

Thomas Fuller (1608-1661) was an Anglican priest and historian whose royalist sympathies caused him difficulties with Cromwell's regime, but whose wit earned him popularity as a writer. Not being a man who set much importance on family trees, he once wrote:

Lord, I find the genealogy of my Saviour strangely checkered with four remarkable changes in four generations. Reheboam begat Abia: a bad father begat a bad son. Abia begat Asa: a bad father and a good son. Asa begat Jehoshaphat: a good father and a good son. Jehoshaphat begat Joram: a good father and a bad son. I see, Lord, from hence that my father's piety cannot be entailed: that is bad news for me. But I see also that actual impiety is not hereditary: that is good news for my son. (1)

Such an observation should be borne in mind when we are reminded (as we invariably are by his contemporary biographers) that the first bishop of the diocese of Niagara was descended on his father's side from this same "worthy master Fuller", and on his mother's from Archbishop Loftus. Loftus was one of the founders of Trinity College, Dublin, and its first Provost. The college authorities seemingly placed a higher value on heredity, and Bishop Fuller was surprised when he visited Dublin to discover that his sons would be entitled to important privileges if they entered Trinity, on account of the Archbishop. (2)

Thomas Richard Fuller had been a soldier some sixteen years when his regiment set out for Canada in 1799. His Majesty's 41st Regiment of Foot disembarked from the Asia Transport in October. Captain Fuller himself had been left behind with the sick at Cork; but he soon rejoined his men. When a command post became vacant in St. John's, Fuller as an old officer was considered. But his commanding officer chose not to recommend him, since he had "perceived the most evident marks of derangement in that officer since his arrival here..." (3) Later, when he was passed over again, he memorialized the Colonel commanding His Majesty's Forces in the Canadas expressing his "Extreme Surprise and concern" that for the third time a Junior Captain was appointed to the Command of a post, and lamenting that he was "the eldest of his rank in British North America". A number of Generals would bear witness to his ability. (4) When he received no reply, he again expressed his disappointment, claiming his slow promotion

is my misfortune not my fault. I little thought when I came to Upper Canada I should be thus degraded. Life under such circumstances is not worth preserving. (5)

His memorials met with success; he was placed in command of troops at York, and promoted to Brevet Major.

For a period he acted as Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General for Canada, and seems to have spent some of his time at York, some at Kingston. In this latter town on the 16th of July, 1810, was born his son, Thomas Brock. The following month, on the 12th of August, the baby boy was baptized by the "minister of Kingston", G.O. Stuart. He took his middle name from one of his godfathers: General Issac Brock. The other sponsors were Poole England, Patrick Corbett and Charlotte England. (6) Two other sons were born to the Major and his wife Mary (7): Edmund and William. Little is known about them,

and even some contemporary articles about the bishop say that he had no brothers. (8)

During the war with the United States, in December 1813, Fuller died. His widow decided to remain in Canada, "requesting ... that her pension and compassionate allowance to her children may be drawn in this Country". (9) When Mary Fuller died in 1817, her sister Margaret took on the responsibility of raising the orphaned sons. Some years later, when young Thomas was about 13, she married the rector of Chippewa, the Rev'd William Leeming (1787-1863). William had followed his brother Ralph as an SPG missionary to Canada in 1820, was placed in Chippewas and would remain there until his death. Soon after the marriage, Mrs. Leeming petitioned the government to continue Thomas' pension beyond his fifteenth birthday, when otherwise it would cease. The expense of educating the boys was heavy, and she needed assistance. (10)

For some time Thomas attended the Hamilton Grammar School. From there he went to York, where the missionary (John Strachan) was master of the Home District Grammar School. In this two-storey blue building Fuller was instructed, perhaps in Greek and Latin and mathematics, by the young men who were preparing under Dr. Strachan to take holy orders.

One of his school-mates here was William McMurray (1810-1894). The lad's parents had brought him over from Ireland in the year after his birth. William was too young to be ordained when he finished his divinity studies, so Lieutenant-Governor Colborne sent him to establish mission posts among the Indians along the north shores of Lakes Huron and Superior. When he was ordained, a year later, Fuller was present to record the event. (11) Returning to the mission, he married a girl of Indian-Irish blood, who had been educated in Montreal. The couple later lived in the rectories at Ancaster and Niagara-on-the-Lake, and he would be made Archdeacon when his old school friend became bishop in 1875.

In 1828 a combined seminary-school, supported by the SPG, had been established in the garrison town of Chambly, Lower Canada. The teacher (Joseph Braithwaite) was not much older than some of his prospective students, being 23 years of age when he set out from Oxford for his new post.

Fuller was one of seventeen men who would receive SPG scholarships to study at Chambly, and at the age of 19 began his four year course. One of the others to receive such a scholarship was his room-mate there, John Gamble Geddes. Many years later Geddes would run against him in the election for bishop of Niagara, and would be named by him as first dean of the cathedral.

He felt that his type of education suited him well for the Canadian church:
I think that all will acknowledge that young men, educated in the country, habituated to the manners and customs of the people, enured to the fatigues and privations attendant upon a missionary's life in new countries, and accustomed to the climate, from which many strangers suffer severely, are ... better suited for supplying our wants than those educated in Europe. (12)

At the same time he felt the need "for a regularly established and well patronized 'school of the Prophets'". The system of young men studying for the ministry under the guidance of an older clergyman was too demanding on the latter's time. Moreover the clergy would need the background of a more formal type of education in order to meet "the opposition...from the infidels on the one side, who are no longer the ignorant grovelling they were in former ages, and from the various bodies of dissenters on the other, whose ministers

are ... becoming more and more thoroughly educated". He was to show an active concern for education throughout his life--not just for divinity students, but for young people and adults as well.

From Chambly he had acted as a catechist and scripture reader in the surrounding area. When his studies were completed, he was made deacon by Bishop Stewart in the cathedral at Quebec (8 September 1833). After a short stay at the Bay of Quinte, he was made assistant minister of the parish church of Montreal (c. 1833-1835). Soon he was ministering to the needs of a community beset by crisis. Cholera had crossed the ocean with the influx of Irish immigrants and was plaguing the Canadas.

For many weary weeks the young clergyman was unceasingly employed amid the fearful scenes of the city pest houses, in visiting the sick, consoling the dying, and burying the dead in their hurriedly made graves. (13)

In quieter times he labored in some of the outlying areas, (14) and established a free service in a neglected part of the city, giving rise to the later parish of St. George. (15)

Two important events marked this time. When he was growing up in the Niagara area, Thomas came to know the family of Colonel Samuel Street, who lived in the village of Clark-hill. The colonel's son Thomas would later become a Member of Parliament, and one of the richest men in Ontario. And Samuel's eldest daughter Cynthia became Mrs. Fuller in April 1834. She would bear him six sons and three daughters. It was a fortunate marriage since Miss Street, as Canon Langtry pointed out, "in addition to being, in gentleness, goodness, and wisdom, the very ideal of a parson's wife, brought him a large fortune". (16) The financial security which she brought would prove helpful in later years, when parishes--and even the new diocese of Niagara--were hard pressed to pay Fuller his salary. Shortly after the marriage, on January 11th 1835, Fuller was priested by Bishop Stewart, in St. James' Church, York.

The prospects of the church in the Canadas when Thomas Fuller was priested were not encouraging. Bishop Stewart had been ill, and the stipend from the government for the bishop was to cease on his death. Other grants from the SPG were to be reduced. There were not enough clergy to serve the growing population of the country.

The young priest wrote down his Thoughts on the Present State and Future Prospects of the Church of England in Canada. He was worried that the colonial church did not share the advantages of establishment that were enjoyed by the mother church, and that the privileges which she did have (such as the clergy reserves) were not very secure.

We must no longer depend upon the favor of government, or trust to the property we now hold or probably we will find them both but as broken reeds in the day of need.

The situation confronting the church here was becoming more and more like the situation the church in the United States had had to deal with, and we could profit by adopting the American form of government by synods. The support which had come from the government must now come from the people.

The laity alone have in their hands what can supply our wants. Before we can avail ourselves of it, we must allow them to have some voice in its disbursement.

The example of the prosperity of the American church would show the value of involving lay people in diocesan synods. For those who might be wary of the idea, he pointed out the practical control the laity already had, through parliament, over the church in England; and he showed it to be in harmony with the practice of the early church.

And surely it is less objectionable to admit a layman to the councils of the church, where many matters of a purely secular nature must be discussed, than to the spiritual offices of preaching and exhorting.

Fuller read his manuscript to Charles Reid, who had been a fellow pupil at Braithwaite's school, and was now rector of Rawdon, L.C. In "much earnest and frequent discussion", Reid agreed "that a crisis in the history of the Church could not be distant", and urged his friend to print the essay. It was about this time that Fuller moved to become the missionary at Chatham. There was then no press in Upper Canada west of Toronto, so the appeal to the example of the American church was printed at Detroit. The pamphlet was published anonymously, and in July of 1836 a copy was sent to the bishop and every clergyman in the diocese.

Four months later Bishop Mountain (who had been consecrated Bishop of Montreal and was assuming some of the ailing Stewart's episcopal duties) held a visitation of the clergy of Upper Canada. They were summoned to St. James' Church in Toronto, and after divine service Dr. Strachan "ascended the pulpit and delivered a discourse, in which he portrayed in his vigorous style the condition of the Church in this country...and the only measures that he could suggest for their remedy". Saltern Givens (who was a year older than Fuller, and was also educated at Strachan's school--perhaps at the same time) was sitting next to Fuller in the pew. At the end of the sermon he remarked, "The Archdeacon has taken his ideas from your pamphlet". Many years later when the pamphlet was reprinted, Givens wrote that Fuller was entitled to the honor of having first suggested synodical action in the colonial church. (17)

Lands continued to be reserved for the church for some years, but they were not without their problems. While Fuller was at Chatham (1836-1840), he petitioned the Lieutenant Governor, Sir George Arthur, saying that he was on "the reduced allowance of \$100 per annum". The rectory had been established,

but that, in consequence of errors made in the return of Lots sent in by the late Missionary, it has not yet been endowed...there is attached to the parish only two small lots, neither of which yields the slightest income: but...there is a "glebe" lot in the neighbourhood, which has always been looked upon as belonging to the parish, for which many applications have been made to him, and which your Excellency's memorialist humbly prays may be confirmed to him and his successors, by grant, lease for a term of years, or otherwise...

It was a matter of some urgency, for the land had "during the last two years been greatly injured by persons cutting the best wood over the whole lot, and sending the greater part of it to the Detroit Market". (18)

From Chatham, where he was the only clergyman for 40 miles, he returned in 1840 to the Niagara area where he had been brought up by his guardian. The Anglicans (and German Lutherans) of Thorold had received the ministrations of clergy in the surrounding area since the 1790's, including Fuller's 'adoptive father' William Leeming during the period 1821-1829.

Most recently James Clarke, an Irishman who was St. Catharines' first rector, had been taking occasional services there. Now Bishop Strachan (--the diocese of Toronto had just been formed, in 1839--) appointed Fuller to reside in the village and take charge of the mission.

A stone church, St. Peter's, had been built in 1832. Now with the arrival of a clergyman, the Governor--still Sir George Arthur--saw fit "to erect and constitute a parsonage or rectory at Thorold in the Township of Thorold", and "to present the Rev. Thomas Brock Fuller...to be the incumbent of such parsonage or rectory". (19)

He began his duties on June 19th, just about a month before the death of his neighbour from St. Catharines. Mr. Clarke, aged 68 years, was being driven to take services at Port Dalhousie when the horse ran off and he was thrown from the wagon, dying from the fall. Strachan had intended Fuller to serve the Thorold church entirely, to help Mr. Leeming look after the people at Stamford, and to spend some time in the "destitute parts of the surrounding country". (20) Now he and Leeming had to provide St. Catharines with weekly services until A.F. Atkinson (another Irishman) arrived there later that year. No sooner had this happened than first John Anderson at Fort Erie, and then Thomas Green at Niagara, took ill, and their parishes had to be supplied.

Even with all this activity, he found time to establish a second congregation seven miles away, at Port Robinson on the Welland Canal. At first services were held in a school house, then in 1843-1844 a church was built, paid for in part by grants from the governor, the bishop and the SPG. Mr. John Beatty stood out as a benefactor of the church, and a director of the Sunday School; and on his death in 1861 Fuller published a brief 'memoir' of him. (21)

He was interested in the extension of the church beyond his parish as well, and soon after he arrived at Thorold, the Niagara District Branch of the Church Society of the Diocese of Toronto was formed, with Fuller as its first secretary. The establishment of a parochial branch soon followed, and its meetings, he reported, "showed that we have our people with us in this 'our work and labour of love'". Raising money was, however, not always easy. One year the parochial association reported that it took "the greatest of exertions" to raise its contribution "in consequence of the great local depression along the line of the canal, with the stoppage of the great flouring mills for the last nine months". (22)

The Wesleyan Methodists had a chapel in Thorold, which had been built in 1833. They were a small, friendly group; or at least they were until the year after Fuller's arrival. Then they decided to hold a Protracted Meeting, which proved so successful that a second one was held early in 1842. One of their number described what was happening in a letter to the Christian Guardian:

after three weeks labor, 33 souls united with the church, and a number of them have been brought to feel the joys of pardoned sin. The Meeting is still going on; the penitent benches are crowded with those who are inquiring the ways of salvation ... Great are the changes that have taken place in our highly favoured village within the last twelve months; from a little handful we now number very near one hundred that meet in class... But in the midst of all these privileges and blessings there are sinners who are unconverted to God, who are hardening their hearts and stiffening their necks.

Some of those who crowded the penitent benches had been Anglicans, despite the efforts of their rector to harden their hearts against such goings on. Indeed, as the Meeting was about to begin, Mr. Fuller warned his congregation from the pulpit (in the words of John's first epistle): "Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits, whether they be of God". And he told them that the extravagances of revivals, the penitence stool and united vocal prayer were certainly not of God. Some of his parishoners were impressed by his strong words, and wrote a letter asking for the sermon to be published. The drafter of the letter told how one person (one of the former Anglicans) said "he had seen Jesus Christ, held him by the hand, and jumped with him as high as the stool, from which the Spirit lifted him". The letter and the sermon were soon printed by the diocesan printers, Messrs. Rowsell in Toronto.

The local Methodists found it hard to believe that anyone would describe his experiences at a revival in such a way, and appointed two of their number to try to track down the story. According to them, it turned out to be an unfounded rumour. According to two of the Anglican letter writers, they verified their statement.

While this was going on, the diocesan paper The Church added fuel to the fire. In announcing the pamphlet, it echoed Fuller's mistrust of Methodists and their revivals:

It is melancholy, indeed, to contemplate the havoc made by these raving usurpers of the priesthood, and to know that every Lunatic Asylum contains the victims of their "unauthorized ministries"... Our own Province is infested with these "ravenging wolves", and Mr. Fuller deserves well of every lover of Christianity for stripping them of their "sheep's clothing".

The gauntlet had been thrown down, and it was picked up by the Christian Guardian in a series of long editorials. Methodists were used to attacks by The Church, but "such an outburst of mortification, anger, and rabid enmity, we have not seen exceeded in any of this Editor's productions". Quoting at length the local church's investigation of the allegation that a Methodist jumped with Jesus, the paper complained:

We have here ignorance, hearsay, supposition, haste, misrepresentation, exaggeration and prevarication. And these on which Mr. Fuller founds his charge of "arrogance", "presumption", and "impiety" against the Wesleyan-Methodist Church!

The editorials sought to justify the practices complained of. The editor even went to the Toronto Asylum, where he found no evidence of people being committed because of revivals; and he pointed out that though there were four Methodists there, there were also at least five members of the Church of England. And he suggested that the real reason for Fuller's attack could be found in a tell-tale sentence from the sermon: "The people have almost forsaken mine to crowd the Methodist Church".

On his part, the rector felt that his pamphlet had done something to reverse the flow of people, that it had helped to point some "pious dissenting families, sick of the evils of schism" toward the Catholic church. The bitterness of the debate is symptomatic of the mistrust that generally existed in those years between Methodists and the Church of England. (23)

If the Church of England was to be protected against the encroachments of Methodists, so too was it to be defended against the claims of the

Roman Church. Having accused the Methodists of--amongst other things--being sectarians and schismatics, he felt a need to show that his own church did not lay open to similar charges. So now from the Thorold pulpit came a sermon on "The Roman Catholic Church not the mother church of England". The argument was one common to Anglicans at the time, that the church in England had always been an independent branch of the Christian Church, over which the pope came to usurp authority, which was thrown off at the reformation. Had the pope accepted the results of the reformation, things would have been fine. But when Pius V excommunicated Queen Elizabeth; he encouraged the "popish party" to separate themselves from the Church of England. So Fuller can assert, "The date of the Roman Catholics in England, as a distinct sect...may therefore be fixed in the year 1570". To his own mind at least he proved his text (from Cyprian), "Non enim nos ab illis, sed illi a nobis recesserunt". When John Strachan came to visit the parish, he read the sermon; and the bishop recommended it to the Church Society of the diocese for publication as a tract. (24)

When Fuller arrived at Thorold, vessels were being locked through the Welland canal on Sundays. So he joined with some others (John Ker, William James and William Beatty) in 1845 to bring a lawsuit against the government, which some three years earlier had assumed entire control of the canal. The result was that the Sabbath Observance law was strictly enforced until 1876. (25)

Fuller had a lively interest in the American church. In 1853 he was one of four people who represented the diocese of Toronto at the General Convention of that church in New York city. The delegation was well received, (26) and one of the major proposals considered there--for a confederacy of churches, based in part on the use of the prayer book--must have struck a chord with the rector of Thorold. That, indeed, was to become the gist of a series of articles he would write in the Canadian Methodist Magazine on "Christian Unity". (27) But what the proposer of this plan came to regard as a corollary of his idea--that greater liturgical freedom ought to be allowed within the episcopal church--would be less palatable to him.

The example of American precedent had figured largely in Fuller's first pamphlet advocating lay participation in the governing of the Canadian church. His concern for Sabbath observance which led to the Welland canal lawsuit (and may have sprung in part from his closeness to the American scene, where Canadian sabbatarianism found some of its roots at the time. Certainly the quotations from American authors in his addresses and writings reflect the attention he gave to the church in the United States.

His interest was reciprocated in 1856, when he was granted an honorary STD from Hobart College, which had been established by Bishop Hobart at Geneva, New York early in the 1820's. Bishop Strachan congratulated him, (28) and despite Hobart's high-churchmanship Fuller commemorated the event by baptizing his new son Henry Hobart. (29)

The following year Trinity College, Toronto repeated the honour by granting him a DCL. (30) When nominated, he seemingly suggested to the bishop that the college consider granting degrees to non-Canadians. Strachan thought he was in too great haste in his desire to cultivate "friendly relations with our Brethren on the other side" and deemed it better to "cultivate our own field" first. He didn't want Trinity to become like the American universities, which granted their honorary degrees all too readily. (31) The bishop's remarks must have hurt Fuller, who had carefully begun to record his new American DD whenever he signed his name.

Fuller was not, however, afraid to voice his disagreements about more important aspects of university policy with Strachan, who had become defensive about his college. The bishop's dream of the Anglican King's College being the centre for higher education in the province had been denied when the new Baldwin government secularized it in 1849. Now the fifties and sixties saw a controversy over the relationship between the new, government-endowed University, and the denominational universities (like Trinity, which Strachan had established shortly after the loss of King's). By giving up their charters and affiliating with the University, the denominational institutions stood a chance of sharing its endowment. Principal Leitch of Queen's tried to persuade the bishop to join with the Church of Scotland and the Wesleyan Methodists in advocating this plan. And Fuller, who headed the synod's university committee, sought to convince the diocese to do the same. Had they succeeded, the province would have had one inclusive University with affiliated denominational colleges, rather than a number of competing universities. The majority of Synod, however, shared Strachan's mistrust of giving up Trinity's charter, and the university committee's report had to be withdrawn. (32)

Many of the clergy of Upper Canada, either through necessity or interest, took to farming their land. The rector of Thorold was one of these, and Archdeacon Dixon later said of him,

The farmers in the vicinity had fallen into very slovenly habits of farming, and to remedy them, he, by great exertions, induced them to form an "Agricultural Association," of which he became Vice-President. He secured the presentation of a silver medal for the best managed farm, which was won by one of his neighbours. He also compiled a work on agriculture of a very useful character, which was published in 1854. Through his efforts a vast improvement was made both in the style of farming and in the character of the stock in that part of the Niagara district. (33)

At the end of April 1856, Bishop Strachan held his annual visitation of his clergy, at the cathedral. It was held on a Wednesday, probably to allow time for the clergy to get to and from their parishes between Sundays. Two months before, the bishop had asked Rural Dean Fuller to be the preacher at the meeting. When the bishop informed Archdeacon Bethune of the invitation, he confided: "He is a grumbler but says he has never since 1835 preached at Toronto. He therefore has some reason to grumble and he may be useful hereafter". Fuller's sermon about "The Sufficiency of the Christian Ministry" described the importance of the minister's role as compared to other professions, since he dealt with things that mattered for eternity. Yet while he would magnify the office, he would also humble the instrument. He warned as well that preaching the word and administering the sacraments do not by themselves bring fruit, that when we look down from our pulpits we see men who have every reason to believe, but do not. The minister should not attribute his successes or failures just to himself, since "the hearts of men are in God's hands, not in ours". Explaining his title, he continued "that in the great work entrusted to our care, 'our sufficiency is of God'". Archdeacon Bethune, seconded by Dr. O'Meara, moved the traditional request that the synod publish the sermon. (34)

If circumstances of need sometimes prompted in clergy an interest in farming, other circumstances led them to become involved in education, for they were better schooled than the majority of their fellow citizens. Before the village of Thorold gained a school, classes were held by the Rev'd William Dickson. When in 1857 the County Council of Welland passed an act establishing a grammar school there, Dickson along with Fuller and four others became the first trustees. The first two masters were clergymen and graduates of Trinity College: Alexander Dawson and Donald I.F. McLeod. The latter afterwards

married one of Fuller's daughters. Latin was the chief subject taught in the higher grades, and "the pupils were chiefly boys, since the study of the classics was considered beyond the capability of the feminine intellect". (35)

The next year the Thorold Mechanics' Institute was organized, with 110 subscribers and Dr. Fuller as its first president. The Institute was a combination of a library and a club to sponsor literary talks. Fuller delivered the first lecture on the appropriate topic of "Reading". (36)

Shortly after Benjamin Cronyn's election as the first Bishop of Huron (July 1857), Fuller unsuccessfully sought the former's place as rector of London. The editor of the Independent-Reform St. Catharines Journal seemingly bore no love for the aspirant, for the paper reported he

has addressed the following egotistical and bribing circular to the members of the "Diocesan Church Society". The Rev. gentlemen is bringing the same tactics into use in the clerical field that he has been accustomed to use in political elections in Welland. The "Rural Dean" is one of the richest men in Welland, and when personal or family aggrandizement or emolument is likely to be the reward of his labors, he will not hesitate to make a greater promise than that contained in the postscript.

There follows the letter in which he outlined the grounds for seeking the rectory, including the support he had received during the late episcopal election, and the offending postscript:

Where desired, the expenses of those voting for me could be borne.
--T.B.F. (37)

A few years after his disappointment about not going to London, Fuller was appointed to the Church of St. George the Martyr in Toronto. When he left Thorold, the congregation owed him £2305/5/2--money which had been spent on the building of the new St. John's church there. He forgave the congregation the debt, and the people in gratitude presented him with a silver plated model of the church for whose erection he was responsible. Now he arrived at a new congregation, who were having their own financial difficulties.

While he was in Toronto, some of Fuller's pamphlets were reprinted, and two new ones published. One was the first of a projected series of tracts to be put out by the Home District Clerical Association (though I haven't found any others in this series). Entitled "Forms of Prayer", it was part of his constant defence of the Book of Common Prayer. It takes the form of a rather artificial dialogue between two laymen: Mr. Jones, who is "a zealous and intelligent Churchman", and Mr. Smith, who is "sincere", "but much prejudiced against the Church". Though we aren't told so, Mr. Smith must be a little simpleminded, for his prejudices vanish rapidly before the zeal of Mr. Jones. In the course of the discussion, Fuller gets in a remark about churches where the singing is "too fine", so that the congregation is left to "sing God's praises by proxy". The prayer book, he suggests, prevents people from being prayed at as well as sung at. It is also a safeguard against the "grievous errors" into which "some few of our clergy have at times, alas! fallen"; for "the teaching of the reading desk was an antidote to the teaching of the pulpit".

The other Toronto pamphlet was a sermon preached in St. George's Church on the occasion of Prince Arthur's recovery from illness: "A Nation's Mercy Vouchsafed to a Nation's Prayers". It was a chance to proclaim the Victorian loyalty to the royal family, protesting against the "treasonable and republican principles" some people were espousing. It was a chance, too, to bask in the sun which never set on the British Empire. "Is there not,"

the preacher asked, "a marked resemblance between the position of England among the nations of the earth and that of ancient Israel"?

Was there ever a nation, which, so small in itself exerted such a sway in the world? Was there ever a nation, so great in worldly prosperity as that nation, whose bankers furnish the sinews of war to all other nations? Was there ever a nation who had God so nigh unto them, so favoured, so blessed with spiritual privileges and rich opportunities of extending His kingdom throughout the world?

Feeling the weight of age, Bishop Strachan felt the time had come for the election of a coadjutor, who would be styled Bishop of Niagara. For three days and nights in September 1866 ballot after ballot took place. A sports writer described the election in terms of a horse race. The runners in this "Race for the Mitre" were "the Bishop of Romford's white mare Cobourg Lass (aged)" (A.N. Bethune), "Mr. Trincoll's black horse Pontifex Maximus" (Provost Whitaker of Trinity College) and "Mr. T. Broeck's grey horse, The Badger" (Fuller--brock is an old word for badger). (38) A stalemate between Whitaker, who led with the clergy and Fuller, who led with the laity and evangelicals was broken when the former withdrew and Bethune gained the majority. The defeated episcopal candidate was collated archdeacon of Niagara, with a jurisdiction extending beyond the present bounds of the diocese to include Northumberland, Durham, Peterboro, Victoria, Ontario and parts of York counties. About a year later Strachan died, and Fuller and McMurray were among his six former pupils who acted as pall-bearers. (39)

For some years the Archdeacon of Niagara had hoped that this area, in which he had grown up and served, might become a diocese. Already parts of the diocese of Toronto had been severed off to produce the sees of Huron and Ontario. The growing population of the remainder, the 1872 Synod resolved, was again "too extensive for the supervision of one Bishop". But as far as the Church of England was concerned, the area of the future diocese of Niagara was not a prosperous one. On its formation it would have 27 missionaries and only 20 self-supporting parishes. Under these circumstances an episcopal endowment would be particularly important. Again the Street money helped Fuller's hopes for the church to be realized, when his wife and her sister (Mrs. O.T. Macklem) offered \$15,000 towards the endowment for the diocese, which they hoped would be named "Niagara".

At the 1873 synod, a committee had been formed to help bring the new diocese into existence; and the following year the synod memorialized the Ontario House of Bishops to permit its formation. The bishops concurred in February 1875, and the Metropolitan invited the clergy and lay representatives of the area to "the school house of Christ Church, Hamilton, on Wednesday, March 17, at 2 p.m. for the purpose of selecting one godly and well-learned man to be Bishop of the said new Western diocese".

The choice of day must have seemed propitious to Fuller, with his Irish parentage. His most prominent rival was the rector of Christ's Church in Hamilton, his former room-mate at Chambly, John Gamble Geddes. The dislike of some low churchmen for this gentlemen, however, was evident in the banners which they hanged in James Street, indicating that a vote for Geddes was a vote for popery. It would be an election about which men felt with passion. In a sermon at the eucharist before the voting took place, Provost Whitaker reminded the people to be sober about what they were doing:

Let me commend you to the guidance of the Grace of God--it is for Him and His Church that you are about to act. Dare to invest your conduct with the sacred dignity of godly simplicity and sincerity.

And Bishop Bethune caused a stir of excitement when he warned the assembly that he expressly desired no demonstration of any kind to be made on the announcement of the result.

With one ballot, Archdeacon Fuller won the majority vote of each order, and Bishop Bethune declared him duly elected. When the bishop was asked to name the diocese, one clergyman suggested the name "Western", which had been associated with the area when the question of subdividing Toronto diocese was raised. But the rector of Niagara, William McMurray, proposed "Niagara" as an alternative. "It shall be called the Diocese of Niagara", announced the bishop, and concluded the session with his blessing. (40)

The Metropolitan, Bishop Oxenden, came from Montreal for the consecration, and was assisted not only by the bishops of Toronto and Huron, but also by two American bishops, from Michigan and Western New York. (Americans had taken part in the five consecrations which previously had taken place in Canada). The service took place on the feast day of SS Philip and James, on Saturday, May 1st. The consecration was in St. Thomas' Church, Hamilton, because Christ's Church was being rebuilt at the time, in expectation of being made the cathedral. The mother church of the see city was in fact appointed as cathedral, and Fuller's "old friend" and erstwhile rival in the election, Geddes, was named as its Dean. Was it an oversight that the bishop's stall was placed on the north side in the new church, while the traditional place for the bishop (the sought side) was occupied by the dean? (41)

As bishop he was involved in the normal episcopal round of confirmations, ordinations and consecrations. He felt that one of the high points of his career was the consecration of the church at Queenston, because of its association with his godfather. When the second Lambeth Conference took place in 1878, the bishop and his wife left Hamilton on the steamer Spartan for Liverpool to attend. Conscious of the contribution of the honorable society to the Canadian church, the bishop gave some 65 addresses in England and Ireland for the SPG.

Fuller was bishop in a period when new methods of biblical criticism were leading to questions about many assumptions about the scriptures, and when ecclesiastical authorities were trying to suppress those questions. Overseas a professor of old testament was removed from his chair, and a bishop was threatened with removal from his see, for their suggestions about the authorship and historical accuracy of parts of the old testament. In Canada two Presbyterians were tried by church courts, one for doubting that "eternal" punishment would last forever, the other for speaking of a progressive revelation in scripture. Methodists who used the new critical methods were in trouble with the authorities of their church. (42)

In a charge to synod, the bishop reflected this desire to deny any validity to the critical methods or the doubts which they caused. Clergy were to instruct their people "as to the genuineness, authenticity, uncorrupted preservation and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures". The people needed support

to face the sceptical climate of the age. Indeed many persons in the congregations, especially the males, shared that scepticism.

Satan has filled their minds with such doubts that they are not prepared to take their stand on the Lord's side. The clergyman who has to deal with such persons has never himself (been) harassed in this way, and cannot, therefore, understand their real condition.

The truth of scripture might be shown by "the fulfilment of prophecy to the very letter", by miracles, by the "excellence of the doctrines" and "the purity of the moral precepts of the Bible", by the harmony between its different parts, and by the benefits it has produced. Questions about the bible were seen only as the result of scepticism, and they could be avoided if the clergy would "Lay the foundations deep, strong and firm...", if they would give the positive instruction that was never more needed than now. (43)

Preaching was important, and he thought he saw a change in style during forty years from "the elaborate, very able, very learned, but at the same time very dry, essays" of earlier days "to plain, earnest, practical Gospel sermons, delivered with warmth and earnestness". (44) His own preaching was done in a "gentle, quiet, patient voice", (45) and he probably followed his own advice not to depend on a manuscript. "To speak to the heart", he said, "you must speak from the heart".

This advice applied only to preaching, however, and not to the rest of the service. Some Anglicans in early Upper Canada had felt "it would perhaps be prudent to make some concessions as to points of Form" by shortening the services, "when they do not involve any vital principles of our religion". (46) Others even adopted the practice of dissenters, of praying "from the heart" as well as from the prayer book. The bishop reminded his clergy that extempore prayer was "contrary to the principles of our church", and exhorted them to observe the rubrics of the prayer book. (47)

He was always striving for an enforcement of what he felt to be proper practice, from 1858 when he moved at the Toronto Synod that the Lord Bishop appoint a "Committee on the discrepancies in the celebration of Divine Service" (and was placed by Strachan on the said committee) till the end of his life. He didn't object to choral service, so long as the singing was good, and there was not too much of it. One hymn, he noticed to his dismay, had 40 lines in it. (48) Music was a contentious matter in many denominations, and when St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Toronto introduced an organ, the move was opposed in the General Assembly. Presbyterians feared the music might compete with the proclamation of the word, Anglicans that it might disrupt the order of the service. Fuller reprimanded his clergy for hurrying through the service, and for making unauthorized abbreviations of it. He objected to a new practice whereby congregations joined with the minister in saying the General Thanksgiving. In the next to last diocesan synod over which he presided he encouraged a memorial to the provincial synod asking for the "promotion of greater uniformity in public worship". (49)

Ritualism could show itself in strange guises, and the bishop and others were ready to combat it. When Archdeacon Palmer left St. George's Church, Guelph, he urged his congregation to travel the traditionally Anglican *via media*, being wary of the evils of Rome, and inclining from the extremes of the Protestant bodies. Alexander Dixon, who became the new rector about the time that Fuller became bishop, did find his people wary of the "evils of Rome". When a new curate donned a cassock, an Irish parishioner threatened to retaliate by wearing his wife's petticoat. A lady who brought a lily to

decorate the otherwise bare church one Easter found it removed by a warden. And when the Young People's Association planted a flower bed in the shape of a maltese cross, they were ordered to tear it up and reseed the plot with grass. (50)

Such were some of the feelings held when Fuller became bishop. A sympathetic biographer described him as being "sound and consistent in his allegiance to the prayer book, and free from all trace of bigotry and party spirit". (51) Yet that allegiance sometimes showed itself in ways very much like party spirit. He assumed perhaps too readily that his feelings for the prayer book were--or should be--shared by all others. He warned those under his jurisdiction that

it becomes us to bow with submission to the law of our Prayer Book as interpreted, for our guidance, by the highest tribunal of the British Empire. (52)

In a letter to his clergy, he told how the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council had decided recent court cases against, for example, the use of "lights", of the crucifix and of incense in churches. He reminded them that the Provincial Synod of Canada in 1868 forbade "the elevation of the elements in the celebration of the Holy Communion, the use of incense during divine service and the mixing of water with the sacramental wine", and disapproved "the use of lights on the Lord's table and vestments except the surplice, stole or scarf, and hood". In case his clergy should not heed, he sent a copy of the letter to their wardens as well. When some of his clergy pleaded their conscience as requiring them to wear alb and chausable, he replied that his conscience bound him to promises made at his consecration to prevent any breach of the laws of the church. Yet when the Judicial Committee interpreted the prayer book as meaning that a bishop should wear a cope in his cathedral for the consecration at the Lord's Supper, he felt himself excused by the provincial synod's opposition to such vestments.

On Wednesday, December 17th, the Hamilton Spectator reported that the bishop had died early in the morning, at home. "The gentle, quiet, patient voice," it said, "is hushed forever; the active brain lies in eternal repose; the hand that blessed the needy lies cold and still". The funeral took place on Saturday from the cathedral. (53) On Sunday, the cathedral was filled (with 700 people in the evening) for memorial services. Archdeacon Dixon of Guelph preached stern reminders of man's mortality to his hearers, based on sobering texts from Ecclesiastes and the Psalms:

A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth. (Ecclesiastes 7:1, text at the morning service).

The days of our years are threescore years and ten...yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. (Psalm 90:10, text at the evening service).

The sort of sources on which a biographer draws inevitably shapes the picture that results. A lack of correspondence leaves us with a hazy impression of Fuller's friendships, though there seems to have been a bond with Archdeacons McMurray and Dixon, fellow Irishmen. He certainly benefited the church materially, and his wealth has left behind some financial records. A fourth century church historian named Socrates said that church history often ends up being an account of disputes, and he looked forward to the time when it would have no more subject matter. That time hasn't come yet, and some of

his tracts and sermon show the part that Fuller played in the causes of his day. The positive value that he affirmed, lying behind some of the negative bickering, was the value of the book of common prayer. He was a man of his age, and bishops today (I hope) would not be members of the "church militant" in quite the same way. But as an Anglican and a bishop, his role was often, appropriately, as "defender of the faith".

Notes:

1. Quoted in the Living Message (May, 1971), page 5.
2. Archdeacon Dixon, Useful Lives (Toronto, 1884), page 4. Hamilton Public Library.
3. Lt.-Col. Thomas to Major Green, 9 November 1801. Public Archives of Canada.
4. To Colonel Bowes, York, 6 May 1806. PAC.
5. To Colonel Bowes, Kingston, 10 July 1806. PAC, G-909, page 82.
6. Record of baptisms in the archives of the Synod of the Diocese of Ontario.
7. The Diocese of Ontario archives has a record of Captain Fuller's marriage to Mary O'Brian England by John Stuart on July 26th, 1806. Miss England was the daughter of a Captain of the 47th Regiment of Foot.
8. Edmund was baptized September 1st, 1811 (Diocese of Ontario archives). The Public Archives of Ontario has a record of an unsuccessful petition by Thomas and his brother William for a land grant (10th April 1834).
9. Prevost to Drummond, Quebec, 5 January 1815. PAC, C-1226, Part 2, page 3.
10. Memorial of Mrs. Wm. Leeming. PAC
11. The Church, March 30, 1839.
12. T.B. Fuller, Thoughts on the Present State and Future Prospects of the Church of England in Canada, with Hints for some Improvements in her Ecclesiastical Arrangements. First published anonymously in 1836. Reprinted with a preface and notes (Hamilton, 1877), page 10. General Synod Archives.
13. Dixon, Useful Lives, page 5.
14. Ormstown, Harrington, Beauharnois, Terrebonne and the township of Godmanchester. Cf. F.D. Adams, A History of Christ Church Cathedral (Montreal, 1941), page 16.
15. Perhaps. Though a contemporary biography by J.C. Dent in the Canadian Portrait Gallery (Toronto, 1881), vol. IV, pages 125-6 ascribes the beginnings of St. George's to Fuller, the parish itself cannot trace the link that far back.
16. History of the Church in Eastern Canada and Newfoundland. (London, 1892), page 249.
17. Thoughts on the Present State and Future Prospects of the Church of England in Canada, with Hints for some Improvements in her Ecclesiastical Arrangements. First published anonymously in 1836. Reprinted with a preface and notes (Hamilton, 1877). N.F. Davin described the printing of the original pamphlet in The Irishman in Canada (London and Toronto, 1877). There was some dispute over Fuller's claim to originality in this pamphlet. John Strachan had proposed the formation of synods, in a sermon preached at the episcopal visitation at York in 1832, but he rejected the idea of lay participation in such synods.
18. PAO. T.B. Fuller to Sir George Arthur, May 1838. The Land Council decided (2 August 1838) that since there was already a rectory, no action was necessary.
19. 28 October 1840. Cf. The History of the Parish of Thorold (1953), p. 12. Some four years before, the township (as opposed to the town) of Thorold

had been made a parish.

20. Fuller to the SPG, 18 January 1841.
21. Memoir of Mr. John Beatty, who Died at Port Robinson, C.W., 15th February, 1861. (Toronto: Rowsell, 1861) 24 pp. Copy in General Synod Archives.
22. 1848. Quoted in The History of the Parish of Thorold, p. 12
23. Copies of the second (1856) edition of the pamphlet, Religious Excitements tried by Scripture, and their fruits tested by experience, are in PAO and TPL, having been presented by the author to the Chief Justice and to William McMurray respectively. See also the Christian Guardian, 2 March, 27 April, 18 and 25 May 1842; The Church, 23 April and 18 June 1842; and Fuller's report to the SPG, 2 January 1843.
24. The Roman Church not the Mother Church of England. (Cobourg, 1844) and (Welland, 1866). Copy in Toronto Public Library.
25. History of Thorold, p. 116
26. Strachan to Fuller, 15 November 1853. Strachan Letter-Books, p. 321. PAO
27. Canadian Methodist Magazine.
28. Strachan Letter-Books, 22 July 1856.
29. Register of St. John's church, Thorold. He was born 27 July 1856 and baptized 5 October.
30. Strachan Letter-Books, 2 June 1857.
31. Strachan Letter-Books, 25 June 1857.
32. Cf. John S. Moir, Church and State in Canada West, chapter 5.
33. Dixon, Useful Lives, p. 10. Mr. John Burtniak of Brock University Library has shown me a copy of The Canadian Agricultural Reader compiled "by a Vice-President of the Niagara District Agricultural Society, and Township Superintendent of Common Schools", published at Niagara in 1845. One wonders whether this was the work mentioned by Dixon. Was Dixon's 1854 a misprint or misunderstanding for 1845? And were the posts of the compiler of the Reader held by Fuller, who was later to be Vice-President of the Thorold Agricultural Society and trustee of the first grammar school there?
34. The Sufficiency of the Christian Ministry (Toronto: Rowsell, 1856). Copy in General Synod Archives.
35. History of Thorold, pp. 163-5.
36. Ibid., p. 166.
37. St. Catharines Journal, September 10, 1857. Microfilm in St. Catharines Public Library.
38. T.C. Patterson, Sporting Intelligence (Toronto, 1866).
39. Excerpts from a memorial sermon preached by Archdeacon Fuller are contained in Bethune's Memoir of Bishop Strachan (Toronto: Rowsell, 1870), pp. 316-321.
40. History of the Diocese of Niagara to 1950, chapter 6; Fuller's 1876 Synod address; C.H. Mockridge, The Bishops of the Church of England in Canada and Newfoundland (Toronto, 1896), chapter 27; Katharine Greenfield, "The Reverend John Gamble Geddes and Early Days at Christ's Church, Hamilton" in Wentworth Bygones, no. 4 (1963).
41. Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton 1835-1935, p. 39
42. The old testament critics were W.R. Smith and Bishop Colenso of Natal.

The Presbyterians were D.J. Macdonnell in the late 1870's, and John Campbell in the early 1890's. The Methodists were George Jackson and George Workman in the first decade of this century.

43. Selections from the Address of the Lord Bishop of Niagara...(Hamilton, 1881), pp. 16-17.
44. Synod address, 26 May 1879, printed in the synod Journal, p. 21.
45. The Spectator, Hamilton, 17 December 1884.
46. Radcliffe, Authentic Letters from Upper Canada (Toronto: MacMillan, 1953), p. 118.
47. 1877 synod address, in the synod Journal, p. 18.
48. 1882 synod address.
49. 1880 and 1882 synod addresses.
50. History of St. George's Parish, Guelph, Ontario 1832-1932, p. 33.
51. J.C. Dent, The Canadian Portrait Gallery (Toronto, 1881), vol. IV, p. 126.
52. Printed letter of December 1881.
53. O.R. Rowley says he was buried "in Burlington Cemetery at Hamilton" (The Anglican Episcopate of Canada and Newfoundland (1928), p. 65), but in my wanderings through the possible areas, I have been unable to find his tombstone.