influence in a host of ways ranging from laws governing the observance of Sunday, or standards of dress and decorum, to the high priorities our nation sets upon education. It could hardly fail to have affected our literature.

When I speak of 'puritanism' in literature I am, like

MacLennan, using the word in a broad sense as a set of attitudes and values, a cultural phenomenon. But unlike MacLennan, I am unwilling to define it simply as "an ancient curse" (as he does in the Preface to Each Man's Son), unwilling to allow it a purely negative value. Its original strengths, its positive religious values, are not as easily separated from the resulting prohibitions as MacLennan would have us believe. Curiously, one finds the values of the original historic Puritans affirmed in MacLennan's writing. His set of values, his deeply moral vision, is Puritan in its religious idealism, its moral earnestness, its rationality. But MacLennan has never allowed the word to carry this positive meaning.

The central significance in the term as MacLennan uses it in his first four novels and in his essays is the sense of sin and accompanying guilt feeling, which result in a basic inability to enjoy life. MacLennan thus equates puritanism with a death-wish, and one of the structural principles in his fiction is the confrontation between these death-seeking attitudes labelled 'puritan' and the belief that life is something vital and joyous to be accepted with gratitude and enjoyed to the full. The latter is represented most clearly by his heroines Catherine, in The Watch That Ends the Night, and by Constance, in Return of the Sphinx.

MacLennan sees guilt as the legacy of puritanism. It operates to inhibit enjoyment and to deny individual self-fulfillment. The puritanism he attacks has lost its understanding

of the religious reasons for its commands and prohibitions, leaving only a diffused suspicion or outright rejection of beauty and pleasure and joy. The puritan tends to be afraid of his own emotions, as Bruce and Lucy find in The Precipice: "Generations of Calvinism had made them all afraid of themselves. The great emotions, love and fear and hate and desire, could break like thunderclaps in his mind as in hers, and because of their training they would both try to conceal them with matter-of-fact words or a quick change of subject."[3] The guilt which puritanism has come to associate with beauty, emotion and joy has been extended, MacLennan argues, to man's sexual nature. This puritan attitude is personified by MacLennan's Jane Cameron. Jane, as Grenville's collective conscience, believes that sex is "the dirtiest thing in the world, and near to the root of all evil."

The other puritan characteristic which is featured and condemned in MacLennan's fiction is an obsessive compulsion to work. In Each Man's Son, the Scots-Canadian doctor turns to his self-imposed study of Greek after he has exhausted himself at the hospital. He refuses to rest, or enjoy life, and his wife suspects that her husband fears rest and enjoyment because of his feelings of guilt. Yet MacLennan's fictional heroes tend to be active people in service professions: doctors, engineers, architects. This is part of the ambivalence one feels throughout MacLennan's work. His condemnation of action as negative and repressive is contradicted by the main characters in all his novels. It would seem that work undertaken in a spirit of joy and self-fulfillment, and constructive work which benefits society, is seen by MacLennan as positive and good; and work undertaken

in a martyr spirit, or in an attempt to earn forgiveness, is seen as futile.

MacLennan's attitude towards work compares interestingly with the treatment of work in the writings of Norman O. Brown and Herbert Marcuse. Karl Marx, in his early works, has a conception of the radical viciousness of the civilized mind, which he terms "the alienated consciousness." Marx correlates this with a money economy, and locates its root in soul-destroying work, unpleasant work down solely for money, a compulsion which subordinates man to things and reduces the drive of the human being to greed and competition. Brown, agreeing with the Marxian condemnation of alienated or unsatisfying work, writes: "Thus the apparent accumulation of wealth is really the impoverishment of human nature, and its appropriate morality is the renunciation of human nature and desires--asceticism."[4] Marcuse, like Brown, believes in the erotization of the entire personality, and views work as a sublimated form of Eros. What Freud calls repression and Marx calls alienated or compulsive work, MacLennan depicts as non-enjoyment, and aligns, in his fiction, with patterns of action and images which negate life. MacLennan's celebration of work, when it is done for the benefit of society and as a necessary fulfillment of the individual's own character, provides a link between the moralism of historical Puritanism and contemporary post-Freudian, post-Marxian thought.

MacLennan's characters frequently judge and condemn themselves, and seem unable to accept their own weakness or sin.

Here one senses a strange deficiency in MacLennan's understanding of Christianity: an inability to recognize that its concern with guilt is paralleled and balanced by its belief in the opportunity for forgiveness and the certainty of God's mercy. A very strict Calvinistic interpretation of predestination is apparently the reason for MacLennan's treatment of guilt. In his determination to free the individual from its paralyzing effects, he seems to suggest an outright denial of the existence of moral guilt as the only solution, whereas the traditional Christian solution has emphasized the remission, not the denial, of sin. In his essays, MacLennan has said that contemporary puritanism has no connection with religion at all, and under his own definition, this is valid. But in his novels, at least when dealing with characters who are Protestant Christians, MacLennan still treats the problem of guilt as one with no apparent religious solution. In Each Man's Son, Ainslie's experience of release from guilt has no relation to his Presbyterian religion; and in The Precipice, Marcia has to become a Roman Catholic before MacLennan can allow her to feel forgiven. This strange inability of his characters to experience forgiveness seems basic to MacLennan's idea of puritanism and helps to explain his antagonism towards it.

Two novels of Leonard Cohen's, published in the sixties, reflect not only the radical change in Canadian cultural attitudes in the last quarter-century but also a moral earnestness similar to that of the historic Puritans. The hero of Cohen's first novel, The Favorite Game, is an artist called Breavman. Breavman is

fairly adept at hopping in and out of beds, and the dust jacket suggests that sex is the hero's favorite game. But then you can't always trust dust jackets, nor publishers who want to hustle their product. Breavman is an artist and, as such, caught in a paradoxical situation involving himself as both a vulnerable human being and an invulnerable artist. His love affair with a girl named Shell occupies the third book of the novel, and Breavman succeeds in helping Shell to find a wholeness which continues to evade his own experience as artist-cum-man. The mood is simultaneously ironic, romantic, tragic, and comic. Breavman's love for Shell becomes a strong temptation to "join the world" and "be a citizen with a woman and a job." His struggle with this temptation is depicted as a struggle between himself as Artist and his deputy or double, the lover of Shell. The double is "a skilful product, riveted with care, whom Breavman wouldn't have minded being himself....The lover, being planned so well, had a life of his own and often left Breavman behind." In this comic inversion, Breavman thinks of his real self as the artist, and the ordinary man, Shell's lover, as his artistic creation, a robot lover. Breavman is fully aware of the irony involved in his rejection of Shell. He sees his artist self as the lover or celebrant of all living things and of life itself. He believes he can create only in lonely freedom, and that he must shun the comfort of married love lest it put the 'Breavman eye' to sleep. The artist's eye is something which could apply

Shell's beauty "to streets, traffic, mountains, ignite the landscape." Love, separation, and a mysterious failure of commitment (Breavman subsequently leaves Shell) are also frequent themes in Cohen's songs.

Sex provides a focus for the artist's iconoclastic tendencies and for his conflict with a narrowly-interpreted puritan tradition in Canada. Cohen's sexual ethic is not simply license, as will be seen if one looks beyond the sexual shock tactics of Cohen's second novel, Beautiful Losers. A belief in the unity of the human body and spirit underlies both novels. Shell's husband Gordon is a homosexual, and Shell, before her affair with Breavman, is all of D.H. Lawrence's frustrated virgins rolled into one. Cohen depicts the result of her frustration as an unnatural separation of body and spirit, with loving sexual relations as the key to integration and peace. There is a remarkable poignacy and fragility in many of the Shell episodes. Breavman initially sees her as a twentieth-century surrealist version of Botticelli's archetypal beauty rising from the waves.

The Favorite Game is concerned with love and loss, and Cohen centres both these experiences in the unity of the body and spirit. Through loving Shell, Breavman discovers that the beauty of the flesh is "just the soul's everyday clothes." But life in the flesh involves dying, and the child Breavman understands that he is part of a mysterious passage of time and pattern of

growth which is leading not only to maturity but to death and decay: "A scar is what happens when the word is made flesh." His mother mourns the loss of the 'real face' of her youth; the body of his dead rat fertilizes the pansies; and the aged father's swollen body has somehow replaced the strong firm body that once waded up rivers in rubber boots. Hence the child who is to become an artist tears at the scientific books recommended by his dying father, sensing that science is as helpless as he is, ultimately, to prevent aging and death. As an adult, Breavman knows that it is not simply that things decay. The things themselves are decay, "the monuments were made of worms." He wonders if Shell shares his vision, the knowledge of strangerhood. Death is the body's final scar. The last book celebrates the bodies Breavman lost, bodies he has loved, killed, hurt, deserted, bodies he has preserved whole and perfect in art--cold comfort to the deprived human beings, he admits.

As MacLennan and Ross remind us, the Canadian tradition of Puritanism emphasizes the necessity of work, work being seen as a basic moral duty. Breavman has his own version of work, namely, artistic creation. He roams the park at night, seeing, touching, smelling, in preparation for this vocation as poet. The apprentice artist is acquiring the knowledge of strangerhood, of the gulf which separates his life from the orderly lives of men who live in tidy rooms and go to work every morning.

Breavman enjoys playing the role of artist-about-town.

Cohen makes excellent comedy out of his hero's self-consciousness, his simultaneous indulgence and demolition of the romantic role. Breavman admits that his melancholy is a hoax, and blames the philistine nature of the culture for forcing him into unnatural poses. In general, the artist as outsider stands in judgment over the Insiders, the conventional ones, the social conformists. It is essentially a moral stance, that of the immoral moralist. Breavman is frequently depicted as being more moral than are the adults who would condemn him. A child's funeral is the occasion for a bitter attack on religious hypocrisy and materialism: "A religious stink hovers above this city and we all breathe it....A religious stink composed of musty shrine and tabernacle smells, decayed wreathes and rotting bar-mitzvah tables. Boredom, money, vanity, guilt packs the pews. The candles, memorials, eternal lights shine unconvincingly, like neon signs, sincere as advertising....Good lovers turn away."

One of the funniest pieces of social criticism is in connection with a dance in Breavman's early adolescence. Ashamed of his smallness, he thinks of himself as The Cunning Dwarf, and adds height by packing kleenex into the soles of his shoes. Apparent success ("Science triumphs again") gives way, as the evening wears on, to physical agony. Hell is envisaged as an eternal Bunny Hop with sore feet. Since it is rumoured that one of the girls stuffs her bra with paper tissues, kleenex becomes the metaphor for the hypocrisy and imitations of our culture. Breavman thinks that perhaps everyone there is wearing a kleenex prop: "Maybe some had kleenex noses and kleenex

ears and kleenex hands. Depression seized him." The ideal girls sought by Breavman and his friend are "not kleenex girls." The reductio ad absurdem, in a hypothetical chain of murders by drowning, is a moist kleenex. Breavman's growth towards maturity represents a growth in compassion and human understanding. It is an odyssey where sex is depicted as the basis for the embryonic artist's acquisition of knowledge and interpretation of experience.

Margaret Laurence has not railed against puritanism as didactically or self-consciously as Hugh MacLennan has. However her Canadian-based novels (The Stone Angel, A Jest of God, The Fire-Dwellers, The Diviners and her short fiction (A Bird in the House) deal largely with Scots-Canadian who are products of a Puritan culture. Much of the harshness of that culture is embodied in a character like Grandfather Conner, whom Vanessa (an obviously autobiographical character) fears and rages against. But when the grandfather is dead and the child has become an adult, Vanessa can admit to herself that although she has feared and fought the old man, he proclaims himself in her veins.[5] His reactions, his attitudes, are frequently hers. Similarly, in articles and interviews, Laurence has acknowledge that she eventually came to understand her puritan heritage as a mixed blessing, and she is thankful for the strength it has given her. Her novels, like those of Ross and MacLennan, depict the emotional repressions of a puritan culture. But they also

reflect some of its religious joy.

C.S. Lewis represents the devil as rejoicing in the current low repute of the word puritanism. Screwtape and his fellow devils claim to have rescued thousands of humans from temperance, chastity, and sobriety, by means of debasing this word. Lewis is suggesting, whimsically but with considerable truth, that it is the devil's work to allow the connotations of the word puritan to be entirely negative and undesirable. I agree. Canadian literature illustrates the religious basis of Canadian culture. The moral preoccupations of writers as different as MacLennan and Cohen help to establish this point. The list of names of Canadian writers who have been affected by puritanism would be almost synonymous with a list of Canadian writers. Even a Rabelaisian poet such as Irving Layton is marked by his reaction against the phenomenon known as puritanism. And Layton, for that matter, is another immoral moralist. Rather than reduce the topic to generalizations about the work of a great many writers, I have offered you a look at a few novelists whose work suggests that the influence of puritanism has not been primarily negative, as E.K. Brown would have it. We have, in this country, a literature of affirmation and strength. And our multiple religious heritage has contributed in no small measure to that literature.

NOTES

1. E.K. Brown, On Canadian Poetry (Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1973) p. 23.

2. Sinclair Ross, As For Me and My House, NCL Series (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1957), p. 112.

3. Similarly, in Robertson Davies' short play "Overlaid," a character refers to emotion as a dirty word not to be mentioned in front of her teen-aged son.

4. Norman O. Brown, Life Against Death (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1970), p. 238.

5. Margaret Laurence, A Bird in the House (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1970), p. 207.

Note: A few paragraphs in the latter part of this paper have been taken from my article "The knowledge of strangerhood': 'The Monuments were made of worms,'" JCF, I, 3 (Summer, 1972), 56-60; and from my book, The Immoral Moralists: Hugh MacLennan and Leonard Cohen (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1972).

"NO SLIPPERY UNDERTAKING" - THE PRESBYTERIAN UNION OF 1875

by

John A. Johnston

I

One of the notable facets of the year of grace, 1975, in which The United Church of Canada commemorates her fiftieth jubilee and The Presbyterian Church in Canada celebrates her centennial, is the increased interest in things historical and especially a concern for understanding the "rock from which we were hewn". One of the boulders of this foundation was the Union of 1875, inaugurating the largest single Protestant denomination in the Dominion of Canada.

Six hundred thousand Presbyterians, six hundred ministers, more than a thousand congregations from the Atlantic to the Pacific, composed the new denomination. Its assets were impressive -- Scottish canniness, a confidence in the presence of the Holy Spirit leading to this act of union, a missionary zeal, comparative easy position, involved laity, and future expectations. At least six British North America Presbyterian amalgamations had preceded the 1875 union. The union of 1817 between the (Burgher) Presbytery of Truro, the (Anti-Burgher) Presbytery of Pictou and some Church of Scotland (Kirk) ministers, established the Synod of Nova Scotia. In 1840, the United Synod of Upper Canada joined the corresponding Church of Scotland (Kirk) body with congregations in what is now Ontario and Quebec. The Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia adhering to the Westminster Standards (Free) and the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia (largely Secession) united as the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces in 1860. A year later, to the west, The Canada Presbyterian Synod was formed, composing the former United Presbyterian Synod (Secession) and the Presbyterian Church of Canada (Free). In New Brunswick in 1866 the (Free) Presbyterian Church of that colony joined the Synod of the Lower Provinces under the latter name, while in 1868 the Atlantic synods related to the Church of Scotland formed the Synod of the Maritime Provinces in connection with the Church of Scotland (Kirk). In each of these unions, only denominations loyal to reformed

theology and Presbyterian church government were involved. All had similar Scottish and Scotch Irish backgrounds. Together they faced the common challenge of a developing nation, ecumenical and political pressures, and latterly a western perspective and a shrinking world.

The latter half of the nineteenth century has been characterized as the age of unions. Industry trembled under the tendency to takeover, commerce commended amalgamation. Politics argued for federation and union, whether given a trans-Atlantic point of view in the Italian or German states, or self-examination in North America. This trend was reflected among the churches of Christendom, and especially of Canada. The Canada Education and Home Missionary Society, established in 1827, sought to provide Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist ministers for areas of British North America devoid of religious ordinances.[1] The French-Canadian Missionary Society was also emblematic of co-operative evangelical effort. Formed in 1839, this undenominational society sought the evangelization of French-speaking people in Canada.[2]

The advent of international Christian societies was also a mark of ecumenici in this period. Typical would be the Evangelical Alliance, founded in London, England in 1846 -- its motto, "In things necessary, unity; in things indifferent, liberty; in all, charity." Presbyterianism largely approved of the strong missionary emphasis and the membership tests based on the acceptance of the Bible's full authority, the Incarnation, Atonement, Salvation by Faith, and the Power of the Holy Spirit.[3] In the Maritimes the Alliance gradually replaced local "Evangelical Associations" which had earlier been organized to oppose grants from the public treasury for denominational use, with particular reference to separate schools.[4] The Young Men's Christian Association in North America was formed in Montreal in 1851, seven years after its beginning in England. By 1853, twenty-seven associations had been formed in Canada and the United States through which Christians sought "the salvation of young men through faith in Christ".

The Sunday School movement effectively drew together various segments of evangelical Christianity. In North America Sunday Schools were characterized by three things: (a) almost entirely a laymen's movement; (b) limited

to Sunday enterprise; (c) a movement in which laymen of various evangelical communions gathered for study, inspiration and policy-making, and then returned to the local Sunday School for practical application. Members of all the Presbyterian denominations supported the Canada Sunday School Convention or Union. By 1853 its agents travelled to all parts of British North America organizing and encouraging Sabbath Schools. During the 1860's Presbyterian congregations supported the Montreal Sabbath School Association.[5] Quarterly meetings were lay-directed, with a strong executive which organized massed rallies, appointed representatives to various national and international conventions and prepared hymn books for use in the Sunday Schools. The Association appointed teachers and superintendents and opened new Sunday Schools in rented houses and other buildings, with grants received from individuals and congregations.[6] Sunday Schools of both the Kirk and the Canada Presbyterian Church used identical Sunday School materials, published in Edinburgh.

References to Presbyterian unions in the Australian colonies were frequently used by the supporters of Union, showing how Kirk, Free and Secession bodies could consummate union with beneficial results. The terms of union in Victoria, for instance, were employed in Canadian discussions which resulted in the formation of the Canada Presbyterian Church in 1861.[7] Presbyterian union movements in Great Britain were also closely studied, and every Scottish decision was carefully chronicled in the Canadian Presbyterian periodicals. Similarly, in the United States of America was the union of 1858 between Associate and Reformed Presbyterians and the 1869 union between Old and New School Presbyterians widely acclaimed throughout British North America. When the Reformed Church joined the Free Church of Scotland in 1875, it assisted Canadian congregations in union planning. Finally, the widespread support for the British and Foreign Bible Society in Canada emphasized an ecumenical approach to Christian witness. Although the B.& F.B.S. faced opposition from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Presbyterianism in its various branches provided wholehearted support, beginning with the appointment of the Rev. William Smart of Brockville as its first organizing agent for Upper Canada.[8] By 1869, the Upper Canada Society alone reported 253 branches, travelling agents and

colporteurs. Laymen were not averse to speaking out in support of union and numerous meetings were held between laymen of the Montreal Presbyterian community. After 1864 these were often held in the home of J.C. Beckett. Men like John Redpath of sugar refinery and construction fame guided the discussion which resulted in "full and free interchange of sentiments".[9] On March 14, 1866, elders from St. Andrew's Kirk, St. Paul's Kirk, Knox's, Cote St. and Cote des Neiges and Erskine were present. John Redpath occupied the chair and Mr. Beckett was appointed secretary. Resolutions concerning the advisability of union were unanimously adopted. They promised to bring the union question before their sessions and pledged their support to the cause, and results were to be forwarded to Mr. Beckett. Surprisingly, two-thirds of the congregations involved sent in returns. Nearly all commented on the unanimous desire for union within the congregations. The Montreal elders were jubilant. They then decided at their May meeting that each representative elder to the Synod meetings whould be prepared to support union.

This lay direction was thwarted by the Fenian Raid. The Fenians, threatening the religious, political and social status quo, were immediately opposed and leading laymen rushed to arms. So much did the raids disturb the church that the Synods were almost devoid of representation by the Ruling Eldership. A motion in the Kirk Synod to commence union negotiations was quickly disposed of by unsympathetic ministers.[10] Not a single layman from the eastern area was present in Synod to support the motion, although the Synod by statute is to be composed of fifty per cent non-ministerial membership. But the matter was not allowed to die. The Kirk Presbytery of Montreal re-affirmed the sympathy of the leaders of Montreal for the union movement. At the Kirk Synods of 1867, 1868 and 1869, the question of union was discussed, and The Presbyterian, operated by Kirk laymen in Montreal, did not hesitate to speak out on behalf of union. The secular press came out strongly and virtually unanimously in support of union. George Brown of the Globe ardently espoused the cause, greatly influencing many a Presbyterian household. "Whatever be the case with the clergy", he stated, "the Presbyterian people of Canada are anxious for such a union."[11] John Dougall of the Montreal Witness felt that Presbyterian churches with their identical Standards and Church Government were ripe for a beneficial union.

A most unique and influential effort by Montreal laymen to publicize union was done through the offering of a two hundred dollar prize to the individual presenting the most acceptable essay on church union. The winning paper was by the Rev. Robert Campbell, minister of St. Gabriel Street Kirk, Montreal. Reprints and digests of the paper were widely distributed. Advantages of church union were listed, two of which were unique to this particular paper. Mr. Campbell suggested that in union a greater independence of ministers and sessions would be forthcoming, in that a session kwould not be afraid to chastise an erring member, knowing that the person could not join another Presbyterian body to escape punishment. Also the author stated that union would attract better men into the ministry of the Church, for in a bigger organization are greater opportunities, and size appeals to the greatness in men. A Basis of Union was outlined by Mr. Campbell and, with rare vision, he suggested: the denomination by known as "The Presbyterian Church in Canada".

Ruling Eldership was less significant in the Kirk than in the Canada Presbyterian Church. In the Maritime churches, the lay element was all-important, in both Kirk and the Synod of the Lower Provinces. In the former body, not more than four ministers were listed by James Croil as actively involved in the union negotiations, and it was left to elders to bring the church into union.[12] In the same vein, many Pictou folk found union with political opponents unbearable. When congregations of the Pictou area voted against union, ministers, though often anxious to enter union, withdrew in order to minister to their flock as heretofore. In Manitoba, laymen joined wholeheartedly with ministers in supporting union. In British Columbia a different situation emerged. Scottish Kirk ministers, with stipends paid from the Church of Scotland, ministered to Scottish immigrants in several urban areas of the province and took little interest in Presbyterian union in Canada. Congregations were loosely organized and Canada Presbyterian ministers were few in number.[13] The result was that the Kirk ministers did not choose to enter union, but all congregations as soon as possible affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in Canada after 1875.

II

In this age of unions, political confederation in Canada in 1867 demanded appropriate ecclesiastical response from the four Presbyterian denominations in the Dominion. The political union of 1867 was cited as a model for ecclesiastical union. Yet just as party rivalries before and after confederation threatened the unity of the new nation, so political considerations affected the Presbyterian union of 1875. Generally speaking, the adherents of the Canada Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces were more politically "Liberal" than the "Conservative" Kirk. In the 1861 union between Free and Secession bodies in the Canadas, political differences did not raise obstacles. Both tended toward reform sympathies and in questions such as Christ's Headship over the Nations, virtual forbearance was allowed.[14] Letters and articles in the Free Church of Scotland's Record published in Edinburgh and in The Presbyterian recorded that politics prevented the Kirk from entering negotiations leading to this union. The latter periodical in 1862 recorded that, "The Church of Scotland, as a whole, is strongly Conservative, while the other Presbyterian bodies are, as a whole, strongly Liberal."[15]

Kirk ministers such as D.M. Gordon of Ottawa and Gavin Lang of Montreal were very active in Conservative circles. Douglas Brymner, later the Dominion's first archivist, used his pen in support of both Kirk and the Conservative Party against Liberal and Free Church policies. Hugh Allan of Montreal, active in the affairs of St. Andrew's Kirk, Montreal, and founder of the Allan Steamship Lines, was accused of collaboration with American interests in contributing large sums to the Conservative Party. An attack on Sir Hugh was an attack on Gavin Lang, his minister. With the 1873 "Pacific Scandal" and the 1874 election when John A. Macdonald was swept from office, in part through the opposition of Free and Secession voters and newspapers like the Toronto Globe, Montreal Witness, and Halifax Witness, all heartily supporting Church Union and the Free Church cause, battle lines were clearly drawn.

Many in the Kirk felt union with the Liberal-minded Canada Presbyterian Church would be intolerable. Gavin Lang told his Synod in 1874 that "there was not much political sympathy between them and the Church with which they proposed to unite".[16] He felt that union could hold no political advantages for the Conservative party, and roused the ire of Liberal organs when he stated that democracy had no place in the church, and the Basis of Union should not be placed before the people themselves for their decision. Macdonnell of St. Andrew's Kirk, Toronto, demanded that politics should be kept out of the union negotiations, and felt his own congregation was evenly divided politically and hoped that the new denomination would never become an agent of any political party. Yet when a deputation from the Scottish Kirk had visited Canada, the statement of one of the deputies, Principal Tulloch, "Schemes of Union laid in political design, or secretly striving after party triumphs, can only come to grief, even should they temporarily succeed", was widely distributed by Conservative members of the Kirk.[17]

Canada's second Prime Minister was Alexander Mackenzie, born of Highland Presbyterian parents in Perthshire, Scotland. Although accepting the Baptist view of baptism as a young man, he continued more or less to support the Presbyterian doctrinal and organizational position. His biographer wrote that "his old associations and most of his personal friends being in the Presbyterian Church", and with his only child being married to a Presbyterian minister in Sarnia, he generally attended at least one service each Lord's Day in a Presbyterian church.[18] By his background, as well as by predilection, he associated himself with the moral and social programme supported by the Canada Presbyterian Church. Swept out of office with John A. Macdonald were many influential Kirk supporters.

In the Maritimes, politics seriously affected union. The Kirk in Nova Scotia was often accused of being the tool of the Halifax oligarchy and allying itself with Anglican and Roman Catholic platforms. Almost without exception, members of the Secession supported liberal or reform

political parties in Nova Scotia.[19] In the 1860 Union, politics proved one of the reasons excluding the Kirk from the negotiations. The fact that the politically Liberal-minded Presbyterian Witness, supported by Free and Secession groups, had assisted in bringing the Liberal government into power just a few months prior to union, did not help matters. The same paper lamented that "some people in Pictou support anything that comes to them under the name conservative".

After the 1867 Confederation, many Free and Secession voices were heard expressing grave doubts about the value of uniting with Ontario and Quebec. As a result, many of this group favoured a local Maritime church union while Kirk Conservatives like G.M. Grant came out in support of a Dominion-wide union.[20] When a letter of Dr. Ormiston was read to the highest courts of the two Maritime churches in 1870 suggesting union of all Presbyterians in British North America, voices were heard in opposition to the wider union. Men were unwilling to lose their ecclesiastical pre-eminence, as they had lost their political powers. The smaller Maritime Kirk feared an Atlantic union for the very reasons that the larger Free-Secession group favoured it. "For many," G.M. Grant writes, "union with the Anti-Burgers meant union with political antagonists and personal foes". The Kirk agreed to appoint delegates to discuss the wider union, relying on the stronger western group in connection with the Scottish Church for support. The Church of the Lower Provinces, still preferring the local, smaller union, agreed to appoint delegates to discuss the formation of the Canada-wide body. During the union negotiations, the Maritime delegates of the larger Church of the Lower Provinces continued to express reservations for union with the two western denominations.[21] Even the name "Canada" was mentioned as little as possible in deference to the Maritimes who equated the word with "take-over".

The Kirk group in the Maritimes unanimously supported the wider union until 1873 and the breaking of the Canadian Pacific Scandal when it was forced to defend its associations with the corrupt Conservative Party. Supporters of church union began to waver. Gavin Lang of Montreal attended the 1874 Maritime synod and urged opposition to union. Everything changed.

The Liberals were in power and the Halifax Witness supported union. The Conservatives were out of power and eleven of the twelve or thirteen Pictou charges voted against union. In spite of Grant's continued support of union and his "trying to allay the distrust and suspicion of his co-presbyters", stating that the Scottish Kirk would continue to support the new denomination, the Presbytery of Pictou refused to enter union, determining to follow an independent existence and waiting for a better day.[22] All four uniting denominations belonged to the same confessional family and upheld the same doctrinal standards. Traditional Biblical teachings, as understood by the Reformers and set forth in the Westminster Standards, were the doctrines supported by all the denominations. In the 1860's and 1870's, German scholarship had touched Canadian Presbyterian thought, but generally speaking, Biblical criticism had scarcely affected the overwhelming majority of the church's membership. At the 1870 meeting of the Joint Committee on Union, the following was quickly and unanimously approved:

> 1. That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament being the infallible word of God are the supreme standard of Faith and Manners.
>
> 2. That the Westminster Confession of Faith shall be the subordinate standard of this Church, it being understood, 'that full liberty of opinion in regard to the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion, as set forth in said confession, be allowed and that the use of the Shorter Catechism be enjoined as an authoritative exposition of doctrine for the instruction of the people.[23]

The unanimous opinion of the Joint Committee on Union was not reflected in the statements of General Assembly Commissioners and the various Synods of the negotiating churches. Thomas Sedgwick of Nova Scotia demanded the Longer and Shorter Catechisms be included in the Basis, as they were in the Union of 1860. David Inglis of MacNab Street Church, Hamilton, urged the acceptance of the Catechisms as Standards of Faith, with Mr. Reid calling the Westminster Confession the sheet-anchor of the Church and the Catechisms the small anchors.[24] With the support of Canada

Presbyterian Church and Kirk bodies, the Joint Union Committee added the Larger Catechism to the Shorter as "appointed to be used for the instruction of the people."[25] John Ross of Brucefield felt that heresy would result from this "slur" on the Catechisms. The classic reply was given that the Basis upheld the Confession and Catechisms in the sense in which the Westminster "divines" had prepared them two hundred years earlier. Most were resigned to the fact the "one standard was as good as three" when they were all prepared by the same men.[26]

In the union of 1875, historically orthodox theology was upheld. It would appear that the professors and graduates of Queen's College, Kingston, were less conservative in their theology than those from Knox or Montreal or Halifax. Yet no one denomination was the exclusive home of theological liberals or conservatives; the traditional Reformation position was held by the vast majority in all churches, with the result that union was consummated on a Basis which was faithful to the historic position held by Presbyterianism. The only exception to this theological unanimity was in reference to the "Headship of Christ" as set forth in Chapter Twenty-three in the Westminster Confession of Faith. Early Scottish secessions in the Kirk had been on this very point, with the Relief Synod, for example, requiring ordinands to vow that the Confession was "founded on and consistent with the Word of God, except insofar as said Confession recognizes the power of the civil magistrate to interfere in religious concerns". The Disruption of 1843 in the Church of Scotland, which brought into being the "Free" Presbyterian bodies in British North America, was the result of the Church demanding freedom from government interference. Unlike the "voluntaryism" of the earlier Secessionists, which believed that the State had no responsibility to support the Church and that the Church had no right to accept any government support, the Free Church was not opposed to an Established Church or State support for the church; rather, it was State interference in church affairs which was felt to be intolerable.

After 1844, attempts at Union between Free and Secession groups in

British North America were thwarted by the varying interpretations of "the Headship of Christ" which influential ministers in both camps demanded be clearly accepted in detail before any union take place. In the Maritime union of 1860, the Westminster Confession of Faith was recognized as a subordinate standard, but added "that the united body disclaim as unscriptural all rights on the part of the civil magistrate to try to regulate or review the procedure of the courts of Christ's Church". It was only after such individuals as John Bayne of Galt had died that the 1861 Union in the Canada's could be effected. A Preamble was added to the confession, stating that "in regard to the practical application of said fourth article, unanimity of sentiment is not required in the united body, and that if any particular case should emerge, it may, and can only, be considered and determined by the Church Courts."[27] Representatives of Free Churches in West Zorra, North Easthope, Barrington, Thamesford and Bruce protested against this compromise, as failing to guarantee the Headship of Christ, but in the end their churches entered the 1861 Union, with only Lachlan MacPherson in exile, although men like John Ross of Brucefield were later to regret their approval of the principle of forbearance.

At the first meeting of the Joint Committee on Union in Montreal, September 1870, the Headship question was briefly noted. The committee members did not find it any obstacle to union and concluded by unanimously agreeing to adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith as the Subordinate Standard of the united church with "full liberty of opinion allowed in regard to the power and duty of the civil magistrate in matters of religion."[28] The twenty-four influential committee members all felt that this statement would satisfy the membership of their respective churches, but they were soon to realize that many of their fellow churchmen had not reached this stage of toleration. Professor McKnight complained to the 1871 Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces that Christ's Headship had not been guaranteed by the proposed Basis of Union.[29] This principal of Halifax Theological Hall was a graduate of

Edinburgh and had studied under Dr. Thomas Chalmers. Naturally the absence of the Headship statement reminded him of the Scottish situation and he did not want governmental interference to creep into the Canadian church situation. However, the 1870 Basis was accepted and it should be pointed out that neither the Maritime Kirk nor the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces felt it necessary to call a fall meeting of Synod to discuss this or any other problem of union.

In the Kirk, the "Headship" concern was barely mentioned, but at the November 1871 General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church, men like George Smellie, John Ross and Donald MacVicar sought to insert a clause in the Basis of Union to emphasize the Headship of Christ and the freedom of the church "from all external and secular authority".[30] Professor Caven of Knox College felt that this clause would be "holding up a flag before the other party".[31] The motion was defeated by a vote of sixty to twenty-two. At the following year's General Assembly, the Rev. William Cochrane stated that the reviving of the question "indicated a wish on the part of this church to make Free churchmen of them before admitting them into the union".[32] It was felt that many of the opponents to the Basis of Union's wording were merely using the "Headship" question to scuttle union. Although four Presbyteries had sought changes to the clause under the Remit sent down by Assembly, by a vote of eighty to thirty-one, it was agreed to keep the articles of faith in the Basis unaltered. The Assembly, however, stated that "in view of the fact that many esteemed members of the Assembly desire a recognition of the Headship of Christ over His Church, it be an instruction of the Union Committee to endeavour to secure in some way such a deliverance as shall meet the views of all parties in this church and report to next Assembly".[33]

The Joint Committee on Union met in Montreal in December, 1872, and agreed that all the negotiating churches approved of the Headship of Christ and hoped the membership would agree. At the 1873 Joint Committee meetings held in St. John, N.B., both Maritime Synods agreed to "the liberty and right of the Church to administer its affairs, free from all

external and secular authority, and that all men in every capacity and relation, are bound to obey the will of Christ, as revealed in His Word",[34] but in the Canada Presbyterian Church, where centred all the opposition to a Basis which did not contain a clause on the Headship, it was recorded that ninety-two Kirk Sessions opposed the Basis. Mr. Cochrane told the commissioners in Ottawa that "if there were more thought of the 'heartship' of Christ, there would be less said of the 'Headship'."[35]

Joint meetings of both Kirk and Canada Presbyterian Church were held, chiefly dealing with the "Headship of Christ". It was recognized that vocal opposition came largely from ministers, but congregations and representative ruling elders were ready to follow. It was Principal Caven who spoke in 1874 of a Preamble as a non-technical explanation of the Headship which all evangelical churches could accept.[36] Such a Preamble was accepted by the Kirk Synod on the advice of Principal Snodgrass who stated that there would be a want of completeness in the union if some statement concerning the Supreme Head of the Church was not outlined. The General Assembly accepted the Preamble unanimously, with the exception of John Ross, who refused to follow his Canada Presbyterian Church into union, but referred to the Act as a "slippery undertaking".

The Rev. Gavin Lang of the Kirk wrote that the Kirk has given up everything for union. Douglas Brymner, in a pamphlet opposing union, charges the Canada Presbyterian Church of accusing the Kirk of tearing "the Crown from the Saviour's brow".[37] Such statements were scarcely noticed by the new church which clearly sought to divorce its doctrine from the practical implications of her Scottish background. By 1875, it was almost universally accepted that no magistrate could dictate to conscience and that a genuine division existed between church and state.

III

By what name was the proposed church to be designated? No delegation to the "Joint Committee of the Presbyterian Churches in the provinces of British North America on the subject of Union", meeting in Montreal in September, 1870, was prepared to accept the title of any of the other existing Presbyterian Churches in the Dominion. This problem was not settled until the very eve of the union. The western churches worked together in attaining a common goal, a name through which Presbyterians in all parts of the Dominion of Canada could unite. It was understood that in parts of the Maritimes, the word Canada was unpopular and would be unacceptable in the title of the new denomination. Also, for the Prince Edward Island congregations, the term 'Canada' was not suitable because this Island was not a part of the Dominion until July, 1873.

The first name approved by the Joint Union Committee was "The Presbyterian Church of British North America".[38] Some did not want the word "Presbyterian" as it was not found in the title of the Church of Scotland. When in 1872 the Rev. J.W. Fraser suggested to the Kirk that the title be "The Presbyterian Church of Canada" he was drowned out by other Kirk commissioners crying "No, no". In the end, the matter was left in abeyance and no title was officially supported. For the next two years, little attention was paid to the designation of the church. In 1874, however, the issue was pressed. The Maritime bodies, although still experiencing "a curious feeling against the name Canada", gracefully accepted the recommendation of the western churches.[39] The word "in" was used instead of the word "of" merely to prevent anyone confusing the new body with the former Free Church, and in June, 1875, the "Presbyterian Church in Canada" was welcomed into being.

More troublesome was the question asked by the negotiating churches as to the relationship of the proposed body to other churches in Christendom. Free and Secession ecclesiastics were unwilling to enter into a special relationship with the established Church of Scotland. On the other hand, Kirk groups in Canada had prided themselves as being "in

connection with the Church of Scotland" and the Maritime Kirk entitled her official periodical The Monthly Record of the Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and adjoining Provinces. Compromise was clearly necessary if union was to become a reality. It was decided at the Joint Committee of Union meetings in 1870 that:

> "this Church shall maintain fraternal relations with Presbyterian Churches holding the same doctrine and government and discipline, and that Ministers and Probationers shall be received into the Church, subject to such regulations as the Church may from time to time adopt."[40]

This statement became part of the proposed Basis of Union, but Gavin Lang, seeking to scuttle church union, made a motion before the Kirk Synod that closest relations be held with denominations of "substantially the same doctrine". This relationship could conceivably be extended to the Church of England whose Thirty-nine Articles, many felt, approximated the Westminster Standards. Members of the Canada Presbyterian Church were sufficiently frightened that a further clause was added to the Basis of Union in order to guarantee a Presbyterian form of government for the new church:

> "That the government and worship of this Church shall be in accordance with the recognized principles and practice of Presbyterian Churches, as laid down generally in the 'Form of Presbyterian Church government' and in 'The Directory for the public worship of God'."[41]

Upon further consideration, the Canada Presbyterian Church wondered whether any article on ecumenical relations might not prove a crutch to the Kirk which perhaps did not realize that the new church, in the eyes of the Canada Presbyterian Church, had to be completely independent. Besides this point, it was felt, was covered in the Westminster Confession itself. At the June, 1874, Kirk Synod, the Canada Presbyterian Church's recommendation to remove the Fourth Article of the Basis was accepted. In the end, it was agreed that the government and worship should be in accordance with the principles and practice of Presbyterian churches as laid down by the Form of Government and Directory of Public Worship.

A two-part resolution accompanied the Basis, stating that:

> a. This Church cherishes Christian affection towards the whole Church of God, and desires to hold fraternal intercourse with it in its several branches, as opportunity offers.
>
> b. This Church shall, under such terms and regulations as may from time to time be agreed on, receive Ministers and Probationers from other Churches, and especially from Churches holding the same doctrine, government and discipline with itself. This resolution, it should be realized, was a practical statement, expressing the ecumenical attitude of the new church, but not binding in any way similar to the actual Basis.[42]

The Maritime Synods, as usual, accepted the changes graciously, and the Church of Scotland at the 1875 Assembly in Edinburgh wished "God-speed in their future labours for the Lord to brethren who propose to accept union", while promising to continue recognition of any who remain outside the new denomination.[43]

Laymen of the negotiating churches were generally concerned with problems of union considered secondary by the theologians, such as the type of worship to be advocated in the united church. The practical query was heard, "How will the Sunday service be changed through union?" Laymen were aware of "Popish practices" which had been introduced into some urban congregations of the negotiating churches and wondered if elaborate rituals would be forced upon all congregations through union. In the '70's, the average Presbyterian pew-holder desired a minimum of liturgy and a maximum of preaching and extempore prayer. Psalms were sung unaccompanied by musical instruments under the guidance of a precentor who led the singing, line upon line. Extant sermons of the period were lengthy, with a propensity toward a theologically conservative doctrine. In the morning service, an additional exposition of the scripture reading was also offered. Prayers were lengthy and generally extempore.

Worship reforms came first to the Kirk, with its connections through establishment with non-Presbyterian churches in Europe. Hymns

were widely used in the Kirk while the Free Church continued to uphold the sanctity of the psalter and paraphrases.[44] City churches of all denominations, reflecting a certain urban opulence, erected new structures of architectural beauty, with the precentor's desk being replaced by choir and lectern. The "organ question" as it came to be called, proved to be "the chief agent of dissension between 1860 and 1880" in local congregations.[45] The movement began in the city Kirk congregations, plus several Secession churches, and gradually spread into smaller centres and other Presbyterian denominations. At first, harmoniums were placed in Sunday Schools; later, used in mid-week prayer meetings and choir practices. Finally, the organ reached the sanctuary. In 1851, for instance, a small melodeon was introduced into the Sunday worship in St. Andrew's, Toronto, but complaints were only heard in 1859 when it was replaced by a large organ. In spite of protests within the Kirk, Synod, it was decided in 1862 that any congregation could install an organ providing the harmony of the congregation was not disturbed.[46] By 1866, twelve Kirk congregations employed instrumental music in their services. Many members of the Canada Presbyterian Church seriously questioned the advisability of uniting with a church which officially countenanced "instruments of Satan". The first attempt to introduce an organ into the Free Church in the Canadas took place in Brockville, whose roots were American rather than Scottish. The Synod succeeded in procuring the removal of the "infernal machine". As early as 1857, Dr. Proudfoot of First (Secession) Church, London, had introduced an organ, but the Synod demanded its removal. Much of the opposition was due to the impending union with the Frees who, it was felt, would turn against the union if organs were allowed.

In the New Brunswick Free Synod, organs were officially considered to be "unwarranted by the supreme and subordinate standards and contrary to the constitudinary practice of this church". Discussion in the sister Synod in Nova Scotia revealed that opposition on such grounds was contrary to individual liberty, and could be considered a new qualification

to the union negotiations.[47] The remote congregation of St. Stephen's, New Brunswick, became a test case. An organ installed in that congregation was ordered removed by Synod in 1861. However, one concession was made; the organ could remain in use for a short period to train a choir. When the pulpit became vacant in 1864, with the organ still in place, the Presbytery refused to moderate a Call until the "kist o' whistles" was removed. The organ was not removed, no meetings of the Presbytery were held, and in the end the Presbytery became defunct.[48]

When the Secession and Free Church Synods of the Canadas united in 1861, congregations were allowed to enter with the forms of worship which they had employed before union. Thus Secession Churches could continue to use their organs and very quickly former Free congregations began to install organs. Attempts to remove organs created much heat in various Presbyteries, but it was a losing battle. Opponents to union cited opposition to organs as a very practical reason why union should not be consummated, but by the 1870's, public opinion had been so won over to the use of organs within the Canada Presbyterian Church that the Presbytery of Montreal agreed to their use in Knox, and indirectly to their use in other congregations. At the 1870 Joint Committee on Union meeting, the Committee decided that present practices should continue in the various churches, with further action left to the legislation of the United Church. Some Kirk members felt that this clause left them open to persecution after Union. More serious was the opposition within the Canada Presbyterian Church, fearing such practices, for instance, as the kneeling for prayer as practiced in St. Andrew's Kirk, Montreal, and unbearable for most Free and Secession members. By 1874, however, opposition to the Worship Clause in the Basis of Union had dwindled to five or six persons. Union was consummated with the Worship Clause being generally interpreted as offering the fullest freedom in such matters. Most congregations, however, were loath to make changes. When the General Assembly finally authorized a collection of hymns, six years after Union, many congregations refused to use them.

To say that the love of money was another root of disunion would be an over-simplification, but financial problems early beset the negotiators and plagued the discussions year by year. Each denomination wanted to protect its financial interests. Worries of a takeover were expressed, with the smaller Churches fearing the influence and clout of the giants with their varied institutions, properties, and financial reserves. None of the negotiating Churches operated a central budget or a common fund upon which the various committees drew specified sums of money. Instead, each project or "scheme" of the Church had its own bank account and treasurer, and each year at Assembly or Synod, committees would be appointed to direct these "schemes" for the succeeding twelve months. Treasurers of such committees were generally laymen of recognized business ability. Amounts contributed by congregations depended greatly on the size and location of the Church. By the 1870's, the overwhelming support came from the cities. A "scheme" also depended on the interest of the individual minister and the efficiency of the Synodical or local treasurer. Usually one or more Sundays in the year were set aside for the seven or more special schemes of the Church, at which time special collections were received and canvasses often made.

Where representatives of the four Presbyterian Churches in British North America met in September, 1870, to discuss terms of union, questions of finance were not central. In June, 1871, the Kirk Synod of Canada appointed a committee to prepare a proposal for the disposal of its Temporalities' Fund -- monies from the Clergy Reserves Fund, etc., invested by the Kirk for the support of its ministers. This was the only denomination to have such a fund, which gave ministers annual augmentation of from $200 to $450 -- other denominations depended on current contributions from congregations for stipend augmentation. To the Kirk Synod, in 1871, came the following recommendation:

> "As regards the Temporalities' Fund -- Resolved that it shall remain as at present, in the hands of a Board, the membership of which shall be continued after the consummation of the Union by the remnant members having powers to fill vacancies caused by death, resignation or otherwise..."[49]

This report was unanimously accepted by Synod; those benefiting from the Fund would continue to do so until death did them part.

At the 1872 Synod meeting of the Kirk, much discussion ensued regarding the future of the Temporalities' Fund. Some suggested that the 1871 decisions to continue the fund for the benefit of Kirk ministers should be annulled and the monies turned over to the united church as the basis for a general Sustentation Fund. The motion was defeated, not because many members of the Kirk Synod were opposed to such a scheme, but because they knew that Canada Presbyterian Church was in opposition to such a fund.[50] Another defeated motion would have divided the fund between the two Kirk colleges and the Home Mission Fund of the united church after commitments were fulfilled. However, the Synod did agree to alter the source from which the non-privileged, non-commuting ministers might receive their annual $200. Instead of taking this sum from the Home Missions Fund of the united church, (a move which would antagonize the other denominations since they themselves did not enjoy that right), it was successfully moved that the monies could be taken from the capital of the Temporalities' Fund if all other means failed. The Kirk Synod again discussed the Temporalities' Fund at the 1873 Synod. Dr. Cook and John Morris successfully moved that those ministers who had received only $200. annually from the fund were now to receive $400 a year when they retired. This increase of payments to ministers was regarded by some as buying their support of union . Congregations, Sessions and Presbyteries were asked to vote on the above decisions. Returns showed no strong opposition to the financial arrangements worked out by the church, although many would have preferred other financial arrangements.

At the Joint Committee on Union of the four churches, meeting in St. John, N.B., in September, 1873, the transfer of property into the united church was discussed. All agreed that the individual ministers or congregations which did not enter the union should have continued right to their annuities, property and other assets.[51] Those opposed

to union demanded the entire Temporalities' Fund as being the real or continuing Kirk organization. The Rev. Gavin Lang extolled the Temporalities' Fund as "the great bond that linked our existence with the Mother Church". Students at Queen's and Morrin Colleges petitioned for a share of the Temporalities' Fund, stating that when they began their studies they had expected to share in the Fund, but present allocation would exclude them. The Synod, however, deemed it inadvisable to grant their prayer and the students were excluded from the benefits of the Fund. In order to separate the Temporalities' Fund from the united church, the 1874 Synod agreed to the self-perpetuation of the Board of Managers. An annual grant to Morrin College of $850 was approved by the 1875 Synod and professors of Queen's College were given an interest in the Temporalities' Fund. Rights and privileges of those who remained outside the new church were guaranteed by provincial laws. Thus every minister on the Roll of the Kirk Synod of Canada in June, 1875, was cared for by these decisions of Synod. After union the General Assembly turned its back on the Temporalities' Fund. Never was a report submitted to this Court. Encroachments were made on the capital after 1875, so that by 1897 only about $88,000 remained in the fund. Annuities were arranged for the twelve commuting ministers by Act of Parliament and payments to the remainder of the non-privileged, non-commuting ministers ended in 1900.

Following union, the various schemes of the uniting churches were reviewed and membership appointed, each to be operated for the following twelve months as if union had not been consummated. Finances were divided into the three geographical areas of Toronto, Montreal and Halifax, and three treasurers were appointed to receive money raised in these areas for the support of the schemes of the church. The same Assembly decided that a large committee of sixty-six ministers and twenty-two elders, representing various church backgrounds, be appointed to meet in Montreal, in September, 1875, to mature and co-ordinate the work of the church. Among its duties was the amalgamation of the church's projects; a $700

minimum stipend, one Board of Management for the Home Missions of the Church. It was hoped that one Foreign Mission Board could be arranged but for the time being, the Maritime Provinces would continue to conduct their own projects. Ministers', Widows' and Orphans' Funds and the Infirm Ministers' Funds were centralized and minimum payments established. Through union, minimums were raised and the reorganization of the schemes of the church would provide for a more effective use of the available funds.

Probably the most delicate problem of union evolved around the church colleges. A quarter-century after union, the Presbyterian Witness recalled that union would have taken place in 1871 instead of 1875 if it had not been for the "college question".[52] This viewpoint is an exaggeration, but does reflect the heat engendered by the competing colleges, as well as the principle of church involvement in higher education. Tens of thousands of dollars in buildings and endowments, hundreds of students, alma mater loyalties, diverse theological emphases and smouldering geographical prejudices all affected the "college question".

Six colleges were involved. The Theological Hall in Halifax, Morrin College in Quebec, The Presbyterian College in Montreal, Queen's College in Kingston, Knox College in Toronto, and Manitoba College in Winnipeg. The Maritimes Kirk never supported a theological college but sent its students to Scotland or Queen's. The Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia had commenced theological training at Pictou as early as 1814, while the Free Church, soon after its organization, followed suit.[53] After the 1860 union between Free and Secession, the Theological Hall in Halifax met the need for the training of theological students. The arts training was closed in 1863 when Dalhousie re-opened, reflecting their view of education that the church must train its students in theology, and only provide literary or arts instruction when the state was unable or unwilling.

Presbyterian theological education in Ontario and Quebec also presented its problems. In 1841, a Royal Charter for Queen's was obtained

but members of the Kirk privately hoped that their theological education could be transferred to Toronto as soon as possible, with the passing of parliamentary bills which would have given Presbyterianism a voice in the management of King's College and an amalgamation with the Toronto institution. With the 1844 Disruption of the Kirk, almost all the student body left Queen's to join the Free Church. Fortunately, annual grants from the Church of Scotland, the sacrificial support of St. Andrew's, Kingston, and the leadership of men like Dr. Machar and Dr. Cook carried it through the following difficult years. In 1870, the failure of the Commercial Bank had drastically reduced the endowments, while many congregations refused to contribute to the College Fund, feeling that Queen's was a hot-bed of unionists. Queen's reflected the Kirk viewpoint that the church had responsibility for Arts as well as Theological education.

The only other college connected with the Canadian Kirk was Morrin College in Quebec City. Endowed with $50,000 by Dr. Joseph Morrin, a native of Scotland and a physician of that city, the college opened in 1862 with Dr. Cook, minister of St. Andrew's Church, Quebec, as its first principal. A very limited constituency and inadequate finances restricted enrolment and faculty. Union was approached with trembling, knowing that in a united church, Morrin would be in competition with the Presbyterian College and the educational advantages of Montreal. The Free Church in Canada, immediately following its organization in 1844, established a theological seminary in Toronto to train the student body of Queen's which had joined the new church. For the first decade, three hundred pounds a year and an able faculty was contributed by the Free Church of Scotland. Knox College provided a classical training for theological students from within its own faculty until 1849 when University College was secularized and this department at Knox was closed. When the United Presbyterian Church united with the Free Church in 1861, the former's Toronto college (originally opened in 1845 in London), was amalgamated with Knox. As a result of agitation in

the new body for a college in the province of Quebec to train a ministry to the French-speaking populace as well as meeting the needs of Presbyterianism in eastern Ontario, Presbyterian College, Montreal, was chartered in 1865.

The only other Presbyterian College to enter the union of 1875 was Manitoba College, a product of the union negotiations and cooperation in the far West and a manifestation of the spirit of the 1870's in Canadian Presbyterianism. In 1870 twelve leading Presbyterians in Manitoba signed a prospectus for an institution of higher learning since the government had not provided such a school. The Presbytery of Manitoba supported the appeal and the Canada Presbyterian Church endorsed it. Although under the control of the Canada Presbyterian Church, Kirk participation was welcomed. Supported by the Lieutenant-Governor, Alexander Morris, a graduate of McGill and an influential member of the Kirk, the school soon outgrew its humble beginnings to play a leading role in the educational needs of the province.

In the deliberations of the Joint Committee on Union continued at that first September, 1870, meeting, the "College Question" was all important. The doctrinal questions took three hours to settle; the problem of the colleges took the remainder of the three days. The Maritime delegates just sat in silence, for the "College Question" was only of concern to Ontario and Quebec, and the Atlantic groups were ready to agree to whatever the western churches could accept.[54] One draft suggested the formation of a Presbyterian University, probably revolving around Queen's, and maintained by the church. Other colleges, like Montreal or Halifax, would receive degree-granting powers from the university senate. No mention was made of Knox College and some suggested that it be closed, with Queen's theological training being transferred to Montreal and the Arts remaining in Kingston. Agreement in the end was reached, suggesting the development of such a university "with such theological halls as may be found requisite to provide the necessary facilities for the education of ministers of the church in the various

provinces of British North America".[55]

Protests were immediate. Many opposed this Kirk-supported concept of the church being involved in secular education. Staff and alumni of Knox, Montreal, and Morrin were greatly opposed to the supposed takeover by Queen's and the voluntarists in the Maritimes were most unhappy. Clarification was then offered by Dr. Topp, a leading member of the Union Committee, stating that all existing institutions would be retained. By implication, it was concluded that the committee was ready, unanimously, to retain the Arts faculty of Queen's under the jurisdiction of the united church.[56] No less dissension was evident in the Kirk. In spite of the assurance by Principal Snodgrass that Queen's would remain "as it is and where it is", many felt that Queen's was a hot-bed of union sentiment and the college would be sacrificed if need be for the sake of union. Douglas Brymer of the Dominion Archives in Ottawa said that he could not feel himself justified in giving one cent to Queen's "if the Church continued to push union with a Church which seeks to destroy Queen's and the whole Kirk tradition".[57] In a private communication to Principal Snodgrass, Dr. Topp expressed his conviction that if union was to be consummated, there could not be an amalgamation of the theological schools. Geographical and ecclesiastical ties were too strong in the churches to consider the closing of colleges even if such would be for the good of the church.

At the 1871 Joint Committee on Union meetings in Montreal, the "College Question" was all important. Grass roots membership was upset in both western denominations through editorials by men like George Brown in the Globe opposing a Presbyterian University and by Kirk pamphlets which insisted on the new church being responsible for non-theological education at Queen's. A motion was passed recommending that theological and literary institutions be kept intact and continue to operate in the new church under present conditions. However, the motion had no sooner passed then many of the Canada Presbyterian Church

delegates thought that it would accomplish nothing, was too conciliatory, and had to be reconsidered. After much discussion, a new resolution was adopted that each college should be asked to raise its endowments so that all would be financially independent of the united church. Queen's supporters were indignant, since that college had just passed through a campaign to recover an amount equal to the government grant now unavailable, and the sum lost through the failure of the Commercial Bank. Queen's and Morrin would lose their theological departments which would be transferred to Montreal and henceforth only responsible for literary and scientific studies. The theological halls at Halifax, Montreal and Toronto would be affiliated with Queen's and represented on the University Senate, with Dr. John Cook to become the first Principal. Principal Snodgrass cast the only dissenting vote at the meeting of the Union Committee but many rallied to his support.

The Canada Presbyterian Church at its June Assembly had agreed that the negotiating churches enter union with their present institutions, but meeting at an adjourned sederunt in November, 1871, it was decidedly opposed to the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Union to keep the Arts faculty of Queen's under the church's control and to unite Morrin and Montreal in the latter city, with affiliation with Queen's.

The General Assembly, in turning down the recommendations of its representatives of the Joint Committee on Union, reiterated its June 1871 decision and added that as it planned to raise $250,000 to endow its theological institutions, it expected the Kirk to do likewise. It further recorded its opposition of State grants to denominational colleges and enjoined its committee to discover if there could be harmonious action in the proposed united church in this matter.[58] When sent down under the Barrier Act, only one presbytery disapproved this position. The Canada Presbyterian Church had officially and forcefully recorded its opposition to bringing the literary and scientific departments into the new denomination. Following heated discussion over several days,

the Kirk Synod of 1872 virtually bowed to the position of the Canada Presbyterian Church as approved a year earlier.

In the whole "College Question" the Maritimes remained silent. Knowing that the future of their own college was assured, they were content to let the western bodies work out a solution which they in turn were ready to accept, whatever it be. Because of the hundreds of miles separating the Atlantic Provinces from the rest of Canada, and the nature of the union problems which seemed to centre exclusively in the Canada Presbyterian and Kirk circles, the result was an acceptance simply of decisions approved in the west. No consensus could be reached between Kirk and Canada Presbyterian delegates regarding the appointment of professors to theological colleges. At the 1873 Joint Committee, it was agreed that the united church should not be required to elect trustees to the Arts Department of any of the church institutions. So ended the negotiations. With June, 1875, came union and the appointment of new governors for the Arts and Science departments of Queen's, with governing powers vested in a University Council. Fullest independence was assured, although reports were still submitted to the General Assembly. As a result of union, Queen's lost considerable monetary, as well as geographical, support. To the College Committee, meeting in September, 1875, two plans were put forth for the more adequate support of the colleges. The first was a common College Fund for the support of all; the second was the assigning of a specific territory to each college in which it could appeal for assistance. Due to the strong opposition to Queen's, the second proposal was withdrawn, and the first became the policy of the church. The Presbyterian College, Montreal, refused to support the common College Fund and privately sought out donors in the Synod to assist in the expansion of the college. A similar approach was followed by others, so that the plan eventually failed.

The suggestion of closing any of the theological colleges died with union. The result was a wider choice of theological facilities available to students. Practical reasons had forced the colleges into

union, and now each sought to make fullest use of the new financial possibilities which accompanied union. Competition for the enrolment of prospective students increased. Bursary funds were built up. The church's involvement in higher secular education was dealt a mortal blow through union. The concept of a Dominion-wide Presbyterian University failed, although the principle was applied to secular education after 1875.[59] Morrin College played an ever-decreasing role in the church's life up to and after union. On the other hand, Manitoba College, in 1875, under the Mission Board, increased in usefulness to the church as the West was opened to settlers. In the Maritimes, theological education followed the maxim of George M. Grant who said that "they in the Lower Provinces must always march in line with the people in the Upper Provinces". Fortunately for Canadian Presbyterianism, this man was called to the "Upper Provinces" to preside over Queen's and to give an effective Maritime- and Kirk-cultured leadership to Canadian Presbyterianism.

IV

A few weeks prior to the sederunts of the highest courts of the various Presbyterian bodies in British North America in June, 1870, the immediate Past-Moderator of the 1869 Canada Presbyterian Church, Dr. William Ormiston of Hamilton, sent a letter to the Moderators of the Synods of the other three Presbyterian bodies proposing union. The first body to receive official notice of this letter was the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland. In accord with the prayer of the letter a committee was appointed to meet with other Presbyterian bodies. Three days later, an overture was read from the Presbytery of Lindsay, setting forth the desirability of union with the Canada Presbyterian Church. The prayer of the Overture had been properly worded, but since it had limited union to one other body, the pro-union forces had arranged for Dr. Ormiston's letter to be read first so that plans for the wider union might not be delayed.

Some considered this step unconstitutional, although opposition on this ground was not voiced at the time.

Supporters of union sought the most prominent ministers and laymen as their representatives to this negotiating committee. Probably the most outstanding men of each geographical area were chosen -- Dr. John Cook of Quebec City, Principal Snodgrass of Kingston and Dr. Barclay of St. Andrew's, Toronto. The laymen were no less prominent -- Alexander Morris, a jurist, Dominion Cabinent member and financier, Sheriff Neil McDougall and James Croil, the editor of The Presbyterian and secretary of several of the schemes of the Kirk.

The opening sermon of General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church was preached by Dr. Alexander Topp in the absence of the retiring Moderator, Dr. W. Ormiston. When Dr. Ormiston's letter was read, the Montreal group, including Principal MacVicar, spoke in support of the smaller union.[60] Voices were heard chastising Dr. Ormiston for addressing the letter to the Kirk Synods, but the final result was the defeat of the Montreal motion and the appointment of a committee of six to meet with other Presbyterian bodies. Membership of the Joint Committee on Union included Dr. Topp as Chairman, supported by such leading ministers as Dr. William Taylor of Erskine Church, Montreal, and Robert Ure of Goderich. Elders included the Hon. John McMurrich of Toronto, M.P.P. from North York, president of the Western Assurance Company, St.Andrew's Society, Toronto, and representative elder of Knox Church, Toronto, and David McKay of Montreal, well known for his commercial and philanthropic interests.

The Presbyterian Church in the Lower Provinces, this former Free and Secession body and the largest Presbyterian group by far in the Maritimes, had already taken the initiative in seeking union negotiations with the Maritime Kirk group, with a union committee already under appointment. Now it was decided to postpone discussion until the Kirk had decided whether to accept Dr. Ormiston's suggestion for a wider union, or merely to negotiate for a Presbyterian union in the eastern

provinces. At the Kirk Synod in the Maritimes, a motion to support the lesser union promised to carry unanimously, but after George M. Grant spoke about the wish of the Kirk in Upper Canada for the wider union, it was agreed to forward a letter to the Presbyterian Church in the Lower Provinces notifying them that they had accepted the proposal for the Canada-wide union.

To Dr. Alexander Topp must go the credit for organizing the first meeting of the Joint Committee on Union. From first to last it was the west in general and the Canada Presbyterian Church in particular which designed the Basis for the church which came into being in 1875. Western domination was seen in the choosing of time and place of meeting for as late as July 26, the eastern bodies had not been informed of the September meeting. Along with Dr. Topp, and Dr. Cook, Mr. Morris formed the inner circle. Prior to the September 28 meeting, private meetings were held by the two Kirk bodies in order to present a united front before the larger Free-Secession bodies. Monetary problems were also worrying the Maritime Kirk, and reductions in transportation fares to the conference were sought.[61]

At the first meeting of the committee, Dr. Alexander Topp was appointed secretary, with Dr. John Cook serving as chairman. Every minister appointed by their respective churches was present, with only two elders absent. Dr. Cook spoke of the "desirability and expediency of Union between the churches". Dr. Bayne, chairman of the delegation from the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces, stated that "a most remarkable degree of unanimity had been reached".[62] How often was quoted "that they all may be one". James Croil, in an editorial, rejoiced that the meeting had resulted in wide agreements. "Entire unanimity is not to be looked for; the wonder is, 'he felt' that the divergence was so comparatively slight."[63]

Union discussions were central in the 1871 church courts. In the Canada Presbyterian Church was opposition centred largely on the "Headship of Christ" and the "College Question". It was agreed to

suggest changes to the Union Committee and to reconvene at a special adjourned meeting of the Assembly. Six members were added to the committee, including Principal MacVicar of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, and Principal Caven of Knox College, Toronto, both of whom had voiced criticisms of current union plans. The Kirk also spent considerable time over union, although there the concern centred on state aid to church controlled educational institutions and the maintenance of Queen's College. Six additional persons were elected to the committee, the most important being Dr. Jenkins of St. Paul's, Montreal, who earlier had been the minister of St. James Methodist Church in the same city and was very partial to this wider union. It was agreed that a special meeting of the Synod could be called if necessary to further discuss the Basis of Union. In the Maritimes, both Synods accepted the proposals of the Joint Committee on Union.

Theological education proved to be the great stumbling block at the Montreal gathering in 1871, with changes coming in two stages. First on September 29, it was agreed that the churches should enter union with the colleges which they had. On October 2, the joint committee reconsidered the above decision and in its stead adopted seven clauses dealing with the colleges. Endowments were sought for their support. Morrin and Queen's were to lose their theological faculties and concentrate on the literary training of students. Principal Snodgrass strongly opposed this decision, and as a result refused to call a special meeting of the Kirk Synod to discuss the Basis of Union. Rev. D. Watson, one of the members of the Kirk Union Committee stated that the Canada Presbyterian Church was trying to control everything and that the only type of union which would be produced would be one in which the Kirk would be absorbed by the Free and Secession bodies.[64]

At the June, 1872, Kirk General Assembly, the proposed Basis of Union as adopted by the adjourned Assembly in 1871 and sent down to Presbyteries was discussed. Six Presbyteries had approved, one had disapproved and eight offered various comments and amendments. Several members of

the union committee submitted their resignations, stating that no further clause should be included in the Basis on the "Headship of Christ", as the Kirk's position was sufficiently clear and acceptable, and that the Kirk should not be asked to close its theological faculties. In the Kirk Synod, unanimous approval was given to the doctrinal terms of union but expressed difficulties over the Temporalities' Fund, colleges, etc. No special meetings of the Atlantic Synods had been held to discuss the Basis of Union. The Monthly Record of the Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia frankly acknowledged that its church took its cue from the deliberations of the western bodies.[65] When the Joint Committee reconvened during the Christmas holidays, 1872, no Maritime delegate turned up. To the western churches came the realization that greater consideration must be given the Atlantic bodies. For some time the request had been made for the Committee to meet in the eastern provinces. Western delegates were not eager to make this long trip, but Dr. Jenkins emphasized its importance. Saint John, New Brunswick, was chosen as the site for the April meetings of the Joint Committee on Union. The result was a common Basis of Union which could be presented to the four negotiating churches.

Opponents of union conducted a campaign of opposition through letters to the editor and dissemination of anti-union pamphlets. However, opposition by this time was very minimal, with a highly publicized anti-unionist meeting in the Agricultural Hall, Toronto, only attracting twenty-five or thirty persons. At the 1873 General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church, the Basis was approved by a majority of 133 to 34. One and one-half days were spent by the Kirk Synod discussing the union, "the most important business of the Synod",[66] and by a motion of 57 to 7, the Basis was sent down to the lower courts for approval. At this Kirk Assembly, Dr. Cook, "in one of happiest efforts", impassionately addressed the Synod in support of union. The Rev. George M. Grant pictured "all the scattered children of John Knox in this Dominion going to take up the old standard and declare that they would start from the

same point at which their fathers started three centuries ago".[67] Delays were blamed on the Canada Presbyterian Church which wanted "to bring in more old books (laughter from the Synod) and wished to appoint a larger committee".[68] In the Maritimes, it was not going to be said that the east held up union. The Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces accepted the Basis "simpliciter". The Kirk sent the Basis down to Presbyteries, Congregations and Sessions.

By June of 1873, an enthusiasm for union was everywhere. A year earlier, defeatism and postponement were in the air. The Kirk had been accused of heretical teachings, the Canada Presbyterian Church with narrowness of outlook and emphasis on detail. It is interesting to note that up to 1873, opposition was chiefly centred in the Free and Secession churches, but when union came in 1875 there was almost unanimous support in favour of union. On the other hand, the Kirk groups which had earlier been almost unanimous for union failed to carry many congregations into the union of 1875. The dissidents in the Canada Presbyterian Church were loud in their opposition during the formative period and as a result their problems were discussed and changes made in the Basis. The Kirk minority, however, failing to speak, especially in the Maritimes, until a few months before union, were considered anti-unionists, and amendments in 1875 were not considered possible, without seriously disrupting the whole union question. The Canada Presbyterian Church learned that fourteen Presbyteries approved, simpliciter, three turned the Basis down, and two offered a qualified disapproval. One hundred and forty-four Sessions approved of the Basis, but ninety-two disapproved, with six others opposing individual clauses and one expressing a qualified disapproval. Whenever a minister opposed the union the Session invariably followed suit. This was less true in the congregational vote, with 168 approving the Basis and 87 still not satisfied. The General Assembly decided to seek a joint meeting with the Kirk in Canada (both were in session in that city) to discuss the Basis.

The Kirk was also experiencing difficulties, but the opposition

did not seem as widespread as in the Canada Presbyterian Church. Nine Presbyteries agreed to the Basis "simpliciter", one agreed with reservations and one disagreed. Most objections revolved around the disposition of the Temporalities and the position of Queen's College in the new denomination.

On June 6, the joint meeting of the two bodies was held in Ottawa. The Canada Presbyterian Church pressed for changes in the Basis, reflecting opposition comments on the "Headship of Christ" recorded under Barrier Act returns. On June 8, the Assembly was informed by delegates from the Kirk that these changes were accepted and another joint meeting was arranged for June 9, when a Preamble was added to the Basis, emphasizing the Headship of Christ, thus satisfying troubled members of the Canada Presbyterian Church. The Kirk also agreed to the Assembly's request to remove the Fourth Article which implied a continued connection with the Church of Scotland. The seventh Resolution accepting forbearance of opinion regarding state grants to the Church was removed by the Kirk Synod, as requested by the Canada Presbyterian Church. Lastly, the Kirk acceded to the request of the Assembly that the Kirk have sole responsibility for the distribution of the Temporalities' Fund.[69] It was decided to appoint committees to deal with the one problem of relations with other churches and to proceed to complete arrangements for union. This Revised Basis of Union was sent to Presbyteries, Sessions and Congregations for their consideration, the results of which were to be studied at the adjourned meetings in Toronto, November 3-5, 1874.

The Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces, meeting on the last Tuesday of June, 1874, in Halifax, was informed that all eight presbyteries had approved of the Basis. After western delegates were heard, the church unanimously agreed to accept the Basis with its additions and deletions and send it down to Presbyteries, Sessions and Congregations. The western churches made the changes, the eastern church agreed to them unanimously. In the Kirk Synod of the Maritimes, opposition was beginning

to crystalize. A visit of Gavin Lang helped to organize this sentiment. Eleven congregations, nearly all within the bounds of the Presbytery of Pictou, decided to oppose union, not on theological grounds but revolving around local politics and property rights. Unwilling to hinder the union negotiations at this stage, the Basis was sent down to the lower courts and the Synod agreed to meet again in New Glasgow on the third Sunday of October to study the results of the Remit. A meeting was held with the anti-union Pictou group but little was accomplished. The dissidents were told that a rump group of ten or twelve could not hope to survive, but no minds were changed. The anti-unionists were informed that the Church of Scotland wanted them to unite since their opposition would seem to tell the world that only a handful of congregations wanted to remain in connection with the Scottish Kirk. The Maritime Kirk, by a vote of 27 to 7, agreed at the October Synod to enter union. All ministers were invited to attend the Montreal meetings the following June when Union was to be consummated.

In the Canada Presbyterian Church, all nineteen Presbyteries approved, although London accepted the Basis only by the deciding vote of the Moderator. Two hundred and seventeen Sessions approved simpliciter, six dissented for various reasons, but only one opposed the union. The congregational vote showed two hundred and thirty-one in approval simpliciter, six dissenting and only one in opposition. Six months earlier, eighty-seven congregations had disapproved, but with the Headship Question covered in the Preamble, the opposition evaporated. A motion to consummate union in June, 1975, was carried by a vote of one hundred and eleven to two. In the Kirk the minority were not ready to accept the majority decision and anti-unionists immediately made plans to overturn this action. When a Bill respecting union was submitted to the Ontario Legislature, a suit was instituted in the Court of Chancery by anti-unionists in the Kirk body, seeking an injunction to restrain the two Presbyterian churches in the province from consummating union. Dr. Alexander Topp ably defended the Bill, although the opposition was from the

Kirk, not from his denomination, and the Court of Chancery refused to interfere. The Private Bills Committee of the Legislature unanimously accepted the Bill and it passed the third reading of the House without a division, and after the assent of the Lieutenant-Governor became law. Rights of the minority were recognized as well as those of the majority who favoured union.

In the Province of Quebec, spirited resistance was faced in the passage of the Union Bills, led by the Rev. Gavin Lang of St. Andrew's, Montreal. The Bill received the approval of the Assembly, but experienced much difficulty in the Legislative Council, after the Union Bills before the Quebec Private Bills Committee were rejected by a five to three decision. Supporters of union were irate. Protest meetings were held in Toronto, Kingston and Montreal condemning this action. Petitions in favour of union were distributed and Sunday worshippers were urged to sign the protests. Two thousand people signed, although Gavin Lang affirmed that many of the signatures were those of Sabbath School scholars. A large delegation travelled to Quebec in support of union. Such actions turned the tide. The Legislative Council refused to accept the recommendation of the Private Bills Committee and referred them back for further study. The battle was won. Slight changes were made in the Bills, but they passed substantially as drawn up and the last obstacle before the union committee had been removed.

Montreal was chosen as the location of the 1875 Union. In that central location both Kirk and Secession-Free influences were felt. An eastern location would have been much more expensive and less practical, and in Toronto only the Canada Presbyterian Church was strong. Principal MacVicar further argued that this show of Protestant unity and strength in a centre of Roman Catholicism was important. The four church courts were constituted in the second week of June, 1875. The retiring moderator of the Kirk Synod of Canada, John Rennie of Chatham, Ontario, preached on the text, "That they all may be one", to the Kirk commissioners assembled in St. Paul's. The retiring moderator of the Canada Presbyterian

Church used as his text, the passage from Ephesians 4:16, "It is universally acknowledged that union is strength." The Lower Provinces Synod dispensed with the usual sermon as their moderator was ill. The Maritime Synods agreed to the formation of one Synod to coordinate the work in the three eastern provinces. Interesting names like "Acadia" were suggested, but it was agreed to accept the term "Maritime". Publications were to be absorbed by a Dominion-wide periodical. In the Canada Presbyterian Church only two ministers, MacPherson the one-time teacher in Embro, Ontario, and Ross, his erstwhile pupil, remained opposed to union. In the Kirk, one and one-half days were expended in discussing union. Motions to postpone the union for a year were defeated, knowing that the Maritime denominations would find it almost impossible to make the second long journey "in toto" to consummate the union.

On Sunday afternoon, June 13, 1875, a gathering of Montreal Sunday School children was held in Victoria Skating Rink, with two thousand children in attendance, accompanied by an equal number of parents and friends. Both Kirk and Canada Presbyterian congregations were represented although those of St. Andrew's were noticeably absent. But Tuesday, June 15, was the day of days. The four church courts marched in procession to the Victoria Hall, the agenda arranged, followed by an afternoon service in St. Paul's Kirk, and a social period that evening in Victoria Hall. The first to arrive at Victoria Hall was the Canadian Kirk. The Maritime groups appeared at 11:00 a.m. as requested, with the Canada Presbyterian Church a quarter hour late. The six thousand seat hall was filled to overflowing. Decorated with streamers and flags, the hall hosted moderators, clerks and officials on a raised platform in the centre.

The ceremony opened with the singing of Psalm 100, "All people that on earth do dwell", led by a choir of one hundred voices, and given out by the Rev. G.M. Grant. Principal Snodgrass read portions of Psalm 132 and Professor Caven offered prayer. Minutes of the four church courts

were read by their respective Clerks and the oldest Clerk in terms of ordination read the Preamble and Basis of Union. The oldest Moderator in terms of ordination declared the union consummated. The four Moderators gave each other the right hand of fellowship and the audience joined in the singing of Psalm 133. The Montreal Witness reported,

> "The vast audience joined hands in singing the 133rd Psalm with enthusiasm and feeling, probably never equalled in any preceding religious assembly in Canada. Aged ministers clasped each other's hands as they fervently sang the words of the psalm, while others seemed too deeply affected by their emotions to take a vocal part in the service, but all realized the truth of the words, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethern to dwell together in unity', as nearly five hundred ministers of four different churches stood at last in one common brotherhood."[70]

Like so many of the pro-unionists that bore the heat of the day in the negotiating controversies, and who were honoured on the day of consummation, the Rev. Dr. John Cook, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Union, was unanimously chosen as the first Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Dr. William Taylor of Montreal, a former Secession minister, gave the nomination address. "I look for a union", he told the throng, "before which the present--blessed and auspicious though we justly account it--shall appear slight and insignificant".[71]

At the evening meeting, thousands participated in an over-lengthy programme. J.L. Morris, a leading Montreal layman and unionist, spoke of the strength of the united church with its 600,000 supporters. Principal Snodgrass, although not a Canadian by birth, emphasized that the country needed a Canadian organization around which future generations could rally. Dr. William Ormiston was present to share in the union that he had sparked five years earlier. He entreated the new church to admit others without question "when they came tapping for admittance at the door of the Church", for he was convinced that "there was strength in numbers".[72] Late in the programme, G.M. Grant of Halifax rose to speak. Disregarding his prepared address, he said, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God and everyone that

loveth is born of God, and knoweth God; he that loveth not knoweth not God for God is love." Then he sat down, and after a moment's hush, a great burst of approval was heard, with one Maritimer crying out that now "our Church had a leader".[73]

Dissidents of the Kirk immediately organized themselves into a continuing Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland. When the unionists left St. Paul's Church, Montreal, for the inaugural ceremony at Victoria Hall, minority remained behind to form their own Synod. They prophesied that the union "was held together by a rope of sand" and that disruption was the fruit of this amalgamation. Unionists were characterized as traitors "who for the past years have been insidiously sapping the foundations of the Kirk, shaking the allegiance of the people to her, scheming extensively for funds of all kinds professedly for the Church of Scotland, when they had in view her destruction."[74] Supporters of union were accused of maladministration of funds and of "bleeding the Kirk nearly to death and then reporting she could not live."[75] However, this continuing Kirk was of short duration. Novel efforts like excommunicating the unionists and the instituting of various lawsuits failed to keep them in the public eye. The continuing body was a ministers' church, with congregations only remaining out of union in loyalty to their minister. Within twenty-five years, only one or two congregations were still outside the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The tiny minority of the Canada Presbyterian Church who remained outside the union decided to form their own Presbytery in 1876. Meeting in Brucefield, Ontario, in April of that year, John Ross and Lachlan MacPherson proclaimed themselves not as enemies of the united church but as peculiar servants of God. They considered themselves called upon to "guard the dykes" and to proclaim Christ's unadulterated Headship over Church and State. The only other congregations in Ontario and Quebec outside the new Dominion-wide church were to be found in a weak Presbytery in the Niagara area, association with the United Presbyterian Church

of the United States and in Montreal where there was a church in connection with the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A.

In the Maritimes, the Kirk congregations in Pictou and the Macdonaldite congregations in Prince Edward Island remained outside the union, largely as a result of lay opposition to union. Opposition revolved around the change of name, relationships with the Scottish Kirk, etc., but political prejudices of the people underlay all. The Monthly Record was continued and a Synod formed. Aid was continued from Scotland, with George Monro Grant complaining that such liberality "encouraged them in their wayward and rebellious course".[76] A third of a century later, many of the congregations were still outside the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Thirty ministers of the Kirk Synod of the Maritimes supported union and affixed their names to the roll of the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Canada Presbyterian Church contributed three hundred and twenty-eight ministers, the Kirk of Canada one hundred and forty-one, and the Synod of the Lower Provinces one hundred and twenty-four, making a total of six hundred and twenty-three ministers in June, 1875. Approximately thirty-one ministers did not enter the union.

V.

Unlike American Presbyterianism which drew upon New England, Wales, Holland, and England itself for its impulse, spontaneity and adaptability, the foundation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada was largely Scottish Presbyterianism transplanted into British North America. To Canada had been carried the various divisions of historic Scottish Presbyterianism; membership of the Presbyterian Church in Canada had an almost unique Scottish background, and ministers were almost totally trained in Scotland or Ireland, or by ministers in Canadian institutions, trained themselves in Edinburgh or her sister theological colleges.

Doctrinal standards in all four uniting bodies were uniquely similar, reflecting their common Scottish heritage. The Standards

adopted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1647 and established by Acts of Parliament in 1649 and 1690 were the doctrinal Bases of Union approved in 1875 in Canada. Dutch and Reformed Church immigrants to Canada were usually integrated into the Scottish dominated ecclesiastical system, rather than forming their own organizations. Similarly L'Eglise Reformé de France worked through the Canadian churches in seeking to witness to the French-speaking areas of Canada. This absorption of all "Reformed" elements into one Presbyterian body enabled the church to display a national spirit and sea-to-sea viewpoint.

It must further be reiterated that the predominantly Scottish influence came from the non-established churches in Scotland. The Kirk was never the force in the colonies that it was in the "land of the heather". In the Canadas, it was the Free and Secession organizations which moved west with the growth of population. The Kirk body in both the Canadas and the Maritimes was recognized as an "exotic" which leaned too heavily upon the Scottish parent body and failed to become indigenous to British North America. A study of the missionary enterprises of the various denominations entering union illustrates again the wider vision of the Free and Secession bodies. To the Red River settlers they sent Black, and to the Indians of Saskatchewan, Nisbet. The Secession Church of the Maritimes commissioned Geddie to the New Hebrides and the Canada Presbyterian Church sent MacKay to Formosa. The Kirk, for its part, failed to advance with the increase of population and to challenge its membership with a missions consciousness. While Free and Secession took a firm stand on spiritous liquors, Sunday observance, and readily made moral judgments, the Kirk usually remained silent. In politics, while the Kirk adherents generally voted for Conservative candidates and the Free and Secession for Reform or Liberal, the latter were more prone to discuss and legislate on political questions in the sederunts of Synod and General Assembly.

Impetus for union generally came from Free and Secession sources.

Even with the Kirk, leadership came from men like John Cook, the friend of Chalmers, who would certainly have entered the Free Church if he had remained in Scotland, or Jenkins who was earlier a Methodist in Montreal. In the final Basis of Union, it was the Kirk who gave up most, relinquishing the control over the Arts Department at Queen's, accepting forbearance in the matter of state endowments and the civil magistrate, denying the cherished relationship with the established Church of Scotland, and tolerating, if not accepting, the Secession interpretation of voluntaryism which was written into the practices of the new body. To the Union, the Canada Presbyterian Church brought more ministers, elders, congregations, Sunday School teachers and scholars than the other three bodies combined. In the latter category, the Canada Presbyterian Church listed 43,536 pupils, compared with 11,487 for the western Kirk, 4,970 for the eastern Kirk, and 13,409 for the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces. Only in ministers' stipends was the Canada Presbyterian Church not in first place. Naturally one would expect the Canadian Kirk, with the proceeds from the Clergy Reserves available for the augmentation of salaries, to offer higher stipends; but it is interesting to note that both the Maritime churches offered higher remuneration than either the western bodies. Apparently the eastern churches experienced a degree of lay liberality and affluence resulting in stipends at least twenty per cent higher than in the Canada Presbyterian Church.

Union was a victory for Presbyterianism in Ontario, Quebec and the Canadian West. The Boards of the church became centred in Montreal or Toronto, and the interests of the Maritimes were gradually overshadowed by the developments in Western Ontario and the prairies. More and more the church became an urban organization, where stipends were more attractive, congregations larger, and resources more readily available. By 1875, city congregations were erecting graceful stone structures with seating for one thousand or more worshippers. The Schemes of the Church found their overwhelming support in the city congregations, and while the rural charge

continued to supply the majority of ministerial students, it was the urban charge which paid the expenses of their theological education. Although the 1875 union was a victory for ecumenicity among the ordained clergy, an all important role was played by Ruling Elders and pew holders in the various congregations of the uniting bodies. Laymen like James Croil or the Hon. Alexander Morris contributed much to the Joint Committee on Union. The effect of the secular press cannot be underestimated. Men like George Brown of the Globe, John Dougall of the Montreal Witness, or Robert Murray of the Halifax Presbyterian Witness cannot be disregarded. Questions of worship and politics were raised in the union negotiations, but it was laymen who caused them to assume their importance. It was the laity who supported union on practical grounds --a consolidation of resources and a more efficient use of finances and manpower--and the great importance of the laymen alongside the clergy in effecting the inauguration of the Presbyterian Church in Canada must be recognized.

Footnotes

[1] John I. Cooper, Canadian Historical Review, March 1945, p. 57.

[2] J. Campbell, The Presbyterian Record, January 1898, p. 9.
J. Wood, Memoir of Henry Wilkes, p. 34 ff.

[3] Toronto Patriot, June 15, 1970.

[4] Presbyterian Witness, July 3, 1858, p. 104.

[5] Minutes, Quarterly Meeting of the Montreal Sabbath School Association, Oct. 20, 1868, Sept. 26, 1869, July 16, 1872, April 15, 1873.

[6] Ibid., Sept. 26, 1869, July 16, 1872.

[7] Home and Foreign Record, December 1870, p. 331.

[8] Canadian United Presbyterian Magazine, March 1855, p. 73.

[9] John C. Becket, Historical Sketch of Steps Taken to bring about an Union of the Presbyterian Church of Canada with the Church of Scotland.

[10] The Presbyterian, 1866, p. 280. A letter to the Editor called these ministerial opponents to union, "Spiritual Fenians".

[11] The Globe, June 1, 1871.

[12] James Croil, Autobiography, p. 141.

[13] Home and Foreign Record, August 1, 1857; 1862, p. 248.

[14] Ecclesiastical and Missionary Record, November 7, 1858.

[15] The Presbyterian, 1862, p. 329.

[16] Toronto Globe, June 6, 1874.

[17] Rev. Gavin Lang, The Union Question.

[18] W. Buckingham, The Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, p. 55.

[19] J. Robertson, History of the Secession, p. 242.

[20] Ibid., June 28, 1873, p. 204.

[21] W. Grant, Principal Grant.

[22] Ibid., p. 146.

[23] Minutes, Joint Committee on Union, September 30th, p.6.

[24] Minutes, General Assembly, CPC, November 8, 1871, p. 11; Toronto Globe, November 9, 1871.

[25] Montreal Witness, June 21, 1871; Minutes, Joint Committee on Union, October 2, 1871, p. 11.

[26] Presbyterian Witness, July 29, 1872.

[27] Minutes, Canada Presbyterian Church, 1861. App. 12-14.

[28] Minutes, Joint Committee on Union, September 28, 1870, p. 2.

[29] Home and Foreign Record, August, 1871. p. 209.

[30] Minutes, General Assembly CPC, November, 1871, p. 12.

[31] Toronto Globe, November 9, 1871.

[32] Ibid., June 14, 1872.

[33] Minutes, General Assembly, CPC, June, 1872, p. 36.

[34] Ibid., June 5, 1873, p. 26.

[35] Montreal Gazette, June 9, 1874.

[36] The Presbyterian, 1874, p. 161.

[37] G. Lang, Supplementary Statement,p.3; D. Brymner, Faults and Failures, p.22.

[38] Minutes, Joint Committee on Union, September 28, 1870, p. 2.

[39] Ottawa Times, June 12, 1874.

[40] Minutes, Joint Committee on Union, September 30, 1870, p. 1.

[41] Ibid. October 2, 1871, p. 12.

[42] Statement of Union, Kirk Synod of Canada, p. 13.

[43] Montreal Witness, June 10, June 11, 1875.

[44] Montreal Witness, June 12, 1868. John Ross stated that "the popular hymnology of the present day had much to do with the alarming increase in infidelity, and a doubting of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures."

[45] John R. Waldie, The Kirk Session, p. 115.

[46] Minutes, Kirk Synod, June, 1862.

[47] Home and Foreign Record, PC, LP, August, 1866.

[48] Minutes, Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick, June 1864, p. 7.

[49] Minutes, Kirk of Canada, June 13, 1871, p. 44.

[50] Toronto Globe, June 10, 1872, p. 135.

[51] Manuscript Minutes, Committee on Union, Saint John, New Brunswick, 1873.

[52] Presbyterian Witness, December 12, 1908.

[53] Letter, McGregor to Keir, 1814.

[54] Monthly Record, Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia, etc., Nov.1872, p.56.

[55] Home and Foreign Record, 1870, p. 304.

[56] Ibid., 1870, p. 378.

[57] Letter, Douglas Brymner to Snodgrass, October 12, 1870.

[58] Minutes, Canada Presbyterian Church, November, 1871, p. 17 ff.

[59] Queen's College Journal, May 1, 1875.

[60] Minutes, General Assembly, Canada Presbyterian Church, 1870, p. 50.

[61] Letter, Bayne to Topp, July 29, 1870.

[62] Home and Foreign Record, Lower Provinces, August, 1871, p. 209.

[63] The Presbyterian, 1871, p. 31.

[64] Letter, D. Watson to Snodgrass, December 9, 1872.

[65] Monthly Record, Kirk of Maritimes, August, 1872.

66 The Presbyterian, July, 1873, p. 169.

67 Ibid., July, 1873, p. 167.

68 Ibid., July, 1873, pp. 165, 166.

69 Minutes, General Assembly, Canada Presbyterian Church, June 9, 1874, p. 47.

70 Montreal Witness, June 15, 1875.

71 The Presbyterian, July 1875, p. 177 ff.

72 Montreal Witness, June 16, 1875.

73 Presbyterian Witness, December 12, 1908.

74 J. Croil, Life of James Croil; R. Campbell, Pretensions Exposed, p. 5; Presbyterian Trade Unions, p. 3.

75 Ibid., p. 3.

76 Minutes, Kirk Presbytery of Pictou, August 30, 1876.